



Pitt State

MAGAZINE



Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water for 40-60 seconds.



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New photo op!

The latest statue on our campus is a fun addition to the Overman Student Center and no doubt will be the backdrop for photos of generations of Gorillas past, present, and future! It was made possible by Chuck and Sandy Overman Haile (Jack Overman's daughter), Mike and Cheryl Sullivan, Shirley Goza, Chris and Dawn McNay, and Roger and Deana Seufferling, as well as the residual senior class gifts from 1997, 1998, 1999, and 2008. The artist, Virgil Oertle of Mascot Benches in Utah, has a connection to Pittsburg: his grandfather was born here!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



DEAR READERS,
As I reflect on the beginning of another fall semester at Pittsburg State University, I recognize that by the time this magazine hits your mailbox, the world could look very different.

While we did everything possible to prepare the campus for a safe and successful reopening, this year has shown us we are

not really in control. COVID-19 has touched and transformed virtually every aspect of our lives. I am proud of the work our faculty and staff have done in response to it, and I am appreciative of the outpouring of support we have received from our stakeholders.

I'm also proud of and impressed with the tremendous impact that so many of you, our alumni, have had on the front lines of this pandemic – from health care workers to those who are doing research in labs. To think that you got your start here, on our campus, and have gone on to achieve what you have, is truly inspiring.

Many of the traditions we hold dear are falling victim to the virus, including our fall sports, fall convocation, Family Day, and Homecoming. As we have been saying, 'It's a COVID year.' But despite the unique environment this year creates for us, I am confident that our Gorilla family will make the most of it in every way we can.

It's well known that adversity reveals the character of individuals and organizations. Well, that has certainly been the case here. What has COVID-19 revealed about Pitt State? We are resilient, persistent, and adaptable and we possess a spirit that cannot be broken.

We are, after all, Gorillas.

Be safe and take care!

Dr. Steve Scott



Pitt State

MAGAZINE

Features

- 14 Cover Story: Signs of the Times
- 22 Profiles – Great Gorillas

College Close-Up

- 26 College of Arts & Sciences
- 28 Kelce College of Business
- 30 College of Education
- 32 College of Technology

Departments

- 4 From the Oval
- 10 Where in the World is Gus/Gorilla Generations
- 34 Athletics
- 36 Alumni News
- 38 Class Notes

More photos and stories at pittstate.edu/magazine

From the editor

This magazine is unique for two reasons: We produced it in the midst of a pandemic, and it's the last one to be designed by Diane Hutchison. We began this magazine in 1989, and in the years that followed produced more than 50 editions – each one designed by Diane. In doing so, she's played an important role in connecting our alumni and preserving our history. Thanks, Diane, and enjoy your retirement!
#OAGAAG

On the cover

Junior Grace Haworth, a graphic communications major, will graduate with a timely and robust portfolio: this summer, she was responsible for designing signs to be used across campus to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. She's one of many Gorillas to make a difference during the pandemic, both behind the scenes and on the front lines. Read her story and more in the cover story, "Signs of the Times," starting on page 14.

Correction:

In the Spring 2020 edition, retired math department faculty member Dr. Harold Thomas was misidentified as "Ralph Thomas" in the PSU Foundation Spotlight ad that ran on the inside back cover. We apologize for the error!

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Pitt State

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 - Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
 - Technology Integration
-
- Hospitality Management (*Undergraduate*)



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Proven. Promise. Pitt State.



Pittsburg State alumni and friends believe in the power of education, understand the importance of hard work, and share a commitment to helping others. Our focus on academic excellence, artistic expression, and dedicated research cultivates future leaders and lifts our region. Philanthropy is an important part of our success.

We're proud to announce that our capital campaign - Proven. Promise. Pitt State. - has raised more than \$80 million to date. Focusing on student success and faculty excellence, this \$100 million campaign will allow Pittsburg State to remain a destination of choice for the next generation of Gorillas.



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President joins alumni in fight against cancer

Pittsburg State University President Steve Scott interacts with alumni almost daily. But his appointment to the KU Cancer Center Community Advisory Board brought the unexpected chance to interact with two former Gorillas in a way that's personal.

Scott, a prostate cancer survivor, will be an ambassador for the center, which has a mission of transforming cancer research and clinical care in Kansas and western Missouri.

At the orientation meeting were Dr. Roy Jensen, M.D., and Dr. Gary Doolittle, M.D. – both graduates of PSU, where they earned degrees in biology. Jensen ('80) is now the director of the KU Cancer Center and is the president of the Association of American



President Steve Scott, a prostate cancer survivor, will be an ambassador for the KU Cancer Center.

Cancer Institutes. Doolittle ('80) is a professor of medicine at KU, a researcher, and holds numerous titles related to the study and treatment of cancer.

"They both attended PSU together, and it's really neat to be able to witness first-hand what they've gone on to achieve," Scott said. "I'm really proud to be part of the board, and proud to see how they're making a difference."

Outstanding Faculty recognized

Three faculty were recognized last spring at Apple Day with the Dr. Robert K. Ratzlaff Outstanding Faculty Awards, created to recognize those faculty members who make lasting impressions on students.

Rion Huffman, an associate professor in Graphics and Imaging Technologies, was nominated by a student who sees him going above and beyond, encouraging graphics students to participate in research.

Jordan Backs, an assistant professor in Technology and Workforce Learning, was nominated for his overwhelming kindness and patience, and ensuring his students understand what he's trying to teach them.

Fang Lin, an assistant professor of finance, was nominated for ensuring his students understand the materials being taught to them and caring for his students.



Fang Lin, Jordan Backs, Rion Huffman and President Steve Scott

Nursing majors named Outstanding Seniors

Piper Misse and Marcus Yoakum have a lot in common: both were active at community service and excelled academically, were nursing majors in the Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing, and were named Outstanding Senior 2020.

The selection of Outstanding Senior is a campus tradition that goes back more than 60 years; winners are honored with a brass plaque in the Senior Walk in front of Russ Hall.

Misse, from Overland Park, Kansas, was captain of the women's cross-country team and the women's indoor/outdoor track and field team, where she racked up numerous awards. She was a member of Honors College and Crimson Club and represented PSU as a senior class officer in the Kansas Association of Nursing Students.

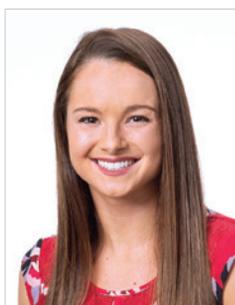
Misse accepted an RN position in the medical intensive care unit at St. Luke's South Hospital, but will always consider PSU her second home and a place that afforded her numerous leadership roles.

"Having been well acquainted with anonymity growing up in the suburbs of Kansas City, I was drawn to Pittsburg State by its friendly, inviting atmosphere and the potential to make a wealth of new connections," she said.

Yoakum, from Pittsburg, graduated with a dual major in Nursing and Modern Languages (French). During his five years at PSU, he created the Outdoor Activities Club – now the largest student-led club on campus – and the Diversity in Nursing Club. He was active with the International Student Association, Pitt Pals, the PEER Mentor Program, and was Nursing School class president.

This summer, he announced plans to move to Lille, France, for a year of teaching English to French students and learning medical terminology in French, with an eye toward returning to the states to become a practicing nurse in the future.

"My favorite part of my time here at PSU has been meeting people and building connections," he said. "Seeing people make connections in organizations I created or was a part of is an incredibly rewarding process."



Piper Misse



Marcus Yoakum

Introductions

Lori Dreiling

(MS '15) was named the new Human Resources Director at Pittsburg State. She replaces Michelle Sexton, who held the position for 31 years before retiring in May.



Lori Dreiling

Dreiling previously worked in the same position at Modine Manufacturing in Joplin, where she hired more than 75 Pitt State graduates over the years. She also directed human resources for Camoplast Solideal and Caterpillar, Inc. Since 2019, she's been an adjunct instructor in the Kelce College of Business, and a guest speaker for the PSU Leadership Class.

She is married to Duane Dreiling, executive director of the United Way of Southwest Missouri and Southeast Kansas. They live in Carl Junction, where they are active in many civic and school related activities and organizations.

One of the things she loves best about being on campus? The students.

"Students are energizing. There's a feeling of teamwork," she said. "And being in a very visible college town is neat. You can't go anywhere without seeing a concrete gorilla or a splitface."

Gorilla Promise Award

Paying for a college education got a little easier for graduates of all Crawford County high schools, thanks to a new scholarship program through the Office of Admission called the Gorilla Promise Award: May 2020 graduates received a scholarship of \$1,000, or \$500 per semester.

Students must be admitted to

PSU and be a full-time degree seeking student. The university has hopes to continue the program in the future.

"Our goal is to give our local students an opportunity to be a part of Gorilla Nation and reduce their college costs," said Director of Admission Scott Donaldson. "We are committed to keeping our local kids

local and are doing our part to help them advance their education while not going deep into debt."

Graduates of Crawford County high schools also were eligible to receive Pritchett Trust scholarships in the amount of \$500, or \$250 per semester, their first year of college; last year, the trust awarded \$50,000 to incoming freshmen.

Student Employee of the Year also winner of statewide award

Things U.S. students take for granted can prove to be detrimental to the experiences of incoming international students if they aren't prepared – from arriving from a warmer nation without a coat, to not having the correct converter to enable them to plug in electrical devices.

A friendly face and a helping hand from Alimu “Daisy” Gulifeila, a psychology major from China who works in International Programs and Services, has often made a big difference. In the spring she was named Student Employee of the Year at PSU and for the State of Kansas.

The first runner up was Anoop Ponnathara Vinod, a finance major from India who works in the Business Office. The second runners up – a tie this year – were Hannah Brown, an accounting major from Iola, Kansas, who works in academic advising in Kelce College of Business, and Carolyn Hess, a Family and Consumer Sciences/child development major from Auburn, Kansas, who works in Study Abroad in International Programs and Services.

Their names, along with Gulifeila's, will be engraved on a plaque to be displayed in the Student Employment area of Career Services in Horace Mann.



Alimu “Daisy” Gulifeila



Anoop Ponnathara Vinod



Hannah Brown



Carolyn Hess

#OAGAAG

@MadisonRaeHurst: Dude, I miss @pittstate. I met so many amazing people and made some of the best memories. #oagaag

@amberlarge_: If your university didn't make an entire hype video about wearing masks, you chose the wrong school. #oagaag

@CoachB_Larson: Humbled to be a part of such a great community! You will not find better support from a community university than you will at Pittsburg State, it just means more. #OAGAAG

@KelsiLeAnn2018: Soooo ready to be back. #oagaag

@sao0991: My diploma came today! Yay for my 3rd degree from @pittstate #oagaag

@Bclaypool63: My Gorilla family has and always will be very important to me and who I am. #oagaag

@hanna_ferg21: It's crazy how we have normalized and adapted to this new life. It's such a surreal feeling receiving your cap and gown but no graduation. thank you. @pittstate #oagaag

@mal_anne_32: Never been more proud to be a Gorilla. #OAGAAG

@MattB_3: No better place to finish a Sunday night run than here! Going to be a great week! #RYFP | #OAGAAG

@ArmandoJohnson: Through all of the madness, I spent the day working on my Gorilla garden! I watched 0 news and my day was very calm! #OAGAAG

@taylorryboucher: Proud to be a part of Gorilla Nation. #OAGAAG

@Terra_Louise: My cap & gown came in today! #RNtoBSN #OAGAAG

@NPNOWClem: Can't believe it's been four years. Thinking back to what were certainly less personally challenging, but just as interesting, times at @pittstate. #oagaag

@SwadenSmith: Thanks for all the memories. @pittstate. #OAGAAG

Finding Gus Gorilla *Can you find the hidden Gus?*

Search this issue for the iconic bronze Gorilla that sits on the Oval in front of the Overman Student Center. The sculpture was created by Larry Wooster in 1965.

Email psumag@pittstate.edu to submit your entry. Include your first and last name, as well as the page number and location where you found the hidden gorilla. One entry per person. Entries must be received by **February 1, 2021**. The winner will receive a hardbound copy of "Pittsburg State University: A Photographic History of the First 100 Years."

We sent one lucky Gorilla the prize for winning the Spring 2020 contest, but we don't have a record of who that was – a technology challenge resulted in the name being deleted from our system. To the winner, we're sorry, and if you see this and email us at psumag@pittstate.edu, we'll publish your name, city, state, and graduation year in the next edition! (Gus was sitting on the desk in the photo on page 26.)



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It's been an unprecedented time

in the world of performing arts, and we certainly felt it here at the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts, from Broadway shows being canceled to uncertainty about what each week and month will bring for performers and patrons.

We're proud to have filled a niche this summer by collaborating with the PSU Department of Music and musicians throughout our community on the **Pittsburg Virtual Festival of the Arts**, a weekly streamed concert series with a little something for everyone.

You can find each concert in our archives on Vimeo, including:

- The J3 Band
- Classical musicians
- Jazz musicians
- A mix of small ensembles
- The Half-Pitts Band
- Pittsburg High School musicians
- Area dance groups
- Country musicians



As the fall semester got underway, directors were planning safe and socially distanced performances, including some in person and some livestreamed events, for the PSU Wind Ensemble, PSU Jazz Ensemble, Southeast Kansas Symphony, PSU Choirs, and Pitt State Theatre.

Please visit our website at www.bicknellcenter.com and follow us on social media for the most up-to-date information about these and future performances.

“Where in the World is Gus?”



Mark S. White (MBA '79), posed in crimson and gold at the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet, China – 7,787 miles from Pittsburgh.



Sarah Light Grosvenor (BA '97, MS '98, Ed.S '99), packed her split face for a visit to South Africa with her family. Here, she's posing in front of a Biltong store – a place to get a very popular snack.



Debbie (Goucher) Jurgensmeyer, (BBA '84), visited the Holy Land and the country of Jordan with her husband. While there, they visited the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem. She was proud to wear her PSU alumni shirt at least a couple of times, she said.



David Kahn (BBA '65) traveled to Cuba in 2019, just weeks before they prohibited U.S. citizens, and took along a bit of Pittsburg State. While there, he visited a coffee farm in the Escambray Mountains where three generations, including the couple he's posing with, live and work.

Remember traveling?!

These photos, sent by alumni who took trips before the pandemic hit, are a great reminder that Gorillas could at one time be seen all over the world!

We look forward to a time when we start receiving such photos again.

Until then, we welcome submissions of the closer-to-home places Gus has hung out during the months of sheltering at home – even if it was simply your backyard garden, on a bike in your local park, or in an armchair with a cozy book.

Email them with your grad year and other details to psumag@pittstate.edu



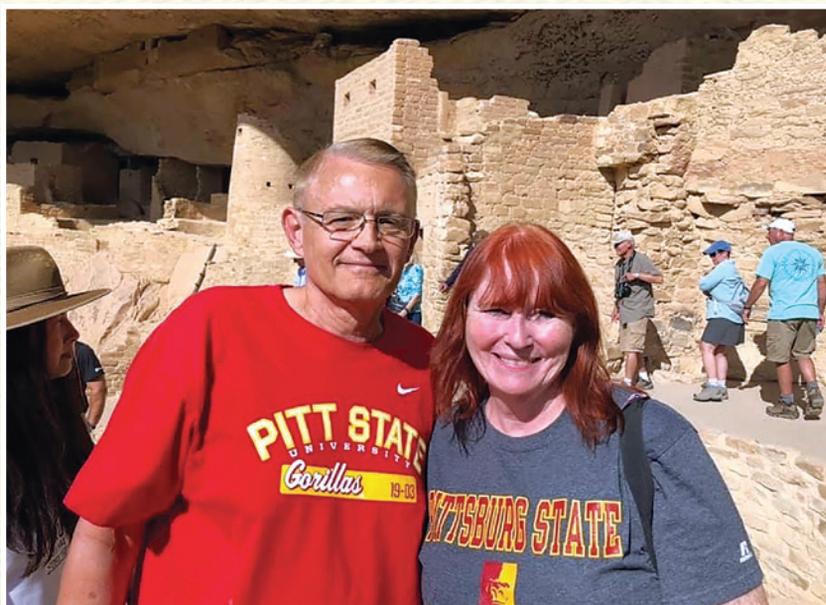
Dan Hodges (MA '20), found a unique way to show his Gorilla pride! He painted his fuel tank on his farm in Douglas County, west of Lawrence, Kansas, with the split face! He plans to give his barn the same artistic treatment.



The Hills are alive with Gorilla pride in Salzburg Austria, where Loren Pontious (BSBA '65), Crystal Pontious Stevens, (BSEd, '69, MS '80, MS '99) and Don Stevens (BS '71) enjoyed the beautiful Mirabell Gardens where the "Sound of Music" was filmed. They traveled to Germany, Czech Republic, and Austria as part of the 8th International Pontius Family Reunion.



David Norgard (BA '71), shows his Pitt State pride shortly after coming ashore from kayaking in Antarctica in March 2020.



John Baker (BS '74; MS '79; Ed.S '85; MS '90) and Dianna (Goll) Baker (BS '74) took a memorable vacation to Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado and showed their Gorilla spirit in front of Cliff Palace, the largest cliff dwelling in North America.

We started receiving photos of the next generation of Gorillas just about the time the pandemic hit. In turn, we wanted to share them with you. In this time of uncertainty and struggle, we're guessing they'll make you smile like they did us!

Gorilla Generations



Hadley Grace was born on February 27, 2020 to Chris (BST '09, BSEd '15) and Natalie (O'Neal) Vanderbeck (BSEd '06, MEd '08, Cert. '19).



Paysleigh Grace was born on February 24, 2020 to Steven Dooley (BBA '12) and Ashleigh Downes Dooley (BA '12).



Miles (BST '16) and Morgan Brown (BS '15) welcomed Jaxon Miles Brown on April 24, 2020.



Mitch (BST '15) and Taylor (Johnson) Streeter (BSN '15) welcomed a sweet baby boy, Weston Cole, on March 18, 2020.



Amanda (Krause) Eden (BSEd '14) and Ben Eden welcomed Nora Lee Eden on July 4, 2020.

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If you are interested in or have questions about making a beneficiary designation gift to impact the lives of future Gorillas, please contact us.



For more information about this and other planned giving opportunities, visit: pittstate.giftlegacy.com
Or contact: Erica Martin, Director of Planned Giving ermartin@pittstate.edu 620-235-4863

Show your support of the arts.

Make a gift to the building operations and programming endowment: Friends of the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts, or make a gift to purchase a seat plaque in the Linda & Lee Scott Performance Hall.



The Friends of the Bicknell endowment fund is a new effort to support the Bicknell Center through annual giving. Gifts to the endowment will be used for programming, operational costs, equipment updates and other facility needs.

Seat plaques in the Linda & Lee Scott Performance Hall are available for gifts of \$1,000 or \$500, depending on where the seat is located.

Your support will provide more opportunities in the performing and fine arts for PSU students and the people of the region.

Gifts to the endowment or seat plaques may be facilitated online at bicknellcenter.com, under the Get Involved links.

Please contact the Office of University Development at 620-235-4768 or dev@pittstate.edu for assistance and additional information.

In Memory of
Jane Doe
The Jane Doe Family

John and Jane
Doe





SIGNS OF THE TIMES



Grace Haworth

GRACE HAWORTH, A JUNIOR FROM KANSAS CITY, KANSAS, will graduate with a portfolio she could never have anticipated.

The graphic communications major spent most of her summer creating signs to be used in buildings across campus when the university re-opened in the fall.

- “Do your part: Wear a mask”
- “Enter here”
- “Maximum occupancy”
- “This way”

Using branding guidelines and a request for a bold color

palette, Haworth was tasked with converting instructions – “Practice social distancing by putting 6 feet of space between yourself and others” – into simple, eye-catching posters and stickers.

“My job was to take ideas and sometimes complicated information and put it into images,” she said. “In high school, I was really into biology and graphic design. It was really satisfying to take on this project and combine both.”

It was also satisfying, she added, to come to campus just a few days before the fall semester started and see her work being installed on floors, walls, doors, and stairwells.

“I love seeing it when I walk in and out of buildings, knowing that I did it,” she said. “It could be the foundation for a future career. I’m pretty proud.”

While her signs have offered clear directions, the path through the pandemic has been anything but clear; instead, it’s required students, faculty and staff, and alumni to figure things out on a weekly – sometimes daily – basis.

Here’s a snapshot of that process, starting in March and ending in August. No one knows what the world will look like by the time this magazine is read, but one thing is sure: there still will be thousands of Gorillas out there making a difference every single day.



Scott Norman

March 16 Changing course

THE UNIVERSITY MODIFIED operations to limit the presence of COVID-19 on campus, releasing students from face to face classes just before spring break. The Critical Response Management Team began meeting daily to plan crisis communication and strategies. And just as the spring edition of this magazine arrived in mailboxes from coast to coast, touting as the cover story the theme “By Doing, Learn,” faculty immediately transitioned to teaching online, remotely.

They had to be innovative and change course quickly.

Automotive Professor Scott Norman (BST ’90), who typically teaches students leaning over an engine in a lab, created a YouTube

channel and recorded himself using his ’57 Dodge in his home garage as a teaching tool.

“I’m looking at this pandemic positively; it allows me to stop and take a breath, be creative, think outside the box, and do fun things I think will benefit my students,” he said.

Assistant Professor Andrew Chybowski created a virtual Wind Ensemble class, offering musical challenges that students could record in their homes that he could then combine into a master “concert.”

“It’s very meaningful. This has all been a big experiment,” Chybowski said. “My students really took a negative situation and made it a positive.”

continued

March 24

Using innovation

OFF CAMPUS, GORILLA GRADS BEGAN DOING what they had been trained to do.

Dr. Zach Krumsick, M.D. (BS '12), first got a taste of serving others in challenging environments as a student who journeyed with faculty and classmates to Peru, Belize, and Juarez, Mexico, to set up medical clinics in underserved and often primitive areas.

This spring, he drew on those experiences as a resident in the Emergency Department at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee. He began tending to pandemic patients not long after the area was hit by a deadly tornado outbreak that killed 26, injured 300, and damaged the hospital warehouse.

Having helped to convert a parking garage into an extension of the ED, with rows of beds and temporary walls, he recalled innovation being part of his medical missions as a student.

“It was those experiences, on those trips, my first patient encounters – that laid a foundation for me to use today; I only had a few minutes to gain their trust and develop a relationship, to work with them and treat them, and I likely would never see them again,” he said. “That’s very much what life is like now in the emergency department.”

April 3

Getting news out

SENIOR MEDIA PRODUCTION MAJOR Vanessa Tapia, meanwhile, began putting into practice what she’d been learning about when she began broadcasting live from her home on the Spanish TV station Univision in Kansas City.

Her goal: to keep the Hispanic community informed about the risks of COVID-19.

“We’re a very social culture by nature anyway, we give hugs instead of handshakes, and people needed to know and understand the risk,” she said. “I wanted them to have the right information.”

She interviewed a range of experts: doctors,



Zach Krumsick



“I’ve just always wanted to help the community, to get the news out.”

– Vanessa Tapia

families of people who had contracted the virus, and the superintendent of Kansas City schools, among others.

Like Krumsick, Tapia drew on her experience at Pittsburg State: she had worked behind the scenes broadcasting PSU athletic events under the direction of Professor Troy Comeau and had anchored shows for CAPS 13 – the Department of Communication’s student-produced cable television station.

“I’m not in it for the fame, I’ve just always wanted to help the community, to get the news out,” she said. “One of the things I like about reporting is making a difference.”



At the start of the fall semester, each student received a Gorilla-themed face mask from local businesses Mpix and U.S. Awards.



Tyler Harrell

April 9 Manufacturing help

FACE SHIELDS FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS were needed fast.

Collaboration provided a solution.

It was a real-life example of exactly what Chief Strategic Officer Shawn Naccarato envisioned when University Strategic Initiatives opened Block22 in Downtown Pittsburg last year.

Prior to the pandemic, his team had been putting the finishing touches on a makerspace. In it,

continued

College of Arts & Sciences

THE LARGEST COLLEGE, AND ONE of the most diverse, relied on input from students, faculty, and staff to guide decision-making. The college accounts for the majority of course offerings in the general education package, produces the largest number of credit hours, and is comprised of 11 departments and one school spread among 10 buildings.

Dean Mary Carol Pomatto said adding to the complexity were the numerous environments in which students would be learning: in classrooms, labs, testing centers, the Early Childhood Learning Center and

Preschool, the Health Simulation Center, clinical settings, on and off campus practicum settings, school systems, fields/streams, and others.

The college also includes activities in which the community engages, including Nature Reach, Pitt State Theatre, band, choir, and the Solo & Chamber Music Series.

That meant planning was done at the department level and in many cases, specific to the needs of students enrolled. Band directors ordered slotted masks and instrument bell covers to allow music students to practice and perform more safely, while other teachers invested in small, portable



webcams with microphones and other specialized technologies to teach virtually.

The college also worked with outside agencies and community partners, including health care providers and school districts, to provide students internship, clinical, and practicum experiences so they can be on track to licensure.

woodworking tools, laser engravers, and 3D printers stood by, ready for use by community members and potential entrepreneurs.

There, and on campus in the Kansas Technology Center and Kansas Polymer Research Center, staff, students, alumni, and faculty in Plastics Engineering Technology and Mechanical Engineering Technology got to work.

Some moved 3D printers home so they could produce round-the-clock. Pitsco, DEPCO Enterprises, LLC, and Stratasyss donated materials.

And Tyler Harrell (BST '01), founder of Pittsburg-based PRG Prototyping, worked with his employees to develop a prototype they could produce quickly by the thousands. They did so for health care providers from coast to coast.



Carley Perkins

April 20 Making a difference

SEVERAL STATES AWAY, CARLEY PERKINS, RN (BSN '14), found herself working as a volunteer on a COVID-19 med surg floor in New Jersey – one of the hardest hit areas with 68,824 confirmed cases and 2,805 deaths just one month into the pandemic.

Perkins chose nursing because she wanted to make a difference. But in spite of getting what she said she

believes was a top-notch education in a highly rated nursing program at Pittsburg State, nothing could have prepared her.

“Each patient with COVID-19 presents differently so you never know what you’re going to walk into,” she said.

The hardest part: no visitors allowed in the hospitals.

“Some families are having to say goodbye to their loved ones via Facetime and phone calls,” she said. “It is heartbreaking, but the families are so thankful and appreciative that you are taking care of their loved one.”



Kelce College of Business

ONE OF THE MOST HEAVILY TRAFFICKED COLLEGES at Pittsburg State looks different this fall, after Dean Paul Grimes and a task force led by Associate Professor Lynn Murray worked much of the summer to reimagine the flow.

“In looking at capacity, we have a lot of challenges to Kelce’s home, given its age,” Grimes said. “Our classrooms are very old-fashioned in the way they’re configured, and some are crowded even in the best of circumstances.”

A capital campaign has been underway for a new facility, which was built in 1950, but the pandemic meant innovation needed to occur sooner.

Faculty and staff worked to reduce classes to a third of their capacity, thanks in large part of reopening an auditorium used long ago by Playhouse on Broadway and in more recent years by the PSU band and orchestra programs. The addition of a projector and white boards, along with wi-fi connectivity, meant 50 to 60 students could learn in the 2,000-square foot space.

The college also overhauled the directional traffic flow through hallways by installing a double yellow line in the hallways (no passing!), and by designating entry and exit doors and up and down stairwells.



Temperature checks and daily wellness questionnaires have become standard protocol for athletes. Employees also are asked to submit a daily wellness questionnaire.



College of Education

TO SERVE 1,500 MAJORS IN three departments and three programs this fall required flexibility. Dean James Truelove began meeting with his department chairs and directors in Teaching and Leadership; Teacher Education; Psychology and Counseling; and Health, Human Performance, and Recreation to determine strategies.

“We have many courses that are unique. Our college also has a high presence out in the community,” he said. “We want students connected and to be able to complete the hands-on, practical side of our program, but safety is also critical as they’re doing that.”

If schools in which student teachers were working were using virtual learning or hybrid remote/face to face models, they could also choose that model. To avoid cross contamination, student teachers are not coming to campus.

Group exercise classes adopted the Hyflex approach to decrease classroom capacity to 30 percent. If the room held 40 students, then alternating groups of 12 students participated face to face while others attended via Zoom.

And with Therapeutic Recreation courses, which often involves students interacting with special needs individuals and senior citizens, they’ve instead become pen pals and conducted virtual visits.

May 14 Remaining flexible

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION major Jansen Miller found herself student teaching in a world that looked very different than the one she imagined as a freshman.

Collaborating with fellow Gorilla Cara Kubler (BSEd '91, MSEd '97), a 25-year-veteran of elementary education, Miller worked quickly to help transition a kindergarten class in Cherokee, Kansas, to a virtual world.

Among her contributions:

continued



Jansen Miller and Cara Kubler

recording herself reading to the children each week – a favorite activity during face-to-face learning – and helping Kubler figure out how to teach the school’s youngest learners via Zoom.

She soon was snapped up by the Nevada, Missouri, school district, as their newest second grade teacher, and said this fall she’ll rely on what she learned last spring.

“I feel like the biggest thing, no matter what, is that as a teacher, you need to remain flexible. Each day can look different, and you might not expect it. You have to make the best out of every situation possible.”

Summer Getting ready

THERE WASN’T THE USUAL downtime between semesters as staff immediately transitioned into preparations for fall – and those preparations changed several times as scientists found new information or recommended best practices.

Career Services, which helps students pursue internships and employment, redesigned every event, including Meet the Firms Day, Fall Career Expo, Nursing Mock Interview Day, Teacher Interview Day, and Spring Career Day.

Alumni & Constituent Relations created a virtual Gorilla Variety Hour and virtual Gorilla Gatherings to keep alumni and other supporters engaged.

Axe Library implemented a material pick-up system and library consulting via Zoom.

Programs like Student Recreation and Campus Activities also began reimagining service delivery.



Taylor Panczer, the university’s COVID-19 Case Manager.

Staff met weekly in committees to find ways to spread out desks, reduce capacity, and move classes.

And faculty once again got busy preparing to teach in alternative ways – but this time, armed with more knowledge, expertise, and classroom technology than they had in the spring.

The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology, under the leadership of Susan Dellasega, with electronic technicians Rick Estenson and Mike Smith, who have expertise in audio-visual instructional delivery, played a key role.

Some courses were offered fully online, while others were a hybrid approach – partly online, and partly in person. Some required creativity: The Chemistry Department, for

example, built lab kits for students to use remotely.

Admission, which was set for hundreds of in-person visits and large-scale events like Rumble in the Jungle, participated in virtual college fairs and set up online chats with recruiters.

The Bicknell Family Center for the Arts suspended live events and worked with the Department of Music to create the Pittsburg Virtual Festival of the Arts featuring local performers in weekly, pre-recorded concerts.

And the Bryant Student Health Center hired Taylor Panczer, previously the program coordinator for Campus Activities, as the university’s COVID-19 Case Manager, a position funded by SPARK dollars.



Fall Moving in

MOVE-IN DAY LOOKED DIFFERENT.

Different location. Strict safety protocols. An entire weekend instead of one day to space arrivals.

A team from the health center, assisted by nursing students, collected saliva samples from each student to screen against COVID-19.

University Housing staff, led by Connie Malle, handed out packets and room keys, but also handed out Gorilla-themed masks – now a requirement on campus.

But beneath the masks and beyond all of the protocols, there still was an undercurrent of excitement, just as there has been on every Move-In Day in Pittsburg State's history: it was a new school year. Students came here ready to start the next chapter of their lives.

"It will be a lot different this year, but I'm still excited," said Alexis Denton, a freshman from Oklahoma who wants to earn a degree in the Family & Consumer Sciences Department.

She was nervous, as most freshmen are, about making friends and figuring out where things are located.

"It will be a memorable year, no matter what," she said. "I'm just ready to get started."



College of Technology

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF DEAN ROBERT FRISBEE, faculty, staff, and administrators in one of the most hands-on colleges worked all summer to share best practices and brainstorm solutions for classroom safety this fall.

Knowing that many of their programs are among just a few of their kind in the nation, and that graduates are sought after by top regional, national, and international companies, they wanted to provide as much face-to-face time as possible.

They went into each classroom, moved tables and chairs, and measured to ensure six feet distancing between students and teachers. In labs, plexiglass partitions were installed to allow, for example, students to work on engines in automotive technology class.

Some lectures moved online, meaning hours spent on campus could be dedicated to hands-on work for which students needed tools and labs.

"I want to acknowledge the chairs for their leadership, especially when things have changed so quickly and so many times," Frisbee said. "They've jumped right in. They wanted to be ready. They've been aggressive to make it happen."



15 years in the making

JEANNICE PARKER SHOULD have been one of the hundreds of graduates who donned their regalia in May and walked across the stage in John Lance Arena. When the pandemic meant postponing commencement, she did the next best thing: she put on a borrowed cap, gown, cords, and tassel, and posed on the Oval for graduation photos.

The photos were, after all, 15 years in the making.

In spite of everything, Parker, 66, was happy and proud.

“I personally have been through some excruciatingly tough times in 22 years, but I don’t focus on the negative – I focus on the positive,” she said. “Going to college has been one of the best choices I ever made.”

In 2005, she began a job as an administrative associate in the Office of Career Services at Pittsburg State and her boss at the time encouraged her to take a class.

“I said no thanks, I don’t think so,” Parker recalled. “But she insisted. She wanted me to experience what students experience.”

Parker was 51. She was responsible for helping students become prepared for the professional world by offering them guidance with résumés and cover letters. That, she could do; she’d been a professional for years.

But Parker, who left home in her teens in order to survive, had never attended college.

“My boss insisted, and so I finally said OK,” she said. “I enrolled in psychology.”

That psychology class turned into the pursuit of a bachelor’s degree in general studies, and when she finally

earned it, she became the first college graduate in her family.

But equally important, she said, was that the experience gave her the insight that her boss had hoped it might.

“One of the most important things I gained is a connection to the changing generations of students, because I’ve been in the classroom with them,” she said. “I absolutely loved the time with students.”

Through it all, she said, it’s given

her a better grasp of what a non-traditional student really is.

“It’s not just a 66-year-old woman,” she said. “Statistics show that actually, 49 to 53 percent of the population is academically considered non-traditional. You might have an 18-year-old who has a child. That’s non-traditional. There are a wide range of things that make someone academically non-traditional, and that’s important for people to realize.” •

“One of the most important things I gained is a connection to the changing generations of students, because I’ve been in the classroom with them.” – Jeannice Parker



From homelessness to ROTC honors

“I wanted to be in an organization where things that I do can change the lives of more than just those around me.”

– Cadet Derrick Sumner

WITH ONLY A FEW DOLLARS to his name, Cadet Derrick Sumner, of Pittsburg, battled homelessness coming into his freshman year of college. In May, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant alongside eight fellow cadets and completed his bachelor’s degree in psychology. In June, he was recognized in a national ceremony.

“He’s a prime example of someone who succeeded against all odds,” said 1st Lt. Taylor Wiebe, assistant professor of military science. “Not too many people can say they have a 600 on their Army Physical Fitness Test or ruck a 12-mile under two hours. People tend to see Sumner as someone with a lot of natural ability. But when you look closer, you can see the only thing separating him from his peers is his drive for success.”

Sumner said he was drawn to ROTC because he understood that cadets gained strong leadership abilities, and because he felt his values matched that of what was needed for an Army officer.

“I wanted to be in an organization where things that I do can change the lives of more than just those around me,” he said.

In the beginning, he said, he didn’t know if he was supposed to salute a sergeant, let alone take charge. By his

senior year, Sumner was leading the program as the cadet commander of the Gorilla Battalion.

He took every opportunity to develop mental agility, leadership skills, and physical fitness, including finishing the Ranger Challenge – a 25-mile ruck, obstacle course, and technical activities – all four years. He competed for the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge, ran and rucked in the Bataan Memorial Death March three times, and consistently earned perfect scores on the APFT.

During his summers, he attended Cadet Basic Camp, Airborne School, and completed advanced camp with the highest score possible. He volunteered in the community in his free time, and pushed himself more academically than he had previously,



finishing with a 3.7 – a full letter grade higher than high school.

His work paid off: he was chosen as the cadet battalion commander, a Distinguished Military Graduate, the winner of the national George C. Marshall Award, and was nominated for Homecoming King; riding in the parade down Broadway in an armored personnel carrier ranks among his top memories.

He was commissioned in the National ROTC Commissioning Ceremony, held virtually, as an active duty quartermaster officer. •



As a Homecoming King nominee, Cadet Derrick Sumner rides in the PSU Homecoming Parade.

Where our story began

IT'S LIKE SOMETHING YOU'D read in a romance novel.

Two university students meet for coffee. Talk for hours. It's raining outside. Like, really raining. The place closes. They run to the car. Get soaked. Laugh about it. First kiss.

A year or so later, accounting majors Annie Davis and Ross Westervelt get married at Timmons Chapel on the campus of Pittsburg State University.

"You know... pandemic wedding," Annie said.

If this were a movie, this is where there would be a pause and that record scratch sound, because getting married at Pittsburg State was the culmination of a romance that saw every major milestone happen on campus.

"It all started in Intermediate Macroeconomic Class," Annie said. "I kept noticing this very professional-looking young man who came into class in polo shirts and slacks. I think it's OK to say that college students don't typically dress like that."

They talked a few times that

semester. No real sparks yet. At least for her.

"I had the crush," Ross said.

The following semester, they have another class together. This time, they're on the same project team. They'd leave class together, walk to their cars together.

Eventually, the kiss. Six months later, it's Dec. 13, 2019. A Friday. Annie is set to graduate. But the night before, she needs to move out of her room at Willard Hall.

"Ross is helping me move, but you can get pretty steamy walking up and down the stairs at Willard," Annie

"He gets down on one knee and says, 'As you start this new part of your life, would you let me start it with you?'"

– Annie Davis Westervelt

said. "So, we take a walk around campus to cool off. We took our normal route, which always goes through The Oval. We're there, and I'm actually standing on the split face.

"He gets down on one knee and says, 'As you start this new part of your life, would you let me start it with you?'"

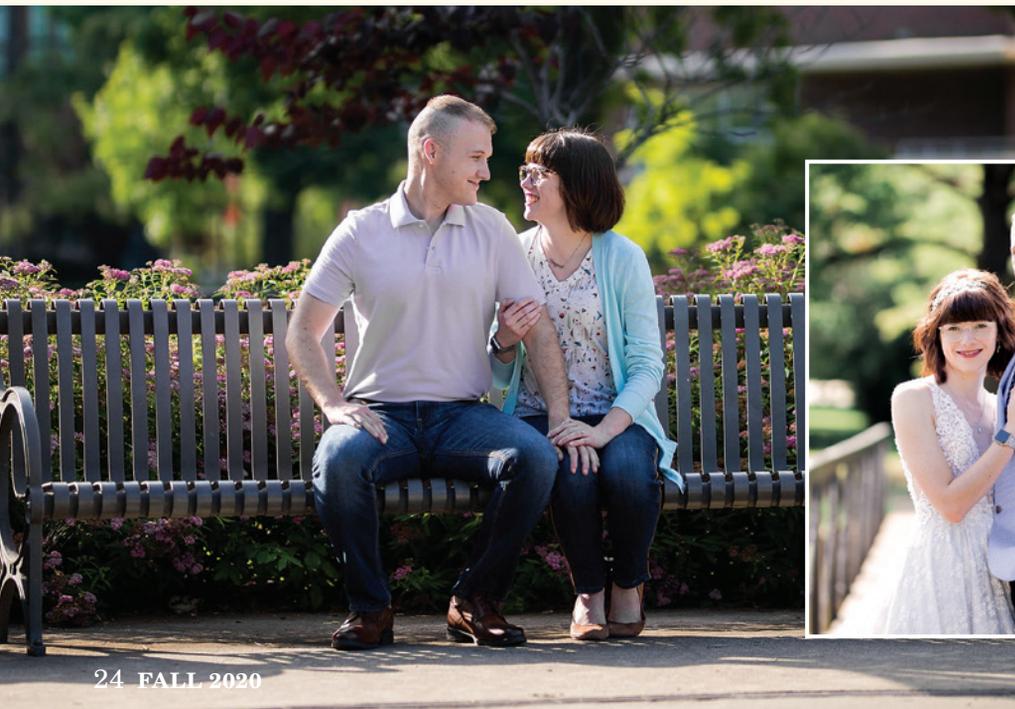
Ross said that moment was always going to happen somewhere on campus.

"It's where our story began," he said.

This is a story about college. Not the education part – the other part. The experience. The life-changing stuff.

"Look, let's be honest, there is no way we meet if not for Pitt State," Annie said. "I mean, there is really no other thing or event or place or anything that would have put the two of us in the same room."

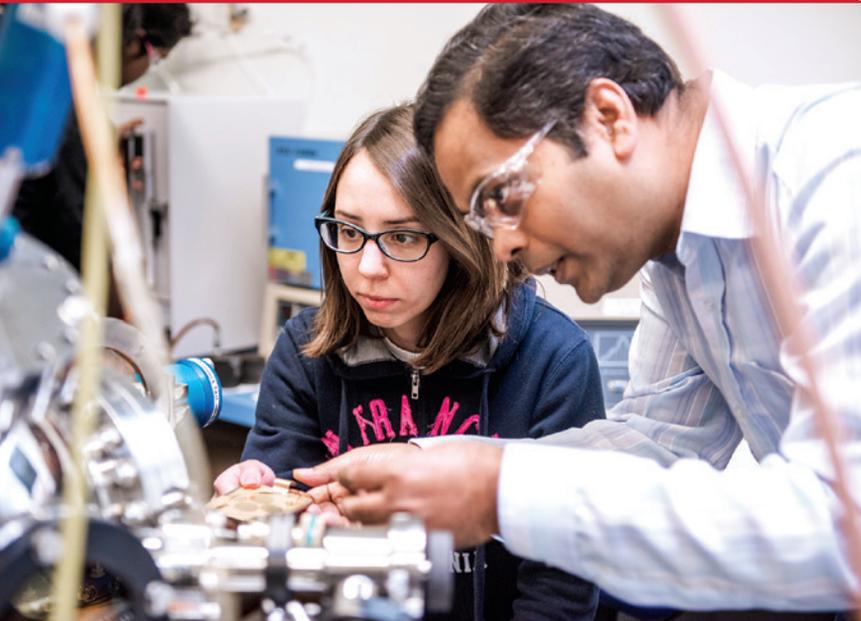
The two are now settled into their first home in Baxter Springs, Kansas. Annie's story at PSU continues, as she now serves as the GUS HR Reports and Analytics Specialist in the university's Human Resources Department. Ross works as an applications analyst for Liberty Utilities in Joplin. •



Annie Davis and Ross Westervelt became Mr. and Mrs. on Aug. 1, in Timmons Chapel.



There is only one Gorilla Nation, but there are many ways to participate every year!



The Power of Annual Giving

Annual gifts make a significant impact on Pittsburg State University and the student experience.

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- Support student-driven projects through online crowdfunding
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Phonathon

- Receive a phone call from a current student
- By answering the phone you provide professional development for our student callers as well as the ability to update your information

Students provide news from the University, update your contact information and allow you an opportunity to give back.



For more information on how to support Pittsburg State, contact: University Development at 620-235-4768 or by email at dev@pittstate.edu

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Thank you!

'Rock stars'

Pittsburg State Associate Professor Kristen Humphrey considers her Advanced Social Work Practice III students to be rock stars: they successfully carried out their planned community service projects in the midst of a pandemic last spring.

"When my students make plans for projects to benefit the community, I always warn them that they may hit bumps in the road and go to plan B, or even plan C or D," Humphrey said. "That was certainly true this time."

Amanda Graham, of Pittsburg, collected 1,068 arts and crafts items for children at the Crawford County Mental Health Center to use during therapy sessions.

Jeffrey Franklin, of Pittsburg, delivered 239 breakfasts to raise \$1,148 for the Children's Advocacy Center in Pittsburg, which serves a seven-county area.

Mackenzie Spaulding, of Overland Park, Kansas, raised \$690 for the new food pantry in Arma, Kansas.

Eva Cumpton, of Adrian, Missouri, collected 1,632 non-perishable items for the School Backpack Program there.

Deedria Woods of Joplin, Missouri, sold feminist-themed apparel to raise more than \$600 for Lafayette House, which serves women and children who have experienced domestic abuse.

Brenna Forbes, of Parsons, Kansas, collected 502 items for Pittsburg's Westside Elementary, which has a high rate of poverty.

Kyla Douglas, of Shawnee, Kansas, collected 540 toy cars for pediatric patients at Children's Mercy.

Jordan Donald, of Shawnee, Kansas, raised \$360 to stock the shelves of the Gorilla Pantry at PSU, open to all students regardless of income.

Amber Stout, of Lamar, Missouri, raised \$300 for Celebrating Birthdays, which provides packages and cakes to children who otherwise wouldn't be able to celebrate.



Amber Stout



Brenna Forbes

New opportunities

High school students have had a unique opportunity in research labs recently at PSU: to play a role in the advancement of medicine, and to help scientists figure out how to use plastics in renewable, environmentally friendly ways.

Santimukul Santra, an associate professor in the Polymer Chemistry department, worked with PHS seniors Caleb Worsley and Joseph Lee, alongside graduate students Truptiben Patel and Raghunath Narayanam, over the summer to research the nanomedicines used in cancer treatment and nanosensors used to detect food-borne pathogens.

The program is one of only three undergraduate programs in polymer chemistry in the U.S.

In the College of Technology, Jeanne Norton, an associate professor in Plastics Engineering Technology, guided Pittsburg High School senior Emily McGown, alongside PSU senior Caleb Jones, in the extrusion of environmentally friendly 3D printer filament over the summer. They used equipment set up by seniors in the program a few years ago.

The Polymer Chemistry and PET programs are key components of the university's Polymer Chemistry Initiative.

Santra and Norton said the work by both groups will lay a foundation for future internships, scholarships, and eventual careers.

"It's a great opportunity, because I'm gaining a new perspective I wouldn't get otherwise," McGown said.

Alumna steps in as new theater program director

Megan Westhoff, who grew up in the world of community theater and earned two degrees from Pittsburg State (BS '02, MA '04), has been chosen as the new director of theater at the university, including the academic program and the company known as Pitt State Theatre.

Pitt State Theatre produces several plays each season, while the academic program provides a theater emphasis for students majoring in communication, preparing them for work in the arts and entertainment industry across a broad spectrum of areas.

Westhoff, who recently completed her doctorate at Regent University, has taught in the Department of Communication for 15 years and replaces Cynthia Allan, who retired at the end of June after 21 years.

Allan and Westhoff are working together to make the transition as smooth as possible during a time that is uncertain for the performing arts due to COVID-19. The season planned for 2020-21 most likely will be adjusted to accommodate the shifting landscape of theater, they noted.

"I know my colleagues and I will be able to devise the best possible options to keep Pitt State Theatre lively, relevant, and safe for our patrons," Westhoff said. "I look forward to working with my fellow theater artists in negotiating these trying times and bringing the best possible experiences to our students."



Megan Westhoff

Best friends finish 18 years of school together

Four best friends who attended school together starting in preschool graduated from Pittsburg State this spring with the same degree: The 2016 graduates of Frontenac High School became 2020 graduates of the Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing.

Faculty and classmates referred to Ryan Menghini, Emily Merando, Brilee Rhuems, and Karlie Zafuta as "The Frontenac Crew."

"We didn't get together and plan it – it just happened," said Rhuems, who decided in fifth grade to become a nurse.

Merando said she has known for years, as well, and Menghini started leaning toward health care after taking anatomy and physiology classes in high school. Zafuta looked up to her aunt, a nurse, as a role model.

They have been together every step of the way,



Nursing graduates Emily Merando, Brilee Rhuems, Karlie Zafuta, and Ryan Menghini.

but after graduation, they had to separate: Menghini went to work in medical-surgical at Ascension Via Christi in Pittsburg, where Merando started a job in labor and delivery. Zafuta began work at Freeman Health System in Joplin, and Rhuems went to work at Joplin's Mercy Hospital.

They made a pact to try to see each other as often as their schedules allow.



Delia Lister, director of Nature Reach, gives a tour to CIS students who are developing an app to track care and feeding of the program's animals.

CIS class takes on real-world app project

Aspiring app developers in a new Computer Information Systems class have embarked on a real-world project that will help the PSU Nature Reach program. If all goes well, it could be a model for other animal care programs.

The class was created by instructor John Kuefler, who teaches in the Kelce College of Business and owns the web and mobile app development company DevSquared.

"I wanted them to have a real-world experience in creating something practical for a client instead of doing a mock assignment like a to-do list app," he said.

Their task: to create an app that will track the care given to the raptors being cared for at the PSU Nature Reserve under the direction of Delia Lister. There, a team of student employees feed the Harris's hawk, owls, vulture, and kestrel a daily diet of mice, rats, and other small animals, and give them individualized medicines, but until now have relied on recording data on paper in a three-ring binder.

Lister wanted a tracking process that would live in the cloud, would allow her to check data remotely from anywhere, and would enable her to manage the data in order to generate reports.

The students began their project by touring the Nature Reserve and learning more about the raptors and their needs. They then divided into teams to begin conceptualizing and designing. In coming weeks, one app will be chosen for further development and ideally, Lister hopes, could wind up being used by her students on a cell phone, a tablet, or a laptop.

"These types of cross-departmental partnerships for a class don't happen all that often, and it's nice we get to get the students out of the classroom and doing something hands on and practical as part of their coursework this semester, particularly with the pandemic," Kuefler said.

Whatever it takes

The campus closure and employees transitioning to working from home came at a challenging time last spring: it was just as early enrollment was starting and students were to meet with their advisors.

In order to accommodate those needs, David Hogard, director of Academic Advising and Career Readiness in the Kelce College of Business, remained on campus where the academic files and records are and began a daunting task: to provide academic advisement remotely to several hundred students.

"It's not just giving them their advisement codes – it's helping them to lay out their coursework, their academic plan, career goals, discuss issues with certain classes, making sure they're meeting pre-reqs so they're in good shape to finish out their degrees," he said. "It was kind of weird to be here by myself, but also kind of cool, and really important."

Starting in April, he used Zoom to begin conducting advisement appointments at a rate of five or six per day. By May, when student employees were allowed back on campus, he was assisted by Kinley Walden, a junior Management & Marketing major, and Myles Clark, a senior Finance & Business Economics major.

By June, he was meeting virtually with incoming freshmen for Pitt CARES – something he was skeptical about at first, but wound up enjoying because he could personalize each visit with students and their parents.

"The bottom line is we want our students to succeed, to graduate, to reach their goals," Hogard said, "and we'll do whatever it takes to help that to happen."

Alumni, friends support Kelce scholarships

Each year, the Kelce College of Business awards more than a quarter of a million dollars in scholarships to assist outstanding students achieve their educational goals.

The scholarships would not be possible, noted Dean Paul Grimes, without donations made by many alumni and friends, as well as the businesses and organizations which employ Pittsburg State graduates and support the college.

“The generosity of these donors truly changes the lives of our students and their families,” Grimes said.

“These scholarships help develop the next generation of our region’s business leadership which in turn strengthens our community and state.”

This year’s ceremony was canceled – the first time in 62 years – but that didn’t diminish the students’ achievements, Grimes said; 158 scholarships totaling \$300,301 were awarded to 102 recipients who met top-tier criteria.

Scholarships ranged from those created by individuals, such as the Tom and Koeta Bryant Putting

Students First Scholarship in honor of the university’s eighth president and first lady, to those given by statewide organizations, such as the Kansas Society of CPAs and the Joplin Tri-State IMA Chapter. Many are given in memory of a family member.

Scholarships and honors were given to outstanding students in Accounting, Business Economics, Computer Information Systems, Finance, International Business, Management, Marketing, and MBA programs.

New PBL chapter already succeeding

Last year, a new organization was formed through the Kelce College of Business as an additional way to help students prepare for careers in business-related fields: Phi Beta Lambda, the collegiate version of Future Business Leaders of America.

Student members wasted no time: In March, nine of them competed at the Kansas PBL State Leadership Conference and their wins qualified them for the virtual National Leadership Conference in June.

They included Amanda Becker, a sophomore Accounting major; Anna Pence, a junior Communication major; Cierra Rose, a senior Accounting major; Daisy Burns, a junior Communication major; Jeremy Walls, a senior Integrated Studies/ Analytics major; Logan Weakley, a senior Finance major; Sarah Clausen, a junior Marketing & Management



Students in a new organization, Phi Beta Lambda, did well in a national competition.

major; Tanner Glenn, a senior Communication major; and Wyntr Jacobs, a junior Management & Marketing major.

They did well: Burns and Glenn captured sixth place in Emerging Business Issues, Clausen won third place in Desktop Publishing, and Clausen and Jacobs earned fifth place

in Small Business Management Plan.

“We’re really proud of their efforts the first year out of the gate,” said Scott Donaldson, director of the Office of Admission, who with David Hogard, director of Academic Advising, Career Readiness, and Enactus, serves as their advisor. “It will be exciting to see where they take it from here.”

All about the students

From the time Laura Covert-Miller started teaching in the Health, Human Performance, and Recreation Department, she's been driven by the desire to think outside the box and provide experiential learning for her students.

It's why she created TR-iffic Field Days for her students to carry out with special needs populations, why she takes students to retirement communities, and why she partners with the local Parks & Recreation Department.

"Great teachers understand the power of education in the life of a student and will do everything they can to harness that power," said James Truelove, dean of the College of Education. "Laura exemplifies this on a daily basis."

That's why she was chosen for the College of Education's annual Excellence in Teaching Award, given to faculty in each of the university's four colleges and funded by the PSU Foundation.

One of her top-tier teaching philosophies: learn by doing.

"Learn by doing – that's PSU's motto, and definitely my motto," she said.

"I wanted our students, once they graduated from our program, to have enough experience to put them at the top of the field. I wanted their potential employers to see they already have experience with various populations in the recreation process to put them above other applicants."

"It's all about the students – that's why I do what I do. I care about them dearly and want to see them succeed."



Laura Covert-Miller

Outstanding educators

The College of Education chose Marissa Morris, a third grade teacher in Center School District, Kansas City Missouri, as the 2020 Outstanding Elementary Educator, and Josey Martin, a middle and high school social studies teacher in Liberal, Missouri, School District, as the 2020 Outstanding Secondary Educator.

Morris (BSEd '14, MEd '18) began her career as a third-grade teacher in Oswego, Kansas, then moved to Kansas City four years later. Last spring, she made another transition: teaching her 23 students remotely from her home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

She said she relied on two important lessons that came from faculty at PSU during her own time as a student: be flexible and open minded and learn empathy as it applies to teaching.

"It was an honor to get the phone call," Morris said. "I remember being a student teacher, sitting there watching the award being given to an outstanding educator, thinking 'I hope I get it someday!'"

Martin (BSEd '14) is teaching, coaching, and advising in the district in which he grew up. Like Morris, he had to get creative to transition to teaching from home last spring while maintaining a connection with his students.

"It's humbling to receive it," Martin said. "I love being a Gorilla, so this is icing on the cake. I had a wonderful experience at Pitt, made friendships that have lasted. The education program is phenomenal; the way they put us in the classroom early on and the interpersonal relationships you can build with professors. All of that was instrumental in making me the teacher I am today."

Teachers of Promise

The College of Education chose Riley Gordon, an elementary education K-6 major from Nevada, Missouri, and Morgan Panovich, a mathematics major from Shawnee, Kansas, as the Spring 2020 Teachers of Promise. Both graduated in May and received the Delta Kappa Gamma Lyla Vaughn Award.



Riley Gordon and Morgan Panovich

Psychology & Counseling offers new graduate program

A new graduate program in the Department of Psychology and Counseling is aimed at filling a demand for those qualified to work in behavior analysis.

“Every agency we partner with says they want more students for interns, they want more behavior analysts,” said Assistant Professor Ryan Speelman, who directs the program.

The degree can be earned in 17 months and will enable graduates to consult with schools to improve classroom management and increase the success of students diagnosed with ADHD and other disorders; design interventions for those with autism and traumatic brain injury; train staff in mental health centers in methods of reducing problematic behaviors; work in businesses and organizations to improve employee performance and happiness; and provide behavior therapy for adults suffering from addiction, depression, anxiety, or emotional disorders.

It’s a relatively new credential; in 2015, there were just 20,000 behavior analysts, as compared to 100,000 speech and language pathologists and 150,000 licensed psychologists.

“Within a 100-mile radius of Pittsburg, there are only a handful,” Speelman said. “Our students have a 100 percent pass rate on national exam certifications – the national average is 61 percent – and they’re in high demand when they graduate.”

Brittany Worthington (BA ’18, BS ’19), who will graduate in December, said it’s a career she didn’t know existed a few years ago.

“As soon as I learned about it, I knew it was exactly what I wanted to do,” she said. “I love that the program is so hands on.”

She plans to work in a clinical

or school-based setting that serves children with an autism spectrum disorder.

“It allows me to apply what I learn in the classroom to the real world immediately through my practicum at the Bill and Virginia Leffen Center for Autism in Joplin, Missouri.”

Erykah McClendon, who also will graduate in December and is

completing her practicum there, hopes to specialize in training parents with children with an autism spectrum disorder.

“Hearing Dr. Speelman speak about his experiences in the field and the multiple applications intrigued me and finally made me feel ‘this is it,’ this was what I had been looking for in a career,” she said.

Grad receives Presidential Award

Luke Henke (BSEd ’08 BSEd, MS ’10), was chosen by a panel of distinguished mathematicians, scientists, and educators for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. He began his career in the Pittsburg Community Schools District. For the past seven years he’s taught algebra, calculus, college algebra and trigonometry in the Columbus, Kansas, School District.

He has integrated the use of 3D printing, drones, electronics, and robots, and spearheaded the first concurrent coursework in his district. He has facilitated math training for the Kansas Department of Education, and his work as a fellow for the Association of American Educators has resulted in multiple publications as an advocate for education.

Henke said the award is an unexpected honor, and gave credit to his mentors, colleagues, administrators, families, and students, who help him hone his craft every day.

“Without them to serve, none of this is possible,” he said. “The Presidential Award is a milestone for my career that will refill my tank many times over as I continue to empower the next generation.”

In addition to being recognized nationally, he received a \$10,000 award and a certificate signed by President Donald Trump.



Luke Henke



A new scholarship is helping five students earn their degree and participate in internships.

Black & Veatch Foundation starts scholarship

A new scholarship program funded by the Black & Veatch Foundation, based in Kansas City, will provide \$7,200 per academic year for up to five incoming freshmen in the Electronics Engineering Technology program.

Scholarship recipients will also be given mentorship, learning, and networking opportunities with professionals at Black & Veatch.

Applicants must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 and be residents of Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, or Arkansas. This fall, scholarship recipients are Talon Besendorfer of Golden City, Missouri; Isaac Maxwell of Pittsburg, Kansas; Dillon Campbell of Vinita, Oklahoma; Trysten Williamson of Osawatomie, Kansas; and Patrick McLaughlin of Galena, Kansas.

"The day I got a call from Professor Shaver about getting this scholarship was probably one of the happiest times of my life," Besendorfer said. "It was relieving in a way. It's also heart-warming because Black & Veatch is willing to give this opportunity to five of us that they know nothing about."

Representatives with the company said the foundation is underwriting the targeted scholarships because of the university's interest and track record in delivering qualified, aspiring EET graduates who can support the company's power business needs.

Greg Murray, chair of the Department of Engineering Technology in the College of Technology, said the college has had a long and successful history with Black & Veatch, to the direct benefit of students.

"Black & Veatch has hired numerous engineering technology and construction students for full-time employment and internships, and employees there serve on multiple advisory boards for the college," he said.

Johnson recognized for excellence in teaching

Mark Johnson has felt a long connection to Pittsburg State: His grandmother earned her teaching degree here in 1917, and he earned his undergraduate, graduate, and specialist in education degrees here ('83, '87, '89).



Mark Johnson

He has a proven track record during his 35 years working on campus: He's been the recipient of the Outstanding Faculty Award, was named National Technical Educator of the Year, and last year was named Outstanding Advisor.

Now, he can add to that list the College of Technology's Excellence in Teaching Award, given annually in each of the university's four colleges and funded by the PSU Foundation.

"I think my number one philosophy is connectivity with the students," he said. "I fervently believe if a student is going to be willing to open up to what I have to say, there has to be a connection. The second thing is to make every classroom experience as engaging and as real life as possible."

Johnson started at Pittsburg State in 1986 as the state executive director of Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, and has taught at the Kansas Technology Center since it opened in 1997.

"It's rewarding to have alumni keep in touch with me from across the U.S. and around the globe, especially when they let me know that something I taught them had real value in the workplace," he said.

Project connects alumni, students, potential employer

When Associate Professor Andrea Kent-McConnaughey and her students began a hands-on project in direct mail campaigns, she turned to Japs-Olson, a Minnesota-based company that is an industry leader to the tune of more than 1 billion pieces last year, as a partner.

She and her students wanted to design and print something to send the 3,000 alumni and industry partners of the PSU's Graphics and Imaging Technologies program.

Two alumni were part of the project; Skylar Ossian and Ian Duncan landed jobs at Japs-Olson last year. The company wants more Gorillas and offered to donate the cost of printing in exchange for 12 students coming to the plant for a live press check. But then, shelter-in-place orders and the COVID-19 pandemic hit, forcing them to become a virtual team. Students worked across multiple states, collaborating with shared files.

They succeeded: after researching which forms of direct mail get the best response rates from recipients, they completed their mail piece with eight inside pages and a variable page wrapped cover, which meant a different design for each of the demographic groups that would receive it.

Instead of a trip, they made do with a virtual press check, and the piece hit mailboxes in July.

Chelsea Cox, a senior from Pleasanton, Kansas, who graduated in May, was responsible for designing the front cover and helped to design two inside spreads.

"I enjoyed many things about this project," said Cox, who hopes to become a Kansas City-based graphic designer and eventually teach. "Knowing this mailing piece will be delivered to thousands of people made me so excited."



PSU GIT grads Skylar Ossian (BST '18) and Ian Duncan (BST '19) now work for Japs-Olson, a leader in printing direct mail.

Construction students land scholarships

Students in the School of Construction were among those chosen for prestigious national scholarships during the Associated General Contractors of America convention last spring in Las Vegas.

Of the nine award winners in Kansas, six were from PSU: William Corlett, of Webb City, Missouri; Michael Hoffmann, of El Dorado, Kansas; Tyson Stites, of McPherson, Kansas; Tucker Tribble, of Spring Hill, Kansas; Alex Wilson, of Paola, Kansas; and Derrick Yager, of Lawson, Missouri.

Two students also served as panelists: Tyler Korte, of Humboldt, Kansas, in "Building the Future: Gen Z's Perspective on Recruiting Talent," and Kristen Van Hoosen, of Omaha, Nebraska, in the Institute of Technology panel discussion on the use of technology in the future.

Students also toured Hoover Dam and got a lesson in its construction.

Grant supports Auto Tech training

A \$95,000 grant enabled the Department of Automotive Technology to purchase a hydraulic training board to train personnel in the agriculture industry.

Before, the closest such training was in Canada and Germany, noted Professor Tim Dell, coordinator of the department's diesel and heavy equipment emphasis.

His department, working in partnership with the Kansas Center for Careers & Technical Education at PSU, will offer a total of 12 workshops for agriculture industry personnel over a span of three years.

The grant is supported by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, and the Agricultural Workforce Training Grants Program.



Jim Johnson

Johnson named one of top athletic directors

Pittsburg State Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Jim Johnson was selected as one of 28 recipients of the 2019-20 Under Armour Athletic Directors of the Year. The award, which Johnson also received in 2013-14, is administered by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics.

The 28 winners span seven divisions; Johnson was one of four NCAA Division II administrators to be honored. Since coming to Pittsburg State in 2010, he has provided leadership and support for the Gorillas' 12 varsity intercollegiate sports programs and the department's more than 50 full-time and part-time administrative and coaching staff members. Those programs have achieved national success in football, outdoor track & field, and women's basketball.

He also has played a key role in the renovation of John Lance Arena/Whetzel Court, construction of the Robert W. Plaster Center, facility enhancements at the Gene Bicknell Sports Complex for baseball and softball, the implementation of the Silverback Fund, and represents the MIAA as a member of the NCAA Division II Management Council.

New coaching staff

Courtney Moran has joined Pittsburg State Athletics as the assistant coach for Gorilla Women's Basketball, and Miranda Rodriguez was named the assistant volleyball coach.

Moran, who is from Oklahoma, coached for four years at the University of Nebraska Omaha and was a recruiting coordinator and assistant coach at the University of Sioux Falls.

"From the minute my husband and I stepped foot on campus and in the Pittsburg community, we felt like we were at home," she said. "Words can't express the excitement I have to be part of the Gorilla family!"

Rodriguez, who is from Illinois, was a graduate assistant at Washburn University after coaching at Quincy Junior High School in Illinois and assistant coaching for the Topeka Impact.

"I'm thrilled to be in the MIAA again as I have learned so much about the competitiveness of this conference," she said. "I cannot wait to be part of Pittsburg State University and the Gorilla Volleyball program!"



Courtney Moran



Miranda Rodriguez

PSU Hall of Fame 2020

A roster of decorated athletes and coaches comprised PSU's Hall of Fame Class of 2020:

- Brian Allen (2006-10), a nine-time NCAA Division II All-American and record-breaking thrower in track & field
- Steve Bever (1991-2012), a baseball coach who won 565 career games and led the Gorillas to their first MIAA title and the program's first four appearances in the NCAA Division II National Tournament
- Pamela Cartagena (2006-09), a three-time All-American and the 2009 MIAA Player of the Year in volleyball
- Lisa Cropper (1993-96), a three-time All-MIAA performer who set PSU records for assists and steals in women's basketball
- Joe Taylor (2002-05), an All-American fullback who helped fuel one of the elite offenses in NCAA football history
- The 1992 football team, which helped the Gorillas to a school record 25 consecutive victories.

Legacy category:

- Max Wilson (1949-50), a football student-athlete who went on to teach for 35 years
- The 1929-30 and 1930-31 men's basketball teams, as the Gorillas won a school record 47 consecutive games over a three-year period



Piper Misse



Levi Wyrick

MIAA honors

Two Pittsburg State student-athletes were named MIAA Student Athletes of the Year for 2019-20: senior cross country athlete Piper Misse for the fall season, and senior track & field athlete Levi Wyrick for the winter season.

Wyrick, of Elk City, Kansas, finished as the MIAA runner-up in the weight throw at the 2020 MIAA Indoor Championships, helping his team secure a second-place finish. His All-MIAA honor made him a three-time All-MIAA performer for his career. He holds the second-best mark in school history in the weight throw.

Misse, of Overland Park, Kansas, captured her second career individual MIAA Championship by leading the women's cross country team to its third straight MIAA team title in 2019. She earned USTFCCA All-Central Region cross country honors for a third straight year in 2019, helping the Gorillas to three straight NCAA Division II Cross Country National Championships appearances (2017-19).

Senior football player Ryan Dodd also was named a finalist for the fall award, and junior track & field athlete Haven Lander was named a finalist for the winter award.

Finalists were chosen based on excellence in athletic achievement, career academic achievements, and community/campus service, and must have had a 3.25 GPA the previous semester.



PSU School of Construction graduate Joe Kerr ('88).

Stadium gets new turf

Carnie Smith Stadium has a new turf field, funded by Freeman Health System of Joplin, Missouri.

The project was led by PSU School of Construction graduate Joe Kerr ('88), who now works for Mammoth Sports Construction based in Meriden, Kansas.

The company's recent projects include fields for Pittsburg High School, Girard High School, and Kansas State University. The new field at Pittsburg State is an elite FieldTurf system also used by the Universities of Oregon and Alabama.

The previous turf was installed in Summer 2012 and was nearing the end of its life from a safety standpoint.

"One of the primary benefits of a

synthetic surface is to help prevent concussions and other injuries at higher rates than what can occur on grass fields," said Jim Johnson, director of Intercollegiate Athletics. "But that advantage degrades over time, so replacement is necessary to protect our student-athletes and others who use our field."

Freeman Health System President and Chief Executive Officer Paula Baker said it's important to invest in the infrastructure that fuels the future, and Pittsburg State produces graduates needed by Freeman and other industries.

"We appreciate PSU's recruiting power and are aware of the health and safety benefits of a new field, so we are proud to support it," she said.

MIAA Hall of Fame Class of 2020

Two historic Pittsburg State teams and a pair of All-America Gorilla student-athletes were chosen for the MIAA Hall of Fame Class of 2020.

The induction class includes:

- Venessa Lee (2004-09), a school record-holding cross country/track & field All-American who captured 11 MIAA individual titles and earned All-MIAA honors on 15 occasions
- Dina (Wathan) Blevins (2000-03), a school record-holding volleyball All-American whose career digs total ranks second all-time in NCAA Division II history
- The Gorillas' 2004 NCAA Division II National Runner-up Football Team, which posted a 14-1 record and set division records for rushing and total offense
- The 2016 NCAA Division II National Champion Women's Outdoor Track & Field Team, which won the first national championship in program history

“It’s a Pitt State thing”

Tony Perez and Larry Weis were chosen for this year’s Dr. Ralf J. Thomas Distinguished Service Award, an award created by the PSU Alumni Association in 1991 to honor the memory of a retired faculty member and longtime volunteer.

Weis (BST ’81) is a senior vice president for Martin K. Eby Construction Wichita, where he has worked for 40 years.

He decided in high school he wanted a career in construction and chose Pittsburg State for his education; his experience was so positive that he remained closely connected to the School of Construction as a volunteer, an advocate, a fundraiser, and a supporter.

“When I went down there in 1976-77 for the first time, there was this feeling, and I’ve never been able to describe it – no one can. To this day, when I go back to campus, I get that same feeling, and it’s worth having,” he said. “It’s not confined to just the School of Construction or the Kansas Technology Center – it’s a Pitt State thing.”

Perez, a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Air Force, has been a volunteer at KRPS Radio at PSU since 1990.

“Pittsburg State was one of the reasons I moved here,” he said. “Universities offer a lot of culture and amenities that towns without them don’t offer, and that was certainly true of Pittsburg. It’s the type of community I wanted to live in. I’ve never left.”



Tony Perez and Larry Weis, recipients of the 2020 Dr. Ralf J. Thomas Distinguished Service Award. The winners were recognized in March in a public reception and during the Apple Day ceremony.



Trevor Maiserouille

A Good Apple

Just a few weeks after being given the 2020 Good Apple Award during the Apple Day ceremony in March, Trevor Maiserouille (BSED ’16, MS ’18) further proved he was a worthy recipient.

Good Apple Awards are given to recent graduates for the impact they’ve had in their career field and community, and for their Gorilla pride.

As the pandemic took hold and schools closed, Maiserouille collaborated with Chris Ball (BSED ’17) to make technology curriculum and strategies available to teachers across the country as they transitioned online.

Maiserouille is the Technology and Engineering Education teacher for Parsons Middle School and High School in Parsons, Kansas, where he

advises FIRST Robotics, Technology Student Association, and SkillsUSA teams, and won the international STEM School of Excellence Award.

To date, more than 850 teachers worldwide have accessed two shared drives he and Ball created. Maiserouille also comes to campus often to assist with special events at the Kansas Technology Center and is helping to plan the 72nd Annual Four-State Regional Technology Conference set for November.

“He’s had a dramatic impact on students’ lives at the middle and high school level,” said Andrew Klenke, interim chair of the Technology and Engineering Education Department. “And this year, he certainly had an impact on teachers, as well.”

Local businesses help campus, community

Two family-owned Pittsburg businesses with ties to Pittsburg State saw an opportunity to help during the pandemic by designing and manufacturing masks.

Their latest effort: 7,000 custom masks given to PSU students, and 3,400 split-face masks sold to Gorilla fans coast to coast as a fundraiser for Alumni and Constituent Relations – an effort that raised nearly \$14,000 for the Alumni Legacy License Plate Scholarship.

“It all began back in March when everyone at Ascension Via Christi Hospital was trying to do what they needed to do to get ready. My aunt, who works there, asked if we could put our machinery to work making masks,” said Nick Dellasega (BBA '07). “We put our minds together and made it happen.”

His grandfather, Charles Dellasega, taught economics in the Kelce College of Business and founded the company. U.S. Awards is now one of the few (and the largest) producers of chenille letters and patches in the nation, and it employs many alumni and students.



Employees at U.S. Awards and Mpix – many of whom are current students and alumni – worked over the summer to create Gorilla masks to be given to all students when the fall semester began.

Miller’s Professional Imaging, the largest professional photo lab in the U.S., which also employs alumni and students, asked the company to collaborate on masks for their employees and for businesses belonging to the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce. The idea caught on, and other businesses and school districts followed suit.

When school began in August, Mpix,

a subsidiary of Miller’s, donated enough to distribute to each PSU student.

Miller’s President Todd Coleman said Pittsburg State “has a special place in our hearts,” while Dellasega said “it was a huge honor” to create the split-face masks.

“It’s been truly inspiring to see so many individuals come together with a common goal of keeping our community safe,” Coleman said.

Gorilla pride riding into Oklahoma

The Gorilla License Plate is officially available in the State of Oklahoma!

The Gorilla License Plate is officially available in the State of Oklahoma!

“With the help of our Oklahoma Gorillas, more than 130 applications were submitted in six months to surpass our goal of 100,” said Alumni & Constituent Relations Assistant Director Danielle Driskill. “We appreciate the support from our alumni and friends to turn this plate into a reality. We couldn’t have done it without you!”

Production of plates, which shine

boldly in crimson and feature a gold split face, began in September.

In addition to displaying Gorilla Pride, it also gives back to students through the Alumni Legacy License Plate Scholarship. In 2020-2021, \$82,000 was awarded to more than 200 students.

“Investing in our students is more important now than ever, and we look forward to providing more scholarship dollars with the help of the Oklahoma Gorilla License



Plate,” said Alumni & Constituent Relations Director Jon Bartlow.

For more information or to purchase one, visit pittstate.edu/licenseplate. Gorilla License Plates also are available in Kansas and Missouri.

Class of 1953

Ronald Roderique (BBA) was awarded the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award by Marquis Who's Who. Roderique served in the U.S. Naval Reserve from 1953-56 and went on to a diverse career in sales. He is a member of the Arizona Bankers Association, American Bankers Association, the Bank Marketing Association, and Rotary. He was awarded PSU's Meritorious Achievement Award in 1993, an award he considers to be one of the highlights of his career.

Class of 1972

Terry Chance (BSEd, MM '79) retired from Christian Heights School in Fort Scott, Kansas. He served as principal for 32 years and as a teacher for 14 years prior.

Dave White (BA) retired from public service to the citizens of Overland Park, Kansas. He served on the Planning Commission (1999-2005) and the City Council (2005-2020) and held the positions of council president; chair of the finance, administration and economic development committee; vice chair of the community development committee and vice chair of the public works committee.

Class of 1982

Jan Finn (BSN) was appointed to MTF Biologics Board of Directors. MTF Biologics is a global nonprofit organization that saves and heals lives by honoring donated gifts, serving patients, and advancing science. Finn is the chief executive officer and president of Midwest Transplant Network and has increased Midwest

Transplant Network's donation rates and recovery of organs and tissues to record levels.

Class of 1987

Monica Murnan (BSEd, MSED '94) was appointed to the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund, whose members advise the governor and the legislature on the use of money credited to the Children's Initiatives Fund in order to enhance the Kansas early childhood care and education system. Murnan has served in the Kansas Legislature since 2017.

Class of 1988

Darbi Stancell (BSEd) was awarded the 2020 High School Golden Apple by the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce. She is a math teacher at McAuley Catholic High School in

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Ride with Gorilla Pride

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For more information, visit pittstate.edu/licenseplate



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Joplin, Missouri. She retired from McDonald County School District after 31 years in public education.

Class of 1989

Steve Westfall (BBA, MBA '90) was named chief executive officer and president of Tuthill Corporation in Burr Ridge, Illinois. He has more than 20 years of senior leadership experience working in the manufacturing, mechanical, and industrial engineering industries. He started his career with Tuthill in 2013.

Class of 1990

Larry DeVolt (BSEd) was named principal of Fort Scott Christian Heights in Fort Scott, Kansas. He has served as a secondary science teacher at the school for the last 28 years. He is filling the shoes of fellow Gorilla and retired principal Terry Chance (BSEd '72, MM '79).

Scott Bailey (BSEd, MEd '90) was named a 2019 Superintendent to Watch by the National School Public Relations Association. He is in his fourth year as superintendent of Desert Sands Unified School District in Southern California, representing 28,000 students. Bailey has served in several educational leadership roles in Nevada and California and has co-written various publications.

Class of 1991

Rance McClain (BS, DO, FACOFP, FAOASM, was named the dean of the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Included in ARCOM's enrollment are several Gorillas. A 1996 graduate of Kansas City University College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. McClain is a board-certified family physician and is also board certified in neuromusculoskeletal medicine and osteopathic manipulative medicine and holds a certificate of additional qualifications in sports medicine.

Class of 1992

Steve Hall (BBA) was named fire chief for the Galena Volunteer Fire Department in Galena, Kansas. He joined the department in 1989 and served as assistant chief since 1996. He is filling the shoes of his late father and fellow Gorilla Bill Hall (BSEd '60, MS '66). He also is a member of the Galena School Board, Galena Educational Foundation, and Booster Club.

Class of 1995

Heather Fuller (BSEd) was named talent advisor manager of Core Business & Financial Services in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Fuller has worked with the firm since 2018.

Retired Major Kellie Triplett

(BS) was recently at the finish line of the Alamo City Marathon in San Antonio, Texas, where she received the flag carried in honor of her nearly 18 years of military service in the U.S. Army. She has served as a parachute rigger for the Airborne Division, served in the military police unit, and was deployed to Bosnia, Germany, and Afghanistan. She completed a veterinarian degree and following her retirement in the military, works with a non-profit organization, Happy Paws Mobile Vet Clinic, in Colorado.

Class of 1996

John L. Heidrick (MEd) recently retired after 25 years of service as a special education teacher/administrator in the East Central Kansas Special Education Cooperative in Paola, Kansas. Heidrick is also a retired U.S. Air Force major, military intelligence analyst, Operation Desert Storm veteran, and Bronze Star recipient.

Class of 1997

Joe Blubaugh (BST) joined the ranks of NFL officials in the 2020 season. He has been officiating football games in the Big 12

Conference since 2005. He was also on the officiating crew for the 2017 national championship game and is the fourth PSU graduate to join the NFL as an official.

Jimmy Hay (BBA) was named the 2020 recipient of the Kansas Association of School Business Officials Pinnacle of Excellence Award, one of the top two service awards presented annually by the association. The award honors his foresight in founding the Serving Our Students program in 2017. He currently serves as the director of finance and board clerk for Paola School District.

Armando Johnson (BA) was named Springfield Public Schools Teacher of the Year and Regional Teacher of the Year in Missouri. He is a Spanish teacher and equity champion at Central High School in Springfield, Missouri. He incorporates American Sign Language into teaching Spanish to reach kinesthetic learners, and he seeks to impart a vast array of cultural knowledge of Latin American identity and history to all students. He also works with students from the high school's feeder schools to offer free basketball training.

Class of 1998

Brandon Claypool (BSEd, MEd '00) was inducted into Nevada High School's Athletic Hall of Fame in Nevada, Missouri. He was a three-year letterman in football receiving an abundance of honors, including 1st Team All-SWC Defensive Line, Team Defensive Player of the Year, Team MVP, and more. During his time at PSU, Brandon was a three-year starter and member of the 1995 NCAA Division II National Runner-Up squad. He is now a physical education teacher and department chair at Shawnee Mission West High School in Overland Park, Kansas, and coaches football.

continued

Robert Goltra III, Ed.D. (BSEd, MSEd '02) was named vice president for student affairs at Rogers State University in Claremore, Oklahoma. Robert brings more than 20 years of higher education experience to this position. He most recently served as administrator for student success and engagement at Metropolitan Community College in Kansas City, Missouri.

Andrea Hoekstra (BS) was named principal at Carlisle High School in Carlisle, Iowa. She has spent the past five years as the learning coordinator for the high school.

Dinsdale Morgan (BST) was selected as one of six members of the U.S. Cross Country and Track & Field Coaches Association NCAA Division II Hall of Fame Class of 2020. During his time at PSU, he was a four-time All-American sprinter and hurdler, finishing as the NCAA Division II national runner-up in the indoor 400 meters as a senior and capping his career with the 1996 NCAA Division II national championship in the 400-meter hurdles. Dinsdale captured seven MIAA titles and earned All-MIAA honors on nine occasions during his two-year career as a Gorilla. After his senior year, he competed in the 1996 and 2000 Olympic Games.

Class of 1999

Jamie Cinotto (BBA) was named wealth manager at Paragon Capital Management in Overland Park, Kansas, where he helps clients with their investment needs, including financial planning, investment management, trusts, retirement plans and risk management.

Mark Drake (BSEd, MSEd '02) was named assistant superintendent of Monett School District in Monett, Missouri. He most recently served as middle school principal in the Webb City School District in Webb City, Missouri.

Bryan Shallenburger (BS, MS '02) was named director of special services in Carthage School District in Carthage, Missouri. He served as principal of Columbian Elementary the past five years and was assistant principal for four years prior. He received the Golden Key Award in 2019 and Emerging Leader of the Year Award in 2020 from the Carthage Chamber.

Class of 2000

Seth Kelso (BST) was named to Ingram's 50 Kansans You Should Know: The Class of 2020. Kelso is the project director at McCarthy Building Co., in Manhattan, Kansas, where he's had a hand in the construction of Level 4 bio-safety labs including the \$1.25 billion National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility slated to be completed and online next year.

Class of 2002

Derek Hoffine (BST) was promoted to director of operations at Hensel Phelps, a development, construction, and facility services organization. He will oversee the Plains District, based in Colorado, with regards to procurement, marketing, recruiting, estimating, safety and operations. During his 18-year career with the firm, he has delivered more than \$1.7 billion worth of projects and is an active member of the Associated Builders & Contractors and the National Workforce Development Committee.

Johnna Norton (BBA, MBA '03) was appointed by Gov. Laura Kelly to the Kansas Behavioral Sciences Regulatory Board. The mission of the board is to protect the public's health, safety and welfare from unlawful or unprofessional practitioners who fall under the board's jurisdiction. Norton currently serves as the executive director of the Mount Carmel Foundation in Pittsburg.

Class of 2003

Terri Piazza (MA) retired after 20 years at Allen County Community College in Iola, Kansas, where she served as a communication and theatre instructor, assistant theatre director, and directed almost a dozen of her own shows. From 2008-2016, she served as fine arts and communication division chair. She added classes to the communication curriculum and launched The Allen Flame, an online student newspaper, with the help of a fellow instructor.

Class of 2004

Colin Holthaus (BST) was named director of Kansas Correctional Industries by Kansas Department of Corrections Sec. Jeff Zmuda. He previously held positions at the National Association of Trailer Manufacturers, BNSF Railway, and Frito-Lay.

Dustin A. Bradley (BS) has formed Bradley & Loggin, PLLC, along with Eric S. Loggin. The firm is in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The firm's practice areas generally include medical negligence, personal injury, real estate, and business law.

Class of 2006

Greg Shaw (MSEd) was honored with the International Thespian Society of Thespis Award, which recognizes those who, when faced with a serious challenge, demonstrate grace under pressure. As he began his battle with brain cancer last year, he continued to direct plays and teach at Pittsburg High School as long as he was able. The award was presented to Shaw this summer at his home with students and colleagues in attendance. This fall, he also was inducted into the Kansas Thespian Hall of Fame.

Christina Williams (BS) was elected on June 2, 2020, to serve on the City Council of Joplin, Missouri, for a four-year term. Her community

involvement and work to champion numerous quality-of-life initiatives led to her receiving the most votes out of 11 candidates with five open seats on the ballot. Williams is a Project Designer for Corner Greer Architects.

Class of 2008

Anna Nimz (BSEd, MS '09) was named head women's basketball coach at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, Louisiana. During her time as a Gorilla, she played basketball and was a two-year letter winner and team captain. She began her coaching career at PSU as a graduate assistant and most recently served as associate head coach at University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Class of 2009

Kelsey Boulware (BSEd, MEd '15, EdS '19) was named principal at Westside Elementary in Pittsburg. She has 10 years of experience in education in the Pittsburg and Columbus, Kansas School Districts. She most recently served as a sixth grade English and language arts teacher at Pittsburg Community Middle School.

Brandon Fry (BSN) was given the first Frank H. Devocelle Legacy Award at Olathe Health in Olathe, Kansas. The award recognizes associates who consistently give their best every day, help progress their departments and the organization, are role models of Olathe Health values, and consistently provide exceptional experience for patients and visitors. He was instrumental in starting the Robotic Surgery program at Olathe Health and serves as the coordinator.

Jordan Woods (BSEd, MEd '12) was named head boys basketball coach at Pittsburg High School in Pittsburg, Kansas. He spent the last nine years as an assistant coach to the team, and previously taught and coached at Pittsburg Community Middle School.

Class of 2010

Matt Clay (BSEd) recently accepted an assistant professor's position in the School of Teacher Education at Fort Hays State University. He defended his dissertation in rural education this summer at the University of Northern Colorado.

Class of 2011

Kathleen Ismert Allen (BS, MA '12) joined GE Johnson's Kansas City team as business development manager. She will be involved in strategic planning and the growth of GE Johnson's footprint in the area and will lead GE Johnson's market development in advanced technology, healthcare, higher education, K12, and multifamily and hospitality markets.

Bryan Campbell (BBA) was inducted into the Nevada High School Wall of Fame in Nevada, Missouri. He is seventh in all-time scoring for Tiger Basketball with 1,303 career points. He earned many honors during his high school career, including first-team All-Southwest Conference. After high school, he played basketball at PSU.

Mike Simons (MST) announced his retirement as the Pittsburg Fire Chief effective September 2020 after 20 years with the department. His career in fire service spans 33 years, starting in 1988 when he worked as a volunteer firefighter. He joined the Pittsburg Fire Department in 2001, holding the position of fire marshal and safety coordinator before his promotion to fire chief in 2012.

continued



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Class of 2012

Michael Davis (BS, MA '14) was named dean of students at KIPP Tulsa University Prep High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The school prepares students from educationally underserved neighborhoods in Tulsa with the academic, character, and life skills necessary for success in college and the competitive world beyond.

Class of 2013

Paula Athey (MSEd) was named Elementary Teacher of the Year at Gardner Edgerton School District in Gardner, Kansas. She is the library media specialist at Moonlight Elementary. Her 26-year teaching career includes third grade, kindergarten, reading recovery, and reading specialist.

Nate Dreiling (BGS) was named defensive assistant for the University of Oregon Football team in Eugene, Oregon, a Division I program in the PAC-12 Conference. He played five seasons for the Gorillas and was a member of the 2011 National Championship Team. Named the 2011 MIAA Defensive Player of the Year, he signed with the Green Bay Packers as an undrafted free agent in 2014, played with the Omaha Mammoths of the Fall Experimental Football League, and worked as defensive coordinator at PSU before joining the Oregon Ducks.

Ernesto Estigarribia (BM) was selected as one of four conductors for Mankato Symphony Orchestra in Mankato, Minnesota. He will conduct Peter and the Wolf on Sunday, March 14, 2021, in Ted Paul Hall on the campus of Minnesota State University in Mankato. He is active with the Quad City Symphony Orchestra, Quad City Symphony Youth Ensembles, and Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies. An accomplished violist, he has performed extensively in Europe and the Americas.

Dr. Grant Hartman (BS) joined Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas. He will see patients in the clinic in Fort Scott, Kansas. After graduating from PSU, Dr. Hartman attended Logan College of Chiropractic in Chesterfield, Missouri, before opening Hartman Spine & Joint in 2015 in Fort Scott.

Class of 2014

Hunter Morrison (BST, MST '15) was appointed technical director at the Architectural Woodwork Institute in Potomac Falls, Virginia. Prior to joining the AWI team, Morrison worked for an architectural woodworking manufacturer, Boulder Mills, Inc., in Lafayette, Colorado. He will be responsible for overseeing development, leading the National Testing Center team in Americus, Georgia, providing industry technical support, and fulfilling senior staff member duties.

Class of 2016

Kori Dodson (BSEd) was named head volleyball coach for Nevada High School in Nevada, Missouri. She spent the last four seasons as an assistant coach to the team.

Class of 2017

Emilyn Dearman (BS, MS '19) placed second in the pentathlon at the two-day USA Track & Field Indoor Combined Events Championships in Annapolis, Maryland. Dearman set a lifetime best of 4,451 points.

Liza Erwin (BS) was selected for the NCAA Postgraduate Internship Program and will work in the championships operation. She was one of 30 individuals who earned a spot in the program after an application field of more than 1,000. She most recently oversaw special projects and championships for the MIAA.

Clint Heffern (BSEd) was named head boys basketball coach at Fort Scott High School in Fort Scott,

Kansas. He will also teach social studies and physical education. He most recently served as assistant basketball coach at St. Mary's-Colgan in Pittsburg.

Travis Young (BSEd, MBA '19) was named head football coach at Cherryvale High School in Cherryvale, Kansas. He spent time at his alma mater as an assistant coach for PSU football and coached in various roles at Coffeyville Community College.

Class of 2019

Danny Smith (BS) recently celebrated his 25th year at the Crawford County Sheriff's Department. He started out as a dispatcher and a reserve officer in April 1995. He worked his way through the ranks of deputy, lieutenant, and captain, and in April 2019 he was appointed Crawford County sheriff.

In Memory

Deaths are listed based on information received from families or reported in local newspapers. They are listed by graduation or attendance date.

1938

Genevieve S. Aikins, Liberty, Mo.
Mildred L. Ingram, San Antonio, Texas
Olice B. Williams, Coffeyville, Kan.

1939

Donald C. Jones, Portland, Ore.
Marjorie Scott, Kansas City, Mo.
Lois M. Walker, Salina, Kan.

1940

Derrell C. Delapp, Sun City, Ariz.
Florence P. Kennedy, Dennis Port, Mass.
Clarence L. Lollar, San Antonio, Texas
Thora F. Shireman, Roseville, Calif.
Robert E. Welch, Richardson, Texas
Maxine M. Zeckser, Raymore, Mo.

1941

Martha A. Crosson, Independence, Kan.
William H. Gay, Denver, Colo.
Ruth H. McCallop, Shawnee, Kan.
Marjorie Wise Smith, Halstead, Kan.
Margaret Steele, Randolph, Va.

1942

James L. Clayton
Marjorie S. DeWitt, Bulverde, Texas

1943

Keitha K. Chew, Atchison, Kan.
William E. Hiatt
Elmagene L. Rains, St. Louis, Mo.

1948

Mary D. Sparks, Ft. Scott, Kan.

1950

John L. Carmichael, Nevada, Mo.
Homer G. Cole, Pittsburg, Kan.
Mary Anna Landwehr, Paola, Kan.
Ella L. Reynolds, Miami, Okla.
Marvin J. Ross, Alexandria, Va.
Lula M. Simms, East St. Louis, Ill.
Roberta E. Carr, Ramsey, N.J.
Kathleen L. Dickerson, Rogers, Ark.
Loren L. Palmer, Grove, Okla.
Bob W. White, Iola, Kan.

1952

Milo A. Harris, Joplin, Mo.
Geradine Lane, Liberal, Mo.
James T. McDonald, Maysville, Mo.

1953

John E. Campbell, Webb City, Mo.

1955

Jane L. Campbell, Webb City, Mo.
Russell C. Craig, Shawnee, Kan.
Mary Lou Kiser, Drumright, Okla.
Bobby L. Kyle, Coffeyville, Kan.
Harley R. Smith, Flower Mound, Texas

1956

Marianne V. Carroll, Pittsburg, Kan.
Charles L. Chosewood, Brunswick, Ga.
George E. Hudson, Wichita, Kan.
Reginald R. Hurd, Scranton, Kan.
Earl L. Koonce, Independence, Mo.
Clarence D. Myers, Carl Junction, Mo.
James L. Picht, Ft. Scott, Kan.
Wayne E. Tadlock, Dayton, Ohio
Arvilla M. West, Stillwater, Okla.

1957

Jack L. Armstrong, Pittsburg, Kan.
Jack R. Buzzard, Weir, Kan.
Tony Dubray, Liberal, Mo.
Marthelle Harman, Gravette, Ark.
James M. Jones, Nevada, Mo.
Charles R. Mosier, McLouth, Kan.
Joseph D. Troxler, Las Vegas, Nev.

1958

Florence H. Brady, Chicago, Ill.
Paul H. Crandell, Coffeyville, Kan.

Lynn H. Frisbie, Columbus, Ga.
B. Warren Keene, Ottawa, Kan.
Neva M. Wasson, Grove, Okla.
Lee A. Williams, Mindenmines, Mo.

1959

Ernest B. Brooks, Kansas City, Mo.
Darlene E. Bussert, Mountain Grove, Mo.
Mildred L. Diehm, Osawatomie, Kan.
Frederick A. Geneva, Ft. Scott, Kan.
Carl Leon Hazen, Chanute, Kan.
Jim B. Maxwell Jr., Springfield, Ore.
Ron A. Overeem, Monett, Mo.
Roy L. Thornton, Kansas City, Mo.
Lyle R. Wood, Baxter Springs, Kan.

1960

Evelyn J. Barker, Liberal, Mo.
Joyce E. Boyer, Dallas, Texas
Sanford W. Crampton, Omaha, Neb.
Jerry L. Davis, Stillwater, Okla.
Marie Girard, Arma, Kan.
Bill Hall, Galena, Kan.
Gerre J. Koger, Marietta, Ga.
Roy L. Misener, Washington, Mo.
Roberta M. Peck, Ft. Scott, Kan.
John R. Rigg, Plano, Texas
Gerald L. Sample, Jasper, Mo.
Mary J. Stevenson, Helena, Mont.

1961

Carla Behrends, Manhattan, Kan.
Samuel E. Farley, Burlingame, Kan.
Franklin L. Hoskin, Henderson, Nev.
Kenneth W. Ruhl, Kansas City, Mo.
Charley R. Thomison, Springfield, Mo.
Earl F. Weidman, Hutchinson, Kan.

1962

Dorothy M. Beck, Chanute, Kan.
Thomas J. Bohrer, Waynesville, Mo.
Jack N. Golden, Joplin, Mo.
Thomas O. Harris, San Antonio, Texas
David H. Kershaw, Springfield, Mo.
Mary L. King, Erie, Kan.
Helen E. McClure, Carthage, Mo.
Karl D. Murphy, Montgomery, Texas
Arlend W. Oney, Jefferson City, Mo.
William G. Pryor, Lake Oswego, Ore.
Mary E. Rader, Lamar, Mo.
Loretta M. Schoonover, Farlington, Kan.
Lorena M. Suschnick, Liberal, Mo.

1963

Donald C. Anderson, Peoria, Ariz.
Bill H. Barnes, Girard, Kan.
Kathryn J. Giambrone, Kalamazoo, Mich.
Jack Gosnell, Perryville, Mo.
Dena M. Hilliard, Evans, Ga.
Merle E. Leech Jr., Kansas City, Mo.

John L. McEachern, Pompano Beach, Fla.
Dale E. Sarchman, Canton, Ohio

1964

Gary M. Allen, Pittsburg, Kan.
Louis G. Bruffett Sr., Joplin, Mo.
Jimmie L. Carter, Fredonia, Kan.
Donald E. Cornell, Shawnee, Kan.
David A. Johnson, Lynchburg, Va.
Connie Noland Matteucci, Leesburg, Va.
Margaret G. Shaffer, Independence, Kan.

1965

James G. Ascanio, Scottsbluff, Neb.
Harold E. Barnhart, Chanute, Kan.
Justin L. Garrett, Vinita, Okla.
Sarah L. Hagan, Springfield, Mo.
Gail E. Hoffman, Spring City, Tenn.
Jeanne L. Leonard, Overland Park, Kan.
Jerry D. Millard, Denver, Colo.
John K. Nicholson, Wichita, Kan.

1966

Ronald L. Adams, Neodesha, Kan.
Kimble O. Bartlow, Mesa, Ariz.
Wayne Cook, Piedmont, Mo.
Linda K. Gray, Diamond, Mo.
George T. Jackson, Galena, Kan.
Robert G. Leverich, Wichita, Kan.
George F. McPherson, Overland Park, Kan.
Don J. Murray, Pittsburg, Kan.

1967

Bob G. Arnold, Nevada, Mo.
Lois R. Broadway, Bowie, Md.
Myrtle Cox, Miami, Okla.
Jack R. Harris Jr., San Antonio, Texas
Jayne Hazleton, Oklahoma City, Okla.
Michael R. Kirkendoll, Andover, Kan.
Sheila E. Kitch, Granby, Mo.
Terry R. Reffet, Lawton, Okla.
Carol J. Rhodus, Humboldt, Kan.
Cheryl L. Sayler, Topeka, Kan.
Howard L. Shuler, Topeka, Kan.

1968

Rodney G. Capanash, Aurora, Ill.
Paula K. Doherty, Treasure Island, Fla.
David M. Hart, Columbia, Mo.
Irene W. Medlin, Joplin, Mo.
Jim R. Morey, Denison, Texas
Jim D. Peterson, Hutchinson, Kan.
Dennis W. Wilson, Lenexa, Kan.

1969

Dale E. Adams, Little Rock, Ark.
Annalea P. Bowersox, Baldwin City, Kan.
Lynda F. Copeland, Oklahoma City, Okla.
Frank D. Hase, Eagle Rock, Mo.
David S. Herman, Montgomery, Texas

continued

CLASS NOTES

Submit Class Notes information online to: psumag@pittstate.edu.

Edith C. McGurk, Lawrence, Kan.
Linda L. Minkler, Kincaid, Kan.
Nancy J. Morrow, Wichita, Kan.
Mary E. Reed, Pittsburg, Kan.
Mark Stephen Schiefelbein, Pittsburg, Kan.
James N. West, Palo, Iowa

1970

Dallas Beem, Longton, Kan.
John E. Borel, Overland Park, Kan.
Leroy C. Huff, Kansas City, Mo.
Jonnie J. Nading, Oswego, Kan.
Ruby M. Priola, Lenexa, Kan.

1971

Gary L. Campbell, Columbia, Mo.
George E. Colgin, Fort Scott, Kan.
Donald L. Hall Jr., Wichita, Kan.
John E. Holinsworth, Okmulgee, Okla.
Marguerite A. Hornback, Burrton, Kan.
David M. Jones, North Little Rock, Ark.
René Verdugo, Olathe, Kan.

1972

Don W. Barcus, Parsons, Kan.
David E. Garard, Erie, Kan.

Katherine A. Kirk, Carlisle, Pa.
Tony M. Wyatt, Bartlesville, Okla.

1973

Walter R. Lauck, Springfield, Mo.

1974

Terry M. Boyer, Mission, Kan.
Harry Coker, Parsons, Kan.
Jerry P. Dotson, Oronogo, Mo.
Robert B. Elliott, Derby, Kan.
Larry J. Hoover, Independence, Kan.
Charliss K. Korthanke, Robinson, Kan.
Carol A. Kublnick, Claremore, Okla.
Marianna Walker, South Coffeyville, Okla.
David E. Williamson, Baxter Springs, Kan.

1976

Richard F. Brewington, Shawnee, Kan.
Robert A. Brown Jr., Pullman, Wash.
Dwayne E. Wheat, Girard, Kan.

1977

Bobby L. Brown, Joplin, Mo.
Maria D. Parrot, Weir, Kan.

1978

Nonetta I. Sode, St. Louis, Mo.
Mike S. Williams, Dodge City, Kan.

1979

Ardys M. Robbins, Springfield, Mo.

1980

George D. Dye, Galena, Kan.
Ginny K. Foster, Oskaloosa, Iowa
Barbara L. McDaniel, Alexandria, Va.
Cynthia H. Smith, Seneca, Mo.
Norman D. Traxson, Pittsburg, Kan.

1981

Michael L. Ayers, Springfield, Mo.
Scott L. Baker, Joplin, Mo.
Janice A. Bennett, Baxter Springs, Kan.
Vesta S. Danielson, Iola, Kan.
Mona F. Harris, Columbus, Kan.
Terry N. Hawkins, Carl Junction, Mo.

1982

Diane L. Sprague, Pittsburg, Kan.

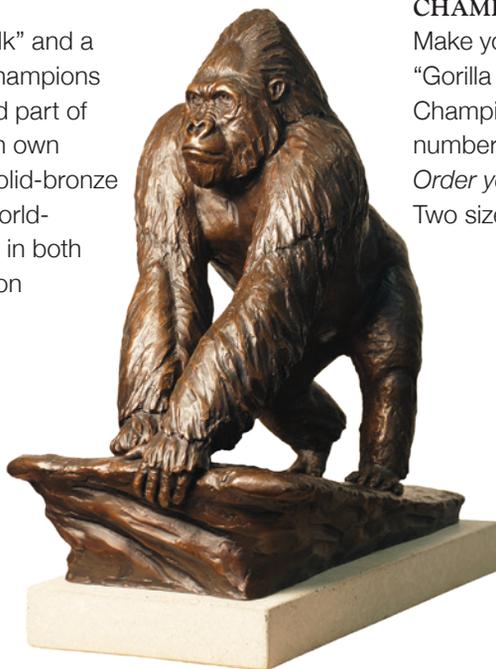
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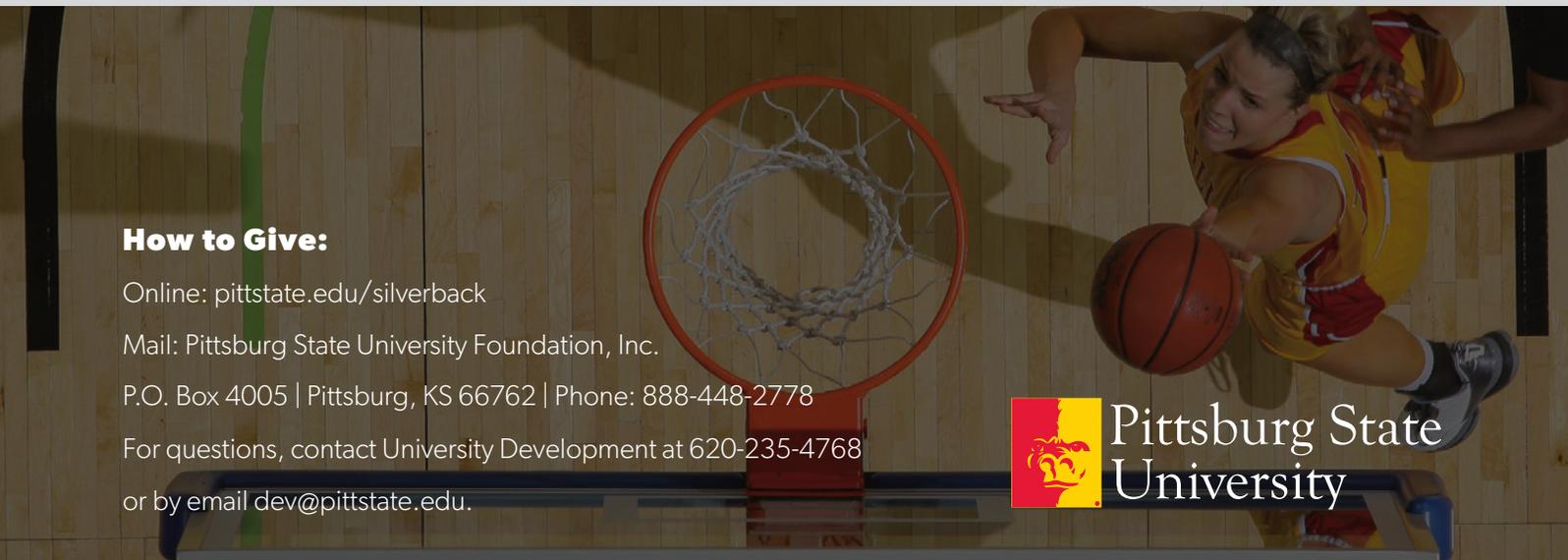
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For questions, contact University Development at 620-235-4768

or by email dev@pittstate.edu.



**Pittsburg State
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1983

Cherie N. Paige, Joplin, Mo.
Don R. Papish, Frontenac, Kan.

1984

Darrel D. Catron, Iola, Kan.
Mitzi S. Frazier, Melbourne, Fla.
Pattie Stephens Hoover,
Independence, Kan.
Duane L. Jabben, Independence, Kan.
Janis C. Mills, Miami, Okla.
Steve C. Ortiz, Cypress, Texas

1985

Bobby R. Cypert, Columbus, Kan.
Robert W. Jarvis, Ft. Worth, Texas
Paul D. Williamson, Omaha, Neb.

1986

Joe S. Boring, Overland Park, Kan.
John D. McDonald, Huntsville, Ala.

1987

Wes A. Hogan, Kansas City, Kan.

1988

Ronald E. Gordon, Chanute, Kan.
Judith A. Gourley, Galena, Kan.

1989

Shelia D. Marque, Pittsburg, Kan.

1990

Sherri M. Hawley, Elk City, Kan.
Jo Ann Hollenbeck, Lincoln, Ark.

1991

Danny J. Clouse, Baxter Springs, Kan.
Jackie R. Frazier, Liberal, Kan.
Alison J. Smeltzer, Overland Park, Kan.
Robert M. Weiss, West Hollywood, Calif.

1993

Rita J. Bicknell, Englewood, Fla.
Elaine K. Kimzey, Elk City, Kan.
Christina Sedberry, Miami, Okla.
Susan D. Versluis, Gerald, Mo.

1995

Carig R. Valentine, Scottsdale, Ariz.
Leasha R. Galvis, Olathe, Kan.

1997

J.B. Smith, Lawrence, Kan.

1998

Virginia L. Holt, Bartlesville, Okla.
Nathan D. Leadstrom, Topeka, Kan.
Randy L. Wagoner, Bartlesville, Okla.

2000

Janell Carson, Parsons, Kan.
John L. Kalert Jr., Columbus, Kan.
Lorrie A. Parrish, Cherokee, Kan.

2002

Eric Wayne Hatcher, Chanute, Kan.

2004

Lloyd Harlan, Miami, Okla.

2005

Theresa Fienen, Parsons, Kan.

2007

Jamie M. Channel, Galena, Kan.

2010

Audra M. Rush, Erie, Kan.

2013

Samantha L. Branson, Osawatomie, Kan.

2014

William A. Treiber, St. Paul, Kan.

2015

Vaughn J. Weaver, Parkville, Mo.

2016

Suzanne M. Goode Reedy, Louisburg, Kan.

John Darling

The seventh president of Pittsburg State University, John Darling, died Feb. 17, 2020, in Texas.

"On behalf of the entire Pittsburg State University community, I offer our most sincere sympathies to

former President Darling's family. We appreciate his service and the difference he made while leading the campus," said President Steve Scott.

Darling was appointed president on Jan. 1, 1996; his inauguration ceremony was held on March 7 that year as part of the traditional Apple Day (Commemoration Day) ceremony.

"My dream is that as we plan for the future we will serve well, not only the people of this region, but also people from many different parts of our country and from other countries," Darling said during his inauguration address.

During his time as president, Darling oversaw the start of historic renovation of Russ Hall, the addition of a December commencement ceremony, the creation of Gorilla Village, the promotion of educational technology, and the development of the Presidential Emerging Leadership Program. He also was a Professor Emeritus of Marketing and International Business in the Kelce College of Business.

His career also included leadership roles at Southern Illinois-Carbondale, Texas Tech University, Mississippi State University, LSU-Shreveport, Rockhurst University, Texas State University, and the University of Texas at San Antonio.

He authored 12 books and monographs and more than 200 academic and professional journals before retiring.



John Darling

In Memory

Pittsburg State faculty and staff:

Sandy L. Bauchmoyer, Bixby, Okla.
Debbie A. Burns, Pittsburg, Kan.
Gary Carlat, Pittsburg, Kan.
Forrest L. Coltharp, Frontenac, Kan.
John R. Darling Jr., Boerne, Texas
Bonnie A. Gaddy, Frontenac, Kan.
Ruthellyn H. Hinton*, Frontenac, Kan.
Lisa A. Loth, Pittsburg, Kan.
Mary E. Marshall, Frontenac, Kan.
Norma J. Matzenbacher, Pittsburg, Kan.
Mike M. Modares, Overland Park, Kan.
Chuck Moller, Prescott Valley, Ariz.
Wanda L. Rhuems, Pittsburg, Kan.

*PSU alumna

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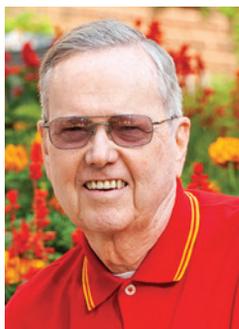
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Forrest Coltharp

Longtime math professor Forrest Coltharp died July 24 in Frontenac, Kansas. He was 86.



Forrest Coltharp

In his 31 years at PSU, Coltharp taught and advised countless elementary teachers, including President Steve Scott.

“We all recognize the role of an academic advisor is an important one, and we also know that relationship does not end upon graduation. The passing of Dr. Coltharp reminded me how true this is,” said Scott, whose friendship with Coltharp spanned 50 years.

After serving in the U.S. Army from 1954-56, Coltharp became the first in his immediate family to earn college degrees and taught for several years in public schools. He and his wife, Barbara, moved to Pittsburg when he joined the faculty at PSU in 1964.

He served on numerous department, college, and university committees and retired from PSU in 1995 as a professor emeritus.

His sons and daughters-in-law earned 10 degrees from PSU, his grandchildren and grandchildren-in-law earned nine degrees, and a grandson who just completed his first year as a high school math teacher is working on his master’s.

His daughters-in-law, Hazel Coltharp and Judy Coltharp, teach in the Math Department and the Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing, respectively, where granddaughter Dr. Ashleigh Coltharp Heter and granddaughter-in-law Tracy Coltharp also teach.

Coltharp Family Memorials have been created in the Math Department and School of Nursing.

Rita Bicknell

Rita Bicknell, a 1982 graduate of PSU’s Kelce College of Business who was widely known for her philanthropy to PSU and to the region, lost her battle with cancer in April at her home in Florida.

A celebration of life was held Aug. 6 at the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts at PSU.

“Rita’s wealth of experience, her strength, her commitment to philanthropy, and her dedication to enhancing the lives of those around her will be missed. She was a role model for so many. We are grateful that she cared so deeply about us,” said President Steve Scott.

Her husband, Gene Bicknell, a longtime businessman, also is well known in the region for his philanthropy and his support of the arts, athletics, education, and civic initiatives. Together, they were lead donors to the Bicknell Center and supported the arts, athletics, education, and civic initiatives.

The couple also were donors to the Pittsburg Public Library, the United Way, the Pittsburg Family YMCA, the hospital, and many other community organizations and agencies.



Rita Bicknell

Retirees

Best wishes to these retirees, who have played a role in making Pitt State the special place that it is. #OAGAAG!

Cynthia Allan, Communication

Joe Arruda, Biology

Barbara Bonnekessen, History, Philosophy, and Social Sciences

Janet Davis, Leonard H. Axe Library

Carol Deats, Music

Brenda Frieden, Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology

Rob Hefley, Health, Human Performance, and Recreation

David Hensley, Physical Plant Services

Linda Higgins, Physical Plant Services

David Hurley, Music

Diane Hutchison, University Marketing and Communication

Pawan Kahol, Graduate and Continuing Studies

Gwen Murdock, Psychology

John Pierce, Intercollegiate Athletics

Joey Pogue, Communication

Zach Quier, Physical Plant Building Trades

Sherry Roberts, Registrar’s Office

Dennis Sellegren, Physical Plant Services

Michele Sexton, Human Resource Services

Dave VanBecelaere, University Police

Mei Wan, Kansas Polymer Research Center

Ray Willard, Teaching and Leadership

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- Let us know about your accomplishments so we can highlight them and communicate to others the value of earning a degree at Pittsburg State.
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- Contact the Office of Admission with the names of potential students.
- Let us know when there’s an event in your community we should attend.



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Scott Donaldson, Director of Admission
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Leading the Way

FOR THE PAST 35 YEARS, THE PSU Foundation has had a history of outstanding leadership. Every member of the Board of Trustees devotes their time and talent to ensuring that the PSU Foundation stays healthy and strong to assist the university in its mission of providing transformative experiences. In today's environment, the work of the Foundation leadership is even more important than usual, especially for Board Chair Troy Hill, a 1984 graduate of the Kelce College of Business. He, along with his wife, Susan, lead by example when it comes to giving back to the university they love by giving of their time, talent, and financial support.

As a student, Troy "came back home" to Pittsburg State to play basketball and complete his degree in accounting. His career path led him to partnership at the accounting firm BKD, which gave him the opportunity years later to recruit students from his alma mater. "PSU has always been a great resource for new talent to be added to the firm," Troy said. "Giving to PSU has always been a part of BKD's firm culture."

When it comes to giving back to PSU, there is no question about Troy and Susan's commitment. "Someone, long before me, made investments in the university and I have been the grateful recipient and beneficiary of those investments, both as



Susan and Troy Hill

a student and a business owner," explained Troy. "I want to continue to perpetuate the legacy that so many before me have created."

Now as chair of the Foundation Board, Troy's commitment remains firm. "During these unprecedented times, it gives me confidence to know that we will navigate these uncharted waters successfully due to the leadership and governance that is in place for the university and the Foundation."

Troy said that he and his wife know that "every person who makes an investment, regardless of the amount of time or size of financial gift, will receive back more in satisfaction as a direct participant in making a difference through PSU, both now and in the future."

To learn more about how you can join alumni and friends in making a difference, visit: giveto.pittstate.edu

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Dear Alumni and Friends,

We often say we have some of the greatest jobs on campus because we have the privilege of meeting and interacting with so many of our amazing alumni across the nation and beyond.

These past months have been difficult for everyone in Gorilla Nation and have challenged us all to focus on the positive aspects of our lives. For those of us in Alumni and Constituent Relations, we realize even more today that the opportunity to connect with our alumni and share about Pittsburg State University in person is something we profoundly miss.

Despite the fact we will not see you this fall, please know we are thinking of you and working hard to find ways to continue to keep Gorilla Nation connected with the university and each other. We hope to see you virtually soon and look forward to the day we see you again in person. Please stay in touch and let us know if we can be of any assistance.

Stay connected to learn about this fall's virtual Gorilla Gatherings on our website or social media. If you aren't



Stephanie

Danielle

Jon

receiving our monthly e-newsletter and would like to, please share your email at alumni@pittstate.edu.

We miss you and wish you good health . . .

Once a Gorilla, Always a Gorilla!

Sincerely,

**Jon Bartlow, '99, '03; Danielle Driskill, '12, '14;
Stephanie Swezey, '07**

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