



Spring 2021

Pitt State

MAGAZINE

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ONCE A GORILLA. ALWAYS A GORILLA.

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From the editor

My transformational moment as a student occurred when I sat before the then-Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Orville Brill in 1990 and asked for permission to redesign the student newspaper, The Collegio.



I had just been appointed editor and technology was changing. We were purchasing our very first Macintosh computers (!).

To change the look, content, and size of the newspaper, I was required to present a proposal to Dean Brill. I worked hard on it, wanting to impress him, and the rest was history. He said yes!

That experience, and the work that followed to implement the changes, would inform many future decisions and projects in my career in journalism, communications, and teaching. I am grateful to Pitt State for it.

Exactly 30 years later, that experience was in my thoughts as our team began a redesign of this magazine, which now has a readership of 65,000 Gorillas.

We wanted to provide more of what readers have requested, to freshen the look, and to allow the work of our photographer, Sam Clausen (BS '14) and our designer, Paulina Scholes (BST '95) to shine.

We hope we've achieved that goal while maintaining the Pitt State feeling. We look forward to hearing from you!

— ANDRA BRYAN STEFANONI
(BA '91, MA '94)

Cover design

When junior Sarah Clausen joined the Office of University Marketing & Communication this semester as a student employee, she hit the ground running: Her creativity shines on the cover of this edition, which she designed to promote the cover story. Sarah is a dual marketing and management major who is pursuing a minor in graphics, and she's a fantastic example of the Pittsburg State mantra, "By Doing Learn."



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The PittState Magazine is the official magazine of Pittsburg State University. Circulation: 64,000.

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PittState

MAGAZINE

In this issue

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It's home to the winningest football program in NCAA Division II, and it's this edition's focus for a new feature called "Then and Now."

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Joey and Kimberly Ross dropped out as freshmen. Decades later, they proved it's never too late to achieve a goal.

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Trinity Davis noticed growing up that there weren't many teachers who looked like her. She set out to change that.

26 ONE OF A KIND

Max Burson gets some doubletakes when he takes his favorite bike out for a spin. He blames the Wood Technology Department, now known as AMMT.



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Pitt State

ONLINE PROGRAMS

Nationally Ranked

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BACHELOR DEGREE COMPLETION

- BS Workforce Development
- RN to BSN

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

- MA History
- MA Teaching
(Elementary, Special Education, Secondary)
- MBA Business Administration
- MET Engineering Technology
- MS Education-School Health
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- EdS Advanced Studies in Leadership
- DNP - MSN to DNP

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Building Principal
- Communication
- History
- Reading/Language Arts
- School Library
- School District Leadership
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
- Technology Integration
- Hospitality Management (Undergraduate)



Finding Gus

In his entry for the “Finding Gus Gorilla” contest, Tom Hankins (BSED ‘65, MS ‘68) noted that the iconic statue’s sculptor, Larry Wooster, was his art instructor.

“This sculpture and Larry Wooster are special to me,” he wrote. “Thanks for a really grand magazine!”

The Wooster Gorilla has overlooked the Oval from its position at the main south doors of the Overman Student Center since 1965, when it was installed there as a gift from the 1965 Senior Class — Tom’s class.

Tom’s memory prompted us to ask the rest of you:

What are *your* special memories or photos of Larry Wooster and/or the Wooster Gorilla? Share them with us and they might just appear in our fall edition!

Email: psumag@pittstate.edu

Postal mail: Pitt State Magazine,
c/o PSU, 1701 S. Broadway,
Pittsburg, KS 66762

And the winner is...

The winner of our popular “Finding Gus” contest for the Fall 2020 edition is Brett Eichkorn (BST ‘90), who spied it on page 19 in the pre-pandemic photo of Jansen Miller and Cara Kubler in their classroom. Thanks to everyone who entered — we received hundreds and we enjoy reading each and every one because they often include a note like Tom’s that makes us smile!

Can you find it?

Search this issue and email your guess to psumag@pittstate.edu to be entered in our drawing. Include your first and last name, the year you graduated, and the page number and location you found it. One entry per person. Entries must be received by **June 1**. We’ll mail one lucky winner a hardbound copy of “Pittsburg State University: A Photographic History of The First 100 Years.”



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Pittsburg State alumni and friends believe in the power of education, understand the importance of hard work, and share a commitment to helping others. More than ever, philanthropy is an important part of our success.

As the Proven. Promise. Pitt State. Capital Campaign comes to a close at the end of June, we ask you to help us finish strong — let's reach and surpass our goal of \$100 million! Emphasizing student success and faculty excellence, your gifts will continue to make a difference and allow Pittsburg State to remain a destination of choice for the next generation of Gorillas.



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First grads in new program

The first three students have graduated from a unique new program: a master's in materials science.

Jonghyun Choi and Sungwoo Hong, both of South Korea, and Tenzin Ingsel, of Tibet, said the degree will prepare them for jobs in a range of industries, including aviation, automotive, medical, and packaging, as well as for postgraduate degrees in materials science, engineering, and related fields.

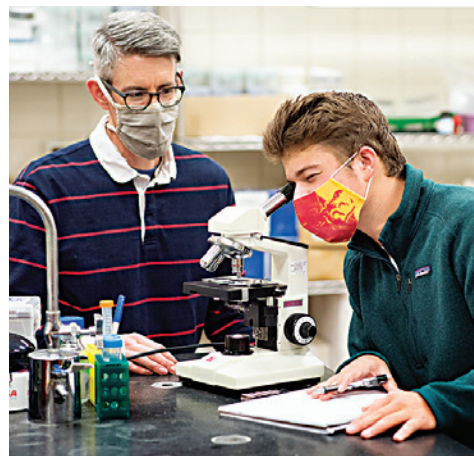
The degree program is a

partnership of the Chemistry and Physics departments; the College of Technology; and the Kansas Polymer Research Center, where they worked with scientists to develop new technologies.

Associate Professor Ram Gupta said there are “endless possibilities” for graduates landing jobs, including Intel and Boeing, with starting salaries in the range of \$70,000, with a mean annual

wage of \$101,910, according to the United States Department of Labor.

“The sky is the limit,” he said.



Dental school partnership

Dental students will be able to complete their degrees in fewer years, thanks to a new agreement between PSU and Kansas City University. The deal should also spur economic growth across the region, where there is a shortage of dentists.

KCU is building a dental school in nearby Joplin, Missouri, with a projected opening date of 2022.

Biology Department Chair Virginia Rider said faculty will identify freshmen who meet several criteria and after their junior year, they'll matriculate to KCU to complete their senior year and first year of dental school simultaneously. They will receive their bachelor's degree after that first year.

They must maintain an overall GPA of 3.25 and a science coursework GPA of 3.5.

Two additions for Kelce

Fundraising for the Kelce College of Business building renovation project continues and architectural design work has identified two important additions.

The Professional Sales Center on the first floor will house the new Professional Sales Certificate program and will be used for academic activities such as role playing, interviews, and sales pitches.

The Business and Economic Research Center on the second floor will house the outreach and research center that produces the economic development work for the City of Pittsburg and surrounding communities, resulting in the quarterly publication “Pittsburg Micropolitan Area Economic Report.”

An area also has been identified within the new faculty office suite as a dedicated space for creating distance education materials like videos and audio recordings.

Visit pittstate.edu/newkelce for details about the campaign and to see architectural renderings of the renovation project.

New class considers inclusion

Imagine buying a shirt at your favorite store. You can see the color and pattern, and after checking the tag, you know the size and the cost. But what if you are visually impaired?

“Inclusive Design,” a new class taught by Associate Professor Andrea Kent-McConnaughey in the Graphics and Imaging Technologies Department, aims to help designers be more inclusive when they conceptualize and create a product.

“The world is changing and we want to make sure that everyone can experience what we create. Why would we want to design it if it’s exclusive to just one group of people?” said Molly Crager, a senior graphic



communications major from St. Paul, Kansas.

Speakers and agencies often visit class to provide real-world perspectives, including educators and students from the Kansas State School for the Blind.



Renewed focus on diversity, equity

President Steve Scott renewed the university’s commitment to diversity and equity with the formation of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council.

The group will have a broad base of membership, responsibilities, and resources and will be led by Assistant Vice President for Student Life and Senior Diversity Officer Deatrea Rose (BS ‘96, MS ‘00).

The group completed a university-wide climate study and in coming months will advise the President’s Council regarding specific actions and policy changes; will encourage, endorse, and participate in the university’s educational programs that promote an increased understanding of equity and diversity; will provide leadership in developing, coordinating, and promoting professional development programs related to diversity issues; and will advocate for resources to support campus diversity initiatives.

Grant helps displaced workers

A \$146,000 grant from the Kansas Department of Commerce to the Plastics Engineering Technology program is aimed at getting workers displaced by the pandemic back into the workforce.

The funding is being spent on accelerated workshops and certificate programs planned for this year, and on state-of-the-art equipment to be housed in the department’s labs in the Kansas Technology Center.

Workshop certificates will allow attendees the opportunity to stack their credits, which will equate to college credit toward a Plastics degree.

There is great demand in the workforce for jobs in the plastics industry, according to the Bureau of Labor, and annual salaries for Kansas upskilled labor in that area ranges from \$42,000 to \$68,000.

A bonus: students in the PSU Plastics program will get to use the equipment, too.

Distinguished educators

The College of Education chose Brandon Wade (BSEd '09) for the Distinguished Teacher Award, and Rex Bollinger (BSEd '92, MEd '97) for the Distinguished Administrator Award.

Wade has built the USD 382 Pratt High School and Middle School choirs from six students to 126 and created an all-staff choir of 20. "I know so many amazing educators that have graduated from Pitt State," he said. "I am very thankful for those who thought enough of what I do to nominate me for this award, and I am very grateful to those who chose me to receive it."

Bollinger is the superintendent of USD 362 Prairie View School District, where he has provided leadership during the pandemic, offering to help coach middle school girls' basketball if needed, obtaining his CDL so he could serve as a substitute bus driver, and delivering temperature scanners to schools. He also has been a leader at Jayhawk-Linn High School in Mound City, Kansas, USD 211 Doniphan West, Highland USD 425, and Denton USD 433.



Wade



Bollinger



Winning researchers

Three PSU students are celebrating first place wins in the annual Capitol Research Summit, comprised of competitors from universities across Kansas.

Kaitlin Barnett, a graduate student in Communication, was the top award getter for her research with advisor Alicia Mason on where people sought and obtained COVID-19 health information, and how it impacted their beliefs.

Trupti Patel won first place in her division for "Nanoceria-Delivered Magnetic Resonance Probe: A Multimodal Theranostic Tool to Identify, Treat, and Monitor Cancer," with advisor Santimukul Santra.

Felipe M. deSousa won first place in his division for "Eco-Friendly Flame-Retardants for Bio-Based Polyurethane Foams," done with advisor Ram Gupta.

Top tier broadcasters

The 2019 football game against Missouri Western produced a national win for a PSU team competing off the field: Students in Media Production captured first place for their live sports broadcast of the game in a competition judged in 2020. Like the football team, they began preparations weeks in advance.

"They learn camera operation, how replay works, and graphics," said Professor Troy Comeau. "I throw them into the fire quickly, but that's the great thing about Pitt State. At D-I schools, ESPN is there and students don't get this kind of experience."

Earning the award meant first winning at the state and regional level before advancing to a national playing field against more than 1,000 entries. The experience and the award will pay dividends to those seeking careers in broadcasting, including Tyler Godwin, a junior from Haysville, Kansas, who did the play by play and hopes to be a sports commentator for a major sports media outlet one day.



Safety professional of the year



Associate Professor Pat Flynn in the School of Construction was awarded the Safety Professional of the Year by the Heart of America Chapter of the American Society of Safety Professionals.

The group noted that Flynn, who has taught at PSU since 2000, was instrumental in the birth and growth of the university's Environmental and Safety

Management program in 2013. In it, he has trained hundreds of students who went on to become safety professionals in a range of fields, thereby impacting tens of thousands of lives.

Flynn also started the university's first Safety Olympics, attended by schools across the Midwest. In nominating him, students and colleagues praised his leadership, his teaching, and his passion for the field.

"He knows students are the future of our profession," wrote Associate Professor Clifford Morris in his nomination.

2021 Outstanding faculty



Becky Brannock



Tracy Coltharp



Phillip Harries

Three faculty were chosen for this year's Dr. Robert K. Ratzlaff Outstanding Faculty Award, nominated and chosen by students: Becky Brannock, professor of Psychology & Counseling; Phil Harries, professor of Biology; and Tracy Coltharp, instructor in the Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing. Watch their video at youtube.com/pittstate

Hall of Honor faculty



When it comes to the field of investment casting — one of the oldest known metal-forming techniques — Professor Russ Rosmait has long been considered an expert. Last fall, he was given official recognition by the Investment Casting Institute as the first educator to be inducted into their Hall of Honor.

He began teaching at PSU 34 years ago. A few years later, he created the investment casting labs and curriculum. Now, he's one of 20 Foundry Educational Foundation Key Professors in North America and annually hosts the Casting Institute's Industry Certification Program. To date it has drawn nearly 500 workshop participants from across the U.S. and other countries.

His collaboration with the ICI has brought funds, materials, supplies, a wax injection press, and other resources to PSU that helped the program expand and its graduates to be highly sought after.

"I enjoy being able to work with students and I enjoy the university setting," he said. "We have a number of alumni out there doing incredible things and I'm proud to have played a role."

2020 ATHLETICS HALL *of* FAME

Six individuals and a pair of teams were chosen for the 2020 induction class in the PSU Intercollegiate Athletics Hall of Fame.

1. 1992 FOOTBALL TEAM

The team posted a 14-1 record in finishing as the NCAA-II National Runner-up, dropping a 17-13 decision to Jacksonville State at Florence, Alabama, in the title game. The loss snapped a school record 25-game winning streak between 1991 and 1992. The Gorillas captured the MIAA title in 1992.



2. BRIAN ALLEN, TRACK & FIELD, 2006-10

Allen was a nine-time NCAA-II All-American for shot put, weight throw, and hammer. He was a 15-time All-MIAA Performer for discus, hammer, and shot put, and the MIAA Men's High Point Scorer at the 2009 and 2010 MIAA Outdoor Championships, scoring 28 points in each meet. He was chosen as the 2010 South Central Region Field Athlete of the Year by the United States Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association. He still holds PSU all-time records in the weight throw and hammer. Allen is a track and field assistant coach at Missouri Southern State University.



3. STEVE BEVER, BASEBALL COACH, 1991-2012

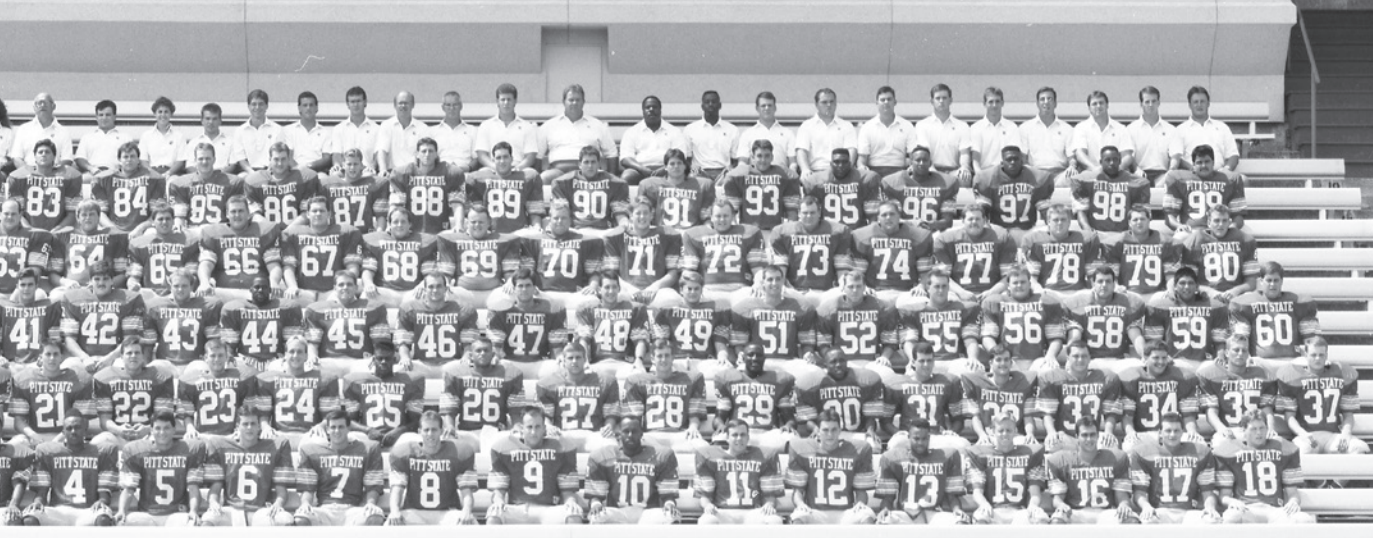
Bever served for 22 years as the Gorillas head coach, helping restart the defunct baseball program in 1991. He would go on to become the longest-tenured and the winningest baseball coach in PSU history. Bever led PSU to the school's first MIAA title in 1999, and to the school's first NCAA National Tournament appearance in 1997. His teams earned four overall berths in the national tournament (1997, 1998, 1999, 2002). Bever also served as an assistant athletic director for game administration throughout his tenure. Four years after retirement in 2016, Bever returned to coaching, but at the high school level: he is the current head coach at his alma mater, Girard High School.



4. PAMELA CARTAGENA, VOLLEYBALL, 2006-09

Cartagena was an NCAA-II All-American 2007-09, was MIAA Player of the Year in 2009, and was MIAA All-Conference (1st team) 2006-09. She set PSU career records for kills (1,836), attacks (4,809) and sets played (500). Cartagena was ranked second in career digs (2,259) and ranked fifth in career service aces (109). Cartagena went on to become a professional volleyball player in Puerto Rico.





5. LISA CROPPER, WOMEN'S BASKETBALL, 1993-96

Cropper was a three-time MIAA All-Conference player, scoring 1,339 points in 110 career games — the fifth-highest scoring total in school history at that time, and currently the 10th. She set PSU records for career assists (382) and career steals (260), currently ranking fourth in assists and second in steals, and she set a PSU single season record in 1995 with 84 steals. Cropper went on to work as a physical education teacher at Jasper R-5 High School.



6. JOE TAYLOR, FOOTBALL, 2002-05

Taylor was an NCAA-II All-American in 2005, an MIAA All-Conference in 2002, 2004, and 2005, and finished his career with 208 carries for 1,243 yards and 21 touchdowns. Taylor moved to fullback in 2003 and helped teammate Germaine Race set the NCAA Division II rushing record. Taylor went on to work in the field of construction.

LEGACY CATEGORY:

In an attempt to bolster the school's rich heritage from earlier years, the Legacy category, created in 2005, focuses solely on individuals who completed their athletic eligibility 50 years from the current calendar year.

MAX WILSON, FOOTBALL ATHLETE 1949-50

Wilson was a two-year member of the football team who went on to serve 35 years in the Fredonia USD 484 school system as a teacher and coach, junior high principal, high school principal, and superintendent (1975-91). He served on the Kansas State Department of Education board and as a delegate to the National Rural Schools Convention, served two terms as mayor of Fredonia, and was inducted into the Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame in 1991. Wilson died in 2013.

1929-30 AND 1930-31 MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAMS

The two squads, composed primarily of the same players, posted back-to-back undefeated seasons, going 20-0 in 1930 and 21-0 in 1931 as the Gorillas set a school record for consecutive victories (47) between Dec. 14, 1929, and Jan. 5, 1932. Both teams captured CIC titles.





“My number one goal whenever I go anywhere is to leave a footprint.”

Royalty

IN ANY SITUATION, D'Andre Phillips has a goal: to make a difference.

As the first person in his family to pursue a college degree, he dreams of becoming a middle school math teacher and impacting young lives. As a leader in the Black Student Association, he has hoped to inspire other students of color and foster awareness at the grassroots level.

"In everything, I just hope that I'm making my family and friends, and my city of Topeka, Kansas, that inspired me, proud," he said. "My number one goal whenever I go anywhere is to leave a footprint."

When he was crowned Homecoming King last fall in a livestreamed ceremony at the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts, he said it felt like a visible marker that he has left his footprint here, on the campus.

Phillips will graduate in May and as a member of the ROTC Gorilla Battalion will be commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

"Getting this crown fortifies for me that my peers believe in me, that they believe in my future, my potential, and it really gives me reassurance," he said. "Especially being first generation — this reinforces to me that I'm on the right path."

Camille Holman, a plastics engineering technology and polymer chemistry major from Cassville, Missouri, who also will graduate in May, was crowned Homecoming Queen.

"Getting this crown is like a cherry on top— it's nice to be

recognized, and it feels like someone

saw what I was doing and felt it was worthy," she said.

Holman served as student body vice president and has been a member of Honors College and Alpha Sigma Alpha sorority.

"I hope to manufacture medical supplies, and over the summer did an internship in Rogers, Arkansas, at a place that makes ventilators," she said. "I feel like that career path will be wide open."

Both were grateful that PSU still had a ceremony, even if it looked and felt different.

"This COVID season has actually been surprising — I've never felt more pride being at Pitt State," Phillips said.

The Homecoming Court

First attendants were Morgan Smith, a biology major from Welch, Oklahoma, representing Crimson & Gold Dance Team, and Raj Thakor, an automotive technology major from

India representing International Student Association.

Second attendants were Kaedra Brenner, a plastics engineering technology major from Wichita, Kansas, representing Student Government Association, and Dom Piccini, a finance major from Pittsburg representing Newman Club.

PSU President Steve Scott described the crowning of Homecoming royalty as an important, longstanding tradition.

"They represent all of us," he said, "and we're so proud of what they've accomplished at Pitt State, because that's going to carry forward when they go out into their communities after graduation."

The ceremony can be viewed in its entirety at pittstate.tv.



L to R: Second Attendants Kaedra Brenner and Dom Piccini; First Attendants Morgan Smith and Raj Thakor.

THEN AND NOW

1922



1924



1929



1950



1957



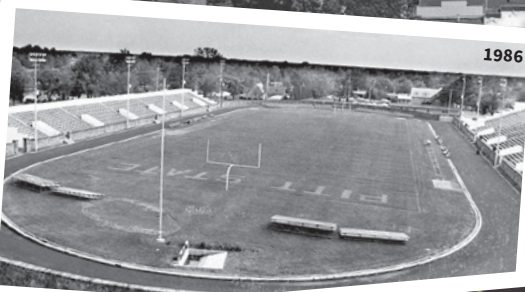
1958



1970



1986



2002



Home to the winningest football program in NCAA Division II. Hallowed ground for thousands of alumni, coaches, and fans. And one of the most beautiful stadiums you'll ever visit.



CARNIE SMITH STADIUM

ON AUTUMN SATURDAYS, it's where you'll find the football team, the spirit squad and dance team, the band, and fans taking part in one of the longest running traditions at Pittsburg State. On spring days, it's where track athletes strive to set records. And on days in between, it's where community members exercise, families watch movies on the Jungletron, and youth dream of future glory days.

Built in 1923 with 5,000 seats on what was then the eastern edge of campus, it was named Brandenburg Stadium in honor of William Brandenburg, the university's first president.

The first game was played in 1924, a game in which PSU — then known as Kansas State Teachers College — defeated Baker University by a score of 6-0.

In 1987, the field continued to bear the name of the first president, but the stadium was named Carnie Smith Stadium in honor of the legendary football coach who led the Gorillas to two NAIA national championships (1957 and 1961) and six conference titles during his 17-year tenure (1949-1966).

In 2001, second-level seating was added on the east side along with 14 luxury skyboxes, elevator access, new restrooms, concession stands, ticket booths and renovated locker rooms. The project also added 2,300 seats, bringing the total capacity to 7,950.

In 2006, eight luxury skybox suites were added to the west side of the stadium along with elevator access.

In 2008, the stadium's first-ever

video board, the "Jungletron," was unveiled to provide fans with 2,800 square-feet of vibrant video and scoring updates. In the summer of 2019, the "Jungletron" was upgraded, and in 2020 new turf was installed.

Each of these projects was funded by private donations from students, faculty, alumni, and community members, just as when the original stadium was built in 1923.

What's your favorite memory from Carnie Smith Stadium? Email us at psumag@pittstate.edu. Bonus points for including a photograph! We'll collect them and hold on to them for 2023 and a 100th birthday celebration!



OAGAAC





Krina Snider

It all began with a letter from a Gorilla who reads this magazine.

We realized he probably wasn't the only one to wonder what OAGAAG means: many of our 65,000 readers graduated long before we started using it.

It stands for Once a Gorilla. Always a Gorilla. — a phrase that connects us, reminds us, and inspires us.

This is its story. (And thank you, Russell!)

Dear editor,

I am a graduate of Pittsburg State University before it became a university, MS '72. I have read the initials OAGAAG a few times in your Pitt State Magazine.

I am interested, but not embarrassed, to ask what is the meaning of these initials?

*Best regards,
Russell Bennett*

A tradition was born

It was the year 2000 when Mindy Cloninger (BS '85, MS '88) was associate director of Alumni Relations and was helping to ramp up a new era of marketing and branding. She hired Krina Snider, (BST '85) to design a logo.

"I noticed that there were athletes who still came back to games, people who still felt like Gorillas, years after graduating," Snider said.

So, each logo sample Snider created included the slogan



"Once a Gorilla. Always a Gorilla."

The executive board loved it. They approved it, put it on a magnet, and distributed it across the country at Gorilla Gatherings.

The phrase caught on.

"Soon, we began closing meetings with 'And remember, Once a Gorilla...' to which the audience responded,

'Always a Gorilla,'" Cloninger said.

With the birth of social media, it became #OAGAAG, and is now etched in stone beneath the bronze Gorilla at Champions Plaza. It can be seen on Gorilla gear from coast to coast.

"It's so neat that the momentum has continued, to see people from all walks of life, all over the world, with that shared feeling," said Snider, who now works at T-Mobile headquarters in Overland Park, Kansas, where her office is decked out in PSU merchandise. "Anywhere you go, you see a bumper sticker, you see a shirt, and you wave – it's a connection that spans decades. I'm proud."

A Gorilla since childhood

Little could Connie Malle (BBA '77) have dreamed that she would wind up being the director of the residence halls she walked past on her way to Horace Mann

continued

Elementary School as a child, and that her office would be in Horace Mann.

"I've been a Gorilla since I was a child," said Malle, whose dad, Jim Farley, taught industrial arts in Whitesitt Hall.

Malle attended College High in the building that now houses the Kelce College of Business, attended summer programs on campus, and took swim lessons in the old gymnasium pool when it was located east of the Overman Student Center.

In 1977, she became an employee.

"It feels comforting to be here," she said. "For me, it's true, the saying 'Once a Gorilla. Always a Gorilla.' I always have been, and I always will be. That saying is my life."

Malle, now 64, will retire April 2 after serving the university for 44 years, including a stint in the Student



Center working in programming and ticketing. As director of housing, she played a key role in renovations of residence halls, new construction, and the addition of Block22 housing.

Her husband, Ed, and their children also attended PSU, as did many family members, and many of

them enjoy supporting PSU Athletics.

She has no plans to stop being a Gorilla.

"I'm a lifetime member of the Alumni Association, and I'll still root for the team, still be a part of things. Being a Gorilla means so much to me," she said. "I can't give that up."

A second home

Brazilian Valquiria Vita (MA '15) considers PSU a second home. An exchange student in communication in 2012, she returned to earn her master's in communication.

"I eventually had to leave, and it was so hard," she said. "They say that once a person lives abroad, she will never feel complete again because she is always missing one of the places, and they are right. As much as I enjoy my life in Brazil, I am always missing the USA!"

Keeping in touch helps.

"During my time as a Gorilla, I made lifelong friendships and we keep in touch through social media, which is where I get news from the university and my former professors, too," she said.

She also stays in touch with her Pitt Pal family, who attended her wedding in 2019 along with other Gorillas



Valquiria Vita (right), with a former roommate.

from Brazil, Paraguay, and the U.S. Vita and her best friend, Natalia Schneider, both got a tattoo to honor their second home: the Kansas logo, "Ad Astra Per Aspera."

"When I'm invited to give lectures at the university in my city, I always begin with Pitt State, a place that was important to shape my career and also the person I became," said Vita. "I frequently encourage other

people from my city to go to the same university, because the experience was life changing for me. And I think that is why I keep involved with it. Even though we were international students, Pitt State people made us feel at home."

Giving back

Scott Casebolt (BST '99) felt so strongly about his education in the School of Construction that for 20 years, he's given back.

Now president of Key Construction in Wichita, Kansas, he has helped coordinate golf tournaments to raise funds for scholarships, has served on the School of Construction Industry Advisory Board, is a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, and seeks out PSU graduates to hire.

"The education I received has provided great opportunities for me and my family," Casebolt said. "I feel it's my responsibility to give back as much as I can."

This spring, 70 students were awarded \$70,000 in construction scholarships.

"As industry professionals, we must provide financial support to students to make sure there is a pipeline of resources for our continued success," Casebolt said. "We feel that PSU provides some of the best graduates there are in our industry. I'll put the program up against anything else in the country."

Casebolt recently passed the torch



Keatin Herder and Scott Casebolt

for organizing tournaments to Keatin Herder (BST '12), who took it a step further by founding a sporting clays fundraiser.

As a four-year recipient of the Alumni Scholarship, he, too, felt it important to give back.

"Even though I don't know most current students, I can relate to their

experience and need for financial assistance," Herder said. "It's a very rewarding feeling to be part of the team. These students are the future of our construction industry, so why not help them be successful in their learning and help make them the best starting employees they can be for their future employers?"



Hanna-1991



Chris Hanna

Leaving a legacy

Chris Hanna (BS '95) attends Homecoming every year and other football games when possible, but for him, leaving a legacy was also important: He was a member of the 1991 National Championship team.

"Alumni from that team recently established the OAGAAG Football Legacy Fund to help give back to the team," he said. "But it's not only to help current players and coaches. It's to honor our teammate, Jeff Mundhenke (BS '92), who died in September 2020."

His death brought the team back together with a sense of urgency to honor him and other fallen players while helping provide for the needs of the current team.

"Our relationships are well past friendships," he said. "We're brothers."

Four generations

Ever since Jim (BSEd '65, MS '67) and Lois Carlson (BSEd '64) first met during fall enrollment in 1961, they've kept the university in their lives. Their family of Gorillas spans four generations, with 11 immediate family graduates and three grandchildren currently attending.

"Staying involved keeps us connected to our roots," said Lois.

The couple are Heritage Society members and Presidents Society University Ambassadors. They started and continue to fund the Jim and Lois Carlson Math/Family Consumer Science Scholarship, honoring both of their chosen professions, and Lois' family funds the Ralph and Carmel O'Malley Scholarship for elementary teachers

(Her mother earned her lifetime teaching certificate in 1929 and completed her BSED in 1962).

"When we meet scholarship recipients and so many other friendly and welcoming students, we know our support is helping to pave the way for leaders and educators in the future, and that's a rewarding feeling," Lois said.

They attend athletic events, scholarship luncheons, and events at the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts. Lois even donated her wedding gown and veil, along with some of



her mother's 1940s-50s dresses, to the FCS historic garment collection.

"It is always good to visit campus and reminisce about what it was like when we attended and how it has changed so much over the years," Lois said. "The changes and improvements are amazing."

Staying connected

After earning her graduate degree, Lindsay Young (MBA '09) has stayed connected. It's important to her personally and professionally, she said, to remain a Gorilla beyond her time on campus.

"I enjoyed my time at Pitt State and learned so much in and out of the classroom," she said. "PSU continues to help me in my career by connecting me with alumni around the country."

To that end, she has served on the Alumni Board of Directors, gives monetary donations several times a year, has co-chaired the School of Construction golf tournament to raise scholarship funds, and participates in Gorilla Gatherings whenever possible.

"I want to continue to give back and spread the word about Pitt State and what a great college it is," she said.



Next in line

As for Krina Snider, the OAGAAG logo creator, she's still very active with the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority. Her connection to PSU strengthened yet again last fall: her daughter, Emma, became a freshman majoring in psychology.

"It warmed my heart she chose Pitt," Snider said.

#OAGAAG

Stay connected on social media with the Gorilla Family.



@deeraemorgan The Morgan Littles are ready for Halloween! ❤️❤️
#oagaag #pittsburgstateuniversity #pittstate #pittstategorillas #pittstatefamily @pittsburg_state @pittstatealumni



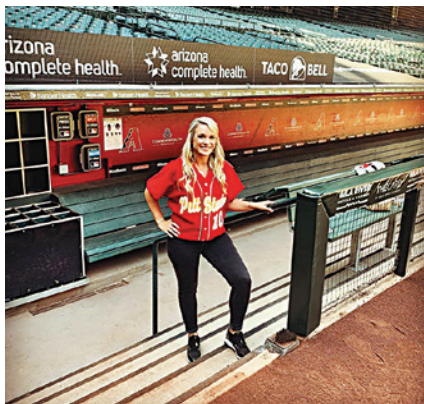
@be.charlez Split face is watching you! All I wanted to do this year was unicycle around campus when it was 0°F, so what's next?

Always appreciate the grounds crew for taking care of the landscaping and sidewalks.

#pittstate #winterunicycling #southeastkansas #magurabrakes

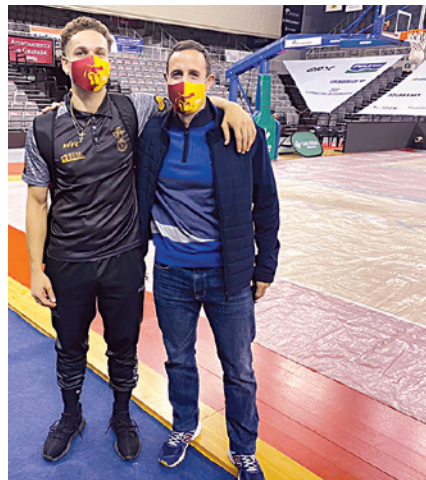


@mattsonsteale Do you think if Ryker wears his grandpas cool jersey he will squeeze right in and nobody will notice? ❤️🐶🐶 #pittstatepet



@kmggregory21 A Gorilla in the Desert • Go Pitt! 🦍❤️🐶🐶

Thank you Pittsburg State University for the education to help me, a girl from small-town Carthage, Missouri, live out my dream of working in MLB! #oagaag



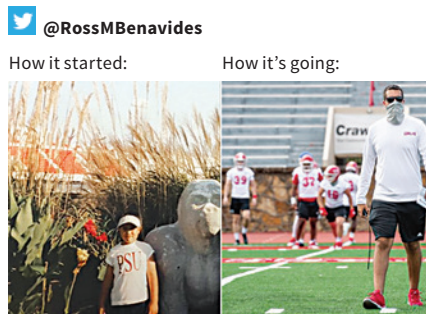
@oglez14 2 Gorillas representing Gorilla Nation in Spain. @PittStateAlumni @GorillasMBB @PittStGorillas @pittstate @gmlozoya #OAGAAG



@christopher.matz.3 A 'Flashback Friday' post since it's Homecoming this weekend at Pittsburg State University. 15 years ago I was honored to be a part of Homecoming Court Royalty. Check out that hair! 🦍🦍🦍 #OAGAAG



@deniselgrasso Yes we do!!!
#OAGAAG



@RossMBenavides

How it started:

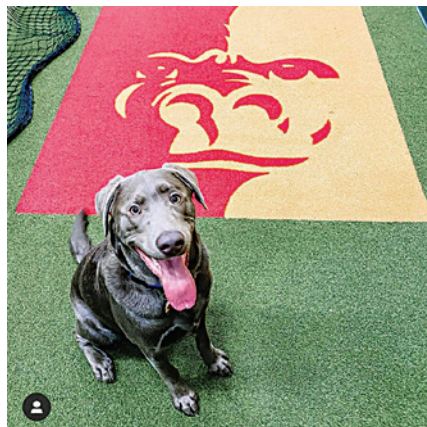
How it's going:

@drewgill53 A little cliché and biased, but December 17th, 2011 in Florence Alabama "and for the 4th time in school history, your Pittsburg State Gorillas are the National Football Champions!!" 🦍🦍🦍 #oagaag

ESPN @espn · Oct 21
What is your favorite sports moment of all time?



f @jordan.wiedemann S/O to Amy Maurer Hite and the Pittsburg State University Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing for the awesome Pitt State scrub cap for my graduation gift from CRNA school! I may be biased, but there's no better place than Pitt State!! #OAGAAG



ig @doug.silverlab Dad's office is my favorite place to be. GO RILLAS! 🐾



ig @owenbly I wish I could've fist bumped Dr. Scott but an elbow will do



ig @brittanynicoleworthington You could say I was pretty excited to find another gorilla on my porch this morning. 🐼
#OAGAAG #pittstatealumni #gorillagrad #merrychristmas



tw @DrCRegaBrodsky Dear @pittstate, Thank you for the snow day! I begged and begged to go out and play in the snow, even during my mom's lectures. After jumping on her mid-lecture, I think she finally got the hint. Love, Molly 🐾❄️
#oagaag #DogsofTwitter #SnowDay



ig @mrredefined Things to do on a frozen lake 🌨️
♥️ Pitt State ♥️
Next @pittstatealumni
#dronephotography #snow #frozenlake #pittstate #pittstategorillas



ig @lipearaujo This was a crazy year, but certainly a good one. It was like a roller coaster and a lot to learn during the ride. Congratulations to all 2020 graduates. Once a gorilla, always a gorilla.
#covidgraduation #internationalstudies #pittstate



ig @izzyhagen zoom university isn't so bad 😊



ig @ben_sinclair50 Easiest 1 on 1 rep I've ever had. #OAGAAG



f @tricia.robertsorourke It's favorite sports teams day at school. Quinn loves the Blues and Cardinals but he says the Pitt State Gorillas are his favorite. 🐼❤️🍌 #OAGAAG



t @michalearlrose Jersey day tomorrow for @SapulpaJrSrHigh? I'm in ... #oagaag



ig @crista_cunningham Gus looked cold this morning. We got him a hat.
#pittstate #oagaag #gorillas #pittsburgkansas

Champions Plaza

Bring the Tradition Home

CHAMPIONS PLAZA SCULPTURE

Part of the Gorillas' famed "Gorilla Walk" and a destination for alumni and fans, the Champions Plaza sculpture has become a beloved part of Pittsburg State tradition. Now, you can own a piece of history with this authentic solid-bronze casting of the dynamic sculpture by world-renowned artist Tom Corbin. Available in both an eight-inch study and a limited-edition 16-inch maquette.



Make Your Mark

CHAMPIONS PLAZA PAVER

Make your mark on the university's famed "Gorilla Walk" by reserving a personalized Champions Plaza stone paver. A limited number of pavers are available, so don't wait! Order your Champions Plaza paver today. Two sizes: 8"x 8" and 12"x12"



pittstate.edu/championsplaza



A Second Chance:

Joey and Kimberly Ross dropped out as freshmen and returned to PSU decades later to earn degrees. They succeeded and landed dream jobs that started a week after commencement.



THEY KNEW WHEN THEY MADE THE DECISION three years ago to try again that it wouldn't be easy. They were in their late 30s and each had a full-time job.

On Nov. 20, they each were handed their diplomas — Joey as a graduate of the College of Education and Kimberly as a graduate of Kelce College of Business — and on Nov. 30, they each started a new career.

"I first came to Pitt State from Nevada High School as a freshman in 1997, but I lived off campus and worked and it was hard to keep up paying the bills and going to school," said Kimberly, now 41. "I also was a typical 18-year-old, probably not applying myself like I should have."

"I had some growing up to do."

Joey, now 44, grew up in Weir, Kansas, where he had a terrific coach who inspired him. He came to PSU as a freshman in 1995 with dreams of being a physical education major, but, like Kimberly, wound up dropping out.

"I had some growing up to do," he said.

When their children were nearing adulthood, they decided to return — Kimberly to the Kelce College of Business for a degree in computer information systems, and Joey to the College of Education for a degree in physical education.

As residents of Lamar, Missouri, it required logging some serious miles.

Joey got up to work at home each weekday from 4 a.m. to 7:15 a.m. before heading to Liberal, Missouri, to complete his student teaching requirements from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. After school, he drove to Southeast High School in Cherokee, Kansas, where he coached wrestling, then returned home to finish remote work hours until bedtime.

Kimberly juggled a job at Leggett & Platt based in Carthage, Missouri, with coursework on campus and online.

But they did it: both graduated with a 3.5 GPA and were invited to join the National Society of Leadership and Success, an honors organization.

Before even being handed their diplomas, Kimberly was offered a job as a programmer/analyst for a Fortune 500 company, and Joey was offered a job teaching and coaching middle school.

"I've waited 20 years for this and I'm ready. It's a big deal, one of my biggest life goals, and definitely worth it," he said.

Kimberly said she has no regrets.

"I think this will be one of my biggest accomplishments," she said. "The same is true for Joey. It was worth it."





*“It dawned
on me then:
There need
to be more
like me.”*



Teachers Like Me

The small town in Southeast Kansas where Trinity Davis grew up had a large Black population for its size, but that wasn't reflected in the teachers she saw in the public schools, nor at Pittsburg State when she chose it for her degree.

“AT A YOUNG AGE, I realized that I wasn't learning a lot from the school district about what happened in history that pertained to Black people,” she said. “My family helped me with self-education, but I wanted to see myself reflected.”

Davis began working toward her degree in education with dreams of becoming a teacher. She was the only Black soon-to-be graduate at the College of Education's Teacher Interview Day.

“It dawned on me then: There need to be more like me,” she said.

After earning her bachelor's in 1997, she landed a job teaching elementary school and working as a literacy coach, but soon learned the unique, systemic challenges and inequities that Black teachers and students face in the classroom in addition to those outside of it.

Feeling she had insight to share and driven by the hope of helping to change the system, she returned to PSU as an associate professor in the College of Education with the goal of preparing teachers before they entered the classroom.

But she yearned for colleagues with greater diversity and the ability to make a more personal impact. She signed on as an administrator with the Kansas City

School District, where she worked for nearly eight years as urban areas were struggling to find teachers. She was promoted to assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

“Kids were suffering from not having teachers period, let alone teachers who look like them, and teachers weren't prepared to teach in that demographic,” she said. “It's hard — no joke. It's not the same as teaching in Parsons or Pittsburg.”

Through the years, she learned that changing hearts, minds, and the status quo can be challenging and at times downright messy. Still, she felt a calling.

Last summer, she resigned her position and launched a solution: her own non-profit called Teachers Like Me.

Her mission: to develop and retain future Black teachers in the Kansas City area.

“We're all about removing barriers,” Davis said.

She has set her sights on recruiting high school graduates, community college students, and upper-level education majors to create a rich network of future teachers, who when licensed will be eligible for housing and signing bonuses.

Her goal: to attract 20 future teachers and 20 classroom teachers to the program each year. She's on her way.

One of a Kind

Max Burson was given a small bandsaw and table saw in high school. In his spare time, he went to the garage and made small toys and chairs. When he came to Pitt State, he grew as a craftsman, and a unique business was born: B3 Wood Bicycles.



Photo by Nathan Hughes (BST '19)



Photo by Max Burson



YOU READ THAT RIGHT.
Bicycles. Built of wood.

As a cross country athlete looking to run collegiately, he chose PSU. On a tour of the Wood Tech program, he met Associate Professor Charlie Phillips. An injury eventually forced Burson to quit cross country, but that allowed him more time in Phillips' wood shop in the Kansas Technology Center.

"I don't remember what sparked the idea, but at some point I thought I'd make a wood bike," Burson said.

Like woodworking, his love of bikes began in high school, when he purchased a \$40 Craigslist road

bike that he fixed up and brought with him to campus.

A trip with Phillips to the International Woodworking Fair in Atlanta provided Burson additional inspiration, and when he returned, he got busy.

"It was single speed, no brakes," he said. "The first nice fall day, I was super excited and took my wood bike on a ride down Rouse. I think I hit 32 miles per hour on a flat stretch."

During an internship in Colorado, he achieved another milestone and bragging rights: he rode one of his wood bikes down Pike's Peak — all 14,115 magnificent feet of it.

"I was passing cars at 40+ miles per hour," he said. "There was a lot of curiosity among people. They were asking questions. It definitely was a conversation starter."

Burson attended a handmade bike show in Utah, where attendees expressed interest in his wood bikes, and he planned to ride one on a cross country bike trip. Ongoing hip pain that required two hip surgeries derailed his plans.

But after eventually overcoming those challenges, he completed his senior project: a wood bike that took him 260 hours to build.

"I was super-focused on making it as beautiful and artistic as possible — really pushing the envelope of what I could do," he said. "I'd been saving up chunks of walnut for years."

Burson was the first to graduate when Wood Tech rebranded as the Architectural Manufacturing Management and Technology program in December 2018.

Jobs since then have included work at cabinet makers and woodworking shops. After hours, he's mulling over what's possible, marketable, and profitable when it comes to his custom wood bikes.

"This degree has really expanded my abilities and given me confidence I didn't have before. It's opened up so many opportunities," he said. "Since I was a kid, I've dreamed of one day having my own shop. I would love for it to be bikes full time, and maybe furniture on the side. It will happen someday. I just need to find my footing."

GREAT GORILLAS



The Winningest

Does winning a state football championship year after year make them any less special?

“PEOPLE ASK THAT QUESTION A LOT. I look at each year as being really special, because you have a whole new group of kids — no two teams are the same,” said John Roderique, head football coach at Webb City (Missouri) High School. “A win is special each time.”

Roderique, who at PSU was an All-American linebacker and graduated in 1990, now holds the record for coaching the most state football championships in Missouri and was chosen for induction in the 2021 Missouri Sports Hall of Fame.

The class includes the late Derrick Thomas of the Kansas City Chiefs, Kansas City Royals General Manager Dayton Moore, angler Edwin Evers, and Springfield philanthropist Bobby Allison.

Since 1997, Roderique’s teams have compiled a record of 298–28 and enjoyed 10 undefeated seasons. They have racked up 12 state championships in Class 4 and have advanced to the playoffs 22 of 24 seasons, winning 21 consecutive district titles.

“Recognition is nice. It makes you feel good. But I’m not really that much of an attention seeker,” he said. “It’s about what our team has accomplished, our program over the years — the success of everyone involved. As a head

coach, I get a lot of recognition, but no one does anything on their own.”

He credits colleagues, players, administration, community, and parents — including family members who feed the players on Thursday nights and who buy them donuts on Friday mornings.

“We ask our players to be unselfish, to give

everything they have, as a team member. To be part of something bigger than themselves. I think any leader wants that,” he said. “It’s more team accomplishment than an individual accomplishment.”

Football has been a part of his life as long as he can remember, and so has winning; he was an All-State linebacker for Webb City High School in 1985 under former Gorilla Mark McDonald (BSEd ‘74, MS ‘78), and was recruited to PSU by Assistant Coach Jerry Kill under Head Coach Dennis Franchione.

“I spent four incredible years at Pitt as a player — we only lost four games — and was fortunate enough to stay on to coach for seven years under Chuck Broyles,” Roderique said. “The coaches I’ve had over the years have really influenced me.”

He married 1989 Homecoming Queen Heather Schnackenberg (BBA ‘90). Their three children,

Hailey (BS ‘14), John (BS ‘19), and Tyson (BS ‘20), all attended PSU, and now, the Roderiques are grandparents. Football has been “a family thing” for all of them.

Reflecting on his career, seeing his players mature into young men with good grades, good citizenship, and good attitudes is as

important as a Hall of Fame induction. He loves hearing from students he coached 20 years ago that he made a difference.

“When kids reach out, that’s what matters,” he said. “That makes me feel the best about what I’ve done over the years. You want to have had an impact, not just wins.”

*“When kids reach out,
that’s what matters...
that makes me feel the
best about what I’ve
done over the years.”*

A Juggling Act

Busy professionals across the region with the goal of advancing their careers have discovered a way to juggle earning a Master of Business Administration with full-time jobs and families: the recently created online Professional MBA program at Pittsburg State University.



Melissa Beasley

THE LARGEST COHORT YET — 48 students from across the region — graduated in December. Among them: a police officer, a bank executive, and an analyst.

“Earning my MBA allows me to continue to grow professionally and become a more valuable member of the organization,” said Melissa Beasley, assistant vice president of the Labette Health Medical Group. “It also validates the credibility and trust that is needed for a leadership position.”

Beasley oversees the daily operations of 10 rural health clinics and six specialty clinics, supporting more than 140 staff,

physicians, and non-physician providers.

“I have a very fast-paced, sometimes very demanding job and I have to be able to be flexible,” she said. “If all of a sudden something came up and I had to stay late at work, I knew I didn’t have to worry about being late or missing a class.”

She knew the reputation of Kelce College of Business and knew the program would give her credibility.

Enrollment has continued to grow — from 40 students in Spring 2019 to 285 this fall. The degree can be earned in

just 12 months in one of four emphasis areas: human resources; accounting; international business; and general administration, which accounts for the largest percentage of enrollment. Soon, there may be more emphasis areas, including construction management, healthcare administration, and marketing.

“Inquiries come from around the country, and we have interest from around the world,” said Associate Dean Bienvenido Cortes.

The bulk of interest comes from the Midwest from students like Melissa Moore, city clerk in



Melissa Moore



Thomas Cuppett

Miami, Oklahoma, who dreams of being a city manager one day. Also a busy wife and mother, she needed flexibility and affordable tuition.

“I’m very happy with my choice to complete this program through PSU.”

“I’m very happy with my choice to complete this program through PSU,” she said.

So much so, in fact, that she has recommended the program to several acquaintances.

For Pittsburg Patrol Sergeant Thomas Cuppett, who also is a sergeant first class with the Army Reserves, the degree was a critical step forward in his career. Both jobs carry heavy administrative duties.

“The shorter classes and flexible periods were essential due to my changing schedule and an attempted deployment,”

he said. “I was able to take a partial semester off when I was supposed to be transitioning to Iraq, but when the mission was off-ramped, I was able to come back and get into the program without any difficulty.”

Cuppett says the culture at the Pittsburg Police Department includes a focus on furthering education; many of his colleagues are working toward their bachelor’s and master’s degrees, and even a doctorate.

“We push each other to become better, and I’m happy to contribute to that culture,” he said.

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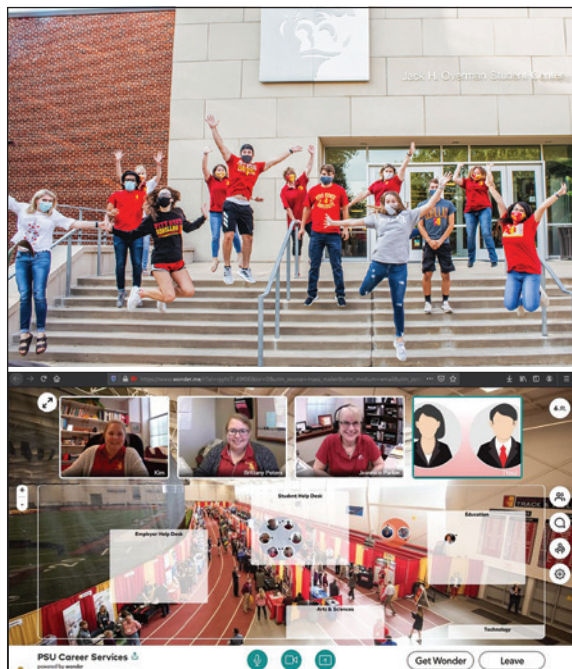
Advantages of Beneficiary Designation Gifts

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- **Avoid Probate** - Gifting assets via a beneficiary designation will avoid the probate process.
- **Tax Savings** - By making a gift of your retirement plan to the PSU Foundation, your estate will receive a 100% charitable deduction, thereby saving estate taxes and income taxes on those assets.
- **Inexpensive** - In most cases, there is no need to amend your will or trust, thus saving legal fees.

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



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Graphic impact

Two projects by seniors in Graphics and Imaging Technologies have positively impacted two Southeast Kansas communities.

One, the Pittsburg Story Walk designed by graphic design major Toni Zibert, is being used by parents and children who visit two local parks. She utilized what she learned from Associate Professor Andrea McConnaughey's classes.

"I don't think I would have been able to complete a project like this, at that scale, without that prior knowledge and confidence I learned at Pitt State," she said.

The other, a website started by one of Assistant



Professor Jason Reid's classes, was completed by web and interactive media major Lauren Wool for the City of Columbus, Kansas, as an internship. It's being used by city staff and residents every day.

"I'm really proud of the end result. It's definitely the biggest project I've worked on," she said. "Now, I'm in talks with another small town about developing a web site. I can see myself doing this for non-profits and other groups."

Athletic data



A \$29,000 grant award from Special Olympics North America is helping four students and an associate professor in Health, Human Performance, and Recreation conduct a research project involving 140 athletes across Kansas.

Reese Dalton of Carl Junction, Missouri; Hanah Carr of Springfield, Missouri; Libby VanRheen of Gardner, Kansas; and Brenna Schroeder of Rose Hill, Kansas, worked with their professor, Laura Covert-Miller, to create demonstration videos and to gather data from each athlete before and after Special Olympics programming.

The grant paid for Chromebooks, Fitbits for each athlete, software to download data from the Fitbits, and stipends for the students. But equally valuable, the students said, is the experience working with special needs populations.

Marketing for fun

Partnerships with local businesses continue to give students in Kelce College of Business the opportunity to work on real-world projects while at the same time benefiting the businesses.

Professor Matt Lunde's applied marketing management class created marketing plans for the new Fun Depot, a family fun center that opened in a renovated 1880s building downtown.

Their plans incorporated advertising, promotion, social media, budgeting, sustainability, ethics, public relations, and more.

"I was very impressed with their work," Lunde said. "Among the goals were for them to work together as a team, understand how all the marketing mechanisms and plans come together for a business, work with a real client, and give back to the community. They were very successful."

Historic connection

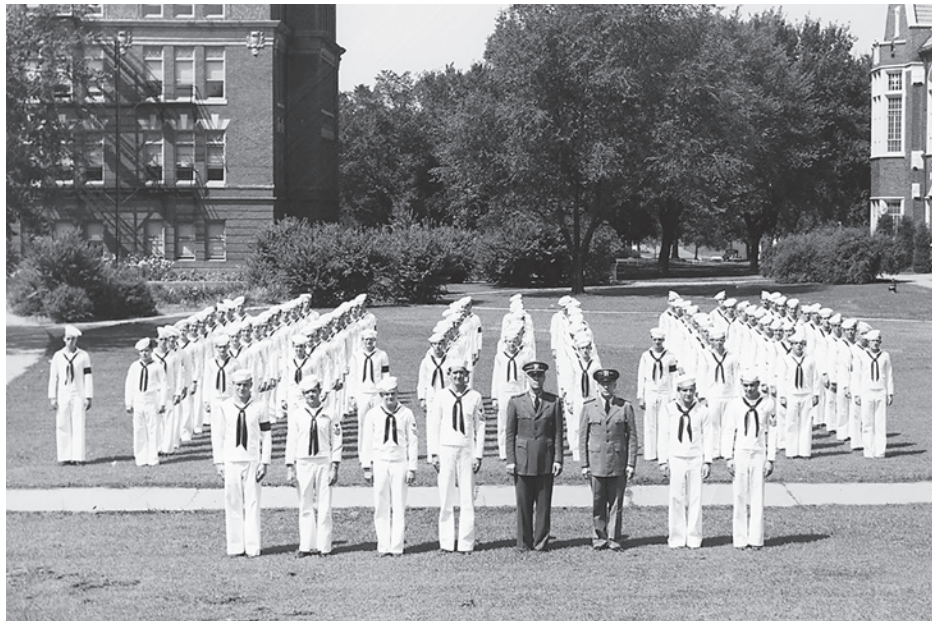
When Associate Professor of History Kris Lawson realized how many veterans and Red Cross nurses from both World Wars have a connection to PSU, but whose stories have been lost to history, she sensed it would make a good project for her students who are learning to become historians.

She gave each student the name of a former student who didn't return from war and tasked them with researching newspaper articles, yearbooks, and other primary documents to learn what happened to them, then write short biographies.

"In the 1946 Kanza yearbook, there is a whole page of names of students who went to war and never returned. What were their ambitions? What were their lives going to be like before they went? What dreams were never realized?" Lawson said.

"I can see this project changing my own students each time they do it, because they spend an entire semester with a person their age who 'boom' is gone. It's made history real for them."

Top: A young family tends to their garden plot at one of several former Quonset hut barracks converted into married student housing from 1946-1952. **Bottom:** Navy V-12 Unit companies trained on campus during World War II from June 1943 to 1945, commanded by Lt. R.E. Baldwin. Enrolled at the same time were members of the McFarland Flying Service U.S. Army Air Forces Contract School.



Virtual education

Professor Julie Dainty is working with career and technical teacher education student Kevin Stalsberg, who is pursuing an educational specialist degree, on a timely research project.

When the pandemic began, Stalsberg, a high school teacher in the Shawnee Mission, Kansas, School District, had to begin making extreme adjustments to his courses. He embraced the opportunity to change his previously planned research mid-stream and instead collect data on student perceptions of engagement and motivation of being educated in a virtual world.

The result, "Comparing Student Participation and Engagement of High School Juniors in their Career and Technical Education Classes and a Core Class, in an Online, Virtual Environment," will be valuable to teachers moving forward.

"I feel this project and Kevin's willingness to add such a huge undertaking to his busy schedule is indicative of PSU student quality and focus," Dainty said.

Campus survey

In the Human Resource Development graduate program in the Department of Technology and Workforce Learning, Assistant Professor Judy Smetana has been teaching students how to properly conduct surveys in the workplace in order to assess the culture of an organization.

What better way to apply what they're learning than by conducting a real survey in a real workplace, and Smetana took it a step further: she had them conduct surveys at PSU.

"It was very hands-on," she said. "They sent out a survey and did in-person interviews of administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The objective was to give them experience in understanding the culture of an organization compared to what or how it presents itself."

MILESTONE MOMENTS

We're proud to play a role in life's milestone moments for Gorillas of all ages, from riding your bike across campus as a child to returning to campus for a Half Century reunion. Have a milestone moment to share? Email your photo, a caption, and your degree and graduation year to psumag@pittstate.edu.



Dru James Mayberry, daughter of Micah Mayberry and Carley Leach, and Blair Olivia Snyder, daughter of Briar and Taylor (BS '14) Snyder. These adorable babies' roots run deep with Gorilla legacies, including their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, and uncles.



Schneider and Giacomelli Wedding (submitted by PSU International Programs and Services). "We love it when Gorillas get married! Natalia Schneider and Fabio Giacomelli got married in Nova Prata, Brazil. Both attended PSU twice — first as exchange students in 2012 and then as graduate students. They both earned master's degrees in biology in 2017. Other Gorillas attended the wedding to support the couple, including Rodrigo Ferreira, Jeremiah Reece, Johnna Foster, Camila Schneider and Valquiria Vita." #OAGAAG



Abhiraj Thakor graduated with his BST in automotive technology. He posted on Instagram, "Thank you from the bottom of my heart to everyone who has supported me in this journey."



Blair Wilson (submitted by Julie Wilson). "VERY excited that my daughter has made her decision to attend Pitt next year!!! I received my MEd in 1996 and our son received his bachelor's degree in 2020."



Kyler Brady, the first person in his family to earn a Bachelor's, achieved another milestone by earning his MBA in December '20. He shared his achievement on LinkedIn. "...it meant the world to me for my daughter to see me walk across the stage. Even if she doesn't remember the moment, she can look back at this picture and be proud of her dad. I wanted her to see that anything is possible with perseverance and determination, even when you are listening to lectures while changing diapers! My wife understood when I needed to step away from family time to study and I couldn't have done it without her! My message to everyone is keep pushing, keep looking, keep listening, because anything can happen no matter what your financial upbringing or background is." #pittstate #oagaag



Amy Drilling will graduate this semester with a Master of Science in Nursing with an Emphasis in Education, but she couldn't attend Commencement since she lives in New Jersey. So instead, she celebrated with her regalia at the Statue of Liberty!



Congratulations are in order for these football graduates: Will Bazzle, Tucker Horak, Kyler Ray, PJ Sarwinski, Zechariah Thomas, Anthony Wilkerson (not pictured). We are SO proud of what they have accomplished!! #RYFP #Strive4Five #OAGAAG



Charles (BS '70, MS '71) and Bobbie (BS '70) Wiltse celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in December 2020. The couple met while attending Pittsburg State and studying social work. The couple resides in Parsons, Kansas.



Karna Carlson-Richards (BS '12) shared this picture of their future Gorilla, Ava.



"Proud mom announcement! It's finally official! Colby has been accepted to attend Pittsburg State University!" Julie Reams shared this photo of her son, Colby Reams, who plans to pursue a degree in graphics.



Lauren Musgrove (BSEd '12, MSED '16) and Chris Musgrove (BS '14) met in 2009 while on the Cross Country team together. "We're so thankful for Pitt State and the chance for us to meet and build our lives together!" Lauren said. The couple recently became parents.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS GUS?

Where have you traveled with Gus or wearing your Gorilla gear? Email your photo, a caption, and your degree and graduation year to psumag@pittstate.edu.



Ethan Lomshek (Freshman, '19), David Newcomb (BSEd '68, MS '72, EdS '76, BS '88), Rebecca Lomshek (BSEd '94, MS '07), and Roger Lomshek pose in their PSU and Tailwind Cyclists race gear at the 2019 Arkansas Mountain Bike Championship Race in Devil's Den State Park, Arkansas.



While hiking outside of Crested Butte, Colorado, Michelle Gerber (BSEd '83) stumbled upon a trail named Pittsburg. (It even had the correct spelling!).



Dr. Brent Crandon, O.D. (BS '85) biked around Aspen, Colorado, last fall and showed off his Gorilla pride.



Jane Steele (Rupard) (BS '72) and David Steele (BST '69, MST '72) enjoyed their vacation with Gorilla Pride, from Victoria, British Columbia, to Alaska, taking in the sights by land and sea.



Before the pandemic, Mark Hornick (BSIT '72, MSED '74) and Betty Stanley Hornick (BSED '71, MSED '73) traveled to Greece — Athens first, and then to Preveza where they saw this mermaid statue. She's been photographed many times over the years, but we wonder if the Hornicks might be the first to have posed in front of her with a Gorilla t-shirt?



Kathy Folk (BBA '83) and her family on a visit to Mount Rushmore.



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1959

Dale Dennis (BSEd, MSED '66, EdS '83) retired after 53 years of service to the Kansas State Department of Education. Dale was named deputy commissioner of fiscal and administrative services in 1976 and supervised the administration of about \$5 billion in state and federal funds that flowed through unified school districts and nonpublic schools.

1963

Pamela J. Beer (BSEd, MSED '78) was published in the Missouri State Teachers Association Magazine "School and Community" Fall 2020. The article, "Celebrating 100 Years of S & C" is a look at education through the eyes of four generations of educators.

1970

Charles (BS, MS '71) and **Bobbie** (BS) **Wiltse** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in December 2020. The couple met while attending Pittsburg State and studying social work. The couple resides in Parsons, Kansas.

1980

Jamie Clarkson (BBA) retired after serving the City of Pittsburg for nearly 40 years. He served as Finance Director since 2012.

1981

John Silovsky (BS) named new Wildlife Division Director by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

1986

Dr. William J. Sullivan (BS), DO, FACP, FACOI, was designated a Fellow by the American College of Osteopathic Internists. He is also a Fellow of the American College of Physicians. Dr. Sullivan is an Assistant Professor of Medicine for the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences and The Kansas Health Sciences College, and is also a preceptor for the PSU Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing.

1987

Jonathon Johnson (BS) was named Chairman for Kansas Bankers Association.

Dave Rockers (MSEd) was named Missouri Association Career Technology Education Director of the Year. The annual award is sponsored by the Missouri Council for Career and Technical Education Administrators.

1990

Melinda Denton (MS) was honored with the Missouri Council on Public Higher Education's Governor's Award for Excellence in Education. Melinda is a mathematics professor at Missouri State University-West Plains in West Plains, Missouri.

John Roderique (BSEd, MSED '94) was inducted into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame. He was also named Coach of the Year by the Central Ozark Conference. John is the head football coach at Webb City High School in Webb City, Missouri.

1991

Craig VanWey (BBA) was named In-State Business Development Manager by Kansas Secretary of Commerce. He most recently served as Regional Project Manager for Southeast Kansas. From January 2019 to August 2020, he oversaw 29 successful projects in Southeast Kansas, totaling more than 1,500 new/retained full-time jobs.

1992

Dan Kinney, PhD (BBA) was named President of Iowa Western Community College in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

1993

John Moore (BSEd) joined Greenbush-Middle River School District in Greenbush, Minnesota, as an industrial technology teacher.

Jason Wiltshire, MD (BS '93) opened a general surgery practice at The University of Kansas Health System Great Bend Campus in Great Bend, Kansas. Dr. Wiltshire is board-certified by the American Board of Surgery and is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons.

1994

Darla Easter (BSN, MSN '09) was awarded Spirit of Excellence Advanced Practice Registered Nurse at Freeman Health System in Joplin, Missouri, during the annual Nursing Spirit Awards.

1995

Denny Routh (BBA) was named to Missouri Sports Hall of Fame Elite 11. The Elite 11 honors former high school, college, and

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professional players who made positive contributions to the sport or have contributed in a meaningful way to the game. Routh played football at Pittsburg State, earning varsity letters in 1991, 1993 and 1994. He was a member of Pitt State's 1991 National Championship team.

2002

Derek Hoffine (BST) was promoted to Vice President and District Manager of Hensel Phelps' Plains District. During his career, he has successfully expanded into new regions and increased Hensel Phelps' presence in healthcare and other key sectors.

Kevin Thomure (BSEd, MEd '06) is a new history instructor at Fort Scott Community College in Fort Scott, Kansas.

2003

Lindsay Krumbholz (BS), along with two business partners, opened an ice cream shop called The Golden Scoop. The Golden Scoop, located in Overland Park, Kansas, employs individuals with developmental disabilities.

Mick Tedlock (BSEd) was named Kansas Adaptive Teacher of the Year by the Kansas Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. He serves as an Adaptive PE Special Education Teacher for SEK Interlocal.

2004

Bethanie Boley (BSN) was named Regional Nursing Director of Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas' Northern Region. She will oversee clinics in Fort Scott, Iola, Pleasanton, and Mound City, as well as Fort Scott Walk-In Care.

2006

Mark Bristow (BST) was named North American Sales Manager of DeatschWerks Fuel Systems, LLC. The company is in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, but Mark works remotely from the Kansas City area.

Greg Shaw (MSEd) was inducted to the 2021 Kansas Thespians Hall of Fame. Shaw was the Director of Theatre at Pittsburg High School until his death in 2020.

2007

Heather Busch (BA, MST '18) honored with the 2020 Technology Award by Kansas Association of Colleges and Employers.

2008

Luke Henke (BSEd, MS '10) won the Presidential Award of Excellence in

Mathematics and Science Teaching, which is the nation's highest honor for math and science teaching. Luke is a math teacher at Columbus Unified High School in Columbus, Kansas.

2010

Megan Carlson, DO (BS) joined Freeman Health System in Joplin, Missouri, as an obstetrician and gynecologist.

2011

Zach Crissup (MSEd) was named head football coach at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College in Miami, Oklahoma.

2012

Nicholas Baldetti, PhD (MBA, MSEd) was named Executive Director of Health Care Initiatives at McPherson College in McPherson, Kansas.

Jessica Dalton (BSN, MSN '14, DNP '16) joined First Med, a clinic within LMH Health, in Lawrence, Kansas. The clinic provides family medicine and walk-in care.

Kasey Hockman (BS, MA '13) appointed to the Board of Directors at The Rainbow Network. This group works to empower Nicaragua's poorest people by providing them with sustainable solutions and practical skills to build a better future.

Lee Johnson (MSEd) was named Director of Admissions at Rogers State University in Claremore, Oklahoma.

Jami Woodyard (BS) named Director of Donor Relations and Phonathon Coordinator at Trine University in Angola, Indiana.

2013

Ben Cochran (MSN, DNP '16) was recognized by The American Association of Nurse Practitioners with the 2021 AANP Nurse Practitioner State Award of Excellence. This award is given annually to a dedicated nurse practitioner in each state who proves excellence in practice. Ben is a Nurse Practitioner at Labette Health's Altamont Clinic in Altamont, Kansas.

Jessica Storey (BSEd, MSEd '17) joined Paola USD 368 in Paola, Kansas, as a seventh grade teacher for interrelated and special education.

2015

Katelyn Erwin (BSN, DNP '20) joined Nevada Regional Medical Center as a Family Nurse Practitioner in the Primary Care Center in Nevada, Missouri.

2016

Jena Hartman (MAEd) was named Director of Learning Services for North Central Kansas Technical College in Beloit, Kansas.

2017

Mikaela Burgess (BSEd) was honored with Filbert Five Award from the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame. This award honors former high school and college standouts who made positive impacts on the game of basketball.

Ramey Mapp (BSEd, MEd '20) joined Paola USD 368 in Paola, Kansas, as a fourth grade teacher.

2019

Kaitlyn Arnold (BSEd) was named first grade teacher at Winfield Scott Elementary School in Fort Scott, Kansas.

Sonny Bourne (BSEd) joined Paola USD 368 in Paola, Kansas. She teaches seventh and eighth grade social studies and coaches middle school basketball.

Aaron Huntley (MBA) was named to Northwest Arkansas Business Journal's 2020 Forty Under 40 Class. He is the Senior Vice President of Strategy at First Western Bank in Rogers, Arkansas.

2020

Christian Edmondson (BBA) graduated from Tarrant Law Enforcement Academy in Fort Worth, Texas. He is now serving the Flower Mound Police Department in Flower Mound, Texas.

Morie Price (BS) joined Four States Homepage as a Digital Producer in Joplin, Missouri.

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

1939

Mary A. Coopridger, Littleton, Colo.

1940

Martha R. Feltych, Joplin, Mo.
Richard L. Schiefelbusch,
Lawrence, Kan.

1941

Lois E. Dickey, Fayetteville, N.C.

1942

Willie T. Hembree, Boca Raton, Fla.

1948

Albert J. Grosdidier, Pomona, Kan.
Dolores M. Kennett, Pittsburg, Kan.
Mary Lou Sheldon, Ottawa, Kan.
Lorena M. Trinkle, Hamilton, Ohio

1949

Lee E. Johnson, Baxter Springs,
Kan.
Lida L. Magness, Golden, Colo.

1950

Floyd E. Belk, Joplin, Mo.
Glenn Frakes, Colorado Springs,
Colo.
Morris P. Grotheer, Clive, Iowa
Donald J. Johnson, McPherson,
Kan.
Robert E. Kennedy, Kansas City,
Mo.
R. Dean Taylor, Commerce
Township, Mich.

1951

Jane M. Ball, Duncan, Okla.
John D. Turlip, Southlake, Texas

1952

George R. Duff, Joplin, Mo.
Jay M. Dutton, Colony, Kan.
Harrison M. Kash, Webb City, Mo.

1953

Audrey E. Crutcher, Springfield, Mo.
Carl E. Liebig, Olathe, Kan.

1954

Joseph A. Haefling, Durham, N.C.
Phillip E. Smyth, Lyons, Kan.
Jim S. Torchia, Tulsa, Okla.

1955

Dorothy M. Aldrich, Moses Lake,
Wash.
Melva I. Hudson, Saint Paul, Kan.
Jackie P. Klingler, Springfield, Va.
Lillian M. Nakamoto, Honolulu,
Hawaii
Robert L. Wright, Lone Tree, Colo.

1956

Jim H. Carter, Melbourne, Fla.
Robert B. Horning, O'Fallon, Mo.
John W. Johnson, Montgomery
Village, Md.
Carl E. McCulley, Webb City, Mo.
James E. Rice, Modesto, Calif.

1957

Elizabeth J. Clark, Spokane, Wash.
Don D. Herd, Tulsa, Okla.
Rose M. Jeffries, Springdale, Ark.
Charles I. Key, Belton, Mo.
Darrell Little, Jacksonville, Ill.
Donald L. Manning, Fort Worth,
Texas
Mike L. Marrello, Springfield, Mo.
Larry E. Mooney, Winter Park, Fla.
Marie Rodich, Frontenac, Kan.
Lezell Smith, Kansas City, Mo.
George M. Thomas, Overland
Park, Kan.
Luanna L. Youvan, Frontenac, Kan.

1958

Richard M. Boone, Meridian, Ind.
Charles L. Guatney, Hiawasee,
Ga.
Gene Hill, McPherson, Kan.
Arnold L. Schnieders, Burrton,
Kan.
Roy L. Surridge, Pittsburg, Kan.
George E. Terry, Carthage, Mo.

1959

Margaret L. Duff, Joplin, Mo.
Jennie H. Ferrel, Mansfield, Ohio
Walter L. Hays, Osawatimie, Kan.
James W. Headrick, Hughson,
Calif.
Wayne E. Kennedy, Branson, Mo.
Leon Maxson, Creston, Iowa
Eldon D. Offenbacher, Vinita, Okla.
Norman C. Schweder, Kansas City,
Kan.
Ted T. Stahura, Portage, Ind.
Hattie B. Tidwell, Altadena, Calif.
Harlon D. Wilson, Independence,
Kan.

1960

Mary K. Arnold, Nevada, Mo.
Donald L. Bleam, La Cygne, Kan.
Fay Bradley, Independence, Kan.
Ronald L. Jost, Overland Park,
Kan.
Larry A. Maycumber, Hot Springs
Village, Ark.
Herbert J. Thompson, Kansas
City, Mo.

1961

Carol B. Boone, Prescott, Ariz.
Avis O. Hale, LaCygne, Kan.
Joe A. Hartley, Kissimmee, Fla.
Barbara L. Lakin, Portland, Ore.
Natalie B. Lattimore, Madison, Va.
Cletus G. Manhart, Silver Lake,
Kan.
Leigh T. Reynolds, Jasper, Mo.
Paul E. Temming, Goddard, Kan.

1962

Donna L. Jamar, Olathe, Kan.
Janet S. Paulsen, Topeka, Kan.
Edith M. Pugh, Carthage, Mo.
George S. Weems, Dunedin, Fla.
Charles A. Wells, Cedar Bluffs, Neb.

1963

James W. Hales, S. Coffeyville,
Okla.
David C. Sewell, Tulsa, Okla.

1964

Larry K. Karst, Charlottetown,
Canada
James R. Paulsen, Topeka, Kan.
Robert J. Smith, Carthage, Mo.

1965

Marjorie Z. Brown-Yokley, Webb
City, Mo.
Sarah A. Biles, Manhattan, Kan.
Joy E. Canon, Calumet, Okla.
Kathy Young, Estes Park, Colo.

1966

Sandra K. Bugni, Overland Park,
Kan.
Robert G. Dennis, Mesa, Ariz.
William A. Puckett, Staunton, Va.
Carl J. Swenson, Jr., Conroe, Texas

1967

Ron Lee Allen, Lutz, Fla.
Carrie L. Elbrader, Winfield, Kan.
Lemuel H. Hester, Leavenworth,
Kan.
Burney W. Johnson, Diamond, Mo.
Richard D. Marshall, Fort Scott,
Kan.

1968

Virginia L. Barger, Joplin, Mo.
Richard L. Carpenter, Pleasanton,
Kan.
Charles N. Ingram, Jr., Derby, Kan.
Herbert L. Linn, Carthage, Mo.
Doug McCarter, Lamar, Mo.
Billy J. Oertle, Pittsburg, Kan.
Billy J. Rickman, Fontana, Kan.
Ronald M. Riggs, Coffeyville, Kan.
Eloise Robbins, Freeman, Mo.
Fred G. Willhaus, Springfield, Mo.

1969

Patrick W. Harmon, Overland Park,
Kan.
Horace Saunders, Riverton, Kan.
Alan K. Stanley, Jacksonville
Beach, Fla.
Cheryl J. Strickland, Nevada, Mo.

1970

Doris R. Daniels, Tulsa, Okla.
Judith A. Jungk, Leawood, Kan.
Ronald C. Silver, Columbus, N.C.
James V. Smith, Joliet, Ill.
Jim B. Thurston, Great Bend, Kan.
Susan B. Wachter, Lawrence, Kan.
Carl E. Wing, Mulvane, Kan.

1971

Dale A. Aikins, Carl Junction, Mo.
Mark C. Bishir, Pittsburg, Kan.
Dennis Carson, Ellinwood, Kan.
Ronald T. Gazaway, Warner, Okla.
Calvin Gonterman, Webb City, Mo.
Anthony P. Gronau, Overland Park,
Kan.
Bonita D. Holeman, Bronson, Kan.
Mike Jades, Shawnee, Kan.
Carveth K. Neer, Frontenac, Kan.
Tom L. Schabel, Caney, Kan.
Gus W. Sturmfels, Huntsville, Ala.
Alex M. Ybarra, Mound Valley, Kan.

1972

Ted W. Bronleewe, Georgetown,
Texas
Roger B. Doty, Bartlesville, Okla.
John F. Gartin, Wichita, Kan.
Gerald R. Gobetz, Springfield, Mo.
Garold G. Goodwin, Lane, Kan.
James E. Holman, Grove, Okla.
Ira G. Salvini, Lawrence, Kan.
Riley C. Worthy, Sedalia, Mo.

1973

David A. Bellamy, Overland Park,
Kan.
Addison A. Deallie, Wichita, Kan.
Larry D. Palmer, Parsons, Kan.
Michael J. Walsh, Canyon, Texas

1974

Fred Brown, Independence, Kan.
James H. Clausen, Cherokee, Kan.
Dennis Crain, Pittsburg, Kan.
Candace L. Eck, Wichita, Kan.
Kerry E. Grigsby, Overland Park,
Kan.
Rolla M. Hurlbert, Pittsburg, Kan.
Mike G. Kingsley, Wellsville, Kan.
Charles N. Long, Minneapolis, Minn.
Larry L. McKenzie, Webb City, Mo.
Fred J. Paschke, Wapato, Wash.
Winifred R. Sneed, Carthage, Mo.
Martha E. Teter, Wichita, Kan.
Tom C. Weathers, McLouth, Kan.
James L. Wylie, Palm Desert, Calif.

1975

Jackie L. Bradley, Joplin, Mo.
Dale D. Kennedy, Coffeyville, Kan.
Michael McQuade, Madill, Okla.
Claudette M. Mercer, Miami, Okla.
Kennedy Swender, Parsons, Kan.

1976

Julia A. Birk-Tutin, Joplin, Mo.
Terry W. Hoover, Kansas City, Kan.
Doug J. Moses, Vacaville, Calif.

1977

Lori J. Bogle, Girard, Kan.
Durward H. Brewer, Neosho, Mo.
Alan E. Burr, Humboldt, Neb.
Steve L. Odaffer, Webb City, Mo.
William E. Wynn, Jr., Nevada, Mo.

1978

Theao A. Cook, Joplin, Mo.
Edward J. Dulin, East Peoria, Ill.

Kathleen A. Keisner, Owasso, Okla.
Kelly M. Shinn, Wichita, Kan.

1979

Joyce M. Alexander, Edna, Kan.
Marilyn K. Madsen, Lenexa, Kan.
Rebecca A. Medved, Olathe, Kan.
George E. Steckly, Clackamas, Ore.

1980

Gregory G. Knecht, Paola, Kan.
Terry D. Smith, Augusta, Kan.

1981

Phyllis A. Gatliff, Sterling, Va.
Phillip R. Hartong,
Saint Petersburg, Fla.

1982

Ronald E. Charlton, Mindenmines,
Mo.
Carol J. George, Redfield, Kan.
Wandalee Shaw, Shawnee, Kan.
Linda M. Smith, Glenpool, Okla.
Joseph L. Warnock, Independence,
Kan.

1983

Kelley Kulaga, Williamsburg, Va.

1984

Margaret DeStefano, Seneca, Mo.
Shawn J. Packard, Pittsburg, Kan.

1985

Michael G. Heath, Arcadia, Kan.

1986

Chris J. Robinson, Parsons, Kan.

1987

Vivian A. Metcalf, Parsons, Kan.

1988

Lyndon S. Bicknell, Joplin, Mo.
Elizabeth D. Follis, Tulsa, Okla.
James A. McVay, Jr., Erie, Kan.
Sammye L. Smith, Cabot, Ark.

1989

Roxine Poznich, Fort Scott, Kan.
Vicki A. Stiles, Jacksonville, Fla.

1990

Mary A. Baldassaro, Independence,
Kan.
Matt R. Newbery, Pittsburg, Kan.
Mary L. Salisbury, Overland Park,
Kan.

1991

William B. Hamilton, Baxter
Springs, Kan.
June F. Brake, Osawatomie, Kan.
William F. Redenbaugh, Paola, Kan.

1992

Jeffrey T. Mundhenke, Hutchinson,
Kan.

1993

Clifford W. Allmon, Pittsburg,
Kan.
Diane J. Ohmart, Carthage, Mo.

1994

Dorothy E. Abella, Girard, Kan.
Katherine A. Alloway, Edna, Kan.
Chad T. Bottorff, Rogers, Ark.

1995

Brad S. Anderson, Lenexa, Kan.
Sonja Holsti-Wells, Nevada, Mo.
Brian D. Phelps, Columbus, Kan.

1996

Travis P. Gray, Columbus, Kan.
Vincent C. Saia, Pittsburg, Kan.
Alison M. Sweet, Lansing, Kan.

2002

Nicholas C. Bennett, Easley, S.C.
James A. Hosack, Laramie, Wyo.
Brandon W. Knight, Carrollton,
Texas
Kurt Zenbauer, Webb City, Mo.

2005

Mickolee D. Box, Baxter Springs,
Kan.

2006

Gregory D. Shaw, Pittsburg, Kan.

2007

Timothy R. Harris, Sioux Falls, S.D.
Betty J. Duding, Orlando, Fla.

2008

Buford F. Pringle, Leon, Kan.

2009

Lealand S. Grimmer, Riverton,
Kan.

2013

Amanda K. Dye, Olathe, Kan.
Jordan Nicole Johnson, Mission,
Kan.

2018

Letha J. Peterson, Baxter Springs,
Kan.

PITTSBURG STATE FACULTY & STAFF:

Janice R. Bernot, Pittsburg, Kan.
Carolyn Joan Brooker*, Pittsburg,
Kan.

Gary K. Carlat, Pittsburg, Kan.
Keith W. Carr*, Pittsburg, Kan.
John T. Chen, Pittsburg, Kan.
Marilyn K. Dubray, Liberal, Mo.
Mary L. Grasso, Pittsburg, Kan.
William A. Gray*, Pittsburg, Kan.
Stephen A. Harmon, Pittsburg,
Kan.

Elizabeth L. Harry, Pittsburg, Kan.
George E. Hudiburg*, Fort Scott,
Kan.

Tom A. Jacks, Pittsburg, Kan.
Ralph Koger*, Neosho, Mo.
Kathleen L. Nichols, Pittsburg, Kan.
Jo A. Ramage, Pittsburg, Kan.
Huston C. Sims, Girard, Kan.
Helen R. Sparks*, Pittsburg, Kan.
Tim J. Tewell, Arma, Kan.
Deborah L. Thompson, Weir, Kan.
Mark R. Thompson, Weir, Kan.
Rod L. Tweedy, Scammon, Kan.

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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.

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

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John and Jane
Doe



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Dr. Fay Bradley

ALUMNI DONOR

Dr. Fay Bradley, a 1960 graduate known for overcoming adversity and whose gift of \$1 million transformed the Department of Nursing into the Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing, died Jan. 14 after a battle with cancer; he was 83.

After a long career with the U.S. Public Health Service, he honored his mother with his gift to a school that would bear her name. His mother, Irene Ransom Bradley, worked as a domestic in a private home earning \$3.50 a week and did not complete high school, nor did his father, Henry Bradley. A noted athlete, Bradley came to PSU on a track scholarship, earned his degree in biology, served in the U.S. Army, graduated from medical school, and pursued a law degree.

He remained active as an alumnus, serving on the PSU Foundation Board of Trustees. University administrators say his legacy will live on in the thousands of students who become nurses.

"He will be missed, but he spent his life on something that will long outlast it," said President Steve Scott.



Carolyn Brooker

NURSING

Two-time alumna Carolyn Brooker (BSN '72, MS '74), one of the founding faculty members of the university's nursing program, died on Nov. 14 of COVID-19. She was 87.

Brooker, whose family's connection to PSU also is strong, was influential both as an advocate and a financial supporter of the Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing. Her career in it spanned 28 years.

After her retirement in 2000, she served as a member of the nursing school advisory board, as a PSU Foundation Trustee, and in 1993 established the Carolyn J. Brooker Scholarship for nursing students. She also established a memorial scholarship in the College of Technology in honor of her late husband, George Brooker, a longtime faculty member.



Nursing School Director Cheryl Giefer noted that Brooker impacted generations of nurses who now work in clinics and hospitals across the U.S.

Brooker is survived by her second husband, retired automotive faculty member Richard Weathers, and by three daughters, including former biology faculty member Nancy Brooker (BS '86).

Stephen Harmon

HISTORY

Longtime Professor Stephen Harmon, known for welcoming international students with open arms and helping to prepare ROTC cadets with the cultural knowledge they'd need for service in the Middle East, died of COVID-19 on Dec. 26. He was 75.

Since 1994, he taught in the Department of History where his specialty was African and Middle Eastern history. He had planned to retire in May.

He was a two-time Fulbright scholar, sought-after speaker, and author of numerous articles and two books. After 9/11, his field gained new importance globally and he was consulted as an expert by news agencies.

Colleague Bobby Winters, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said Harmon helped to make connections that were essential in the creation of the PSU in Paraguay program.

Harmon is survived by his wife, Olive Sullivan (BA '82), whom he married in 2014, as well as five children and seven grandchildren. A celebration of his life may be viewed at vimeo.com/498414921.



Matt Newbery

ATHLETICS

Matt Newbery, who worked for years in sports information at both PSU and the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association, died Nov. 22 of COVID-19. He was 53.



After working several years at the Pittsburg Morning Sun as a sports writer and sports editor, he served as assistant sports information director at PSU and then sports information director for the MIAA — a position he held for 15 years.

He was a driving force behind the KOAM-TV "Pigskin Preview" and "Full Court Press," and played an integral role in expanding the MIAA brand.

Newbery's colleagues noted his near-photographic memory of statistics and encyclopedic recall of moments in a game that occurred years ago.

PSU Hall of Fame softball player Wendi (Rickson) Horak said Newbery "knew every single stat."

Emporia State sports information director Don Weast said Newbery didn't just care about PSU, he cared about the league.

"In a way, he was a pioneer in Division II conference communication," Weast said.

Barbara York

MUSIC

Barbara York, an internationally renowned composer and musician who worked in the Department of Music as a piano accompanist for rehearsals, student recitals, and other performances, died Nov. 6 of pulmonary fibrosis. She was 71.

For years, musicians have been recording albums of York's songs and doctoral students have been basing their theses on her compositions. The SEK Symphony and other campus ensembles have performed several of her works.

Alumni say she changed the landscape of music for those who play low brass; many of her pieces became standard repertoire in the world's top music schools and conservatories and are on contest lists in several states.

A memorial concert of her works is being planned for once COVID-19 allows. Memorials to the Music Department can be mailed to the PSU Foundation, P.O. Box 4005, Pittsburg, KS 66762 or can be given online at pittstate.edu/givenow.



Sam Clausen (BS '14) sees more of the campus than perhaps anyone else: he's the university photographer and takes thousands of photos each year.



1. Commencement looked different without rows of graduates seated on the gym floor. The upside? Families and friends got a prime spot for photos and video.
2. History was made at the Bryant Student Health Center when staff got the COVID-19 vaccine on Jan. 7. Since March 2020, they have tested more than 2,000 students and helped coordinate care and isolation for positive cases.
3. As the nation confronted racial and social justice issues, Gorilla football players took action and spoke with a united voice advocating for equality for all.
4. Each year on Sept. 11, ROTC cadets read each victim's name and do a pushup. They fire the cannon four times: at 8:46 a.m., at 9:03 a.m., at 9:37 a.m., and at 10:03 a.m.
5. Gorilla Village became a winter wonderland in January, disguising the "jungle" that tailgating fans are used to. Don't worry, Gorillas — football season will be back soon!
6. The longstanding Plastics Technology Engineering program continues to train the next generation in scientific molding with an eye toward optimizing the injection molding process.
7. The Music Department, whose home base is historic McCray Hall, rallied to perform a series of virtual concerts from the state-of-the-art Bicknell Family Center for the Arts.
8. Students continue to seek out favorite scenic spots — like at the Night Song sculpture between Porter Hall and the Overman Student Center — to relax and share meaningful moments.





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L to R: Jeff, Ann, Bethanne, Beverly, Gordon, Trevor, Evan, and Abby Elliott.

PSU Foundation Spotlight

Elliott family creates a legacy

A transplant from Minnesota, Gordon Elliott considers himself an adopted Gorilla: He came to Pittsburg in 1969 on a one-year contract, but liked the community and the university so much that he and his wife, Bev, put down roots here.

Fifty-two years later, three generations of Elliotts call themselves Gorillas: all three of their sons attended school here, followed by two of their grandchildren.

The family has supported the university in a myriad of ways. Gordon, who serves on the PSU Foundation Board, volunteered to promote the Community Campaign; with his wife, Bev, created two endowed scholarships; supported facilities; and established a planned gift.

“PSU is the economic and cultural engine of our area,” said Gordon, who has held football and basketball tickets for 51 years and attends concerts, theater, speakers and more. “We need to do everything we can do to make our city a better place to live.”

On his travels throughout the state, he tells everyone he meets about the university and the community.

“I say this is the place to come to get a higher education,” he said. “Everyone I know who attended here has had nothing but positive things to say. They talk about how much they enjoyed Pittsburg and that they feel welcome here. And impressive alumni have come out of here – I’m always amazed at the accomplishments of the people who have graduated from PSU.”

That includes teachers and nurses, noted his grandson Trevor, who earned a degree in education in 2011 and returned for his master’s in 2018. Trevor’s wife, Abby, earned her degree in nursing in 2013.

“Whether you’re a donor, a spectator at events, or keep in touch by following the university on social media or the magazine, it’s important to help support the university in order to continue that legacy.”

To learn more about how you can join our faculty and staff donors in making a difference, visit: giveto.pittstate.edu

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Join us for virtual gorilla gatherings and more!

Spring 2021 Calendar

April 1 Virtual Gorilla Gathering: Engineering Technology

April 6 Virtual Gorilla Gathering: University Update with
President Steve Scott and Provost Howard Smith

April 8 Wichita Taste of Home with Chicken Annie's Original

April 13 Kansas City Taste of Home with Chicken Annie's Original

April 20 Virtual Gorilla Gathering: Family & Consumer Sciences

April 22 Tulsa Taste of Home with Chicken Annie's Original

April 27 Virtual Gorilla Gathering: Music Department

April 29... Northwest Arkansas Taste of Home with Chicken Annie's Original

May 13 Springfield (Mo.) Taste of Home with Chicken Annie's Original

May 20 Topeka Taste of Home with Chicken Annie's Original

Dates are subject to change.

For more information, please visit pittstate.edu/alumni.

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