Self-Made American:

CELESTE RIVAS OVERCOMES LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL HURDLES TO GRADUATE A HUSKY

Page 10

ALSO INSIDE

Commencement 2023
Celebrating our Graduates Page 8

A Professional Pipeline
Geisinger/Commonwealth U Nurse Anesthesia Program Provides Vital Professionals

Page 6
Greetings Bloomsburg Family,

In May, we celebrated our graduates at the 2023 Commencement Ceremony. As President, one of my favorite moments is shaking hands with our graduates as they receive their diplomas. Commencement marks a significant achievement in our students’ experiences, but more than that it signifies the beginning of the next phase of their lives when possibilities are limitless. Our cover story highlights 2023 graduate Celeste Rivas, whose story is nothing short of inspiring. Celeste immigrated to the United States as a child and spoke no English. In May, she graduated with a degree in professional sales and marketing and aspires to become an entrepreneur—fulfilling her American dream.

At Bloomsburg, we are quickly approaching the one-year anniversary of Commonwealth University. I’m proud of all we have accomplished together, and I am inspired by the work ahead of us. Commonwealth University began as a bold dream designed to bring new opportunities for students across Pennsylvania, to harness the strengths of three powerhouse institutions, and to ensure that affordable high-quality education options remain available in the communities we call home. Our future students will have access to a fully updated curriculum and pathbreaking coursework, leading to degrees that are increasingly relevant in today’s economy.

The integration of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield also has allowed for benefits beyond the classroom by leveraging our combined resources to create initiatives that positively impact a range of stakeholders. Commonwealth University students will enter the workforce ready to make an immediate difference and positive impact for their employers. Professional U—our comprehensive approach to career and student professional engagement coupled with an engaged community of dedicated faculty, staff, alumni and employers begins on the first day a student sets foot on campus. This initiative, which began at Bloomsburg, is now available to students across Commonwealth U. Our goal is for each student to complete one professional experience, such as an internship, each year. These high-impact professional experiences give students an advantage when they prepare for their first jobs. About 70% of our interns are offered employment at the company where they interned, and 80% accept these job offers. Commonwealth University is designed to bring new opportunities for students during all phases of their lives when possibilities are limitless.

As Bloomsburg alumni and supporters, you can partner with us to provide these crucial experiences for current Huskies. From establishing high-impact internships, to supporting Professional Experience Grants that make it possible for students without the financial means to complete internships, or returning to campus to conduct mock interviews or resume reviews with students, your support makes a difference in the lives of our students.

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do in support of our students. As you’ll see in these pages, our Bloomsburg University students will enter the workforce ready to make an immediate difference and positive impact for their employers. Commencement is a significant achievement in our students’ experiences, as they receive their diplomas. Commencement marks a year for alumni, students’ families, and friends of the university back teams may be found at bloomunimagazine.com.

I hope you will join us on campus in the coming months for Homecoming, or to cheer on our student-athletes.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr. Bashar W. Hanna, President

Spring 2023

Commonwealth University—Bloomsburg

Spring 2023

Commonwealth University is an AA/EEO institution and is accessible to disabled persons. Bloomsburg University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, or veteran status in its programs and activities as required by Title II of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable state and University policies.
Commonwealth University Earns Recognition as ‘2022-23 PNGAS Guard-Friendly School’

Bloomburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield, as Commonwealth University, have been named as “PNGAS Guard-Friendly School” by the Pennsylvania National Guard Associations (PNGAS).

Developed by the PNGAS Education Advisory Council, the “PNGAS Guard-Friendly School” program was designed to recognize high schools, colleges, universities, and trade schools that meet or exceed a set of standards for creating a supportive learning environment that is friendly to recruiting and assists members of the Pennsylvania Guard in pursuing post-secondary degrees and military service.

These criteria include providing flexible scheduling options for National Guard members whose class availability may be disrupted due to the requirements of their Guard service, providing credit for prior learning via military training and experience in accordance with American Council on Education (ACE) college credit recommendations, and offering training for school faculty and/or staff on how to support the specific needs of military and veteran students, and permits recruiting by the Pennsylvania National Guard.

Pennsylvania National Guard Associations (PNGAS).

The board advises on the work of the Pennsylvania’s 529 College Savings Program, which provides families with a tax-advantaged way to help save for their children’s higher education.

State Treasurer Stacy Garrity, a 1986 graduate of Bloomsburg University, oversees the PA 529 program.

PA 529 accounts are designed to help Pennsylvania families steadily and strategically save for future educational expenses. The PA 529 Guaranteed Savings Plan allows families to save at today’s tuition rates to meet tomorrow’s tuition costs.

More than $276,000 PA 529 accounts are open, with over $6 billion saved for future education. Over the program’s more than 30 years, it has helped families pay for more than $5 billion in qualified higher education expenses.

I’m excited to have Dr. Hanna join the TAP Advisory Board,” Treasurer Garrity said. “He will bring a unique and important perspective to the board with his vast experience in higher education, his proven dedication to helping students, and his lifelong passion for teaching. As we continue to make the PA 529 College & Career Savings Program work better for all Pennsylvanians, Dr. Hanna will be a strong voice in support of students and their families.”

Commonwealth University Receives $60K Hunger-Free Campus Grant

In an effort to address student hunger on campus, Commonwealth University (CU) received the Pennsylvania Hunger-Free Campus+ designation from the PA Department of Education. This designation also qualified CU to apply for grant opportunities, resulting in a $60K grant awarded to the university to address food insecurity on its campuses at Mansfield, Lock Haven and Bloomsburg. This was the highest amount given to five of the 28 colleges and universities that received the grant in the 2022-23 academic year.

Former Gov. Tom Wolf successfully advocated for $1 million to support postsecondary institutions’ efforts to address student hunger needs on campus. This effort resulted in the institutions being invited to apply for the PA Hunger-Free Campus or Campus+ designation to demonstrate their commitment to addressing the hunger needs and food insecurity for college students and diminishing hunger as a barrier to learning.

Dr. Tiffany Welch, assistant professor of social work at Mansfield, wrote the grant and Dr. Amy Dawkins, associate vice president for student success and campus life at Lock Haven and director of the Haven Cupboard food pantry, assisted with her efforts.

The grant will help the three campuses with their objectives of expanding pantry services with food purchases and refrigeration and upgrades to their existing facilities. They also plan to create a more standard system for food delivery across all campuses and supply sharing.

Commonwealth Faculty Member Finds Global Audience for Research

A scholarly article co-authored by Alan Gishlick, assistant professor of Environmental, Geographical and Geological Sciences, has made waves in the popular media around the world. The paper, “Trilobite tridents demonstrate sexual combat at 400 Mya,” published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, outlines how a trident found on trilobite fossils from 400 million years ago may be the earliest example of specialized sexual combat in the animal kingdom.

Commonwealth University has received national recognition as a PNGAS Guard-Friendly School

Bashar W. Hanna Appointed to PA Tuition Account Program Advisory Board

Dr. Bashar W. Hanna, president, has been appointed to serve on Pennsylvania’s Tuition Account Program (TAP) Advisory Board by former Gov. Tom Wolf. Hanna’s appointment runs through September 2026.

The board advises on the work of the Pennsylvania 529 College Savings Program, which provides families with a tax-advantaged way to help save for their children’s higher education.

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Commonwealth University-Bloomsburg Spring 2023

Commonwealth University

COMMON GROUND

news on campus

The Big Event ‘23

As part of the 134th Annual Big Event at Bloomsburg on Saturday, April 15, more than 1,050 students spread out across the 170 locations in the Town of Bloomsburg to help residents get their homes and yards ready for spring. The event is organized by the Community Government Association.

President Hanna Named to Higher Education Power 100

President Bashar W. Hanna recently was named to the 2023 Higher Education Power 100 list by City & State Pennsylvania.

After a multi-year consolidation process, Hanna took over leadership of Commonwealth University on July 1, 2022. With university finances stabilized, Hanna is launching a new strategic plan and touting the merger’s opportunities for everyone from varsity athletes to local community college students. View the full list at cityandstatepa.com.
Students and Faculty Take Service Trip to Rural Jamaica

After a three-year hiatus due to the pandemic, Lock Haven faculty, once again led a short-term service-learning program to Harmons, Jamaica, and for the first time, were joined by Bloomsburg students.

This program has been offered through Lock Haven since 2015, where students learn and serve in the rural mountainous village of Harmons in south central Jamaica. Commonwealth University-Lock Haven faculty leaders Jennifer Bell (physician assistant studies) and Amy Way (health sciences) traveled to Harmons with two graduate students from the physician assistant studies program and 20 undergraduate students from the Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and CLEARY locations in a variety of majors.

The students learned about healthcare access in rural Jamaica, and participated in several community service projects. These included two health fairs, parent workshops, school outreach, participation in the oral health initiative in partnership with the Jamaican Ministry of Health, and in some of the research initiatives that Bell and Way are pursuing. They also helped to build a house and a new church for the community in partnership with Win By One to Jamaica, a mission that has had a consistent presence in Harmons for more than 30 years.

“I left Jamaica feeling so rewarded, grateful and appreciative, plus the lifelong memories with awesome people was just an added bonus,” said Bloomsburg student Amanda Stoll, junior biology major from Farmington, N.Y.

Other Bloomsburg students who attended the trip were Angel Pasci from New Columbia, Hannah Shevin from Beaver Springs, Nicole Stewart from Burlington, N.J., and Sarah Wertz from Philadelphia.

The next program to Jamaica is planned for the 2023 winter intersession semester, and the experience will be available to all Commonwealth University students.

Commonwealth University Hosts Presidential Leadership Summit

Commonwealth University hosted the inaugural Presidential Leadership Summit at the Pennsylvania Capitol in Harrisburg on Tuesday, April 25. The event, sponsored by PSECU, brought together student leaders, legislative allies, and alumni from Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield.

Commonwealth University President, Bashar Hanna, spoke about the transformative power of education and the need for the university, alumni, and supporters to partner together to create opportunities for students to participate in professional experiences that prepare them for today’s workforce.

Force Honored as Top Business Teacher

Christina Force, a professor in Technology, Analytics, and Workforce Learning in the Zeigler College of Business, has been named the 2023 Teacher of the Year Award for Senior College/University Business Teachers by the National Business Education Association (NBEA). She received her award at the 2023 NBEA Annual Convention in Kansas City, Mo., in April.

“I always strive to be the best teacher for my students. I have been teaching for 25 years, and I always look for new ways to improve my teaching and engage my students,” says Force, who was nominated by several colleagues and who received both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Bloomsburg.

Force was honored by colleagues and students earlier this year at the Commonwealth University-Bloomsburg Annual Scholarship Dinner, where she received a watch as part of the “We Wear Black in Support of Our Black Students” activity.

During an awards ceremony at the Lancaster County Convention Center on March 9, Commonwealth U received one bronze and two gold CUPPIE Awards. A gold was awarded in the Long Form Story Writing category for the piece, “Pulling Back the Curtain on the Uncommon Man,” written by Thomas McGuire, senior director of strategic communications, for the Bloomsburg: The University Magazine Winter 2022 issue. The second gold was awarded in the Wild Card category to the MarComm staff for their collective effort for community scholars and scholarship strategy (scholarship materials, media relations, social media and webpages) and the bronze was awarded in the Executive Communications Speech Writing Remarks category for the “Clinton County Economic Partnership Keynote,” written by Elizabeth Arnold, executive communications and editorial director and Dan Krone, director of external and government relations.

CUPPIE Awards are given for creative excellence in marketing and communications to the work of member institutions in the categories of advertising, electronic media, print, public relations and marketing, writing, and photography. A total of 501 entries were received for the 16th annual CUPPIE Awards from colleges, universities, agencies, and providers of private, specialized, and secondary education. Judges represented experts in the field of communications and included designers, writers, educators, corporate executives, and media professionals.

Commonwealth University Honored with Three CUPPIE Awards

The Marketing and Communications Department (MarComm) at Commonwealth University (CU) took home three awards at the recent 2023 CUPPIE Awards competition sponsored by CUPRAP (College and University Public Relations and Associated Professionals).

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The Geisinger/Commonwealth University Nurse Anesthesia Program is attracting attention from students nationwide—and providing critical professionals for Pennsylvania.

The 36-month program, which results in graduates earning a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree, accepts just 15 students for each class. Those students come from as far away as California, Oregon, and Arizona.

A Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) anesthetist provides pain medication care for patients before, during, and after surgery. They administer medications to keep patients asleep and pain-free during surgery and constantly monitor every biological function of the patient’s body. The specialization is in high demand across the country.

“We’re always in demand,” says program director Debra Minzola. “Starting salaries can be more than $180,000 with sign-on bonuses and money to relocate.”

Commonwealth University (CU) nurse anesthesia graduates have earned a compelling reputation in the industry with the Class of 2022 earning a 100% pass rate in NCE National Certification Exam, while the average pass rate is 82%. Commonwealth U students also won first place in the Pennsylvania Association of Nurse Anesthetists College Bowl last year in competition against all other programs in the state.

Headquartered at Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, the program’s facilities include advanced simulation equipment. When it’s time for clinical experiences, the partnership between Geisinger and CU enables students to have a broad array of experiences within Geisinger’s varied facilities.

After graduation, many students stay at Geisinger to practice as CRNAs. “Approximately 60% of our graduates are staying with the Geisinger System,” says Minzola. “That says a lot about the good relationship between the university and the clinical site. It makes it a more positive learning experience, and they want to stay here. Our recruitment has been phenomenal for Geisinger.”

Previously, the program led to a master’s degree. Omar Wijahat, who will graduate in May 2024 in the first cohort of graduates at the doctoral level, plans to stay in the region to practice in the Geisinger system. Like other students in the program, Wijahat came with experience—as a nurse technician for two years and an intensive care nurse for three years. “I got to know CRNAs dropping off patients and then was able to shadow them to learn about the field,” he says.

For Wijahat, a career in nursing is a way to carry on the nurturing tradition he experienced from his parents. “My mom and dad immigrated to the U.S. from Pakistan 25 years ago,” he says. “They gave me a lot with the little they had. In nursing, I can pay it back to other people. As a nurse anesthetist, you care for people when they are most vulnerable.”

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— DEBRA MINZOLA, Program Director, Geisinger/Commonwealth U Nurse Anesthesia Program
A Hearty Welcome to the Husky Family

More than 1,300 students received a hearty welcome to the Husky alumni family at graduation on May 13.

“A global pandemic did not deter you from today,” President Bashar Hanna told the graduates. “It would have been really easy for you to step aside and say, ‘I’ll come back a little later.’ But your resilience and your perseverance are two of the attributes that contributed to your being here. We congratulate you on your resolve to finish your education.”

“Regardless of the road you took to get here, a common theme was that your education was important to you,” added Hanna. “The one thing no one can ever take away from you is your education. Do not underestimate the power of that diploma you are about to receive. That education you received has the weight that you will need in order to go and change the world.”

“There are people here who believe in you,” said Trustee John Wetzel ’98. “Bloomsburg is the kind of place that whatever you want to be, if you tell somebody, there will be someone on campus who will get you there. If you don’t believe me, google Steph Pettit.”

“Everybody drove up Steph Pettit Way,” continued Wetzel. “I hope you leave here the Steph Pettit way, which means work your butt off. It means be dedicated to making the world a better place. Most importantly, come back and help a Husky. There’s not a Husky that Steph Pettit wouldn’t help. There’s not a Husky any alum wouldn’t help.

“That’s what’s different about this place. It’s the professors, it’s the administrators, it’s the coaches, it’s the folks working the grounds. Everybody is part of this Husky family and now you’re part of our family. Right now this world needs you more than ever. What I know is that when the world’s in trouble, the best thing we can give them is a Husky.”
At 11-years-old, Celeste Rivas stepped off a plane in New York City ready to start a new adventure: a life in the United States. Now, after stepping down from the commencement stage, she’ll begin her next big adventure: life after graduating with a degree in professional sales and marketing.

“If you had told me 11 years ago that I would be living in the United States, I would tell you that you were crazy,” says Rivas, who immigrated with her family from the Dominican Republic. “And if you were to tell me back then that I would be graduating from an English-language school, I’d say there was no way. I didn’t even speak the language.”

Standing in the airport terminal, Celeste’s childhood was packed into a single suitcase; what didn’t fit had to be thrown out. “When you’re a kid, how do you choose which toys are the most important to take with you? What do you leave behind to make room for something you need?”

She and her family settled in Reading. The transition for Celeste was especially difficult. Alongside the culture shock she felt in a new country, she had to learn in a school that didn’t speak her language. Confronted by the English placement test, Rivas thought, “I don’t even speak the language, so what’s the point of taking this?”

She didn’t do well, and following the test, Rivas’ mother was called to meet with the principal. She was told Rivas would have to repeat the sixth grade, which she immediately refused. The school gave her an ultimatum: if Rivas couldn’t keep her grades up by mid-term, she would either have to move down to 5th grade, or retake sixth grade.

This was the push that Rivas needed. “I remember thinking, ‘I’m here now, so I’ll just do the work,’” says Rivas.

Rivas said she charged her whole life to learn English. “I practically learned English from watching the Disney Channel,” says Rivas. “I changed the language on the TV, and even though it made my brother mad, it really helped me learn.”

By the time she was a senior in high school, Rivas knew that her next step was college, but she didn’t know where to start her search. “I went to my counselor for advice, and he said I would have to attend a community college because I hadn’t taken the English or science I needed,” says Rivas. “But I knew I didn’t want to do that.”

Looking for other options, a friend gave Rivas the name of an Upward Bound counselor. The counselor agreed to help Rivas with her applications, on one condition. “She said to me, ‘Look, I’m already helping a lot of students, who I have to give priority,’ And we agreed that we could make it work after school when she was done with her other students,” says Rivas.

Once again, Rivas made it work. After she finished classes at 2:30 p.m., she and the Upward Bound counselor worked together until 6 p.m. for weeks to fill out her FAFSA and college applications. In the end, she heard back from just one school; but Rivas wasn’t ready to give up yet.

“We decided to call Bloomsburg because I hadn’t heard back about my application yet,” says Rivas. “When I called, the director of admissions answered, and checked my application right there on the phone with me and said, ‘You look like you’ll do a lot of good here,’ and accepted me on the spot!”

Rivas’ acceptance into Bloomsburg was met with mixed emotions. Her mother was distraught at the idea of Rivas moving somewhere she was unfamiliar with for school. Her father, however, understood that it was what she needed to do. “He said, ‘If you have to go, you have to go,’” Rivas recalls.

Initially, Rivas thought she wanted to study to become a veterinarian or pediatrician, but before going to school, Rivas’ father sat her down for a conversation. “He told me, ‘Let’s be real. You don’t like studying, and this field will be difficult. You need to find something you can see through to the end,’” recalls Rivas.
Ultimately, Rivas decided to enroll in college undeclared; she would have time to figure that part out once she arrived on campus. Rivas enrolled at Bloomsburg in the ACT 101 program. During the jumpstart part of the program, Rivas met with some faculty from the Marketing and Professional Sales Department. They were good salespeople,” says Rivas, “They sold the program to me.”

Back in high school, Rivas participated in her school’s technical school program, where she originally fell in love with business. She studied horticulture in her technical program where she earned some of her early experience with sales. She sold flowers to her church, handmade festive wreaths for the holidays, and fruit at the end of the year, as well as decorated houses and arranged the flowers for her brother’s wedding. She realized she could potentially turn this into her career.

At Bloomsburg, just as predicted, Rivas has done a lot of good. She’s taken advantage of every opportunity to get involved. She is the treasurer and does public relations for the Student Organization of Latinos, is active in the Multicultural Center, and is very involved in the professional development activities offered on campus.

“I’ve met so many wonderful people while I’ve been here,” says Rivas. “Everyone in the ZIPD program keeps me accountable, and (Multicultural Center director) Madelyn Rodriguez has helped me become the best person I can be.”

“We have a joke that I’m the intern at the Multicultural Center,” says Rivas. “If I’m not home, I’m usually in there. If Maddy needs something, I’ll do it. All of us always try to go above and beyond to make her proud.”

With her professional development, Rivas tried to get to as many events as possible. “Whenever they said people are hiring, I’m there; if there’s a trip to a company, I go,” says Rivas. “I even carry extra copies of my resume around just in case.”

“I put myself out there to get what I want,” says Rivas, who completed an internship with Benco Dental in the summer of 2022. “There are so many great tools and opportunities that you’re given here, so you better use them.”

Outside of the academic and professional opportunities that Rivas has been given at Bloomsburg, she’s grateful for the friends she’s made at school as well. “Not everyone can say that their freshman roommate is their best friend, but we get closer every year,” says Rivas. “Bloomsburg may not be a big city, but you’ll find your family here.”

The family that Rivas built at Bloomsburg is what she’s going to miss the most. “Who would have thought that out of everyone I met at Bloomsburg, I’d find three other Dominican girls that have grown to mean so much to me,” says Rivas. “They’re my sisters. I’ll miss exploring and finding new things with them; some days, we’ll come up with some new food we want to try and just go out and find somewhere new. We always find time for another adventure.”

After graduation, Rivas hopes to start working in sales before starting her own business. Her dream is to open a flower shop and start a non-profit with her old technical school’s horticulture department. As she prepares for the next chapter of life, she thinks about her younger self, who desperately wanted to return home to the Dominican Republic. “If I could say something to her,” said Rivas, “I would tell little Celeste that everything is going to be okay.”

What will you do with a music degree?

“It’s a question asked of many music majors— at dinner tables, summer cookouts, and high school graduation parties. And it’s a question that just might make a student reconsider their career path.

Abby Manns ’08, director of performing arts and programming, is dedicated to helping students answer that question with the confidence of a rock star. She and other Bloom alumni are using their music degree to do it.

“Some students wonder if they can make it in the industry, and drop the major,” says Manns. “Our alumni are proof that you can make a living at this. At first glance, Manns says Philadelphia Freedom: A Tribute to Elton John didn’t have the cultural or educational flavor that Arts in Bloom typically represents. But with two former students in the band, Manns saw an opportunity.

“It was an opportunity to showcase Aaron and Mike and get our students involved.” Even while majoring in criminal justice, Aaron Eldred ’20 knew his future was in music and found his niche when he switched to a major in music performance. Mike Shaw ’20 enrolled at Bloomsburg as a music performance major/audio, knowing he wanted a career in audio engineering. Both were student workers with Arts in Bloom and both gained the experience necessary to pursue a career in the music industry. After a graduation, Eldred teamed up with Wilkes-Scame native and Berklee-trained musician Doug Delescavage to start Philadelphia Freedom. Later, Shaw joined the band as drummer. In the meantime, Philadelphia Freedom was getting noticed.

“We all feel lucky to work in this industry, so it’s a super important to arts programming coordinator, Reed Lehman 18, and me to make the experience for the students as rich as it was when we were students here,” says Manns. Manns’ vision was to invite the band to not only perform at the Haas Center for the Arts, but also have them spend the day with the orchestra to accompany the band. “We learned a lot doing live shows. If something went wrong, we had to figure it out immediately because a band was playing. It was a professional environment in a university setting, and Abby is good at expressing that to students.”

“When it came time to bring the show to Bloom, we wanted to give back,” says Eldred. Delescavage was on board with the extended day, and suggested they also bring in the university orchestra. Conductor and faculty member David Tedford, arranged for the Bloomsburg-Mansfield community orchestra to accompany the band. “I’ll never forget the moment we were practicing with the orchestra, and the students were saying it was the most fun they’d ever had playing,” says Eldred. “We learned a lot doing live shows. If something went wrong, we had to figure it out immediately because a band was playing. It was a professional environment in a university setting, and Abby is good at expressing that to students.”

“Mike and Aaron live that life, so they understand the opportunity for students,” says Manns. “Many times, students know what they’re doing. They’re just missing confidence because they don’t do it all the time.” Shaw remembers those days with gratitude.

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Standout Husky Quarterback Alan Eck Joins the NFL as a Referee

By Andrea O’Neill and Tom McGuire

Going into his senior season as quarterback for Huskies football, Alan Eck ‘91 knew he’d never play in the NFL. But he didn’t know that 27 years later, he would be in the NFL—as one of only 17 NFL referees in the sport.

So how did the undeclared transfer student from Grove City College go from Redman Stadium to leading a crew of officials in a multi-billion-dollar industry that captivates much of the American public each fall?

Let’s just say he can “count” the ways.

“I had no idea of a career until my roommate returned from class and told me not to take accounting because it was too hard,” says Eck. “I took that as a challenge.”

Not long after that first class, Eck declared a major in accounting. At the same time, his athletic talent quickly put him atop the BU depth chart for quarterbacks. He threw for over 2,000 yards during his sophomore and junior years, setting the current school single-season record as a junior for completions with 194.

But a pre-season thumb injury before his senior year threatened to end his last season before it started. With Eck sidelined, the Huskies started 1-5. After Eck returned to the lineup, he led the Huskies to a four-game winning streak to finish at 5-5.

“I knew I wasn’t good enough to play in the NFL, so I was going to get back any way I could,” recalled Eck. “I learned a lot that year about overcoming adversity.”

But even a successful ending to his playing career didn’t ease the transition from college athlete to accounting professional. A month after graduation, Eck was showing in 60-plus hour work weeks as a brand-new public accountant in the middle of tax season.

“I was struggling,” says Eck. “It was my first time away from the game since I was 7, and I didn’t have the flexibility in my schedule to coach. I was miserable.”

Miserable, that is, until a co-worker suggested he officiate. Eck watched training videos and volunteered for pee-wee and middle school games. At the end of his first season, he worked his first high school varsity game and was hooked.

“I thought I was working the Super Bowl,” he says.

Like accounting, officiating hadn’t been on his radar, but reaching the NFL was, again, a goal. Eck gradually worked his way up, doing small college games, lower-level D-3, and then the Big 12. He studied film and emulated top officials, attended training camps and development programs. Of all those experiences, Eck says it was “The Score Will Take Care of Itself” by Bill Walsh that had the biggest impact in shifting his mindset from scoresheets and evaluations to maintaining focus on his position and confidence in his process. “We’re graded pretty severely,” said Eck. “(Blu) I started being a better official when I focused on owning my position and being a good crewmate instead of the grade.”

While vacationing with his family in 2016, he got the call from then NFL Senior VP of Officiating, Dean Blandino, inviting him to join their ranks as a side judge.

“There are many rungs in the ladder, and the higher you climb, the slipperier it gets,” recalls Eck. “I was cloud nine at first and immediately called everybody that helped me along the way.”

During the years of long weekends and low pay, Eck says the support of his wife and high school sweetheart, Michelle, was vital. She was wary of the time he was investing, especially when he came home after a day of working youth games. One bad call can mean getting a post-season assignment or staying home and raking leaves. “Otherwise, I couldn’t have made this journey.”

And what would the journey of an NFL official be without a few blown calls? Eck recalls flagging a coach with a 15-yard penalty after he thought the coach ran into him on the sidelines. When he reviewed the footage, Eck realized he ran into the coach and not the other way around.

“We strive for perfection,” says Eck, who apologized to the coach. “In later games, the coach would say, ‘Hey, Alan, am I going to be okay on the sideline?’ We can joke about it now, but at the time, I was mortified.”

Over time, Eck has refined his process and compares the mental preparation to a pilot’s pre-flight checklist: reviewing the down, distance, clock, score, formation, and substitutions before every one of the roughly 160 snaps per game. He says it’s similar to the meticulous and detailed nature of his work in public accounting, although he jokes that the NFL rulebook is more logical and straightforward than any IRS or state statutes. In both worlds, however, accuracy is paramount.

“One bad call can mean the difference between getting a post-season assignment or staying home and raking leaves,” he says.

Eck earned his first post-season assignment for the 2023 division playoff game between Buffalo and Kansas City and again in January when the Eagles took on San Francisco for the NFC Championship.

“I was extremely excited–San Francisco had an 11-game win streak, Philadelphia had a great team, and the place was rocking,” says Eck. “Then I reminded myself that seven billion people worldwide didn’t know or care about this game and got locked in.”

Just a little over a month after the Eagles defeated the Niners and 27 years since he led Huskies as quarterback, Eck earned the white hat and the helm of an officiating crew. He will retire from full-time corporate America in August to adequately prepare himself and his team for the 2023 season.

“It’s made a tremendous impact on my life,” says Eck. “It was a long climb, but it was worth it.”
They say a journey of 1,000 miles begins with the first step. For Robert “Bob” Bartoletti, Ed.D., ’70, and his wife JoAnn, it was a journey to 100 years of service in public education that began with their own steps of becoming first-generation college students. After impacting the lives of thousands of students throughout the country, and across the globe since they started their teaching careers in the early 1970s, Bob and JoAnn are creating an even greater legacy as educators through their philanthropic support to their respective alma maters.

Bob’s march toward an exemplary career as a public school teacher turned administrator started when his football coach, Joe Moran at Coughlin High School in Wilkes-Barre, recommended he enroll at Bloomsburg after graduation.

“He knew I wanted to get into education, so he encouraged me to go to Bloomsburg,” says Bob. “They had a renowned education program, and I could continue playing football.”

Bob credits the great teachers and administrators he had at Bloomsburg for fueling his passion for teaching and inspiring him to pursue a career in education.

“I always wanted to become a teacher and loved teaching and coaching others ever since middle school,” Bob adds. “But I don’t know if I would have realized those dreams without the great teachers I had at Bloomsburg.”

He and his friends from the Class of 1969, Mike Smith, Ron Russo, and Frank Yartz, used to lovingly refer to Bloomsburg as the “Ivy League of State Colleges” as a testimony to the quality of their teachers, from Dr. John Seft, Hans Karl Günther, and Robert Warren in the History Department to English professor Dr. Richard Savage, and even administrators Dr. John Hoch, dean of instruction, and Stuart Edwards, director of secondary education.

“They were all great role models and teachers,” says Bob. “And it is they, along with several others, to whom I attribute my love and dedication to education.”

Becoming a teacher was one thing, but Bob had bigger aspirations in education. His career began with his first job teaching high school social studies and coaching freshman football at Lawrence High School in Lawrence Township, N.J.

A job that he still cherishes most because of the opportunity to impact students, but more importantly, because that’s where he met the love of his life, JoAnn D’Angelo, also a social studies teacher at Lawrence.

“He was over the moon that morning,” says Bob. “It was a great day for our family.”

JoAnn also became principal at Lawrence Township High School in Lawrence Township, N.J. An accomplishment he still considers one of the highlights of his career, trailing behind meeting JoAnn. He wrapped up his career as the Director of Support for the Teacher Education Program and Global Student Teaching office at the College of New Jersey.

Within that role, he formed partnerships with international schools in Europe, Asia, and Africa. He was also responsible for partnerships with 30 regional New Jersey school districts.

The couple’s passion for teaching outside the classroom to make a more significant impact didn’t stop with Bob. JoAnn also became principal at West Windsor-Plainsboro High School and then executive director of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association. She finished her career in 2020 after serving 10 years as the National Association of Secondary School Principals CEO. An organization that represents 24,000 middle and secondary schools principals and vice principals nationwide.

Bob and JoAnn both credit the trajectory of their success to their undergraduate degrees earned, respectively, at Bloomsburg and the College of New Jersey.

For Bob, it was the mentors he found and the friendships he made at Bloomsburg that remain strong to this day, including his two closest friends, Mike Lynch ’69 and Ernie Vedral ’71, whom he introduced to two of his wife’s friends 52 years ago and are still married today, that helped forge his path.

“As a lawyer of history, I’m a big believer in the sentiment that we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us,” says Bob. “I benefited from the teaching of my professors at Bloom, who prepared me for the success I have achieved.”

That’s why Bob and JoAnn established the Dr. Robert Bartoletti ‘70 & JoAnn Bartoletti Scholarship in 2014, which is awarded each year to a first-generation student pursuing a career in education. They have also recently increased the scholarship endowment through a significant bequest in their estate.

“As a proud alum, I wanted to have my name always associated with Bloomsburg,” adds Bob. “Even though I went to major universities for graduate degrees, my foundation began here at the ‘Friendly College on the Hill.’ At Bloomsburg, what we can leave behind will have a greater impact on the students and the institution.”

GIVING BACK
By Tom Schaeffer ’02

SERVING EDUCATION FOR 100 YEARS
AND STILL GIVING BACK

GIVING OPTIONS:

ByaCharitable Gift Annuities | Gifts of Real Estate Required Minimum Distributions | Virtual Endowments

For more information on how you can include Bloomsburg in your estate plans, please call 570-389-3922, email jnelh3@bloomsburg.edu or contact your financial advisor.

To learn more, visit:
giving.bloom.edu/PlannedGiving

LINDA WILLIAMS ’77 established a scholarship through a bequest in her will to secure her legacy.

LAMAR OGLESBY ’07 and his wife Dominika give back through a Virtual Endowment, which combines a gift in their estate with an annual gift to provide a scholarship for a deserving student.
Jill Schneider Davis '66 was named to the Bulldog Foundation Hall of Fame. The Bulldog Foundation supports the Big Spring School District in New Columbia. Davis began her career as a teacher at Big Spring in 1980 and taught there until her retirement in 2016. The impact of service continued with her involvement in mentoring young students at the John Graham Library.

Commonwealth University-Bloomsburg

HUSKY NOTES

Thomas Holly '86 has been appointed to the board of directors of Comstock Holding Companies. Comstock is a leading developer, investor, and asset manager of mixed-use and transit-oriented properties in the Washington, D.C. region. Holly is a retired partner from PwC's US Public Company Practice, where he recently led PwC's U.S. Asset & Wealth Management practice that specializes in delivering holistic solutions to global multi-strategy asset managers.

Lori Barnes Maley '86 has been appointed to the American Bankers Association Community Bankers Council. Maley, CPA, is president, CEO and vice president of the Bank of First in Hand in Bloomsburg. The Community Bankers Council is made up of approximately 100 bankers from across the country in institutions with generally less than $5 billion in assets. Maley has been with Bank of First in Hand since its inception in 2013. Her career included employment with First National Bank of Young, LLP Berks County Bank, Pennsylvania National Bank, Lehig Coal and Navigation, Berks First Bank and Customers Bank.


Lorna Connolly '74 has been appointed to the American Rugby League Hall of Fame to honor her contributions to the sport. Connolly has been a cornerstone figure in the history of rugby in the United States, having played for the US National Team and served as its president for more than two decades.

Jason Wolfe '82 has been appointed to the Milton Hershey School Board of Managers. Wolfe enrolled at Milton Hershey School at the age of 11. After graduating from Milton Hershey School, Wolfe was named to the American Football Coaches Association's All-America Team. He went on to play college football at the University of Pennsylvania, where he was a two-time All-American and helped the team win the NCAA championship in 1980 and 1981.

Clare Watson '86, an assistant professor of public health sciences at WVU, was named the National Academy of Education's Newosr of the Year. Watson is the program director for the public health and health sciences program at WVU, and serves on the board of Family Design Health, an organization that provides resources for families of children with disabilities.

Peter Hughes '82 has been appointed executive director of the American Legion Post 132 in Bloomsburg. Hughes has over 30 years of experience in military service and leadership roles, and is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has served as a member of the American Legion Department of Pennsylvania's nominating committee.

David Marcolla '10 has joined Franklin Technology Partners of Central & Northeast PA as a project manager for area engineering services. Marcolla has over 10 years of experience in the engineering field, and has worked on a wide range of commercial, residential, and repair and restoration building projects. He also has extensive experience in forensic engineering.

Lori Shaffer Koltenbus '11/18M has joined UPMC Neurology in Williamsport, Montour, and serves on the board of Family Design Health, an organization that provides resources for families of children with disabilities.

Karly Scala Warner '16 has been named marketing and communications manager at Penn State University's Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central & Northern PA in State College. She provides innovation capital, operational assistance, and entrepreneurial support to emerging tech-based companies and small, existing manufacturing, capital, and entrepreneurial projects in the 32 counties of central and northeastern Pennsylvania. She joined Penn State in 2018 and previously held marketing coordinator and program manager positions.

Steven Beattie '18B has been named executive director of the SEDA-COG, Joint Rail Authority. Beattie began his career as a project manager for area engineering companies and held several leadership roles, including communications at the University of Scranton, as an associate professor of forensic engineering at Bloomsburg University, as an assistant professor of forensic engineering at Bloomsburg University, and as an associate professor of forensic engineering at Bloomsburg University.

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Michael Hein '86 has been named chief financial officer at Republic First Bancorp, Inc., the holding company for Republic First Bank. Before joining Republic First, Hein was a banker in a division at JAM Special Opportunity Ventures. Hein previously spent 35 years in various operating roles in banking, most recently as executive vice president and chief financial officer of The Bynum Trust Company. He also has more than five years in the $5 billion asset institution that completed a sale to WFS Financial Corp. in 2021.
Marriages

Mohigan E. Delaney ’13 & Nicholas Mitchell ’13, Sept. 30, 2020
Kathy Warner ’16 & Dominick Scala, Nov. 12, 2022
Jocelyn May Brubaker ’14 & Zachary Tyler Daily, Oct. 15, 2022

Births

Samantha Honig Davis ’09 & Herman Davis, a daughter, Nalani Kai Davis, April 11, 2021.
Jeffrey Felman ’06 & Darrelle (Schatz) Felman, a son, Casey, April 4, 2022
Trace (Hubert) Gieser ’09 & Adam Gieser, a son, Lincoln Adam, June 4, 2022
Kellein (Bridle) Auckerbach ’13, a daughter, Mackenzie, Sept. 28, 2022
Sam (Pietak) Kozuch ’12 & Josh Kozuch, a son, Ty Julian, Nov. 15, 2022
Kayla (Dinak) Diak ’15 & Nicholas Diak ’15, a daughter, Aria Chanel, Nov. 12, 2022

Kabekin (Brija) Aucherbach ’13 & John Aucherbach ’13, a daughter, Machenae, 2022

Obituaries

Oct. 15, 2022
& Zachary Tyler Daily,
Jocelyn May Bordner ’14
Nov. 12, 2022
& Dominick Scala,
Karly Warner ’16
Sept. 30, 2020
& Nicholas Mitchell ’13
Meghan E. Delaney ’13

2023 Commonwealth University Homecoming and Parents and Family Weekend
October 13 — 15
Stay tuned for more information regarding this year’s theme and schedule of events at bloomu.edu/homecoming

In Memoriam

CHARLES CARLSON,
Interim president of Bloomsburg State College, 1972-73 academic year

Dr. Charles Carlson passed away on Wednesday, March 15, at the age of 94. He served as interim president of Bloomsburg State College during the 1972-73 academic year. Carlson joined the faculty in 1959 in the music department. He served as the department chairperson and was director of the Maroon and Gold Band. In 1967 Carlson was named acting director of graduate studies, and in 1968 was named director. He was appointed dean of the School of Graduate Studies and director of research in 1970. Following his time as interim president and a sabbatical, he returned as dean of graduate studies in 1974. In 1982 Carlson was named assistant vice president for academic affairs and occasionally served as acting provost. He remained in that role until his retirement in 1991.

After retirement, he remained very active in the Bloomsburg community, serving in volunteer leadership positions with the Boy Scouts, Bloomsburg Municipal Airport Advisory Board, the Bloomsburg University Foundation, and the Friends of the Bloomsburg Library Association, among many organizations. He is survived by his son, Charles Howard Carlson Jr.

KARL BEAMER,
Professor emeritus of art

Karl A. Beamer, professor emeritus of art, passed away on Sunday, April 16, at Evangelical Hospital in Lewisburg. Beamer came to Bloomsburg in 1972 and retired in 2009. He is known for his interpretations of Japanese ceramic art and has worked with renowned artists Shiko Kanzaki and Toshiko Takaazu. Kanzaki, from Shigaraki, Japan, built an anagama pottery kiln on campus, and gold leafed all of the firetrucks and most recently painted the firehall mural. His passions included playing ice hockey and racing dirt track cars.

Karl is survived by his wife, Ginny; daughters, Kori Beamer and Nichole Beamer; and several nieces and nephews.
Coaching for the LONG GAME

By Jackson Dixon, Athletic Communications Intern

Art after the final pitch of the ninth inning is thrown, baseball coach Mike Collins knows that his players will face more important contests and challenges in life.

That’s why Bloomsburg’s baseball program implemented its 40-year plan—a concept Collins created to help his players reach their professional goals and strengthen the bond his teams have beyond their playing days.

“The focus of the plan is on athletes, but the plan enriches the entire University’s community by promoting positivity and collaboration while utilizing one of its greatest assets—the student-athletes,” says Collins.

“The plan involves community leadership programming, professional engagement opportunities, life-skills training, and a staff of professionals coming together to support Huskies outside of their athletic endeavors.”

One way Collins and the baseball program has helped student-athletes through the 40-Year Plan is by holding its fifth annual professional engagement night, which took place in January at the Jameson Elementary School in Bucks County.

The event hosted over 40 established alumni, as well as the entire baseball team. The alumni were happy to attend the event, helping the players who now wear the same jersey they once wore.

The alumni in attendance were from a variety of different career fields, each offering their own perspective and knowledge from their respective fields. They also saw value in the event and were happy to attend.

“Bloomsburg baseball alumna Vinnie James ’07/’09M, who attended the event, describes the 40-year plan as ‘the culmination of everything you want to accomplish in your four years here that will set you up for the rest of your life.’ It’s critical to Bloomsburg coaches that their athletes are set up for success moving forward,” says James.

The professional engagement night focuses on introducing players to a professional setting while also giving them an opportunity to learn from and network with professionals. “I’ve met a ton of cool, unique alumni. There is a lot of opportunity at our disposal,” says catcher Tyler Wilk, also noting the event was a great networking opportunity.

The event kicked off with a speed networking activity where players were given 90 seconds to introduce themselves and get acquainted with alumni. Collins says this activity is a good icebreaker to get players comfortable with taking to their predecessors.

While most of the players were doing this, a handful of players who will be graduating in the spring were taken into a separate room. These players had mock interviews with one or two alumni from the career path they were pursuing.

The alumni then gathered in their designated career-specific rooms for break-out sessions. There were two 30-minute sessions where players could go to a room and have an open, back-and-forth conversation with professionals from the field they are pursuing.

Collins intends to continue the event for as long as he can, and his ideas have been adopted by the wrestling and the softball teams, both of which held networking events using Zoom in February.

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The Bloomsburg women’s basketball team celebrated several members of the program who reached 1,000-points during their time as a Husky. Joining in on the celebration for the Huskies and pictured are Morgan Klunk, Emma Saxton, Taylor Montana, Alyssa Mack, Michelle Simons, Dana (Weiler) Bonner, Adriana Sadowski, and Catherine Noack. Catherine Noack and her father are a father-daughter duo of 1,000-point scorers for the Huskies.

The 10th Anniversary of the 2012-13 Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC) Championship team was celebrated as members of the team, Alyssa Canso, Dana (Weiler) Bonner, Jocelyn Ford, Adriana Sadowski, Catherine Noack, Brianna (Dudeck) Ravel, Marta Simmons, and Lauren Ellis, returned to Nelson Field House. The Huskies were the No. 1 seed in the East and defeated Kutztown (81-52), No. 18 Edinboro (76-73), No. 7 Cannon (74-57) to claim the program’s second PSAC Title, and first since the 1991-92 season.

The Huskies honored their first 1,000-point scorer on the men’s basketball team, William Swisher ’39. Swisher is currently 29th on the all-time scoring list with 1,014 points for the Huskies. He was a member of Harold S. Shelly’s team that went 39-29 during his four years. Swisher is shown with Dr. Diana Rogers-Adkinson, and Dr. Michael McFalland, and the Husky cheerleaders during his celebration.
Nelson Field House — 50 YEARS

By Bob Dunkelberger

Last fall marked 50 years since the opening of Nelson Field House and the start of the 50th season of athletics the building has hosted. Yet, when originally planned, it was not always certain where the University’s field house would find a home.

The first gymnasium opened on campus in early 1894—a state-of-the-art facility attached to the dormitory building—later named Walker Hall. In the 1930s, Roosevelt’s New Deal provided funding for a new gym. Three months after hosting its first athletic contest—a victory over West Chester in basketball—and after many delays, Centennial Gymnasium was dedicated in May 1932.

Within 20 years, planning was underway to build a companion field house facility. Originally slated for the site of the current library, by 1967 it was decided instead to use land on the upper campus that would house the majority of Bloomsburg’s athletic facilities. Because of funding and redesign delays, ground was not broken on the project until 1970.

By early Fall 1972, the field house, built at a cost of more than $2.6 million with gymnasium, movable bleachers for 4,000, a swimming pool, classrooms, offices, locker rooms, and other athletic facilities, was complete. The first athletic event held there, Dec. 2, 1972 before a full house, was appropriately enough, a victory for the men’s basketball team over West Chester.

The field house was officially dedicated on May 5, 1973, and named for Elna Harrison Nelson, a Wayne County native and 1911 graduate. The field house construction on the upper campus, September 1970

Field House construction on the upper campus, September 1970

Elna Harris on Nelson, a 2311 graduate and namesake for the field house


Archbishop Desmond Tutu at commencement, December 14, 1996


James Brown, Dean, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

As Commonwealth University’s longest-serving dean, James Brown, who started his tenure as dean at Bloomsburg in 2011, embodies the University’s mission to be accessible to all students in the state. A native of western Pennsylvania whose mother was an entrepreneur and father a steelworker, he’s also an alumnus of the State System, having graduated from Slippery Rock University.

Before being named dean at Bloomsburg, he was dean of arts and sciences at Mansfield University, associate dean at Bloomsburg, and a professor of English at Charleston Southern University. And at different times, he’s served as acting dean for the colleges of business and education.

When he’s not on campus, he can often be found in his woodworking shop.

Q: What is the biggest challenge of higher education?
A: Well, there are some false narratives about the value of a liberal education. The word liberal is not political in this sense, but I think it has been tarnished. So, I’m glad our college is called the College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities. It tells people what we’re actually doing.

We push back on the narrative that you can’t get a job by showing that our history, English, and philosophy majors are getting great jobs. We bring those graduates back for CASSH CON every fall. And we have alumni who are nationally known, successful people in every field represented in our college. Our students interact with them and frequently get hired. We have alumni of the College of Business who come talk to our students because they want to hire them because of the skills and perspectives they can bring to their organizations.

Q: Why is Commonwealth University and universities like it essential?
A: Price is one thing. Value is another thing, a function of price and quality. We are the best game in town in terms of value. As a graduate student, I had a great experience at a Big 10 school, but I would have been lost if I had gone there. As an undergraduate, also, students have real professors, here from day one, not teaching assistants. They are publishing, they are competitive, but they are teaching first. Their first responsibility is to the students. That’s incredible value.

Q: How do higher education transform your life?
A: From an early age, I assumed that I would go to college, and my parents made many sacrifices to make sure that could. The money they saved was enough for most of my first year in college. I didn’t know what I wanted to major in, but I had a professor take me aside and said, “You’re really good at this; maybe you should major in English.” I told my parents for a year and a half that I was a business major. I worked in a steel mill with my father in the summers. I majored in English because I thought I can always get a job in a steel mill. That was shortsighted because there aren’t many steel mills anymore. I’m glad I wasn’t only trained to be a steelworker because that wouldn’t have gone well for me.

Q: What did you learn working in a steel mill?
A: The most important thing for me was I learned I could do it. It wasn’t work that I thought I could do. I was summer help, and there were “older guys” in their 20s. Many of them already had families and children and mortgages. When I talked with them and said, “I kind of enjoy working here,” they always told me, “if you don’t finish college, I’m going to find you and kick your ass.” I understood to me what a privilege it was to be able to go to college and transform the direction of my life.

And by working alongside my dad, I got to know how a lot better than I would have otherwise. To see him interacting with other people, not as a dad, but as one of the guys, was cool.

Q: Why do we need arts, humanities, and social sciences?
A: Studying things through different lenses is important. The arts, humanities, and social sciences provide us with different lenses through which to view social problems and economic issues.

That’s why I think what we’re doing here is important. We have the humanities, or the study of who we are; the social sciences or the study of how we are together, how we interact, and the arts, which are why we are human. The arts define us as humans, among all the other animals in a positive way. We are the animals that can create and appreciate art, music, poetry, and theatre. I want everybody, every future teacher, every future business leader from the Zeigler College of Business, to know something about literature, sociology, and art history because those lenses, those ways of knowing, will make them better leaders and better citizens.

Q: Talk about your passion for woodworking.
A: When you’re building a piece of furniture, you’re solving problems. Am I going to make this piece the right size before I make it the right thickness? How do I use these tools to accomplish these tasks? It’s very visceral. There’s a product at the end of the day. For those of us whose work products are not generally tangible, there is something to be said for being able to say, “I made that.”

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We push back on the narrative that you can’t get a job by showing that our history, English, and philosophy majors are getting great jobs. We bring those graduates back for CASSH CON every fall. And we have alumni who are nationally known, successful people in every field represented in our college. Our students interact with them and frequently get hired. We have alumni of the College of Business who come talk to our students because they want to hire them because of the skills and perspectives they can bring to their organizations.

Q: Why is Commonwealth University and universities like it essential?
A: Price is one thing. Value is another thing, a function of price and quality. We are the best game in town in terms of value. As a graduate student, I had a great experience at a Big 10 school, but I would have been lost if I had gone there. As an undergraduate, also, students have real professors, here from day one, not teaching assistants. They are publishing, they are competitive, but they are teaching first. Their first responsibility is to the students. That’s incredible value.
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and Huskies on Your Mind.

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