

BloomSBurg

THE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

Not Your Typical Politician

How Stacy Garrity '86 went from being a respected business leader and Army veteran to state treasurer

Page 12

ALSO INSIDE

Connecting Across Generations

Alumni Association Board nurtures the next generation of Huskies

Page 20

The Ultimate Soccer Mom

Paige Harris balances motherhood and being a student-athlete

Page 28

Dear BU Family,

We are pleased to present the Winter 2021 edition of *Bloomsburg: The University Magazine*, and I hope that you and your families continue to remain safe and healthy amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

I first want to recognize and congratulate a BU alumna who makes us all Husky proud – not only for what she has achieved in her military and business careers, but perhaps more importantly for all that she will accomplish in her next role in Harrisburg. Our feature story on Stacy Garrity '86, Pennsylvania's recently elected state treasurer, is an inspirational one. I had the honor of serving as an honorary chair of her transition team, and I know she will be a great role model and leader for all Huskies and Pennsylvanians.

While our spring semester began a bit later this year, it has been great to see our students back on campus this month after an extended holiday break.

Thanks to a partnership with the Columbia County Commissioners, the University was able to purchase rapid COVID testing kits so that our students could be tested prior to the semester's start. The health and safety of our campus community remains our highest priority in the coming months, and I am confident that we will overcome the challenges the pandemic has brought us as we continue to collaborate with the commissioners and other community partners.

Speaking of collaborations, you may have read about the ongoing integration discussions between BU, Lock Haven University, and Mansfield University. These discussions began last fall, and we remain heavily involved in the analysis and planning for this potential partnership through regular working group and subgroup meetings. I am optimistic and excited about the potential of this collaboration because we have a unique opportunity to partner and grow together for the benefit of our students and their success, providing them greater access and more opportunities so that they themselves may grow and thrive personally and professionally. I urge you to visit our website to learn more about this ongoing process: bloomu.edu/integration. I also encourage you to share your thoughts and suggestions on the feedback form on this site.

As we have celebrated Black History Month on our campus this February, we remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring an inclusive and equitable BU experience for all. Thanks to the guidance of our President's Commission for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) – and the leadership of its co-chairs: Dr. Shavonne Shorter (Special Assistant to the President for DEI) and Ms. Madelyn Rodriguez – we have progressed in this endeavor over the past year. Yet, we acknowledge the work ahead of us as we strive to become more welcoming and inclusive for all members of the BU community.

As always, I thank you for your support of BU, and look forward to seeing you back on campus later this year.

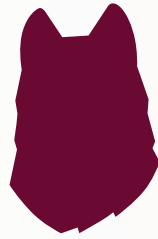
GO HUSKIES!

Sincerely,
Bashar W. Hanna
President



President Bashar Hanna



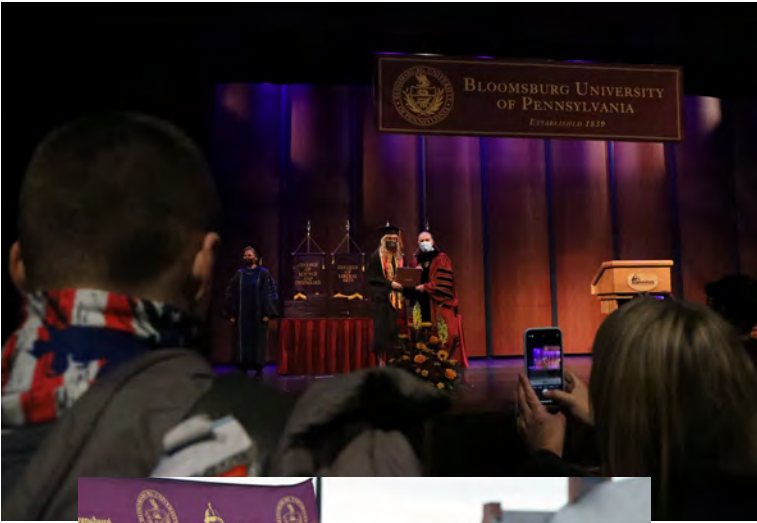


DREAMS REALIZED

Even masked up, smiles persevered as hundreds of students and their families and supporters participated in the November graduation walk-through event in advance of BU's official virtual commencement in December.

Inside Mitrani Hall, graduates received personal congratulations from President Bashar Hanna and Provost Diana Rogers-Adkinson. Outside, supporters and family members took photos to share and preserve their memories. Additional photos on page 32.

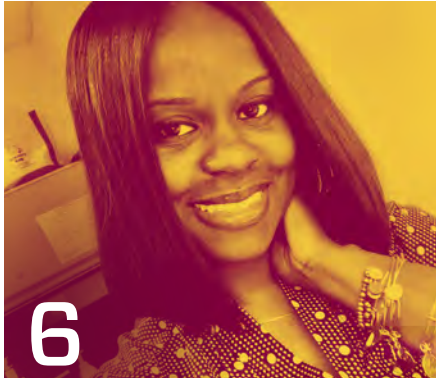
Check out more photos at [flickr.com/photos/bloomsburgu](https://www.flickr.com/photos/bloomsburgu)



“This year, you’ve adjusted twice to a remote learning environment — and you’ve passed this test with aplomb. With the customary grit and determination Huskies are known for, you’ve continued to persevere despite the COVID-19 related challenges, and you’ve each crossed the virtual finish line. For that I’m beyond proud of all of you.”

— President Bashar Hanna

Winter 2021



Contents

4	COMMON GROUND	20	CONNECTING ACROSS GENERATIONS
6	DONORS STEP UP	24	HUSKY NOTES
8	A PIPELINE OF SUPPORT	27	A VIEW FROM THE TOP
12	NOT YOUR TYPICAL POLITICIAN	30	THEN AND NOW
16	THERE ARE NO SMALL PARTS	33	FALL 2021

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Bloomsburg: The University Magazine is published three times a year for alumni, students' families, and friends of the university. Back issues may be found at issuu.com/buhuskies.

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PASSHE Northeast Integration Gains Momentum

By Tom McGuire

Rarely does an opportunity come along that can transform the look and shape of the higher education landscape. But the proposed integration of Bloomsburg, Lock Haven, and Mansfield universities is one such instance.

This work, led by Bloomsburg President Bashar Hanna, who was also named interim president of Lock Haven in February, and close to 1,000 individuals, will build stronger institutions with an expanded capacity to serve an increasingly diverse student population.

When complete, the integration would give students at all three locations access to a broader array of academic programs, a larger pool of faculty, and an affordable education with expansive opportunities for personal development and professional success.

The integration of the three universities will strengthen and expand partnerships with the region's employers and fulfill northeast Pennsylvania's workforce needs. Faculty will have the opportunity to collaborate with their peers for the benefit of students across three campuses.

"This is an ambitious undertaking aimed at preserving our legacies while sustainably building a new institution that will serve the commonwealth's students for generations to come," said Hanna. "Within each institution's community will remain the advantage of a thriving university that continues to have strong partnerships with school districts and area employers with whom we can partner to prepare our students for the region's workforce and beyond."

For BU's students, faculty, staff and alumni, there is a commitment to maintaining the Bloomsburg name, and honoring BU's identity, brand, and traditions — while opening the door to new opportunities.

University integration is focused on accessibility and student success and aims to retain the unique and personal on-campus experiences, services, and faculty-student interactions that have historically reinforced campus identities. Integration includes pursuing a path with the NCAA where all three campuses would retain their current complement of athletic teams. This effort also will build upon an existing foundation of collaboration and shared services partnerships to expand and deliver undergraduate and graduate programs across the region and beyond.

At each institution, the original University name will continue to appear on diplomas connecting graduates to a Husky network of 76,000 and counting alumni. Integration will also allow the alumni of the three institutions to interact with more than 60,000 new friends with similar experiences so that they can collectively provide professional networks and opportunities for the benefit of students.

"What gives me great confidence about this complex effort is that it is being led by BU President Bashar Hanna and supported by so many faculty and staff across all three institutions," said John Wetzels, BU trustee and Pennsylvania Secretary of Corrections. "Combining Dr. Hanna's visionary leadership along with the commitment and support of faculty and staff, I have no doubt that students across the Commonwealth who are seeking a high-quality, affordable education will be the ultimate beneficiaries of this potential integration."

The integration team is expected to submit preliminary implementation plans and aspirational goals to the Board of Governors in April, and if approved, those plans will be subject to a public comment period lasting 60 days. The Board will then review the public comments and consider final implementation plans as early as July, which would mean the first cohort of students to enroll in an integrated university is the Fall semester of 2022.



For more information about integration, visit bloomu.edu/integration

Ramakrishnan Named Dean of the College of Science and Technology

Latha Ramakrishnan, Ph.D., knows firsthand the power of inspiration. BU's new dean of the College of Science and Technology, Ramakrishnan was inspired by teachers at critical points in her life.

Ramakrishnan comes to Bloomsburg after serving for more than 14 years in multiple roles at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota.

But her journey in science began as a child in India. "My first mentor was a high school teacher. I really liked chemistry a lot because of how he made it so simple," says Ramakrishnan. Her interest in science sparked, she went to the top universities in India — earning her master's degree in chemistry from the Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai, and her doctorate in chemistry from the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.

Ramakrishnan came to the U.S. to further her education, doing post-doctoral research in biophysical chemistry at Cornell University, where she was awarded the Epilepsy Research Foundation and Milken Family Foundation's post-doctoral fellowship grant in 2003.

In 2006, she went to Minnesota to join St. Cloud's chemistry department. She was promoted to full professor and became chair of the department of chemistry and biochemistry in 2013.

In 2016 she became interim associate provost for research and dean of the School of Graduate Studies, where she oversaw more than 40 graduate programs.



"Throughout my education and career at every level, it's the faculty who have the greatest influence on me," says Ramakrishnan, who has emphasized student-faculty research throughout her career. As an independent investigator, she established a research program in behavioral neuropharmacology testing anti-convulsive drugs, mentored more than 50 undergraduate students in research, and published research articles with multiple student co-authors.

"During the interview process Dr. Ramakrishnan distinguished herself as someone who has a depth of experiences that will serve our institution well," says Diana Rogers-Adkinson, BU's provost and senior vice president for academic affairs. "She also possesses the qualities of being a collaborative problem-solver, an outstanding mentor to faculty and students, and a champion of diversity."

During her tenure at St. Cloud State, Ramakrishnan secured over \$6 million in external grants, including multiple grants from the National Science Foundation.

Before Ramakrishnan's arrival to BU in December, Lynn Hummel '02/'03M, Ed.D., had been serving as the interim dean of the college.

Bloomsburg University to Offer Master of Social Work Degree

BU will begin offering the Master of Social Work (MSW) degree this fall after the program was approved by the Board of Governors of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

"The demand for master's-level social workers is on the rise nationally and in Northcentral Pennsylvania," says Andy Dunlap, associate professor and program director of social work. "Graduates of the program will be trained to assist individuals, families, and communities to adjust to these challenging times. Social workers are also charged with making positive change in their communities."

"Employers in fields such as health care, corrections, and substance abuse counseling have been asking for this program and are eager for us to begin contributing masters-prepared social workers to the workforce in our region,"

says James Brown, dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

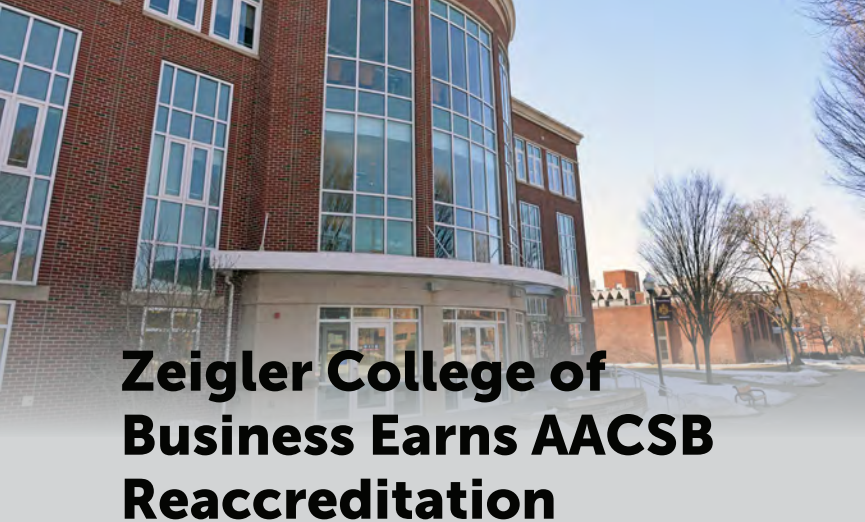
BU's program will be accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, enabling graduates to be licensed in Pennsylvania as a Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW).

"LMSWs have more advanced positions in professional settings," says Dunlap. "They tend to provide supervision, specialized care and program leadership. After several years of clinical supervision, LMSWs may also go on to become Licensed Clinical Social Workers, who provide specialized counseling and can be independent practitioners."

The program is two years for students who have earned a bachelor's degree in any field, but students who have earned a Bachelor's in Social Work (BSW) may be eligible to opt out of two semesters of foundational courses.

"Bloomsburg's social work program already enjoys strong community ties, and local agencies have expressed enthusiasm for providing field education sites for master's level social work students," says Dunlap.

For more information, go to bloomu.edu/gradschool/social-work.



Zeigler College of Business Earns AACSB Reaccreditation

BU's Terry and JoAnn Zeigler College of Business has earned reaccreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

BU initially received accreditation by AACSB in 2005 and is one of seven schools within the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education that hold it. Just 5% of all business schools globally have this prestigious designation.

"Earning reaccreditation from the AACSB is a testament to our University's commitment to excellence," says Diana Rogers-Adkinson, BU's provost and senior vice president for academic affairs. "It reaffirms our faculty and staff's unwavering support for our students and programs."

The Zeigler College of Business received commendations from AACSB for the high-level of engagement between faculty, students, and staff, including:

- The Zeigler Institute for Professional Development.
- Student success in business knowledge competitions, including professional sales, international business, and others.
- The Husky Dog Pound, providing college and high school students the opportunity to share an innovative idea in a Shark Tank-style competition.
- Professional internship opportunities for students.
- Very active student clubs and organizations.

"Accreditation is earned by meeting or exceeding the rigorous standards of AACSB for excellence in our degree programs, faculty research, teaching, and community service. This is earned by always seeking continuous improvement and creating high-quality educational and experiential learning opportunities for our students," says Todd Shawver, dean of the Zeigler College of Business.

Accreditation by AACSB International, founded in 1916, is a voluntary, non-governmental review of educational institutions and programs.



^ Alumni share their insights with students at the fall 2019 Zeigler Institute for Professional Development Business Conference.

BU Police Department Earns Accreditation

BU's Police Department has earned accreditation from the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association through its Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission.

BU is now one of only seven accredited institutions of higher education law enforcement agencies in Pennsylvania to be accredited by the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission and one of only 127 statewide.

Accreditation helps institutions evaluate and improve their performance. The process takes between 18 and 24 months and covers 136 standards and 184 sub-standards.

"When I arrived back at BU more than three years ago, I told our administration leadership that I could reshape the BU PD into a model 21st-century department," says Leo Sokoloski, director of the BU police department.

"To be a model department, we had to transform training, develop and write 21st-century policies and then put into practice what we said we were doing. The department headquarters needed minor physical changes to retrofit the facilities to be compliant to accreditation standards."

The accreditation process continued under new VP for Finance and Administration Claudia Thrush and Associate VP for Facilities Management Eric Ness, who saw the value and importance of the effort.

"This accreditation is a feather in the university's cap as it confirms the department is operating at an exemplary level and providing best-in-class service," says Thrush.

Sokoloski is quick to point out the many individuals involved with the effort.

"Sergeant Rob Neiderhiser and officer Jeff Bachinger played significant roles and were focused on driving this initiative to completion after many, many months of work," says Sokoloski. "Also, BU's skilled craftsmen did great work for us. The plumbers, electricians, carpenters, painters, and many more worked tirelessly to make the changes we needed in our facilities."



^ From left: Sgt. Rob Neiderhiser, Director Leo Sokoloski, Officer Jeff Bachinger.

Alumni and Donors

STEP UP

During Challenging Year

By Tom Schaeffer '02

The numbers are in, and the results show BU alumni and donors have come together to provide support for students when they needed it most.

Despite many pandemic-related fundraising challenges, the donors' response helped create opportunities and alleviate financial stress for students to the tune of:

58%
increase

in giving from 2019

70%
increase

in donor support
on Giving Tuesday.

32
new

scholarships created

\$2M+
increase

to BU's endowment,
growing to more than

\$60M

"2020 was certainly a challenging year for us all, but the commitment of our alumni and donors in supporting our students exemplifies the Husky spirit of resilience and togetherness and has truly been an inspiration," says President Bashar Hanna. "We are fortunate to have such a dedicated community, and I am forever grateful for their commitment to our students and their success in especially challenging times."

During a tumultuous year filled with unprecedented academic and logistical challenges, many students also faced financial crisis due to job loss and other circumstances. In addition to regular fundraising efforts, these challenges sparked the Strengthen the Pack Campaign for emergency student aid, which raised \$105,000 from 241 donors. The fund helped BU administrators deploy urgent resources to students facing urgent short-term needs like computer and internet access, temporary housing needs, tuition assistance, and food insecurities.

"While I'm typically in awe of the support and generosity of our alumni and friends, this past year has been extraordinary," says Vice President for Advancement Erik Evans. "What was especially encouraging was more than 75% of the gifts we received were \$250 or less. This shows that donors at all levels are giving what they can to support our students, and they know that every gift counts. When everyone comes together to give, it makes all the difference."

Annual gifts to the Bloom On Fund, emergency aid, and scholarships to help recruit and retain students made for a promising year of support, but the generosity didn't stop there. BU donors also bestowed several transformational gifts, which are

equally vital to the advancement of the University, including a \$10 million gift from Steph Pettit '89 to support student-athletes, a \$1.5 million gift from Craig A. Diehl Esq. '82 to establish a center for law school preparation and a \$500,000 gift from Mike '85 and Beth Boguski to support Professional Experience Grants.

Finally, in addition to immediate-use funds provided, BU donors also stepped up to show their commitment to future Huskies by pledging more than \$6 million in gifts through estate intentions, an increase of \$2.2 million from the previous year.

To learn more about how donor support impacted the BU community during 2020, visit giving.bloomu.edu/Impact, or to make a gift go to giving.bloomu.edu/GiveNow.

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"2020 was certainly a challenging year for us all, but the commitment of our alumni and donors in supporting our students exemplifies the Husky spirit of resilience and togetherness and has truly been an inspiration. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated community, and I am forever grateful for their commitment to our students and their success in especially challenging times."
— President Bashar Hanna

First-Generation Alumni Support Future Generations of **HUSKIES**

Nearly a third of BU students are the first in their family to attend college. And many of them know, all too well, just how expensive it can be.

They also know that they need every little bit of support they can get — especially when their families aren't always in a position to help.

That was especially true for Christina Adenuga '10 and Karl Luxardo '95. Both were first-generation students, and though they both had very different experiences, they both knew they wanted to give back to BU.

Adenuga, a Philadelphia native who came to BU through the Act 101 program, benefited from a scholarship. Her parents supported her dream of attending college, but were not in a position to pay for her education, and she had a difficult time finding scholarships.

"Several of my friends came to BU through Act 101, and that's how I learned about the school," Adenuga says. "The program played a major role in laying the foundation for my education."

That scholarship and the support she received from the Act 101 program members inspired her desire to give back. And her first gift came with a big impact. In 2019, Adenuga established a scholarship through a virtual endowment, which allows her to support a student today with an annual gift and ensure that support for years to come with an

additional gift to BU in her estate.

"We've all gotten to where we are because someone helped us in some way," Adenuga adds. "We owe where we are to them, so it's important to find a way to do that for someone else if we can."

A Bloomsburg native, Luxardo and his wife, Marti, were high



school sweethearts who both attended BU and graduated together in 1995.

Luxardo went on to pursue his medical degree at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, with which BU now has an established formal pathway.

His loyalty to his hometown drew him back, and in 1999 he completed his medical training at Geisinger Health System, where he has worked ever since.

"I wasn't sure what would happen until I went out and experienced more of the world," says Luxardo. "But it wasn't until I was in the city and exposed to that lifestyle that I realized that I wanted to come back and practice here and give back to my community."

His loyalty to BU is just as strong. In 1996, one year after graduating, Karl and Marti made their first gift to BU, even while Karl was in med school. They have been loyal donors ever since.

"We've always said that if we were able to give back, we would. Along with having fond memories of BU, I also got a great education there that prepared me for med school," says Karl. "It's more than just a university for us. It's where our kids had their high school graduation and played high school field hockey when their field was destroyed by flood waters. It's such a big part of our lives and our community."

Their triplets, Gabrielle, Dominique, and Alexandra, graduated from college last spring. And with their youngest daughter Bella hoping to follow in their footsteps as a Husky, the Luxardos are looking forward to increasing their contributions to BU to support future first-generation college students.

Pathfinders

BU Provides a

Pipeline of Support

for First-Gen Students

By Eric Foster

Serving first-generation students has been a foundational part of Bloomsburg University's mission since its beginning in 1839 as a literary institute. That mission has remained steadfast through its years as a state college in the 1960s and 70s, and as recently as 2008, when more than a third of the student body were the first in their families to attend college.

Through those decades, students experienced the unfamiliar challenges of "navigating" college — obtaining financial aid, scheduling classes, communicating with professors — together.

"For first-gen students, it is all brand-new," says Mindy Andino, interim vice provost and dean of undergraduate studies. "They face challenge unlike their peers who have families with college experience and references to college growing up."

Today's first-generation students, making up 28% of BU's student population, don't always have peers to share their experience with, and the university is working to make sure they don't face the challenges alone.

Andino is one of many administrators and faculty, including President Bashar Hanna and Provost Diana Rogers-Adkinson, who understand the experiences of these students because they were first-generation students themselves.

"You don't know what you don't know. There are unspoken cultural norms about university life you just don't know as first-gen," says Andino. "Little things, like figuring out

that the residence hall closes over breaks and you have to arrange for a ride home. Or how the final exam schedule works. The students around you can navigate everyday life and call mom and dad if they have questions."



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“You don't know what you don't know. There are unspoken cultural norms about university life you just don't know as first-gen.”

— Mindy Andino



BU has been named to the 2021-22 First-gen Forward cohort by The Center for First-generation Student Success, an initiative of NASPA (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) and The Suder Foundation. The First-gen Forward designation recognizes higher education institutions that have demonstrated a commitment to improving experiences and advancing first-generation college students' outcomes.

As a First-gen Forward Institution, BU faculty and staff will have opportunities to engage with peer institutions that are also working to improve first-generation students' experiences and outcomes. BU will participate in the First-gen Forward Workshop slated for early-June, monthly phone calls, and virtual professional development sessions. After two successful years in the program, institutions are eligible to apply for the Advisory leadership designation.

First-gen Forward now recognizes and supports over 200 diverse institutions across three cohorts committed to first-generation student success.

When she was college-age, Andino's father was terminally ill, and she might never have gone to college except on a scholarship. "For graduate school, my boyfriend, now husband, helped me with the FAFSA," says Andino, referring to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. "And there's a massive pressure to succeed and be successful. You have to manage that and move forward, and it's not easy. It's one of the experiences that's similar to being an immigrant."

William Ross '65 knows this pressure all too well. He was the first and only member of his family to go to college — his sister went to business school, and his brother followed their father into the trades. "Back then, everyone was first-generation. The first day, three of us met in the registration line and wound up being roommates. We're still friends."

"My father had an accident on the job and had to be cared for by his family. I chose Bloomsburg because it was close to home," says Ross, a native of the Schuylkill County coal community of Connerton. "It was a lot more intensive than high school. It took a lot of getting used to."

A constant help for first-gen students over the years are professors who go the extra mile for their students.

"Dr. (Harold) Lanterman gave me textbooks to read. I was reading chemistry books like novels," says Ross. "The next year, I got a job as a student assistant in the lab for three years. I spent more time with my professors than just in class. I was a lab rat." For Ross, the experience paid off. After graduation, he worked for major chemical companies before moving into chemical sales and founding his own firm, Ross Organic, which supplies materials for health and beauty firms.

Maddy Rodriguez '95 has experience at BU both as a first-generation student and as a staffer who has shared her wisdom to help new first-generation students navigate college.



"Campuses operate on social capital. We're trying to change that. One of the challenges is making it more transparent."
— Rebecca Willoughby

"There's imposter syndrome, 'I don't belong here.' Even as a grown woman, I still get that feeling," says Rodriguez, BU's director of multicultural affairs. "Many of our students carry that with them. Should I really be in this class?"

Rodriguez — known as 'Miss Maddy' by the students she works with — almost had her own college career derailed by self-doubt and lack of focus. "My sister, Janet (Rodriguez) O'Toole '88, saw my grades from the first semester and said, 'I'm not wasting gas and paying tolls to pick you up with grades like this.' After that, I improved my grades."



“They don’t realize the relationship with the faculty is important. They want to stay under the radar. I made sure I knew my professors by name, and they knew me by name.”
 — Maddy Rodriguez

Among the lessons Rodriguez shares with students is to get to know their professors. “They don’t realize the relationship with the faculty is important. They want to stay under the radar. I made sure I knew my professors by name, and they knew me by name.”

One of the professors first-generation students are likely to meet is Rebecca Willoughby, executive director of Student Success and the First-Year Experience, and an ‘01 first-generation graduate of BU.

“I was a commuter, so I didn’t get the full-on experience,” says Willoughby, “But I still felt like a fish out of water, particularly my first semester. My family was completely unfamiliar with the whole idea of college and all that entailed. I came to BU at 17, and I was struggling to decipher my parents’ taxes so I could fill out the FAFSA form.”

“Campuses operate on social capital,” Willoughby explains. “We’re trying to change that. One of the challenges is making it more transparent — if you need help with this, here is a campus resource that can help.”

Willoughby teaches several sections of BU’s First-Year Seminar course, but she emphasizes that the First-Year Experience is a more encompassing project. To start with, each First-Year seminar has a peer mentor assigned to it. “Students connected to peer mentors is hugely important to ease the transition,” says Willoughby. “They have a peer to go to, someone like themselves.”

Another new tool is BU’s HuskySuccess platform, launched last year. While it is designed to help all students, HuskySuccess can be particularly helpful for first-generation students to connect to resources. The application is also a one-stop destination for students seeking help.

“Even students who aren’t first-gen are finding it helpful,” Willoughby says.

From the Dominican Republic to Bloomsburg



Sophomore Celeste Rivas is not only a first-generation college student but also first-generation American. “I came to the U.S. eight years ago from the Dominican Republic,” says the marketing and professional sales major. “I’m the first in my family to go to school. I have the support of my family. My dad is paying for college, and he wants me to focus on school and not work. And I’m taking out loans to help my dad.

“In my culture, if you want to be successful, you have to have some type of profession. If I want to be something, I must learn about it and then go do it. That’s the mentality I came to this country with.”

“Dad’s English is better than mom’s, but if I have a homework question, for them to help, I have to translate it for them. My own English is not perfect yet,” adds Rivas. “But my professors are understanding. Even though my language is a problem, they saw my hard work, and they really liked that about me. They would say we can work through it, and I would go to office hours right away after class.”

In high school, Rivas took part in a career program that allowed her to work as a florist. “I would make beautiful flower arrangements with my own hands and made someone so happy. When I went out and sold the flowers I made, it opened my eyes. I like making and marketing things. That really brought me joy.”

“Every facet of the campus is working to be more accessible to students.”

To further build a community of support, two years ago BU launched a chapter of the first-generation honor society Alpha Alpha Alpha (Tri-Alpha). And this winter, BU was also named a First-gen Forward Institution by the Center for First-Generation Student Success. BU has also celebrated National First-Generation College Student Day on November 8.

“The honor society was brought forward by Cody Deitz, a first-gen graduate student” says Andino. “We’re creating a pipeline of support.”

“When I was an undergrad at BU, we had a lot of different honor societies, based on major or minor — never one that talked about being first in your family to go to college.” says Deitz’ 18/’20 M, now a resident hall director at California University of Pennsylvania. “Moravian College was one step ahead of my thoughts and started Tri-Alpha. I worked with them to charter it at BU, making us the first state institution to have Tri-Alpha.”

As a graduate assistant for BU’s orientation program, Deitz helped bridge the experience gap with sessions for first-generation students and family members. “I knew there had to be something that we could continue to do to help make students’ second and third years successful.”

To bring that vision to life, plans are for BU’s Tri-Alpha chapter to match upper-class members with younger first-generation students to act as peer mentors beyond their first year.

“We are also asking faculty and staff who want to self-identify as first-generation to let first generation-students know they are not alone,” says Andino. “Students need to see people who have their shared experiences. See other first-gen professionals who have made it. And they can see that they can do that too.”



“I knew there had to be something that we could continue to do to help make students’ second and third years successful.”

— Cody Deitz

Taking ownership of his future

As a first-generation college student, senior digital forensics major Michael Engle takes full ownership of his education and future.

“Most people start college right after high school,” says Engle. “I took a few years off to work, so I forgot a lot of things. I need something else. I needed a career, not a job.”

“It was a big transition to go from school to work to school. Two years in, I’m still trying to wrap my head around the idea that I’m in college.”

Like many first-generation students, finances are tight for Engle.

“I would get so much joy over not having to worry how I’m going to pay for this. If I can’t pay something, it’s my problem, nobody else’s,” says Engle. “But when I graduate, I can say that I did this.”

Engle came to BU as an undeclared student but quickly discovered BU’s digital forensics program, a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education, jointly sponsored by the National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security. “I’ve always been interested in solving crimes and would like to work for the FBI at some point.”

He’s already made connections with his faculty and spent the last year working on a research project about human trafficking with professor Scott Inch as a mentor.

— By Andrea O’Neill ’06





NOT YOUR *TYPICAL* POLITICIAN

—
How Stacy
Garrity '86
went from
respected
business
leader
and Army
veteran
to state
treasurer

by Tom McGuire



To say Stacy Garry '86 is not your typical politician is an understatement. She went from political unknown to winning a state row office, a journey that has taken the Bradford County native around the world. Her election victory shocked even the most optimistic of supporters and has suddenly thrust her into the thick of the political world.

So how did the Athens, Pa., resident and retired Army Reserve colonel make it to Harrisburg as Pennsylvania's new state treasurer?

The oldest of four daughters of Howard Garry and Beverly Arbie, "we were raised to be about God, country, and family," says Garry. "We went to church every Wednesday and Sunday. In the summer, we attended vacation Bible school, and every morning at school, we recited the Pledge of Allegiance. And on top of everything, no matter what, I had to watch out for my sisters."

"My parents were very encouraging," says Garry. "They always made it a big thing to say that whatever you put your mind to do, you can do it. I grew up just believing it in a naive sort of way."

Following graduation from Sayre High School, Garry knew she was going to college. It was something her parents drilled into her and her sisters. However, the first-generation student admits she didn't put much thought into what school she would attend. "My reason for [first] choosing Lock Haven was simple; my friends were going there."

"I wasn't well-traveled and lived a pretty sheltered life, so I figured I could carpool and come back home on the weekends," Garry says. "After a year of adjusting to college life, I realized I should look for a school with more of a focus on business, which is what I was interested in. When I looked around, I saw that Bloomsburg had a very good program and so I transferred." As a student, Garry was intrigued by business and economics and how markets function. It was a field dominated by males in the 1980s, which did not worry her in the least. At BU, Garry studied finance and accounting and was influenced by then chair of the accounting and business law department, the late Bernard Dill. (See obituary, page 26.)

"Professor Dill was very engaging with his students," Garry recalls. "He was funny, he was motivating, and he made me take a strong interest in the major."

Garry, a runner in high school, also found time to be a varsity cheerleader, but more importantly, she joined the Army ROTC on the encouragement of her parents, both 20-year Navy Reserve veterans.

"Basic training was an eye-opening experience. I wasn't mentally prepared for people being in my face and yelling. We weren't allowed to call home for a few weeks, and when we did, of course, my mom immediately said forget it and to come home. My dad said never quit. So, I stayed so I wouldn't disappoint my father."

"My dad supported us and told us 'whatever your mind believes you can achieve, you can achieve' and that 'winners never quit, and quitters never win.' It stuck with me."

After graduating from BU, Garry joined Global Tungsten and Powders Corporation, or GTP, in Towanda and advanced through several positions, becoming vice president of two of GTP's three business units. She was VP for government affairs and industry liaison before stepping down to assume her elected position.

At the same time, Garry was a member of the Army Reserve, but certainly had no plans for what would become a 30-year military career.

"My original idea was to do my six years and then get out. Of course, after 9/11, I went to Kuwait. That was my first deployment. Upon returning home, I just could not bring myself to get out. I felt I needed to stay and serve our country."

GTP management shared Garry's commitment to the Reserve. "At some companies, when you return from a deployment, management will try to reorganize you out. But every time I got back from a deployment, GTP would promote me. They are a great company that has been around for more than 100 years. We have many third-generation employees. And, of course, they were always very proud of me and my work."

"The entire GTP Group organization has deep respect for Stacy," says Hermann Walser, president and CEO. "She is always looking beyond her direct responsibilities. The well-being of all stakeholders, customers, employees, community, and country, is her priority. Her ability to motivate and convince people, to communicate, and to network are unique. We will desperately miss her in this function, as well as a member of our GTP family."

During her last overseas deployment in 2008-09, Garrity earned the nickname "Angel of the Desert" while serving as the acting battalion commander of the military police at Camp Bucca in southern Iraq. "Our mission was to provide care and custody with dignity and respect to the 7,000 detainees."

"To make sure all the rules and regulations were being followed, I would walk the camp after midnight because I always said nothing good happens after midnight. I would walk with the senior staff and just check on soldiers. Then we would have meetings and make sure everything was going OK."

"We also had a deal that as long as the detainees weren't doing anything to hurt our soldiers, then we would allow family visitation or even some soccer matches. The detainees would also get videos once a week. But, among our staff, we had zero tolerance for abuse. We were the first internment facility to have zero abuse allegations. I'm very proud of that fact."

Garrity's outstanding work in Iraq did not go unnoticed. She was twice awarded the Bronze Star and received the Legion of Merit before retiring from the Army Reserve with the rank of colonel.

Back in Bradford County, she and her husband Dan Gizzi, married since 2005, kept busy with water skiing, snowmobiling and running. But the desire to serve others was always an itch.

"As I was thinking about what to do, volunteer work and politics were two of my choices. I've always liked politics, so I called our state representative Tina Pickett, who I knew from my job in government affairs since my real passion is the industrial base and making sure that we keep jobs in the United States."

Pickett recommended jumping into the race for Tom Marino's U.S. Congressional seat after his resignation. "The next day she had me lined up with a political consultant, and they pushed me right into the deep end." Despite 31 candidates in the race, Stacy finished a respectable sixth.

That showing led the state GOP leadership to reach out to her in late 2019 to gauge her interest in running for statewide office.

"I started praying about it, and I thought, OK, Lord, if you want me to do this, then open the doors. And, he did, and then I still was pretty hesitant. When the GOP leadership said they couldn't find anyone to run for treasurer, I decided, if not me, then who's going to do it."

Shortly after making the decision to run and receiving the state Republican Party's endorsement to challenge incumbent Democrat Joe Torsella, the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

"Trying to campaign and raise money during a pandemic was hard. I had to go total grassroots with the odds stacked against me. A Republican had not defeated an incumbent Democrat since 1994. Many people told me 'Stacy, you're running a great campaign, but there's no way you can beat this guy.'"

As Election Day grew closer and the polls showed a tight race, Torsella mounted an advertising blitz with a campaign chest of more than \$2 million. But on election night, as results showed her in the lead, she was cautiously optimistic.

A week later her opponent called to concede. She had pulled off a win no one had expected. "Joe was extremely gracious and very helpful in the transition. I'm sure it was tough for him because he was told there's no way you're going to lose to somebody from Bradford County who had never run before."

At her swearing-in ceremony in January, Garrity did something most unusual. She offered Torsella an opportunity to deliver some remarks. "Joe rose above politics and helped ensure a smooth transition. As we say in the military, thanks for your service."

In her inaugural address, Garrity touched upon several key points that have been a part of her life. "Service to others, be it in elected office or wearing the uniform of our country, is the highest calling."

"Getting the job done in good faith and with honest effort is the watchword by which I promise to serve. I say we look ahead to a place of optimism and cooperation."

Garrity says her goal for the office is to make transparency a top priority and put taxpayers first. "Putting those checks and balances in place is what I want to focus on so that we can make sure that we're being a good steward of our taxpayers' money. Taking transparency to the next level is something that I want to do, and then probably further enhancing the savings programs."

Throughout her journey from rural Pennsylvania to the battlefields of Iraq and then through the rigors of a political campaign, Garrity has never forgotten her roots. Her advice to young girls and women is to remain true to your values.

"I've really tried to live my life with integrity, selfless service, honor, loyalty, and duty. If somebody like me from Bradford County, who grew up on the left side of middle-class, can put myself through college, join the military, then work in manufacturing and become the first female vice president in my company, deploy three times overseas, and retire a colonel, then anyone can do it."

As for the next part of the Stacy Garrity journey, only one person knows for sure.

"People have already called me about running for other offices, and I've told them I campaigned on staying in the job for four years and want to be the best treasurer I can for the people of Pennsylvania. And then we'll see what God has in store for me."

Spoken like a true non-politician.



1. Stacy Garity takes the oath of office as Pennsylvania's state treasurer.
2. Members of the BU Concert Choir perform at Garity's inauguration.
3. Garity, left, while on a tour of duty in Iraq.
4. A member of the 1985-86 cheerleading squad, Garity is in the back row, second from left.



There Are No Small Parts

By Eric Foster

Career Highlights (Character names and roles)

2021, Film, **Silk Road** (Chris Tarbell)

2021, Film, **Breaking News in Yuba County** (Petey Buttons)

2018-2020, TV appearances, **Dream Corp LLC** (Patient 21)

2020, Film, **Unhinged** (Andy)

2016-2020, TV recurring role, **Westworld** (William)

2019, TV recurring role, **Perpetual Grace, LTD** (James Schaeler)

2018, TV recurring role, **Unsolved: The Murders of Tupac and the Notorious B.I.G.** (Detective Russelle Poole)

2017, TV mini-series documentary, **Wormwood** (CIA Agent)

2016, TV appearance, **This Is Us** (Andy Fannan)

2013-2016, TV appearances, **Person of Interest** (Logan Pierce)

2016, TV recurring role, **Hap and Leonard** (Soldier)

2016, Theatre, **Empathitrax**, HERE Arts Center, New York City (Him)

2015, Theatre, **Trevor**, Atwater Village Theatre, Los Angeles (Trevor)

From the stage 25 years ago in Carver Hall to sharing the screen with Oscar-winner Russell Crowe last year, Jimmi Simpson '98 is by any measure a veteran in his field ... of stage, television, and film.

"Bloomsburg is the reason why I'm in the industry," says Simpson, a Hackettstown, N.J., native. "I did find my future there. The practicality of the theatre experience at BU, so many opportunities to perform. Spaces where you could reach down deep and show the department our art, what's inside of us. I have colleagues in the industry who didn't have those opportunities."

But acting was not part of Simpson's career plans when he first stepped on campus as a business and English major.

It all changed with a simple elective course.

"I took a theatre class with Karen Anselm (now professor emerita) thinking she didn't take attendance," says Simpson. To his surprise, Anselm did take attendance and he had an acting project due. "I put my back into it, and I spent so much time doing my first self-directed acting scene that professor Anselm reached out to me and said, 'I think you should be a major.'"

That class, that moment, was a key piece of Simpson's discussion this past fall during the virtual CASSH Con (Careers in Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities) event when he spoke with students on how BU kindled his love of acting 25 years ago.

"The department was family-oriented," Simpson says. "I think that's why I connect with people who are more collaborative. It set me up for being able to know the types of folks I want to be around in this industry."

In addition to starring in BU productions such as "The Assassins," Anselm and the late Michael Collins also turned Simpson onto the Williamstown Theatre Festival. The annual Massachusetts event allows college students to apprentice with seasoned professionals, including the occasional acting legend.

"I scooted around Bloomsburg on a little motorcycle and sold it to pay for Williamstown," says Simpson. For four summers he worked at the festival, going from building sets to serving as an extra to acting with regular speaking parts.

"I never considered being a professional actor. When I thought of acting it was just Jack Nicholson and Tom Cruise — people doing a thing I would never have access to. At Williamstown, I see it's not just the elite. There's the entire core which is 99% of these professionals who love it and struggle and learn and work together. And that's what I wanted to do. I didn't have any expectations besides doing community theatre after my job."

But a lot of hustle at Williamstown, and a little luck, determined that acting would be Simpson's job.

His diverse career was launched with a funny story. "Lewis Black taught us stand-up — which was him telling us to tell a funny story," recalls Simpson.

"I'm not a stand-up guy, but I wanted to do an amazing job and so I worked on it hard. Luckily Black's agent noticed me doing my stand-up and that was my first access to an agent — which turned into working in film and television. This industry is all about work and luck combining to make something happen."

Having earned an agent, Simpson picked up a role in the film "Loser" and appeared on television shows such as "24" and "NYPD Blue." In those early years, Simpson was roommates with actor/producer Charlie Day. "We would make videos to make each other laugh, because we couldn't get work, so we made our own work. I kept returning to this deadpan slack-jawed character. It just made Charlie laugh."

The self-created work evolved into the Liam McPoyle character on "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia."

"It was slotting in my natural tendency to be off-putting into an off-putting character," says Simpson in his trademark low purr, "but it was a pleasure to bring him to life."



"The department was family-oriented. I think that's why I connect with people who are more collaborative. It set me up for being able to know the types of folks I want to be around in this industry."

— Jimmi Simpson

Winner: *Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award: Lead Performance*

2014-2015, TV recurring role, **House of Cards** (Gavin Orsay)

2014, TV recurring role, **The Newsroom** (Jack Spaniel)

2005-2013, TV recurring role, **It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia** (Liam McPoyle)

2013, Film, **White House Down** (Tyler)

2012, Film, **Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter** (Joshua Speed)

2011-2012, TV recurring role, **Breakout Kings** (Lloyd Lowery)

2011, TV appearance, **How I Met Your Mother** (Pete Durkenon)

2010, Film, **The Big Bang** (Niels Geck)

2010, Film, **Date Night** (Armstrong)

2010, Film, **Good Intentions** (Kyle)

2008-2009, Recurring TV role, **Late Show with David Letterman** (Lyle the Intern)

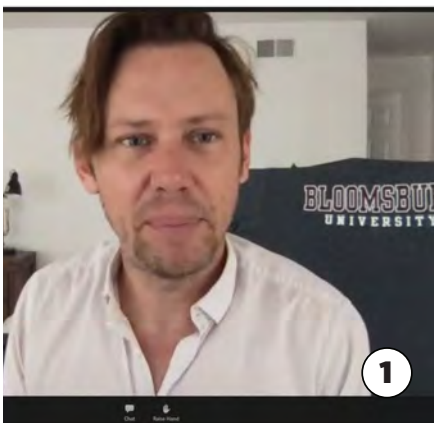
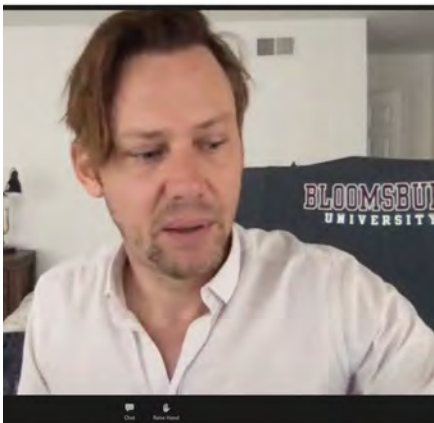
2008, Film, **A Quiet Little Marriage** (Jackson)

2007-2008, Theatre, **The Farnsworth Invention**, Music Box Theatre, New York City (Philo T. Farnsworth)

Drama League Award: Distinguished Performance, Winner: Theatre World Award

2006, TV appearances, **My Name Is Earl** (David Hayes)

2005, Film, **Herbie Fully Loaded** (Crash)



“

“My deepest love is theatre, because that’s where I was trained. That’s what I know. That’s my foundation. There’s so much responsibility for a stage actor. You’re in control of that character. It’s on you to make it brilliant. When you’re performing a play, the director is not there.”

— Jimmi Simpson

In addition to “It’s Always Sunny,” Simpson is known for his work on “House of Cards,” “Westworld,” “Black Mirror,” and “Unsolved,” Simpson has built a reputation in film and on stage as well. On stage, his performance in “The Farnsworth Invention” earned him a Theatre World Award in 2008. And for “Westworld’s” second season, he earned a Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Drama Series.

There are no small parts. A truth Simpson proves time and again — whether playing a mysterious hacker in “House of Cards,” or leaving David Letterman at a loss for words as Lyle the Intern.

With “Westworld,” says Simpson, “I thought my guy would show up and make things a little bit funny or a little bit creepy.” Instead, he was a key recurring character with a dramatic arc.

While his “Westworld” character is a favorite role and was a major shift toward drama for Simpson, other roles that stand out were in smaller productions.

“I played the character named ‘Soldier’ in the IFC show ‘Hap and Leonard,’” says Simpson. “It was almost a theatre experience. We were there by our bootstraps trying to make it work, because we thought it was great. I really threw my back into it. I’m so proud of it.”

“My deepest love is theatre, because that’s where I was trained. That’s what I know. That’s my foundation. There’s so much responsibility for a stage actor. You’re in control of that character. It’s on you to make it brilliant. When you’re performing a play, the director is not there.”

“I love the control you have in theatre to push the boundaries that you can imagine. In film it’s fun to push the boundaries in a collaborative way that people in a room can imagine.”

While the COVID-19 pandemic has closed live theatre, Simpson has kept busy.

“I pitched a television show earlier during COVID and instead of driving to meetings for a week, it was just a couple of days — a bunch of Zoom meetings. Nobody drove anywhere, everyone was ready and present with their full focus. There were a lot of pros to that kind of accessibility.”

You’ll be able to catch him on the screen in the coming year. He’s featured in the thriller “Silk Road” about the dark web, and the comedy crime drama “Breaking News in Yuba County.”

2004, Film, **D.E.B.S.** (Scud)
 2002, TV series appearances, **24**, (Chris)
 2002, TV mini-series: **Rose Red** (Kevin Bollinger)
 2001, Theatre, **Street Scene** (Apartment Hunter/Fred Cullen), **The Winter’s Tale** (Lord) Williamstown Theatre Festival

2000, Film, **Loser** (Noah)
 2000, Theatre, **The Skin of Our Teeth** (Fred Bailey), **The Hot I Baltimore** (Delivery Boy), **Tonight at 8:30** (Jimmie Horlick), Williamstown Theatre Festival
 1999, Theatre, **Quark Victory** (Artiba), **Camino Real** (A Bum in a Window), **The Blue Demon** (Omar), Williamstown Theatre Festival

1998, Theatre, **Assassins**, Bloomsburg University (John Wilkes Booth)
 1997, Theatre, **Square Peg Ball**, Bloomsburg University (Pinky)
 1997, Theatre, **Purgatory Café**, Bloomsburg University (Preacher)

1997, Theatre, **A Midsummer Night’s Dream**, Bloomsburg University (Puck)
 1996, Theatre, **Prelude to a Kiss**, Bloomsburg University
 1996, Theatre, **Temptation**, Bloomsburg University



1. Jimmi Simpson shows his Husky pride while taking questions this past fall during the virtual CASH Con (Careers in Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities) event.
2. Simpson at BU in the 1990s with classmate Jeff Lombardi '98 behind him.
3. Simpson as Lyle the Intern on the "Late Show with David Letterman."
4. Simpson with Russell Crowe on the set of 2020's "Unhinged."
5. Simpson with Damon Herriman and Chris Conrad in the film "Perpetual Grace."





Connecting Across Generations



By Andrea O'Neill '06

After 150 years, the Alumni Association Board of Directors
commits to nurturing the next generation of Huskies into success



Jason Williams '93 enrolled at Bloomsburg University after his mother made him apply. Though he didn't know it, she had done so because an alumnus had assured her that if he came to BU, her son would be looked after by the campus community.

So began an experience that Williams describes as "nurturing," something shared by many of his fellow BU Alumni Association board members. It is an experience that has led to both personal and professional success, but also a desire to nurture success in the next generation of Huskies.

In many ways, the mission of the BU Alumni Association is the same today as it was at its founding in 1871 — to serve as a conduit for alumni connections and empower members to be ambassadors of the institution. In the 150 years since, the Association has expanded its efforts to keep students moving to graduation and to serve as a bridge to satisfying careers.

"We feel such a sense of dedication because BU was our home, it took care of and prepared us," says Todd Argenziano '89, IT director at DeAngelo Brothers, and Alumni Association board president. "We want our students to be the best and spread that message when they graduate. To do that, our alumni need to know what our students face. It is a responsibility that has greatly impacted us."

Time and again, the importance of such close-knit relationships surfaces in conversations with board members as they describe caring professors and an educational process that layered time and personal attention with high expectations.

Williams, now a vice president at Fitbit, says his professors kept in contact with advice and help with industry connections after he graduated, which kept him connected to the university.

"It was literally like I never left," says Williams. "Having those relationships and being involved with the Alumni Association allows that nurturing we had as a student to continue."

"My professors were such a huge part of my confidence and ability to contribute very early in my career," says Mike Coppa '00, board vice president and health care partner at RSM US LLP, an accounting firm. "If you failed at something, there was a support system that could get you back on track."

"The longevity of any university is attributable to its ability to change, identify new opportunities, and have a good understanding what is needed in the work force," says Coppa.

While the quality of the education at BU certainly remains as robust and challenging as it was in 1871, and the grit and determination of its students just as prominent, the need for alumni connections, professional polish and career experience as part of every academic program is now recognized as an equal necessity.

Claire Day '93, chief program officer with the Alzheimer's Association of Northern California and Nevada, joined the board when BU combined the departments of Alumni Affairs, Career Development, and Academic Internships to advance BU's Professional U initiative. The new Department of Alumni and Professional Engagement was charged to work with the alumni board to create professional development opportunities for students, build relationships with donors and employers, and engage alumni as volunteers and experience hosts to help new Huskies tap into a network 76,000 strong.

"My friends (at other schools) didn't have the opportunity to gain the professional experience that I did," says Day. "Now the board works to set future alumni on a pace to be successful in that tough transition into the workplace."

To help the university in its mission, the board has spent the last several years reorganizing and refocusing on outreach events that impact alumni and provide students with a professional edge.

“

“Bloomsburg never gave up on me. When I needed it, it gave me a second and a third and a fourth chance and it's doing that for students now. If I take Bloomsburg out of my life, where would I be? Not where I am now. Bloomsburg never let go of me.”

— Jason Williams



Bill Benz '82



Todd Argenziano '89



Claire Day '93

Soft skills — conflict management, professional conversation, meal etiquette, and salary negotiations are part of events like the Career Intensive Boot Camp. Resume reviews, mock interviews and LinkedIn labs help students make that invaluable first impression. College conferences showcase the career possibilities of every major, and professional events like Our World Runs on DATA bring students and alumni in touch with industry leaders.

All these programs require alumni volunteers to serve on panels, give presentations, review resumes, and host students for job shadows and internships.

“The IT Professionals Event was a turning point for the Alumni Association’s ability to engage both students and alumni,” says Williams. “The online interactive session put everyone on equal footing as learners and contributors. I was able to experience the critical thinking, insightful questions and ideas from individuals at different life and career stages.”

“It’s important we make sure that, as students move into the world, there is one link back to current students and one link ahead to older alumni. That way we all move forward,” Williams adds.

While networking used to be prominent in business settings alone, it is now the norm in every professional setting, whether an art museum, research lab, or second-grade classroom. Volunteering is a way to not only impact a student directly, but also to contribute to one’s own lifelong learning, regardless of major or class year.

“That personal interaction and exposure to new ideas is how people learn,” says Bill Benz '82, Carnegie Agency, a digital marketing company. “One can have information, but it takes somebody else’s perspective to form a new idea. The

college experience may end with a degree, but Bloomsburg can help you even further when you give back with your experiences.”

“I think about the broad range of experience and knowledge of the people I’ve met in my time on the board and what I’ve learned,” adds Ken Lastowka '05, serving as board secretary. “To consider the network we have now after 150 years — imagine what we will have in the next 150.”

Although inextricably linked, the need for professional experiences for students and alumni isn’t the only recent change in the association’s focus. In the last century and a half, the profile of the student population, and consequently the alumni base, has changed to reflect a more diverse community. While its members continue to work toward a board that truly represents the increasing diversity of BU students, Day says the diverse nature of the current board has allowed them to approach the task of student development and alumni engagement so everyone is represented.



“We want our students to be the best and spread that message when they graduate. To do that, our alumni need to know what our students face. It is a responsibility that has greatly impacted us.”

— Todd Argenziano



Jaison Williams '93



Mike Coppa '00



Ken Lastowska '05

Day of Dialogue is an example of how the alumni board has worked to have more of an impact on students, alumni, and the institution. The mentoring event allows nontraditional, first-generation, and other underrepresented students of diverse backgrounds to network with board members and alumni who have had similar experiences. While COVID-19 has resulted in much heartache and division, it also enabled record engagement from alumni who would normally have been too far away to participate. Geography is no longer a deterrent.

"We've learned a lot about what it means to stay engaged during a global event, and the power of what we can do with technology," says Day. "We've always had that need for things to happen on campus, but this taught us that we can adapt."

The board has also created a standing committee on diversity, equity and inclusion, the chair of which is seated on the president's commission of the same name to help alumni get involved in finding remedies to social ills and upheavals affecting students.

"Diversity and inclusion are an important part of the college experience, and we want to make sure it's at the forefront

and a cornerstone of what we do," says Lastowka, an adjunct faculty member at Northampton Community College. "It is an important conversation in which alumni are able to listen to student struggles and share their own to help students navigate their experiences."

Even with the challenges of the 21st century, the role of the BU Alumni Association hasn't changed all that drastically from when student recruitment and alumni celebrations were the sole focus. After all, what better way to connect alumni and represent the university than by helping fellow Huskies make a difference in the world; while returning to the place, virtually for now, that introduced them to success, friendships, spouses, and their future.

"There are a lot of stories like mine," says Coppa "For this 150th celebration, we can pause and consider that we were students once and maybe we can help that next person have the same experience, if not better. That's what drives me to give back."

"Bloomsburg never gave up on me," says Williams. "When I needed it, it gave me a second and a third and a fourth chance and it's doing that for students now. If I take Bloomsburg out of my life, where would I be? Not where I am now. Bloomsburg never let go of me."



Finding Joy in the Noise (and Chaos)

By Mary Raskob



For the last 30 years, Joe Silimperi '89 has enjoyed the noise that fills the halls of a lively school environment. And while he still finds joy in his everyday teaching, this year has been vastly different for him and all educators due to COVID-19. But, Silimperi has embraced this new normal with the same joy he brought to the class his first 30 years.

The Nazareth native began his journey at BU as a transfer student after two years at Northampton Community College and one semester at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. It was while he was awaiting his acceptance to BU that Silimperi met his future wife, April (White) Silimperi '88/'89M, at the Helen L. Diller Vacation Home for the Blind in Avalon, N.J. April was already enrolled in the American Sign Language/English Interpreting program at BU and Silimperi had his sights on becoming a high school history teacher.

But a teaching symposium at BU connected him to Dr. Gina Scala and the Centennial School at Lehigh University. Centennial is a special education day school licensed to provide educational services to students with emotional disturbance and autism, while the teachers continue their education to earn their master's degrees. "It was my indoctrination into special education when I just needed a job — and here I am 31 years later still doing it," says Silimperi.

Silimperi next spent nine years in the classroom in the Pocono Mountain School District. He then took a consultant position and worked for five years as a special education administrator. During those years, the Silimperis had three children.

But in 2005, Silimperi returned to his roots — teaching. "I decided to go back into the classroom at Nazareth Area Middle School as the seventh and eighth grade learning support in the special education program. I like the daily interactions with kids and families. Administration does not allow for that to happen and I missed helping kids/families directly."

"A teaching day is not just about content; it's about creating connections with the students. And my advice to any future teacher is simple — find something you like, do what you love, and it's not work."

With so much teaching delivered online this past year, and knowing he had students who were non-readers and had special education needs, Silimperi set up Zoom sessions to interact with his students for an hour each, three hours a day.

For his dedication, Silimperi was honored by student Ryder Marsh and his mother last April. They shared a special thank you on CNN for all of the work he has done for his students, and especially for Ryder. The recognition by a national network was an unexpected honor. But Silimperi still longs for the bustle of school hallways.

"I miss the loud, vibrant hallways and the noisy kids. I miss having time to do the fun stuff, like taking the kids to the pool for swimming lessons, or taking the kids to learn how to cook, and even movie days! I am very sentimental these days and I think the first day back to a normal classroom, I'll cry!"

'70s

» **John Braganini '75** expanded the capacity of his Michigan-based business, St. Julian Winery, with the installation of two large storage tanks as a major investment in the winery's growth. Each tank holds 70,000 gallons of wine or juice in a temperature-controlled environment. St. Julian's sales have grown at a double-digit rate, and the workforce has grown, according to Braganini.

» **Robert De Carolis '76**, a longtime college administrator, is in his third year as Santa Clara University's deputy director of athletics, where he oversees academics, the business office, compliance, sports medicine, sports performance and student-athlete services. Previously, De Carolis spent 19 years as an administrator at the University of Michigan before embarking on a 17-year stint with the Oregon State Beavers, including 13 years as athletic director. He was inducted into the BU Athletic Hall of Fame in 2009.

» **Don Adams '77** is chair of Hope Enterprises Foundation, a nonprofit for people with intellectual disabilities. Adams leads the 13-member volunteer board in raising funds for the nonprofit, oversees the organization's direction and mission. Hope Enterprises serves individuals in Lycoming, Clinton, Northumberland, Sullivan, Columbia, Montour, Snyder, and Union counties. Adams has been a member of Hope Enterprises' board since 2014.

'80s

» **Andrea "Gigi" Kilroe '81** is a volunteer speaker for Resilient Voices out of the Office of Victim Advocate in Harrisburg, and a member of the Crime Victim Alliance of Pennsylvania. She is also a member of the Speakers Bureau of the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. Her book, "From Within, My Path of Hope and Healing from Sexual Abuse," will be released in early 2021. She previously was the supervisor of itinerant programs at BLaST Intermediate Unit #17, retiring in 2016 after a 32-year career in special education.

» **Brian Mahlstedt '81** is the executive vice president and chief lending officer of FNCB Bank, leading commercial lending and business development and managing relationships with the bank's commercial customers. Mahlstedt has more than 30 years of credit administration, commercial lending, and management experience. He graduated from BU with a degree in accounting.

» **Donna (Stefanowicz) Yanuzzi '82** is managing director of F.N.B. Equipment Finance Sales and Marketing at F.N.B. Corporation, parent company of First National Bank. In her new role, Yanuzzi is responsible for all origination activities for the equipment finance company. In addition to leading vendor finance sales, she is responsible for commercial leasing sales and marketing. Yanuzzi has been with F.N.B. for more than 23 years, and has made significant contributions to the expansion of the bank's vendor equipment finance and small business portfolios. At BU, she earned a bachelor's degree in communications and public relations.

» **Phillip Patrone '86** is board chair of Habitat for Humanity in Philadelphia. He is also a senior vice president and loan team manager at Wells Fargo.

» **Timothy Grunstra '88** has served on PSECU's Board of Directors since 2012 and is currently treasurer. Additionally, he has served as board secretary and assistant treasurer and was an associate director from 2010 to 2012. Grunstra is a principal with Brown Schultz Sheridan & Fritz and provides accounting, tax, and advisory services. A certified public accountant, he is a graduate of Leadership Harrisburg Area and a member of several professional organizations in his field.

» **Rebecca (Kenvin) Warren '88** spoke on the state of COVID-19 and its impact on the construction industry in Pennsylvania for the Associated Builders and Contractors Eastern Pennsylvania Chapter's virtual meeting in August. She received her J.D. from The Dickinson School of Law in 1991.

'90s

» **Cole Camplese '96M** serves as the Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information

Officer at Northeastern University. He was one of eight employees to earn an Outstanding Service Award. The eight individuals were tasked with ensuring compliance with state and federal COVID-19 standards, implementing NUFlex across classrooms and working with faculty and staff colleagues to enable seamless and synchronous learning for students, and making sure students and parents were well-informed about every development impacting the university community.

'00s

» **Susan (Bennett) Fetterman '00** has been selected to serve as BU's nursing supervisor for health services through June 30.

» **Kelly (Pollock) Gallo '00** was named executive director of the Brodhead Watershed Association in East Stroudsburg. Previously, Gallo was an environmental health scientist at Summit County Health Department, Park City, Utah. While previously living in Pennsylvania, Gallo was an environmental education specialist at Hickory Run State Park.

» **Karena (Kodack) Weikel '01** was promoted to chief actuary at The Geisinger Health Plan (GHP). Previously, Weikel was the vice president of risk and revenue management and actuarial services at GHP since 2015 and interim chief actuary since May.

» **Kevin Hickey '03** has joined Acerus Pharmaceuticals Corporation as senior vice president, US Commercial. Hickey, who sits on multiple pharmaceutical executive advisory panels, is a member of Acerus' senior leadership team.

» **Tiffany (Myers) Forman '06** has joined RE/MAX Bridges as an administrative assistant in the Watsontown office. She also manages day-to-day business operations at Forman Grain LLC, a business owned by her husband, John, and her father-in-law.

'10s

» **Robin Hampton '14** became nursing clinical instructor at BU in the fall of 2020.

» **Andrew Horst '20** took a position with the Boyer & Ritter LLC accounting firm after completing an internship there. He is pursuing a Master of Accountancy degree at BU.

Marriages

Heather Kratz '05 and Gregory McMenaman, July 9, 2020.

Kristina Kurelija and Cody Pavlick '19, Aug. 15, 2020

Anna Newcomer '17/'20M and Cody Cooper '16/'20M, Sept. 5, 2020

Births

Holly (Shemonis) Keefer '07 and Aaron Keefer '07, a son, Alexander, on Aug. 24, 2020

Debon (Berger) Kolb '11 and David Kolb '08, a daughter, Rebecca Linn, on Aug. 27, 2020

Taylor Burkhart and Craig Reinard '10, a son, Caige, on Aug. 31, 2020

Kaleena (Lockard) Dietterick '06 and Jack Dietterick, a son, Axel, on Sept. 5, 2020

Melissa (Landis) Beer '08 and Jonathan Beer '06, a son, Devon Jonathan, on Sept. 14, 2020

Mary (Lorence) Schrader '10 and Frederick Schrader '11, a son, Frederick, on Oct. 15, 2020

Lauren Esser (Kopich) '09 and Vince Esser '09, a daughter, Avery Grace Esser, on Oct. 23, 2020

Charity (Trapane) Klinefelter and Brian Klinefelter '07, a daughter, Elyse, on Oct. 25, 2020.

Obituaries

Jane (Niles) Barndt '48

Harold Hartley '52

Royal Miller '52

Benjamin Burness '54

William Norton '59

Paul Kunkel '60

John Cherup '64

John Murtin '65

Bruce Fehr '72

Sharon Cashman '73

Wayne Koch '74

Jeffrey Creveling '85

Patricia (Disori) Romanoski '87

Denise (Falborn) Cutillo '88

William Scherer '99

Lisa Welms '02

Jarell Jackson '17

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Bloomsburg: The University Magazine
Arts and Administration Building
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Bloomsburg, PA 17815-1301



Nelson “Nellie” Swarts

BU’s Inaugural Volunteer of the Year Recipient

Nelson “Nellie” Adler Swarts, 81, died peacefully at his home in Mechanicsburg, surrounded by his loving family, on Feb. 11, following an arduous battle with Alzheimer’s and cancer.

Swarts, Class of ‘63, was a proud alumnus, dedicated volunteer, and loyal supporter of BU. Beyond that, he was committed to serving and supporting higher education both at BU and throughout the commonwealth. For his service to BU, he was honored with the inaugural William T. Derricott Volunteer of the Year Award in 2012.

His involvement at BU included service on the Zeigler College of Business Advisory Board and the Bloomsburg University Foundation Board of Directors. He also served the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education in various positions from 2000-2007. Additionally, he drove the convertible that carried BU’s president in homecoming parades for many years.

A native of Bloomsburg, Swarts competed on BU’s first swim team and graduated with a degree in Business Education in 1963. The voice that he was renowned for was discovered during his college days as a DJ for WHLM. He also golfed, skied, and was a member of the Marine Corps ROTC. Nelson began a teaching career at Main Endwell High School in Endwell, N.Y., where he met his wife, Paige Parker, whom he married in 1967 and moved to Syracuse, N.Y. to start their family. They both were weekend ski instructors at Greek Peak in Cortland, N.Y. from 1965-1977.

Swarts left teaching to embark on a 32-year career with IBM, moving to Allendale, N.J., in 1980, where he and Paige spent 12 years raising their three daughters. He became an avid golfer and coached many young swimmers at the Ridgewood YMCA.

Nellie and Paige returned to Pennsylvania in 1992, so Nellie could return to sales work with IBM and

eventually retire. Instead of retirement, he found work with the PA State System of Higher Education as a consultant and ultimately as a director. In his off time, Nellie honed his golf skills at West Shore Country Club, serving as president in 2001, and coaching young swimmers there and at the West Shore YMCA.

Nellie and Paige have been active members of Christian Life Assembly in Camp Hill since 2009. Outside of BU, Swarts’ many philanthropic and volunteer efforts included the West Shore YMCA Board of Managers, Americhoice Federal Credit Union Board of Directors, and Hospice of Central PA. In addition to his wife, he is survived by three daughters, eight grandchildren, and a sister.

Memorial donations may be made to the Nelson A. Swarts Scholarship with checks payable to BUF or online at giving.bloomu.edu/nellieswarts.

Dr. Bernard C. Dill

Former BU professor taught finance for 30 years

Dr. Bernard C. Dill, 88, of Sugarloaf passed away on July 30, 2020. A finance professor at BU for 30 years, Dill was born in New York City in 1931 and was raised in Hazleton. A professor emeritus, he served as chair of the Department of Business

Administration and taught finance. He was a passionate educator and loved hearing from his former students and learning of their accomplishments post-graduation. He also served as president of the local Penn State Alumni Club.

An avid reader and traveler, he traveled extensively around the U.S., Europe, and Asia with his wife, the former Kathleen Matarella, to whom he was married on Sept. 12, 1959,

who survives. He is also survived by two children and four grandchildren.

An educator to the very end, Dill donated his body to science through Humanity Gifts Registry. Memorial donations to the Dr. Bernard C. Dill Scholarship Fund for first-generation students may be made through the Bloomsburg University Foundation, 50 E. Main St., 4th Floor, Bloomsburg, PA 17815-1301; or online at giving.bloomu.edu.

David R. Linkchorst

1940s and 50s athletic standout

David R. Linkchorst, 92, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020. Born in Ashland, he was raised in Maple Hill and later Frackville.

A 1946 graduate of Mahanoy Township High School, Linkchorst played football, basketball and baseball. He spent nearly two years in the U.S. Army before starting his college career, attending BU on the GI Bill. He graduated in 1953 having played four years of football and basketball, and three seasons of baseball. He started for the Huskies

on the 1948 (cornerback) and 1951 (quarterback) undefeated football teams. He was also a teammate of NBA Hall of Famer Chuck Daly.

At BU he met his wife, Mary Louise, a cheerleader, and they married in 1956. After graduation, he played on barnstorming basketball and baseball teams and one season of minor league baseball.

A basketball and football coach in the Mahanoy school district, Linkchorst's teams won nine Schuylkill League Basketball Championships and the 1965 District 11 Class A Tournament. He coached the professional basketball team, Hazleton/Hamburg Bullets, for the

1972-1973 season.

Linkchorst was inducted into the BU Athletic Hall of Fame, the Jerry Wolman Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame and the Northeast Region of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame.

He won many golf tournaments and recorded 10 holes-in-one over his lifetime.

He is survived by his wife and four children. Athletic memorial contributions in Linkchorst's memory may be made to the Bloomsburg University Foundation, 50 East Main Street, 4th Floor, Greenly Center, Bloomsburg, PA 17815 or online at giving.bloomu.edu.



Making Plays to Help the Community

While the BU athletic teams did not get to compete in the fall and winter seasons because of the COVID-19 pandemic, that did not stop them from making positive plays this year. From members of the men's basketball team helping feed the community to the football team organizing a Christmas toy drive for AGAPE, a local humanitarian ministry, student-athletes gave back to the community in a variety of ways.

Members of the men's basketball team spent parts of two days in October helping at the Berwick Area YMCA Local Food Distribution assembling and handing out boxes of food to 800 families in need.

"It was a great opportunity for our players and coaches to give back," says men's basketball coach John Sanow. "I was proud of players sacrificing a few hours out of their day to

help others in need. We have a wonderful group of young men who represent BU in a positive way on and off the court."

Graduate student Peyton Mortellite was one of the Huskies who helped with the food distribution. "The people at the Y are incredibly giving and never look for anything in return," says Mortellite. "It has been an excellent way for our team to give back to the community. We have been making it a habit to reach back into the community over the last few years.

The kindness didn't stop there, though. As the holiday season approached, redshirt-sophomore Talid Crippen, from the football team, got the ball rolling for the Huskies to partner with AGAPE to collect toys for those families in need this holiday season. Crippen brought his idea to head coach Frank Sheptock, who helped to mobilize the athletics community.

"I grew up in a neighborhood where money was tight in a lot of homes," says Crippen. "We all need that person to step up and help others. I was hoping this toy drive would impact those people who needed it the most."

Six locations were set up across campus and in the community to collect donations of new or slightly used toys that were then donated to AGAPE for distribution for families in need in the town of Bloomsburg.

"I was very excited when Talid came in to discuss the toy drive — what a wonderful idea," says Sheptock. "The idea made a difference in the community and the children and allowed everyone the opportunity to provide a random act of kindness during the holiday season."

While they couldn't share their talents on the field or court last fall, BU student-athletes were able to share their generosity with those in the area.

The Ultimate Soccer MOM

By David Leisering

Student-athletes rely on good time management skills to handle the daily grind of practice, games, team road trips, and of course, lots of schoolwork. However, Paige Harris has an even more important task to juggle. Being a mom.

“My daughter is me in child form,” laughs Harris, a junior forward on the women’s soccer team. “She’s spunky and full of energy. She will dance around in a puffy Cinderella dress and then walk outside to dig up worms with her hands. She’s my heart. Anytime I feel stressed or having a bad day, she’ll look at me and say something funny, and I’m reminded it will all be OK.”

Harris, who grew up in nearby Danville, chose to attend Shippensburg University four years ago for that “away from home experience.” Following her freshman season — where she scored six goals and was named to the All-Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC) Third Team — she learned she was pregnant, resulting in a two-year hiatus from school.

“The first thing I did was move back home to be with my family,” says Harris. “I started working full-time to make as much money as I could before the baby arrived.”

Holly Mae arrived on Aug. 19, 2017. After a six-week maternity leave, Harris returned to working full-time but knew she wanted something more.

“It was always in the back of my mind I would return to school and graduate, so I could get a great job and give us the best life possible,” says Harris. “I still had life goals to accomplish and

“

“The hardest part was not feeling guilty about doing something that made me happy.”

— Paige Harris

having a child made me want to work for those goals even harder. I knew the next step to get both of us to a better place in life was to go back to school.”

After discussing her college intentions with her family and Holly’s father, she applied to Bloomsburg to pursue special education with added hope of renewing her soccer career.

“I always knew her as a tough competitor,” says Matt Haney, head women’s soccer coach. “I believe the birth added maturity to that mix and has allowed Paige to flourish as a mother, a student, and a soccer player.”

However, the comeback trail hasn’t always been easy.

“To be honest, I wasn’t as prepared as I should’ve been,” says Harris. “I was uncomfortable with my body and exercising again after having a baby. It was also difficult to find time to work out. I either had to find someone to watch her, or I would try to keep her occupied while I ran on the treadmill.”



The mental aspect was just as challenging.

“The hardest part was not feeling guilty about doing something that made me happy,” adds Harris. “After having Holly, I felt as though everything I did had to be for her. Being away from her for a few hours to practice or to lift would make me feel guilty. During my time off from school — just working and taking care of her — I felt like I only identified as Holly’s mom. Paige was gone.”

But not for long. As she physically got stronger and faster while preparing for the 2019 season, she began to realize that by playing soccer, “Paige was still around” and “she was allowed to be happy as well.”

“Paige came in, worked hard, and fit in nicely,” says Haney. “We have a very welcoming culture, and I believe Paige noticed that, used it to her advantage and made some immediate friends along the way.”

Her grit and determination paid off.

Women's Soccer Earns Team Pinnacle Award

Harris made the team and helped the Huskies to their second consecutive NCAA Division II Atlantic Regional title, resulting in a second straight trip to the Elite Eight. She finished the year with two goals — both of which came during a 5-0 win over Mansfield on Oct. 19 — nearly three years to the day she last scored with Shippensburg.

"My first game was such a rush of emotions," remembers Harris. "I thought about all I went through and the times thinking I might never play again. But there I was (playing again). It wasn't just any team; it was a darn good one. It was an honor and a privilege to be a part of something so special."

Holly, meanwhile, is still at the forefront of everything her mom does and hopes to accomplish.

"My parents bring her to every game they can," says Harris, who as an early childhood and special education major plans to work with children every day. "She loves coming, and I love having her there. I want her to see how her mom pursued her life goals even when things felt hard. I want her to feel like she can accomplish anything she wants if she puts her mind to it. I hope this part of my life inspires her to do anything she wants in life — regardless of the situation."



BU's women's soccer program was one of nine collegiate programs across all divisions — men or women — to be named this past year a recipient of the Team Pinnacle Award from the United Soccer Coaches.

The Team Pinnacle Award honors teams that have achieved a high level of fair play, educational excellence, and success on the pitch. To be considered for the award, teams must have received a version of the Team Ethics and Sportsmanship Award; achieved recognition in the classroom as a recipient of the Team Academic Award; and recorded a winning percentage of .750 or higher during the respective season.

"Our culture of winning and losing the right way and, most importantly, succeeding in the classroom, helps make the women's soccer family a group of dynamic young women who are in it together and work hard for each other," says head coach Matt Haney.

The Huskies, who went 18-3-1 (.841 winning percentage) en route to their second consecutive Atlantic Regional title in 2019, earned the Team Ethics and Sportsmanship Bronze Award as well as the Team Academic Award from United Soccer Coaches during the 2019-20 academic year.

Bloomsburg was the only institution from the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC) to earn a Team Ethics and Sportsmanship Award in 2019-20. That award recognizes teams that exhibit fair play, good sportsmanship, and adhere to the game's rules. A team must not have received any red penalty cards during the season and the team's yellow caution card percentage (total yellow cards divided by total games played) must not have exceeded 50%.

Meanwhile, the Huskies had a cumulative team grade point average of 3.55 to earn a Team Academic Award. It marked the fifth consecutive season that the women's soccer team was honored for having a cumulative team GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Over the last two seasons of competition (the 2020 season was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic), the Huskies claimed back-to-back Atlantic Regional championships and made consecutive trips to the Elite Eight. The team also won the 2018 PSAC title — the program's first in 16 years. The 18 victories in 2019 tied the school record for most victories in a season while its 35 wins over the span of the last two years has set a new program mark.

"We recruit industrious and competitive people who want to succeed in all facets of life," adds Haney. "We have become a place where young women want to continue their academic and athletic careers. It is not about one of us — it is about all of us. And we will continue to work together to reach the very top."

From Small Beginnings to a Worldwide Network

By Robert Dunkelberger

Today, the Bloomsburg University Alumni Association has more than 76,000 members with graduates in every state and around the world. But the origins of the association 150 years ago were much more modest. On commencement day, June 22, 1871, the eight-member first class of teachers at the Bloomsburg State Normal School and the dozen new graduates from the second class met to form an alumni association.

The association's activities began in 1873, when a banquet was held at commencement to welcome back alumni and celebrate the newest members. As the number of graduates grew, the number of reunions gradually expanded. At first alumni all met together, but by the 1880s individual classes began to have their own reunions. Anniversaries were important, so classes met formally every five years. These were the most popular gatherings, when classmates who had attended school together could reconnect.

And the celebrations became larger, with more than 500 at the banquet in the main dormitory's dining room in 1912. As the numbers grew, additional class reunions were added, held in rooms in the main dormitory or Carver Hall, based on where a favorite teacher had taught. There was so much enthusiasm that the most recent grads couldn't wait for their fifth anniversary and so had formal reunions every two years.

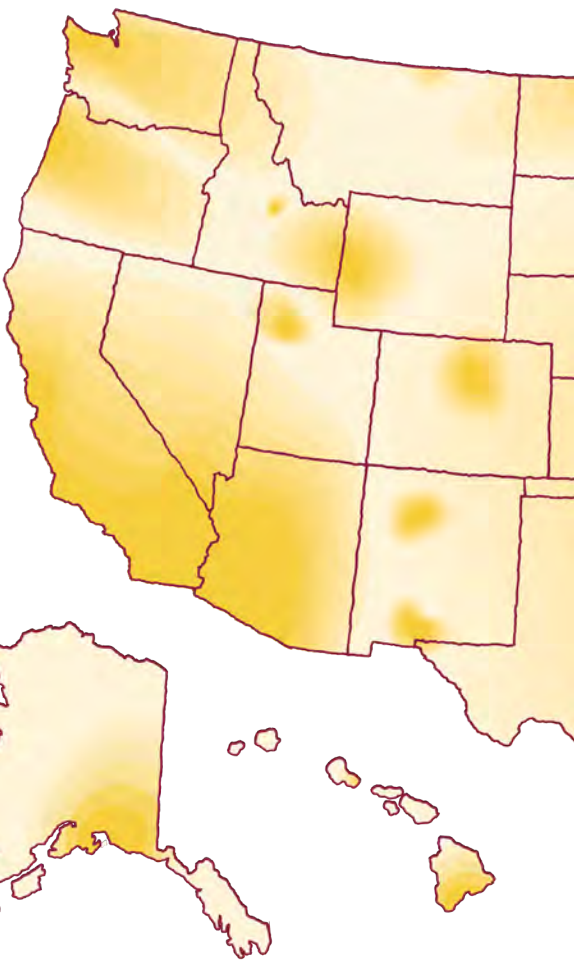
Although many alumni came back for the reunion at commencement, there was a strong desire to gather closer to home and at a different time of year. The ideal solution was to tie a reunion in with the annual teachers' institutes held in each county every fall, where practicing teachers gathered to learn new teaching methods.

The first local association was formed in 1890 in Luzerne County, which had the greatest concentration of Bloomsburg graduates. These quickly became popular, with up to 300 attending each year, often at the Hotel Sterling in Wilkes-Barre. The nights would begin with a reception, followed by the banquet, an after-dinner program of toasts, and hours of dancing.

Normal School administrators saw the value of the county chapters and were well represented at the events, often by the principal and several of the senior faculty. A primary means of recruitment was through Normal graduates teaching in the high schools, who urged prospective teachers to attend Bloomsburg and earn the same quality education they had.

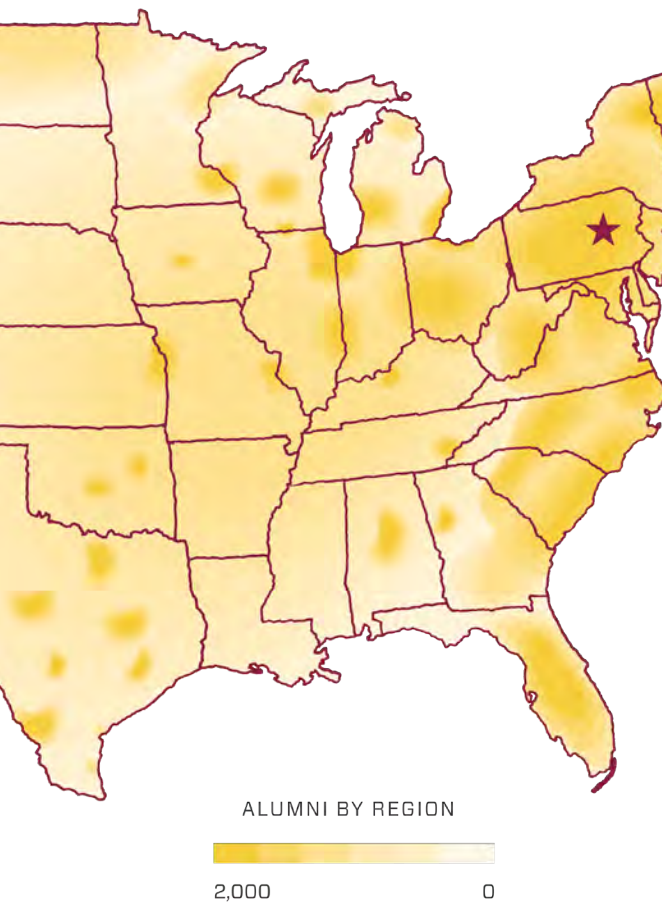
The success of the Luzerne County reunions led more local groups to organize. Next was Lackawanna County, which created a chapter in 1901. Eleven additional counties added associations between 1909 and 1912, with Montour and Columbia following soon after. These reunions were greatly anticipated as alumni reconnected and reminisced about their school days.

The reunions on campus remained fairly consistent until the 1920s. In 1921 an Alumni Day intended solely to rally graduates was held the day before commencement. It included class reunions, an assembly, a luncheon, and a baseball game. The biggest change was the addition of Homecoming in 1928, which provided another opportunity for graduates to return to Bloomsburg.



The Alumni Association valued the local organizations, so by the late 1920s when the chapters became inactive, efforts were made to revitalize them. One was formed in Philadelphia in 1931, leading to monthly luncheons and large annual banquets. In 1934, an Association resolution urged county chapters to reorganize and within a few years there were 10 in central and eastern Pennsylvania, three covering two counties. They held reunions and, as before, the president of the college and faculty members were in attendance.

In its early years, the Bloomsburg University Alumni Association worked to support the school and engage alumni, recognizing the good they could do through recruitment and monetary assistance for scholarships. The alumni responded, having become endeared to Bloomsburg through their school days and wanting to give back. This is a spirit that, with now 76,000 alumni and counting, has continued to the present day.



1. The Class of 1897 gathers for a reunion in 1899.
2. The 1928 Alumni Day Luncheon was held on the Long Porch of old Waller Hall.
3. Those attending the 1934 Philadelphia Alumni Banquet pose for a photograph.







FALL '21 ONWARD

The BU campus will once again bustle with activity as the university plans to return to a full-time, in-person Fall 2021 semester.

Keep up-to-date on plans for the coming Fall semester at bloomu.edu/fall-2021



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On June 22, 1871, the Bloomsburg University Alumni Association was formed to keep the bonds among alumni and our alma mater strong. This has held true during every one of the 150 years since its very first meeting.

And while the last century and a half has delivered an array of challenges to Huskies everywhere, we have weathered those challenges and preserved the life-changing experiences and relationships we formed at BU; all while working to ensure current students are as successful as they have been since the school was founded in 1839.

With 75,477 alumni world-wide, the Bloomsburg University Alumni Association has much to celebrate in its legacy of support; support for the university, support for students, and support for each other. Every year, events and successes are made more impactful with your participation. You won't want to miss what we have planned in 2021!

Join in the celebration by visiting bloomu.edu/alumniassociation150.

Here's to the next 150 years of grit, loyalty, and excellence! Go Huskies!