

WILKES

SUMMER 2011



AMERICAN DREAMER | WILKES IN BLOOM | LEADING DOWN UNDER | FUNNY MAN

The Value of Independent Higher Education: Priceless

ALUMNI KNOW THE VALUE OF A WILKES EDUCATION. As I travel the country visiting with our graduates, I find them to be uniformly enthusiastic about Wilkes and its impact on their lives. As any Colonel can tell you, we have something truly special to offer our students that can't be duplicated.

This spring, I was elected to the board of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU). This organization represents private colleges and universities on policy issues with the federal government, such as those affecting student aid. I've also been a board member of The Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP) that represents independent schools in Harrisburg.

Why do I choose to be involved? After leading Wilkes for a decade, I'm passionate about what we do here. In this era, when funding for higher education is threatened at the federal and state levels, I believe it's important for me to advocate for independent colleges like Wilkes.

As this magazine went to press, state funding for PHEAA grants and federal funding through Pell Grants were slated to receive only modest cuts for fiscal year 2012. These programs are important because more than one-third of Wilkes receive one or both grants. I strongly support maintaining these programs for the coming year and increasing funding in future years because they allow college students a greater choice in the institution they will attend.

Let me share some facts, courtesy of AICUP, which completes an annual study of independent institutions in Pennsylvania. You'll understand why I believe we deserve even greater support from the state through the PHEAA Grant program:

- Forty percent of students attend independent colleges and universities in Pennsylvania and an impressive 50 percent of all bachelor's degrees are awarded by our institutions. The number is even higher for graduate degrees: 68 percent.
- Independent schools awarded more science, technology, engineering and math bachelor's degrees than the entire public sector of higher education.
- Independent colleges and universities provide educational access to more than 51,800 low-income students annually. Only community colleges enroll more.
- Independent colleges and universities have a hefty economic impact, contributing \$16.1 billion to our state's economy.
- The per-degree cost to the state from independent institutions is \$3,600, while the per-degree cost at public four-year institutions is over \$21,000.

We have many success stories to back up these facts and figures. Please join me in speaking in support of independent higher education—and for Wilkes—whenever you have an opportunity. We're doing great things for our students, our state and our nation!



Dr. Tim Gilmour
Wilkes University President



Independent institutions like Wilkes provide access to higher education for students of all economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. PHOTO BY BRUCE WELLER

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Wilkes University is an independent institution of higher education dedicated to academic and intellectual excellence in the liberal arts, sciences and professional programs. The university provides its students with the experience and education necessary for career and intellectual development as well as for personal growth, engenders a sense of values and civic responsibility, and encourages its students to welcome the opportunities and challenges of a diverse and continually changing world. The university enhances the tradition of strong student-faculty interactions in all its programs, attracts and retains outstanding people in every segment of the university, and fosters a spirit of cooperation, community involvement, and individual respect within the entire university.

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Gene Chu '89 and a 15,000-pound granite bull—an ancient symbol for perseverance—stand outside CounterTopia, the business he founded with two Wilkes classmates after he journeyed to the United States from his native China. PHOTO BY STEPHEN BARRETT

Have a story idea to share?

Contact us at wilkesmagazine@wilkes.edu or *Wilkes* magazine, 84 W. South St., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766.



Student Wins HHMI Research Fellowship for Prestigious Pasteur Institute

Wilkes senior Derek Nye, a biology major from Athens, Pa., has been awarded a Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) Research Fellowship at the Pasteur Institute in France. Nye will spend three months following graduation working with Dr. Camille Locht, research director at the institute's facility in Lille, France. He will work with Locht on a study of the incidence of two infectious diseases—tuberculosis and pertussis (also known as whooping cough)—commonly found in the population. The study will try to determine what factors make tuberculosis more virulent, causing infection in those carrying the disease. Nye, accompanied by Wilkes biology faculty Michael Steele and Linda Gutierrez, attended a pre-departure meeting and orientation in March in Washington, D.C. Nye has been an HHMI Scholar at Wilkes, a research assistant to Gutierrez, associate professor of biology, and a research intern at The Commonwealth Medical College

The Pasteur Institute is a private foundation dedicated to the study of biology, micro-organisms, diseases and vaccines. It is named after Louis Pasteur, who made some of the greatest breakthroughs in modern medicine at the time, including pasteurization and vaccines for anthrax and rabies virus. The institute is at the forefront of research focusing on infectious disease. Since 1908, eight Pasteur Institute scientists have been awarded the Nobel Prize for medicine and physiology, and the 2008 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was shared by two Pasteur scientists.



Biology major Derek Nye will complete a research fellowship at France's prestigious Pasteur Institute in summer 2011. PHOTO BY EARL AND SEDOR PHOTOGRAPHIC



MORE ON THE WEB

Wilkes held its 64th Annual Spring Commencement on May 21 at Mohegan Sun Arena. The commencement address was delivered by attorney Robert Listenbee. The University awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree to Listenbee for his distinguished service to advance the cause of juvenile justice in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. To view a commencement photo gallery, visit <http://www.wilkes.edu/graduationphotos>

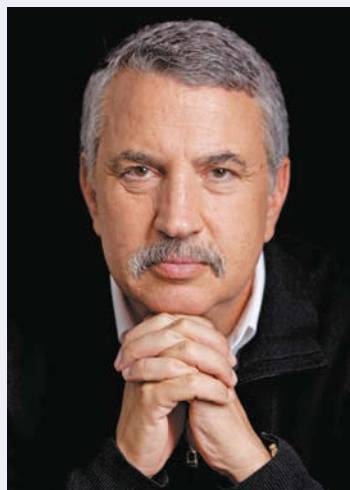
Pulitzer Prize-winning Journalist Thomas Friedman to Speak at 2011 Outstanding Leaders Forum

Tom Friedman, foreign affairs columnist for *The New York Times*, will be the speaker at the 2011 Outstanding Leaders Forum. Friedman will speak on Nov. 16 at 7:30 p.m. in the F.M. Kirby Center for the Performing Arts.

Covering many of the monumental stories of recent decades, he has won three Pulitzer Prizes.

Friedman's appearance at the Outstanding Leaders Forum will follow the September 2011 release of his latest book, which he is writing with Michael Mandelbaum. The book examines the major challenges facing the United States, the reason the country is not addressing those challenges

effectively, and the policies America needs to adopt to ensure prosperity at home and strength abroad in the 21st century. The title will be *That Used to Be Us: How America Fell Behind in the World We Invented and How We Can Come Back*.



Friedman's last book, *Hot, Flat and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution—and How It Can Renew America*, is a Number One *New York Times* bestseller. His previous bestseller, *The World is Flat*, sold more than four million copies. His other books include *Longitudes and Attitudes: The World in the Age of Terrorism*, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* and *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, which serves as a basic text on the Middle East in colleges and universities nationwide and won the National Book Award.

For more information about sponsorships and Friedman's lecture, please visit www.wilkes.edu/friedman.

Loren D. Prescott Jr. Appointed Vice President of Finance and General Counsel

Loren D. Prescott Jr. has been appointed vice president of finance and general counsel at Wilkes. Prescott previously served as the University's dean of the law school initiative and as assistant to the president for special projects.

Prior to coming to Wilkes in 2007 to lead the law school initiative, Prescott served as vice dean and professor of law at Widener University's Law Campus in Harrisburg, Pa. Prescott served for 18 years as a member of the full-time faculty at Widener, including two years as dean of students and eight years as vice dean in charge of the

resident academic and administrative function of the campus. At Widener, he taught classes in federal income taxation and business organizations and a seminar on tax exempt organizations. His legal research at Widener focused on tax exemption for charitable organizations.

Prescott earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Washington in Seattle, a J.D. from Willamette University College of Law in Salem, Ore., and a master of laws in taxation from the University of Florida College of Law in Gainesville, Fla. He is currently a doctoral candidate in public administration at Penn State University.



Faculty Receive Grants Encouraging Innovative Use of Technology in Teaching

Five faculty have received Wilkes University's first technology and learning grants, promoting innovative uses of technology in the classroom. Presented by the Teaching Commons with funding support from the Office of the Provost and the Information Technology Department, the grants are being used on classroom projects in the spring 2011 semester.

Opened in Fall 2010, the Teaching Commons is a center for excellence in teaching and learning. It has a special focus on helping faculty to incorporate new methods and technologies into classes. The technology and learning grants are part of facilitating that process.



The University's first teaching and technology grant winners gather in the Teaching Commons, which administers the grants. Pictured clockwise from left, Dana Burnside, director, Teaching Commons; Helen Davis, assistant professor, English; Caroline Maurer, chair, undergraduate education; Meredith Selden, assistant professor, psychology; Janet Starnier, associate professor, English; and Loran Lewis, assistant professor, communication studies. PHOTO BY VICKI MAYK

Grant recipients and their projects are:

Caroline Maurer, chair, department of undergraduate education, is using the grant to facilitate the "Digital Photography in the Classroom" Action Research Project. This project involves Wilkes education majors and teachers at Heights-Murray Elementary School in Wilkes-Barre using still photography and video recording as educational tools in hands-on projects.

Loran Lewis, assistant professor, communication studies, will use the grant to create a "journalism toolkit" to move student journalists into the 21st Century, allowing them to experience what journalists are doing right now in an increasingly convergent journalism environment.

Janet Starnier, associate professor, English, is exploring ways to use mobile devices, such as e-readers and iPads to enhance course content and facilitate collaborative thinking and writing.

Helen Davis, associate professor, English, is integrating iPads and Nook readers into several of her English courses to facilitate the use of technology in group work.

Meredith Selden, assistant professor, psychology, is using the grant for iPads and projectors for use by student members of Psi Chi, an international psychology honor society. The equipment will allow these students to travel to area schools and deliver presentations.

Nursing and Pharmacy Students Participate in Medical Mission



Nursing student Kristin J. Zigner, above left examines a child in the Village of Kaya, while nurse practitioner Linda Heckman checks records. Above right, Wilkes nursing students, left to right, Mary Kate Brady, Jasmine King, and Jeanne Wood play with children after a day at the medical clinic. PHOTOS BY WANDA RUPPERT '07

Three pharmacy and four nursing students from Wilkes University found themselves in a remote West African clinic in January, taking vital signs, assessing patients, cleaning wounds, and filling written prescriptions.

It was all part of a nine-day mission to Burkina Faso, as the students joined a team of professionals in administering care to villagers.

“It was really interesting, a very life-changing kind of experience,” said assistant nursing professor Wanda Ruppert '07

In the small, dusty village of Kaya, where Moré is spoken, students were assisted at the clinic by translators, Ruppert said. Patients had asthma, bronchitis or cold symptoms; others, joint, hip and low back pain.

The team taught the villagers how to use inhalers and showed them techniques to reduce their back pain, such as how to properly hold a broom when sweeping.

One elderly woman, using a tree branch for support, came to the clinic with what she said was a decades-old foot fracture. Students tended to a foot wound.

To cheer the children, students gave out lollipops. Ruppert handed one to an older woman who had felt pain as students cleaned a wound. The woman looked puzzled. “You are never too old for a lollipop,” Ruppert told her through a translator.

“We had an instant bond,” Ruppert said, “and she listened intently as we all explained what she needed to do to help her foot wound heal.”

The Faith Assembly of God Church in Hazle Township, Emmanuel Bible Chapel in Hazleton, and Wilkes organized the mission. The surgical team worked at the Schiphra Medical Center in the capital city.

It was the second year pharmacy students made the trip. Marie Roke-Thomas, associate pharmacy professor, said students researched the types of diseases they might see and the medicines the team would need to take.

Though on a public service project to help others, the students also learned about such matters as herbal remedies. “It was important for them to learn about the type of medications they have in other cultures,” she said.

Nursing students used basic nursing knowledge, but had to learn to improvise with available resources. Said Ruppert: “The students were able to see things they will never see here.”

XIAOLI ZHANG OF ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT AWARDED GRANT FOR ROBOTIC PROJECT

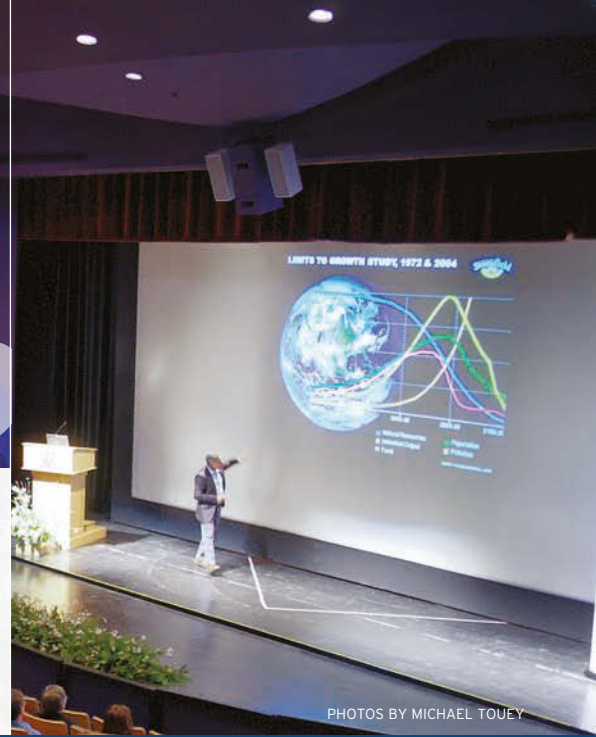
Xiaoli Zhang, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, was awarded a \$17,500 grant from The Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Commercialization Initiative (PATCI) for development of a robotic device to be used in surgery. PATCI is a pilot program designed to leverage the state’s academic and student assets and kick start the formation of new companies. Funds for the initiative are provided through Pittsburgh-based The Technology Collaborative (TTC), a statewide economic development organization, focused on creating and nurturing technology startups, primarily in the areas of advanced electronics, embedded systems, cyber security and robotics. Zhang’s project was one of only two projects in northeast Pennsylvania to receive funding this year and received the largest grant.



Pictured at the grant presentation, front row left to right, are Xiaoli Zhang, assistant professor, engineering; Mohammed Tharwan, senior, mechanical engineering; Mouhd Alghuson, senior engineering management major, and project manager for the team; back, left to right, Naif Alzahrani, senior, mechanical engineering; Rodney Ridley, director of engineering; Robert Watts, vice president, PATCI; and Trevor Hirsh, senior entrepreneurship major, who serves as business liaison for the team.

“ If we continue our patterns of resource consumption in the 21st Century, we would see a peaking out of the earth’s ability to support us. ”

– Gary Hirshberg, President and CE-YO of Stonyfield Farm; Chairman, Climate Counts
Delivering the Allan P. Kirby Lecture in Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship, “Win-Win: Why ‘Good for All’ Will Save the Planet.” March 22, 2011



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL TOUEY



MORE ON THE WEB

As Wilkes magazine went to press, The Max Rosenn Lecture in Law and Humanities marked its 30th Anniversary with a May 1 lecture by Michele Rhee, former chancellor of the Washington, D.C., public schools and chairman of StudentsFirst. To view a video excerpt of Rhee’s lecture and view a photo gallery, visit www.wilkes.edu/rhee

Department of Entrepreneurship and Leadership Studies Established

The Department of Entrepreneurship and Leadership Studies recently was established to leverage key areas of programming in the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership. The department houses the entrepreneurship program, the Personal and Professional Development (PPD) Program and the Sidhu School leadership program. Jeff Alves, Allan P. Kirby Jr. Professor of Entrepreneurship, is chairing the new department. The department was established in response to the growing number of students attracted to the entrepreneurship major and minor. The PPD program is the foundation for the leadership studies area. Recognized nationally and internationally, the leadership program challenges and prepares students to develop their leadership potential and develop the habit of giving back to our communities.

David Dudick Sr. '78 Visits as Executive in Residence

David Dudick, Senior Vice President, President U.S. Sales Channels for General Mills, visited campus Feb. 17 and 18 as the Sidhu School’s 2011 executive in residence. Dudick visited with classes and shared lessons learned during his 33-year career with General Mills, the world’s sixth largest food company. A Wilkes-Barre native, Dudick graduated from Wilkes in 1978 with a degree in business administration. At General Mills, he and his team market the company’s products to non-traditional grocery outlets such as Wal-Mart, Target and drugstore chains, accounting for approximately 40 percent of the company’s business. Best known for cereals such as Cheerios and Wheaties, General Mills successful brands include Fiber One, Pillsbury, Progresso and Yoplait Yogurt.



Students from the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership met with the 2011 executive in residence David Dudick '78. Pictured chatting after class, from left are Scott Skammer, Dudick, Megan Kazmerski and Kaitlyn Sweeney. PHOTO BY VICKI MAYK

CHAMPIONS OF SERVICE



Wilkes football player Chris Horn volunteers his time at the All Pro Dad event at the Wilkes-Barre YMCA.

Below inset: Student Amanda Pawlowski of the women's basketball team participates in fall cleanup in Wilkes-Barre.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF WILKES FOOTBALL AND WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAMS.



WILKES ATHLETIC TEAMS SCORE OFF THE FIELD AS COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

By Rachel Strayer

WILKES UNIVERSITY JUNIOR MARK SENCHAK is sweating hard. With football in hand, he faces his opponent—a 3-foot-nothing kid less than half his age, who is squealing with delight. Senchak tosses the ball and steps back to take in the sight of more than 20 kids playing football with their moms and dads.

“It is important for athletes to participate in community service,” says Senchak, a history and secondary education major from Larksville, Pa. “It helps tie the athletes and school to the community.”

In January 2011, Senchak and the rest of the Colonels football team joined with All Pro Dad—an organization founded by National Football League coach Tony Dungy of the Indianapolis Colts—and the Wilkes-Barre YMCA to run a football clinic for families. The goal of the clinic was to encourage parents to play with their children.

“It was very well received,” says head football coach Frank Sheptock. “Our players had a great time with it; the people in the community had a great time with it.”

Whether running sports clinics or raking leaves, student athletes at Wilkes strive to “Be Colonel” by helping the community and, in a way, helping themselves.

While student athletes may be admired for how they handle a ball or applauded for the number of times they score in a game, the Colonels are just as comfortable in a soup kitchen as they are on the court or the athletic field. Every Wilkes sports team is asked to participate in at least two community

Right: Lady Colonels basketball players enjoy time off the court as volunteers. From left are students Megan Kazmerski, Whitney Connolly, Brittany Ely and Angela Palmerio.

service activities per year, but most teams do an average of four. Student athletes also volunteer individually.

“The teams do things that are not glamorous but have a big impact on the community,” says community service coordinator Megan Boone.

Last fall, the baseball team planted trees and rebuilt the pitcher’s mound at Artillery Park while the women’s volleyball team raised money and dedicated two tri-matches to benefit a Lehigh, Pa., high school student with lymphoma. Basketball player Erin Schneider and cross country runner Michelle Wakeley joined more than 30 students, faculty and staff on service trips for Wilkes’ Alternative Spring Break. Other teams—including wrestling, men’s soccer and women’s softball—participated in highway clean-ups, volunteered at local soup kitchens and helped kids with homework at the McGlynn Center in Wilkes-Barre throughout the year.

“Our involvement in community service is very important...in the area and nationally,” says John Sumoski, women’s soccer team head coach. “As a coach, it is important for me to help my student-athletes understand a servant role in the community and how much that compassion means to other people.”

The women’s soccer team extended that compassion through a Pink Day game where they sold bracelets and wore pink to raise breast cancer awareness. The Lady Colonels basketball team participated in the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association’s Pink Zone, a week dedicated to breast cancer awareness that included a benefit game on Feb. 12. Both teams donated money to the northeast Pennsylvania chapter of Susan G. Komen for the Cure in Scranton, Pa. The women’s tennis team has plans to do a similar event this year.

“It is very important for our student-athletes to give back to the local community,” says tennis coach Chris Leicht. “It really allows the student-athletes the chance to take part in something that is meaningful to them.”

One of Wilkes’ signature events, The Colonel Charity Challenge, encourages the University community to join athletes’ service efforts. The Challenge, run by athletic coordinator Keith Klahold, is an iron-man competition of sorts that invites teams of five to compete in nine events, from push-ups to tug-of-war to truck pulls. Every team has to raise at least \$15 per person in donations to participate. Half of the donations each year goes to The Children’s Miracle Network, while the rest goes to a local organization such as Geisinger Children’s Hospital, Ruth’s Place, or the Bo Tkach Foundation, named for a former Wilkes football player, which focuses on suicide prevention. The challenge raised \$16,000 over the past five years.

Whether participating in a campus-wide activity, team project or individual volunteerism, student athletes and coaches agree on the value.

“We (the coaches) want them to be champions in the community as well as on the field,” says Sheptock. “We believe if we emphasize that’s who our players are, then they will put emphasis on it.”

Boone puts it another way. “Their community mindfulness affects what they go on to do in life,” she says. “It becomes an indelible trait of who they are.”

“Community service...helps bring our team closer which develops us as people and athletes,” remarks Senchak.

“

It is very important for our student-athletes to GIVE BACK to the local COMMUNITY

– Tennis Coach Chris Leicht

”



Below, Wilkes football player Tate Moore Jacobs, center, demonstrates the right moves to a youngster with support from teammates, rear from left, Tony Edge, Duane Daniels and Louis Abramo.



American Dreamer

GENE CHU '89 BUILT
A FRIENDSHIP AND A
BUSINESS AFTER COMING
TO THE UNITED STATES
TO STUDY AT WILKES

By Geoff Gehman

Joe Smith '90 couldn't help but notice the young man in the polyester powder-blue leisure suit. Why, he wondered, would anyone wear clothes at least 10 years out of fashion? And why would anyone sit alone in the same corner of Wilkes' Pickering Hall cafeteria eating the same meal in the same outfit every single day?

It took a month for Smith to stop wondering. One day in October 1986 he sat down with the leisure-suited fellow, who happened to be a fellow freshman biology major. He learned that Gene Chu '89 was a 25-year-old native of Beijing who had recently arrived in the U.S. with two changes of clothes, \$300 and a letter of recommendation from a Wilkes booster. Within the month he introduced Chu to his parents and the American custom of trick-or-treating.



PHOTO BY STEPHEN BARRETT

A quarter-century later, Chu and Smith remain friends. They've stuck together through Smith's driving lessons and Chu's limousine driving, marriage and children, the start of Smith's podiatry practice in Pennsylvania and Chu's sales jobs in China for American corporations. In 2001 they launched a Maryland company now called CounterTopia that fabricates and installs custom granite and marble surfaces in kitchens and bathrooms in residential and commercial buildings in the Mid-Atlantic region. Their bond remains as solid as the stone they sell.

Sitting in a CounterTopia office at a table covered by Lady's Dream granite, Chu begins the story of his American Dream with a story about his Chinese nightmare. At age 14 he applied to join the People's Liberation Army Air Force. He endured four months of demanding physical and mental tests, and an investigation of his relatives' Communist Party loyalty. "They wanted to make sure you're a good guy," says Chu, "a good seed."

Chu was selected as a fighter-pilot student. His Air Force career ended before it began when his grandfather insisted the mission would be too dangerous for the youngster. Chu's parents accepted the ruling because, as Chu points out, in most Chinese families, an elder's word is law.

Two years later, Chu passed the Chinese national entrance exam for college. It was a great family honor, since only 4 percent of applicants pass the test. Yet he never attended school. According to Chu, Chinese government officials refused to let him enter college to punish him for bowing out of the Air Force program.

His hopes "completely wiped out," Chu was deeply depressed for more than four years. His attitude improved while working as a medical technician. One day a female bacteriologist visited the lab where he raised animals for experiments. When Xu Feng fainted from low blood sugar, he revived her with a boiled egg. His good deed led to a romance that blossomed into an engagement.

Frustrated by his lack of freedom in China, Chu planned to move to the

United States. He studied English on educational television shows and practiced it with foreigners on Beijing streets. One day the Chinese secret police visited him, accusing him of conspiring with English-speaking spies. His government file received another demerit, or "black spot."

Being an outsider in China fueled Chu's desire to be an insider in America. His window of opportunity opened when his father, a mining engineer for China's Ministry of Coal, met Joseph A. Wiendl, a mining-equipment executive for Ingersoll Rand, a Wilkes trustee and a prominent supporter of Wilkes wrestling. His son, Joseph Wiendl '69, won two straight NCAA Division II wrestling championships. Impressed by Chu's ambition, Wiendl promised to support his application to Wilkes and sponsor him in America.

In summer 1986, Chu flew to San Francisco with \$300, two changes of clothes and a cardboard case tied with rope. He refused to rent an airport baggage cart because he worried about reducing his worldly savings to \$299. He forgot his financial troubles when he saw three ladies singing and dancing up a storm in the airport. In China, the act would have been punished as a public nuisance.



Joe Smith '90 and Gene Chu '89 as Wilkes freshmen beginning a friendship lasting 25 years. The former Miner Hall in the background is now the Wilkes-Barre YMCA. PHOTO COURTESY OF GENE CHU

Twenty-five years have passed, and Chu still relishes the memory of that spontaneous show. Jumping out of a chair, he imitates the dancing singers as if he's auditioning for a Broadway role. "That's when I thought to myself: 'Oh my God, we're in America,'" he says. "That's the spirit of freedom that welcomed me. From that point on, I was a fish in water."

Once in Pennsylvania, he prepared for biology courses at Wilkes by studying English for five weeks at Beaver College (now Arcadia University). His command of English immediately impressed Joe Smith when they met in the cafeteria.

Smith quickly discovered that Chu was his kind of guy. Chu, he points out, was brave enough to leave his fiancée in China. He was thrifty enough to eat mostly instant noodles for a month. He was industrious enough to bus tables in a Chinese restaurant, a job that provided free food and ended his almost exclusive diet of instant noodles. Chu reminded Smith of his hard-working, progressive father, Joe, a former salesman of Fuller Brushes and cemetery plots who earned a degree in criminal justice and became a prison guard.

"I thought: Wow, this guy is pretty special," says Smith. "So I kind of took him under my wing."

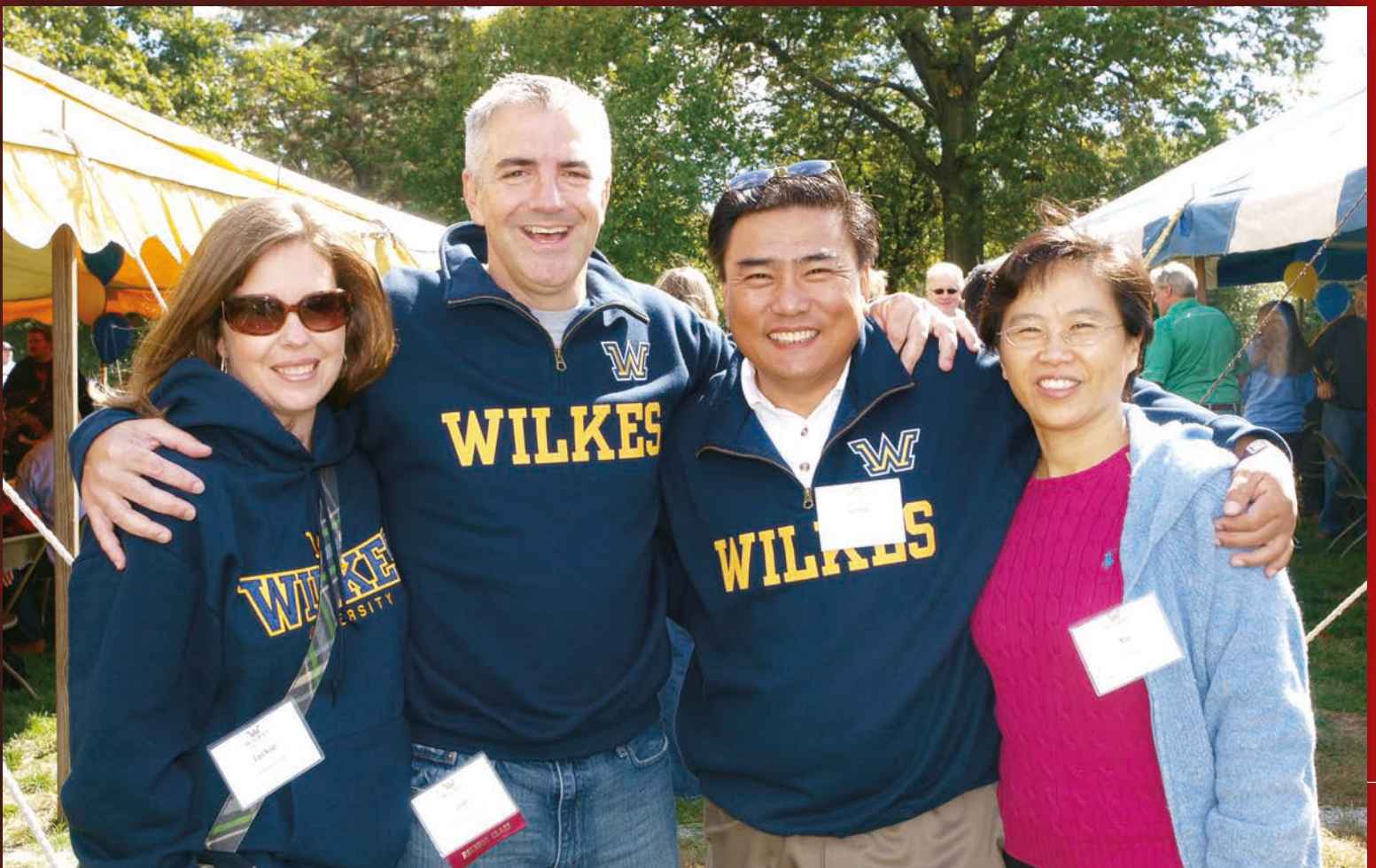
Two weeks after they met, he took his friend to his parents'

house in Hunlock Creek, Pa., a half-hour from Wilkes-Barre. Chu endeared himself to Joe and Rosie Smith by cooking them Chinese dumplings. They endeared themselves to him by relieving his indigestion with his first dose of Alka-Seltzer.

The same month Chu was introduced to two of America's favorite fall rituals. One was the spectacular colors of autumn leaves, which exploded in his eyes like fireworks. The other was Halloween. Smith decided to make Chu's first time trick-or-treating a treat and a trick. He convinced his friend to join him in wearing one of his mother's dresses for a costume, with two rolls of toilet paper, strategically placed in the chest. That night, they visited the home of an elderly gentleman who was puzzled when he heard "Trick or treat!" in a Chinese accent.

“
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Celebrating together at Homecoming 2010 are, from left, Jacqueline Smith, Joe Smith '90, Gene Chu '89 and Xu Chu. PHOTO BY MICHAEL TOUEY



“You’re not from around here, are ya?” the elderly gentleman asked.

“No.”

“Where ya from?”

“Oh, I from New Jersey.”

Chu, a resident of America for only three months, had made his first star-spangled joke. It was a one-liner fit for a sitcom. Even better, it made his friend Smith laugh his fool head off.

It wasn’t long before the Smiths had an honorary Chinese relative. Joe and Rosie Smith sponsored Chu’s fiancée, Xu Feng, when she came to the U.S. to study at Wilkes. Chu calls the Smiths “Mom and Dad.”

“Their moral support empowered me,” he says. “They made me feel that I was not fighting alone.”

Chu even tested his salesmanship on his surrogate parents. Halfway through a July 4 party in the Poconos, he asked the younger Joe Smith to gather everyone for a presentation. Chu disappeared into the house, changed from shorts to a three-piece suit, emerged with a briefcase, and proceeded to hawk Ginsu knives, the legendary cutlery of late-night TV ads.

Chu didn’t sell any knives that day, even though he was among friends. His lack of success didn’t diminish his entrepreneurial drive. After a semester, he changed his major from biology to business. He graduated cum laude in three years.

Chu continued to work odd jobs while studying for an MBA at Baruch College in Manhattan. He delivered newspapers with his wife, by then the mother of their young daughter and a doctoral candidate in pathology at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. The couple also worked for a wealthy land broker. Chu drove the broker’s family members in a limousine.

After receiving his master’s degree, Chu analyzed budgets for a New Jersey university. In 1995 he joined Ingersoll Rand, the

industrial-products giant that employed his mentor Joe Wiendl for 42 years. Chu worked as a controller for the company’s pneumatic-tool division in Guilin, a city in southwest China. In 1998, he became controller of greater China subsidiaries for Autodesk, which makes design software for architects, engineers and builders. He left China again in 2000 after his boss rejected him for another position, insisting he wasn’t a first-rate salesman.

Chu vowed to prove his former supervisor wrong after he returned to the U.S. with Xu and their children, Jennifer and Eugene. One day in 2000 he asked for a job at a car dealership in Bethesda, Md., where Xu was working as a scientist for the National Institutes of Health. He was hired on the spot, even though he had never sold automobiles. He sold 31 Hondas in his first month—more than any other salesman.

Chu sold cars for three months before discovering a more promising prospect. At the time he didn’t know anything about granite countertops. Yet he understood why builders and buyers of single-family homes and rental complexes raved about a stone surface that was sleek, resistant to heat and most scratches and raised resale value. He recognized the great potential of using his extensive homeland contacts to buy granite directly from China, a world leader in quarrying and fabricating.

One night Chu telephoned Smith to ask his Wilkes friend if he wanted to help him start a granite-counter business. “Joe is better with English,” says Chu. “He’s also funny and charismatic and very loyal.”

Smith liked Chu’s proposal. “I thought: Gene’s a great guy, a hard worker and whatever he did would be successful,” says Smith, a podiatrist who lives in Reading, Pa., with his wife, Jackie, and their children, Maxwell and Daniel. “And I wanted to be a part of that.”

For the next year, Smith and Chu met nearly every weekend at Chu’s house, Smith’s house or a diner in New Oxford, Pa.,

Gene Chu celebrated graduation day with his early mentor, Joseph A. Wiendl, a Wilkes trustee. PHOTO COURTESY OF GENE CHU



“
Their moral support
empowered me...
They made me
feel that I was
not fighting
alone.”

”

halfway between their homes. Eventually they took on a third investor, Franco Rossi Jr. '90, an optometrist in Goshen, N.Y. Rossi, Chu and Smith were environmental musketeers at Wilkes, canoeing on the river and cleaning up a creek.

In 2001, the three Wilkes graduates incorporated Granite America, earning a reputation for detailed, diligent service. Over time they increased sales by offering low prices and high quality, a wide range of products (vanity tops, fireplace surrounds) and a wider range of designs (Mauve Mist granite, Midnight Lightning marble). There were major projects (housing developments, condominium complexes) with major builders (Toll Brothers, Mitchell and Best) in major markets (Arlington, Va., Ocean City, Md.). In fiscal 2007 the company set a revenue record, earning \$3.3 million.

And then the boom went bust. In 2007, banks stopped lending money for speculative building, builders stopped building, buyers stopped buying buildings, owners stopped renovating buildings. In 2007–2008 Granite America's income fell two-thirds. At least the company didn't suffer the fate of nearly 400 competitors that died within 50 miles.

Chu and Smith buoyed the business with their own money. They diversified, branching into cabinets. They simplified, returning to renovating single-family homes. They changed Granite America to CounterTopia, a more marketable name. They moved operations from a rented warehouse in Bladensburg, Md., to their own warehouse in Frederick, Md.

Smith and Chu remain bullish about building their business. CounterTopia, they point out, is contracted to install granite kitchen and bath counters in two graduate-student residences for Johns Hopkins University, including a 320-unit skyscraper in Baltimore. They're confident enough to offer CounterTopia franchises and place a 15,000-pound granite bull outside the corporate warehouse. Designed by Chu and Smith, the stone beast is a massive advertisement, a Chinese symbol of perseverance and a monument to friendship.

"There are two things I really cherish: my family and my friends," says Smith. "When I come home after a difficult day and my boys jump into my lap, they make me forget my troubles. When I get that phone call and I see 'Gene Chu, CounterTopia,' it just makes me happy. And then we'll recall something that happened to us in school or tell some joke and I'll feel better, every time.

"I really think of Gene as my brother," adds Smith. "His friendship is part of my inner soul."

This touching moment fades fast. A few minutes later, Chu and Smith are spinning a funny story about eating in a restaurant in the Chinese city of Dandong, across the Yalu River from North Korea. Chu had previously introduced Smith to chicken feet and pig tongue. This time he persuaded his American buddy to try a dish both exotic and domestic.



Gene Chu outside the CounterTopia corporate headquarters with the 15,000-pound granite bull, a Chinese symbol of perseverance.

PHOTO BY
STEPHEN BARRETT

Gene Chu, Gaithersburg, Md.

B.S., Business Administration, Wilkes 1989

Career: Founding president/CEO of CounterTopia in Frederick, Md., a manufacturer of granite countertops.

Favorite Wilkes memory: Discussing student rebellion in his native China with then-University President Christopher N. Breiseth during an accidental meeting in spring 1989 along the Susquehanna River. Deeply impressed that a university president would ask the opinion of a "nobody," Chu vowed to make himself available to young people.

"How you like it?"

"It's all right. A little different from the meat I'm used to. What is it?"

"Dog."

How did Smith react? "Not too good," says Chu with an explosive laugh. "I really enjoyed it. It was revenge for all the tricks he pulled on me. It was payback time, big time."

As usual, Smith has to fling the last zinger. "So I guess the next time I eat dog I'll probably have to give you a call," he tells Chu with a straight face. A beat, a smile, and then the punchline: "The problem is, you'll probably be with me when that happens."

Wilkes in Bloom



WILKES' FIRST LADY CREATES
A GREEN OASIS ON CAMPUS

By Vicki Mayk

Wildflowers highlight the Learning Garden next to Fenner Hall on the Wilkes campus. PHOTOS BY LISA REYNOLDS AND VICKI MAYK



IT USED TO BE A PARKING LOT.

But when Wilkes' first lady Patty Gilmour looked at the space next to the former Fenner Rose Garden on South Franklin Street, she saw something more: a larger garden for lessons to be learned outside of the classroom.

"I wanted it to be a place where students could come to see things growing," Mrs. Gilmour says. "More and more, our young people are divorced from nature. Years ago, they spent much of their time playing outside, but children don't do that anymore."

Over the last three years, she has transformed the space into the Learning Garden, a place that boasts much more than the original rose and raspberry bushes planted by Fenner Hall's former owner. Her choices have included plants native to the area, with many chosen for their colorful blooms that attract bees, butterflies and birds.

No chemicals and herbicides are used to maintain the garden. Mrs. Gilmour, an avid environmental advocate, is an organic gardener and practices composting to feed her plants. "You don't need to buy all those chemicals," she states. "Layers of newspapers and mulch are effective for choking out weeds. But organic gardens have a more natural look—including a few weeds." On a spring morning, visitors to campus are likely to find her in the garden spreading compost or weeding. She spends many hours working there in season.

The garden also features gifts from alumni: Benches, a gift from the Class of 2009, provide a place to relax on a warm afternoon. A fountain, a gift of the Class of 1969, is a focal point. Columns unearthed in the back of the fieldhouse have formed the basis for a one-of-a-kind gazebo.

Mrs. Gilmour says she wanted to make a lasting contribution to campus and sharing her love of gardening was a natural way to do that.

"This is how I've shown my love for Wilkes," she says. "The campus is a habitat everyone can enjoy."

A SAMPLING OF PLANTS FROM THE WILKES LEARNING GARDEN

The following plants are among the species chosen by Patty Gilmour. The species thrive in the northeastern United States.



Bee Balm (Monarda) flower colors include pink, red, and white; new double-flowered forms are also available. The plant blooms from early to late summer and grows 2 to 4 feet tall, depending on the variety. Butterflies, hummingbirds, bees, and other nectar-seeking creatures covet the tubular flowers on the plant's rounded flower heads



Chokeberries (Aronia) are cultivated as ornamental plants in the northeast United States. Chokeberries are resistant to drought, insects, pollution, and disease. The name "chokeberry" comes from the astringency of the fruits which are inedible when raw.



Sneezeweed (Helenium autumnale) is a member of the aster family. The yellow-green disk at the center of the yellow flowers is a distinguishing characteristic. It grows from two to five feet in height and flowers from August to November.



Spicebush (Lindera benzoin) gets yellow flowers in early spring which grow in tufts. It has smooth, shiny leaves which grow alternately from spotted twigs. Red berries appear in late summer, attracting many birds.



More on the Web

Want to learn more about plants native to your area? Visit the following Web sites:

<http://www.plants.usda.gov>

<http://www.nps.gov/plants/>

For more views of Wilkes' Learning Garden, visit

<http://www.wilkes.edu/garden>



The Learning Garden provides a green oasis for taking a break. Right top, A fountain is a gift from the Class of 1969. Right center, Patty Gilmour created the garden and spends much of her time working there. Lower right, visitors are welcomed to the garden.






ROBYN SPEAK WALSH '76, MBA '80
FINDS NEW CHALLENGES
AS A CEO IN AUSTRALIA

By Mary Ellen Alu '77

LEADING

DOWN UNDER

Robyn Speak Walsh '76, MBA '80 takes a break from her duties "down under" as CEO of MLCOA in Melbourne, Australia.
PHOTO BY GAVIN BLUE



ROBYN SPEAK WALSH WAS ZIP LINING IN Costa Rica when she felt her Blackberry vibrate in her pocket. Checking the e-mail, she saw a message that would eventually change the course of her life: Would she be interested in becoming the CEO of a company in Australia?

Retired from a decades-long career in the health care and insurance industries with Aetna Inc., Walsh was taking some time off to travel and figure out the next chapter in her professional life.

But Australia? “I knew that I did not want to fall back into my comfort zone of working in a typical corporate environment,” remembers Walsh, “but I also had to grapple with the difficult decision to take a job so far away from my daughter, family and friends, and from the very comfortable and interesting life I had created for myself since retiring.”

Walsh ’76, MBA ’80, took the job. In June 2010, she became chief executive officer and a director of the Melbourne-based MLCOA, a company that provides independent medical assessments of employees for companies and insurance organizations.

“I wanted to define success in a new way for myself,” explains Walsh.

Since her Wilkes days, when she worked in the Recorder’s Office while pursuing a degree, Walsh has risen to leadership positions in the corporate world—budget director, then controller, administrator, vice president, senior vice president, president, consultant, chair of the board of directors. Along with these successes came personal hardship: a difficult divorce, a devastating fire at her Pennsylvania home and the death of her mother, a role model and mentor.

But back to that vacation in Costa Rica and to the e-mail Walsh had received.

As chairwoman for Trips and Tours at the Town and County Club in Hartford, Conn., Walsh was leading a group of 20 women. An event on that trip convinced her to take her next career step. She and the group were in a remote area when one woman became seriously ill. Walsh became concerned that the woman might die if she didn’t get to a hospital.

“I called one of the tour guides who spoke Spanish, secured a boat ride out of the jungle, and, through my Aetna contacts, arranged for an ambulance ride to a hospital in the Costa Rican capital of San Jose where my co-traveler received medical treatment which saved her life,” says Walsh. “I was so grateful that I was able to use all the leadership skills I had learned in the corporate world, and realized that I still have more that I want to achieve.”

Walsh says she had always wanted to be a CEO and use her “motivating” style of management to run a company. After receiving the offer from Australia, Walsh consulted with her daughter, Jordan, a third-year law student at Cardozo School of Law in Manhattan, and with a close friend, about whether she should accept the job. They both said that it was her life, her journey and her book.

Before retiring in 2005, Walsh had been president of Aetna Workers Comp Access. In that role she was responsible for leading a new company initiative—a worker’s compensation network of hospitals, physicians and specialists

who helped injured workers return to work. After doing some due diligence on MLCOA, Walsh decided to sign on as CEO.

Walsh is in Australia on a four-year visa, and says her goal is to build MLCOA and put the right people in place. “I’m not running a company,” she says. “I’m building a team.”

Part of the experience has been learning to adapt to a new work/life balance. “In Australia,” she explains, “people generally work eight hours, play eight hours and sleep eight hours. Unlike Americans, Australians work hard, but leave their jobs behind when they go home. Another major difference is that Americans work today on what was due yesterday, as opposed to the Australians who work today on what is due next week.

But if there is a downside to being Down Under, it’s that it is a difficult and expensive journey for family and friends who want to visit.

She is enthusiastic about life in Melbourne. “I love the vibrancy of this city, and have found the food and coffee to be nothing less than exceptional.” According to Walsh, the people in Melbourne are well-read and informed, with a keen interest in the United States.

Since taking the position in Australia, Walsh has returned to the U.S. two or three times a year for business and family holidays. She has continued as board chair for FairPay Solutions in Texas, which provides workers comp and auto-liability claims review.

Her life journey continues.

“
I wanted to
define SUCCESS
in a new way
for myself.”

Robyn Speak Walsh
B.A., Sociology and Anthropology, 1976;
MBA, 1980, Wilkes

Notable: Resides in South Melbourne, Australia, where she is chief executive officer for MLCOA, a company providing independent medical assessments of employees for companies, insurance organizations and other groups.

Memorable Wilkes faculty: Wagiha Taylor, professor, and Ted Engel, associate professor, in the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership, where Walsh received her MBA.

Favorite Wilkes place: Weckesser Hall, where she worked while a student with Ruth Bishop, recorder who later became her daughter’s godmother.



DAVE RUSSO '93
LEAVES THEM
LAUGHING IN HIS
SUCCESSFUL
COMEDY CAREER

By Vicki Mayk

Funny Man



Dave Russo, Boston, Mass.

B.A., Communication Studies, Wilkes 1993

Career: Stand-up comic who has performed in Boston, New York and Las Vegas

Notable: Winner of the Inaugural Boston Comedy Festival and finalist on "The Entertainer," reality show with Wayne Newton on E! Entertainment Network.

Favorite Wilkes Memory: "Going to football games, participating in intramural deck hockey and the camaraderie of hanging out with friends."

DAVE RUSSO '93 ISN'T JOKING WHEN HE SAYS he got the idea to do stand-up comedy in his Wilkes public speaking class. The first time he gave a speech he had everyone—including his teacher, Jane Elmes-Crahall—laughing. Not an easy feat in an 8 a.m. class.

“When he finished that first speech, I told him, ‘You have real talent and humor,’” says Elmes-Crahall, a professor of communication studies. “Every speech after that got funnier and funnier. Did he always leave me wondering ‘Where did he come up with that?’ Yes, he did!”

More than 18 years later, Russo is making his living by laughter. A mainstay of the comedy scene in his native Boston, Mass., he is a host for Dirty Water TV, a production company that provides entertainment news on the New England Sports Network (NESN). In more than 15 years as a comic, Russo has performed in New York, Las Vegas and on the West Coast.

Calling himself “the hardest-working comic in Boston,” Russo sometimes does four shows at two or more venues on a weekend. He says Beantown is one of the best cities in America to do comedy. “In order to be a better comic, you need stage time. In Boston, you get stage time,” he says. Following in the tradition of Boston comedians like Conan O’Brien, Jay Leno and Dennis Leary, he’s learned a lot about his business. “In comedy, you have to develop a rhythm,” he explains. “The punchlines should be coming every eight to 10 seconds.”

Watching Russo’s high-energy act is exhausting. The jokes fly by so quickly, it’s easy to miss one. Hecklers don’t have a

Cardinale steered the young wrestler to his alma mater. Russo came to Wilkes and wrestled for coach John Reese. Along the way, he also discovered his penchant for comedy when performing in and out of the classroom.

“I’ve wanted to be an entertainer since I was 5 years old,” Russo says. “I can still remember going to my sister’s school dance when I was 9 and dancing to the song *Rapper’s Delight*. By the time I was 14, I had won a national competition as the best break dancer in America.”

The break dancing title led to contracts to break dance in commercials for Dunkin’ Donuts, Nabisco Sugar Babies candy and Tweeter Stereo. Although his interest switched from dancing to wrestling in high school and at Wilkes, he still longed to be a performer. “I wanted to create my own destiny with stand-up comedy,” he says.

After graduating from Wilkes, his first job was as assistant director of admissions for Hesser College in Manchester, N.H., running a program to encourage students to continue in school and go to college. “It was a good job for me because I was the first person in my family to attend college,” says Russo. But comedy was calling. He started entertaining at open-mike nights while there. Winning the inaugural Boston Comedy Festival in 2000 launched his stand-up career. He moved to New York City in 2001 and toured on the college circuit. While working in Las Vegas, he was chosen from among thousands of performers to appear with Wayne Newton on “The Entertainer,” a reality show that aired in 2005 on the E! Entertainment Network. Ten finalists competed for a \$1 million contract to work in Las Vegas. Russo came in second.

Losing the contest was a low point. “When I came back from

LAUGH LINES

Dave Russo shared some of his favorite jokes with *Wilkes* magazine:

On Leaving Home:

“When I turned 18, my mom kicked me out of the house and said I couldn’t come back until I got a job and a note from a mental health professional. And I’m thinking, ‘Where am I going to get a job?’

On excelling academically:

“I graduated first in my class: I was home-schooled.”

On the difference between the sexes:

“They say a man invented the bra: No way could a man have invented it. If they had, the sizes would have been completely different: I mean, a ‘D’ would have been an ‘A.’”

chance: “What you do as a professional comedian is repeat what the heckler said. It lets the audience know that someone is being distracting—and it gives me time to have a comeback.”

Russo was his high school’s first state wrestling champion in Malden, Mass. A chipped tooth at a wrestling tournament provided him with an unexpected introduction to Wilkes. The dentist who gave him emergency treatment also was the dentist for Wilkes alumnus Anthony Cardinale ’72, a Boston-area lawyer.

Vegas, I thought, ‘What am I going to do?’ I actually looked into getting a day job,” he recalls. An invitation to appear at a benefit for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation led to his current gig on Dirty Water TV on NESN and back on the performing circuit. He’s been leaving them laughing ever since.

Now a seasoned comic, Russo has learned who he is, both on and off the stage: “Whoever you are off-stage is the same person you are on-stage. Know what your persona is.”



Tom Ralston '80 Elected President of Alumni Association Board

Tom Ralston '80 was elected president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors at the April 1 meeting. In this Q & A, Tom talks about his father, George Ralston, the continuing Ralston Legacy at Wilkes, his goals for the Alumni Association and his favorite Wilkes memories. Tom's memories reflect the diverse roles his father played, including football coach and dean of students to generations of Wilkes alumni.

Three generations of your family have called Wilkes home. Why is it important for you to be involved with the Alumni Association and why did you choose to take on a leadership role?

I've been involved with Wilkes since the day I was born. My mother, three brothers and I have Wilkes degrees and two of my nieces are currently students. How could I not bleed Blue and Gold? It was only Dad (George Ralston) who was lacking the Wilkes degree until his Honorary Doctorate was awarded in 1997.

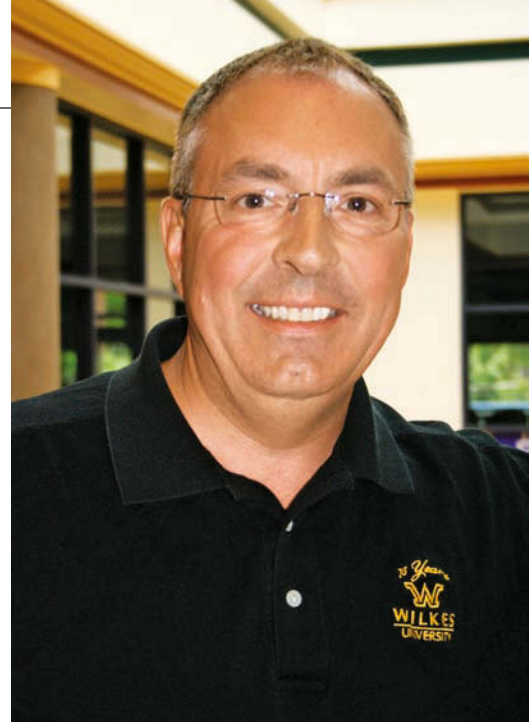
I believe in the mission of Wilkes and I believe that Wilkes can continue delivering the quality education that I received to students well into the future. I serve on the Alumni Association Board out of respect to the institution and its members, as well as to maintain a close relationship with Wilkes. Through this service, I am able to give back where and when it will truly be meaningful.

As President, what is your vision for the Alumni Association?

My focus over the next year will be to continue the good work of my predecessors and the fine staff that supports the Alumni Association. My goal will always be to determine new methods to engage or reengage our alumni base coast to coast and internationally. I want to grow our participation in any way that is appropriate and think that giving "time, treasure or talent" are all ways that alumni can become engaged with Wilkes.

Tell us about your most memorable college experience.

I've had many, but I always loved Saturday afternoons in the fall watching Wilkes



football. Those days were electric, with great teams and great crowds. We had a fantastic band in my days to warm some of those cold, dreary days and help lead the Colonels to victory.

What's new with you?

After a fairly long stint in the corporate world, I entered academia five years ago. I work in an alumni relations and leadership giving capacity at Bentley University just outside of Boston.

In addition to welcoming Tom as Alumni Association board president, congratulations to Rosemary LaFratte '93, MBA '97, now serving as first vice president, and Cindy Charnetski '97, now serving as second vice president. In addition, Adrienne Richards '07, Rick Seipp '01, Pat Skibbs '60, Brian Switay '10, Frank Yamrus '80 and Ted Yeager '72 were named to the Association Board of Directors.

HOMECOMING 2011 SEPTEMBER 23, 24 AND 25

Homecoming 2011 is just three months away!

Join fellow alumni back on campus from Sept. 23-25 for a jam-packed schedule of events, including the Homecoming Parade, concert on the Greenway, Pints with Professors, tent parties, reunions and much more.

This year, we'll celebrate the following reunions: the Classes of '61, '71, '81, '91, '01 and '06; ROTC; Sturdevant Hall; Sullivan Hall; men's and women's soccer; debate; cross country; biology and

chemistry; Ancestral Colonels; and the A-List. If you are a member of one of these groups and would like to help plan your reunion, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at (570)408-7787 or alumni@wilkes.edu. Check out www.wilkes.edu/homecoming for the latest information!

Homecoming Committee

Rosemary LaFratte '93, MBA '97, chair	Ellen Hall '71 Buck Mallan '71	Melissa Maybe '05 Anita Mucciolo '78
Roya Fahmy '83	Jim Marascio '71	Brian Switay '10

Lawrence Cohen '57 honored at Alumni Association Dinner

The Alumni Association honors a member of the Wilkes community each year, recognizing a strong commitment to the University and the community. This year, Larry Cohen '57, was honored at the Alumni Association Scholarship Dinner on April 29. President Tim Gilmour recognized him in the company of family and friends for his important contributions to Wilkes and the area. Larry Amdur '57 and Richard Cohen, Larry's son, spoke in his honor.

Cohen serves on the board of the Wyoming Valley Jewish Federation and is active in the Dental Trade Alliance. He is the semi-retired chairman of Benco Dental. Benco Dental is now run by his sons, Charles and Richard, Managing Partners. He and his wife Sally reside in Delray Beach, Fla., and Kingston, Pa.

The Alumni Association Scholarship is awarded annually to a student who demonstrates exceptional academic credentials and campus involvement and whose parent or grandparent graduated from Wilkes. This year's recipient, Erin Robinson, a senior English major from Harford, Pa., was recognized during the dinner. Proceeds from the dinner help to fund this annual scholarship.



Larry Cohen '57 was honored at the Alumni Association Dinner. Pictured from left are Wilkes President Tim Gilmour, Larry Cohen '57, Sally Cohen and Ruth McDermott Levy '82, representing the Alumni Association Board. PHOTO BY MICHAEL TOUEY



The alumni event in Orlando, which was one in a series of gatherings held in the Sunshine State in early March. Pictured left to right in the front row are Theresa Martincavage Mahon '99, Patty Gilmour, Mirko Widenhorn, Andrea Powell '06 and back row left to right: President Tim Gilmour, Jeff Slank '95, Tim Banks, MaryElla Banks '79 and Alex Powell. PHOTO BY MUSEUM STAFF



Alumni, whose graduation years ranged from 1958 to 2009, gathered at the Famished Frog in Morristown, NJ on March 10. Coaches Frank Sheptock, Matt DiBernardo and Mike McCree joined to catch up with former players. PHOTO BY BRIDGET GIUNTA HUSTED '05



President Gilmour and alumni gathered at the home of Irene and Jay Mack '79 in Boca Raton, Fla. Pictured left to right are Bryon Earl '85, Wilkes President Tim Gilmour, Linda Baron Kaufer '76, Ken Schaefer, Patty Gilmour, Connie Kamarunas Schaefer '56, Jack Basler, Carolyn Goeringer Basler '58, Jay Mack '79, Linda Millar '80, Jessica Millar, Irene Mack and Alexandra Mack. PHOTO BY SUSAN JOLLEY



Alumni attending an event in Tampa/St. Petersburg at the home of Maureen Cambier '82 are, on floor, Jim Basta and Colleen Cambier; second row, seated from left, Bill Brennan '90, Connie Kamarunas Schafer '56, Marie Honcharik Basta '61, Claire Handler Silverstein '63; third row, standing from left, Christine May Terry '86, Helene, Catherine Schaeffer, Mrs. Bill Brennan, Ken Schaeffer, Maureen Connolly Cambier '82, Dr. Joe Sabadish '82, Marianne Sabadish '83, Roberta Berger '71, Ron Silverstein, Dr. Patrick Cambier and Derek Jolley. PHOTO BY ANGELA BUCKLEY.

1965

Donald Ungemah retired from his position as senior vice president and chief legal and risk officer of MWH Global Inc. Ungemah resides in Littleton, Colo., and Marco Island, Fla.

1971

Reunion Sept. 23-25 

Francine Douaihy took third place in the 5th NeoPopRealism Starz International Art Competition.

1980

Joseph D. Angelella MBA '87 is vice president, commercial loan officer and relationship manager at First National Community Bank.

1983

David R. Carey M.S. '98 earned his doctorate in electrical and computer engineering at Clarkson University, Potsdam, N.Y. Carey works at Tobyhanna Army Depot as an engineering branch manager and teaches in the engineering department at Wilkes. He lives in Wilkes-Barre with his wife, **Jennifer (Ogurkis) Carey '83**.

1985

Susan Maier Davis was named senior vice president of operations for SMV Management Company LLC.

1986

Neal McHugh is regional manager of environmental health and safety for the northeast region of Kinder Morgan Energy. He resides in Point Pleasant, N.J., with his wife, **Diane (Gatfield) McHugh '86**, and children.

1989

Robert Faille is the director of development information systems in the office of development for Princeton University.

Benjamin P. Tielle is assistant vice president of PNC Bank in northeast Pennsylvania. He resides in Pittston, Pa.

1992

Michael John Brogan see **Graduate Students 2001**.

Charlotte A. Moser is the assistant director of the Vaccine Education Center at The Children's Hospital in Philadelphia, Pa. She recently co-authored a new book, *Vaccines and Your Child: Separating Fact from Fiction*. Moser lives with her husband, **Dan Moser**, and their two children in Bensalem, Pa.

1993

Priya Patel is the network

administrator at Berman, Goldman & Ribakow, an accounting firm in Ellicott City, Md.

1994

Eileen Evanina is director of the nurse anesthesia program at Columbia University's School of Nursing. She also works at Northeastern Gastroenterology Associates in Honesdale, Pa. She resides in Olyphant, Pa.

Tracy (Gusditis) Zabrenski is director of revenue cycle for Moses Taylor Hospital after serving 12 years as director of revenue cycle professional reimbursement and compliance at Geisinger Health System.

1995

Christopher Carr writes a recurring column, "The Working Man's Hunter," in a new national hunting magazine, *Racks and Tails*.

1997

Renee F. Casterline was presented with the Joseph C. Donchess Chair in Science by the Wyoming Seminary Board of Trustees.

Dr. Cindy Charnetski is one of *The Times Leader's* Top 40 Under 40 for 2011. She practices optometry at the Northeast Eye Institute.

1998

Christine (Tondrick) Baksi and her husband, Dave, announce the birth of their first child, Samuel David, born Dec. 13, 2010. The family resides in Mechanicsburg, Pa.

Michael Barrouk MBA '00 is one of *The Times Leader's* Top 40 Under 40 for 2011. He is assistant vice president at PNC Bank in Wilkes-Barre.

Lisa (Niewinski) Ciampi and husband, Lou, announce the



Phillip James Torres '89 and **Joel Bieber** were married on Aug. 21, 2010. The groom is a teacher for the Elk Grove Unified School District. The bride is employed at CH2M HILL, an environmental engineering company. The couple reside in Elk Grove, Calif.



Susan Marie Tomchak M.S. '05 and **David Frederick Thackara** were married on Oct. 9, 2010. The bride is a teacher in the Pocono Mountain School District. The groom is employed by Shamrock Communications. The couple reside in Wyoming, Pa.

Jordan Padams Career Propelled by NASA Job

Jordan Padams '08's career could be described as "out of this world." Padams is in his third year working as a software engineer for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Jet Propulsion Labs. The computer science major never planned on working for NASA.

"It just kind of happened," he laughs. "I didn't even think about it growing up."

The southern New Jersey native was finishing his degree at Wilkes when career services told him of a job fair in New York City. He and a friend drove to the city and interviewed all day, making their last stop at the table for NASA's Jet Propulsion Labs.

"They liked what I had to say," recalls Padams. "They flew me out to Pasadena, interviewed me and offered me a job."

His work for NASA, though complex, can be broken down into two basic concepts. "I make computer programs," he says, comparing them to ones we use daily, such as Web sites or phone apps. But the information he works with is coming straight from outer space. A NASA spacecraft has instruments and readings, he explains, that send data down to the home base, where it needs to be analyzed by scientists. "My job," he continues, "is to make it easier for these scientists to read the information clearly and understand what was going on at that time." He takes the information and puts it into a database for easy access.



Jordan Padams '08 at NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab, where is a software engineer. PHOTO COURTESY JORDAN PADAMS

What the Burbank, Calif., resident enjoys most about his job is "the sheer magnitude of what goes on" at the labs. "The scientists walking by are some of the smartest people in the world," he says. "There's a Rover next door that's going to Mars in a few years."

Padams credits much of his success to the education he received at Wilkes. "I work right alongside

people from MIT, Cornell, Stanford," he says, "but I still have the same education, if not better than they do." Padams notes he was especially grateful for the late Professor Matthew J. Zukoski, who was "just a pleasure to be around."

In addition to his day job, he is pursuing his master's degree in computer science at the University of Southern California.

"Push your boundaries," Padams says. "It's not just thinking outside the box, but living outside the box."

– By Rachel Strayer

birth of their third child, Mia Regina Rose, born Nov. 15, 2010. Mia joins brothers, Louis, 5, and Nicholas, 3. The family resides in Wyoming, Pa.

1999

Jill (Mackay) Barrouk M.S. '03 and Michael Barrouk '98, MBA '00 announce the birth of their third child, Nick Steven, born on Nov. 18, 2010. He joins siblings Sam, 5, and Nina, 3.

Aaron Sherburne see 2000.

2000

Jason Evans was interviewed by WBRE news anchor Kyla

Campbell '03 via Skype after being evacuated from his home in Hawaii due to tsunami warnings. Evans is the owner of SilverShark Media, an independent production company in Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii.

Nathan Lipton see 2002.

Lauren (Castelli) Sherburne and Aaron Sherburne '99 announce the birth of their twin boys, Matthew Aaron and Nicholas Michael, born on Nov. 3, 2010. They join older brother Jason.

2002

Jennifer Lipton M.S. '09 and Nathan Lipton '00 announce the birth of their son, Gabriel Daniel Lipton, born on Dec. 29, 2009. They reside in Pottsville, Pa.

Ronald M. Metcho, Esq., and Nicole D. Curran were married on Dec. 11, 2010. The groom is an associate attorney with the law firm of Marshall, Dennehey, Warner, Coleman & Goggin, P.C. The bride is tax director at FXI Innovations. The couple reside in Philadelphia, Pa.

Piyush Sabharwall is the American Society of Mechanical Engineers' representative for the 2011 New Faces of Engineering program. The heat transport lead scientist at Idaho National Laboratory, Sabharwall is one of 14 early-career engineers chosen to represent various engineering organizations for the New Faces project.

2004

Jessica (Hinkel) Leibig and her husband, Michael, announce the birth of their son, Logan, on Aug. 15, 2010.

2005


John P. Boylan recently completed the requirements to be a certified public accountant at Riley & Co. Inc. in Mount Pocono, Pa. Boylan has worked for the firm for more than five years.

Jennifer Hendrix and **Ryan McCabe** were married on Sept. 4, 2010. The bride is a productivity solution specialist for Microsoft. The groom is an audio visual technician for Star Home Theatre.

The couple reside near Washington, D.C.

Elvira Illiano-Trovato and her husband, **Carmin**, announce the birth of their son, **Giuseppe Aniello**, born Oct. 18, 2010. The family resides in Conshohocken, Pa.

2006

Reunion Sept. 23-25 

Amanda Lewis is now a certified and licensed Zumba fitness instructor in central New Jersey.

Erik O'Day is one of *The Times Leader's* Top 40 Under 40 for 2011. He is a social studies teacher and cross country coach for E.L. Meyers High School.

Shelby Schultz M.S. '09 and **Edward Naperski** were married on June 26, 2010. The bride is a seventh-grade English teacher for the Wyoming Valley West School District. The groom is a sales director for FirstFlight, a corporate aviation company. The couple reside in Forty Fort, Pa.

2008

Steven Zerbe was named a pharmacist at Mike's Pharmacy of Myerstown, Pa.

Carmen Winters is one of *The Times Leader's* Top 40 Under 40 for 2011. She is director of marketing at MyNEPA LLC, an internet marketing firm in Plains, Pa.

2009

Joel Antolik and **Heather Beretski** were married on June 26, 2010. The groom

Sabrina Naples Benulis '05 Signs Book Deal with HarperCollins

Sabrina Naples Benulis '05 graduated from Wilkes with two bachelor's degrees—one in English and another in psychology—and sold four of her short stories and poems for publication in a very competitive market. But her most rewarding labor of love to date is *Archon*. The fantasy fiction novel—the first in a trilogy—allowed Benulis to finish her master's degree thesis in writing popular fiction at Seton Hill University in 2007 and recently earned a coveted three-book contract with publisher HarperCollins.

"It's one thing to get a book published, but I was also lucky enough to sign with one of the largest publishers in the business," explains Benulis. "I was excited enough to walk on sunshine for days."

The novel follows **Angela Mathers**, a troubled young adult who learns that she is really an avenging angel

in a world of witches, demons and ancient prophecies. Benulis says *Archon* was born out of myriad interests, "but mainly a long-time love affair with the supernatural, world religions, mythology, and believe it or not, Japanese anime." She is currently working on the sequel to *Archon* and has plans to publish a young adult novel in the future.

Benulis suggests that while talent is important when hoping to be published, persistence is essential. So is proper guidance. Benulis says she did "write for fun" in high school, but it was Wilkes creative writing adjunct faculty **Bernie Kovacs '10 M.F.A.'98** who first opened her eyes to the possibility of writing as a career.

"He wrote a note on a story I'd written, telling me to speak with him after class," she recalls. "I thought I was in trouble."

Kovacs simply told her that she had talent. He suggested she think about writing professionally, a piece of advice that set her on the path to becoming a published novelist.

"But for me, I think it was always more about creating a world and telling its story," says the author. "That is my true love."

Benulis continues to create worlds out of the home she shares with her husband, **Michael Benulis '05**, in Drums, Pa. Her work has appeared in *Third Order Magazine*, *Oddlands Magazine*, *The Opinion Guy* and Wilkes literary magazine, *The Manuscript*. *Archon* is due to be released under the HarperCollins imprint HarperVoyager on Dec. 26, 2011.

– **By Rachel Strayer**

Sarah Benulis '05 at her desk in Drums, Pa., where she created *Archon*, the fantasy novel to be published by HarperCollins. PHOTO COURTESY SARAH BENULIS





Andrea Kinal '06 and Alex Powell were married on Nov. 6, 2010. The bride is an analyst of jewelry and accessories for Beall's Department Stores. The groom is a custom furniture builder for Dream Works, Inc. The couple reside in Bradenton, Fla.



Kara (Culnane) Hines '10 and Erik Hines were married on Sept. 18, 2010. The bride is a registered nurse at Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Hospital in Binghamton, N.Y. The couple reside in Thompson, Pa.

is employed by Medico Industries Inc. The bride is employed by Sam's Club and the Dallas School District as a substitute teacher. The couple reside in Miners Mills, Pa.

Brian Lang completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill. He will now attend Navy Special Warfare training in Coronado, Calif.

David Ramil and Allison Davis were married on July 24, 2010. The groom is employed by Corporate Call Center as a licensed insurance agent. The bride is employed by the Springfield School District as a math and physics teacher. The couple reside in Phoenixville, Pa.

Graduate Students 1968

Ruth Uy Asmundson M.S. was honored among "Outstanding Alumni" with a

2010 College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Award of Distinction from the University of California at Davis.

1987


Joseph D. Angelella MBA see 1980.

1989

Joseph H. Knecht MHA is senior vice president of clinical services at the Wilkes-Barre Children's Service Center.

Charlotte Czeponis Pharm.D., manager at Bracey Pharmacy in Ashland, Pa., was honored at the first Ashland Area Rotary Club Vocation Night. Czeponis resides in Ashland with her husband **Adam, Pharm.D. '01** and son.

2001

Reunion Sept. 23-25 

Bridget Ann McLaughlin M.S. and **Michael John Brogan '92** were married on Nov. 26, 2010. The bride is

a sixth grade teacher for the Pittston Area School District. The groom is employed by the Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority. The couple reside in West Pittston, Pa.

Jennifer Lynn Youmans M.S. and **Kenneth Robert Weaver Jr.** were married on July 17, 2010. The bride is employed as a business education teacher for the Williamsport Area School District. The groom is a caseworker for Lycoming-Clinton Joinder. The couple reside in Williamsport, Pa.

2004

Adam G. Soares Pharm.D. and **Megan Sabonis** were married on Aug. 14, 2010. The groom is the pharmacy operations manager at Lahey Clinic in Burlington, Mass. The bride is an assistant project manager for the TIMI Study Group at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston,

Mass. The couple reside in Easton, Mass.

2007

Maureen Shovlin M.S. and **Bryan Pikas** were married on July 24, 2010. The bride is employed as a teacher and head swim coach by Wyoming Area School District. The groom is a journeyman electrician for International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Wilkes-Barre Local 163. The couple reside in West Wyoming, Pa.

2008

Jason Slavoski Pharm.D. and **Kelly Walsh** were married on Sept. 24, 2010. The groom is employed by a Walgreen's affiliate in Milford, Del. The couple reside in Rehoboth Beach, Del.

2009

Karen M. Kaleta MBA and **Stephen P. Alessi** MBA '10 were married on Oct. 23, 2010. The bride is assistant director

of the master of arts in business administration program at Wilkes University. The groom is a sales representative for the Sherwin Williams Company. The couple reside in Mountain Top, Pa.

Lindsay Ann Lenchak
M.S. and Joseph Thomas

Filipkowski Jr. were married on July 17, 2010. The bride is a third grade teacher in the Pittston Area School District. The groom is an apprentice wireman for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. The couple reside in Duryea, Pa.

Joseph Giomboni M.F.A. and Jill Rozitski were married on July 2, 2010. The groom is employed by King's College as assistant director of public relations and an adjunct professor for the mass communications department. The bride is marketing

project manager at King's College. The couple reside in Plains, Pa.

2011

Mark A. Kutzer MBA was promoted to associate attorney at Fellerman Ciarimboli law firm.

In Memoriam

1942

Olive Jean Thomas Pearn, Wilmington, Del., died Dec. 18, 2010. She taught high school and middle school for 30 years in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

1943

Rev. Joseph A. Lorusso, Wilkes-Barre, died Dec. 28, 2010. He served in the Army Transportation Corps during WWII and was ordained into the priesthood in 1947. He taught English at several universities.

John T. Zucosky Jr., Plains Township, Pa., died March 9, 2011. He was a retired employee of American Cyanamid in Bound Brook, N.J.

1945

I. Martin Berger, Washington, D.C., died in May of 2010.

1948

Joseph J. Pribula, Exeter, Pa., died Feb. 17, 2011. He was a U.S. Army Air Corps veteran and a life member of Exeter Hose Co. No. 1. He worked as an engineer for Sordoni Construction and Commonwealth Telephone Co. in Dallas, Pa.

1949

Marjorie Tyler Green, West Pittston, Pa., died Dec. 21, 2010. She was a retired mathematics teacher for the Wyoming Area School District.

1950

John E. Young, Uniontown, Pa., died Jan. 2, 2011. He worked in the coal division of the U.S. Steel Corp.

1952

Edmund Victor Niklewski, Hagerstown, Md., died Feb. 25, 2011. His career included staff psychiatrist and medical director at Brook Lane Psychiatric Center, medical director of the Mental Health Unit and Alzheimer's program at Washington County Hospital, and a private practice of psychiatry.

Mario A. Sellani, Orwigsburg, Pa., died Nov. 7, 2010. He was a Marine Corps veteran of WWII and was employed as plant chemical engineer for Litton industries in Salt Lake City, Utah.

1953

Paul B. Beers, Harrisburg, Pa., died Jan. 24, 2011. He was

a U.S. Navy veteran, award-winning journalist and the associate editor for *The Patriot* and *The Evening News*.

Andrew (Andy) Francis Roan, Oviedo, Fla., died Jan. 4, 2011. He was a U.S. Air Force veteran of WWII and was the owner of Roan's Beverage Distributorship in Dallas, Pa., for many years.

1954

Wayne S. Madden, Seminole, Fla., died Dec. 28, 2010. He was a United Methodist minister and a chaplain colonel in the U.S. Air Force. He completed 26 years of service, most recently as chief of chaplain personnel for the Strategic Air Command in Nebraska.

June E. Stevens, Carlisle, Pa., died Feb. 17, 2011. She was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II and retired from teaching secondary school in the Wilkes-Barre city schools after 25 years.

1955

Dominic Charles Varisco, Newport, R.I., and Harwich, Mass., died Jan. 17, 2010. He was a U.S. Army veteran and maintained a career in higher

education administration and teaching for 40 years, working at Brandeis, Harvard and Salve Regina universities. He also was a senior consulting vice president with the Shaver Corp. of New York City and Grenzebach Glier & Associates of Chicago.

Jane Falk, Tinton Falls, N.J., died Feb. 6, 2011. She was an employee of Tinton Falls School District and active in local politics.

Paul P. Krasucki Sr., Roaring Brook Township, Pa., died Dec. 31, 2010. He was a U.S. Army veteran and was employed as a pipefitter with the Plumbers and Pipefitters Union, Local No. 524.

Capt. Joseph D. Miceli, USN (Ret.), Wilkes-Barre, died Jan. 28, 2011. He served in the U.S. Navy for 37 years, as the commanding officer of Naval Weapons Support Center in Crane, Ind., and later as a program manager at NAVSEA in Arlington, Va.

1958

Joseph I. Leibman, Harrisburg, Pa., died March 3, 2011. He was president of SHS Employment Agency.

In Memoriam

Merle Levey, Atlanta, Ga., died Feb. 24, 2011.

1959

Paul A. Schecter, Williamsburg, Va., died Jan. 30, 2011. He was a partner at the law firm Coopers & Lybrand, retiring in 1996. He taught law at Georgetown, Washington & Lee, and Howard universities.

1960

Thomas M. Walsh, Sr., Pittston, Pa., died Jan. 21, 2011. He was a rehabilitation teacher for Blindness and Visual Services of Wilkes-Barre and was also president of the Luzerne County Council of the Blind for 21 years.

1962

Morgan Richards “Dick” Jones, Wyndmoor, Pa., died Dec. 17, 2010. He was a partner and chairman in the national law firm of Drinker, Biddle and Reath, LLP, in Philadelphia, Pa., and founder of the firm’s Investment Management Practice Group.

1968

Barbara L. Gatto, Johnstown, Pa., died March 5, 2011.

James H. Murray, St. Albans, Vt., died Feb. 4, 2011. He was employed as a certified rehabilitation specialist for United Rehabilitation Associates for more than 20 years prior to his retirement.

1973

David G. DeMorat, Hanover Township, Pa., died Jan. 10,

2011. He was a U.S. Army veteran and an insurance agent for the Western Southern Life Insurance Co.

Frank J. Gubitose M.S. ’77, Laflin, Pa., died Feb. 15, 2011. He was a U.S. Navy veteran and worked as an executive and vice president in the food industry for more than 30 years prior to his retirement.

1976

Thomas F. Brennan Jr., Sugarloaf, Pa., died Jan. 21, 2011. He was a U.S. Army veteran and was employed at the White Haven Center for 25 years as well as being a self-employed counselor with a private practice for the past 16 years.

Denise A. Polinchak, Wilkes-Barre Township, died March 8, 2011. She was employed as a data analyst at the Social Security Administration Office in Plains Township, Pa.

1977

Mary Anne Rose Chopyak, Hamlin, Pa., died Dec. 24, 2010. She worked as a registered nurse at the VA Medical Center and then at M. Saleem’s medical practice as nurse and office manager.

1978

Bert Katz, Bernardsville, N.J., died Dec. 22, 2010. He worked as a certified public accountant for 20 years and was a volunteer driver and photographer for several area fire and first aid departments.

1980

Joseph F. Litchman, Harveys Lake, Pa., died Feb. 20, 2011. He was board certified in both family medicine and emergency medicine, which he practiced at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital for nearly 30 years. He was a founder of Linden Medical Group.

1983

J. Frank Clause, Old Forge, Pa., died Jan. 17, 2011. He was a resident nurse for the Clarks Summit State Hospital for over 25 years before his recent retirement. He was also a specialist 4th class in the U.S. Army Reserves.

1988

John R. Baer, Jr., Hunlock Creek, Pa., died Jan. 3, 2011. He worked at the United Methodist Home for Children in Mechanicsburg, Pa., and taught at Northwest Area High School until 2005.

1990

Barbara A. Ross, Sweet Valley, Pa., died Feb. 6, 2011.

2002

Jessica Alferio Clark, Roaring Brook Township, Pa., died March 15, 2011. She taught English at Seton Catholic High School in Pittston, Pa.; Holy Cross High School in Dunmore, Pa.; and South Scranton Intermediate School.

Graduate Students

1977

Frank J. Gubitose M.S. see 1973.

Friends of Wilkes

Stanley Samuel Gutin, Pittston, Pa., died Feb. 28, 2011. A U.S. Navy veteran, Gutin was a professor of English at Wilkes University for 33 years and was awarded emeritus status in 1992. After his retirement he tutored students seeking their general education diploma as well as taught English as a second language.

James H. Lynch, Bloomfield, N.J., died Feb. 3, 2011. He was a U.S. Army Air Corps veteran and a “Flyboy”—a member of the 6th College Training Detachment which was housed at Wilkes University in the 1940s. Following his military service, Lynch worked for the U.S. Postal Service for 43 years.

Richard M. Ross, Dallas, Pa., died Feb. 17, 2011. He was a U.S. Army veteran and worked as a certified financial analyst for the Hanover Bank in New York City. From 1990 to 1993 he served as chairman of the Board of Trustees of Wilkes and, following his retirement, was an adjunct faculty member in the University’s Economics Department.

In Memoriam

Fred R. Demech Jr. '61

Capt. Fred R. Demech Jr. '61 a dedicated Wilkes University alumni volunteer, died on March 11, 2011, and the University lost a loyal friend. A resident of Moosic, Pa., he earned a degree in biology from Wilkes. A volunteer for Wilkes for more than 20 years, he served on the Wilkes University Alumni Association board. He chaired the technology and scholarship committees and served most recently as the board's first vice president.

Demech also was a graduate of the Naval War College and the National War College. Commissioned as an ensign in 1962, he served in the Navy for over 27 years, retiring in 1989. He was a career cryptologist and a qualified surface warfare officer. Demech was commanding officer of the Navy's largest cryptologic base, a 1,000-person overseas facility. This command won the coveted Travis Trophy that identified it as the top



communications site in the Department of Defense during 1984. As a Navy captain and presidential appointee, Demech twice served as the executive director for the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board in the White House. He was recognized for his service with the nation's highest peacetime military decoration, The Defense Distinguished Service Medal. Demech also was awarded the Legion of Merit.

For 19 years, Demech was employed by the TRW and Northrop Grumman corporations. Prior to his retirement in 2008, he managed the company's special work and travel program that provided security, safety and health services for personnel internationally. Demech's community involvement includes chairing a city cable television commission and recreation task force, board membership for a volunteer organization and services as a church elder. He also was the public affairs chairman for the National Cryptologic Museum Foundation. He was a member of American Legion Post 1188 in Minooka, Pa. Demech is survived by his wife of 47 years, Janet; a daughter Lesley D'Andrea '88 and husband, Robert, of Doylestown, Pa.; two grandsons; and a sister.

Friend of Wilkes: Glenn Gambini

Wilkes lost a special member of the University family on Feb. 23, 2011 with the passing of Glenn Gambini. An employee of Wilkes food service for 38 years, he was a friend to thousands of the University's students, faculty and staff.

At a campus memorial service, Paul Adams '77, vice president of student affairs, offered his reflections on Glenn's contributions to campus life. "While Glenn did earn a paycheck fulfilling his responsibilities in the dining hall every day, Glenn didn't work at Wilkes. He "lived" Wilkes. And few have ever "lived" Wilkes in the way that Glenn did," Adams said.

For Glenn, "living" Wilkes included two breakfasts each day—one in Rifkin Café and one in Einstein's Bagels in the University Center on Main. His enthusiasm for Wilkes sports teams was unmatched and Glenn spent many weekend afternoons and weeknights at Ralston Field or at the Marts Center cheering on his beloved Colonels. He counted many athletes among his friends, attending their weddings and staying in touch long after they graduated.

Glenn's friendliness and care is remembered by more than three generations of alumni. Known for his warm smiles, his kind greetings were always marked by a gentle touch on the shoulder or arm. In eulogizing him, Adams urged those who knew him to "Think how often during the span of time that you knew him that he embraced you or patted your arm or shoulder. All of those touches are a part of our experience with Glenn and have become a part of our being. Let us remember those touches and the goodness he passed on to us through them."

In addition to his involvement with the University, Glenn was a member and volunteer for St. Benedict's Church in Parsons, Pa., The Pro-Life Center and Plains Yankee Football. He is survived by his mother, Norma (Vinciarelli) Gambini; niece Claudette June and her husband, Joseph III, Pittston, Pa.; a great-niece and great-nephew and several cousins.



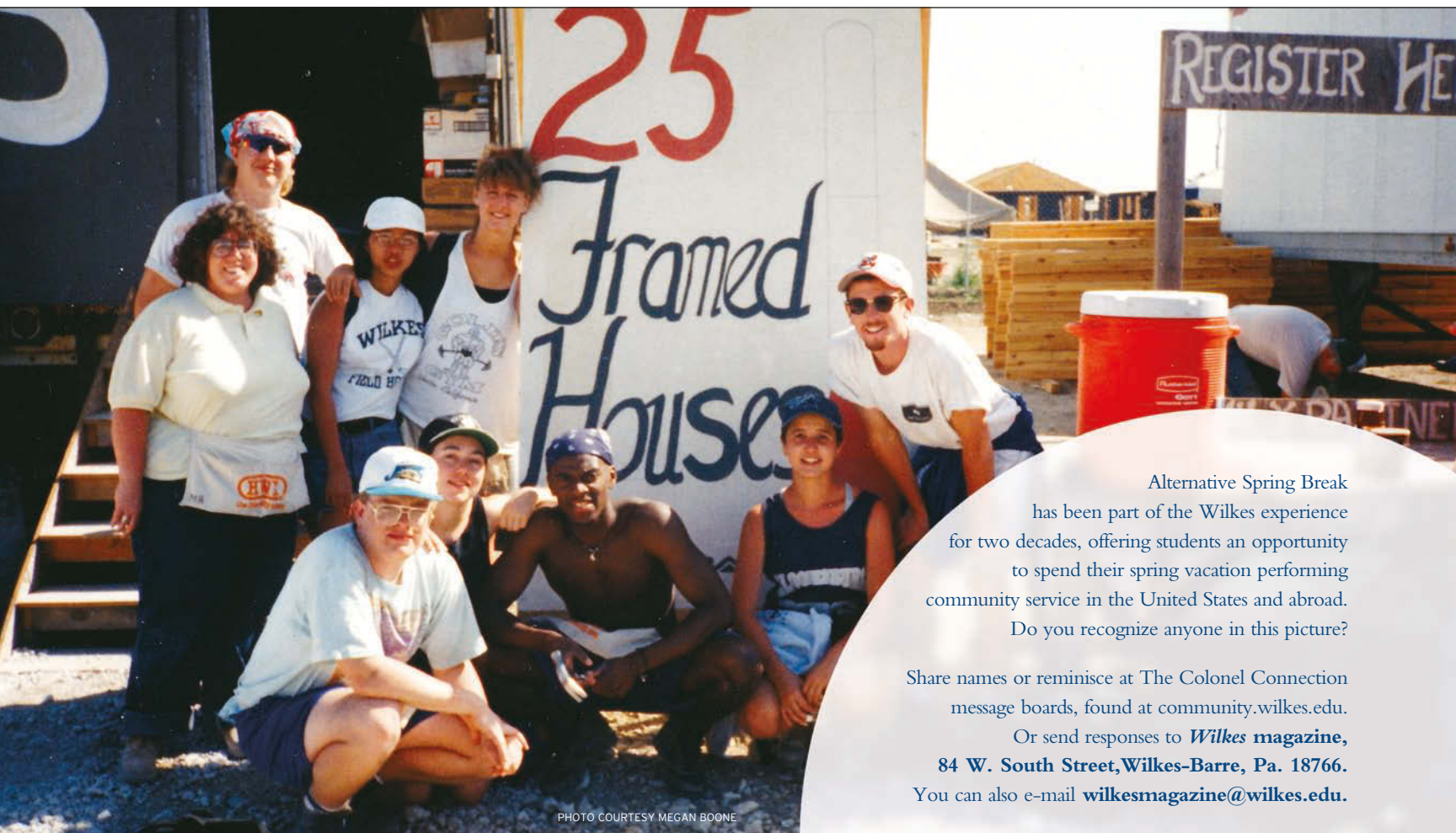


PHOTO COURTESY MEGAN BOONE

Alternative Spring Break has been part of the Wilkes experience for two decades, offering students an opportunity to spend their spring vacation performing community service in the United States and abroad. Do you recognize anyone in this picture?

Share names or reminisce at The Colonel Connection message boards, found at community.wilkes.edu.

Or send responses to *Wilkes* magazine, 84 W. South Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766. You can also e-mail wilkesmagazine@wilkes.edu.



Kit McCarty '75 wrote to identify the "Then" picture in the Spring 2011 *Wilkes* magazine: "The picture is from *The Good Person of Szechwan* by Bertolt Brecht. It was performed in March 1973 and was directed by Al Groh and Joe Salsburg. The players in the picture are (I believe) Matt Hughes and Joe Tomashefski. I was fortunate enough to be cast in the lead as Shen Te/Shui Ta; I was a sophomore at the time, and it was only through the help and encouragement of both Mr. Groh and Mr. Salsburg that I was able to perform the role."



This year's Alternative Spring Break teams included more than 50 students, faculty and staff who worked at a coffee cooperative in Costa Rica, an orphanage in the Dominican Republic, Habitat for Humanity in New Orleans and with the Christian Appalachian Project in Kentucky. Here, Wilkes University students tutor students in a Dominican Republic school

PHOTO BY DR. AMY BRADLEY

calendar of events



June

- 12 Alumni Event, Boston, Mass.
- 28 Alumni Event, Philadelphia, Pa.

July

- 8 Wilkes University Admissions Open House
- 24 Alumni Event, Long Beach Island, N.J.
- 25 HHMI-WEBS Summer Science Camp.
Through Aug. 5

August

- 29 Fall Semester Classes Begin

September

- 17 Wilkes University Admissions Open House
- 23-25 Homecoming Weekend

October

- 6-12 Travel with Wilkes to Germany

November

- 12 Wilkes University Admissions Open House
- 16 Outstanding Leaders Forum, featuring
Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Thomas
Friedman

PHOTO BY EARL AND SEDOR PHOTOGRAPHIC