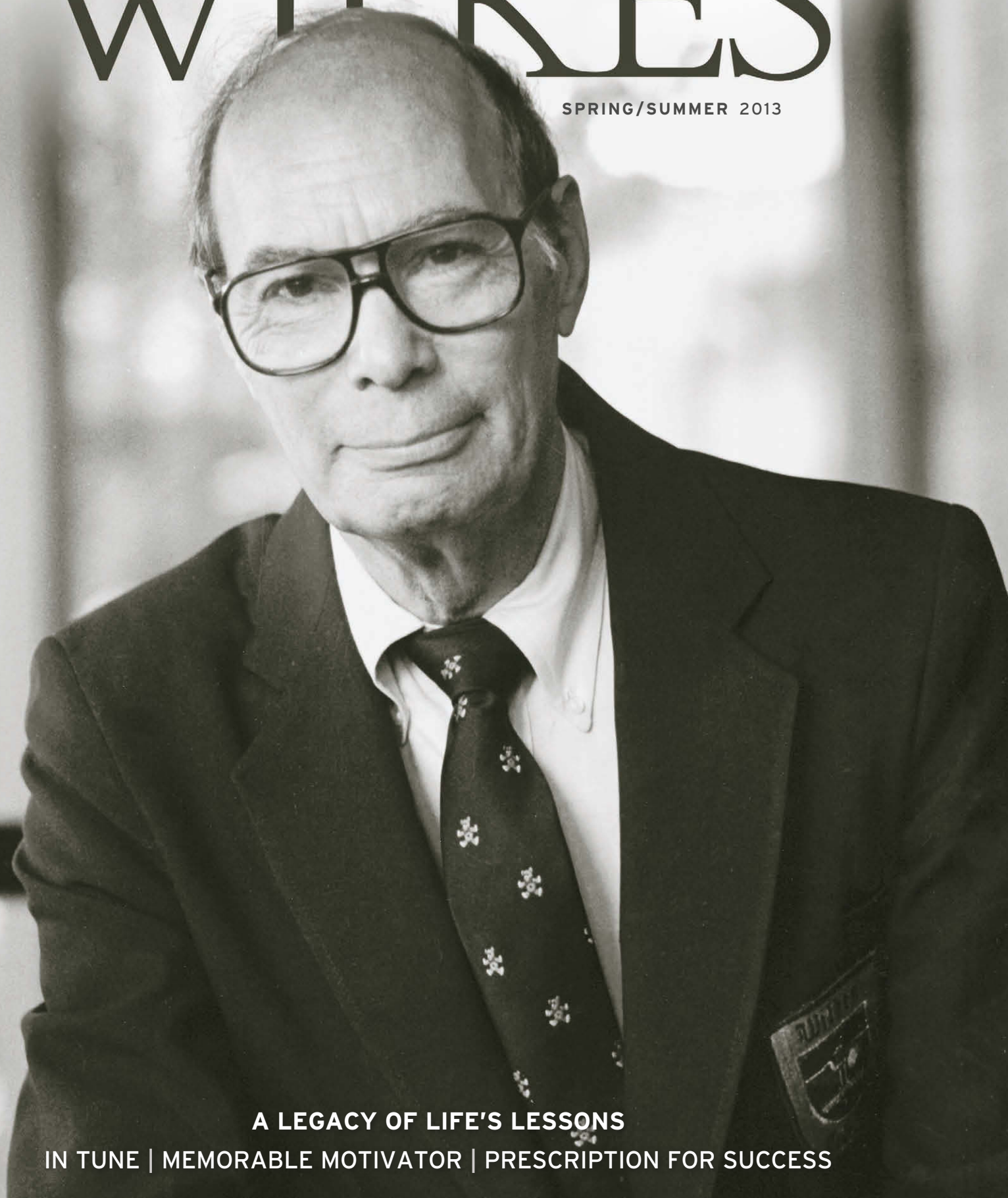


# WILKES

SPRING/SUMMER 2013



**A LEGACY OF LIFE'S LESSONS**

**IN TUNE | MEMORABLE MOTIVATOR | PRESCRIPTION FOR SUCCESS**

# Defining the Wilkes Experience

**A** YEAR AGO, I BECAME WILKES UNIVERSITY'S SIXTH president. I anticipated that it would be one of the most fulfilling years of my career. Reality has exceeded my expectations. I've found Wilkes to be a unique community of alumni, faculty, staff and students. We are warned to be careful about using the word "unique" too freely, since it connotes that something has attributes not found elsewhere. Yet unique is the word I'd use to describe Wilkes as I end my first year as president.

A number of characteristics truly define Wilkes. We are a relatively small institution with a broad program mix, from traditional majors in the liberal arts to professional programs in fields such as engineering, nursing, business and pharmacy. Our size allows students to continue to enjoy their favorite co-curricular activities—such as playing a sport or participating in student government—while pursuing a

demanding major. Students can play football while majoring in pharmacy or play field hockey while studying to be an engineer. It's not unusual for students to participate in their favorite co-curricular activities while majoring in more than one discipline. That college experience is unique.

Students are the heart of the matter here. Quite simply, there's a family feeling here that's hard to find at other institutions. I started this job saying I knew I'd joined a community that was totally dedicated to student success. I end my first year believing that more emphatically than ever. I see it reflected every day, from our continuing commitment to serve first-generation

college students to our ongoing efforts to maintain our beautiful campus. Everyone, from the facilities staff to our faculty, is committed to our students. We can confidently tout our mentoring culture because we know that students will have caring people to guide them during their Wilkes careers—from the upperclassmen who welcome freshmen as part of our award-winning E-mentor Program, to the many faculty and staff members who work with them in and out of the classroom.

I need everyone's help to continue building on all of these great things that are hallmarks of the Wilkes experience. Communication among all of our constituencies has been a priority during my first year—and it will continue to be important throughout my time at Wilkes. To help promote communication and involve everyone in what we're doing at Wilkes, I'm launching my own Twitter account. This will allow me to share what's happening at Wilkes and my plans for the University in a very immediate and dynamic way. I hope you'll consider following me @patrickfleahy on Twitter.com.

I wish you all the very best during the summer of 2013.



President Patrick Leahy chats with alumni Dave Kaschak '71, right, and his wife, Camille, at Homecoming 2012—one of the many events that he enjoyed with the Wilkes community during his first year.

**Dr. Patrick F. Leahy**  
Wilkes University President

## WILKES MAGAZINE

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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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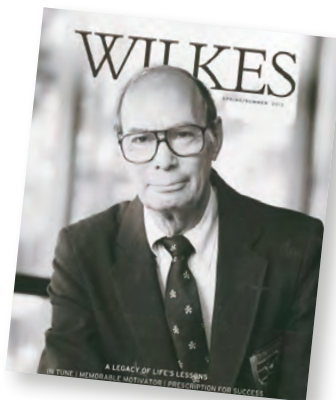
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Alfred S. Groh '41 left a legacy at Wilkes that includes the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts—where this photo of Groh, taken at his retirement, hangs in the lobby.

Have a story idea to share?

Contact us at [wilkesmagazine@wilkes.edu](mailto:wilkesmagazine@wilkes.edu) or *Wilkes* magazine, 84 W. South St., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766.



## Wilkes Earns Place on President's National Service Honor Roll

Wilkes has been honored with a place on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. The honor roll highlights annually the role colleges and universities play in serving their communities and placing more students on a lifelong path of civic engagement by awarding recognition to institutions that achieve meaningful, measurable outcomes in the communities they serve.

In the past three years, the total number of students who participated in community service was 1,368, and these students logged over 19,000 hours. Megan Boone Valkenburg, coordinator of civic engagement, worked with faculty and staff to track the hours students spent in service. Several large projects included the clean up after the 2011 flood in the Wyoming Valley, the veterans oral history project completed by students in freshman-year foundations courses, and general community service from clubs and classes.

A special initiative of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the awards go to colleges and universities that make a profound impact on their communities.

Students, from left, Shawn Carey, Brittany Buddman and Kyle Henry pitch in for clean up at the River Common during a community service day—one of many that earned Wilkes a place on the National Service Honor Roll.

PHOTO BY BRYAN CALABRO

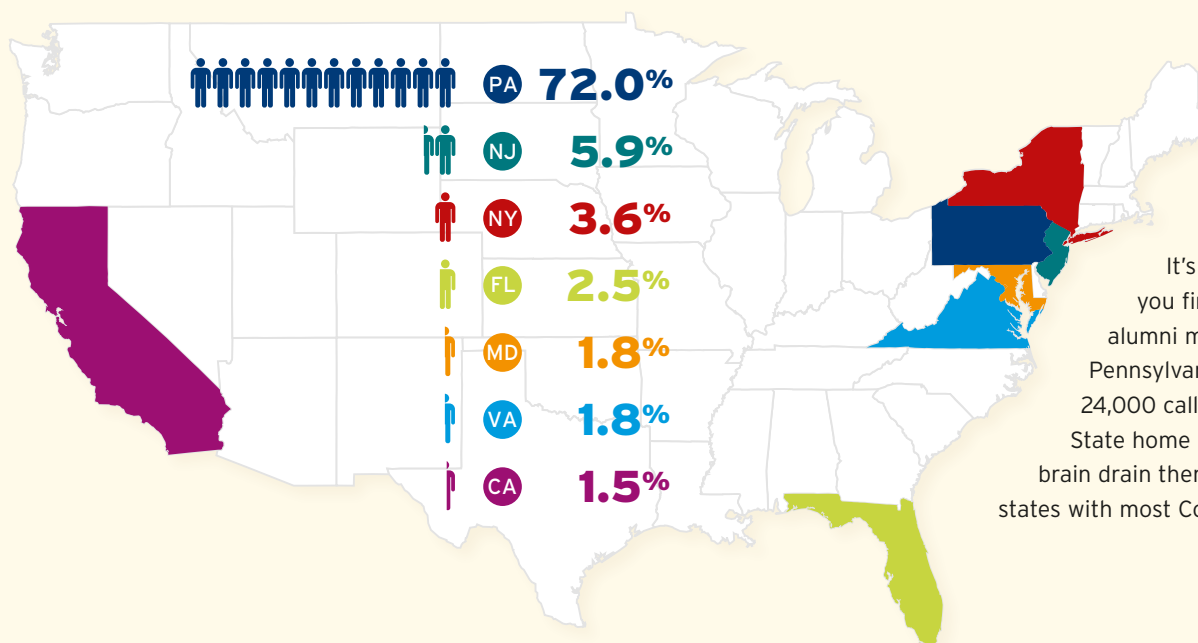


## Pentagon Honors Clinical Work of Nesbitt College of Pharmacy Team

Jennifer Malinowski, associate professor of pharmacy practice, and pharmacy students she supervises at the Wright Center for Primary Care in Scranton, were recognized by the Health Resource Service Administration at the Pentagon. The team was recognized with The Transformation Award from the Patient Safety Pharmacy Collaborative for its ability to integrate clinical pharmacy services within an inter-professional team. They also received The Integrative Medication Management Award for the development of an innovative medication reconciliation process to improve patient safety and outcomes. About 18 Wilkes pharmacy students work at the site with Malinowski each year as part of their clinical requirement.

Malinowski says that the innovative practices introduced by the Wilkes team included using computers for medication reconciliation. The system provides a way to leave an integrated note that can be accessed by all team members. Successful outcomes from the medication management and integrated team included improvements in conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes that were sustained for four months and a year after the procedures were implemented.

### WHERE ARE OUR ALUMNI?



It's no surprise that you find the most Wilkes alumni making their homes in Pennsylvania, with more than 24,000 calling the Keystone State home after graduating. No brain drain there! Here's a look at the states with most Colonels.



## Wilkes Engineering Students Bring Internet to Remote Bangladesh Village

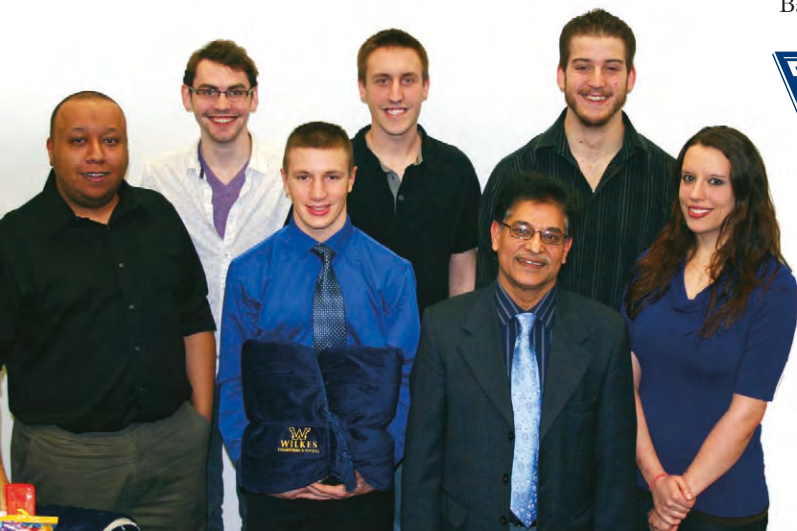
Six Wilkes University students traveled halfway around the world to complete a project to bring Internet access to a school in the underdeveloped village of Gush Kande. The students constructed a solar energy generator to provide electricity to charge iPads and other devices, making Internet access possible for the first time to children in the school.

The team of students was headed by project leader Christa Tutella, a senior electrical engineering student from Wilkes-Barre. Other student team members include mechanical engineering students

Eric Danko of Dallas, Pa., and Dustin Hough of Chambersburg, Pa.; chemical engineering student Suliman Alhojairi of Saudi Arabia; business student Joshua Haag of Bethlehem, Pa.; communication studies student Ryan Wood of Kingston, Pa.; and English major Todd Oravic of Ashley, Pa. They were accompanied by mechanical engineering professor Syed Kalim. Tutella and Alhojairi did not accompany the group to Bangladesh.

Wilkes student engineers are required to complete a hands-on senior project that solves a real-world problem. The Bangladesh project is the senior project for the students, who designed and installed the system. The students also handled the logistics of getting the equipment to the remote village after flying into Dhaka, some three hours away.

Wilkes became involved in the project after a student in its doctor of education program, Ty Frederickson, shared his dream of bringing internet access to Gush Kande. Frederickson is a teacher at American-British Academy, an international school in Muscat, Oman. Wilkes offers its doctoral program in education online to a cohort of teachers at the school. Frederickson has been working with the school in Bangladesh since 2010.



### MORE ON THE WEB

A slide show of photographs taken by communication studies senior Ryan Wood of the Wilkes student team in Bangladesh shows their experience in the village of Gush Kande. To view the pictures, go to [www.wilkes.edu/bangladeshtrip](http://www.wilkes.edu/bangladeshtrip).

Above, students from the Gush Kande Primary School in Bangladesh celebrate the installation of a solar generator that will help to bring the Internet to their school. The project was a senior project for Wilkes student engineers. PHOTO BY RYAN WOOD

Left, students who worked on the senior engineering project in Bangladesh are, front from left, Suliman Alhojairi, Eric Danko, mechanical engineering professor Syed Kalim and Christa Tutella. Second row from left are Ryan Wood, Dustin Hough and Joshua Haag. Not pictured: Todd Oravic. PHOTO BY VICKI MAYK

## President, Senior Administration Return to Weckesser

President Patrick F. Leahy became the sixth Wilkes president to have his office in Weckesser Hall when he moved back into the historic building in April. Leahy and other members of senior administration relocated their offices from the University Center on Main to move closer to the center of campus activity. Leahy's new office, on the first floor in the front of the building, previously was used as a conference room. It faces South Franklin Street with a view of the main part of campus.

A gift from the Davidowitz family helped to underwrite renovations to the building, which included refurbishing floors, painting and other cosmetic improvements.

Weckesser was originally the home of Frederick J. Weckesser, director of the F.W. Woolworth Company. This home, built by Charles H.P. Gilbert of New York—the architect of Frank W. Woolworth's home—was actually the second Wilkes building to carry the Weckesser name. The first was located at 78 West Northampton Street, near Evans Hall.

Top, Paul Adams '77, vice president for student affairs, in his office, which was formerly the library of Frederick Weckesser. It features leaded glass windows, built-in bookcases, a fireplace and even Mr. Weckesser's original humidifier. Bottom, the fireplace in President Patrick Leahy's office is the perfect place for photographs. The president's office faces campus on South Franklin Street. PHOTOS BY LISA REYNOLDS



## E-Mentor Program Receives National Recognition

Wilkes was recognized with a 2013 Excellence Award from Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education in recognition of the University's first-year student E-mentoring program. Wilkes' E-mentoring program received a bronze award in a category recognizing exemplary programs for orientation, transfer or first-year students. Other winners in the category were Towson University and Wake Forest University.

The e-mentor program was developed by Sharon Castano, a coordinator in Wilkes' student development division. It pairs incoming freshmen and transfers with current Wilkes students to help facilitate their transition to the University. The current students contact and mentor the new students via email, meet them at summer orientation and continue to mentor them after they arrive on campus in the fall.

E-mentor Nimi Patel, front row center, with a group of freshmen during orientation in summer 2012. E-mentors from Wilkes' award-winning program provide key guidance for incoming students during orientation and fall semester.

## Colonels Elite Honors Student Athletes for Academic Achievement

Wilkes student athletes who not only excel in their respective sports but also in the classroom are now being recognized as members of the Colonels Elite.

The Colonels Elite recognition program, formed by women's soccer coach John Sumoski in consultation with the Student Athletic Advisory Committee, recognizes student athletes that have a cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 or higher. The athletes must have at least 60 total college credits and be of good moral character as determined by the athletic department. Transfer students must have completed at least 30 credits at Wilkes.

The first Colonels Elite ceremony honored 30 student athletes. They included juniors or seniors from various majors and athletic teams.

President Patrick Leahy and Vice President of Student Affairs Paul Adams made opening remarks and praised the students for their academic and athletic achievements.

"It is noteworthy enough that you have this GPA," says Leahy, "and also noteworthy that you are NCAA athletes. The combination of the two is something great, and makes me proud to be the president of this university."

Adams pointed out that this is history in the making. "You are the first Colonels Elite, and this inaugural ceremony honors your extraordinary talents."

Right, The special trophies designed for the inaugural group of inductees to the Colonels Elite are displayed at the awards luncheon.

Below, The first group of student athletes inducted into the Colonels Elite were honored at a luncheon in the Marts Center. They are pictured, first row, left to right; Kirsten Smith, soccer; Sarah Fillman, cross country; Amanda Holyk, tennis; Ally Kristofco, tennis; Kait Brown, softball; Melanie Nolt, tennis; and Ashley Ream, field hockey; second row, left to right; Scott Skammer, baseball; Michael Daubert, golf; Darren Mensch, golf; Joe Dantas, baseball; Kris Krawchuk, wrestling; Alysha Bixler, softball; Angela Palmerio, basketball; Robert Sperazza, cross country; Nicholas Patricia, soccer; and Tyler Young, soccer; and back row, from left; Bobby Schappell, baseball; William Baker, football; Virginia Edwards, basketball; David Marr, soccer; Michael Shannon, wrestling; Nicholas Dawson, football and wrestling; Jeremy Nolt, golf; Casey Bohan, volleyball; Luke Dombert, soccer; Jason Kieffer, soccer; and Omar Richardson, football. PHOTOS BY THOMAS MARKLEY '11

Sumoski said that this ceremony is important as part of a tradition he hopes to continue at Wilkes. The Colonels Elite symbolizes the hard-working athletes who deserve to be honored for all they put into their work on and off the court. "I wanted to give back to the students and recognize all their hard work."

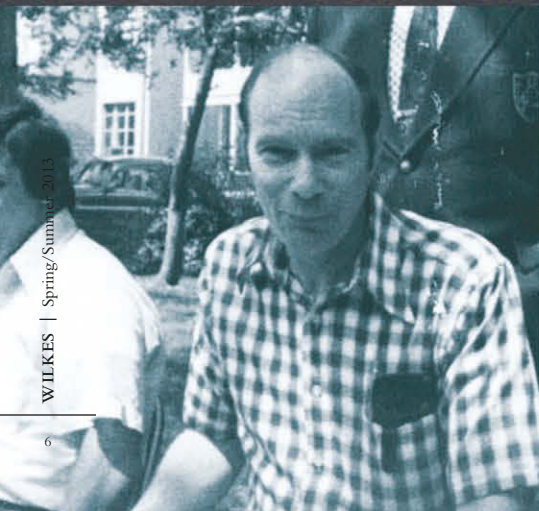
Sumoski says the success of these students lies in their attainment of measurable goals. "I think that they know how to prioritize and more importantly how to keep those priorities straight."

The Colonels Elite selection committee included Sumoski, women's basketball coach Chris Heery, men's basketball coach Jerry Rickrode, women's field hockey coach Mollie Reichard and men's soccer coach Phil Wingert.





Left, A portrait from the Fifties shows a young Alfred Groh. Above, left to right: Al Groh and Jane Lampe-Groh on their 1977 wedding day. A student actress has her costume adjusted while conferring with Groh backstage before a performance. Top, Groh and long-time friend and trustee emerita Esther Davidowitz chat at a Wilkes function. Below, Groh and Elizabeth Slaughter '68 enjoyed a close relationship spanning more than 40 years. Groh reviews rehearsal notes with music department chairman John J. Detroy, Pictures of the Grohs in their Kingston, Pa., home from two different eras. Bottom row, left to right: Groh is caught informally during an outdoor event on campus. Al Groh and Howard Ennis Jr. '55 pause during rehearsals in Chase Theatre. Sally Rosenn and Judge Harold Rosenn with Al Groh at a campus event. Groh and a visiting artist, actor Theodore Bikel, are seen during a meet and greet with students on campus. The Grohs display teddy bears fashioned from heirloom furs from the Lampe family. TEDDY BEAR PHOTO COURTESY JAMES RUCK '78. ALL OTHER PHOTOS COURTESY WILKES UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES







# of Life's Lessons

ALFRED S. GROH '41, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF ENGLISH AND THEATRE ARTS, HAD IMPACT ON MANY AT WILKES AND IN THE COMMUNITY

By Helen Kaiser





**A**GHOST LIGHT STOOD stage left in the Dorothy Dickson Dart Center during the funeral service for Alfred S. Groh '41. Traditionally lit when a theatre is unoccupied, ghost lights help directors, crew members and actors find their way on stage.

It was a singularly appropriate tribute among many given during the February 2013 service for Groh, associate professor emeritus of English and theatre arts. Like the ghost light, Groh helped generations of Wilkes students find their way through the lessons he taught in theatre.

The performance stage may have been Groh's classroom, but his lessons transcended to real life. His exemplary life—filled with a passion for his craft, devotion to duty and love for his family, friends and students—inspired many. His influence extended into the community surrounding Wilkes. As founder of Fine Arts Fiesta, he left a lasting legacy in the Wilkes-Barre arts community.

After his death at 92, alumni recalled the man who influenced their lives and remained their life-long mentor. Colleagues remembered Groh for the role he played in molding the Wilkes of today. Groh's personality was molded by parents who endured the Great Depression, by his experiences attending Wilkes and as an Air Force bomber during World War II.

Shaped by those experiences, he later returned to Wilkes as one of the new four-year college's founding faculty members. Groh completed his education at Syracuse and Columbia universities, and he wanted to use his love for the arts to provide students with opportunities to better themselves.

That may have been one of his greatest gifts: the ability to instill in others the desire not only to excel, but to go beyond their expectations, says Groh's niece, Alison Miller Kovalchik '79. For the professor, it wasn't just a matter of speaking clearly, projecting a voice, embracing the personality of a literary character; it was a matter of challenging students to do their absolute best.

"It wasn't always easy to work with him," reflects Liz Slaughter '68, a member of Wilkes' board of trustees who counted herself as a close friend from the day they met until the day he died. "But we knew what his motivation was, and we tried to meet that expectation. He was such a compelling force; even if you physically left the campus you stayed close." Groh, she recalls, wanted to "liberate the creative spirit" in us.

Because Groh was so demanding, Kovalchik didn't want her fellow students to know she was his niece; she worried it would spoil her chances of making friends. Kovalchik says she always preferred to remain behind the scenes. For one production, however, Groh needed two fiddlers to play "Turkey in the Straw" in a square dance scene. He chose her and another youth to play the song.

"I pleaded with Al to choose someone else, but to no avail," she says. "I had to overcome my fear and do as Al commanded. The scene is ready to begin; we are poised to play, and the other violinist freezes. Now what? Was I capable of even playing this? Al's voice resonated in my head: 'Just do it.' So I did. And then the other player jumped in. Once again Al achieved what he expected from each of us and showed us what we were capable of doing."

Those who knew him say that conquering his own fears during World War II was a life-altering experience for Groh. Former Wilkes President Francis J. Michelini shared a special friendship with Groh for nearly 50 years.

"Our best times were the visits after I retired and came back to see my dentist. Al and I would get corned beef sandwiches at Goldstein's Deli and a bottle of Gibbons or Stegmaier beer and sit on the bleachers at Ralston Field and just talk . . . those conversations helped me understand what made Al such an unusual teacher and mentor."

Sometimes the two kindred souls spoke about their wartime experiences. Groh had been assigned to B-17 bombing missions out of Foggia, Italy, to destroy oil refineries in Ploesti, Romania, that were providing German fuel supplies, Michelini says.

"These were very heavily defended targets, and Al's assignment in his plane was belly turret gunner. An unbelievably scary place to be: locked in place before takeoff and alone in freezing, oxygen-requiring space for eight-hour missions . . . After five missions Al was losing it and was taken off the active-duty roster. He was devastated because he was letting his crew down, and he willed himself to function and returned to his crew, completing 60 missions.

"He told me that he found new depths in himself that he had never envisioned, and that in teaching his goal was always to make students look deeper into the roles they were playing, the teamwork that supported them and the knowledge of self that the arts helped them achieve—to participate and never be afraid."

Opposite page, from left to right: Al Groh delivers remarks at a University event. The director demonstrates how it should be done for one of his students. Trustee emerita Esther Davidowitz and Joel Fischman '73 talk with Groh at an event. A scene from an April 1977 production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

Bottom, from left: A scene from a 1971 production of *Lysistrata*, one of many plays that Groh directed. A sampling of programs from Groh's many productions at Wilkes. The sisters in *Fiddler on the Roof* prepare to sing about their perfect match in Groh's 1974 production of the musical.

PHOTOS COURTESY WILKES UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

As a youngster, Groh's nephew Christopher Miller '83 never understood why his uncle was so intense.

Later, he realized that Groh was "kind of reborn" after having been tested in World War II.

"I think he was touched by this spirit to make his career the arts and to help his community when he came back," says Miller, who is a marketing and communications consultant for non-profit organizations. "From him I learned to express myself, to communicate well, to cultivate good relationships that would lift me up in life—and to deliver as best as I could whatever would contribute to the community."

Groh's lessons were not just about theatre arts and expression, but about life itself. He was more than a mentor; his students became beloved friends. Occasionally they would return to reprise their original roles or otherwise take part in special events at Wilkes.

"There are so many examples of the people who achieved the kind of excellence my uncle cultivated in them. They went on to do so much in life and in the community," Miller says, citing as examples Nancy Leland Frey '68 and her late husband David '68, who assisted in forming the Peace and Justice Center in the Wyoming Valley.

"Mr. Groh was a person who only looked for the best in all of humanity," reflects Slaughter, who is a psychologist. "It rubbed off on all of us. He was there to help, to guide, to give assistance. That

insistence on a faith in humanity—as a theatre group it drew us together."

Kit McCarty '75, a registered investment advisor, credits her public speaking skills and "enormous amount of presence" to Al Groh. He coached her as a sophomore at Wilkes in Bertolt Brecht's "The Good Woman of Setzuan." McCarty performed challenging roles as the "good" Shen Te and her alter ego Shui Ta—a cousin invented to perform malevolent deeds. Forty years later, she cherishes a congratulatory note from Groh: "You made this theatre never see Shui Ta—always Shen Te. Our deepest thanks for always being the good woman."

McCarty was not the only Wilkes student who later used her theatre experience in her career. Wilkes trustee emerita Esther Davidowitz recalls, "John Chwalek, who handled career placement for Wilkes at that time, would make sure that their theatre experience was positioned as skills they could use in their careers." Those skills, Davidowitz says, included clear diction and a professional posture.

Like many others, Bruce Phair '73's relationship with Groh began as a student and continued in his professional life. As managing/technical director of the Darte Center, he worked closely with Groh from 1980 to 1987.

"Al never lost sight of the fact that you should always take the other person's feelings into consideration, even if you

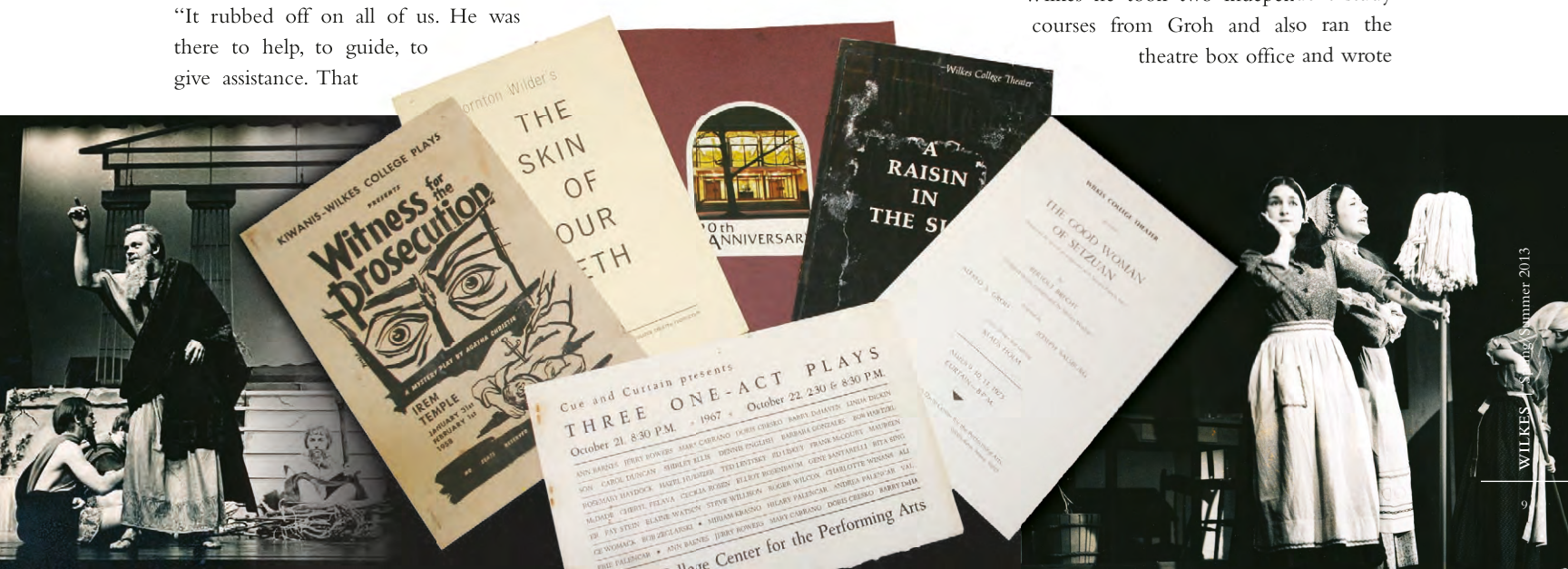
“  
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– Groh's nephew,  
Christopher Miller '83

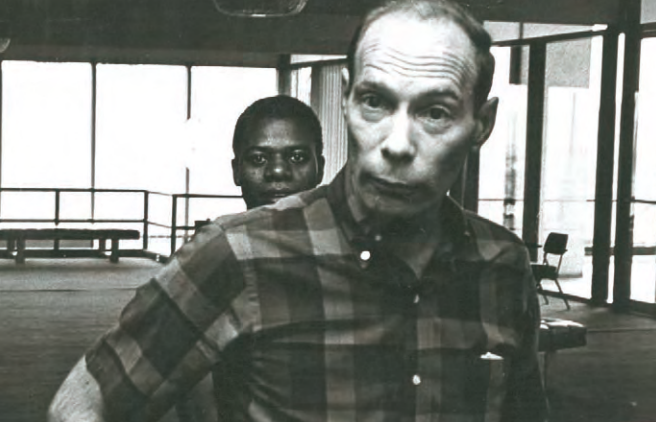
were critiquing," he says. "He understood how you felt and reacted . . . and would nudge you along in a nice way. I try to make that management style part of my efforts with students today."

Phair described his first encounter with Groh as a disconcerting surprise. As a Wilkes undergraduate, Phair was constructing the annual homecoming display—which featured 20-to-30-foot high 'Colonels' with moving arms. The committee needed some spare parts, and the musical performance major knew there was a lumber scrap pile in the theatre storage area.

"So we snuck over there to 'borrow' a few pieces, expecting to enter a darkened area at night after school hours. Instead, Al confronted us and admonished us for not following proper procedures. But, in the end, he empathized with our needs."

Another alumnus who passed along lessons from Groh to his own students is James Ruck '78, retired choral music director of Northvale New Jersey Public Schools. As a music education major at Wilkes he took two independent study courses from Groh and also ran the theatre box office and wrote





Groh mugs for the camera in the lobby of the Darte Center while the late Edwin Manda '69, a student from Zambia, looks over his shoulder. Groh on his wedding day to Jane Lampe in their home in Kingston, Pa.

publicity materials. Groh instilled a strong work ethic in his students, he says.

"We knew to always show up, never be late," Ruck says. "When Al would come galloping into the theatre at 100 miles an hour, with his papers flying, we knew it was work time. I can remember him flying up the steps in the back of the theatre to check how loud you were, view the sight lines and see how the costumes looked."

A Wilkes-Barre native, Ruck was able to maintain close contact with his mentor on frequent visits home. Their families shared Thanksgiving dinners and other occasions. Groh also attended many of Ruck's student performances in New Jersey and watched videos of them, as well.

"He loved to hear the stories about my work," he says. "Even during my last conversation with him, when I was leaving to work (with high school students) on 'Legally Blonde' he asked, 'How's the orchestra? How are rehearsals coming?'"

As founder of the theatre arts program at Wilkes, Groh staged hundreds of productions there over four decades; but his reach extended off-campus, as well. Groh co-founded the annual celebration of the arts in the Wyoming Valley now known as the Fine Arts Fiesta. Now in its 58th year, the event features four days of music, theatre, strolling performers, juried art shows and ethnic specialties in Wilkes-Barre's Public Square. Its creation stemmed from Groh's long-held desire to make the arts available to people in all walks of life—not just to those who could afford them, according to his nephew Miller.

David Kerr '81, immediate past president of the Fine Arts Fiesta, joined its board of directors at Groh's invitation in 1986.

"Everyone worked closely on the project, and as founding adviser, Al was always there to remind us of our mission and to provide guidance," Kerr says. "He was devoted to raising up the community through the arts."

He also served as the event's poet laureate, inspired by his longtime passion for penning creative idea threads. He published a series of poems for children and was known for conceiving pieces for special occasions—such as anniversaries of the dedication of the Darte Center—and for special people.

Davidowitz recalls other community support championed by Groh, citing the shows he staged to benefit the wheelchair fund of the Wilkes-Barre Kiwanis Club. "Everyone looked forward to those shows, including the students who performed in them," she says.

Groh married Jane Lampe, Wilkes' dean of students emeritus, in 1977. (See story on page 11) To her, he once wrote affectionately:

*A man who loves a woman  
Longs to tell her so  
For a woman, when she's loved,  
It's what she wants to know  
And my beloved Jane Kathleen  
Is adored by Alfred Groh.*

Groh wrote the poem to the right regarding his cherished theatre, the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center. Fittingly, the words closed his memorial service in the building where his legacy continues.

## Portrait of a Theatre

By Alfred S. Groh

This is the house  
Where Shakespeare and Chekhov play  
And when they're in town  
Where Arthur Miller and Philip Barry stay  
And John Keats and Robert Edmond Jones  
Define tomorrow's future every day  
Where tomorrow's future is already on its way.

Williams, Wilder, Ionesco,  
Albee, Beckett, Giraudoux, Shaw,  
Gershwin, Menotti, Sondheim—  
On the boards they're a box office draw,  
And actor, director, and crew,  
No longer separate forces,  
Discover the creative spirit  
In imaginative and unimagined sources.

I have lived in this house  
With friends such as these  
Genuine, truthful,  
Always hard-to-please,  
I have lived in this house  
Where the stage is set  
For wondrous things to happen  
When all commitments are met  
And the curtain rises and falls  
On scenes I will not forget.

What begins as a thought  
On the printed page  
Becomes a script  
For a life on the stage  
That becomes a show  
Performed or read  
And begins again  
In someone's head.

On the stage  
A character never dies  
And comes to life again and again  
Before an audience's eyes.....  
A majestic creation  
The arts immortalize.

This is the house  
Where poets and artists stay  
And actors, musicians, and dancers  
Define tomorrow's future today  
And where tomorrow's future is  
already on its way.

This is the house  
When I am gone  
Images of magnificence  
Build upon.



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# Al Groh and Jane Lampe-Groh

## Devoted to Wilkes and Each Other

By Vicki Mayk

His friends and family thought Al Groh was a confirmed bachelor. Jane Lampe was the woman who changed that. Groh started dating the new dean of women not long after she came to Wilkes in 1969, recruited by its first president, Eugene Farley.

They had things in common, including a love of the theatre. One of Lampe-Groh's master's degrees was in speech. So it was appropriate that they went to see a show on their first date.

"We went to the Pocono Playhouse to see 'The Most Happy Fella,' " Lampe-Groh recalls.

Although she isn't sure it was love at first sight, romance quickly blossomed. "When it happened and we were together, we knew it was the right person," Lampe-Groh says.

Married in 1977 in the Kingston home they shared until Groh's death in February, their relationship was one that came to be admired by many who knew them at the University and in the surrounding community.

"You don't find many couples so utterly content with each other," says Chris Miller '83, Groh's nephew. His sister, Alison Miller Kovalchik '79 adds, "It was a beautiful love story," and

recalls the affectionate nicknames they had for one another. In private, they became "Alfred Bear" and "Pooh Bear."

Lampe-Groh agrees that tolerance and acceptance of their differences was central to their relationship. Groh was Jewish and his wife is a practicing Catholic. In a lighthearted reference to their religious diversity, Lampe-Groh fashioned a needlepoint proclaiming, "Jewish Men Make the Best Husbands." It still hangs in their home. During more than 35 years of marriage, they attended each other's religious services and observed the holidays of each tradition. In their household, they lit a menorah for Hanukkah and also decorated a Christmas tree. When Groh's elderly mother, Ethel, moved in with them, she often accompanied Lampe-Groh to church. After her death at 102, Lampe-Groh continued the tradition of making homemade applesauce for an observance at her mother-in-law's temple.

Not all differences were overcome. Lampe-Groh never shared her husband's passion for all kinds of food. "Jane is content with peanut butter and jelly and Oreos. Al loved to eat," Kovalchik laughs. Lampe-Groh also drove more slowly. "Al could be across the Market Street Bridge and at campus in three minutes."

Individually each will be remembered for their contributions to Wilkes. Together they'll be recalled as a couple devoted to one another for more than 30 years. In a 2011 interview in the magazine *The Independent*, Al Groh was quoted as saying, "My most priceless memory of my time at Wilkes is Jane Lampe-Groh."

James Ruck '78, Groh's former student and a close friend, recalls that on the day of Groh's funeral his wife sat backstage by her husband's flag-draped casket for an hour before the service. "That's where she always was," Ruck says. "By his side."

Jane Lampe-Groh and Al Groh '41, pictured in their home, enjoyed more than three decades as a married couple.  
PHOTO BY MARK GOLASZEWSKI





# IN TUNE

JIMMY HARNEN '85 FINDS  
SUCCESS AS NASHVILLE  
RECORDING EXECUTIVE

By Bill Thomas '13



**J**IMMY HARNEN '85 WAS ALWAYS MEANT for music. He just didn't know it.

"I was involved in it, but I don't think I ever considered it as a profession," says Harnen, who majored in psychology at Wilkes.

"I remember when I was a child and my mom used to take me to Wilkes-Barre on the bus. The route we took didn't have a lot of people on it for the first few miles, and the interior of the bus had this way of reverberating sound. I loved the way my voice sounded in there. So I was 3 or 4 years old and I would sing on the bus and my mother would let me. If you think about it now, that must've been awkward for her, but she never shushed me. I wonder if she had, would I have taken a different path?"

The path Harnen has followed has been a long one, taking him from his hometown of Plymouth, Pa., to Nashville, Tenn., where he is executive vice president of Big Machine Label Group. The company comprises Big Machine Records, home of such artists as Taylor Swift, Rascal Flatts and Tim McGraw; subsidiary imprint The Valory Music Co., with artists like Reba, Brantley Gilbert and The Mavericks; and Big Machine/Republic Records' joint venture, Republic Nashville, which records artists The Band Perry, Eli Young Band, Florida Georgia Line and Cassadee Pope. Harnen also serves as president of Republic Nashville.

Despite all that country music street cred, Harnen admits he didn't grow up a fan of the genre. Over time, however, the boundaries of both country music and his own tastes have blurred into one another.

"When I was growing up, I was a big pop and rock and metal guy. My parents listened to Kenny Rogers, though, and stuff like that, and, oddly enough, my mom used to always tell me I should get involved with country music. I never did, but then I moved [to Nashville]," Harnen says.

"When I first got here, country was a little different than what it is now. If you were to tell me that in a few short years I would be working on a Darius Rucker country record, or that Sheryl Crow would be playing country, or that Jessica Simpson would be trying to make a country record, I never would've believed it."

Time, of course, has a way of changing things. And just as the music industry has evolved, so too has Harnen's place within it.

While at Wilkes, Harnen played in a cover band called Krysis ("Of course, we had to spell it differently because if we'd spelled it the normal way, it wouldn't

have been cool," he jokes), but he quickly lost interest in playing other people's music. That led to the creation of pop-rock outfit Synch, which would eventually become known as "Jimmy Harnen with Synch" after the breakout success of the single "Where Are You Now," which climbed to Number 10 on the Billboard Hot 100 and Number 3 on the Adult Contemporary Chart in 1989.

Harnen later performed as a solo artist, recording with future "American Idol" judge Randy Jackson, Toto guitarist Steve Lukather and REO Speedwagon frontman Kevin Cronin. Always first and foremost a music fan at heart, that experience is especially cherished by Harnen.

"When I was a kid, Kevin Cronin was one of my idols. I grew up listening to his music. I remember fighting to get tickets to see his show at the Spectrum. Today, he's one of my friends. It's amazing."

Gradually, Harnen transitioned to the executive side of the industry, something he never really considered, though it was in the back of his mind "I've always dreamed of running my own record label," he says. That psychology degree hasn't just been collecting dust, however. While psychology and music may not seem compatible at first glance, as has been the case with so many things in musician-turned-executive/rocker-turned-cowboy Harnen's life, he's been able to use lessons from his past in his current job.

"I've been the artist who was signed. I've been the artist who was dropped. I've been the artist who was starving. I've been the artist who was successful. So what I try to bring to this side of the business is all of those emotions and experiences the artists go through on the other side. I try to be mindful of those emotions when I'm dealing with an artist," Harnen explains.

"There was so much I learned when I was at Wilkes getting that degree that I still use today. Life is a contact sport and it's all about how you interact with other human beings."

“There was so much I LEARNED AT WILKES getting that degree that I still use today.”

Opposite page left: Jimmy Harnen '85 relaxes in the Nashville headquarters of Big Machine Label Group, where he is executive vice president, and Republic Nashville, where he serves as president.

PHOTO COURTESY BIG MACHINE LABEL GROUP

Opposite from top: Country music recording artists with whom Harnen has worked include The Band Perry, PHOTO BY DAVID MCLISTER; Florida Georgia Line, PHOTO BY ADAM TAYLOR; Eli Young Band, PHOTO BY JEREMY COWART; Brantley Gilbert, PHOTO BY JUSTIN NOLAN KEY; and Cassadee Pope, PHOTO BY MACPHERSON

**Jimmy Harnen, Nashville, Tenn.**

**B.A., Psychology, Wilkes, 1985**

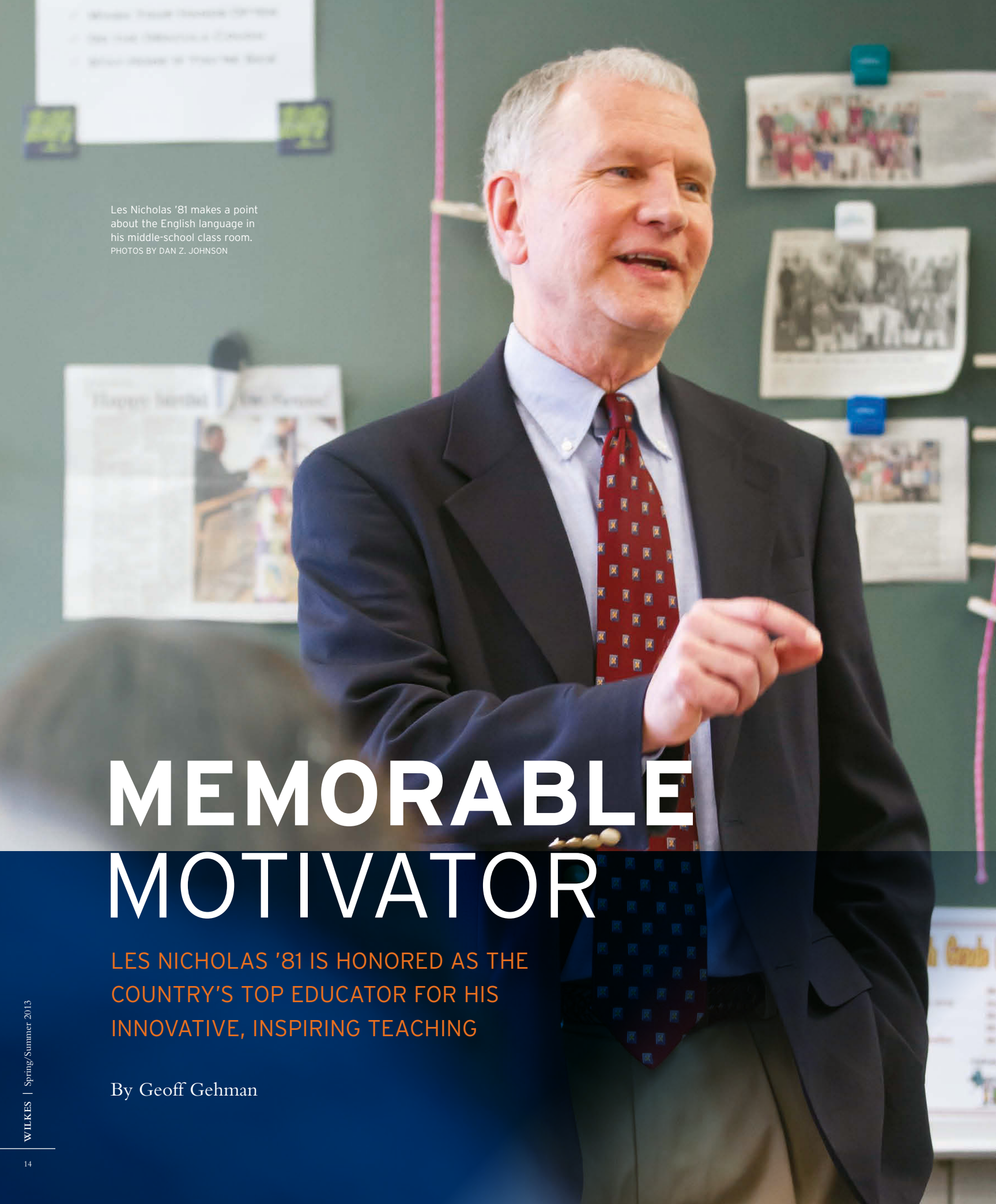
**Career:** Executive vice president of Big Machine Label Group and president of Republic Nashville

**Notable:** Harnen leads music recording companies whose rosters include Tim McGraw, Reba, The Band Perry and "The Voice" Season 3 winner Cassadee Pope

**Favorite Wilkes memory:** Gathering with friends around a TV in the Student Union Building to watch then-new music network MTV



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A photograph of Les Nicholas '81, a middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing a dark blue suit, a light blue shirt, and a red patterned tie. He is standing in a classroom, gesturing with his right hand as if speaking. The background is a green chalkboard with several papers and photos pinned to it. The papers include a list of items, a newspaper clipping with the headline "Happy Birthday", and a group photo.

Les Nicholas '81 makes a point about the English language in his middle-school class room.  
PHOTOS BY DAN Z. JOHNSON

# MEMORABLE MOTIVATOR

LES NICHOLAS '81 IS HONORED AS THE COUNTRY'S TOP EDUCATOR FOR HIS INNOVATIVE, INSPIRING TEACHING

By Geoff Gehman



**L**ES NICHOLAS '81 WATCHES HIS SEVENTH-grade language-arts students hold a funeral for words he thinks deserve to be dead. First they bury the foul phrase in a cemetery of foul phrases in a classroom corner. Then they form a conga line of happy grief. The service ends with a eulogy from Nicholas, who promises that “a lot” will be reborn as something better, maybe even “a great deal.”

The Word Funeral is one of many ways that Nicholas makes learning memorably meaningful at Wyoming Valley West Middle School in Kingston, Pa., his hometown. It's one of many reasons that he received a major award in February from the National Education Association Foundation. The \$25,000 prize honoring him as the country's top educator is one of several awards for an inspiring and innovative educator nicknamed “Mr. Nick.”

An afternoon in Mr. Nick's classroom is a clinic in motivation, led by a canny coach. Nicholas demonstrates the tricky difference between “imply” and “infer” by reading dialogue from “The Big Bang Theory,” the hit TV show that celebrates the sexiness of braininess. He commands his students' attention with everything from corny jokes to funny chides (“Thank you, Captain Obvious”). He prepares them for the next day's assignment, a short report on the importance of their birth names, by reading his own short report on his birth name, Leslie.

A fourth-generation educator, Nicholas jokes that he knew he wanted to teach “in the womb.” As a youngster he eavesdropped as his grandmother, a teacher, and his father, a high-school principal, discussed the ups and downs of education during holiday dinners. As he collated copies of his dad's student worksheets, he imagined how cool it would be to improve student skills and lives.

Two Wilkes teachers helped Nicholas sharpen his teaching tools. He learned about organizing and drilling in coaching classes with John Reese, the University's wrestling coach for 42 years. English professor Olivia Ayres Frey toughened him by videotaping him teaching recently completed lesson plans. “She didn't tell us what we saw; she told us to open our eyes,” he says. “She made it real.”

Nicholas made it real for journalism students from 1981 to 2008 at his alma mater, Wyoming Valley West High School. He taught pupils to write concisely and incisively, reminding them to “Write like a Spartan,” a reference to the school's mascot. He urged them to challenge injustice, even if it meant challenging their principal. Whether advising the school newspaper or the TV/radio studios he helped build, he made a trade practical and ethical, necessary and noble.

This devotion to excellence earned Nicholas three prestigious prizes: the Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year Award (2004), the First Freedom Award (2008) and 2009 induction into the National Teachers Hall of Fame. His favorite tributes come from protégés who worked for *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times* and other influential publications.

“If kids know they're not going to be ridiculed, they'll keep getting back to you. The problem is, we don't let kids fail. FAILURE IS FRUITFUL.”

— Les Nicholas

**Les Nicholas, Kingston, Pa.**

**B.A., English, German and education, Wilkes, 1981**

**Notable:** One of five winners of the 2013 Horace Mann Award for Teaching Excellence and the winner of National Education Association Award for Teaching Excellence, presented by the country's largest teachers' union.

**Favorite Wilkes places:** The Commons and Emerson's bar

**Favorite Wilkes memory:** A kinesthetic teacher, Nicholas remembers an unusually kinesthetic demonstration of the word “flung” by the late Philip Rizzo, professor of literature and linguistics. First Rizzo flung his jacket into a classroom corner. Then he flung himself out a first-floor window.





Above, Nicholas responds to a student's questions. Below, the award-winning teacher listens to a student's answer. Opposite, Nicholas relaxes during hall duty at Wyoming Valley West Middle School.



“  
I know it sounds  
corny, but that sparkle  
of recognition IS  
AN INCREDIBLE  
RUSH.”

“Write like a Spartan” still guides Nina Elias, an assistant editor for the Web site of *Prevention* magazine. For her, the mantra means “Out-write all your competition” and “Don’t let me down.” Exceeding Nicholas’ exceedingly high standards, she admits, “is the coolest feeling in the world.”

Five years ago Nicholas began teaching language arts at Wyoming Valley West Middle School, in the building where he attended high school. He launched livelier exercises to reach students with shorter attention spans and steeper learning curves. One of the liveliest is the Sprinkler Dance.

“You’re hot today,” Nicholas will tell a student burning with right answers. Another right answer and he’ll say, “You’re on fire.” That’s the cue for other students to spring from their desks and juke around, waving their arms to cool their peer’s intellectual flames.

Nicholas won’t embarrass a student who’s not hot. He tries to give a youngster who answers incorrectly another chance to respond correctly during the same period. “If kids know they’re not going to be ridiculed, they’ll keep getting back to you,” says Nicholas, who is married with a 23-year-old son. “The problem is, we don’t let kids fail. Failure is fruitful.”

Like any teacher, Nicholas has days more fruitless than fruitful. He’s bothered most by spoiled potential. Rotting talent makes him quote from a Shakespeare sonnet: “Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.”

Nicholas’ faith returns whenever a student gets jazzed by knowledge. “I know it sounds corny,” he says, “but that sparkle of recognition is an incredible rush.”

Nicholas looks forward to holding funerals for words that don’t sparkle. He can’t wait to bury a foul phrase that’s commonly used, like, every third, like, word. He thinks it’s high time to give the old R.I.P. to “She’s LIKE, ‘You’re a jerk!’ ”



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This devotion to excellence earned Nicholas three prestigious prizes: the PENNSYLVANIA TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD (2004), THE FIRST FREEDOM AWARD (2008) AND 2009 INDUCTION INTO THE NATIONAL TEACHERS HALL OF FAME. His favorite tributes come from protégés who worked for *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times* and other influential publications.

# PRESCRIPTION for Success

By Vicki Mayk

## DENISE CESARE '77 HEADS HEALTH INSURANCE GIANT BLUE CROSS OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

**F**ROSTED GLASS DOORS ON THE NINTH floor of Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania's Wilkes-Barre headquarters mark the entrance to the executive suite. For Denise Schaal Cesare '77, those doors could symbolize the glass ceiling she shattered to become the company's first female chief executive officer 14 years ago.

For Cesare, a Wilkes-Barre native, hard work led to her job as president and CEO. She exhibited a strong work ethic at Wilkes, where she became the first in her family to attend college. Her father, a baker and restaurant manager, and her mother, a bookkeeper and office manager, wanted their four children to attend college.

"I always excelled at academics in high school, but my family knew nothing about college or how to research colleges," she recalls. "It was my cousin Rick (Hatcher '72), who had attended Wilkes as an accounting major, who recommended both Wilkes and their outstanding accounting program to me. Knowing there were accounting jobs available, it was an easy choice to make."

She has fond memories of her Wilkes experience. "It was clear my professors truly wanted to impart what they knew to their students. They truly exhibited a genuine caring attitude—something I believe my daughter Gabby experiences today as a Wilkes student," Cesare says, referring to her younger daughter, a nursing major at the University. Her older daughter, Ashley, has a master's degree in counseling and plans to pursue a doctorate in psychology. Cesare's husband, Louis, also an accountant, is a majority shareholder in United One Resources Inc., a real estate risk-management firm.

After graduation, Cesare entered public accounting, earning her certified public accounting license in 1979. After four years in public accounting, with both a regional firm and one of the "Big 8," Cesare returned home to help her parents. She reluctantly took a job with Blue Cross as a senior auditor.

"Having been in public accounting, I had developed an 'up or out' philosophy for my career. When I started in internal audit, I thought I wouldn't want to be there more than five years. However, after understanding the positive impact that Blue Cross has on its members and its communities, I developed a passion for

our business and told myself that 'up' must mean that I would one day be president."

Her work ethic soon earned her recognition from senior management, but 'up' didn't appear to be happening soon enough. She left Blue Cross briefly to work as director of internal auditing for Allied Services, but jumped at the opportunity to return to Blue Cross in 1987 to become chief operating officer for its new health maintenance organization subsidiary. "What I did within the HMO formed the basis for my deepest understanding and love of the health-care industry."

When Cesare became CEO in 2001, she became one of a very few female heads of major companies in the region. "A vast majority of this community's business leaders were, and continue to be, men," she concedes. She was reminded that she's still part of a minority when she took her executive team out to dinner for the first time. After dining together in a private club, she jokes that the women could not join their male co-workers as they adjourned to the bar downstairs.

Cesare's work has given her influence and understanding of an industry that impacts everyone in America. As CEO, she has worked to improve the system, constantly trying to bridge the gap between payers and providers. Hallmarks of Cesare's tenure include developing new subsidiaries focusing on health, creating the Blue Ribbon Foundation of Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania that funds community health projects, and serving as a founding board member of The Commonwealth Medical College.

Her role puts her in an important position during a time of tremendous change within the health-care industry. Always critical of the fragmented nature of the industry, in which multiple players, from physicians and hospitals to pharmaceutical

“It was clear my professors truly wanted to impart what they knew to their students.”

Denise Schaal Cesare '77 leads Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania from her office in downtown Wilkes-Barre. PHOTO BY EARL AND SEDOR PHOTOGRAPHIC

companies and insurers, play a role, Cesare defends the concept of managed care. "Having a primary-care physician as your health-care advisor just makes sense; the primary-care physician should be the advocate for the patient," she says.

Cesare sees the role of an insurer such as Blue Cross as being "the subscriber's advocate." She's critical of the lack of coordination and collaboration in health care and of a system in which physicians, hospitals and other providers get paid primarily when patients have more tests and procedures. Advances in technology also contribute to skyrocketing costs because many times expensive equipment can be used more frequently than necessary in order to give the companies developing it a return on investments. A shift to a system focusing on patient advocacy, maintaining health and improving outcomes is long overdue, Cesare says.

She sees strengths and weaknesses in the government's Affordable Care Act. "One of the things I love about the Affordable Care Act is that it eliminates medical underwriting, which begins to level the playing field and return to the basic principles of health insurance," she says. Under medical underwriting, a patient's medical history determines coverage eligibility and the amount of their premiums. She supports the act's efforts to ensure universal access to care, but criticizes it for neglecting to address the fragmented system that delivers the care.

Cesare defines her role as a "servant leader" and advocates the not-for-profit status for insurance companies and others in the health arena. As soon as the interests of shareholders enter into the decision-making process, profits may overshadow the best interests of the community, she says. "Blue Cross exists here for the good of our subscribers," she says. "I need to do what's in the best interests of the community."



**Denise Schaal Cesare, Moosic, Pa.  
B.S., Accounting, Wilkes, 1977**

**Career:** President and Chief Executive Officer, Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania

**Notable:** First female chief executive officer at Blue Cross. Served as the chief operating officer and executive vice president who started its HMO in 1987.

**Favorite Wilkes memory:** Wilkes business faculty Wagiha Taylor and Robert Capin, who taught accounting before becoming Wilkes president. "He had the most influence on my professional career. He was so kind and so approachable. A real gentleman."



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## HOMECOMING 2013—OCTOBER 4, 5 AND 6

Homecoming 2013 will be here before we know it, so start making plans to return to campus now! In a few weeks, you'll receive a brochure with the full schedule of events in the mail. In the meantime, you can look forward to these events:

- NEW! Dedication of the Cohen Science Center
- NEW! Casino Night
- Annual George Ralston Golf Outing
- Pints with Professors
- 50th Reunion Reception & Dinner
- Twist & Stout Downtown Bar Tour
- Tailgate Tent
- Reunion Celebration
- Blue & Gold Breakfast

If you belong to one or more of the following groups, Homecoming 2013 is the place to be:

- Class years ending in 3 and 8
- 1993 Football Team
- A-List
- Alternative Spring Break
- Communication Studies
- Engineering class of '83
- Pharmacy
- Political Science
- Psychology
- Resident Assistants
- Sidhu School of Business
- Men of Warner Hall from the 60s

The best place to find the latest Homecoming information, including event updates and hotel discounts, is [www.wilkes.edu/homecoming](http://www.wilkes.edu/homecoming). We look forward to seeing you in October!



### Colonels, Clean Out Your Closets!

Do you have a favorite Wilkes T-shirt that dates back to your days on campus? Glassware given out at a dance from years past? Your frosh sign from freshman year? Send a photo featuring your Wilkes memorabilia to [bridget.giunta@wilkes.edu](mailto:bridget.giunta@wilkes.edu) and you could see yourself online or in Homecoming materials. Plus, we'll have contests and prizes for different categories.

### Alumni Association Welcomes New Board Members

At the April meeting of the Alumni Association, Richard Burns '64, Kathy Heltzel '82, MBA '85, Gabe LeDonne '05, Chris Sommer '94, and Lou Steck '55 were elected as new board members, starting on June 1. Tom Ralston '80 will continue his service as president through May 31, 2014, with Cindy Charnetski '97 filling the role of vice president of the association.

If you're interested in becoming involved with the Alumni Association, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at [alumni@wilkes.edu](mailto:alumni@wilkes.edu) or at (570)408-7787.

# Family and Football

## BROTHERS SUPPORT COACH SHEPTOCK AND FOOTBALL PROGRAM

By Bridget Giunta Husted '05

For Wilkes football head coach Frank Sheptock, the word football is synonymous with family. For real-life brothers Tony '00 and Mike '03 DaRe, this statement was true both on and off the field during their time at Wilkes.

“Playing alongside Tony as a freshman brought our family together in the most incredible way. We knew it was special at the time, but understanding how rare of an opportunity it was becomes clearer with every year that passes,” says Mike.

The brothers' relationship deepened at Wilkes, where they were able to play on the same team for the first time in their athletic careers. “It was the time in my life when my brother and I became best friends,” says Tony.

The pair includes Coach Sheptock in their family; he has influenced their lives long after leaving Wilkes. Both brothers say that there is not a day that goes by that they don't call on the lessons they learned from him. For this reason, they decided to give back to the program that gave them so much.

When Tony and Mike approached Coach Sheptock about supporting the football program, he enthusiastically agreed. “I was humbled, appreciative and thrilled. They were willing to take the lead, which is something they have done since I have known them,” explains Sheptock.

Working with their coach to identify a project, they decided to raise money to renovate the locker rooms at Munson Field House because it is an area

that was used by many alumni. “The effort will give our current players a state-of-the-art locker room facility to go along with Schmidt Stadium and the Ralston Athletic Complex, which is one of the finest venues for small college football. It demonstrates the pride, the tradition and standard of excellence this program has always expected,” says Sheptock.

Over the past several months, the trio has garnered support for the project through a series of events. “My favorite part about these events has been seeing Coach Sheptock stand in front of us again, put his heart on his sleeve and talk—in a way only he can—about what we've all meant to him and to the program,” says Mike. “We know that when we leave an event, we not only have gained support for this project, we have reignited a fire that will keep us all connected for years and years to come.”

Mike hopes that current players will see the new facility as a symbol of the Wilkes football family. “When they walk into this locker room every day and see some of the names and faces of the guys from years past, they'll know they're part of something bigger than themselves. That confidence will not only translate into wins on Saturdays but will also help them succeed in whatever they choose to do after they graduate.”

The renovations, which are set to begin this summer, are just the beginning of the long-term support the DaRes hope to cultivate among football alumni. “Going forward, all football alumni will have multiple opportunities to spend time with their Wilkes family and support the program at the same time. With their participation in this campaign, financially and otherwise, these guys have established themselves as a group that cares deeply about not just Wilkes football, but the University as a whole, and we are here to stay!” says Tony.

To learn more about the project and find out how you can help, contact Coach Sheptock at [frank.sheptock@wilkes.edu](mailto:frank.sheptock@wilkes.edu).

**Michael DaRe '03, Hoboken, N.J.**  
**B.A., Communication Studies**  
**Current Position/Employer: PR**  
**and Influencer Entertainment/**  
**Diageo North America**

**Tony DaRe '00, Easton, Pa.**  
**B.S., Business Administration**  
**Current Position/Employer:**  
**Agency Principal, BSI**  
**Corporate Benefits, LLC**



Football alumni gathered at an event organized by Tony '00 and Michael DaRe '03 to raise money for new locker room facilities. Pictured standing from left to right, are Tony DaRe '00, Bryan O'Leary '04, Brett Trichilo '05, David DiMartino '01 MBA '03, Jamie Connell '01, Mike DaRe '03, Julian Morales '05 MBA '09, Steve Donlin '06, Tom Wighard '03, Tim Yeagley '10 and Tim Partridge '10. Seated in front is head football coach Frank Sheptock.

**1959**

**Stephen Poleskie** recently released his sixth novel, *Scotto Walaa*. Published by Onager Editions, the book features a national guardsman recently returned from service in the Middle East suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. Poleskie, a former Cornell University professor, also is an artist whose work has been featured in collections in The State Museum in Lodz, Poland, the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, and the Tate Gallery and Victoria Albert Museum in London.

**1964**

**Gary Einhorn** became a grandfather for the first time when his son Noah and daughter-in-law Gretchen welcomed their first child, Eleanor Grace. Einhorn is a business coach in Ashland, Ore., and co-facilitates peer discussion groups of business owners.

**1972**

**Deanna Grietzer Jones**, see 1971.



**1971**

**Ellen Stamer Hall** and her husband, **Mick '93**, visited **Tom and Deanna Grietzer '72 Jones** at their home in Arizona. While there, Hall visited Wilkes' new Mesa, Ariz., site and chatted with site director Bonnie Culver.

**Gary Williams** received the "Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser" award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals Northeastern Pennsylvania Chapter. The award was presented at the 2012 National Philanthropy Day luncheon on Nov. 16, 2012.

**1975**

**Bob Lehman**, a staff engineer at Honeywell Aerospace in Phoenix, Ariz., recently received his third U.S. patent in the field of telecommunications. He is working on a new aeronautical Ka-band satellite communications system. Bob and his wife, Melanie, reside in Peoria, Ariz., near their three children and six grandchildren.

**Agnes (Swantek) Cardoni** was awarded tenure and promotion to associate professor at Marywood University, Scranton, Pa. Cardoni spent 33 years in public education prior to moving to higher education. At Marywood, she serves as a program coordinator for the



**1992**

**Lee Morrell's** career has gone to the dogs. In December 2012 Morrell joined Santa Monica, Calif.-based DogVaycay, a company that provides home vacation stays for dogs, as the company's new director of public relations. Morrell has lived in the Los Angeles area for almost 20 years and is married to LeeAnn Morrell. He is the proud father of 9-year-old Sydney.

English/secondary education majors. She also teaches methods courses, medical humanities, poetry and world literature and supervises student teachers in the field.

**1976**

**Barbara Gavlick Hartnett** published a children's book, *The Poor Little Pumpkin*. She worked with artist/illustrator David Corrado. It can be purchased on Amazon or from the publisher, Rosedog Books of Hazleton, Pa. She is the owner of Costumes by Barbara in Luzerne, Pa.

**1981**


**Susan E. Schwab** was appointed a U.S. magistrate judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

**1991**

**Shannon (Doughton) Kam** recently earned her doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Phoenix. She

is employed as a curriculum coordinator/data coach for the Hawaii Department of Education and part-time as an adjunct for the University of Phoenix College of Natural Sciences. She lives on Oahu with her husband and 9-year-old son.

**1993**

**Reunion Oct. 4-6**   
**Mick Hall** see 1971

**1996**

**Grant Yoder** was named the first head baseball coach in the history of Penn State University-Schuylkill campus, which formed a team in spring 2013.

**2000**

**Donna Talarico Beerman MFA '10** was a contributor to *Social Works: How #HigherEd Uses #SocialMedia to Raise Money, Build Awareness, Recruit Students and Get Results*. The book was



## Stephanie Corey '95 Brews Small-Business Success With Monster Potions

At first glance, Stephanie Corey '95 may not resemble a potions master. Her alter ego, Miss Stephanie, is a voodoo master mixer who keeps frightening monsters at bay.

Corey runs her own business, Miss Stephanie's Potions, from her home in San Jose, Calif. Miss Stephanie produces monster repellent potions, body wash and fairy attraction sprays for children who fear any type of monster.

Corey came up with the idea after her son, Nico, then 7, wouldn't sleep because he feared zombies. She put a new label on a bottle of lavender spray, and assured Nico spraying it would scare zombies away. That night, her son slept on his own for the first time in weeks.

Miss Stephanie's Potions has been in business since 2011. The product line includes monster repellents for zombies, werewolves, vampires, generic monsters, and closet monsters, a fairy attraction spray and monster armor body wash. Each

monster has its own mascot character with a backstory explaining how they came to work for Miss Stephanie in the Monster Be Good Gang. One is Draco, the vampire who has Ph.D.s in philosophy and physics but is afraid of heights and flying. Miss Stephanie found him stuck in a tree and offered the scholarly vampire a job.

Stuffed animals and monster repellent T-shirts are also sold to accompany the sprays. They are available online and in outlets in California and Pennsylvania. All of the products are non-toxic, have

natural ingredients and are made in America by a lab specializing in green manufacturing.

Corey, who majored in economics at Wilkes, formerly worked as chief of staff to the general counsel at Hewlett-Packard. Going from a high-powered job to running a business warranted a large learning curve.

"I was way out of my element," Corey says. "I realized I had become burned out and discovered I wasn't happy anymore because I wasn't helping people. I started thinking, 'What can I do that would make me feel good about myself?'"

Corey still works part-time as a legal operations consultant for Flextronics, a technology and supply chain management company. It has helped to ease her adjustment to being a small business owner.

"I was used to the corporate lifestyle where I got feedback on my projects, and, until then, I hadn't

realized I had identified with that part of my life so much," Corey says.

She has plans to write books and license the characters from the potions business, which could lead to it becoming a full-time venture. "Parents can read the bedtime story with the accompanying spray and stuffed animal."

– By Anne Yoskoski  
*Yoskoski is an English and communication studies major.*



Stephanie Corey '95, dressed as her alter-ego, Miss Stephanie, displays some of the monster and fairy merchandise sold in her business, Miss Stephanie's Potions.

PHOTO COURTESY STEPHANIE COREY

## Andrew Bartlow '10 and Rachel Curtis '10 Win NSF Research Fellowships

Two Wilkes biology graduates from the Class of 2010 are among a select group of early-career scientists chosen to receive National Science Foundation Research Fellowships. Andrew Bartlow '10 and Rachel Curtis '10 credit the role their Wilkes undergraduate experience played in preparing them for the honor. The NSF receives more than 13,000 applications for the fellowships, which carry three years of support, including a \$30,000 annual stipend and an additional \$12,000 annually to cover tuition and fees.

Both Bartlow and Curtis worked as post-graduate researchers in the Wilkes biology department after earning their undergraduate degrees. Bartlow now is a doctoral student at the University of Utah, where he is engaged in research in an evolutionary parasitology lab, examining the evolution of parasites and host/parasite interactions. However, his NSF proposal was based on work he started at Wilkes with biology professor Michael Steele and post-doctoral research fellow Salvatore Agosta '98.

"It is an extension of acorn dispersal and plant/animal interaction research that I worked on there," he says. The research examines weevils, the miniscule insect that infects acorns, and the impact on the oak population as their numbers increase in northern latitudes. "Squirrels feed on the acorns infected with weevils. Changes in weather patterns may see more weevils coming north and a decrease in acorns as squirrels eat them. As you have loss of acorns, there is less regeneration of oak trees."

Curtis is a doctoral student in epidemiology in the Veterinary Integrative Biology Department of the College of

Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M University. Her research examines the factors that determine the transmission of the parasite that causes Chagas disease, a debilitating disease with no known cure and no treatments approved by the FDA.

"Chagas disease has always been an important tropical disease, and is found throughout south and central America. However, only recently has it been recognized as being acquired in the United States," Curtis says. "My research focuses on the ecological factors, including the disease vector (the kissing bug that spreads the disease), the different sub-types of the parasite, the non-human animals that can harbor the parasite, and the environmental conditions. Through taking a whole-system approach to studying this disease, we can better understand where humans are most at risk for acquiring it in the United States."

Both Bartlow and Curtis credit their research experiences at Wilkes with preparing them to compete with other doctoral students for the NSF grants. Bartlow notes that he is one of four doctoral researchers in his department at the University of Utah to receive the NSF funding.

Curtis states, "Wilkes was the perfect place to develop the background I needed to be a successful applicant to this fellowship. NSF specifically looks for applicants with substantial research experiences, which were abundant at Wilkes. Attending Wilkes for my undergraduate degree gave me the research experiences, presentation skills and publications needed for success in the world of science."

– By Vicki Mayk

Top, Rachel Curtis '10 works in her lab at Texas A&M University, studying Chagas disease and the kissing bug parasite that carries it.

PHOTO COURTESY RACHEL CURTIS

Left, Andrew Bartlow '10's research at the University of Utah has taken him to the Galapagos Islands, where he is pictured with sea lions during a break in his work. PHOTO COURTESY ANDREW BARTLOW





## 2005

**Tim Wagman** and **Jennifer (Snyder) Wagman '07** were married on Nov. 17, 2012, at the Lancaster Marriott in Lancaster, Pa. Tim is a project manager for Monarch Products Precast Concrete and Jennifer is a senior accountant at Rite Aid Corp. They reside in York, Pa. Many fellow Wilkes alumni were in the bridal party, including: bottom row, left to right, Lynn Snyder, Mark Wagman, **Andrew Minarik '05**, **Ashley Gibson '07**; middle row, Neal Liptak, Christa Liptak, **Jen Snyder '07**, **Tim Wagman '05**, **Amanda Snyder '10**, Justin Detig; back row, **Stacy Kittrick '07**, Jason Walker, **Bill Vacchiano '05**, **Alicia Demer Hack '07**.

edited by higher education social media guru Michael Stoner. Talarico Beerman's case study chronicled how Elizabethtown College—where Talarico Beerman is integrated marketing manager—and Messiah College developed a social media campaign to successfully boost giving participation among young alumni.


## 2005

**Julie Melf** has joined WNEP-TV in Scranton, Pa., as a news manager. She previously worked for WBRE-TV in Wilkes-Barre.

## 2007

**Jennifer (Snyder) Wagman**, see 2005

## 2008

**Reunion Oct. 4-6** 

Georgina (Robinson) Ferriero, see photo 2007

## 2011

**Amanda (Lenig) Riedinger**, see photo 2009

## Kyla Campbell '03 Reports From Our Nation's Capitol

Kyla Campbell '03 says she is living her dream. A television news reporter for Cox Media Group in Washington, D.C., her coverage can extend to breaking news anywhere in the world. In one week this past April, she covered the Boston Marathon bombings, threats from North Korea, immigration bill plans, gun control legislation and news involving Congress and President Barack Obama.

Campbell went to Washington after working as an anchor and reporter at WBRE/WYOU Eyewitness News in Wilkes-Barre.

"Although I love the small-town feel of northeastern Pennsylvania, I also love what larger cities have to offer," says Campbell, who lives near Capitol Hill.

Her days start with a 6:15 a.m. conference call from home. She discusses story ideas and angles with producers from as many as four television stations before heading to the studio. Between 7:30 and 11:30 a.m., she does nine live shots for Cox television stations, including those in Oakland/San Francisco, Seattle, Tulsa and Jacksonville. After that, she focuses on a story that all 13 Cox-owned stations can use in their evening newscasts.

The broad reach of her broadcasts can cause extra stress for Campbell.

"You just feel a bit more pressure to make every live shot and story perfect because more eyes are watching."

Since graduating from Wilkes with a degree in communication studies, Campbell worked as a reporter and anchor in Utica, N.Y., then as a news and sports anchor and reporter at WJAC-TV, which serves the Johnstown, Altoona and State College, Pa., areas. Most recently she worked as weekday morning anchor for WBRE/WYOU.

Campbell says she has reached a new level of satisfaction with her job.

"For the first time in a long time, I really feel like I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing with my career at this point in my life. I feel spoiled in so many ways—great company, co-workers, location and stories—and I don't know what job could be good enough to take me away from here."

— By Anne Yoskoski

*Yoskoski is a junior English and communication studies major.*



Kyla Campbell '03 is a television news reporter in Washington, D.C., for Cox Media Group, where her stories regularly take her to the Capitol and White House.

PHOTO COURTESY KYLA CAMPBELL



**2007**

**Michael Ferriero** wed **Georgina (Robinson) Ferriero '08** on June 30, 2012, in Selinsgrove, Pa. They celebrated their union with more than 25 Wilkes alumni. Georgina is employed as a physician assistant at Evangelical Community Hospital. Michael is employed by Susquehanna University as a football coach. Wilkes alumni at their wedding are pictured, top row, left to right, **Annie Serfoss '09, Michael Ferriero '07, Georgina (Robinson) Ferriero '08, Kerry Battersby '09, Adrienne Richards '07, Becca Duttry '08, Lauren Cirilli '09, Bethany Head Pharm. D. '10, Elizabeth Pauly '08, Christina Waldele '07, Vincent Abbott '07, Tommy Andreopoulos '07**; and bottom row, **Justin Rogers '07, Bryan Vivaldo '07, Jillian Friedler '08, Jessica Gannon '09, Kiara Kasa '07, Kristi Barsby '07, Carlos Proano '05**. Other alumni in attendance included **Erika Barletta '08, Michael Bridy '06, Matthew Archey '09, Chris Fellin '87, Diane Fellin '83, Deanna Woodward '07, Lauren Verduchi '07, and Cassie VanLuvender '05**.

**Graduate Students**

**2007**

**Laurie Loewenstein MA** will publish her novel *Unmentionables* as the first book published by Kaylie Jones Books, the new imprint established by Wilkes graduate creative writing faculty member Kaylie Jones. It is an imprint of Akashic Books. Loewenstein has been chosen to participate in the Heartland Fall Forum in Chicago, the midwest's largest annual convention for independent bookstores.

**2009**

**Barb Taylor MA** has signed to publish her novel *Sawdust Trails* with Kaylie Jones Books, the new imprint established at Akashic Books by Wilkes graduate creative writing faculty member Kaylie Jones. The novel is the first in a trilogy about the Morgan family of Scranton. Taylor is an English teacher in the Pocono Mountain School District.

**2012**

**Christopher Barrows MS** has joined New York University as its social media and mobile product coordinator.



**2009**

**Kyle Riedinger** and **Amanda (Lenig) Riedinger Pharm.D. '11** were wed on Oct. 6, 2012, in Wilkes-Barre. The couple met on their work-study jobs at the Wilkes admissions office. After maintaining a long-distance relationship while Amanda finished her degree, they married and moved to Kingston, Pa. The couple is pictured outside of Chase Hall, where they met.

## In Memoriam

### 1938

**Ernest Weisberger**, Kingston, Pa., died Jan. 27, 2013.

Weisberger served in the U.S. Army Air Corps as a captain in World War II. He was president and founder of Marvell Kitchens Inc. until his retirement in the early 1990s.

**Marjorie (Shapiro) Leffler**, Oakland, Calif., died May 1, 2010. Leffler taught at a middle school in Alameda, Calif., for 25 years before retiring and developing a library at Alameda's Temple Israel.

### 1944

**Clarice (Pearson) Smith**, Forty Fort, Pa., died Dec. 9, 2012. Smith was an educator at Hanover Area School District.

### 1945

**Alphonse Dervinis**, Wayne, Pa., died Dec. 28, 2012. Dervinis worked in research at Wyeth Pharmaceuticals in Philadelphia, Pa.

### 1948

**Leonard Kuchinskis**, West Wyoming, Pa., died Jan. 6, 2013. Kuchinskis served in World War II in the U.S. Army. After his deployment, he was an electrician until his retirement.

### 1949

**Leonard J. Shetline**, Ravenna, Ohio, died Dec. 7, 2012.

Shetline was a veteran of the U.S. Army and chairman of the math department at Jefferson Township High School in Oak Ridge, N.J.

### Irene (Smith) Moon,

Endicott, N.Y., died June 16, 2012. Moon worked for Binghamton General and Wilson hospitals for more than 20 years.

### 1950

**Robert D. Barber Sr.**, Tunkhannock, Pa., died Dec. 27, 2012. He worked as the vice president of Sordoni Construction Co. and retired as treasurer of Commonwealth Telephone Co. Barber served in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

**Dr. Theodore L. Piczak**, Plymouth, Pa., died Jan. 8, 2013. He practiced podiatric medicine for more than 40 years in Kingston, Pa. Piczak served in the U.S. Air Corps during World War II.

**Stephen Polakoski**, Nutley, N.J., died Sept. 23, 2012. A veteran of the U.S. Army in World War II, Polakoski was later employed as a chemist with Picatinny Arsenal in Dover, N.J.

**Paul Huff**, St. Clair, Mo., died Jan. 30, 2011. During most of his working years he was employed as a machinist for Boeing in St. Louis, Mo., retiring after 37 years.

### 1951

**Peter J. Banos**, West Pittston, Pa., died Jan. 10, 2013. Banos was the owner and operator of Pittston Shoe Repair and Hat Cleaning. Banos served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War.

**William Lewis Evans**, Washington Twp., N.J., died March 12, 2012. Evans served in World War II as an airman. He worked at Dupont in Deepwater, N.J., for more than 30 years. He had numerous publications and patents in the field of chemistry.

### 1952

**Michael Henry Gustave**, Aberdeen, Md., died Nov. 30, 2012. He worked as a mathematician in the Ballistic Research Laboratories for 31 years, and then retired to become a consultant with various defense contractors.

### 1953

**Charles A. Giunta**, Exeter, Pa., died Jan. 3, 2013. Giunta served in the U.S. Army in World War II and later the Korean Conflict. He operated the Flat Iron Hotel and Charlie's Supper Club.

### 1956

**Dean R. Malkemes**, Hanover Township, Pa., died Jan. 9, 2013. Malkemes was employed by Modern Floor Co., Wilkes-Barre, until his retirement.

### 1957

**Robert (Bud) F. Price**, Kingston, Pa., died Dec. 2, 2012. Price was a member of the Marine Corps since 1948. Price worked for the Marine Corps and then the Nicholson Division of Datron Systems, Inc., where he retired as vice president of marketing.

### 1960

**Lyle Kenneth King Jr.**, Lake Township, Pa., died March 3, 2013. King served in the U.S. Army in the Korean conflict. King retired from Proctor & Gamble Paper Products in 1990.

### 1964

**Leslie G. (Stone) Peltan**, Bensalem, Pa., died July 7, 2012. Peltan was a third-grade teacher at Pollock Elementary School until retirement.

### 1965

**Joseph F. Wydra**, Hanover Township, Pa., died Dec. 27, 2012. He was employed as the principal of Jonas Salk Middle School and the Carl Sandburg Middle School in New Jersey.

## In Memoriam

**Anthony John “Tony” Parulis**, Glen Burnie, Md., died Nov. 19, 2012. Parulis was a member of the U.S. Air Force and a fifth-grade teacher at Glendale Elementary School.

### 1968

**Rose M. (Novroski) Gula**, Dallas, Pa., died Jan. 26, 2013. Gula was a business teacher at Meyers High School.

### 1969

**Angela B. (Chatrone) McNicholas**, Scranton, Pa., died Oct. 11, 2010. McNicholas was a registered nurse at the Scranton State General Hospital and taught nursing at Wilkes.

### 1972

**Mary Catherine Petroziello**, Duryea, Pa., died Dec. 28, 2012. Petroziello was a teacher in Pittston Area High School.

### 1973

**Amy Lyn (Pouser) Webb**, Dallas, Pa., died Nov. 29, 2012. She was a schoolteacher for many years before becoming a mother and homemaker.

### 1974

**Ronald A. Noyalis**, Dallas, Pa., died Jan. 10, 2013. Noyalis worked at the VA Medical Center in Scranton as a social worker. He served in the U.S. Air Force, stationed in Southeast Asia, and was awarded the Vietnam Service Medal.

### 1976

**Joseph J. Warmus**, Hanover Township, Pa., died Jan. 5, 2012. Warmus served in the U.S. Army in the United States and Europe. He was employed by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry for 31 years.

### 1977

**Edward J. Pupa**, Pittston Pa., died Jan. 8, 2012. He was employed as a science teacher for the Pittston Area School District for 25 years. Pupa served in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

**Thomas J. Ohl Jr.**, Dallas, Pa., died Feb. 4, 2013. Ohl was the nursing supervisor at the State Correctional Institution at Dallas, Pa., until his retirement in 2005. He recently was employed by Geisinger Home Health and Hospice.

### 1978

**Edward F. Gallagher**, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., died Dec. 6, 2012. Gallagher's career as a counselor and therapist included positions at Misericordia University, Children's Services and Saint Michael's School.

### 1982

**Ralph Lavere Schobert**, Old Forge, Pa., died Aug. 11, 2012. Schobert was most recently employed at Salerno's Café in Old Forge.

### 1984

**Brenda C. Kocher**, Warrior Run, Pa., died Oct. 20, 2012. She was a social worker for Luzerne County Children and Youth Services.

### 1985

**Michael W. Ortalano**, Vienna, Va., died Jan. 2, 2013. Ortalano worked as a software engineer with the American Association of Rhodes Scholars after receiving his doctorate from the University of Delaware.

## Friends of Wilkes

**Robert A. (Bob) Fortinsky**, Kingston, Pa., died Dec. 27, 2012. Fortinsky founded Fortune Fabrics in 1949 and worked there until retirement. He was president of Temple Israel and the Jewish Community Center as well as many other organizations. He served in the U.S. Army as a second lieutenant. He was a trustee emeritus of Wilkes.

## Faculty

**James J. Bohning**, Bethlehem, Pa., died Sept. 2, 2011. Bohning, professor emeritus, was department chair of chemistry and then environmental science in his 31-year-career at Wilkes. After his retirement, he continued to teach and participate as director of oral history for the Chemical Heritage Foundation and a science writer for the American Chemical Society News Service.

**Ronald G. Mortimer**, Pittston, Pa., died Jan. 9, 2013. Mortimer taught at St. Paul's School in Scranton, Pa., and Pittston Area High School. After retirement, Mortimer was an adjunct professor at Wilkes.

# ACHIEVING OUR DESTINY

THE FUTURE OF SCIENCE AT WILKES UNIVERSITY



## Mark Your Calendars for the Dedication of the Cohen Science Center

The entire Wilkes community is eagerly anticipating the completion of the new Cohen Science Center this summer. By the first day of classes for the fall 2013 semester, the building will be in full operation. All are invited to a special dedication ceremony at Homecoming on Friday, Oct. 4, 2013, at 4 p.m. Mark your calendar now to be part of Wilkes history! There is still time to make a gift in support of science at Wilkes by going to [www.wilkes.edu/achieve](http://www.wilkes.edu/achieve).

Many thanks to the following contributors who pledged their support between December 1, 2012 and April 10, 2013:

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Mrs. Karen Miller Zingale '85 &  
Mr. Lance Zingale

## calendar of events



### June

- 1-Sept 1 Sordoni Art Gallery:  
Permanent Collection Exhibition
- 10-Aug. 16 Summer Class Sessions
- 23-27 Maslow Faculty Reading Series,  
Graduate Creative Writing Program

### July

- 12 Admissions Open House
- 22-Aug. 1 Education Department Reading Academy  
for Elementary School Students

### August

- 12 Graduate Studies Information Session
- 26 Fall Semester Begins
- 27-Oct. 20 Sordoni Art Gallery: The Art of Ballet

### September

- 8 Summer Commencement

### October

- 4 Dedication of the Cohen Science Center
- 4-6 Homecoming Weekend
- 10-14 Fall Recess

### November

- 27-Dec. 2 Thanksgiving Recess