

# CURRENTS

Penn State Harrisburg 2021-2022

A diverse and inclusive learning culture provides opportunities to work with people unlike ourselves who shape, expand, challenge, enrich, and deepen how we view the world.

## DIVERSITY EQUITY AND INCLUSION

When we welcome difference and see it as an asset and not a liability, we are moving closer to the ideals of DEI.



**PennState**  
Harrisburg

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# Greetings FROM THE CHANCELLOR



John M. Mason Jr.



This issue puts a spotlight on the college's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. Our diverse community has long been our strength at Penn State Harrisburg. Efforts to nurture that diversity and maintain an inclusive environment on campus continue to be a bedrock for all that we do. Like the University, Penn State Harrisburg is committed to supporting all members of our community, as well as ensuring equity and inclusion in education.

Our commitment is evident in the numerous campus groups devoted to accomplishing DEI goals, as well in the two new roles created to lead the college's DEI efforts. In this issue, you will hear from Dr. Wanda Knight and Mr. Evan Williams – in their own words – reflecting on DEI efforts in higher education in general and at Penn State Harrisburg specifically.

The college's land grant mission prioritizes academic excellence, research and scholarship, and service to the greater community. These remain the foundation for our success. Throughout *Currents* are many stories illustrating how our faculty, staff, students, and alumni fulfill that mission, fostering learning, creating knowledge, and solving real world issues.

Penn State Harrisburg continues to thrive as a destination campus for students. We continue to add new academic programs to our portfolio, expand student services, and enhance our facilities. We are driving innovation in the region and supporting the economy. Each year we proudly graduate some 1,000 students, ready to join the workforce. But our successes would not be possible without the support of our generous alumni. We are grateful for your continued commitment to Penn State Harrisburg.

I hope you enjoy this glimpse into all that is happening at the college. Please consider following us online and via social media (details on the many ways to keep in touch are on the back cover of this issue). As always, I hope that you will remain engaged and active for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Mason Jr." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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John M. Mason Jr., Ph.D.

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# Diversity EQUITY Inclusion

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are fundamental to the University's values and mission to support all community members. Penn State Harrisburg shares these values and mission with a commitment to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment. The college has established numerous groups to help accomplish this goal.

In addition, Penn State Harrisburg recently created two new roles to lead the college's DEI efforts. Dr. Wanda Knight serves as the college's assistant dean for DEI and Evan Williams, the college's assistant director for student DEI.

Knight leads the development and implementation of strategies, that create and support a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environment at the college. Williams works with students, providing training and programming.

Knight said that the goal is for DEI efforts to be intentional and strategic. "The outcome is to see that because of DEI, everyone has a genuine opportunity to thrive in whatever way that means for them," she said.

In recent interviews, Knight and Williams shared their thoughts.

## KNIGHT

### How do you define Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are inextricably linked. They are also distinct concepts.

**Diversity:** *Everybody is different.*

Diversity describes observable and non-observable individual differences (life experiences, learning styles, personality types, among others) and group/social differences (race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, age, ability, among others) that can contribute to campus vibrancy and a dynamic learning community.

**Equity:** *Everyone wants to be treated fairly.* Many people conflate the terms "equity" and "equality." However, these terms are not synonymous. Equality refers to sameness, while equity refers to fairness. Equity requires we recognize barriers and advantages as everyone does not start at the same level. Acknowledging and confronting a history of systemic exclusion impacting specific populations within academic settings, it behooves us to create conditions that support fairness and justness based on individual needs and circumstances.

**Inclusion:** *People want to be recognized for their uniqueness.* No one wants to be excluded because of differences or feel they should hide some part of their identity or change to fit in. Inclusion describes proactive, intentional, and thoughtful engagement with diversity to the extent that all can contribute fully and effectively throughout the campus community and feel a sense of welcoming and belonging.

### What do educational institutions gain by being more diverse and inclusive?

There is much to be gained, including greater personal, social, racial, and cultural awareness.

Higher education attracts people from all walks of life, from all over the world. So, intentionally or by default, we are attracting diversity. Institutions need to leverage diversity to create a campus community welcoming and accepting of all identities and perspectives. In my opinion, higher education should focus on intellectual and cultural engagement with diversity. When an institution commits to inclusive excellence, we intentionally design experiences that honor varied identities, cultures, experiences, and perspectives.

A diverse and inclusive learning culture provides opportunities to work with people beyond our insular communities, people unlike ourselves who shape, expand, challenge, enrich, and deepen how we view the world.

Higher education shapes students, who in turn shape the world.

### What is most difficult when implementing a DEI program?

Perseverance. Representing historically marginalized communities within a majority institution or organization is difficult. Most of the individuals doing the heavy lifting towards transforming organizations into inclusive spaces tend to be those who face discrimination. Yet, those impacted by systems of oppression continue devoting their talents and energies despite opposition or resistance to change from majority populations. I perceive some resistance stems from fear, misunderstandings, miseducation, blame, and guilt, among other areas.

It has been my experience that people, in general, are not

comfortable with being uncomfortable, specifically when discussing race. Moreover, because people perceive race as a taboo subject, especially in mixed company, people are afraid to talk about race and avoid the topic altogether. Yet, we all have a potentially significant role in racial learning, healing, reconciliation, and bridging divides.

DEI leaders and equity workers who work in caregiving spaces tend to be absent from discussions concerning our well-being, as people take for granted that we do not experience significant societal, institutional, or organizational challenges concerning our identities that warrant considerations or resources. On the contrary, DEI work is complex and can be traumatizing and draining. Because there is much work to be done, we need to prioritize time, energy, and space for restorative self-care to better support the communities we serve.

### **What is one thing each of us can do to positively impact DEI?**

Embrace difference. This statement may sound cliché, but the concept is an important one. Often people are more comfortable talking about what we have in common, but commonalities are not what gets us in trouble. Instead, it's our attitudes and beliefs concerning difference. When we welcome difference and see it as an asset and not a liability, we are moving closer to the ideals of DEI.

### **Where do you see the future of DEI at the college?**

Penn State Harrisburg has a bright future. We take pride in the fact that we are a diverse community. We could be a model for others to learn about diversity and diversity-focused initiatives that support the first generation, historically marginalized low-income, or underrepresented populations. We could leverage our diversity to value diverse perspectives, be an anti-racist campus, close equity gaps, break barriers and expand pathways for access and success for all campus community members to thrive.

We can always work against something, but what are we working toward and building in its place, and how can we move forward with integrity, passion, and compassion?

### **How do DEI initiatives improve a student's experience?**

DEI initiatives impact a student's college experience because they allow those in marginalized and minoritized populations to be "seen and heard." In my undergraduate years, I went to a predominantly white university and as a black queer student, I did not feel seen nor heard on that campus. Since

then, higher education has made great strides to create DEI initiatives that provide co-curricular learning and engagement to allow campus communities to embrace and be part of building brave and inclusive spaces for our students to feel like they belong.

I have listened to students around campus...and witnessed several students say they feel like they can be themselves when they come to diversity related programs. The programs provide a space to help build community and to learn from different students from various cultures and backgrounds. I also believe that DEI programs provide exposure for students who have not been in diverse environments before, so it opens up the chance for students to have their personal experiences enriched.

### **Can you share initiatives your office is working on?**

A longstanding initiative, the Multicultural Academic Excellence Program (MAEP), is based on building community with four pillars: academics, culture and society, professionalism, and health and wellbeing. Keeping this initiative active and thriving continues to help our campus to be more inclusive.

In addition, we are focused on creating inclusive programming such as arranging educational trips, hosting a Social Justice Workshop, holding a National Coming Out Day program, and more.

### **What opportunities do you see for enhancing DEI for students?**

One of the main areas of opportunity I see includes creating brave and inclusive spaces on campus for students to be their authentic selves. Personally, I think if students do not feel like they belong on campus then we are doing a disservice.

Providing brave spaces means providing places for students – and faculty and staff – to share and discuss issues and have civil discourse. Other spaces – such as the Pride Room and the Oliver LaGrone Cultural Arts Center – provide a physical place for students to connect with others and be themselves without judgement.

Another area of opportunity is working alongside Dr. Wanda Knight, an expert who has been able to shake grounds. Recently, we presented to our incoming class around diversity, equity, and inclusion. She provided the framework of DEI, and I provided the student experience portion.

### **How can students become involved or have a voice in DEI efforts?**

I operate with an open-door policy. Therefore, if my door is open, students can feel free to come by and chill or have discussions with me. Also, I would highly recommend students be part of MAEP. Near the end of our program, I always leave time for conversations and that is a great space for students to be their authentic selves and express how they feel.

## In Memoriam: Mukund S. Kulkarni



On April 26, 2022, the college community joined the family of former Chancellor Mukund S. Kulkarni in an event celebrating his life. Kulkarni, who retired from Penn State in 2018, after more than 30 years of service, passed away on June 2, 2021. A resident of Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, he was 75.

Kulkarni became the chancellor of Penn State Harrisburg in 2010. He joined the college in 1985 as a member of the business faculty, and advanced in faculty rank and leadership posts prior to becoming chancellor. He also had served as director of undergraduate studies, director of the School of Business Administration, and senior associate dean for academic affairs.

During Kulkarni's tenure, Penn State Harrisburg experienced substantial enrollment growth, including a record number of international students. In support of the growth in enrollment, Kulkarni oversaw the successful introduction of new degree programs, the development of new and enhanced academic and student life facilities, the expansion of teaching and learning support to faculty, and the enhancement of instructional technology.

In addition to his administrative appointment, Kulkarni held the rank of professor of finance. He held bachelor's and master's degrees from his native India, an MBA from Marshall University, and a doctorate from the University of Kentucky.

Kulkarni's dedication to students and the community, as well as his interest in supporting the arts, was recognized in 2018 with gifts that supported student scholarships, the naming of the Mukund S. Kulkarni Theatre in the college's Student Enrichment Center, and the Mukund S. Kulkarni Cultural Series Program Fund.



## President Bendapudi visits campus, shares vision

Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi visited Penn State Harrisburg in March, before she officially began her tenure as the University's 19th president, to meet with students, faculty and staff as part of her tour of Penn State's campuses.

During her tour stop, President Bendapudi discussed her overall vision for the University; her commitment to the collaboration of students, faculty and staff; as well as the importance of Commonwealth Campuses to the University's success.



She stressed that Commonwealth Campuses are essential in Penn State's ability to fulfill its land-grant mission and highlighted the uniqueness of Penn State's Commonwealth Campus system as one of the reasons she accepted the presidency at the University.

She also shared what she called her **"ABCs of success"**: Ensuring **A**cademic preparedness for students, instilling a sense of **B**elonging for all members of the Penn State community, and providing access and affordability by managing the **C**ost of education.

Bendapudi previously served as president of the University of Louisville and has held leadership roles at the University of Kansas and at Ohio State University.

# HARRISBURG LIBRARY NAMED IN HONOR OF MADLYN HANES



*Madlyn L. Hanes*

On March 24, 2022, Penn State honored recently retired Senior Vice President for Commonwealth Campuses and Executive Chancellor Madlyn Hanes at a naming ceremony for the Madlyn L. Hanes Library at Penn State Harrisburg. Ahead of Hanes' official retirement in August 2021, after a 33-year career at the University, the Penn State Board of Trustees announced the library's name, effective July 15, 2021.

Hanes served as Penn State Harrisburg's chancellor from 2000 to 2010 before her appointment as the chief academic and administrative leader of the University's 20 Commonwealth Campuses. She had held a variety of senior leadership positions within the University, including as chief academic officer of Penn State Delaware County, now Penn State Brandywine, and as Penn State Great Valley's chief executive officer and the founding head of its School of Graduate Professional Studies.

Under Hanes' leadership, the Commonwealth Campuses, which enroll approximately 27,000 students, added many high-demand baccalaureate degree programs, instituted a differentiated tuition structure to reflect the demographic circumstances of local regions and the resource needs of students and developed new institutional partnerships and articulation agreements to increase admissions access. The campuses also launched 21 innovation hubs that help to advance entrepreneurship and spark economic activity in communities across Pennsylvania; made investments in research, technology and facilities infrastructure; and substantially increased institutional student aid.

"The library at Penn State Harrisburg and I share history in the evolution of the college," said Hanes. "It made its debut at the same time I made mine in 2000 as the incoming chancellor. The library building served as an anchor that not only helped define the core of campus, but it also began the campus complete physical transformation from a group of classroom buildings into the robust academic community it is today — a sense of place it long deserved to have. More than buildings, libraries are the heart of academic life and places to learn for learning's sake. Having my name associated with the Penn State Harrisburg library — connecting me to the Capital College in perpetuity — is a deeply personal honor."

The Madlyn L. Hanes Library, which encompasses three stories and 115,000 square feet, is an academic research library with 300,000 volumes and 1.3 million microforms. Following the naming announcement, Hanes and her husband, Michael L. Hanes, established the Madlyn L. Hanes and Michael L. Hanes Library Endowment, and supporters were invited to make additional gifts to the fund in Madlyn Hanes' honor, delivering enhanced impact.

## Roufos-Abbey named director of development and alumni relations

Noah J. Roufos-Abbey has been named the director of development and alumni relations at Penn State Harrisburg. As a director of major gifts, he had served as interim director for the campus since fall 2021.

In 2022, Roufos-Abbey led the development and alumni relations office to the successful conclusion of the Greater Penn State campaign, surpassing its \$44 million campaign goal. He began his career at Penn State Harrisburg as a major gift officer in 2009 and has served Penn State, collectively, for over ten years.

Roufos-Abbey's career includes work in community affairs for Gaudenzia, Inc., as well as the vice president of Harrisburg Area Community College, where he oversaw all administrative aspects of the flagship campus in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Roufos-Abbey holds a bachelor of arts in communication arts and sciences from Penn State and earned a master of public administration degree from Penn State Harrisburg.



*Noah J. Roufos-Abbey*

## Two from Penn State Harrisburg receive 2022-23 Fulbright Scholar Awards

### Awards provide unique opportunities for scholars to teach and conduct research abroad



David Witwer

Two faculty members have received Fulbright Scholar Awards for the 2022-23 academic year. Administered by the Institute of International Education, Fulbright Scholar Awards are prestigious and competitive fellowships that provide unique opportunities for scholars to teach and conduct research abroad.

The program affords recipients the opportunity to interact with, and make an impact on, their host communities during their Fulbright tenure and plays a critical role in U.S. cultural diplomacy, establishing long-term relationships between recipients and their international collaborators in host institutions and countries around the globe.

Penn State Harrisburg faculty awardees include:

**David Witwer**, professor of American studies in the School of Humanities, who was named the 2022-23 Fulbright Bicentennial Distinguished Chair in American Studies at the University of Helsinki, Finland.

The award is a nine-month appointment at the University of Helsinki and began in August 2022.

As part of the award, Witwer will lecture throughout Finland on his expertise as a labor historian, including on his book project, "Searching for Jimmy Hoffa: The Continuing Mystery of America's Most Notorious Union Leader." The book traces the history of what is known about International Brotherhood of Teamsters president James R. Hoffa's disappearance, his involvement with organized crime, and what his career reveals about working-class attitudes toward corruption.

**Senel Poyrazli**, professor of psychology and chair of the Division of Social Sciences and Psychology in the School of Behavioral Sciences and Education, has been awarded a Fulbright Senior Scholar award for the 2022-23 academic year.



Senel Poyrazli

As part of her award, Poyrazli will lecture at Bilkent University, in Ankara, Turkey; conduct a research study related to Syrian refugees; and complete a book related to multicultural competency. Poyrazli also will present her research related to multicultural competency at different institutions and conferences throughout Turkey.

## Research partnership provides hands-on learning

When Anilchandra Attaluri, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, approached alumnus Tim Ritter, a co-owner of Universal Protective Packaging (UPPI), about joining in a research project, Ritter was in.

Supported by a grant from the PA Department of Community & Economic Development's Manufacturing PA Innovation Program, Attaluri's research focuses on helping small to medium-sized manufacturing businesses find ways to improve existing equipment and processes. Attaluri aimed to do this by testing his research on the automated practices performed at Ritter's company.

"[The project] seemed like it would fit pretty well with some of our company objectives of trying to advance our technology," Ritter said. "We're a custom thermoform packaging manufacturing company, and we do the whole packaging process from the design of the package to the manufacturing of the molds and the tooling that's required to make the custom packaging, and then manufacturing the package as well."

The outcome of their research partnership has paid many dividends, not the least of which includes Attaluri's training the next generation of engineers through hands-on learning.

Brandon Rauenzahn, a recent mechanical engineering

graduate, is a testament to that success. In the fall of his senior year, Rauenzahn joined Attaluri's research team, where his main role was as a liaison between Attaluri's lab and UPPI. He did such a good job, that when he graduated in spring of 2021, Ritter hired him as a project engineer.

Ritter acknowledges the "great advantage" of students getting real world experience through research and the competitive edge it provides them in seeking a job.

"One thing we noticed about Brandon was his ease with working hands-on and doing the technical, engineering side of work," Ritter said. "He was equally adept, and to us, that was a real valuable skill."

The benefits of research collaborations with industry ripple broadly. Students gain experience and job opportunities, while companies find business solutions and can access a trained workforce. As Attaluri explains, his research in increasing machine productivity leads to faster production, enabling companies to better meet marketplace demand, and successful businesses in turn hire more employees, all of which has a positive impact on the regional economy.

## Go, baby, go!

Penn State Harrisburg's Capital Area Institute for Mathematics and Science (CAIMS), School of Behavioral Sciences and Education, the Penn State College of Medicine, and two area schools recently partnered on "Go Baby Go," a national program that provides modified ride-on cars to young children with disabilities so they can move around more independently.

"Go Baby Go" was founded as part of a research project at the University of Delaware, and researchers, including at Penn State, have now trained volunteers in more than 40 communities nationally and internationally. The project aims to provide accessible and inexpensive solutions to help restore physical independence for children with disabilities.

CAIMS director Tyler Love said they are excited to collaborate on this program to modify mini-electric cars. "We explored how Penn State Harrisburg could collaborate locally to bring this program to our region. We were fortunate to have the required expertise in the college's kinesiology and teacher education programs, and the nearby College of Medicine," Love said.

"Go Baby Go" is part of an international engineering by design curriculum used by many Pennsylvania schools. The curriculum provides STEM learning experiences that help students develop problem-solving skills.

"Go Baby Go" provides an authentic engineering design challenge for middle and high school students, who must develop a design to meet the specific needs of each child," Love said. "The practices of creativity, empathy, safety, and designing for other users are valuable technological and engineering skills for students to develop."

As part of the program, students from nearby Middletown Area High School and Mechanicsburg Middle School volunteered after school, implementing the engineering design process to modify the cars, which came in kits they had to build, to be safer and more user friendly for the children. Tyler Richardson, Penn State Harrisburg assistant professor of kinesiology, described the types of safety features the children might need. Students then designed the structure to keep the children safe within the vehicle using common materials. Penn State Harrisburg faculty and teachers from each school assisted students as they developed their designs, answering questions, helping with wiring and electronics and monitoring quality control.

Richardson then worked with Dr. Laura Murphy and registered nurse Traci David from the College of Medicine to select children who would benefit from the program.

The group built cars for five children to keep, and an additional car will be kept at the College of Medicine to help recruit children for future builds.

David, a case manager at the Penn State Hershey Medical Group Complex Care Clinic, was on site when the families picked up their cars.

"What an absolute joy it brought to my heart to see the smiles on the faces of these amazing kids," she said. "Their everyday lives are complicated by so many health demands and lack of mobility. To give them a way to get around and have fun while doing it was priceless."



## Tisdell named distinguished professor

Elizabeth Tisdell, professor of lifelong learning and adult education, has been named a distinguished professor by the Penn State Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. She was one of 13 faculty University-wide named as a distinguished professor for 2021.



The title of distinguished professor recognizes a select group of professors who have achieved exceptional accomplishments.

An internationally and nationally recognized and respected leader in the field of adult education, Tisdell joined Penn State Harrisburg in 2002 as an associate professor. She received early tenure in 2006 and was promoted to professor in 2009. Her scholarly interests lie in the areas of adult education, transformative education, spirituality and culture in education and society, and medical and health education. She has published seven books, 70 refereed journal articles and book chapters, and 66 conference proceedings. She has made nearly 100 international, national, and regional presentations and has been a resident scholar three times. Tisdell has also supervised 48 doctoral dissertations since arriving at Penn State Harrisburg.

She received the 2018 Penn State Harrisburg Outstanding Faculty Research Award. She also was elected to the Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame in 2015.

At Penn State Harrisburg, Tisdell was the professor-in-charge of the graduate program in lifelong learning and adult education for 14 years and the chair of health and professional studies in the School of Behavioral Sciences and Education since 2016.

## Study looks at data vs. perspectives

Against the backdrop of the Black Lives Matter movement and summer 2020 protests surrounding police killings of persons of color, Penn State Harrisburg researchers sought to understand whether Pennsylvanians' perceptions of criminality and violence shifted in response to increased media attention of police-citizen interactions.

Eileen M. Ahlin, associate professor of criminal justice, in the School of Public Affairs, said, "Racial divides have historically contributed to perceptions that racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to commit crimes that come to the attention of police and result in arrest. We wanted to see if increased media attention impacted these perceptions."

The study was partially based on an exercise that Shaun L. Gabbidon, distinguished professor of criminal justice, has used in his race and crime course. In the exercise, students are asked to estimate the percentage of national arrests for serious offenses by race/ethnicity.

Ahlin and Gabbidon collected data to assess citizen perceptions on perceived criminality in fall 2018 and fall 2020. All respondents were asked "Which racial/ethnic group do you believe is arrested for the largest proportion of serious crime in the United States?"

In findings reported in 2021, the researchers discovered that increased media attention did not shift perception, and that these perceptions are not in line with official arrest data.

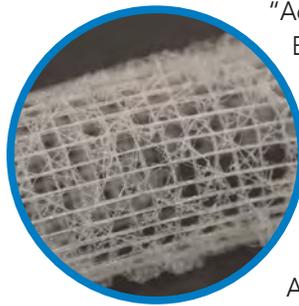
In both years, respondents predominantly said that Black people are arrested for the largest portion of serious crime in the U.S. In the 2020 survey, 51% of whites, 78% of Blacks, and 61% responded accordingly.

Ahlin notes that this result is in stark contrast to official data on arrests for crimes such as homicide, robbery, rape, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. Police records show that Black people are arrested for a smaller proportion of serious crime than white people.

"[The] disconnect between perceptions and official data can contribute to racial tensions in our communities," Ahlin said. "There is a need to educate the public on the discrepancies between perceptions, criminal behavior, and arrests."

## Professor receives prestigious NSF CAREER Award

Fariborz Tavangarian, assistant professor of mechanical engineering in the School of Science, Engineering and Technology, has been awarded a \$616,000 National Science Foundation (NSF) Faculty Early Career Development (CAREER) award for his project



"Achieving Resilience in Brittle Materials Through Bio-inspired Nested Cylindrical Structures."

The CAREER Program offers the NSF's most prestigious awards in support of early-career faculty "who have the potential to serve as academic role models in research and education and to lead advances in the mission of their department or organization.

Activities pursued by early-career faculty build a firm foundation for a lifetime of leadership in

integrating education and research."

Ceramics and other brittle materials play a pivotal role in biomedical, automotive and aerospace applications and their failure under thermal and mechanical stresses is a concern, Tavangarian said. His research aims to address this concern by focusing on investigating the microstructure, micromechanical properties, and crack development patterns and mechanisms found in certain marine sponges. Although their structural components — known as marine spicules — are made of a brittle ceramic (silica), they show unusual toughness and flexibility due to unique factors within the structure.

Tavangarian's research findings will be used to design and fabricate similar structures from brittle materials and explore the potential of these bio-inspired structures for human bone tissue engineering and other applications.



## Projects to bolster diversity in STEM education

Two groups of Penn State Harrisburg researchers have been awarded a total of more than \$2.7 million in National Science Foundation (NSF) grants for initiatives to increase diversity in STEM education.

“Support of these initiatives by the National Science Foundation is critical to our ability to best serve students as we work to promote greater access to higher education, especially in the STEM disciplines, and to create a pipeline of well-prepared professionals for business and industry in our region and beyond,” said Penn State Harrisburg Chancellor John M. Mason.

One team received a \$1.5 million grant to provide scholarships and mentoring support for 30 academically talented students with financial need to help them graduate with a degree and be successfully prepared for a career in a STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) field.

A collaboration between the college’s School of Science, Engineering and Technology and School of Behavioral Sciences and Education, the six-year project aims to examine how interrelated program components can foster persistence among STEM students.

The project objectives include increasing the number of diverse, low-income, academically talented students who enroll in and graduate from STEM undergraduate programs; identifying factors that contribute to scholars’ persistence to remain in STEM programs; implementing curricular and support activities that promote these factors; and sharing knowledge gained about the role of specific components in fostering persistence.

Co-principal investigators on the project include Aldo Morales, professor of electrical engineering; Omid Ansary, senior associate dean for academic affairs and administration; Sairam Rudrabhatla, professor of biology; and Jane Wilburne, professor of mathematics education.

Another group, led by Wilburne, was awarded a \$1.2 million grant as part of a national effort to recruit, prepare and retain a diverse workforce of secondary mathematics teachers skilled at implementing culturally responsive instruction. Culturally responsive teaching is an approach that connects students’ cultures, languages and life experiences with what they learn in school.

The project seeks to address the nationwide shortage of secondary mathematics teachers and the high teacher turnover experienced by schools serving high-need communities. These are rural or urban communities of higher poverty rates, where classrooms are influenced by the difficulties of their students’ lives.

Research demonstrates that planning for diversity among teachers can promote higher school-student engagement and performance. Building upon this, the project will augment Penn State Harrisburg’s teacher education program to prepare prospective math teachers using innovative teaching approaches that combine mathematical modeling, emerging technologies, and culturally responsive practices.

Wilburne’s co-PIs include Reuben Asempapa, assistant professor of mathematics education; Tyler Love, assistant professor of elementary/middle grades STEM education; Anita Mareno, associate professor of mathematical sciences. Co-investigators include Brittany Anderson, assistant teaching professor of chemistry and Xenia Hadjiannou, associate professor of language and literacy education at Penn State Berks.



## New Ph.D. in engineering systems now offered

Penn State Harrisburg is now offering a new doctoral program in engineering systems beginning in fall 2022. The program aims to prepare students to pursue careers in research and development, industry, government, and academia by providing them with interdisciplinary engineering education, critical thinking skills, and research experience. The program is geared for engineers who wish to acquire expertise in multiple areas.

The new program provides a pathway for engineering education and research that focuses on the understanding and development of next-generation systems. The program will combine course work and doctoral research with a focus on topics such as those defined by the National Science Foundation as “engineered systems.”

“The only program of its kind in the region, this doctoral program is unique in its interdisciplinary approach,” said Vahid Motevalli, director of Penn State Harrisburg’s School of Science, Engineering and Technology. “That aspect of the program differentiates it from many traditional doctoral programs in engineering and prepares students for positions in traditional engineering fields as well as in growth areas within academia, and the public and private sector.”

While students in the program may develop expertise in civil, environmental, electrical, mechanical engineering, and computational systems, they also will apply their research to the broader engineering systems. The program also will allow students to explore academic fields outside of engineering, which will enable students to better understand the role of engineering systems in non-engineering fields and within society.

## Student research and innovation impacts the community

College students often combine innovative thinking with what they learn in the classroom, leading to projects that have real impacts in the community. Here are a few of the latest from Penn State Harrisburg.

**Aiding musicians:** In response to her own high school experience as a student-athlete and musician, recent Penn State Harrisburg graduate Carley Furlow created the patent-pending "Bonded Bow" to help people with wrist and hand injuries

continue to play their stringed instruments.

The "Bonded Bow" is used by sliding the ring and middle finger through the finger holes and snapping the grip around the handle of the instrument. Furlow launched "Bonded Bow" on her online store, Sharps and

Flats, after winning first place at the winter 2021 Idea TestLab program sponsored by Harrisburg LaunchBox powered by Penn State. Harrisburg LaunchBox assists Pennsylvania entrepreneurs — including Penn State students and alumni — with their product or business needs.

The Bonded Bow also won second place at Mont Alto LaunchBox powered by Penn State's LION tank pitch competition. In addition, elementary schools are putting the product into their music programs.

Furlow, also an up-and-comer in the sustainable fashion industry, plans on continuing her entrepreneurial efforts. " ... I have more products I'm currently developing to solve more limiting circumstances."

**Justice research:** Camille Ingham, who recently graduated with a master's degree in criminal justice, for her master's thesis partnered with the college's Center for Survey Research to assess how the publication of digital arrest logs impacted the future success of justice-involved individuals, especially arrestees, across Pennsylvania. The study included how "digital punishment" affects an individual's ability to find employment or housing or even maintain social involvement after an arrest.

Ingham wanted to determine what features on police websites may be important and impactful to learn more about the way they affect others.

"The publication of digital arrest logs has the potential to affect members of every community," Ingham said. "With the sheer number of people who are or have been involved with the criminal justice system at some point, millions could be subjected to their mugshots being posted online and have to deal with the detrimental social and economic effects that come with such publications."

Ingham used data collected from the 2021 Lion Poll, a statewide survey conducted by the center, to understand whether Pennsylvanians know that many local police agencies publish a detailed arrest log on their agency websites.

Her research found that, while Pennsylvanians regard the digital arrest logs as somewhat useful, their reported knowledge about this information is limited. Ingham said that since crime-related digital footprints can impact justice-involved individuals for an extended period, regardless of whether an individual is found guilty or not, these findings question the true benefits of publishing digital arrest logs.

While Ingham's research aims to explore public opinion on the knowledge and perceived usefulness of these digital arrest logs, she hopes to stimulate conversations about whether the posting of these logs meets the goals of e-government accessibility, transparency and accountability and whether the benefits of publication outweigh the costs to justice-involved individuals.

**App development:** Three Penn State Harrisburg students worked with Penn State researchers on a new web-based application that could help pharmacists and health care providers improve patient safety by reducing unintended interactions between medical and recreational marijuana and cannabidiol (CBD) products and other medications.

CANNabinoid Drug Interaction Review (CANN-DIR™) is a free web-based resource that evaluates cannabinoid products against a database of common over-the-counter and prescription medications. CANN-DIR™ was developed by researchers at the Penn State College of Medicine, one of nine approved medical marijuana Academic Clinical Research Centers in Pennsylvania.

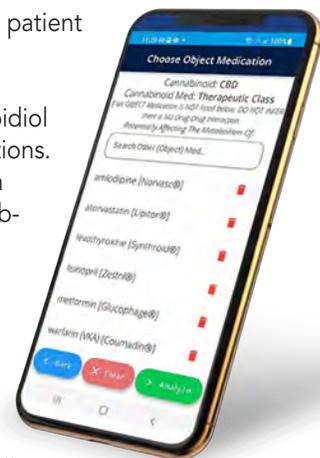
Users select the cannabinoid product a patient is taking and then choose other medications they are using. The app provides information about how the cannabinoid product could potentially affect the metabolism, or breakdown, of the other selected medications.

Information in the database was researched by Kent Vrana, Elliot S. Vesell Professor and Chair of the Department of Pharmacology, and Paul Kocis, a clinical pharmacist at Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center.

Funding from the College of Medicine Center for Medical Innovation enabled Vrana and Kocis to connect with Penn State Harrisburg computer science students Samuel Wadrose, Aqib Ahmed and Rohan Gajjar, who worked on the app as part of their capstone project.



Credit: Carley Furlow



# around campus

A look back at activities and scenes from 2021-2022



WITF-TV, and the Center for Holocaust and Jewish Studies, presented a special sneak preview and community conversation around the new documentary series, **“The U.S. and the Holocaust,”** directed by Ken Burns, Lynn Novick and Sarah Botstein, that examines America’s response to one of the greatest humanitarian crises of the 20th century.



New students were welcomed at the **New Student Convocation**, the first event of the new academic year and the ceremonial start for all incoming first-year students, marking their formal entry into the life and traditions of Penn State University.



The college’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) hosted a community art project to honor **World Suicide Prevention Day** through painting and creating art to raise awareness of suicide and suicide prevention.



The Student Clubs and Organizations **Involvement Fair** gave the chance for many clubs and organizations to provide information and recruit new members.



Students were wowed by the craft of magician **Mike Super Magic** and Illusion. One of many events held during Welcome Week.



At the college’s annual **Veterans Day celebration**, former employee Michael Kalbaugh shows off a photo of his time in the U.S. Armed Services.



The college hosted the national **Summer Institute for Equity in the Academic Experience** in June 2022. The institute aims to advance meaningful equity work at U.S. colleges and universities to improve equitable access and outcomes for low-income, first-generation, and students of color.



We welcomed new and returning students to campus during **Move-In Weekend**.



**New Student Orientation** returned to campus in person for the first time since 2019. A dozen full-day sessions were held over the summer offering new students and their families a chance to visit the campus, learn about available resources, and explore academic areas.

# PENN STATE HARRISBURG ATHLETICS



## Athletics receives highest conference honor

Penn State Harrisburg Athletics was awarded the 2021-22 United East Presidents' Cup, presented by the United East Conference to recognize the athletic achievements of its members. United East Conference Commissioner Stephanie Dutton presented the award to the college at a ceremony on September 27, 2022.

The Presidents' Cup is determined by a scoring system that rewards schools for their success during the regular season and postseason competition. This is the first time Penn State Harrisburg has earned the prestigious honor.

Penn State Harrisburg displayed athletic excellence throughout the entirety of 2021-22, topping the Presidents' Cup leaderboard after each of the three traditional sport seasons. The school's athletic programs combined for four United East championships, including men's basketball, baseball, and men's and women's soccer. Men's and women's cross-country, men's golf, and men's and women's tennis earned runner-up finishes at their respective championship events, while women's volleyball, women's basketball and softball also earned postseason tournament berths.

**"I am thrilled for our student-athletes, coaches and our entire campus community,"** said Rahsaan Carlton, director of athletics. **"Winning the inaugural United East Presidents' Cup is a tremendous honor that reflects excellence across all sports and speaks to the commitment and depth of talent of everyone in the department."**

In the conference's first year as the United East, the structure used to award its annual cup was altered. Under the former moniker, the North Eastern Athletic Conference, cups were awarded for athletic success, academic excellence, community service and sportsmanship. The results of those awards were combined and compiled to determine one overall winner of the Presidents' Cup. Moving forward, the conference will award athletic achievement, while expanding its recognition of academic success, service and sportsmanship by placing greater emphasis on those pillars throughout the academic year.

## New home field for college's athletic teams

In September 2021, Penn State Harrisburg dedicated its newest athletic facility, a multipurpose turf field that has become the home for the men's and women's soccer programs.

The college received charitable investments from K&W Engineers and Lift Development that made possible the construction and enhancement of the field. The gift from K&W Engineers supported construction, while Lift Development's contribution supported installation of a 16 by 16 foot video scoreboard.

"The expansion of athletics at Penn State Harrisburg over the past decade or more, reflects the overall growth of the college," said Chancellor John M. Mason during the dedication ceremony. "Our enrollment increased during this time, and in response, student programming has expanded, new facilities have come online, and the college's excellent reputation has grown, too. The new turf field is the latest symbol of that growth and of the college's dedication to supporting students and providing the best opportunities possible."

A second phase of development for the field project is slated for 2023.



# FAST FACTS

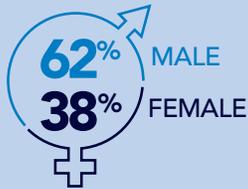
## ENROLLMENT\*

# 4,053

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

AVERAGE AGE

# 21

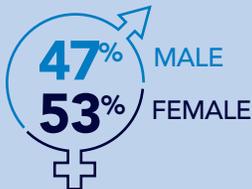


# 455

GRADUATE STUDENTS

AVERAGE AGE

# 31



# 75+

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

# 40,000+

ALUMNI

STUDENTS FROM



# 46

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES  
OUTSIDE OF THE US

# 45

DIFFERENT STATES  
OUTSIDE OF PA  
(Including Puerto Rico and Guam)

\*Fall 2022 data

## Campaign reports record levels of support

Penn State Harrisburg raised \$44.9 million and helped the University to achieve record-breaking success in its recently concluded campaign, "A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence." June 30, 2022 marked the end of the most successful campaign in the institution's history.

Harrisburg's total is a new record for the college in a campaign. Gifts from more than 4,900 alumni, friends, corporate partners and others will assist Penn State Harrisburg in its mission to provide an integrated and responsive approach to society's evolving needs.

"Penn State Harrisburg has received a historic level of philanthropic support during this campaign," said Chancellor John M. Mason. "This collective generosity will have a long-lasting impact on the future of the college and its most important stakeholders — our students. I am grateful to the many individuals and organizations who have enabled access to academic excellence at our campus for many years to come."

The campaign, which began in 2016, was focused on three key imperatives: keeping the doors to higher education open to hardworking students regardless of financial well-being; creating transformative experiences that go beyond the classroom; and impacting the world by serving communities and fueling discovery, innovation and entrepreneurship. At Penn State Harrisburg, the impact to the college is substantial, advancing key institutional priorities. **A few highlights included:**

- **\$12.5 million** raised for new undergraduate and graduate scholarships. Donors committed additional funds for Harrisburg students, which included co-investments from the University's scholarship matching programs: matching funds from the University included \$2.4 million through the Open Doors Matching Program and \$550,000 through the Educational Equity Scholarship Matching Program.
- **\$2.5 million** to establish the Douglas W. Pollock Center for Addiction Outreach and Research, which is addressing issues related to substance use disorder by partnering with community-based organizations.
- **Over \$1 million** raised for the Mukund S. Kulkarni Theatre and Kulkarni Cultural Series on campus, in honor of the college's former chancellor.
- **More than \$2 million** raised for the Madlyn L. Hanes Library on campus. The building was named in honor of the college's former chancellor and retired vice president for Commonwealth Campuses.
- **Almost \$27 million** in additional philanthropy to enhance facilities, classroom instruction, research, outreach and student life.

"We are grateful for the support from so many donors who embraced the priorities of this campaign. The new funds generated enhance access to a college degree, provide expanded opportunities for students and faculty, and impact our community in a number of initiatives, including addiction prevention and economic development," said Campaign Chair Rick Barger, a 1971 alumnus of Penn State Harrisburg.

With the record-breaking success of "A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence," which raised \$2.2 billion from 2016 to 2022, philanthropy is helping to sustain the University's tradition of education, research and service to communities across the commonwealth and around the globe. Scholarships enable the institution to open doors and welcome students from every background, support for transformative experiences allows students and faculty to fulfill their vast potential for leadership, and gifts toward discovery and excellence help the University to serve and impact the world we share. To learn more about the impact of giving and the continuing need for support, visit [raise.psu.edu](http://raise.psu.edu).



Nelson Rimensnyder and Lisa Nickerson

## Couple's gift establishes graduate scholarship in public administration

Nelson Rimensnyder, retired director of research for the U.S. House Committee on the District of Columbia and current director of the New Columbia Archives, and his wife, Lisa Nickerson, made a commitment of \$312,500 to establish the Rimensnyder Graduate Scholarship for Excellence in Public Administration at Penn State Harrisburg. Washington, D.C. residents, the couple share a legacy of public sector experience, as federal employees and as civic activists.

The scholarship supports full- or part-time graduate students who are enrolled or plan to enroll in either the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program or the Public Administration doctoral program. The goal of the fund is to benefit and help sustain students with demonstrated academic excellence and a strong commitment to a career in public service.

**"The future success and happiness of our society depends on the quality of leadership, expertise and devotion to the public welfare of our government employees at every level,"** Rimensnyder and Nickerson said in a statement. "We hope this scholarship may attract and help produce outstanding candidates who are interested in careers dedicated to providing such service."

"The generosity demonstrated by Nelson Rimensnyder and Lisa Nickerson in their gift to support graduate education is overwhelming, and my colleagues and I are extremely grateful," said Marvin Overby, director of the Penn State Harrisburg School of Public Affairs. "Generations of students will benefit as they complete their educations and prepare for careers in public service and leadership."

Rimensnyder, who graduated from Penn State in 1969 with a bachelor's degree in liberal arts and in 1970 with a master of public administration degree, credited a fellowship with the University's former Institute of Public Administration as prompting him to support annual fundraising at Penn State, including the Mowitz Fund, named for the institute's director, Robert Mowitz.

"From the start (of the fellowship), it was clear to me that the institute and its staff, under the leadership of Robert Mowitz, was engaged in nurturing, motivating, inspiring and training individuals to operate at the highest standards of careers in government and public service," Rimensnyder said. "To this day, I am grateful for the outstanding academic preparation that contributed so greatly to my later success working for the legislative branch of the U. S. government in Washington, D.C."

Rimensnyder said that he was pleased to learn that the goals and ideals of Mowitz are ongoing through Penn State Harrisburg's School of Public Affairs. "I believe it was a fundamentally wise decision to move that program to Harrisburg, to give students more opportunities to explore and study government operations at the state level and in a variety of local jurisdictions," he said.

Rimensnyder is an expert on the history of Washington, D.C., and its government. After graduating with his MPA, he moved to the city, where he met Nickerson, a fellow MPA graduate with a degree from George Washington University. He served as an analyst at the Library of Congress Congressional Research Service, where he worked closely with the House Committee on the District of Columbia as it was developing home rule legislation for district residents that ended 100 years of direct rule by Congress. He was later hired as the committee's director of research. He retired in 1992.

Throughout his career, Rimensnyder has been engaged in compiling and cataloging the only comprehensive archive on the relationship between the District of Columbia and the federal government. When the House D.C. Committee was abolished, he created, with his wife, a documentary collection, the New Columbia Archives.

Nickerson spent 10 years as an analyst in the federal government and speechwriter at the Library of Congress. Later she served as the office manager of the U.S. Capitol Police Bomb Squad, where she used her training in planning and budgeting, logistics, inventory, and human resources and personnel management. She retired in 2010.

"Fifty years of living on Capitol Hill has made it clear to us that the quality of public service at the federal government level impacts the well-being of every citizen in this country," the couple said. "It is imperative to find, prepare and train a share of the best and brightest individuals to assume this work and dedicate themselves to maintaining the highest standards in their professional service. During our careers we have seen and worked with many examples of such outstanding public servants. It is our hope that the scholarship program will help ensure that the government can continue attracting the absolute best to its service."

**Got stories?**

**We want to hear them!** Share them with the Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Office, [hbgalumni@psu.edu](mailto:hbgalumni@psu.edu) • 777 West Harrisburg Pike, Middletown, PA 17057-4898 • 717-948-6715



Jeannine D. Peterson

## Penn State Harrisburg alumni named Penn State Alumni Fellows

Two Penn State Harrisburg alumni have been named Penn State Alumni Fellows by the Penn State Alumni Association. The Alumni Fellow Award is the most prestigious award given by the Penn State Alumni Association. Penn State Harrisburg honorees include:

### Jeannine D. Peterson '78g

Peterson is the president and chief executive officer of Hamilton Health Center in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. She has spent more than 35 years dedicated to improving healthcare access, especially focusing on issues that disproportionately impact minority and low-income populations. At Hamilton Health Center, she and her team have received both local and statewide recognition as they provide medical, dental, behavioral health, and social services to over 35,000 residents of the Greater Harrisburg area.

In 2016, Peterson received the Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Achievement Award representing the School of Public Affairs. She is also a current member of the Penn State Harrisburg Board of Advisors.



William Terrill

### William Terrill '92

Terrill is associate dean in the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions, and a professor in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Arizona State University. He has published widely within the criminal justice field and has written two books on police use of force and culture.

Terrill's early experience as a military police officer translated to an interest in policing from both a practitioner and academic perspective. Over the past 25 years, he has worked with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, directed numerous research studies, served as a consultant on a multitude of projects, and been retained as an expert witness.

## William "Bill" Stout named honorary alumnus

Bill Stout, retired chairman and CEO of engineering management company Gannett Fleming, Inc., Camp Hill, Pennsylvania and member of the Penn State Harrisburg Board of Advisers since 2000, has been awarded an Honorary Alumni Award by the Penn State Alumni Association.

The Honorary Alumni Awards have been given by the association since 1973 to honor exceptional people who are not Penn State graduates but who have made significant contributions toward the University's welfare, reputation, or prestige. Honorees receive a life membership in the Penn State Alumni Association and a cast bronze medallion.

Stout's support of Penn State Harrisburg has been extensive. He joined in the creation of an endowment in honor of former regional business leader Cliff Jones to support student internships in government and the development of the Gannett Fleming Award in honor of Professor Charles Cole which supports students in engineering.

His contributions to the college have supported numerous campus initiatives; the athletics program; and the development of partnerships for the campus with outside organizations.

In addition, Gannett Fleming has employed hundreds of Penn State graduates from several campuses.

Stout earned a bachelor of science in management engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1973. He is a registered professional engineer in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts.



Bill Stout with wife Sherry, son Rick and sister Julie.

# ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The college annually recognizes one graduate from each of its five academic schools for their outstanding professional accomplishments.

## 2021 AWARDEES



Fred Sembach, Lyndsay Kensinger, Jay Badame, Robert Scaer  
(Not Pictured: Jewel Cooper)

### School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

#### **JEWEL COOPER**

Director of Business Development  
LeTort Trust and Boyer and Ritter LLC  
'88, Behavioral Sciences

### School of Business Administration

#### **ROBERT SCAER**

Chairman of the Board and CEO, Gannett Fleming Inc  
'94g, MBA

### School of Humanities

#### **LYNSDAY KENSINGER**

Press Secretary for Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf  
'07, Humanities; '18g, Communications

### School of Public Affairs

#### **FRED SEMBACH**

Executive Director, Pennsylvania State Senate State  
Government Committee  
'78g, Public Administration

### School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

#### **JAY BADAME**

President, Construction Management Business Line,  
AECOM Tishman  
'78, Building Construction Technology

## 2022 AWARDEES



Tom Stoessel, Tracy Brundage, Scott Kupper  
(Not pictured: Jacquelyn Anderson, John Saich)

### School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

#### **TRACY BRUNDAGE**

President, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College  
'97g, Training and Development

### School of Business Administration

#### **JACQUELYN ANDERSON**

Senior Vice President, CFO, and Treasurer,  
Penn National Insurance  
'00, Professional Accountancy

### School of Humanities

#### **TOM STOESEL**

Executive Vice President and Chief Strategy and  
Transformation Officer, Penn State Health  
'95, Communications

### School of Public Affairs

#### **JOHN SAICH**

Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative  
Officer, Select Medical  
'98g, Public Administration

### School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

#### **SCOTT KUPPER**

Founder and President, Kupper Engineering  
'93, Electrical Engineering Technology;  
'96g, Engineering Science

# PEOPLE TO WATCH AWARDS

The college also recognizes People to Watch, graduates who have made a significant contribution to the betterment of society through their personal and professional endeavors.

## 2021 HONOREES



Christopher Spittle, Kathryn Peterson, Corey Dupree, Bryan Majors  
(Not Pictured: Shyamili Dhivakar)

### School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

#### KATHRYN PETERSON

Associate Director, Intensive Pediatric Feeding Disorders Program, Children's Specialized Hospital (Somerset, New Jersey).

'08g, Applied Behavior Analysis

### School of Business Administration

#### SHYAMILI DHIVAKAR

Senior Manager, Price Waterhouse Coopers

'15g, Information Systems

### School of Humanities

#### COREY DUPREE

Co-founder of the Bridge Eco-Village in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, an impact real estate development company.

'14, communications

### School of Public Affairs

#### BRYAN MAJORS

CEO, Major Prep LLC, Major Prep Apparel, and Major Prep Cycle Breakers

'12g, Public Administration

### School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

#### CHRISTOPHER SPITTLE

Supply Chain Manager, Keystone Custom Homes

'16, Structural Design and Construction Engineering Technology

## 2022 HONOREES



Guy Suter, Douglas Downing, Chelsey Hall, Rafael Fulton Fernandes  
(Not pictured: Lori Ezzedine)

### School of Behavioral Sciences and Education

#### LORI EZZEDINE

Licensed Professional Counselor, Ezzedine Counseling Services, LLC

'18g, Applied Clinical Psychology

### School of Business Administration

#### RAFAEL FULTON FERNANDES

Senior Global Project Manager, Lenovo

'17 Project and Supply Chain Management

### School of Humanities

#### CHELSEY HALL

Campaign Development Manager, Central Pennsylvania Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

'15, Communications

### School of Public Affairs

#### GUY SUTER

Co-founder and CEO, Ampl

'21, Public Policy

### School of Science, Engineering, and Technology

#### DOUGLAS DOWNING

Electronics Engineering Manager, Lockheed Martin

'10, Electrical Engineering

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## Dobrosky Henry retires after 21 years of service

Laurie Dobrosky Henry has retired as Penn State Harrisburg's associate director for alumni relations after more than 21 years of service at Penn State.

Dobrosky Henry initiated, organized and developed award-winning programs for the Penn State Harrisburg Alumni Society, most focused on connecting alumni to the college through reunions, alumni award and recognition programs, and networking and student mentoring events. She nominated multiple winners for Penn State's individual alumni awards, and, under her leadership, the Alumni Relations programs at Penn State Harrisburg received Outstanding Alumni Programs awards from the University Alumni Association.

Dobrosky Henry received the Penn State Harrisburg Staff Service Award in 2017 in recognition of her contributions and dedication to the college. She was also recognized with the 2021 Karen and Lewis Gold Penn State Alumni Association Staff Recognition Award, given annually to one University staff member.

Megan Bennett, '13, '15g, has been named interim associate director for alumni relations.

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