

January 2025



Pitt State

MAGAZINE



**LASTING
LEGACY**

From the editor

Anyone who works at Pitt State probably will say one of the best parts of their job is interacting with students and alumni.

Surprisingly, we see alumni often! We see them return to mentor students, from doctors who come back to share what it's like to work in a hospital and to teach them suturing, to alumni who have gone on to careers in television and return to give advice to future broadcasters.

We see them volunteer to serve on advisory boards in their program areas, attend athletic and arts events, and welcome students to job shadow them for a day or complete internships in their businesses for an entire year.

Alumni investing in future generations is a huge part of what makes Gorilla Nation so special.

In this edition, you'll read about many alumni who are investing in future generations in many ways. You'll also read about milestone moments, cutting-edge projects, and inspiring people!

In addition to seeing you on campus, we love hearing from you. Drop us a line at psumag@pittstate.edu!

— Andra Stefanoni, Editor



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PittState

MAGAZINE

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GORILLA CONNECTION

Subscribe to the weekly Gorilla Connection digital newsletter, a snapshot of the inspiring people, innovative projects, and milestone moments that make Pitt State unique. Listen to the Gorilla Connection podcast on Buzzsprout or Spotify.

pittstate.edu/gorillaconnection

Miss a performance by any of the outstanding PSU music ensembles? You can watch them anytime through our archived livestreams:

bicknellcenter.com

We're convinced we have the prettiest small campus in the land, and photographer Sam Clausen has captured it in every season. Download your favorite view to use as your desktop background:

pittstate.edu/backgrounds

Need a good, old-fashioned Pitt State pick-me-up? Download the fight song to use as your ringtone, played by the PSU Pride of the Plains Marching Band!

pittstate.edu/info/fightsong

Loved this issue and feeling nostalgic? Find past magazines in our digital archive at:

pittstate.edu/magazine

Check out what campus looks like these days: take a virtual tour!

pittstate.edu/tour

Gorilla Love



Paula Oviedo (BS '18, MS '21) and **Fernando Insfran** (BS '17, MBA '19), both from Paraguay, met in 2015 as students at Pitt State.

"The funny thing is we never met in Paraguay but quickly became friends at Pitt State," said Oviedo. "We both loved to play basketball, being around international students whether as International Advocates or International Student Association members, and soon enough started dating."

After eight years, three different countries, and four degrees later, they married in August 2024.

"Pitt State will always hold a special place in our hearts," said Oviedo.

Finding Gus

And the winner is...

We'd love to give each person who enters our popular "Finding Gus" contest a prize, but alas, we can only pick one. This time, the winner is **Amy Betzen**, Class of 1999, who spotted it on Page 6.

Can you find it?

Search this issue and email your guess to psumag@pittstate.edu



to be entered in our drawing. Include your first and last name, the year you graduated, and the page number you found it on. One entry per person. Entries must be received by **April 1** (no fooling!). We'll mail one lucky winner a hardbound copy of "Pittsburg State University: A Photographic History of the First 100 Years."

GoPitt!Fest returns

GoPitt!Fest, a week of activities involving students, faculty and staff, alumni, donors, and community, was a success in 2024 and will return in 2025.

Aimed at celebrating all that is great about Pitt State, it is planned for March 31-April 6.

The week will kick off on Monday with Advancement Ambassadors thanking donors by labeling items and buildings across campus that have been funded through private gifts, in their annual T.A.G (Thank a Gorilla) Week.

Tuesday, a reception to honor Outstanding Faculty and recognize Service Awards is planned.

Wednesday's highlight will be Apple Day, a long-standing tradition to honor funding being secured for the construction of Russ Hall—the university's first permanent building.

Thursday will feature the kick-off of the Community Campaign by University Development, an Alumni



Board meeting, Alumni spring awardee welcome dinner, and the Scott Speaker Series, which is open to the public.

Friday's highlights will be Coffee and Connections, the spring Alumni award reception, and a wine tasting as part of the 10th Anniversary of the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts.

On Saturday, the Student Government Association will stage The BIG Event, which since 2002 has been pairing hundreds of student volunteers with sites across



Pittsburg that could use assistance with chores like raking, painting, and basic clean-up.

Sunday's Student Leadership Awards and Order of Omega Awards will conclude the week.



THE CHILDREN'S SYMPHONY has become a beloved tradition at Pittsburg State University, with the Southeast Kansas Symphony introducing more than 600 fourth and fifth graders from across Southeast Kansas each fall to a concert hall setting. This year, the event included the Pittsburg High School String Orchestra and four Pittsburg music teachers and a narrator who all graduated from Pitt State! A few lucky students were chosen to be guest conductors.

Photo courtesy: Pittsburg Community Schools

STEM improvements

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran visited campus last fall to announce \$5 million in congressionally directed spending for STEM improvements (science, technology, engineering, and math) at Pittsburg State University.

“I have a desire to create a workforce in Kansas so that good things can happen. I want to make certain that communities across the state have a future so that our kids grow up and raise their kids here,” he said.

The funding will be spent on improvements to the STEM ecosystem, including equipment and research labs in Heckert-Wells and Yates Hall, which house the departments of Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and Mathematics.

Associate Professor Christine Brodsky, chair of Biology and Chemistry and director of the Polymer Chemistry Initiative, said new equipment and renovations will “make a strong impact on student research at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.”

Moran praised the university for being innovative at developing plans and programs to benefit the entire Southeast Kansas region.

“This area needs growth, needs jobs, and each time I come back to campus, what’s happening here shows the future is very bright,” he said.

Moran said Kansas is “poised for significant economic opportunity,” but “it will only happen if there’s a workforce to meet their needs.”

He expressed gratitude to university leadership for “making opportunities possible with projects that make sense and make a difference.”

Champion QBs share careers with Nursing students

Jeff Moreland (Nursing '96) and Zac Dickey (International Studies '12, Human Performance & Wellness '19) both returned to campus last fall to spend time discussing their career pathways with Nursing students.



Zac Dickey and Jeff Moreland.

Moreland, who received the Pitt State Outstanding Senior Award, is now CEO and chief patient officer of Patient Engagement Advisors, one of the top 500 fastest-growing companies in the U.S. He was invited to the White House during the Biden administration as a “Food is Medicine” strategist.

Dickey began his career in the medical device industry and now works for NavMD, an Overland-Park-based technology company focused on healthcare analytics to support self-funded employers. He was named to the Wichita Business Journal’s 40 under 40 list.

In addition to both working in health care related fields, they have something else in common: they were All-American quarterbacks for National Championship teams at Pitt State—Moreland in '91, and Dickey in '11!

STEM STUDENT STIPENDS

Students have a new opportunity to further engage in STEM disciplines at Pitt State and receive stipends for it, thanks to a grant from the National Science Foundation.

The Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation grant will support undergraduate student researchers belonging to underrepresented populations on their path to earning a degree.

The end goal of the grant: to increase representation in the STEM workforce in Kansas and Nebraska.

The grant will bring almost

\$443,000 to Pitt State across five years to support STEM student recruitment and retention.

Each of the 15 students participating at Pitt State will receive a stipend between \$2,000 and \$2,500 per year to support hands-on opportunities with faculty research mentors. Nearly 25 faculty members in a variety of academic programs including Biology, Chemistry, Math and Physics, HHPR, Psychology, School of Automotive and Engineering Technology, have signed up to be mentors.

KRPS makes changes

Staff of KRPS 89.9 Radio, part of Pittsburg State University, moved essential broadcasting equipment into Grubbs Hall last semester as a temporary space until a new permanent space is finished in the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts.

The station occupied Shirk Hall since the station went on air in 1988. Shirk Hall has been vacated as it is on the list for demolition in coming years.

Shirk Hall was constructed in 1958 as a men's residence hall and was renovated in 1988 to house KRPS, the Business and Technology Institute, University Police and Parking, and other offices. The building was named in honor of James Shirk, a past chairman of the Physics Department.

KRPS General Manager Fred Fletcher-Fierro also spearheaded expanded programming made possible by a new transmitter—the first major equipment upgrade in 18 years. It added two new HD channels, tripling offerings to listeners to include a dedicated NPR news channel, a 24/7 classical music channel, and a BBC World News channel.

The KRPS station is unique: it's the only 100,000-watt station in the area, with a coverage area that spans 100 miles and reaches listeners in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.

Listeners anywhere can hear it at any time via its app or website at krps.org



General Manager Fred Fletcher-Fierro oversaw the move of KRPS 89.9 Radio to a temporary home last fall. Shirk Hall is slated for demolition. Also moving from Shirk was the office of Pitt State Police & Public Safety, which relocated to Horace Mann.



THE PSU FOUNDATION now owns a shiny new branded golf cart, thanks to Bryan and Courtney McCoy, owners of McCoy Custom Carts and graduates of Pitt State!

Gorilla Giving Day

Mark your calendars for March 12—a date on which Gorilla Nation comes together in support of Pittsburg State University for the 9th Annual Gorilla Giving Day. Whether you make a gift to the Annual Fund (greatest needs of the university), the Great Gorilla Scholarship Fund, or a specific department, program, or scholarship most meaningful to you, your generosity will benefit current and future Gorillas while helping PSU achieve our mission of making life better through education.

To participate in this 24-hour giving challenge, show your support by making a gift of any amount online at pittstate.edu/GGD25 between 12 a.m. March 12 and 12 a.m. March 13. It's that easy! Thank you!

Scott Speaker Series to feature comedian and political author

The H. Lee Scott Speaker Series in 2025 will feature an actress/comedian and a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist.

Melissa Villaseñor will be the featured speaker at 7 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 24. Tickets are on sale now.

Villaseñor broke barriers by becoming the first-ever Latina cast member of “Saturday Night Live.” She has voiced characters on TV shows and in films, and has appeared in dramas and sit-coms.

This event will be part of the university’s GOLD program, or Gorillas of the Last Decade, designed to engage young alumni.

Thomas Friedman will be the featured speaker at 7 p.m. on April 3 as part of the weeklong celebration called GoPitt!Fest. Tickets will go on sale starting Feb. 4.

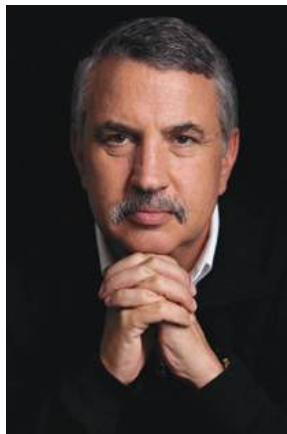
Friedman is the bestselling author of “The World is Flat” and a New York Times foreign affairs columnist. He is renowned for his direct reporting and accessible

analysis of complex issues shaping the world.

The winner of three Pulitzer Prizes, he has covered political stories from around the globe for The New York Times since 1981. He has written seven books that have sold 10 million copies in 40 different languages. He was featured in Showtime’s climate change documentary series, “Years of Living Dangerously,” executive produced by James Cameron and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Details and tickets: pittstate.edu/tickets

The speaker series was created in 2015 with a \$2 million gift made by alumnus and former Walmart CEO Lee Scott and his wife, Linda.



Friedman



Villaseñor

Gorillas Show Up

A new initiative will launch soon that is focused on building a culture of service at Pitt State! To raise money and create awareness, President Dan Shipp will head to numerous Kansas communities this summer to volunteer at non-profits and agencies and learn more about their needs.

In Pittsburg, the new initiative will provide a structured system that connects student volunteers with organizations that need them. It will be located in the Campus Activities Center, heightening its visibility and access, and will be staffed by paid students.

Donations made during Shipp’s summer of volunteerism will help to fund that initiative.

Past summer missions by Shipp have included Dan Bikes Kansas, which raised funds for student scholarships, and Dan Golfs the 4 States, which raised funds in support of student-athletes.

Details will be announced at pittstate.edu

DR. ZACH KRUMSICK (Biology, '12) is one of many alumni who have returned to campus in the past year to volunteer time and share talent. Krumsick was the keynote speaker at the first Explore Pre-Med Day last fall, and he and Dr. Neil Bryan (Biology, '08), guided dozens of high school students through their first experience in suturing.



University contributes resources to help save local newspaper

Two graduates of the Communication Department and the former editor of this magazine are helping to save The Morning Sun—Pittsburg’s newspaper since 1887—at a time when newspapers across the country are folding.

Josh Letner ('09, '10), who worked for a few years in the radio and newspaper industry and since 2017 has overseen the publication of the Collegio student newspaper and Kanza yearbook, stepped in as publisher.

Amy Sawyer ('07), who was active on her high school newspaper and yearbook staff and today serves as an advisor at the university’s Small Business Development Center, offered to develop a business plan.

Ron Womble, who worked as director of Media Relations at the university for 30 years, is serving as news editor.

The once daily and robust newspaper has gone through tumultuous times over the past decade, having once been locally owned, then bought up by a conglomerate, then sold to another conglomerate, then sold again. Subscriptions and advertising declined as both readers and advertisers turned to social media.

Two years ago, local families stepped in with personal financial investments to save the paper. It hasn’t been easy: costs to produce newspapers, including newsprint, ink, and production costs, continue to rise. It’s now printed in Tulsa, which means press deadlines are much earlier.



Retired Pitt State Director of Media Relations Ron Womble, and grads Amy Sawyer ('07) and Josh Letner ('09, '10) embarked on an effort last year to save Pittsburg’s local newspaper. Students are helping with writing, graphic design, and sales.

The Sun has held on despite the odds, publishing Tuesday through Saturday and being delivered by mail.

A report published in 2023 by Northwestern’s Medill School of Journalism, Media, and Integrated Marketing Communications found there are about 6,000 newspapers left in America. Of those, a majority (4,790) publish weekly, not daily. Currently, 204 U.S. counties are without any local news outlet.

The authors of the report argue those statistics portend “a far-reaching crisis for our democracy as it simultaneously struggles with political polarization, a lack of civic engagement and the proliferation of misinformation and information online.”

“If a paper folds, it means no reporters are attending city commission meetings and pursuing those issues. It means no one is here

to ask tough questions, research the answers, and provide an analysis for the public,” Letner said. “It also means historic documentation of our community stops – groundbreaking, ribbon cuttings, milestone moments. Those are all vital to us and we as a town will feel it if it goes away.”

The Community Foundation of Southeast Kansas agreed to serve as the Sun’s philanthropic sponsor for fundraising known as the Save Local Journalism project.

Ken Ward, a professor in the university’s Communication Department who has expertise in daily newspapers and their decline, also has a passion for helping student journalists to gain real-world experience. He is working on a plan to provide students those experiences that at the same time would shore up the Sun’s reporting staff.

University faculty and students in many program areas are conducting research that provides valuable experiences and skills and contributes to the success of our state, region, and world. In an ongoing series of stories, we'll explore some of those research projects and their impact.



Birds, bats, and forests

FROM BIRDS TO BATS TO FOREST ECOSYSTEMS, Associate Professor of Biology Andrew George and his students are conducting important research: They're tracking bird populations and migration, capturing and studying federally endangered bats, and taking part in a 100-year experiment in the Ozarks.

Such experiences help them build field skills to prepare them for careers while also contributing to the world of science.

These projects are among many hands-on research opportunities that students get to take part in at Pitt State, some as early as their freshman year.

Tracking bird populations and migration

"Studying bird migration is important," George said. "Shifts in patterns can act as early warning signs of climate change and environmental conditions that impact temperature or food availability."

Patterns can provide vital information about ecosystem health, help identify potential threats, and allow for conservation efforts to protect migratory routes and habitats.

Harris's Sparrow populations have declined by more than 50 percent over the last 30 years. George is working with undergraduate students like

Heather Burrow, a Biology major from Wichita, to track movements of the birds between their wintering grounds in Kansas and their breeding grounds in Canada.





“We’re attaching tiny solar-powered tags to the birds that will tell us where they’re going,” George said.

The goal: To help researchers understand the needs of migratory animals throughout their full annual cycle.

Bird migration in Southeast Kansas and across the state is part of the Kansas Motus Project, to which George and students are contributing research.

With colleagues from Emporia State University and Kansas State University, they’re developing a network of automated telemetry stations in eastern Kansas to study movements of birds and other migratory animals. They’ve collaborated with many Kansas entities and raised funds to build 20 receiver stations, with more on the way.

“This expansive project is important for many reasons,” George said.

Automated receivers detect the presence of nearby birds, as well as bats, insects, and other animals that are transmitting digitally coded signals. Any tagged animal that passes within about 10 miles of a receiver will be detected and logged automatically. The data is transmitted and stored centrally, then shared with the network.

Over time, patterns will emerge.

George and students also are conducting bird banding—capturing them temporarily to attach tiny metal identification bands to their legs and then releasing them—in Southeast Kansas. Undergraduate students are helping him to establish

a bird banding station.

“We band birds one to two weekends per month on several sites including the Monahan Reserve and the Ford property,” George said.

Tracking bats

The Gray Bat is a federally endangered species at risk because of disturbance to caves, and potentially White Nose Syndrome, a deadly fungal disease that is affecting many imperiled bat species across North America.

George is working with undergraduate students like Braidy Hunt, a Biology major from Grant City, Missouri, to track movements of Gray Bats between Southeast Kansas and their hibernation caves in the Ozarks of Missouri and Arkansas.

“We are attaching tiny temporary Motus tags to them near Pittsburg,” George said, “and Braidy recently placed detectors at several caves in the Ozarks that will log when one of our tagged bats enters.”

Understanding forest management

A 100-year landscape-scale experiment to understand the effects of forest management on birds and other ecosystems processes has provided a learning lab for five undergraduate students and three graduate students completing their thesis projects.

Called the Missouri Ozark Forest Ecosystem Project (MOFEP), it is now in its 33rd year.

George has been a research associate with MOFEP since 2014.



Coming up:

Grad student Gabe McCain is starting a new project focused on Prothonotary Warblers, which are threatened by deforestation and degradation of wintering and breeding habitats. He, George, and other students will set up more than 250 nest boxes across the region to study movements and nesting success of the warblers.

HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2024

A cast of decorated athletes were honored by Intercollegiate Athletics last fall as the newest inductees to the Pitt State Athletics Hall of Fame.

The class includes John Brown (2011-13), a three-time NCAA Division II All-America wide receiver in football; Amanda Davied (2000-03), a record breaking guard in women's basketball; Jeremy Jackson (2008-10), a four-time All-American hurdler in track & field; Mickey Nichol (2003-04), an All-American outfielder in baseball; Mark Smith (2004-08), a two-time All-America quarterback in football; and Travis Stepps (1997-2001), a two-time All-America cornerback in football.

Roddy Gaynor (1980-81), a three-time NAIA All-America middle distance runner in track & field, and Gary Wilson (1963-66), an NAIA All-America selection as a running back in football for the Gorillas, were inducted in the Hall of Fame's "Legacy" category.

The Legacy category, created in 2005, focuses solely on individuals who completed their athletic eligibility 30 years or prior from the current calendar year in an attempt to bolster the school's rich heritage from earlier years.

JOHN BROWN, Football, 2011-13

- Three-time NCAA-II All-American, 2011-13 (Consensus AA in 2012-13)
- MIAA All-Conference, 2011-13 (1st, WR/AP, '12-13; 2nd, WR, '11)
- MIAA Special Teams MVP, 2012-13
- NCAA-II Special Teams POY, 2012-13 (Don Hansen)
- Set PSU career records with 185 receptions for 3,387 yards & 34 TDs
- Selected 91st overall (3rd Rnd) in 2014 NFL Draft by Arizona Cardinals
- Nine-year NFL veteran playing for the Cardinals (2014-17), Baltimore Ravens (2018), Buffalo Bills (2019-2020, 2022), Las Vegas Raiders (2021), Denver Broncos (2021), Jacksonville Jaguars (2021) and Tampa Bay Buccaneers (2021)
- Made 321 receptions for 4,790 yards and 32 touchdowns



AMANDA DAVIED, Women's Basketball, 2000-03

- Three-time MIAA All-Conference (H.M., '01; 2nd, '02; 1st, '03)
- Scored 1,229 points in 109 career games (11.3 ppg) – ninth-highest scoring total in school history at the time (currently 13th all-time)
- Set & still holds PSU record for career assists (553)
- Set PSU single season assists record (157), currently ranked No. 3 all-time
- Set PSU career free throw percentage record (.844, 313-371), currently No. 2 all-time
- Set PSU single season free throw percentage record (.897, 113-126), currently No. 3 all-time
- Ranks 5th all-time at PSU in career steals (195)
- Serving in her sixth season as head coach of the PSU women's basketball program and her 20th year as a staff member



JEREMY JACKSON, Track & Field, 2008-2010

- Four-time NCAA-II All-American: 60m Hurdles (2nd, 7.87, 2008; 1st, 7.83, 2010); 110m Hurdles, (3rd, 14.07, 2009; 2nd, 14.10, 2010)
- Captured one national championship (60mH) & two national runner-up finishes (60mH & 110mH)



LEGACY CATEGORY

- Seven-Time All-MIAA Performer - 3-Time MIAA Champion: 60mH, 2008, '10; 110mH, 2010; 4-Time MIAA Runner-up
- Set school record in the 60m hurdles (7.83), currently ranked No. 4 all-time
- Posted fourth fastest 110m hurdles time in school history (13.95), currently ranked No. 9 all-time
- Made 96 tackles (44 solo) in two seasons as a linebacker in football ('07, '09)

Mickey Nichol, Baseball, 2003-05

- NCAA-II All-America, 2005 (3rd team, OF, ABCA)
- MIAA All-Conference, '03, '05 (1st, OF, '05; 2nd, OF, '03)
- MIAA co-Offensive Player of the Year, 2005
- .407 career batting average with 19 HRs and 96 RBIs in 100 games
- .459 BA with 59 runs scored, 14 HRs and 56 RBIs, 2005
- 2005 BA (.459) ranks 2nd on single-season records chart



Mark Smith, Football, 2004-08

- Two-time NCAA-II All-American, 2007-08 (HM, QB, '07-08)
- MIAA All-Conference, 2007-08 (1st, QB, '07; H.M., QB, '08)
- Passed for 5,190 yards and 40 TDs - ranks 6th all-time at PSU in career passing yards
- Rushed for 2,364 yards and 29 TDs - ranks 2nd among QBs and 16th all-time at PSU in career rushing yards
- Rushed for a PSU quarterback record 212 yards vs. Neb.-Omaha in 2008 NCAA-II playoffs
- Compiled a 24-6 (.800) career record as PSU's starting QB
- Serving in his first year as an assistant coach in Pitt State football program



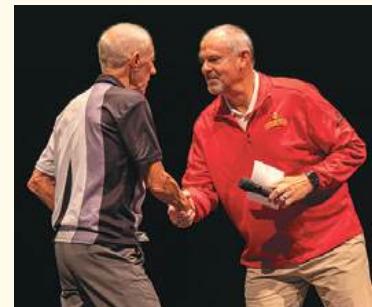
TRAVIS STEPPS, Football, 1997-2001

- NCAA-II All-American, 2000-01 (2nd, DB, 2001; 2nd, DB, 2000)
- MIAA All-Conference, 1997-98, 2000-01 (1st, DB, 2000-01; H.M., DB, 1997-98)
- Made 28 career pass break-ups - 2nd highest total in school history at the time (currently No. 4)
- Made 35 career passes defended - 2nd highest total in school history at the time (currently No. 4)



RODDY GAYNOR, Track & Field, 1980-81

- Three-time NAIA All-American: 1,000m (4th, 2:15.65, '80; 3rd, 2:15.06, '81); 880 yds (4th, 1:55.26, '81)
- CSIC All-Conference, 800m (5th, '80; 2nd, '81)
- Set PSU indoor record in the 600 yard run (1:13.14)



GARY WILSON, Football/Track & Field, 1963-66

- NAIA All-American, 1966 (H.M., RB)
- CIC All-Conference, 1966 (1st, RB)
- Amassed 1,382 career rushing yards and 167 career points
- Six-time All-CIC track & field athlete, 1963-65
- CIC Champion in 330-yard intermediate hurdles, 1965





Evaluating for autism

A NEW INTERDISCIPLINARY AUTISM EVALUATION PROJECT by the Psychology & Counseling Department will help slightly relieve waitlists at area agencies while at the same time giving university students valuable experience.

The project will be funded by a \$40,000 grant award by the Kansas IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (K-INBRE), which will cover enough testing materials and resources for two children per month for 2 to 3 years. Initially, it will serve children ages 1 to 6 years old.

The results will not be a diagnosis, but rather an evaluation that can be used for educational services or for parents to provide to their child's pediatrician for a medical diagnosis.

The project, slated to begin this spring, will be directed by Assistant Professor Paige Boydston.

Such a service is in high demand. There are more than 100 children on wait lists at two area agencies.

The goal: To eventually secure ongoing funding to assess 50 children a year and conduct virtual and in-person parent training.

Boydston (MS '14) earned a doctorate from Southern Illinois University and practices clinically at a local agency. Her research interests

include intensive behavioral intervention and treatment of autism, and supervision in behavior analysis.

She supervises graduate interns during their applied experience, and for this grant will be assisted by Halle Panter, who graduated in December with a degree in Psychology and begins her graduate degree this semester.

They hope to collaborate with other Pitt State programs to provide children an interdisciplinary evaluation process, including Therapeutic Recreation for motor skills assessments.

The evaluation process will require around 10 hours of staff time per child and will be completely free.

"Getting additional services in this area is long overdue," Boydston said.

"This helps our community, and it helps our students."

"This helps our community, and it helps our students."

They also will make training videos for students that demonstrate assessments of children without autism and those with autism for

comparison, how to interact with families, and how to navigate the assessment process.

Boydston hopes to be able to one day extend the evaluations to children ages 7 to 10 years old.

Halle Panter
and Professor
Paige Boydston.



THE COOLEST THING MADE IN KANSAS

THE COOLEST THING MADE IN KANSAS?

Depends on who you ask.

If you ask the Kansas Manufacturing Council, it's the CIC Powerbox, the world's first AC truck box invented and patented by Pitt State graduate Mike Windsor.

An electronic engineering technologist by trade, Windsor (BST '81) used his knowledge and skills acquired over three decades in the electronics and aerospace industry to create the world's first AC-powered truck box.

His company, CIC Powerbox, won last year's Kansas Manufacturing Council's "Coolest Thing in Kansas" contest out of nearly 40 nominated products. Every model comes standard with electric power, air power & jump start power. It recharges while the vehicle it is attached to is running.

Windsor grew up in Southeast

Kansas helping to farm with his father, grandfather, and uncles. But a career in electronic engineering was calling his name.

Armed with a degree in Electronic Engineering from Pitt State, he went to work in industry and spent the next two decades building his skills and resumé, including a stint in Denver as president and COO for Electri-Tek, Inc.

In 2000, medical issues involving extended family drew him home to



an 80-acre farm just outside Pittsburg. One evening while building a 7,000-square-foot work shed, he became frustrated as hundreds of feet of electrical cord running to the house continually tripped the circuit breaker.

He realized that if he had power in his truck, he could work wherever he wanted—and the concept for the first Powerbox was born. He began with a simple power inverter system in his truck toolbox, slowly adding

to the design until he realized that a power system like he envisioned had never been built before.

By 2003, he had completed his first prototype, and by 2005 had finalized the design and filed for a patent.

Today, he and his team have perfected his designs and continued to innovate and release new products under his utility patent that are unmatched in the industry. Their customers range from farmers

to military bases and span from Alaska to Texas.

“Being Kansas born and raised, it makes me proud to know that our products are helping so many Kansas farmers and ranchers, construction workers, miners and even windmill turbine erectors,” Windsor said. “Everyone can use portable power, especially when they find themselves out in the beautiful fields of Kansas!”



Bringing culture alive through music

THREE YEARS AGO, Isaac Hernandez, a gifted pianist from Mexico, was looking for a place to earn a master's degree in piano performance. His checklist included finding a solid academic program with skilled faculty, and finding a safe, welcoming community for not just him, but his wife, Frida Herrera, and their young son, Emi.

The family found what they were looking for at Pitt State and in the community of Pittsburg. Frida began taking classes in the university's Intensive English Program and Emi began studies at a local elementary school.

Isaac jumped in with both feet, winning a statewide collegiate piano competition, performing in several ensembles, and starting the Pittsburg Hispanic Banda, which includes several Pitt State students as well as alumni who are now area band directors and perform at area functions.

After graduating in May 2024, Isaac began work as an adjunct instructor in the Music Department while Frida began work on her master's degree.

And, the couple took on a massive project that would allow them to share their love of music and culture with their adopted community: they created the first Pitt State Hispanic Music Festival, held to coincide with the national Hispanic Heritage Month Sept. 15–Oct. 15.

It was a five-month process to plan dates and concert themes, book artists—some of whom were local, and some of whom traveled from Mexico to perform—and create printed programs and marketing materials.

"It was a really rewarding and learning experience for us both," Isaac said. "We had the support of many different people, so it didn't feel as if it was an impossible

mission. It was teamwork, and that made us feel very happy!"

A mix of current and recently retired faculty and staff, students, and alumni agreed to provide a welcome and introduction in English at each concert, while Frida and Isaac provided one in Spanish.

For a "South American Serenade" concert, the Paraguayan Student Association cooked empanadas for guests to enjoy. At each concert, members of Hispanics of Today served as ushers.

"People really enjoyed it, and it felt like they were really engaged with every concert," Isaac said. "Our music has an energy that can bring smiles to the audience, and we could see that at the end of every concert. We were bringing our culture alive!"

Next up: the couple is working to secure funds and collaborators on and off campus for the festival to continue in 2025.





Geeks For Kids

Students in the Mechanical/Manufacturing Engineering Technology Senior Design Class are helping children with mobility limitations and learning skills valuable to their future careers.

Their project: work with Geeks for Kids, a Kansas City-based non-profit organization, to help produce custom, electric cars for children who cannot get around on their own.

Needs of the children vary: Some can't walk. Others can stand and walk with crutches or other aids but have trouble keeping up with their typically developing peers. Some can't use their hands effectively, or at all. Some can move only their heads and necks.

Cars produced by Geeks for Kids open the world for children, giving them the power to explore on their own. The waitlist of potential recipients is long, and the organization would like to ramp up production, but it's an all-volunteer workforce.

The Pitt State team's contribution last fall was a record: it helped build 12 cars under the guidance of Professor David Miller, who also volunteered on the team.

Team members included Jeremiah Christian (Team Lead and Marketing), Cade Southard (Design and Manufacturing Lead), Charles Gilmore (Procurement

Lead and Documentation), Reed Mason (Scheduling and Financial Lead), and Andrew Coberley (Quality Lead and Documentation).

"It has been a very informative project understanding the amount of preparation that goes into a product before it comes to market," Christian said.

Tasks can range from installing simple left, right, and go buttons, to adding retinal tracking equipment for children who can't use their arms.

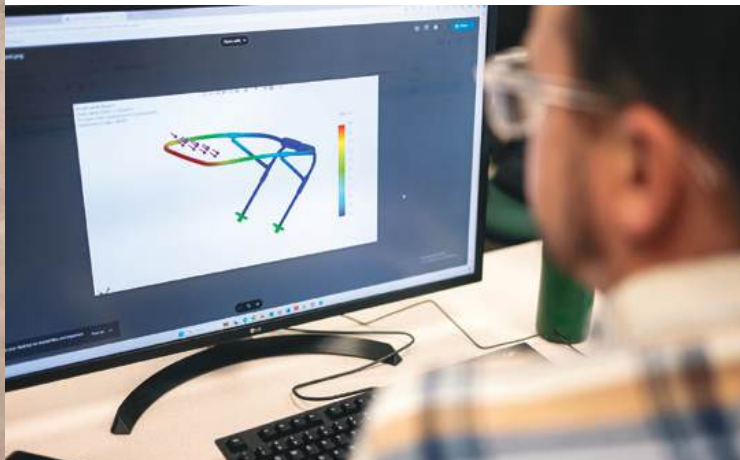
"Our portion is to modify the roll bar to make it convertible to make it easier for parents to load it into midsize SUVs," Christian said. "The second part of the project is to expand and improve the shade cover of the car."

Both the children and the equipment can be very sensitive to sunlight, presenting challenges. The project will continue this spring.

"It is an extensive part of our time throughout the semester, requiring weekly update presentations and very thorough documentation of the manufacturing process," Christian said.

But team members say it's a rewarding project, and they're excited to see how it continues and changes with the years as they continue to fine tune and come up with new, unique solutions to the obstacles these kids face.

"It allows them to be just a kid for a while and forget about any of the things that might be in the way," Christian said.



FULL CIRCLE



Schnurbusch

Standing in the Sullivan Courtyard of the Kansas Technology Center of Pittsburg State University on a Saturday morning last October, Chris Schnurbusch, a Pitt State graduate and regional president at Crossland Construction, experienced a full-circle moment.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH THE CROSSLAND FAMILY and dozens of other Crossland employees who also graduated from Pitt State, he watched as the building he helped construct was formally named the Crossland Technology Center.

At the same time, the

College of Technology, which is housed in the massive building, was formally named the Crossland College of Technology.

“It’s truly a full-circle moment for me. Back then, we were a small company, but I recognized what a significant project this was for the company,” said Schnurbusch, who graduated in 1994 with a degree in Construction Management.

“The fact that we now have our name on the



“We take great pride in our partnership with Crossland, which runs deep throughout our community and region.” –DAN SHIPP



Pitt State President Dan Shipp, Crossland Construction Chief Executive Officer Ivan Crossland Jr. (BST '84), Gus Gorilla, and Crossland Construction Chief Development Officer Patrick Crossland (BST '00) at the naming ceremony of the Crossland Technology Center.

building is amazing to me,” he said. “I remember feeling honored just to have been part of building it, and now, seeing the Crossland name on it is an incredible accomplishment.”

The name honors all Crossland employees who graduated from Pitt State, said President Dan Shipp, during a ceremony that featured remarks by Crossland CEO Ivan Crossland Jr., PSU Foundation Chair Gary Tredway, and representatives from the Kansas Board of Regents.

“We take great pride in our partnership with Crossland, which runs deep throughout our community and region,” Shipp said.

The name also honors the countless contributions the company has made to the university.

“Crossland has changed students’ lives with scholarships and internships, hired our graduates, given financial support, and provided us with their industry expertise and service,” said Vice President for University Advancement Kathleen Flannery, who also is president of the PSU Foundation. “In short,

Crossland has shared time, talent, and treasure, and this recognizes and honors their legacy,” she said.

“A CORNERSTONE FOR SUCCESS”

When the 278,000-square foot building was finished in 1997 at the corner of Ford and Rouse streets, it was the first of its kind and the largest in the Midwest.

It was also a pivotal moment in Crossland’s history as a company.

“It was a huge deal to us at the time to win that project—I knew that, even as a young kid just starting out,” Schnurbusch recalled.

The \$25 million project was four to five times larger than any project Crossland had built before, which felt significant to its employees.

The Technology Center and the College of Technology have been impacting the Southeast Kansas economy—and beyond—in a big way ever since.

Just one example: A report from Fall 2023 to Spring 2024 shows a total of 90 graduates of the Construction Management and Construction Engineering Technology programs were employed by 52 companies, 29 of which

have headquarters or do their primary business in Kansas.

Data kept from Fall 2012 to Spring 2024 show a total of 852 were employed by 264 companies, 140 of which have headquarters or do their primary business in Kansas.

Since its construction, thousands of graduates in many majors have been educated in the Technology Center. Today, programs from which they can choose have evolved to include the following:

School of Automotive and Engineering Technology

- Automotive Technology
- Plastics Engineering Technology
- Manufacturing Engineering Technology
- Mechanical Engineering Technology
- Electronics Engineering Technology

School of Construction

- Electrical Technology
- Construction Engineering Technology
- Construction Management
- Environmental and Safety Management
- Interior Design

School of Technology and Workforce Learning

- Career and Technical Education
- Graphic Communications
- Workforce Development
- Wood Product Manufacturing
- Technology Programs

Each program is supported by faculty with industry expertise and accolades, advisory boards comprised of industry professionals and alumni, and companies and individual donors who keep equipment and labs up to date.

Students from each program are winning national awards and are recruited for full-time employment and internships by companies from coast to coast—many of which descend on the Technology Center each September for the long-running Company Days, and others who come to events for specific programs held throughout the year.

Several programs are unique in the region or the nation, making Pitt State graduates highly sought after.

continued on next page

Among the many graduates is Ivan Crossland Jr., CEO of the Columbus, Kansas-based company started by his dad, Ivan Crossland Sr., in 1977.

Ivan Jr., who earned a degree in Construction Engineering from Pitt State in 1984, described the university's programs and graduates as having been "a cornerstone for Crossland's success."

"PSU graduates have contributed to the growth and success of Crossland and the industry," he said. "That's a testament to the strength of Pitt State's programs."

"Naming the building and the college signifies our ongoing support and appreciation for the high level of talent and dedication that PSU graduates bring to our company."

—PATRICK CROSSLAND

About 400 Pitt State alumni have helped build the company to what it is today.

They "always fit our culture, and bring a strong work ethic in addition to academic knowledge," Ivan Jr. said. "In our company, people with those attributes hit the ground running, grow, and succeed here."

"INCREDIBLY HONORED"

Patrick Crossland, who earned a degree in Construction Management from Pitt State in 2000 and now the company's chief development officer, said everyone at Crossland feels "incredibly honored to see our partnership recognized" by the rededication.

"More importantly, this is a significant milestone for our employees who are PSU graduates. They have been the lifeblood of our company," he said. "Naming the building and the college signifies our ongoing support and appreciation for the high level of talent and dedication that PSU

A snapshot of recent achievements by students, faculty, and staff in the Crossland Technology Center:

AWARDS

Mark Johnson (BBA '83, MST '87, EdS '89) and Doug Younger (Technology & Workforce Learning) were named University Professors, Class of 2024. The rank indicates a faculty member has been recognized by their peers both on and off campus as an outstanding contributor in a field of specialization and recognized on campus for outstanding contributions to the education program. Faculty aren't eligible until they've been a full professor for seven years. The designation is for a term of seven years and can be renewed.

Students majoring in Graphic Communications and Communication came home with 39 medals from last year's American Advertising

Awards, or ADDYs, held at Downstream Casino, and plan to compete again this spring.



Seven students — Aidan Wolownik, Riley Hedges, Gianni Piccini, Griffin Souder, Kavan Limbasiya, Parker Jenkins, and Max Hampton—placed 8th in the national Mechanical Contractors of America Association Student Chapter Competition, earning them each a \$1,000 scholarship from the National MCAA and another \$1,000 from MCA of Kansas City. At the national competition in Orlando, four students were awarded additional scholarships: Limbasiya won the \$2,500 Robert J. Durr Sr. – UA/NCPWB Partnering Scholarship; Tabitha Watson won the \$2,500 Ann Mattheis Memorial Scholarship; Wolownik won the \$5,000 Reilly Family Memorial Scholarship; and Souder won the \$5,000 Viega Scholarship.

Teams of students from Manufacturing Engineering Technology have repeatedly earned top spots in the national Cast in Steel competitions under the direction of Professor Russ Rosmait.



graduates bring to our company.”

“From the very beginning, our dad instilled in us the importance of lifelong education,” Patrick said. “We have always prioritized education, investing in our people and their potential. Seeing this building named in honor of our employees and the commitment to education and professional development aligns perfectly with our dad’s vision for our company. We are here to support Pitt State and make sure these programs continue to lead the way.”

CROSSLAND CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC.

Founded in 1977 by Ivan Crossland Sr., Crossland Construction has grown from humble beginnings in a family garage to a nationally ranked construction firm, now ranked No. 55 in the U.S., with nearly 2,000 employees across 11 offices in 7 states.

Crossland Construction has been selected by a competitive bid to build Pitt State’s reimagined Kelce College of Business building in downtown Pittsburgh.



CROSSLAND COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY Pittsburg State University

Construction on the Technology Center began in 1994 and was completed in 1997. It is the largest building on campus and one of the largest in the region.

U.S. Sen. Bob Dole played a key role in securing funding for the Technology Center. In 1990, he announced that \$6 million had been appropriated for the project, and in 1991, he announced that another \$4 million had been secured.

The CTC has multiple wings, including:

- the City of Pittsburgh Technology Building
- the Gene Bicknell Tech Building
- the Sen. Robert J. Dole Technology Building
- the Gov. Bill Graves Technology Building
- the Gov. Joan Finney Technology Building

NATIONAL GRANTS

Classroom teachers from across the nation will be better prepared to teach agricultural technology, thanks to a

\$500,000 grant from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture awarded to the Diesel and Heavy Equipment program, headed up by Professor Tim Dell. For the next four years, Dell will offer three workshops each summer. Each workshop will accommodate 12 participants.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Each year, the Technology Center hosts numerous community groups and summer camps, including Girl and Boy Scout troops

satisfying badge requirements and the long-running and very popular Adventures in Robotics and Construct Your Future for elementary and middle school students.



CERTIFIED AND HIRED

Eighteen students graduating from the Electrical Technology program and who earned their Journeyman Certification signed on with 13 companies last

year as project engineers, technicians, and electricians. It will bolster the regional workforce, but more grads are needed to fill jobs in the industry.



CONTINUED LEARNING

The Technology Center also hosts a multitude of elite workshops and conferences for teachers, industry

professionals, and other adult learners, including a national Wood Technology Boot Camp, an international Investment Casting Institute, and the long-running Regional Technology Conference.



Milwaukee Tool

Milwaukee Tool has a strong history that this year will hit the century milestone, but it's also always looking toward the future and those who will be helping to shape it.

To that end, the company made a sizeable donation of tools to Pitt State's School of Construction.

"As a company we want to take care of the future, and we've identified that the young men and women coming into the trades are going to be the future," said Matt Henderson,

safety specialist for the company's upper Midwest division. "So, we asked ourselves, 'How do we get them comfortable with using what we offer, and at the same time how do we make a positive impact in their educational and skill-building experiences?'"

The answer: a full tool solution across all of the company's cordless platforms – from small hand tools to larger equipment items.

The students began using the tools in the

"As a company we want to take care of the future, and we've identified that the young men and women coming into the trades are going to be the future."



Fall semester, and Chris Pross, coordinating professor of the Construction Engineering Technology program, said they have been well received.

"We are all very appreciative, as this gives our program the chance to use what industry professionals are using," he said.

Since the company began in 1924, it has developed not just cordless systems, but also jobsite lighting, time-saving accessories, innovative storage products, and other trade-specific solutions.

The company has strong ties to Pitt State through the Mechanical Contractors Association of Kansas City, a group that represents the mechanical construction and service industry that has awarded scholarships to Pitt State Construction majors. The company also recently hired a Pitt State grad, Tyler Buchanan (Business Management, '19).

"We take pride in all of our innovation – we are never settling, always improving," Henderson said. "This is one more way we're improving, by helping students to learn and grow."

Cultural learning

Watching fireworks on the Fourth of July. Hiking in the Ozarks. Attending a Kansas City Royals game. Playing soccer in the Plaster Center.

Visiting students from Japan and Taiwan got a taste of living in the Midwest last summer and they all agreed: the visit was a great orientation to American culture, improved their English skills, and prepared them for college in the fall.

Students from Japan were here as part of Pitt State's new Summer Success program, while students from Taiwan were here for the English and Culture Program.

They lived in the residence halls, attended daily academic classes, and visited places like Silver Dollar City, Crystal Bridges Art Museum, the Country Club Plaza in Kansas City, Root Coffeehouse, the Harley Davidson Motorcycle Training Center, the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts, and the Pittsburg Aquatic Center.

"I have never been to the United States. I wanted to practice my English and get used to the culture," Sonya said. "I also have not lived away from my parents or in dorm life, so this gives me independence."

The Taiwanese group was organized by a Pitt State graduate from Taiwan, Y-Ling Yolinda Chen (HRD '05), and her niece, Joyce, led the group. She even brought along a stuffed gorilla that Chen purchased 20 years ago when she was a student.



Top scientists

Three faculty in the Chemistry Department were recognized on the World's Top 2% of Scientists list produced by Stanford/Elsevier: Professor Ram Gupta, Assistant Professor Mazeyar Parvinezadeh Gashti, and Assistant Professor Alessandro F. Martins.

The ranking is produced annually and takes into account the scientific achievements of researchers in a broad range of fields. The annual list draws from a variety of metrics and serves as a powerful tool for identifying global scientific leaders.

All three conduct their research while mentoring students at the National Institute of Materials Advancement at Pitt State. For Gupta, it was the second time to be named to the list.

Read more about their work at pittstate.edu/gorillaconnection



Assistant Professor Mazeyar Parvinezadeh Gashti, Professor Ram Gupta, and Assistant Professor Alessandro F. Martins.

Career Connections

Heather Busch, associate director of employer relations in Career Development at Pitt State, was chosen for the Brad Barackman Bridge Award by the Kansas Association of Colleges and Employers.

The annual award is given in recognition of an outstanding program that helped connect employers and students served by campus career services.

In the past year, Busch has helped lead the development of a new virtual career center for students and the development of the new Pitt State Employer Partnership Program, which streamlines sponsorship opportunities for employers.



Sorority spotlight

It's rare for all sororities on one campus to earn national awards in one year, but that happened at Pitt State. Such awards reflect sororities having gone beyond expectations of a well-functioning chapter in membership, academic excellence, finances, chapter operations, philanthropy, and more.

Award winners for 2024 included: Alpha Gamma Delta (Circle of Excellence Award); Alpha Sigma Alpha (Four Star Chapter, Generous Spirit Award: Kaytie Frisch); and Sigma Sigma Sigma (Touchstone Chapter, Excellence in Academic Success, Excellence in Marketing & Social Media, and Margaret Freeman Everett Outstanding Senior: Madeline Murdock).



Family Day repeat

Family Day was a full circle moment for Dana (Riffel) Blubaugh (Communication '97, MSEd '03).

As students, she and her brother, Brandon Riffel, nominated their family as Honorary Family in 1996, and they won.

This year, Dana's younger daughter, Avery, a sophomore in Biology Education, nominated her family—including older sister Morgan (Biology '24), younger sister Reese, and parents Dana and Joe (Plastics Engineering Technology '97)—for the award.

Once again, Dana's family was chosen—except she was the parent, not the child. During halftime of the Gorilla Football game against



Emporia State, they were recognized as the 2024 Honorary Family.

The recipients of this annual award, sponsored by the PSU Foundation and Advancement Ambassadors, are selected by a committee based on a student-submitted nomination and essay

about the family's involvement, school spirit, and Gorilla legacy.

The Blubaugh's roots run deep: Joe proposed to Dana at the University Lake in 1997. In 2000, Dana began working as a regional recruiter for the Office of Admission.

Faculty of the Year

Two faculty who students say have made a profound difference were named Faculty of the Year recipients by the Kansas Board of Regents in Topeka last fall.

Both also were named Outstanding Faculty in Spring 2024 by the Student Government Association.

Associate Professor of Biology Christine Brodsky and Assistant Professor of Communication Kristen Livingston were among eight faculty members from across Kansas to be named in the new program, which recognizes outstanding contributions to teaching, student success, research, and communities.

"These two faculty members are tremendous representatives

of Pitt State," said President Dan Shipp. "Their leadership is exactly how we are making life better through education at Pitt State."

Brodsky, who also serves as chair of Biology/Chemistry, teaches a variety of courses that integrate fieldwork and community engagement. Her innovative teaching style has earned her high praise from students and faculty alike. She actively engages students in her research, and has served on numerous committees and initiatives aimed at improving science literacy and conservation awareness.

Livingston, who teaches



Brodsky



Livingston

strategic communication, multimedia production, media writing, and human communication, has presented at prestigious conferences and has served as a leader in university committees, student organizations, and professional development workshops. In Spring 2023, she taught a movie production project that won a Kansas Association of Broadcasting Award.

Outstanding Alumni Award Winners

Three alumni with careers in television, nursing, and campus activities were honored with the 2024 Dr. Kenneth K. Bateman Outstanding Alumni Award, given annually by Pitt State's Alumni Association. It recognizes those who have demonstrated significant professional growth and advancement since the completion of their degree.



Ryan Bartlett

BA '03 – Communication

Ryan Bartlett is the senior producer of Digital Talent Production at FOX Sports in Los Angeles, California.

He has worked at KMBC-TV, KOAM-TV, ESPN, and NFL Media as digital line producer and managing producer. Bartlett now oversees the digital production of content for the NFL, MLB, WWE, Gambling and NASCAR.

He is a three-time Emmy Award Winner and a two-time winner of the Vision Award at ESPN for Creative Excellence.

Bartlett was appointed to the Alumni Association Board of Directors in 2023. When he is back on campus at his alma mater, he can be found visiting with broadcasting students in the Department of Communication.

Bartlett grew up in Merriam, Kansas, and is a graduate of Shawnee Mission North.

The university will present the annual Meritorious Achievement Award and Distinguished Service Award to recipients in April. Check Pitt State Alumni & Constituent Relations on Facebook for an announcement.



Benjamin Cochran

MSN '13 – Family Nurse Practitioner
DNP '16 – Advanced Practice Nursing

Benjamin Cochran is a board-certified family nurse practitioner at Labette Health's Clinic in Altamont, Kansas.

Starting his nursing education at Labette Community College, he finished his Bachelor of Science in nursing at Wichita State University before attending the Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing.

Cochran hosts a podcast called Just Some Podcast for Nurse Practitioners, which he started in 2018.

He was awarded the Nurse Practitioner State Award for Excellence in Kansas in 2021. And the William & Allene Guthrie Van Meter Outstanding Alumni Achievement Award from LCC in 2023.

He is a member of the LCC Nursing Advisory Board, the LCC Foundation & Alumni Association Board, the Altamont City Council; is President of the Curious Minds Discovery Zone, and has coordinated Labette County Toys for Tots since 2013 with his wife, Audra.

Cochran grew up in Chetopa, Kansas and lives in Altamont.



Amber (Shaverdi) Huston

BA '05 – Communication

Amber (Shaverdi) Huston is the executive director of the National Association for Campus Activities. She is the first female in NACA's 64-year history to hold that role.

Huston is serving her second term as National President of Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority, and has served as a volunteer, an advisor, and as an employee for the organization. She was initiated into the Eta Eta Chapter during her collegiate years.

Huston serves on the Marriott International Customer Advisory Council and the Higher Education Consortium for Student Affairs Certification Board.

As a student she earned Outstanding Leader of Campus, Jack H. Overman Leadership & Service Award, Outstanding Greek Woman, Golden Gorilla, and Homecoming Queen. In 2020, Eastern Illinois University honored her as an Outstanding Alumnus.

Huston grew up in Girard, Kansas. She and her family live in Columbia, South Carolina.

Gorillas of the Last Decade

Two alumni with careers in plastics and small business were honored with the Gorillas of the Last Decade (G.O.L.D.) university award designed to recognize outstanding graduates within the last 10 years who have made an impact in their career fields or communities while showcasing Gorilla pride.



Lexington Peterson

BS '21 – Polymer Chemistry

BSET '21 – Plastics Engineering Technology

Lexington Peterson is the business development manager in the Automotive and Mobility division at ENGEL in Cincinnati, Ohio.

After graduating, Peterson joined the team at iMFLUX as a field process engineer. She then joined KraussMaffei as project manager in their injection molding division. At ENGEL, Peterson builds partnerships and advances a shared vision on the future of automotive and mobility markets with a special focus on sustainability and emerging technologies.

Peterson was named the 2023 Plastics New Rising Star and was an SPE Inspiring Plastics Professional at SPE ANTEC 2023.

As a woman in STEM, she encourages girls to follow their dreams and advocates for women in the industry. She has volunteered in several schools in the Cincinnati area, as well as organizations focusing on girls in STEM.

Peterson grew up in Amsterdam, Missouri.



Josh Thompson

BST '17 – Construction Management

Josh Thompson is the owner and CEO of JT Companies in Pittsburg, Kansas.

JT Companies includes JT Construction and JT Home & Lawn. Thompson started JT Home & Lawn while he was a student at Pittsburg State. After graduation, Thompson joined Crossland Construction Company where he served as a field engineer and project manager.

In March 2020, he started his own business. Two days later, COVID shut the world down. Thompson kept working hard – focusing on concrete and metal building construction. During this time, he had only one full-time employee. JT Companies now employs more than 30 employees.

Thompson continues to hire Pitt State graduates to help him lead field operations, and welcomes interns. He serves on the School of Construction Leadership Council, is a proud sponsor of Pitt State Athletics, and gives back to several departments and groups through sponsorships.

In addition, he supports the Salvation Army, The Lord's Diner, Mount Carmel Foundation, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and Folds of Honor.

Thompson was born and raised in Pittsburg, and still lives here today with his wife, Amy.

Top educator



Professor Chris Huitt (Graphic Communications) was named Educator of the Year in 2024 by the Printing & Imaging Association of MidAmerica—a dynamic association serving nearly 500 print, visual communications, and marketing firms throughout the Midwest.

Huitt has taught at Pitt State for nearly 15 years, specializing in screen printing, layout and design, and layout software.

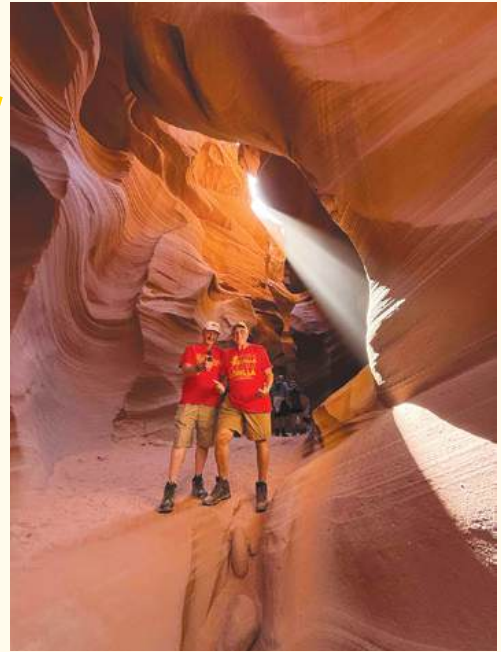
Additionally, six students—Caleb Fausett, Anna Holmes, Sophia Werhman, Peyton Simpson, Kayla Rosche and Megan Fausett—earned seven Graphic Excellence Awards (GraphEx) from PIA MidAmerica for outstanding technical achievements in innovation and print production.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS GUS?

Where have you traveled with Gus or wearing your Gorilla gear? Email your photo, a caption, and your degree and graduation year to psumag@pittstate.edu.



John Baker (Education '74, MS '79, EDs '85, MS '90) and Dianna (Goll) Baker (Social Work '74) celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a trip to Alaska. They packed their Pitt State shirts for an excursion to the Arctic Circle sign.



Felix Livingston (BS Economics '68) and Pat Normile (BS Biological Sciences '68) are "two wild and crazy" former PSU cross country Hall of Famers who trekked in Zion National Park and Bryce and Antelope Canyons in Utah and Arizona.



Math Professor Cynthia Huffman (BSEd '86, MS '87) climbed through Machu Picchu in Peru, South America, with her Pitt State flag! Huffman was on a study trip related to her History of Math Class and research she conducts in Ethnomathematics.



Matt Smith, Caroline Case and her mother Christine (Hildebrandt) Case (Nursing '09), Elena White and her mother Maya (Otero) White (Education '02, MS '05), DeLane (Crockett) Adam (Finance '04) and son Levi Adam, all showed their Pitt State pride as part of a mission team from Cherokee, Kansas, that traveled to Kenya, Africa to serve at Mercy Ministries school, church, and home.



New grad Erik Jantz (Biology '24) made sure to pack Gorilla gear on a trip to Glacier National Park in Montana. He hiked to Medicine Grizzly Lake—aptnly named as he saw a grizzly 30 feet away right before taking this photo.



Paul Sherman (BST Plastics Engineering '00) showed his Pitt State pride on his first European trip when he was in Madrid, Spain, at the Puerta de Alcalá.



Peggy Coleman Shaverdi (English '70, MS '76) traveled through Norway in a group that included several other Gorillas!



Becky Brannock (Ed.S. Counseling '90 and retired faculty) and her husband, Jim, (MS '03) traveled to Europe this fall to celebrate their 41st wedding anniversary. While there, Becky met a man whose mom and dad met at Pitt State and later married. His Dad was a past Alumni Award recipient. What a small world it is!



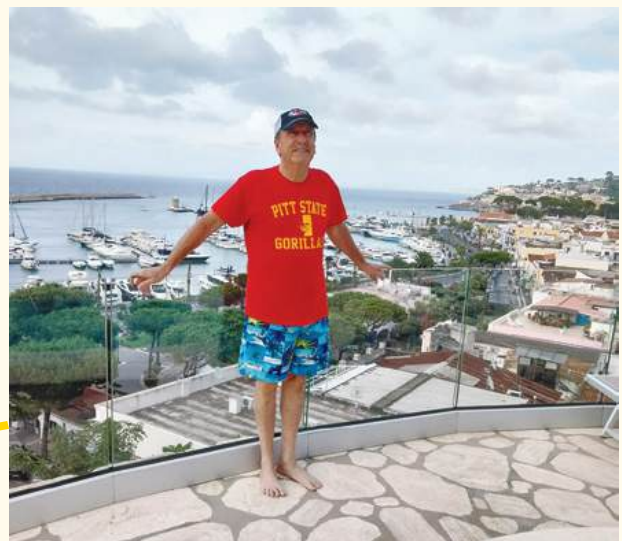
The splitface was on display at a KC Current game at CPKC Stadium when Pitt State Alumni & Constituent Relations hosted a Gorilla Gathering for 56 Gorillas, including members of the Board of Directors. From left: Andy Kesinger (BBA '94, MBA '96), Chris Hanna (BSEd '95), Danielle Driskill (BS '12, MA '14), DePrice Taylor (BS '10, BSEd '12), Samantha Pinkal-Jefferson (BST '08), and Katie (Barnett) Ervin (BS '98).



Former Pitt State exchange students Ada Pahkala, Saimi Patrikainen, Joonas Kukkonen, and Jere Kylli, all from Finland, and Giorgio Soto, from Paraguay, traveled to France. They met up in Paris with Charline Brimbeuf, Mathis Gariel, and Alexis Vassiliou, all from France, for a Pitt State reunion!



Natalie Christman (Communication '17) and her dad Ben Coomes (Education '86) repped PSU while visiting Acadia National Park in Maine, where Natalie now lives.



Paul Ramm (Automotive '84) took along his Pitt State gear while vacationing with his wife on the island of Ischia off the coast of Italy.



Abby Johnson (General Studies, '21) and her aunt Rhonda Zafuta McFarland (Communication '91) packed their Gorilla flag to display at an altitude of 12,300 feet in Guatemala's Acatenango Base Camp, where they experienced breathtaking views of the active Fuego volcano.



It's not Gus...but maybe a cousin?
Patricia Hughes Knarr (Education '61) spotted this one at Burj Khalifa Mall in Dubai, UAE.



Karen Vermillion (Education '80) and Michael Vermillion (Automotive Technology '80) remembered to take along their crimson and gold on Poipu Beach in Kauai, where they celebrated their 46th wedding anniversary as part of a Hawaiian cruise.



Mark White (MBA '79) had a Gorillaheart while standing in the ruins of Richard the Lionheart's castle overlooking the Seine river in France. It was built in 1196.

1980

Richard Van Pelt (BA) was once again named to the Missouri Lawyers Weekly annual Power List of the 30 Top Family Law Lawyers in the State of Missouri.

1983

Lori Boyajian-O'Neill (BA) was named the team physician for the U.S. men's and women's volleyball teams at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. She has previously served as the physician for the U.S. women's team and has been with USA Volleyball for 20 years.

1985

Krina Cloninger Snider (BA) was named a Top Ten Business Woman of the Year by the American Business Women's Association, an award that annually recognizes 10 women across the U.S. for their outstanding career achievements, community involvement, and contributions to ABWA among their 15,000 members in more than 400 chapters.

1986

Roger McKinney (BA) retired as the education reporter of the Columbia Tribune in Columbia, Missouri, after an almost 40-year career in journalism.

1988

Judy Stiles (MA) was recently inducted into the Regional Media Hall of Fame at Missouri Southern State University after working at the university's television station for 34 years. Judy managed the station and hosted the Newsmakers interview program.

1994

Jay Spoonhour (BSEd) was named assistant athletics development director at Missouri State University. He has a long-standing career in coaching with 30 years of experience and most recently served as assistant Men's Basketball coach at MSU.

Influential art educators

Three Pitt State graduates who became influential art educators have been given top awards in the past year by the Kansas Art Education Association.

Charity-Mika Woodard (BFA '99) was named the 2024-25 Outstanding Higher Education Art Educator of the Year. An associate professor and director of Art Education at Emporia State University, she has been active throughout Kansas and the Midwest representing Higher Education, Museum, and Administration divisions on the KAEA board, and has served as a liaison to the National Art Education Association.

She also has degrees from the New York Academy of Art (MFA), University of Central Missouri (Certification Art K-12/ Curriculum and Instruction), and George Fox University (Ed.D. in Higher Education Leadership).

Joe Summers (BSE '03, MA '11), a Neosho County Community College instructor, has been named the 2024 Middle Level Art Teacher of the Year. A middle and high school art educator in Kansas for more than 20 years, his students became a dominant presence in

school art shows. He has organized and hosted regional student art competitions and initiated the "Robot Art Across Kansas" guerrilla art project, an ongoing event that involves creating ceramic robot sculptures with his children and art students, which then are strategically placed throughout Kansas for people to discover, keep, and enjoy.

Rebecca Lomshek (BSEd '94, MS '07) was named the 2023 Outstanding High School Art Educator of the Year. An art teacher at Pittsburg High School, where she has taught for 10 years, she also is active as a leader at the ArtForms Gallery in Pittsburg. The gallery is a collaborative business venture for local artists to sell their work and the homebase for a diverse array of community art workshops. Lomshek also developed a community-based course called Shaping Lives which pairs students with residents at a local nursing home to engage them in art activities. She also has been active as a presenter and leader with KAEA.



1995

Caralee VanBecelaere (BS) published a children's book titled, "A Home for Sadie," that teaches children what it might look like to practice patience.

1996

Melinda Brown, MHA (BBA), was elected to the Carl Junction Schools School Board last spring and also serves as the Missouri School Board Association Delegate. She is the director of the Gipson Center for Healthcare Leadership at MSSU and lives

in Carl Junction with her husband, Dr. Mark Brown (BS '07), their children Zakory (BS '21), Maggie (BS '24), and Ashdyn.

1997

Jessica Shaw (BA, MS '00) completed medical school at the University of Kansas SOM-Kansas City and has entered residency at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita Family Medicine Residency Program at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita, Kansas.

1998

Dr. Robert Goltra III (BSEd, MS '02) was appointed as vice president and dean of students at Missouri Western State University. He previously served as assistant vice president and dean of students.

2005

Scott Breuer (BST) was promoted to director of operations at Capital Electric Construction Co., Inc., where he has worked for almost 20 years.

2011

Dustin Wiley (BSEd, MEd '13) is the new principal of Lindbergh Elementary School in the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools District. He is currently on the Board of Directors for the Pittsburg State University Alumni Association.

2012

Amisha Daniels (BSET, MET '14) was named to the Wichita Business Journal's Young Professionals Series. She is a project manager at McCownGordon Construction. She drives project development across the Kansas market with an expertise in process engineering, project feasibility plans, greenfield and brownfield projects, and spearheads the successful implementation of new process lines and facilities.

Holly Hrabik (BS, MBA '21) was elected to serve on the 2024-2027 Master of Health Administration Alumni Association Board of Directors at Texas A&M. She earned her graduate degree there in 2014.

Jennifer Johnmeyer (BS, MA '14) was named to the list of

2024 Most Influential Women by the Springfield Business Journal. She is the director of communications for Alamo Drafthouse Cinema franchises in Missouri.

2013

Nicole Dickey (BS) was named vice president of Customer Relations at PTMW, Inc.

2015

Tyler Conklin (BA) joined Adams and Reese LLP as an Associate for the Aviation and Aerospace team. Conklin previously worked as in-house counsel at Atlas Air, Inc. where she provided advice on compliance, risk management, and strategy for a leading international cargo airline.

2016

Lena Helms (BS) started as a marketing coordinator for Kanokla. She previously held a marketing position at Wheat State Wine Co. in Winfield, Kansas.

2017

Liza Erwin (BS) was named athletic director at Fort Scott Community College. With more than 12 years of experience in intercollegiate athletics, she previously worked as director of

operations for Lacrosse at Northwestern University and oversaw NCAA Championship Operations Cross Country, Track and Field, and Men's Golf.

2018

Courtney Blankenship (BS, BA) was selected as a member of Globally's Emerging As A Global Leader Experience summer 2024 cohort, which aims to empower young emerging leaders from diverse backgrounds in national security and public service.

Danielle Mouer (BS, BA) was named to the Kansas Department of Commerce's 2024 NextGen Under 30 list in the Oil, Gas & Energy category. She currently works as an Operations Engineer at Evergy.

Ryan Urban (BS) was named to the Kansas Department of Commerce's 2024 NextGen Under 30 list in the Media & Public Relations category. Ryan currently works as a Strategy Account Coordinator for Go Local Interactive.

2019

Samantha Guy (BS) was named to the Kansas Department of Commerce's

2024 NextGen Under 30 list in the Media & Public Relations category. Samantha currently works in Sales and Business Development at Norris Outdoor.

Katherine Pinto (MS)

was named to the Kansas Department of Commerce's 2024 NextGen Under 30 list in an auxiliary category. She currently works as an EFNAP & SNAP-Ed Agent at K-State Research and Extension.

Sarah Veesart-Wright

(BS) completed medical school at University of Kansas SOM-Wichita and has entered residency at University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita Family Medicine Residency Program at Ascension Via Christi in Wichita, Kansas.

2022

Kaylee Long (BST) was named to the Kansas Department of Commerce's 2024 NextGen Under 30 list in the Media & Public Relations category. She recently began a new position as the Marketing Manager at Pitt State.



1942

Edwin Robert Byrd, Kansas City, Mo.
Jennie Ozark Herring, Wichita, Kan.

1944

Mary Margaret Clary, Lakeland, Fla.

1946

Dorothy Mae Dudley, Wichita, Kan.
Paul Norton Lee, Pittsburg, Kan.
Frances Elizabeth Wynn, Kansas City, Mo.

1947

Ruth Marie Doty, Carl Junction, Mo.

1948

Ralph E. Dennis, Olathe, Kan.
Mary Lou Roberts, Leawood, Kan.
Lester Lee Paul, Hutchinson, Kan.

1949

Joey Victor Cornella, Concord, Calif.
Margaret Ann Grandy, Neosho, Mo.

1950

Kenneth Elwood Bean, Celina, Texas
Robert M. Menchetti, Scottsdale, Ariz.
Lee Leon O'Neill, Manhattan, Kan.
Bill Elwin Welty, Greensboro, Ga.

1951

Margy Louise Carlson, Rogers, Ark.
Charlotte Irene Hutchinson, Seneca, Mo.
David Eugene Wilson, Columbus, Ohio

1952

Raymond Walter Ballock, Chico, Calif.
Richard Thomas Kelly, Zelenople, Pa.
Doyle Slifer, Englewood, Fla.
Mary Lee St John, Bradenton, Fla.

1953

Reta Nell Kennedy, Prairie Village, Kan.
Hester Lee Roby, Joplin, Mo.
James George Ruggles, Yankton, S.D.

1954

Max Lundstrom, Urbandale, Iowa
Catherine Mary Rundell, Saint Paul, Minn.

1955

Tom Resovich, Grass Valley, Calif.

1956

Jon Maurice Clark, Spokane, Wash.

1957

William McCormick Carl, Chanute, Kan.
James William Dellinger, Crystal Lake, Ill.
Cecil Paul Lind, Arlington, Texas
Alice Gay McClain, Sabetha, Kan.

1958

Donald Emery Bryan, Troutville, Va.
Mary Sue Conley, Worcester, Mass.
Nancy Jo DeArmond, Eudora, Kan.
Johnnie Eugene Favero, Prairie Village, Kan.
Georgine M. Johnson, Essex, Iowa
Sylvia Frances Resovich, Grass Valley, Calif.
Roger Russell Viets, Mesa, Ariz.

1959

Gary Eugene Ange, Gilroy, Calif.
Lloyd Benjamin Banwart, Springfield, Mo.
Shirley Ann Sims, Denver, Colo.
Barbara Jewel Webber, Olathe, Kan.

1960

Robert Harold Beeler, Kansas City, Mo.
Ronald J. Breneman, Girard, Kan.
Fred Reid Harder, Tucson, Ariz.
Lee Jones, Benbrook, Texas

Jimmie Dee Sullivan, Leawood, Kan.
Elizabeth Betty Jane Potter, Leawood, Kan.

1961

Willard A. Bright, Independence, Kan.
Ray Allen Laing, Phoenix, Ariz.
Glenn Gordon McBride, Independence, Kan.
Mary Ann Thomas, Pittsburg, Kan.
Forest Ellsworth Pierce, Centennial, Colo.
Richard Lee Turner, Grove, Okla.

1962

Ray Wallace Slomer, Pearland, Texas

1963

Edward Cole Carter, Lawrence, Kan.
Jerry Lee McKillip, Junction City, Kan.
Melva D. Glaser, Pittsburg, Kan.

1964

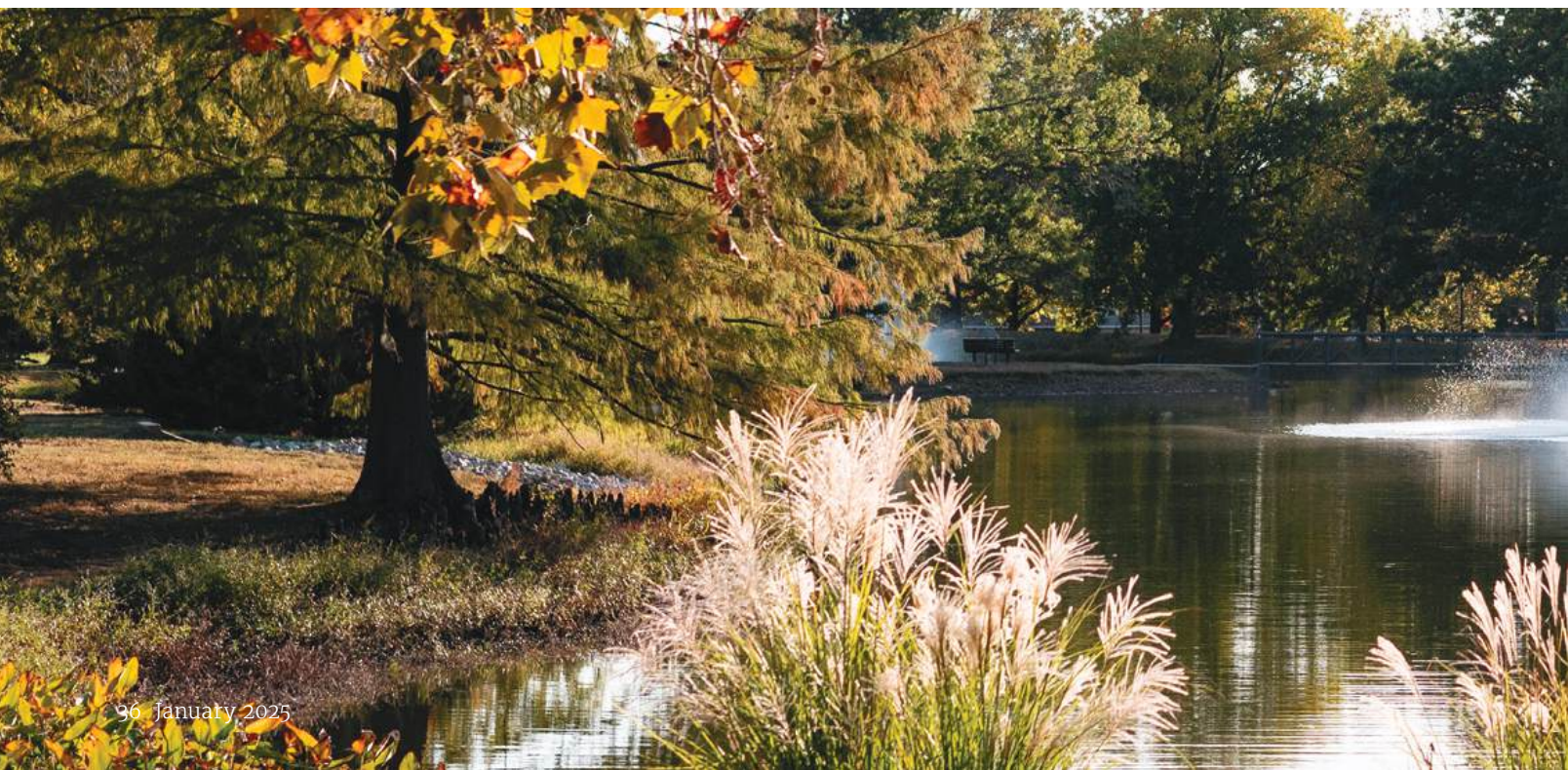
Audrey Ann Dibble, Kansas City, Mo.
Marjorie Farris, Boone, N.C.
Relna Lou Mason, Spring, Texas
Corinne Ruth O'Neal, Junction City, Kan.
Carl Edward Roberts, Tucson, Ariz.

1965

Nancy Kay Greenwood, Chesterfield, Mo.
Carolyn June Johnson, Racine, Wis.

1966

Robert Dexter Brown, Columbus, Kan.
Julianna Davis, Miami, OK
Leota Elsie Korns, Dove Creek, Colo.
Mildred Lorraine Seboldt, Cape Girardeau, Mo.
Rex Melvin Shawger, Tulsa, OK
Ruth W. Short, Pittsburg, Kan.
Michael Lee Roy Still, Joplin, Mo.
Nancy Eileen Passmore, Springfield, Mo.
Jimmie Leedo Poe, Arkansas City, Kan.



1967

Sharon Lea Kurtz, Allen, Texas
Francis Barnum Howell, Pittsburg, Kan.
Bill Andrew Summers, Fredonia, Kan.

1968

Wayne Thomas Baeuchler, Delafield, Wis.
Barbara Louise Thimmesch, Mission, Kan.
James Robert Gunnels, Drexel, Mo.
John Michael Yoger, Girard, Kan.
Mary Sue Belk, Joplin, Mo.

1969

Irma Ella Dean, Tulsa, OK
Bernard Wayne Devoy, Topeka, Kan.
Peter David Gent, Kansas City, Mo.
Jim Lester Kelley, Lawrence, Kan.
Michael Joe Torchia, Bartlesville, Okla.

1970

Bill Joseph Hayden, Sherman Oaks, Calif.
Kenneth F. Hightower, La Cygne, Kan.
Carl William Nicholson, Shawnee, Kan.
Ron Ray Thompson, Overland Park, Kan.
Jean Lind White, Kansas City, Mo.
John T. Planchon, Enterprise, Ala.

1971

John Charles Bland, Alba, Texas
Barry Sheldon Davidson, West Palm Beach, Fla.
Michael Alonzo Forbes Sr., Parsons, Kan.
Jane Ann Kelly, Pittsburg, Kan.
Robert Clay Wilson Jr., Shawnee, Kan.

1972

Ania Johnson, Prairie Village, Kan.
Ted Ungerman, Seven Hills, Ohio
David Ross Clark, Tulsa, Okla.

1973

Susan Mary Kavanagh, Pittsburg, Kan.
Greg Gregory Miller, Kiowa, Kan.

1974

Mary Louise Schuetz, Topeka, Kan.
Ron Wayne Schulteis, Mission, Kan.
Stephen Lee Schulz, Pittsburg, Kan.
Georgianna Pohl Short, Dublin, Ohio
Joseph Franklin Richmond III, Ottawa, Kan.
Rolland DeWayne Guder, Bronson, Kan.

1976

Bob Eugene Golay, Pittsburg, Kan.
Royce Cleland Muzingo, Overland Park, Kan.
Carolyn Elizabeth Goolsby, Tulsa, Okla.
Randy Stephen Russell, Asheville, N.C.
Susan Janice Parise, Pittsburg, Kan.

1977

Jim William Brauer, Shawnee, Kan.
Don Baker Johnson, Pittsburg, Kan.

1978

Kenneth R. Dinkins, Lonoke, Ark.

1979

Kathleen Jillian Mayes, Joplin, Mo.

1980

Nancy Jane Wilson, Pittsburg, Kan.
Ahmad Malek, Van Nuys, Calif.
Elizabeth Bard Golledge, Ashland, Ore.
James Ray Zimmerman, Pittsburg, Kan.

1981

Mohammad Reza Arman, Tujunga, Calif.

1982

Elizabeth Ann Haas, Reno, Nev.
Debbie Louise Pate, Pittsburg, Kan.
Oloruntoba Phillip Unuigbey, Corinth, Texas

1986

Michael Wayne Phelps, Edmond, Okla.
Craig Wayne Potter, Pittsburg, Kan.

Irma L. Alpers, Wichita, Kan.
Aaron Michael Kranker, Huntington Beach, Calif.

1987

Steve Francis Sullivan, Scammon, Kan.

1988

Margaret Denise Thomas, Coffeyville, Kan.
Denny Warren Rice, Mulberry, Kan.

1989

Owen P. Zeigler, Vashon, Wash.
Pauline Tackett, Bartlesville, Okla.

1991

Gerald Leon Kirbey, Nixa, Mo.

1992

Hans C. Russell, Durango, Colo.

1993

Cheryl Lynn Tinkler, Pittsburg, Kan.
Debra Jean McKibben, Quapaw, Okla.

1995

Tadd Lane Crawford, Chesapeake, Va.

1996

Mark W. Sutterby, Redfield, Kan.

1998

Lisa Ann Ingram, Preston, Mo.

2001

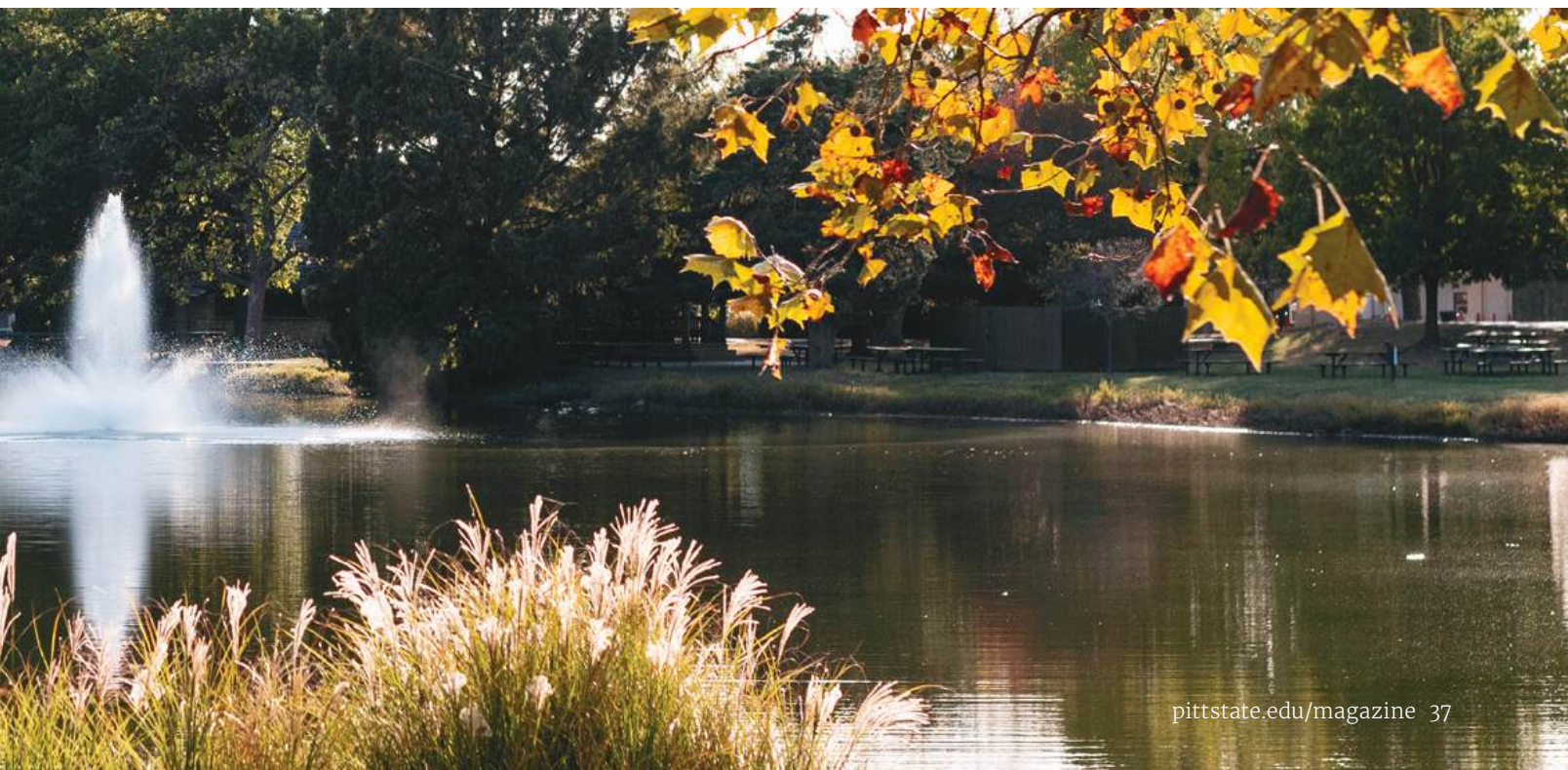
Douglas B. Urie, Lees Summit, Mo.

2002

Brian A. Kavanagh, Baltimore, Md.

2005

Peter L. Monsour, Pittsburg, Kan.
Lieonel Duhorane, Pittsburg, Kan.
Ann Stein, Ashland, Ore.



James B. Appleberry

5th PRESIDENT

James B. Appleberry, who served as president from 1977 through 1983, died Oct. 21 at the age of 86 from complications of pancreatic cancer.

It was during his tenure that Kansas State College of Pittsburg was made a university and the official name was changed to Pittsburg State University.

With its more prominent status came an expanded vision. The new \$3.6 million library, Leonard H. Axe Library, opened in August 1979, replacing the outdated Porter Library which had served campus since 1927.

Appleberry drove enrollment growth, established the university's role as the state's technology transfer center, and fostered programs for students from the five surrounding community colleges to transfer to the university for a four-year degree.

During this time, he was selected by the U.S. Secretary of Education to serve as vice chair of the National Center for Educational Statistics.

He also was a supporter of the arts and maintained a steady correspondence of letters to noted University Artist in Residence Eva Jessye that are now archived in University Special Collections.

In his inaugural address on April 13, 1977, he spoke of the value of a higher education:

"Education teaches us to appreciate the creativity in a book, a play, a work of art, a musical composition. It has enabled us to make major



breakthroughs in medicine and technology and to understand the forces and counter forces which shape our world. And, it has taught us to know ourselves and our neighbors better and

through a deeper understanding of our human heritage," he said.

Appleberry started his career as a public school music teacher and then principal in Missouri, then entered higher education at Oklahoma State University. He served as director of Strategic Planning and assistant to the chancellor at the University of Kansas where he was actively involved with KU Medical Center. He served as president of Northern Michigan University where he formed the Northern Economic Initiatives Center, helped establish the first U.S. Olympic Education Center, and helped create the Glen Seaborg Center for Science and Mathematics.

He led the American Association of State Colleges and Universities that works with the U.S. President and Congress to develop higher education policy.

In retirement, Appleberry joined a national consulting firm helping recruit academic leaders for colleges and universities and was active in numerous civic organizations in Louisville, Kentucky.

He was preceded in death by a son and his wife of nearly 50 years, former Pittsburg State "First Lady" Patricia Ann (Trent) Appleberry. He is survived by a son, daughter-in-law, and five grandchildren. A service to celebrate his life was held in Louisville on Oct. 26.

Martin Campion

HISTORY



Martin Campion, a longtime History professor, died Aug. 3, 2024, in Kentucky. He was 89.

He is survived by his wife Connie, children and grandchildren, and many extended family members. Campion taught at Pitt State from 1965 to 1994 and was a pioneer in using games for education in the classroom.

He designed several computerized educational classroom games, including Rails West and Medieval Lords, and hosted the Historical Games Club on the fourth floor of Russ Hall in an area referred to as the History Laboratory—a place for students to congregate, analyze war tactics, and explore creative learning.

He received the Lifetime Achievement Award from NASAGA (North American Simulation and Gaming Association) in 2013.

A fan of theater, he performed in several plays in Pittsburg, including "The Odd Couple" and "The Red Mill."

He was buried in Kentucky.

Planned Giving

The PSU Foundation would like to recognize the following individual for making a planned gift:

Connie Kline

Connie Kline made an impact on students for three decades. After her death, that impact continues through a gift from her trust to Pittsburg State University that will be used for an elementary education endowment. In this way, she'll support future teachers.



Kline graduated in 1972 with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. She taught third grade for 31 years in the Carl Junction, Missouri, school district, retiring in 2004.

She died in Pittsburg on Aug. 14, 2022; she was 70. Kline grew up in Pittsburg, attending elementary, junior high, and high school there.

She was an active hobbyist, and was a volunteer serving in the Via Christi Hospital Auxiliary and playing piano on Sunday mornings at Wesley House.

She is survived by a multitude of friends whom she considered family, including fellow Gorillas Shayne Anderson (BSE '73, MS '90), Sean Anderson (BSN '08, MSN '12), and Mona Wachter (BSE '69, MS '74).

For more information on the Heritage Society and leaving a legacy, visit pittstate.giftlegacy.com.



Graphic Communications Senior Megan Brownell is a marketing intern for the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts this year.



She captured a range of performances at the center last semester during the kick-off of its 10th anniversary season.

To see what's coming up, visit bicknellcenter.com

1. Stacey Struble (MA Teaching '23) sang in the Linda and Lee Scott Performance Hall with her band Bill+Monica's Excellent Adventure during their back-to-school '90s-themed concert in September.
2. Hypnotist Chris Jones talked with a hypnotized student during his show in August. Jones comes to campus each fall and draws a huge crowd.
3. Music Education majors Joseph Barnes and Sara Flessner perform in "A Little Night Music" on the mainstage in October as part of a collaborative project between Pitt State Theatre and Pitt State Opera. *Photo courtesy: Alice Carnahan, freshman Communication major.*
4. Geographical and Political Sciences senior Olivia Harkins played her bassoon in the PSU Wind Ensemble concert in September. The group opened its season with a concert about the night sky.
5. The PSU Chorale sang in November for a fall concert that featured 11 arrangements with the University Choir.
6. Music senior Jocelyn Goodwin sang "Fever" at the PSU Jazz Band concert in October. The group performed in the Miller Theater to a nearly full house.
7. Music senior Ryan Ford played his trumpet for professional musician Caleb Hudson of Triple Cortado during the 14th Annual Midwest Trumpet Festival in October.
8. The Southeast Kansas Symphony, founded in 1915, is comprised of students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members. Its beloved annual holiday concert featured music from holiday films.
9. Interior Design sophomore Ellie Carpenter performed a trick during her solo at the Dance Minor showcase in November. Carpenter auditioned to perform her solo to "I Miss You, I'm Sorry."







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SAVE THE DATE

Half-Century Reunion: May 15-16, 2025

Class of 1975, join us to celebrate your 50th anniversary, reconnect with classmates, walk in Commencement, socialize at a dinner and dance, be inducted into the Half-Century Club, and more!



Learn more:
pittstate.edu/halfcentury or call 620-235-4758.

TEXAS: SAVE THE DATE!

We're heading to Texas to visit alumni and friends!

Reconnect with alumni in your area over food and drinks and enjoy a Pitt State update. Attendees will receive a complimentary T-shirt and a chance to win prizes. See y'all soon!

Monday, Feb. 17: Dallas
Tuesday, Feb. 18: Austin
Wednesday, Feb. 19: San Antonio
Thursday, Feb. 20: Houston
Friday, Feb. 21: Fort Worth



Details and registration: pittstate.edu/alumni.



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