

Blue & Gold

Pitt-Greensburg increasing academic profile of incoming classes

The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg made considerable progress toward meeting its strategic goal of increasing the academic profile of its incoming classes. For fall 2009, academic quality measures increased in all categories, including a 5.2 increase in the SAT average and a 0.08 increase in high school GPA average. For incoming students, the average SAT score was 1032.1 and the average high school GPA was 3.37.

Additional milestones achieved were an increase in the number of incoming students ranked in the top 10 percent, 20 percent, and 40 percent of the high school graduating class. Ten percent of this year's incoming students were ranked in the top 10 percent, 28.6 percent were ranked in the top 20 percent, and 65.8 percent were ranked in the top 40 percent of their classes.

"We increased our selectivity by six percent," explained Heather Kabala, Pitt-Greensburg's director of Admissions. "We also



chose to offer more academic scholarships to academically desirable students."

The overall result of these strategic actions was 594 new students, 410 of which were new freshman, 166

were new transfers, and 18 were first-time non-degree students. The campus' total enrollment of 1,808 is composed of 1,676 full-time students and 132 part-time students, for a full-time equivalent of 1,729. This full-time equivalent is consistent with last year's full-time equivalent of 1,737.

"I am delighted by the success we are having in recruiting students with a strong academic foundation," said Dr. Sharon

Smith, president of the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg. "Over time, this increase in academic quality will positively impact our ability to retain students, thus helping us to

achieve our goal of a consistent full-time equivalent enrollment of 1,750 students." She added, "There is a tension between quality and quantity in recruiting a class. These results reflect the attraction of exciting new academic programs as well as a collection of serious choices made by a dedicated team."

Supporting these efforts is the campus' Advisory Committee on Enrollment (ACE), initiated in 2007-2008 by Dr. Smith. The Committee's purpose is to bring together, for discussion and strategic planning, the President's Cabinet, faculty leadership, and representatives of the departments playing key roles in recruitment and retention of students. The committee has focused on two goals: achieving and maintaining an enrollment of 1,750 full-time equivalent (FTE) students and increasing the academic quality of incoming students.

Pitt-Greensburg also was successful in meeting its goal of increasing the number of direct applications for both freshmen and transfer populations. Direct freshmen applications increased 1.5 percent and direct transfer applications increased 16 percent. New programs, either announced or in the planning stage, are also expected to positively impact enrollment at Pitt-Greensburg. These include the Katz Immersion MBA program, announced in May 2009, and four other programs in development, two of which are at the final approval stage. ▲



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from the President

Students who attend the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg have the opportunity to have a unique experience.

Leading the list of what makes the Pitt-Greensburg experience unique is our faculty. Of our full-time faculty, 15 percent—the highest percentage of any University of Pittsburgh campus—have received the prestigious University-wide Chancellor's Distinguished Teaching Award. Eighty-six percent of our full-time faculty hold a doctorate or terminal degree within their field—a significantly higher number than the majority of other area colleges and universities.



Because our student-to-faculty ratio is 18:1 and an average class size is 25, Pitt-Greensburg is able to offer individualized attention to its students. Our faculty are also able to offer undergraduate research experiences, which allow students to gain valuable practical knowledge and hands-on expertise that supplements and builds on knowledge learned from texts.

For example, students like Kim Roman, a senior double majoring in chemistry and biology, are using their Pitt-Greensburg experience to better prepare for graduate school and careers. As an outgrowth of her senior capstone research project, Kim developed an environmentally friendly lab technique that could be considered graduate-level work. Her story is featured on page six.

One of our primary strategic initiatives is to continue to improve the overall academic quality of the students we recruit. The academic profile of an incoming class can be a predictor of the success of those students in their college studies and in their careers. We are pleased to report the quality measures of our fall 2009 class increased in all categories, as it did for the 2008-2009 academic year.

Our faculty and staff continue to look for ways to better identify students who are experiencing challenges and more quickly reach out to offer support. Newly initiated this fall was MAP-Works. First-year students participated in a 184-question electronic survey that ranged from study habits and financial aid to social acclimation. The survey also assisted in setting realistic goals and identifying problem areas. Appropriate faculty and staff then followed-up with students whose surveys identified problems. Our success will be evident when we see these students succeeding because they adjusted better to college life or performed stronger academically after receiving assistance.

I extend a personal invitation to you to join us at the events planned during the next few months. Starting with our annual Holiday Networking and Wine Tasting event in December and continuing through to our Homecoming and Family Weekend in February, Pitt-Greensburg offers a variety of activities in which to participate. Please use these events as an opportunity to return to campus and see what is new while reacquainting yourself with faculty, staff, and friends.

Sharon P. Smith

Sharon P. Smith, PhD

President

University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg

Blue & Gold is published by the Office of University Relations and Institutional Advancement.

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The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution.

Dr. Mary Lynn Yothers shares her goals for the PGAA

"It's an exciting time to be part of the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg," says Mary Lynn Yothers, DC, '80. "I can see what is happening under the leadership of Dr. Sharon Smith—and the future is huge!"

Yothers, president of the Pitt-Greensburg Alumni Association (PGAA), invites alumni to campus to see what is happening and to become involved. She encourages alumni to attend events.

"Brian (Moreland) brought the PGAA into greater involvement with the Oakland Pitt Alumni Association. That greater involvement and our participation in the Pitt Alumni Association's Banner Program has increased our resources and the benefits to Pitt-Greensburg," she explains.

Her main priority is to connect the PGAA to students in a positive way so they will continue to participate. She is excited to be continuing the projects put into place by her predecessors. These include the PGAA Incoming Freshman Award and the PGAA Student Emergency Fund.

Yothers also would like to provide alumni support to Admissions. "The diversity and success of our alumni need to be shared with incoming students. They need to see what others have accomplished after earning a degree from Pitt-Greensburg."

She, herself, is an example of how versatile a degree from Pitt-Greensburg can be. A psychology major, Yothers graduated and



Dr. Mary Lynn Yothers at work.

spent 15 years working for Westmoreland County. She made the decision to become a chiropractor while working for the Westmoreland County Area Agency on Aging.

"It was the easiest decision I'd ever made—this is my passion," Yothers says of her career as owner of her own chiropractic practice, located near the Westmoreland County Fairgrounds. She graduated from Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic in 2002.

"Pitt-Greensburg helped form me into who I am," Yothers notes. "It was the foundation that I built on. I want to say thank you and to give back." ▲

To become more involved with the Pitt-Greensburg Alumni Association, contact Dr. Yothers at mlyothers@gmail.com or Jodi Kraisinger, director of University Relations and Institutional Advancement, at kraising@pitt.edu or 724-836-9942.

Building Relationships: State Senator Kim Ward

This is the third in a series of articles highlighting local governmental officials and their connection to the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg.

Pennsylvania State Senator Kim Ward is familiar with the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg and its programs through her prior public service as a Hempfield Township Supervisor. She also notes that Rob Ritson '93, her chief of staff, was the 2003 PGAA Alumnus of Distinction.

She worked closely with Pitt-Greensburg during her six years as a Township Supervisor. Senator Ward notes that her most memorable experience in office thus far was being part of the redevelopment of the old Greengate Mall property, located on Route 30. "The property was blighted when I took office," she notes. "I was able to work with the new developer to make it the biggest commercial property along Route 30 in Westmoreland County."

Senator Ward, who also served one year as a Westmoreland County Commissioner, took office in January 2009. She serves as chairperson of the Senate Aging and Youth Committee and vice chairperson of the Senate Banking and Insurance Committee. Her other committee assignments include Public Health and Welfare, Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure, Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness, and the Senate Republican Policy.

She sees her election to public office as an opportunity to have a direct impact on her community. She was amazed at how quickly the other elected Senators accepted her. She notes that neither Democrat nor Republican Senators have treated her like an outsider.



Senator Kim Ward (center) meets with Pitt-Greensburg students during Pitt Day in Harrisburg this past spring.

Senator Ward began her career as a licensed respiratory therapist who became a self-employed political consultant working on grassroots politics in the Republican Party. That led to her election to Township Supervisor and County Commissioner. She sees her career as a respiratory therapist as establishing the foundation of her public compassion. "It's made me more grounded in ways that help me to understand what truly affects the people I represent," she explains. "Public officials should never lose that objectivity."

Her advice to others interested in public office is to become involved in their communities through any group, activity, or event. "You'll meet so many people, which will guide you to those future decisions about possibly pursuing public office." ▲



GREENSBURG
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Pitt-Greensburg Alumni Association and Career Services host Speed Interviewing

The Pitt-Greensburg Alumni Association and the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg Office of Career Services hosted their annual Speed Interviewing event on November 18.

Approximately 50 volunteers, representing the Pitt-Greensburg campus community as well as representatives of a variety of business in the Greensburg



Molly Henderson '09 (left) interviews a student.

area, served as interviewers. Notable were Molly Henderson '09 and Cindy Long '84 who wanted to "give back" to the University and current students by participating. The event continues to provide valuable practical experience for seniors preparing to enter the job market. ▲

Pitt-Greensburg mourns the loss of past PGAA president



The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg is saddened by the loss of Jason P. Gongaware '97, who died October 1.

Gongaware served as president of the Pitt-Greensburg Alumni Association from 2002 to 2005 and as chair of the PAA scholarship committee. His primary focus as president of the PGAA

was identifying ways the alumni association and scholarship program could be used to increase the number of qualified students applying to the University. He also served on the Pitt-Greensburg Advisory Board as part of his duties as PGAA president (*ex officio*) and then as a regular member based on his credentials.

Prior to attending Pitt-Greensburg, Gongaware worked as a trauma nurse in Nashville, TN. He returned to New Alexandria in 1995 after his marriage. Extremely interested in community service and how he could contribute to improving the region, Gongaware was a member of the Crabtree Volunteer Fire Department and served as a board member for several area nonprofit organizations. A resident of New Alexandria, he was employed by Chapel Hill Investment Analysts. Gongaware is survived by his wife, Sheri Campbell Gongaware and two sons, William Campbell and Joseph Elliott. ▲

Plans set for Pitt-Greensburg's Homecoming and Family Weekend 2010

Mark your calendar and plan to attend Pitt-Greensburg's Homecoming and Family Weekend on Friday, February 5, 2010, and Saturday, February 6, 2010. This event is being organized by Student Services at Pitt-Greensburg.

Alumni who register by January 29, 2010, will be eligible to win our Pitt Homecoming Spirit gift basket. See the flyer enclosed with this issue of the *Blue & Gold* for a full schedule and costs.

The weekend opens Friday evening with dinner and entertainment by comedian Eric O'Shea in Wagner Dining Hall followed by Casino Night in the

Bobcat Station. The registration table will be open from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. in Chambers Hall.

Saturday's schedule includes:

- 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. – Registration (Chambers Hall)
- 9 a.m. – Brunch (Wagner Dining Hall)
- 10 a.m. – tours of the new Ronnie Andrews Fitness Center
- 11 a.m. --Carnival
- 1 p.m. – Pitt-Greensburg Lady Bobcats vs. Penn State Behrend (women's basketball)
- 3 p.m. – Pitt-Greensburg Bobcats vs. Penn State Behrend (men's basketball)
- 5 p.m. – PGAA Alumni Reception at Lynch Hall

Visit www.upg.pitt.edu/homecomingandfamilyweekend/ for more information. ▲



Winter Gala opens the New Year

The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg kicks off the New Year with its annual *La Cultura Winter Gala* on Saturday, January 16, 2010. This year's theme, "Moving toward a greener future," will provide attendees with a verdant respite from the gray mid-winter landscape.

Proceeds from this annual black-tie optional event, scheduled to begin at 5:30 p.m. with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres in Pitt-Greensburg's Millstein Library, benefit the President's Scholarship Fund. Dinner begins at 7 p.m. Chartwells' award-winning Executive Chef Richard McMahon, director of Dining Services, and his staff will plan and prepare a sumptuous feast.

Sponsorship opportunities are available. In addition to gala tickets and recognition in the program book, sponsorships at the higher levels include a scholarship award to a Pitt-Greensburg student in the name of the sponsoring company. Contact Mark Matras, development coordinator, at 724-836-7039 or mrm126@pitt.edu for information.

Advance ticket sales will run through December 15 at a cost of \$115 per person or \$920 per table. Tables of 10 are available at a cost of \$1,150. After December 15, tickets will cost \$130 per person or \$1,040 per table of eight. Tables of 10 will be available at a cost of \$1,300. To purchase tickets or for information about the gala, please call 724-836-7497. ▲



Chorale and Chamber Singers to perform fall concert



The Pitt-Greensburg Chorale & Chamber Singers will perform *Salvation is Created: Music of Mozart, Bach, Handel, and Chesnokov* on Friday, December 11, at 7:30 p.m. in the Mary Lou Campana Chapel and Lecture Center. This performance is open to the public at no charge.

The Pitt-Greensburg Chorale is the University's largest choral ensemble and is open to all voices in the University community. The select-voice Chamber Singers debuted at the Spring 2009 concert. Both groups are under the direction of Chris Bartley, instructor of music at Pitt-Greensburg. ▲

Join the PGAA Group on Facebook



If you use Facebook to stay in touch with friends and family, consider joining the Pitt-Greensburg Alumni Association group. This is an easy way to stay up-to-date on upcoming events and activities. To join, open your Facebook account and enter "Pitt-Greensburg Alumni Association" in the search box. Then click "join." ▲

Joan Chamber Concert Series announces spring schedule



The Joan Chambers Concert Series at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg will feature the Pennsylvania State University Chamber Singers and Swara Sonora Trio in the spring semester. Both performances will be held in the Mary Lou Campana Chapel and Lecture Center and are open to the public at no charge.

Twenty-four students under the direction of Dr. Christopher Kiver comprise the Pennsylvania State University Chamber Singers who will perform February 28, at 2:30 p.m. They will perform a variety of repertoire from all historical periods, focusing on the works from the Renaissance and the 20th and 21st centuries.



Swara Sonora Trio will challenge audience expectations in April when they perform with the Pitt-Greensburg Chorale and Chamber Singers on April 16 and as part of the Joan Chambers Concert Series on April 17. The trio unites different artistic disciplines and explores multi-cultural themes. Pianist Aryo Wicaksono, soprano Kathryn Mueller, and baritone Nathan Krueger have been teaching and performing together for five years. ▲

Pitt-Greensburg student develops environmentally friendly lab technique



Kimberly D. Roman, a senior double majoring in chemistry and biology, recently placed second out of 192 entries at the 12th annual UMBC (University of Maryland, Baltimore County) Research Poster Symposium. Her poster, based on her own research, was an outgrowth of her senior capstone research project.

Roman developed a more environmentally friendly method of comparing methods of iron determination in animal blood. Her method involves the lysing of blood cells and peroxide as opposed to the previous and hazardous wet ashing method.

“The wet ashing method employs concentrated acids, such as nitric and sulfuric acids, which are heated to near boiling to destroy the blood matrix and solubilize iron,” explained Dr. Mark Stauffer,

associate professor of chemistry and Division chair at Pitt-Greensburg. “The concentrated acids are hazardous and require the use of a fume hood and protective eyewear. The biological lysing technique uses essentially environmentally friendly reagents and can be classified as a ‘green’ sample preparation technique. This is definitely a significant improvement over traditional wet ashing and similar sample preparation.”

Roman developed the idea as part of her “Iron Project” assignment in Dr. Stauffer’s Introductory Analytical Chemistry laboratory course in Fall 2007. The “Iron Project” is a three-week mini-research project in which students develop and use a colorimetric method for determination of iron in a sample type of their choosing. Roman is continuing her research to develop precision and accuracy assessments for the technique.

“I was both impressed and awed by Kim’s selection of sample type and digestion method, which was a far cry from the usual water samples that most students tend to choose,” noted Dr. Stauffer. “Also significant is that Kim found very little, if any, published literature on the use of biological lysing as a sample preparation step toward determination of iron in animal blood.”

More than 400 students and mentors, comprising about 200 contributions, participated in the UMBC Research Poster Symposium. A panel of participating mentors and other attendees judge the posters.

Roman, plans to attend graduate school to study chemistry after graduation from Pitt-Greensburg in May 2010. ▲

Pitt-Greensburg participating in Yellow Ribbon program and GI Bill



As one of the four regional campuses of the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg is one of some 500 U.S. higher education institutions voluntarily offering tuition remission and other benefits under the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, which includes the Yellow Ribbon GI education enhancement program.

Under the new GI Bill, all eligible veterans receive an amount equal to the cost of attending a public, four-year college at the in-state, undergraduate-student rate. For those veterans eligible for the full benefit, the University, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), has agreed to make up the difference between the in-state undergraduate tuition and fees, and the tuition and fees for out-of-state students and students enrolled in graduate programs. The University is also waiving its \$45 application fee for all veterans. Visit www.gibill.va.gov for additional information on eligibility and benefits. ▲

Pitt-Greensburg awarded two grants for Millstein Library renovations



Millstein Library

The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg received two grants to be used for renovations at Millstein Library. The **Millstein Charitable Foundation** approved a \$25,000 grant and the **Brooks Foundation** approved a \$15,000 grant. Work is expected to begin late January or early February.

The renovations will provide an optimal study environment and are based on current and future needs of students.

Leading the list is the conversion of an existing staff lounge into a psychology lab suite that will include a large

testing room, small testing room, observation room, and a waiting area. Another major change will be the upgrade of the current periodical room and the addition of an outdoor reading patio. These areas will accommodate study groups as well as individuals wishing quiet reading opportunities and will provide Internet access and a place to host events.

The existing circulation desk will be repaired and the area will be upgraded to include the installation of power outlets at the open stairway, repairs of the countertop, and the improvement of lighting for the work surface. Three other rooms will be converted into two private group study rooms, two graduate assistant offices, and another office. ▲

Pitt-Greensburg Advisory Board adds two new members

Michael T. Lordi, vice president of Elliott Company's Industrial Products Division, was appointed to the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg Advisory Board for a three-year term beginning September 2009. He brings more than 30 years experience in industrial sales, marketing, engineering, and division management for complex instrumentation and engineered equipment manufacturers to the Board.

Also appointed to a three-year term beginning April 2009 was Donald J. Spence. Spence is chief executive officer of Home Healthcare Solutions, Philips Healthcare. Prior to November 2008, he served as president of the Sleep and Home Respiratory Group for Respironics, the predecessor to Home Healthcare Solutions. He brings senior management experience in global business to the board. Throughout his 30-year career, he has held positions with companies such as GKN plc, Datex-Ohmeda, Inc., and The BOC Group, plc.

Congratulations to Advisory Board member Gary A. Amelio (CAS '78, LAW '81) who was selected to serve as the executive director of the Retirement Board of the San Francisco Employees' Retirement System. Amelio is an award-winning industry veteran with nearly 30 years of expertise in the employee benefits, financial services, investment, and public fund industries. ▲

Fall sports teams participate in AMCC Tournaments



Pitt-Greensburg's Brian Clause

The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg women's volleyball team, men's soccer team, and men's golf team finished the fall 2009 athletic season by earning invitations to the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference Tournaments for their respective sports.

The volleyball team finished the season 5-5 in the Conference (6-18) overall to earn the sixth seed in the AMCC tournament. Third-seed Pitt-Bradford defeated the Bobcats 3-0 in the first round of play. Kylynn Smith led the Bobcats this season with a .243 kill percentage in 81 games. Kourtney Laratonda was second with a .138 kill percentage in 81 games.

The men's soccer team finished the season 3-6-1 in Conference play (4-14-1 overall). Seeded sixth in the AMCC tournament, the Bobcats lost to Penn State-Altoona, 2-1. First-seed Medaille won the AMCC Championship. For the season, Sam Kuhn led the team in scoring with seven goals and three assists for 17 points. Kyle Cermak was second with five goals and three assists for 13 points.

The Pitt-Greensburg men's golf team placed seventh out of nine teams at the AMCC Tournament with a two-day team score of 716. ▲

Winter Events

December 11

Pitt-Greensburg's Chorale & Chamber Singers perform *Salvation is Created: Music of Mozart, Bach, Handle, and Chesnokov*, at 7:30 p.m. in Mary Lou Campana Chapel and Lecture Center. This event is free and open to the public.

January 16, 2010

Join us for the **La Cultura Winter Gala: Moving toward a greener future** in Millstein Library. Advance tickets are available by December 15 at \$115 per person, \$920 per table of eight, and \$1,150 per table of 10. After December 15, tickets will cost \$130 per person, \$1,040 per table of eight, and \$1,300 per table of 10. Call 724-836-7497 or e-mail upgalum@pitt.edu for information about the event or to purchase tickets.

January 22, 2010

Friday Evening Music Club will feature a student recital at 7:30 p.m. in the Mary Lou Campana Chapel and Lecture Center.

February 5, 2010

Pitt-Greensburg's Homecoming & Family Weekend opens with dinner, entertainment, and Casino Night. Visit www.upg.pitt.edu/homecomingandfamilyweekend/ for details and costs, or call 724-836-9991 to register.

February 6, 2010

Pitt-Greensburg's Homecoming & Family Weekend continues with Fitness Center tours, Carnival, Women's Basketball vs. Penn State Behrend, Men's Basketball vs. Penn State Behrend, and an evening Alumni reception. Visit www.upg.pitt.edu/homecomingandfamilyweekend/ for details and costs, or call 724-836-9991 to register.

February 28, 2010

Joan Chambers Concert Series presents the Penn State University Chamber Singers at 7:30 p.m. in the Mary Lou Campana Chapel and Lecture Center. This performance is open to the public at no charge.



University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg

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Class Notes . . .

Congratulations to **Daniel M. Burkley '91** and his wife, Mary Beth, on the birth of their daughter Emma Monica on August 14, 2008.

Carrie Smith '06 was named managing editor of the *Pittsburgh Observer*, an online alternative magazine (www.pittsburghobserver.com). Adam Matcho '06, Emily Nalevanko '07, and Jason Downey '07 are contributing writers. ▲

*La Cultura
Winter Gala
Moving toward a greener future*

Saturday, January 16, 2010
Millstein Library

Benefits the President's Scholarship Fund

ADVANCED BOOKING BY DECEMBER 15:
\$115 per person, \$920 per table of eight, or \$1,150 per table of 10

AFTER DECEMBER 15:
\$130 per person, \$1,040 per table of eight, or \$1,300 per table of 10

To reserve your seats or for information about the gala,
please call 724-836-7497, or e-mail upgalum@pitt.edu.