

# MUHLENBERG

SUMMER/FALL 2014

THE MAGAZINE



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www.muhlenberg.edu  
phone: 484-664-3230  
fax: 484-664-3477

email: bruckner@muhlenberg.edu

**Credits**

Dr. Peyton R. Helm  
PRESIDENT

Michael Bruckner  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

Jack McCallum '71  
GUEST EDITOR

Jillian Lovejoy Lowery '00  
EDITOR  
DIRECTOR OF COLLEGE COMMUNICATIONS

Mike Falk  
SPORTS INFORMATION DIRECTOR

Tanya Trinkle  
DESIGN

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*On the Cover:* In 1985, 'Berg's student body came from 20 states. Today, thanks to positive word of mouth and concerted efforts from the College's office of admission, our students hail from 38 states, including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In this issue's cover story, we hear from nine current students who traveled quite a distance to become part of our caring community.

**WANT MORE MUHLENBERG NEWS?**

If you want to see more news about Muhlenberg College, please follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/muhlenberg](http://www.twitter.com/muhlenberg) and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/muhlenbergcollege](http://www.facebook.com/muhlenbergcollege).

For upcoming events, news about the school and more, go to [Muhlenberg.edu](http://Muhlenberg.edu).

Alumni: Are you connected? Visit [www.MuhlenbergConnect.com](http://www.MuhlenbergConnect.com) for the latest alumni news and events.

## Features

### 10 Tuskegee Trailblazer

Dr. James Williams '51 grew up in a time when it was difficult for an African-American to become a student, a soldier and a doctor. So what did he do? He became all three.

### 12 Cover Story: Why We Came Here

Muhlenberg's borders are expanding, and students are coming from all over the country to walk through our red doors. Find out how nine scholars from far-flung states came to be Mules.

### 18 2014 Commencement

### 20 Russ Choma

Russ Choma '03 honed his investigative and writing skills at 'Berg. Now he's in D.C. writing for OpenSecrets.org, shedding light on the financial decisions of liberals and conservatives alike.



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### A Garden of 'Berg Delights



By the time this issue of *Muhlenberg* is in your hands I will have started my final year as President – a year of bittersweet “last times” as I wrap up what has been a wonderful stage of my life. So, naturally, I started thinking about all the things I love about my job and this College – the things I’ll miss the most. There are so many of them that I could fill the entire magazine if the editors would let me. But they won’t, so I’ll have to be satisfied with an even dozen.

**June Advising.** I love greeting the incoming class with my story about jumping from the “high dive” – acknowledging that college can seem scary, but reassuring them that we’ll help them survive the plunge. (It’s the Dean’s job to tell them they have to go to class.) I never tire of teasing them about how humiliating it is to have parents in tow, especially when those parents are taking pictures of them!

**Move-in Day** is even better than June Advising. The Muhlenberg family is really at its best: upperclassmen in matching t-shirts applaud as overloaded SUVs roll up to Prosser, Brown or Walz; like famished piranhas they swarm over each vehicle, picking it clean of luggage and furnishings and moving each freshman in within minutes. The “Green Team” of faculty, staff and students recycles packing materials, alumni hand out coffee and juice to the occupants of vehicles waiting in line, and Calypso and I peer through car windows to see if there really are freshmen hidden beneath the pillows, blankets, boxes and baskets of belongings. Later, I share stories with parents about Pat’s and my own empty nest experiences – including my cherished “Waiting for Godot as performed by Gerbils” tale, and advice for coping with the inevitable melt-down phone calls they will get. Then on to greet the freshmen themselves in *Empire Theatre* – as Iron Man, Batman, Darth Vader, Dumbledore or somebody else. I love the fact that students identify their class year by the costume I wore on move-in day. We end the day with the candle-lighting ceremony – a beautiful ritual.

can only be acquired by raising and loving teenagers. I learn so much from them – and we always find opportunities to laugh together.

**Student Humor.** Muhlenberg students are shrewd observers of the human condition, quick to laugh at the foibles of their classmates, professors and president, and skilled at finding opportunities for jokes in their newly acquired knowledge. My favorite example was a message to the Dining Services staff posted on the “napkin board” where students serve up praise, criticism and requests about the food. This particular one, from a biology student no doubt, asked if Sodexo could add “primordial soup” to the menu. “Of course,” was the reply, “if you can give us the recipe.”

**Mules Football.** I’ve sat through games on splendidly brisk autumn days and in drenching typhoons. I’ve been baked by unseasonable heat and frozen while I tried to watch the action through a raging October blizzard. I’ve stood at the fifty-yard line crowning Homecoming Kings and Queens, greeting seniors’ parents and handing out awards. Most memorably, I sat in the stands while Muhlenberg triumphed over Moravian to complete its first ever undefeated season – and I have the jacket to prove it!

**Women’s Basketball.** Simply amazing, year after year. Watching Ron Rohn do his thing at courtside is a master class in coaching. And the fans are something else. I never thought I would have to ask a Lutheran Bishop to watch his language!

**Mainstage Productions.** My first summer on campus I was blown away by “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.” Then I was thrilled to learn that Charlie Richter and Curtis Dretsch shared my love of Gilbert and Sullivan. Riddigore, Pinafore, and the Mikado, not to mention a production of *Pirates of Penzance* to which I brought a troop of dinner guests dressed in pirate garb. Every semester and every summer brings new wonders to our stages. No surprise that our theatre program was rated number one by *Princeton Review* a few years ago!

**Senior Staff Meetings.** It’s not just that my colleagues on the College’s senior staff are bright, witty and charming – though they are all that and more – but that we really get a chance to dig into the full range of issues that face the Muhlenberg community. From macro to micro, from budgets to building projects, from Greek Life to curriculum reform, from meal contracts to fundraising to enrollment — we discuss it all as a team. I never claimed to be the smartest person in the room — working with smart people to solve complicated problems is exhilarating.

**Parents Council.** Nowhere but Muhlenberg, I suspect, would a president have so much fun meeting with parents – but year in and year out, this is one of the most enjoyable events on my calendar. Muhlenberg parents are energized by their kids’ experience, enthusiastic about what’s working well, constructively insightful about what might be improved and have a keen sense of humor that

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## The College Mourns the Loss of David Amdur, David Much



Dr. David Amdur

The College was saddened to lose two beloved professors this summer, **Dr. David Amdur**, assistant professor of business, and **Dr. David Much**, professor of biology.

Amdur died Saturday, May 31, 2014. He was the husband of Sharon Maynard Amdur. Born in Cambridge, he was the son of Nicholas J. and Margaret (Sauer) Amdur of Hingham. He had been a part of the Muhlenberg Community since 2010.

A 1994 graduate of Thayer Academy, Braintree, Amdur received a bachelor's degree in computer science in 1998 from Rice University, Houston, TX. After graduation, Amdur spent three years in Quito, Ecuador, where he worked as a software engineer. After returning to the United States, he worked for Agile Software in San Jose, Calif., and later Towers Perrin, Boston. He earned his Ph.D. in economics from Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

An avid hiker, he enjoyed the outdoors and had conquered Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and Mt. Cotopaxi in Ecuador. He had a passion for teaching his students and service to Muhlenberg College. A devoted husband and father, Dave treasured the time he spent with his family.

Survivors: wife; parents; son, Thomas J. Amdur; daughter Juliet R. Amdur; brother, Matthew B. Amdur and his wife Alyssa and niece, Rowan Amdur all of Cambridge, father-in-law and mother-in-law, Scott and Penny Maynard of Ottsville, Pa.



Dr. David Much

Much died on May 12, 2014, after 33 years of teaching and research at Muhlenberg.

He received a B.S. in biology from Temple University and an M.S. and Ph.D. in microbiology from Thomas Jefferson University. He was subsequently awarded a National Institutes of Health Fellowship in Immunology at New York University Medical School. He taught at Princeton University, Franklin and Marshall College and Texas Wesleyan University before coming to Muhlenberg in 1980.

Much was a member of the American Society for Microbiology and a former congregant at Congregations Am Haskalah and Keneseth Israel. He was an avid tennis player, chess enthusiast and had a passion for travel, movies and music of all kinds. He was an excellent dancer, played the guitar and was addicted to gadgets from watches to computers and everything electronic. He inspired and encouraged his students and brought laughter to everyone who knew him with his quick wit. However, above all, Much was devoted to his family and was a loving son, brother, husband, father and grandfather.

Survivors: He is survived by loving wife of 43 years, Jane (nee Hersohn); son, Dr. Jason Much; daughter-in-law, Dr. Daniele Rottkamp and grandson Nathan Much of Menlo Park, Calif.; nieces Barbara DeRicco of Chichester, Pa.; Marci Pinsky of Atlantic City, N.J.; Francine Bright of Glen Mills, Pa.; nephews Richard Epstein of Wallingford, Pa.; Fredrik Much of Costa Mesa, Calif., as well as many great nieces and nephews.

## Faculty Promotions Announced

Muhlenberg College is pleased to announce the following faculty members have been promoted to Professor by the Board of Trustees:

**Dr. Diane Follet**  
professor of music

**Dr. Barri Gold**  
professor of English

**Dr. Jason Kelsey**  
professor of chemistry

**Dr. Linda McGuire**  
professor of mathematics

**Ms. Francine Roussel**  
professor of theatre

**Dr. John Sullivan**  
professor of media & communication

## Peter Pettit, IJCU Director, Selected for National Conference

Muhlenberg College is pleased to announce that Dr. Peter Pettit, director of the Institute for Jewish-Christian Understanding and associate professor of religion studies, was selected from a nationwide pool of nominees to participate in a faculty seminar on the teaching of interfaith understanding. The seminar is offered by the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) and Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC), with support from the Henry Luce Foundation.

Twenty-five faculty members participated in the five-day Teaching Interfaith Understanding seminar that took place June 15–19, 2014, at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

“Strengthening the teaching of interfaith understanding at colleges and universities is a high priority at a time when college enrollment is becoming more diverse – by religion, as well as socioeconomic factors – just as American society is becoming more diverse. Strengthening participation in American life with greater understanding of the distinctive contributions of different faiths is key to America’s future success.” said CIC President Richard Ekman. “The number of institutions that nominated faculty members to participate in the new interfaith understanding seminar is most impressive.” The seminar broadened faculty members’ knowledge and strengthened their teaching of interfaith understanding, with the development of new courses and resources.



# PRESIDENTIAL FAREWELL TOUR

Join members of the Muhlenberg community across the country as we bid a fond farewell to Muhlenberg’s twelfth president, **Peyton R. (Randy) Helm.**



October 1, 2014	Northern New Jersey
October 30, 2014	Boston, Mass.
November 6, 2014	New York, N.Y.
November 13, 2014	Central New Jersey
December 4, 2014	Stamford, Conn.
January 8, 2015	Los Angeles, Calif.
January 9, 2015	San Francisco, Calif.
February 12, 2015	Philadelphia, Pa.
February 25, 2015	East Coast Florida
February 26, 2015	West Coast Florida
March 19, 2015	Washington, D.C.
March 26, 2015	New York, N.Y.
May 7, 2015	Allentown, Pa.

For more information or to register, visit [www.MuhlenbergConnect.com/presidentialfarewelltour](http://www.MuhlenbergConnect.com/presidentialfarewelltour), email [themuhlenbergfund@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:themuhlenbergfund@muhlenberg.edu) or call 1-800-859-2243.

## 'Berg Receives Three-Year Grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

*Resources will help the College achieve its civic and global mission*

Muhlenberg College has been awarded a \$428,000 three-year grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support six interconnected initiatives aimed at globalizing the curriculum, increasing study abroad opportunities and strengthening faculty scholarship in the humanities.

"The support of the Mellon Foundation could not have come at a better time," says Provost John Ramsay. "As we internationalize our curriculum, Muhlenberg faculty and students will extend and deepen their understanding of the languages, cultures, arts, literatures and histories of people across the globe. At the same time, Mellon's support for the integration of digital tools into our humanities curriculum will provide opportunities to fulfill our civic mission right here in the Lehigh Valley. We're truly grateful to Mellon for their generous investment in the College and their confidence in the future of the humanities at Muhlenberg."

The funds will support the following activities:

Creation of new courses as part of the College's general education diversity and globalization requirement. Faculty development will target the integration of global perspectives at both the introductory and advanced level in existing majors as the College implements its

new and more rigorous two-course Human Diversity and Global Engagement (HDGE) general education requirement.

Deepening faculty integration of digital tools into teaching and scholarship, particularly in the humanities division. On-campus workshops will support the curricular integration of digital tools such as GIS, digital archives, wikis, blogs, ePortfolios, digital storytelling and web-based social learning tools, providing opportunities to support HDGE goals, integrative learning, faculty-student research collaboration and global partnerships.

Broadening of faculty expertise in international issues and global perspectives through international faculty development seminars. The creation of international on-site faculty seminars will foster the integration of global perspectives in curriculum development through place-based interaction with foreign cultures and will facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration on both curriculum development and scholarship.

Increasing short-term study abroad opportunities for students with a language instruction component integrated into these experiences. Course development grants will allow faculty to investigate new sites to expanded offerings of our short-term faculty-led study abroad courses (Muhlenberg Integrated Learning Abroad -

MILA courses). MILA instructors will collaborate to develop shared learning goals and common assessment tools to evaluate student learning within and across these experiences.

Strengthening the intellectual community among humanities faculty and colleagues in the arts and sciences. A Humanities Scholars in Residence program will provide opportunities for short-term on-campus residencies for humanities scholars in art history, English, history, modern languages, religion studies and philosophy over the three-year period. The residencies will support professional development related to curriculum and scholarship in the humanities.

Strengthening the curriculum in religion studies and Asian traditions with a humanities faculty position focused on India. Funds will support a two-year position to support the study of India, particularly in the religion studies major and Asian traditions minor.

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's grant-making philosophy is to build, strengthen and sustain institutions and their core capacities, rather than be a source for narrowly defined projects. As such, the Foundation develops thoughtful, long-term collaborations with grant recipients and invests sufficient funds for an extended period to accomplish the purpose at hand and achieve meaningful results.

## A Grande '05 Appearance

Last summer, Frankie Grande '05 graced the stage in Muhlenberg Summer Music Theatre's production of *Crazy for You* (pictured left). This summer, Grande is a resident of the Big Brother house, appearing on the popular CBS reality show.

Grande, a self-proclaimed super fan of Big Brother, wasn't available for comment at press time, due to the nature of the show – but he'd already proven himself a fierce competitor, winning the first Head of Household challenge.

Since his graduation from 'Berg, Grande has appeared in the Broadway cast of the hit musical *Mama Mia*, taught dance and is a bona fide YouTube sensation, (<http://www.youtube.com/user/FrankieJGrande>) with over 175,000 subscribers and nearly 10,000,000 views.



photo credit: Ken Ek

## 'Berg's Comic Connection



Muhlenberg College had a booth at the Wizard World Philadelphia ComicCon, part of the largest comic/pop culture convention in the USA at the Philadelphia Convention Center. Muhlenberg was the only private, liberal arts college in attendance. The CEO of Wizard World is a parent of a current Muhlenberg student.

According to Muhlenberg President Randy Helm, "ComicCon devotees have many of the qualities we're looking for: they are imaginative, creative, close readers and listeners with an eye for detail, a sense of humor and a flair for the dramatic. That pretty much describes the typical Muhlenberg student."

Students staffed the Muhlenberg booth, passed out admissions materials and discussed the College, but unlike the usual college fairs, these students wore "Raiders of the Liberal Arts" t-shirts featuring President Helm, who has been known to dress as everything from Indiana Jones to Iron Man for freshman orientation.

## SAVE THE DATE! 2014 Muhlenberg College Golf Classic

Friday, September 12, 2014

Green Pond Country Club • Bethlehem, Pa. • Double Shotgun Format

## Muhlenberg's Here & Now Fundraising Package Wins International Award

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) named Muhlenberg College a silver award winner of its 2014 Circle of Excellence awards program.

Muhlenberg was recognized for its Here & Now Fundraising Package. The same package also received the Gold Award as part of the District II CASE Accolades Award Program.

A panel of experts selected the institution's entry in the Fundraising Publications Packages category from among 18 entries. Muhlenberg tied with London Business School in this category.

This year, 629 higher education institutions, independent schools and nonprofits from around the world submitted more than 3,000 entries in 100 categories for consideration in the Circle of Excellence awards program. Judges gave 283 bronze, silver and gold awards. Thirteen institutions received the top prize of a grand gold award.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education is one of the largest international associations of education institutions, serving



more than 3,650 universities, colleges, schools and related organizations in more than 80 countries. CASE is the leading resource for professional development, information and standards in the fields of alumni relations, communications, educational fundraising and marketing.

For more information, visit [www.muhlenbergconnect.com/hereandnow](http://www.muhlenbergconnect.com/hereandnow).



“You can receive a lot of awards in your life, but there is nothing better, nothing better than being honored by your own.” ~Oprah Winfrey



**ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

The mission of Muhlenberg College is to “develop independent critical thinkers who are intellectually agile, characterized by a zest for reasoned and civil debate, committed to understanding the diversity of the human experience, able to express ideas with clarity and grace, committed to life-long learning, equipped with ethical and civic values, and prepared for lives of leadership and service.” Every day more than 25,000 Muhlenberg graduates strive to make these words a reality. Since 1952, the Alumni Board has selected close to 400 outstanding men and women to receive Alumni Achievement Awards.

This year’s Alumni Achievement Award winners were chosen by the Alumni Achievement Award committee of the Alumni Board, co-chaired by Sharon Gleichmann '89 and Carl Oplinger '58, from

a pool of highly qualified candidates. Nominated by their friends and classmates, the accolades below are taken from those letters of endorsement. The six individuals chosen have

made significant contributions to their fields of expertise, their companies and their communities while upholding the highest standards and values in everything they do. As such, they represent the best in our alumni body.

I invite you to attend this year’s luncheon on Saturday, September 13 to celebrate and congratulate these remarkable members of our Muhlenberg alumni family.

*Natalie Kulp Hand '78, PhD*  
Director, Alumni Relations

**NANCY DONOFRIO CHIARAVALLOTI '94**  
*Alumni Achievement in Science*

Nancy has a distinguished reputation and is known internationally as a leader in her field, winning numerous prestigious awards and securing multi-million dollar research grants. Currently the director of the Traumatic Brain Injury Research Laboratory and the Neuropsychology and Neuroscience Laboratory at the Kessler Family Foundation, she also has university appointments at Rutgers, New Jersey Medical School and

Fairleigh Dickinson University. Her extensive research has been focused on understanding and benefitting persons whose cognitive functioning has been impaired as a result of traumatic brain injury and disease, especially multiple sclerosis.

**DR. FREDERICK ECK '64**  
*Lifetime Achievement*

After serving in Viet Nam as a flight surgeon, Jack moved to Vail, Colo., to begin his medical practice. Recognizing the

inadequacies of the ski patrol of that era in addressing anything beyond orthopedic accidents, Jack developed a protocol and kit for handling cardiac rescue on the slopes, saving the lives of thousands. Jack was also a major force behind building the Vail Valley Medical Center. Part of that center – an on-site lodging facility for patients undergoing cancer treatment and their families – has been named Jack’s Place, in honor of the much beloved physician who has dedicated his life to meeting the health care needs in his community.

**JUDY DECKING JONES '64**  
*Lifetime Achievement*

Judy has played a key role in the state of Rhode Island in alleviating some of the state’s most urgent social issues – homelessness, unemployment and mental health. She did this patiently, carefully and by mastering the intricacies of policy and legislation – always with the goal of serving the disadvantaged. A singular achievement was the passage in 2001 of an affordable housing act that led to a \$45 million program creating 1,000 housing units. As current chair of the board of directors of the state’s oldest Community Mental Health Center, her patience, vision and hard work brought the Center and its programs into the 21st century.

**AMY JORDAN '83**  
*Alumni Achievement in Communications*

Amy is currently associate director of policy implementation and director of the post-doctoral fellowship program at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research on youth and media informs her teaching on youth, media policy and media effects. Additionally, she is co-editor of the *Journal of Children and Media* which

reflects some of the most widely cited research in the field. She is also President-elect of the International Communication Association, the major scholarly organization in the field with almost 5,000 members in 77 countries.

**MICHAEL SCHLOSSBERG '05**  
*Young Alumnus Recognition Award*

Michael has established himself as one of Pennsylvania’s rising political stars and committed public servants. He began his career as an intern for State Representative Jennifer Mann. Subsequently he won a seat on the Allentown City Council, becoming the youngest member ever, where he pursued policies to protect public safety, including one of the state’s first bans on texting and driving. Currently he is a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives representing the 132<sup>nd</sup> district – a district which includes Muhlenberg College. He serves on the Health, State Government, and Transportation committees.

**HOWARD WEITZ '74**  
*Alumni Achievement in Science*

Howard’s achievements in the field of medical education, clinical care and research have been recognized by Thomas Jefferson University through appointment to the faculty rank of full professor and chair of the Jefferson Heart Institute. Revered and respected by patients, students, residents and his professional faculty colleagues, Howard is known in Philadelphia as the “doctors’ doctor.” In addition to his numerous awards, honors and memberships in honorary societies, his name appears regularly on the lists of Philadelphia Magazine’s “Top Doctors” and America’s Top Doctors. Nationally, he has been involved in many educational programs and has shared his knowledge with many in a wide range of publications.

*At press time, alumni scheduled to receive an award at the ceremony are, from left to right: Dr. Nancy Donofrio Chiaravalloti '94, Dr. Frederick Eck '64, Mrs. Judith Decking Jones '64, Dr. Amy Jordan '83, Mr. Michael Schlossberg '05, Dr. Howard Weitz '74.*

## Muhlenberg Match Challenges a Resounding Success in Inaugural Year

In September 2013, Muhlenberg College launched two extraordinary challenges to inspire alumni, parents and friends to support students by establishing endowed funds for scholarships and educational enrichment opportunities ([muhlenbergconnect.com/muhlenbergmatch](http://muhlenbergconnect.com/muhlenbergmatch)). The College set aside \$10,000,000 for the Scholarship Challenge and \$1,000,000 for the Enrichment Challenge and offers donors a 1:1 match for establishing endowed funds between \$25,000 and \$250,000.

At the close of Fund Year 2013-2014, more than a fourth of the scholarship funds and nearly half of the enrichment funds were com-

mitted. Thanks to our generous donors, students will have access to a top-notch liberal arts experience designed for the 21st century.

To date, there have been 54 commitments to 50 endowed scholarships and four commitments to endowed funds supporting summer research, study abroad, the Academic Resource Center and a professorship.

Muhlenberg College is profoundly grateful to the alumni, parents and friends who have established endowed funds in support of our students. For more information on the Match Challenges, visit [muhlenbergconnect.com/muhlenbergmatch](http://muhlenbergconnect.com/muhlenbergmatch) or call 484-664-3247.

Challenge	Gift Commitments	Match Funds Utilized
Scholarship Match	\$3,721,702	\$2,971,702
Enrichment Match	\$1,150,000	\$400,000
Total (both)	\$4,871,702	\$3,371,702



Robert P'13 and Lisa Alpert P'13 have established The Alpert Family Scholarship "to put a Muhlenberg College education in reach of a bright-minded student whose heart is firmly set on attending the College, but whose financial means make it impossible."



## Class of 2014 Sets New Participation Record

by Hannah Oros '14

The Class of 2014 reached 60% participation, with 322 seniors making a gift to Muhlenberg, through the Senior Class Connections Campaign (SCCC). This breaks the record for senior participation set by the Class of 2013, who achieved 58% participation.

The Campaign kicked off in January at a "Senior Chill" event when the SCCC Committee encouraged the Class of 2014 to "Rob the Riches" as part of a challenge initiated by Chairman of the Board Rich Crist '77, P'05, P'09 and past Chairman Rich Brueckner '71, P'04, P'10. The "Rob the Riches" Challenge called for both Riches to commit additional funds to the Class of 2014 if they beat the record set by the Class of 2013. Since the Class of 2014 did so by reaching 60%, both Rich Crist and Rich Brueckner gave \$10,000 each on behalf of the Class, totaling \$20,000.

Recent graduate Marisa Levy '14 was excited to give back: "Muhlenberg was a great experience for me so I wanted to help make it a great experience for future students!"

For students who want to come to Muhlenberg, finances can determine whether or not they are able to attend. Giving back to Muhlenberg

allows talented students to attend Muhlenberg, regardless of their financial situation. Gabby Aboodi '14, who was a member of the Senior Class Connections Campaign, says "I gave to The Muhlenberg Fund because Muhlenberg has given so much to me. I received a great education and I've made amazing friends that I can always count on. I wanted to support The Muhlenberg Fund because I want to give back to the place that has given me so much!"

"By giving to The Muhlenberg Fund we are giving other students the chance to get the great experience we have had. Without the 'silent scholarship' [provided through philanthropic support of Muhlenberg], there are students who may not be able to come and get the education and the chances that we have had. Any amount you give is helping someone come and have the Muhlenberg experience," concludes Gabby. The silent scholarship is the 15% of what it costs the College to educate students that is not covered by tuition dollars and is provided in part by gifts from alumni, parents and friends.

Seniors who gave at least \$20.14 to the Campaign were treated to a tour of the Haas Bell Tower and a picture with President Helm. Congratulations and thank you to the Class of 2014!



# Dr. James Williams '51: *Tuskegee Trailblazer*

by Jeremy Fuchs '14

**D**r. James Williams '51 grew up in a time when our society made it difficult for an African-American to become a student, a soldier and a doctor.

So what did he do? He became all three.

Williams, 90, is infirm and was unable to comment for this article. He lives in a care facility on Philadelphia's Main Line. But the memories of a life lived well were filled in by two of his five children, son Bruce and daughter Kathy.

Along with his fellow Tuskegee Airmen, Williams (pictured center in above photo) received the Congressional Gold Medal in 2007. But at first the military even denied him the ability to serve, claiming that he was overweight. As Williams told J.F. Pirro of Main Line Today in a 2011 article, it was more that his "hue didn't meet their criteria." Instead of sulking, Williams rededicated himself to training so that the military "couldn't say no anymore." That attitude became his calling card, in battle and later in life.

Once in the service, Williams became one of the celebrated Tuskegee Airmen, America's first black aviators. Williams was in training for Operation Downfall, the planned military invasion of Japan in World War II, sometimes flying so low on his B-25 training missions, he used to tell Bruce, "that I would cut the cornstalks."



History didn't allow for a starring role in Operation Downfall, as the Allied Forces chose to drop the bomb on Nagasaki and Hiroshima, but Williams nevertheless became one of a few to earn "three wings"—as a navigator, as a bombardier and as a pilot.

With the war ending and scores of veterans attending college on the GI Bill, Williams did what so many Mules do to this day—follow a friend. Lt. General Julius Becton Jr., who went on to become the eighth director of the Federal Emergency Management Administration, had come to 'Berg in 1949 and recommended it to Williams. Becton was the first African-American to attend Muhlenberg, although he did not graduate from the school. The two remain good friends.

So Williams walked through the red doors, breaking down, again, the strictures of the past. He excelled in the classroom, absorbing all the academic offerings. Williams "felt like he was cheating in school," his daughter says, "because he could read his notes in his head during tests."

But like all trailblazers, Williams, who graduated with a B.S. in natural sciences, faced obstacles that marked the era. His color prohibited him from living on campus, so he commuted from a nearby boarding house. He was so poor, his daughter said, that he "used to eat baked beans, out of the can, on the radiator, when there was heat."

But despite all that, Williams, typically, found a way to ingrain himself into the Muhlenberg community. He was active in student government, the vice president of the sophomore class, elected in 1949, and one of 21 men to be nominated for student council in 1950. He excelled as a hurdler and was named a "Promising Plebe" by freshman football coach Ernie Fellows in an October 1947 edition of the *Muhlenberg Weekly*. Williams, a 190-pound guard, never let those who met him with skepticism keep him down. He graduated in 1951 along with William Pulley, the first African-American 'Berg grad.

Williams went on to receive his medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville in 1955 and became a clinical and anatomic pathologist in Bryn Mawr. He was in practice there for the next five decades, becoming a respected member of the medical community.

"Our dad would be very proud," Bruce Williams said, when asked what his father would think of being profiled for this magazine. "He spoke highly of Muhlenberg. He was very proud to be a graduate of Muhlenberg."

Not as proud as Muhlenberg is of Dr. James Williams, a trailblazer who lived a life worth celebrating.



# Why We Came Here:

## Not Just the Tri-States Anymore



By Ron Czajkowski '71

**I**t was early December of 1966, and I was faced with a recurring question that prompted a few sleepless nights: Why Muhlenberg?

As a better than average high school student who boasted some modest accomplishments tempered by less than impressive SAT scores, I had managed college acceptances to Davidson, Franklin & Marshall, Drew, Muhlenberg and a wait list from Johns Hopkins. I also threw a long-shot application in at Princeton, but I have yet to hear back from them.

Winter turned to spring, and a college commitment had to be made. The others fell off the charts for a variety of reasons: too far away; too close; hadn't visited the campus; visited the campus and, and receiving lower marks from me at three of the five, they had yet to become co-educational.

Muhlenberg, regionally acclaimed, liberal arts grounded, academically challenging, co-ed and, within a 90-minute drive, bus or train trip from home, became my top choice. An older sister of a friend went there and sent back great reviews. However, the experience that sealed the deal came during a third visit to campus by myself, with no parents joining me and no student tour guide to follow. I took a day off from school and wandered Muhlenberg on my own. What I experienced during those few hours was a sense of community and a commitment to nurturing the best from everyone that proved to be true for my four years there.

One thing I hadn't expected however, was that the majority of my freshman class, and almost the entire student body for that matter, came from a handful of states, namely Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York, with an

occasional New Englander and a south-of-the-Mason-Dixon-Liner sprinkled in for good measure. Fact was, back then, most of the students found their way to Muhlenberg from hometowns within a few hundred-mile radius of Allentown. (Though there were exceptions ... see The Last Word on page 33.)

But, oh, how the Muhlenberg map has changed. In 1990, 84% of students came from that tri-state nexus. But this past fall, according to Dean of Admission and Financial Aid Christopher Hooker-Haring, a full 25% of the student body was from outside the tri-states, hailing from 35 states plus the District of Columbia. As a result of Muhlenberg's increased national reputation, alumni outreach and targeted admissions recruitment, the numbers for some states have swelled. For example, in 1990, five students came from California; last year that number grew to 60.

Whether it be a growing reputation in recently emerging and nationally recognized majors and programs like theatre, dance, communications, neuroscience and pre-med, or 'Berg's first-visit impressions that prompt student reactions such as "close knit," "caring," "challenging" and "a real sense of community," more students from places like Chicago, Dallas, Miami and Los Angeles are finding their way through the red doors.

"We have been more intentional in recruiting nationally as well as regionally in an effort to keep Muhlenberg healthy and to bring new perspectives from other parts of the country into

the educational equation here," says Hooker-Haring. "Southern California has proven to be a good area for us, as well as the greater Chicago area. And we are now aiming at other territories, including greater Atlanta, Minneapolis/St. Paul/Milwaukee, Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston and both coasts of Florida. The next frontier for us is international recruitment, which we're just beginning to truly tap."

So, when the editors of the *Muhlenberg* magazine asked me to join them in reaching out to students from geographic areas far removed from those of my long-ago classmates, I was eager to do so. Through e-mail and phone interviews, we asked three questions: How did you first hear about Muhlenberg? What were the factors in your decision to come here? Is being so far away from home an issue for you, and how have you adapted to the Muhlenberg experience?

What follows is a sampling of feedback from eight students from various parts of the country. If there's a common theme to these responses, it is best defined by that same sense of community that I experienced nearly 50 years ago. The only difference being that now, the community is making a much larger footprint on the national map.

*Ron Czajkowski graduated from Muhlenberg in 1971 and earned a master's degree in journalism from Syracuse University in 1975. Now semi-retired, he crafted a 40-year career in weekly and daily newspapering, public relations and most notably, teaching. He resides in Somerville, N.J.*



## Family Ties

Jesse Lerner '15 – Maitland, Florida

When push came to shove, I was down to four schools: Muhlenberg, Quinnipiac University, Boston University and Florida State University, with two days left to decide. There was part of me that desperately

wanted to go to FSU considering that my three best friends from high school were going there.

However, going to school in Florida scared me for a number of reasons, the main one being that I never saw myself leaving Florida after college if I went to school there. I decided to venture out of my comfort zone and ultimately zeroed in on Muhlenberg one day before the deadline and haven't looked back or second-guessed myself since.

I chose to come to Muhlenberg because of the reputation it had as an academic institution, the family ties that my parents, little brother and I have to the area, and to play basketball. The distance hasn't been too much of a burden for my parents because they frequently would make the trip to Allentown ... They were both born and raised here, gave birth to me here, and both still have multiple family members in the area.

One of the major advantages to going to school far away from home is that I am forced to be more independent and self-reliant. Being unable to drive home for breaks, head home on the weekends whenever I want or even bring laundry home or have my parents come to help me on a whim at school is out of the question. It has taught me valuable life skills that I will need to have, especially in life after Muhlenberg.

Florida

Texas



## Gotta Dance

Dalit Agronin '16 – Dallas, Texas

I came to Muhlenberg because I was looking for a small school, a school with a good dance program as well as Jewish life and a school in the northeast. My graduating class was only 31, and so I knew that a big college was not for me. There was something I found at a small school with the student-teacher relationship, and that is what I wanted in my college.

In addition, Muhlenberg has an amazing dance program, ranked #1 according to the *Princeton Review* for liberal arts theatre & dance programs when I applied, and it just seemed like it would be the best place, where I would be challenged, nurtured and grow as both a person and a dancer. All of these factors that I looked for in Muhlenberg proved to be true and have exceeded my expectations of what I could have hoped for. Other schools I considered were Barnard College, Rutgers- Mason Gross School of the Arts, George Mason, Michigan and FSU.

It was only when we had a college visit to Muhlenberg and met with [Associate Dean of Admission and Financial Aid] Melissa Falk that I started to think more about Muhlenberg. My mom and I made a last minute decision to visit Muhlenberg in the middle of April of my senior year, and I remember I only had about an hour at the school. In that time I had a tour, sat in on a dance class, met with Melissa and had the opportunity to even meet with Karen Dearborn [the chair of the dance program], which really said something about the type of place Muhlenberg is.

My mom tries to come up at least once a semester for my performances, so that is always great. ... I don't go home very often, but I keep myself very busy at school so that I don't really think about going home.

## Love at First Sight

Felisa Wiley '16 –

St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

I first heard about Muhlenberg when I went on a college tour my junior year of high school. I went with my heart in deciding to attend Muhlenberg. During the campus visit, I immediately fell in love with the College and knew it was the place for me. 'Berg had the majors I was interested in (media and communication and film studies), the friendliness of the staff and students that I met stood out, and the overall atmosphere was so welcoming.

Being so far away from St. Thomas is not an issue for me because Muhlenberg has become a second home.



St. Thomas  
U.S. Virgin Islands

Illinois

## A Place to Act Up

Eliana Sagaran '14 – Wilmette, Illinois



The reason why I ultimately chose Muhlenberg was the theatre program, the ability for theatre majors to double major, study abroad and receive a liberal arts education, which is not the case at many conservatory theatre programs. I also loved the feeling on campus. I went to New Trier High School on the North Shore of

Chicago, and it had about 5,000 students. I was looking forward to a change of pace.

One of my mom's close friends went to Muhlenberg to study theatre, and she indoctrinated me at a young age that Muhlenberg would be a good place for me. It obviously worked. I came into my high school counselor appointment with Muhlenberg on my mind, and they knew of the school and were

highly supportive of me pursuing enrollment here, even though it was far from a familiar name among my classmates and the general community in New Trier. Making my college decision ultimately came down between the BFA Acting program at the University of Illinois and Muhlenberg. I knew that Muhlenberg was the place for me, and luckily, financial aid pulled through for me, which made Muhlenberg a possibility.

There were moments when I wish my family was closer because of convenience. But luckily both parents had the opportunity to see me perform at least once. I enjoyed branching out and exploring the East Coast while I was a student. During many of my shorter breaks, I explored Boston, New York, D.C., Providence and Philadelphia. I definitely feel it was an advantage. It fostered independence and made me extremely comfortable with traveling alone. I studied abroad in London my junior year.

## East Coast Refuge

Rachelle Murad '16 – Manhattan Beach, California

I heard about Muhlenberg in a magazine my mom was reading after I begged her not to make me return to my counselor, who was trying to get me to aim low for my college choice. I applied to only two schools near home because I knew I wanted to be on the East Coast, since most of my cousins and grandparents live in New York. I also wanted to attend a small school.

By decision time, it was between NYU and Muhlenberg. NYU

stressed me out, and after attending Muhlenberg's "Through the Red Doors Day," I felt at home and knew that Muhlenberg was perfect for me.

The distance is only hard during summer and winter breaks when all of my friends are hanging out without me. But I love Muhlenberg and have made an amazing number of quality friendships here. I love California, too, but the year goes by so fast that during the school year I don't miss home at all.



California

## Alumni Connection

Julian Rutkowski '15 – *Chicago, Illinois*



counselor and 'Berg alum named Carolyn Schoen approached me about Muhlenberg. She said that she was thrilled to see my

The reason I chose Muhlenberg was a combination of its East Coast location, the liberal arts curriculum, the size of the school and the opportunity to further pursue athletic and academic interests. I had never heard much about Muhlenberg until it appeared on a computer-generated list of colleges that fit similar characteristics. From there a college

interest in her alma mater and played a huge role in my eventual decision to attend Muhlenberg.

My other college choices were liberal arts colleges and universities such as Rochester Institute of Technology, Wittenberg and Babson. Attending school away from home has been an invaluable experience. It not only allowed me to build on the independence that I cultivated while attending a boarding high school, but also allowed me to experience life in a region of the country far different from that of my own Midwest.

Illinois

## Getting a New World View

Robbie Motz '16 – *Burbank, California*



I came to Muhlenberg mostly because of its incredible theatre program. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my life during my senior year of high school. I was considering becoming an engineer, but acting came on my radar as a strong possibility. I chose not to go into a conservatory or a BFA program because I knew there were too many other things I wanted to try. After visiting and being promised an affordable financial package, Muhlenberg became the obvious choice for me.

My high school counselors knew little more than the names of the California universities. Their priority was just to get the students to graduate. My mom started her own college search consultation service to fill the niche our high school staff was not providing. It was through her expertise and

experience that we found Muhlenberg.

I didn't look in-state at all. I wanted to go somewhere with good weather, so I ended up applying to Whitman College, Connecticut College, Beloit College, Wesleyan University, Northwestern and Carleton College in Minnesota. In the end, Muhlenberg was the undeniable best fit.

The experiences I've had in Allentown with my East Coast friends would not have been possible in southern California...It's been an absolute blessing to experience a new side of the country. I feel like I have a better world view, and I feel like I was able to reinvent myself more than the average college freshman. The tricky thing is that the worlds of home and college have a strong disconnect. During my snowy winters in Allentown, it's 74 degrees in Burbank. Trickier still is a long-distance relationship I have with a girlfriend from high school. Luckily, she and my family have been able to visit once or twice a year. All in all, I'm very thankful for the choices I've made and for my educational experience at Muhlenberg.

California



## Felt the Energy

Lena Schneider '16 – *Salem, Oregon*

I first heard about Muhlenberg through a friend who was deciding between Muhlenberg and a school closer to home, which was his ultimate choice. On paper, Muhlenberg looked like the best bet for me because of its strong theatre program and its Jewish presence. At first I was looking at larger schools such as Oberlin, because I was familiar with its name.

But after visiting campus, there was no longer a choice. I was captivated by Muhlenberg. The energy on campus, the welcoming feeling, the beautiful buildings ... everything. I ended up applying early decision and not applying to schools that were at the top of my original list.

Distance from home has not been a problem. The things I do on campus keep me so busy I don't really have time to think about being homesick. However, I didn't realize how much of a financial burden coming to school almost 3,000 miles away would be. It can be a little hard to watch friends go home for a weekend or for breaks, while I'm limited to going home for a month in December and a month in June. Purchasing plane tickets are mainly my responsibility. But despite being so far from home, I've loved my experience at 'Berg. It's definitely been worth the occasional stress of dealing with the distance.

Oregon

## A Spirited Experience

Ginelle Wolfe '16 – *Beverly Hills, California*



I worked with a college counselor outside of my high school. I'm pretty sure my high school counselor had never heard of Muhlenberg. I was already looking for small schools on the East Coast where students would have good relationships with their professors and other students, but when I came to Muhlenberg, I noticed that the people there seemed to actually care how I was doing. Even from the first visit, I found out how easy it was to cultivate relationships at the school with other students and professors. I had a great tour guide the first time I visited and even though it was pouring rain on that day, I knew I liked the school and wanted it on my list of schools to apply.

My admissions counselor, Melissa, helped me throughout my whole college process. She customized my schedule for an overnight visit to make sure that I visited the classes I wanted to see and had a good experience. I could tell that the person who hosted me, Megan, was a genuinely nice person who was proud of her school. Everyone who I met that day was happy and proud to be a Mule. Muhlenberg had a very specific type of school spirit that I didn't see anywhere else. When I visited, I also noticed that everyone I met was involved in several different activities on campus and I knew I wanted to go to a school where that was not just an option but encouraged.

Each time I visited another school, I found myself comparing it to Muhlenberg and at the end of my week of over nights and the schools I was accepted to, I knew without a doubt that Muhlenberg was where I wanted to be for the next four years. In the end, the runners up were the College of Wooster in Ohio and Trinity College in Connecticut.

Going to the East Coast for college had always been in the back of my mind. I love being on the East Coast and having seasons. The snow is always fun, and my friends and I like to keep the Muhlenberg tradition of sledding down the hill by the library on the lunch trays. My parents visit me once in a while, but I definitely enjoy having the space. It's fun to tell people that I live a bicoastal life and to get to experience two completely different parts of the country. It's also fun to go to my friends' houses over short breaks. I have gotten to explore a lot of New Jersey, New York and Connecticut.

California



# Muhlenberg College Celebrates 2014 Commencement

On Saturday, May 17 and Sunday, May 18, Muhlenberg College welcomed family, friends and members of the community in celebration of the College's 166<sup>th</sup> Commencement weekend.

Muhlenberg awarded the degrees of bachelor of arts, bachelor of sciences and bachelor of arts & sciences to 540 degree recipients.

Erin Laney '14, who earned her B.A. in American studies and Spanish and is certified to teach grades 4-8, served as student speaker. Saturday night, during the Baccalaureate ceremony, seniors Benji Kornbluth, Avni Mittal and Matthew Bocchese provided reflections on their four year experiences.

Ron Chernow, American Historian Laureate and Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Washington: A Life*, served as commencement speaker. Chernow was awarded an honorary doctor of letters degree. Henry David Abraham, M.D. '63, noted psychiatrist whose research contributed to the development of the Diagnostics and Statistical Manuals of the American Psychiatric Association, was awarded an honorary doctor of human letters degree. Donald Holder, recipient of two Tony awards and lighting designer of more than 40 Broadway productions, was awarded an honorary doctor of arts degree. Dr. Carson D. Schneck, M.D., Ph.D. '55, renowned professor of anatomy and diagnostic imaging at Temple Medical School, was awarded an honorary doctor of science degree.

Dr. Amy Hark, associate professor of biology and co-director of the biochemistry program, was honored with The Paul C. Empie '29 Memorial Award for Excellence In Teaching. This award, honoring inspirational teaching, is given in memory of the Rev. Paul C. Empie '29, D.D., a Muhlenberg Trustee and Chairman of the Board from 1972.



# RUSS CHOMA '03: He Knows Where the Money Flows

by Jack McCallum '71, Guest Editor

Russ Choma's first story for *The Muhlenberg Weekly*, written when he was a freshman in 1999, was about washing machines in the dorms. Fifteen years later, he is still going through dirty laundry, metaphorically-speaking. Choma '03 is a reporter for OpenSecrets.org, a web-based publication that follows the money in Washington, D.C. politics.

"I still remember the headline on the washing-machine story was 'THE TIDES THEY ARE A' CHANGIN'," said Choma, over a recent breakfast in the nation's capital. "Good headline, but the story was largely nonsense. It was about how the washing machines were going to go to swipe cards, which didn't happen until after I graduated. There were all sorts of things I wanted to write about when I got to Muhlenberg, but washing machines was not one of them."

So his first was also his last story for *The Weekly*. Choma then co-founded an online student publication, *The Muhlenberg Advocate*, which took a more serious look at campus life, and, from time to time, "caused a little trouble" in Choma's words.

"We did some good stories," he said, "but like most student

publications we went off on a tangent once in a while. Mike Bruckner [Muhlenberg's vice president of public relations] held our hand and was the one who said, 'Look, you really don't want to do that.'"

*The Advocate* (which stopped publishing last year) set Choma's life course, even if he didn't realize it at the time. He graduated with a degree in political science and followed a classmate, Seth Williams, to New Hampshire, where Williams was working on John Kerry's Presidential campaign. Choma saw how many hours Williams spent working and decided that a full-flung leap into politics was not for him. But he landed a job as a reporter for the *Union-Leader*, New Hampshire's biggest paper, covering police and courthouse stories and, of course, politics. "Everybody in New Hampshire covers politics," he says.

In 2008, Choma came to D.C. on an American University journalism fellowship, earned a master's degree and, through a thesis project, a job. He pitched a story in class about how stimulus money for green energy was ending up primarily overseas, and his professor, Charles Lewis, founding editor

of the Investigative Reporting Workshop said, "I'll pay you to finish it." Choma had found his niche. He worked for Lewis, then moved as the money-in-politics reporter to *OpenSecrets*, the publication for the Center for Responsive Politics, which is both non-profit and non-partisan, the latter being difficult to find in Washington these days.

"Our job is not to take an editorial position on issues, but, rather, to follow the money and show how and why those issues are important," says Choma. "Politicians love and hate *OpenSecrets*. They hate it because we tell their secrets, but they love it because we tell the *other guy's* secrets. Both liberals and conservatives complain about our stories, which means, I guess, that we're doing the job the right way."

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[Here is a link to a couple of Choma's stories on the *OpenSecrets* blog <https://www.opensecrets.org/news/tag/russ-choma2318/>]

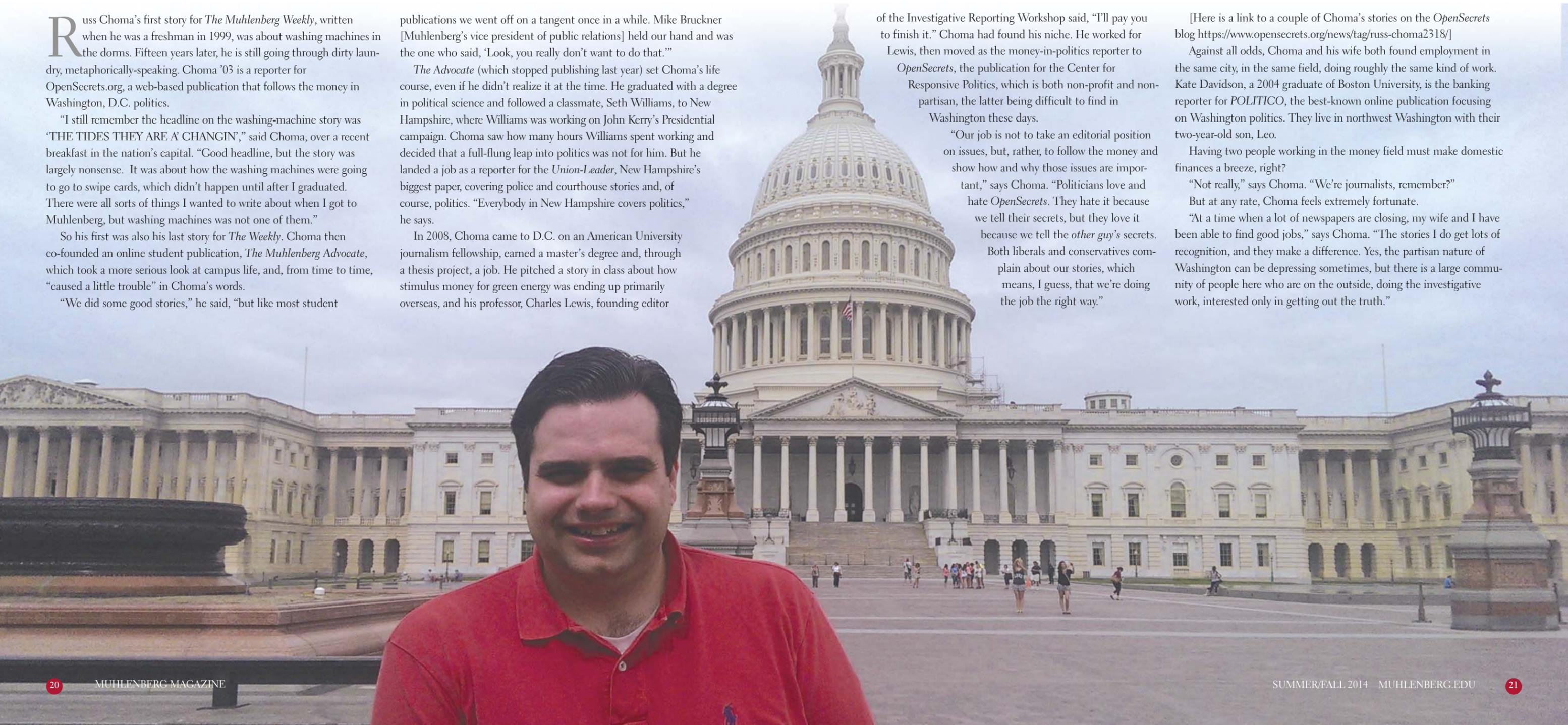
Against all odds, Choma and his wife both found employment in the same city, in the same field, doing roughly the same kind of work. Kate Davidson, a 2004 graduate of Boston University, is the banking reporter for *POLITICO*, the best-known online publication focusing on Washington politics. They live in northwest Washington with their two-year-old son, Leo.

Having two people working in the money field must make domestic finances a breeze, right?

"Not really," says Choma. "We're journalists, remember?"

But at any rate, Choma feels extremely fortunate.

"At a time when a lot of newspapers are closing, my wife and I have been able to find good jobs," says Choma. "The stories I do get lots of recognition, and they make a difference. Yes, the partisan nature of Washington can be depressing sometimes, but there is a large community of people here who are on the outside, doing the investigative work, interested only in getting out the truth."





# Erin Laney '14: Say Yes to No

by Andy Edwards, Assistant Sports Information Director

Erin Laney '14 is no stranger to standing alone in a pressure-packed situation.

Whether it be as a member of the Muhlenberg women's basketball team or during her time as a student-teacher, she knows what it's like to have all eyes on her. While those experiences are great preparation, she never had to stare into a spotlight like this.

Laney was selected as the senior speaker and delivered the address for the Class of 2014 at Muhlenberg's 166<sup>th</sup> Commencement.

"Never," Laney said when asked before Commencement if she had any previous experience in public speaking. "This is a great place to start."

Like many other things in the self-admitted procrastinator's life, the idea to put her hat in the ring didn't hatch until late in the process. Probably unlike most of her competition, Laney's decision came spur of the moment.

"Right when second semester started and I was reflecting on my teaching experiences and how I was back to being a student again, I thought about it from a different perspective," Laney said. "I think because of that I woke up one morning and decided I wanted to write a Commencement speech. It was a random thought, but it comes from seeing learning from a different perspective and getting insight into that."

The first step was writing her speech. Then came the announcement of three finalists. After that, students had a 48-hour window to vote for their favorite. A well-liked athlete with a wide-ranging friend group, Laney knew she had a chance to win the popular vote – as long as she

did most of the work for her constituents.

"Being friends with all the athletes, I have a lot of friends at the school, and they're generally not the kind who will go way out of their way to spread the word," Laney said. "So, I went through my phone and texted every single person I felt comfortable texting to vote for me. And I did it with the link too – if I just told them to vote for me, no one would try to find out how."

Her good reputation came in handy, too. "I had heard that even people who didn't know me well but had heard of me were voting for me because they knew me by association," Laney said.

On the first Monday in April, an e-mail notification with the good news pinged on her cell phone.

"I hadn't even gotten out of bed yet, but I read it and was like, whoa, that's my name!" Laney recalled. "I read it again and couldn't believe I won. Then I remembered I had roommates and could go celebrate, so I ran out of my room and was jumping around."

A member of the prestigious RJ Fellows program and a certified peer tutor, Laney certainly fits the ideal of a senior speaker. She made the Dean's List every semester at Muhlenberg and graduated Phi Beta Kappa and magna cum laude. She was named to the Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll each of the last three years.

Over the course of her four years at Muhlenberg, community service in the City of Allentown was important to Laney. She participated in the Healthy Youth Peer Education

Program (HYPE), discussing issues of racism and prejudice with high-school students. This past year, she participated in the Institute for Jewish-Christian Understanding's Youth & Prejudice: Reducing Hatred Conference, engaging middle-school students in small group discussions on the language of tolerance. Laney also volunteered with Casa Guadalupe, working in conjunction with a Muhlenberg education professor in the instruction of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) education to low-income middle-school students at an afterschool program.

Laney, the second Muhlenberg athlete to deliver the Commencement address in the last four years (soccer standout Mike Williams spoke for the Class of 2011) fell back on her student-teaching experience to prepare for the magnitude of the moment when she was to give her speech.

"If I can go an entire day in front of seventh-graders and be fine, I think I can handle 6,000 people looking at me and not being able to talk back," she joked.

She handled it with great aplomb, looking every bit the experienced public speaker as she delivered the well-received speech.

"It felt so good being up there at the podium," she said. "I was really only nervous walking up the ramp [on the way to the podium]. I felt like everyone wanted to hear me speak and I was really comfortable. My experience at Muhlenberg prepared me."

In addition to her extensive classroom experience, one of Laney's biggest on-court moments also helped her preparation.

In early February, Laney was at the free-throw line in a tie game at home against McDaniel. There were only 0.8 seconds left on the clock, but the wait must have felt like an eternity. She missed the first freebie, but the second was true, giving the Mules a stirring victory.

The win helped Muhlenberg reach the Centennial Conference playoffs for the ninth straight year and was one of several big moments for Laney in her senior year. She earned All-CC honorable mention after averaging 9.5 points and 6.0 rebounds (both second on the Mules). She finished her career with 669 points and 472 rebounds.

As for the speech itself, Laney drew on personal experience to deliver a wider message to her fellow students.

"I guess the gist of it is this," Laney said. "When someone tells you no ... you're not good enough, you're not what we're looking for ... how are you going to react to that face value judgment? People don't know your potential, what you're capable of or how hard you're going to work. It's kind of a compliment to Muhlenberg in a way, because this is a personal victory for me."



"I've been told I can't do basketball and student-teacher. I've been told I couldn't study Spanish and my other major on top of teaching. I've been told I couldn't study abroad. Basically my career and where I'm ending up has been shaped around being told no so many times. I did all of those things. In a way,

Muhlenberg has made me into a more determined person. What is no? For me, it means nothing."

And although Laney's message of determination may be a timeless one, she punctuated her speech with a decidedly modern action, pausing before leaving the podium to take a selfie.

"I thought, this is a moment I want to share with everyone," said Laney, who was inspired by a selfie from another graduation ceremony that a teammate showed her. "There was that awkward ten seconds where I was fumbling around under the podium, trying to get my phone into camera mode."

Laney conquered that challenge, as she did with every other one she encountered at Muhlenberg. Her next challenge comes this fall, when the Old Greenwich, Conn., native returns to Allentown to teach Spanish to children kindergarten through fifth grade. It is a job that could lead Laney back to the podium.

"I hope to see myself in a role where I can do public speaking, maybe to spark education reform," she said. "I'm really passionate about education."

## Mule Teams Reached Postseason at Record Rate in 2013-2014

Across the board, the 2013-14 year was a strong showing and major step up for Muhlenberg athletics in Centennial Conference competition.

The Mules reached a consistent level of success that few CC programs can match.

### PERCENTAGE OF TEAMS IN POSTSEASON

The CC crowns champions in 24 sports and fields championship events – an end-of-the-year meet or playoff tournament – in 23 of them (all but football). All schools that sponsor the sport compete in the champi-

onship meet in cross country, golf, track, swimming and wrestling, but they need to finish in the top four or five to qualify in the other sports.

Since Muhlenberg does not sponsor swimming, it has 21 opportunities for championship participation. And in 2013-14, the Mules certainly took advantage.

Muhlenberg set a school record with 18 postseason qualifiers during the past athletic year, missing out in only three sports. That was percentage points better than the 2001-02 season, when the Mules placed 16

*continued on page 24*



continued from page 23

teams in the CC playoffs out of 19 chances (tennis did not feature a team tournament until 2005).

Examining data that dates back to the 2001-02 athletic year, when the CC started its postseason tournaments in most sports, Muhlenberg's most recent campaign places it in rarified air.

**TEAMS IN POSTSEASON IN 2013-14**

First, the Mules' 18 playoff teams were tied for the conference lead with Franklin & Marshall. Additionally, since 2001-02 only one other CC school – Gettysburg – has sent more than 18 teams to the postseason. In fact, Franklin & Marshall is the only other CC member to reach 18, doing so in each of the last two seasons. However, the Diplomats did so with one more chance at playoff qualification than Muhlenberg, since they sponsor swimming.

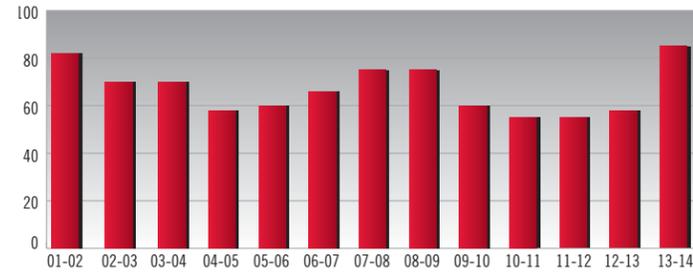
Muhlenberg's winning percentage in the 13 sports where the regular season determines the champion or playoff qualification was .571 (87-65-2) this season. That represents the Mules' best performance since the 2008-09 athletic year, when those 13 teams were a combined 91-53-4 (.628).

In the last three years, the Mules have been steadily on the rise.

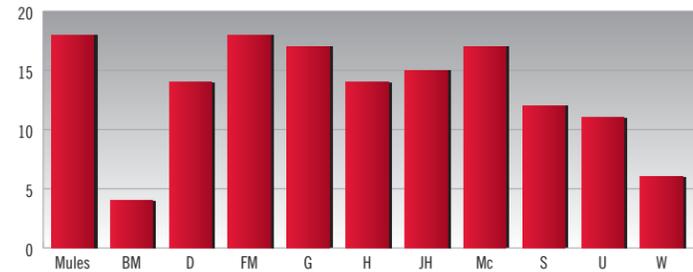
Muhlenberg is the only CC school to improve its playoff participation each of the last two years, and one of only three to not suffer a decrease in any of the last four seasons. The Mules totaled 12 playoff teams in both 2010-11 and 2011-12 before increasing to 14 last year and making the leap to 18 this time around. Only once in the last 12 years – Gettysburg between 2005-06 and 2006-07 – did another conference program have a jump of at least four from one year to the next.

Emerging programs for the Mules in 2013-14 included five playoff teams – field hockey (6), women's lacrosse (5), women's tennis (3), volleyball (4) and baseball (6) – that ended postseason droughts of at least three years, with volleyball reaching the CC final for the first time since 2001 and baseball winning a postseason game for the first time since 2003. Not surprisingly, none of those teams was expected to break the spell – all five were predicted to finish outside of postseason contention in their respective CC preseason polls, and a sixth (women's soccer) was

**Yearly Percentage of Muhlenberg Teams Qualifying for CC Playoffs**



**2013-2014 CC Playoff Qualifiers**



\*BM – Bryn Mawr, D – Dickinson, FM – Franklin & Marshall, G – Gettysburg, H – Haverford, JH – Johns Hopkins, Mc – McDaniel, S – Swarthmore, U – Ursinus, W – Washington College

tabbed to tie for the final berth.

Muhlenberg's traditionally strong programs continued their run of excellence during the 2013-14 year. The football team finished second in the CC and earned a postseason bid for the 10th time in 14 years, and softball won the regular-season conference crown and the top seed in the league tournament for the second year in a row. Women's basketball made the playoffs for the ninth straight season.

**Muhlenberg student-athletes showed record levels of success in the classroom as well:**

- In the fall, 37 Mules were named to the Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll, tying for the most in the last 10 years.
- Twenty-four Mules (the most in 10 years) were named to the winter Academic Honor Roll.
- Muhlenberg set a school record with 44 athletes on the spring Academic Honor Roll, shattering the previous mark of 35 from 2007.
- Five Mules - Bryan Auvil '16 (football), Kelly Kline '14 (softball), Nicki Cronin '14 (cross country/track & field), Max Litvak '14 (baseball) and Tyler Bauer '15 (track & field) pictured at right - were selected to CoSIDA Academic All-District teams. Bauer went on to earn Academic All-America honors for the second year in a row, moving up to the first team after making the second team last year. The sixth-place finisher in the javelin at the NCAA Division III Championships, he is the first athlete in College history to be an All-American and an Academic All-American in back-to-back years.



34<sup>th</sup> annual Stromathon with 1970 PKT alumni brothers

**1970**

Bruce Reitz writes, "PKT alumni brothers returned to campus on Saturday, May 31, for our 34<sup>th</sup> annual Stromathon in recognition of our former cook, Gilbert C. Strohm. The brothers that attended included: Keith Pedrani '12, Joe Moussa '12, Tom Flatley '11, Ryan Doncsecz '11, Ben Wald '14, Dave Wolf '11, Mike Goodrich '11, Ben Perlman '13, Steve Solano '13, Tim Hilbert '74, Rod MacKenzie, Tom Burkholder, Bruce Reitz, Tom Dunkel '72, Randy Bush '74, Don Atkiss '72, Walt Roetting '72, Jeff Gilbert, Barry Burkhardt, Jim Thacher '71, Barry Waterhouse '71, Hoss Ehrgood '73, Tom Bennington '74, Tom Miller, Bill Appel '71, Ron Tuma and Dale Rice." (pictured above.)

**1977**

Michael Stanton writes, "Our second granddaughter, Violet Elizabeth Simons, has arrived."

**1982**

Rich Siegel has published his first book, *You Can't Do Both*. The book is a series of 10 short stories that come together to form a broader tale of the journey from youth to adulthood.

**1988**

Trish Donnelly Davidson was named President, Urban Outfitters, Inc. effective July 14, 2014. She resides in Manhattan with her husband and two children. • Kirkland & Ellis LLP announced that Dean S. Shulman has joined the Firm's N.Y. office as a partner in the Tax Practice Group. Dean represents clients on a wide range of U.S. and international tax matters, including mergers, acquisitions, divestitures, tax-free spin-offs, leveraged buy-outs, initial public offerings and fund formation. He repeatedly has been selected for inclusion in Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business.

**1993**

Cranfill Sumner & Hartzog LLP (CSH Law) announced that Russ Racine has joined the firm's Charlotte office where he will focus his practice in the areas of Aviation Law, Construction, Criminal Defense and Intellectual Property.



Russ Racine '93

**2003**

Melissa Kubit Angelides and her husband Mario Angelides announce the birth of their daughter, Sabrina Claire Angelides, on May 4, 2014. • Susan Rhoads-Procina has accepted a position as accounts payable/payroll manager with Sacred Heart Health Network in Allentown.



Sabrina Claire Angelides



Andrew Marcus Pashley



Cooper Isaiah Kavalsky

2006

Jack Shulman has been named Acquisitions Associate with The Kalikow Group, a multi-faceted real estate organization focusing on joint venture equity financing, multifamily property management, and development and construction services. He has been working with the firm as an Associate since 2013. Prior to joining The Kalikow Group, he was a Director of Commercial Leasing for Tenants and Landlords for Colliers International in New York City.



Anthony Joseph Starkowski V

2007

Danielle (LaRose) Koren and her husband Ryan welcomed son, Asher James, on



Jack Shulman '06

who have a loved one in a nursing home or assisted living facility. It's a tool for families to communicate with each other about coordinating care and visits for the loved one, that also



suggests different activities for visits. • Ryan Kavalsky and his wife Katie welcomed their first child, a beautiful baby boy, Cooper Isaiah, on December 12, 2013, 10 lbs, 14 oz, 23 in. Ryan and Katie feel so blessed to have received this wonderful little Christmas gift. Get ready, Muhlenberg Class of '36! • Chelsea Gomez Starkowski and her husband Tony welcomed their first child, a baby boy, Anthony Joseph Starkowski V, on December 26, 2013. He was the perfect Christmas gift this year, and they are just so in love with their little man.



Levi Joseph Getz

2004

Joe and Lindsey (Aspinall) Getz welcomed a baby boy on May 21, 2013. Levi Joseph Getz weighed 9 lbs 13 oz. Although big sister Dyllan Rose (age 4) wanted a baby sister, she has become smitten by her little brother and helps take good care of him. • Danielle (Ferreri) and Drew Pashley, Jr. are happy to announce the birth of their son, Andrew Marcus Pashley, on December 2, 2013.

2005

Kate Arney-Cimino recently developed an app, GrandmaSays (pictured right), for families



Asher James Koren

September 14, 2013. • On October 13, 2012, Dr. Geoff Zinberg and Lari (Luckenbill) Zinberg '06 were married in Rehoboth Beach, Del., at the Rehoboth Beach Country Club. Alumni in attendance were: Roger Luckenbill '68, Amanda Heiberger '12, Jordan Sorkin '06, Phil Kimble '05, Drew Stocker '06, Dr. Brian Campfield '06, Neil Freedman '06, Mike Menna '06, John Opuda '06, Jared Goldstein, Dr. Laurie (Waldron) Campfield '06, Scott Sutton '06, Heather Lafferty '08 and Chris Catania '06.



Liz (Nickle) Saunders '75, Janet Saunders '08, Kaitlin (Reilly) Collura '08 and Kim Nguyen '07



Alumni in attendance at the wedding of Dr. Geoff Zinberg '07 and Lari (Luckenbill) Zinberg '06

## CLASS NOTES

### 2009

**Adrian Shanker** was elected by voters in Northampton County, Pa., to a four-year term as a member of Pennsylvania Democratic State Committee. State Committee is the board of the State Democratic Party and is responsible for voting for the party platform and endorsing candidates.

### 2010

**Steven and Caitlin (Weigle) Kalman** were

married on July 20, 2013 in Long Valley, N.J. Muhlenberg alumni present included: **John DiMeglio, Paul Herold, Shelley Smith '11, Kelsey O'Keeffe '12, Shannon Fitzsimons '09, Jackie Gober '08, Abra Like '08, Jason Knox '09, John Caparella '08, Sarah Monticue '09, Colleen Christian '12, Justine (Ide) Lowcher, Heather (Brown) Gugenheim '08, Zach Gugenheim '08, Jen (Perbetsky) Focht '03, Samantha Burgess '09, Michael Gillies and Pat Brodarick '11.**



Alumni present at the wedding of Steven '10 and Caitlin (Weigle) Kalman '10



Alumni present at the wedding of Joseph '10 and Dr. Cecilia DeSouza Dyer '10.



Submitting Class Notes has never been faster or easier. Use MuhlenbergConnect ([www.MuhlenbergConnect.com](http://www.MuhlenbergConnect.com)) to share your milestones, news and favorite photos. If you are new to MuhlenbergConnect and have not registered, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at [bergalum@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:bergalum@muhlenberg.edu) or call us at 800-464-2374 for your first time log-in instructions.

## IN MEMORIAM

### 1934

**Robert Evan Mentzer** died on June 1, 2014. He was predeceased by his wife, Helen Aagaard. He is survived by two daughters, Carolyn Mentzer Byham (William C.) and Christine Mentzer Batten (David P); four grandchildren, Tacy M. Byham, Carter W. Byham, Erika Batten Goldwater (John A.) and Kurt D. Batten; and four great-grandchildren, Spencer Byham-Carson and Olivia, Mitchell and Bennett Goldwater.

### 1942

**Leonard Weaver Wetherhold** died on January 9, 2014.

### 1943

**Jack M. Snauffer, M.D.** died on February 25, 2014. He was preceded in death by Margaret, his wife of 52 years. He is survived by his son Mark, and his wife Lynda; his daughter, Lisa Dunshee, and her husband Mitch; and his two beloved granddaughters, Jana Alexander and Erin Garcia.

### 1945

**William "Bill" Young** died on February 19, 2014. He is survived by his daughter, Kay (Chris) Reese; son, Jay (Vita) Young; his beloved granddaughters: Rachel Reese Wagoner, Sarah Reese Rendos (Joe), Lindsay Young Schurig (Jason), Samantha Young, Katie Young; and his great granddaughter, Anna Rendos. He is also survived by his sisters, Florence Methlie and Betty Hittinger.

### 1946

**Dr. John Andrew Growich, Jr.** died peacefully at home after a long illness. He was the devoted husband of Evelyn Lucas Growich, who passed away in 1971, and Clare Schneider Growich, who predeceased him in 2005. He is survived by two daughters and a son, Nancy Claire Vaida, William Growich and Janet Murray; and four grandchildren, Allison Rose and her husband, Thomas Rose, Jr., Justin Vaida and his wife, JoAnn Cohen-Vaida and Evan.

### 1948

**Edward John Brown** died on April 27, 2014. Ed was pre-deceased by his wife Mary and siblings Roger Brown, Jane Bergbower and Nancy Mittl. Devoted father of Maggie Cuning and her husband Daniel, Ann Brown Sullivan and her husband Tom, and Bridget Brown Lipkin and her husband Lawrence. Cherished grandfather of Patrick, Mary, Grace, and Edward Cuning, Sean and Emily Sullivan, and Benjamin, Claire and Tessa Lipkin.

**Edward Cloman Goretzka** died on April 8, 2014. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Teresa Goretzka (nee Reynolds), and his three children, Amy Williams (John), Keith Goretzka (Rebecca) and David Goretzka (Stacey); and his three grandchildren, Edward Raines Goretzka, Kathryn Blair Goretzka and Svea Ann Williams.

**Stephen H. Wallach** died on February 22, 2014. Steve was a loving companion to Barbara Freid Gottesman for the past 26 years, and with her he inherited a large family that he made his own. He is survived by his longtime companion Barbara, her three children, their spouses and eight grandchildren.

### 1950

**Earl Isaac Adams** is survived by his wife of 53 years, Barbara Harman Adams; his daughter, Pamela Adams-Campbell; her husband, Brian; and two grandsons, Bruce and Clark, whom he adored.

**Hillel A. Silberg** died on April 5, 2014. He is survived by his wife, Haralyn (Levy) Silberg; children, Wayne (Kathy), Robert (Sandy), Sheri, David (Kathy), Scott (Jean) and Susan (Keith). He was the grandfather of Ryan, Linzy, Ashley, Brittany, Alex, Samantha and Jake. He was predeceased by a brother, Dr. Samuel Silberg.

### 1951

**The Rev. Mark A. Heiney** died on March 25, 2014. Pastor Heiney is survived by wife of 60 years, Dolores (Ebner) Heiney; two daughters - Pamela F. Scott (Terry Houck); Jessica Dubois

(Armand Dubois); son - Noah S. Hines (Stephanie Groom Hines); three sisters - Betty Dougherty, Anna (Bob) Taschler, Diane (Steve) Batko.

**Donald Gene Markley** died on February 28, 2014. He was the husband of Margaret (Moritz) Markley. In addition to his loving wife of 64 years, Margaret, he is survived by his 2 sons, Don Phillip and his wife Jane, and Christopher P. and his wife Diane; his grandsons, Jarrod and his wife Samantha and Nathaniel and his fiancée Laura; 6 step-grandchildren, Celina, Matthew, Tara, Kelli, Joseph, and Matthew; and 2 great granddaughters, Maya and Veda.

### 1956

**DeForrest LeRoy Trexler** died on February 14, 2014. He was the husband of the late Ellen M. (Foley) Trexler. Survivors: Daughter, Jenifer E. Neely; sister, Gwen Trexler; grandchildren, Elizabeth, Adam, Makenna, and Sophia.

### 1957

**John J. Basile Sr.** died on May 16, 2014, with his wife Kathleen and son Stephen at his side after a period of declining health due to Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS).

**Edward O. Smith, Jr., Ph.D.** died March 11, 2014. He is survived by his three best friends: John Kozlowski, Russell Maxwell (Morgan McDole), Gerhardt Yaskow (Louis Fabrizi Jr.), his Buffalo State College family and fondly beloved Irish Wolfhounds Cormac and Connor.

### 1958

**Charles "Bud" McCutcheon Sr.** died on May 19, 2014. He was predeceased by his beloved wife, Frances (Kaufmann) McCutcheon and his brother, George McCutcheon. He is survived by his devoted children, Chuck McCutcheon and his wife, Lisa Ecola; Caren van Wyk and her husband, Ken; and Megan Quigley and her husband, Declan, Ashlyn, and Braden; his brothers, Robert and James McCutcheon; his sister, Marie Menzel, and his devoted caregiver, Maria Jobadzc.

## IN MEMORIAM

### 1959

**Charles Markosi Jr., M.D.**, died on April 25, 2014. He is survived by his wife, Irene A. (Rongyos) Markosi. Surviving in addition to his wife is one son, Charles Markosi III, and his wife, Stephanie; three daughters: Lauren J. Markosi; Tanya L. (Markosi), wife of Christopher Dinger; and Mary A. (Markosi), wife; and six grandchildren: Tara and Stefanie Seider, children of Lauren; Charles IV and Anastasia Markosi, children of Charles III; C.J. Dinger, son of Tanya; and Damon Greene, son of Mary.

**Thomas Arthur Schaffer** died on April 15, 2014. He is survived by his daughter Wendy, his sister-in-law Paula Lasky and husband Bob, sister-in-law Ann Hafer and husband Charles, brother-in-law Jack Longhenry and wife Lorraine, brother-in-law James Longhenry, sister-in-law Bonnie Daniels-Buzzelli, several nieces and nephews, and great nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife Joyce M. Longhenry Schaffer in 2008, his parents and nephews John and Michael Longhenry.

**Donald E. Wendling** died on April 13, 2014. He was the husband of Janet (Klimek) Wendling who died in 2008. Survivors include a son, Todd, and his fiancée Maureen Connolley; a daughter, Jill Miller; a grandson, Michael

Miller; a brother, Robert and sister-in-law Joanne; a sister, Shirley Wittman and brother-in-law James.

### 1961

**Miss Marilyn D. Kohler** died on May 4, 2014.

### 1963

**Brian Fred McKee** died on January 31, 2014. He was preceded in death by his wife Susan Baker and his parents Nettie and Fred McKee. He is survived by his Aunt Pauline Hribok and cousins Danny, Ellen and Laura.

### 1964

**Vivian H. Yoder** died May 3, 2014. She is survived by her husband, Rev. George H. Yoder ; children: Rev. Rebecca Stephens, wife of Barry Stephens; Philip Yoder, husband of Stef Brok; Susan Bauer; Barbara Yoder, wife of Edward Connor; grand and great-grandchildren: Eric and Jen (Tice) Stephens and daughter Hazel Grace; Emily (Stephens) and Christian Sutter; Bhagavan and Ananga (DeLeon) Bauer and sons Nava Kishore and Nitia; Suki Bauer; and Nara Bauer. Brother Dr. G. Winfield Hedrick, husband of Jackie (Mood) Hedrick; Hedrick nieces Donna and son Matthew Buck and hus-

band Marland Brown, Connie and husband Karl Deibler, Cheryl Taketa and daughter Kamaile, and Jennifer DeLong.

### 1965

**Ruth Post Bridegam** died February 26, 2014. She is survived by her son, Poul Bridegam; sister, Susan Post McNeil; brother, Wilfred (Mac) Post III; a niece, Lauren McNeil; two nephews, Andrew McNeil, Brian Post; three grand-nephews, Malachi, Callum, Brendan; and other loving family and friends.

### 1968

**Paul Kenneth Woodburn Jr.** died on February 13, 2014. In addition to his wife, the former JoAnne Sink, he is survived by a daughter, Elizabeth Cavadel; a sister, Cherry Woodburn; and a grandson.

### 1972

**Erwin J. "Erv" Schummer** died on March 12, 2014. He is survived by his wife, Patricia (Lisicky) Schummer; son, Eric and wife, Kristin; daughter, Jessica Schummer; grandchildren, Haley and Nick Schummer; and sister, Helga Schummer. He was predeceased by his infant son, Jeffrey.

*President's Message; continued from page 1*

**Chapel Services.** There is something deeply refreshing about Sunday evening chapel services as we gather, light candles, pray together, reflect on big questions and renew our faith. We've had two chaplains during my time here, and each has done chapel differently – but it is always a wonderful way to end one week and begin the next.

**Reunion Weekend.** This is so much more fun since we combined it with Homecoming. Now students, alumni, faculty and staff can enjoy everything a fall weekend on campus can provide. On Saturday evening, Pat and I ride around on a golf cart with members of the

development staff and greet each returning class with a recitation of their exploits. It's great to start with recent grads who got their diplomas from my hands, then progress to alumni with babies, then weary parents of pre-teens, then the emancipated empty-nesters and end up with the 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion class and the Heritage Reunion. That golf cart is no DeLorean, but it's still like a ride in a time machine.

**Teaching Homeric Epic.** It may be ancient, but it never gets old. The classroom is always one of my "happy places." Taking students to Greece to share my love of antiquity makes

it even better.

**Commencement Weekend.** The joy, the pride, the pomp and circumstance, the sense of completion and renewal. The campus is always at its most beautiful. And, let's be honest, it's followed by a little peace and quiet.

I could go on. And on. And on. But I mustn't. You get the idea. I hope to make this last year a great one for Muhlenberg – and for me.



Peyton R. Helm  
President, Muhlenberg College

## REUNION AND CLASS FUND CHAIRS



### We want to hear from you!

Reunion Chair and Class Fund Chair volunteers serve as liaisons between the College and your class. If you would like to get more involved, are interested in helping plan your upcoming reunion or have relocated and are looking for other Muhlenberg alumni in the region – let us know. Please be in touch with your respective class liaison(s) (names and email addresses are below) and share with them your accomplishments, successes and other important life moments. We'll be sure to include your updates as part of Class Notes in the next edition of the magazine.

### 1949

William D. Miers  
Class Fund Chair  
mgb19744@verizon.net

### 1951

Theodore C. Argeson  
Class Fund Chair  
tca51mberg@yahoo.com

### 1952

Harold S. Weiss  
Class Fund Chair  
weishama@verizon.net

### 1953

Joseph H. Jorda  
Class Fund Chair  
jjorda1010@aol.com

### 1956

Richard G. Miller  
Class Fund Chair  
rg.miller@comcast.net

### 1957

Wolfgang W. Koenig  
Class Fund Chair  
wkoenig1@cox.net

### 1958

Owen D. Faut  
Class Fund Chair  
ofaut@frontier.com

### 1959

Lee A. Kreidler  
Class Fund Chair  
leebar@ptd.net

### 1960

Edward M. Davis, Jr.  
Class Fund Chair  
eddavis@ptd.net

### 1961

Richard L. Foley  
Class Fund Chair  
rlfoley4@verizon.net

### 1962

Duane G. Sonneborn, Jr.  
Class Fund Chair  
duanesonneborn@comcast.net

### 1964

Patricia Dickinson Hoffman  
Class Fund Chair  
pdh806@rcn.com

Edward H. Bonekemper III  
Reunion Chair  
ebonekemper@comcast.net

### 1965

John E. Trainer, Jr.  
Class Fund Chair  
jetrain2@gmail.com

### 1966

Timothy A. Romig  
Class Fund Chair  
explr3311@comcast.net

### 1967

David J. Nowack  
Class Fund Chair  
DLNowack@ptd.net

### 1968

W. Russell Koerwer  
Class Fund Chair  
wrkoerwer@aol.com

### 1969

Mark Pascal  
Class Fund Chair  
mspchemo@hotmail.com

Charles "Cliff" Allen  
Reunion Chair  
clifford\_allen12@comcast.net

### 1970

Diane R. Schmidt Ladley  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
dianeladley@verizon.net

Diane E. Treacy  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
tdseaglen@aol.com

### 1971

Mary Daye Hohman  
Class Fund Chair  
MaryDaye\_Hohman@Vanguard.com

### 1972

Rev. Eric C. Shafer  
Class Fund Chair  
ericshafer@hotmail.com

### 1973

Jeffrey R. Dundon  
Class Fund Chair  
jeffreydundon73@gmail.com

### 1974

Betsy Caplan MacCarthy  
Class Fund Chair  
thebfm@yahoo.com

Bruce Albright  
Reunion Chair  
windihill@earthlink.net

### 1976

Tom Hadzor  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
T.hadzor@duke.edu

Greg Fox  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
gfox@mmwr.com

Stephen Hart  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
stephen.hart@siemens.com

Carolyn Ikeda  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
csikeda76@yahoo.com

### 1977

Steven and  
Susan M. Ettelman Eisenhauer  
Class Fund Co-Chairs  
steve@congruencewines.com

### 1979

Rudy A. Favocci, Jr.  
Class Fund Chair  
rudyfavo@yahoo.com

Mitchell R. Goldblatt  
Reunion Chair  
Mitchgoldblatt@aol.com

### 1980

Kim Barth Kembel  
Class Fund Chair  
kbkembel@verizon.net

### 1981

Joan C. Triano  
Class Fund Chair  
jtriano@aol.com

## REUNION AND CLASS FUND CHAIRS

### 1982

William J. and  
Tambria Johnson O'Shaughnessy  
Class Fund Co-Chairs  
wtoshau@verizon.net  
Marion E. Glick  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
82marion@gmail.com

### 1983

Tammy L. Bormann  
Class Fund Chair  
tlbormann@comcast.net

### 1984

Michelle Rein Pressman  
Class Fund Chair  
mjpressman@comcast.net  
Debrah Cummins  
Reunion Chair  
dncummins@gmail.com

### 1985

Carolyn Ricca Parelli  
Class Fund Chair  
csp6163@msn.com

### 1986

Paul "Chip" Hurd, Jr.  
Class Fund Chair  
pmhref@verizon.net

### 1987

Eileen Collins Neri  
Class Fund Chair  
ecneri@verizon.net

### 1988

V. Scott Fegley Koerwer  
Class Fund Chair  
skoerwer@me.com

### 1989

Jeff Vaughan  
Class Fund Chair  
jv@voncom.com  
Tracy Kleppinger Bozik  
Reunion Chair  
tracyb@rcn.com

### 1990

Ramy Sharp  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
ramysharp@aol.com  
Sharon Mahn  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
sharonmahn10@gmail.com

### 1991

Christopher Parkes  
Class Fund Chair  
cparkes@conceptiii.com

### 1993

Jill M. Poretta  
Class Fund Chair  
jporetta@cozen.com

### 1994

Bret G. Kobler  
Class Fund Chair  
bret.kobler@gmail.com  
Erica Carlstrand Coverley  
Reunion Chair  
ecoverley@swain.org

### 1995

Alyssa J. Picard  
Class Fund Chair  
picarda@umich.edu

### 1996

Mikel Daniels and  
Melissa Wasserman Daniels  
Class Fund Co-Chairs  
mdaniels@bcps.org

### 1997

Courtenay Cooper Hall  
Class Fund Chair  
Courtenay@bellanyc.com

### 1998

Joshua A. Lindland  
Class Fund Chair  
joshua.lindland@gmail.com

### 1999

Matthew R. Sordoni  
Class Fund Chair  
matthewsordoni@msn.com  
Elmer Moore  
Reunion Chair  
elmer.moore@gmail.com

### 2000

Drew J. Bitterman  
Class Fund Chair

### 2001

Christopher A. Lee  
Class Fund Chair  
christopher\_a\_lee@hotmail.com

### 2002

Adam Marles  
Class Fund Chair  
adammarles@hotmail.com

### 2003

Laura A. Garland  
Class Fund Chair  
lgarland@muhlenberg.edu

### 2004

Robyn M. Duda  
Class Fund Chair and  
Reunion Chair  
robynmduda@gmail.com

### 2005

Chelsea M. Gomez Starkowski  
Class Fund Chair  
chelseagomez@allstate.com

### 2006

Elizabeth R. Hamilton Marrero  
Class Fund Chair  
elizabethmarrero@gmail.com

### 2007

Jason M. Bonder  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
jmbonder@gmail.com  
Courtney N. Roosa  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
courtney.roosa@gmail.com

### 2008

Allison C. Schnall  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
Allison.Schnall@gmail.com  
Kristel R. Dow  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
kristeldow@gmail.com

### 2009

Brittany A. Barton  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
brittanyabarton@gmail.com

### 2009 continued

Jillian K. Carrick  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
thedancingherbalist@gmail.com

Christina Anna Vergos  
Reunion Chair  
cvergos@gmail.com

### 2010

Jonathan Falk  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
jfalk715@gmail.com

Alysea McDonald  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
alysea.mcdonald@gmail.com

Jessica Davis  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
JessDavis1@gmail.com

### 2011

Kelly E. Frazee  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
frazee.kelly@gmail.com

Catherine S. Schwartz  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
c.schwartz89@gmail.com

### 2012

Lisa Peterson  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
lisapetey27@gmail.com

Jeffrey P. Brancato  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
brancatojeff@gmail.com

### 2013

Nina E. Pongratz  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
nepongatz@gmail.com

Nashalys Rodriguez  
Class Fund Co-Chair  
nashkrod@gmail.com

### 2014

Gabrielle Aboodi  
Class Fund Chair  
gabrielleaboodi@gmail.com

## THE LAST WORD

The request to write an essay about my Muhlenberg experience came at a most appropriate time, in anticipation of the 40th reunion of the Class of 1974.

My contacts with Muhlenberg have increased in recent years. I enjoyed dinner with President Helm in Athens three years ago. I meet classmates who visit Greece, use Facebook and LinkedIn to communicate with college friends and get information on school activities. Information flows easily and freely across borders, not like 45 years ago, when my Muhlenberg story started.

I should tell you a little about myself first. I am CEO of the Hellenic Aerospace Industry (HAI), a state-owned company that performs manufacturing and maintenance of military and civil aircrafts. Right now, looking outside my window office, I see fighter planes taking off and landing at the Greek Air Force base next door, wondering what their mission might be—training, routine, or interception.

I have to secure the airworthiness of all Greek Air Force airplanes, deliver major parts of F-16's and C-130's to the USA, execute myriad international contracts, and, on top of that, run the company. Needless to say, assuring the profitability of HAI in a global economy is a challenge in the midst of Greece's financial crisis.

As a 17-year-old growing up in Thessaloniki, Greece, I saw neither a Muhlenberg education nor an aerospace career in my future. I was starting my senior year of high school when a friend dropped the idea of applying for a Fulbright to study in the U.S. It seemed like an idle summer dream, but what are dreams for, right? So I took the exams and went through the interviews and won the scholarship.

It was fate, one of these unpredictable moments that change the course of your life. My parents were not happy about my study-

ing so far away from them, but they were proud. So I started refreshing and perfecting my English, waiting for my school placement.

In March of 1970 I received a letter from the Institute of International Education that I had been accepted at Muhlenberg. I didn't know anything about the school until I received the 1970-71 college catalogue. Back in the 70s, you see, information came mainly via snail mail.

That 'Berg catalogue is still in my library at home. Between its pages I keep the same letter, sent to me in August 1970 by K.D., a sophomore at Muhlenberg who was responsible for foreign students. Her friendly greeting was the first evidence of the warm welcome that I was to experience during my arrival at school.

There were fewer than 15 international students here in the early 70s. We organized our own activities but we were also routinely invited to various events at schools in the area and had the chance to spend time during the holidays with American families. I still remember the last-minute invitation from a classmate to spend Christmas

at her home when she found out that I was planning to stay alone on campus.

All that is a way of saying that I never felt like a foreigner at Muhlenberg. My roommate helped me with practical issues, my big brother, a sophomore from Jordan, was always eager to solve problems, and everyone on campus was friendly and sociable.

Yes, the four years I spent on this campus were truly the most transformative and crucial to my character and to my life. With excellent professors who inspired and motivated us to study and learn; with true friends who would always stay next to you; with varied facilities on a beautiful campus, life at Muhlenberg was unforgettable for this young Greek dreamer.



By Demetrios Papacostas '74

# MUHLENBERG

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### CLAIRE TAYLOR '15: A FACE OF PHONATHON

Majors: Anthropology and Theatre • Muhlenberg Women's Ensemble Vice President  
• Member of the Muhlenberg Chamber Singers • Phonathon Supervisor

Gifts to The Muhlenberg Fund benefit students every day. Claire's participation in Phonathon has taught her that a piece of equipment in her anthropology lab is not just a physical item – it is a connection to the alumni, parents and friends of the College whose gifts are providing her with the lab experience.

*“There is a benefit to being at a small school. If I'm struggling [in class], I can go to a faculty member during office hours, and the professor will sit down and talk to me. We have a beautiful library with wonderful resources and staff who we can go to for assistance. And I had the opportunity to visit a church in Harlem, with the Chamber Ensemble, to sing as part of a larger concert. I've gained an appreciation for what the College does for its students, and [an appreciation] for the alumni who are contributing.”*

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