Muhlenberg introduces fundraising program

College to match large gifts to establish scholarships.

BY SAM KENNEDY
9/31/13

Muhlenberg College in Allentown has launched a grant-matching fundraising program to increase financial aid for needy students.

Under the program, called the Muhlenberg Match Scholarship Challenge, the college will match gifts of at least $25,000 to establish endowed scholarships.

"We see access to higher education as the ultimate democratic value," Muhlenberg College President Randy Helm said in a news release. "To prove it is a top priority, we're offering this extraordinary opportunity for alumni, parents and friends not only to double their gift but, more importantly, to double their impact on the lives of talented students who simply don't have the means to afford the Muhlenberg experience."

The school has set aside $10 million in matching funds, meaning the program could raise up to $20 million in scholarship funds.

According to Muhlenberg, the school is contending with rising demand for financial aid. This year, 87 percent of the class of 2017 is receiving grants or scholarships, up from 83 percent last year for the class of 2016.

Tuition and fees at Muhlenberg cost $41,500 for the 2012-13 academic year, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

"Endowed scholarships ensure that the college will be able to provide to those who need aid for generations to come," Helm said.

Development and alumni relations Vice President Rebeklah Brown said the purpose of matching "is to inspire somebody else to make a gift." Gifts up to $250,000 will be matched, under the program's rules.

The $10 million in matching funds will come from Muhlenberg's "quasi endowment," which is a portion of its total endowment controlled by the board of trustees, Brown said. As of last year, the total endowment was about $80 million.

Already, the initiative has spurred several donations, including two of $100,000, she said. Additionally, donations from the past two years totaling $550,000 will be retroactively included in the program.

In addition to the Match Scholarship Challenge, Muhlenberg has set aside $1 million in matching funds to encourage endowed gifts for educational enrichment opportunities, including studying abroad, or for particular departments, such as the Academic Resources Center or the Career Center.

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Kent Dyer
Chief Business Officer and Treasurer
Muhlenberg College
Allentown

Achievement: Honoring Kent Dyer, Chief Business Officer and Treasurer of Muhlenberg College in Allentown, as one of the finalists for CFO of the Year 2013. This recognition acknowledges the financial and business leadership that Dyer has demonstrated.

Changes in the CFO's Role:
"For me personally, the scope of my role has expanded. Faculty and human resources were added to my responsibilities in the last 18 months. The emergence of technology has changed not only my role as CFO but I would guess all CFO's roles."

Best Advice: "One of my best bosses told me to show up early with a good attitude, work hard and volunteer to do the work others do not want to do. I have tried to continue to love this work."

Something People Would Be Surprised to Know About Kent:
"My wife benefits from the checkbook and keeps the $100s of balances."

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Muhlenberg College students (clockwise from right) Danielle Ruffini of Livingston, N.J., Sydney Abajian of North Caldwell, N.J., and Taylor Edelman of Newtown, Bucks County, work on projects for their Drawing I class.

Outdoor education

Danielle Ruffini (left), Sydney Abajian (center, and below) and Taylor Edelman sketch Wednesday while sitting on the Muhlenberg College lawn.
Cutting public funds for colleges not only factor in tuition hikes

With a new academic year underway, the rising costs of higher education are again on our minds.

President Obama prominently addressed this growing concern and has controversially proposed linking outcome performance with financial aid as a means of controlling costs.

Many college and university presidents, as appropriate, have also offered their opinions and assessments. In The Morning Call, Muhlenberg College President Randy Helm was quoted at length on the subject and, in an additional example, an op-ed piece co-authored by former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and former chair of the Senate Committee on Intelligence David Boren, now presidents, respectively, of the College of William and Mary and the University of Oklahoma, recently appeared in the Wall Street Journal.

All three focused on and lamented the decline of support for public education. State legislatures are increasingly feeling the pressures of budgetary imbalances and responding by reducing expenditures, often without thoughtful consideration of what expenditures should be cut.

In an increasingly competitive world, it may be argued that reducing education expenditures is a shortsighted response with worrisome long-run consequences. As an academic, of course, I am in full agreement with the three presidents that the decline in public support for higher education is unfortunate and detrimental to the national well-being. Let us, however, make a distinction that may be blurred in the discussion.

The affordability of higher education, especially for low-income families, is obviously worsened by a reduction in state support. But the cost of that education is not significantly affected by reduced public support.

The distinction is quickly illustrated. If, for example, tuition (including room, board and fees) is, say $25,000, then the "cost" of sending a son or daughter to college is $20,000 if there is a state "subsidy" (public support) of only $5,000. This "cost" is reduced to $10,000 if the state provides $15,000 in "subsidy."

But, regardless of the level of state support, someone must pay the full tuition cost of $25,000 (the argument holds whether other selective "discounts"—for example, financial aid—are offered by a college or university). That is, there is an important difference between the cost and affordability of a college education. The relevant cost question is why is tuition $25,000 rather than, say, $15,000?

With that distinction, let's consider the rising costs of higher education. My comments are those of an interested observer over a long academic career. They are not based on a detailed economic analysis.

Why have costs gone up so rapidly? First, increases in faculty salaries have outpaced inflation. Part of the explanation is found in what has been called Baumol's disease. Teaching continues to be done as it always has been done; there is a classroom, a teacher, and a limited number of students. There have been few gains in efficiency; analogously, it still takes four people 40 minutes to perform a Beethoven string quartet.

Universities are no longer primarily concerned with providing a formal education. Social grooming has become more important than education in defining an undergraduate experience. The social grooming mission was, in part, imposed from the outside.

Students and their parents want better accommodations—single, attractively appointed rooms; higher-quality, more-varied food choices; well-equipped recreational facilities; and professional, more personalized counseling services. All of these add to costs, which, in turn, in an era of reduced public support, affects affordability, especially for lower-income families.

What else? In part to meet the increased social grooming demands, administrative staff has grown. My admittedly casual observation of trends, although supported by some empirical studies, suggests that administrative staff positions have grown much more rapidly than faculty teaching positions. Again, additional costs without, perhaps, additional educational benefits.

The federal government must also share blame for increasing costs. Support for student loans is increased, Pell Grant amounts have, as unintended consequence, provided colleges and universities with seemingly irresistible incentives to increase tuition fees. More detailed federal regulations have also, as Muhlenberg President Helm observed in his recent remarks, added significantly to the cost of compliance.

What must be done? I'll leave that for another View. But, as hinted, I think it requires an appreciation of the university as an idea and not a place.

George Heitmann is emeritus professor of management science at Penn State (University Park) and professor of economics at Muhlenberg College.
When Mules rocked college football

Muhlenberg beat national power: Penn State 3-0 in 1933.

BY EVAN BURMAN
Special to The Morning Call

It may not have been a big score. Allentown's Muhlenberg College won not a big battle, but the Mules' 3-0 victory over Penn State 80 years ago was a big win, perhaps still the biggest in the school's history.

Today, one would never find Muhlenberg on Penn State's football schedule, but from 1918 to 1945 the two schools did not play on the gridiron. An expected, the Nittany Lions easily won five of the three contests. The exception came on Oct. 18, 1933, when the Mules pulled off the stunning upset that rocked the collegiate football world.

EASTERN POWERS

In 1933 the major eastern independent colleges, who not only offered the unique American game of football in 1899, but who were also the sport's first powerhouse, ruled the national collegiate scene. The game played by tough 60-minute men, was brute-face, single-wing, and the best brand of this form was played in the East. Brown, Columbia, Harvard, Navy, University of Pennsylvania, Penn State, Pitt, and Washington and Jefferson all played in early Rose Bowls.

Fritz Collier's directional Princeton Tigers went 9-0-2 as the only perfect record in the country.

Army went 8-1 and only lost to Notre Dame by one point in the last game of the year in Yankee Stadium.

Branson College went 8-1 and only lost at Fordham as the Rams were a new power in the region.

Leo Lott's Columbia Lions earned an 8-1 record, losing only at unbeaten Princeton, and defeated Stanford in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1, 1934.

Elmer Layden's Duquesne Dukes were 8-1, losing only to Pitt, and beat the University of California in the Festival of Tulips at Orange Bowl on Jan. 1, 1934.

Jack Stitt's Southern's powerful Pitt Panthers, who started the year by playing USC in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1, 1933, went 8-1 and lost only at Minnesota.

Penn State, 10 years removed from playing USC in the Rose Bowl on Jan. 1, 1923, were guided by Bob Higginson, who was in his fourth season as coach of the Nittany Lions.

On Oct. 14, the Penn State Nittany Lions were as much as 50-1 favorites to slaughter Muhlenburg in their second game of the season. That is why The Morning Call bold-headline the next day: "Muhlenberg Defeats Penn State," shocked readers.

It was the biggest upset on radio scoreboard broadcast around the country.

An Associated Press from New York recognized that weekend's games with the words: "The usually 'held' early season opponents of many teams referred to the Nittany Lions, but that didn't happen. The unbeaten, unblemished Nittany Lions, went 8-1 to upset Penn State, 3-0."

Georges' former Lehigh Valley scholastic stars helped lead the Mules to victory.

VALLEY MULES

Johnny Ott, former University of Pennsylvania captain in 1929, was in his second season as head coach of Muhlenberg. He was the 7th head coach since the school started playing football in 1898, and his team proved to be the 8th team in the East to defeat Penn State.

The 34-year-old Muhlenberg team was filled with former scholastic stars from eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, including Ott's catcher, the late Lloyd Sterner, and Joe Rodgers, guard, and halfback Al "Bull" Broderick, all for coach Ott's Blue Crew, who had been in charge of football at Lehigh for three seasons.

Enos Rodgers, Paris, Young and Steigewalt, and backs Warrick and Shower, started against Penn State. A second-season Sterner, was sidelined with a broken arm.

The second half was the same trench warfare as the first half, but it wasn't until the closing minutes of the fourth quarter that victory presented itself to Muhlenberg.

With fourth down on the Penn State 1-yard line, Muhlenberg decided to try a field goal, which was none with 15 seconds left on the clock. With 15 seconds left, the Mules lined up, and with a minute to go, the Mules were at the 1-yard line. They were successful.

However, Penn State took the opening kickoff and marched to the Muhlenberg 20-yard line where a hurried fourth down pass fell incomplete in the end zone.

The game ended shortly afterwards.

The Nittany Lions went on to finish the season at 9-1.

POSTGAME

Although Werner was the hero of the game and his field goal, all players received praise from coach Ost because they never gave up despite being humiliated by Fordham the week before and being huge underdogs to Penn State.

When news of the stunning upset reached Allentown, even the most ardent of Muhlenberg alumni and followers were in disbelief.

When, however, when school president Dr. John A. W. Harris was told of the Mules' triumph, he immediately called The Morning Call to announce that all classes were cancelled so that Muhlenberg fans could celebrate.

The entire Muhlenberg squad was now "Big Man on Campus" as Monday evening the school held a special pep rally followed by an automobile parade from the east campus down Hamilton Street.

Maybe the fact that a team with a record of 3-0 had beaten the top team in the country was too much to handle for the Mules, because in the next game two weeks later, the Mules were upset by Gettysburg, 9-6. They finished the season with four straight wins, including a 10-0 victory over Lehigh to finish with a respectable 6-3-1 record.

Muhlenberg and Gettysburg were co-champions of the Eastern College Athletic Conference with 8-3 records.

Weber, who was the most decorated player in the nation with three gained honorable mention on the AP's All-America and All-East teams.

After graduation, Weber became the sixth Mule to play professional football when he played for the Philadelphia Eagles in 1933.

He scored six points in the NFL on one field goal and three extra points.

Evan Burman is a freelance writer, and author of six books including Football Legends of Pennsylvania.
A Year Later, Superstorm Sandy Hasn't Changed Climate Narrative

Brian Kahn, Climate Central Published: Oct 30, 2013, 10:56 AM EDT weather.com

In the year since Hurricane Sandy struck the Mid-Atlantic, news articles have widely declared that the storm has “changed the public’s view of weather threats” and that “resilience” would be the environmental buzzword of 2013. That sounds all well and good, but are headlines enough to move public opinion and spark new discussions?

Signs seem to point to “no.” Policy has moved forward in a number of the states most affected by Sandy. But the broader U.S. public has shown little interest in carrying that conversation to the national level, and despite proclamations otherwise, the media has been equally disengaged.

“Climate adaptation,” “disaster preparedness,” and “sea level rise” — the most robust tie between Sandy and manmade global warming — are three key terms associated with Sandy.

A weekly breakdown of search data in the U.S. shows that in the run up to and immediate aftermath of Sandy, the public showed a greater interest in those terms. But interest quickly waned, and there’s been no discernible trend in the year since the storm.

Even in New York City, which bore the brunt of Sandy’s impacts and has put forth a $19.5 billion climate resiliency plan, interest has been ephemeral. Looking at city-level searches, the same pattern than happened nationally played out locally.

Equal or even greater spikes in search interest are noticeable around other climate events as well. For example, searches for “climate adaptation” spiked following Hurricane Irene and a Halloween snowstorm in 2011. Searches for “adaptation” following those storms were on par with Sandy, despite smaller economic losses.

Interest in “adaptation” as well as “sea level rise” also rose in early December 2011 and late November 2012. Those peaks coincided with the annual United Nations climate negotiations. During the 2012 negotiations in Doha, Qatar, a major sea level rise report was released and the amount of searches during that period for that term actually topped searches during Sandy. However, even those big peaks failed to produce longer-lasting trends, as interest dropped back down to a baseline level.

Ironically, though the media declared Sandy a conversation changer, there’s been no major shift in media coverage either. Searching newspapers, magazines, newswires, and other media shows the same post-Sandy peak in coverage mentioning the three terms but no major changes in the long run.

Only “sea level rise” shows an upward trend in coverage since Sandy. There’s been almost no trend in coverage mentioning “disaster preparedness” and even a slight downward trend in coverage mentioning “climate adaptation.”

"I think there’s not a lot of leadership or enterprise in science and environmental writing as we would hope given cutbacks in the mainstream media," said Cristine Russell, a veteran science writer and senior fellow at Harvard's Kennedy School. "Reporters on this story, as well as others, tend to be a little reactive rather than proactive."
That means that once it seems like people know the story, reporters stop covering it. "Even extreme weather has run its cycle," she said, noting that 2012 was a year of extremes so the comparative calm in 2013 could have also helped cause the dip.

So why didn’t Sandy, a storm that blacked out parts of the media capital of the country, have staying power?

Part of the challenge could be timescales. Following an extreme weather event, there are inevitably questions about the role climate change plays and how society should plan for future extreme events going forward. However, science often lags behind public interest and the understanding of how, if at all, climate change contributes to a specific event can often take months, if not years, for scientists to get a handle on.

In the case of Sandy, an extreme events study released on Sept. 5, 2013, nearly 10 months after the storm, said: “Sandy is probably one of the most difficult extreme events of 2012 to fully explain.”

With public interest faded, restarting the conversation with a phrase like that is like trying to get the wheels turning on a bike with a rusted chain.

Sandy was a large storm, but it also left a large part of the U.S. unscathed. And much of the country will never have to deal with hurricanes, so while Lower Manhattan blacked out might be a powerful image, the hazard isn’t something that’s universally relatable.

There’s also a third, simpler explanation for why Sandy failed to change the conversation: people simply don’t change their minds easily.

“In public opinion, we don’t often see things move dramatically,” said Chris Borick, the director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion. “It’s more the norm that people don’t change their views than do change their views, especially when something becomes more entrenched with ideological and political arguments.”

Climate change fits into that category. Polls by Borick and others show not only that opinions about whether it’s happening fall down party lines, but also that there’s little movement from one opinion to the other.

Instead, events like Sandy just shift how people frame their attitudes. Borick found that shortly after Sandy, 42 percent of those that accepted that climate change is occurring cited the strength of hurricanes hitting the U.S. as evidence for their opinion. The month prior to Sandy, that number stood at just 26 percent.

The same phenomenon was also on display for skeptics following the snowy winter of 2010-11. Borick’s polls found a major uptick in the number of skeptics citing snowstorms as the reason for their belief. In both cases, there was only a slight shift in overall public opinion one way or the other.

“You have these existing beliefs and now you’re connecting the events as a way of confirming those views,” Borick said.

Zra Markowitz, a postdoctoral researcher at the Center for Research on Environmental Decisions at Columbia University, echoed Borick’s views. “The relationship between personal experience and
engagement goes both ways,” he added. “People’s perceived personal experience of climate change-related events increases their certainty about the problem, but also people’s preexisting beliefs influence how they experience an event.”

In that light, proclamations that Sandy would change minds or stir national interest appear myopic. Though it has happened, it’s exceedingly rare for single events to cause big shifts.

Borick cited Watergate and the Vietnam War as two events that had profound impacts on the public’s level of trust in the government. The impact of those two events was so profound that in the nearly 40 years since Watergate, Americans’ trust in the government has never fully rebounded.

Other events not previously on the public’s radar can also capture the cultural zeitgeist more easily.

“In the case of Kony 2012, you got a lot of interest really quickly,” Markowitz said, referring to a viral campaign against an African warlord. “You got tens of millions of people to pay attention to an issue they never paid attention to before in a few weeks time.”

Broad public interest has since dissipated, but not before public opinion convinced President Obama to commit special forces to seeking out Kony and led Congress to pass a bill offering a reward for his arrest.

In addition to climate change being a polarizing topic, many of the ways to address it come down to government interventions, a topic that also falls along sharply divided lines. Clearing that hurdle is a tall one.

Russell believes more local coverage of the connection between climate and extreme weather and how they affect communities is one way over it.

"In 2014, there will be more in the IPCC about impacts and adaptation and that may spark more local coverage and concern,” she said, citing the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s latest report. The first part released last month focused more on the physical science of climate change.

Markowitz echoed that, saying, “Large-scale events can be focusing events, as a jumping off point, but not as everything.”
Our cities: A killing field for birds October 26, 2013

Michael Mesure remembers every vivid detail of the day he decided to devote his life to the cause of making cities safer for birds. It was May 16, 1990. The high point of the spring migration season. It was foggy in Toronto’s downtown financial district, and birds were falling out of the sky after colliding with glass-encased towers.

"It’s etched in my brain. A combination of dead and dying. They were dropping all around me."

Mesure travels with supplies of paper bags to carry wounded birds to safety. But that morning there were so many casualties he quickly ran out, so he scavenged through dumpsters looking for bags that people had thrown away. He filled his car with the rescue bags and drove off, intending to release the injured birds far away from the downtown core. "I was driving up the Don Valley Parkway and one (of the birds) escaped from a bag. This one flew and perched itself on my rear-view mirror. It started to sing inside my car. I was fixated on this bird for about 10 seconds." Here, Mesure stops, too choked up to continue. But he soon collects himself. "It dropped dead in my lap. And it struck me ever since. That’s why I’m here. It was trying to tell me something and I just couldn’t ignore it."

Three years later, Mesure, who owned an art gallery and antique shop, started a non-profit group called FLAP—Fatal Light Awareness Program—and began lobbying the City of Toronto to pass building guidelines that would better protect migrating birds against window strikes.

He also assembled teams of volunteers who patrol the city at dawn, looking for the dead and wounded. Over the years, they have collected 60,000 dead birds, and rescued thousands of the injured. But this is only a tiny fraction of the casualty toll. Mesure calculates that every year, a million birds die of window strikes in the city. It’s a very rough calculation, based on the fact that there are 940,000 structures in the city, most of them have at least one glass window, and each window has at least one fatal strike per year.

The North American toll of deaths by window strikes has been estimated at between 100 million and one billion a year—a carnage equivalent, at the low end, to 300 Exxon Valdez oil spills per year. (The Exxon Valdez oil spill off the coast of Alaska in 1989 killed roughly 300,000 seabirds, and got worldwide attention.) Yet most city dwellers are unaware of the window strike problem, because gulls, rodents and other urban scavengers, as well as cats and dogs, very efficiently dispose of the dead and injured birds before we see them.
"They don’t realize that as they sleep in their beds at night, there’s hundreds of thousands of birds streaming over their rooftops," says Mesure. "When they come to work and learn about this issue, they start to look for these birds. But the bulk of these birds are either eaten by scavengers, or swept up. It's very hard to get this through to the public."

The birds are vulnerable because of simple biology. Birds cannot see glass. All they see is what glass reflects—like trees and the sky—and in a city rich in urban foliage, like Toronto, that creates a hazardous landscape. Toronto is also on a major migratory flight-path, so it's become one of the world's most dangerous cities for birds.

Ornithologists, like Daniel Klem of Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa, have argued for decades that it's easy to create a more bird-friendly city: all you need is glass markers that birds can see, and avoid. These markers come in the form of small white dots or squares that, from a few feet away, are virtually invisible to the human eye. But they represent a clear warning to birds.

Mesure says the markers would reduce window strikes by 70 per cent. The main obstacle is cost. Building owners are, for the most part, reluctant to spend the money to retrofit their glass towers, just to keep bird-lovers happy. So in 2010, the City of Toronto passed guidelines that required all new buildings to have bird-safe glass installed to a height of 12 metres—that's the maximum height of most urban trees which are reflected in the glass.

These and other guidelines don't apply to existing buildings, but they have nevertheless become a model for other large cities around the world. Klem credits Toronto, and especially the work of FLAP, as being "the linchpin in getting our attention and education at a level that would stimulate constructive action."

Like Mesure, Klem is a tireless advocate for bird-friendly windows. He says we've created modern cities with an environment that is pleasing to live in but which kills vast numbers of birds. "This is, in my humble view, ethically and morally unacceptable. We're obligated to stop that."

It's a battle Mesure fights every day. But there is resistance. In Toronto, for example, one of the prime bird kill zones is the property around the massive TD Bank towers, owned by Cadillac Fairview. These properties have been declared off-limits to the FLAP volunteers, because the group joined in a court case against the developer.

Cadillac Fairview won the case, and then notified FLAP that the volunteers would only be welcome on the TD Tower sites if they signed a confidentiality agreement about their findings. In other words, FLAP would not be able to make public the numbers of birds they collect on Cadillac Fairview properties. It's a deal Michael and his volunteers are reluctant to make, since they consider their findings in the public interest. But the confrontation doesn't deter him in the least. "What's happening in my life is inevitable," he says. "It's a calling. I feel I've been put on this planet to be doing exactly what I'm doing."
Life Lessons: The Groovy Project

Author: Nancy Werteen, Anchor / Reporter, NWerteen@wfmz.com
Published: Oct 28 2013 05:00:00 AM EDT

Life Lessons Groovy project

ALLENTOWN, Pa. -

For today's kids, social media has added a whole new layer to the word "bully."

How can we help kids to treat each other and themselves with respect?

A Lehigh County musician has come up with a way to talk to kids in a language they can understand and he's taking his message to kids in the Lehigh Valley and beyond.

He is Nate Lombard, a graduate of Emmaus High School and Muhlenberg College.

These days he lives in New York City but he is bringing his program and his energy to the Lehigh Valley.

Watching him light up a room of kids, it's hard to imagine how someone wouldn't be moved by his message of hope.

Lombardi, or Natekid, as he's called, has created "The Groovy Project," a non-profit anti-bullying campaign.

Lombardi says we have to help kids at a young age to prevent bullying.

"So people are like 'what's the answer' and I think it's prevention and awareness at a young age as opposed to fixing the problem." says Lombardi.

We caught up with Lombardi when he appeared at the Swain School in Allentown to work with fourth graders.
He got the kids dancing, singing, and writing their own songs. But most importantly, he got them thinking.

Nate said, "And you can still show them on a trajectory, this is how it feels to lift someone up and this is what it feels like to be lifted up and be positive and use your voice in a positive way."

Together with a New York City production company, Nate hit social media with a music video promoting his message.

He said kids these days grow up with a screen and that's not always a good thing.

"What's it like being 13 and having this at your disposal your whole life?"

He said he encourages kids to put their screens away and make real relationships.

He said even he sometimes focuses on his cell phone instead of the person he's talking to.

"This is not how you have a conversation with somebody. I find myself doing it and I'm a grown man so if that's how I grew up, that's horrible," he said.

Nate said he's committed to bringing the Groovy Project to as many as kids as possible.
ELECTION 2013

Pawlowski runs low-key campaign against Donovan

Mayor making independent work harder for attention in Allentown mayoral contest.

BY EMILY OPILO
Of The Morning Call

By this point in his first mayoral campaign, then-candidate Ed Pawlowski had participated in at least five debates or forums, held nearly a dozen news conferences on city issues and amassed a sizable war chest that outmatched opponent Bill Heydt.

Eight years later, as he seeks his third term and pursues a simultaneous bid for governor, Pawlowski has kept a noticeably lower profile — letting mayoral appearances take the place of most campaign press events, avoiding his opponent’s debate invitations and making only one appearance at a campaign forum.

For those eyeing his job, Pawlowski’s approach could create the perception that the 2013 race is an opportunity that the two-term incumbent already has one foot out the door.

But for independent challenger Michael Donovan, a professor at Cedar Crest College and Pawlowski’s only opponent, the mayor’s low-key appearance has made it difficult to craft a counter-campaign. Efforts so far have
MAYORAL RACE

Continued from NEWS

included news conferences, mailers, and even showing up at Pawlowski's events.

After his eight years in office, Pawlowski's message is still strong. It's in the downtown, in the live arena cameras. And while his gubernatorial aspirations may bother some voters, that issue is unlikely to undermine Pawlowski's campaign. His campaign manager, Mike Fleck, says that Pawlowski is not running his most aggressive campaign to date. Borick and others say that an understated campaign is exactly what Pawlowski needs, assuming the polls numbers support it.

Debates and press conferences remind people that there is a real race for the governorship. A plan for a more robust partnership between the city and the school district was outlined, as well as a proposed leadership training program and a modest grant program to assist the city's neighborhoods groups.

But without debates and forums to elaborate on those goals, Donovan has struggled to reach voters in the days that have followed. The financial disparity between his campaign and Pawlowski's has only made that effort more difficult.

Since June, Pawlowski has raised $427,000 for his mayoral campaign, more than twice as much as Donovan's committee amassed, according to campaign records. His spending during the same period topped $143,000, eclipsing Donovan's $107,775, although many of Pawlowski's expenditures appear to be related to his gubernatorial campaign.

That's not an unfamiliar scenario, Borick said. The challenge for grassroots candidates like Donovan is to get creative, leveraging the time and events of their opponents, he said. Donovan has done so on several occasions. When Pawlowski held a forum for the public to meet the final four candidates for city police chief, Donovan was there holding a news conference of his own, imploping the mayor to delay the decision.

On the day that Pawlowski announced his candidacy for governor, Donovan was there to “observe” and answer questions for reporters. This month, Donovan was booked from a Pawlowski campaign event after he showed up wearing a Pawlowski campaign button.

Campaign staff for Donovan insist that point of those appearances was not to hijack the mayor. Pawlowski has given him few options by refusing to engage in debate, said Bryan Kleiner, a consultant for the Donovan campaign.

"This isn't a game," Kleiner said. "We try to avoid that trap of political campaigns as a game of chess where we're just trying to beat an opponent.

But the Donovan camp will have to beat an opponent. And in the 2013 mayoral race, Pawlowski is a formidable one, said Don Cunningham, former Lehigh County executive and president and CEO of the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corp.

Although other taxes have increased, property taxes have remained steady throughout the mayor's tenure, and the recently completed water and sewer lease is affiliated with Pumed into the city's previously struggling pension system, despite concerns from some residents about rate increases.

From a visual standpoint, the development in the tax-supported Neighborhood Improvement Zone will also be important, said Democratic organizer Brian Johnston, who ran Pawlowski's first campaign but now is affiliated with the Lehigh County Democrats. The zone, which was established by the state during Pawlowski's tenure, will be home to the $350 million arena complex and the 11-story National Bankshares building among others.

"When you drive into Allentown, you see cranes," Johnston said. "That's significant. [Pawlowski's] record really speaks for itself in Allentown. Either love him or hate him, but you see results."

Cunningham said: "That's what people are voting about. The only question that is a hard one for the mayor to answer... is how long will he be here?"

That question is one of several that Donovan has tried to keep on the minds of voters. His campaign had a press release prepared for Pawlowski's gubernatorial announcement well before it went live, and more than $6,000 has been spent since June on printed materials publicizing all of Donovan's positions, according to campaign records.

But without the financial means to do much more, questions remain about whether Donovan's message will reach and resonate with voters, Borick said.

"That's the biggest challenge in this race," Borick said. "You don't have the resources to make that happen through media, so you have to do it more organically."

Donovan also has the disadvantage of running as an independent without the backing of the local Democratic Party. Although he served on City Council as a Democrat, Donovan entered the mayoral race as an unaffiliated independent candidate, allowing him to skip the primary in May and face Pawlowski directly in the general election.

That was a strategic move that got him on the ballot, Cunningham said, but independent candidates have not been very successful locally, commanding only 5-7 percent of the vote, he said. Donovan will face an additional challenge because Pawlowski's name will be on both the Democratic and Republican ballots next Tuesday. He won both primaries.

Rick Daugherty, Lehigh County Democratic chairman, said Donovan has yet to convey his ideas to the public. Voters want to hear what he plans to do, but he's running out of time, he said.

"We need to show how he's going to address the issues," Daugherty said. "It's easy to criticize somebody, but... you're running for mayor. Show us what direction you're going in."

Considering Pawlowski is facing an independent candidate and simultaneously seeking higher office, Cunningham said it's surprising that he has been even this visible in the mayoral race.

"In reality, the Democratic primary is the key election in Allentown," he said. "That being over, that's actually on both tickets, for all intents and purposes, that's as sewn up as an election can be in advance of Election Day, even with an independent candidate on the ballot."
Muhlenberg Hillel welcomes a dynamic duo

Jeremy Brochin and Jaimie Krass are working hard to ensure that Muhlenberg College's Hillel feels like a welcoming place for all Jewish students.

By Ethan Weg
Special to HAKOL

Over the summer, Muhlenberg’s Hillel got a huge makeover. Come the beginning of the fall semester, the Hillel had a new director and new program engagement associate.

Jeremy Brochin, a Hillel professional for over 37 years, is Muhlenberg’s new interim Hillel director and Jewish chaplain. Brochin received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Minnesota, and his master’s degree from Hebrew University of Jerusalem. After spending 23 years as director at the University of Pennsylvania Hillel, he came out of retirement to be the interim director at the University of Washington. Thus, it is no surprise that he was coerced out of his second retirement by the possibility of yet again influencing and guiding young Jewish leaders.

Brochin is glad to be back at work with Jewish young adults and said that, “Jewish life [at Muhlenberg] is at a place where it is ready to take off.”

Muhlenberg junior, Ilana Blumohn, added that Brochin “brightens Hillel with his smile and contagious laughter.” He can often be found at Hillel smiling, joking and wearing sandals, his favorite form of footwear.

The other part of Muhlenberg’s new Hillel team is Jaimie Krass, the program engagement associate. Krass is a graduate of the University of Florida, where she earned degrees in political science and Jewish studies. She never intended to be a Hillel professional, but when the chance presented itself she jumped at it, because she wanted, she said, “to give back to the organization” that impacted her in her college years.

Krass has indicated that she would like to be available as a resource to the Muhlenberg community, whether that be academic, religious or otherwise. One of Krass’s more prevalent traits is her enthusiasm. As Brochin explained, “Jaimie has a huge amount of energy.”

Students also have noticed Krass’s fervor for Jewish learning and programming. “Jaimie’s energy is infectious and she brings innovative and new ideas to any situation,” said Muhlenberg junior Caroline Dorn.

The dynamic duo of Brochin and Krass has already become a great team, and their work within Muhlenberg’s Jewish community reflects that.

For example, they are taking tangible steps to ensure that Hillel feels like a welcoming place for all Jewish students. Brochin said his guiding principle is “[Muhlenberg’s] not my community, it’s the students’ community.” Krass echoes this idea that, “Hillel is for the students.”

That said, Muhlenberg College’s Hillel has been granted an enormous gift: the leadership of two new and amazing individuals. They will continue to do remarkable things for Muhlenberg’s Jewish community, and the students know that the future will bring even more exciting opportunities through Hillel.

“We want to create a place for students to find their Judaism,” Brochin said. This is the present and the future of Muhlenberg Hillel, a place where Muhlenberg’s Jewish population can feel comfortable, grow and just be Jewish.
A joyful beginning

Eaton's installation 8
The Stroud Courier

Bird-Window Collisions Increase Avian Mortality

Posted by: Rebecca Jasulevicz on Nov 1, 2013 |

Dr. Daniel Klem, Jr., the world's leading expert on birds killed by collisions with windows, gave a presentation on October 18, 2013.
Photo Credit / Rebecca Jasulevicz

On October 18, 2013, East Stroudsburg University's Biology Department hosted Dr. Daniel Klem, Jr., of Muhlenberg University. As the second bio-colloquium of the semester, Dr. Klem gave a presentation entitled "Bird-Window Collisions: Overview of Current Knowledge and Prevention."

Dr. Klem is a Sarkis Acopian Professor of Ornithology and Conservation Biology who has received a number of awards throughout his lifetime, such as the Hawk Migration Humana Service Award. The main interests of Dr. Klem's studies are ethology (the study of animal behavior), ecology (the study of interactions among organisms and their environments), conservation, ornithology (the study of birds), and, of course, wildlife mortality resulting from the actions of man. Dr. Klem is considered to be the world's leading expert on birds killed by collisions with windows. An estimated one billion birds are subject to human-associated mortality every year. According to Dr. Klem, this could be a conservative estimate.

"The avian toll exacted by glass is indiscriminate, an additive rather than a compensatory population mortality factor," said Dr. Klem. Birds only have to take off from about a meter away from the window in order to build up a sufficient amount of momentum to receive serious, life-threatening injuries upon impact. The problems are not due to the physical or mental fitness of the bird.

"If we believe they act as though the glass is invisible to them, they are all subject to the fatality," said Dr. Klem.

Glass causes so many casualties to birds because they do not believe there is a barrier between themselves and the habitat that resides on the other side. This is known as the see-through effect. Another property of glass is known as the reflective effect. This is when the glass reflects the image of the habitat opposite of it. Instead of it appearing as though there is no barrier present, it will seem like the habitat they are already in is continuing.
As long as the conditions exist for these effects to take place, according to Dr. Klem, “Birds are vulnerable to sheet glass of all sizes and colors.” Glass casualties are responsible for the deaths of eight percent of the world’s bird species and 28 percent of North America’s bird populations. The most common casualties of North American birds include species such as the American Robin, Dark-eyed Junco, Cedar Waxwing and the Ovenbird.

The Swift Parrot is an endangered species, yet, according to Dr. Klem, “1.5 percent of the word population of 1,000 breeding pairs is killed annually colliding with windows.”

Being able to estimate the number of birds subjected to window collisions is a matter of examining population density. Dr. Klem said, “The best predictor of the number of bird strikes at any site is the density of birds in the vicinity.” If an area has a large population of birds, there will be a proportionally higher number of bird strikes annually than if fewer birds lived in the area. Many forms of prevention exist, including increasing the use of screens, making glass more visible to birds with either creative awnings or novel panes, the angling of panes, using frosted glass and altering the placement of attractions.

Novel panes are also known as “Klem Glass,” and they utilize nanoparticle coatings and interior films within laminated glass. Angling the pane of glass to face downward instead of being perpendicular to the ground not only helps the glass to be more visible, but it also allows birds that fly into it to have a greater survival rate.

Utilizing glass that is non-reflective is also an option, as is using glass from manufacturers that will impose an ultraviolet signal into the glass. Many birds have a wider range of site than humans. This is in part because some species have about a million cones per square millimeter in each of their eyes, and also because they have double cones, while humans only have single cones. Cones are the retinal structures responsible for color, sharpness, and acuity.

While we cannot see ultraviolet light, many species of birds can. If the glass has patterns or images in the ultraviolet wavelength, this may aid in the bird’s ability to see the glass and avoid it. The location of bird feeders and trees in relation to buildings also affects the mortality rate of birds. When bird feeders and other similar attractions are placed closer to buildings, there is a drastic decrease in the number of casualties.

Dr. Klem encourages people to educate others about the severity of bird strikes. Encouraging architects that use Green Building Council Evaluation Pilot Credit Number 55 to adhere by the LEED Green Building Rating System is also a way to prevent the installation of harmful windows. Additionally, Dr. Klem recommends to encourage governments, whether they are local, state or federal, to enforce existing legislation in order to ensure bird-safe human structures. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and the Ecological Society of America work to protect wildlife and diversity.

“We have the solution. We just have to convince people that we have the power to take some action. I need people to take it seriously,” said Dr. Klem.

As human construction continues to expand and skyscrapers touch the skies, prevention of avian mortality is becoming an increasingly important issue. Buildings littered with windows have the opportunity to take action against the creation of unnecessary victims.

Taking simple precautions can prevent the deaths of, quite literally, billions of lives. Taking Dr. Klem’s advice, individuals can act as catalysts for a better future for avian populations worldwide.
Will voters' anger with incumbent effect Pa. judicial retention votes?

on November 04, 2013 at 5:22 PM,

HARRISBURG — Among the choices voters will have to make Nov. 5 is whether to retain two Supreme Court justices and two Superior Court judges.

Some are questioning whether voters' anger at Congress over the government shutdown will have any effect on their decision on whether to vote "yes" or "no" to retain the judges for 10-year terms.

"Pennsylvania judges have nothing to do with Congress," said Justice Max Baer of Mount Lebanon. "I don't think it'll affect us. I believe we will all be retained."

But "emotion can play a role in politics," notes Christopher Borick, a political science professor at Muhlenberg College in Allentown. For the first time, he said, many voters are saying they'd throw out their congressmen.

"An already diminished institution in the eyes of the public is now even more so," Borick said.

The average approval rate for members of Congress was 8.4 percent on RealClearPolitics.com, which reports polls from various sources. A CBS poll showed approval for Congress dropped from 17 percent in July to 9 percent in October. The 16-day shutdown, stemming from a fiscal dispute between the political parties, resulted in about 800,000 federal employees being furloughed and national parks such as the Gettysburg battlefield being closed.

"I can see some voters with limited knowledge of the candidates saying, 'You know what? Let's throw them all out,'" Borick said.

"Do I think it's possible? Yes," said G. Terry Madonna, a political science professor at Franklin & Marshall College. "Do I think it is likely? No." Only one Pennsylvania justice has been defeated since the state established retention elections in 1968.
Former Justice Russell Nigro lost in 2005 amid voter outrage stoked by the middle-of-the-night pay raise for three branches of government. Nigro had not ruled on the pay raise but became a casualty. There was at least a direct relationship between a pay raise and state judges who received it, Madonna said. This time, with anger against Congress, there is no link to judges.

In addition to Baer, Chief Justice Ron Castille of Philadelphia is seeking retention. So are Superior Court Judges Jack Panella of Northampton County and Judge Susan Peikes Gantman of Montgomery County. Wary of the mood of the electorate, Baer confirmed that his campaign paid for a poll that found essentially what the national polls show about anti-Washington sentiment. He declined to release the poll.

"Max has done polling and it reveals that voters, driven by intense anger at Congress, and to some extent state officials, are strongly against all incumbents," said a fundraising solicitation letter sent on Baer’s behalf by John Dougherty, business manager of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 98 in Philadelphia. It’s typical for candidates to use polls as a way to raise campaign money, said Wes Leckrone, a political science professor at Widener University in Chester. Leckrone doesn’t foresee voters extending their anti-incumbency anger to statewide appellate court judges.

"If I told you it’s not a concern I’d be misleading you," Panella said. But he believes voters will separate the issues: "I have faith in the people of Pennsylvania."

Gantman said she doesn’t hear dissatisfaction from voters as she travels around the state. "In terms of Congress, we have no relationship to Congress," she said, noting that voters seem pleased with the "fairness and integrity" of the courts.

"Who knows?" said Moe Coleman, director emeritus of the Institute of Politics at the University of Pittsburgh, when asked about blowback from the Washington fiasco.

"Off the top of my head, I don’t think so," Coleman said. "I think they’re mad at Congress, the president and state government. I don’t think it will fall on judges."

This story was compiled by Brad Bumsted, state Capitol reporter for Trib Total Media.
U.S. News Releases Best Colleges for Veterans Rankings

By Devon Haynie | U.S. News & World Report LP – 23 hours ago

Since the Post-9/11 GI Bill was implemented in August 2009, colleges and universities have experienced an influx of veterans and their family members eager to use the expanded educational benefits. At least 773,000 veterans and their loved ones have taken advantage of the bill, which provides tuition and housing assistance to eligible veterans and their family members, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. As more veterans return to school, they are looking for high-quality colleges and universities that fit their needs. To help them in their search, U.S. News has launched its inaugural Best Colleges for Veterans rankings. The 234 schools in the new list scored well in terms of graduation rate, faculty resources, reputation and other markers of academic quality measured in the 2014 edition of the U.S. News Best Colleges. To qualify for the new rankings, the schools also had to be certified for the GI Bill and participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program, two federal initiatives that help veterans reduce the cost of school.

Finally, the schools were required to be members of the Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC) Consortium, a group that works to simplify credit transfers and give veterans credit for military training and national tests such as the College-Level Examination Program. The new rankings include 10 separate categories: National Universities, National Liberal Arts Colleges, Regional Universities (North, South, Midwest and West) and Regional Colleges (North, South, Midwest and West).

The data on veteran benefits was collected as part of a broader survey of undergraduate schools by U.S. News in spring 2013. All Unranked or Rank Not Published schools in the 2014 Best Colleges rankings were excluded from the Best Colleges for Veterans rankings. Among National Universities, Pennsylvania State University--University Park placed No. 1, followed by Tulane University in New Orleans and the University of Texas–Austin, which tied at No. 2. Penn State has more than 900 veterans at its University Park location, according to Brian Clark, director of the office of veterans programs. He says improving the higher education experience for veterans has long been a top priority for the university.

"If we as a nation are going to lean so heavily on these few people and ask them to risk their lives to defend us, the least we owe them is a new life after the service and the chance to support themselves and pursue the life they choose," he says. New York's Ithaca College, Florida's Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Drake University in Iowa and the University of Redlands in California are ranked at the top in their respective Regional Universities category. Among Regional Colleges, Pennsylvania's Seton Hill University, West Virginia's Wheeling Jesuit University, Dordt College in Iowa and Texas Lutheran University all earned first place in their respective regions.

Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania topped the list for National Liberal Arts Colleges, followed by Oregon's Lewis & Clark College and Michigan's Hillsdale College. Matt Stahl, a 25-year-old Marine Corps veteran and junior at Muhlenberg, said he chose the school because its participation in the Yellow Ribbon Program made his education affordable. So far, he says, he's been impressed by the school's efforts to improve the college experience for veterans.

"I think it's important for the school to focus on because of what all the veterans have given," he says. "They can't provide an education for the ones who have given the ultimate sacrifice - their life - but for the ones who were lucky not to go that far, it's very important. In today's job market you are going to need some sort of degree."
Transportation bill defeated

Author: Jamie Stover, Reporter, JStover@wfmz.com
Published: Nov 19 2013 06:00:15 PM EST  Updated On: Nov 20 2013 12:14:38 AM EST

HARRISBURG, Pa. -

A proposed fix for Pennsylvania's roads and bridges has sputtered out in Harrisburg.

Governor Tom Corbett was pushing for this plan, and while lawmakers agree that something needs to be done, the proposed plan wasn't convincing enough.

"Any measure of quality of Pennsylvania roads puts it very low in comparison to other states," said Dr. Chris Borick, Political Science Professor at Muhlenberg College.

The State House shot down a transportation funding bill Monday night by a vote of 103 to 98.

"A fairly even split among democrats and republicans in terms of their caucus," Dr. Borick said.

The bill would have raised gasoline taxes and a host of motorist fees to spend billions on roads, bridges and mass transit systems.

Dr. Chris Borick said its rejection puts Governor Tom Corbett, who's up for re-election next year, in a tough situation.

"He needs signatures on legislative accomplishments. But on the other hand if he does accomplish this, and the public is dissatisfied with some of increases, that might have a negative effect on him," Borick said.

Borick said he believes some lawmakers quiver at the thought of raising taxes, especially at a time when public opinion lingers near record lows, even at the state level.

"It's never popular to have any type of legislation that might raise the expenses of the public," Borick said.

Now, house democrats are pushing for a vote on their transportation funding plan but it's unlikely that any transportation measure will pass before 2015.

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Local foreign policy expert breaks down Iran nuclear deal

Author: Jamie Stover, Reporter, JStover@wfmz.com
Published: Nov 24 2013 06:25:15 PM EST

ALLENTOWN, Pa.-
A day after Iran and six World Powers reached an agreement concerning nuclear regulations and sanction reductions, experts are breaking down the nuts and bolts of the deal.

Muhlenberg College Political Science Professor Chris Herrick said the deal is temporary. The six-month deal is an interim plan, while diplomats work on a more permanent agreement, he explained.

Herrick calls it a trial run and confidence builder, as international leaders look to improve trust with Iran.

Herrick said the talks emerged over concern regarding how Iran would regulate its nuclear weaponry.

"There is every reason to believe India is a stable nuclear power...and in turn, Iran would not be...There is some concern that Iran would not have adequate control over nuclear weapons they produce," Herrick said.

On Saturday, diplomats agreed to a deal that lowers sanctions on Iran and allows foreign countries to act as a watchdog over Iran's nuclear development.

"A small proportion of the sanctions will be lessened not removed, and could be re-institutionalized relatively quickly. Iran has agreed they will freeze their enrichment process, and potentially downgrade some of the uranium they already have enriched," Herrick said.

Herrick said the benefit for Iran revolves around economic opportunity. The country currently faces a double digit unemployment rate. International sanctions aren't helping.

"Sanctions are crippling and eroding to the point where their economy will be in a free fall," Herrick said.

The agreement also allows foreign powers to regularly check on Iran's uranium productivity.

"Verification is the key. President Obama and I said from the beginning we're not going to verify, we're going to verify and verify and verify," said John Kerry, U.S. Secretary of State.

"The known sites can and will be visited, potentially, on a daily basis," Herrick said.

Herrick believes it's in Iran's best interest to adhere to the agreement.

"The likelihood of Iranians adhering to it is actually relatively high," Herrick said.

According to Herrick, Iran could face more and stricter sanctions if it strays from the deal arrangements.

"If Iran were to now renge on the deal, not follow through, or cheat on the enrichment process, it would become much easier for the U.S. to re-establish slightly diminished sanctions and increase the severity and maybe even bring in more countries," Herrick said.
Muhlenberg’s ‘Winter’s Tale’ brisk and playful

BY KATHY LAUER-WILLIAMS
Of The Morning Call

Muhlenberg’s ‘The Winter’s Tale’ is as brisk as a chilly morning and as playful as new fallen snow.

Troy Dwyer’s direction of the Shakespearean tragedy successfully updates the story while keeping the essence of the play intact with a whimsical and well-paced telling.

Curtis Drescher’s set design is completely immersive and puts the audience in the middle of the action. The convincingly rocky terrain easily transforms a story shoreline to a stately palace. Enchanting details like falling leaves and glowing lanterns add to the rich environment.

Sean Skahill, who leads a strolling band of musicians, adds an enchanting element with his original folk-flavored tunes and atmospheric music.

Parties open both acts. In the first, Sicilian king Leontes, played by Jeffrey Robb, is hosting his friend Polixenes, the king of Bohemia, played by Mark Mcgillivray. In this seemingly genteel setting, Leontes becomes convinced his very pregnant wife Hermione, played by Emily McDowell, is having an affair with his friend.

Robb is convincingly crazed as the husband who has lost control because of jealousy, and McDowell is confused but regal, as the wronged queen. As Antigonus, Colette Campbell projects a grounded fortitude as the one sent to abandon the innocent baby. As Paulina, Eliana Sagarin is a fiery presence with her flashing and determined mien.

As the young prince Mamillius, Amara Young adds a whimsical note as he runs around in space footie pajamas.

In the bear scene, while it’s not entirely clear it’s a bear, the movements of the dancers impart an effectively overpowering and threatening shape, enhanced by lighting by Gertjan Houwen for a very ominous effect.

Comic relief comes in the form of the somewhat dim old shepherd, Jordan Elman, dressed like the Gorton’s fisherman, and his even dimmer son, played by Ryan King. Both are a little goofy but convey a basic decency when they find and take in the abandoned babe.

The second act plops the audience in the middle of a sheep shearing feast in Bohemia, here wrought like a hoe-down complete with pot luck and high kicks.

As Florizel, who disguises herself as the shepherd Doricles, Kelley Amnesley is low-key but endearing. Kim Rogers brings a sweet innocence to Perdita. They are charming as a couple trying to be together despite the disapproval of Florizel’s father Polixenes. The same-sex aspect of their relationship seemed quite natural.

Skahill also has a hilarious turn as the thief and rogue Autolycus, taking advantage of the clueless younger shepherd, and stowing in his underwear the wallet he has pocketed.

Also adding a distinct flavor was the simple but effective choreographed movement by Allison Berger.

All the parts came together for a satisfying evening of theater that gave an appealingly new twist to Shakespeare’s classic tale.

“A Winter’s Tale,” 8 p.m. today, 2 p.m. Sunday, Muhlenberg College, Studio Theatre, Trexler Pavilion, 22nd and Chew streets, Allentown. Tickets: $15; $10, students.muhlenbergen.edu/theatre, 484-664-3333.

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10 more colleges, universities sign on to Say Yes

Associated Press

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Yale and Brown University are among the latest colleges and universities to promise free tuition to students as part of the Say Yes to Education compact.

New York City-based Say Yes announced the addition of 10 institutions on Friday.

Say Yes offers locally funded tuition scholarships to Buffalo and Syracuse public school students who attend a public two- or four-year college.

Private institutions typically waive tuition for qualified Say Yes students whose family income is below $75,000 a year.

The other newly added colleges are: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Washington University in St. Louis; Williams College in Williamstown, Mass.; Smith College in Northampton, Mass.; Trinity College in Hartford, Conn.; Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio; Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa. and Northeastern University in Boston.

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“Our brand represents quality, and we need to protect that for our community and our alumni.”
—Mike Bruckner, Muhlenberg College spokesman

Muhlenberg College wants to make sure that when its students and alumni buy a sweatshirt, the Mule they get is the real deal in exactly the right shade of red.

To that end, the Allentown liberal arts college is suing Seattle-based online retailer Sportswear Inc. for using the Muhlenberg name, mascot and other trademarks without permission.

“Our brand represents quality, and we need to protect that for our community and our alumni,” college spokesman Mike Bruckner said about the lawsuit filed last week in U.S. District Court in Allentown.

That's a battle many smaller colleges and universities are fighting in an age when the campus bookstore isn't the only place to turn for a ball cap with your alma mater's name on it.

Some, like Lafayette College in Easton, and schools in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, use brand managers to keep a handle on who profits off their name and reputation.

“There are companies out there that we certainly don't want to have our image associated with,” said Matt Santos, director of university relations at Kutztown University.

Muhlenberg alleges that Sportswear is violating federal trademark law by using the college’s identity without permission or approval. Bruckner added that the company responded to a cease-and-desist letter with defiance.

“They wrote back and said they will continue to do it,” Bruckner said.

The suit alleges Sportswear, which sells athletic apparel at prepsportswear.com, is trading on “the enormous goodwill” associated with Muhlenberg and passing off its goods as those endorsed by the college.

“Sportswear’s misconduct is likely to cause confusion and to deceive consumers and the public,” the lawsuit says.

Sportswear CEO Chad Hartvigson didn't return calls about the lawsuit.

Federal court records show Sportwear has been sued two other times in 2013, by Manchester University in North Manchester, Ind., and by the Pinehurst golf resort in North Carolina. Both cases settled for undisclosed amounts, court records show.

Scott Morse, director of athletics communications and promotions at Lafayette, said the college uses a licensing partner to handle interactions with companies that want to sell apparel with the college's name and images of its Leopard mascot.

In the past, the licensing firm has taken steps to stop unauthorized use of the trademarks by Sportswear, among others.

Using an outside firm to work with retailers has allowed the Lafayette brand to appear in local stores of national and regional retailers like Walmart and Boscov’s. But the proliferation of online retailers means the college needs help keeping track of where its brand appears.

Morse said Muhlenberg handles its own licensing, which is common for smaller colleges.

Kutztown and East Stroudsburg University use a licensing agency to keep an eye out for unauthorized uses of the schools’ identities.

Brenda Friday, director of university relations at Kutztown, said unauthorized uses of the university's name and logo haven't been a serious problem.

“We've had a couple of instances where we've had to go to folks and let them know they shouldn't be using our logo,” she said, noting that the offenders tend to be local restaurants and bars trying to attract students.

Santos said Sportswear is licensed to sell Kutztown University apparel, a deal made through the university's brand manager, which takes a share of the licensing fees for its work.

Money is not the main motivating factor for many smaller colleges and universities to keep their brands under control. Where Big Ten Conference schools like Penn State and Ohio State make millions on merchandising, for a university like Kutztown, branding generates an insignificant amount of revenue.

Santos said Kutztown has collected about $4,000 licensing its name and mascot so far this year.

The main concern, he said, is image. For example, any association with alcohol is discouraged. But, Santos said, when students and alumni and their families want to wear Kutztown's name and mascot, that's good publicity, so he works to make sure it's properly licensed and available.

“My philosophy is that we want to get our brand and image out there in the right way as much as possible,” he said.
With great celebrity comes great scorn, and Jennifer Lawrence might be on track to become the latest in a long line of female icons accused of being "fake." In a world that increasingly demands "authenticity," there is mounting pressure on female celebrities like Lawrence to prove that the down-to-Earth persona they display in public is an accurate reflection of who they really are.

Lawrence's newest film, American Hustle, is set to release in theaters on December 20. Reviews for the film have been stellar, and many praise Lawrence's performance in particular — as they have done for nearly every movie she's appeared in since Winter's Bone. With an Oscar win early this year for Silver Linings Playbook, the rousing success of Catching Fire, what looks to be a phenomenal mid-December film, and — as of Thursday morning — a Golden Globe nomination for Best Supporting Actress, 2013 is shaping up to be "The Year of Lawrence."

It's about this time that the naysayers rear their ugly heads. And so they have. As early as March of this year, entertainment commentators began pining to the ether about whether or not Jennifer Lawrence's laid-back, happy-go-lucky attitude is "real" or if she is just putting forth a relatable front for the camera.

And she's not alone. Last year, after her Supporting Actress Oscar win for Les Miserables, actress Anne Hathaway came under so much fire for being "annoyingly cheerful" that The New Yorker felt the need to defend her. Pretty much any female celebrity in the news today has undergone this same dissection of their public persona.

Madonna, who is so well established that questions about her authenticity are in books, has come into
question often, with reviewers referring to her work as "antics" and "bizarre shenanigans." Miley Cyrus, whose laid back demeanor rivals J-Law's, is so often accused of faking her free-wheeling nature that her sister stepped up to defend her. The motivations behind Taylor Swift's personal life come under fire from fellow celebrity Kelly Osbourne, who said, "I cannot stand Taylor! She only dates people for press and is so hungry for attention."

Lady Gaga has taken heat for her unique image from women like Karen O to Camille Paglia, who referred to Gaga as a "manufactured personality." More than once, Nicki Minaj, whose image is similar to Gaga's, has been called a "Barbie'd, blinking, synthetically-built gimmick."

And post-pregnancy Beyoncé has had to field accusations against her Tumblr account that "Every single one of [her] "natural" photos is completely un-natural." Even the veracity of her pregnancy itself has been doubted by Beyoncé birthers.

But to what extent, if any, are any public personas truly "authentic?" According to Jeff Pooley, an associate professor of media and communication at Muhlenberg College, not much. "What you can't do is be told by a social media guru to act authentic and still be authentic," he said in a different New York Times piece. In today's world of social media, what people see as authentic is more akin to "calculated authenticity," or stage presence. "The best way to sell yourself is to not appear to be selling yourself," Pooley continued.

In short, no one in Hollywood is genuine — Jennifer Lawrence is just better than most at appearing so. Celebrities are especially responsible for selling their public persona as much as their acting skills. Authenticity is a crafted skill that those in the spotlight must possess.

Men also have to present a calculated authenticity, but they are rarely questioned it. A quick Google search reveals that stars like Justin Timberlake and Kendrick Lamar also must keep fans believing that they are "real," but they are more often than not praised for being successful at it. Searches of other leading male music stars and actors — like Christian Bale, Brad Pitt, Justin Bieber, Will Smith, or Leonardo DiCaprio — reveal that little such pondering of their authenticity exists.

Adam Hanft, CEO of Hanft Projects and frequent celebrity commentator, thinks there is an explicit double standard. With regard to the disparate treatment of long-time stars Madonna and Jay-Z, "I think there's a strain of misogyny at work here. Madonna has outlived the culturally prescribed shelf-life of sexuality, so she's attacked at every turn. As an older woman with overt sexuality who 'doesn't know her place' she is seen as threatening."

Women, then, appear to be held to higher standards of authenticity than their male counterparts. This is unsurprising. For one thing, this incessant questioning of successful women's authenticity is an easy way to cut them down. Authenticity as a crafted persona is a job skill required of celebrities. And like in most other fields where they work alongside men, women are expected to be better at their jobs to get the same amount of praise — and receive more scorn when they do not meet that raised bar (or even sometimes when they do).
Muhlenberg said best for vets

Muhlenberg College has been named the nation's best liberal arts college for veterans by U.S. News and World Report. The rankings provide data and information on schools that offer benefits and services, including tuition assistance, to veterans and active service members.

"I am delighted that Muhlenberg has been ranked first among the nation's liberal arts colleges in providing support to our veterans," said Muhlenberg College President Randy Helm.

Joshua J. Tosado is a military combat veteran enrolled in the Wescoe School Teacher Certification Program. He was a student teacher until Dec. 11 at Parkland High School.

Said Tosado:

"The Wescoe School was very different than most. I was a military combat veteran who just redeployed from Iraq and was seeking an education that would fit the organized format I desired. I had only been back in the United States two months when I decided to take the leap.

"Through the military I have gained professionalism, dedication, and unmatched life experiences. Even with those great skills, the transition from life in the military to the civilian community was very difficult for me.

"What was even more difficult was finding an institution like The Wescoe School that would accommodate the needs of a military veteran. The faculty and staff in the Education Department made adjustments and created a flexible schedule to give me an organized path of accomplishable tasks.

"The program has allowed me to develop into the teacher I wanted to be. I highly recommend anyone wishing to become certified in Teacher Certification to contact The Wescoe School."

The Wescoe School of Muhlenberg College offers specific veteran's education benefits and has been named a Military Friendly School. Under the Yellow Ribbon Program, Muhlenberg College has partnered with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in offering scholarships to veterans that cover the difference between the cost of tuition and the amount provided by the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

There were 234 ranked schools across all 10 U.S. News ranking categories: National Universities, National Liberal Arts Colleges, Regional and Regional Colleges.
Governor’s race to dominate state politics

While there was no shortage of interesting political news in Pennsylvania in 2013, much of the commonwealth’s interest regarding political issues has been directed toward 2014, with a gubernatorial election in the offing and control of the state legislature in question.

With a number of important choices to make come November, Governor Tom Corbett’s re-election bid looks promising.

Corbett has garnered support from both the business community and organized labor, and his record on issues like education and the economy will be key in determining the outcome.

Despite some recent丑闻, Corbett remains a strong candidate and is expected to continue his campaign with renewed energy.

The race for lieutenant governor is also expected to be closely contested, with several candidates vying for the position.

In the House and Senate, the Republicans are expected to retain their majorities, but some races in the suburbs and rural areas could be close.

The question of whether Gov. Tom Corbett can be re-elected will dominate state politics in 2014.
Corbett, Kane made political waves in 2013

December 27, 2013 10:35 AM

HARRISBURG — For an off-election year, 2013 was surprisingly full of political intrigue and engagement in Pennsylvania.

The travails of Gov. Tom Corbett, a Republican who polls suggest is one of the nation’s most vulnerable governors, inspired at least eight Democrats to declare their candidacy for the nomination to challenge him in next year’s election.

Attorney General Kathleen Kane, who took office in January as the first woman and the first Democrat to be elected as Pennsylvania’s chief legal officer, worked in tandem with her fellow Democratic row officers — newly elected Auditor General Eugene DePasquale and Treasurer Rob McCord — to hold the GOP administration’s feet to the fire.

In the state and federal courts, battles raged over the politically charged issues of whether Pennsylvanians should have to show photo identification to cast ballots and whether same-sex couples should be allowed to marry.

In a year-end setback for the Corbett administration, the state Supreme Court struck down industry-friendly rules in a law that limited local governments’ power to control where the natural-gas industry can operate.

The 2013 elections were almost exclusively local, with just one contest — for an open seat on the Superior Court — on the statewide ballot.

But in the larger political arena, Corbett and Kane were clearly the year’s focal points.

Corbett, a former attorney general, has struggled to overcome criticism of his reticent leadership style, his public gaffes on politically sensitive topics, his support for the natural-gas industry, and spending cuts in education and social services. Two of his three major 2013 initiatives — overhauling state pensions and privatizing liquor and wine sales — went nowhere.

Polls show Corbett’s popularity started to slide in early 2012, his second year in office, and remains stubbornly low.

A Quinnipiac University poll released Dec. 18 showed majorities of Pennsylvania voters disapprove of Corbett’s handling of his job and believe he should not be re-elected, while 36 percent supported Corbett on both points. About 10 percent were undecided, according to the poll.

“No governor in modern history has been below 40 percent,” said Terry Madonna, a pollster at Lancaster’s Franklin & Marshall College.

Corbett, 64, scored a major victory in late November when the Republican-controlled Legislature passed — and he signed — a $2.3 billion transportation funding package that will accelerate long-overdue improvements to highways, bridges and mass transit.
"He deserves as much credit as the leaders of the Legislature do," for helping broker a compromise that has eluded legislators and governors for years, observed former longtime state Republican chairman Alan Novak. "It was not an easy lift."

"This is a huge victory for him," Madonna said, noting that the bill was supported by a coalition that included business and organized labor.

The victory may be bittersweet.

Corbett ran on a no-new-taxes pledge in 2010 and has sought to play down the fact that most of the revenue will come from gradually increasing a wholesale tax on gasoline. The increase, which is expected to be passed along to motorists, would add more than a quarter a gallon to the price at the pumps once it is fully implemented — a fact some observers believe could come back to haunt Corbett in the election campaign.

"I think it's going to be an easy game for the eventual Democratic nominee to take advantage of," said Christopher Borick, a political scientist and professor at Muhlenberg College in Allentown. "No matter how he parses it out, he broke a promise, and that in itself presents a character challenge for him."

Kane, 47, a former Lackawanna County prosecutor who had not previously run for public office, defeated a former congressman in the Democratic primary and a veteran district attorney in the general election in 2012.

Kane, who billed herself in her campaign as "a prosecutor, not a politician," has impressed Democrats and Republicans alike with her independent style and political savvy — prompting widespread speculation about her political future.

"She's picked her fights very well," said T.J. Rooney, a former state Democratic chairman.

When civil rights advocates filed a challenge to Pennsylvania's ban on same-sex marriage in federal court in July, Kane refused to defend the law because she believed it is unconstitutional. The unusual move left the task to Corbett, who hired an outside law firm to represent state officials named in the suit.

In February, Kane's office blocked Corbett's plan to contract out the management of the $3.5 billion Pennsylvania Lottery to a British firm, saying it violated the state constitution and state law. The issue remains unresolved in the final days of the year.

One of Kane's first official acts was to fulfill her campaign promise to appoint a special deputy to find out why it took state investigators nearly three years to arrest former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky on child sex abuse charges. Sandusky was convicted and imprisoned, but the state's largest university is still reeling from the ensuing scandal.

Kane never accused Corbett of wrongdoing, but he was the attorney general during most of the period in question. He has cited the successful prosecution as proof the probe was effective and denied keeping it from becoming public while he was running for governor.

History is on Corbett's side. In the four decades since the state constitution was amended to allow Pennsylvania governors to serve two terms instead of one, none has been denied re-election.

The Democrat contest is shaping up as an anti-Corbett free-for-all.

Candidates include McCord, who was re-elected state treasurer last year; fifth-term U.S. Rep. Allyson Schwartz, a former state senator from the Philadelphia suburbs; York businessman Tom Wolf, a former state revenue secretary; and two former state secretaries of environmental protection, John Hanger and Katie McGinty.

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