Muhlenberg Ranked #1 Liberal Arts College for Vets!

By Molly Brown, Director of Marketing & Public Relations

The news arrived appropriately on Veterans Day, November 11. Muhlenberg College was named the #1 Liberal Arts College in the country for Veterans—2014 by U.S. News & World Report.

The recognition brought pride to our staff, which has been diligently and passionately working for many years to assist vets and active military personnel in their academic pursuits. In addition, we are a Yellow Ribbon School and have been on the list of Military Friendly Schools since 2010.

“It has been our mission to help veterans successfully navigate the process of returning to school. Coupled with our local outreach efforts, being connected to the Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington, D.C. and the Military Education Program in Harrisburg has been critical to our success,” explains Wescoe Associate Dean and Director of Veterans Affairs Joe Kornfeind.
Since 2006, students in the Accelerated Degree Program (ADP) have completed 93 capstone projects for a wide variety of organizations. The capstone project is the student’s cumulative academic experience in the ADP and involves the students finding an organization to work with that has a pressing issue that needs resolution. We thought it would prove interesting to revisit one of these organizations a few years after the completion of a capstone project to gauge what impact the students had on the organization. In 2010, Joshua Onia and Brian Thomson, a team in the Healthcare Management concentration, took on the challenging task of preparing a Simulation Needs Assessment for the new regional campus of the School of Medicine of Temple University/St. Luke’s University Health Network, located in Bethlehem. The project was well received by both the administration of the medical school and the health network and resulted in Josh becoming the Simulation/Standardized Coordinator for the medical school and network in the long run. This particular capstone project is but one example of the win-win nature of these projects. The client organization receives value through the recommendations of the students; the students have an opportunity to put their knowledge to work; and current students gain a better understanding of what’s expected in this final module by attending the capstone presentations. Look for future updates on impressive capstone projects in this column.

Focus on: Candice Arnold ’07

For some people, receiving a diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis would be a time to focus solely on the personal challenges that lie ahead. However, Wescoe Alum Candice Arnold ’07 took a different approach. She decided that it was the perfect time to start Hockey Fights MS, an organization that would raise money for research, treatment and programs for the disease that she would be fighting.

Growing up, Candice was an avid hockey player. Beginning at age 10 she played for Northampton Jr. High School boys’ team for five years, competitive girls’ hockey for three years and a men’s league for four years before competing at the NCAA Division III level in college. Aside from playing, she was also a private skating instructor and hockey coach and loved every aspect of being on the ice.

After her diagnosis in 2005, Candice was terrified that she might not be able to continue playing hockey. MS is a disease that targets the brain and spinal cord resulting in the loss of muscle control, vision and balance. Rather than accepting defeat, she started brainstorming ways to make the best of the situation.

In her final year at Muhlenberg, Candice began an Entrepreneurial Studies practicum that involved shadowing a small business and then writing a paper based on observations. Instead of shadowing an existing business, Candice formed Hockey Fights MS.

With the help of mentor and instructor Joe Kornfeind, Candice took the idea from concept to reality. Candice registered the business name, created a logo, drafted a mission statement, created the first benefit ice hockey tournament, started writing letters requesting sponsorship and launched a website. The mission of Hockey Fights MS is to raise money for research into the cause, cure and treatment of Multiple Sclerosis and to help improve the lives of those living with multiple sclerosis by supporting local rehabilitation centers. What began as a single event and part of a school practicum turned into an annual event with tournaments taking place in multiple locations.

Now, just a few short years after Hockey Fights MS was formed, there are tournaments in Pennsylvania, Vermont, Maryland, and Massachusetts. The number of participating teams has increased from the original seven to 101 in 2013. The tournaments are open to adult ice hockey players of varying ages and abilities.

To date, the tournaments have raised over $95,000 for MS research and rehabilitation centers such as Good Shepherd Rehabilitation’s MS Wellness Program in Allentown, PA. They have also donated to The MS Center at Fletcher Allen Health Care located in Burlington, VT; The National MS Society’s New England and Greater Delaware Valley Chapters as well as the Johns Hopkins Project Resto— one of the leading MS research facilities in the country.

Candice really embodies the old adage, “When life hands you lemons, make lemonade.” Others with MS will benefit from the fruits of her labor.
Wescoe student Marco Calderon, who is working towards a major certificate in art, currently has his photography on display in Seegers Union. “Block by Block” is made up of portraits of small business owners in the old Allentown neighborhood. The series captures the charm and vitality of the city through the faces of the people who live and work in Allentown.

His most recent series, “Fighters,” showcases young boxers training at the Allentown Boxing Youth Program. Marco collaborated with Emily Theil, Allentown native, to bring the art of photography and storytelling together to create the series. “Many people connect boxing directly with violence. “Fighters” takes a deeper look into the driving force behind those who train. It suggests a more complicated understanding of the sport and its role in the lives of local residents,” says Marco.

“Fighters” will be on display in the Loft at SteelStacks, April 25-June 22.

For more information about “Block by Block” visit calderonphoto.com/blockbyblock.

For more information about “Fighters” visit calderonphoto.com/fighters.

portraits from Marco Calderon’s “Fighters” series

Marco Calderon