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JOURNAL

Comedic Chemistry

NANCY PIMENTAL '87
SCRIPTS A "SHAMELESS"
SUCCESS IN
HOLLYWOOD

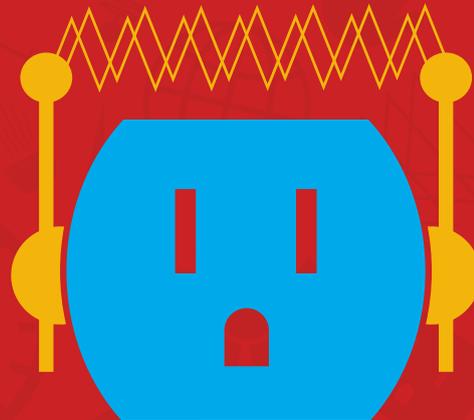


Donal Boyd '13 caught this haunting image of a mysterious man crossing fog-shrouded Earle Bridge just after a concert in Alden Memorial. The photo was selected for *National Geographic's* "Daily Dozen" online collection and will be published in an upcoming print edition.



TOUCH TOMORROW

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NASA returns for the Sample Return Robot Centennial Challenge, a national competition with a \$1.5 million prize.

In celebration, WPI will host the third annual TouchTomorrow—a family-friendly festival featuring interactive exhibits by WPI and NASA—for kids of all ages.



PRIZE MONEY
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Nancy Pimental '87 developed Hollywood fever at a young age—and her engineering education gave her the confidence to cure it.

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BY CLAYTON STROMBERGER

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WPI

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WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

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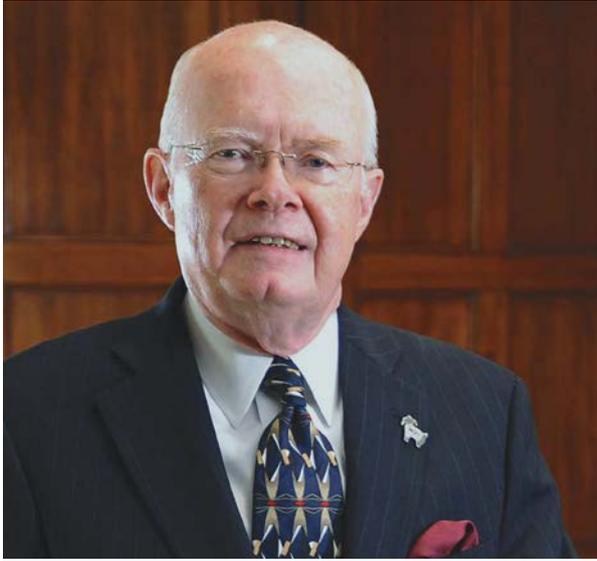
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Where in the world is WPI?

When American undergraduates head off campus to study or work in distant locations, they often experience a world dramatically different from the one with which they are familiar. It is no different for WPI students who travel to one of the 39 project centers that make up our Global Perspective Program. But our program takes students well beyond a simple tourist adventure and gives them a far more engaging experience than a standard study-abroad program. Our students don't experience the world superficially. Instead, working closely and collaboratively with our many partners around the globe, they have the chance to deeply immerse themselves in new cultures and in real-world challenges that lie in that critical zone where science and technology meet social issues, human needs, and cultural norms. Working in teams, and guided by faculty advisors, they make a real difference to local communities and organizations.

The Global Perspective Program, now in its 41st year, is the core of a widening world view for WPI. Building on the great successes our students and faculty have already achieved across five continents, we are further expanding our global impact through our academic, research, industry, and governmental networks. Starting with international relationships built organically by our faculty, alumni, students, and business partners, we are consolidating and reinforcing our global connections in locations where we have the opportunity to address important challenges in a more robust, multifaceted manner.

The idea for establishing multiple focal points of international activity grew from a Global Task Force appointed by WPI Provost and Senior Vice President Eric Overström in 2011. That group strongly reinforced the value of continuing global outreach for our academic and research programs and recommended that the university have "a coherent, clearly defined global strategy for international engagement that is consistent with our entrepreneurial nature."

Among its recommendations was that the university define "relationship hubs" in strategic locations around the world that can serve as centers for research, scholarship, and corporate connections. The first set of hubs are emerging in China, where the university has strong alumni relationships and longstanding student project programs; in Switzerland, where we've been building productive ties to the Zurich University of Applied Sciences and where strong alumni ties exist to the international pharmaceutical companies situated there; and in Moscow, where faculty and corporate connections helped pave the way for a new student project center.

These emerging hubs of global engagement hold the promise of greatly expanding opportunities for the members of our university community to interact on a global stage and have an impact on the great challenges that face our world. They are particularly exciting and especially powerful because, having emerged as a natural evolution of our Global Perspective Program, they are built upon the foundation of the WPI Plan, our project-based approach to education, which, in turn, has its roots in our heritage of putting theory into practice for the betterment of society.

Through our distinctive philosophy of education, we allow our students to take control of their own learning by developing ideas, solving real-world problems, and understanding professional interactions in ways a traditional classroom cannot duplicate. We've always believed that this is a particularly impactful way to learn, but only recently have we had the empirical evidence to back up this belief.

A recent study of the impact of the Plan on generations of WPI students conducted by the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts has provided overwhelming evidence that our project-based curriculum, combined with our global projects program, offers students preparation for careers, an expanded world view, and personal growth that far exceeds the experience of typical undergraduates. As one alumnus stated in response to the survey, "I can't think of another school that would have been suitable for me to be doing what I do now, [because] *life is projects*."

"I don't think it really mattered where I went....," another alumnus wrote. "My entire experience after my Interactive Qualifying Project was different than before. Somehow, something changed. I felt like a different person when I came back. I saw the reason why I went to college, because I saw something taken to completion in the real world."

In this issue of the *WPI Journal*, you will meet WPI graduates who have taken their education out into the real world, where they are ready to work anywhere, on anything. Take Nancy Pimental '87, who went from chemical engineer to Hollywood writer, or Piti Bhirombhakdi '02, who, through his expanded world view, transformed his family's Boon Rawd Brewery based on the skills he learned while at WPI.

A WPI education provides a universal viewpoint that can serve as a foundation for something much more profound than the degree you hang on an office wall. We offer our graduates the world.

Where is WPI? Everywhere.

Phil Ryan '65
Interim President



Revisiting Games

I commend the *WPI Journal* staff for publishing Professor Sanbonmatsu's essay, "Virtual Murder," in the fall issue. Since the essay was critical of big business, the NRA, the military, and the government, I'm sure it caught reader attention. It's good to know that there's not just formulaic number crunching going on at my alma mater, but critical thinking as well. What the professor points out is that violence in America has become big business, and we Americans have become numb to it. A single murder is barely news. It has to be a mass shooting to be newsworthy. What does this say about us as a society when every evening on TV there are programs showing bodies being shot and mutilated, but if a four-letter word is uttered during the violence, it must be bleeped out because impressionable children may be watching? As a loyal reader of the *Journal*, I look forward to more such articles. We don't all need to agree, but we do need to think.

PATRICK C. WELGE '90

Congratulations to Professor Sanbonmatsu for his fine essay on the likely effects of violent gaming on society, particularly with respect to mass killings and misogyny. I would only like to add that, as a Vietnam veteran, I find it insulting and appalling that game developers, like the ones graduating from WPI, glorify war and make it entertainment. Anyone who has served in a war zone will tell you (and it may be the only thing they tell you) that war is not entertainment, it is hell!

What a singular and strong statement it would be if WPI closed down its Department of Interactive Media & Game Development. Ending war should be so easy.

PAUL A. CROCE, SC.D., LFSME

VP (Ret.), FM Global; member, WPI Fire Protection Engineering Advisory Board

Gym Dandy

I am a proud parent of an architectural engineering major at WPI, and as such, I just received my first *WPI Journal* and was very impressed with the layout and content. My congratulations to the *Journal* staff for a job well done. I can tell you it is every bit the equal of other alumni publications we receive from larger, more financially endowed schools. I read with great interest the story on the



Alumni Gym project and wanted to share with the project team a reference that may be of some help regarding the flexible spaces within the gym.

Stanford University, my alma mater, undertook a renovation project on a larger scale about five years ago to design a space for their Design School. It is a school where every class is based on collaboration and interaction and where flexible space is paramount. The designers were so successful they were asked to write a book about what they had done, which can be found at dschool.stanford.edu/makespace. I hope you will share it with the design team for the Alumni Gym, and I look forward to your next issue.

MAYNARD A. HOLLIDAY, P '16

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the article on Alumni Gym, the building I was located in for 40 of my 42 years at WPI. My only disappointment was that the article gave no mention of WPI Wrestling, which took place in that building (the only New England Division 3 wrestling team with over 500 victories). After Harrington Auditorium was built in 1968, wrestling became the only WPI varsity team using Alumni Gym as its "home court." Because of the boisterous and unruly crowds, Alumni Gym soon became known as the "The Pit" by our competitors as they certainly did not like wrestling against us in that venue. The record book shows 50 years of wrestling in Alumni Gym, from 1962 to 2012, producing a record of 506–310–11. Our wrestlers, parents, students, and fans have some great memories from Alumni Gym.

PHILIP J. GREBINAR

Associate Professor, Physical Education
WPI Head Wrestling Coach (1972–2005)

Branching Out

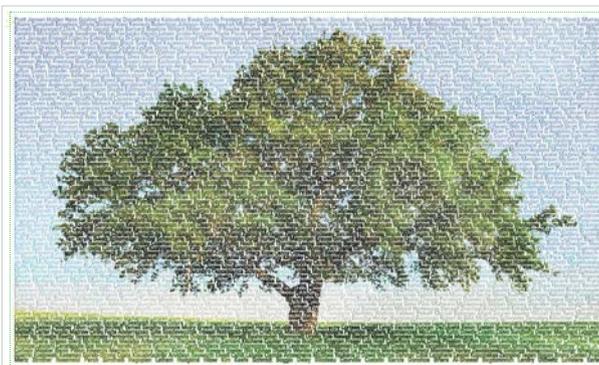
The "legacy tree" image in the last issue was a nice piece of artwork. We, of course, immediately looked for—and found!—our family name. My father-in-law, husband,

and daughter all attended WPI, with my daughter graduating this past spring. She had such a good experience at WPI, while my husband enjoys seeing all of the changes for the better since he graduated in '83. WPI will always have a special place in our hearts.

CATHERINE AGAR
Fairport, NY

Reader Satisfaction

Despite my advancing years, I haven't forgotten that I sent a similar note about the last issue; however, I can't resist congratulating the *Journal* staff again.



The *Journal* has been around forever. I'm sure that people have worked hard on it for many years, trying to make it a showpiece for the university...The

rebirth of the *Journal*, however, has been amazing to me. It is now sharp, snappy, information rich, easy to navigate, light in tone—and I could go on! The biggest surprise, however, is the degree to which it is clearly designed from the ground up as an online publication. Like many people, I spend a lot of time reading on the Internet. I think the *Journal* is the best publication I read, as far as both design and content are concerned.

I think you're adding immensely to the quality and content of the university. Keeping up with the happenings on The Hill is now a joy rather than a chore, and I thank you for that!

TOM NEWMAN '64



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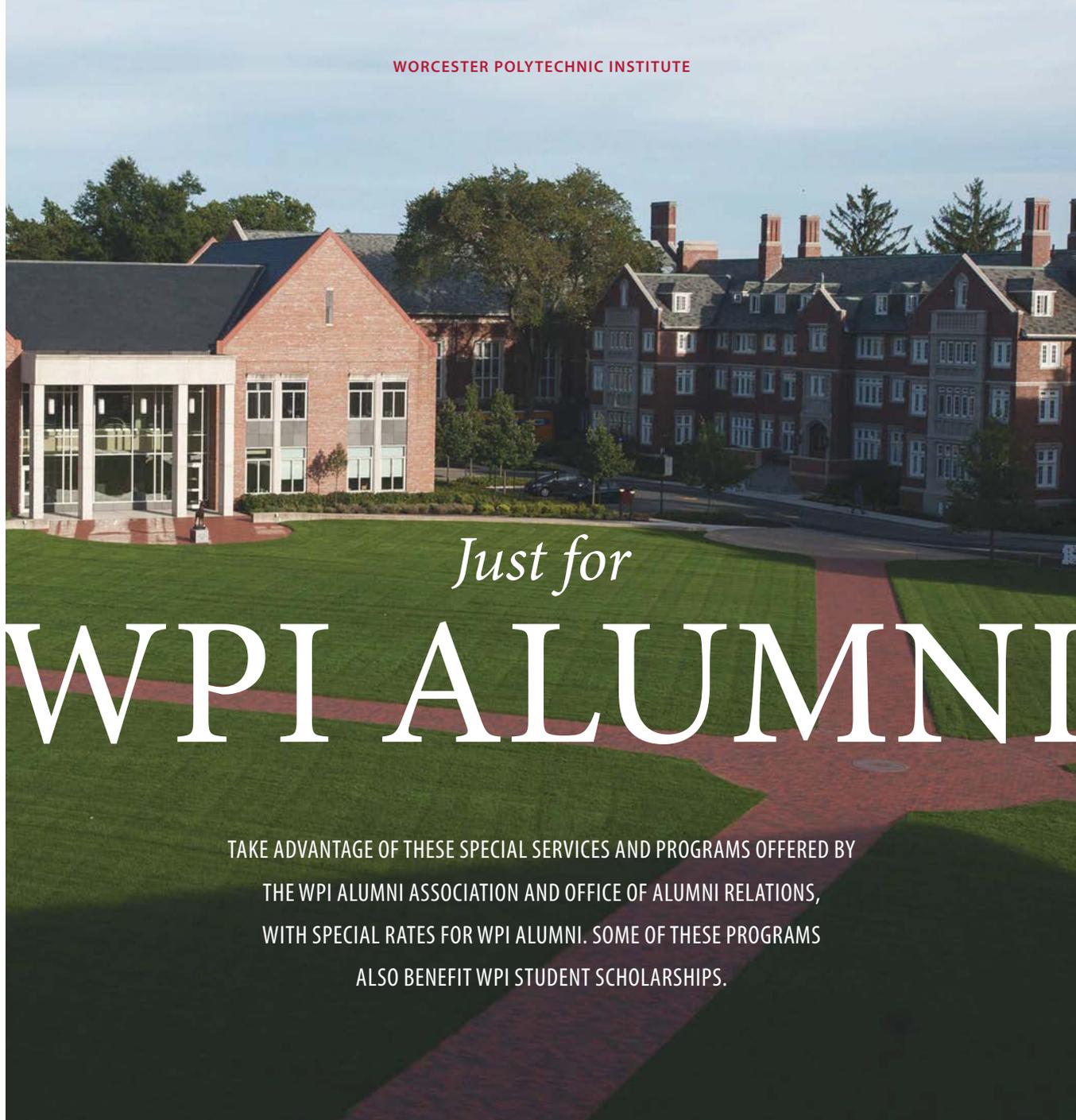
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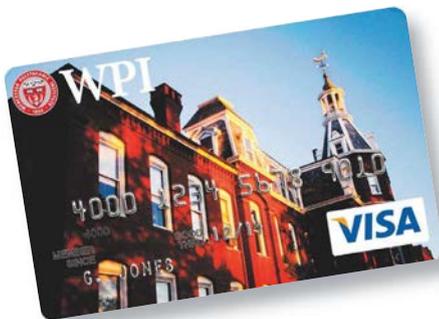
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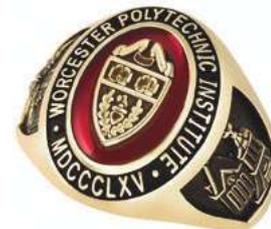
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From the National Campaign Chair

DEAR ALUMNI:

WPI is the great enabler of my life. It's hard to believe that I graduated almost 40 years ago, yet I continue to be grateful for the education I received and recognize how instrumental WPI was in my success. I am so proud to be connected to an institution that serves society by educating leaders who have the habits of mind and the practical skills to solve society's most challenging problems.

Project-based learning has been the key, and it is about to be elevated to a whole new level at WPI.

Alumni Gym – a building most of us remember fondly for reasons other than academics – is about to be transformed into an Innovation Studio, a state-of-the-art hub for project-based education at WPI. This hub will bring students and faculty from various disciplines together like never before, assist students in developing products with the help of experienced entrepreneurs, and connect project centers around the globe to each other and the campus community. It will spark ideas and nurture them through trial and error. The Innovation Studio at Alumni Gym will make a great education even better for WPI undergraduates. A special insert in this issue of the *WPI Journal* describes the project in detail and provides information about how you can support it.

Alumni Gym took its name from WPI's first alumni-driven fundraising initiative to supply students with space they needed in the university's early days. I believe the need for a centrally located home for project-based



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education is even more critical today and that WPI alumni are ready to rise to the challenge again to serve future students of our alma mater.

The campus where we lived and learned, and the professors who taught us when we were

students, were supported by people who came before us. I urge you to join me in making WPI a model institution for the next generation. Make a financial commitment to the Alumni Gym transformation. Be part of history at WPI.

Michael J. Dolan '75
Senior Vice President, Exxon Mobil Corporation
WPI Trustee and National Campaign Chair

▶ RAP SHEET

A Spectacular Path

MARI O'NEAL MCPHERSON '08, MS '10, considers himself a natural-born engineer, set to reimagine the world at a young age. From dabbling with Legos and toy cars to dismantling radios, dreams of mechanical engineering formed for him around the 5th grade. ¶ British born McPherson emigrated to Connecticut in 1994, and his academic journey eventually brought him to WPI, where his interest diverged between engineering and his musical muse. For McPherson, the WPI campus community offered ample opportunities to explore his talents outside the classroom. ¶ Take a look at the creative path this young alumnus has followed since leaving WPI...

2008

Graduates with a BS in mechanical engineering.



Releases EP called *Spectacular Ever After*. "Since all fairy tales end with 'Happily Ever After,' I thought it fitting that my own story start from the end."

Begins master's in marketing and technology innovation to fuel desire to become an artist.

2010



Releases in spring *Rap Is Just A Game* "because I felt like my pursuits in the 'rap game' had become futile and I should just have as much fun as possible playing the game."

Graduates in summer with MS degree.

Releases *Heaven is a Mile Away*. "That album was inspirational and full of a hope that one could experience heaven on earth through faith."

Leaves Worcester to start career as engineer at Verizon Wireless HQ in New Jersey as a part of its three-year leadership development program.

2012

Begins videography as side gig. Opens photography studio in Jersey City.



Shoots *Caged Black Woman*, first of a series of collaborations with poet Kofi Genfi.

Launches House of Lords LLC.

2013

Directs and stars in short film *Soda Pop Love Dreams* (sodapoplovedreams.com)



Co-directs *The King Has Fallen* with Kofi Genfi.



Reignites spark as recording artist on a trip to Jamaica. Records a number of songs that evolve into most recent album *Til Shiloh*. "This album is a tale of my life up until my son, Shiloh, was born in December."

MANIFESTATIONS OF GRANDEUR

An Ecclesiastical Meditation

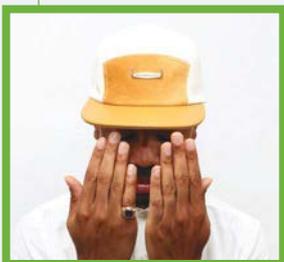


OMARI O'NEAL

Releases *Manifestations of Grandeur*, an experimental body of work that explores different philosophical and biblical themes concerning creation of the inner and outer worlds.



2014



Becomes creative consultant offering services in video, photography, audio production, and web design. Is currently working on growing House of Lords LLC.

The Future...

Create new music, films, and other personal projects—including a documentary on black male teachers in education.



►PROJECTS

Elm Park Gets a Makeover

WPI students aid Worcester in rebuilding iconic footbridge

An MQP by a WPI project team will leave a lasting mark on the City of Worcester. Under the direction of faculty advisor Tahar El-Korchi, seven students are designing a replacement for the historic footbridge in Elm Park, one of the most recognizable structures in the city. The bridge was removed last fall and taken to Worcester Technical High School, where students will follow WPI's blueprint and build a replica.

The original bridge was built at the turn of the 20th century and has been replaced three times, most recently in the 1970s. Before being moved to the high school, it had been closed because supports on its underside had rotted. The fourth reincarnation will copy its predecessor as faithfully as possible, while using a design and sustainable materials that will enable it to last longer. The target date for completion is spring 2015.

WPI students will submit three designs for the replica, one of which will be chosen by the city. Goals and challenges include handicapped accessibility, steepness, size, and cost, as well as remaining faithful in appearance. The MQP also involves developing materials lists, load calculations, and other specifications before turning the project over to the high school for construction. WPI students will continue as managers and assist with further planning and troubleshooting. Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty lauded the city's partnership with the two schools, saying the collaboration will save about \$250,000 and perhaps two to three years, had the project gone through the usual public bidding process.

▶ARCHIVAL

When JFK Pledged PKT

Fallen president was pinned in Worcester during 1958 fraternity rush

SHORTLY BEFORE the 50th anniversary of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, a never-before-seen film of the future president was re-discovered by the Phi Kappa Theta fraternity chapter at WPI.

In the 16-mm film, which is less than two minutes long, then-Senator Kennedy is shown receiving a pledge pin from Donald Ferrari '59, president of Phi Kappa Theta (then Theta Kappa Phi), on the night of Oct. 2, 1958, at the Worcester Armory. In addition to Senator Kennedy, future First Lady Jackie Kennedy and JFK's brother Robert Kennedy can be seen in the footage. At that time, Theta Kappa Phi was dubbed a "national fraternity for Catholic men." Since Kennedy was Catholic—and later became the first Catholic president of the United States—the video holds historical significance.

The footage surfaced about 10 years ago, when Frank Pakulski '59, now living in Vermont, was preparing to move to a new house. He came across a reel of film marked "PKT Pledging" and recalled that Kennedy's visit occurred on the same day as the fall rushing for the fraternity. Pakulski played the film and was astonished to see history relived. The video was shown last fall to current and past members of WPI's PKT chapter and made headlines in the days leading up to the 50th anniversary of Kennedy's assassination.



U.S. Sen. John F. Kennedy receives a pledge pin from WPI fraternity Phi Kappa Theta (then Theta Kappa Phi) president Donald Ferrari '59 on Oct. 2, 1958, at the Worcester Armory.

Len Dutram '59, now living in Pennsylvania, had the duty of keeping JFK, RFK, and Jackie Kennedy occupied at the Armory until the fraternity rushing concluded at 9 p.m. To this day, Dutram often asks himself, "Did that really happen?"

▶SPEED COUNTS

Selecting Fastest Sperm to Improve IVF

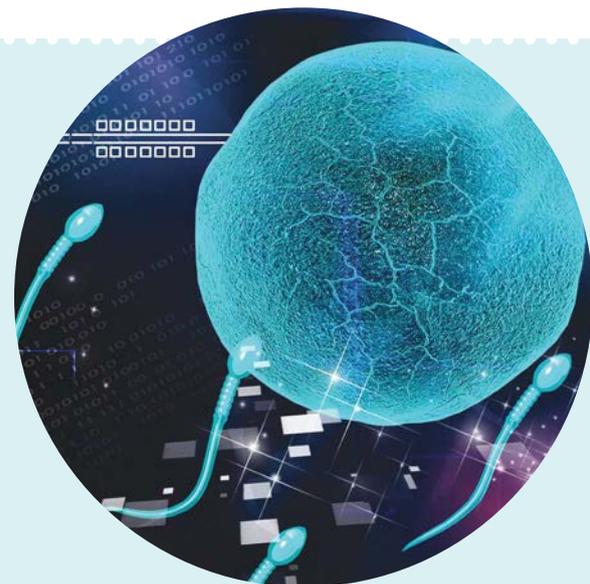
Each year, more than 70 million couples around the world find that they are unable to conceive. Nearly a third of the time, the cause is insufficient or lackluster sperm. In such cases, in vitro fertilization (IVF) can help, but for it to have a chance of success sperm must be sorted and only the most active, or motile, cells used. Laboratory techniques are often used to try to amplify the supply of peppy swimmers, but they have not proved especially effective, and one common method can damage sperm DNA.

A new technology being developed by a research team at WPI and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston promises to effectively sort sperm, and to do so in a safe and simple way. The method involves placing the sperm in a microfluidic chip, a device with a tiny, meandering, fluid-filled channel. A sample is inserted in one end and the sperm are allowed to swim down this microscopic racetrack. After a suitable peri-

od, the most active swimmers are recovered from the other end.

The chips are being developed at Brigham and Women's in close collaboration with Erkan Tüzel, assistant professor of physics at WPI, who uses advanced mathematical models and high-powered computer simulations to analyze and predict how sperm swim under varying conditions. Tüzel recently received a three-year, \$293,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to use his models and simulations to optimize the design of the sperm-sorting chips. Based on his work, the team at Brigham and Women's will build and test new devices.

The collaboration has already produced promising results. In a paper published in May 2013 in the journal *Small*, the WPI/Brigham and Women's team reported that in trials with mouse and human sperm, the microfluidic channels yielded sperm with significantly



higher motility and produced samples with a greater concentration of highly motile sperm than the current lab techniques. "We will use the NSF funds to build on our research," Tüzel says, "and develop clever microfluidic designs that will be even more effective in sorting sperm and improving the success of assisted reproductive technologies."

► RECOGNITION

ROTC Unveils Hall of Honor

BEFORE A STANDING-ROOM ONLY audience, the Bay State Battalion (BSB) Hall of Honor was unveiled in a ceremony during Homecoming 2013, giving Army ROTC alumni and current cadets a place for formal recognition and remembrance. LTC Ciro Stefano, who assumed command of the BSB in 2011, led more than a year of planning and coordination to make the monument a reality.

WPI is the host for the BSB, which comprises 12 colleges and universities. Stefano says one of his top goals was to find a way to honor and integrate diverse alumni



from 63 commissioning classes. The Hall of Honor is located in Daniels Hall, outside the Army ROTC offices.

Among the eight inaugural inductees are two WPI graduates: Gen. David Heebner '67 (Ret.) and the late 1st Lt. Ryan Patrick Jones '05, whose parents accepted the honor on his behalf. With the attendance of active and retired officers, and representatives of area colleges, Homecoming Weekend marked the largest BSB alumni event since its formation in 1951.

"I can't even explain how amazing it is," said cadet battalion commander Marlisa Cardoso, a senior biomedical engineering major at WPI. "Their accomplishments are extremely impressive, and sometimes it's hard to believe that they were all cadets like me once. Walking by the Hall of Honor every day will give me the drive and motivation to pursue a successful military career."

► QUOTABLE

"I got a tingle in my spine when I was shown the area where he did some of his early rocket tests. It's a fantastic connection."

President-Elect Laurie Leshin responding to a question about Robert Goddard's Worcester origins, on WTAG radio. Goddard graduated from WPI 1908 and ran some of his earliest experiments in the basement of Salisbury Labs. Leshin, a space scientist, is a former deputy director at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

► ALUMNI SERVICE

Bridging the Gap

AlumniBridge puts job search on new footing

PAUL VARADIAN '75 felt something was missing from the way people find jobs.

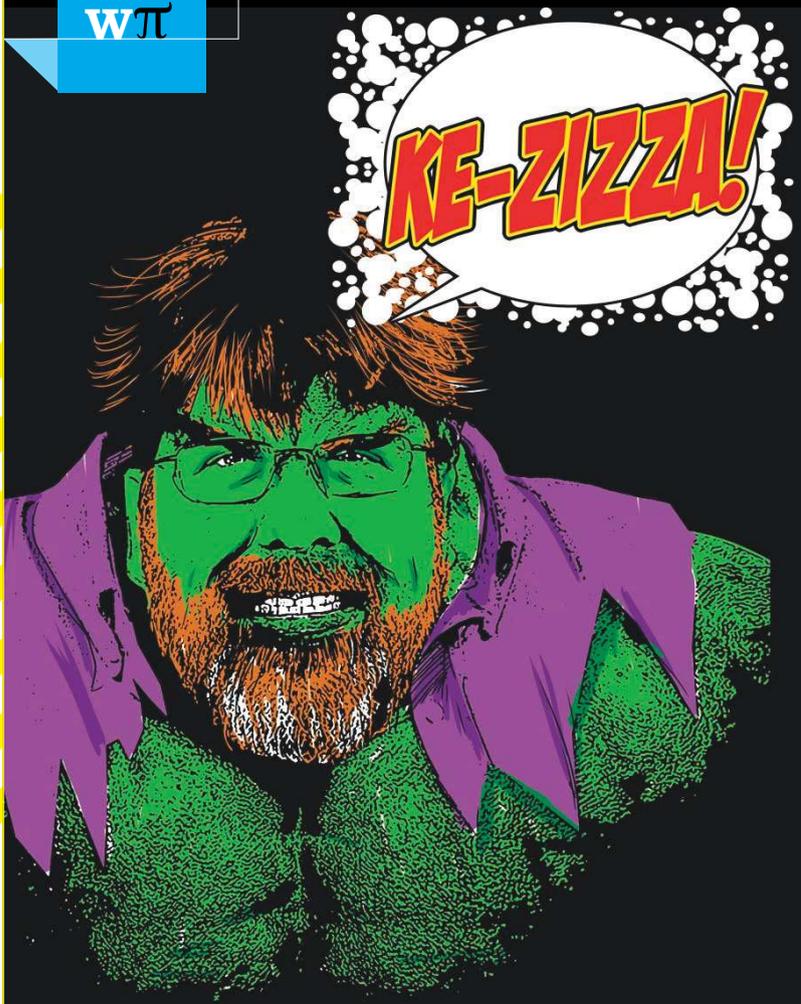
So he created AlumniBridge, a free placement tool that enables a job seeker's profile data – personality traits, skills, and interests – to be matched against the qualifications and preferences companies have identified for specific positions. The data is then presented to the employers in a single multimedia screen shot. "There's too much information out there," he says, "and we process things visually much faster than we do by reading. AlumniBridge gives employers a short, easy, graphical way to review candidates. You look and within 20 seconds you say, 'I like this person' or 'I don't.'"

AlumniBridge provides employers with insight into candidates that may have been passed over based on their resumes alone. For job hunters, it opens doors to positions they may have never considered. "Most of the time, you apply for a job based on the job," says Varadian. "Here, you may get replies from nine or 10 companies that you've never heard of, but you are what they are looking for."

Universities, including WPI, also benefit. A portion of the placement fee a hiring company pays AlumniBridge for its services is gifted to the new hire's alma mater, and important data about the job market is provided to schools to make informed decisions. "We can tell WPI that certain companies are clicking on certain skills and not others," Varadian notes. Schools can then adjust their curricula and opportunities in order to better prepare students. "Knowing what employers are looking for in hires is important for schools, students, parents," Varadian continues. "It puts us a step ahead of everyone else. This is the hard data – this is what students are looking for."

To see AlumniBridge in action, visit alumnibridge.com.





►THE VOICE

WPI's Keith Zizza creates sound effects for Marvel™ Puzzle Quest

Professor also serves as the voice of The Incredible Hulk

FOR PROFESSOR Keith Zizza, serving as the audio lead for Marvel Puzzle Quest, a puzzle/action game app was “an unforgettable experience. It was truly a blast to create sounds for the X-Men, Avengers, Dr. Doom, Venom, and a host of other characters in the Marvel Universe,” says Zizza, now in his third year as professor of practice in the Interactive Media and Game Development program at WPI. “I was blown away. As a kid I read a lot of comic books and became steeped in the whole mythical lore.”

To create hundreds of sound effects for the X-Men, the Avengers, and other heroes and villains, Zizza took audio samples and put them into a computer, where he created and set up combinations of sounds to make them more tactile and distinctive, and also to hear how they interact with one another in the game. As it turns out, Zizza said he couldn't find any “good grunts” in his sound effects library. “So I took some pitch-shifting software and manipulated my voice down and altered some of the frequencies to become the Hulk,” he says. “It was quite an experience.”

Zizza's road to being tabbed for the project comes from networking contacts as he's spent more than 20 years working in the digital audio industry. “By maintaining my standing in game development as a consultant on these types of projects,” he says, “I'm able to bring back new ideas, skills, and techniques to my students.”

►ROYAL VISIT

Ghanaian King Comes to WPI

Saving the Earth, Saving Humanity: A Lecture on Agriculture, Environment, Sustainability, and Poverty Alleviation

OKYENHENE OSAGYEFUO Amoatia Ofori Panin, King of Akyem Abuakwa in eastern Ghana, spoke at WPI in October. His visit marks the beginning of a possible partnership between WPI and the University College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies he founded in Bunso, Ghana. WPI environmental and sustainability studies professor Rob Krueger, a member of the university's international advisory board, has been invited for a reciprocal visit to discuss collaboration on educating youth on issues of sustainability. “It is easy to think that a problem in Ghana has no impact here,” said the King. “That is an illusion. We are indeed one.” Noting that his people might have missed the industrial and information technology revolutions, he stressed that with climate change looming “we cannot afford to miss the green revolution. The least we can do is let the children of Africa wake up in a world of hope.”



Krueger, left, and his children, Eleanor and James, with Osagyefuo and Kwabena Abo-Agye Jr.

▶ SWEET IDEA

Green Bee Soda Has a Healthy Buzz

Beekeeper makes honey pop.

From the tech boom in Manhattan to artisanal soda in Maine?

"It's a direct and logical path," jokes Chris Kinkade '91, founder of Green Bee Soda, which makes soda flavored with honey and natural ingredients.

After graduation, the electrical engineering major went to work in computer networking for a start-up tech company in New York. He earned an MBA from New York University and, when the tech company was sold, he went into investment banking. Seven years later, Kinkade says, "I had had enough."

Living in downtown Boston, he and his wife, Lori, wanted better schools for their three young children and a lifestyle that didn't include commuting. Better yet, they already had a weekend home on Casco Bay in Maine. When they realized they were returning to Boston later and later every Sunday, says Kinkade, "we finally decided to make the leap and start something up here."

That "something" seemed fairly obvious. Kinkade had already been tinkering with homemade soda for his kids, using honey from his own hives. He was passionate about the decline of the bee population and just as passionate about giving his children "something wholesome you could feel good about drinking."

He notes, "My fine appreciation for fermented beverages started at WPI," where he used to brew beer for his brothers at Phi Sigma Kappa.

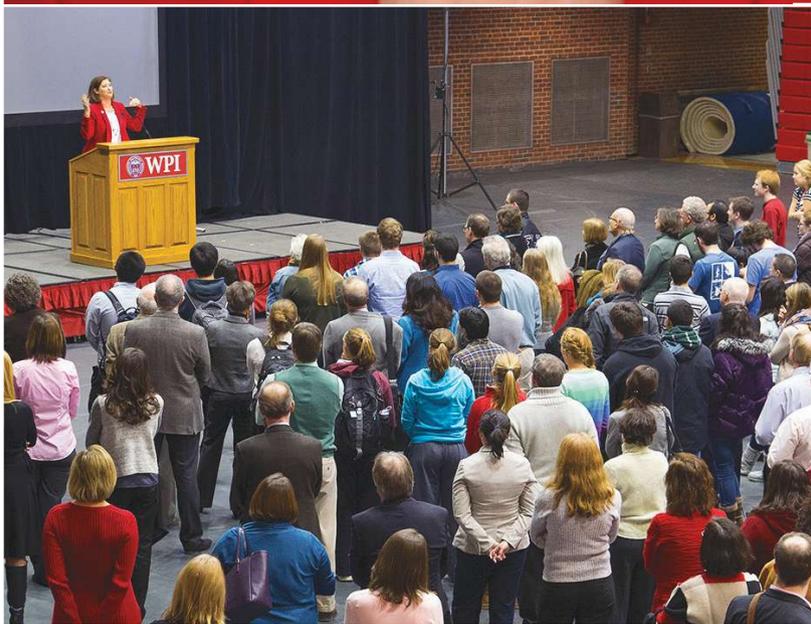
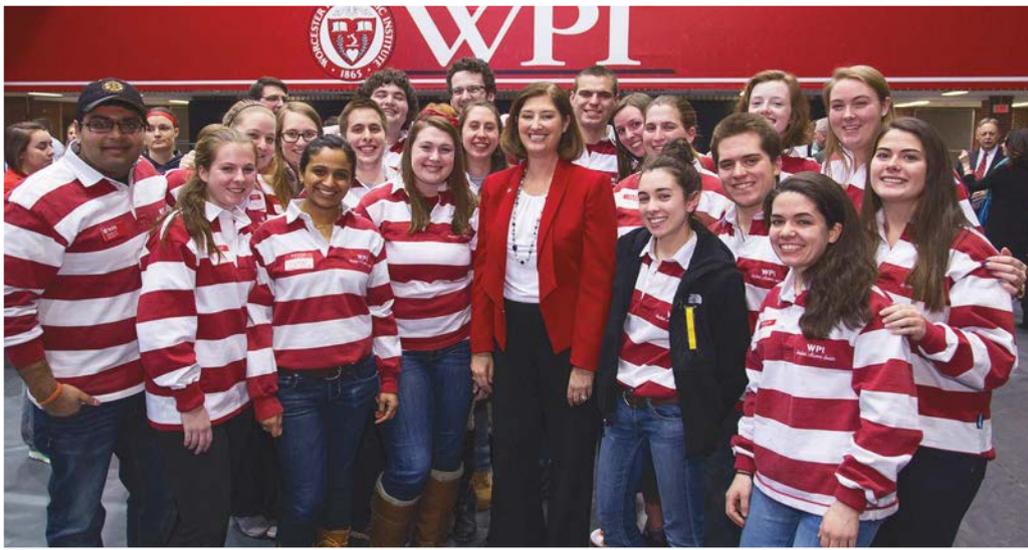


From the Kinkades' kitchen, soda production spread to the garage and then, once they started selling in stores, to a commercial facility. In addition to Chris and Lori, Green Bee employs four part-time employees and an intern. The kids help out on the bottling line, sticking on labels.

Green Bee's three flavors, Lemon Sting, Ginger Buzz, and Blueberry Dream, are sold at Whole Foods and other stores throughout New England and in New York City. The buzz is spreading!

— Laura Porter

"My fine appreciation for fermented beverages started at WPI."



Welcome, Laurie Leshin

THE EXTENSIVE SEARCH FOR WPI'S NEW PRESIDENT

has come to a notable conclusion with the announcement that Laurie Leshin, PhD, will become WPI's 16th president on July 1.

Guided by recommendations of the WPI community, and the service of two committees appointed to evaluate the large pool of outstanding candidates, the Board of Trustees unanimously elected Laurie to lead the university.

Through the diligent work of the community, plus the search and advisory committees, the qualities of the university's next president were clearly identified. With a goal of selecting a leader who would possess superior academic credentials, extensive administrative leadership experience, and superb communication skills, the committee came to the decision that she would be the ideal candidate to bring vision and energy to the WPI community.

Impressive by any measure, Laurie brings exceptional academic credentials from some of our nation's leading universities, as well as tremendous experience and expertise from her time spent in leadership positions at NASA. She is an academic who understands the role of—and the potential for—academia in the larger world, and is well positioned to take WPI to an even higher level of excellence and prominence.

Over the past 20 years the geochemist and space scientist has established herself as a leader in academia and the public sector. She has cultivated an impressive career at NASA, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Arizona State University, and the University of California, Los Angeles.

In 2004 she received the NASA Distinguished Public Service Medal, and in 2011 she was honored with NASA's Outstanding Leadership Medal. She is a recipient of the Meteoritical Society's Nier Prize for her research. She has served on the Board of Directors of Women in Aerospace and the Council of the American Geophysical Union. The International Astronomical Union recognized her contributions to planetary science by naming an asteroid "4922 Leshin."

Phil Ryan, who stepped away from his duties as Board chair to serve his alma mater as interim president, will continue his role until Laurie's arrival.

Excitement is growing across campus. You'll be hearing directly from our president-elect in our next issue.



C O M M E D I C

WITH A CHEMICAL ENGINEERING DEGREE IN HER BACK POCKET, AND A COMEDIC PEN GROWING SHARPER BY THE DAY, NANCY PIMENTAL SET HER SIGHTS ON THE BRIGHT LIGHTS OF HOLLYWOOD.

by james dempsey | photography by dave lauridsen

C H E M I S T R Y

N

ANCY PIMENTAL '87

was already the class clown by the time she reached third grade, and her report card showed it, a reproving “N.I.” (needs improvement) written under the “Behavior” category. She was always “chit-chatting,” complained stern Miss Sullivan.

But when the time came to put on the Christmas play, “The Elves and the Shoemaker,” Pimental found her loquaciousness rewarded. Miss Sullivan, handing out parts for the play, looked at the chatty child and said, “You like to talk, so you can be Mrs. Shoemaker.” A backhanded compliment, perhaps, but it got her her first stage role.

Throughout high school, Pimental dreamed of a career in show business, but had no idea how to go about it. By the time she was a senior, her acting resume consisted of a few parts in school plays and one at an all-girls camp, but, by and large, she continued to hide her lamp under the proverbial bushel.

She remembers sitting with her mother in the guidance counselor’s office. “We were discussing college and what my future held, and I said in a tiny little voice that ‘I’d love to go to Hollywood and acting school.’ My mother just gave me a look.” And that’s how Pimental ended up studying chemical engineering at WPI. “At the time I didn’t have the confidence to pursue my dream,” she says. But that would change.

Pimental grew up in Somerset, Mass., where her single mother worked hard to keep Nancy and her brother out of trouble. Mrs. Pimental was strict. Nancy wasn’t allowed to date during high school, and was even forbidden from attending the prom. “I had a sheltered upbringing in a lot of ways,” she says.

But not wholly. Pimental’s mother was quite happy to take her children to R-rated movies. “The ticket person would say, ‘This is R-rated,’ and my mother’s big joke would be, ‘I don’t let them drink or smoke, but I do take them to R-rated movies.’”

The family also watched a lot of television, and even attended live entertainment on occasion. “We watched *Happy Days*, *Laverne and Shirley*, *All in the Family*. I knew every episode of *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. We watched *The Love Boat*, *Fantasy Island*. When I was 12 my mother took me to see Joan Rivers. I remember there were what sounded like gunshots outside the theatre, this was in Providence, Rhode Island, and Joan just worked it into her act seamlessly, saying, ‘Oh, my boyfriend must be waiting for me outside.’”

Pimental loved Rivers’ sense of humor. She remembers seeing her in the Billy Crystal movie *Rabbit Test*, in which Rivers played a nurse carrying a liver in the kind of cardboard container you might get in a fast food restaurant. When she dropped the liver, looked around to see if anyone had noticed, then popped the organ back into its box like a waitress who has dropped somebody’s meal order, Pimental cracked up. “Joan Rivers was a big comedic influence on me,” she says.

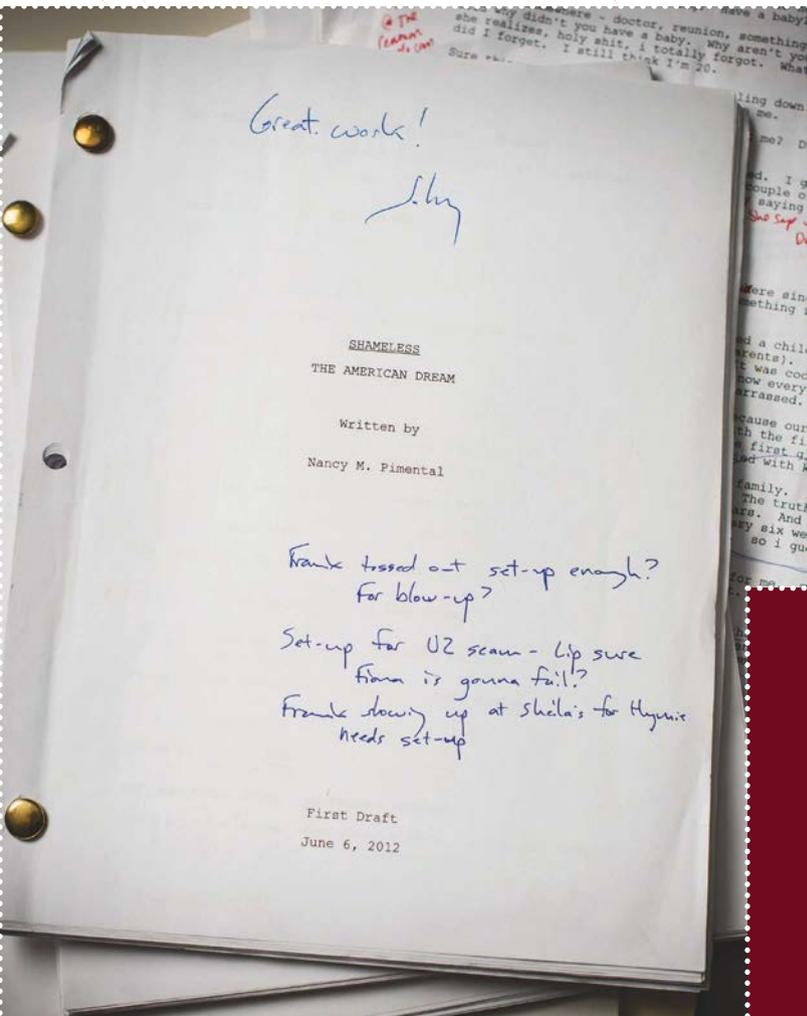


Chemistry to Comedy

WPI turned out to be the perfect fit for Pimental. She had always enjoyed science, particularly chemistry, and she learned a lot about herself at the school. “I got confidence from WPI,” she says. “College was my rebirth. There was an attitude there that I appreciated, as if we were the cream of the crop. There were only 34 people in my chemical engineering graduating class, and we thought of it as the hardest discipline.”

She recalls former WPI professor Al Sacco, chemical engineer and astronaut, with a lot of fondness. “He was good to me, he got me,” she says. Her confidence in her public persona grew also during her undergraduate career. She gave a speech during student orientation and was told that she had something special.

While at acting school, Pimental supported herself by driving tour buses around Boston, narrating the city’s history in her own unique way. This was also a confidence-booster. “I didn’t even know how to drive when I got the job,” she says, “and at first it was really hard, driving and



talking and dealing with everything, but about six months in I just got it. I was queen of the trolley world and could handle any situation. It gave me a ton of confidence, being in front of people, being funny, being narrative, and driving on all those little cow path roads of Boston at the same time.”

She also began to make headway in the stand-up world, and was getting up to 10 shows a week with her improv groups. Then in 1992 she took an actor’s workshop in Los Angeles and decided she had to move there. All that confidence she had built up quickly came crashing down. “For five-and-a-half years I busted my butt, struggling, working at survival jobs like waitressing, valet

car parking, catering, handing out cereal samples wearing a squirrel on my hat, just every kind of crappy job. I was writing a lot and was always on the edge of getting somewhere, but nothing was breaking. People would say, ‘You’ve got something going,’ but they didn’t know what to do with you.”

Things got so bad that at one point she considered bankruptcy, and it was during a stand-up tour in some hotel in 1997 she remembers seeing her first episode of *South Park*. “I’ll never forget it. The episode featured that Bigfoot guy who had an arm made of celery and a leg made of Patrick Duffy. It was weird and obscure and I totally got it. I said, ‘This is my sensibility, that’s me,



Breaking Barriers

Nancy Pimental discovered comedy and engineering have something in common—both have long been male bastions. When she attended WPI, the male-to-female ratio was 4–1; today, it’s closer to 2–1. And when she went into stand-up, she discovered that female comics were something of a novelty.

“I was talking about these issues recently with someone in an executive position, and she was struggling,” Pimental says. “I feel very lucky that I don’t look at myself as a woman, I look at myself as a talent in this industry.

“I grew up with lots of boys. I wasn’t really a tomboy, but I played with all my brother’s friends. Cops and robbers, kickball, spitting contests to see who could spit the farthest. Nobody ever said, ‘You’re a girl, you’re not supposed to spit.’”

She recalls working once at an improv club in Los Angeles, and watching a woman performer who was exceptionally attractive. “She came onstage and she just ‘played beautiful,’” she says. “I pulled her aside and said, ‘Look, you’re beautiful, so that’s taken care of. Now you can play something else—show another dimension of yourself.’”

“In L.A. it’s important how you present yourself,” Pimental says. “You can’t lead with your emotions, and you can’t take stuff personally. You need a tough skin.”

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WPI

U.S. Census Bureau reports that a person holding a master's degree makes 19% more annually than a person holding a bachelor's degree.

Day and Newburger report that master's degree holders make 13% more over their lifetimes than those with a bachelor's degree.

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that's my voice,' and I decided to write a script on spec. I had this attitude of just saying yes to everything. That eventually led me to the right people, got the script to Matt [Stone] and Trey [Parker], and they called me in."

Suddenly, a lot of things started happening in her career. It was while she was working on South Park that she was called in by Comedy Central to take over from Jimmy Kimmel on *Win Ben Stein's Money*, and she put in a stint as the smart-mouthed, wise-cracking host of this quirky game show. She also wrote a movie script, *The Sweetest Thing*, a romantic comedy romp that was released in 2002, starring Cameron Diaz, Thomas Jane, and Christina Applegate.

Ultimate High

Pimental's current project is *Shameless*, a Showtime television series whose fifth season she is now putting together as the show's top writer and supervising producer. An adaptation of an edgy British comedy, *Shameless* is set in working-class Chicago and is the story of Frank Gallagher and his six children. Gallagher is a manipulative, self-centered drunk, and the show focuses on how the various family members manage the damage and chaos he causes in their lives.

"Frank Gallagher is an addict, a sociopath, and a narcissist," Pimental says. "Those kinds of people are going to choose their addiction over everything else. There might be glimmers that somebody else matters, but that's all. It's tough for Bill [actor William H. Macy, who plays Frank]. Actors want characters with some redeemable qualities, but until his character has an awakening, a hitting bottom, the nuances are few and far between." In a script currently being written, however, Pimental hints that Frank may reveal a spark of decency in a future episode.

Despite her success, there are still challenges in the unsentimental world of show business, but Pimental has survived enough setbacks that she knows how to recover and move projects

forward. A couple of years ago she came tantalizingly close to having a television show picked up, but after many hopeful signs she got the call that the project was being shelved. "I mourned over the weekend, but by Monday I just started 'revenge writing,' where you write for you and not for them. That's the ultimate high."

Pimental describes her current success as "a

While at acting school, Pimental supported herself by driving tour buses around Boston, narrating the city's history in her own unique way.

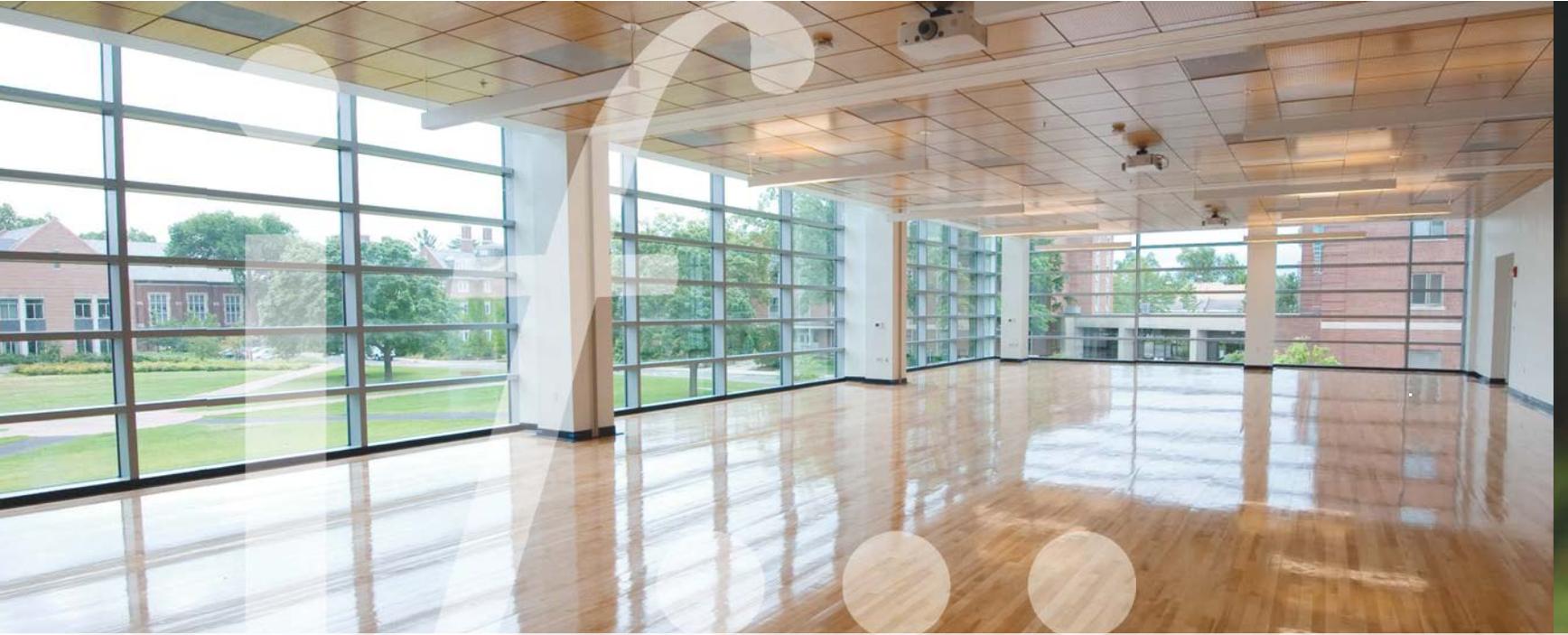


lovely and creative gravy train," but she is not one to sit still. She is also forging ahead with new projects, including writing another movie, acting, and directing. Her advice to young writers? Persevere and know thyself. "I truly believe that you have to find and use your voice," she says. "We all have a unique perspective on life and art, and if you're tapping into that, you're doing OK. I used to be very protective about my writing, fearing that people were going to steal it. But a friend said, 'You have an infinite amount of ideas.' I always had this weird pilot light inside of me, this knowing that I have something to say, something to put out there."

A sort of comedic chemistry, you might say. ■



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—David Schwaber '65



ALENA AND DAVID SCHWABER '65

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WPI

Playing to Their

Strengths

A generation of accomplished musicians have graduated from WPI's music program, revealing a strong correlation between talent and technology

BY JOAN KILLOUGH-MILLER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JARROD McCABE





WPI is known for taking on the “Grand Challenges,” pitting students against complex, real-world problems from day one. Last fall, after a reporter came to campus to watch the WPI Plan in action, the

Boston Globe’s Sunday Arts section devoted a full page to a different kind of challenge: an orchestral performance of Karlheinz Stockhausen’s 20th century masterpiece *Gruppen*.

The complexity of *Gruppen*—which is scored for three orchestras, each with its own conductor, playing at independent tempos—is staggering. Noting that the piece had only been performed twice before in Massachusetts (by the New England Conservatory, and at Tanglewood), *Globe* correspondent Matthew Guerrieri wrote, “WPI might seem an unexpected member of that club—the school doesn’t even offer a music major—but, then again, what better place for such a challenge than at an engineering school?”

WPI does offer a music minor, and as students and alumni know, music at WPI is anything but minor. Under the WPI Plan, music is not an extracurricular activity—it’s part of the academic curriculum, and the caliber of the department’s course work and per-

forming ensembles, in addition to the project opportunities, can be the deal-maker for applicants with a musical bent.

An engineering diploma is not the usual ticket to musical stardom. But WPI has made its mark—from the Paris Opera to Nashville, and in conservatories, jazz clubs, and community orchestras, (see sidebar). There are even Grammy Award winners to be proud of. Although faculty are quick to name names of musically accomplished alumni, there’s more at play here than just “WPI’s Got Talent.”

Coordinator of music and associate head of Humanities and Arts Douglas Weeks says WPI students bring a high sense of purpose to everything they do. “They’re smart, they’re focused, they’re committed. They like to be challenged, and they are not intimidated.” He sees his players working on laptops until the moment before the curtain goes up, and studying during breaks when students from other schools are socializing.

Weeks notes one other WPI difference. “Even my lesser players can count. *Gruppen* has many difficult time signature changes, but they flew through it with more ease than most music majors. I don’t have to explain 5/4, 7/4, 3/16—they already understand the concept.”

Professor Douglas Weeks collaborates with Samantha “Sam” McGill ’09, assistant director of WPI’s Concert Band.





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WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

When they leave WPI, graduates take their music out into the world in a variety of ways. Weeks and his wife have sat up late into the night at their kitchen table, talking through the options with graduating seniors. Some find a good balance between an engineering career and a vibrant nightlife of gigs. Others, like Subaiou Zhang '10, might resolve to “lay the instrument aside” to focus on other goals. Zhang, who took first prize in China’s National Violin Competition for Young Musicians at age 7, came to WPI to study biology and biotechnology, but found that completing her music minor reawakened her passion to perform. Last year her auditions won her full scholarships at several prestigious conservatories. She is now a full-time graduate student in violin performance at Boston University. “Though I have tried to push music aside many times, it has always pulled me back,” she says.

The Producer’s Path

Neal Cappellino '87 describes himself as a typical suburban rock-obsessed teenager of the '70s who dreamed of taking to the stage with his musical idols. When his band needed a mixer, he built one. In his own musical compositions, he experimented with sound-on-sound recordings using two cassette tape recorders. “I just did it for fun,” he says. “I wasn’t thinking about engineering – I was in a *band*.”

Today he sometimes has to pinch himself to believe he’s recording and producing the likes of Dolly Parton, Brad Paisley, and Nickel Creek. With three Grammy Awards in his discography, (including Best Engineered Album, *Non-Classical*, for Alison Krauss and Union Station’s *Paper Airplane*), he takes pride in bringing to life the musical vision of top talent and independent artists in his Nashville studio, The Doghouse.

As an electrical engineering student at WPI, Cappellino wrestled to resolve his technical and his creative sides. He played in the Jazz Ensemble, took music theory and history classes, and did his Humanities Sufficiency on jazz pianist Bill Evans. Professor Rich Falco helped him find a spiritual home at a place where music and electronics merged – the legendary Long View Farm recording studio in North Brookfield, Mass. “It was a straight up, five-bucks-an-hour job,” Cappellino laughs. “They let me in the door, but I had a lot to learn before I was of any use to them.” Although there are now degree programs in sound engineering, Cappellino says, “Sometimes it’s just a matter of being a guy in the room and someone turns to you and says ‘Do you know how to work that, kid?’”

“I consider myself a classic example of the perfect marriage of the technical and the creative. Having a strong music component at WPI was important for me, and in hindsight, I realize the value of my technical learning. You couldn’t have told me that, at 20. That’s something you have to live out and come to realize yourself.”

UTUNES

Test your knowledge of WPI’s musical talent.

1. Grammy nominees in 1983—fans are still lobbying for their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.
2. A tenor with the L’Opera Lyrique de Paris, he found his voice while on a choir tour with the late Louis Curran.
3. First-prize winner of China’s National Violin Competition at age 7, she won a full scholarship to Boston University’s graduate performance program.
4. Home “bass” for John Prine, Emmylou Harris, and other Nashville notables, he can be heard on several of Prine’s Grammy-nominated albums.
5. He was named 2007 Jazz Educator of the Year by the International Association for Jazz Education.
6. Engineer by day, this singer/pianist sways by night to the rhythms of Brazilian jazz.
7. From the Great Hall in Higgins House to Carnegie Hall, WPI was the key for this jazz pianist.
8. A world-renowned acoustical oceanographer and music enthusiast, he endowed a string ensemble at WPI with scholarships for four musicians.
9. Author of *The Mighty Accordion*, he began his music career as a child singing at a barber shop.
10. His JamStik electronic guitar device was one of *Popular Science*’s top inventions for 2013.
11. This hip-hop artist and videographer released his first EP in his senior year at WPI.
12. The WPI Festival Chorus can be heard on this Grammy-winning album.
13. His ARP synthesizer rivaled the Moog in the 1970s.
14. Professional violist (and daughter of two WPI professors), she performed Mozart’s *Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola* with her sister.
15. Former presidential candidate whose 80th birthday was celebrated with WPI music groups.

Answers: 1. Jay Gelis, Danny Klein, Dick Salwitz, Jean-Pierre Trevisani '89, Subaiou Zhang '10, Dave Jacques '84, Bob Sircrope '71, Isabella Quagliariello '05, Sergio Salvatore '02, Hank Medwin '42, David DiGiuseppe '75, Dan Sullivan '77, Omar O'Neal '08, Paul Winter's *Mho: Journey to the Mountain* (Best New Age Album, 2011) 13. Alan (Robert) Fearman '48, Irma Servatius '04, Michael Dukakis



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WPI

Conducting a Career

“The real benefit for me was the fact that WPI wasn’t a music school,” says Michael Driscoll ’97, ’99 MSEE. “Because I wasn’t competing with all the music majors that a normal music school would have, I had more opportunities to perform, sing, and conduct.” Managing the Glee Club, launching Simple Harmonic Motion (WPI’s men’s a cappella group), and conducting the Glee Club and Concert Choir gave him leadership experience invaluable to his present role as director of choirs for Brookline (Mass.) High School.

As one of the first students to complete a music minor at WPI, Driscoll’s projects included arranging a cappella pieces and conducting Shubert’s *Mass in G*. He notes that his engineering background also informs his work with singers in interesting ways—from the physics of waveforms and overtones, to the mathematical relations of frequencies that he teaches in his AP music classes. From his thesis advisor, Professor Dave Cyganski, currently interim dean of engineering, Driscoll learned to attack a problem by breaking it into the smallest solvable steps. “I try to explain concepts to my students in the most sequential way I can, with the least amount of extraneous information, to help them understand quickly,” he says.

Just as his WPI professors stressed building skills rather than memorizing information, Driscoll is passionate about teaching music literacy to empower his singers to read and hear their own parts. “I try to give my choirs the tools to start thinking on their own, so they can apply principles from one piece to another, without all the direction coming from the podium,” he says.

Driscoll originally planned to conduct a community chorus as a sideline to an engineering career. Now, he describes himself as “overly employed” in music, with posts as music director of the Andover Choral Society and lead musicianship teacher for the Handel & Haydn Society’s Vocal Apprenticeship Program. In 2012 he began doctoral studies in choral conducting at Boston University.

WPI proved to be an asset in an unexpected way in the years that Driscoll conducted Boston’s Saengerfest Men’s Chorus. “There

aren’t too many people out there with so much experience in the all-male repertoire, he says. “I think that’s what got me the job.”

History of Success

The *Gruppen* concert was the pinnacle of a year of intense preparation for Weeks, who compared it to “a war with three generals.” One of those conductor-generals was Samantha McGill ’09, a flutist and composer who took up the baton as a student conductor while earning her BS in management engineering with a minor in music. She now holds an adjunct faculty position as assistant director of WPI’s Concert Band.

McGill has a foot in the past and a stake in the future of music at WPI. Inspired by artifacts found in the band room, she researched the history of instrumental music at WPI for her Humanities Suf-



The WPI Orchestra teamed up with members of the Claflin Hill Orchestra for a rare performance of *Gruppen* in Worcester’s Mechanics Hall on Nov. 10.

ficiency project, unearthing evidence of a rich musical past that dates back to WPI’s founding—from the Tech Minstrels to the Banjo Club and the Boyntonians big band.

A business and technology analyst in the Alumni Relations office at Holy Cross, McGill says that conducting and coaching the ensemble she played in as a student is a dream come true. “As a conductor, I want to bring the best out of the group as I possibly can. The coach aspect comes in as we work on technique to bring our students to that next level. Music at WPI was such an integral part of my life as a student that I am overjoyed to be working with the faculty who taught me. I feel fortunate to be a part of the rich and exciting history of music at WPI.” ■

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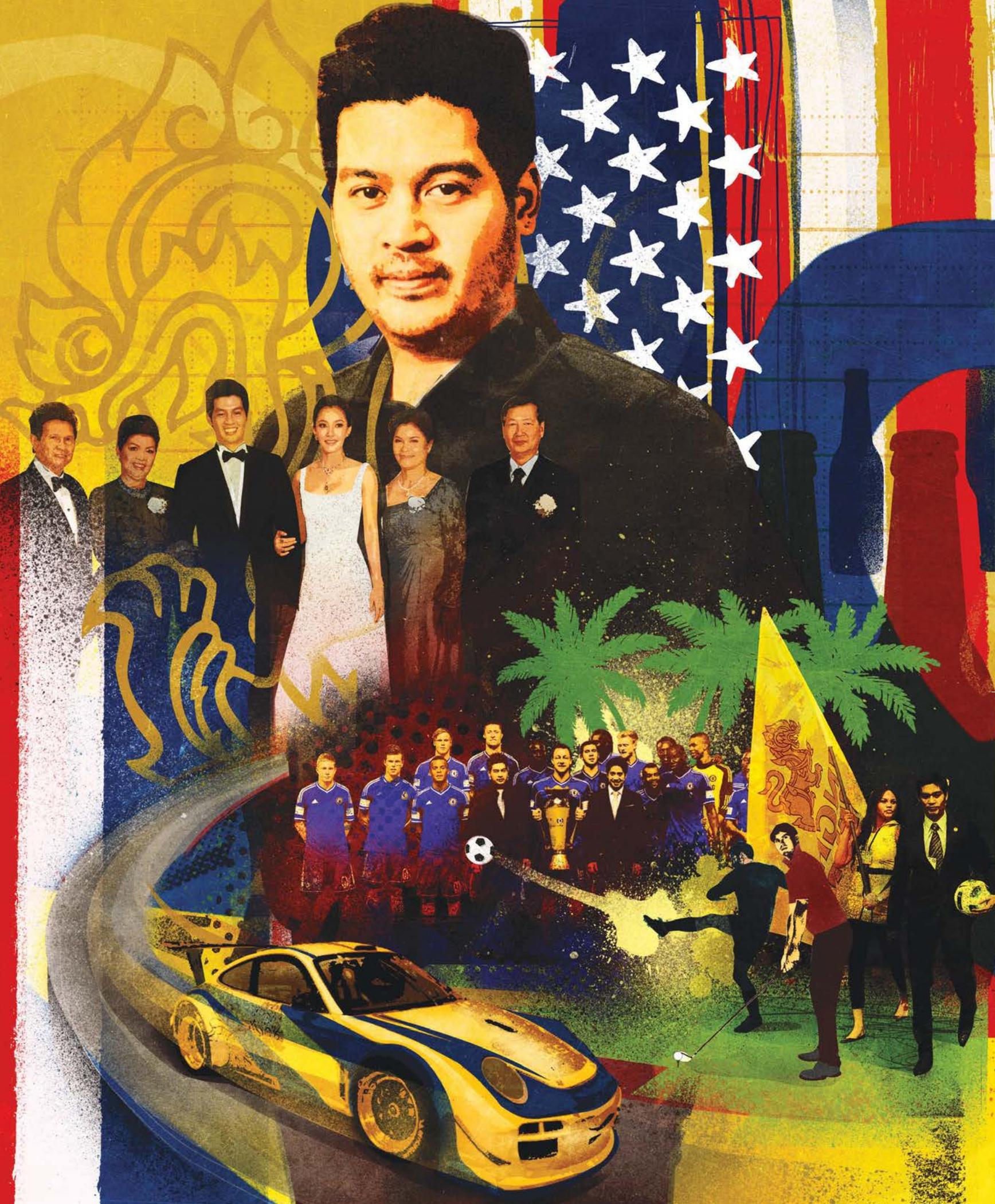
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driving the brand

Piti Bhirom Bhakdi '02 drives a global brand toward stardom

A **LUMNUS** and Thailand native Piti “Todd” Bhirom Bhakdi leads a life that could rival that of Tom Cruise: race car driver, talk show host, married to a silver screen starlet, and owner of a clothing line, four golf courses, two resorts, a racing school, and eight chain restaurants. But at the heart of it all, he’s the director of Boon Rawd Brewery, a jewel in the family business, and makers of Singha beer, a global brand. The *Journal* sat down with Bhirom Bhakdi recently to talk about his business, his time at WPI, and how an engineering education can help grow a global beverage business.

You're the CEO of a global company, a talk show host, a race car driver, a golf course owner. How do you juggle it all?

Well, it is demanding to run all these ventures, but I am fortunate to have great teams and team leaders who are highly responsible and devote themselves to the success of the enterprise. I no longer host the talk show, as Boon Rawd is expanding aggressively and that's where my focus lies right now. The fun projects always end too soon! But, yes, I am fortunate to have a strong team, which allows me to juggle many projects. At Boon Rawd, we treat all our professionals as if they are family and we treat our family members as professionals.

How essential are family values to your business?

They are very essential. We recently celebrated our 80th anniversary. Only a few privately owned companies in Thailand have lasted this long, and we are very proud of that. Family values are the connective tissue and the source of our success. They represent commitment, which has created longevity. These family values bring energy to the business, helping assure cohesion, resolving conflicts, and strengthening operations. It means more than passing down a legacy, though; that's important, too. We are expanding our values by benefiting others—especially the community in which we operate.

Singha market share fell from 80% to 19% in 2004, yet now it's back up to 78%. How did that happen? What did you do to reverse the trend?

The lack of competitors in Thailand made us complacent, so when a real competitor did arrive, we had some challenges. Fortunately, my father, Santi Bhirom Bhakdi, was quick to embark upon a series of changes that were painful to implement but beneficial to the company. This is where family values become important. We were strong, but we also had our faults. We did a lot of soul-searching. We became more innovative. We developed new products. We paid more attention to our distributors and customers. Today, we are back on top with nearly 78 percent market share, while our main competitor sits at 15 percent and is in decline. Our production is more efficient. Our distribution networks are much stronger. We know exactly where our products are being placed and we are able

to track their depletion in real time. It's been nearly a decade since we made these changes, and the results are impressive. The marketing knowledge we gained from this work has been tremendous.

Have your marketing efforts changed since the economic crisis of 2009?

We responded by establishing a stronger brand platform. I was the one who initiated this project a few years after I left WPI. A healthy brand begins with a clear structure. I brought in a well-known company from the U.S. who did re-branding for Citibank, Nikon, McDonald's, and 3M to help with the restructuring. As you can imagine, consolidating 72 years worth of marketing knowledge from a broad range of departments was a daunting task. However, a few years later, we were able to create value by making the brand central to our business aims. We now have a branding department, which acts as our in-house "Brand Police" to make sure our strategic aims are in focus.

Tell us about the partnership developed between Singha and the Premier League, particularly Manchester United and the Chelsea Football Clubs.

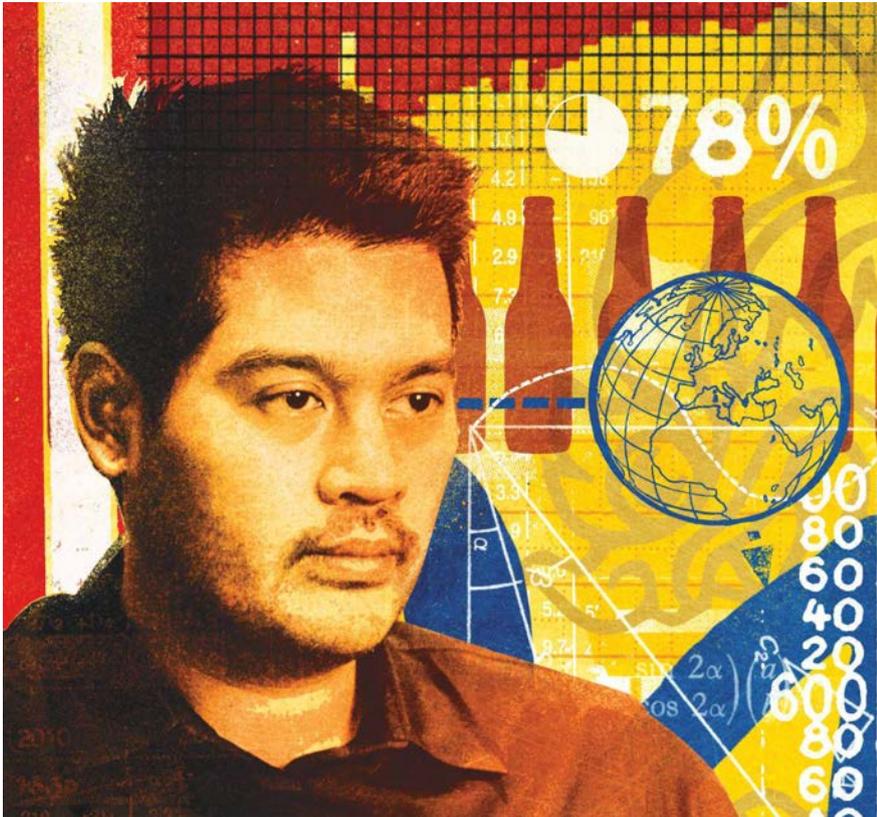
What's better than having the two best soccer teams in the world as our partners? Many people asked me whether it is worth sponsoring these world-class teams when our product is not readily available everywhere in the world. But I look at it as a valuable long-term relationship and a great way to introduce our brand to UK consumers. Can you imagine how many people are watching each match, and how many matches they play throughout the year? It is not permissible to advertise alcohol products in Thailand, so those pitch-side billboards carry our name and image to hundreds of countries around the globe, including Thailand. These partnerships help us reach millions of households.

We also recently partnered with the History Channel for a one-hour documentary titled "The Making of the Lion." This was broadcast regionally in September 2013 and it was an honor to have been the first Thai brand to be featured on this world-famous channel.

What was it like being an international student at WPI?

Like most international students, it took me a while to get used to the system and the U.S. environment. I was pretty young when I left

“
My engineering education helps me think more clearly, see things more vividly, and process them more constructively.
”



for school in the U.S., like my father, who left Thailand to attend school in Germany when he was 16. He gave me a huge amount of advice to prepare myself. The language barrier was inevitable, even though I studied English from grade school to high school. Reading and writing English wasn't too difficult then, but speaking the language took some getting used to.

How was your experience at the Bangkok Project Center?

Very fruitful. We did a joint research project with Chulalongkorn University, the leading institution here. Our project focused on Bangkok's air pollution and how it affected the health of citizens. Sustainable development remains a challenge for Thailand, in part because policy makers often rely only on economic information. There isn't the same level of empirical data on health, social, and environmental impacts from developmental policies. Fostering and strengthening epidemiological research in Thailand can provide the necessary perspective for policy development. I learned a lot through the empirical research we did, and I think, to a certain extent, the city has used what we contributed.

You were an industrial engineering major. Do you find your WPI education helps you in business?

Industrial engineering is a good foundation, especially when you are involved in decision making. It gives a solid framework for organization decisions, as it teaches a more structured approach. Industrial engineering also helps overcome a "complexity ceiling," which is characterized by a mismatch between the sophistication of organizational decision-making practices and the complexity of the situations. An IE background can be thought of as bringing advanced analytics techniques to the desktop of the non-expert decision maker. Engineering, in general, builds on the insight that it is possible to design the decision itself, using principles previously used for designing more tangible objects like bridges and buildings.

My engineering education helps me think more clearly, see things more vividly, and process them more constructively. I tend not to make any decisions based on emotion but rather through a scientific method. Same thing applies to my personal life.

Do you see opportunities for a school like WPI to increase its presence in Asia, and in Thailand specifically?

With globalization, the world is much smaller these days, and an integral part of surviving lies on local knowledge, international experience, and global vision. This speaks to opportunity here. I noticed that many western institutions have begun a presence here in the Asian region, and Thailand was not left out of the thinking. So my answer is "Yes"—I believe that WPI is unique enough to offer a great deal of knowledge by bringing western academic concepts to Thailand. It could be very interesting and we have so much to learn from each other.

What is your favorite memory from your WPI student days?

What I miss the most from my student days, believe it or not, is the food and the weather. I miss those cold morning walks to and from campus and having nice hot New England clam chowder—Christmas is kind of warm here. I also miss my student life, though I thought I had it tough then. ■



SSN
est. 2006

friends in the hood

COLLEGE IS A STRESSFUL TIME FOR MANY STUDENTS, WHICH IS WHY WPI'S PIONEERING STUDENT SUPPORT NETWORK HAS BEEN WIDELY EMULATED BY OTHER UNIVERSITIES— AND FOR GOOD REASON. IT WORKS.

by Clayton Stromberger

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JARROD MCCABE

I **T WAS EARLY IN C-TERM**—when you have to climb over snow banks to get to class and it's dark an hour before dinnertime—and WPI freshman Kristen Elizabeth Schleier was sinking. ¶ “I hit the wall,” recalls Schleier, now a senior majoring in mechanical engineering. “I was over the honeymoon phase with college and I was like, ‘Oh my gosh, now I have to be an adult. I have to do my own laundry, I have to make decisions about jobs on my own, I have to somehow budget my money and not be poor...’ And class difficulty ratchets up a little bit in C-Term, because you’re getting into the real engineering courses. So I just became really, really overwhelmed.” ¶ Schleier began sleeping late and missing classes. She picked at her food during mealtime. In something of a fog, she figured no one had noticed her new WPI survival plan to squeak by on C’s. ¶ She was wrong. A few weeks later, two upperclassmen she knew approached her. ¶ “They said, ‘Hey, you should talk to someone, because you’re not doing so well, you haven’t been to class in two weeks, you’re getting bad grades, and we don’t want to see you like this because we know you have so much more potential in you,’” remembers Schleier.

The two students were members of the Student Support Network, or SSN, an innovative and nationally recognized mental health program at WPI that teaches students how to assist fellow students who are struggling with depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. Along with several hundred other students on campus, these two were the proud owners of grey hoodies with the SSN logo on the back—three stick figures holding up the letters W, P, and I, above the words “We’ve Got Your Back” – which are issued to everyone who has completed the six-week SSN training. They had practiced for this very situation in role-playing exercises, and their mission was to steer the struggling freshman to the campus Student Development and Counseling Center (SDCC) to talk with a counselor.

Schleier was startled, but touched: Someone noticed? She decided to follow up on their suggestion. After working up the nerve to ask a friend to go with her, Schleier and her friend made the walk over to West Street House to the SDCC. It was a turning point in her life at WPI.

“Without that counseling center, I don’t know if I’d still be at this college,” she says today.

Out in Front

Schleier’s journey from isolation to reconnection is, happily, not an unusual one at WPI. Since SDCC director Charlie Morse and his team trained the first team of 30 student SSN members in the fall of 2007, the network has grown to become an integral part of a campus that Morse calls a “caring and engaged community, where we look out for one another.”

Students who might have previously walked past the West Street House oblivious to what was inside are now on a first-name basis with center staff, either from their SSN training or from visits to talk. The total annual number of SDCC consults—visits when a student comes in either for advice or to share a concern about a fellow student—have tripled over the past few years, from 100 in 2010 to about 300 in 2013. The percentage of WPI undergraduates who come in for counseling visits has risen since 2007 from 8 percent to about 12 percent—a significant increase in a student body that is 70 percent male, since men traditionally do not seek out mental health services as readily as women do.

College is a stressful, challenging time, and counseling centers have long battled the stigma our culture attaches to seeking help for mental health issues. At WPI, Morse and his staff have made an end run around that stigma: The open discussion of mental health is now the cool thing to do. Students are nominated by faculty, staff, and other students to be invited for SSN training—though you can



SDCC director Charlie Morse and his team of students have become an integral part of campus life.



also request to take part—and so it has become something of an honor to be asked, and a sign that you are considered a campus leader. There are waiting lists for every SSN training session, and as Schleier puts it, the grey sweatshirt is now “the most coveted hoodie on campus.” Training is also now provided for interested faculty and staff.

“We’re training about 100 students a year,” Morse says. “That re-

sults in about 400 students on campus who have been trained at any given time. And what they get is an honest, open, and pragmatic discussion about the way people struggle with mental health concerns—first, how we all struggle with mental health concerns; second, when they should be concerned; next, what they should do in the moment; and finally, what are referral resources on campus, how to get help.”

The program has garnered national attention, including a *New York Times* profile in 2011 and a JedCampus seal award given last year by the Jed Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to suicide prevention—one of only 30 JedCampus seals given that year.

Just as important, what began at WPI in 2007 is now spreading to colleges around the nation. Since creating the SSN, Morse—who has been with the SDCC since 1993 and assumed the role of director of counseling in 2005—has written journal articles about the program and presented talks on it at national conferences of college counseling center directors. With a second round of federal funding, SDCC staff was able to create a free SSN guidebook available to any college upon request, and about 200 copies have been distributed. To date almost 20 colleges have developed their own version of the Student Support Network (see sidebar).

Innovate Empathy

Great ideas often just sit around waiting to be discovered. Charlie Morse’s innovation may seem somewhat obvious in the rear view mirror, seven years later—of course, we should train students to look out for one another—but the remarkable fact is that no one else was

doing this on a college campus before he got it rolling at WPI.

College counseling centers have traditionally focused on “gatekeeper” training, in which university faculty and staff are seen as being in the best position to spot students in distress and refer them to the counseling center. If students were given tips on mental health resources and warning signs of mental distress, the sessions were usually one-time events in a large room. Morse, who makes it his business to get out of the office and talk with students as often as possible, sensed that these approaches, while valuable, were safety nets with gaping holes; that is, many students resisted talking with adults about their problems, perhaps out of fear of judgment, and would instead confide in a friend – who often felt unsure about how to respond, what to say, who to tell.

“One of the things that really stood out for me,” says the soft-spoken Morse, “was that students had been turning to each other for help already, but a lot of the helping students didn’t know how to respond. So our thinking was: Students are already out there trying to support each other, so let’s put together a program that helps them in their natural supporting role.”

His breakthrough came when federal grant funding became available for college suicide-prevention programs through the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act, signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2004. The act was created by U.S. Senator Gordon Smith (R-Oregon), whose 21-year-old son committed suicide in 2003. Morse applied for and received funding in the second round of grants in 2006, and began to map out the network idea.

He sought out students in leadership positions who were already connected to on-campus networks – “the kind of students other students go to,” as he puts it, such as dorm resident assistants, athletic team captains, or those active in groups like sororities, fraternities, and campus ministry. He had a hunch they were well-placed to benefit from SSN training. When Morse emailed these students with his proposal, he got a big response. He knew he was onto something.

The 50-minute trainings, held once a week for six weeks, allow groups of 15–18 students to practice role-playing exercises, hold discussions, and try self-discovery exercises. There is a strong focus on empathetic listening and resisting the impulse to fix things by offering advice or hearty encouragement, the trap most of us instinctively fall into – “It’ll get better” or “Maybe you need to exercise more!” Students are not trained to take on the role of counselors; they are given guidance on how to listen, how to provide empathy, and how to skillfully guide troubled students to the trained professionals who are just five minutes or a phone call away.

Students intuitively clicked with the SSN approach right away. “Students are experts on the undergraduate experience at WPI,” insists Zach Arnold ’15, a computer science and applied mathematics major who became an SSN member this past fall. “You can do as many studies as you want, but until you’re living it, you don’t know.”

As Kristen Schleier describes it, “to SSN” has become a verb at WPI, as in, “Hey, are you SSN-ing me right now?” Seniors nominate younger students for training, and many students who first met Charlie Morse and his staff after being guided to the center eventu-

Emulating Success

For all its reputation as “the best years of your life,” college is a challenging time for even the most grounded young person. It is a period of huge transition, new temptations, and an uncertain future, all of which can trigger stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and other issues. According to the American College Health Association, at some point during each year 50 percent of college students experience overwhelming anxiety, 30 percent experience symptoms of depression that make it difficult for them to function, 6.6 percent consider suicide, and 1.1 percent report actually making an attempt.

Many of these students never initiate a visit to their college counseling center, which is why the Student Support Network model created at WPI has been embraced by many other center directors as a way to reach students who might otherwise be slipping through the cracks.

“I do think it’s catching on as a model,” says Jennifer T. D’Andrea, director of Counseling and Psychological Services at Wesleyan University, who first read about SSN online several years ago while doing research on best practices. Wesleyan’s version of SSN is called WESupport and has been in place for two years. Other universities have adapted it to fit their particular campuses. At the University of North Carolina, the program is called Friends Helping Friends; at Cornell, it’s Friend2Friend; at Boston University, it’s the Boston University Suicide Prevention Program. Some have borrowed or adapted the idea of the “We’ve Got Your Back” hoodies—at Connecticut College it’s T-shirts, at Castleton State in Vermont it’s baseball caps.

ally become so involved in mental health advocacy on campus that they take the training themselves, and don the grey hoodie.

Among them is Schleier, who became an SSN member in the fall of her sophomore year and now also works with the Active Minds suicide prevention chapter on campus, using her training to look out for young students who, like her freshman self, have gone adrift. The upstate New York native came to WPI knowing she needed to learn about lever bearing gear, pressure beam strain, and thermodynamics; now she also finds herself talking about peer advocacy, empathy, and mind-body relaxation strategies. She has found that her SSN training has given her a toolkit for her own life, as well.

“SSN gives you the skills to help you handle situations you might not have known how to handle before college,” Schleier says. “It teaches you empathy, crisis management, communication – things that don’t necessarily think you need in college. But they are valuable skills. Particularly for the workplace, where you need to deal with project teams or manage people. Being empathetic and having the ability to communicate with others without making them defensive, those are critical skills to have.” ■

news from HIGGINS HOUSE



THE VIEW FROM THE HILL

From the Alumni Association President

DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

The weather has started to turn, and green shoots are rising from the frozen ground that we've been treading over for too long here in New England. In the same spirit of renewal, I hope you'll take part in what has become a rite of spring at the WPI Annual Community Service Day and Alumni Association Meeting on April 26. The service activities are a great opportunity to connect with students and other alumni while doing some good for the Worcester community. At the annual meeting, you will hear what the Alumni Association Board of Directors is working on and how you can help. It's always an invigorating and enlightening morning.

Sesquicentennial celebrations don't come along every day, and on Nov. 11—Founders Day—WPI will kick off a year-long celebration to mark the 150th year of its existence. Events celebrating this historic anniversary continue to be planned and should provide us as alumni with some great opportunities to reconnect with the university that has been nurtured and shaped by faculty, staff, alumni, students, and friends over six generations. In addition to the sesquicentennial festivities, the next year will include both the inauguration of WPI's 16th president and the culmination of *if...The Campaign to Advance WPI*, the university's \$200 million capital campaign (with nearly 80 percent of the goal achieved to date). There's a truly exciting time ahead for the WPI community.



Together we can make a transformational difference in the lives of WPI students...

The momentum to transform Alumni Gym continues to build, and it will be our responsibility as alumni to provide key input and contributions to make the aspiration of an innovation studio at Alumni Gym become a reality. This issue of the *WPI Journal* includes a special insert about Alumni Gym—the plans to transform this iconic building and how it will impact current and future WPI undergraduates. Together we can make a transformational difference in the lives of WPI students and help advance our alma mater's groundbreaking approach to STEM higher education.

Alumni Weekend 2014 is right around the corner (May 29–June 1) and it will be packed with fun activities and, most important, opportunities to connect with other alumni. Whether or not you are celebrating a reunion year, I encourage you to come back to campus for this event—when the campus

always looks its best, and alumni are in the spotlight.

As always, please reach out to me (mwalton@alum.wpi.edu) or any of the other Alumni Association Board members with feedback on what we're doing and what we can do to improve our engagement with you.

With best wishes,

Myles Walton '97

Gilded Conversations

GOLD Chair Shares the Wealth of His Decade

WPI's, Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD) is the living link between WPI and graduates from '04 through '13, helping the university's youngest graduates stay connected to their alma mater—and to each other.

Michael Ferro '10, chair of the GOLD Steering Committee and a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, helps guide GOLD's current group of enthusiastic alumni from the classes of 2004 through 2013 to create events and programs that cater to graduates of the last decade.

In our conversation with Ferro, you can see a dedication to his class decade, and feel the excitement that surrounds this GOLD generation.

How did you first become involved with the group?

I had been very active in the WPI community as an undergraduate, and after graduation I wanted to remain connected with the university. GOLD was in need of enthusiasm and leadership, and I found it was a natural progression for me to transition from active undergraduate to active alumnus.

Why do you feel it's important for alumni to stay engaged with their alma mater?

They're an integral part of the strong WPI community, which fosters both social and academic experiences that develop successful graduates. Remaining engaged with WPI provides an opportunity to not only stay connected with fellow graduates but also connect with and foster current undergrads. Alumni paid forward experiences and scholarship for me as an undergraduate, and I believe I have a responsibility to do the same for current students.



What programming does GOLD typically offer throughout the year?

GOLD has three annual events: a Homecoming Social; a Winter Social, which we've had at the Harpoon Brewery the last few years; and a Senior Welcome Reception during Senior Week where we welcome new graduates into the alumni community.

What's been the focus of the group lately?

The Steering Committee has two objectives. We continue to tweak our annual events to better cater to alumni and provide engagement and networking opportunities. We are also working with the Student Alumni Society and the Office of Alumni Relations to create opportunities for students to network with alumni and transition to engaged alumni after graduation.

What makes GOLD graduates stand out?

I think we stand out because while we are still finding our way in life—from new jobs to purchasing homes to starting families—we're still closely linked to the university and are interested in staying connected with our fellow alumni, our student clubs and organizations, and the school.

How do you hope to see alumni become more involved with WPI?

I would encourage all alumni to start by thinking about which group, organization, or academic department has had the most impact on them and finding an opportunity to give of their time and/or money. Whether it's sitting on a steering committee, finding an hour to mentor an undergraduate, or donating money annually to the university. Every bit counts and engagement can only build from there.

Three project centers celebrate key anniversaries

Boasting a combined 80 years and thousands of alumni having completed a wide range of projects, three WPI project centers celebrated milestone anniversaries in 2013.

At its 40th, the Washington Project Center stands as the senior member of the trio, with Venice and Wall Street marking 25th and 15th, respectively. Through the Global Perspective Program, WPI project centers give undergraduate students an opportunity to address real-world problems while completing their IQP and MQP requirements at more than 35 locations around the globe.

Kent Rissmiller, director of the Washington Project Center, says the center's location makes it attractive to students. "Students get to work with government employees in a highly professional environment on problems that the [sponsor] agencies have identified," he explains.

He also believes the time spent in Washington makes a lasting impact on students, and many look for ways to stay. "We have an active alumni group in the Washington area, and whenever I meet with them, they often tell me about their IQPs from years ago." One of the center's alumni is current WPI Trustee Fred Rucker '81, who completed his IQP in 1980.

Sponsors of projects at the Washington center have been primarily federal agencies, but some work is done for neighboring states and public advocacy groups. The overarching theme, Rissmiller says, is to engage students in public service and give them an opportunity to learn about government from the inside.

As the center embarks upon its next 40



years, Rissmiller says he has certain goals in mind. "I'm always looking to expand the number of organizations that we're working with. In the past, we have worked with the Smithsonian Institution and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. I'd like to get our students back into those organizations."

One street, three nations

The Wall Street Project Center is somewhat deceptively named, according to director Arthur Gerstenfeld. While the street itself is in New York City, the center has three international locations: New York, London, and Glasgow.

"It was for many years just in New York," explains Gerstenfeld. "However, as the financial institutions grew, London became a very important hub and we started doing projects there. Most recently, JP Morgan has asked us to do two projects in Scotland."

Not surprisingly, the focus of the Wall Street Project Center is on how to make financial transactions more efficient. On a typical day, the New York Stock Exchange trades more than 600 million shares and the London Stock Exchange, three billion. That makes it quite a challenge, Gerstenfeld points out, to keep things running smoothly. And the possibility of seeing their solu-



A. Trustee Emeritus Steve Rubin '74, Senator Ed Markey, Provost Eric Overström, Interim President Phil Ryan '65, and Trustee Fred Rucker '81 **B.** Congressman Jim McGovern with Interim President Phil Ryan '65 **C.** Judy and Phil Ryan with Richard DiBuono '62 **D.** Senator Elizabeth Warren at WPI's celebration of the Washington, DC, and Venice project centers

tions actually implemented by the world's biggest financial firms makes Wall Street a desirable destination for students.

He adds that students are often given job opportunities after the completion of their projects. Two alumni who subsequently pursued careers in finance are Scott Burton '84, managing director at JP Morgan, and Gregory Friel '90, vice president for Barclays Capital. Both have been active in the Wall Street Project Center for many years.

Ancient challenges, modern solutions

There might be a temptation to assume that the work done at the Venice Project Center is all about water, but that's not the case, says director Fabio Carrera.

"During the first decade we worked a lot on canals," he explains, "including boat traffic and the damage the wakes cause to the canal walls. But then we did a great deal of work on preserving public art and other types of heritage preservation. More recently, we've been moving toward tourism and housing

and things that have a long-term impact."

A recent project, the City Dashboard, provides real-time tracking of planes, ships, and tourists arriving in the city. The Venice Project Center was the first to systematically catalog and map all the public art visible along the streets of Venice, as well as the inscriptions, tombstones, and decorations embedded in the floors of the city's churches. The center also launched Venipedia, an online information resource with nearly 18,000 articles about Venice.

Notable achievement, powerful impact

Last November, a special event recognizing the Washington and Venice anniversaries was held at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Massachusetts Senators Elizabeth Warren and Edward Markey, along with Congressman Jim McGovern, spoke in honor of the milestones to an audience of more than 130 alumni and friends. President Phil Ryan delivered opening and closing remarks.

Rick Vaz, dean of WPI's Interdisciplinary and Global Studies Division, notes that with more than 35 project centers worldwide, WPI strives to deliver powerful learning experiences and provide opportunities for students to make a positive impact.

"Alumni who went to a project center usually have a story about how it shaped their career or life, and each center has stories about the impacts of student research on local organizations and communities. Those stories of personal growth and local impact are what the Global Perspective Program is all about, so it's important for us to take time out to celebrate them."

— Mike D'Onofrio

Rubin Campus Center Honors Alumni Leader

Steve Rubin '74 exemplifies alumni engagement

ON FOUNDERS DAY 2013, more than 100 alumni, students, faculty, and staff gathered on campus to rename the Campus Center in honor of one of WPI's most dedicated alumni leaders: Steve Rubin '74.

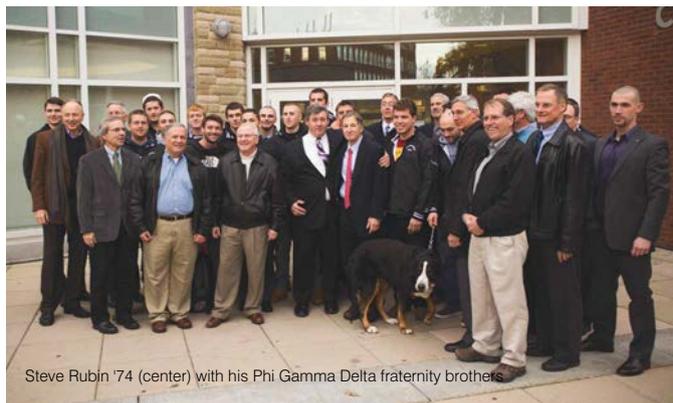
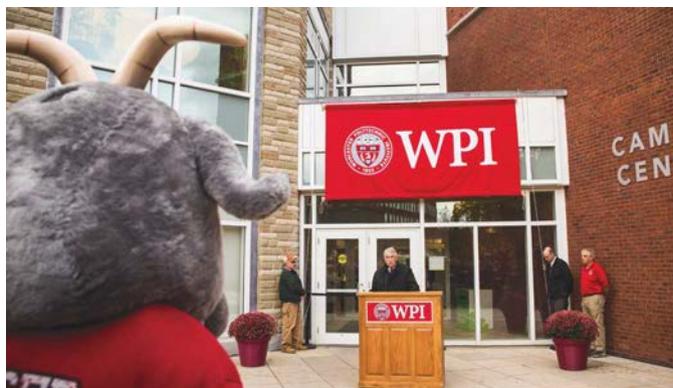
"Ever since this place was built, it has been the Steve Rubin Center," said Warner Fletcher, chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Interim president Phil Ryan '65 noted the renaming was especially appropriate because the Rubin Campus Center is where people on campus talk, debate, and connect. "Steve is all about building relationships and connecting people," Ryan said.

Indeed, Rubin's commitment to WPI is motivated by its people. "I love the people at WPI," says Rubin, an entrepreneur with several successful ventures to his credit. "When I started my first company, I hired a bunch of WPI graduates. I realized that I had the opportunity to hire people who were smarter than me. I learned that having people with creative ideas and helping them with management and marketing really creates success."

One of the first graduates of the WPI Plan, Rubin is the founder and past CEO of Intellution, an industrial software company. He currently serves as president and CEO of Recognis, a software company which helps institutions track and manage how donors are recognized.

Drawing on his business experience, Rubin first became involved with WPI through the WPI Venture Forum, serving on its executive board. In 1996 he was elected to the WPI Board of Trustees. He served on the Advancement, Academic Planning, Marketing, and Executive Compensation committees, as well as on the search committee that elected Den-



Steve Rubin '74 (center) with his Phi Gamma Delta fraternity brothers

nis Berkey as WPI's 15th president. In 1999, in recognition of what turned out to be just the start of a remarkable record of service, Rubin received the WPI Alumni Association's Herbert F. Taylor Award for distinguished service to WPI.

Rubin chaired the Board of Trustees from 2010 to 2013, during a time of significant expansion and recognition for the university. He led the quiet phase of *if...The Campaign to Advance WPI*, the university's \$200 million fundraising endeavor, helping the campaign reach

more than \$110 million by its public launch in May 2012. During his tenure as chair, Rubin also became a presence on campus.

"I spent about three days a week on campus, and I enjoyed walking around to see people and listen to them." Most often Rubin could be found in the Campus Center, meeting with a student team or a faculty member at one of the tables outside the bookstore. He has deep and broad connections with students and faculty upon which to draw. He was also an avid supporter of the Trustee Mentor Program, estab-





The WPI community gathers for the dedication of the Rubin Campus Center.

lished by Janet Richardson, former vice president for student affairs. Last year Rubin traveled to Israel with a WPI business class and began discussions with the faculty and deans to explore the possibility of launching an Israel Project Center for innovation and entrepreneurship.

“WPI has always been a leader in the student experience,” says Rubin, noting that the mentor program is as important to the trustees as it is to the students. “The trustees listen to the students to learn about how life is at WPI, how the teach-

ing is, and so on. This is important. And I’ve kept in touch with my mentees, about 10 of them.” Rubin became trustee emeritus in 2013.

The crowd that gathered to mark the dedication of the Rubin Campus Center represented the many groups and individuals who have benefitted from Rubin’s mentoring and involvement—students, faculty, staff, alumni; his fraternity, Phi Gamma Delta; the Skull honor society, which tapped him for membership decades after graduation; and the Student Alumni Society, among others.

Rubin’s humility is as great as his generosity, and the naming of the Rubin Campus Center was not easy for him to accept. On Founders Day, he is typically on campus with his beloved Nigerian dwarf goats—Honey, Castor, and Pollux—sitting nearby while students pet, feed, and take photos with WPI’s favorite ruminants. Founders Day 2013 was no different: when all the speeches were done, and all the photos taken, Rubin slipped away from the crowd for a few moments to check on his goats, who were waiting in a nearby truck to head home.



Global Perspective Inspires Gift

A GOOD ENGINEER must have technical expertise, problem-solving skills, and familiarity with the latest cutting-edge research in his field. But often, as Joe Adams '75 has learned over nearly four decades as a successful geotechnical engineer, a good engineer must also rely on cultural sensitivity and a deft human touch.

"I've seen the tremendous benefit of understanding how other cultures work, how other cultures look at the world," says the president of Energy and Industry with the 8,000-person international engineering and construction firm MWH Global. In addition, he's learned firsthand the importance of having a global perspective. Adams serves as chairman of the board for the MWH-led joint venture, handling design for the

\$3 billion Panama Canal expansion. His team manages all oil and gas, mining, and hydroelectric projects around the world, a job that has taken him to as many as 25 countries in a single year.

"What's striking to me is the balance that I must show, of understanding the political situation in a country, understanding the cultural situation, and understanding the technical challenges," he says. "I think it is absolutely critical to the success of engineers today for them to have had an experience abroad."

When Adams and his wife, Pat Habel, made a gift to WPI last year in memory of his father, Joe Adams Sr., it was with that idea in mind. The Colorado couple decided to use their \$250,000 donation to create a scholarship for WPI's Project Centers, a program that allows students to fulfill their humanities and arts requirement or complete their IQPs and MQPs at off-campus centers in more than 35 locations around the world—including places as far-flung as Cape Town, South Africa, and Osaka, Japan. The money, Adams says, will allow students who might otherwise be unable to afford a semester abroad the opportunity to

gain valuable experience out in the world.

It's an appropriate honor for Adams's late father, without whom Adams might never have found his way to WPI. A surveyor with the Massachusetts Department of Public Works, Adams Sr. never got the chance to go to college. But he worked with WPI-trained engineers on major projects, such as the construction of Interstate 91 through Western Massachusetts, and their skills impressed him.

"He always wanted me to go to WPI," the son says. "The best engineers, he said, had all gone to WPI."

At first, Adams went in a different direction, enrolling at the Air Force Academy in Colorado. But when he decided to transfer to a college closer to home for his junior year, he found only one school that combined the opportunity to delve deeply into technical subjects with the expectation of social responsibility. His father, Adams says, "was thrilled."

At WPI, where Adams's friends knew him as "Bud," he soon gained a reputation as a clever student who wouldn't hesitate to help a struggling classmate study for a big exam—or to dress up as a member of Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band to give his pals a laugh.

His friend and fellow civil engineering major Andy Kopach '76 says he could tell Adams was "going places," and that he had taken to heart WPI's requirement that students understand how the technical skills they were mastering fit into the wider world. "You needed to know your field and to do something more, go beyond that."

At the time, WPI had recently adopted the WPI Plan, and students, especially through their IQPs and MQPs, were expected to solve real-world problems and understand the impact they would have on people. "It was looking at not 'How high can you build a building, or how big can you build a dam?' but 'How does that interact with the people that are going to be a part of it?'" Adams recalls. Today, he says, that's the primary focus of MWH projects around the world. "If we're going to build a dam in Latin America, if we're going to open a mine," he says, "we need to understand what the local population thinks about the project, what their concerns are—and make sure those are addressed."

As an example, Adams recalls working on a mining project in Peru, where the local community was concerned about the impact on their water supply. After listening to the residents' concerns, the MWH team realized that if they upgraded a nearby wastewater treatment plant, the mine could use the treated water instead of drawing from the river. It was a solution that worked for everyone, Adams says. "It's called the 'social license to operate,'" he explains. "I go back 40 years at WPI, and they were thinking about that then!"

Even today, Adams says, WPI graduates seem to be ahead of their peers in their understanding of how their work fits into the world. But the project centers, the number of which has rapidly expanded over the past few years, offer students a way to broaden their perspective even further. And that, he believes, will help them become the next generation of successful engineers.

—Amy Crawford

McDonough Legacy Spurs Innovation

Neil McDonough has a special appreciation for innovation and entrepreneurship.

FIFTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO, his father, Myles McDonough, quit his job to begin making plastic film laminates for women's shoes and handbags in a rented garage in Spencer, Mass. With no bank loans or venture capital and using parts from old washing machines to make equipment, he started the business that became FLEXcon, a maker of pressure-sensitive films and adhesives with more than 1,000 employees worldwide and annual sales of \$300 million.

"He always had the bug to run his own business," Neil McDonough said in an interview in his office at FLEXcon's gleaming headquarters off Route 9 in Spencer, not far from the old ambulance garage where his father started it all.

To honor the late McDonough's entrepreneurial spirit and his connection to WPI as a trustee, Neil and his mother, Jean, have donated \$1 million to help other innovators turn their ideas into commercial enterprises. Their donation will help fund the McDonough Business Incubator, part of the conversion of Alumni Gym to an innovation studio that will also include a robotics laboratory, project and classroom space, an instrumental lab, tech suites, and an atrium to display innovations and achievements of WPI students and alumni.

Mark Rice, vice provost for innovation and entrepreneurship, says the business incubator will be "a living lab for innovation and entrepreneurship" and the physical home for what he calls the virtual incubator that has existed for a year and a half. In WPI's virtual incubator, named the Tech Advisors Network (TAN), WPI alumni and friends with extensive entrepreneurial experience provide early-stage entrepreneurs with mentoring, networking, and connections to resources. Once the McDonough Business Incubator is in place, there will be space for early-stage entrepreneurs to meet with other entrepreneurs, with their TAN professionals, with WPI Entrepreneurs-in-Residence, and with WPI faculty. A WPI Accelerator Fund is also being established, making



“pre-seed” money available for prototypes, market research, business plan development, and proof-of-principle work.

Neil, now president and CEO of FLEXcon, said his father was a chemist who gave up a job with a small adhesives company to go into business for himself. He broke the news to his wife while she was in the hospital, giving birth to Neil’s older brother, Mark.

“I quit my job today,” Myles told his wife, “and we’re going to start that company we’ve always talked about.”

Though he had been living in Natick, in the sales territory of his old job, McDonough launched his business in Spencer, where the rent for the garage was cheap – \$30 a month – and skilled labor was available as the shoe industry declined. Many of those early employees became leaders of the company for many years.

Products made by FLEXcon are everywhere: in labels on beverage and shampoo bottles, graphics on the sides of buses, and screen protectors on smartphones. The company makes labels on cars that need to stand up to harsh environments, unit price and bar code labels on supermarket shelves, those metallic-like labels on computers – even labels on cell phone batteries that change colors when submerged in water (proof to the manufacturer that a warranty should be voided).

Myles McDonough, who died in 2012 at 82, became a trustee at

WPI in 1989, serving on several committees and receiving the WPI Alumni Association’s Award for Distinguished Service in 2003. He was named trustee emeritus in 1999.

Neil McDonough followed in his father’s footsteps, both at FLEXcon and at WPI, where he became a trustee three years ago. He and his mother were at the 2012 WPI Innovator of the Year celebration when they overheard Rice describing plans for the innovation studio and business incubator in Alumni Gym. The McDonoughs decided that sponsoring the incubator would be a fitting way to pay tribute to Myles’s business spirit and his ties to the school.

Neil hadn’t been asked for a contribution, Rice points out. “He just stood up and said he’d give \$1 million.”

McDonough said the incubator will help WPI students take an idea and make it a reality—with help from people who know the ropes. Students who successfully make that leap can create opportunities for themselves and jobs for others – and spur further innovation, in McDonough’s view, just like his father did.

And while the incubator can smooth the way, it can also provide a reality check, he said. “The innovator lab should be able to help them commercialize or understand why something’s not working.”

–David Greenslit

WPI’S ENTREPRENEURSHIP ECOSYSTEM

Mark Rice likes to say that the mission of WPI’s School of Business to “develop innovative and entrepreneurial leaders for a global technological world” is a natural extension of the WPI Plan and project-based learning.

“I’ve been in this space for most of my life,” says Rice, vice provost of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Rice came to WPI in 2010, and has been leading the transition of the Department of Management into the School of Business. He has done research on innovation, entrepreneurship, technology strategy, and business incubation; he ran a technology business incubator and co-founded a start-up solar energy company.

He also co-wrote *Growing New Ventures, Creating New Jobs*—the bestselling book on the topic of business incubation—and was the director of the business incubator at Rensselaer

Polytechnic Institute before coming to WPI. The RPI Incubator Program received the Randall Whaley Incubator of the Year Award from the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA), and Rice, who served as an NBIA director and chairman of the board, was recognized for his leadership in the industry with one of NBIA’s 14 inaugural Founders Awards.

Rice sees the McDonough Business Incubator as a place where students will take their project-based learning to the next level by commercializing their project outcomes. But even before the incubator is completed, he says that the Tech Advisers Network, a group of about 50 professionals, has been working to provide advice, networking, and connections to resources at WPI and beyond. Those resources can include links to potential customers and employees, partnering organizations, and financial resources, according to Rice.

In the first quarter of 2014, WPI has been launching the Accelerator Fund to “pre-seed” money to help budding entrepreneurs. Rice says initial funding has been committed, and a trustee who is an investment professional will put together an independent investment decision-making committee and establish due diligence processes.

All of this is part of what Rice calls WPI’s entrepreneurship ecosystem. “Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial thinking are becoming key to success in the global innovation economy, and in many aspects of life,” he says. “The McDonough Business Incubator, WPI Accelerator Fund, Tech Advisers Network, and a number of other activities are coalescing in the new Alumni Gym to enable us to prepare our students to be as successful as possible after they graduate.”

Balanced Giving

2012 WPI Innovator of the Year David Norton Establishes Fund

DAVID NORTON '62 HAS consistently supported Worcester Polytechnic Institute for more than five decades, giving generously to assist his undergraduate alma mater with its annual goals.

Now, the 2012 WPI Innovator of the Year is looking to impact the university for decades to come. He has pledged \$2 million from his estate to establish the David P. '62 and Melissa Norton Endowed Fund to create the David P. Norton Chair for Strategy Management in the School of Business.

"The money could have been used to name a building, but I thought this was a better way to invest it so WPI can continue to hire the best faculty," says Norton, the president of global management consulting firm Palladium Group and considered one of the world's leading authorities on strategic performance management. "I wanted to do something that would make a world-class business school at WPI and invest in its future."

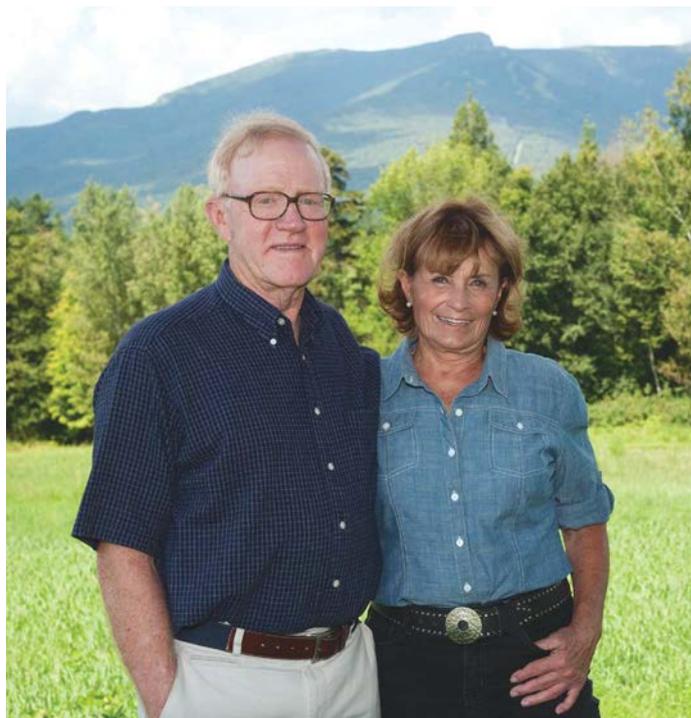
The faculty member who holds the chair will be expected to advance the theory and practice of strategy management, and its interaction with other WPI strategic initiatives such as innovation and entrepreneurship.

"Great universities—and great business schools—first and foremost start with great people: faculty, students, staff, alumni, parents, and friends," says Mark Rice, vice provost for innovation and entrepreneurship, who's had extensive discussions with Norton on how best to use the funds. "David's generous gift will enable the School of Business to recruit a star faculty member who will add tremendous value in teaching, research, and program leadership."

The chair's focus aligns with that of Norton's extremely successful career. Although he graduated from WPI with a BS in electrical engineering, the Concord, Mass., resident has made his mark as an entrepreneur, lecturer, writer, and expert on strategy management.

Norton is best known as the co-creator of The Balanced Scorecard, a strategic planning and management system used by businesses, industry, government, and nonprofit organizations around the globe. The system aligns a company's activities to its vision and strategy, improves internal and external communications, and monitors organizational performance against strategic goals.

"American companies focus too much on their quarterly earnings and not enough on managing their employees, products, and customers and identifying what should be done and measured," Norton says. "There was no common way to execute a company's overall strategy that incorporated all of these elements, so the Scorecard helps them simplify the process of managing their business."



The Scorecard concept, which Norton created with Harvard Business School professor Robert Kaplan, was selected by *Harvard Business Review* editors as one of the most influential management ideas of the past 75 years. He and Kaplan have co-authored eight HBS articles and five books on how to use this extraordinary tool. Norton was voted one of the world's 12 most influential thinkers by Suntop Media's "Thinkers Top 50" in 2008, and was awarded the Champion of Workplace Learning and Performance Award by the American Society for Training and Development. His books have been translated into 23 languages.

Norton, who received his doctorate in business administration from Harvard Business School, supports other organizations in addition to WPI. For him, designating such a sizeable planned gift is his way of paying forward the scholarship that made it possible for him to attend WPI in the early 1960s. And it's no different today, as more than 65 percent of the school's students receive some sort of financial assistance.

"The cost of a student's education is greater than the tuition. That's why alumni participation is so crucial," says Norton, WPI trustee emeritus. "I hope that I can be a role model for others to use part of their estates to help future generations of WPI students."

Rice agrees. "His leadership commitment will inspire other donors and volunteers to add fuel to our fire as we develop innovative and entrepreneurial leaders for a global technological world—the key element of our mission at the School of Business at WPI."

—John Shaw

Louis J. Curran, Professor emeritus of music

Louis Curran came to WPI in 1966 and was charged with organizing a formal music program. Starting with about a dozen singers and musicians, he built and shaped a large, multifaceted music performance enterprise that remains a source of pride for the university. Through his leadership, WPI's musical offerings became a significant draw for students who wanted to continue to grow as musicians as they pursued studies in science and engineering.

Curran passed away on Dec. 31, 2013, at the age of 79. "Louis was completely dedicated to WPI, to the Glee Club, and to all music at WPI," says Douglas Weeks, coordinator of music and associate head of the Department of Humanities and Arts. "He always demanded the best from his students and held them to the highest standards."

Under Curran's baton, the Men's Glee Club grew into a vibrant, popular, and highly respected ensemble. The group, which now numbers about



On tour in Rome, Curran and members of the WPI Glee Club had an audience with Pope John Paul II.

80 singers, has performed throughout Europe, in Canada, on radio and TV, and on recordings. Curran was also a co-founder of the Worcester Intercollegiate Chorale and served as its first conductor.

Although he officially retired in 2004, Curran left a lasting impression on generations of WPI stu-

dents who have remained fiercely loyal to him and the organization he long shepherded. Thomas L. Collins III '01, chairman of the Glee Club Alumni Association, says, "Louis was a teacher, a mentor, and a dear friend who I will miss, and who made an impact on every life he touched."

Spencer Lang '40 (Phi Gamma Delta)
Richard Jasper '41 (Phi Kappa Theta)
Leonard White '41 (Sigma Alpha Epsilon)
William Wiley '41 (Lambda Chi Alpha)
Wilbur Day '42
William Dodge '42
William Allan '43 (Phi Gamma Delta)
Galpin Etherington '43 (Sigma Alpha Epsilon)
John Lebourveau '44
Edward Smith '46 (Lambda Chi Alpha)
John Mohn '47
Kenneth Cooke '48
Leon Lipton '48 (Alpha Epsilon Pi)
Bruce Nagler '48 (Lambda Chi Alpha)
Dean Amidon '49 (Phi Sigma Kappa)
Raymond Remillard '49 (Phi Kappa Theta)
Donald Shattuck '49 (Phi Sigma Kappa)
Burl Watson '49 (Phi Gamma Delta)
Robert Murdock '50 (Sigma Phi Epsilon)
Edward Saling '50 (Lambda Chi Alpha)
Stanley Miller '51 (Sigma Phi Epsilon)

Carl Mohr '52
Allan Rowe '52
Richard Will '52 (Phi Gamma Delta)
Joseph Holmes '53
Robert Jacino '53 (Phi Kappa Theta)
Donald Grenier '55 MS (Phi Kappa Theta)
Henry Grimm '55
John Bandarra '57 (Phi Kappa Theta)
John Smith '57 MS (Lambda Chi Alpha)
Joseph Chenail '58 (Phi Kappa Theta)
Nathaniel Johnson '60 (Theta Chi)
Jon Thorson '60 (Sigma Phi Epsilon)
Daniel Lizdas '63 MS
Stephen Wilcox '64 MS
Raymond Davis '66
Terrence Bulger '70 (Sigma Pi)
Fred Nashawaty '70 MNS
Daniel Eide '73
Stephen Goodwin '73 (Sigma Alpha Epsilon)
William Hobbs '73
Michael White '75 (Sigma Phi Epsilon)

Paul Carubia '76 (Tau Kappa Epsilon)
Ronald Norris '77 MS
Francis Gingras '81 MNS
Catherine Dillingham '84 MNS
Karla Szkutak '84 (Phi Sigma Sigma)
Timothy Sarr '87
Sean Brennan '95
Angelo Chandler '08 MBA
Richard Lyman D.Sc. (Hon.) '08
Charles Vest D.Eng. (Hon.) '09
Shawn Sullivan '13 MS

Other members of the WPI community who have recently passed away include faculty members Louis Curran (Tau Kappa Epsilon), Raymond Leboeuf, and Kenneth Nourse, and staff members Sadie Goesch and Helen McDermott. WPI also mourns the passing of Barbara Horstmann, wife of the late Peter Horstmann '55. The Horstmans were active members of the WPI family.



Retired head softball coach George LeGacy

Worcester native George W. LeGacy Jr. spent 11 years at WPI (including eight as head coach), retiring in 2013. He died Jan. 13, 2014, leaving a legacy of 101 wins for WPI. "In addition to his coaching accolades, the 'Chief' was a true friend to all of WPI's student-athletes, teams, coaches, and co-workers, as well as a true ambassador to the entire university," says WPI sports information director Rusty Eggen.

LeGacy guided the Crimson and Gray to two of their three highest win totals, including a school-best 24-16 mark in 2012. Under his tutelage, the Engineers qualified for the NEWMAC Tournament in 2009 and 2012, sported a NEWMAC Rookie of the Year in 2011, and had six players named all-conference. His players also enjoyed success in the classroom, earning Academic All-NEWMAC honors a total of 31 times and had five Co-SIDA Academic All-District 1 first team selections. Predeceased by his wife, Patricia E. (Moynihan) LeGacy, he leaves two children.

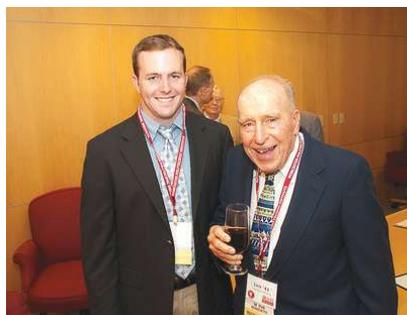
Leonard H. White '41

Trustee Emeritus, Dedicated Volunteer and Supporter

In a 2011 interview with WPI, Leonard White clearly recalled his earning power while he was a student at WPI—50 cents an hour—which paid his annual tuition bill of \$320. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, White took a position with the Public Service Electric and Gas Company of New Jersey for a 44 percent pay increase to 72 cents an hour.

In 1943, with the United States engaged in World War II, White enlisted in the Navy as an engineer officer and served in the Pacific Theater, eventually as an executive officer and navigator. At the close of his service, White returned home and in 1946 began working for the family business, R. H. White Construction Co., located in Auburn, Mass. He was president from 1960 to 1989, served as chairman of the board from 1989 to 2010, and as chairman emeritus since 2010.

When his son, David White '75, enrolled at WPI, Len White became more involved with the life of his alma mater. He served on reunion committees and as a class agent, participated in fundraising initiatives, and attended many WPI events over the years. During his time on the Annual Fund Board, he established the President's Advisory Council, which evolved into the President's Circle, WPI's leadership group of annual donors. This group started with 30 members and has grown to several hundred each year. White served as a WPI trustee from 1977 to 1992, earning emeritus status in 1992. The WPI Alumni Association recognized his contributions to the



university in 1981 with the Herbert F. Taylor Award for Distinguished Service.

"Len White left an indelible mark on WPI through his dedication to his alma mater and his generosity of spirit," says WPI President Phil Ryan '65. "Len and his late wife, Ann, visited campus often over the years and attended his reunions, and it was always a pleasure to see them. He will be sorely missed by his many friends in the WPI community."

White was among WPI's most generous supporters. His gifts to the university include the Leonard and Ann White Endowed Scholarship Fund, which honors White's late wife and represents his gratitude for her support during their life together. Len proposed to Ann on Earle Bridge, and WPI remained an integral part of their lives. The Whites also established the Ralph H. White Scholarship Fund and, with David, the Ralph H. White Professorship in Civil Engineering in 1987. The professorship is currently held by Rajib Mallick. White was honored as a member of the 1865 Society, recognizing lifetime giving to WPI of \$1 million to \$2.5 million.

Leonard White died Jan. 14, 2014. He is survived by his four children: Susan Premo and her husband, Walter Premo; Janie Larson and her husband, Bruce Larson; David White '75, MS '76, MBA '84 and his wife, Shirley White; and Wendy Bowen and her husband, Nicholas Bowen. He also leaves nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Complete obituaries can usually be found through newspapers, websites, legacy.com, and similar indexes. WPI will share details on the "completed careers" of friends and classmates, if available. To request further information, contact jkmliller@wpi.edu or call 508-831-5998.

'58

Bill Rabinovitch's "Artists Preserving Our Inner True Spirit about Nature & Reaching the Public" represents his desire to bridge the gap determined by corporations, which he says have lost us the means to influence the public about the planet. "There are many causes about saving Earth," he writes, "but shared words alone on Facebook prove not able to produce change –so perhaps newer, deeper more inspired images coming from otherwise throttled artists' visions everywhere on Facebook can kick-start things to greater & more effective art than the gallery system. Picasso & Van Gogh did so & every serious artist can reach out as well with their truly deeper feelings & unused abilities. There is little artists cannot accomplish."



1943

Nelson Calkins celebrated his 93rd birthday on Nov. 21, 2013. He lives in Rutland, Mass., but regrets that he's not able to get to Tech Old Timers meetings these days.

Lincoln Nutting lives at Asbury Pointe, an independent living facility in Getzville, N.Y., near Buffalo. He has two wonderful grandsons, Avery, 14, and Nate, 9, who visit often. His brothers, 90 and 93, live in Needham, Mass.

1945

Dan Katz reports from Cincinnati that he is enjoying the arrival of his first great-granddaughter.

1946

Del Walton writes, "After graduating from WPI and serving in the Navy, I lived in Los Angeles for about 15 years. Then I spent 39 years in Honolulu as a manufacturer's representative. During this time my wife and I traveled overseas extensively. Ten years ago we moved to Port Charlotte, Fla., and now spend the winters here and summers in Winnipeg, Canada. In Port Charlotte we live in a gated community with great neighbors and plenty of activities to keep us busy."

1948

Ron Moltenbrey writes, "I am on oxygen 24/7, so travel is at best difficult. Still manage to stay reasonably active with golf and bowling. Was very disappointed in not being able to get to our 65th Reunion last year. I hope more of the people in the classes from my era take advantage of the opportunity to contribute class notes. It is always good to read about old friends that were in school with me."

Al Soloway received an honorary DSc degree from Ohio State University last year.

1949

Robert Quattrochi writes, "Hi, 49ers! Can you believe that we are starting to plan our 65th Reunion? Save the date—May 31, 2014! You'll hear more soon."

1951

Dick Davis writes, "Eighty-five and still kicking. Engineered at Monsanto, then trained in chiropractic. WPI taught me how to diagnose and solve problems, which makes treating patients so successful. Thanks WPI!"

George Messenger writes, "My recent activity has been concentrated in two areas: I have been making improvements to my model of the stock market to account for the trading done automatically by computers, which leads to increased volatility. This activity is often triggered by illegal release of information by government or industry of data to favored traders. Their profits result in increased losses by individual investors. I have also increased my modeling of probabilities of various slot machines, especially video poker machines, which offer the highest winning probabilities. I continue to make profits in the market regardless of whether it is going up or down and continue to make small profits playing video poker machines."

From Toms River, N.J., **Jack Writer** shares this: "At age 86, I still make it around the golf course."

1952

Mon Dickinson writes, "My wife, Anne, and I have been living in a CCRC (continuing care retirement community) for the past five years, where we have met a number of interesting new friends. Anne sings in the chorus, and I serve on the Board of Directors. I am a member of the governance, finance, and strategic planning committees, so I have a full plate of volunteer work. We are just getting started on a major expansion program, and at present there

are endless details to be considered by the board. Since retiring I have volunteered with the AARP tax program—now I prepare at least 50 returns here at our CCRC. Summer will find us on Block Island for four months. We have had a vacation home on the island for some 25 years, so we are quite well settled, with yet another set of friends and activities. It is not difficult to attract our three children and their families for a visit.”

1953

David Hathaway writes, “As my grandchildren pick a college, I try to impress them with the knowledge eluded me when I attended WPI. Back then, I really did not have a clear idea of what I would be ‘happy’ doing. (Forget successful) Electronics at the time was a curiosity, but had nothing to do with my particular happiness. I was too early for the great computer development. I leaned shortly after leaving WPI that I did not like to sit very long nor did I really like working with numbers (now that was strange after all the math leading up to understanding electronics!). I quickly realized that I would be much better off if I had picked civil engineering! My life was heavily wrapped up with that experience and would have been enhanced by having been in ‘Civil E’ at WPI.”

1955

William Taylor is the author of *Intravenous Hope, Stat!*, a book aimed at helping stressed or suicidal doctors, nurses, psychologists, health professionals, and their families. He is retired from practice as a child and family psychologist. He lives in Bloomfield, Conn., where he and his wife enjoyed raising three children. “We’re fascinated by their adult lives, and by six grandchildren and several grand-dogs,” he notes in his online bio. (See Bookshelf, p. 55.)

1956

John Kasper continues to enjoy retirement in Scituate, Mass., with his wife, Aldona.

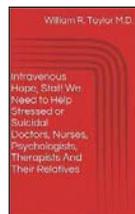
1957

Alfred Barry was re-elected to a three-year term as chair of ASME B18.8, the organization’s subcommittee for machine pins. He and his wife, Shirley, live in Bellair Bluffs, Fla.

▶ Bookshelf

Intravenous Hope, Stat! We Need to Help Stressed or Suicidal Doctors, Nurses, Psychologists, Therapists and Their Relatives

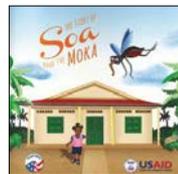
BILL TAYLOR '55 | Amazon Digital Services



In the medical world, “stat” designates an order that is to be carried out right away. Taylor, a retired child and family psychiatrist, examines the rarely discussed plight of overburdened medical professionals and offers advice on the stresses that might drive them to consider suicide. “I hope that readers who are at risk for self-harm will take the step of seeking help from one of the many sources in their region or even online,” he writes in the book’s conclusion. “No one should have to live that way, when the right kind of help could make a difference.”

The Story of Soa and the Moka

PATRICK SPENCER '05 AND RAEGAN SPENCER | USAID



Soa is a brave, fun-loving African girl. When Soa’s friend Franky gets sick, Soa learns that the “Moka” (mosquito) can’t be trusted. In simple words and pictures, Peace Corps volunteers Patrick Spencer and his wife, Raegan, offer life-saving preventative measures to combat malaria, which is a threat to 3.3 billion people in 106 countries and territories. The Spencers are stationed in Madagascar’s Morondava District, where Patrick is serving as a Peace Corps Master’s International graduate student through Michigan Technological University. They also developed an anti-malaria classroom curriculum that will be distributed along with the book to students and teachers in classrooms across Madagascar. An electronic version of the book can be viewed on issuu.com.

Bob Galligan writes, “I’ve remarried and now split my time between Scottsdale, Ariz., and East Gull Lake, Minn.”

1958

Donald Abraham writes, “My wife, Pat, and I celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary in Cape Coral, Fla., on Feb. 1, 2014. My brother **Ray**, WPI Class of 1960, was there. Our three sons put on the affair, inviting friends, relatives, retired co-workers, and golfing buddies. All our sons have engineering degrees, and two have PhDs in mechanical and electrical engineering (from University of Connecticut). Pat and I met when I was pursuing a master’s degree from Northeastern. She earned her degree in electrical engineering at Northeastern in ‘63, as well as a nursing degree.”

Phil Rubin and his wife, Lynn, have moved to Park City, Utah, with their labs, Baily and Ciara, to “live life elevated.” He says, “Avid skiers and outdoor enthusiasts, we have elected to live where the amazing outdoors is only steps away.” Phil can be reached at rubinpj@yahoo.com.

1959

Robert Pill writes, “After retiring from my family business in 2005, I’ve been busier than ever, taking courses at Lifelong Learning Institutes both at Brandeis University (BOLLI) and Regis College (LLARC), leading a course at BOLLI, ‘The Broadway Musical, Art Imitates History –Almost,’ and co-leading a course at both BOLLI and LLARC called ‘Laughter, The Best of All Medicines.’ I volunteer in a few capacities: working on three committees at BOLLI, tutoring 4th grade math in

Newton and Boston, working behind the scenes at the local TV station, and heading a committee at a nonprofit organization called Newton-at-Home, which provides services to seniors to help them to stay in their own homes rather than to move to an assisted living dwelling. My wife, Cynthia, and I have travelled extensively, taking a few major trips a year. My health is good (not excellent) so we are able to travel without restrictions. We have three adult children and eight grandchildren (all good-looking, of course). My golf is as good as it will ever get. I broke 100 the last time I played. However, I just can't remember which hole it was."

1960

Susan and **Richard Brewster** are set to return to Africa this spring for a land-based mission with Mercy Ships. Working under the auspices of Smile Train, the medical team is charged with repairing cleft lips and palates in that needy part of the world. Richard, the photographer, records before-and-after shots of the patients served. This is the Brewsters' fourth Smile Train trip, although they have lived and worked in other West African countries with Mercy Ships since 1999. Richard has documented the success stories of previous trips with photos of patients admiring their new faces. Mercy Ships, recently featured on CBS 60 Minutes, has recently announced plans for the construction of a new, larger hospital ship, which will be ready in 2017.

1962

Bill Krein writes that he's into his 25th year as an adjunct faculty member at WPI. He teaches in the School of Business and the Corporate and Professional Development program.

1964

"Hello everybody!" writes **Ed Curtis**. "Carolyn and I are spending our winters in the Sarasota, Fla., area, and our summers in York Harbor, Maine. We regularly see about a dozen alums from our era and enjoy the reconnecting very much. Our 50th Class Reunion is coming up this year, and I hope to see many of you at the events. Upon graduation in 1964, I stayed on for an MS ChE and then went to work for the Cabot Corp. in Boston. After seven years as an intrapreneur with Cabot, I launched my own consulting business in the energy industry while we raised three daughters. I am proud to say that they are all successful professionals with happy families. Now I'm working on all the projects I deferred during my very satisfying but busy career."

Bruce Maccabee received the International UFO Congress Lifetime Achievement at the organization's 2014 conference in February.

1965

Gene Dionne was elected a fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA). The presentation of the new fellows will take place at the AIAA Aerospace Spotlight Awards Gala in April 2014 in Washington, D.C.

1966

Phil Hopkinson reports that he is "still doing power transformer consulting and having fun." He formed his own company, HVOLT, in 2001, and continues to work on developing industry standards with a variety of agencies, including NEMA (National Electrical Manufacturers Association) and the U.S. Department of Energy.

1967

According to **Joe Ferrantino**, "The 7th Annual Georgia Cup Golf Matches will be contested again this year between me, **Gary Dyckman '66**, and **Wayne Blanchard '68**, the week of March 23. Hopefully, **Dick Court '67** will also come to witness part of this event. I cannot report the results of previous matches because I don't want to be accused of bragging. It's rumored that Gary and Wayne are stopping at Myrtle Beach on their way to Georgia to practice, though."

Eduardo Mendez writes, "Visited the campus on Dec. 30, 2013. Everything was closed, but I ran into an international student (not on vacation) who was able to let me use the bathrooms at the Labs building. A very cold day in Worcester, but I was able to see the walk and find my brick."

Charlie Proctor writes, "Just working away, no deer harvest this year. Bought a Cummins powered diesel Dodge and just pulled a car and trailer out of a combination ice/snow bank. Looking for a hi-performance VW engine for my MG relicar; waiting to X-C ski and skate this winter. That's about it."

1968

Cary Palulis writes, "Still VP of Sales & Marketing for Heritage-Crystal Clean LLC, which has a re-refinery to make recycled base oil from nasty dirty used oil. It is excellent quality and we are expanding 50 percent this year. Still going strong at my old age. Wife Susan also works full time for Saint Francis Hospital in Hartford, Conn. Our daughter, Lauren, graduated with her master's from Simmons College in Boston and is now working as a HS teacher in West

Roxbury, Mass. My mom is 92 and still drives a 13-hp grass mower. She lives in Northampton, so we are all in New England. So life is as good as ever."

Roger Pryor has published his third book on multiphysics modeling, titled *RF Module: The Three Stub Tuner*, a guide for users of COMOL Multiphysics® software. He is president and CEO of Pryor Knowledge Systems in Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

1970

Pat Abbe writes that 2014 begins his 17th year of a "5-year plan" as president and founder of Cabinetparts.com Inc. "It has been a wonderful journey beginning from the early days of the commercial Internet," he writes. "In 2013 we became a Google Trusted Store and were awarded the Stella Services rating of Excellent, which is one of the highest honors one can get from this online Secret Shopper (Home Depot only has a Good rating). My wife, Christine, and I now split our time now between our cabin in Montana and home in Florida as I look forward to getting to the 25th year of 'The Plan.'"

Peter Denoncourt retired in July 2012, after 25 years with Saft, S.A., the global manufacturer of advanced batteries based in France. "I had just finished managing a large project in Jacksonville, Fla., to build a \$200-million plant to manufacture advanced lithium ion batteries for hybrid vehicles and backup power for renewable energy sources like wind and solar. The company received a \$95 million ARRA grant for the project and kicked in the extra \$105 million themselves. My wife, Carolyn, and I live in Jacksonville, Fla., and have three grown daughters (two living in Alaska, and one in Sarasota, Fla.), and two grandchildren. Our first post-retirement adventure was a four-month cruise in our 35-foot sailboat, *Kite*, to explore the Chesapeake Bay. We met lots of other boaters during our cruise, and they all had interesting stories to tell, some of them may have even been true! We really enjoyed eating everything crab—steamed crabs, crab cakes, etc.—while in the Bay, and managed to visit 15 ports between Norfolk and Baltimore."

Bill Hillner reports that he retired from ExxonMobil in August 2012, after 37 years with the company. "I worked and lived in eight countries (England, Scotland, Norway, Thailand, Angola, Nigeria, Qatar, and Russia) on some of the world's largest onshore and offshore oil and gas development projects. I am now doing contract/consultant work for ExxonMobil, working primarily in Abu Dhabi in the Middle East. When not working, my wife and I are 'chillaxing' at our homes in MA and VA."

'73

Diane Pritchard (MS CS), daughter of the late football coach and athletic director Bob Pritchard, was recently married to David Clayton on Oct. 19, 2013, in Egg Harbor Twp, N.J. They had an old-fashioned country style wedding, even riding to have pictures taken in the bucket of a John Deere tractor along with their rescued 'schnocker,' Hailey. They took an extensive honeymoon trip from New Jersey up to Campobello Island, Canada, to visit the many lighthouses along the coast, with Hailey accompanying them. Diane is retired as a programmer-analyst. Dave is a retired from the FAA. They plan to split their time between Egg Harbor and Dave's farmhouse in Phenix, Va.



Vinay Mudholkar joined All Aboard Florida as senior vice president of rail infrastructure. He is responsible for design, engineering, and construction, as well as managing the bid process, contractors, and engineering teams on systems improvement projects.

1971

Abbas Salim writes, "Had double bypass open heart surgery in July 2013. My wife had bilateral knee replacement surgery in October. I guess this comes with the age and neglecting to care of your body earlier in the life. Although I retired in 2009, I am still active and consulting in the field of space power systems."

Dave True writes, "In the ten years since I retired from National Grid, I have traveled by RV across the country with my wife, Mary, and for the last nine years have been an adjunct instructor in chemistry and physical science at Bristol Community College in Fall River, Mass. I've been living in Southeastern Massachusetts since 1971."

1973

Dick Belmonte recently completed the AARP volunteer tax counselor course and will be helping seniors with their tax returns this year.

1974

Steve Braley writes, "Sue and I celebrated our 35th anniversary with a fabulous two-week tour of Alaska in July. We live near Ann Arbor, Mich., where I have been the CEO of Thermax Inc. for three years. I have been fortunate to visit many places around the world in the course of my career. Sue just joined a new medical practice focused on providing traditional health care to the large Asian community in the area, which is home to the University of Michigan. Two of our three kids live in Ann Arbor, the other is located in Delaware. We are expecting our first grandchild in June."

Edward Gordon's third book, *Room of Knowledge*, is available on Nook and Kindle. It details the journey of a man through the double life he leads. Externally, he is a modern American; internally, he is a Marrano. (The Marranos are Jews that went underground to escape the persecution of the Spanish Inquisition.) He reflects on his life in order to determine how to raise his sons as Marranos. Ed, who retired in order to write, notes that the book is a result of his explorations of his place in the Jewish Community.

'73

Joel Loitherstein registered for his 20th Pan-Mass Challenge—a 200-mile bike ride that last year contributed almost \$40 million to Dana Farber’s Jimmy Fund. “Although I used cycling for transportation around WPI, I was not a real cyclist back then. (Actually, motorcycles were more my speed.) When I moved back to Boston in 1981, I realized that bicycling was a better form of transportation in the city. Did my first Pan-Mass Challenge in 1995, to honor my father and my mother-in-law, who had both fought cancer. Since then, I have become an avid cyclist and did a cross-country ride in 2002. I now do about 10 charity rides a year, including the Livestrong Ride in Austin, Texas, where I get together with fellow WPI AEPi alumni who live in that area.” In 2011, Joel closed his environmental firm and joined Tata & Howard Inc., a firm founded by **Donald Tata ‘75** and **Paul Howard ‘82**. Joel lives in Ashland, Mass., with his wife, State Senator Karen Spilka, and their dog, Brisco. They have two sons—Jake is a WPI ‘11 management engineering grad who works at a construction firm in Boston; Scott went to Union College and is a teacher in the Bronx, where he heads up the history department.



1975

Doug DeWitte follows his poem in the Summer 2013 issue with this:

It’s interesting
Is it?
Sing, I invite you!

Gerald “Dutch” Forstater writes, “I wrote the lead article for a cover story in the January issue of *Homeland Security* magazine.

Bob Horner reports that he continues to enjoy his public policy and lobbying activities for the Illuminating Engineering Society and does not miss corporate America one bit. In June, Bob’s son Jim will be getting married. His younger son, Daniel, graduated with a degree in economics and now has a job. “Both sons on their own...life is good!”

Paul Varadian is founder and CEO of AlumniBridge. See his story in the *W/* section at the front of this issue.

Dave Westerling (’95 PhD) writes, “I have been elected to the board of directors of the Association of Inspectors General. Recently, while on sabbatical leave from the Civil Engineering Department at Merrimack College, I served as interim inspector general for the City of New Orleans.”

Jon Wyman was appointed associate vice president of facilities management at Mount Wachusett Community College, managing operations for the existing

500,000-square-foot main campus. He will also play an instrumental role in construction of a \$41 million science and technology building for the Gardner, Mass., campus. Wyman served in the U.S. Navy Civil Engineer Corps for 24 years. After retiring from the Navy in 1999, he worked with contractors to provide facilities support at military bases nationwide, most recently as general manager of facility management, construction, engineering, and operations for IAP Worldwide Services at Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford, Mass.

1976

Brian Mellea reports that 2013 was a good year. “Consulting business booming in Silicon Valley. Family prospering. But 2013 ended on a down note with the extreme lack of snow in Tahoe for our skiing. But 2014 will be a big year for us. An 8th grader ‘elevating’ to 9th grade, a niece off to Penn, a son running a TEDx event, and myself leading Boy Scouts at Philmont—in addition to our 2.5 weeks in mid- and northern Italy and the Dolomites. Suggestions for what to see and do in Italy would be appreciated!”

1977

Merrick Cohen (MS EE) writes, “After graduating with my master’s, I married a beautiful native Bostonian. Her name is Marlene. That cemented my tie to Massachusetts, and I settled in Chestnut Hill. We have two sons, ages 18 and 21,

who are pursuing professional degrees in law and medicine. I had a long career at AT&T Bell Laboratories as a forward-looking technology planning manager, and I now am retired. Traveling, consulting, and involvement in community affairs keep me busy. We recently adopted Cosmo, a beautiful Goldendoodle. Walking him daily is a new experience and thanks to his energy, he keeps me in shape. To any of my classmates who may remember me: send a note to mlcohen@rcn.com. I would enjoy hearing from you.”

1978

Ian Cannon asks, “What are the odds of three different WPI class representatives being in the same place at once?” Ian, **Andrew Bruce ‘88**, and **Ed Minasian ‘92** met up in Stavanger, Norway, at the International Association of Drilling Contractors’ Advanced Rig Technology Conference, where they were part of a larger dinner gathering at the end of the first day of the conference. Ian and Ed are with Shell TechWorks in Cambridge, Mass., and Andrew is with National Oilwell Varco in Houston. Ian was a contributing author for the conference presentation titled “Culture and Change in Upstream Oil & Gas Business in Acceptance of New Technology.”

John Hannon worked for DuPont for 32 years and retired in 2010. He writes, “My work included firearms manufacturing (Remington arms), nylon spinning R&D, mechanical development, pharmaceutical packaging, medical devices, Corian manufacturing (including technology

development for largest plastic (Corian) sink plant in the world. Final project was to take DuPont's Building Innovations manufacturing (Corian, Tyvek, etc.) to zero landfill in eight sites worldwide. I retired for a few months and then started a C&D recycling business in the Buffalo area. Triad Recycling and Energy Corp. is first to recycle many materials in New York, such as asphalt roofing shingles, drywall, vinyl siding, and mattresses, to name a few. I'm currently working to develop new markets and processes of recycled materials and reduce material headed to landfill."

1979

Andrew Davidson writes, "On Saturday, Sept. 7, 2013, I walked my daughter down the aisle. A day to make a dad proud."

Chris Mather runs Leveragent, a company that helps communities and organizations implement effective entrepreneurial development programs.

1981

Phil Gallagher writes, "I spent the Christmas holiday at Big White, B.C., skiing with my family, including my son Scott (WPI '13) and my daughter Hannah (WPI '16). Both kids are Chem Eng majors, which means they got their smarts from their mother. Life is good in the Pacific Northwest, but we enjoy our trips back to New England to visit friends and family as often as possible." Phil is senior vice president at Babcock Services in Kennewick, Wash.

1982

Anni Autio writes, "In October I joined The Thompson & Litchner Company in Canton, Mass., as a senior engineer. The company offers a broad range of engineering, testing, quality control, advisory, and forensic services to the construction industry. T&L has enjoyed a reputation for excellence and quality of service since the formation of the original partnership of Sanford E. Thompson and Frederick W. Taylor in 1896. It's exciting to be working at this well-established firm with such a rich history of projects."

Jay Koven is a second-year student in the computer science PhD program at NYU Polytechnic School of Engineering, working in the areas of visual data analytics and investigative forensics. "Three of my four kids are engineers and spread around the country," he writes.

"The fourth is currently up in Worcester working as a curator intern at the Higgins Armory Museum, which is in the process of merging with the Worcester Art Museum."

1983

Joel Kearns has changed jobs. After almost four years at MEMC Electronic Materials (now, SunEdison) in St. Louis, as vice president for solar wafer R&D, he is now deputy director for space flight systems at the NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, Ohio.

1984

Jean Salek Camp and her husband, David, have moved from Hawaii to southern California to be closer to her parents. Jean shut down her project management and consulting business and is focused on renovating the newly purchased house. In addition to helping her parents, Jean and David are taking advantage of being on the mainland, which makes it easier to travel and visit other family members and friends. Jean is taking a distance learning interior design course and continues to enjoy painting with watercolors.

In March, **Bob Korkuc** celebrated his 25th year at BAE Systems (formerly Sanders) in Nashua, N.H., where he is a digital module product lead. Bob earned an MSEE at Villanova University in 1989, and obtained a master's certificate in systems engineering from Johns Hopkins University in 2003. He is also the author of *Finding a Fallen Hero: The Death of a Ball Turret Gunner*, published by the University of Oklahoma Press in 2008. *Fallen Hero* tells the story of Bob's uncle Tony Korkuc, who was killed in WWII on a B-17 mission over Germany. Bob has been happily married for 13 years and has a 10-year-old daughter and an 8-year-old son.

1985

Jeannine Machon is expanding her laboratory and testing business with the legalization of marijuana in Colorado. Having run a mobile lab testing marijuana potency for 2+ years, she has been actively working with the State Department of Revenue to help draft practical and pragmatic testing legislature for this nascent industry. In one of three labs licensed by the state of Colorado, Jeannine and her two business partners are expanding their equipment and analytical capabilities to meet the needs of the recreational marijuana industry.

1986

Patrick Tormey is vice president, Global Accounts Program, at PerkinElmer Inc. He writes, "I am proud to report that one of my twin daughters, Carmen, was recently accepted to enter WPI this fall, along with a generous scholarship. What a wonderful opportunity for this young lady to immerse herself in one of engineering's top institutes!"

1987

Paul Gaynor, CEO of First Wind, gave a seminar at WPI in December called "Wind Energy: Will the Growth Continue?" His company, headquartered in Boston, has played a major role in that expansion, with wind farms from Hawaii to Maine. "Wind has grown 15-fold since I've been in the industry (about 10 years), and still only provides about 3 percent of the U.S. energy needs. Yes, there is a long way to go, and yes, it is a very fine career choice," he told an interviewer for *The Daily Herd*, WPI's online newsletter.

Steve Hall recently retired as president of Ekra America, a multinational electronics manufacturing automation company. He's back on the WPI campus as the head wrestling coach and says he's happy to be giving back to the next generation of the "WPI Wrestling Family." Steve and his wife, **Michelle Payant Hall '85**, are getting used to being empty nesters, as their sons, Connor and Matt, are both in college, "playing lacrosse and, hopefully, going to class!!"

Don Kane is a senior distribution engineer with Connecticut Light and Power (Northeast Utilities), living in northwest Connecticut with his wife, Jacqueline, and their boys, Patrick and Andrew. Don recently completed his MS in power systems management through WPI.

Paul Lubas joined ASCO Valve Inc., a division of Emerson Electric, as director of marketing. He is responsible for developing and maintaining a marketing strategy for ASCO products in process control markets, which include refining, oil and gas, chemical, food and beverage, life sciences, water and waste water, power generation, and pulp and paper. Paul and his family have relocated to New Jersey from Glastonbury, Conn., as a result of the job change and now reside in Mendham.

1988

Mike Basmajian celebrated 25 years with Ingersoll Rand in 2013 and recently relocated with his family to IR's headquarters in North Carolina.

Lt. Col. (Ret.) **Rob Provost** and his wife, Cindy (Lt. Col., USAF), moved back to their home outside Colorado Springs this past summer. Rob is the founder and owner of Grand Slam Fly Fishing Destinations (grandslamflyfishing.com) and will enroll in cooking school at the Colorado Culinary Academy in Denver in April. Cindy works in the Admissions Department at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. Rob was also the first president of the WPI Jazz Alumni Association.

Cheryl (Hagglund) Caffrey writes, "For the past 23 years I have been working at the U.S. EPA NVFEL in Ann Arbor, Mich. I am currently in charge of mass reduction evaluation (technology and cost) for the greenhouse gas rulemaking standards of 2017–2025. It's been fun seeing the results of our work on the roads with more efficient vehicles! My husband (**Peter Caffrey '86**) and I own a car wash and laundromat as an investment with another couple. In March of 2012 our business was hit by a tornado and destroyed. We have rebuilt the business and reopened in June 2013. The business was over 40 years old, so it is very nice to have new, efficient, good-looking buildings. You can see our rebuild story on Facebook (Dexter Village Car Wash and Laundry)."

Rod Shaffert, VP, Scholastic Division, for Cutler Associates, was recently named board chairman of the Design-Build Institute of America's New England Region. Rod has been with Cutler for 25 years. He has been a DBIA member for 10 years and on its Board of Directors since 2006.

1989

Jeffrey Goldmeier is currently the fuel flexibility manager for GE's Heavy-Duty Gas Turbines. His role was expanded in 2013 to include all of GE's large-frame gas turbines. "I develop solutions for customers who are interested in using non-traditional fuels (i.e., fuels other than natural gas or distillate oil) in a gas turbine for power generation. This year I was able to visit South Africa, helping me come closer to my goal of visiting all seven continents (still missing are South America and Antarctica)." At Johannesburg's Lion Park Jeff enjoyed some close encounters with wildlife.

"We also attended the FIRST Robotics Regional Competition held at WPI, and had the joy of cheering my son's team, Shaker High School. It was an exciting event, as

Shaker was the #1 seed heading into the finals. Although they did not win, they did receive the Engineering Excellence Award. It was great to have the family at my alma matter for the competition."

David Sunderland has been employed as a production system analyst at Green Mountain Coffee Roasters in Waterbury, Vt., for the past four years. This follows two years in the aerospace industry, and 18 years in the mineral processing industry with Omya Inc. in Florence, Vt., and Lucerne Valley, Calif. David also serves as the state chair of the Vermont Republican Party. His role includes providing strategic guidance and leadership for Vermont Republicans, recruiting and training candidates for office, and raising funds to support political races. Prior to this role, he served in Vermont's House of Representatives, 2003–2007. He was appointed to an open seat by then-governor Jim Douglas and later won re-election twice from his district in Rutland Town, where he still resides with his wife, Theresa, and their four children.

1990

After 16 years in its Chicago office, **Paul Gibbons** joined the Boston office of Robins, Kaplan, Miller & Ciresi, where he continues as a trial lawyer, trying patent infringement and intellectual property cases.

Kyle Petersen writes, "After a two-year tour in Peru as executive officer, I assumed command of U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 6 in 2012. NAMRU-6 is a biomedical research lab with a \$19M budget and 300 employees engaged in developing vaccines and medications to treat diseases such as malaria, dengue, diarrhea, and leishmaniasis that affect deployed warfighters and local children in the developing world. We also are a global surveillance site for pandemic diseases, such as influenza or coronaviruses, that can emerge in the tropics and spread to the rest of the world rapidly. We collaborate with governments, NGOs, and universities in 12 countries in Latin America on almost 140 research protocols. My family has enjoyed visiting most of Peru as well as Easter Island, Buenos Aires, and Iguassu Falls. I will be in command until August 2015."

1991

After serving as CEO for USRobotics and Data2Logistics, **Gerry Burns** has come back home to the region. He was appointed executive vice president of Columbia Tech, a Coghlin Companies firm headquartered in Westboro, Mass. Gerry will be merging two businesses into one for Coghlin Companies to help Columbia Tech grow and deliver

"Concept to Commercialization" services in the contract manufacturing sector with a focus on time to market (TTM). Gerry is a WPI TAN (Technology Advisors Network) member and, among other teams, leads WPI's very own Gompel's Goat Cheese business. The TAN is an incubator for the WPI community (students, faculty, and alumni) that fills gaps at the earliest stages of venture development.

Chris Kinkade founded Green Bee Soda in 2010 to share his belief that soda can be healthy and tasty, and support a critical link in our food system, the honey bee. See his story in the *W/* section at the front of this issue.

1992

Bechara Samhara (MSCE) is president of the Lebanese Council for Research and Development.

Ed Paluch says, "I was in the area and was able to stop by campus for the first time in several years. I love the improvements that have been made. I took the chance of catching Professor Emanuel and was lucky enough to find him in his office. He is a very important and special person in my life, and we are lucky to have him as a part of our great school."

1993

Andy Hodgkins and family recently moved to Japan for his latest Air Force assignment. Andy is a civilian employee of the Air Force and is also a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force Reserve. He and his wife, Katie, and their two-year old son, Nolan, climbed Mount Fuji in July 2013. "It was a really great experience, definitely worth a spot on everyone's bucket list!" he says.

1994

Len Belliveau was promoted to director of northeast operations at Hughes Associates, a fire protection engineering and code consulting firm. He is directly responsible for the performance of the company's offices in Warwick, R.I., Marlborough, Mass., Armonk, N.Y., and New York City. Prior to that, Len served as the director of the Rhode Island office, where he supervised 10 people, most of whom were graduates of WPI's FPE program: **Mark Blackburn '03, '04 (MS FPE)** (who succeeds him as director for Rhode Island), **Joe Watson '99, '01 (MS FPE)**, **Kevin Toomey '06, '08 (MS FPE)**, **Chris Cumiskey '11 (MS FPE)**, **Charles Mason '06 (MS FPE)**, **Eric Camiel '11 (MS FPE)**, and **Dennis Sullivan '11**.

Pat MacGibbon writes, "It doesn't seem like yesterday anymore as this will be the 20th year since my ECE days at WPI. Our MQP predicted EV charging stations, hybrid vehicles, and government investment by the turn of the century. It's great to see EV technology come to life!"

The USS *Oklahoma City* (SSN 723) conducted a change of command on 20 December 2013 in San Diego, Calif. CDR **Andrew Peterson** was relieved by CDR Michael Conner. Peterson's next assignment will be as deputy commander, Submarine Squadron 15 in Guam.

"Bonjour, Class of '94," writes **Raedah Saman**. "I bring you my greetings from Paris, where I moved a year ago as a marketing manager for a French company. Having a blast with my husband, and we also founded an Arabic-speaking church. Take care, all!"

1996

After a year working for IAC at About.com and Ask.com, **Mike Caprio** is now employed as a software engineer for Neo Innovation Inc. In 2013, Mike organized the New York location for the NASA International Space Apps Challenge, the world's biggest cooperative hackathon, with 11,000+ global participants. Later that year, he was invited to and attended the inaugural "Yes by Yes Yes" (YxYY) conference in Palm Springs. He continues in his capacity as a community leader for the StartupBus organization in NYC.

1998

Matthew Freimuth was promoted to partner at the law firm of Wilkie Farr & Gallagher in New York. Matt's practice focuses on complex commercial litigation with an emphasis on antitrust matters, including class action litigation, FTC and DOJ investigations, mergers, compliance, and client counseling.

Gregory Murphy writes, "My second daughter, Alexandra, was born in September 2013. I am currently a sports medicine fellow at UMass Medical Center. As part my training I spent six months taking care of WPI athletes and working at WPI Health Services. It's great to be back on campus!"

With a January deep freeze in Worcester bringing temperatures below zero, **Jeff Spaleta** writes, "I'm in Antarctica right this minute, writing this email from McMurdo Station. Just to let you know... it's 44 degrees outside and sunny. Nothing really new since my last Class Note submission, but I'm super bummed out about Louis Curran's passing in December."

1999

Paul Graves (MS ENV) was recently interviewed about a "green" parking lot project his team managed this year on the University of Kansas campus. The interview can

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'07

Sunny Manivannan (left) and **Sid Rupani '05** summited Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania on Christmas Day. Climbing Kilimanjaro does not require technical skills, but endurance and altitude can be challenging, they note. The climb involves passing through ecosystems and climate zones from rainforest to moorland to alpine desert to glacier, and climbers experience landscapes of surreal beauty.



be read at lawrencebusinessmagazine.com. He writes, "A happy coincidence for me was that my daughter's middle school writing class analyzed another article about the project in which I was quoted several times, and she gained a little more insight into my work."

2001

Paul Lamson-LaPlume (née LaPlume) reports, "This year marks my ninth year teaching high school math in Yarmouth, Maine. Next year will find me entering new territory: I'll add an introduction to robotics course to my teaching load as the culmination of two years of a pilot study. I still play trombone, although not as often as when I was involved in six of the instrumental ensembles at WPI. I've kept my radar on as I work with students, looking for those who would be a good fit for WPI. This year marks the first such excellent fit: Devon Bray, who was essentially born to attend WPI, is now a freshman. I keep trying to build awareness in all students who have a *Lehr and Kunst* bent. I wouldn't have predicted my current situation when I graduated back in 2001, but I don't regret my choices, and I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing had it not been for the excellent examples of teaching shown to me through most of my WPI professors."

Johanna (Tenczar) and **Matt Shaw '00** welcomed their third son on Oct. 5, 2013. Jackson Daniel weighed in at 9 pounds, 8 ounces. He joined older brothers Brechin and Riley.

Stacey Leisenfelder Ward writes, "Lots has happened since I graduated from WPI! I earned my PhD in microbiology/immunology from SUNY Upstate Medical University in 2007, and married my husband, Jeff Ward, in 2010 (with **Tom Solodyna**, **Matthew Lewis**, and **Nikole (Howard) Lewis '02** in attendance). We then moved to St. Louis so I could complete my postdoctoral studies in cancer biology. We welcomed our first child, Benjamin George Ward, on Nov. 16, 2013, and are adjusting to our new expanded family!"

2002

Juan Chaves (PhD MFE) writes with this news. "I had successful cancer surgery, and my son, Juan Ignacio, started his second year at the United States Naval Academy."

Daniel Young was elected to the Board of Governors of the Boston Patent Law Association for 2014. He is a patent attorney at Wolf Greenfield in Boston.

2003

Mark Blackburn ('04 MS FPE) has been promoted to director of the Warwick, R.I., office of Hughes Associates, where he works with many WPI FPE alumni.

2004

Becca (Hanifen) and **Kevin Derwin** welcomed their first child, James Timothy, into the world on July 18, 2013. "He arrived seven weeks before his due date, while we were visiting my family in Virginia," writes Becca. "After a relatively short stay in the NICU, we took Jamie home with us to Massachusetts, where he has been growing into a healthy, happy baby boy!"

Greg Kronenberger reports that he still lives in Germany and is working for Booz & Company (soon to be PwC). He continues his focus on supporting companies in planning and executing large-scale transformation programs, typically implementation of new ERP systems.

2005

Barrett Franklin was awarded the AAMI's (Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation) 2013 Young Professional Award. The award is given annually to a professional under the age of 40, who exhibits exemplary professional accomplishments and a commitment to the healthcare profession. Barrett was the award's inaugural recipient.

On Sept. 12, 2013, **Jonathan Mulla** and **Melissa (Costello) Mulla '06** welcomed their first child, Isolde Pamela, into the world. "Everyone is happy and healthy," they report.

Keri (Driscoll) Sicard, patent attorney at Loginov & Assoc., was promoted to name partner last year. To accompany her promotion, the firm will change its name Loginov & Sicard PLLC. Keri received her juris doctorate from the University of New Hampshire School of Law (formerly Franklin Pierce Law Center) in 2008.

Patrick Spencer and his wife, Raegan, are Peace Corps volunteers stationed in Madagascar's Morondava District. See the Bookshelf column in this issue to learn about their efforts with the Peace Corps' Stomp Out Malaria In Africa initiative, and their book, *The Story of Soa and the Moka*, about a little girl who learns not to trust the "moka" (mosquito).

2007

Geoff Batstone writes, "My wife, Meghan, and I have been married for over a year, and things have been great! Looking ahead, we're excited about this year's plans to travel to Mexico City for a wedding, to Houston to meet my brother's first baby, and to Europe for our second honeymoon. We expect this year to be jam-packed! I'm approaching my fourth year at National Grid as a transmission engineer, and am excited about the new opportunities. This year I also plan to take the PE exam in civil engineering and hopefully receive my professional engineering license."

Sam Feller was on campus in February for a lunchtime talk, as part of WPI's first "Geek Week." Students were invited to patch up their glasses with black tape and hike their pants high for Dress-up Day, sport pocket protectors and suspenders, or dress up as *Big Bang* characters. Sam spoke with students about founding his own company (awkward engineer.com) and figuring out his life path. "I want to tell them it's not even about open-ended problem solving," he says. "It's open-ended about deciding what you want to do. Everything you learn helps you with the next thing." Sam's Cookie Dunkr Cups are finally available for sale, with newly perfected High Milk Displacement Technology. "It's taken a year-and-a-half to get here, through the lows of an unfunded Kickstarter, to the excitement of signing a licensing deal. It's the largest project I've ever started, and holding finished products in my hands for the first time was a thrill. It's been an incredible journey, and I'm so thankful for everyone that helped me get this far."

2008

Chris DaCunha received his degree in 2009, after working at WPI for six years. He reports that the past five years have been quite an adventure. "I moved to California for an exciting opportunity in biofuels, then, two years later, I started a company with people I met while speaking at a NASA conference. My company, Universal Bio Mining LLC, is making the mining industry more efficient and environmentally friendly via biology. UBM was started in San Francisco and has since expanded to Arizona. I have done extensive volunteering in science education for several organizations: most notably iGEM, BioGENEius, and CCSF Bridge to Biotech programs. I was married in 2011, and we just had twins this past October. I stay busy making beers and cheeses, and playing bass guitar (when the twins allow)."

Omari O'Neal McPherson ('10 MS MTI) writes, "I just became a father to a little star named Shiloh. I'm currently working on new music and videos to complement my independently released album, *Til Shiloh*, available at OmariONeal.com. Right now, 2014 looks incredibly promising, and I wish the rest of the alumni body a prosperous new year!" (Read more about Omari's work in the *W/* section of this issue.)

Ryan Trunko writes, "I have been accepted to take the Professional Engineering License Exam in April 2014, and have already started studying. My wife and I are also expecting our first child in late May, which will result in a very busy springtime."

Jodi (Lowell) and Neil Whitehouse '05 were married in July 2012, and welcomed the birth of their first child, Edith, in September 2013.

2009

Alex Schwartz of OWLchemy Labs announces the team's latest game, *Dyscourse*, which was successfully funded on Kickstarter. "Because this game is by far our most ambitious project, we went the Kickstarter route to raise money, providing pre-orders and rewards to those who buy-in early. *Dyscourse* is a survival game like you've never seen. You and a haphazard group of travelers are marooned on a desert island and your choices on that island greatly affect the outcome." Special note for 'Slacker Backers' — Missed the Kickstarter? You can still join the party at discourse.com.

2010

Nick Comeau writes, "Since graduation I have been working for UMass Memorial Health Care as a process improvement specialist. Basically, it's a fancy way of saying I coach our employees on projects where they look to make improvements to their work. I work with a variety of people, both clinical and non-clinical, from those on the frontlines of care delivery to the chairs of departments. My role ranges from direct facilitation of improvement projects (we use the A3 methodology) to behind-the-scenes coaching. As a Lean Black Belt, I am involved in projects related to improving patient access (getting the services our patients need, when they need them), strategic planning and leadership development in the department of Family Medicine, and improving the flow and sharing of information. I also spend a good amount of time in the classroom. We train our physicians and staff in lean and process improvement, and even have our own belt system. I teach our one-day White Belt course, two-day Yellow Belt Course, and nine-month Black Belt course."

Nathan and **Lianne (Elsner) Poisson** of Hudson, N.H., announce the birth of their son, James Michael Poisson, on Sept. 16, 2013, at Southern New Hampshire Medical Center. James was 7 pounds, 6 ounces and 20¾ inches long at birth.

Justin Skelly writes, "I proposed to Erika Wilson on the evening of Saturday 1/18/2013. This life-changing moment took place in East Falmouth, Mass., at her cousin's house, where we were first introduced. I misled Erika into thinking that we were attending a dinner party, but she was happily surprised when we arrived to candles, lanterns, and lights set up outside at the spot of our first kiss. We spent the rest of the weekend on the Cape celebrating together. I have been working on my master's degree in environmental engineering part time since graduation and will be finishing in the spring. Erika will complete her long journey of medical school in the spring, as well."

Vickie Valencia writes, "I moved to Oregon last year, and I've had some WPI friends visit. I'm still settling into the Portland metro area, and I've been able to learn some fun skills along the way. Since moving out here, I've learned to identify healing and edible plants, build a fire using hemlock twigs as kindling, and build a shelter in the woods with sticks and mud. I also joined a Morris dancing team that performs around town. I hope that in 2014 I'll be able to add another achievement to my list: to be employed as a mechanical engineer."

'12

Alex Segala writes, "I work at Phoenix Inc. in Seekonk Mass., which is owned by **Bob Fuller '81**. Our head of electrical engineering is **Michael Euell '00**. **Brian Aguiar** (who spent his freshman and sophomore year at WPI before transferring to UMass Dartmouth) and I make up part of the mechanical engineering team, and we have been the main mechanical engineers on an interesting project. We are completing the installation of an 8m VTMC (dubbed "The 1 Million Pound Machine," which is the largest of its kind built anywhere in North America in the past 50 years. I thought the Institute may be happy to see what it has obviously had some hand in creating." (Below, from left, Alex, Bob, Michael, and Brian.)

2011

Nina Bass has a new role at ExxonMobil as the Intermediates and Aromatics Improve Planner at the Baton Rouge Chemical Plant. She says she enjoyed her many adventures of 2013, including trips to Israel, Kansas, Puerto Rico, Austin, and San Antonio. Nina is looking forward to celebrating the marriages of several close friends in 2014.

Jennifer Kamara came to campus in November to give a presentation sponsored by the Global Humanitarian Alliance (which she founded at WPI). After graduation she worked for Novartis, a biomedical research company, and also started her own NGO, World Health Equity (worldhealthequity.org). Her presentation focused on her organization's role in addressing the inequity of health care globally, particularly in her home country of Sierra Leone.

2012

Kaitlyn Kelley writes, "After working at Pratt & Whitney as a test engineer for a year, I relocated to Seattle to pursue a career in the space industry. Now I'm working as a mission manager at Spaceflight Inc., a space start-up in Tukwila, Wash. The company helps provide access to space for small satellites, like CubeSats. My job is to ensure that small satellites are properly integrated to launch vehicles."

2013

Macauley Kenney competed in the 2013 Global Finals of the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) Present Around the World (PATW) competition in London. She represented the Americas region at the final.



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