

PRESIDENTIAL PROFILES

December 29th, 2019



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Penn State Scranton
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Wilkes University

Stability of the region rests with the quality of education system

By Bill O'Boyle
boboyle@timesleader.com

WILKES-BARRE — Earlier this year, Larry Newman, executive director of the Diamond City Partnership, said a significant key to the economic growth and stability of any region rests with the quality of education at all levels.

Northeastern Pennsylvania — and specifically Luzerne County — is fortunate to have many colleges and universities that provide numerous programs that produce thousands of graduates each year.

“Consider this: in 1919, Wilkes-Barre was the largest city in the United States without any college or university to educate its young people,” Newman said. “Today, Greater Wilkes-Barre boasts five different colleges and universities enrolling more than 16,000 students. That didn’t happen by accident, but through hard collective effort.”



Ooms

Teri Ooms, executive director of The Institute for Public Policy & Economic Development, said a 2019 study shows that collective higher education investment in Luzerne County exceeds \$547 million — about \$28 million more than



Newman

2018 and supports 3,516 jobs in the community, with more than 700 jobs being from sectors other than higher education and 369 more jobs than in 2018.

Ooms said she ran a high-level model of economic impact based on the number of employees at Wilkes, Kings, Misericordia, LCCC, and PSU Hazleton and Wilkes-Barre. She said since it is based only on current employment and doesn’t include student and visitor spending, it is a very conservative estimate of the economic impact in Luzerne County.

“Luzerne County has a number of higher education institutions which contribute so much to the region,” Ooms said. “First, they support economic development activities since they have the capacity to provide a trained and skilled workforce. Workforce is the primary driver determining if a business will locate in a region.”

Ooms said from the community college pro-

grams to the professional degree programs, higher education creates the region’s workforce pipeline.

“Equally important and mostly overlooked, higher education is an economic driver in and of itself,” Ooms said. “The institutions are criticized for being nonprofits, i.e. exempt from property taxes, but their economic impact supports our communities in so many different ways.”

Ooms said the colleges and universities are major employers with family-sustaining jobs. She said employees reinvest their earnings in the region through purchasing local goods and services. And the schools themselves buy local goods and services.

“Further, there is impact of student spending and additional spending when their families and friends come to visit,” Ooms said. “Finally, their capital projects create short-term economic boosts through construction. All in all, their collective annual economic impact — not including student and visitor spending.

Wico Van Genderen, president/CEO of the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce, said there is a “collegiate energy” in Luzerne County that extends from downtown Wilkes-Barre to the Back Mountain and throughout the Val-



Van Genderen

ley. “The alignment of business and academics makes for a great local economic ecosystem,” Van Genderen said. “Wilkes, Kings, Misericordia, Penn State/Wilkes-Barre, and Luzerne County Community College have all expanded their programs and their facilities, resulting in more students and deeper specializations.”

Van Genderen said LCCC’s downtown campus is their fastest growing. Simultaneously, Wilkes and Kings have also seen increases in incoming undergraduate and graduate students in their Wilkes Barre Campuses. Misericordia is in the midst of the completion of a \$30 million Science Center and Penn State also expanded on their Invent Penn State drive to encourage entrepreneurial, health services and STEM-based programming aligned to the skill-set needed in the region. All of which not only adds to the regional

“college-town” vibe, but also makes us more resilient and sustainable in bucking the trends to national enrollment numbers that are trending down.

Strong academic capital provides a great ecosystem for STEM-based innovation, research, entrepreneurial creativity and business activity — not just in higher education, but in critical specialty trades as well, Van Genderen said, in fact LCCC now offers specialty trade curricula and certifications that align with the need for skilled trade labor in the workforce.

“With high demand for graduates of LCCC’s welding, automotive and additive manufacturing programs, there’s now a waiting list to enroll at LCCC’s Technology Center,” he said.

“Add academic capital, business innovation, and community leadership and you have a strong synergy in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

Van Genderen said by connecting the academic capital of the colleges and universities to the growing and diverse businesses and to the community’s social sector, you create “a fertile Petrie dish” producing sustainable economic momentum in the region.

According to a 2017 study done by the Association of Independent

Colleges & Universities of Pennsylvania, private colleges and universities play a major role in the state’s economy:

- \$5.67 billion — Salaries and wages paid to employees, making private colleges and universities the fourth largest industry employer in PA.
- \$9.6 billion — Institutional expenditures.
- \$1.8 billion — Student and visitor spending (\$1.7 billion in student spending, \$155 million in visitor spending).
- \$1.1 billion — Value of federal funds received for research and development projects.
- \$945 million — Construction and renovation projects.
- \$167 million — State payroll taxes.
- \$136 million — Municipal taxes (wages and local services taxes).
- \$17.9 billion — Total economic impact of private college and universities in Pennsylvania.

Another recent study done by the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania — The Economic Impact of Education in Pennsylvania — revealed that the nearly 290,000 students enrolled at independent colleges and universities in Pennsylvania spend \$1 billion annually, or \$2.7 million a day at local Pennsylvania businesses. The total economic

Diana Rogers-Adkinson, Bloomsburg University



Submitted
Dr. Diana Rogers-Adkinson joined Bloomsburg University as provost/senior vice president of academic affairs in June.

By Marcella Kester
For Times Leader

BLOOMSBURG – Bloomsburg University is preparing for a series of changes, additions and enhancements, and helping to lead the way is a new provost.

Following a nationwide search, Dr. Diana Rogers-Adkinson began her tenure at Bloomsburg University in June. She previously served Southeast Missouri State University, where she led seven departments and more than 3,500 students as the dean of the College of Education, Health and Human Studies.

“When I got to Bloomsburg for my interview I immediately felt at home,” she said. “The passion for students by the faculty, staff and President (Dr. Bashar) Hanna was what I was looking for in the step phase of my career. I knew I was joining an institution with the same values as

mine.” Hanna said he was excited to welcome Rogers-Adkins aboard, citing her extensive experience that can serve faculty and students at Bloomsburg University, alike. “Her focus on academic excellence, student success and retention, along with faculty growth and

“I knew I was joining an institution with the same values as mine.”

development aligns perfectly with our strategic direction. In addition, she understands and has a

track record of fostering, supporting and nurturing a diverse student population,” he said. Earning her master’s degree in counseling, Rogers-Adkinson began her career working as a special education teacher and therapist for students with emotional disorders. Realizing there was a

missing bridge between the two sectors, she would later earn her doctorates in both to create an encompassed care plan for her patients and their families.

It wasn’t until a faculty mentor suggested becoming a professor that she considered a career in higher education. She would later rise through the ranks of higher education, leading others while utilizing her education and human development

backgrounds. Rogers-Adkinson works alongside Hanna to meet priorities and goals of Bloomsburg University. While the president focuses on external factors – such as working with the community, alumni and key stakeholders – the provost handles inward duties to ensure the academic mission of the university is fulfilled.

“President Hanna and I meet weekly to discuss our priorities and goals,” she said. “We try to make sure we are serving all of our constituents effectively in service to Bloomsburg University.”

Along with a new provost, the institution also welcomed some new courses of study and long-term plans for prospective students.

It recently opened the Diehl Center for Law School Preparation to assist students looking to pursue legal careers. It also approved a Professional Sales major, and is



developing a Bachelor of Fine Arts. A Masters in Social Work is also awaiting approval, with even more programs working their way through planning stages. As an institution within the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, the future of Bloomsburg University is one that has the potential to be interconnected, Rogers-Adkinson explained.

“PASSHE is exploring how we can share programs and open up new opportunities for students across the system. It will be an interesting process as the long-term goal is that PASSHE schools could share majors across

our campuses through online learning,” she said. On taking her new role, Rogers-Adkinson said she’s currently focused on taking input, listening and understanding before inciting change. As a first generation college student herself, she feels like she can relate to students on campus today and welcomes conversation.

“I hope students will feel like they can ask me questions when they see me on campus. I walked their shoes once. Asking for help can seem scary, but everyone at Bloomsburg University wants our students to be successful. We are all here to help,” she said.



Submitted
Dr. Rogers-Adkinson interacts with students during regular, informal morning coffee meetings that she holds with students and faculty.



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Jim Lytle, Clarks Summit University




Name: Jim Lytle

Title: President of Clarks Summit University

Quote: "I want this school to continue being a school that shapes your life, makes you into someone who loves God and wants others to love God."



clarkssummit.edu

By Jerry Lynott
jlynott@timesleader.com

SOUTH ABINGTON TWP. — The numbers are there and Jim Lytle believes he can bring some of them here to Clarks Summit University through distance learning.

The university president has a goal of increasing the online enrollment five-fold and is counting on the school's faith-based education as the multiplier.

His predecessors have left their marks through capital improvements and expansion and Lytle, 66, a graduate from the small, private school in Northeastern Pennsylvania, wants to build on that framework.

"A president's supposed to make sure there's a school next year and in a hundred years," Lytle says during an interview earlier this month on campus.

"Pushing out the boundaries on who we are serving education to, I've come to this job when distance education is becoming normal, not abnormal," he says.

The push under his guidance is to go

beyond the approximate 600 students pursuing bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees into the thousands. The post post graduate degree students account for most of the online studies.

"I'm looking by 2023 to have 3,200 online students. That sounds huge until you look at what the market is, the available market," Lytle says.

He estimates there are 35 million Americans in that category, but it shrinks when considering the majors and curriculum his school offers.

Every undergraduate has a dual major - taking 30 credits in biblical studies and the remainder to reach their total of 120 credits to earn a degree in their field of study. It's in line with the school's aim to produce graduates who are "Christ-centered and Career-Ready."

The school offers 40 undergraduate majors in business and communications, education, Christian ministry, sports and sciences and human services. It also offers master's degrees and doctorates from Baptist Bible Seminary.

"When you bring in the faith aspects of it, that changes the flavor of our classes. That changes the color as you go through there. That's kind of the secret sauce in there," Lytle explains.

It is an acquired taste, Lytle acknowledges.

"We do want our grads to be Christ-centered. We want them to know God and love him and serve other people for him, but then also have the skills along with that so that their first boss doesn't have to say to them, 'Around here, we are not passive-aggressive.

Around here, we solve problems by talking to people.' And we want them to develop that skill in college," Lytle says.

He speaks from experience. "I know how it works," he says.

Lytle, who is married and has four daughters, is a 1977 graduate who went onto the seminary to earn two master's degrees. He received a Doctor of Ministry from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. He taught at the school for 14 years, went to South Africa as a missionary with his wife, Diane, and children. He was named 10th president of the school in 2015.

Teaching is still part of his mission and a way to connect with the students.

"A small school, you oughta have people who

care about you. It's hard to hide in a small school," he says.

Lytle's been teaching "Principles of Bible Study" for 39 years and has redeveloped over that time to let his students know how to approach the Bible.

"So I teach that class because I want to know who the students are. I want to know who the student leaders are, you know. I want to have a part in making them what they can be with that," he says.

His contribution is just one component of the larger sum made up of the entire school's faculty and staff.

"I've got some exceptional educational and business professionals who work here with me, who've got the same vision for students. And so they play into it," Lytle

says. "And you talk to any other presidents here in the valley and they're going to tell you they succeed because of their cabinet. And that's just as true here."

Without them, neither he, the school, nor the schools succeed, Lytle points out.

"I want this school to continue being a school that shapes your life, makes you into someone who loves God and wants others to love God," Lytle says.

"Can that keep some students away? Sure. And we gotta be OK with that. And we gotta say then well you fit over there. On the other hand, it can draw some really cool people in too."

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Marcia G. Welsh, East Stroudsburg University



East Stroudsburg University: Marcia G. Welsh

Submitted Photo



Name: Marcia G. Welsh

Title: President of East Stroudsburg University

Quote: "Student success continues to be at the heart of all we do at East Stroudsburg University, and it begins the first day they set foot on campus."

By Geri Gibbons
For Times Leader

East Stroudsburg University President Marcia G. Welsh takes seriously her role of overseeing a university which provides a spirit of diversity and excellence that prepares students for their careers and for life.

The 13th president of the university and the first female to serve in that role, Welsh is quick to speak of the university's commitment to building entrepreneurial programs and opportunities that fuel an innovative learning environment while supporting econom-

Finance and Accounting/Marketing. Welsh said the university was quick to identify the needs for these programs in the current business environment and to respond with the opportunity for students to excel in these areas. The university has also added a master's

to the office, but instead works to build relationships with students. For example, during December's final exam week, Welsh again made her way from dorm to dorm to deliver cookies, to fuel students both emotionally and physically.

The university as a whole celebrated the holiday season in several ways, including a giant card crafted by students in the university's Art and Design program.

The 8-by-20 foot card was put out on campus to be signed by students and staff.

The university also puts together a five minute video that celebrates the holidays, reflecting a spirit of diversity.

For several weeks in December, the video has a prominent presentation on the school's website.

Welsh emphasizes that because 40.3 percent of the undergraduate student body is diverse, the university also seeks to employ teaching staff which is diverse.

"Our professors are role models to the students," she said. "We keep that in mind."

About 84 percent of students receive financial aid at the university, which offers 58 undergraduate, 21 graduate and 2 doctoral programs.

For students athletes, the university offers 22

varsity sports, recently having added women's wrestling and tumbling/acrobatics.

Top fields of study at the school are exercise science, criminal justice, business management and biology.

Welsh said enrollment continues to hover at just over 6,000.

When other university's are struggling to attract students, ESU continues to maintain a consistent student base.

Some of that, she said, could be attributed to the university's geography, making it easily accessible to both Philadelphia and New York City, just two blocks from Interstate 81.

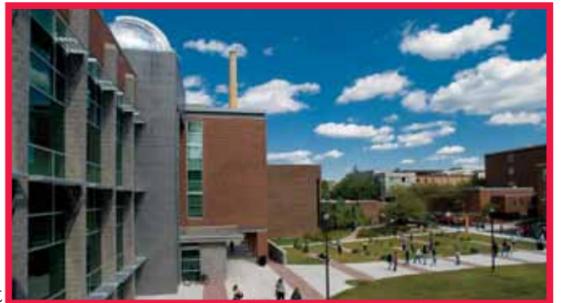
"Our location provides great opportunity for quality internships and externships for students," she said.

The university is also in the heart of the Pocono Mountains.

"Some families come to vacation in the area and decide this is where they want to go to school," she said.

Welsh continues to be excited about the university's Warrior Promise program launched in the Fall of 2018. The program guarantees that undergraduate students will pay the same tuition rate, without an increase, for four years.

The program enables



Fred Adams | For Times Leader

East Stroudsburg University President Marcia G. Welsh, Ph.D., and the University's Warrior mascot arrive at an open house event to greet hundreds of prospective students.

ic growth and stability in the Pocono Region and beyond.

As an example, Welsh points to the introduction of two undergraduate program introduces within the last two years:

degree in accounting and a doctorate program in Health Sciences this year – again, in response to student input and the current job market.

Welsh, however, has never limited her duties

undergraduate students to complete as many undergraduate degrees, minors and certificates as they choose within their four-year window.

Its intent is to provide students and their families with financial predictability and removes concern about annual tuition increases. ESU is the first public university in Pennsylvania to provide this guarantee.

The university, Welsh said, is also committed to building entrepreneurial programs and opportunities that fuel an innovative learning environment, inspire ideas and

business creation while also supporting economic growth and stability in the Pocono Region and beyond.

"We are very fortunate to have such great partnerships with businesses in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industries as well as those in the financial and health care fields that enable our students to get quality internship opportunities that prepare them for today's job market, she said. "Our partnerships with the K-12 system ensure our teacher education candidates are the best-of-the-best."

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Raquel Sosa '19
Psychology Major
Wilkes-Barre, PA

ESU.edu

Madeline Levy Cruz, Fortis University



Madeline Levy Cruz has been president of the Fortis Institute's campuses in Scranton and Forty Fort for eight years.

Bill Tarutis | For Times Leader

By Geri Gibbons
For Times Leader

In the eight years that Madeline Levy Cruz has served as president of Fortis Institute's Scranton and Forty-Fort campuses, she has held fast to the school's commitment to equipping students for the workforce, providing area businesses with skilled employees.

Cruz, who calls education "a great equalizer" is a first generation American and the first person in her family to receive a college education.

"I know firsthand how important it is and the effect it's had on my family and my community," she said. "I love being in an industry that affords students such a tangible outcome."

Cruz, who has an open door policy and enjoys hearing students' stories, said education has the ability to change people's lives.

"Several years ago, we had a student who was attending the school and living in a shelter," she said. "The student struggled throughout his time at Fortis, but was able to graduate."

"Upon graduating the

student was immediately hired and within six months, had a home and was able to be with his children."

Cruz recently bumped into the student in the community and was happy that his time at Fortis has seemed to change the trajectory of his life.

Cruz said when she came to the school, she was determined to make a difference and to adequately prepare students for the work world and to benefit the community as an institution.

"When I first came on board, I wanted to make sure that our schools partnered with other community organizations and employers to provide the best training possible for our students in their chosen field," she said. "To that end,

I made sure that our instructors had plenty of field experience in addition to didactic training."

Additionally, under Cruz's watch, the school grew its network of internship providers and clinical sites to ensure students had real-time field experience before they graduate.

The Institute has 10 programs between two campuses: Practical Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Expanded Functions Dental Assisting, Medical Assistant, Phlebotomy and Lab Assistant, Medical Billing and Coding, Electrical Trades, HVAC, Massage Therapist and CDL-A training.

The Scranton and Forty Fort campuses serve upwards of 300 students.



Name: Madeline Levy Cruz

Title: Campus president

Quote: "Career training allows people to find a career that can help them change their future outlook in a short period of time."



Fortis Institute President Madeline Levy Cruz describes the school as the 'premier locations for occupational training in our area.'

Fred Adams | For Times Leader

Times Leader Media Group is proud to support the many prestigious colleges and universities in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties. Some of the Times Leader's most stand-out employees - from the newsroom to advertising to circulation and beyond - have succeeded because of the education they received in these schools.

As we begin a New Year, the Times Leader thanks these schools for the efforts they have made to better our communities and our residents.



Wilkes University

Steven J. Scheinman, M.D., Geisinger School of Medicine



President and Dean Steven J. Scheinman, M.D., of Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, Scranton, is shown working at his desk at the medical college.

By Patrick Kernan
pkernan@timesleader.com

SCRANTON — 2019 was another big year of growth for the Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine, if you ask Steven J. Scheinman, M.D.

And Scheinman has a better chance of knowing that than anyone, considering he's been serving as the president and dean of the school almost since its inception.

With multiple campuses around the area — and even as far away as Atlantic City, N.J. — the school's growth seems poised to continue.

And while there are numerous things to be excited about on the school's multiple campuses, Scheinman said that perhaps the most interesting is the school's Geisinger Primary Care Scholars Program, a new program being offered to incoming freshman.

According to Scheinman, the program is open to 40 students in each incoming class. If a student agrees to work in primary care at a Geisinger facility for a certain amount of time after graduation, Geisinger agrees to not only give that student a full schol-

students, as it all but ensures a lack of student loans to repay and job after graduation, making it very attractive.

Additionally, heading into the new year, Scheinman said that the school is going to be "looking at (its) curriculum with a fresh look."

helping students begin developing their professional identities. Also, as evidenced by the new Geisinger Primary Care Scholars Program, Scheinman said there will be an increased focus on primary care.

Since last year, Scheinman said the launch of the new Atlantic City campus has been everything the school could have hoped for.

"We're very enthusiastic about our students," Scheinman said. "We can already say our Atlantic City campus launch was a great success."

Additionally, Scheinman said there will be a series of new online masters programs being offered online, including

"We can already say our Atlantic City campus launch was a great success."

arship, but also a living stipend.

"It's not a gift, though," Scheinman said. "If they don't come back, they owe the money back. It's more like a forgivable loan."

It's a program that is likely to be incredibly popular with incoming

"We want to preserve those elements that we're very proud of," Scheinman said, specifically citing the school's emphasis on active, hands-on learning instead of lectures.

But, he said, there are other things the school is looking to begin to emphasize more, like

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine

Name: Steven J. Scheinman, M.D.

Title: President and Dean, Geisinger School of Medicine

Quote: "We're very enthusiastic about our students. We can already say our Atlantic City campus launch was a great success."

healthcare administration and biomedical informatics.

These programs are being launched in conjunction with the Univer-

sity of Sciences in Philadelphia.

Reach Patrick Kernan at 570-991-6386 or on Twitter @PatKernan

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geisinger.edu/gcsom

Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine

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Katie Leonard, Johnson College



Katie Leonard has served as Johnson College president since 2018.

Submitted Photo



Name: Katie Leonard

Title: President of Johnson College

Years of Service: 13 (one as president)

Quote: "I just fell in love with Johnson College. From the moment I stepped on this campus, I felt like I was home."



johnson.edu

By Kevin Carroll
kcarroll@timesleader.com

SCRANTON — Johnson College President Katie Leonard may have only taken office back in January 2018, but she's already left an indelible mark on the school.

Originally from New York, Leonard earned a bachelor's degree from York College of Pennsylvania and worked there in numerous roles, meeting her future husband and deciding to move to Northeastern Pennsylvania.

She started at Johnson College in 2007 as the school's Coordinator of Grants. She immediately realized that she was in the right place.

"I just fell in love with Johnson College," Leonard said. "From the moment I stepped on this campus, I felt like I was home."

Even though she's spent more than a decade at Johnson, Leonard admits that higher educa-

tion wasn't always the plan, but when she saw an opportunity in the

nity like this again," said Leonard, "so I threw my hat in the ring when the

"Work is central in the lives of our students," Leonard said. "We

classes in Forest City starting in 2020, and also in Luzerne County.

year ahead.

There's also talk of expanding the internship program at Johnson.

"We have a very robust internship program here at Johnson," Leonard said. "Now, we're allowing students to enter the program a whole semester sooner."

"Employees love it, students love it."

As president, Leonard has overseen the growth and maturity of countless students under her watch, and according to her, it makes the job even more rewarding.

"To make the connection with students while they're here ... there's no better feeling," she said.

"I just fell in love with Johnson College, From the moment I stepped on this campus, I felt like I was home."

field, she took it.

"I just kept gaining more and more experience," Leonard said.

After serving as executive vice president starting in 2015, Johnson became the college's eighth president in 2018.

"I realized that I may never have an opportu-

school announced they were doing a search."

One of the very first advancements made under Leonard's watchful eye was the expansion of Johnson into a full-time, year-round campus, allowing flexibility for students who have to work in addition to taking classes.

wanted to create some flexibility that allows for an intercession."

Leonard also oversaw the creating of Johnson College's first advising office, where students can talk to advisers about their goals – personally, academically and professionally.

The college will offer

11."

Leonard also expects to fill the next class at Don's, starting in 2020.

Future plans for Johnson College include an industry fast-track program, where high school students can take courses for college credit and arrive at Johnson a whole

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Tracy Brundage, Keystone College



Tracy Brundage has served as president of Keystone College since July of 2018.

Kevin Carroll | Times Leader

By Kevin Carroll
kcarroll@timesleader.com

LA PLUME — In just her second year on the job, Keystone College president Tracy Brundage has already made a significant impact on the social and academic atmospheres of the school.

“We’re trying to make sure we have alignment with our career pathways so students know where they want to go,” Brundage said. “We want to make sure that their time here pays off.”

After taking over as president in July of 2018, Brundage immediately set to work building on Keystone’s already stellar academic reputation.

Her main goal, she says, is to make sure that students have their path to the future mapped out well before they leave campus.

“We really want to make the Keystone experience as transformational as we can for the students,” she said.

Brundage’s path to the presidency was a long one, with many stops along the way.

After earning a master’s degree at Penn State, Brundage worked in various academic roles at Penn State York, Harrisburg Community College

and Penn College before making her way to La Plume.

She served as provost and vice president in

charge of academic affairs for a year before former president David Coppola stepped down.

Brundage believes that

her ties to the area and to the campus helped her win the presidency.

“Working as the provost helped me get to know faculty, and the campus’s culture,” Brundage said. “I really had a good sense of the organization.”

This year has been a banner year for Keystone College, both academically and athletically. Keystone brought in its second-largest freshman class in the past 10 years with 350 new students coming to campus under Brundage’s watch in her first full year as president.

On the gridiron, Keystone’s football team had their very first season of competition in the fall.

Other advancements came in the form of Keystone’s computer science program, which features an artificial intelligence component to it. Other academic steps have been taken in Keystone’s visual arts and geology programs.

“Where it makes sense, we will continue to grow and improve,” Brundage said.



Brundage

Fred Adams | For Times Leader

Keystone College

Name: Tracy Brundage

Title: President of Keystone College

Quote: “We’re trying to make sure we have alignment with our career pathways so students know where they want to go. We want to make sure that their time here pays off.”

Tuition Price Reset

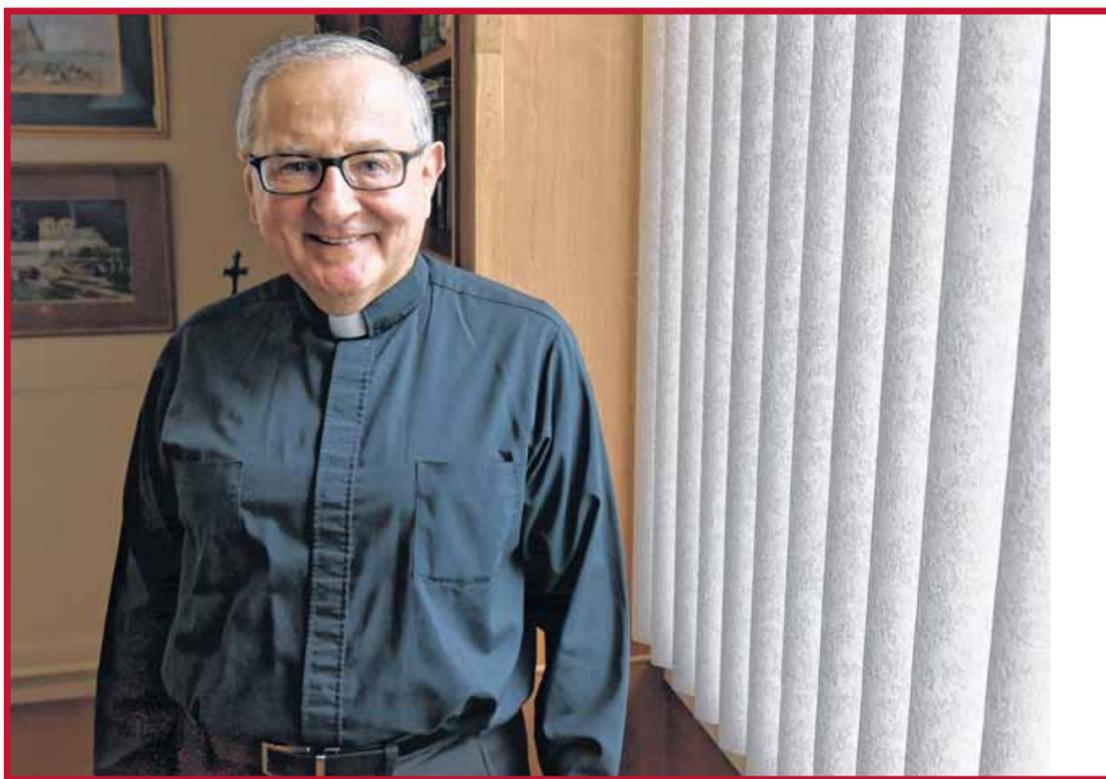
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“Keystone has always been a leader among colleges in making higher education affordable to as many students as possible.”

President Tracy L. Brundage, Ph.D.

Rev. Jack Ryan, C.S.C., King's College



Rev. Jack Ryan has been president of King's College since 2011.

Times Leader file photos

By Kevin Carroll
kcarroll@timesleader.com

WILKES-BARRE — From the seminary to the president's office at King's College, Rev. Jack Ryan has walked a long, long road.

"When you interview an old person like me, it's hardly ever a short answer," Ryan joked as he was asked about his path to the presidency at King's, an office that he has held since 2011.

The funny thing about Ryan, who was born and raised in Wilkes-Barre, is that he's actually a Wilkes University graduate, something he says that Wilkes interim president, Paul Adams, loves to hold over his head.

Since earning his degree, Ryan has been quite the traveler, enjoying stops in Philadelphia,

Reading and even up north in Toronto before entering the seminary, where he was ordained as a priest in 1990.

"It was always in the back of my mind to join the seminary," Ryan said. "So I figured I'd give it a try."

He taught his first course, a finance class, in 1984.

"I walked into that classroom and thought to myself, 'I just lowered the IQ of this room and I'm the teacher,'" Ryan said.

No matter the case, teaching stuck.

"It's not something I

planned, it's just something that I serendipitously stuck to, and I liked it," Ryan said.

He became the dean of the William McGowan School of Business at King's in 2004, a position he held until his elevation to the presidency in 2011.

Ryan prides himself on bringing in classes from all over the world.

"One of the things that people don't realize is that 60% percent of our students come from different parts of the world," Ryan said. "People come from all over to go to our school."

The last four incoming freshman classes are among the biggest the school's ever seen, according to Ryan.

He also wanted to broaden the university's horizons by implementing new academic programs.

"I wanted to broaden out a number of academic programs to align them with what students were asking for," Ryan said.

One such program was King's engineering program, which opened in 2011, Ryan's first year as president.

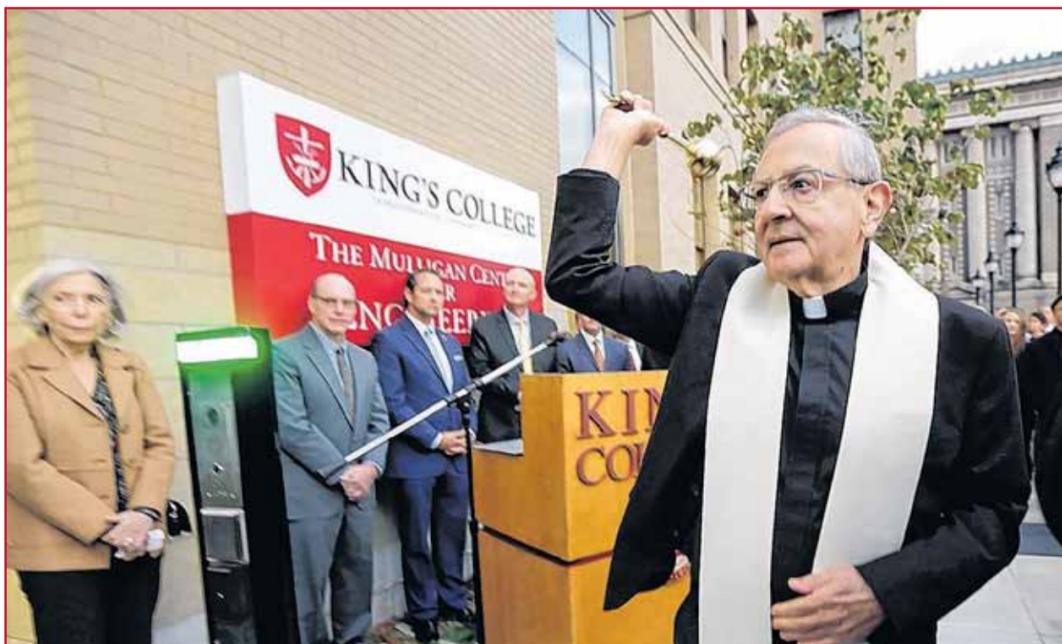
"In one decade, we



Name: Rev. Jack Ryan

Title: President, King's College

Quote: "One of the things that people don't realize is that 60% percent of our students come from different parts of the world. People come from all over to go to our school."



King's College President Rev. Jack Ryan blesses the Mulligan Center for Engineering during a ceremony on campus in Wilkes-Barre earlier this year.

Times Leader file photos

went from no engineering program to a fully-equipped program," Ryan said.

Ryan also wanted to expand the school's athletic opportunities. King's is up to 27 different athletic programs now.

"We wanted to offer a more robust array of sports, including hockey and track and field," Ryan said.

In just the last year, Ryan has started a joint nursing program with Luzerne County Community College, where students could spend their first year at King's, go to LCCC for two years, then

return back to King's to finish up.

King's is also on the verge of launching an e-sports program, as well

"Gaming is very popular with young people," Ryan said. "There's socializing and bonding that happens when your part of a team."

All in all, Ryan's proud of the legacy that he's built at King's.

"To help a woman or a man figure out what your gifts are, and to use those gifts to serve the common reward is incredibly rewarding," Ryan said.

Times Leader Media Group is proud to support the many prestigious colleges and universities in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties. Some of the Times Leader's most stand-out employees - from the newsroom to advertising to circulation and beyond - have succeeded because of the education they received in these schools.

As we begin a New Year, the Times Leader thanks these schools for the efforts they have made to better our communities and our residents.



Wilkes University

Mark Volk, Lackawanna College



By Roger DuPuis
rdupuis@timesleader.com

Mark Volk, president of Lackawanna College, is seen at his office.

Times Leader file photo

SCRANTON — Lackawanna College President Mark Volk understands the needs of the veterans in his student population.

That's because he is a veteran himself. Volk spent 26 years in the U.S. Army, retiring with the rank of colonel, before entering the world of academia. He respects that many of the college's students, including veterans, increasingly seek education which is relevant to the world of work and will help their employability. Many, especially the veterans, appreciate an education that is relatable and usable.

"It's about experiential learning versus book learning," he said during a recent interview. "People now want to make a difference." For Volk, helping move the college in that direction has been the capstone of a long and distinguished career. Volk is in the process of transitioning into retirement on a high note. It was announced earlier this year that Volk will be succeeded on July 1, 2020 by Dr. Jill Murray,

currently Lackawanna's executive vice president and chief innovation officer. Volk, an Easton native, is the son of a World War II veteran who joined the U.S. Marines in 1945. "I kind of grew up with the idea of service to the nation," he said. "I also knew in my mind that I wanted to be an officer." Volk earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from the University of Scranton in 1977. He said a chance encounter with a friend on the rifle team led him to ROTC and then to the military. That friend was Ray Angeli — whose career in many respects mirrored his own, and who was Volk's predecessor as Lackawanna's president. Volk entered the military thinking he would serve for two or three years. "But then it all kind of clicked for me," he recalled. "I loved the community, the mission." That mission would take him to diverse corners of the world, and lead to increasingly important roles. As his official college biography points out, Volk served in a variety of command and staff positions at home and overseas. He also trained as a Middle East/North Africa

Foreign Area Officer (FAO) regional specialist studying Arabic at the Defense Language Institute, the bio adds, and is also a graduate of the Department of State Foreign Service Institute, Tunisia, where he continued his Arabic studies and traveled extensively throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The transition to academia, again, was one where Angeli played a role, acting as a mentor when Volk was teaching

in the 1980s, and eventually drawing him to Lackawanna. Volk was appointed to the position of Vice President of Planning and Operations in 2004 and then was promoted to Executive Vice President of the College in 2007. He succeeded Angeli in 2012. Under Volk's tenure, the student body has grown 26%, to about 1,860, he said. Lackawanna has many programs to benefit veterans, and Volk said that

thanks to that and their benefits, many can attend for almost no cost. He also encourages them to be active members of the student community, from classroom to clubs and groups. "We all serve for different reasons, and at different times, from different cultures, but we all have a common bond," Volk said. "We all at one point raised our hands and took an oath."

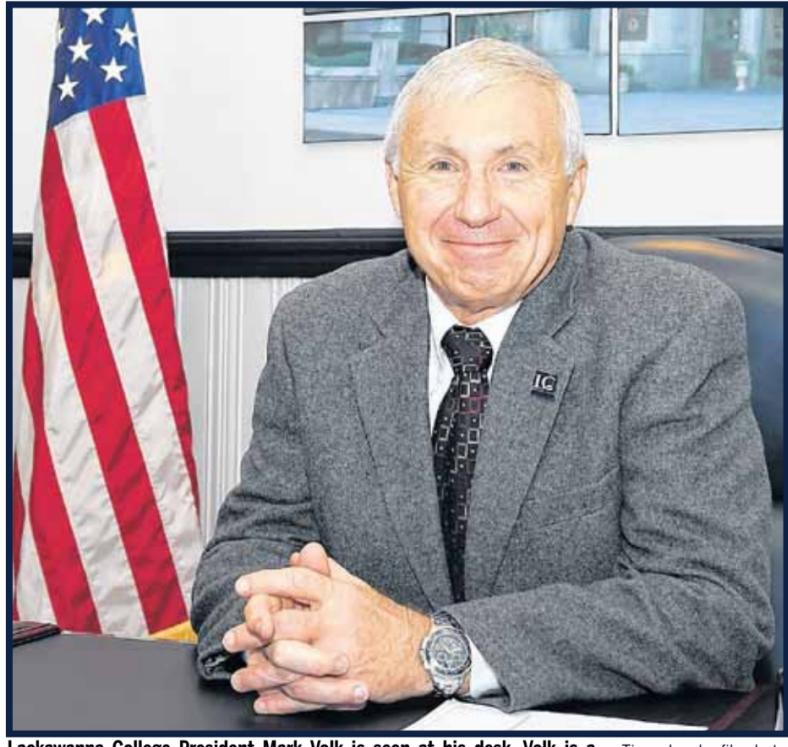


Name: Mark Volk

Job title: President of Lackawanna College

Years of service: 14.5

Quote: "It's about experiential learning versus book learning. People now want to make a difference."



Lackawanna College President Mark Volk is seen at his desk. Volk is a veteran who served 26 years in the U.S. Army, retiring as a colonel.

Times Leader file photo

Times Leader Media Group is proud to support the many prestigious colleges and universities in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties. Some of the Times Leader's most stand-out employees - from the newsroom to advertising to circulation and beyond - have succeeded because of the education they received in these schools.

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Thomas P. Leary, Luzerne County Community College



Times Leader file photo

Luzerne County Community College President Thomas Leary stands for a portrait in his office on the college campus in Nanticoke.

By Nick Albertson
nalbertson@timesleader.com

NANTICOKE — Thomas P. Leary has led Luzerne County Community College for 13 years as president and steward of the school.

When discussing his station at LCCC, Leary doesn't say a word about the personal attributes that make him the president he is. Instead, he talks about his students, his team and their goals as a community.

"Particularly, I think what we pride ourselves on is the fact that we are focused on student success in just about every aspect of people's lives," Leary said. "What we try to focus on is the fact that we have such a diversity of students who come to us from all kinds of academic and economic backgrounds. In many instances, we change family lives we help so many who never experience a college education before."

Leary goes on to tell a story, "a pertinent experience for me", as he put it. He describes standing at graduation and rewarding diplomas. One student in particular stood out to him. A woman who had spoken

to him about her goals for the future but was being held back financially by circumstances out of her control. Leary describes talking to her in his office and seeing her around on campus over the course of the three years she attended LCCC. He said at graduation, when handing this woman her diploma during one of the quiet moments of the ceremony, he heard the voice of a little girl calling out to her mommy who had just completed an education she may not have had elsewhere.

"It instilled in me that that was a real-life moment. Captured that that is going to change that family. Her daughter is going to learn to appreciate how important college is, she saw over those three years her mother working on papers and doing all the stuff that needs to be done but ultimately leading to that moment of celebration and accom-

plishment."

Leary cites this story as a difference between community colleges and four-year schools in that LCCC is an open door school with reasonable tuition allowing for all manner of students to walk through and, one day, across the graduation stage.

"There is such a great synergy in the community between the college and the people out there giving their time, their energy and their treasure to help students achieve their dreams. And that's what we're most proud of," Leary said. "Four out of our five graduates stay right here at home, so we're inextricably linked to the community."

Leary himself is no stranger to the private college experience. He received his bachelor's degree from King's College in Wilkes-Barre, his master's from the University of Scranton and attended Temple in Philadelphia while working on his master's. He does not see these schools as competitors to LCCC but rather as partners in education.

Networking and teaching students how to network has been and continues to be one of the advantages LCCC affords its students. Leary states how important it is that the community college experience be as much an

education in life as it is in school.

LCCC is expanding its network and increasing the accessibility of their service. Leary mentioned that this past September the college opened its seventh dedicated center in Watsonstown and that two of their centers are expanding. LCCC's dedicated center in Hazleton is adding space due to student demand and an expansion to the Wilkes-Barre center is being discussed.

"We learned that in Pittston, which we opened last year, from our students that they needed the center in Pittston or they would not be able to get their education."

The optimistic, solution-oriented, manner in which Leary and his team serve the students of the college is evident in the ability they have shown to face and overcome challenges by engaging in positive business with other institutions of learning and by adapting to the challenges facing students.

During this past semester, Leary was given a new contract by LCCC's board of trustees. It is an investment and vote of confidence that Leary has made it his mission to live up to.

"I'm driven by people who I work with who are on a mission and I'm part of it. It is important



Name: Thomas P. Leary

Title: President of Luzerne County Community College

Quote: "What we try to focus on is the fact that we have such a diversity of students who come to us from all kinds of academic and economic backgrounds. In many instances, we change family lives we help so many who never experience a college education before."

for us to never sit back and feel we have accomplished what we need to do," he said. "I get excited sitting around a table and hearing the ideas recently in the last couple of years."

One such idea has been LCCC's Academic English as a Second Language program, which Leary describes as a way for the many people who have come to the community LCCC serves to learn the language they will need to thrive there.

"We're really proud of the fact that we have established that in Hazle-

ton and Wilkes-Barre. We're moving it into Scranton, which also has a high demand," Leary said. "And the second program that really came from our faculty is the certified recovery specialist program. We're all familiar with, unfortunately, the opioid crisis, and we began a state model program that offers the opportunity for people who are in recovery to become certified recovery specialists. They'll be going back into agencies and other areas in our community to help those who are in recovery."



Times Leader file photo

Thomas Leary has been president of Luzerne County Community College for 13 years.

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Sister Mary Persico, Marywood University



By Patrick Kernan
pkernan@timesleader.com

SCRANTON — In last year’s edition of the Presidential Profiles, Sr. Mary Persico said there was no place she’d rather be working than Marywood University. Now, this year, Persico said there are more things to be excited about at Marywood than ever before.

Persico, who took over as the university’s 12th president in 2016, said there’s been an increased push to make Marywood a more community-focused school.

A main part of that initiative comes by way of the university’s purchase of the former Holy Family Residence, a retirement home only a short distance away from — or now ostensibly a part of — Marywood’s campus.

According to Persico, the facility will now be called Marywood Heights, and it serves as the first university-based retirement community in the area.

“It’s a brand new trend in education,”

Persico said.

Marywood Heights’ approximately 75 residents can expect to have the same level of care as they previously did, but its purchase by the university now opens up new opportunities for Marywood students, as medical and therapy students

will be able to do their course-required rotations directly at the home.

And another new initiative at the opposite end of life’s spectrum: early childhood.

The NativityMiguel School of Scranton now calls Marywood University home. A school

focused on providing education to low-income students in the area, the NativityMiguel School teaches 60 students between fifth and eighth grades right on Marywood’s campus.

Persico called it a “very specialized program,” which, once again, pro-



Marywood University President Sister Mary Persico, IHM.

Marywood

UNIVERSITY

Name: Sister Mary Persico

Title: President

vides unique opportunities for Marywood students.

“Our Marywood students have an opportunity to do student teaching there,” she said, adding that faculty members at the university have also given exciting presentations to the students there.

Persico said the Marywood community has responded incredibly well to the introduction of the wider community directly onto the campus in these new ways.

“(The students) love the interaction,” she said. “They love being helpful and being able to give

back.”

Other programs on campus have similar goals in mind, including the ever-expanding Veterans and Military center, focusing on providing education to veteran students, and an on-campus daycare for children under the age of 5.

She explained that providing unique educational opportunities like these that also have direct community benefits completely falls in line with the university’s mission.

“That’s who we really are,” she said. “This exemplifies our service to the community.”

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Tom Botzman, Misericordia University



Thomas Botzman is president of Misericordia University in Dallas.

Aimee Dilger | Times Leader

By Mark Guydish
mguydish@timesleader.com

DALLAS TWP. — Misericordia University may seem a tad isolated compared to the urban-centric campuses of King’s College and Wilkes University, but President Thomas Botzman gladly points to recent expansion and non-campus work designed to show how much a part of the community his school really is.

There is a sidewalk in both the borough and the township that runs all the way from downtown Dallas to the Anderson Athletic center,” Botzman notes. “We extended our parking lot and added some green space down where the Dallas dairy used to be.”

“We now have a space where people can go downtown, do a little bit of shopping at the local businesses and relax and enjoy our community,” he said. “We were really excited about creating a gateway to the university in a way that people would really know we are here.”

The sidewalk also helps connect various buildings on Lake Street that Misericordia has purchased and re-purposed, including John J. Passan Hall and three homes used for the Women With Children program — which, not incidentally, will add a fourth house soon. Botzman has championed the program, doubling the size and earning attention from the state, which has launched several pilot programs at other institutions of higher education.

Space on the campus itself has been periodically set up to be inviting

to students and public alike, he said, noting the recent addition of a statue of Catherine McCauley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy who in turn founded Misericordia. Plans call for tables and chairs and additional landscaping near the statue in spring “so one can stop and share their dreams with Catherine,” Botzman said, “and have a good cup of tea, as the sisters say.”

“We’ve done a lot of things symbolically to make it more of a gateway to who we are and who we’ve been, and who we will be.”

The “will be” is already unfolding with the expansion and renovation of the science center, and expansion of needs-based scholarships. “I like the idea of endowed scholarships,” he said. “We are rewarding the students who are capable and ready to go to school, but who need some support today. And some day it will be our children and grandchildren. It’s what I call inter-generational justice, that we are not only taking care of the residents in the valley and Pennsylvania today but 100 years from now, 150 years from now we will still be doing good.”

The campus itself

is growing thanks to the acquisition of the Payne Printery property between Lake Street and Memorial Highway. Planning is still in the early stages, but Botzman predicted the property will be used at least in part to expand the health sciences program, including more clinical space where students can get hands on experience in their fields.

Misericordia already has several on-campus clinic services, which Botzman proudly points to as another part of the community outreach.

“We do quite a bit of pro bono work,” including occupational therapy, a speech language and hearing center and an autism center.

“We’re doing things that say to the community, come on campus, be part of this,”

Botzman said. “We’re saying where are the needs, who needs help? The sisters always said

whoever needs help lets go find them, let’s walk, go find them and and give them help. So whether it’s

autism, or speech and language, or someone recovering from a stroke who needs physical therapy, we’re ready.

“We want to do as much good as we can and use the resources we’re given wisely, to make things better for all the people who live in this area.”



MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY

Name: Tom Botzman

Title: President of Misericordia University

Quote: “We want to do as much good as we can and use the resources we’re given wisely, to make things better for all the people who live in this area.”



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Davie Jane Gilmour, Penn College



By Marcella Kester
For Times Leader

PENNSYLVANIA
COLLEGE OF
TECHNOLOGY

Name: Davie Jane Gilmour

Hometown: Williamsport

Job, title: President, Pennsylvania College of Technology

Years of service: 21 as President; 42 with the College

Not only has Davie Jane Gilmour has been busy molding “tomorrow makers” at the Pennsylvania College of Technology for the past 21 years, but she’s also assisted in turning the higher education establishment into a national leader in applied technology education.

Known as Penn College, the Pennsylvania College of Technology is also a special mission affiliate of Pennsylvania State University.

Raised in Enola, Gilmour completed her bachelor’s degree in dental hygiene at West Liberty University. She would then come aboard Penn College (then Williamsport Community College) 42 years ago to help open its dental hygiene program as a full-time instructor and curriculum developer.

Gilmour would later go on to earn both her master’s degree and Ph.D. in health education from Penn State, as well as become the president of the college.

Graduates of 100-plus academic programs boast an overall 97.3% placement rate in the workforce, with several majors reaching a full 100% placement rate. Many Penn College graduates can find jobs in fields that range from nursing and plastics to aviation and mechatronics.

Their ability to quickly assert themselves into a variety of career fields matched with the significant impact they have on both the workforce and surrounding communities is what led Gilmour to call her graduates “tomorrow makers.”

“Teaching is at the heart of our educational mission,” Gilmour said. “We have a 100-year legacy in hands-on learning.”

Classrooms at Penn College feature state-of-the-art labs and equipment that allow students to gain marketable skills on industry-standard equipment. Penn College continues to collaborate with industry-leading companies who serve in an advisory capacity, she added.

“Our students learn from faculty with real-world experience. The state apportionment funding we have received is a testament to our value in producing graduates who address the critical skills

Excellence at the college epitomizes how college and industry can work collaboratively.

Nearly 50,000 Pennsylvanians are employed by the plastics industry with an annual payroll of \$2.5

billions – values that include meeting industry needs and empowering the future workforce for success,” Gilmour said. “For Penn College, this means producing tomorrow makers with stronger skills and a greater depth of understanding for rotational molding. For Shell, it means investing in the workforce of its organization and its customers.”

Penn College also doubled the size of its welding facilities to help meet industry demand, allowing for an additional 60 students to be enrolled per year. Along with purchasing new equipment, Gilmour said the college became first higher education institution in the U.S. to house an electron

beam welder for instructional purposes.

With mounting tuition costs remaining at the forefront of higher education news, Penn College is doing its part to help alleviate passing that cost – and future debt – onto its students.

Its apprenticeship program was awarded almost \$8 million in federal grants to deliver training to over 3,000 apprentices throughout the next four years. Also, Gilmour was pleased to announce that tuition increases have been held to under 3% for five consecutive years.

It’s also participating in the Momentum Incentive Program, a new initiative for first-time, full-time bachelor degree students who will be able to freeze their tuition costs for their entire four years if they graduate on time and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA.

Visit pct.edu for more information about the Pennsylvania College of Technology.



caps affecting manufacturing and so many other industries and professors in Pennsylvania and beyond,” she continued.

The recent opening of the Shell Polymers Rotational Molding Center of

billions, she said, and the center will help ensure future generations of plastics professionals in the workforce.

“The investment from Shell exemplifies values held by both of our orga-

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Frank Britt, Penn Foster



Frank Britt is the chief executive officer at Penn Foster.

By Geri Gibbons
For Times Leader

As a high school student growing up just outside Manhattan, Frank Britt, CEO of Penn Foster, wasn't making the connection between an education and a successful life.

Then, with the help of a neighbor, he realized the importance of investing in himself.

"I started to recognize that developing disciplines, habits of learning, and earnest self-discovery could serve as the catalyst for a different future," he said.

That understanding of how education and self discipline shape a person's future serves as the compass for Britt's tenure at Penn Foster.

"Penn Foster is bridging the gap between education and economic opportunity to build the workforce of tomorrow," he said. "We partner with employers to design and deliver digital and blended learning programs that attract, upskill and retain workers in America's fastest-growing fields and professions."

With more than 40,000 graduates each year, Penn Foster helps individuals discover

pathways to opportunity through accredited diploma, certificate and degree programs that matter in the world of work.

Britt's own story reflects his willingness to change and grow.

Having entered the field of business, he found himself a the Operating partner at one of the premier venture capital firms in the country.

At first he thought he had achieved the American dream, but then asked himself, "Have I?"

"What happens in life when you actually begin to successfully complete your original story?" he asked himself, "Is there a need to do a sequel? Do you launch the new and improved version of the same narrative, or do you pivot to live a different and ideally better story?"

So Britt decided to change the course of his life, to be open to change.

"I landed as the leader of an institution focused on helping to transform the lives of the often left-behind and at-risk young adults looking for an on-ramp to a career-trajectory," he said. "My new focus was to help others find the means to make the jump themselves."

Britt is more than pleased with his decision.

"It is working; we are helping individuals to change their futures and redefine their personal story, and I, too, am undergoing a personal transformation as a result."

Penn Foster is headquartered in Scranton with offices in Boston, Scottsdale, Norcross, Montreal and New York.

It is on track to graduate 70,000 students in 2019. It has over 2,400 employer-partners.



Name: Frank Britt

Title: Chief Executive Officer, Penn Foster

Quote: "Penn Foster is bridging the gap between education and economic opportunity to build the workforce of tomorrow. We partner with employers to design and deliver digital and blended learning programs that attract, upskill and retain workers in America's fastest-growing fields and professions."



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Marwan Wafa, Penn State Scranton



Penn State Scranton Chancellor Marwan Wafa.

Bill Tarutis | For Times Leader

Times Leader staff

Penn State Scranton Chancellor Marwan A. Wafa's vision for his campus is simple.

He wants to make it the place to be for prospective college students in Northeastern Pennsylvania and beyond.

"Working with our faculty, staff, and key stakeholders, we aspire to be the destination choice for students who want to earn a globally recognized degree right here at, or near, home," Wafa said. "We also believe in the importance of an engaged university that works closely with our local communities to make our region a destination for those who want to work and raise a family in a welcoming environment."

Wafa's own trip to PSU Scranton was a long won.

He grew up in Kuwait and earned a bachelor degree in civil engineering from Kuwait University in 1980.

"After two years of practice, I decided to earn a master's degree to more effectively manage and lead projects," he said.

That took him to Clemson University in South Carolina where he earned a M.S. in management and a Ph.D. in Industrial Management.

"I discovered my pas-

sion for higher education while at Clemson, which was a turning point in my career," he said.

Wafa started his academic career at the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville, Ind., as an assistant professor. After 14 years of service there, which included different leadership and academic roles, he moved to the University of Wisconsin Parkside as the dean of the School of Business and Technology.

Several more moves landed at IUPUC in Columbus, Ind.

"During that career journey and over 20 years of progressive leadership roles, I was fortunate to be selected for my current role of chancellor of Penn State Scranton," he added.

In his role at PSU Scranton, his responsibility is to make sure his campus "fulfills its mission of a Land Grant University."

That mission includes ensuring student have access and affordability, while aligning our degree program offerings with regional and global market needs."

Tuition at the school remains one of the lowest in the region, in part thanks to successful efforts in raising scholarship funding.

"Each campus has its own strategic plan, which supports the overall strategic goals and values of Penn State University," he said. "It is my responsibility that Penn State Scranton fulfills her role in serving Pennsylvania residents."

Under Wafa's watch PSU Scranton, which already offers the first two years of pre-engineering, is working on bringing a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering to the campus in the fall of 2020. In preparation for the program, the Grainger Building in Dunmore was purchased and will be redesigned to serve the program with a "state-of-the-art-facility."

"Penn State University engineering programs are highly recognized globally and graduates are well sought after by employers," Wafa said. "Making such a program available locally is an important initiative to serve area companies. A significant

service that we offer is that 92% of Penn State Scranton's students are local, which means they stay in our region which is key to maintaining a stable, highly educated and prepared workforce."

Bringing programs such as engineering is one of the things Wafa points to as his biggest achievement at the school

"The ability to bring new degree programs that serve our region, along with providing more scholarship funding to facilitate affordability, are important achievements," he said. "Being recognized as a 'welcoming campus' of Penn State University, where the majority of our students are Pennsylvania residents (92%) is a great return on investment for our state."

"In terms of challenges, having sufficient scholarship funding in order to give more residents opportunities to fulfill their aspirations of earning a globally recognized degree right here at home. We continue our work with our community to invest in the next generation who wish to stay in the community and

make it one of the best places to live and work."

For more information

on Penn State Scranton, check out its website at scranton.psu.edu.

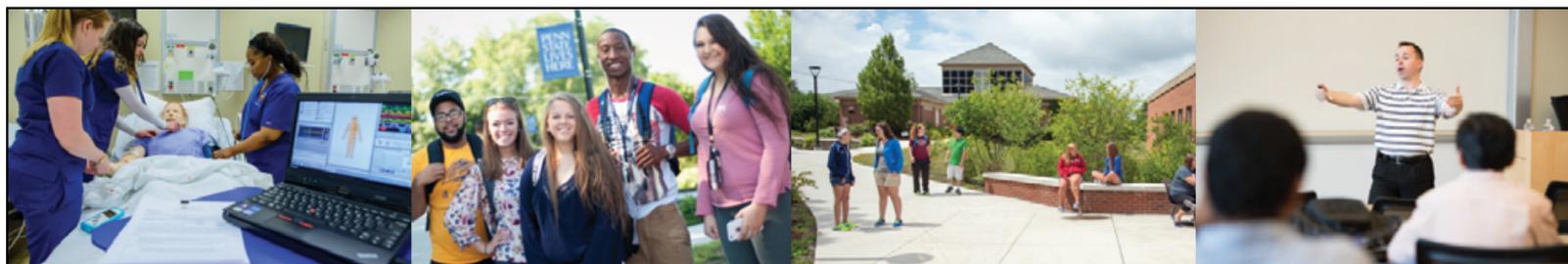


PennState
Scranton

Name: Marwan Wafa

Title: Chancellor of Penn State Scranton

Quote: "Penn State University engineering programs are highly recognized globally and graduates are well sought after by employers. Making such a program available locally is an important initiative to serve area companies. A significant service that we offer is that 92% of Penn State Scranton's students are local, which means they stay in our region which is key to maintaining a stable, highly educated and prepared workforce."



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Dale Jones, Penn State Wilkes-Barre

Penn State Wilkes-Barre leader looking to grow campus



Dale Jones has been Chancellor at Penn State Wilkes-Barre for three years.

Aimee Dilger | Times Leader

By Geri Gibbons
For Times Leader

LEHMAN TWP. – In the three years that Dr. Dale Jones has been at the helm of Penn State Wilkes-Barre, he has focused on providing students with a life-changing education which will set the course for lifelong learning.

“I believed learning is a lifelong venture, from birth through our adult lives,” he said. “We work to provide the educational resources to serve the lifelong learning needs of our community.”

Jones is committed to getting to know students, equipping them academically and as part of the local, national and global community.

“My passion is helping our students become responsible citizens, well-educated employees and ethical community leaders to keep our nation strong,” he said. “I am a firm believer that all of us at Penn State Wilkes-Barre — faculty, staff

and administrators — are privileged to be able to positively prepare our nation’s youth for tomorrow’s challenges.”

Jones is also aware that both success and failure often positively impact the trajectory of our lives.

“A situation that has stuck with me is when I applied for and was not selected for a special Air Force position I prepared extensively to achieve,” he said. “In response to the disappointment, I set new goals, redoubled my efforts and transferred to the Air Force Academy to be an instructor of political science and international affairs.

This new path led to

me discovering my passion — higher education in all the forms it has taken over the course of my career, including completion of a doctoral degree, legislative director in the U.S. House of Representatives, professor and administrator roles at five universities and my current position with Penn State. “

Jones is quick to point out the quality of the nine bachelor’s degree and four associate degree opportunities at the campus.

The university is especially excited about two of those programs: a new degree program in Administration of Justice and both a two- and four-year degree in the field of Surveying Engineering.

The

Administration of Justice degree offers the flexibility for pursuit of a variety of law enforcement careers on the federal, state and local level, as well as those as corrections officers and other court-related fields.

A two-year program, titled “Surveying Engineering Technology” degree equips students as land surveyors in gathering and implementing data, using a variety of methods.

The four-year program, goes into greater depth in the legal and professional aspects of land surveying, and covers subjects which include image analysis, geographic information systems and land subdivision design.

Simply stated, the Surveying Engineering Technology program is designed to provide the technicians for the industry, whereas the Surveying Engineering program is designed to produce the professionals for the field.

Jones strives to instill a sense of pride in students regarding their experience at the university, making them lifelong Penn Staters.

“During my career, I have relied upon an optimistic outlook, resilient



Name: Dale Jones

Title: Chancellor at Penn State Wilkes-Barre

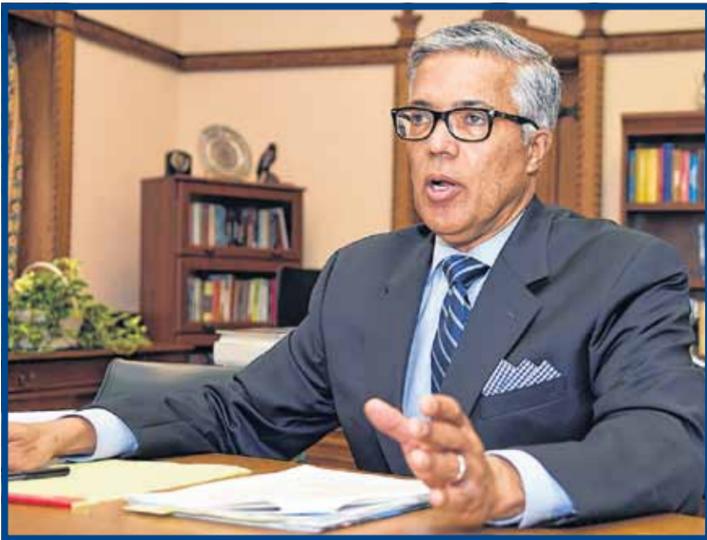
Quote: “I engage with students in ways that help develop them into Penn State graduates who are persons of character, possess a strong sense of responsibility, think of what is best for their communities, act with civility, and treat others with respect”

approach, determined attitude and actions with integrity,” he said. “As an administrator and educator, these are qualities I strive to pass on to students.”

Jones believes that students should go beyond just academic or career success.

“I engage with students in ways that help develop them into Penn State graduates who are persons of character, possess a strong sense of respon-

sibility, think of what is best for their communities, act with civility, and treat others with respect,” he said. “Successful leaders recognize and appreciate that they received help along the way, and I in turn want to give that back to our students as the chancellor of Penn State Wilkes-Barre.”

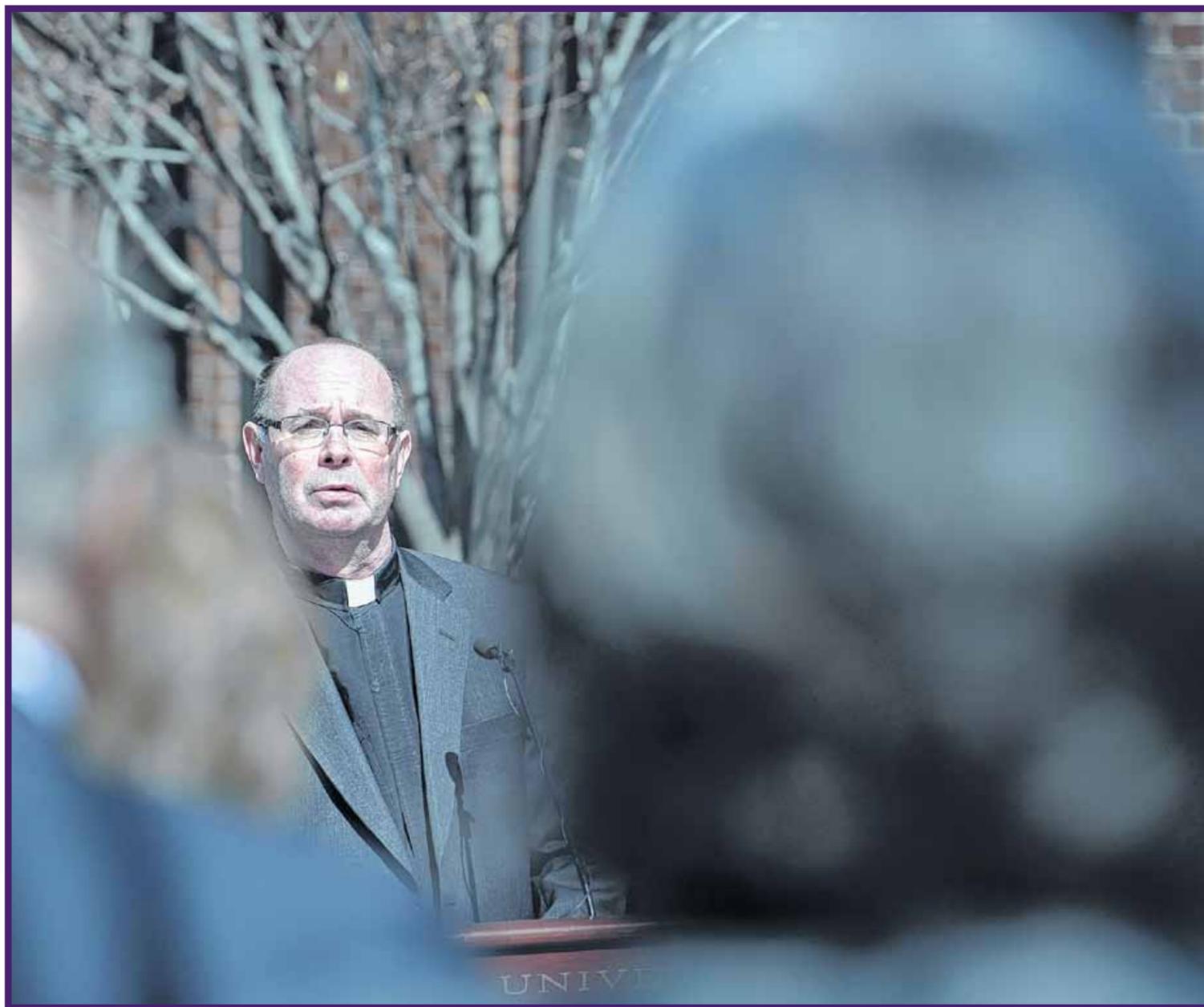


Times Leader Media Group is proud to support the many prestigious colleges and universities in Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties. Some of the Times Leader’s most stand-out employees - from the newsroom to advertising to circulation and beyond - have succeeded because of the education they received in these schools.

As we begin a New Year, the Times Leader thanks these schools for the efforts they have made to better our communities and our residents.



Rev. Scott Pilarz, University of Scranton



Father Scott Pilarz

Submitted photo

By Patrick Kernan
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SCRANTON — The Rev. Scott R. Pilarz, S.J., is currently about a year-and-a-half into his second tour of duty as president of the University of Scranton, having taken over as the 27th president in July 2018.

And under Pilarz's watch, there are some big things happening at the university.

Pilarz, who previously served as the university's 24th president between 2003 and 2011, previously told a Times Leader reporter about the university's commitment to education and the region. This year, Pilarz highlighted a few programs at the school which show that effort off.

One such program is the Slattery Center for the Humanities, an initiative Pilarz called "dear to (his) heart."

Established in May 2019, the Gail and Francis Slattery Center is named for the chair of the university's board of trustees, James M. Slattery. According to Pilarz, the center plays an integral role in the school's

educational system.

"The Center will advance the University's liberal arts tradition and enhance the core role it plays in the formation of our students to truly become 'men and women for others,'" Pilarz said.

This fall, the center launched a Humanities in Action Lecture Series, kicking things off with a talk from Denis McDonough, the former Chief of Staff to President Barack Obama.

"More lectures, program development, fellowships and community outreach programs with special emphasis on students are planned for 2020," Pilarz said.

Additionally, Pilarz said the University of Scranton is excited to begin offering two new majors: business analytics, which began in the fall, and

mechanical engineering, which will begin next fall.

"Enthusiasm from prospective students and their parents is always a welcome sign for a university," he said.

Another recent program, called THRIVE, is focused on supporting first-generation students, which seeks to improve student readiness, helping students cope with the various challenges of university life.

"We have and are continuing to put in place a number of programs to enhance the transformative experience our students receive at Scranton and keep the education we provide affordable to families," Pilarz said.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
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Wilkes University

Paul Adams, Wilkes University



Paul Adams, interim Wilkes University President.

Aimee Dilger | Times Leader

By Bill O'Boyle
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WILKES-BARRE — In the one year-plus that Paul Adams has served as the interim President of Wilkes University, he said his main objective during the transition has been to “keep the train running.”

And Adams, 64, has done just that. While Wilkes conducted its search for its seventh president — Dr. Greg Cant was recently announced as Patrick Leahy’s successor — the

our goals,” Adams said. “Wilkes’ greatest days lie ahead. Using this plan as a framework, we engage our challenging and exciting future with a clear sense of direction and how we invest our

ate of Binghamton City School District. Adams said Wilkes invested nearly \$8 million in new athletic fields at the Ralston Athletic Complex. The project includes

a multi-purpose turf field that will be used for men’s and women’s soccer, men’s and women’s lacrosse and women’s field hockey. It also includes a new turf baseball field.

Due to a leadership gift from Wilkes alumnus Robert Bruggeworth ’83, the new fields are named Bruggeworth Field at Ralston Athletic Complex.

Adams said Wilkes will continue to build programs that transform the lives of the students it serves. He said at the center of a Wilkes education is a commitment to academic programs that reflect the highest standards, and challenge students to achieve beyond their perceived

potential. “Central to this commitment is a faculty who, first and foremost, value excellence in teaching and learning,” Adams said. “With an emphasis on individualized attention and academic excellence, the university’s values of mentorship, scholarship, diversity, innovation and community will guide the student experience in and out of the classroom.”

Adams said faculty, staff, and alumni are single most important asset in transforming the lives of students.

“Therefore, Wilkes must recruit, retain, and develop its faculty and staff members, as well as engage alumni in support of our students and programs,” Adams said.

In a market characterized by intense competition and unrelenting challenges, Adams said Wilkes must recruit, retain, graduate, and place students to maximize the transformative impact, while growing in a way that supports Wilkes’ mission and value.

“Recognizing that the

campus’ infrastructure and program capacity will determine how much the university can grow, it is critical that the Wilkes maximize its opportunities to increase enrollment at the undergraduate and graduate level,” Adams said.

Adams said Wilkes hopes to continue to grow its enrollment, hopefully recruiting more than 30% of its students from outside Pennsylvania. He also said the school hopes to increase its international student market as a way to diversify the campus and reduce reliance on mature recruiting markets.

He also said Wilkes hopes to develop strong articulation agreements with four Pennsylvania two-year colleges to grow new transfer students to 300 per year and build a support structure that assures readiness.

“As an enrollment-dependent university where cost of attendance will increasingly influence enrollment decisions, Wilkes must

strengthen and diversify our ability to generate and manage resources,” Adams said.

Driven by a sense of its community responsibility and a business imperative, Adams said Wilkes must be a force for positive economic development, making Wilkes-Barre an increasingly attractive option for current and prospective students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

“When Wilkes actively engages in our city, we affect not only those whom we touch, but ourselves as well,” Adams said. “Driven by our commitment to community engagement, Wilkes has developed relationships with our region’s strongest private and public organizations, creating synergies that afford our students opportunities to prepare for the roles they will assume throughout their lives and careers. As an anchor in the center of Wilkes-Barre, Wilkes must continue to be an aesthetic, cultural, intellectual and economic resource and influence.”



Wilkes University

Name: Paul Adams

Title: Interim President, Wilkes University

Quote: “When Wilkes actively engages in our city, we affect not only those whom we touch, but ourselves as well. Driven by our commitment to community engagement, Wilkes has developed relationships with our region’s strongest private and public organizations, creating synergies that afford our students opportunities to prepare for the roles they will assume throughout their lives and careers.”

university was left in the capable hands of Adams, who was quick to credit his colleagues, staff and students for their dedicated endeavors in the best interests of the university.

“Wilkes has had a lot of success on the academic side and we have improved the campus, adding to the character of the university,” Adams said. “And we continue to build our financial strength as we continue to implement our strategic plan.”

Gateway to the Future: The Wilkes University Strategic Plan began in 2014 and runs through 2020. Adams said the plan is “firmly rooted” in the university’s mission, vision and values.

“This plan guides our prioritization, informs the development of our budget and includes an agreed-upon set of performance indicators with which we gauge our progress toward

resources.” Before being named interim president, Adams served as Vice President of Student Affairs, a title he held since 2002, overseeing all aspects of student life including athletics; health and wellness; residence life and judicial affairs. He also oversaw student development, which includes career development and internships, student activities, campus interfaith, community service, e-mentoring and orientation.

Adams received his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science in Education from Wilkes, and earned his Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership and Curriculum Instruction from the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a graduate of Harvard University’s Institute for the Management of Lifelong Education. In 2011, Dr. Adams was named a Distinguished Gradu-



Paul Adams, interim Wilkes University President, in his office at Weckesser Hall.

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