

CLARION

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

WINTER 2019

phi·lan·thro·py

goodwill to fellow members of
the human race





SURVIVAL MINDSET

Rick Capozzi '85 was an hour into his vacation when he got a call from his boss at Penn State University, where he was a learning strategist. A gunman had killed 32 people on the campus of Virginia Tech.

"What happened at Virginia Tech, I don't ever want to happen at Penn State," his boss told him. "Put something together."

With a full schedule of projects and no military or law enforcement background, Capozzi wasn't sure if he was the right person for the job.

"I was concerned with not being a subject matter expert," Capozzi said. His boss said that didn't matter, as they had expertise through University Police, who was the partner in the project.

What they needed was a learning strategist and instructional designer who could work with law enforcement to create a program that would challenge people's comfort levels, but not be so over the top that people freaked out and shut down. Within nine months, it was one of the most popular programs his department had ever developed.

To read more of this story, please visit, www.clarion.edu/survivalmindset.



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By working together, students consistently surpass their Relay for Life fundraising goal, this year by more than \$7,700.

President: Dr. Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson

Executive editor: Tina Horner

Co-editors: Sean Fagan (sports); Amy Thompson Wozniak ('02, MS '06)

Design: Bryan Postlewait ('04)

Contributors: Michelle Port, Hope Lineman ('10, MS '16), Leandro Aristeguieta

Photographers: Adam Reynolds ('15), Bri Nellis ('16), Bill Stein

Address comments and questions to:

Clarion University Magazine
Center for Advancement
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
840 Wood St., Clarion, PA 16214

Email: alumni@clarion.edu

Visit Clarion University on the Web at www.clarion.edu.

Clarion University Magazine is published by the Division for University Advancement for alumni, families of current students and friends of Clarion University. Alumni information is also located at www.clarion.edu/alumni.

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Direct equal opportunity inquiries to:

Director of Social Equity
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
216 Carrier Administration Building
Clarion, PA 16214-1232
814-393-2109

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Clarion University has always been a singular place; a place nestled amongst some of the most beautiful natural surroundings of any university, anywhere; a place where students from cities large and small come to transform themselves; a place where expert and caring faculty and staff work together to help our students; and a place where we enjoy a community who engages with our university.

It is also a place made better by the spirit of philanthropy. This spirit manifests itself in not only the financial gifts made by our alumni and all of our university community, but also in the way that our alumni stay connected to each other – and to the university – to provide opportunities for our students to grow, learn and gain a leg up on their futures.

One of the stories is on the “Party for a Purpose,” a long-standing tradition by some of our alumni of color who get together on a regular basis to share stories of their time at Clarion, their lives today, and to give back to make an impact on our current students. It is inspirational.

There are, of course, many stories of how our alumni give back, and in the many ways that you do. Since 1968, financial gifts have been skillfully administered by Clarion University Foundation, Inc. Our campus community collectively says, “Thank You!”

Dr. Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson
President, Clarion University

SHOWMAN, BAKER PRESENT AT *renowned* RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Samuel Showman, a senior biology major/physics minor, and Andrew Baker, a May 2019 graduate with a bachelor's degree in physics, presented research at the renowned Material Research Symposium in April in Phoenix.

Showman gave an oral presentation, and Baker presented a poster for which he was awarded the Sustainable Energy and Fuels prize from the Royal Society of Chemistry, surpassing students from Harvard and University of Pittsburgh. Both students' findings were published in the conference proceedings and in a peer-reviewed journal.

Both Showman and Baker, who have co-authored several manuscripts and presentations, work under the guidance of biology professor Dr. Helen Hampikian and physics professor Dr. Chunfei Li on an interdisciplinary research project funded through a National Science Foundation grant to study a novel type of nanoparticle.

Baker has presented his findings at other national conferences, including the Microscopy and Microanalysis conference, the American Physical Society meeting and the Western Pennsylvania American Association of Physics Teachers conference. He has also completed a Research Experience for Undergraduates program at the University of Utah and served as an intern at the National Renewable Energy Lab.

After graduating, Showman will continue his research with Hampikian and Li, while Baker is pursuing a doctorate degree at University of Pittsburgh.



Samuel Showman and Andrew Baker



DESANTIS *wins* NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP

Kelley DeSantis, a senior information systems major, was awarded a \$1,000 national scholarship by Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society. She had received a \$750 local Phi Eta Sigma Foundation scholarship, which made her eligible for national consideration.

Among the criteria are community service, service to the organization and scholastic achievement.

DeSantis, currently president of Phi Eta Sigma, has also served as vice president and treasurer.

ROTC CADETS COMPLETE *specialized* SUMMER TRAINING

During summer 2019, six cadets participated in the prestigious Cultural Understanding and Language Proficiency program, a three-week overseas immersion experience that allows students to experience different cultures, lifestyles, economic systems and views of the United States. Participants included:

- Eric LaFrance, criminal justice major, Thailand
- Dalton Ray, accounting major, Peru
- Alexa Keyes, criminal justice major, Bulgaria
- Ty Bittner, management major, Lithuania
- Antonio Lopreiato, criminal justice major, Lithuania
- Vincent Dongilli, criminal justice major, Lithuania

Three cadets completed summer internships:

- Haley Holzwarth, nursing major, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Landstuhl, Germany
- Ray Dent, nursing major, Fort Bliss, Texas
- Shantaea Jones, biology major, Tripler Army Medical Center, Honolulu

Cadet Justin Galati, criminal justice major, was selected for summer training at the United States Military Academy at West Point, where he trained with West Point Cadets. Galati scored in the top 5 percent of his training class and was awarded for superior performance.



Front row L-R: Eric LaFrance, Tony Lopreiato, Vincent Dongilli, Shantaea Jones, Alexis Keys
Back row L-R: Ty Bittner, Cochise Wanzer, Austin Barger, Hunter Aubele, Justin Galati, Dalton Ray, Hayley Holzworth
Not pictured: Raymond Dent

KIDS IN COLLEGE 2019



Third through fifth graders practice bucket balancing.

KIDS IN COLLEGE *combines* FUN AND LEARNING

School was out for the summer, but the learning – disguised as fun – continued with the Kids in College summer enrichment program at Clarion University – Venango. The program, for kindergarten through eighth grade, encourages children to enhance their academic development through unique and fun activities.

“Students explored subjects related to science, technology, engineering and math,” said Hope Lineman, interim director of Venango Campus, who developed the program. “Students made discoveries, completed experiments and enjoyed an adventure.

“In 2012, 14 of the program’s first year participants had become students at Clarion University,” said Lineman. The program runs through Continuing Education and has been led by Kyle Vickers, Academic Resource Center coordinator, for the past two years.

The kindergarten through second grade class particularly enjoyed the integration of Legos into STEM activities. Students used Legos to build balloon-powered cars, marble mazes and sling shot launchers, and create replicas of famous landmarks. They tested their chemical engineering capabilities in exploring slime. They investigated environmentally friendly topics and upcycled basic plastic bags into a jump rope. The participants constructed a 3-D

marshmallow tower, and took science into the kitchen with a lemon volcano.

The third through fifth grade students enjoyed themed escape rooms with group problem solving activities. Summer Olympics got them out of the classroom with giant bowling and bucket balance. They created circuit bugs and magnet stations and polished their problem solving skills in untangling wooly webs, constructing pipe towers and transporting “toxic” popcorn.

“The sixth through eighth grade students really enjoyed the lesson on coding and creating their own mobile application,” Vickers said. “These lessons were a great fit because most, if not all, of these students in this group had cell phones and/or tablets, so it immediately gained their interest.”

A partnership with the Venango County Conservation District provided an Adventure Day at Two Mile Run County Park. The day allowed students to explore watershed education, macro-invertebrate life in streams, stream table demonstrations, bird identification, and a lesson on the enviroscape.



MANGRUM'S *business* IS STUDENT SUCCESS

Natalie Cannon Mangrum '08, M.Ed. '09 is founder and CEO of Maryland Teacher Tutors, which offers one-on-one tutoring and academic coaching with certified teachers. Mangrum, formerly a classroom teacher, started the business after seeing the success of students she tutored privately. As demand has grown, she has added tutors, and she recently expanded to the Pittsburgh area.

This fall, Mangrum was a guest on Fox News Baltimore, giving tips for back-to-school success. She recommends a designated homework hour, organization to help mornings go more smoothly, and goal setting for students of all ages.

To learn more, visit www.marylandteachertutors.com.



State Senator Scott Hutchinson presents the Oil Region Alliance Volunteer of the Year award to Allan Montgomery.

MONTGOMERY *integral* TO OIL REGION WORK

The Oil Region Alliance honored **Allan Montgomery '66** as its Volunteer of the Year. Montgomery, a member of ORA's Heritage Advisory Committee, was instrumental in the creation of four interpretive panels depicting local legend Coal Oil Johnny, who inherited and frittered away an oil fortune. Montgomery provided a thorough review of the proposed texts for the panels. He is a regular contributor to local newspaper The Derrick's "Out of the Archives" feature and nominated the newspaper for a Historic Preservation Award, which he personally presented to Derrick representatives.

Montgomery has made many other contributions to the preservation of oil region heritage. ORA president and CEO John Phillips said it is the participation of people such as Montgomery that leads to the success of ORA's mission to preserve the oil heritage and promote the region.

THE ROAD TO CBS *radio* NEWS

Bill Rehkopf '89, CBS Radio News correspondent and anchor in Washington, D.C., visited the main studio at WCUC Aug. 23 in Becker Hall 23. He began his career at the station while a communications student from 1985 to 1989. In addition to the WCUC visit, Rehkopf talked shop with the professors, sharing insight as to the direction of the radio industry as well as career requirements and paths for students. With Rehkopf (left front) are department professors Michael Hissam, Dr. Myrna Kuehn and Bill Adams.





President Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson cuts the ribbon to officially open the National Fitness Court. With her (from left) are Center for Wellness director Jim McGee, M&B Services owners Mike and Kristen Hindman, campus recreation coordinator Ewing Moussa, and Fitness Court ambassador Carly Errera.

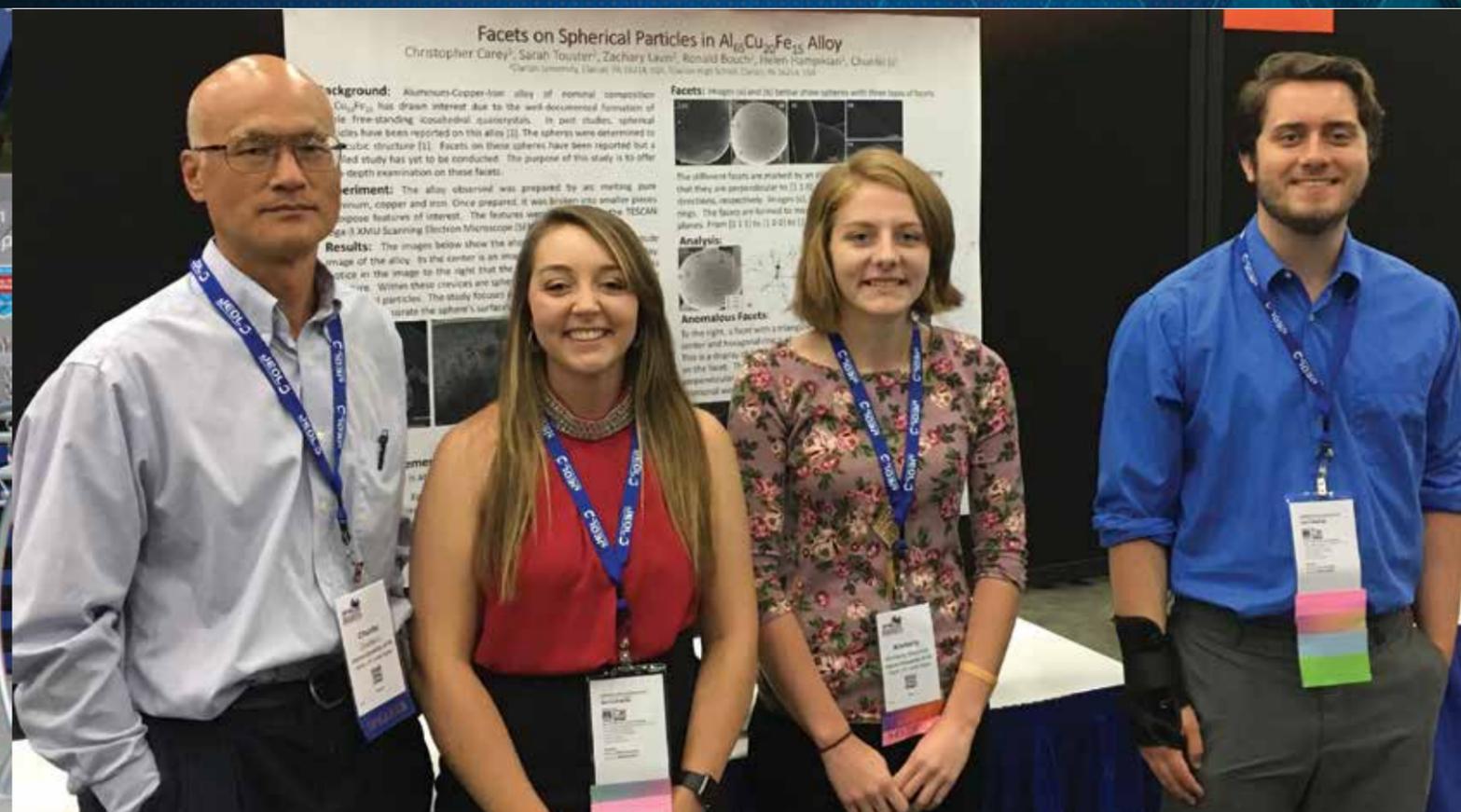
OPEN-AIR *national* FITNESS COURT DEBUTS

What does Clarion University have in common with Harvard, Baylor and Florida State universities? It's one of the 20 higher education institutions in the United States to have a National Fitness Court on campus. The court officially opened in October.

The 32-by-32-foot, open-air facility – the first National Fitness Court in Pennsylvania – was funded through a \$30,000 NFC Fitness Grant as part of the 2019 Healthy College Campaign and an in-kind gift from M&B Services in Clarion.

Jim McGee, director of Clarion University Center for Wellness, said that student input requesting additional outdoor recreation facilities drove the decision to apply for the grant. The court will be open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It is free to use for students, faculty, staff and the community; no membership or university affiliation is required.

M&B Services of Clarion donated excavation, site preparation and concrete.



Li with students Kira Smith (secondary education/physics), Kimberly Westover (biology) and **Christopher Carey '18** (dual degrees in physics and mathematics), now a Ph.D. student at West Virginia University, during a Microscopy and Microanalysis conference in Baltimore in 2018.

LI TOPS \$1 MILLION IN NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRANTS

Clarion University and physics professor Dr. Chunfei Li have been awarded a \$305,097 grant from the National Science Foundation. The grant supports Li's project, "RUI: Morphology and Crystalline Orientation of Particles in Al₆₅Cu₂₀Fe₁₅ Alloy Prepared by Arc Melting." Including this grant, the university and Li have received \$1,005,642 in NSF grants since 2011.

"In addition to scientific contribution, the project has significant impact on the education at Clarion University," Li

said. "Students will be given the opportunity to take on part of the project, which will be conducted on a level similar to those conducted at research universities and national labs. Two undergraduate students will have the opportunity to work as paid research assistants."

Through prior work on the project, Li and his students have identified previously unreported details about the morphology and crystalline orientation of surface particles of a molten aluminum-copper-iron alloy.

FROZEN: CLARION TUITION AND HOUSING *costs*

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education announced a tuition freeze for the 2019-20 academic year, keeping basic tuition at \$7,716 for in-state undergraduate students at the system's 14 universities. Clarion University went even further. Overall, the cost of Clarion's fees did not increase this year, and, collaborating with the Clarion University Foundation, Inc., the cost of on-campus housing for next year has also been held.

"This is great news for our students," said President Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson. "With many of our programs being nationally ranked for quality and affordability, the value of a Clarion education has never been better."



CLARION UNIVERSITY

HOMECOMING

2019



Clarion University Foundation, Inc., Celebrates Golden Anniversary

Two years ago, Clarion University celebrated its 150th anniversary, a mark that would have been impossible to reach without the generosity of alumni and friends. In fact, the very beginning of what was then Carrier Seminary came about through the Carrier family's philanthropic gift of lumber and money to build Seminary Hall.

Likewise, in 1960, Venango County citizens who sought to establish a post-secondary education site in the Oil City-Franklin area raised money to start Clarion University - Venango.

Since Dec. 8, 1969, philanthropy has been administered and directed by Clarion University Foundation, Inc. In the 50 years since it was established, foundation assets, like the Golden Eagles they support, have soared - from just over \$107,000 then to more than \$151 million now.

The single purpose in this substantive body of work and financial growth is and always has been helping students succeed.

In this past fiscal year alone, the foundation:

- Pledged to hold housing rates flat for the 2019-20 term;
- Provided almost \$8 million to the university in scholarships, grants, special programs and other support;
- Directly supported 796 students through awarding nearly \$1.3 million in scholarships;
- Raised \$2 million in private support from more than 2,900 donors;
- And increased its endowment by more than \$2 million to \$39.2 million, representing one of the highest endowed dollars-to-student ratios among the State System schools.

Students supported through the philanthropic work of Clarion University Foundation, Inc., have gone on to succeed as role models, environmental heroes, educators, doctors, lawyers, actors and athletics professionals. Most of all, they have gone on to become philanthropists themselves, paying forward the opportunities given to them.

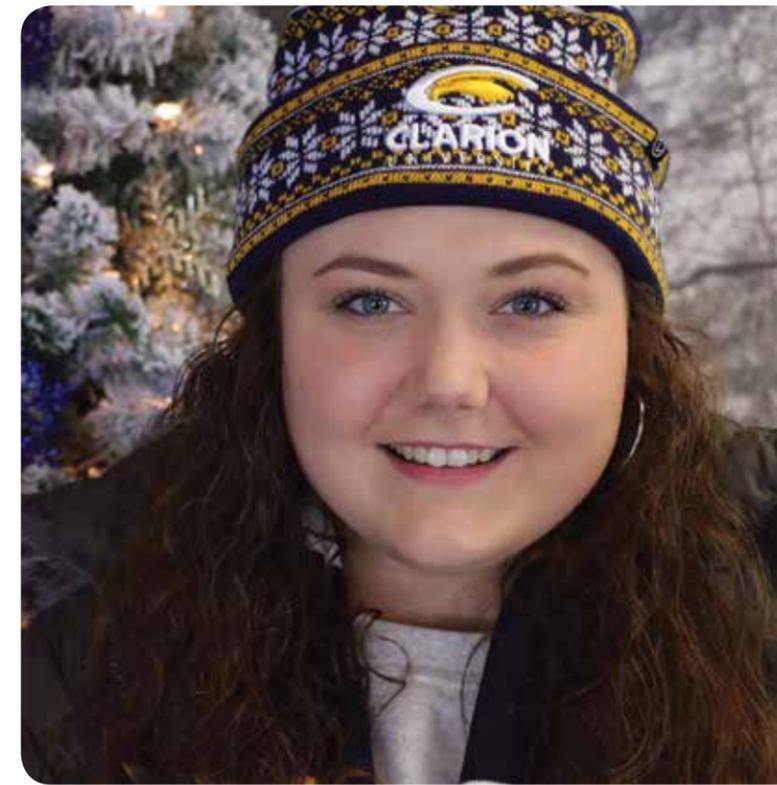
"The foundation was established to support Clarion University in its mission to promote life-changing, affordable educational experiences to its students," said Jane France, president of the Clarion University Foundation, Inc., Board of Directors.

It's doing just that in supporting current students such as Tatum Henderson (right). She knew that a college education was the path out of poverty and the means by which she could help her family, which struggled financially due to her mother's catastrophic illness. In four years, Henderson has gone from homelessness to hopefulness.

After she graduates in May with an education degree, she plans to pursue a master's degree in social work to help families overcome their struggles and to help other children achieve their lifelong goals.

"I wouldn't be the person I am today without Clarion University and the generous donors."

-Tatum Henderson



Timeline of Clarion University Foundation, Inc. milestones:

- Dec. 8, 1969**: Clarion University Foundation, Inc. **FOUNDED**
- 1979**: First Alumni Fund Drive \$8,000
- 1980**: First Five-Year Campaign Launches \$2.1 Million; First Phonathon
- 1987**: First CU Athletics Golf Classic; Montgomery Hall Renovated
- 1988**: Annual Giving Reaches New High of \$396,068
- 1990**: Brick Campaign to Renovate Reimer (Gemmell)
- 1992**: \$1.6 Million Received in Private Gifts
- 1993**: \$485,720 in Scholarships Awarded To 530 Students
- 1994**: Official University Residence
- 1995**: Investing in Futures Launches
- 2000**: Investing in Futures \$11.34 Million, Venango Call to Action \$1,988,000, Both Exceeding Goals
- 2001-2004**: CUF Begins Student Housing Involvement with Diane L. Reinhard Villages
- 2003**: Venango Student Housing Begins
- 2004**: Diane L. Reinhard Villages Opens
- 2005**: Gift Creates Barbara Morgan Harvey Center at Venango
- 2009**: Grunewald Center for Science and Technology Opens
- 2010**: Student Philanthropy Begins; Nursing Sim Lab Campaign Begins
- 2012**: Fly, Eagles, Fly Campaign Concludes \$4.7 million
- 2013-2014**: Assets Reach All-time High \$153,911,187
- 2015-2019**: Suites II Project Completed
- 2019**: CUF Endowment Reaches All-time High of \$39,175,199



Santa's Gift

Do you believe in Santa Claus? Ott Quarles does, because he is Santa Claus.

For the past 30 years, Quarles has listened to the Christmas wishes of children in the Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania, area. He was first asked to play the role when a volunteer fire department to which he and his dad belonged needed a Santa.

He bought a fake beard and white wig, put on the red suit, and found that he loved being Santa. His reputation grew, and Quarles was asked to visit people's homes and to transform into Santa at more and bigger venues.

One particularly warm day, Quarles just couldn't bring himself to put on the wig and fake beard. He was taking diabetes medication that had turned his own hair and beard white, so he decided to go with what he had. It was a hit.

"They told me don't ever put on a fake beard again," he said. He hasn't. He keeps his own hair and beard groomed in proper Santa style throughout the year. He frequently dresses in red and wears the Santa stocking cap.

Quarles' clothes and hair make him look like Santa, but it's his heart that makes him Santa. With the money he earns during the holiday season, he buys gifts for children in need and supplies for their families to prepare two holiday meals.

Last Christmas, Quarles worked as he usually worked, both as Santa and in his full-time position as an inspector for Cranberry Township, and gave as he usually gave, but it was more difficult for him. For two years, he had gone several times a week for dialysis – a procedure through which blood is removed from the body, filtered and returned to the body – for kidneys that were failing, but the dialysis was no longer working. Santa found himself with his own Christmas wish: He needed a new kidney.



Quarles and Klimkos



Mike “Rusty” Klimkos ’75 is Santa Claus, too. He doesn’t wear a red suit, have a white beard or listen to the Christmas wishes of his community’s children, but he has the heart of Santa. As it turned out, he also had the kidney.

Klimkos, a retired biologist who now writes books about Pennsylvania, and Quarles were Theta Chi fraternity brothers in the 1970s at Clarion University. They had lost touch for a while but had been back in contact for a few years, mainly via Facebook. When he saw Quarles’ post about needing a kidney, Klimkos called to ask how he could help.

“I told him to spread the word,” Quarles said. But that wasn’t what Klimkos meant. The men have the same blood type, and Klimkos wanted to be tested as a potential donor.

“That was August,” Klimkos said. He filled out the paperwork and underwent a medical exam in October. “They said, ‘You’re our guy.’”

“I just couldn’t believe it,” Quarles said. “Mike was my big brother when I joined the fraternity. To make that offer – I said, ‘Really?’ He said ‘Sure, that’s the right thing to do, Ott.’”

Late fall is an understandably busy time for Quarles, so the surgery was scheduled for Jan. 8 at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center – Montefiore.

“The people there were fantastic. They put all my fears to rest,” Klimkos said. “The risk was the same as any risk you have when you undergo surgery. The anesthesia is probably the most dangerous part.”

Klimkos was wheeled into surgery at 10:30 a.m., and he was in recovery at 4:30 p.m.

“They started me first, then Ott,” Klimkos said. “Ott was in about an hour longer.”

The recovery was surprisingly fast for both men, who were awake and alert that evening and had minimal pain.

Both felt well enough with 11 fraternity brothers who came to the hospital to visit the next day.

Did Klimkos have any hesitation about donating a kidney?

“Yeah, I did. But how can you say no to Santa Claus?”

On the receiving side for a change, Quarles didn’t know what to say.

“How do you thank someone for giving your life back?”

Quarles hopes more people will become heroes like Klimkos, because the list of people needing donors grows every day.

“There is a need for kidney donors all across America,” Klimkos said. “You can donate and still lead a normal life.”

For information about organ donation, visit www.organdonor.gov/.



Theta Chi fraternity brothers visit Quarles and Klimkos the day after the transplant.

Party FOR A Purpose

GIVING BACK:
IT'S OUR DUTY

From the time she was 13 years old, **Angela Groom Brown '80** worked summer jobs. One year, shortly before she returned to Clarion University for the fall semester, a career employee known as “the meanest lady in the building” summoned Brown, grabbed her hand and pushed something into it.

“It was \$5,” Brown recalls. “She probably earned \$1.25 an hour, but she wanted me to have that money. She wanted to do her part to make sure I finished school.”

Her peers in the Clarion University Black Alumni group have different versions of the same story, in which people they knew – and people they didn’t know – took part in helping them get where they are today.

“She said I wasn’t just going to school for me, but for others, so they could see if I could do it, they could do it, too,” Brown recalls the woman telling her. “We have been taught that it’s our duty to give back and to reach back,” Brown said.



President Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson (left) with Party for a Purpose committee members Spicer-Sanders, Brown and Edwards.

PARTY FOR A PURPOSE

The Black Alumni held a Black Student Reunion during homecoming from 1998 to 2012. Attendance at homecoming began to drop off due to rising travel costs, so the reunion committee began to organize reunions closer to where many of them lived.

“We decided if we couldn’t get them to come back to Clarion, we would take the party to the people,” Brown said.

Alumnus **Joe Pailin '79** had periodically organized events in the Philadelphia area to raise money for funds that supported black students; the Black Alumni adopted that framework. Party for a Purpose was born.

Since then, Party for a Purpose has been held in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia, which is where this year’s event, in November, took place. The four-person core

committee of Brown, **DeBorah Spicer-Sanders '76**, **Alva Epps Edwards '76** and **Annette Curry Redd '77** plans the gathering, which they try to have annually.

This year’s purpose was to support the university’s Student Resource Room. Begun in 2018, the Resource Room provides food, school supplies, toiletries, cleaning supplies and paper products – essential items that ensure students have what they need to succeed. Students simply go there and select what they need.

The 2019 Party for a Purpose raised \$2,315, half of which will be used to stock the Resource Room with products designed for black students’ needs. In addition, boxes of non-perishable items, toiletries, clothing and other goods were donated by Spicer-Sanders and the staff of Hyatt House, King of Prussia, where the event was held.



Previous events supported the Black Students Fund, an emergency assistance fund that retired President Joe Grunenwald and Dr. Brenda Dede, retired associate vice president for academic affairs, initiated when they learned of a black student who had only a can of tuna to eat each day. Students can apply for help with a medical expense, aid in traveling back to Clarion after a holiday break, food, textbooks, anything that a scholarship wouldn't typically cover.

Brown said the assistance the Black Alumni group provides to students wouldn't be possible without the help of many Clarion University people. She recalls the encouragement of Grunenwald, retired President Karen Whitney and retired vice president of student affairs Harry Tripp for the alumni to remain connected to Clarion and to each other, and of Jeff MacTaggart, director of dining services, who

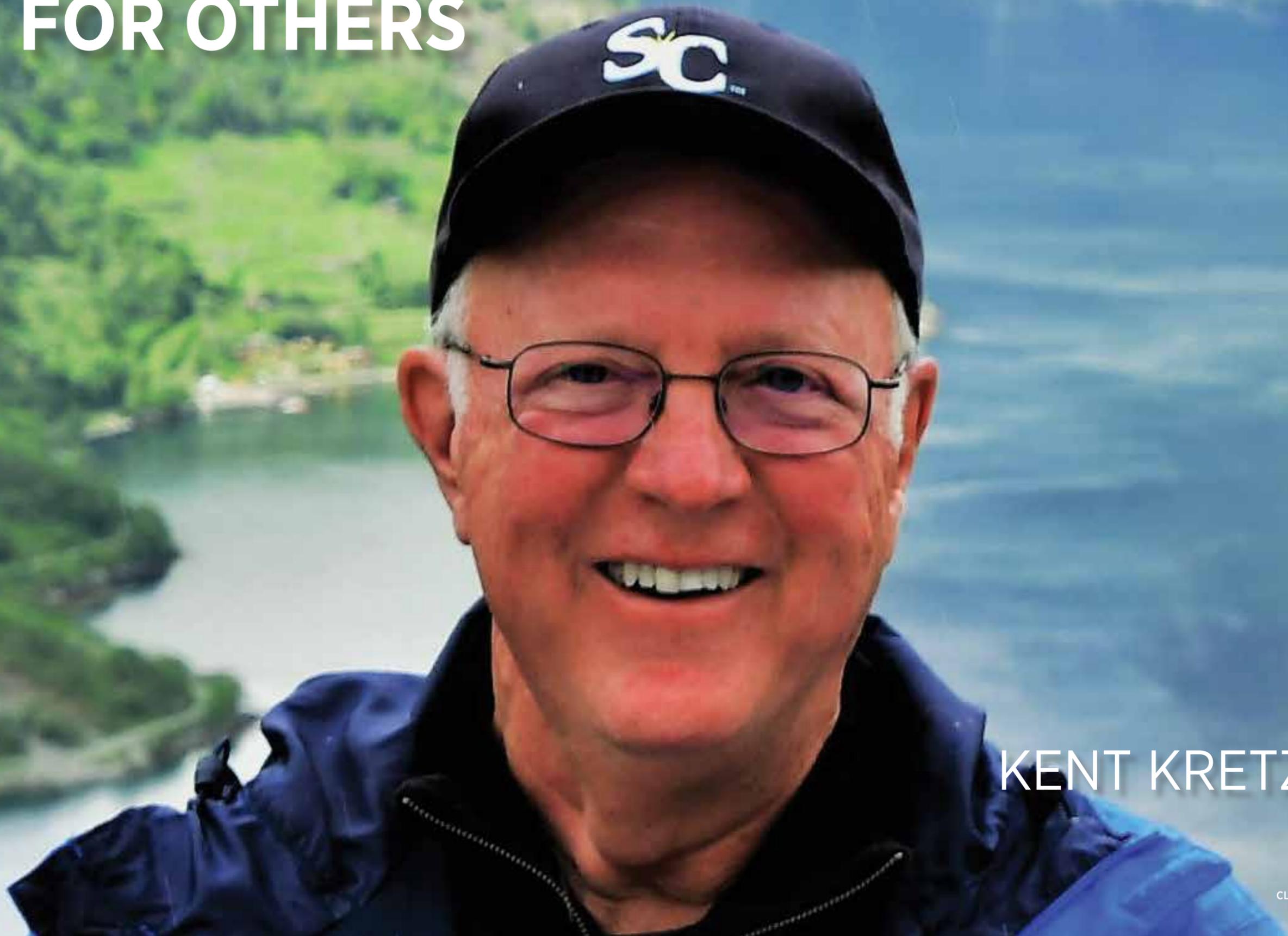
ensured that a favored spot in Gemmill Student Complex was available to the alumni to gather during homecoming. There, the alumni invited students to join them for hearty dinners, music, games and fellowship each night of homecoming. Grunenwald and his wife Janice were fixtures at the dinners, as was Dede, who has mentored countless black students.

The Black Alumni wouldn't exist without the people who supported them when they were students.

"Francine McNairy and Terri White picked up where our families left off, providing encouragement, guidance, accountability and tough love when needed. As a direct result of their interaction and intervention, we earned our degrees and proudly walked across that stage," Brown said. "They said remember, if you succeed, another one can. It's not just about you, but for all who follow."



WHAT YOU DO FOR OTHERS



KENT KRETZLER

Kent Kretzler '73, MS '74 started visiting Clarion University around the same time he started to walk. His earliest memory of campus is attending homecoming at the age of 3 or 4.

“The football field was where the old Peirce Science Center stood,” Kretzler said. “The Clarion players dressed in Harvey Hall and walked down the bleacher steps, through the seated crowd, waiting for the game to begin. We sat on the end, because my dad knew I liked to watch the big guys walking by.”

His mom, **Lorraine Miller Kretzler '42**, was the reason for the trips to campus. She graduated from Clarion with an elementary education degree.

“My mother loved Clarion: the college, the staff, the teachers, the activities, the students, and the entire life she enjoyed as a student and, later, as an alumna,” Kretzler said. “I remember meeting so many of the professors in the 50s and 60s – ones whom many of the buildings were named after: Tippin, Marwick-Boyd, Campbell, Peirce and Moore.

The Kretzler family – Mom, Dad, Kent and sister Karen – was a fixture at homecoming.

“Whether it was raining, snowing – it didn’t matter. We were there. It drove my father crazy, because he hated the cold,” Kretzler said. “We always joked that although my dad did not attend Clarion, he should have an honorary degree, based on the number of miles he drove between our home in Pittsburgh and Clarion, and the number of football games that he sat frozen to those bleachers.”

During those visits, the Kretzler kids fell in love with Clarion. Choosing a college was easy.

EVERYONE NEEDS A START

Kretzler’s dream was to follow in his mother’s footsteps and become a teacher. He earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in secondary education from Clarion, and he taught for five years. When enrollment started to drop at the school where he taught and knew he would be laid off, he thought about what to do next. The answer was travel.

“I started a small travel agency that grew pretty well. I developed a niche in the market for student travel, marketing to high school bands, choirs, sports teams and senior classes,” he said.

He segued into fundraising, requiring that students had “skin in the game,” whether they were traveling to Disney or Paris.

Another of Kretzler’s prominent childhood memories is being in church and his mother pointing out various members of the Shriners organization. He didn’t think much more about it until he joined the Syria Highlanders Pipe & Drum Band.

“That got me started,” Kretzler said. He became involved with other Shrine organizations, clubs and caravans and eventually found himself as president. If the group was involved in a charitable aspect, he was in charge.

Eventually he was recognized on, appointed to and then voted to “the line,” a seven-year progression to the organization’s crowning glory – serving as potentate, an equivalent to a CEO. Kretzler became the third youngest potentate in history at age 46.

In his leadership role with the Shriners, Kretzler developed various ideas for fundraising, all geared toward supporting the Shriners Hospital for Children.

“There are 22 Shrine orthopedic and burn hospitals across America. It costs \$1.5 million a day to run them,” he said.

“I read a quote years ago: ‘What you do for yourself dies with you, what you do for others lives on forever.’ I’ve always followed that idea of doing something for someone who can’t,” Kretzler said. “It’s giving them a start – everybody needs that. A lot of parents just can’t afford the health care their children require. Our hospitals, our organizations make it happen.”



For his work with the Shriners, Kretzler received the key to the city of Pittsburgh and was recognized with a proclamation by Allegheny County. KDKA’s Stacy Smith – a product of the Shriners Hospitals and an honorary member of the Syria Shrine – introduced him both times.

“It recognized not just me, but Shriners members. We make miracles happen every day.”

A PENCHANT FOR GIVING

When Kretzler’s business became successful, he began adding to a college fund his parents had started when the daughters of his sister **Karen '79** and her husband, **Chuck Dinsmore '81**, whom she met at Clarion. He wanted to make it easier for the family to educate the girls, and he wanted them to graduate college without debt. Ultimately, the fund paid for both nieces’ bachelor’s and master’s degrees, with money left over. They weren’t the only ones to benefit from his success, though.

“I’ve done well in life, and I wanted to make sure it’s paid forward. My idea was that quote – to give to others for it to last forever,” Kretzler said. He decided to create scholarships for students at Clarion University and at the

military academy he attended in Woodstock, Va. Recipients are required to have skin in the game.

At Clarion, the Kretzler Family Athletic Endowment benefits football, men’s and women’s basketball and women’s volleyball team members who maintain a certain level GPA, are involved on the team and contribute to the community.

**“KIDS WILL BENEFIT FROM BEING INVOLVED,
BEING A GOOD STUDENT, BEING A GOOD CITIZEN.
THAT’S THE TYPE OF PERSON I WANT TO HELP – SOMEONE
WHO COULD SAY ‘I WAS BIGGER THAN MYSELF.’”
- KENT KRETZLER**

Kretzler remains active with the Shriners, helping out with the annual East/West Shrine Football Game and the Shriners Open in Las Vegas each fall. Now a resident of Florida, he is involved with the Conquistadors, a small fraternal group that awards three college scholarships each year and is involved with various community enhancement initiatives.

“When I was potentate, I made a lot of speeches. I talked a lot about membership and being involved,” Kretzler said.

Among his key messages was, “If you join this organization and get a card but never get involved, take the card and throw it in the trash on the way out. You’re wasting your time. Get involved, and you’ll get out of it tenfold what you put in.”

“I try to motivate people to do something. Everyone has the same 24 hours in a day. You make of it what you will.”

CLARION UNIVERSITY



President Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson with Eagle Ambassador officers Brittany Fitzgerald, Elisabeth Papa, Erika Carolus and Madison Campos giving a lift to president Kirsten Davis.

The conference inspired the Eagle Ambassadors to host more philanthropy-promoting activities, which included the first “Nearly Naked Mile,” held in November as a winter clothing drive for area school children. Runners/walkers were encouraged to dress in summer clothing – shorts, camisoles, tank tops, etc.

“We had never heard of anything like that on the Clarion campus, and we thought it would be a good, unique event,” said Kirsten Davis, Eagle Ambassadors president. “Until we started planning, we didn’t realize how big the need is. It’s something that’s not necessarily talked about, and we hope to bring it to light.”

Tag days are a way to bring awareness to the generosity of donors and their impact on a student’s education. The Eagle Ambassadors will place tags around campus, representing the tangible impact Clarion’s donors have on the university.

Change for Change will be another simple way in which the importance of philanthropy can be emphasized to Clarion and its students. Containers will be placed throughout campus in which students, faculty and staff can place spare change or monetary donations. The money collected from this drive will be given to a campus project of the student body’s choosing.

CURRENT EXECUTIVE BOARD FOR THE EAGLE AMBASSADORS:

Kirsten Davis, President
Major: Nursing; Minor: Computer Information Systems
Class of 2020

Brittany Fitzgerald, Vice President
Major: Speech Pathology
Class of 2020

Haley Bills, Secretary
Major: Rehabilitative Sciences; Minor: Special Education
Class of 2021

Madison Campos, Treasurer
Major: Paralegal Studies
Class of 2020 (December)

Erika Carolus, Public Relations Chair
Major: Secondary Education, Mathematics
Class of 2022

AMBASSADORS OF CHANGE

The Eagle Ambassadors, the official student alumni group, serves as liaison between current students and alumni. Their mission is to aid, assist and promote Clarion University, the Clarion University Alumni Association and its board of directors, the Clarion University Foundation, Inc., and the Office of the President. They also emphasize student dedication to the university and the community, both before and after graduation from Clarion.

One way they fulfill their mission is through student philanthropy – not just in practicing it, but promoting it to the student body and bringing awareness of its profound effects. The Eagle Ambassadors host a variety of philanthropic events and activities, including Donate-A-Meal and Egg Roulette.

Donate-A-Meal, held every fall, encourages students to donate one of their board meals back to Chartwells Dining Services. Chartwells, working with Eagle Ambassadors, uses the proceeds to purchase turkeys and hams to donate to Clarion County Community Action, which distributes the turkeys and hams to area families in need during the holiday

season. The student body raised over \$1,800 in fall 2018, which resulted in the purchase of 60 turkeys and 40 hams, supporting 100 families in the Clarion County area.

Egg Roulette is held every spring during Student Philanthropy Week and is a way for students to give back to their fellow students. For only \$1, students can purchase a plastic egg for a chance at a mystery prize, which might be small giveaway items donated by PSECU, coupons for local businesses, or gift cards and vouchers for the university bookstore. Proceeds from Egg Roulette go to the Underfunded Scholarships Project at Clarion University. Students raised more than \$700 last spring.

Members of the Eagle Ambassadors recently attended the CASE Conference for Student Advancement in Baltimore, where they were able to network with students from more than 100 universities and colleges across the United States. They attended sessions about strengthening student alumni groups, developing leadership skills, creating new ideas for events, and promoting student philanthropy.



Carolus, Davis and Fitzgerald at the summer CASE conference in Baltimore



bridging **THE GAP**



Helping Butler County

In his spare time, Clarion alumnus **Scott “Howie” Dittman ’98** is Helping Butler County.

As founder of the Facebook-based Helping Butler County, he leads a group that helps needy people fill in the gaps where state and federal agencies can no longer help.

He got started through feeding the homeless under a bridge in Butler County after he learned that the county’s homeless received daily lunches and dinners, except for lunch on Sundays. He began taking roasters of food to them. Because the homeless trusted him, he was able to connect them with agencies, which could better their situation.

He also realized two more things: Many people fall through system’s cracks; and there are others who want to help, but don’t know how.

“I’m essentially a conduit between the community and the agencies that are helping people,” Dittman said.

Agencies can only do so much. A person might be placed into a new living situation, but that person might not have furniture, clothes, cleaning supplies, etc. School nurses contact Dittman if a student needs a new coat or shoes. This is where Helping Butler County comes into play.

When Dittman learns of a need, he posts in the Facebook group. The needs are as varied as the people: cleaning supplies, car repairs, furniture, clothes and Christmas gifts. Typically, group members meet the need within minutes.

“Everybody has something,” Dittman said of the group’s willing donors.

The key to success for Helping Butler County is understanding people’s donation habits and preferences. Dittman has noticed that people tend to forget about year-round donation stations; supply drives for specific needs work better. Donors like knowing that their donations are going to “people actively engaged in bettering their situation.”

Helping Butler County vets the people to avoid fraud, but Dittman said fraud seldom occurs.

Dittman tells stories such as the veteran who was simply in need of a crockpot because his efficiency apartment had limited appliances. That same veteran cried upon receiving the donation.

Another story is about a family in which the dad was playing guitar outside of Walmart to earn money to fix their vehicle. Instead, a person gave him a job and connected him

with an agency, which helped his family get an apartment. When the family moved into the apartment, Helping Butler County donations completely furnished it, including providing a Christmas tree and gifts beneath it. Donations were anonymous and placed before the family got there.

KIDS IN NEED

Helping Butler County’s success has spiraled into other donation programs such as expanding an existing backpack program for the county’s food-insecure students.

Through the program, once a month children received a backpack filled with food. When Dittman heard of a little boy who consistently asked if it was the weekend for the program, he knew the program needed to expand to weekly. He also knew people would come through with donations to support it. Each school district administers its respective backpack program.

Helping Butler County also ensures that each school has hygiene items on hand for children who need them.

Going a step further, the group has a fund called “Bed for Every Head” which collects donations for new mattresses, a common need. The group doesn’t collect used mattresses due to infestation concerns.

Other needs that have been met by the group include providing senior pictures for students who can’t afford them. Members have stepped in to take those photographs, and Dittman said parents are so grateful.

“Basically, anything that we can find that needs to be done, we do,” Dittman said.

MANY HANDS, MANY HEARTS

The growth of Helping Butler County surprised Dittman and his wife, **Lee Burgoon ’98 Dittman**.

“It just kind of took off,” Lee Dittman said. The organization grew “more than I had anticipated.”

As a result, “he has so many more people helping,” Lee said, which means needs are met even more quickly.

Dittman hopes to share the process to bring about a nationwide solution. His day job involves designing health care systems for a Florida-based company, so he’s familiar with creating processes based on user experiences.

His desire to help doesn’t stop there. Dittman noticed that the temporary and transitional housing used by the people

his group helps is often from the 1950s and 1960s, designed with narrow doors, hallways and stairs that sustain damage during occupants’ frequent moves.

Dittman helped design housing that is handicapped accessible and made with sturdy materials that can stand up to frequent transitions. Initially, the housing will be 20 percent more expensive, but Dittman said over a short time the county will save thousands of dollars by not needing to repair the outdated housing. The prototype – a duplex in Slippery Rock – is in the works.

DAD HUGS

Dittman tries to fill non-material needs, too. He received wide media attention after posting on Facebook his experience at the Pittsburgh Pride Parade, where he gave “Dad hugs” to LGBTQ individuals who had been rejected by their families. The post went viral, leading to BuzzFeed and USA Today articles and interviews on CNN and local news channels.

Dittman said he attended the parade with the expectation of a joyful experience, but he also learned how much a hug from a dad meant to so many. It angers him that people reject their loved ones for their sexual orientation.

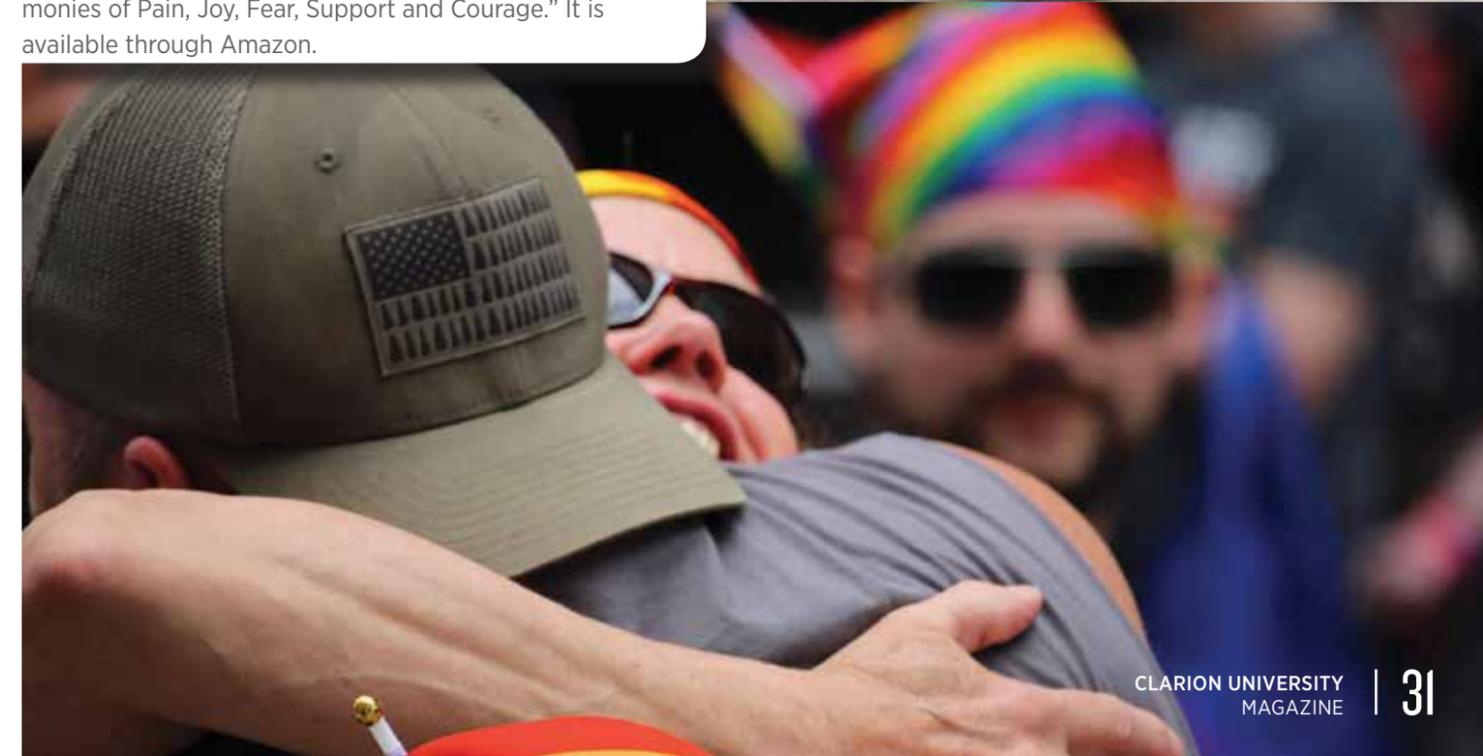
“How can you do that?” Dittman asked.

After the parade, he received 2,900 Facebook messages from people who were touched by his presence at the parade. He responded to every message.

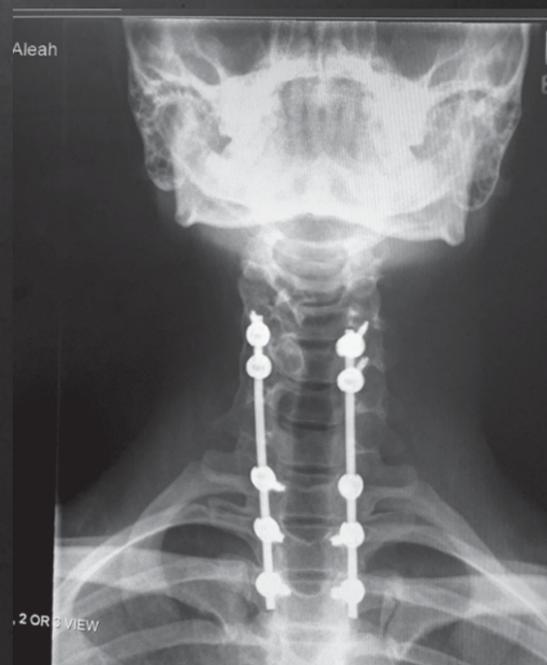
With permission, he compiled some of those Facebook messages into a book called “Beyond the Hugs: Testimonies of Pain, Joy, Fear, Support and Courage.” It is available through Amazon.



The Pirates Parrot gets a “dad hug” from Dittman at the Pittsburgh Pride Parade.



DIGGING DEEP



At first glance, Aleah Karam's volleyball career has been solid but not necessarily spectacular. Through the middle of her sophomore year, she had played in fewer than 30 career matches, and other than a few brief moments, there had not been much of a highlight reel. Absent of context, she would appear to be your average student-athlete that makes up the rosters of hundreds of college teams across the nation.

That context, though, is what makes the story of her college career rise from unremarkable to astounding. If you had asked her parents nine years ago, they would have told you they were just happy their daughter was alive, let alone a college athlete.

It was just a few days before Christmas in 2010, and Karam was getting ready to leave for a Catholic Youth Organization basketball game when her younger sister Annika came running around the corner and fell on top of her, inadvertently hyper-extending Aleah's neck and causing instant paralysis.

“I could see my hands and fingers performing weird movements, but I had no feeling or control,” Karam said. “It was truly the scariest moment of my life.”

Karam's mother, Daniela Strausser, an emergency room nurse, acted quickly, and they were soon on their way to Akron Children's Hospital. The paralysis began to fade as doctors administered tests through the night and into the early morning hours. Still, the doctors came back with a grim diagnosis: the tests revealed an aneurysmal bone cyst – a blood-filled tumor that feeds on bone and is fueled by the body's blood supply – on Karam's C6 vertebra. In some ways, the accident she had suffered was a blessing; had the cyst not been discovered, the consequences would have been dire.

“The doctors said that if I had played in that basketball game and made any wrong movement – a push, a fall, anything – I could have severed that vertebra and died that night,” Karam said.

It is not overly dramatic to say the cyst was a ticking clock. It had already eaten through all but a centimeter of Karam's C6 vertebra; doctors said surgery was needed as soon as possible, or the cyst would eventually destroy the rest of her vertebra and kill her. Further, aneurysmal bone cysts are most commonly found on the larger bones of the body; the fact that this one was on not just a smaller bone but on a vertebra, made finding qualified doctors difficult. According to Karam, it took her family more than



Karam's recovery included re-learning how to walk.



a month to find a surgeon able to carry out the delicate procedure.

Even after the family identified a surgeon, the prognosis wasn't promising. According to Karam, her parents were told there was a 70 percent chance she would not live through the surgery. If she lived, there was a significant possibility of lifelong paralysis, and merely a 10 percent chance she could live a normal, healthy life again.

Karam said that her parents did everything they could to shield their daughter from the harsh realities they were facing, but even then, there were moments she started to understand the gravity of the situation.

"I caught my mother numerous times crying on the phone with my father, or when she was alone in another room," Karam said. "I didn't know exactly what was going on, but I knew it was taking its toll on them."

There was one part of preparation for the surgery from which Karam's parents were not able to shield her: preparing for the halo she would have to wear for the next six months of her life. Because they are custom made for each patient, she would have to be fitted for the device before she went into surgery.

"Because you need it immediately after surgery, they can't really hide that one from you," Karam said. "It was tough having to look at that thing before going into surgery, not knowing what it really meant when it was all done."

The surgery was a complete success. Dr. George Thompson and his staff inserted two rods, 10 screws, 10

bolts and a bone graft from Karam's hip into her neck to stabilize her. The difficult task of rehabilitation lay ahead, with Karam set to spend the next six months in the halo and three months away from school. She had to start at the beginning, even having to re-learn how to walk, and she suffered a weakness in her left leg that left her with a pronounced limp for a period.

"I did not like my physical therapist at all," laughed Karam. "I thought he was the devil! He would make me get up and walk, and it was the most pain I had ever endured. I get it now, but as a child, I didn't understand why he was pushing me so hard."

It was that prompting and encouragement that Karam credits with allowing her to return to the world of athletics at all. She did her first month of physical therapy at home and progressed faster than the typical projections for her rehabilitation, eventually regaining the ability to walk properly. However, the time away from physical activity was difficult for her, and she needed to seek out new avenues to get her fill of action.

"I had played pretty much any sport possible to that point," Karam said, but now doctors were warning her to avoid any sports with possible severe physical contact, such as basketball or soccer. She took up dancing, but after two years found that her passion remained with competitive sports. With fewer options than before, Karam returned to volleyball after spending three years away from sports of any kind.

"My doctor was leery about it, and my parents were nervous," Karam said. "It was hard to get back into it, especially trying to play at a competitive level."

While the rigors of club volleyball proved to be an early challenge for Karam, one thing that never entered her mind was fear of further injury. In fact, she said she never considered the possibility.

"I just think I was so young, it never even occurred to me to be scared," Karam said. "Maybe if I was older and I really understood everything that had gone on, it would have been different, but I just never worried about it at all."

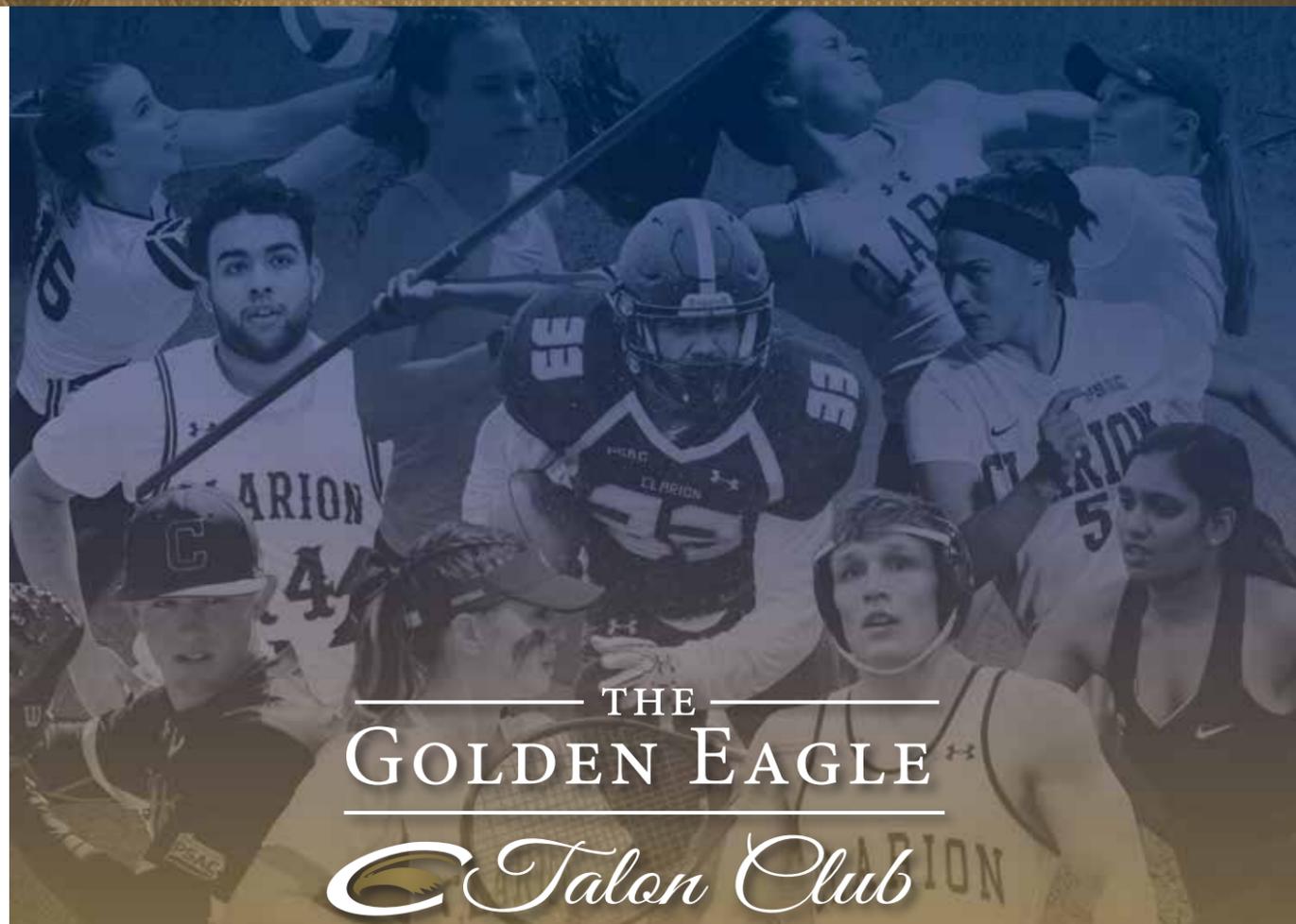
Karam's perseverance was evident not just in her return to the field of play, but also to the classroom. Because of the amount of school time that she missed, it was thought that she would have to be held back for a year, but she pushed herself to complete her classwork and move on with the rest of her grade. Likewise, her dedication to her rehabilitation allowed her to regain her full physical capabilities, and her fearlessness in returning to the court played no small part in her eventually being one of the privileged few to play college volleyball.

"If I had not pushed myself to get back into sports despite the hurdles I faced, I would not be enjoying the game I have always loved, or playing here at Clarion," Karam said.

"Volleyball has always been my happy place. It teaches so many priceless lessons. It is a sport that cannot be properly executed without everyone on the court giving their best effort on every play.



Karam contributing to Golden Eagles volleyball.



THE GOLDEN EAGLE

Talon Club

Longtime supporters of Clarion athletics likely noticed a change in the way those friends of the program are being recognized and honored. The Golden Eagle Talon Club was formed earlier this year as a way to better connect with the people that provide student-athletes with the chance to compete at the highest level.

“Our donors are an integral part of Clarion University athletics, and the Golden Eagle Talon Club allows us to thank them for their annual support,” said Chris Anderson, Clarion’s director of athletic giving. “This gives us a new and meaningful way to celebrate our donors and let them know they are essential members of the team.”

Anderson’s passion for Clarion comes from his personal experiences. A 2010 graduate, he says the Golden Eagle Talon Club was created with the idea to put Clarion back on the map as an athletic program.

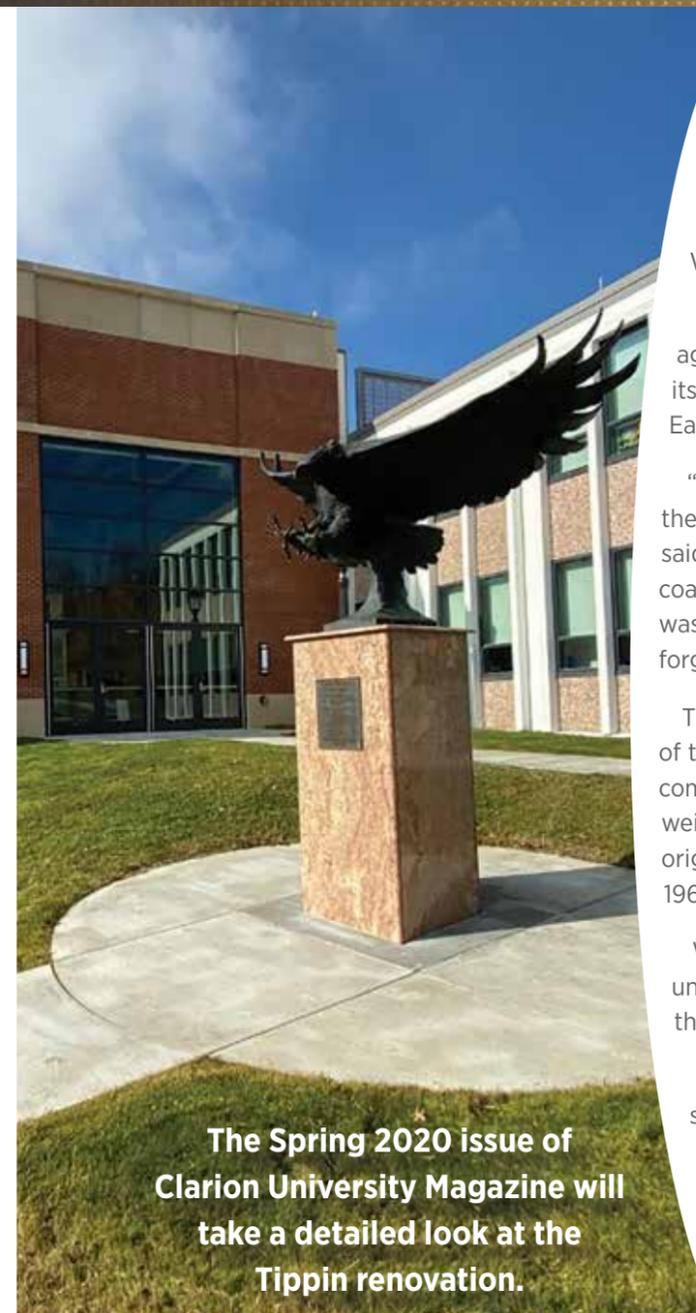
“We are excited to see the Golden Eagle Talon Club established at Clarion University,” said Mark and Sheryl Riesmeyer, longtime donors and friends of Clarion athletics.

“The program creates a team mentality among the alumni and friends who support Clarion Athletics. We, as supporters, relish the opportunity to continue giving to the sport we love, while building unity among the entire Golden Eagles fan base. It is a victory for this organization.”

With the Golden Eagle Talon Club, donors are recognized and rewarded for any contribution over \$99 to any athletic program. Those that give to multiple programs are recognized for the sum total of their contributions and are eligible to receive premiums such as complimentary tickets, invitations to special events and public recognition of their support.

Those wishing to get their name on the Golden Eagle Talon Club roster need only donate to any Clarion University Athletic Fund. The program is an annual giving society, so donations made during the athletic season (July 1 – June 30) will count toward your giving level for that season. When the new athletic season starts in July, a new giving season with new membership levels also begins.

More information about the Golden Eagle Talon Club can be found on the athletics website, at clariongoldeneagles.com/talonclub.



The Spring 2020 issue of Clarion University Magazine will take a detailed look at the Tippin renovation.

RENOVATED TIPPIN GYM REOPENS

After an 18-month, \$42.7 million renovation, Waldo S. Tippin Gymnasium- Natatorium has reopened.

Golden Eagles volleyball hosted its final two regular season games against Mercyhurst Nov. 15 and Gannon Nov. 16, while wrestling made its debut in its new home Nov. 17, hosting George Mason in the Golden Eagles’ Mid-American Conference opener.

“It was important to give our volleyball and wrestling student-athletes the chance to close and open their seasons, respectively, in the facility,” said Dr. Wendy Snodgrass, athletic director. “This is a moment that our coaches, athletes, alumni and fans have looked forward to since ground was broken last year, and I am sure it will be a moment they will never forget.”

The total renovation provides a new entrance/lobby, complete overhaul of the basketball courts and seating, natatorium overhaul with a new combination swimming/diving pool, expanded areas for wrestling, new weight room, new locker rooms and a new auxiliary gymnasium. The original Waldo S. Tippin Gymnasium-Natorium was dedicated Oct. 12, 1968.

While competitions are being held, some areas of Tippin are undergoing final phases of the renovation. An official grand opening of the building is being planned for the spring semester.

The project was designed to achieve the LEED Silver level of sustainability under the US Green Building Council’s LEED 2009 for New Construction and Major Renovations.

The contractors for the project are: Mascaro Construction Company (General), Renick Brothers Mechanical Contractors (HVAC), Shipley Brothers Construction, Inc. (Plumbing) and Westmoreland Electric Services, LLC (Electrical).



THE GOLDEN EAGLE FAMILY HAS CHANGED DRASTICALLY OVER THE COURSE OF 2019,

with a host of new coaches and staff members filling out the department in the past year. Here is a look at some of the newest head coaches and support staff members in Clarion Athletics:



BEN BEVEVINO '15
TRACK & FIELD

Bevevino enters his third season – and second stint – as head coach of Clarion track & field. He spent 2016-18 as interim head coach for the Golden Eagles. His athletes recorded 12 school record performances and 38 top-fives in their respective events. The team excelled academically, twice earning USTFCCCA Division II All-Academic Team honors. He spent 2018-19 as an assistant coach at Texas Lutheran, where he was the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association 2019 South/Southeast Regional Assistant Coach of the Year. His athletes authored six national qualifying performances and two earned All-American status, boasted six school record performances, four conference champions and nine all-conference performances. He helped lead the men to a conference championship and the women to a second-place finish.



ERIK JONES
STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH

Jones accepted the position of strength and conditioning coach in July 2019 and has already established a strong rapport with the Golden Eagle student-athletes he is in charge of developing. A coach with years of Division I experience, he was most recently a graduate assistant strength and conditioning coach at Robert Morris. Before that, he enjoyed stints at Louisiana-Monroe and Villanova, and was a volunteer assistant strength and conditioning coach at his alma mater of Bloomsburg. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science from Bloomsburg in 2016 and his Master of Science in Organizational Leadership from Robert Morris in 2019.



AFRIM LATIFI
SOCCER COACH

Latifi was hired as interim women's coach in April 2019 and completed his first season as head coach in November. He was head coach at Bethany in 2018 and assistant coach at his alma mater, Gannon, for two years prior, where he helped the Golden Knights to a 23-10-5 record, a bid to the 2017 NCAA Division II tournament, and 2016 PSAC Tournament semifinals. Taylor Lewis was named the 2016 PSAC Freshman of the Year, and the Golden Knights featured three First Team and seven total All-PSAC players. As a Gannon player from 2007-10, Latifi had a prolific career. He graduated ranked sixth all-time in career goals (44), ninth in career points (102) and fifth in career starts (64). He finished his career as the Golden Knights' all-time leader in game-winning goals. He earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in sport & exercise science.



DERON "DOC" NEIMAN BASEBALL COACH

Neiman took over as interim head coach of Golden Eagles baseball after spending the 2019 season as a volunteer assistant. In his year as assistant, the Golden Eagles won 19 games, the second-highest single-season wins total in program history. Clarion had its best finish in the PSAC standings since winning the PSAC West division in 2005, and two players earned All-PSAC status as a result. Prior to coming to Clarion, Neiman was an assistant at his alma mater, DeSales, under his father Tim Neiman, where he coached a host of all-conference and all-region selections. As a player, Neiman was a three-time All-Freedom Conference selection and was twice voted the team's MVP. At DeSales, Neiman earned a bachelor's degree in sport management in 2001 and a master's degree in criminal justice in 2019.



DAMIAN PITTS - MEN'S BASKETBALL COACH

Pitts became head men's basketball coach in June after spending 2017-19 as head coach at Centenary, where he laid a foundation for the Cyclones' success. He engineered a turnaround in his second season that saw his team break the record for consecutive wins, rattling off six straight as part of a 9-1 run in 2018-19. He spent nearly two decades on the bench at Millersville during a highly successful run for the Marauders. A full-time assistant at Millersville from 2004-17, Pitts helped coach the Marauders to the 2007 PSAC Championship, two PSAC Tournament finals, three NCAA Tournament appearances and two NCAA Regional Finals appearances. Pitts earned a bachelor's degree from Goucher College, where he was a standout basketball player, and a master's degree in sport management from Millersville in 2002.

ELISABETH "LIS" SCHULZ - SOFTBALL COACH

Named head softball coach in 2019, Schulz will coach her first season at the helm of the Blue & Gold this spring. She came to Clarion after four years as head coach at Division III Bridgewater, where she led consistent annual improvement in competitive Old Dominion Athletic Conference and turned the Eagles from doormat to contender. The team improved on previous seasons' wins totals in each of her four years, starting with nine wins in 2016 and improving to 10 in 2017, 15 in 2018 and a 23-17 season in 2019. The team returned to the ODAC Tournament for the first time since 2014. Schulz coached five All-ODAC honorees in her four years. A Gibsonia native, Schulz earned a B.A. in communication studies from Westminster in 2011, and went on to earn an M.Ed. in 2013.

BEN JEWART - MULTIMEDIA COORDINATOR

Jewart, hired in October, is the operator and overseer of the audio and video presentation in renovated Tippin Gymnasium. Before Clarion, Jewart was director of A/V for the Tsongas Center at UMass-Lowell for three years, and was the AV manager for four years before that. His primary duties included serving as director of in-game entertainment for UMass Lowell's ice hockey team and men's and women's basketball. He was responsible for operation and staffing of the Tsongas Center's \$1.5 million control room. During his tenure he oversaw a \$750,000 ESPN renovation of the control room. Jewart was instrumental in helping the university broadcast its first games on ESPN3 and NESN. Before that he helped open the Kovalchick Convention and Athletics Complex in 2011. He holds a bachelor's in communication media from IUP.



1968 Sequelle

ALUMNI NOTES *winter* 2019

1981

Polly (Potter) Ferringer recently retired after 33 years as a middle school teacher at North Allegheny School District. She resides in Pittsburgh with her husband, Steve. While attending Clarion University, Polly was a four-time All-American swimmer on multiple-year National Championship teams.



1988

Deborah (Hornicek) Fuge recently graduated with a Doctor of Education in Educational Psychology from Regent University. She is a first grade teacher for Virginia Beach (Va.) City Public Schools. Deborah resides in Virginia Beach with her husband, Kurt.

Laura (Kidder) McNeill '90 recently received a Ph.D. in Instructional Leadership with a concentration in Interactive Technology from the University of Alabama. Dr. McNeill serves as an assistant professor at the University of Alabama and a lecturer at Samford University. She is also an assistant vice president and senior instructional designer at Regions Bank. Laura earned master's degrees from the University of Alabama and The Ohio State University. She resides in Birmingham, Alabama.

1990

Jeff James is director of security at Seneca Valley School District, Harmony. In February 2019, James founded Capitol Security Consultants, a security consulting firm that offers training in active shooter survival, self-defense and child safety. The firm also conducts risk and threat assessments for individuals, schools and small and large businesses. He is retired from the United States Secret Service and resides in Mars with his wife, Julie, and children: Delaney, Jackson and Madelyn.

1991

Evelyn Wassel is a teacher resource specialist trainer at Polk County School District, Florida. She resides in Winter Haven, Fla.



1995

Christopher Albrecht was one of five inductees into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas. In 2018, Christopher was selected as the New York State Teacher of the Year.

1996

Carrie (Wissinger) Short is director of financial services for Lorain County Community College, Elyria, Ohio. She resides in Medina, Ohio, with her husband, Ben.

2000

Nicole (Mike) Lininger is a senior marketing manager for Oncology Nursing Society, Pittsburgh. She resides in Pittsburgh with her husband, Joe.

WE WANT TO *know about* YOU!

And so do your Clarion classmates. It's easy to share your latest personal milestones and professional accomplishments in the pages of Clarion University Magazine. Just send us a note!

Visit www.clarion.edu/alumni-update

2001

Robert Kartychak earned his doctorate degree from Point Park University. He is an elementary assistant principal in Hopewell Area School District. Dr. Kartychak resides in Oakdale.

2003

Heather (Bennett) Miller was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of biochemistry at High Point University. She resides in Pleasant Garden, N.C.

2005

Nicole (Weaver) Lauer is a principal for Boston Valley Elementary School, Hamburg Central School District, Hamburg, N.Y. She resides in Eden, N.Y., with her husband, David, and children, Jack and Jordan.

Alison Gregory is a librarian for Marymount University, Arlington, Va. She resides in Arlington.

2006

Nicole (Burns) Hawk is an internal audit director for Koppers, Inc., Pittsburgh. She resides in Belle Vernon.

Edward and Christine (Wolbert '01) Baumcratz reside in Shippenville with their children: Noah, Sydney and Olivia. Edward is a high school principal for North Clarion County School District, Tionesta.

2007

Mark and Kristy (Clarke) Trumbo reside in Liverpool, N.Y., with their children, Avery and Grant. Mark is assistant athletics director for Syracuse University.

2011

Jonathan Mracko is a music teacher for Christiana High School, Newark, Del. He resides in Middletown, Del., with his wife, Kristine.

2013

Stephanie Lynch and **Daniel Brent** reside in Altoona. Stephanie is a physician assistant for UPMC – Metropolitan Ear Nose and Throat, Pittsburgh. Daniel is systems administrator at TrueCommerce, Cranberry Township.

2015

Katrina Verdone is a scribe for Southwood Psychiatric Hospital in Upper St. Clair. She resides in Trafford.



MARRIAGES



Stephanie Lynch '13 and Daniel Brent '13
May 18, 2019

Brittany Mesarick '09 and Steven Musick,
May 19, 2018

Amy Piroga '07 and Dereck Rankin '03
July 27, 2019

1940s

Robert J. Zelechowski '48
Sept. 26, 2019

James D. Shofestall '49
(retired faculty)

1950s

Joseph Edward Murphy '50
Aug. 3, 2019

Elizabeth Marie Cober Carbin '53
Sept. 21, 2019

John C. Black '54
Sept. 28, 2019

George J. Reed '57
July 19, 2019

John Richard McCoy '58
June 18, 2019

Nancy Buzard Hankey '58
Sept. 14, 2019

Darrell D. Franklin '59
July 13, 2019

1960s

Janet L. Decker '60
July 4, 2019

Harold G. Baker '62
July 6, 2019

Jack Arnold Loya '62
Oct. 2, 2019

Shirley Rose Guido '62
Oct. 26, 2019

Clair Arnold Nelson '63
Sept. 5, 2019

IN MEMORIAM

Joan Welms Borgia '64
Sept. 26, 2019

John Richard Bielick '65
June 28, 2019

James G. Burkholder '68
July 9, 2019

Ronald J. Himes '68
July 31, 2019

Susan K. Solida '68
Sept. 10, 2019

Daniel J. Kauffman '69
Sept. 17, 2019

Phyllis K. Rodgers Jacoby '69
Sept. 30, 2019

1970s

Rebecca M. Soules Merry '70
Aug. 13, 2019

Terry E. Kirkwood '71
Sept. 18, 2019

Mike Gemble '75
May 13, 2018

Deborah M. Wilson Dowling '76
Aug. 12, 2019

Christy A. Morin '77
Oct. 16, 2019

Cynthia C. Barrett '79
July 5, 2019

1980s

Kirby L. Ordiway '80
Oct. 4, 2019

Mary Alice Chadman '88
Aug. 29, 2019

Nancy Lee Griffin Neeley '89
Oct. 24, 2019

1990s

Barry Charles Cherkes '94
June 29, 2019

Melissa Jo Wetzel Johnson '94
July 20, 2019

2000s

Jason Michael Ross '04
June 29, 2019

Eric P. O'Polka '05
July 20, 2019

2010s

Shawn M. Rehberg '12
July 22, 2019

Nicole Lynae Tosh Amundson '15
Aug. 26, 2019

Friends

John E. Greer, Sept. 8, 2019

Ellen W. Lawrence, Sept. 10, 2019

Ralph Montana, Sept. 16, 2019

Charles Jack Shontz, Oct. 7, 2019
(retired administrator)



Frank Lignelli '50

Frank Lignelli, 94, prominent in Clarion athletics, passed away Sept. 1.

As an athlete, he earned 11 varsity letters: four in wrestling and football and three in baseball.

After graduating, he taught at area schools before returning to Clarion in 1957. He was assistant football coach for 13 seasons; he restarted the wrestling program in the 1959-60 season and had a 69-11-1 record and the 1965 PSAC title.

With Mr. Lignelli as athletic director from 1966 to 1990, Clarion's athletic teams won 11 national championships, 59 PSAC titles, 22 PSAC runner-up finishes, 40 PSAC-West crowns and numerous NAIA district titles.

He was inducted into multiple halls of fame: NAIA and EWL in 1984, Clarion University Sports in 1993, and the National Association of Collegiate Athletic Directors in 2006.



CLARION UNIVERSITY **BABY EAGLES**



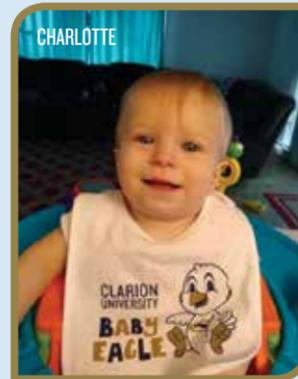
Our gift to baby Eagles of Clarion alumni is a dashing new bib!

To receive a bib, visit www.clarion.edu/babybib and complete the online form. Once you receive your bib, take a picture of your Eaglet putting the bib to use, and email a high-resolution photo to us for inclusion in Clarion University Magazine.

For more information, call the Office of Alumni Engagement at 814-393-2572.



LAUREN
Lauren June Stanley, daughter of **Joseph '11** and **Danielle Cicero '10 Stanley**, born Dec. 30, 2017



CHARLOTTE
Charlotte Ann Whitling, daughter of **Michael '05, M.Ed. '08** and **Rachel Appleby '06 Whitling**, born June 11, 2018



ELLIANA
Elliana Rose Heard, daughter of **Edward** and **Stephanie Corso '18 Heard**, born Oct. 14, 2018



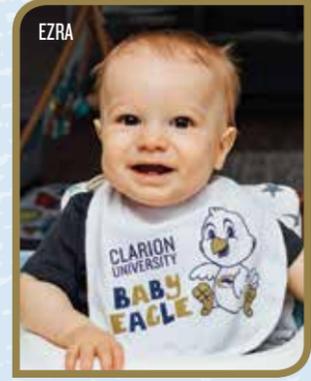
GABRIEL
Gabriel Weaver, son of **Bill** and **Kate Irwin '15 Weaver**, born April 7, 2019



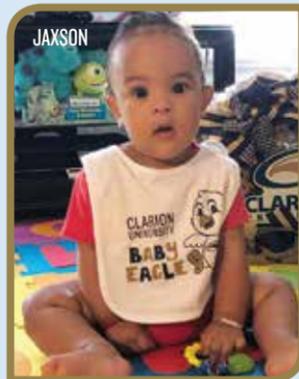
MAX
Max Howard McGregor, son of **Shawn** and **Katie Harbison '10 McGregor**, born April 16, 2019



BRADY
Brady James Anthony, son of **Nicholas** and **Kristen Park '02 Anthony**, born April 18, 2019



EZRA
Ezra Joseph Patrick Pearce, son of **Nathan Joseph '10, M.Ed. '12** and **Lauren Mary Sarso '10, MS '12 Pearce**, born Jan. 24, 2019



JAXSON
Jaxson Brooks Sullenberger, son of **Jared Sullenberger '18** and **Alize Martinez**, born Dec. 20, 2018



LEYLA
Leyla Marie Langharst, daughter of **Brittany Langharst**, born Jan. 22, 2019



LUKE
Luke Warner Rigby, son of **Nicole** and **Kevin '07 Rigby**, born Jan. 30, 2019



CALLEN
Callen Thomas Jude Duffola, son of **Brad** and **Jessica Hummel '05 Duffola**, born May 4, 2019



MARY
Mary Cosette Puckey, daughter of **Jason** and **Jackie Rodgers '06 Puckey**, born June 1, 2019



CARSON
Carson Lee Sprankle, son of **Wesley '14** and **Brittany Kowatch '18 Sprankle**, born June 1, 2019



LYDIA
Lydia Marie Anderson, daughter of **Chris '10** and **Ashley McCullough '13 Anderson**, born April 18, 2019



BURDELL
Burdell Ann Felmlee, daughter of **Norman** and **Amber Yukon '12 Felmlee**, born Feb. 15, 2019



RILEY
Riley Sue Burkett, son of **Derek '13** and **Melissa Skiff '13 Burkett**, born Feb. 19, 2019



MILES
Miles Tanner Eng, son of **Shaun** and **Dana Falk '10, MBA '11 Eng**, born March 2, 2019



WYATT
Wyatt Mitchell, son of **Scott** and **Abigail Fazio '10 Mitchell**, born June 19, 2019



GIOVANNI
Giovanni Tofani, son of **Matthew '16** and **Samantha Bonner '17 Tofani**, born June 28, 2019



EMERY
Emery Shaelynn Brendel, daughter of **Danielle Charney '14** and **David Brendel**, born June 30, 2019



KORINNE
Korinne Brownlee, daughter of **Korey '11** and **Bethany Genevro Brownlee '11, MS '13**, born July 9, 2019

Cameos of Caring honors **ZEMAITIS**



Dr. Mary Lou Zemaitis, assistant professor of nursing at Clarion University's Pittsburgh site, was recognized for excellence in the Nurse Educator Category of University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing's Cameos of Caring Awards.

The awards, which honor the exceptional work of bedside nurses working at acute care hospitals, were presented at a Nov. 2 gala at David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh.

Zemaitis spent many years delivering direct patient care before deciding to teach.

"I realized that sharing what I was learning with others was natural for me," she said. "I enjoyed teaching and the opportunity to learn new insights from those who questioned me. I've worked with exceptional, talented nurses whose curiosity about how to best improve care has challenged me to push a bit further."

Zemaitis, whose passion is the improvement of nursing care through a well-educated nurse workforce, said designing new strategies of educational support and academic pathways for nurses has kept her involved.

"My energy has been driven by exceptional mentors, supporters and students who have brought out-of-the-box ideas for consideration. I believe that together, we've done much to improve nursing care delivery and patient care outcomes," she said. "Becoming a nurse educator was the most important move I made."

In addition to Zemaitis, seven Clarion University alumni received Cameos of Caring Awards through the nursing facilities where they are employed:

Samantha Brison '17
General category, UPMC Northwest

Jennifer Lyn Capets '13
General category, VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

Dina Boyd '99
Advanced Practice category, Allegheny Health Network, West Penn Hospital

Shauna Mack '16
Advanced Practice category, Allegheny Health Network, Saint Vincent Hospital

Jennifer Wasco '04
Nurse Educator category, Chatham University

Michelle Shields '95
Advanced Practice category, VA Pittsburgh

Michelle Collins '90
Case Manager category, UPMC Northwest



Love Clarion? Let it show!

Clarion University alumni live all over the United States and in many parts of the world. If you're one of the 58,000 alumni whose love for Clarion continues to grow, we invite you to be part of its continued success.

How? Great question!

Getting involved is the most powerful way to help Clarion continue to thrive. Alumni chapters have been formed in several areas where concentrations of alumni reside, so even if you've moved from the Clarion area, it's still easy to be involved.

An alumni chapter is a way for alumni and friends to connect with one another, engage with the Alumni Association, and stay connected to the university through leadership and volunteer opportunities, student outreach, local events, and social and professional networking.

"On campus, we developed the True North Initiative, which outlines goals and gives us direction in reaching them. We all have a responsibility in the success of the university, because we all have a stake in its future," said President Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson.

"On-campus alumni engagement events such as Alumni Weekend, Distinguished Awards and Homecoming, and off-campus events including my Pehrsson in Person tour, Pittsburgh Pirates Games and Mid-Winter Golf in Sunny Florida have allowed me to learn why our alumni love our university, and it's always about the transformation of their lives through Clarion," she said.

The ways to be involved are as plentiful as the alumni themselves. Whether near or far, you can share your time, talent and treasure. Assist in recruiting new students by talking about your time at Clarion and the impact of your Clarion education. Connect as a mentor with current students. Provide internship opportunities. Help new students acclimate to their first year. Welcome new graduates to the community, and help them transition to a new home and job.

Get involved today by filling out our online form at clarion.edu/getinvolved.



#WINGSUP

RELAY FOR LIFE COMMITTEE



Clarion University's 2019 Relay for Life was a story of triumph and vindication, and a demonstration of the power that young students possess when they work together. The event, held last spring, surpassed its fundraising goal of \$40,000, collecting \$47,743.04. The previous year they surpassed their \$38,000 goal by \$4,000.

Over the last four years, Relay for Life at Clarion University has raised over \$153,000, which supports cancer research, survivorship programs and patient support services. The only school that raises more money through Relay for Life is Penn State.

"A lot of planning goes into Relay for Life each year," said student Carri Pakozdi, event co-chair. "We actually start planning in September for the event in March. We meet with all of the necessary contacts like Chartwells and the Rec Center to ensure that everything will be ready."

Student participation is crucial. Pakozdi said multiple student organizations are involved, and more continue to come on board. Last spring's event had 521 registered participants, 25 cancer survivors and representation by 31 student organizations, including athletics teams, fraternities and sororities, and academics-based groups.

The annual event is more than the 18-hour walk. It also features entertainment, speakers, hair donations and the Miss Relay pageant. Pakozdi said the atmosphere ranges from upbeat to emotional.

Relay is always looking for more involvement.

"Monetary help is always accepted, but getting involved and volunteering time or resources are just as helpful," Pakozdi said.

Your gift *matters.*

No matter which department or scholarship you support, no matter the size, your gift makes a difference.



Dalton Ray | Tunkhannock, PA
Accounting major with a minor in finance and leadership

What brought me to Clarion

My family used to pass the Clarion exit on Interstate 80 regularly when traveling to visit family. We decided one day to drive through the town and see the campus. Immediately I had the feeling I belonged here. As high school graduation neared, I started to look at Clarion's wrestling program. I saw what Coach Ferraro was doing with the program and, combined with the sense that the campus just felt right, I committed to attend and wrestle for Clarion University.

What I love about Clarion

I absolutely love the small-town feel. Everywhere I go, people are always saying hi and showing kindness to others. The professors really care about the students. I also love the fact that I can drive 10 minutes from campus and enjoy the woods, fields and rivers.

Future Aspirations

I will graduate in May 2020 and commission as a 2nd lieutenant in the U.S. Army. I plan to establish my career with the Army and eventually transition into the FBI for forensic accounting.

Scholarship Opportunities

Clarion has a great variety of scholarships available. I was lucky enough to be granted an academic scholarship right out of high school, then earned an ROTC scholarship.

Why am I grateful for Clarion

I am extremely grateful for Clarion for the opportunities it has provided, including developing leadership and management skills through Army ROTC. I have met so many great people whom I am honored to consider my friends, now and for a lifetime. Clarion has given me the education and skills to succeed on my life path, and I am extremely grateful for that.

Your gift to Clarion University creates opportunities for students like Dalton.

To make a gift today, go to clarion.edu/yourgiftmatters


Clarion University Foundation, Inc.

Seifert-Mooney Center for Advancement
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
840 Wood Street, Clarion, PA 16214
814-393-2827 | giving@clarion.edu



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M I D - W I N T E R GOLF OUTING

WELCOME ALL CLARION ALUMNI JAN. 20 & 21, 2020

MONDAY, JANUARY 20 PUNTA GORDA

LAISHLEY CRAB HOUSE

COCKTAILS/DINNER 5:30 p.m. • 6:30 p.m.
150 Laishley Ct, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

TUESDAY, JANUARY 21 PORT CHARLOTTE

KINGSWAY COUNTRY CLUB

LUNCH BUFFET	11:15 a.m.	\$15
GOLF SCRAMBLE	12:30 p.m.	\$53
DINNER BUFFET	6:30 p.m.	\$45

13625 SW Kingsway Cir, Lake Suzy, FL 34269

Music will be provided by Al Holland and Verceal Whitaker, both former members of The Platters.

Come join us for any or all of the events: lunch, golf or dinner.

Rooms will be available at a reduced rate at the Holiday Inn Express.

Ask for Clarion's rate by January 17, 2020. 941-764-0056

Take I-75 exit 170; Go east; hotel is 1/10 of a mile on the right.

RSVP to attend by January 17, 2020 to:

Wayne Norris 888-327-0280 | Dan Wolovich 724-733-2258 dwolovich@comcast.net

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