

# CLARION

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

SPRING 2016



**DAVE FUSILLI**  
PROFESSIONAL  
KAYAKER

**MELISSA  
O'NEIL**  
*aims HIGH*

**THE  
SHADOW**  
*knows*

**THE  
CLARION  
PROJECT**

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YOU CAN MAKE TO US.

AND *that's not*  
THE BEST PART.



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Dave Fusilli ('04) navigates Green River, N.C.



# CLARION

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

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## WILK AND NAIR COME TUMBLING DOWN



With the opening of the new Suites on Main, Nair and Wilkinson halls are being demolished. Both buildings, completed in 1971, aged out and were no longer sustainable. The space will be used for parking. Bricks from the buildings will be available during Alumni Weekend.

[www.clarion.edu/alumni-weekend](http://www.clarion.edu/alumni-weekend)

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



**COURAGEOUS.**  
*confident.*  
**CLARION.**

Dear Clarion University family,

Another academic year is drawing to a close, and it's been an exciting time at Clarion University. When this year's graduates arrived as freshmen just four years ago, many of them lived in the traditional residence halls of Nair and Wilkinson halls. When they applied for admission, inquired about financial aid, worked with a mentor or visited the health center, the paths to those offices led to various buildings around campus.

With the renovation of Becht Hall completed last summer, current and incoming students know that most of what they need is in one convenient, central location. With the completion of the new Suites on Main, our student housing has been completely updated and represents the best of college student housing. In fact, this newest community also effectively extends the downtown Clarion experience with the relocation of the book store and Starbucks and the addition of The Den by Denny's and a movie theater.

Clarion University is deeply committed to the community and to a vibrant and engaging Clarion Main Street, benefiting both the town and the university.

But don't take my word for it. I invite you to see for yourselves, and there's no better time than Alumni Weekend, June 3-5. Our Alumni Association has tons of fun planned. Come, see and experience how your university is growing!

Fly Eagles Fly!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen M. Whitney".

Karen M. Whitney  
President, Clarion University

*spotlight on:*

## **BS CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION**

### **WHY IT'S HOT**

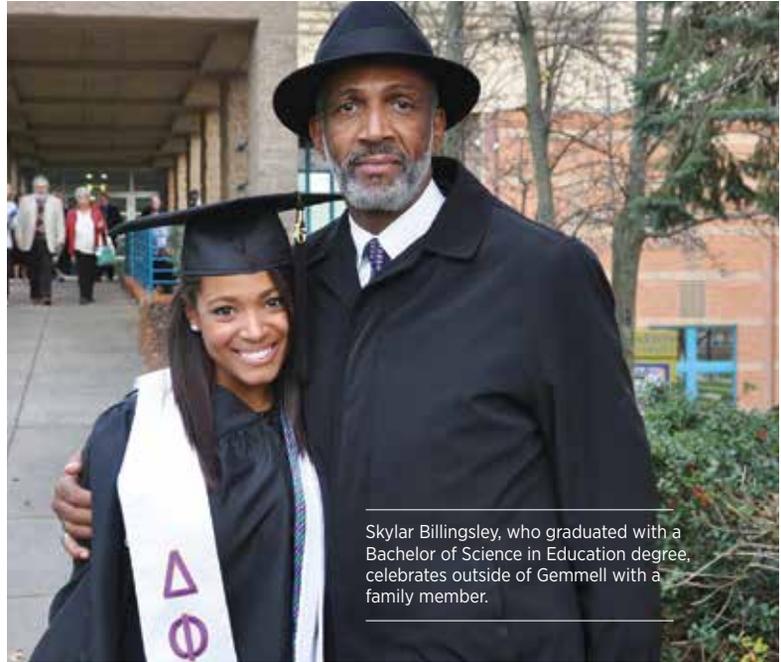
Less than one-third of Pennsylvania's 18,000 corrections officers have bachelor's degrees. Leadership positions are typically held by baby boomers nearing retirement age, which creates a workforce void. Offering a degree completion program helps to ease that void.

### **WHAT IT'S GOT**

Students pursuing this program must have an associate degree in criminal justice or have earned 60 college credits. Clarion's program is unique because it provides online degree completion in criminal justice administration. Career opportunities include correctional officers and jailers, first-line correctional supervisors, police and sheriff's officers, investigators, detectives and gaming officers.

### **WHAT'S NEXT**

After one year of offering the program, more than 30 students are enrolled.



Skylar Billingsley, who graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Education degree, celebrates outside of Gemmell with a family member.

## **WINTER COMMENCEMENT**

President Karen Whitney conferred 123 master's degrees, 259 bachelor's degrees and 34 associate degrees at Dec. 12 winter commencement in Tippin Gym. Charles P. Leach Jr., a key policy team member and participant during the foundation's greatest period of growth and organizational development, addressed graduates and received an honorary Doctor of Public Service degree.



Marc Bush is commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army.

## **CLARION ROTC COMMISSIONS THREE OFFICERS**

Clarion University and the U.S. Army proudly conferred degrees and commissioned three officers at its December 2015 commencement ceremonies: Marc Daniel Bush of Butler, Christopher James Flaughter of Clarion, and Alexander James Pucilowski of Moosic. The ROTC program was developed by the U.S. Army Cadet Command, designed to teach students leadership and management skills. ROTC is intended to increase self-confidence, self-discipline, physical stamina, poise and other qualities essential to the development of a leader of character.

## Benedict Oddi exhibition in Carlson



The work of Benedict Oddi is featured in the University Art Gallery. Oddi was an adjunct professor at Clarion University in fall 2014 and is currently teaching at IUP. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting and his teaching certification from

Edinboro University. He completed his Master of Fine Arts degree in painting at IUP.

In 2010 and 2012, Oddi was one of 100 artists invited internationally to the EMMA International Collaboration

in Big River, Saskatchewan, Canada. In 2009 he was presented the Best New Artist Award by Celebrate Life/Celebrate Art, Persad Center Auction, Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh.



## SUMMER *theatre* 2016

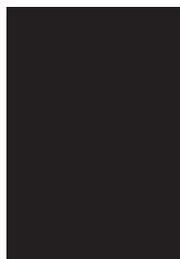
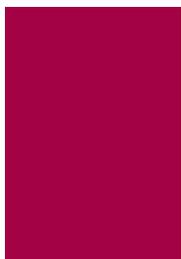
Clarion University has scheduled its 2016 Summer Musical Theatre Festival performances.

“Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” will be performed at 7:30 p.m. June 23-25 and June 29 to July 2, and at 2 p.m. June 26.

“You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown” will take the stage at 7:30 p.m. July 28-30 and Aug. 3-6, and at 2 p.m. July 31.

All performances will be in Marwick-Boyd Little Theatre. For tickets call 814-393-ARTS or visit [clarionuniversitytickets.com](http://clarionuniversitytickets.com).

## MLK COMMUNITY BREAKFAST



Rev. Lora A. Adams-King, superintendent of Farrell area School District and pastor of the Franklin New Life Family Worship Center, was the keynote speaker at the Jan. 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast. Held at the American Legion on Main Street, Clarion, the theme of the breakfast was “The King Legacy: And Justice for All.” It was open to the community.



Student Jerrell Blaine shares ideas with West.

## CORNEL WEST GOES ‘INSIDE POLITICS’

As part of the Mary L. Seifert Cultural Series, established to provide the campus and community with cultural, learning-inspired discussion, Dr. Cornel West visited Clarion Feb. 4. A public intellectual and groundbreaking author, he participated in a panel discussion, “Black Lives Matter,” with university students. He also presented a lecture, “Inside Politics.” The author of more than 20 books, he has composed award-winning spoken word albums, and is dedicated to keeping the message of Martin Luther King Jr. alive by bearing witness to love and justice.

## DÉDÉ *honored* FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENT ADVOCACY

Brenda Dédé, Ph.D., associate vice-president of academic affairs at Clarion University, was awarded the 2016 Outstanding First-Year Student Advocate Award Feb. 20. Presented by the University of South Carolina’s National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition, she is one of 10 being recognized.



Dédé is responsible for students from recruitment to graduation. While she focuses on freshmen, she helps at all points of the spectrum by assisting students with social, financial and academic issues. Dédé is credited with starting and maintaining several campus programs, such as Movin’ On Week.

Instituted in 2013, Movin’ On’s goal is to register first-year students who failed to do so during the traditional registration period. Movin’ On also includes a week of face-to-face encounters with university faculty and staff, designed to introduce students to Clarion college life.

From the fall of 2013 to the spring of 2014, Movin’ On is credited with raising the freshmen retention rate from 88 percent to 91 percent. All students are now included in its events.

## SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER ACCREDITATION

ONE OF **18**  
CENTERS

TRAINING TO  
**1,500+**  
INDIVIDUALS

**461**  
CLIENTS

MORE THAN  
**\$11,000,000**  
IN FINANCING

**7,500**  
HOURS

**10**  
COUNTIES

**1**  
on  
**1**  
CONSULTING

PAST YEAR'S NUMBERS



CLARION UNIVERSITY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER, one of 18 centers in Pennsylvania, received accreditation by the National Association of Small Business Development Centers. The SBDC provides entrepreneurs and existing small businesses in Armstrong, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Potter and Venango counties with consultation, information and education to help businesses start, grow and prosper. During the past year, the Clarion University SBDC provided 7,500 hours of one-on-one consulting to 461 clients, assisted clients with securing financing for projects totaling more than \$11,000,000 and provided entrepreneurial training to more than 1,500 individuals.



## INFINITE *opportunities*

**THE SECOND SEASON** of "Infinite Opportunities," a half-hour, public affairs program on PCN featuring Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education universities, is currently being televised.

In its inaugural season, the program introduced viewers to the 14 State System universities and the broad array of academic programs they offer. The new season will delve even deeper into the many opportunities Pennsylvania's public universities provide.

"In the second season, we will go more in depth, providing viewers the opportunity every week to learn even more about the programs and services the universities offer, not just to our more than 100,000 students, but to all of the residents of the commonwealth," said State System Chancellor Frank T. Brogan, who regularly serves as the program's moderator.

Topics to be covered during the second season will include athletics, online learning, service learning, liberal arts, internships, health and wellness, diversity, alumni success, economic impact, supporting higher education and succeeding in college. The season will conclude with 14 university-specific episodes.

For the complete season two schedule, or to view episodes from season one, go to [www.passhe.edu/infiniteopportunities](http://www.passhe.edu/infiniteopportunities).

## SCHOLAR ATHLETES



(From left) Jordan Bekelja, Jen Straw and Shelby Coughenour, members of the Carlson Cup-winning women's basketball team, stand with Jana Ashley and Jermaine Cooper, head coach and assistant coach, respectively. The Carlson Cup goes to the team with the most-improved GPA.

**A** record-setting 171 student-athletes – making up 49 percent of all Clarion student-athletes – were recognized for their academic efforts at the 26th Annual Bob Carlson Scholar-Athlete Luncheon Feb. 6. The event was held in Gemmell multi-purpose room and featured representatives from every Golden Eagle athletics program, with faculty athletics representative Rich Lane, Ph.D., introducing the student-athletes.

“Nothing makes me prouder than seeing the success our teams have in the classroom as well as in their competitions,” said Clarion athletic director Dave Katis. He was followed by university president Dr. Karen Whitney, who was also exuberant in her praise for the athletics programs.

“I love this athletics program because of the emphasis put on academic success and the way those successes continue to grow,” Whitney said.

To be named a scholar-athlete, student-athletes must achieve a cumulative grade point average of

3.2 or higher, have two consecutive semesters of a 3.2 GPA or higher in the previous spring and fall semesters, or be a freshman or new transfer who achieved a 3.2 GPA or higher in the fall 2015 term.

This year, 171 student-athletes met that criteria, making up nearly half of all Clarion athletes in the last year. Both the total (171 student-athletes) and percentage (49 percent) top the previous records of 166 and 47 percent, respectively, set at the 2014 luncheon.

In addition to the scholar-athlete recognitions, the Clarion women's basketball team was awarded the 2016 Carlson Cup, given annually to the team that displays the biggest overall increase in GPA during the past calendar year. The award is named after Bob Carlson, who started the scholar athlete luncheon in 1991 and was Clarion's athletic director from 1990 to 2005. On hand to receive the award was head coach Jana Ashley and women's basketball scholar-athletes Jordan Bekelja, Jen Straw and Shelby Coughenour.

In addition to the Carlson Cup, two other awards were handed out at the luncheon. Bruce Kendra was presented with the Extra Effort Award, recognizing the hard work done by the facilities management staff at Tippin Gymnasium and elsewhere on campus.

Ken Staub was also recognized as the Faculty of the Year award winner and was presented a plaque by Student-Athlete Advisory Committee president Alissa Spencer, a member of the women's soccer team.

**171**  
student  
athletes

**3.2**  
or higher  
GPA

**49%**  
of athletes

# ACADEMIC *honors*

In December three Clarion student-athletes were awarded the highest academic honor in collegiate athletics, when football's Matt Koerper and volleyball's Kaley Pittsley and Morgan Seybold were named College Sports Information Directors of America Academic All-Americans. To be eligible for this honor, a student-athlete must be a sophomore or above academically, maintain a 3.30 GPA or better, and have spent at least one year at their current institution. That list of nominees is then whittled down into All-District teams and another vote is held, with only the best of the best in the country earning Academic All-American honors.



**Koerper**

Koerper is an accounting major carrying a cumulative 3.75 GPA and was dominant on the defensive line in 2015. He tied for the team-high with eight sacks and totaled 45 tackles, a team-best 13 of which went for lost yardage. Koerper had a hand in three turnovers on the year as well, recovering two fumbles and forcing another. In his career Koerper has played in 32 games, made 94 tackles, 21 tackles for loss and 10 sacks.



**Seybold**

A rehabilitative science major, Seybold concluded a stellar four-year career at libero for the Golden Eagles with 772 digs and an average of 5.76 digs per set. Her 2,471 career digs make her one of just four players in program history to top 2,000 career digs and ranks third in the program annals.



**Pittsley**

Pittsley led the PSAC in total assists (1,452) and assists per set (10.52) in 2015 and added 10 assist-dig double-doubles on the year. The junior marketing/management major set Clarion to the best marks in the PSAC in kills (13.80) and assists (13.04) per set in conference matches, and the Golden Eagles ranked 10th in the nation in total assists and 13th in total kills.

In addition to their Academic All-American Honors, the duo of Seybold and Pittsley were honored as members of the PSAC Fall Top 10. Initiated in the 1997-98 academic year, the Top 10 Award is given to five males and five females in each athletic season: fall, winter and spring. It is chosen by the league's sports information directors and are designed to recognize student-athletes who excel in both the classroom and in athletic competition.



## STUDENT ATTENDS **HARRISBURG INTERNSHIP**

Benjamin L. Edney of Fredonia worked for the state Department of Health in the Office of Legislative Affairs as part of a 15-week internship sponsored by Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education. Edney is a junior sociology major, and is one of 16 students participating in The Harrisburg Internship Semester program. THIS provides students with the opportunity to work in all areas of state government while earning a full semester's worth of credits.

# FLORIDA *alumni tour*

Sunshine and balmy weather greeted alumni gathering in Florida for the Florida Alumni Tour. Clockwise from top: the notorious Pirate Parrot was in attendance at the Pirates training camp game; Jim Hoofangle ('73) (left) and Mart Grichor ('79) hold name badges from the "old days" as proof of their Clarion alumni status; director of alumni relations Laura King (left) sits with Capt. John DiTommaso ('78) and President Karen Whitney on the water of Citrus Hill, Fla.; a view from the stands; alumni gather for a day of sun; alumni gather in the shade. At center: Clarion alumni hold a banner at the Pirates training camp game in Bradenton, Fla.





# THE

# SHADOW

# KNOWS

**Punxsutawney Phil was up early to predict whether we can expect six more weeks of winter, and two Clarion University alumni were close to the prognosticating action.**

Katie Donald ('08) is executive director of the Punxsutawney Groundhog club, and Dan "Moonshine" McGinley ('02) is part of the club's Inner Circle.

According to the official Groundhog Day website, the Inner Circle is "a group of local dignitaries responsible for carrying on the tradition of Groundhog Day. They're the ones who are not only responsible for planning the events every year, but they're also responsible for the feeding and care of Phil himself!"

As part of Phil's entourage, Donald and McGinley have insider information on Phil and the festivities that surround Gobbler's Knob.

First, Phil has the difficult task of seeing or not seeing his shadow.

Seeing his shadow means there will be six more weeks of winter.

Not seeing his shadow means spring will come early. This year, Phil did not see his shadow much to the delight of thousands of people at Gobbler's Knob and around the world.

So far, history has been on the side of winter, with Phil seeing his shadow 102 times in the past 130 years. There are another 17 times when he didn't see his shadow, and the other times are lost from the record books.

Not everyone is a fan of the groundhog's results, which the Inner Circle claims are 100 percent accurate. It depends on if you're a fan of one season over the other.

McGinley said Phil has had "no threats of violence," but there was talk of a lawsuit once. However, it was quickly quashed.

Donald said Phil feels very safe. Phil's burrow, where he lives with his wife, Phyllis, is in Punxsutawney Memorial Library, next door to Punxsutawney Police station. The groundhog couple doesn't have children, due to Phil's demanding work schedule.



Dan "Moonshine" McGinley,  
Katie Donald and Phil

"It's so much more than a one-day-a-year holiday, and we're happy to host," McGinley said.

Living in the library has its perks for both Phil and those who come to see him. People enjoy reading to him, and Phil likes knowing that he boosts library attendance.

With his active schedule and his burrow's lighting and temperature settings, Phil doesn't fully hibernate like most other groundhogs, Donald said. He doesn't eat as much and is sleepier during winter.

So what does the premiere prognosticator eat? His favorite meal is honey and oat granola, and he is a big fan of kale. He also receives alfalfa as part of a balanced groundhog diet, she said.

In order to keep up appearances, Phil has a dentist, legal team and veterinarian.

"He has to have a physical once a year," Donald said.

Food preferences are about as close to a diva attitude as Phil ever exhibits.

## WHILE OTHER GROUNDHOGS ONLY LIVE THREE TO SIX YEARS IN THE WILD, PHIL IS NOT EMBARRASSED BY HIS AGE OR HOW HE HAS COME TO LIVE SO LONG.

Well, that and the fact that he doesn't recognize other animal prognosticators – or TV weather personalities, for that matter.

There are many other weather forecasters, but there's only one Punxsutawney Phil, who has had the job for the past 130 years. The first official Groundhog Day was Feb. 2, 1887, but the tradition was started in 1886 when a group of Punxsutawney residents

marked Candlemas Day by searching for a groundhog.

Candelmas Day is celebrated Feb. 2, and, as the tradition goes, if any animal came out from underground hibernation and the sun was out, there would be six more weeks of winter. A local newspaper editor named the group Punxsutawney Groundhog Club, after the group's first trek to find Phil.

"He looks great for 130," Donald said.

While other groundhogs only live three to six years in the wild, Phil is not embarrassed by his age or how he has come to live so long. Phil enjoys drinking the Elixir of Life every summer, which sustains him for another seven years, McGinley said.

It's the only time Phil hits the bottle, which is surprising since some of the questions that a groundhog is asked can become tedious, like: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck, if a

# RECIPE



## Groundhog Cookies

2 cups sifted flour	1/2 cup soft butter
1/2 teaspoon salt	1 cup sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	1/2 cup molasses
1 teaspoon baking powder	1 egg yolk
1 teaspoon ground ginger	1 egg, slightly beaten
1 teaspoon ground cloves	Currants or raisins
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon	

Sift together first seven ingredients. Set aside. Cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Blend in molasses and yolk. Stir in flour mixture and mix well. Form into a ball.

Wrap in plastic wrap. Chill overnight, several nights or freeze.

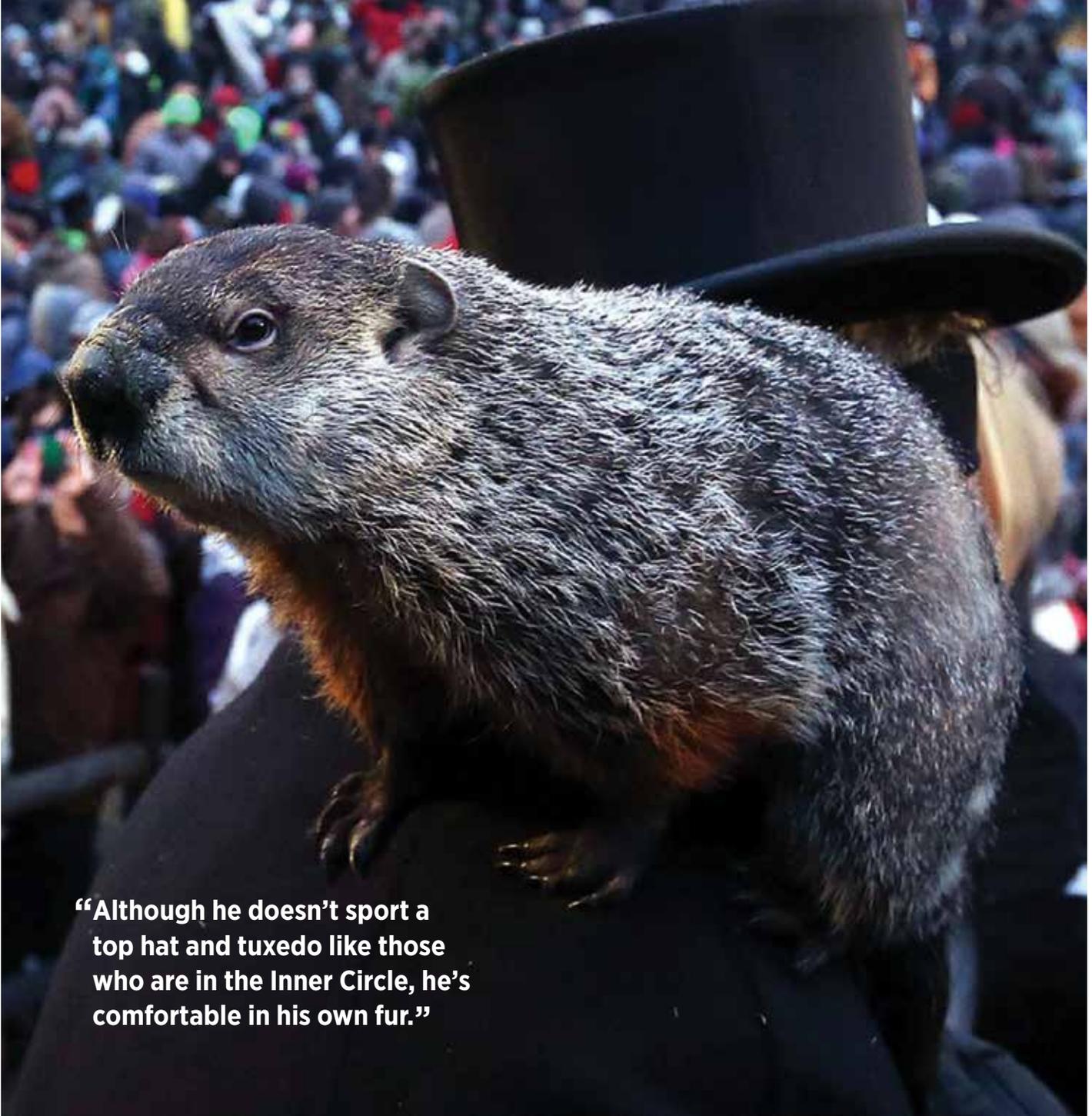
Place small amounts of dough on a sheet of plastic wrap, and cover with plastic wrap. Roll 1/8 inch thick. Cut out cookies with lightly floured cutter.

Place cookies on greased baking sheet. Brush with slightly beaten egg. Decorate with currants or raisin eyes. Repeat until all dough is used.

Bake 8 to 10 minutes in a preheated 350-degree oven. Cool slightly before removing from cookie sheet. Makes 72 or more medium-sized groundhogs.

# GROUNDHOG DAYS PAST





**“Although he doesn’t sport a top hat and tuxedo like those who are in the Inner Circle, he’s comfortable in his own fur.”**

woodchuck could chuck wood?

Donald insists Phil doesn’t get bored with these questions since he only speaks groundhog-ese, but his handlers might be a little less patient. The answer is 700 pounds, she said, in case anyone was wondering.

Even with mundane questions, Phil loves his job.

“He enjoys meeting new people all the time,” Donald said.

Although he doesn’t sport a top hat and tuxedo like those who are in the Inner Circle, he’s comfortable in his own fur,

McGinley said.

McGinley was nominated to the Inner Circle, members of which have traditionally been men, after working with the Groundhog Day stage show. He earned his nickname, “Moonshine,” because he works the stage show under the moonshine.

“Women have been nominated (to the Inner Circle), and I don’t think it will be long before a woman breaks that mold and gets into the club,” McGinley said.

Donald said as a local, she would always stay for the celebration when she

was growing up, and has never grown tired of town’s most famous day and celebrity.

As executive director of the club, she is close to the Inner Circle. She moved out of the area for a couple of years, but when she came back, she was happy to land the job as executive director for the Groundhog Club, which is a 501c3 organization.

Unlike Donald, McGinley isn’t originally from Punxsutawney, but his wife is. He met her through her cousin, who was McGinley’s roommate at Clarion. ■

# Fun Facts

The average groundhog is 20 inches long and normally weighs from 12 to 15 pounds. Punxsutawney Phil weighs about 20 pounds and is 22 inches long. Groundhogs are covered with coarse grayish hairs (fur), tipped with brown or sometimes dull red. They have short ears, a short tail, short legs, and are surprisingly quick. Their jaws are exceptionally strong.



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A groundhog's diet consists of lots of greens, fruits and vegetables and very little water. Most of their liquids come from dewy leaves.



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A groundhog can whistle when it is alarmed. Groundhogs also whistle in the spring when they begin courting.

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Insects do not bother groundhogs, and germs pretty much leave them alone. They are resistant to the plagues that periodically wipe out large numbers of wild animals. One reason for this is their cleanliness.

---

Groundhogs are one of the few animals that really hibernate. Hibernation is not just a deep sleep. It is actually a deep coma, where the body temperature drops to a few degrees above freezing, the heart barely beats, the blood scarcely flows, and breathing nearly stops.

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Young groundhogs are usually born in mid-April or May, and by July they are able to go out on their own. The size of the litter is four to nine. A baby groundhog is called a kit or a cub.

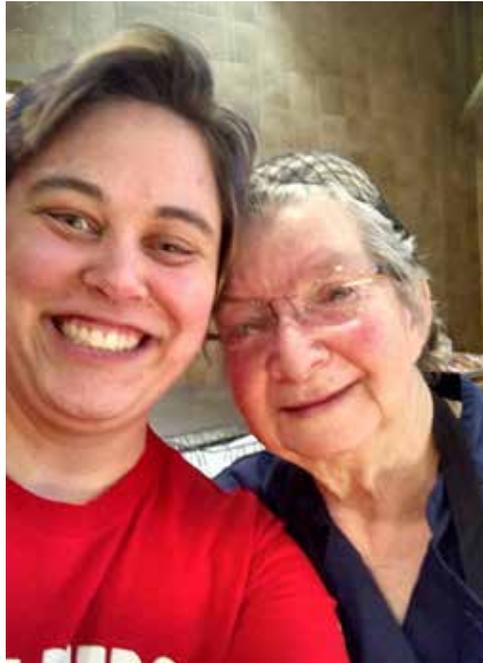


## OLD ENGLISH SONG



IF CANDLEMAS BE  
FAIR AND BRIGHT,  
COME, WINTER, HAVE  
ANOTHER FLIGHT.  
IF CANDLEMAS  
BRINGS COLD  
AND RAIN,  
GO, WINTER, AND  
COME NOT AGAIN.

# THE CLARION PROJECT



# TheClarionProject is a thank you to everyone who makes Clarion University possible.

Prompt: What do you love most about Clarion University and why? Try to have your response reach at least two paragraphs. I want to hear your story, because everyone has one!

To read stories or share your own, visit Let's Try This Angle - Foster's Photography page on Facebook, or email Foster at [Ittafostersphotography@gmail.com](mailto:Ittafostersphotography@gmail.com).



## Hi there! My name is Megan Foster, and I'm the photographer behind the camera.

For my last semester at Clarion University, I want to do something that could change the school for the better. I want to be able to bring the school closer together.

On Facebook, there is a page called Humans of New York. There, Brandon, the HONY photographer, goes around the city (and the world, really) and takes the picture of its citizens. He then asks about them and posts their photo and life story to the page.

The Clarion Project is similar. However, instead of getting life stories, I want to know why the people that make up Clarion University chose this school. I also want to know what they love most about it. I want this to be about them

and their relationship with the school. Whether it be a student, professor or staff member, I want their story.

Anyway, I guess I should answer my own questions. I chose Clarion University because it offered a course in library science, a field in which I had always been interested. I also chose it because of what I heard about the faculty and professors. At Clarion, I am not a number, but a person with a name. Those who work behind the scenes and those who teach us know us by name. They genuinely care about us. This is also what I love most about this campus. The educators that are employed here are some of the most caring, kind-hearted, individuals I have ever met.

Over the last six years here at the home of the Golden Eagles, I have seen a lot – some good, some bad – but everything made the college just that much more amazing. It'll be bittersweet when I walk across that stage and receive my master's hood. I will miss the campus. I will miss my friends. But most of all, I will miss the community that has been built – the bond that is seen between those who make up Clarion University.

I will miss that the most.

MEGAN FOSTER ('14)

education faculty joy degree events  
 professors small town pride fortunate students  
 home dedication accredited individuals  
 minor internship  
**Clarion** lifetime campus legacy  
 impactful goals mentoring happy  
 connections business thanks  
 coaches focus success job dreams teach athletic  
 careers information **University** amazing organizations  
 Golden Eagles support friendships staff  
 college opportunity proud major imagine sciences Cook Forest  
 graduation **community** fulfill professional outdoors  
 world undergraduate experience senior kind-hearted changes  
 involved encourage team heart win **family** canoeing learn  
 caring love accomplishment Autumn Leaf Festival



In May, I will be reaching 32 years of working for the university. The one thing that I love most about Clarion is the kids. I love the kids because they keep me young. They are very polite, calling me 'Grandma' or by my name. 'Hi Lois!' 'Hey Lois, how are you!' they say. **These students are the reason I get up to come to work**, and I look forward to them. In my eyes, all these kids are my kids. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Working at Clarion keeps me young as well, but the breaks make me kind of lazy. That happens with all of us, though. I look forward to coming back each semester. I also love all the changes the university has made, from adding The Den to moving Starbucks. These have helped the university for the better!"

LOIS MCLEAN  
 32-YEAR VETERAN OF CLARION UNIVERSITY

What I liked most about Clarion University were the friends I made and still have, the outdoorsy campus and my education. I graduated in 1979 with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, which I believe I use every day in some way.

I remember Forest Manor, sled riding down the hill by Campbell Hall, and canoeing at Cook Forest. **I still go back every year for Autumn Leaf to meet my friends - lots of good memories and still making more.**

Now, both of my children are attending Clarion, so the legacy lives on! I was thrilled when my children expressed an interest in attending Clarion. I think because I had such a great overall experience there, I wanted that for them, too. My daughter has gone on to obtain her master's degree, also at Clarion, and my son is looking to do his internship this summer and may be graduating early! Both should be able to obtain good jobs after graduation!"

LORIE FOSTER ('79)  
 MEGAN'S MOM





DR. JEFF EICHER  
PROFESSOR OF FINANCE

“I like a lot of things about Clarion University, including the small town atmosphere and the campus. But, what I like most are the students and the faculty/staff that I work with. I enjoy the opportunity to get to know my students one-on-one and to help them as they move through their undergraduate careers and out into their professional careers. It is gratifying to see them learn and grow, and, hopefully, become successful. The students work hard and appreciate the efforts that faculty extend on their behalf and that, of course, is particularly meaningful to a teacher.

I am also fortunate to work with and for some exceptionally gifted and caring individuals. The faculty and staff of the College of Business and Information Sciences are top flight, and their dedication to their disciplines and their students is always wonderful to see and to be a part of. I believe that their hearts are in the right place in that **their primary focus and concern is the education and welfare of their students.** Our current dean is a difference maker, and I enjoy working with him immensely. I consider myself fortunate to be part of the Clarion family.”

The reason I chose Clarion University was for the College of Business AACSB accredited program. I knew in high school I wanted to go into some form of business, but was undecided on which route to take. After my first semester I fell in love with Clarion and the university as a whole. Not only did I gain lifelong friendships, I've encountered nothing but **caring and education-driven professors who care about each student's success.**

Now, being a senior I can truly appreciate the education I have gained here. In four years I am proudly graduating with two majors and a minor along with a lifetime of memories. Looking back on my last four years here brings up so many emotions. Memories such as A.L.F, being a CU cheerleader, or even winning the Miss Clarion University pageant are cherished so dearly to me. The memories students make here last a lifetime. I could go on and on about my love for this campus and would encourage anyone to experience what Clarion University has to offer.



LAUREN BOVARD  
SENIOR



JESSE SNYDER ('14)

“When I think about my time at Clarion, I think about all of the mentors who challenged and supported me, the professors who pushed me to do better and friends that I'll have for the rest of my life. I also think of the people whom I never thanked, the apologies I have yet to give, or letting some people know how much they mean to me.

Being a first generation college student, every experience at Clarion was new for me and my family. Coupled with living on the other side of the state, attending Clarion could have easily become problematic. Instead, **Clarion became my home.** I spent every summer on campus working odd jobs, became involved in as many organizations as possible, and shared my experience with everyone I knew.

Flash forward to now. I am finishing up my master's degree and working full-time at Ohio University, mentoring first-generation college students. Clarion equipped me to be the best professional I can be and enabled me to mentor these students so that they can find joy and success.



### Why Clarion University?

Simple answer is that I was actually supposed to go to RMU but funds fell through and Clarion was the answer. Clarion is so much more than a financial reason. Clarion helped shape me and save my life.

When I came to Clarion I was a bit lonely, but **I found friendship and support.** I found a home away from home. I joined Allies and found out what true love and pride are. Clarion was my saving grace.

SHELBY EHRIN ('14)



MORGAN ANTHONY WOODIN

"I love Clarion because it's been such an impactful piece of my puzzle. I went from my small hometown to a new small town expecting to have the same feelings, but it's been so much better than expected.

Clarion has, without a doubt, become my home, and **I've gained a second family in the friends that I've become close to.** Without Clarion, I wouldn't be the person I've developed into today."

What I like most about Clarion University is the sense of family that a small university provides. **The connections that are able to be made with the students is amazing.**

When I attend athletic events, I don't show up to just to see if the Golden Eagles are going to win. I am there to support the student-athletes as individuals and as a team. These young women and men bring so much life to campus. I am there to support the coaches, people I am proud to call friends. It is truly a Golden Eagle Family.



CHAD THOMAS  
DIRECTOR OF AUXILIARY OPERATIONS

"What I like most about Clarion University are the students. I grew up in part of Missouri that is just like western Pennsylvania in many ways. It's primarily rural and quite poor, and the people who lived there either farmed or provided some kind of service work for the agricultural industry, or they commuted hours every day to Kansas City to labor in factories or in the construction industry.

Opportunities for higher education were rare, and seldom did anyone leave the area to find greater fortune elsewhere. I loved my life in Missouri, but I recognized when I was quite young that if I stayed there, I would remain poor and uneducated and would never know how great my life could actually be.

So, when I teach or talk to the students at Clarion University, I feel like I am talking to everyone I have ever known or cared about who wanted, just like me, to find a better life. They want to learn about the world, to succeed financially, to put themselves in a better position to help others, and to find a job that they love and which provides them with a permanent sense of pride and accomplishment.

I know what it is like to want all of this and to do all of this, and I know that I can help them to accomplish their goals. I like Clarion University, then, because **it provides me an opportunity to genuinely help young people to fulfill their own dreams and to have happier lives.** I cannot imagine a better vocation."



DR. JAMIE PHILLIPS  
PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Ask Megan Foster why she loves Clarion University, and her eyes fill. She smiles and apologizes as she fans her face, attempting to dry the tears.

The bubbly grad student from New Brighton takes a deep breath.

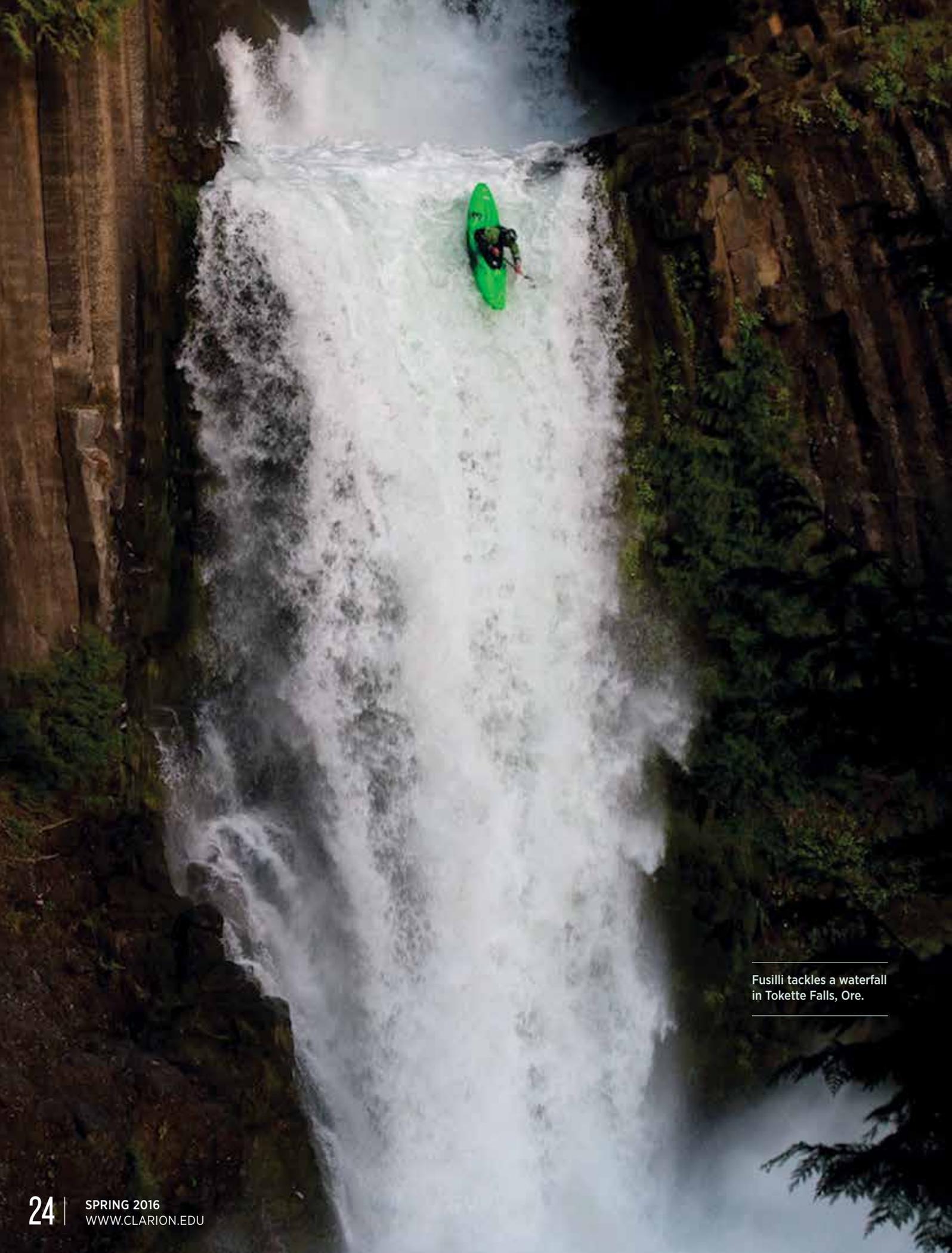
“My first week here, as a freshman who was terrified of being 90 minutes away from home, I was so homesick. I have ADD, and I worked with Disability Services. They helped me tremendously, as did Counseling Services,” she said. She’s been reaching for the stars ever since.



Foster graduated magna cum laude with her bachelor’s degree in 2014 and will graduate in May with her Master of Science in Library Science. She is a black belt in shokotan (a form of karate), writes role play fiction and is a self-described “huge gamer.” She has her own photography business, and she works at Best Buy, where her goal is to brighten the day of everyone she encounters.

For Foster, finishing her master’s degree is “the cherry on top.” She plans to combine what she’s learned in the classroom with skills acquired through campus jobs and involvement with Campus Fest and Social Media Roundtable, as well as with research experience and interning at Clarion County Historical Society.

To thank Clarion, she created The Clarion Project, photographing and collecting stories of the people who comprise the Clarion University family. The stories are posted on her Let’s Try This Angle – Foster’s Photography page on Facebook. ■



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Fusilli tackles a waterfall  
in Tokette Falls, Ore.

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# ON THE EDGE



**Ask Dave Fusilli** what he's been doing since graduating in 2004, and he'll tell you he's been floating around the world.

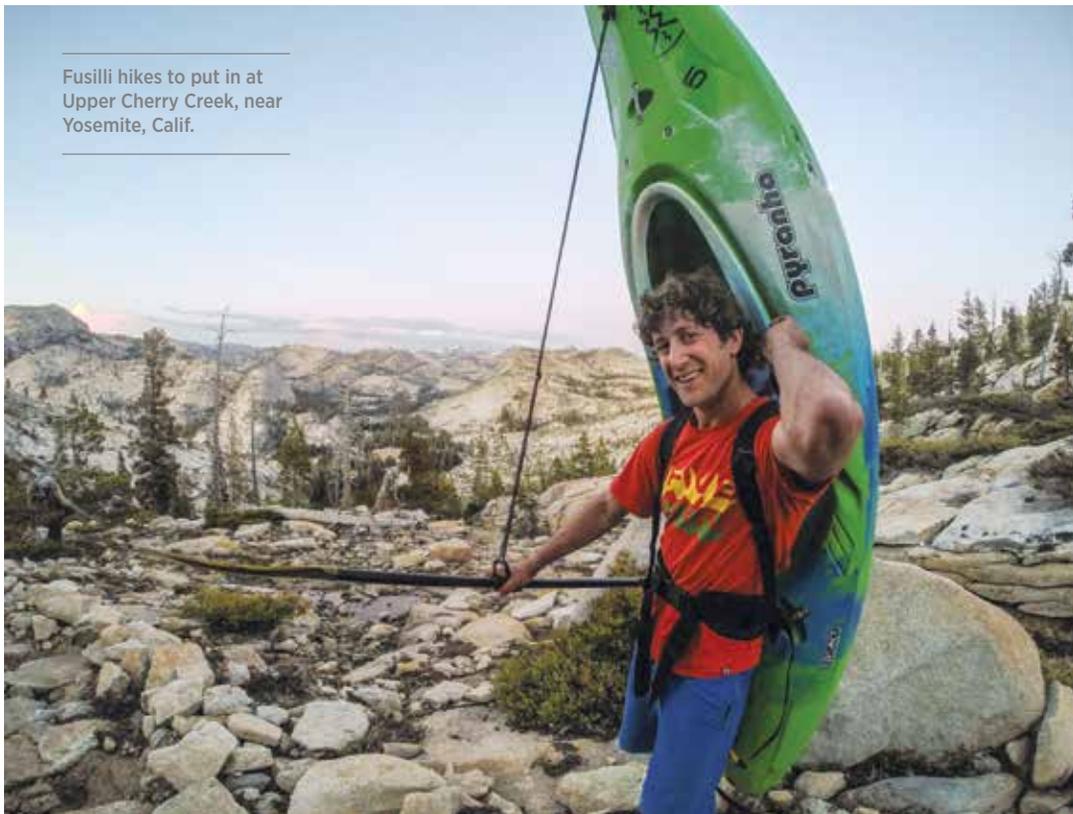
***Sounds leisurely, right?***

More accurately, Fusilli has been floating from **one adrenaline rush to the next.**

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Fusilli hikes to put in at Upper Cherry Creek, near Yosemite, Calif.

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**A**fter graduating from Clarion-Limestone High School, Fusilli wanted nothing more than to move to Colorado and be a snowboard bum. His mom wouldn't hear of it, though, and she pushed her son to further his education.

Fusilli enrolled at Clarion. He had been active in high school sports, but he wasn't playing sports in college. Realizing he needed an outlet, Fusilli went back to kayaking, the sport in which his family had always been active.

The Fusilli family regularly attended the Cheat River Festival along the banks of the Cheat River in Albright, W.Va.

"It's one of the only free-flowing rivers in the east. There's a beautiful canyon; it's a really cool place," Fusilli said. "One morning we jumped in the boat and paddled our kayaks back. I remember flipping and rolling. I did that the whole way down the river. I had a blast."

He was 19 at the time, and he was addicted.

"Basically from that day on, I was just trying to get in water as much as possible," Fusilli said. "I just wanted to kayak, period. I wanted to be on the water every day."

At Clarion, Fusilli finished two bachelor's degrees, in environmental science and geology. Two days after commencement, he moved to Colorado, intending to make a living in his kayak.

"I started raft guiding, and my skills got better and better," he said. In 2007, Pyranha, a manufacturer of specialist whitewater kayaks, sponsored him.



Fusilli's first experience in a kayak was as a 7-year-old in the Clarion University pool.

"Pyranha gave me a little cash, a gas card and a vehicle in which to travel around and do competitions," Fusilli said. He now represents Pyranha full time. During the United States' winter months, he pushes the limits, competing in places such as Chile, Ecuador and Austria.

"I was flown to Mexico for a big competition, where there was a one-of-a-kind, big waterfall. It went from a 30-footer (drop) into a 60-footer into a 40-footer. We were judged on fluidity, style and difficulty of line. It's the first time we'd ever done anything like that in kayaking, period."

A little more than a year ago, he moved again, to White Salmon, Wash.

"That's my home. I'm eight miles from the put-in of maybe the best creek in the United States, the Little White Salmon," Fusilli said. "The white water is rated class one to

class five – class one is like the Upper Clarion River before it gets dammed. (The Little White Salmon) is real steep and aggressive with waterfalls and big boulders."

## GETTING HIS FEET WET

Fusilli's first experience in a kayak was as a 7-year-old in the Clarion University pool.

"My dad taught me. He used a homemade boat and homemade skirt. Kayaking gear was of poor quality then. It's come a long way," Fusilli said. "It's a very young sport. Gear – especially whitewater gear – is evolving."

"My dad is a pioneer of white water kayaking," Fusilli said of David W. "Big Dave" Fusilli ('79). "There are definitely folks ahead of him, but not many."

The elder Fusilli grew up in Pittsburgh and spent time at Ohiopyle, where he saw kayaking for the first time.

"People had to make their own kayaks," he said. "Back when Dad

“I just wanted to kayak, period. I wanted to be on the water every day.”

started, no one could roll.”

As he grew up, the Fusilli family often could be found navigating local waterways.

“A lot of it was paddling on Mill Creek, a tributary to Clarion River. That’s basically where I learned. Dad would take us over the hill, two miles from our house. Going down that first time, with the brown, muddy water, was a little intimidating,” he said. “I remember my brother as an infant, in canoes, going down the Clarion River. We’ve always been on the water.”

He recalls one excursion as a youngster when the creek water was especially high. “I was crying. My mom took her sock off and tied the back of her kayak to the front of mine and pulled me down the river.”

As Fusilli grew, so did his proficiency and comfort in the water.

“I remember taking a class at Slippery Rock (University) when I was

8 or 9 years old, in which I learned different skills from different people,” he said. His early years in a kayak were spent paddling Slippery Rock Creek, the Youghiogheny River and the lower Youghiogheny.

Fusilli’s first time on the lower

Yough was when he was 10 years old.

“It seemed massive. The waves were like, ‘Whoa!’ It was pretty intimidating,” he said. “My dad wanted nothing more than for me to be a kayaker. The gear sucked – it was pretty cold and not super comfortable.”



Fusilli and friends kayak White Salmon River, Wash.



Fusilli goes over the edge of Spirit Falls on Little White Salmon River, Wash.



Fusilli at Spirit Falls on Little White Salmon River, Wash.

## TAKING THE PLUNGE

“My first waterfall was probably Wonder Falls in Big Sandy River in West Virginia. It was a 17- or 18-foot drop,” Fusilli said. “I didn’t even look – I knew it was safe. My dad lined me up at the top. It was pretty calm.”

The feeling afterward? “It was awesome, like winning the Super Bowl!”

The drops Fusilli conquers in his kayak are of increasing challenge. His biggest drop so far has been a 90-foot drop down a vertical waterfall.

“It’s just been a progression. I’ve built up from the 18-footer.”

Fusilli said he’s had a couple of close calls, being stuck in hydraulics

(river features in which water is cyclical). “My body recirculated a few times – kind of like being in a washing machine,” he said.

“Those times are so few. I’ve had two pretty bad swims out of thousands and thousands of days on the river. I’ve been injured a few times,” he said.

Still, he finds the sport to have

broad appeal in the age demographic.

“Yesterday I paddled a class four-plus run. There were guys out there who were 70 years old. The overall impact on your body isn’t much, Fusilli said. “What’s cool about white water, as a kid you can do white water and be safe when you learn the basic skills.”

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“It was awesome, like winning the Super Bowl.”

## RESCUE

As with any man vs. nature showdown, there are some dangers.

As an experienced kayaker, Fusilli had been eyeing Hamma Hamma Falls on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington state. He had visited the waterfall a few years prior to finally making the run, but he had a tweaked rib, so he took it easy on that trip.

"It haunted me – I had three years of thinking about running the fall," he said. He and three friends finally went back.

"We get there, and the water level is perfect. That's important in taller waterfalls. If there isn't enough water, you'll make a bigger impact. Water creates aeration and makes it soft."

"One kid (Bren) had been wanting to run waterfalls. He was all fired up."

Fusilli reviewed the run with him. It was a 20-foot waterfall, then a short pool into a 60-foot waterfall. The 20-footer was the harder of the two because it had a curl of water coming off the right side of it. That curl would want to set the kayaker

left. Fusilli explained that Bren would want to fall with the flow, then take a really late left stroke, otherwise he'd end up with the bow putting him in an eddy on the right.

"That's what I'm nervous about," Fusilli cautioned.

Fusilli went first and considered, once he navigated the 20-foot drop, continuing on to the 60-footer.

"I had a second thought of making sure he gets down, so I paused. I see him come straight off and get shoved right in the catcher's mitt. He's getting pushed into a wall. I see all of this happening. He had come out of the boat and reaches this perfect hand hold on the rock.

"I see that, and I'm looking around. I have very little to stand on – just a wet, angled rock. I had a tether tied to my life jacket, so I clipped it to my kayak, scrambled onto the rock, then I get the throw bag out – it's basically a bag full of rope.

"He's still hanging on, and it's getting close to a minute that he'd been there. I yelled, 'Bren! Rope!'

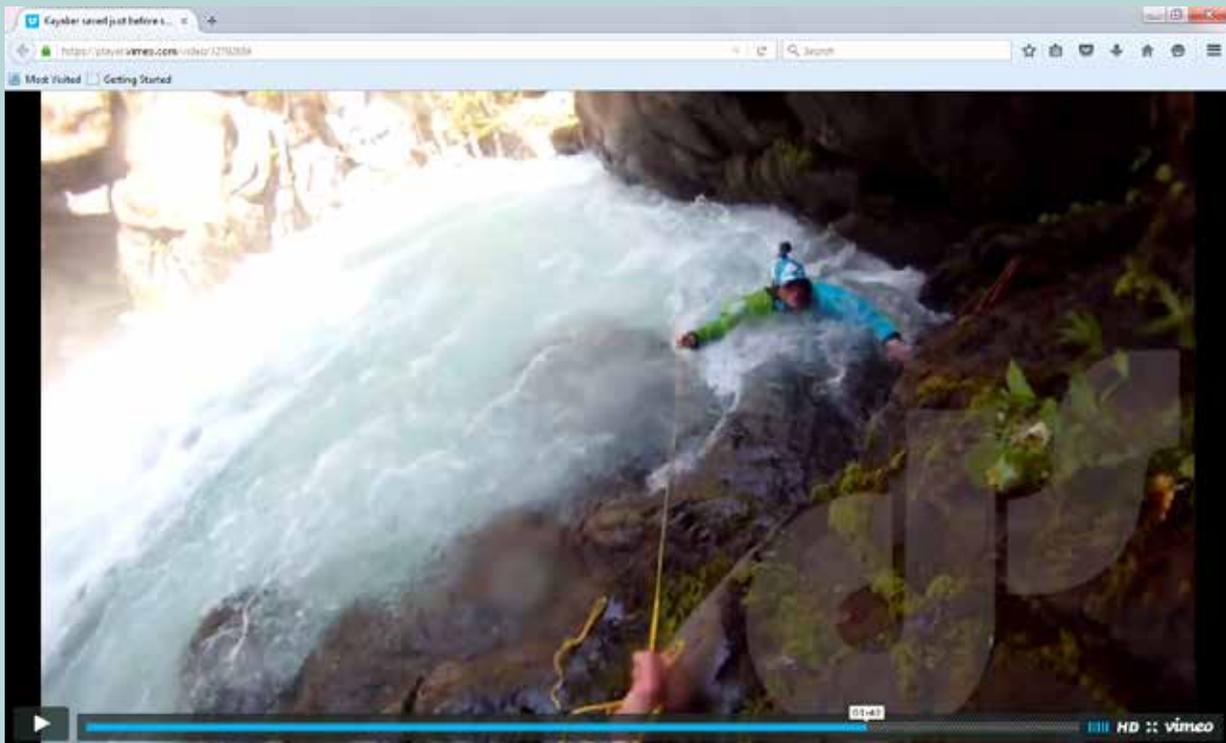
and I threw it a little upstream to allow the current to float it down to him. Sure enough, he grabbed it. I pulled as hard as I've ever pulled, right across the lip of a 60-foot waterfall. I was tired as hell, and he was exhausted. It was almost 10 years of experience happening in one minute.

"At that point, his boat runs the 60-footer without him. Bren is stuck in a pocket, sitting on this rock, no way to get out. I was trying to figure out how we'd get out of there, but I still really wanted to run this waterfall – I'd been thinking about it for years. I'm on the lip ... I have to go. I rolled off the lip and had a great line!"

After the run, Fusilli and the other two friends hiked back to the top of the waterfall and threw a rope down to Bren, who had been sitting there, cold, for two hours.

"The three of us just extracted him up 50 feet. It was an insane day."

As for Bren – "We went back a couple of weeks later, and he ran it."



To watch the rescue unfold, visit <http://demshitz.com/kayaker-saved-just-before-swimming-over-a-60-foot-waterfall/>

## GOING PRO

"I had a friend, Bob Petty ('01), who was going to college at Clarion. I watched him progress from being an OK paddler to improving a ton," Fusilli said. "That's how I ended up raft guiding. I wanted to be on the water all day, kayaking. After work I'd do another run. I could make money and be on the water every day. That got my skills way better."



Fusilli paddles Oh Be Joyful Creek, Crested Butte, Colo.,



Fusilli, at the edge Metlako Falls, Ore.

After raft guiding on the eastern side of the United States during summers in college, Fusilli went to Colorado, where a friend convinced him to take part in a freestyle competition.

"I did that competition the next year, and I did another one that summer in Colorado. At the end of

the summer, Pyranha Kayaks got ahold of me."

A local kayak shop that gave Fusilli discounts on gear was a Pyranha dealer. When the shop owner heard that Pyranha was looking for good freestyler paddler to help grow the brand, he gave them Fusilli's name.

"I've been to Mexico, Uganda, all

over Canada and all over the United States," Fusilli said. "I've paddled the best places on the east coast - in New York, West Virginia and North Carolina. Colorado is pretty good. California, when they have snow, is incredible. Washington and Oregon are ridiculous," Fusilli said. "Anywhere you have big mountains."

## THE GOOD LIFE

Fusilli lives in Washington with his girlfriend, Gina, and his younger brother, Rob, whom Fusilli says is “damn good” in a kayak.

“He paddles with me, runs the stuff I run,” he said.

What others would view as a challenging lifestyle is exactly what Fusilli loves about it.

“I don’t have a house or a nice car. I’ve gone for years without even paying rent, just wandering around,” he said. “People like their comforts – having a home base and set routine – if you’re that way, this is very difficult for you.”

He wouldn’t want it any other way.

“When you have a certain goal in life and things you want to do, if you want to do them badly enough, you’ll do them whatever way possible. The things I have are all free – the kayak, gear, anything else I have. I don’t have unnecessary things. I don’t have things that make me look rich.

When he needs to slow down and mellow out, he simplifies even further.

“I just like camping and being outside. My dad has always loved being outside. He shared that with us and our mother strongly,” Fusilli said.

“My goal is always to continue to kayak and live the way I want to live. I’m outside almost all the time, I have tons of freedom. I’m not really tied down. I don’t have to sit inside at a desk. I don’t have a schedule unless I make it. ■

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“When you have a certain goal in life and things you want to do, if you want to do them badly enough, you’ll do them whatever way possible.”



## DEMSHITZ LEGACY

“What are demshitz up to now?” “Where did demshitz get off to this time?” – the words that started it all, by a disgruntled “Big Dave” Fusilli and friend Jay Seiler and yelling out from a camp fire, wondering where their kids had gotten off to, a long day on the river not enough to tire their rambunctious energy. It all started with family – Jay and his two boys, Jared and Graham, and “Big Dave” and his kids Dave, Carly and Rob. Siblings joined, friends joined. The river lifestyle was the lifestyle. As the kids turned into adults, their passion for pushing the limits of their paddling drew attention. More and more people wanted to be a part of that energy. Demshitz was born, and more friends joined their extended family.

Werner, another of Fusilli’s sponsors, paid homage to the family and the lifestyle by creating limited edition Demshitz paddles.

# aim HIGH



The drive from the University of Pennsylvania to Clarion is just a shade over 300 miles and takes somewhere in the neighborhood of four hours and 34 minutes, traffic permitting. But for **MELISSA O'NEIL YEAROUS**, after one of the most challenging days of her collegiate track & field career, it must have felt much, much longer.

O'Neil had completed a standout basketball career and was in the midst of a senior track season that would end with her becoming **THE FIRST ALL-AMERICAN IN PROGRAM HISTORY**. Her performance at the Penn Relays – a three-day track & field meet that becomes the center of that sport's world the last weekend of every April – was the spark for O'Neil's accolades, though not in the way many would think.

The high jump event was set to begin with an abnormally high opening jump of five feet, six inches – “I'd cleared that before, but **I'D CERTAINLY NEVER STARTED THERE BEFORE!**” said O'Neil – and one of the best field athletes in Clarion history couldn't get past the first round of jumps.

**“I BOMBED IT. I JUST BOMBED IT,”** O'Neil said.

Not a word passed between O'Neil and **FORMER HEAD COACH PAT MOONEY** as the two drove back to campus. Not until the very end of the drive.

“Coach Mooney dropped me off at my car, and I'll never forget what he said to me right then. He told me, ‘Don't worry about it. **I'VE NEVER HAD A SENIOR DO ANYTHING AT THAT MEET,**’” O'Neil said.

The words stung O'Neil. For someone as confident in her abilities and motivated for success as her, knowing that she let her coach, let herself, down was difficult. Instead of crumbling, though, **SHE VOWED TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT**.

“I was going to make damn sure that never happened again,” said O'Neil, biting off each word like it was still April 2001.

To hear O'Neil tell it, her first love was always the game of basketball, so much so that she decided at a young age what she wanted to do for a career.

"Where I have been so blessed is that I knew in fifth grade that I was going to become a basketball coach when I grew up," said O'Neil. "I was going to camps in the summer, playing pick-up at every opportunity, and as I got older that morphed into working at camps and forming relationships with coaches and players."

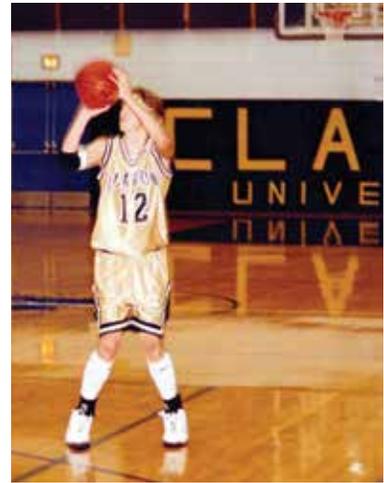
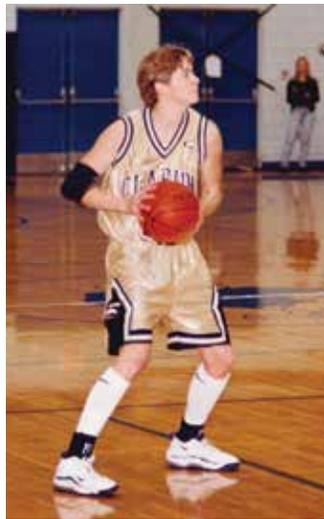
A dyed-in-the-wool Hawkeye, the Iowa native had a decision to make in high school. She had the opportunity to attend the University of Iowa and compete on the track & field team but did not want to give up on her dream to play college basketball. O'Neil knew that it would be difficult to do both at Iowa, where both coaches would be leery of her splitting her attention. After a frank conversation with the basketball coaches at Iowa, the door to following both of her passions appeared when former Clarion women's basketball coach Gie Parsons came calling.

"The folks at Iowa worked behind the scenes, calling other coaches they knew that were looking for a scholarship player at the Division II level," said O'Neil. "Gie called me and invited me to campus, and I came out for a visit."

## CLARION YEARS

O'Neil said she instantly fell in love with Clarion - "by the time I left the visit, I told my parents I was committing there and we could figure out the details later" - but she still wanted to compete on the track. After discussions with Parsons and Mooney in which they agreed to let O'Neil compete both in basketball and track, she made the trek halfway across the country to Pennsylvania.

"At first it was difficult for me, being so far from home," O'Neil said. "This is before cell phones, so it's not like I could just call or text them when I wanted. I



don't even think we were really using email yet. The people at Clarion did everything they could to make it feel like family and home for me."

O'Neil was a two-time Second Team All-PSAC West selection in basketball and finished her Clarion career as one of only a small handful of players to record 1,000 points and 500 rebounds in her career. She was seen as a leader for the Golden Eagles, especially in her ability to take burdens off the shoulders of her teammates.

"I remember we used to run something called the "70 Percent Drill" in practice that we all hated," recalled O'Neil. "Coach would put garbage cans out in the gym and we would have to sprint until someone shot 70 percent or someone got sick. I never cared how exhausted I was, I would always try to shoot my free throws first and milk every second of the clock I could to let them catch their breath."

"Being able to stretch yourself emotionally and physically, calming your heart rate in difficult situations, that's mental toughness."

That same mental toughness is what allowed O'Neil to overcome the disappointment of her performance at the Penn Relays in her senior year. Many would

have been discouraged, but she became even more determined to prove herself against the best in the country. O'Neil qualified for the NCAA Championships in a meet the next week and headed west for the 2001 Championships hosted by Southern Illinois-Edwardsville.

The conditions were cold and windy that day - not necessarily ideal for the majority of competitors, but hardly out of the ordinary for the Iowa product.

"Back then we didn't have all the modern cold gear like tights or Under Armour, just minimal tight clothing, and we practiced every day in the sleet, rain and wind," O'Neil said. "Even though I was 16th on the performance list, I knew I could beat anyone there because of the way I trained and my mental toughness. Nothing was going to stop me."

O'Neil tied for fourth in the nation that day with a high jump of 1.67 meters, or five feet, five and three-quarter inches. And even though he stayed in the press box and didn't make his way down to the field, she knew what Pat Mooney was thinking as she jumped.

"He didn't want to get in my way," said O'Neil, who said the two shared a laugh after the meet was over. "I knew he was watching, but I knew I could do it."

***"BEING ABLE TO STRETCH YOURSELF EMOTIONALLY AND PHYSICALLY, CALMING YOUR HEART RATE IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS, THAT'S MENTAL TOUGHNESS."***

## NEW PATHS

After graduating O'Neil became a graduate assistant coach at Syracuse under head coach Marianna Freeman, joining the Orange in their first NCAA Tournament run since the 1988 season. She pursued a master's degree in advertising and moved on to Indiana (Pa.) where she served as a full-time assistant under Cindy Martin. O'Neil was finally living the goal she set for herself when she was 10 years old, but something was missing. Three years after joining the staff at IUP, O'Neil left the basketball coaching profession and returned with her husband and family to Iowa.

"I was reflecting on the situation and realized that I wanted to explore a different path," O'Neil said. "I had missed a lot of my daughter growing up because of the grind of college basketball coaching and recruiting, and I realized I didn't want to miss any more."

## MAKE AN IMPACT

O'Neil took a position as a challenge coordinator at Iowa State University Extension – Polk County and found that it gave her the satisfaction of coaching individuals to their full potential without the other caveats the college game provided. The switch had flipped.

"I spent seven years teaching emotional intelligence on the ropes course," O'Neil said. "We were able to help people build self-efficacy. It's different than building their self-esteem, which is getting people to accept themselves and their own personalities. Self-efficacy is believing you can have an impact on your world."

The work O'Neil did over those seven years reached a wide array of people, ranging from students dealing with bullying in school to employees of major corporations trying to take the next steps in their careers. According to O'Neil, the message was always the same: if you can do this, what else can you accomplish?

## *I TOLD HER, 'LISTEN, THE FIRST TIME YOU JUMP, AND YOU MISS AND LAND ON THE BAR, IT'S GOING TO HURT.'*

"It's a process of getting people to build their confidence and maintain it," O'Neil said. "When people got ready to go down our zip line, they had the confidence that in taking that first step off they were going to be alright. In doing that, they're less afraid of taking the next step once they get back on the ground."

## TAKE A STAND

O'Neil, always ready for another challenge, became vice president of Iowa Jobs for America's Graduates (iJAG) in August 2013. If ISU Extension was about teaching self-efficacy to a wide range of people, iJAG was about instilling that value in young people to make a long-lasting difference in their lives. A non-profit organization that focuses on dropout prevention and school-to-career paths for Iowa's high school students, iJAG works with more than 2,000 at-risk students in Iowa – including roughly 25 percent who had neither parent complete high school - and shows them the power they possess in themselves to change their communities.

"We're teaching these kids to take a stand for something," O'Neil said. "Be it a social justice issue, a political issue, anything that they feel passionately about. If they believe it with all of their heart, we're going to give them the confidence to stand up for it."

"It's incredible to see what these kids are willing to do for their communities, what they're willing to sacrifice for others," O'Neil said. "So many of them live in poverty, not knowing where their next meals will come from, and they're doing things like food drives for other people! There's so much selflessness."

"We want these kids not just to graduate, but to graduate with hope for the future."

## SET GOALS

In February 2016 O'Neil accepted a new role as CEO of Central Iowa Shelter and Services in Des Moines, the largest homeless shelter in the state. Naturally, though, O'Neil doesn't refer to it simply as a homeless shelter.

"I like to refer to it as the 'Opportunity Center,'" she says.

Even though she doesn't have a whistle around her neck or a ball in her hand any longer, O'Neil still considers herself a coach.

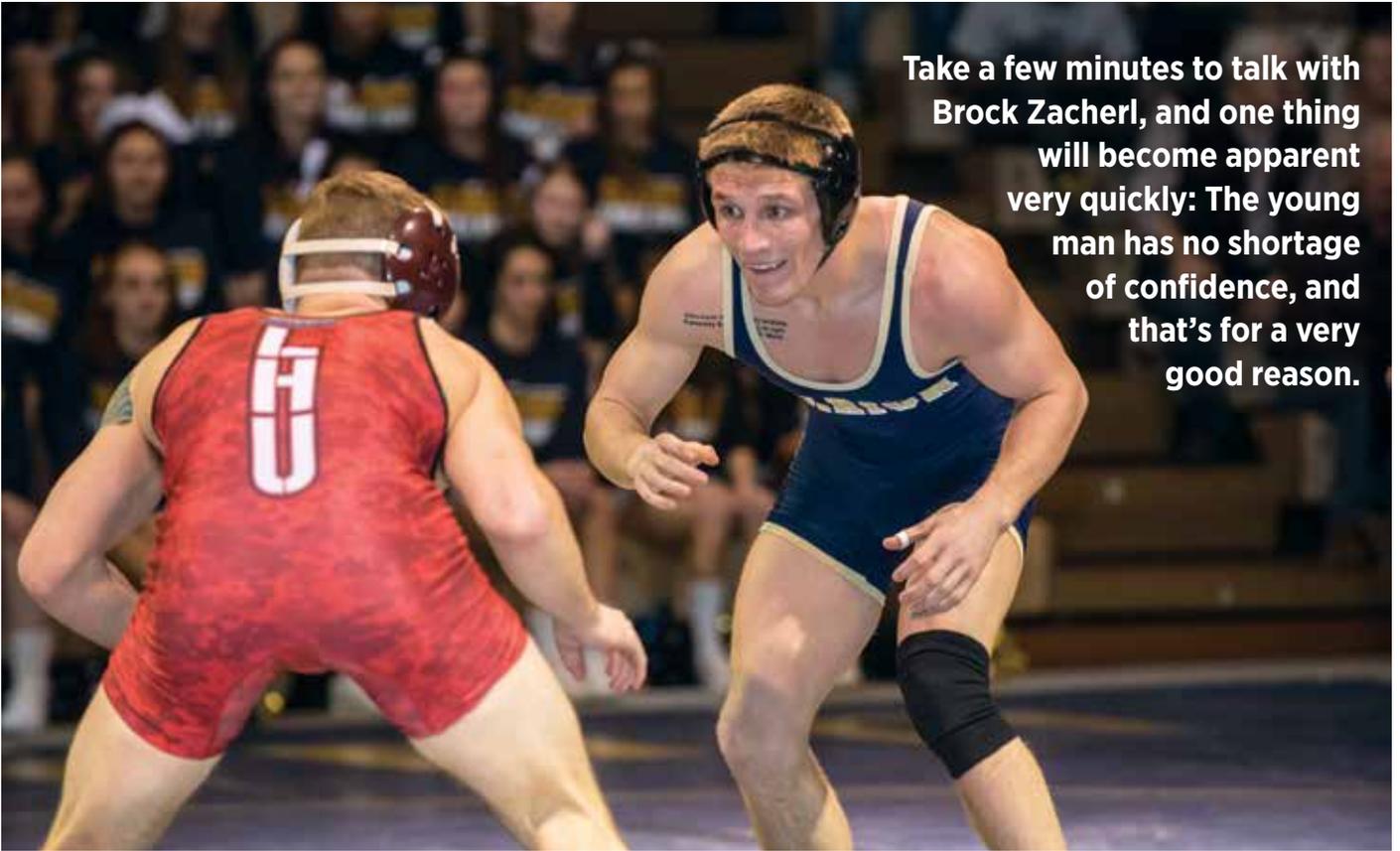
"I still have that purpose, that passion when it comes to trying to push people beyond what they believe is possible," she said. "My wish for this world is that more young people could find those things and pursue them."

There's one young person in particular, though, that she takes special joy in "coaching."

"My daughter is the spitting image of me," laughed O'Neil. "She's going to be going into track for the first time this year, and I started showing her the high jump. I told her, 'Listen, the first time you jump, and you miss and land on the bar, it's going to hurt,' and she looked at me and said, 'Why would you do that?'"

"I told her fear shouldn't discourage you or hold you back. It has to be what drives you to persevere and keep trying to get over it," O'Neil said. "When I talk to her she says things like she wants to be an entrepreneur, and that she wants to do something with that and robotics. She's so young but she's already got goals to strive for."

Sounds familiar. ■



Take a few minutes to talk with Brock Zacherl, and one thing will become apparent very quickly: The young man has no shortage of confidence, and that's for a very good reason.

# BROCK ZACHERL



In his first year as a competing member of the wrestling team, Zacherl has shown to be one of the best wrestlers in his weight class – not just in the Eastern Wrestling League, but in all of NCAA Division I. After dropping a bout to Northern Illinois’ Steve Bleise Nov. 7, Zacherl won 20 straight matches to improve to 27-1 on the season. He rode that winning streak through the entire Eastern Wrestling League tournament, earning a berth to the NCAA Championships as a result. As of March 8, he was ranked 18th in the nation at his weight class by InterMat Wrestling, a

nod that is indicative of the respect he’s garnered across the country.

Zacherl doesn’t try to pretend that he doesn’t

**“I know I’m better than what they say. It’s on me to go out there and prove it.”**

know what the rest of the wrestling world is saying about him, either. In fact, he uses that as motivation to get better.

“I mean, it’s hard not to know about the rankings and things like that with Facebook and Twitter,” Zacherl said. “Those things

aren’t the focus, though. The goal isn’t to be ranked, it’s to win a championship. But...”

He grinned.

“I know I’m better than what they say. It’s on me to go out there and prove it.”

As for any freshman, the first days of a college education can be rough. However, the “rough” portion that most of those freshmen go through doesn’t include the physical and mental toll of college wrestling. Even for Zacherl, a heralded recruit from nearby Brookville, there was an adjustment period in fall 2014.

“Oh man, it was a wake-up call,” Zacherl said. “You come in from high school where you were the big dog and might be physically more capable than everyone else, and then you’re on a team where everyone already has that? It’s tough.”

“I just tried to come in every day and work hard and avoid the rollercoaster. If you do that, the tables can turn and turn fast.”

Zacherl recalled the steep learning curve in going against Division I competition every day in practice, but there was an added catch in his case: he would redshirt during the 2014-15 season. He would be able to practice with the team and could compete unattached at open tournaments but was not allowed to wrestle in dual meets.

“It was definitely different than anything I’d experienced before, and it was weird at first,” Zacherl said. “I knew I was part of the team but didn’t always feel like it.”

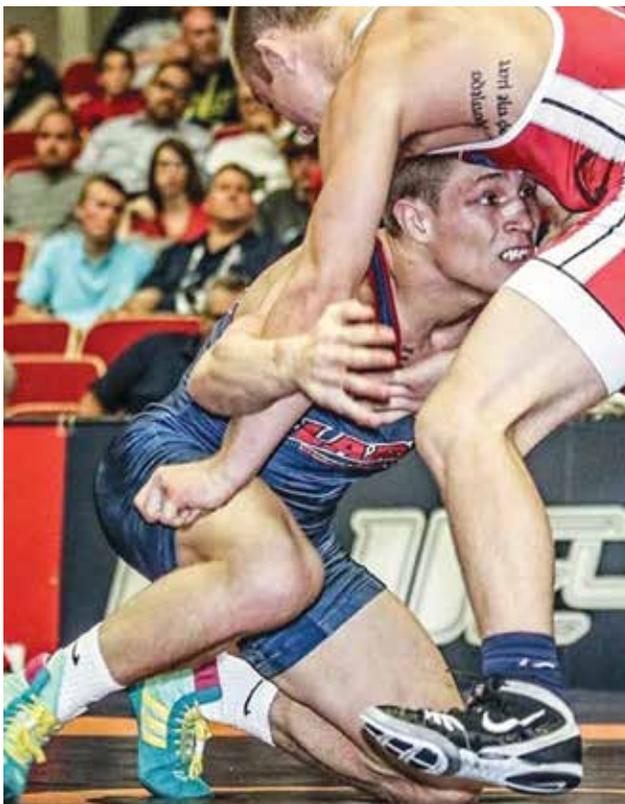
“Anytime you make a decision about a redshirt – whether you do or don’t – it’s tough,” said head coach Keith Ferraro. “At the time we had a fifth-year senior at 141 pounds that we knew could do a good job, but I also know the benefit Brock would take from that redshirt year. I knew his mindset and had faith that he would use the year to the best ends possible.”

Viewing this as an opportunity to grow and improve – “I viewed it as a chance to prosper and I feel I really excelled at it,” Zacherl said – the freshman displayed his ability in open tournaments and put his name on the college wrestling radar.

“He used the redshirt year the way you’re supposed to use it,” Ferraro said. “He trained hard, wrestled a ton of matches and learned something valuable from every win and every loss. He set himself up for success.”

Zacherl won the Mat Town and Purple Raider open tournaments at 141 pounds as he continued to hone his skills on the mat. He qualified for the national freestyle tournament due to his placing at prominent tournaments such as the ASICS/Vaughan Junior National Freestyle Championships and the United World Wrestling Cadet and University Nationals.

Zacherl parlayed that success into a spot at the UWW Junior World Team Trials



“**HE TRAINED HARD, WRESTLED A TON OF MATCHES AND LEARNED SOMETHING VALUABLE FROM EVERY WIN AND EVERY LOSS. HE SET HIMSELF UP FOR SUCCESS.**”

–FERRARO

event in Madison, Wisc., in June, where he won the 132-pound weight class. He cleared the nine-man bracket and defeated Gary Wayne Harding, the top-ranked wrestler in the event, and earned a trip to the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., to wrestle for a spot on the UWW Junior World Championships in Brazil.

According to Ferraro, watching Zacherl’s transformation during this stretch highlighted the qualities that have made him successful in 2015-16.

“No matter who the competition is, Brock enters every tournament to win,” Ferraro said. “Looking back on that training cycle, he was as disciplined as I’d ever

seen him. To cut the weight he did to wrestle at 132 and wrestle as well as he did is really remarkable.

“There was low margin for error and he handled it perfectly.”

“It was the most exciting trip I’ve ever been on in my life,” said Zacherl, who wrestled against 2014 UWW Junior World

silver medalist Joey McKenna for the final spot on the team. "It was an unbelievable experience."

McKenna defeated Zacherl in a best-of-three competition to take the team spot, but Zacherl said the level of competition he was afforded in his training was completely invaluable, not just to his development but also to his confidence.

"The senior-level Olympic team was there while we were, so we got to train against them as well," Zacherl said. "Every single day I was wrestling against guys that won multiple NCAA championships, Hodge Trophy finalists [the highest honor in amateur wrestling], and I was able to compete with them. It made me believe I could do it, too."

Zacherl brought that passion and confidence back with him to Clarion in 2015. Now a redshirt freshman eligible to compete with the rest of his teammates,

**“EVERY SINGLE DAY I WAS WRESTLING AGAINST GUYS THAT WON MULTIPLE NCAA CHAMPIONSHIPS.”**

he said his mindset had changed drastically in just a year’s time.

"I definitely worked with a lot more urgency this year because I knew there was more pressure," Zacherl said. "Whereas last year I knew that I wouldn't be competing in March, this year I knew it was crunch time. It's more pressure, but it's a good pressure to have."

On March 5, Zacherl shrugged off the pressure and etched his name into Clarion lore. Entering the EWL Tournament as a top-seed in the 141-pound bracket, he stormed his way to the finals and claimed a 7-0 decision to earn an automatic bid to the NCAA Championships, hosted at Madison Square Garden.

According to Ferraro, the strongest trait Zacherl developed in the last year was developing a critical eye toward the man in the mirror.

"There are some technical things that he's improved on, but the biggest growth has been in his ability to identify those weaknesses and work relentlessly to correct them," Ferraro said. "He's always seeking about the best competition to train with, and he trains exceptionally hard. His goal is to be a champion, and he trains that way." ■

BEATTY



CARPENTER



EDGAR



CLARION UNIVERSITY  
**SPORTS HALL OF FAME**  
COMMITTEE HAS ANNOUNCED  
**2016 INDUCTEES:**

ROBERT J. BEATTY (1980; FOOTBALL/BASEBALL),  
BERNIE CARPENTER (1980; FOOTBALL),  
FRANK EDGAR (2005; WRESTLING),  
JAMES KOONTZ (1979; BASEBALL),  
WILLIAM "BILL" MAY (1968; GOLF), AND  
MELISSA (YEAROUS) O'NEIL (2001; WOMEN'S  
BASKETBALL/TRACK & FIELD).

Induction will be April 29 at Eagle Commons dining hall. A social starts at 5:30 p.m., followed by the ceremony at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$40 per person. To order, call Scott Courtney at 814-393-2057 or email him at [scourtney@clarion.edu](mailto:scourtney@clarion.edu). Make checks payable to Clarion Sports Hall of Fame.

KOONTZ



MAY



(YEAROUS) O'NEIL



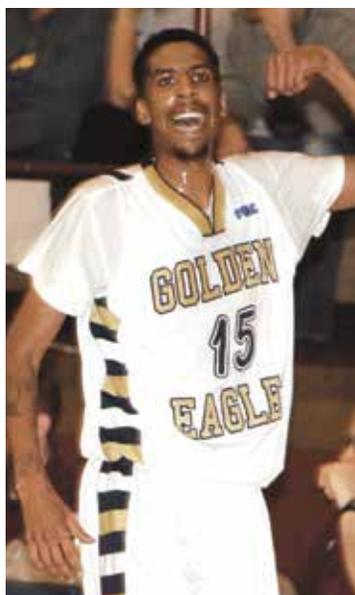
# 2015-2016 BASKETBALL



## MEN'S BASKETBALL

THE MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM, under the direction of second-year head coach Marcess Williams, proved themselves to be one of the most dangerous teams in the PSAC West division in 2015-16, thanks to a high-pressure style that emphasizes creating havoc in the opposing backcourt. That formula allowed the Golden Eagles to surpass last season's win total with six games yet to play and put them in the PSAC Tournament for the first time since the 2009-10 season. The Golden Eagles came from 13 points back to upset the third-seeded Edinboro Fighting Scots in the first round of the tournament before bowing out to Mercyhurst in the quarterfinals.

Clockwise from top: Rob Agurs earned Second Team All-PSAC West honors and led the Golden Eagles with eight double-doubles in 2015-16; key junior contributors that will return next season include center Akeem Williams (left), who was one of the best shot blockers in the PSAC last season, and high-scoring guard BJ Andrews (right); De'Ondre Terrell celebrates a basket in the Golden Eagles' early season win over Gannon at Tippin Gymnasium; head coach Marcess Williams led the Golden Eagles to the PSAC Tournament for the first time since the 2009-10 season.



The contributions have come from all corners of the roster as Williams routinely finds minutes for 10 or more players on any given night. One night, the hero could be senior swingman and Second Team All-PSAC West performer Rob Agurs, who is capable of playing at guard or forward and produced a team-best eight double-doubles. Other nights it could be senior point guard Andre' Anthony, whose 33-point effort against Carlow Nov. 28 was the best single-game scoring output for a Golden Eagle since Lloyd Harrison scored 34 points against Edinboro in 2011.

Or it could be senior center Tim Gill, who led Clarion to an upset win over Mercyhurst Feb. 6 by bullying his way to 22 points against the Lakers. Or freshman Cameron Grumley, who came off the bench for 14 points for a close win over California. Or...

Well, you get the idea. According to Williams, the minutes on the floor aren't necessarily predicated about what happens when the lights turn on, but rather what a player does when they're off.

"It's all based off their practice habits," said Williams, who said the decision to take on the identity of a pressing team necessitated a rotation of 'at least' 10 players. "If you practice well, you get bumped into the rotation. We have enough guys that it allows us to kind of gauge them on practice and reward the guys that work hard.

If you're engaged and competing hard in practice, and you're picking up what we're putting down, you're going to get that trust from us on game day."



## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

AFTER A REBUILDING 2014-15 CAMPAIGN for the women's basketball team, second-year head coach Jana Ashley has the Golden Eagles back on track to competing in the PSAC West division. The team that won just one conference game and two overall the season before improved greatly in 2015-16; the team was in the thick of the playoff hunt until the final week of the season and improved by seven games in the standings from the previous season.

Ashley says the fresh blood in the program has been at the root of the team's turnaround this season.

"I think the root of our success comes from recruiting, and that started at the beginning of last season," Ashley said. "Even though we had a difficult year, the players we secured last fall and spring made a difference in how competitive we could be in the league overall and in specific games. We brought in the types of kids that don't accept losing and will fight every day in practice and in games."

Better yet, the contributions have (necessarily) come from the team's underclassmen, as the Golden Eagles had just one senior – guard Tania Holmes – on the roster in 2016. Holmes capped an excellent Clarion career by becoming just the 17th player in program history to top 1,000 points, and, in fact, surpassed Hannah Heeter for ninth on the all-time list after a 12-point effort against Mercyhurst Feb. 6.

That said, the Golden Eagles show more promise for the future because of the

quality of those returning to the team next season. Junior Tyra Polite showed signs of being one of the more dangerous scorers in the league, averaging 13.6 points per game, but going off for 20-plus points on a number of occasions, including a 27-point effort against IUP Jan. 16. Delrika Jones-Carey provided a spark in the post with three double-doubles, showing the ability to score in a variety of ways while not sacrificing rebounding ability in the process.

Freshman Jordan Bekelja asserted herself as a dangerous player in her rookie season. The guard from Solon, Ohio, earned PSAC West Freshman of the Week honors

three times in 2015-16. Other freshmen on the squad include Taylor Moltz, a bench post player with dangerous shooting ability, and Nicole Maxson, a forward who saw her playing time increase as the year went on. Ashley reiterated, though, that it takes everyone on the team to establish a winning culture, something that the Eagles have so far begun to do.

"Their attitude and toughness have gone a long way toward changing things on the court on game day," Ashley said. "This team pushes each other to get better every single day in workouts and in practice, and it shows up when it matters."

(Clockwise from top): Second-year head coach Jana Ashley oversaw a seven-game improvement in the standings in 2015-16; freshman guard Jordan Bekelja was three times honored as the PSAC West Freshman of the Week in 2015-16; senior guard Tania Holmes became one of just 17 players in program history to score 1,000 career points and finished her career ranked ninth in program history in scoring; junior forward Delrika Jones-Carey was a tough matchup in the post for opponents, recording three double-doubles on the season.





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John Burja ('88) portrays Daisy in "Baby with the Bathwater" in 1986.

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# ALUMNI NOTES

## SPRING 2016

### 1966

**Joseph Eckhardt** is retired and just published his third book, "Living Large: Wilna Hervey and Nan Mason." He resides in Lansdale.

### 1970

**Jean (Borsh)** and **Jack ('71) Inskip** reside in Fairfield. Jean was recently named director of the Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction at Pennsylvania Department of Education, Harrisburg. They have a daughter, Dr. Megan Maurer.

### 1972

**Joseph** and **Joanne (Wiater '73) Donovan** reside in Pittsburgh. Joseph is an agent with Spectrum Insurance Services, Mars.

### 1973

**Gary Walstrom Sr.** recently retired as principal of Glendale School District after 38 years of service. He was a social studies teacher for 20 years and an administrator for 18 years. Gary resides in Glasgow, Pa., with his wife, Betsy. He has two sons.

### 1977

**Theresa (Leisey) Eisele** is employed with Four Season Produce. She resides in Reinholds.

**Sharon (DArgo) Rathi** retired after 10 years as principal of Conneaut Area Sr. High School. She resides in Meadville with her husband, Michael.

**Robert Hodgson** is retired. He resides in Harrisburg with his wife, Nancy. He has three children: Dan, Emily and Sean.

### 1979

**Thomas Slagel** handles purchasing and estimating for Dan Ryan Builders, Morgantown, W.Va. He resides in Morgantown with his children: Katie, Amy and Emma.

**Corinne (Hosfield '79) Smith** has written a nonfiction book for middle-grade readers. "Henry David Thoreau for Kids: His Life and Ideas, With 21 Activities," will be published by Chicago Review Press in January 2016. It combines biographical narrative with hands-on suggestions so that young students can incorporate some of Thoreau's ideas into their everyday lives. The book has already gotten a favorable nod by Kirkus Reviews, which concluded that it is "Utilitarian of format but well organized and with plenty of grist for both minds and hands." Smith's first book, "Westward I Go Free: Tracing Thoreau's Last Journey," was released in 2012.

### 1980

**Annamarie (Shutey) Mellett** is administrative associate to the chair of emergency medicine for the Penn State Hershey Medical Center, Hershey. She resides in Harrisburg.

### 1981

**Margaret (Kernan) Bauer** is self-employed as owner of My Laundromat, Imperial. She resides in Georgetown with her husband, Greg, and has three sons: Dan, Andrew and Joe.

### 1990

**Colonel Thomas** and **Tamara (Schnur '91) Netzel** reside in Alexandria, Va., with their sons, Jacob and Benjamin. Thomas is in the United States Army, Washington, D.C.

### 1992

**Jody (Hartley) Vinson** is owner of Back to Basics Nutrition and Fitness. She resides in Centerton, Ark., with her husband, Scott, and sons, Jack and Clay.

### 1997

**Krissi (Nastal) Butler** is an assistant principal for Kershaw County School District, Camden, S.C. She resides in Lugoff, S.C., with her husband, Brett, and children, Savannah and Logan.

## 1998

**Stephen Williams** is owner and funeral director for Osborne-Williams Funeral Home, Greenville. He resides in Greenville with his wife, Christina, and sons, Stephen and Sawyer.

## 1999

**Mark Watts** is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher for Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic School, Columbus, Ohio. He resides in Columbus with his wife, Nikki, and daughters: Claire, Abigail and Quinn.

## 2000

**Ben Stentz** is executive director of recreation and parks for the town of Princeton, N.J. He resides in Hamilton, N.J., with his wife, Angela, and son, Michael.

**Ashleigh Jade Kozup** is a sponsorship director for Steve Harvey, Atlanta, Ga. She resides in Smyrna, Ga.

**Paul (PJ) Carroll** is a safety, health and environment manager/business unit SHE lead for Cobham Advanced Electronic Solutions, Lansdale. He resides in Pennsburg with his daughter, Riley.

**Dr. Christopher and Jennifer (Kibler) Davis** reside in Greenbrier, Ark., with their children: Emma, Noah, Addison, Kristen and Victoria. Christopher is a vice-president for information systems and technology for the University of Central Arkansas, Conway, Ark.

## 2001

**Dr. Dennis Slagle** is a neonatologist for The Women's Hospital - Deaconess Health System, Evansville, Ind. He resides in Newburgh, Ind., with his wife, Dr. Stacey Slagle, and children: Noah, Joshua and Eliana.

**Brianne (O'Hara M.S. 03) Brinkley** is a speech/language pathologist for Howard County Public School System, Laurel, Md. She resides in Baltimore with her husband, Tom, and daughters, Harper and Campbell.

## 2002

**Cindy (Miller) McBride** is an area salon leader for JC Penney, Cranberry, Pa. She has two children, Lindsey and Sean.

**Dr. Michael and Amanda (Speth '04) Sable** reside in Jefferson Hills with their sons, Zane and Zeke. Michael was awarded his Doctor of Education in advanced leadership studies in November 2015. He is a middle school principal at West Mifflin Area School District.

## 2003

**Kristin (Kneib) Parmer** is an account services coordinator for Clipper Magazine, Mountville, Pa. She resides in Leola, Pa., with her husband, Justin, and children, Alexis and Jackson.

**Jessica (Wallace) and Joseph ('05) Williamson** reside in Verona with their daughters, Adelaide and Wren. Jessica is an optician for Insight Vision Care, Pittsburgh.

## 2004

**Alfred Encarnacion** is a library director for Stratford Public Library. He resides in Woodbury, NJ.

**Michelle (Miller) Sakovics** is a registered nurse case manager for You Care Health Plan, Williamsville, NY. She is also an ice skating coach with Skate Great, Buffalo, N.Y. She resides in Blasdell, N.Y., with her son Austin.

## 2007

**Kelly (Devlin) Harper** is assistant principal of Roundtown Elementary School in the Central York School District, York. She resides in York with her husband, Shane, and children: Madison, Christian and Jacob.

**Douglas and Ladona (Owens) Strouse** reside in Oxford, N.C. Ladona is a supervisor clinician for Masonic Home for Children at Oxford.

**Bradley Soyland** is a legislative assistant for Congresswoman Lois Frankel, Washington, D.C. He resides in Washington.

## 2008

**Caleb Young** is an assistant athletic director/upper school teacher for Dayspring Christian Academy. He resides in Elizabethtown with his wife, Maria.

## 2009

**Deserie (Vendetti) Sayre** received a Master of Education in literacy education from The Pennsylvania State University with reading specialist and literacy leadership certifications. Deserie resides in Mechanicsburg.

## 2010

**Kristen (Pearce M.S. '12) Whiteford** is a speech therapist for Healthpro. She resides in Bellwood with her husband, Christopher.

## 2012

**Allison (M.S.L.S '14) Latagliata** is a library director for Marian Sutherland Kirby Library, Wilkes-Barre. She resides in Wilkes-Barre.

## 2013

**Timothy Port** is a clinical treatment supervisor for Abraxas, Marienville. He resides in New Bethlehem.

**Lindsay (Thill) and Benjamin Fiscus** reside in Wexford. Lindsay is a special education teacher for Canon McMillen and Ben is an internal auditor for PNC Bank.

**Megan (Odonish) Leichtenberger** is a color correction specialist for Blair Corp., Warren. Megan resides in Sheffield with her husband, Kyle, and children, Madilynn and Toby.

## 2015

**Meredith Hendrix-Jackson** is library assistant, CAS, for the Library System of Lancaster County. She resides in Lancaster with her wife, Kat Jackson.

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## MARRIAGES



Mark Engel and **Janet ('98) Eggleston**,  
May 17, 2014

Kyle Leichtenberger and **Megan ('13)  
Odonish**, Sept. 13, 2014

Justin Parmer and **Kristin ('03) Kneib**,  
October 2014

Michael Rathi and **Sharon ('77) DArgi**,  
July 18, 2015

Christopher Whiteford and **Kristen  
( '10, M.S. '12) Pearce**, Sept. 26, 2015

**Christopher ('11) Katella** and Kayla  
Soltis, Oct. 3, 2015

Jason Bolen and **Tracy ('03)  
Weakland**, Oct. 10, 2015

**Ben ('00) Stentz** and Angela Siso,  
Oct. 11, 2015

## BIRTHS

Tom and **Brianne (O'Hara '01, M.S. '03)  
Brinkley**, a daughter, Campbell, March  
4, 2015

Shane and **Kelly (Devlin '07) Harper**, a  
son, Jacob Michael, June 16, 2015

Kyle and **Megan (Odonish '13)  
Leichtenberger**, a son, Toby Robert,  
Aug. 9, 2015

**Joseph ('05) and Jessica (Wallace  
'03) Williamson**, a daughter, Wren  
Sophia-Grace, Sept. 19, 2015

**Mark ('99) and Nikki Watts**, a daughter,  
Quinn, Oct. 7, 2015

Justin and **Kristin (Kneib '03) Parmer**,  
a son, Jackson, Oct. 15, 2015

## IN MEMORIAM

### 1940s

Ilene G. (Ross '44) Bovaird, Sept. 18, 2015  
Mervin K. Strickler ('47), Sept. 18, 2015  
William B. Martin ('49), Dec. 27, 2015  
William D. Gilbert ('47), March 17, 2016

### 1950s

John J. Lutz ('57), Sept. 20, 2015  
John N. Wiberg '52, Oct. 14, 2015  
Sue A. (Buzard '58) Martonik, Oct. 27, 2015  
Grace Vogus ('52), March 3, 2016

### 1960s

Larry B. Schrecengost '62, Nov. 13, 2015  
Carol S. (Strickland '62) Sayers, Dec. 18, 2015  
Joseph P. Shaw '64, Dec. 23, 2015  
Bonnie D. (Brannen '69) Agostino, Jan. 29, 2016  
Emily J. (Fry '66) Connors, Feb. 6, 2016  
George T. Ihnat ('62), Feb. 10, 2016  
Joan A. (Moody '66) Beichner, March 4, 2016

### 1970s

Dorothy J. (Willen '72) Reitz, Oct. 20, 2015  
David M. Speer ('76), Dec. 24, 2015

### 1980s

Elizabeth C. Eichlin '82, Nov. 25, 2015  
Beverly A. Books '84, Jan. 26, 2016  
Richard D. Sheffel ('81), Feb. 9, 2016  
Joseph A. Keblitsch ('84), Feb. 29, 2016

### 1990s

Keith J. Rice '92, Oct. 13, 2015

### Friends

Keith Martin, Oct. 5, 2015  
Jerry McKisson, Oct. 16, 2015  
Sue A. Martonik, Oct. 27, 2015  
Eugene Sobolewski, Nov. 14, 2015  
James Blake, Dec. 18, 2015  
Ellie Gardner, Dec. 24, 2015  
Gail A. Fields, Jan. 8, 2016  
Charles Ruslavage, Feb. 15, 2016

# CLARION UNIVERSITY BABY EAGLE



Our gift to baby Eagles of Clarion alumni is a dashing new bib! To receive a bib, let us know about the new addition to your nest by emailing to [alumni@clarion.edu](mailto:alumni@clarion.edu):

- Parents' names
- Full address
- Graduation year of alumni
- Baby's name and gender
- Date of birth

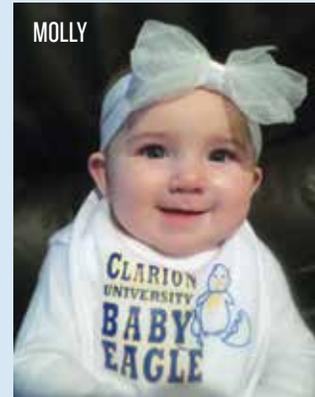
Once you receive your bib, take a picture of your Eaglet putting the bib to use, and email a high-resolution photo to us for inclusion in Clarion University Magazine.



Indie D'Annibale, daughter of **James ('13)** and **Shelbie D'Annibale**, born June 16, 2015



Malakye Johnny Darr, son of Andrew and **Brittany ('13) Darr**, born Oct. 13, 2015



Molly McAdoo, daughter of **Josh ('07)** and **Lynnsey McAdoo**, born May 23, 2015



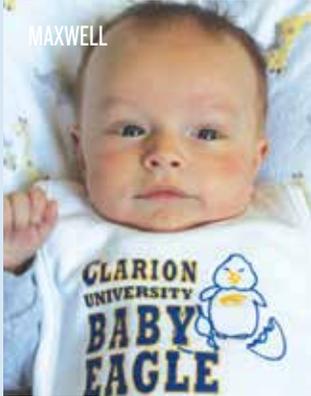
Colson Anthony Long, son of **Niki (Stedina '01) Long**, born April 21, 2015



Rowan McKinley Yurko, daughter of Kevin and **Erin (Cooper '05) Yurko**, born June 19, 2015



Jayda Noonan, daughter of Steve and **Haley (Hynes '06) Noonan**, born Nov. 17, 2014



MAXWELL

Maxwell Martin, son of **Carl ('13)** and **Tara ('06, MS '07) Martin**, born March 21, 2015



KAYLYNN

Kaylynn Grace Raydo, daughter of Eric and **Beth ('04) Raydo**, born June 27, 2015



OWEN

Owen Paul Pollock, son of **Jason ('07)** and **Jennifer (Weaver '06) Pollock**, born Aug. 31, 2015



WREN

Wren Sophia-Grace Williamson, daughter of **Joseph ('05)** and **Jessica (Wallace '03) Williamson**, born Sept. 19, 2015



SUMMER

Summer Ealy, daughter of Aaron and **Autumn (Hall '11) Ealy**, born Aug. 9, 2015



EVELYN

Evelyn Louise Freeman, daughter of **Geoffrey ('13)** and **Allison (Stoltz '09) Freeman**, born Sept. 11, 2015



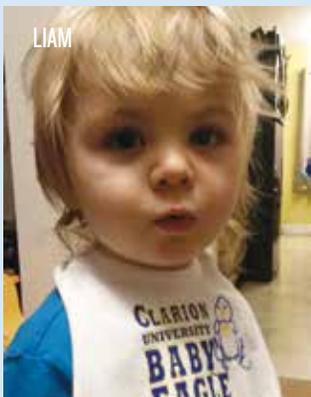
ALLISON

Allison Rebecca Sprankle, daughter of **Sean ('02)** and **Melissa Sprankle**, born Dec. 14, 2015



AUGUST

August William Franzetta, son of Anthony and **Krisa (Keller '08) Franzetta**, born March 12, 2015



LIAM

Liam Thomas Hetrick, son of Jason and **Lynn (Russell '09)**, born Aug. 9, 2014



SIENNA

Sienna Andersen, daughter of Ted and **Marissa (Lunardi '00) Andersen**, born Dec. 4, 2015



LILLIAN

Lillian Grace Boltz, daughter of Chad and **Mackenzie (Mayes '15)**, born March 2, 2015

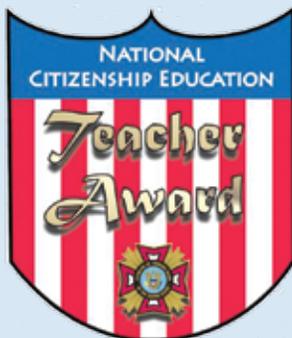


VAL

Val Joseph Peles, son of Dan and **Julie (Evenoski '04) Peles**, born Aug. 6, 2015



# MICHALEE CHRISTY: EXCEPTIONAL TEACHER



Michalee (Lopuh '99) Christy was named VFW Teacher of the Year in Pennsylvania in 2015 and has been nominated for the 2016 award.

The contest recognizes exceptional teachers for their outstanding commitment to teaching Americanism and patriotism to their students. Each year, a classroom elementary, junior high and high school teacher whose curriculum focuses on citizenship education topics for at least half of the school day in a classroom environment can be nominated for the Smart/Maher VFW National Citizenship Education Teacher Award.

Christy, who is vocal director for Mercer High School, went up against 450 other Pennsylvania educators for the 2015 honor. She was nominated through Mercer VFW Post 6345.

"We do many different types of patriotic influences in the classroom. Each year is different," Christy said. "Each year I have all 252 students learn "The Star-Spangled Banner" in four-part harmony, then we travel around in groups of four to 20, singing at different events in the community."

Several times Christy has organized a patriots concert to honor those who

have served or are serving, and many students will take part in the USO Concert honoring veterans on the 4th of July.

"I simply try to teach that the gift of voice, whether speaking or singing, can be used to honor your country," Christy said.

"Mrs. Christy is more than a teacher – she is a mentor and has made an incredible impact in my life," said Janalyn Miklas, a senior at Mercer High School. "She has impeccable insight and pushes me to my limit in the vocal and theater departments. I cannot thank her enough for all the wonderful things she has done

for our school and our community."

Another Mercer senior, Ryan Hamilton, describes Christy as "one of the most sincerely dedicated teachers" he has had.

"She truly cares for every one of her students. I personally have been involved in the choir program since seventh grade and am now the president of the choir department, and every step of the way she has striven for the best that every student can put forward," Hamilton said. "She teaches us not only how to sing and perform, but she also connects music to everyday life."



Michalee Christy (left) and theatre professor Marilouise "Mel" Michel watch performances by Christy's Mercer High School students, whom she brought to campus in October for a theatre workshop.



# COURAGEOUS *endeavors*

NATHAN MATHEWSON

**N**athan Mathewson hadn't yet reached his first birthday when he was diagnosed with CHARGE Syndrome, a rare disorder that arises during early fetal development and affects multiple organ systems.

The term "CHARGE" comes from the first letter of some of the more common features seen in these children:

- Coloboma and cranial nerve defects
- Heart defects
- Atresia of the choanae (blocked nasal breathing passages)
- Retardation of growth and development
- Genital underdevelopment
- Ear abnormalities and sensorineural hearing loss

“  
**I HAVE A NOTE TAKER,  
AND I HAVE PRIORITY  
SCHEDULING SO I CAN  
SCHEDULE CLASSES IN  
AN EASY ROUTE.”**

"It's life-threatening from the beginning," Mathewson said.

He was born with a hole in his heart that had to be repaired. He lived with a gastrostomy tube for a while. "When they put it in, they took my appendix out, so I have scar tissue, and multiple times it's impacted my entire GI tract. I've had a lot of surgeries for that," he said.

His most recent surgery was to correct a muscle in his eye in 2015. Coloboma, a condition in which normal tissue in or around the eye is missing from birth, causes Mathewson to be very nearsighted, and he has low peripheral vision, blind spots and double vision. His eyes don't correctly process objects coming toward him, so activities such as playing sports or driving aren't possible for him. He also has significant hearing impairment in his left ear, necessitating a hearing aid.

"My childhood was not a normal one. I'm not interested in sports, and with eye and ear issues and the resulting balance problem, I didn't do much running around. I stayed inside and colored or read a book," Mathewson said. "I did have fun dribbling a basketball to myself, or running around by myself. I couldn't do structured stuff. Not everyone realizes someone can't roughhouse or doesn't like roughhousing. I was very emotional about that kind of stuff."

Still, Mathewson considers himself fortunate.

"I realized as I grew up that I got lucky. I'm one of the more high-functioning people with CHARGE," he said. "Some people have a trach and feeding tube all their lives."

He also has no cognitive disabilities. He does have a learning disability, but it wasn't discovered until he was a senior in high school. "It was there, but nobody ever said anything about it. I was able to do the work."

Now, Mathewson is a junior library science major. He transferred to Clarion last fall after completing two years at Community College of Allegheny County.

"I have a note taker, and I have priority scheduling so I can schedule classes in an easy route so it's not so physically taxing getting around campus. This semester, I have three online classes and classes in Founders two days a week," Mathewson said.

He lives in Suites on Main South. On days he doesn't have class, he likes to visit his favorite spots on campus – Carlson Library, Gemmell, Eagle Commons or The Den.

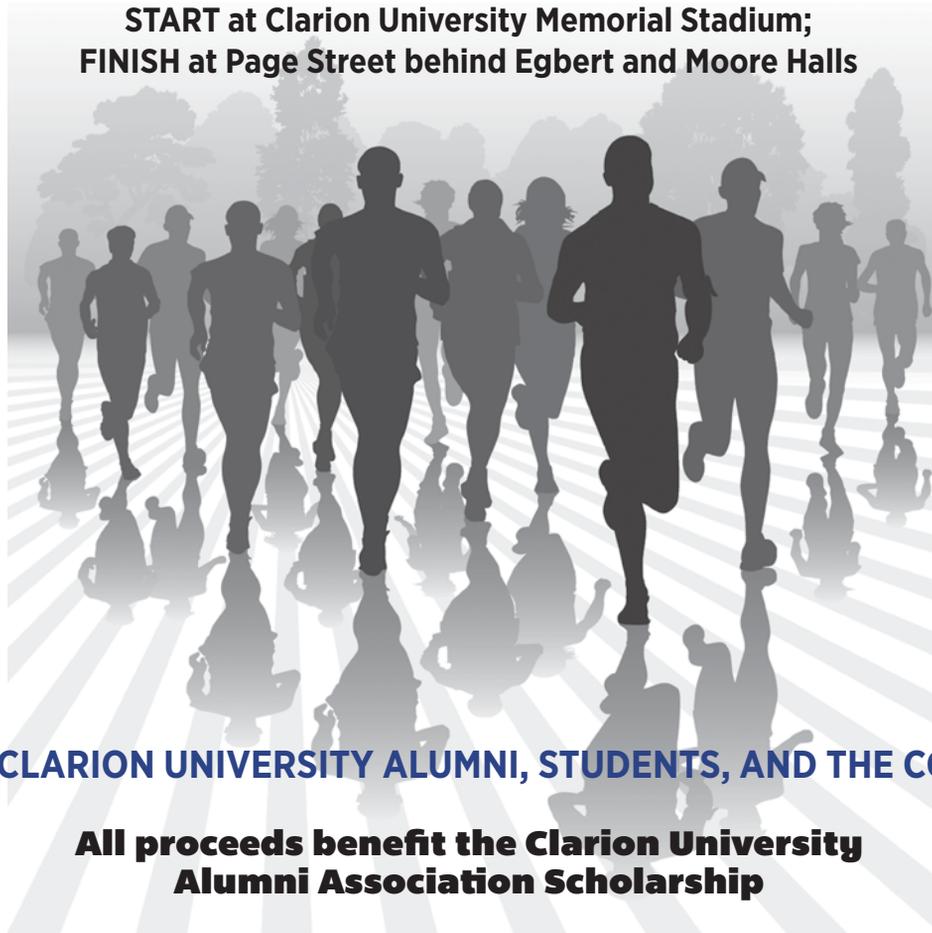
Clarion University's  
Alumni Weekend

# Blue & Gold COLOR RUN

**SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2016**

Registration at 8 a.m.; Shotgun Start at 9 a.m.

**START at Clarion University Memorial Stadium;  
FINISH at Page Street behind Egbert and Moore Halls**



**OPEN TO CLARION UNIVERSITY ALUMNI, STUDENTS, AND THE COMMUNITY**

**All proceeds benefit the Clarion University  
Alumni Association Scholarship**

Register online at [alumniandfriends.cuf-inc.org/events](http://alumniandfriends.cuf-inc.org/events)  
Questions: Call 814-393-2572 or Email [alumni@clarion.edu](mailto:alumni@clarion.edu)

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*alumni*

# WEEKEND

— A FEW OF THE HIGHLIGHTS —

ALL ALUMNI REUNION BANQUET HONORING CLASS OF 1966 • DISTINGUISHED AWARDS  
ALUM-NITE • ALUMNI-FEST PICNIC • AND NEW BLUE AND GOLD COLOR RUN

For more information and schedule of events, visit [www.clarion.edu/alumniweekend](http://www.clarion.edu/alumniweekend).  
For questions regarding alumni weekend, call the Alumni Relations Office at 814-393-2572.