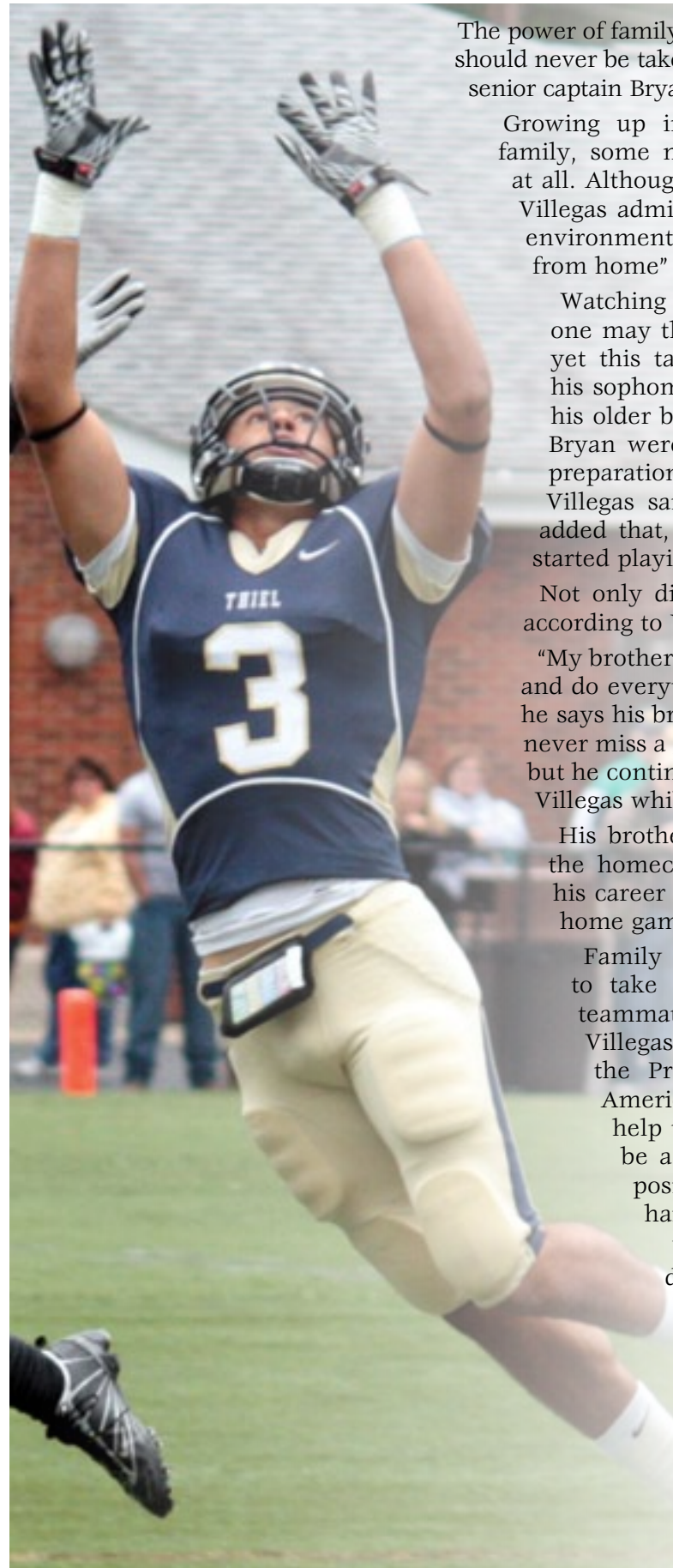


## Student-Athlete Profile: Bryan Villegas



The power of family, whether biological or athletic, is something that should never be taken for granted—a fact that Thiel College football's senior captain Bryan Villegas has grown to know very well.

Growing up in Tampa, Fla., with a very large extended family, some may wonder why Villegas came to Greenville at all. Although he does not like the snow and cold weather, Villegas admits that Thiel offers a great living and learning environment and one that has served as a good “home away from home” for the past four years.

Watching this 6-foot, 1-inch and 183-pound free safety, one may think he has been playing since he could walk; yet this talented athlete has only played football since his sophomore year in high school. Villegas explains that his older brother came home one day saying that he and Bryan were going to start doing the football workout in preparation for the upcoming season. Up until that point, Villegas said he had only played backyard football, but added that, now looking back, he wishes he would have started playing at a younger age.

Not only did his brother get him started in football, but according to Villegas, he is also his biggest inspiration.

“My brother has always believed in me and wants me to try and do everything I possibly can,” Villegas said. In addition, he says his brother is his biggest fan because not only did he never miss a game throughout his senior year of high school, but he continues to stay in touch and involved in supporting Villegas while he has been at Thiel.

His brother along with his parents have made it to all the homecoming games in the past three years, but as his career worked its way to a close, they attended every home game during the season.

Family is a main focus for Villegas and he worked to take this mindset and apply it to his family of teammates throughout his time at Thiel. Although Villegas's individual goals are to make first team in the Presidents' Athletic Conference and earn All-American status, his top priority this season was to help the team turn its season around by working to be a more vocal leader as well as keeping people positive and inspired to keep going and working hard week after week.

Villegas mentions that after graduating with degrees in Web development and e-commerce, he hopes to find a coaching position somewhere.

As Villegas's final season with the Tomcats wraps up, he will leave the program with these words for his teammates: “Do everything you do on the field like it's the last time you do it because you'll be a senior before you know it. You want to leave here with no regrets, so give it all you got.”

—Danielle Dwyer '11

## 2010 Game Day Honorees

The Game Day Honoree Program is a way to say thank you to valued alumni, friends and partners for their commitment to Thiel College. Our game day honorees have invested in the Thiel Community and are actively engaged with the College. They are dedicated to the success of our students. At each game one special person or group is recognized and Dr. VanAken offers his thanks on behalf of the entire community for their generosity, friendship and steadfast support.

### September 4—Dr. Marty Manning



Dr. Marty Manning was honored during Thiel's first home game. A 1988 Thiel graduate, he was a staff member of Youngstown State University since 1990, culminating as associate director of student life. Manning was a high school football official, an assistant coach to his daughter's soccer team and a member of St. Luke Parish in Boardman, Ohio. Manning had three children, Melina, Marc

and Maya with his wife, Mille. (Editor's note: Manning lost his battle with cancer shortly after Marty Manning Day.) Each day Manning lived out the Thiel College mission by constantly seeking to reach his full potential as a beloved educator, a devoted father and a loyal friend.

### September 18—Howard '56 & Kay '59 Weyers



Howard and Kay Weyers were honored for their commitment to Thiel—shown through their service on the Board of Trustees, work with athletics and the Blue Gold Club, and dedication to Thiel students' success. Both the Weyers Sampson Art

Gallery and the Weyers Student Lounge are named in honor of their generosity. In 2000, Howard and Kay led the charge for an on-campus stadium, offering a lead challenge gift to other alumni and friends. In 2004, they were recognized as Distinguished Alumni during Homecoming.

### November 6—Ronald & Karen Doerr



Students are at the heart of Thiel, and no one understands that better than Thiel parents Ron and Karen Doerr, whose son, Jeff, is a member of the Class of 1990. During Jeff's time at Thiel, the Doerrs joined the Parents' Advisory Council, now the Thiel Family Council. Their dedication to student issues was soon recognized and Ron moved to a position on the Board of Trustees. He went on to become chair of the Board in 1998 and served through 1999. The Doerrs dedicate tremendous time and energy to Thiel's success, including Ron's service as board chair during the Thiel 2000-Sharing the Mission campaign, and leading both the 1999 and 2009 Presidential Search Committees. In 2001, they were honored with a “Service to Thiel” award. Ron has rejoined the Board of Trustees and serves as the chair of the Board's Advancement Committee.

### October 16—The Anderson Family



The Anderson Family was recognized for their tremendous leadership, engagement and service not only to the College but to the entire region. Their company, Anderson Coach & Travel, began in 1937 and now serves more than half a million customers each year. The family, led by Dot and the late O.D., includes children Doug, Sue, Lyle, and Karen, their spouses Lori, Darrell, Susan and Dave as well as numerous grandchildren. The family has been engaged in the Thiel College community for more than 60 years with Thiel Athletics and various boards. During the October 16 football game, Thiel celebrated all of the Anderson Family, including its more than 200 employees.

### October 30—First National Bank



The Thiel College Community is a family bound together by a commitment to a common mission and strengthened by shared experiences, values and goals. That family includes students, faculty, staff, alumni and valued partners such as First National Bank. The long partnership between Thiel and FNB has connected them on a variety of levels, including a business relationship, internships, community engagement and service on Thiel's Board of Trustees by FNB officers, such as Norman Mortensen, Peter Mortensen and Jeff Wallace. FNB also endowed the chair of Thiel's largest academic department as the Norman P. Mortensen Chair of Economics.

## A Taste for Victory

Winning is becoming something that is more expected rather than hoped for during the women's volleyball season at Thiel.

Fifth-year head coach Steve Brewer, with the help of assistant coach Amanda Brewer, has led the the Tomcats to a second consecutive successful season, proving last year's 23-win campaign was no fluke.

This season was very similar to the last. Both had first-time wins over Westminster—the Tomcats registered their first-ever win over the Titans last season and their first victory in Westminster's gym this season—and both featured Thomas More and Thiel as the top two teams in the standings. This season, the Tomcats topped Washington & Jefferson College for their 10th straight win, matching last year's 10-match winning streak.

The wins haven't come at the cost of playing quality competition either. While some coaches take the easy way out and pad stats with an easy non-conference schedule, Brewer did the opposite. He lined up a pair of nationally-ranked teams, an NAIA team and a few other solid programs to get the team ready for the conference part of the schedule and the postseason.

"It's important for our program to get out every season and play some of the toughest schools in our region," Brewer said. "The goals for our program are lofty, and you need to beat great teams before you can become the best team."

Over the past two seasons, the Tomcats tallied at least one win over every team in the Presidents' Athletic Conference and were strong contenders for the conference title this year.

The squad was led by Kelly Barzak, who won two PAC Player of the Week awards this season. The sophomore already appears in the program's single-season and career record books and will probably own every record related to her position by the time her career at Thiel is complete. The 6-foot-1-inch sophomore is one of the best athletes on campus and is a two-sport star. If she stays the course of her freshman season, she could leave Thiel with eight all-conference selections combined in volleyball and basketball.

In addition to Barzak, the Tomcats have three other players with their names in the Thiel record books. Senior Stephanie Shipley tops the school's career list in digs, senior Madison Chylik is the career leader in assists and junior Megan Kay is second only to Barzak in career hitting percentage.

The Tomcats earned a trip back to the PAC championship match this year after defeating



Westminster College in straight sets. The team faced top-seeded Thomas More College in the championship match for the second year in a row on Nov. 6, but fell 3-1 to Thomas More. With this win, the Saints earn the right to represent the PAC in the 2010 NCAA Division III women's volleyball championship.

Despite the tough loss in the championship game, Brewer says the strength of his team is based on discipline and accountability. And, of course, it all begins with quality recruiting. The Tomcat coaches have done a great job of bringing in student-athletes that fit in well with what they want from the program. That task should only get easier in the next few years as the coaches now have the best recruiting tool available, a winning team.

## The Comeback Kid(s)

Trailing 4-1 and needing an offensive spark, Thiel men's soccer coach Andy Hoggarth turned to an unexpected player in a match earlier this season.

Less than 18 minutes remained on the clock when Hoggarth moved Tanner Mesing, a defender, up front with the hope he could provide a spark. The freshman didn't disappoint, scoring four goals in nine minutes as the Tomcats came back to beat Hilbert College 6-4.

The four goals tied a Thiel record for goals in a game. (Nikola Vasilev scored four times against Waynesburg in 2004.)

Mesing's first goal came on a header off a corner kick by Erik Gabrich at the 72:28 mark. He added a second goal six minutes later off an assist by Francis Ahia and netted an unassisted goal just three minutes after that. Mesing's final goal, the go-ahead score for the Tomcats, came just one minute later and was assisted by Darwin Porras.

"We were outplayed and disappointed for the first 70 minutes," Hoggarth said. "We made some changes and put Tanner up front. We told him to win balls in the air and create chances for us and he did that. It shows a lot of heart from our squad to come back like we did."

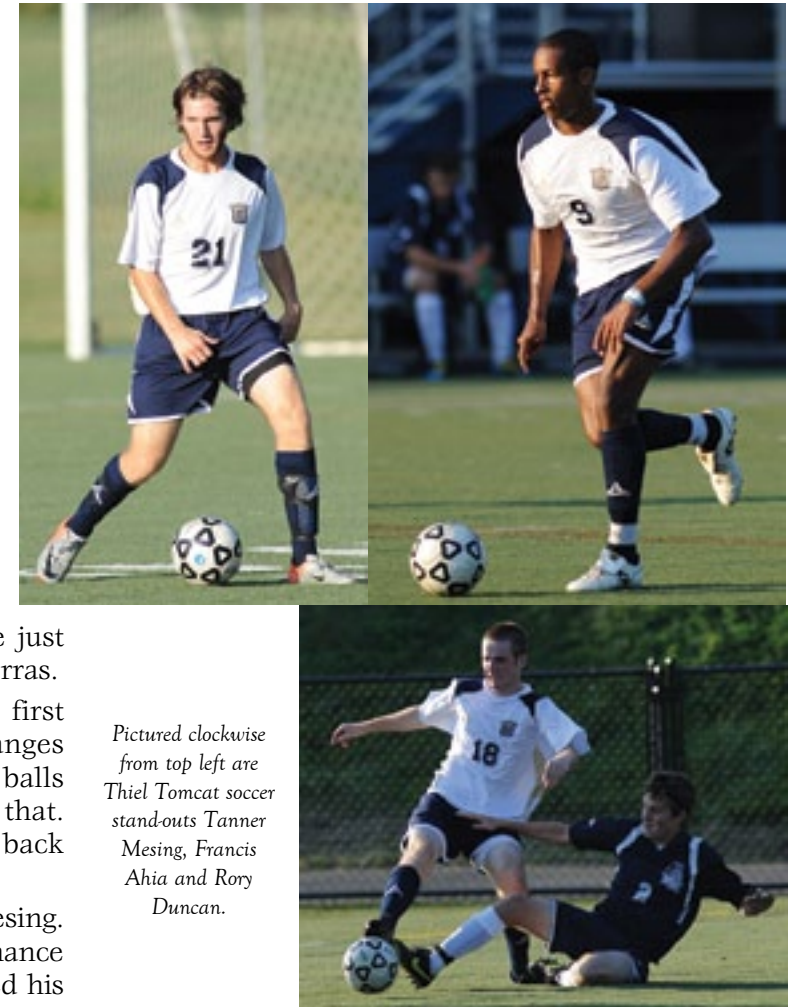
The goals were the first four of the season for Mesing. His great game overshadowed a breakout performance by another Tomcat freshman. Tyler Hanks tallied his first two goals of the season, including a game-tying score in the 34th minute and an insurance goal in the 90th minute. Chris Lepley assisted on Hanks' first goal while the second was unassisted.

With the win, Thiel tied the program's record for wins in a season with five and would later notch its sixth win to make this season the most successful in Thiel men's soccer history.

To put Mesing's performance into perspective, only one other player in the conference has scored four goals in a game this season. Marco Rosas scored four times in Thomas More College's win over Thiel. Only three players in Division III have scored five times in a game this season and 15 others matched Mesing's performance with four. The only difference is that the Thiel freshman did it in a 10-minute span and on just four shots.

The outstanding performance is even more surprising when you consider Mesing didn't score a goal during his time on the team at Freedom High School.

"It is very rare that a player has that type of game, and we were very fortunate that Tanner was able



*Pictured clockwise from top left are Thiel Tomcat soccer stand-outs Tanner Mesing, Francis Ahia and Rory Duncan.*

to have a break out game just when we needed it," Hoggarth said.

The move wasn't permanent as Mesing was moved back to play defense the next game. Still, from one 10-minute offensive breakout, he is just one goal shy of cracking the top 10 in the PAC through 16 games.

Mesing is just one of a large group of freshmen that have the Tomcats on the rise. Rory Duncan helped Thiel open the season with a 5-4-1 record with a terrific start to his career. Duncan scored eight goals and tallied three assists in the first eight games of the season and is currently fourth in the conference in goals with nine and third in points with 22.

Duncan is also putting his name in the Thiel record books. He needs one more goal to move into a tie for a second in single-season goals and is already third in career points and fourth in career goals. Fellow freshman Francis Ahia is also having a great debut season. His five assists are a single-season record for the Tomcats.

## Welcome to LAX

Soon, another Thiel athletic program will call Alumni Stadium home as the men's lacrosse team opens its season under the Rissell-Schreyer Dome on Feb. 19, 2011.

Coach Shem Johnston-Bloom and the men's lacrosse team got their first taste of competition in a tournament at Washington & Jefferson College this fall. Their first real competition has the coaches and players eager to get back in action this spring.

"We had our wrap-up meetings from fall practice and the guys are really pumped," Bloom said. "They felt like we felt, that they really belonged out there. They know we have some things to work on, but the competition gave them some confidence as we get ready for the season."

Thiel played three games in an adjusted format to allow each participating team a chance to play as much as possible. Each game consisted of two 20-minute halves with a running clock.

The Tomcats didn't shy away from tough competition with games against top-notch junior college programs in Mercyhurst North East and Hartford Community College and a future Division II program in Walsh.

When the Tomcats put the pads on for spring practice, the Rissell-Schreyer Dome will be ready to hold events. The first three home games on the schedule will be in the dome.

The opening game will be against Penn State Abington with an away game at Albion College a week later. The other two games in the dome will be against Medaille College and Wells College. Fourteen games are on the schedule with eight at home, five on the road and a game against Bard College during a trip to Wesleyan University.

Currently, the Tomcats are not associated with a conference. Three other Presidents' Athletic Conference programs have lacrosse teams—two established teams at W&J and Saint Vincent College and a startup at Bethany College.

The men's team won't be the only lacrosse squad on campus for long. Coach Whitney Turnbull has hit the recruiting trail hard and is set to officially begin the women's lacrosse team during the 2011-12 school year.

Turnbull brings experience in starting a program from scratch after coaching the University of Arkansas women's lacrosse club



team for four years. She played a large role in the creation of the team, which was the state's first.

Lacrosse fans on campus will have the chance to watch teams next season, but for now they will watch as the men's team develops during its first year.

"We have a long way to go but there's definitely a lot of positives. The big thing is we had a chance to go back and look at tape to evaluate our guys and determine what they need to work on," Bloom said. "We're obviously a very young team so we're going to make our fair amount of mistakes, but we're further along than I thought we'd be at this point."

## Scott Stano—Student Sideline Reporter

What do you want to be when you grow up? Most children answer this question with responses such as firefighter, police officer, doctor, singer or actor, but for Thiel senior Scott Stano, this was not the case. Since he was four, the Erie native has aspired to be a sports announcer and claims his role model growing up was the voice of the Chicago Cubs, Harry Caray.

With his mind set on eventually becoming a sports broadcast announcer for ESPN or a large market professional athletic team such as the Chicago Cubs, Buffalo Bills or Buffalo Sabres, Stano has made it a point to get actively involved in the Communication Studies Department throughout his Thiel career. Some may have seen Stano appear on TCTV (the college television station) doing the news and various other shows; others may have heard his radio show where he would play music and discuss everything from sports to global events.

However, this fall, students have seen Stano in a whole



Scott Stano on the sidelines with the Thiel Tomcats

new environment as he became Thiel College's first-ever sideline reporter for the football team.

After Coach Kurt Reiser, Thiel's head football coach, proposed doing an internship for him as a sideline reporter at home football games, Stano accepted the position without any hesitation.

"With the new addition of Scott as the sideline reporter, it adds a nice element to our broadcasts by providing sideline coaches' interviews, injury updates, weather reports, etc.," said Hugh Ringer, who is in his seventh year as the voice of the Tomcats on News Talk 790 WPIC. "I was very impressed with Scott's performance at the home opener on September 4. He was poised, articulate and enthusiastic and has a promising future in the broadcasting field."

Stano enjoys the role sideline reporters play in athletics because it allows him to give his input not only on the basics such as injury reports and the weather, but also his opinions on questionable calls.

"I devise my questions for the coaches based on game situations and what has happened thus far in the plays," said Stano.

Although it was not until a week before high school graduation that Stano made the decision to come to Thiel based on the opportunity to join the track team, he has been quite the asset to the Communication Studies Department at Thiel for the past three years.

"By being a college athlete I feel as though it allows me to have the upper-hand in sports broadcasting because I can relate to what the athletes are going through over someone who does not have much playing experience," said Stano. "My main focus in the past, present and future has always been to give to the audience and make sure that I am not only entertaining them, but also giving them accurate facts and making them happy viewers."

—Danielle Dwyer '11

**THIEL COLLEGE ATHLETICS**

**SECOND ANNUAL HAWAII TRIP RAFFLE**

THIEL ATHLETICS IS RAFFLING A CHANCE TO WIN A SEVEN-NIGHT STAY AT A FIVE-DIAMOND RESORT ON WAIKIKI BEACH AND ROUND-TRIP AIRFARE FOR TWO. ARRANGEMENTS BASED ON ADVANCED RESERVATIONS AND AVAILABILITY THROUGH THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE, INC. TICKETS ARE \$10 EACH AND CAN BE PURCHASED ONLINE AT [WWW.THIELATHLETICS.COM](http://WWW.THIELATHLETICS.COM).

Drawing to be held on Friday, May 27, 2011 at the Blue-Gold Golf Outing



### Wrestlers Serve the Community

On April 22, the Tomcat wrestling team participated in a community service project at Hempfield Station One where they served breakfast to many community members at the 45th annual Lions' Club Pancake & Sausage Day.