

The Bell



Legacy of connections


The Thiel network links people and opportunities

Standing Tall at Thiel

Thiel College is home to a state champion sassafras tree. It is near the intersection of Amelia Earhart and College avenues. The tree is approximately 90 years old. It shows up on a map drawn in 1939 when it was approximately 12 feet tall. Today, it's 96 feet tall and 202 inches in circumference. There are more than 50 species of trees on campus.

2024 will be 150th anniversary of the planting of trees along Brother Martin's Walk. In addition, a campaign is underway to dedicate a tree on campus to each president who has served at Thiel.





Thiel College

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Greenville, Pennsylvania 16125
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Thiel College is a liberal arts, sciences and professional studies college affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Dear Thiel College Alumni and Friends,

It is with great pride and joy that I write to you today, reflecting upon the incredible legacies that continue to shape the very essence of Thiel College.



The Fall/Winter 2023 edition of our alumni magazine is a testament to the enduring connections that bind us all together, a celebration of the unique journey each of you has taken since your time on campus. Homecoming brought more than 800 alumni, friends and families home to campus. Together, we enjoyed reunions, awards, music and wins on the field and court.

Our alumni community is a source of immense inspiration, showcasing the incredible accomplishments and contributions that define the Thiel legacy. From CEOs to dedicated educators shaping future generations, from compassionate healthcare professionals to World Series champions—your stories remind us of the limitless potential we possess when fueled by knowledge, passion, and the care for community that are central to Thiel’s mission.

But this legacy would not be possible without the unwavering support of generous alumni and friends. The College is grateful for the many who, each year, selflessly contributed their time, expertise, and resources. This generosity has enriched our academic programs as guest speakers, provided scholarships through the Thiel Fund, and strengthened Tomcat Athletics by joining the Blue-Gold Club. These gifts, and so many others, support our current students’ journey toward joining the ranks of Thiel’s remarkable alumni.

In the spirit of celebrating these legacies, we invite you to engage with us, to share your experiences, and to participate in the ever-growing narrative of Thiel College. Attend our events, mentor our students, offer your expertise, or simply reconnect with fellow alumni and faculty. Your involvement enriches our community and ensures that the Thiel legacy remains vibrant and enduring.

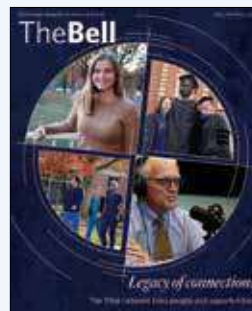
Thank you for being an integral part of our community and for helping us shape a legacy that will stand the test of time.

Go Tomcats!

Susan Traverso, Ph.D.

Social Media, Letters	5
Scholarship	6
Student News	8
Faculty & Staff News	9
Homecoming	10
Legacy of Connections	14
Athletics	20
Class Notes	21
In Memoriam	29
Final Word	30

On the Cover



On the cover (top left and then clockwise), are a few of the examples of the legacies of connections on campus. **Alex Hudson MBA'21** graduated as a member of the first Master of Business Administration cohort and has returned to Thiel College as a member of the Board of Trustees; **Ahmad Tejumola '22 MBA'23** (center) was an intern at

Penn-Northwest Development Corporation, which is looking at ways to keep graduates of Thiel in the area; Chair of the Trustees **Rod E. Wilt '86** uses the state-of-the-art podcast studio in the James Pedas Communication Center; and **Brian Merino M.S.'25, Fiona Lam M.S.'25** and **Autumn Duncan M.S.'25** in the Master of Science in physician assistant studies program walk across campus. The first cohort graduated in August of this year. That ceremony served as a symbolic bookend as that same day the majority of the Class of 2027 moved in for the start of the 2023-24 academic year.

Celebrating Thiel Spirit

Each year during Homecoming, the Thiel Community marks Thiel National Spirit Day.



This year students and faculty and staff members gathered in front of the Howard Miller Student Center to join members of the community from around the country to mark the day.



Letter to Tommy Tomcat

Teddy Archer, son of **Stephanie (Dolinar) Archer '12** and James Archer, wrote to Tommy after Homecoming 2022:

Dear Tommy Tomcat,

I miss you very much! I love you! I hope you are having a great year. I have been missing you and Thiel since Homecoming.

I cannot wait to see you soon.

I have been learning a lot in school so I will be ready to come to Thiel in the fall of 2036. Hope I can come visit soon.

Go Thiel!!

Tommy Tomcat loves correspondence from the Thiel Community's future Tomcats. Send him a letter to Tommy Tomcat, Office of Communications & Marketing; 75 College Avenue; Greenville, PA 16125



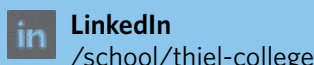
Stuart Sewell '74 at O'Brien's Tower on the Cliffs of Moher



Letters to the editor

Thiel College welcomes feedback regarding *The Bell*. Letters must contain a contact number (not for publication, but to allow for verification of the sender). Letters can be mailed to **Thiel College, Office of Communications and Marketing, 75 College Ave., Greenville, PA 16125**; or emailed to pr@thiel.edu. Letters accepted for publication may be edited for length and clarity.

Follow us on social media



Anonymous donor creates scholarship for aspiring educators



Assistant Professor of Education, Director of Teacher Education and Department Chair **Kara Schreckenghost** (standing) and students in the Department of Education have an additional financial resource with a new scholarship for future educators..

Thiel College received a generous gift from an anonymous donor—a \$50,000 contribution to establish a scholarship fund designed to support aspiring educators. The donor, who has a passion for education and wishes to facilitate the growth of the teaching profession, aims to pave the way for more students to pursue teaching careers.

The scholarship's creation is a testament to the donor's commitment to fostering a new generation of dedicated and enthusiastic teachers. It aims to lessen the financial burdens that often impede students aspiring to enter the field of education.

Pennsylvania had the largest increase in teacher attrition on record in 2022, with 7.7% of all teachers leaving their jobs, according to research from the Center for Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis. In Maine, more than 2,000 teachers and other educators quit or retired last year, the most in the past seven years, according to the Maine

Scholarship recognition event brings together students, donors

The Annual Endowed Scholarship Recognition was November 11 in the Lutheran Heritage Room of the Howard Miller Student Center. This event is a unique platform for students to personally connect with the generous families and individuals who have endowed the scholarships they are recipients of. The event aimed to foster a sense of gratitude, appreciation, and mutual understanding between the scholarship donors and the deserving students.

Throughout the luncheon, students had the opportunity to share their personal stories, aspirations, and experiences with the scholarship donors. This exchange allowed both parties to gain insight into each other's lives, fostering a deeper connection beyond the financial support provided.

Thiel College's commitment to creating an inclusive and supportive community was evident as students expressed their gratitude to the scholarship donors. The event emphasized the significant impact that endowed scholarships have on the lives of students, enabling them to pursue their academic dreams and achieve success.



See photos from the event
<https://bit.ly/thielscholarship2023>

Public Employee Retirement System. The significant donation will provide financial assistance to education students at Thiel College, offering them the means to access quality education without the weight of excessive financial strain. This initiative not only supports the students but also aligns with the broader objective of enhancing the quality and quantity of educators entering the workforce.

The establishment of this scholarship serves as an invitation to others who share the donor's passion for education to contribute to this noble cause. Anyone interested in bolstering the scholarship fund is encouraged to reach out to Vice President of College Advancement Roberta Leonard at rleonard@thiel.edu to explore ways to support and expand this initiative.

For the past several years, Thiel College education graduates have had 100 placement in careers or graduate school. Thiel College offers an early childhood education and special education major as well as secondary teaching certificates for math, history, English, chemistry and biology majors.

As the scholarship fund gains momentum, it stands as a testament to the transformative power of philanthropy in education and its ability to shape the future of the teaching profession.



Interested donors
can contact the
Advancement Office:

 (724) 589-2160

 advancement@thiel.edu



Gifts & Grants

\$250,000

Marion G. Resch Foundation

Thiel College was recently awarded an additional \$250,000 from the Marion G. Resch Foundation to help fund science-based and other scholarships at the College.

Marion G. Resch Science Scholarships are exclusive to home-schooled students and students from high schools in the Ohio counties of Mahoning, Columbiana and Trumbull who graduate six months before their first semester at Thiel College. Scholarships are in addition to any other merit or institutional awards. To bolster interest in the natural and physical sciences, 50 percent of all available Resch Science Scholarships are provisionally reserved for women.

Established in 2000, The Marion G. Resch Foundation is committed to assisting and developing the Mahoning Valley's number one resource, its Youth. The Foundation is focused on promoting education in primary and secondary schools, trade schools, and institutions of higher learning. To achieve this end, The Marion G. Resch Foundation is engaged in two activities; namely the granting of college scholarships and supporting early identification programs designed to help high school students successfully cross the bridge to higher education.

\$1,700,000

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Thiel received \$1.7 million from Pennsylvania's Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program grant. RACP is a state grant program in the Office of the Budget for the acquisition and construction of regional economic, cultural, civic, recreational and historical improvement projects.

\$2,400,000

Dietrich Foundation

Based in Pittsburgh, The Dietrich Foundation is a Pennsylvania charitable trust created through the vision and generosity of **William (Bill) S. Dietrich II**, who passed away in October 2011. The primary mission of The Dietrich Foundation is to benefit higher education, principally in the greater Pittsburgh area, by providing ongoing and increasing financial support to educational institutions, which includes Thiel, the University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon and Princeton. Annual grants from The Dietrich Foundation grow the College's endowment, providing funding for Thiel's Dietrich Honor Institute. Named in honor of Bill Dietrich's parents, **Kenneth '31** and **Marianna (Brown) Dietrich '32**, the DHI provides distinctive learning opportunities for students, including enhanced coursework and independent research.



Katie Aaron '24 poses with a sea turtle during her summer research.

Environmental science major presents sea turtle research

Senior **Katherine Aaron '24** presented the result of her summer research project surveying sea turtle nests at the Gulf Coast Undergraduate Research Symposium at Rice University on October 21.

Her research presentation, "Nest Architecture of Loggerhead Sea Turtles in Hammock's Beach State Park," is the result of her participation in a research experience for undergraduate students in collaboration with Duke University. Aaron, of Lehigh, Pa., is an environmental science major and wildlife biology minor and a 2020 graduate of Lehigh Area High School. She worked at Duke University's marine lab.

Tomcats take part in movie premiere on campus

Student **Marcus Hernandez '24** and alumna **Samantha DiBucci '23** participated in the U.S. premiere of "SpookT," hosted on campus on September 22. Both Hernandez and DiBucci played roles in the movie's production and took part in the panel discussion prior to the debut.

"SpookT" is set in Greenville, Pa. and was filmed in and around the region.

The panel discussion was in Stamm Lecture Hall in the James Pedas Communication Center, which was named for alumnus **James Pedas '50 H'89**, who was one of the foremost backers of 1990s American independent cinema, which included the Coen brothers' debut and sophomore films, "Blood Simple" (1984) and "Raising Arizona" (1987). The event featured Director **Tony Reames**, who is the son of **Mary Reames**, who served as a faculty member in the College's Department of Education from 2006 to 2019.



Marcus Hernandez '24 (left) and **Samantha DiBucci '23** (third from left) pose with members of the cast and crew of "SpookT."

Speech-Language Pathology students receive diversity award

The Thiel College Chapter of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association, under the direction of **Jeanette Benigas, Ph.D.** was awarded Most Impactful Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Focused Advocacy Effort at the annual convention of the Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association held earlier this year.

The Thiel College Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders hosted the interdisciplinary professional development opportunity, "Creating Safe(r) Spaces for Trans and Gender Non-Confirming Patient, Clients, and Students; Trauma Informed Rapport Building Across Settings," with over 110 students and professionals nationwide in

attendance. Following the event, the Thiel College NSSLHA chapter invited speech-language pathology students in attendance to stay for a 30-minute advocacy discussion with the presenter, A.C. Goldberg, Ph.D. Students were able to ask questions and learn more about profession-specific issues related to trauma-informed care.



Physician assistant program director has Op-Ed published in regional newspaper

Physician Assistant Program Director, Associate Professor of physician assistant studies and a clinically practicing PA **James E. Tkacik** had an opinion piece celebrating National Physician Assistant Week published in *The Meadville Tribune* in early October. In the piece, Tkacik discusses the projected expansion of the profession, citing the more than 168,318 PAs who are working across the country, and the expected growth of more than 30 percent in the next 10 years.

Tkacik was appointed director this summer, and Thiel College graduated its first cohort of Master of Science in physician assistant studies in August.

Vice President for Student Life and Athletics selected for NCAA program



Vice President for Student Life and Athletics **Michael McKinney Ed.D. '02** has been selected to attend the 2024 NCAA Division III New Athletics Direct Report Professional Development Program. The event will be held in January in conjunction with the 2024 NCAA Convention in Phoenix. McKinney, already the Vice President for Student Affairs, had his role expanded and title changed to reflect the addition of overseeing the Department of Athletics at the College in July 2022.

Each fall, up to 15 ADRs who are new to their role or who have never attended the ADR Institute are selected to attend programming at the NCAA Convention.

Football coach talks to TV station about program for players' mental health

Football defensive line coach **Kevin McLane** was interviewed by Youngstown, Ohio CBS affiliate WKBN talking about his involvement with Hilinski's Hope and the team's efforts to improve the mental health of its football players.

Thiel College participated in Student Athlete Mental Health Week from September 30 to October 7 alongside 155-plus other colleges and universities around the country. McLane is in his second season with the Tomcats. He leads weekly meetings with team members to discuss mental health and help the athletes deal with trauma, criticism and the pressure of being a student-athlete.



Thiel hosted Lutheran college leaders and NECU's top executive



Thiel College hosted the annual Presidents' Summer Seminar from August 7-9. The event, organized by the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities, brought together presidents from six Lutheran colleges and universities, along with the executive director of NECU, Lamont Wells.

The Presidents' Summer Seminar is a unique opportunity for academic leaders to "converse, consult and connect," Wells said. This year's event fostered

insightful discussions on a range of pivotal topics, including leadership principles, shared governance models, the crucial role of educational institutions in driving economic development, effective strategies for embracing and supporting diverse student populations, and the strategic direction of NECU as a consortium of ELCA institutions.

The participants in this year's seminar were:

- **Debbie Cottrell, Ph.D.**; Texas Lutheran University
- **Rachelle Keck, Ph.D., J.D.**; Grand View University (Iowa)
- **Stephanie Herseith Sandlin, J.D.**; Augustana University (S.D.) and president and executive committee chair of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities
- **Susan Rundell Singer, Ph.D.**; St. Olaf College (Minn.)
- **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.**; Thiel College (Pa.)
- **Lori E. Varlotta, Ph.D.**; California Lutheran University
- **Lamont Wells**, Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities

HOMECOMING 2023

TOMMY-PAW-LOOZA DRAWS MORE THAN 800 ATTENDEES

Tommy-paw-looza transformed Homecoming 2023 into a vibrant festival-style celebration, featuring energetic parties, lively music, and the joyful reunion of friends and family. The event brought together more than 800 friends, family, and alumni on campus and countless others across the country and even the world by way of the online gathering. The weekend encapsulated the vibrant spirit and enduring pride that Thiel College instills in its community. From spirited gatherings to nostalgic reunions, the Homecoming festivities were a blend of tradition, camaraderie, and celebration.

A range of activities unfolded throughout the weekend including the spirited parade and pep rally, an alumni tailgate brimming with blue and gold, athletic competitions showcasing Thiel's teams (including the first home cross country meet in two decades), and engaging campus tours and open houses.

One of the highlights of the Homecoming weekend was the recognition of distinguished alumni through the presentation of the Alumni Awards. The 2023 Award Winners, acknowledged for their exceptional contributions and achievements, included:

Distinguished Alumni Award

- **Arthur Wetzel, Ph.D. '73:** Wetzel's illustrious career and commitment to excellence have earned him this prestigious award. His impact on his field and alma mater is a source of inspiration for current and future Thiel students.
- **Philip Joyce, Ph.D. '78:** Joyce's contributions to his profession and the wider community make him a deserving recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award. His accomplishments stand as a testament to the high standards set by Thiel College.

Service to Thiel Award

- **Melissa (Eagon) Oakes '03:** This award recognized Oakes for her dedicated service to Thiel College. Her commitment to fostering a sense of community and support within the college has left an indelible mark.

- **Anna (Pischera) Reinsel, Ph.D. '06:** Reinsel's contributions to Thiel College go beyond the academic realm, making her a beacon of service and dedication. Her impact on the college community is both profound and lasting.
- **James Frank '88:** Frank's commitment to service has earned him the Service to Thiel Award. His tireless efforts in connecting the Thiel Community earned him the award.

Young Alumni Award

- **Becky Crawford '14:** Recognizing the achievements of recent graduates, Becky Crawford receives the Young Alumni Award. Her accomplishments early in her career are a testament to the quality of education and support provided by Thiel College.

Director of Alumni Relations **David Hummel '83** said Thiel pride was reflected in the strong turnout and the palpable sense of camaraderie that permeated the entire weekend.

"Homecoming is a special time for Thiel alumni to come back to campus, reconnect with old friends, and see the exciting developments happening at our alma mater. Tommy-paw-looza exceeded our expectations, with more than 800 attendees, making it one of the most memorable Homecoming weekends in recent years," he said. "It was heartening to witness the passion and pride that our alumni have for Thiel College. From the spirited parade to the heartfelt reunions, the weekend was a true celebration of the Thiel community. Seeing familiar faces and hearing stories of the impact our graduates are making in their respective fields is incredibly rewarding. Homecoming is not just a weekend; it's a reaffirmation of the bonds that tie us together as a Thiel family. We look forward to building on this momentum and creating even more opportunities for alumni engagement in the future."

With that he said it's not too early to think about 2024.

Homecoming 2024 is September 27-29!

HOMECOMING



Members of the Thiel and St. Paul's communities gathered for the annual Joining Generations cook-out on Sept. 28.



Alumni from Delta Sigma Phi celebrated with their annual tradition of their chicken roast and alumni tent during the football tailgate.



Class of 1973 Reunion

First row (left to right): **Karl C. Geist '73, Ken Wilson '73, Judy (Knestrick) Taylor '73, Lois (Higgins) Shimrack '73, Lois (Gerstenberg) Beauchamp '73**; second row: **Arthur Wetzel '73, Eloise Campbell '73, Ruthanne Beighley '73 H'20, Linda (Krapp) Berggren '73**; third row: **Darla Dunn '73, Sharon (Wilson) Nystrom '73, Joan (Kane) Vican '73, Cathy (Antil) George '73**; fourth row: **David Fauth '73, Mark Eckert '73, Cheryl (Collins) Rossi '73, Marilyn Long '73**; fifth row: **Wayne Grinnik '73, Linda (Fontanazza) Grinnik '73**.

JUST CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF THIEL 2023?

We know the feeling! Homecoming was a great experience, and we shared and made so many memories with friends old and new. Join us online to see more of the festivities.

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjAY3ZL>



HOMECOMING



Members of Alpha Xi Delta were one of the many groups celebrating tailgating.



Alex Eaton '10, Cara (Riffe) Papay '09, Kelly Barzak '13 and Josh Tedesco '09 were the 2023 inductees to the Athletics Hall of Fame.



Alumni gathered in the Haer Family Science and Arts connector for a wine tasting, networking, and an opportunity to look back over yearbooks.



Matt Beuermann '23 MBA'24 won the Tomcat Rumble cross country meet. It was the first home meet in two decades.



Launching into the World of Work: A Career Conversation Alumni Panel Event was held Sept. 28 and featured **Brittany (Gzikowski) Mears '07**, **Jesse Sealand '17** and **Alex Yoder '16** talking with students about making the transition from college to work.



Members of the Tomcat cheer team were presented their 2023 National Cheer Association championship rings. The Tomcats won the national championship in the Cheer Spirit Rally Open division at the National Cheerleaders Association College Nationals in Daytona Beach, Fla. in April.

HOMECOMING



From left to right, the Homecoming Court was **Rowan Thomas '27, Lauren Taylor '27, James Cromwell-Young '26, Mila Brdar '26, Evan Cessna '25 and Maria Torres '25. Austin Krieger '24 and Mikala Wyss '24** were king and queen.



Thiel's chapter of the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association hosted residents from St. Paul's Senior Living Community at the football game as part of their Bleacher Buddies program.



The football and cross country teams were not the only Tomcats in action on Sept. 29. The women's volleyball team hosted a pair of matches. Thiel beat Carlow University and lost to Westminster College in a Homecoming doubleheader.



Members of Zeta Tau Alpha share a group photo during Saturday's events.

CLASS OF 1971
 CELEBRATING EVERYONE'S 75TH BIRTHDAY TOGETHER!
Save the date! Saturday, June 15, 2024
 Agenda for the Day:
 Dedication of the Class of 1971 Quadrangle, Campus Tours
 Contact: **David Hummel '83** at alumni@thiel.edu



MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!
HOMECOMING
2024
September 27-29, 2024

HOMECOMING 2023



Legacy of Connections

The Thiel network brings together people, ideas and opportunities



At Thiel College, the essence of being an alumnus transcends academic achievement, weaving a rich tapestry of legacies that extend far beyond the confines of campus. The interconnected stories of alumni paint a vivid picture of the diverse paths forged after graduation. From the dynamic realm of business, which includes Chair of the Trustees **Rod E. Wilt '86** and a member of the College's first MBA cohort and new trustee **Alex Hudson MBA'21**, and the Homegrown Initiative orchestrated through the Penn-Northwest Development Corporation to the academic and professional pursuits that alumni passionately engage in, the legacy of Thiel College alumni is multifaceted.



This narrative explores the profound impact alumni make as they return to campus, not only to share their experiences but also to actively contribute to the growth of future generations—further exemplified in the new chapters unfolding through the Physician Assistant Studies and Speech-Language Pathology programs. A testament to the enduring spirit of family, the stories of alumni **Muhsinah Saleem '03** and **Clinton Harden '02**, who display unwavering support for their son, **Elijah Harden '25**, as he embarks on his own journey at Thiel.

Moreover, the cultural richness of Thiel College's legacy extends to the performing arts, with member of the Board of Trustees **Miles Wallace** supporting the Con Spirito Music series and the 70th-anniversary choir reunion, illustrating how alumni continue to contribute to the vibrant artistic landscape of the institution. These narratives collectively underscore the enduring impact of Thiel College alumni, whose legacies continue to shape the institution's identity, fostering a sense of interconnectedness that spans generations.

What follows are stories that showcase both family legacies, alumni legacies and community legacies.





Natalie Zgurich '23 used the Penn-Northwest Development Corp. network to find an internship in Mercer County and became the first student to land a residency internship with UPMC Jameson and Horizon.

MBA students, Penn-Northwest program creating opportunity locally

Penn-Northwest Development Corporation, under the leadership of Executive Director **Rod E. Wilt '86**, is connecting Thiel students with an important initiative aimed at stemming the brain drain in Mercer County. The Homegrown Initiative, launched in early 2022, has proven to be a beacon of opportunity, connecting students with career paths that can keep them in Mercer County.

Thiel College graduate **Natalie Zgurich '23** interned at Penn-Northwest. She is a resident director at Thiel and is the first student to get a residency internship with UPMC Jameson and Horizon in Lawrence and Mercer counties. She is also an online student in the Master of Healthcare Administration and Public Health program at George Mason University.

"Thiel has provided me the opportunities and skills to grow as a leader," Zgurich said. "I am thankful for all the people who have helped me accomplish everything that I have done over the past three years."

Zgurich acknowledged Professor of Business Administration and Accounting **Gary J. Witosky '79**, Library Director **Tressa Snyder** and Professor of English **Mary Theresa Hall, Ph.D.** for all they have done to assist her throughout her college career.

Zgurich said she made many connections while interning at Penn Northwest and was grateful for the opportunity.

"I met many local business leaders, and I reached out when it was time to find postgraduate plans. (Wilt) set up an interview with the VP of UPMC Horizon & Jameson, Zach Lenhart, who knew of this residency program that is for Pitt students, but he implemented it for me. I am the first ever administrative resident here all due to Penn-Northwest's Homegrown initiative."

Director of Penn-Northwest's Homegrown Initiative, Jake Rickert, is confident that young people fresh out of high school, trade school or college don't have to look far for job opportunities. He and Wilt have met with members of the College's admissions and communications and marketing offices to find ways to promote the program to incoming high school students.

Another example of the legacy Thiel College and its MBA program are creating can be seen through **Alex Hudson MBA'21**. She was a member of the first MBA cohort and now serves as a member of the Board of Trustees.

The Homegrown Initiative is more than just a workforce development program; it's a catalyst for change that hopes to create a sense of community and pride for students first then as young professionals.

The Homegrown Initiative stands as a testament to the potential that lies within our communities. It's a



Ahmad Tejumola '22 MBA '23 also interned at Penn-Northwest and anticipates taking a position with the Department of Defense soon.

generation can find their place in the professional world without having to venture far from home. The success stories of individuals like **Natalie Zgurich** and **Ahmad Tejumola '22 MBA'23** serve as an inspiration, illustrating that dreams can indeed come true in the very places we call home.

Tejumola also interned at Penn-Northwest and anticipates working for the Department of Defense. His experience at Penn-Northwest combined with the College's Career Development Center got him on path to find his career.

"The Thiel College Career Development Center offered numerous opportunities to connect with esteemed alumni," Tejumola said. "These networking events were key in expanding my professional circle and gaining insights that ultimately contributed to me securing a position with the Department of Defense."

Celebrating community connections through the mentor of the year programs

The Mentor of the Year program at Thiel College highlights the legacy of partnerships with educators, alumni, and accomplished professionals.

For professionals and alumni, the college presents three prestigious awards:

- **James Pedas '50, H'89 Communications Professional of the Year Award** acknowledges and honors local and regional media and communications professionals.
- **Simon Chiu, M.D., Ph.D. '73 Science Professional Award** recognizes and honors local and regional science professionals.
- **Business Professional of the Year Award** acknowledges and honors local and regional business professionals.

In addition to professionals and alumni, the Mentor of the Year

program also spotlights educators:

- **Sarah Taylor-Rogers, Ph.D. '69, H'19 STEM Mentor of the Year Award** recognizes outstanding female high school educators who promote fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.
- **Patrick Hecking, Ph.D. High School Science Educator of the Year Award** recognizes an outstanding high school science teacher.
- **Jim Cunningham '77 Pedas Media Mentor of the Year Award** is given to exceptional media mentors.
- **The Business Educator of the Year Award** was established to recognize and honor local and regional teachers in the fields of business.

Plans are underway to expand this initiative in 2024.

Past Recipients

High School Business Mentor Award

2023: David Snyder

Business Professional Award

2023: Peggy Mazyck

Jim Cunningham '77 Pedas Media Mentor Award

2023: Brigid Edwards

2022: Steve Vinton

2019: Matthew Gehly

James Pedas '50 H'89 Communications Professional Award

2023: Greg Vorse '06

2022: Jim Cunningham '77

2019: Angelo Perrotta

Patrick Hecking, Ph.D. High School Science Educator Award

2023: Teresa Guth

2022: Jason Drake

Simon Chiu, M.D., Ph.D. '73 Science Professional Award

2023: Punit Upadhyaya, Ph.D. '09

2022: Walter Binder, Ph.D. '74

Sarah Taylor-Rogers, Ph.D. '69, H'19 STEM Mentor Award

2023: Andrea Redinger

2022: Pam Amos



Choir celebrates 70 years of harmony

This summer, the campus came alive with the vibrant energy the heartfelt harmonies of the 70th-anniversary Choir reunion.

The two-day event in July brought together alumni from across the decades to celebrate the enduring legacy of Thiel's choral tradition. One-hundred-six performers returned to campus for the reunion and performance.

David Hummel '83, director of alumni relations, said the choir alumni spanned generations, from 1953 to 2023.

Professor of Music Emeritus **Michael Bray, D.M.A.** returned to direct the choir.

The group rehearsed for about 12 hours on the day before Saturday's performance that took place in front of a crowd of 160 at David Johnson Memorial Chapel.

"The energy we felt in the room was very intense," said **Jessica Gahr '08**, an admission counselor and choir reunion participant.

Participants reunited their voices in a breathtaking performance that echoed through the campus and left a lasting impression on all who attended.

"It was one of the most joyful, heartfelt events I have ever participated in," Hummel said.



Watch the 70th Choir reunion performance: <https://bit.ly/choirconcert23>
 Watch a recap of the Reunion: <https://bit.ly/choirrecap>



Thiel Players, Weyers-Sampson and Con Spirito continue tradition of arts at Thiel

The arts at Thiel College continue with the traditions of the Thiel Players, the Con Spirito Chamber Music Concert Series and the Weyers-Sampson Gallery.

The William A. Robinson Theater will be hosting the Thiel Players' production of "The Awesome 80s Prom" from April 19-21 and 26-28 as well as Alpha Psi Omega, the national theatre honorary society, production of "All in the Timing" by David Ives, directed by **Bailey Stilts '24** and **Al Bach '25** on March 1-2.

The Con Spirito Concert Series held two performances in the fall. The first was by the Fischhoff Award winning group Kodachrome and Grammy Award nominated Hermitage Piano Trio capped the fall performances. The Con Spirito Concert Series is a musical journey that captivates audiences with its enchanting melodies and virtuoso performances.

The Weyers-Sampson Gallery featured former Thiel professor **Bill Mancuso** and prints from alumnus **Marlin Casker '60** earlier this fall. Both Mancuso and Casker led gallery talks discussing the pieces in the gallery.

Speaker series continues with Ruthanne Beighley Humanities Series

The legacy of giving back to Thiel with gifts of time and knowledge is showcased with the numerous opportunities for alumni to return and speak to students.

A speaker series for students in the humanities disciplines has been endowed by **Ruthanne Beighley, Esq. '72 H'20**. The series is held monthly during the fall semester. This seminar series provides students, especially those in the humanities and related fields, with the opportunity to hear from and talk to alumni about their career paths. The first was held Sept. 13 with a formal panel-and-dinner event. For each of the panels that will occur this semester, a humanities department serves as host. For the September 13 event, the English Department served as host, with students from the English Capstone/Political Science Seminar of Professor of English **Mary Theresa Hall, Ph.D.** attending the panel led by

alumnae **Abby Charsar Ainsley '12** and **Sydnee Pilarski '22**.

The Department of Philosophy hosted the second seminar of the series. Philosophy majors **Brittany Chill '08** and **Ryan Hart '15, Ph.D. '15** returned to speak to students.

According to Professor of Philosophy Matthew Morgan, Ph.D., “humanities students gain perspective from successful alumni returning after developing their careers.”

The series joins the Ruth Miller Seminar Series for business students. **David Miller '61 H'20** created the business seminar class where each spring students get experience in a formal dinner setting, are introduced to etiquette lessons and connect with the College’s alumni. The weekly seminar was later named the Ruth A. Miller Senior Seminar in honor of his wife, who also served as campus nurse at Thiel College.

“(The presenters) said how Thiel taught them how to think, rather than what to think.”

Seminar attendee
Roxanne Cianci '24

In the past, alumni have also returned to participate in The Health Professions Institute Seminar Series to provide guidance and resources to assist in students in preparation for medical, dental, veterinary, or other professional schools.

These seminars provide insights into different career options and what is involved with being a professional.

English department explores literary New England

The Department of English went on a trip through New England this past June, led by Assistant Professor of English **Sheila Gross, Ph.D. '10**, and co-led by English lecturer **Sean Oros '15**, a group of six students set out to explore the rich literary history embedded in the landscapes of the northeastern United States.

The trip, which was from June 5-12, was an exploration of literary homes, museums, and other significant sites that have played a pivotal role in shaping the literary tapestry of the

region. The journey took the students to iconic locations, including Walden Pond near Concord, Massachusetts; the Mark Twain Home in Hartford, Connecticut; and the Robert Frost homestead in Derry, New Hampshire.

Walden Pond, the tranquil setting that inspired Henry David Thoreau’s transcendental masterpiece “Walden,” provided the students with a chance to connect with nature and gain insights into Thoreau’s philosophies. The Mark Twain Home in Hartford allowed them to step into the world of the



renowned author of “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” and “Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.” The Robert Frost homestead in Derry offered a glimpse into the life of the beloved poet, known for his evocative verses on rural life and nature.

Graduate programs add to the College's academic legacy

Physician Assistant program graduates first class

A totally new chapter in Thiel College's legacy began in 2020 when the recruitment of the first class of Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies students began. A little over three years later Thiel College celebrated the inaugural graduating class of 37 Master of Science in physician assistant studies students on Aug. 27 at the William A. Passavant Memorial Center.

Thiel College's Physician Assistant Studies program began in 2021, with the mission of graduating physician assistants who have the disciplinary knowledge and skills, clinical preparation, and dispositions to provide excellent patient care and serve the needs of their community. Members of the second cohort were recently presented with their white coats to mark their completion of the first half of the 27-month program at Thiel. The third cohort arrived this summer.

A special highlight of the event

was the induction of **Monica Leigh Ewansik M.S.'23**, of Gibsonia, Pa.; **Abigail Grace Gallagher M.S.'23**, of Woodbine, Md.; **Katarina Lavelle Lewis M.S.'23**, of Youngstown, Ohio; **Robin Kelley Moore M.S.'23**, of Sandy Lake, Pa.; and **Carolyn Mae Peters M.S.'23**, of Normal, Ill., in to Pi Alpha, the esteemed national physician assistant honor society. This recognition celebrates their outstanding dedication to both academic excellence and the commitment to advancing patient care. Faculty members **Jennifer Shellenbarger** and **Lynn Williams, M.D.**, also joined this esteemed circle as inaugural inductees.

Thiel College President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.**, was further celebrated as an honorary inductee into Pi Alpha, in recognition of her unwavering dedication and advocacy for the physician assistant program. Her commitment has been instrumental in shaping the program's growth.

Read the full list of physician assistant graduates at <https://bit.ly/thielPA23>

Students honor humanity gifts with plaque

Members of Thiel College's inaugural class of Master of Science in physician assistant studies added to their unique legacy as the first class with their dedication of a plaque recognizing the gifts to science donors made for the College's anatomy lab.

Katarina Lewis M.S.'23 proposed



the dedication based on her experience, and **Alaina Bailey M.S.'23** was vital in getting the plaque made.

Speech-Language program earns prestigious accreditation from ASHA

In mid-August, the Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology received accreditation from the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

The accreditation signifies the highest standard of excellence in the field of speech-language pathology education. The CAA, a part of ASHA, is the leading authority in accrediting speech-language pathology programs.

"We are thrilled to receive this prestigious accreditation from ASHA's Council on Academic Accreditation," Thiel College President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.** said. "This achievement is a testament to the hard work and commitment of our faculty, staff and students."

Accreditation from the CAA not only reflects Thiel College's dedication to providing top-tier education but also emphasizes its role in producing highly skilled professionals who make significant contributions to the field of speech-language pathology.

"I'm so proud of this program," SLP Program Director, Professor and Department Chair of Communication Sciences and Disorders **Mary Beth Mason, Ph.D.** said. "The program we've developed at Thiel College is truly special. I look forward to welcoming many more cohorts of students in future years."



Musinah Saleem '03 and her son, **Elijah Harden '26**



Elijah Harden '26 and his brother and sister with his father, **Clinton Harden '02**

Harden family legacy pays dividends on the court for Tomcats

The legacies that echo through the generations of a family can be built on so many different traditions. The tale of the **Elijah Harden '26** includes the leadership opportunities that athletics interwoven with academics presents.

Harden is a sophomore guard on the basketball team and his mother, **Muhsinah Saleem '03**, and his father, **Clinton Harden '02**, both graduated from Thiel.

Saleem, a sociology major said, "I was excited for him. It didn't become real for me until we went on college tour. It brought back so many good memories."

Clinton Harden, a business administration major, played

football at Thiel. His mother knew playing the sport Elijah loves was important and was happy he was able to find a place at Thiel.

"I was excited for him. I know that he really wanted to play basketball in college and being able to play right away was very promising for him at Thiel," she said.

Harden averaged 28 minutes and 13.7 points per game in his first season with the Tomcats. The Kennedy Catholic High School graduate has started the first five games of the 2023-24 season.



President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.**, Director of Athletics **Jason Fautas**, Rod E. Wilt '86 Head Coach for Wrestling **Craig Thurber** and Pa. state legislator **Parke Wentling**

Thurber recognized by PA state legislator

Pennsylvania Representative Parke Wentling on July 25, 2023, presented a citation to **Craig Thurber**, the Rod E. Wilt '86 Head Coach for Thiel College Wrestling.

This recognition came after Thurber was inducted into the Pitt-Johnstown Hall of Fame earlier this year for his achievements in wrestling. During his career at Pitt-Johnstown University, Thurber won three NCAA Regional titles, three NCAA Division II All-American honors, and he was the National Runner-up in 1995. Thiel College named the Greenville native the head wrestling coach in 2003. Thurber has been named the President's Athletic Conference Coach of the Year nine times in the 20 years of coaching at Thiel College.

This past season, he led his team to a share of its conference-leading 24th Presidents Athletic Conference title.

— 1950s —



Ken Satterfield '53 was born July 18, 1931. He graduated from Thiel with a B.S. in economics. He was drafted into the Army 35th Engineering Group.

He worked at Westinghouse for 35 years. He also worked at the U.S. Treasury Department for 12 years. His wife Shirley (Hummert) Satterfield is deceased. He cherishes his children Sharon Foster Palguta (Patrick Palguta), and Kenneth Ned Satterfield (Mary Harrington). He stays busy writing essays, reading, and taking physical therapy. He fondly remembers his days at Thiel... many years ago. He resides in Westerville, Oh.

Helen (McCullough) Hopkinson '57, Mary Ann (Brown) Reimer '57, Linda K. (Ruppel) Smith '57, Mary (Mehrten) Stickley '57, Ralph Kusserow '57, Robert Olson '58, and **Dora (Sellers) Park '58** all participated in the 70th Anniversary Thiel Choir Reunion in July.

— 1960s —

Elroy Sprauve '61 is retired and lives in Davie, Fla.

James Stough '62, Robert Hawk '64, Janet (Scofield) McClintock '64, Bill Pfeifer '64, Karen (Spence) McCullough '65, Fred McCullough '65, Donna (Greenwood) Brewster '66, Elizabeth (Hankey) Fackler '68, Judi (Alexander) Brown '69, and

Philip Greenwood '69 all participated in the 70th Anniversary Thiel Choir Reunion in July.

Philip W. Namy '62 is retired from Indiana University Bloomington. He lives in Loxley, Alabama.

James Books '64 came to tour campus in July. He was in the area before participating in the 2023 National Senior Games in Pittsburgh. He lives in Mineral, Va.



Edward S. White '68 lives in Three Oaks, Mich.

Linda A. (Grant) DeNardo '66 lives in West Chester, Pa.

Michelle Reefer '90

Residence: Indiana, Pa.

Professional Experience: Chief Executive Officer at the Progressive Workshop of Armstrong County, Inc. in Kittanning, Pa. (a vocational program for adults with disabilities) since 2015. Prior to that, her career was spent in mental health and intellectual disabilities services.

Involvement at Thiel: Thiel Choir, Thiel Players, Alpha Psi Omega theater fraternity, and Zeta Tau Alpha and serving on the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Reason for Giving Back: "The Thiel community is special, and I would like to share that with as many people as possible! I strongly believe that as alumni we should give back to Thiel, whether that be financially, or through giving of ourselves and our talents. Thiel shaped me into the person that I am today and the friendships that were created at Thiel remain today! My daughter, **Hannah Uschock '22** is a graduate of Thiel, and I am happy that she now has her own Thiel story to share. I have had the opportunity to be on campus and speak at the senior business seminar class twice and the message I try to leave the class with is that when you can give back, do it, quietly and without fanfare, you never know when your gift of talent, resources, or financial gift could make a major impact on someone's life. Go Tomcats!"



The Thiel Fund File

A short profile of the people who donate to The Thiel Fund, the College's largest source of unrestricted funds.

Linda Ague '69 and her spouse, Kirk Kneeland, live in Eugene, Ore.

George L. Lyon '69 is retired. He lives with his wife, Judy, in Fort Worth, Texas.

— 1970s —

Cynthia (Brown) Sweeney '71 is retired and lives in Cranberry Township, Pa.

Nancy E. McLean '72 lives in Warren, Ohio.



Michael A. Crognale '75 lives in Midlothian, Va.

Barbara A. Swab '76 is a freelance writer/marketing consultant at Barbara Swab Consultants in Ashville, N.C.

— 1980s —

Cynthia (Grkinich) Hollander '83 is a VPK teacher at Zion Lutheran ECC. She and her spouse, Alan, live in Fort Myers, Fla.

Jana (Phillis) Grimm '84 is a partner at Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease in Pittsburgh, Pa. She and her spouse, Bob, live in Bridgeville, Pa.

Todd Reichard '86 lives in Evesham, N.J.

Carla (Colangelo) Ruffennach '87 lives in Bridgeville, Pa.

Delia M. Thomas, CFE '87 was sworn in as Inspector General for the Virgin Islands on August 3, 2023. Thomas was born



on the island of St. Thomas. She attended Charlotte Amalie High School on St. Thomas. After graduation, she attended Thiel College and obtained a B.A. in business administration and accounting, also a minor in philosophy. She most attributes her personal development success to her uncle, **Elroy Sprauve '61**, and her fifth-grade teacher, Thelma Sewer.

— 1990s —



Jon Kosior '92 was recently hired as vice president, senior relationship manager, commercial lending by

Farmers National Bank of Canfield, Ohio. Kosior will be based out of the Emlenton, Pa. main office, which was acquired when Farmers National Bank of Canfield merged earlier this year with Farmers National Bank of Emlenton. Kosior joins the team with more than two decades of experience in commercial lending, and specifically, in western Pennsylvania. In his role at Farmers, Kosior will help small businesses across the area reach their goals.

Nickole Nesby

'92 is the former mayor of the City of Duquesne. She resides in Duquesne, Pa.



Heather (Hackman) Casey '95 and her spouse, Richard, live in Harrisburg, Pa.

— 2000s —

Brian P. Eckhart '03 is a project manager for McCarl's in Beaver Falls, Pa. He and his spouse, Hannah, live in Beaver Falls, Pa.

Katie E. (Stambaugh) Kramer '03 recently published her first book, "Shut Your



Dr. Ray Brodie '73 was awarded the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. Baltimore Alumni Chapter Centennial Achievers award in recognition of his outstanding professional achievement and noble service to our community on July 31, 2021. He also received the Farrell Alumni Hall of Fame Ted Pedas Lifetime Achievement



Award and was inducted into the Farrell Alumni Hall of Fame on October 8, 2022. He is a retired urologist living on the eastern shore of Maryland.

Gary F. Best, Ph.D. '77 and **Michele (Gaus) Best '77** recently moved to Dover, after seven years in Apollo Beach, Fla.

Donut Hole,” which is a personal development book on confidence and being your authentic self.

Nicholas N.

Shannon '04 and **Lesa (Cooper)**

Shannon '05 live in Hampton, Va. Nicholas is a math interventionist with the Hampton City Schools. He recently won the Kraft Elementary’s Teacher of the Year. He is pictured with his daughter, Sylvia.



Autumn N. White

'04 shares that as of July 2023, she has achieved her Doctor of Education degree in organizational

leadership with an emphasis on K-12 school administration. She hopes to continue to positively impact the field of education through her professional endeavors. She thanks Thiel College for helping to establish the foundation upon which her personal, educational, and professional endeavors were built

William Prunka '06 is an attorney with BGS Law, LLC in Rockville, Md. He lives in Gaithersburg, Md.

Lindsey Bona '07

works for the No. 1 Dealer Management Service Software company in the United States, CDK Global. In addition to exceeding sales goals and winning a trip to Dubrovnik, Croatia with the other sales leaders, she was also named “Rookie of the Year” for the



entire organization. She was an art major and religion minor and is a member of the Thiel College Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Bobby Flukas '07 is the Assistant Director Assignments and Data Analysis at the University of Notre Dame.

Abigail Marie (Lubanovic) Watterson '07 is the owner of Legacy Wellness Solutions in Kittanning, Pa. She is a licensed professional counselor.

Angela P. (Bowe) Maranuk '08 is a physical therapist assistant at Diamond Healthcare in Effort, Pa. She and her spouse, John, live in Kunkletown, Pa.

Sheila M. Gross '10 is an Assistant Professor of English at Thiel. She lives in Hermitage, Pa.

Maggie Anne Giel Bovaird '09

director of outreach & recruitment for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Pittsburgh, was named a member of *Pittsburgh Magazine's* “40 under 40” recently. Giel-Bovaird is a magna cum laude graduate of Thiel College with undergraduate degrees in communications studies and media communications, as well as a 2011 Indiana University of Pennsylvania graduate with a master’s degree in school counseling (K-12).



— 2010s —

Evan D. Ditty '12 is the Director of Student Leadership and Involvement at Seton Hill University. He and his spouse, Mackenzie (Maurer) Ditty, and their daughter live in Greensburg, Pa.

Chelsea C. Maukonen '14

was promoted to partner in February 2023 at Chartwell Law in Fort Myers, Fla. She lives in Naples, Fla.



Carly R. (Florida) Hensley '14 is a stay-at-home mom. She and her spouse, Jordan, have four children and live in Warren, Ohio.

Nathan J. Nitzczynski '15 has joined the Board of Directors for New Vision Dance Company out of New Albany, Ohio. Through engagement with New Vision Dance Company, Nitzczynski has served as committee chairperson for the 2023 New Albany Dance Festival. Additionally, he has been elected to the position of President-Elect of Ohio Academic Advising Association. Nitzczynski currently resides in Columbus, Ohio and serves as a full-time academic advisor at Otterbein University.

Alesha S. (Shatley) Postlewait '15 is a paralegal at VOCE. A year ago, she served on the Poland/Ukraine border to help refugees fleeing the war. It was a very humbling experience to see people who have lost everything and yet are still filled with hope. She lives in Emporium, Pa.



Dustin Slomainy '18, his sister **Diana (Slomainy) Banko '13** and his nephew, Beau Banko, on a family vacation at Cape Hatteras, N.C.

Matthew Babeji '19 is a field environmental compliance specialist with Range Resources. He lives in Ellwood City, Pa.



Historian and Thiel College graduate **Hans Myers '19** was profiled in an article in the *Greenville Record-Argus* regarding his

collaborations with renowned Titanic expert **Paul-Henri Nargeolet**, who perished in the Titan submersible tragedy on June 18. Myers worked with Nargeolet, 77, a former French Navy officer who had made more than 35 dives to the Titanic, to ensure historical accuracy in the development of the educational video game "Titanic: Honor & Glory."

Yuanyuan Qu '19 lives in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Joelle Reitz O.D. '19, of DuBois, Pa., was among 133 students recently awarded the Doctor of Optometry degree from Southern



College of Optometry in Memphis. Reitz graduated Cum Laude and was named a member of Beta Sigma Kappa, an honor awarded to students who demonstrate exceptional academic achievement. She is a graduate of DuBois Area High School and was a health systems and

neuroscience major with a chemistry minor at Thiel.

— 2020s —

Marissa A. Ramirez '20 is a teacher in Warren County Public Schools in Virginia. In the fall of 2022, she was accepted into Pittsburg (Kan.) State University master's degree in history program. She resides in Front Royal, Va.

Katrina Deckinger '22 earned her master's degree in biomedical science at the University of Pittsburgh in 2023. She is a laboratory technologist at Independence Health System in Latrobe, Pa

Kayla Lyn (Steiner) Smith M.S.'23 graduated in August as a physician assistant from Thiel. She and her spouse, Isaak Smith, have five children and live in Hermitage Pa.



**TELL US
WHAT'S NEW
IN YOUR LIFE!**

Please contact the Office
of Alumni Relations
at alumni@thiel.edu

Lauren Haines M.S.'23 graduated in August as a physician assistant. She and her spouse, Peter Gardner, live in West Chester, Pa.

Monica Leigh Ewansik M.S.'23 and her husband, Benjamin Vey, live in Lake Charles, La.

Robin K. Moore M.S.'23 and her husband, Harley Moore, live in Emlenton, Pa.

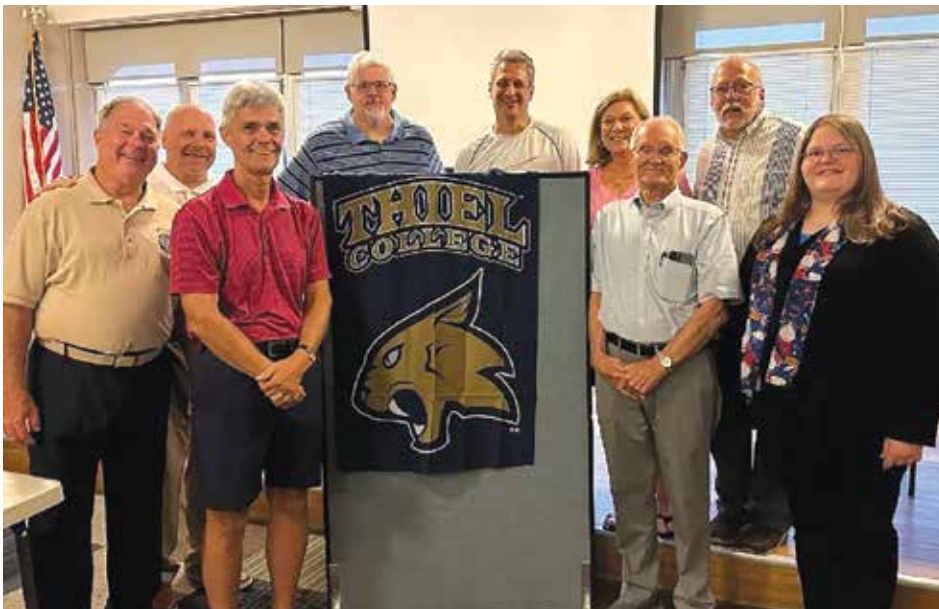
— gatherings —



Three Tomcats from the Class of 1970 met July 7, 2023 for dinner at the Silver Shores Restaurant in Conneaut Lake, Pa. From left to right is: **Liz (Klotz) Smith '70**, of Canfield, Ohio; **Nancy (Ferguson) Cavanaugh '70**, of Erie, Pa.; and **Alice (Getty) Dalmaso '70**, of Saegertown, Pa. They shared jello shots, a tradition Alice started (and shared with everyone) at their 50-year class reunion, held at Thiel in October, 2021 (delayed a year due to the pandemic). Cheers to all Tomcats!



The Phi Theta Phi fraternity coordinated a student and alumni gathering at a Pittsburgh Pirates game. Bottom row from left to right: **Damion Grinnell '24**, **Branston Peese '23**, middle row left to right: Morgan Popilarcheck, **John Ganiear '22**, **Joshua Roberts '23**, **Austin O'Connor '24**, **Alonzo Holliday '23**, top row left to right: **Michael Boratyn '16**, Thiel Fund Director and Phi Theta Phi advisor **David Mogle** and **Nathaniel Meth '23**.



Dr. Robert C. Olson '60 H'09 former president of Thiel College, Dean of the Department of History and Professor of History Emeritus was invited by the Whitehall Borough Historical Society in Pittsburgh to offer a presentation on Amelia Earhart on July 27. There were more than 50 people in attendance including the eight alumni in the photo. Pictured left to right in the front row: **John Wotus '74**, **Bill Matthews '74**, **Robert C. Olson, Ph.D. '60 H'09**, **Christina Urie '05**. In the second row: **Mark Batt '87**, **Dan Kirk '92**, **Shawn Konter '16**, **Debbie (Petrovic) Wotus '76**, **David Hummel '83**.



James Frank '88, **Jessica (Peters) Burkley '21**, **David Waugaman '15** all met up as recruiters at the Mars High School College Fair night on Wednesday, September 20.



Former Tomcat football players, **Neil Gargano**, **Brandon Chambers '07** and **Dan Schneider '73** are all coaching together on the Hickory High School football staff.



Jennifer (Monasky) Sait '07 and **Saad Sait '04** stopped in for a tour of Thiel while in the Greenville area. Admission team members **Liz Young '96** and **Sonya Lapikas** joined the photo with the husband and wife.

– births –



To **Donnay (Schulthesis) Hunter '16** and Glenn Hunter: a daughter, Alana Ray Hunter, on July 4. Alana is welcomed by her big sister, Aria.



To **Sarah L. (DiFrango) Kane '11** and **David J. Kane '11** a son, Maverick Anthony Kane, on March 18. He joins big brother, Jackson. Sarah works for USAA as a QC Advisor in AML/Fraud. David works for LyondellBasel as a QC Color Technologist. They live in Strongsville, Ohio.



To **Shaina (Marini) Newara '17** a daughter, Harlow Mae Newara on August 4.

– gatherings –



Paul Saternow '71 and his wife, **Pauline**, came back to Thiel for a visit on July 11. Paul was working in the Thiel treasurer's office and Pauline was teaching at Thiel when they met in September 1973. They returned to campus on October 3, 1981, and were married at the Burgess Chapel which was in the Passavant Center by **Pastor Dr. Luther Fackler**. They reside in Port St. Lucie, Fla.



Left to right: **Gary Bonner '80**, **Bob John '79**, Dr. Scott Joy from Colorado and **Paul Eberhardt '75** with the helmet that **Tim Roser '79** gave to Dr. Joy when he was a patient at Children's Hospital during the 1978 Phi Walk to Pittsburgh. Roser died in February of 2021. Roser was a religion major who became a Lutheran pastor. Phi Theta Phi brothers **Bonner**, **John** and **Eberhardt** accepted the helmet on Roser's behalf. The helmet has been returned to Roser's family in New Hampshire.



TC Class of 1962 gathered for their 60th college reunion during Homecoming 2022. First row left to right: **Elsa (Calderwood) Schlentner '62**, **Judy (Nelson) Johnson '62**, **Roberta (Anderson) Skopow '62**, **Chuck Smith '62**, **Chris Shinkman '62**, second row: **Jane (Mickley) Heineman '62**, **Richard Ocher '62**, **James Stough '62**, top row: **Phil Stutzman '62**, **Maggie (Dozer) Frazier '62**, **Brenda (Hamilton) White '62**, **Doug Fairfax '62**, **Dennis Weber '62**.



Mark Batt '87, Director of Advancement met with **Dr. Clyde Johnson** on campus in May. Dr. Johnson endowed a scholarship in his mother and uncle's memory this past year. The **Helen Marie Lutton '27** and **David Albert Lutton '27** Endowed Scholarship Fund at Thiel College will be awarded to an education major who comes from a rural town in western Pa. Dr. Johnson's grandparents' home was in Osgood, Pa., which is about two miles from campus. He enjoyed his time on campus and continually remarked about how beautiful it is here.

Sean Oros '15

Residence: Hermitage, Pa.

Professional Experience: Started career in higher education as the Dietrich Honors Institute Associate, went on to Assistant Director of the Honors Learning Community and served as an Honors Advisor at Bowling Green State University and have now returned as a Lecturer of English and Coordinator of the First-year Curriculum at Thiel.

Involvement at Thiel: The DHI, Res Life, English Club, Sigma Tau Delta, *The Phoenix*, *The Thielensian*, Thiel Student Support Network, Lutheran Student Movement, Global Club, Kappa Sigma (currently the alumni and campus advisor).

Reason for Giving Back: "Thiel changed my life. I arrived as a first-gen student that needed a lot of adjustment, but the staff, professors, and community at Thiel supported me each step of the way and helped me achieve both at Thiel and beyond. This was thanks to people like my advisors Professor of English **Mary Theresa Hall, Ph.D.** and Professor of History **David Buck, Ph.D.**; Professor of History Emeritus **Jim Koshan, Ph.D.**; Professor of English **Jared Johnson, Ph.D.**; **Carole Johnson** at the Bistro, **Melanie Broadwater '98** in the Counseling Center; **Kim Scobie** and **Charlotte Montozzi** in housekeeping/environmental services, and so many more. I continue to give back time and money because Thiel and its people gave generously to us—and I want to be part of this life-changing mission and legacy."



The Thiel Fund File

A short profile of the people who donate to The Thiel Fund, the College's largest source of unrestricted funds.

– marriages –



Abigail Marie (Lubanovic) Watterson '07 and **Bria Watterson '07** were married on August 13, two days shy of their 20th anniversary of meeting at Thiel College as first-year students on August 15, 2003. They were both recruited by admissions counselor **Vickie Poe** and participated in Women's Leadership and the music department. On their campus visit, they were happy to see the amount of support for LGBTQIA+ students demonstrated on campus. Pride at Thiel College!



Cheryl L. (Bundy) Marshall '14 and Joseph Bundy were married on August 6, 2022. **Pastor Jayne Thompson** officiated (she was Thiel College Campus Pastor from 2013-19) and **Emily (Petrak) Russell '14** was Matron of Honor (fun fact we've been best friends since 2011). Various Thiel alumni and Thiel Faculty were in attendance, including former Thiel College Choir Director and Professor of Music Emeritus **Michael R. Bray, D.M.A.** and choir accompanist **Kay Gray**. It was a great reunion of close friends and family from near and far.



Jennifer (Shelley) Matheson '16 and Derek Austin Matheson were married on July 9, 2022, at The Old Courthouse in downtown Cleveland, Ohio. The newlyweds honeymooned a few weeks later on a Mediterranean cruise - visiting parts of Italy, Spain, and France. Jennifer studied Early Childhood Education and Special Education and played volleyball at Thiel. She started teaching at the Grove City School District upon graduation. She then obtained her master's degree in education from Clarion University in 2020. Jennifer taught in the Grove City School District for 5.5 years, before moving to teach in Ohio for a year. She is a sales associate for Imagine Learning (a core and supplemental products/curriculum company).



Lindsay E. (Love) Meyers '11 and Mark Meyers were married on April 29. They live in Pittsburgh. Fellow alumni who attended the wedding were **Grayce (Kelly) Love '78**, **Kathy Love '77**, **Tracy (Love) Fasone '82**, **Robin (Stuedler) McMillan '78**, **Dr. Sarah Barefoot '08**, **Allyson Waldon '08**, **Vickie McKee (Boyer) '11**, **Rachel Meyer '09**, **Maggie Babinka-Repic '08**, **Kris Sass-Hurst '08**, and **Jaime (Kirchhofer) Harper '11**.



— in memoriam —

A REMEMBRANCE OF ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE COLLEGE WHO HAVE RECENTLY PASSED

Dean W. Anderson '56
 Dorothy Armour
 Thomas Bartholomew
 Mary Jo Bartnicki
 Steve Blauser '74
 Douglas Brian Boliver
 Sherry Bortz
 Carol L. (Ortner) Cable
 Cunningham '53
 John R. Cianci
 Pamela Cianci
 Nancy Crash
 Gary W. Dankmyer '73
 Adele D. (Bernauer) Dengel '50
 Joanne M. Diana
 Robert Dreisbach
 Evelyn J. (Walleck) Folta '48
 Shirley Garrett
 Theresa Gerbert
 Howard W. Gerbert '51
 Violet M. Grober

Rev. Roy A. Guinn '51
 Sandra Ann Gustafson
 Alice F. (McWreath) Herman '59
 Keith R. Hittle
 Lorna E. Hodgson
 Albert Y. Hyndshaw '68
 Robert Imhof '62
 Kenneth A. Jones
 Martha Kather
 Lawrence M. Laskovac '79
 Dorothy E. Lean
 Jay Leffler
 Cynthia J. (Shafer) Levering '72
 Theodore A. Marantis
 Paul R. Massie '51
 Donald E. McCright '57
 Gerald McDowell
 Edward Michael Mihilek '79
 Patricia Murrin
 Helen A. (Emery) Nestor '46
 Ruth M. Olson

John C. Piai '57
 Daniel Timothy Poppenhouse
 John R. Reeher '67
 Deborah F. (Blanset) Ridel '78
 Sandra Lynn (Wareham)
 Ridgway-Bachelor '01
 Stewart C. Ritter '83
 Eugene Roller
 Phyllis M. (Baker) Schade '69
 Barbara (Lowry) Sobotka '73
 Gloria (Bannister) Spargo '51
 Margaret Taylor
 Les Thomas '56
 Clifford A. Toth '71
 Richard R. Trill '76
 Leroy H. Truax
 Anne P. (Patterson) Valesky '57
 Sarah Jane (Hissom) Walker '58
 Francis Michael Weida '77
 Belinda J. (Webster-Long) Wilson '88
 Rita (Montgomery) Wilson '66



Alumna and former alumni director passes away

Lynn E. (Miller) McClimans '79 passed away on November 10, 2023. She served as Thiel College Alumni Director from August 2005-09. She was also the Director of Annual Giving and Parent Relations from 1999-2002 and served on the Alumni Board of Directors from 1992-99. Prior to that, she was the administrative assistant for the Center for Lifelong Learning on campus from 1980-81 and 1983-86. She served on the Haller Enterprise Institute Board and was a Presidential Search Representative.

McClimans graduated from Indian River College, Fla. with an associate degree in psychology in 1976, from Thiel College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1979 and attended Kent State University working towards a Master of Arts degree. She was the owner of Mode O'Day, women's clothing and accessories franchise in Greenville 1980-85. She served as Executive Director for the Greenville Area Chamber of Commerce from 1986-96 and served on the boards of the Greenville Area Economic Development Corporation, Mercer County Tourist Agency, Greenville Regional Hospital Wellness Center Advisory, Mercer County VoTech General Advisory. She married H. Edward McClimans on June 21, 1980, and he survives at home in Greenville. Also surviving are her son, **Matthew McClimans**, of Columbus, Ohio; her father, **John C. Miller '50** and her sister, **Amy (Miller) Lightner '86**. Her mother, **Norma (McCurdy) Miller '53**, was also a Thiel College graduate.

Thiel legacies are more than just family connections

By John Hauser '71 H'20

As demonstrated in the articles of this edition of *The Bell*, legacy takes many forms. The ways in which our alumni and friends have left their mark on Thiel College all stem from a desire to make our institution stronger so that its students, past, present and future, may receive the best possible education in preparation for lives of service to their professions, their communities and their churches.

The most prominent name at our College (other than **Barbara** and **Louis Thiel**, of course) is Roth. The Roth family boasts not only two presidents, **Henry Warren Roth H1913**, our first president (1870-1887) and his brother, our fourth president, **Theophilus D. Roth 1874** (1893-1903), but more than 40 alumni and two buildings, Roth Hall and Elizabeth Stewart Hall, named for the niece of H.W.'s wife.

David Baughman, a Greenville native but an alumnus from a college down the road, remembered a time when a significant number of students from the area attended Thiel and then stayed in Greenville and made the town a great place to live, work and raise a family. His commitment to his town and to Thiel was manifested in an endowed scholarship fund that this year serves 67 students at Thiel.

Another Greenville native (and graduate of that same college down the road), **Daniel Spence**, will continue the legacy begun by his grandfather, Professor **Nathan Harter**, through the naming of the Daniel and Dorothy Spence Academic Center. Class of 1969 classmates and Trustees **Carl Hoffman H'10** and **Francis Maenpa H'21** have made significant gifts to Thiel for facility and program enhancements. The names of alumni and friends that are on buildings and other facilities and programs bear witness to their generosity and commitment to Thiel.

The Dietrich Honors Institute, created by **William Dietrich** in honor of his parents, **Kenneth '31** and **Marianna (Brown) Dietrich '32** and the Haller Enterprise Institute, the result of a gift from **Henry Haller H'97** and his wife, **Linda H'13**, are two Centers of Excellence on the campus and benefit students from every undergraduate major.

Alumni are quick to give the name of a professor whose legacy remains in their hearts and minds for the demanding work in the classroom and the care and attention given outside the classroom. For evidence



of this it only takes a few moments of listening to the presenters and recipients of the Alumni Awards ceremony during Homecoming. Every winner cited a faculty member and two of this year's award winners (**Melissa (Eagon) Oakes '03** and **Anna (Pischera) Reinsel '06**) have returned to continue that legacy as professors. Former professors like **Evelyn Baer**, **Richard Bennett**, **James Bloomfield**, **Gladys Cleland**, **Joyce Cuff**, **Ernest Heisenbittel H'73**, **Marlowe Johnson H'01**, **Roy Johnson H'69**, **David Miller '61 H'20**, **Robert Olson '60 H'09**, **Curtis Thompson**, **William Robinson**, **Gary Witosky '79** and **Sonya Wilt** instilled in their students a love of learning and a passion for excellence that is carried on today by our current faculty.

Former coaches like **Mel Berry**, **Linda Cooper**, **Jack Leipheimer '74**, **Charles "Bud" Manes '58**, **Jim McCullough** and **Jack Stoeber H'63** led their teams to championships and made a lasting impression on the lives of their players.

Retired staff members are remembered by many alumni for the way they helped them as students and continued as they became alumni. **Jeanne Miller Blackson**, **Cindy Farrell '77**, **Eleanor Kilner '36**, **Mark McGrath '86**, **Peggy Miller** and **Joanne Schell** top the list of those who made an impact outside of the classroom.

As a relative to 17 Thiel alumni, I am always happy to see family names carried on from one generation to the next. The Bachmans, Clares, Daughertys, Hankeys, and Seiberlings have generations of students at Thiel dating back to the late 1800s and early 1900s, joined now by more recent families like the Carpenter/Achenbachs, Gadsbys, Mechlings, Orczecks and Wilts.

The Thiel story continues to be written. As an alumnus or alumna, friend of the College or Lutheran, your legacy can be a part of that story.

John Hauser '71 H'20 graduated with a degree in psychology. He has had a lengthy career in higher education, including many years of service on Thiel College's administration. In his retirement, he continues as the College's archivist and was awarded an honorary degree in 2020.

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- ## 2024 Events
- Thursday, Feb. 1, Founders' Day Convocation
 - Friday, Feb. 9, Academic Honors Convocation
 - Thursday, April 25, Scholarship & Arts Symposium
 - Sunday, May 12, 150th Commencement Exercises