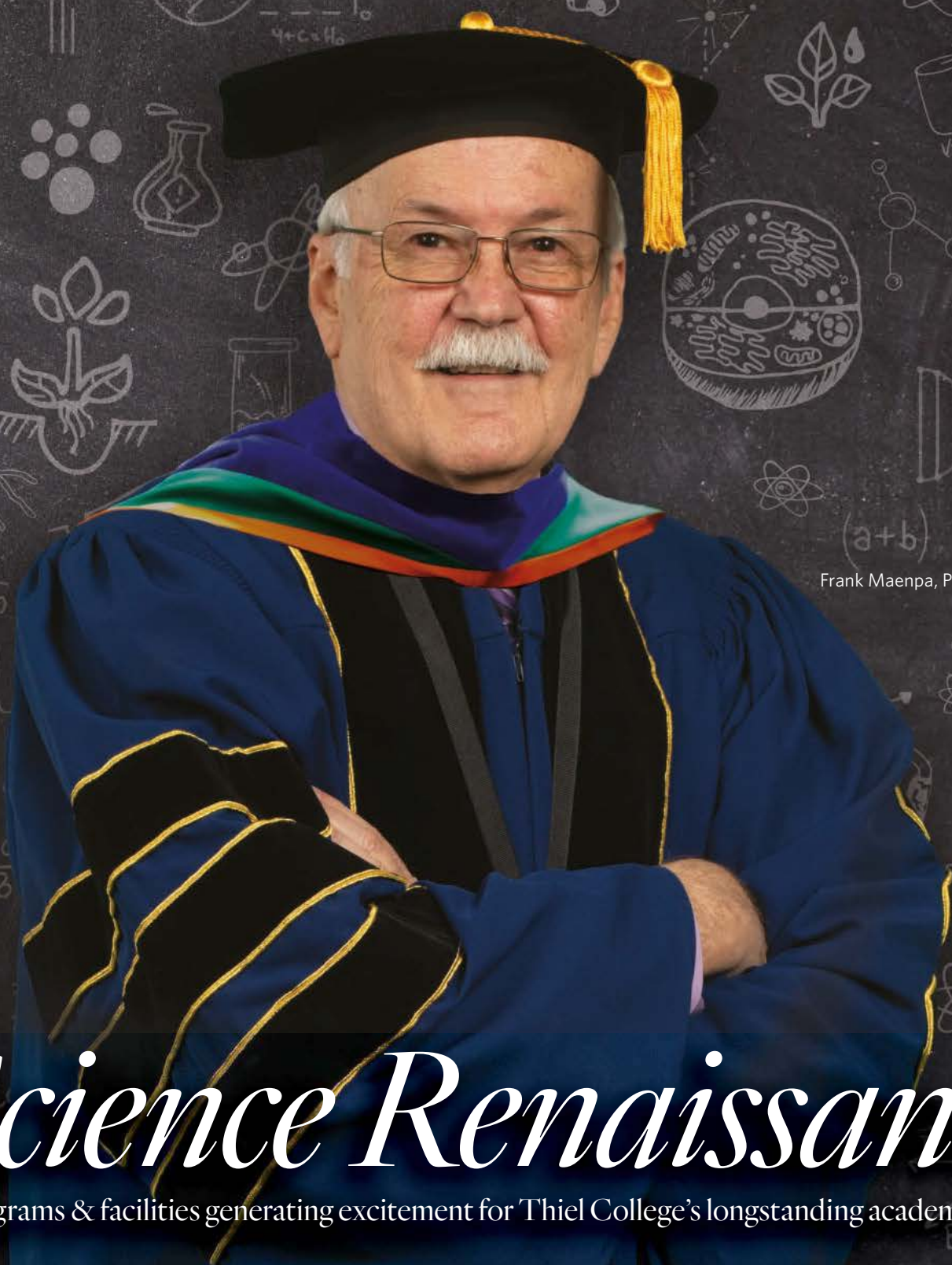


Thiel College Magazine for Alumni & Friends

SPRING/SUMMER 2021

The Bell



Frank Maenpa, Ph.D. '69, H'21

Science Renaissance

New programs & facilities generating excitement for Thiel College's longstanding academic tradition



Thiel...
a campus for all seasons



Thiel College

75 College Avenue
Greenville, Pennsylvania 16125
800-248-4435 • www.thiel.edu

CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

John Hudson

PRESIDENT

Susan Traverso, Ph.D.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS & DEAN OF THE COLLEGE

Liz Frombgen, Ph.D.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR COLLEGE ADVANCEMENT

Roberta Leonard

VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE & DEAN OF STUDENTS

Michael McKinney '02

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Richard Orr

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

Amy Schafer

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Bob Schmoll

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

Ashley Josay Zullo

The Bell

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Richard Orr

EDITOR

Dominick DiRienzo

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Carol Brzozowski

Molly Shepler '22

Dick Davis

Ed Topoleski '02

Kevin Hart

Hannah Uschock '22

CLASS NOTES

David Hummel '83

PHOTOGRAPHY

Austin Balaschak '21

Michael McElroy

Leary Studios

Mei Williams '23

Ed Massery

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Michelle Mondri

DESIGN

Rex Burruss Design

PRINTER

Knepper Press, Pittsburgh

The Bell is published in the spring and fall by the Office of Communications and Marketing, Thiel College, Greenville, PA 16125. Publication inquiries should be sent to aforementioned address, in care of the Editor-in-Chief.

For Class Notes and address changes, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at alumni@thiel.edu.

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

Dear Alumni and Friends,

This summer, the campus will be alive with activity as we welcome new graduate students to the new master's degree programs



in physician assistant studies and communication and leadership, as well as enrolling the second cohort of students in Thiel's business administration and speech-language pathology master's programs. With the completion of the graduate floor in the Rhodehouse Science Building in June, we will immediately embark on the next phase of the planned \$16 million in updates and remodeling projects, including the full renovation of the Academic Center, substantial improvements in several residential buildings, investment in athletics, and extensive landscape enhancements. Support from individual donors, state grants, corporate and foundation funding—along with financing through tax-exempt bonds—is making possible substantial investments in Thiel's educational programs and campus facilities. I am deeply grateful for the generosity of Thiel's alumni and friends, who are supporting this renaissance.

Though the pandemic did not slow the momentum at Thiel, I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to reflect on the challenges and accomplishments of the unprecedented 2020–21 academic year. With equal parts diligence and perseverance, we made it to May! Hard work, sacrifice and commitment from every corner of campus made it possible. Along the way, we celebrated student achievements and hosted two Commencement ceremonies.

If a worldwide pandemic could not hold us back, just imagine the success ahead for Thiel. We are leveraging partnerships with community organizations, such as Penn-Northwest Development Corporation, to extend our educational mission in service to the region (Page 12). Stay tuned for more about how the College's educational reach will extend even further as part of the vision and strategic plans for Thiel 2026, taking shape over this summer. Excellence in the sciences (Page 14) will be a central feature of the College's plans moving ahead, and so much more.

I hope you will plan to join us for Homecoming on October 1–3. We believe it may be one of the largest alumni gatherings in Thiel's history. The theme is "Wild with Pride." And we are! Come home and celebrate with us.

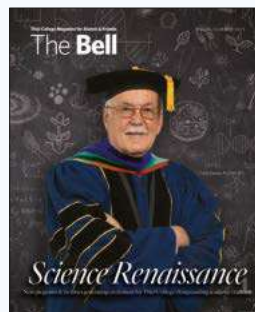
Go Tomcats!

Susan Traverso, Ph.D.

President of Thiel College

Table of Contents

President's Letter	4
Social Media	5
Faculty News	6
Student News	7
Campus Highlights	8
Class of 2020 Commencement	10
Class of 2021 Commencement	11
Evolution of Science and Health	14
Athletics	20
Class Notes	22
In Memoriam	29
Final Word	30



On the Cover

Serving as a bridge between the College's traditions in science and its future was this year's Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2021. Former member of the Board of Trustees **Frank Maenpa, Ph.D. '69, H'21** was awarded an honorary degree in honor of both his scientific accomplishments and his commitment to the College,

which includes the creation and support of The Maenpa Family Biotechnology Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Setting the agenda, a glance at what you'll find inside

561 Total Donors

**\$209,250.00
Amount Raised**

Total Laps Walked
2,252

Total Walkers
404

6 Years Increased Participation

Other Famous Thiel Walks
 Brother Martin's Walk
 Phi Theta Phi Walk-A-Thon
 Heart Walk
 Jack Walk '06






For the full story go to Page 8 • thiel.edu/thiefund

#MakeittoMay

#MakeittoMay was a social media campaign that counted down the weeks to the end of the academic year. In the Fall/Winter edition, we introduced the campaign, and in this edition, we provide the bookend with some samples from the end of the academic year. The campaign celebrated important groups, events and people in the College's history as well as relevant topics from our nation's history and current events. Each social media patch is part of the larger quilt that symbolizes the many ways the Thiel Community is connected.



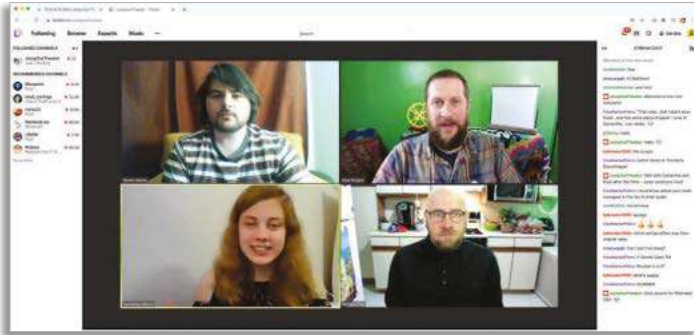
Follow us on social media

-  **Facebook**
/thielcollege
-  **Twitter**
@thielcollege
-  **LinkedIn**
/school/thiel-college
-  **Instagram**
@thielcollege
-  **YouTube**
/ThielCollege

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.

— faculty & staff news —

**Student and professor appear on online film series**

Thiel College sophomore **Samantha DiBucci '23** and Assistant Professor of Communication **Ross Nugent** appeared as part of the online series “Film Kitchen” discussing the videos they created.

DiBucci screened a collection of shorts she made for the TV studio production class after being sent home last spring. In this series of one-minute introspective and poetic videos called “COVIDz,” DiBucci explores her hometown of Greenville, Pa.

Nugent showed his documentary, “Steel Mill Rolling.” It is a 13-minute movie, shot on 16-millimeter color film, that is equal parts landscape, industrial and portrait film and is a look at a functioning steel mill.

New leaders tabbed for Career and DRC offices

Thiel College has recently appointed **Liza Schaeff** the Career Development Center director and **Jodie Witherite** the Disability Resource Center interim coordinator.

Sakonyi named director of the Learning Commons

Robin Sakonyi is the new director of the Thiel Learning Commons. She served as Assistant Director for Student Tutorial Services and Supplemental Instruction at Youngstown State University and was the Associate Director for the Center for Student Progress.

Psychology professor’s research work published

Associate Professor of Psychology **Kristel M. Gallagher, Ph.D.** recently had the results of her research conducted at Thiel College published in two academic journals.

Gallagher’s first article, titled “Using Make & Take Quizzes to Improve Exam Performance and Engage Students in Effective Study Strategies,” was published in *Teaching of Psychology*, the flagship journal of the American Psychological Association’s Society for the Teaching of Psychology. Gallagher’s second article, titled “I teach, therefore I am? – Exploring the Teaching Personas of College Professors,” was published in the *Journal of Effective Teaching in Higher Education* and described the results of her innovative research examining the teaching personalities of college professors.

President’s Council for Diversity and Inclusion Launched

As part of the continuing focus on diversity and inclusion at Thiel College, the President’s Council for Diversity and Inclusion has been launched.

The institution-wide panel includes President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.**, Associate Dean for Diversity and Inclusion **Anthony E. Jones Jr., Ed.D.**, students, alumni, members of the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff members. The first meeting was held in mid-April.

“The council will guide and set priorities moving forward for initiatives to strengthen our community and ensure its commitment to diversity and inclusion.

This council will heighten coordination of our efforts and contribute to the next strategic plan,” Traverso said. “We incorporated diversity and inclusion into the College’s mission statement when we created the strategic plan in 2016, and the council will continue that work of advancing diversity and inclusion and make it a point of emphasis going forward. At Thiel, we understand the widest interpretation of diversity.”

About 23 percent of Thiel’s student body identifies as a member of a minority or underrepresented population, which is among the highest for small liberal arts undergraduate colleges in the region.

In the College’s current strategic plan, *Thiel 2021: Student Success*, several diversity and inclusion initiatives were created, including:

- Jones’ appointment to lead diversity and inclusion efforts;
- The launching of a yearlong interfaith series;
- The introduction of a Courageous Conversations speaker series, which has connected members of the Thiel Community to various speakers discussing diversity topics;
- The awarding of Martin Luther King Jr. awards for community members, alumni and employees who exhibit the ideals of Martin Luther King Jr.

— student news —

Students sign card to thank Greenville-area veterans

The Kappa Sigma fraternity collected signatures from the campus community for a “Thank You” card they presented to the Greenville, Pa. Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3374. They collected more than 100 signatures.

The national headquarters of Kappa Sigma established A Greater Cause Foundation to support the charitable endeavors of the undergraduate chapters. The foundation’s principal program is the Military Heroes Campaign, which honors and aids military veterans and their families in communities in the U.S. and Canada.

Belton worked in D.C. with Lutheran colleges program

Senior **Tyla Belton '21** spent the Spring 2021 semester in Washington D.C. as part of the College’s internship and exchange program.

A political science major from Altoona, Pa., Belton took classes in the nation’s capital and interned at the nation’s largest anti-sexual violence organization, the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network. RAINN carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help survivors and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

Phis come up with alternative to Children’s Hospital walk

Members of the Phi Theta Phi fraternity collected donations and pledged to walk 100 miles in just over 24 hours at the Dr. Barry '70 and Carol Stamm '71 Track & Field Complex for the organization’s annual Walk-a-thon for Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh.

**Environmental Club ramps up campus recycling program**

The Thiel College Environmental Club boosted the campus recycling program to reach more students, improve efficiency, and transfer the responsibility for recycled materials to a fully student-led initiative.

The College’s current recycling program collects recycled materials from the academic buildings and residence halls, and housekeeping staff move these materials to a larger recycling bin on campus. The new program is an expansion of the current program; more buildings

were provided with recycling bins, and rather than housekeeping staff being responsible for disposing properly of recycled materials, student workers will be hired into work study positions to take care of these materials and will be paid. The club purchased recycling bins, bags, and gloves.

“Recycling bins will now be located on each dormitory floor as well as the lobby and kitchen areas,” explained Environmental Club President **Chad Pakozdi '21**.

“Phi Theta Phi’s Walk-a-thon has been a staple for the Thiel College community for decades, and though COVID-19 posed a threat to cancel it, the show must go on!” Phi Theta Phi president **John Ganiear '22** said. The fraternity later announced they raised \$10,416 during collections and were featured on Pittsburgh’s CBS television affiliate KDKA on Thursday, December 10 to discuss their success. The fraternity has raised more than \$1.8 million for the Hospital’s Free Care Fund since it began an annual 100-mile Walk-a-thon in 1968.

More than 250 students complete first online December term

The first online December term at Thiel College comprised 15 classes and 254 registered students.

“This online session was incredibly successful,” Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College **Elizabeth Frombgen, Ph.D.** said.

Frombgen was one of 12 faculty members who taught during the December session.



Match Day participants walked a combined 2,263 laps, or about 563 miles, which is a little more than one mile for every donor.

Match Day smashes previous records; breaks \$1 million raised milestone

Thiel College's eighth annual Match Day, a one-day fundraising event themed "Match Madness" this year, smashed records for donations and participants on Feb. 25 and surpassed the million-dollar mark for funds generated since the event's launch in 2014. Students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends of the College pledged to walk 550 laps at the Dr. Barry '70 and Carol Stamm '71 Track & Field Complex on Feb. 25.

Participants walked a combined 2,263 laps, or about 563 miles, which is a little more than one mile for every donor. The 559 donors contributed \$209,250. "This is the greatest gift at the greatest time for the College," Vice President of College Advancement **Roberta Leonard** said.

"For our community to come together and support each other like this is just incredible."

"From the first cold steps early Thursday morning to the last laps being counted at dusk, I was humbled by the commitment of the members of the Thiel family," said Thiel College President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.**

Director of the Thiel Fund, **Mark S. Batt '87**, coordinated the day at the College.

"So often we hear about the intangible ideas of comradery, teamwork, togetherness, unity; but for Thiel College, these are more than just platitudes," Batt said. "Thiel College is a unique place forever connecting people to each other and the institution."

Trustee's gift lifts Match Day to new heights

Paul Runge '70, a member of the Thiel College Board of Trustees, a Sigma Phi Epsilon member and an active alumnus, was recognized by the College as the Millionth-Dollar Donor. Runge's donation this year pushed the total amount raised by Match Day past the million dollar mark. "This year, Thiel alumni and friends gave so generously in the face of daunting pandemic challenges," Runge said. "To cross the \$1 million mark is truly impressive, and **Maryellen** and I were glad to have played a small part." Giving over the last eight years has raised more than \$1.2 million for the Thiel Fund and the College.





Scholarship connects history student, former Trustee

Each November, students and benefactors gather for the annual scholarship luncheon on campus. While the event was put on hold for one year because of the pandemic, celebrating and acknowledging these connections is still important for the College community.

Hannah Uschock '22 and **Connie (Christy) Danko '69** represent two of the many stories of connection and community created through the College's scholarship programs.

Uschock, of Indiana, Pa., is a history major and will be Student Government Association president this fall. She is a recipient of the Walter Charles and Ethel Fern Rupert Scholarship. Hannah is the daughter of **Michelle (Stahl) Reefer '90**.



USCHOCK

"I am so pleased to have been awarded this scholarship! It will help me greatly. I am fortunate to go to the best college, and that is shown through our generous alumni who help students," Uschock said. "I can confidently say that my donors have positively impacted my life and have changed the trajectory for the better."



DANKO

Danko, a member of the Board of Trustees from 2006-2015 and a retired registered occupational therapist, created Uschock's scholarship.

"My older brother, **Larry Christy (1968)**, and I were at Thiel three years together, and our younger brother, **Bob Christy**, graduated from Thiel a bit later (1975)," Danko said. "If it weren't for scholarships, none of us could have afforded college. I am honored to have a degree from Thiel and feel blessed that I can now help others. My husband and I established two scholarships. One, in honor of my parents, is given to a student who displays caring for others through community service. The second one honors my grandparents. I hope others will join me in this most worthy cause of providing scholarships to current students."

In-person ceremonies culminate year unlike any other

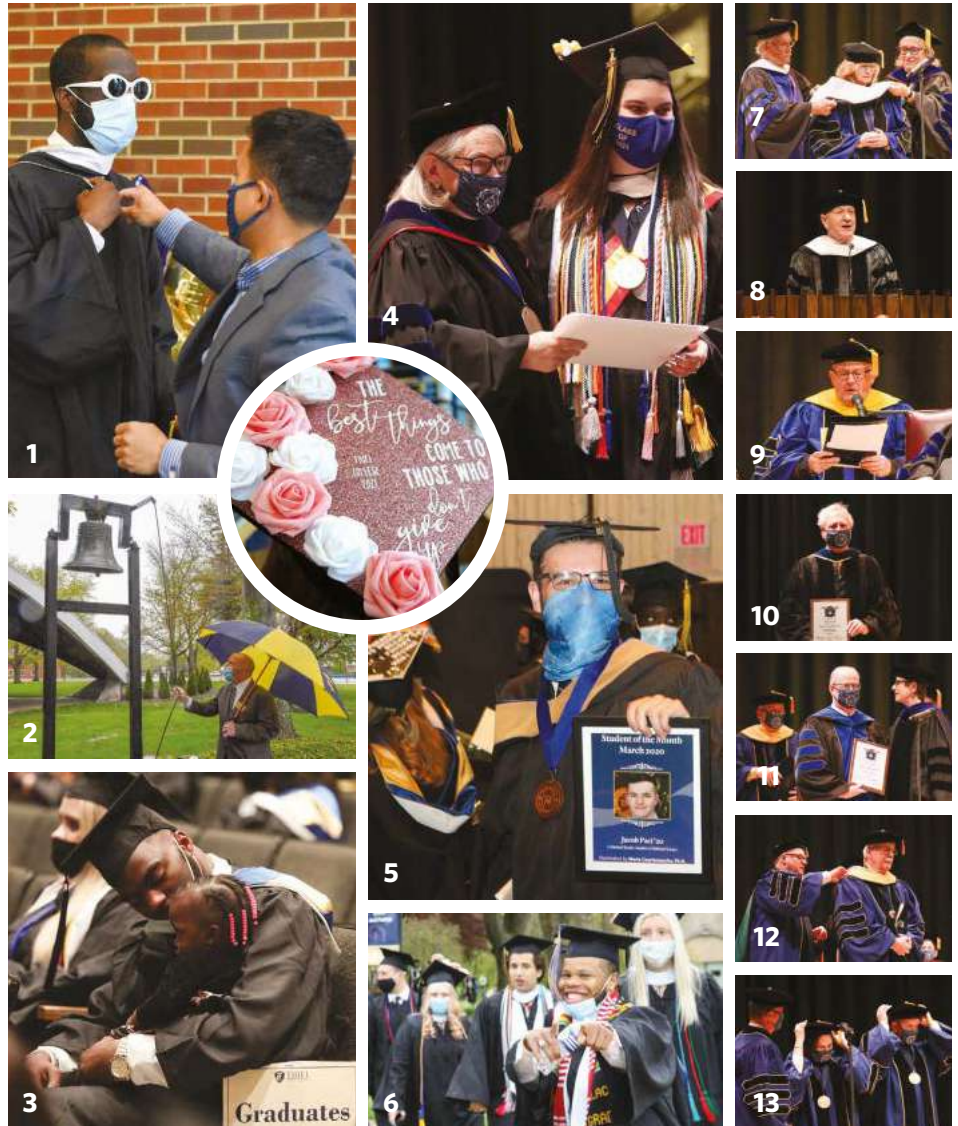
Class of 2020 members return for 'rite of passage...closing chapter'

Rain, sleet, snow, none of it could stop the Class of 2020 on May 9. It's members had waited more than a year for this moment. So despite 30-degree temperatures and three different kinds of precipitation falling from the sky, fifty-eight of the members of that class came back to walk along Brother Martin's Walk and the stage at the Passavant Center.

"It's a rite of passage, a chapter closing and I can move on," **David Blaney '20** told a *Record-Argus* reporter in an interview before the ceremony.

The graduates were also joined by College archivist **John Hauser '71, H'20** and the first female chair of the Board of Trustees and trustee emeritus **Ruthanne Beighley, Esq. '73, H'20**, who were both awarded honorary doctorates by the College. **Talia O'Brien '20** also returned to deliver the senior address.

"It seems like a lifetime ago that you and I began our journey at Thiel College," President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.**, said. "In the fall of 2016, you were first-year students, and I was a first-year president. Last spring, just as you were looking forward to graduating the world changed. So much was unknown as you gathered your things for a hasty departure from Thiel. While disappointed, you were not defeated. So we celebrate you Class of 2020 for all that you have accomplished."



1. **D'ondre Merren '20** and **Than Oo**; 2. **Mark Batt '87** rings the bell during the Class of 2020's march into the Passavant Center; 3. **Trou Johnson '21** with his daughter, Samiah, 4. **President Traverso** and **Jess Peters '21**; 5. **Jacob Paci '20** shows off his Student of the Month recognition; 6. **Tyrique Coston '21** is all smiles; 7. **Robert Olson '61, H'09** (left) and President Traverso (right) place the honorary degree hood on **Ruthanne Beighley, Esq. '73, H'20**; 8. **John Hauser '71, H'20** speaks; 9. **Carl Hoffman, D.O. '69, H'10** introduces Hauser; 10. **Patrick Hecking, Ph.D.**, and 11. **James Koshan, Ph.D.**, are award emeritus professor status; 12. **Frank Maenpa, Ph.D. '69, H'21** has his hood placed on; 13. **Bretton** and **Stacey Walberg** display their Passavant Award medals.

Thiel College's online photo galleries
<http://bit.ly/thielcollegephotos>

Legacies

Class of 2021 exercises also recognize first cohort of graduate students

President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.**, stepped to the lectern and on a day already rich with tradition, took a moment to acknowledge the history-making nature of the Class of 2021.

“For the first time in the history of the College, my remarks are directed to both undergraduate and graduate students,” she said.

Students in the Master of Business Administration and Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology officially graduate later this summer, but took part in the May 9 event.

Former member of the Board of Trustees **Frank Maenpa, Ph.D. '69, H'21** was awarded an honorary degree. He played a role in the massive scientific achievement of the Human Genome Project and created and supports The Maenpa Family Biotechnology Endowed Scholarship Fund. The William A. Passavant Distinguished Service Award was given to **Bretton** and **Stacey Walberg. Landon Westover '21**, a history major with a secondary education certification, was the senior orator.

More online

Go to www.thiel.edu to find Commencement Exercises video links.



Several family members attended the Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2020 where **John Hauser '71, H'20** (bottom right) was awarded an honorary doctorate. Pictured (from bottom left then clockwise) **Nancy Gibson Hauser '71, Patricia Daugherty Hauser '63, William Hauser '63, Virginia Hauser Trygstad '73, Robert Hauser '65, David Hauser '77** and **Cynthia Hood Allshouse '90**.



Sisters **Liz Carlson '17** and **Sarah Carlson '21**.

Families celebrate their Thiel College connections



Daniel Witosky '20 and his uncle **Gary Witosky '79**, the David Miller '61, H'20 Endowed Chair of Accounting and Professor of Business Administration and Accounting.



Macy Siefert '21 (center) and her parents **George Siefert '90** and **Vicki (Dittman) Siefert '90**.



David Stryffeler '09, G'21 and his wife, **Elizabeth (Sitko) Stryffeler '10**.

A productive relationship

Thiel College connections help Mercer County economic development group grow its mission

By Dick Davis



WILT



THIGPEN

Since its creation in 1985, Penn-Northwest Development Corp, the county's lead economic development agency, has been strongly supported by Thiel College.

Today, with two distinguished 1986 Thiel graduates in leadership positions and Thiel President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.**, as a board member, Penn-Northwest has a distinctive Tomcat flair. **Rod E. Wilt '86** was named executive director last September while **John Thigpen '86**, joined the board in 2012 and was named its president in 2019. Traverso joined the board in 2019. Going back a few years, the now-retired president and CEO of Liberty Steel Products **James Grasso '79** was Penn-Northwest board chairman 2016-17.

The Penn-Northwest mission is to attract, retain and grow business opportunities in every corner of Mercer County. Innovation Way in Hermitage now houses its administrative offices after locations on the Courthouse Square in Mercer, downtown Sharon, and Coolspring Township.

Penn-Northwest business members with links to Thiel include:

- Hudson Construction Inc.

- Hudson Companies
- ILSCO Extrusions Inc.
- Jamestown Coating Technologies
- Joy Cone Company

"Penn-Northwest's fingerprints are all over many projects at Thiel, although the role we play is mostly behind the scenes," says Wilt. "We facilitate the successful implementation of state and federal low-interest rate loans and/or grants, and Thiel has benefited greatly from those programs on nearly every capital project we have completed in the past several years."

"There are so many connections to Thiel in the local business community that I get to deal with on a weekly basis. We are all working to make Mercer County a great place to live, work and play."

Thigpen appreciates the skills and connections Wilt brings to the role of executive director.

"Rod and I were classmates," Thigpen says. "We went our different ways after graduation, but Thiel has a way of keeping you connected. Rod came back to Mercer County within the last few years, we had an opening last year for a new leader at Penn-Northwest

and all the stars aligned. We were blessed to have Rod apply for the position. He has been at the helm just over six months and he's a natural at driving economic growth."

Following Thiel degrees in business administration and English, Wilt held key positions at First National Bank, the Hudson Group, Winner International, and the Keystone Energy Forum. He served the 17th legislative district as a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives from 1996-2006.

"Education at every level is a key component of the Penn-Northwest mission," says Wilt. "The ultimate goal is to have a job ready and available for every person that exits the education system whether that is at the high school, vocational school, technical school, community college or baccalaureate degree level."

"We need to integrate all levels of the county's education delivery system to job creators. It is a never-ending challenge, but Thiel has been a great collaborator in helping us fulfill that mission. They have connected to the marketplace and have created new programs and majors that help us fill the needs of local businesses."



Thiel College students did the production work for a series of videos that have been released by Penn-Northwest Development Corporation.

Wilt says Dr. Traverso is a key member of the Penn-Northwest’s board and her contributions have been invaluable to him and the organization.

An All-American wrestler two years, Academic All-American one year and a member of the Thiel athletic hall of fame, Wilt credits the sports competition for his business career success. And in another example of teamwork, Thiel College students used the facilities in the James Pedas Communication Center to record Penn-Northwest Development Corporation’s annual membership meeting and its “Discover Mercer County Business” video series.

The first three videos will show **Stacey Glenn** of American Hospitality Group, **Doug Anderson** of Anderson Coach & Travel, and **Tom Roberts** of HopeCAT. The episodes will be on Penn-Northwest’s YouTube channel, featured on their social media, and sent out to their members.

“We have plans to tape at least six more episodes,” said **Melinda Bowen-Houck**, Marketing, Membership & Special Events Manager at Penn-Northwest. “We used the Pedas Center for our Virtual Annual Meeting in November, and the production values coming out of the Pedas Center are world-class.”

“The athletic experience that I had at Thiel has been a driving force at every level of my professional career,” says Wilt. “I love to compete. The things I did to be a relatively successful competitor still apply to being successful in business or politics.”

“The biggest thing is being honest with myself and others. Am I truly leading by example? Am I working as hard or harder than everyone else? Am I expecting success? Am I uplifting the rest of the team?”

“These are the things that are on my checklist every day,” he adds, “and

they were way back when it was time to practice and compete. It hasn’t changed even though I couldn’t wrestle for 30 seconds now!”

Thigpen holds Thiel degrees in accounting and business administration, an M.B.A. from the Pennsylvania State University, and became a licensed C.P.A. in 1989.

He is the leader of ILSCO Extrusions in Sugar Grove Township and received the Thiel College Haller Institute Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2017. Thigpen has served on Thiel’s Board of Associates since 2006.

“I am excited about Penn Northwest,” Thigpen said. “I am excited about Thiel College. And I couldn’t be happier about the way the two organizations are collaborating to develop a brighter future for jobs and growth in Greenville, Mercer County, and the region.”

Evolutionary process

By Carol Brzozowski

Among the many factors the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted is the growing demand for more healthcare and science-educated professionals. Even after the pandemic is in the rearview mirror, the need will continue.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports employment in healthcare occupations is projected to grow 15 percent from 2019 to 2029, adding about 2.4 million jobs. More broadly, the bureau reports that employment in life, physical, and social science occupations is projected to grow 5 percent from 2019 to 2029, faster than the average for all occupations, and will result in about 68,200 new jobs. Healthcare occupations are projected to add more jobs than any occupational groups as an aging population leads to greater healthcare services demand. Increasing demand for expertise in the sciences, particularly in occupations involved in biomedical research, energy management, and environmental protection, is projected to result in substantial employment opportunities in the coming years.

Thiel College is positioning itself to meet that growing demand and professors, students and alumni are optimistic about its success.

Firdaus Kharas '78, H'07, founder of Chocolate Moose Media, points out that while there have been many unfortunate aspects to the COVID-19



Thiel College expanding its base in the sciences to address the needs of the 21st century



pandemic, three distinct advantages emerged from it.

“The first is that healthcare has come to the forefront not only in governments, but for every person,” he says. “All of us are discussing healthcare and recognize the need for greater capacity in healthcare. We all recognize we need to be more proactive in preventing diseases than responding to them after they happen.”



KHARAS

The second advantage: the realization that in healthcare, “we cannot work in isolation, that what started in China has affected literally every country on the planet and that we are all in this situation interdependent.”

The third advantage is that it has moved creativity to the forefront, says Kharas, author of *‘Creativity: The Key to a Remarkable Life’*.

“Liberal arts colleges like Thiel have an advantage,” he adds. “Creativity has always been one of the—if not *the*—most sought-after skill among employers. When you think about liberal arts colleges, you’re really thinking about affecting a person’s ability to analyze and think creatively, to persuade people to work collaboratively.

“In order for young people in particular to face the information age we’re in

now and in the future, the liberal arts colleges are best placed to create these soft skills that are going to be necessary.”

Kharas credits Thiel College for its impact on his own career. He graduated studying political science. His subsequent focus has been on international affairs.

“I can draw a straight line from my studies at Thiel to what I do today,” Kharas said. “Almost everything I do is on a global basis, cross-cultural and across countries’ boundaries. There are aspects of my own thinking and character that Thiel developed, particularly analytical thinking and the art of persuasion.”

Thiel’s evolution toward a greater healthcare and science emphasis started in 2017 with the dedication of the Haer Family Science and Arts Connector, a \$4.5 million project including four enhanced labs for faculty and student research projects and open collaborative areas linked to innovative laboratory spaces dedicated to histology, environmental science, and data analysis.

Fred Haer ’65 was a chemistry major at Thiel who went on to make an impact through his company FHC, which manufactures products used in various therapies such as deep brain stimulation, ablation, resection, and for movement disorders such as Parkinson’s disease, epilepsy, dystonia, and essential tremor.

In August 2019, Thiel College announced its first graduate degree program—a Master of Science in



Julia Wagner ’21 graduated in May and will return to campus in July as a graduate student in the new Master of Science in physician assistant studies program.

speech-language pathology—was awarded candidacy status by The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech Language Pathology of the American Speech-Language Hearing Association, allowing the college to recruit and enroll students.

In November 2020, Thiel College kicked off the first phase of \$16 million in construction projects on campus, including a substantial renovation of the Rhodehouse Science Building and the Academic Center to create new lab and classroom spaces.

The graduate floor opens in July in time to launch the physician assistant graduate program and the second year of the speech-language pathology graduate program.

The physician assistant program

facilities will include a new cadaver lab. The first construction phase is also supported by \$1 million for improvements to laboratories, classrooms and common areas awarded to the college through a state Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program.

The first cohort of physician assistant with 40 students will begin taking class in July.

Additionally, undergraduates from Ohio’s Mahoning Valley who want to major in a science-related field at Thiel are afforded the opportunity for a Marion G. Resch Science Scholarship.

Through the scholarship program, the Resch Foundation helps students earn a bachelor’s degree from Thiel College

in biology, biochemistry, chemistry,



Thiel's evolution toward a greater healthcare and science emphasis started in 2017 with the dedication of the Haer Family Science and Arts Connector. The \$4.5 million facility has four enhanced labs for faculty and student research projects and open collaborative areas linked to enhanced laboratory spaces.

in biology, biochemistry, chemistry, communication sciences and disorders, environmental chemistry, environmental science, exercise science, neuroscience, physics and secondary education with a science concentration.

Alumni are optimistic about Thiel College's positioning as a recognized leader in training healthcare professionals and scientists.

"Doctors are trained to respond to people who are sick. If we take the innovative approach of preventing sickness—looking beyond what medical diagnosis do and what medicines the person needs, which is best done by medical schools—to

create an innovative, holistic approach, then Thiel could become a leader," says Kharas, who has written extensively about health issues.

Shawniece Boss, D.P.M. '12, a Sarasota, Florida podiatrist and foot and ankle surgeon notes the biology and liberal arts background she got from Thiel was more advanced than the experience of her peers who also started medical school.

"I felt I was very well-prepared," she said. "I was able to test into the program before I even graduated from Thiel College."

Greg Q. Butcher, Ph.D., Associate Academic Dean for Student Success

and Professor of Neuroscience, says he is excited about Thiel College's growing focus on healthcare and science professions and notes that alumni and trustee support have been essential in the process.

"I came to Thiel in 2014 largely because I saw a great deal of potential in the sciences," Butcher said. "The longstanding support of the trustees led to development of a pilot faculty/student summer research program, renovation of the science labs and classrooms, and construction of new clinical spaces to support new programs.

"Each of these actions indicates that we are moving to realize this potential. In the seven years I've been at Thiel, we've come a very long way. I'm

and start placing Tomcats as health providers in the region.”

Butcher points out the regional need for clinical professionals and growing demand from prospective students for health-related careers convinced the faculty that Thiel College had an opportunity to address both.

“Additionally, these programs align well with our long-standing mission to prepare students for careers and lives of meaning and purpose,” he says. “Construction, while inconvenient at the time, is also exciting for the students. It provides them with direct evidence that Thiel College is advancing new programs that will change and enhance the overall student experience.

“Having clinical graduate students—speech-language pathologists and soon physician assistants—on campus will lead to more changes in our culture,” he adds. “Students also realize that the new graduate facilities—the speech-language pathology clinic and cadaver lab for example—will enhance their own

coursework and training.”

Julia A. Wagner '21, a neuroscience/health systems/pre-physician assistant major and a chemistry/medical biology/psychology minor, agrees with Butcher.

“A large part of me deciding to attend Thiel College for a master’s in physician assistant studies is that I am currently an undergraduate student here,” she says. “I’ve gotten to know my professors on a more personal level than I feel I would have at larger institutions. I know from my time here that they truly value what students have to say.”

Wagner says she doesn’t feel like she’s a “number in a student body” but that her interests are known by the dean and faculty, who have provided her with one-on-one availability.

“I love that Thiel is placing a larger emphasis on the health sciences,” Wagner says. “It allows Thiel to become more diverse and grow as a school.”



Shawniece Boss, D.P.M. '12 said her experience at Thiel prepared her well for her medical career.



Spaces in Rhodehouse Science Building are being renovated for the physician assistant and speech-language pathology programs. Students will begin using those spaces in July.



She cites one undergraduate class for helping students figure out early on in their undergraduate career whether health care or the health sciences are an appropriate career choice for them.

Through that class, Wagner says she was inspired by **Alex McClurg '12**, a physician assistant, who returned to Thiel College as a speaker for for a health professions seminar series.

"Hearing how passionate she was and how much flexibility there was in the field was so exciting," Wagner says. "I love the idea that PAs are not as tied down to a specialty as other health professions are."

"Everywhere you look, there are urgent care facilities and doctors' offices being run by physician assistants, nurse practitioners and other types of practitioners," Boss said. "Training more well qualified practitioners is going to be very helpful in the future."

Serving as a bridge between the College's traditions in science and its future was this year's

Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2021. Former member of the Board of Trustees **Frank Maenpa Ph.D. '69, H'21** was awarded an honorary degree in honor of both his scientific accomplishments and his commitment to the College, which includes the creation and support of The Maenpa Family Biotechnology Endowed Scholarship Fund. It is awarded annually to at least one full-time Thiel College student majoring in the sciences.



MAENPA

In 1987, Maenpa worked for the first company to develop and manufacture a practical agent for DNA sequencing. This allowed for the implementation of the Human Genome Project. If you do an internet search for the greatest scientific accomplishments in the 20th century the Human Genome Project will be on every one of those lists, according to Thiel College trustee **Robert Burns, M.D. '74**.

"There are implications for anthropology, forensics, but the implications in medicine are profound," Burns said. "It's truly exciting science and Frank and his company help make it possible."

And how far can a student majoring in the sciences at Thiel go?

"I often reflect on how a career path that started in mathematics, ended in chemistry at Thiel so many decades ago developed into one of DNA sequencing, genetics, biotechnology, international trade and business management so many years later," Maenpa said. "Many of these opportunities were barely discovered when I graduated from Thiel. The landmark gene splicing experiment didn't even occur until 1971. The earliest discussions of the possibility of a human genome project did not even begin until 1988. It was not possible for one to plan for a career that covers such an emerging future. One must develop skills to see the interconnection of disciplines."



From no-go to full go

Student-athletes return to play under modified schedules in spring

By Ed Topoleski '02

All was quiet and, although unknown at the time, spectacularly mundane on Saturday, March 7, 2020, when the women's lacrosse team left the Rissell-Schreyer Dome after playing the Houghton Highlanders in a non-conference game in the wee hours of spring break.

The novel coronavirus, as it was commonly referred to then, had been in the news for months. But not many people knew exactly what was on the horizon.

The women's lacrosse team's game against Houghton was the last home game played at Thiel College during the 2019-20 academic year. Students departed campus on March 13, and online classes began a few days later and continued through the 2020 spring semester.

"I was sad," said **Emily Sears '22**, (pictured at left) a junior libero for the volleyball team. "I was also terrified."

In August, the Presidents' Athletic Conference Presidents' Council voted to postpone all Fall 2020 competition based on the NCAA's Division III Administrative Committee

announcement on Aug. 20, which recommended that member schools not compete in the fall.

Planning for nearly all sports to play games in the spring semester continued throughout the fall semester. Despite the cancellation of NCAA Division III Winter championships, PAC member institutions began playing basketball games in late January. Thiel's first home game during the spring semester was Feb. 17, when the men's basketball team hosted the Westminster Titans. **It had been 347 days since a game was played on campus.**

Student-athletes in high-contact sports, such as basketball, required surveillance testing three times per week. Tested with less frequency, volleyball players were required to wear face coverings during competitions.

"It was nerve wracking," junior guard **Rachel Breckenridge '22** said of being tested three times per week. "It was the anxiety, the worry, the fear of testing positive or one of my teammates testing positive and then having to go into quarantine for ten days."

COVID-19 challenges persisted throughout the spring semester, but according to Sears, simply being able to compete was more than worth it in the end.

Net results from the first decade

The Thiel College men's volleyball team recently completed its 10th anniversary season. Here's a quick look at some program milestones.

First match and first win
Jan. 15, 2011

Thiel College took on Sienna Heights College at Beeghly Gymnasium for its first match, and the Tomcats started things off on the right foot defeating the Saints of Siena Heights College, 3-1, for their first win.

First victory in postseason play
April 1, 2011

The Tomcats beat second-seeded Milwaukee School of Engineering in the Midwest III Volleyball Conference playoffs.

First all-conference team members
April 5, 2011

Dante McCoy '14, Kyle Turkalj '14 and Grant Kocher were named all-Midwest III Volleyball Conference.

First season with winning record
2013

The Tomcats finished the year 20-12 and ended their season in the quarterfinals of the Continental Volleyball Conference playoff tournament.



“ I am so grateful to even be here. It made me appreciate the moment even more because a lot of athletes didn’t get to experience something like that this year. ”

Rachel Breckenridge '22

“I was nervous because I didn’t know how it was going to go with all the testing and being able to play a full season,” Sears said. “But I was also excited because I knew we were going to get to play.”

“I’m thankful for the PAC and Thiel for giving it a shot,” said Breckenridge. “Athletes work so hard, and we had to give it a try.”

In a first round PAC Championship Tournament game on the road against the Waynesburg Yellow Jackets on March 13, Breckenridge scored a game-high 21 points, 15 of which were on 3-pointers. With her team trailing by three points (63-60) with one second left in regulation, Breckenridge was fouled on a potential game-tying 3-point shot. She drained all three free-throws although the Tomcats went on to lose in overtime.

“I’m so grateful to even be here. It made me appreciate the moment even more because a lot of athletes didn’t get to experience something like that this year,” Breckenridge said.

The sixth-seeded men’s basketball team upset the third-seeded Washington & Jefferson, 69-64, on the road in the quarterfinals of the PAC Championship Tournament before losing in the semifinals to eventual champion Westminster.

While PAC Wrestling Championships were not contested in the spring, the wrestling team won a pair of non-conference matches against Jamestown Community College and also fared well in exhibition bouts against Division II Gannon.

Volleyball, softball, soccer get new leaders

The Department of Athletics has hired three head coaches since December, including **Dylan Lasher '15** for men’s volleyball, **Kelly Kirkpatrick** for softball, and **Zack Walters** for men’s soccer.

Lasher returned to his alma mater in December. He started an NCAA Division III men’s volleyball program at Millikin University in Decatur, Ill. A four-year member of Thiel’s volleyball team, Lasher served as the Tomcats’ team captain for two seasons.



LASHER

Kirkpatrick was named the head softball coach in February. She arrived at Thiel after spending three seasons as the assistant varsity and head junior varsity coach at the University of Northwestern Ohio. In 2018, she helped the Racers win the Wolverine-Hoosier Athletic Conference Tournament title.



KIRKPATRICK

Walters was named the head coach of the men’s soccer team in January after serving as interim head coach for three months. Walters was the team’s assistant coach during the 2019 season.



WALTERS

First national Top-20 ranking
Feb. 4, 2014

The team was ranked No. 15 in the American Volleyball Coaches Association national poll.

National statistical leaders
June 1, 2015

Thiel College led NCAA Division III in digs per set, averaging 12.86 during the 2015 volleyball season.

First conference championship
April 13, 2019

Thiel defeated rival Wittenberg University to win the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference title and its first title.

First-team and top coach honors
April 23, 2019

Mitch Patterson '21 and **Ryan Sumarsono** were named to the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference’s first team and head coach **Adam Roche** was voted as the conference’s coach of the year.

— 1960s —

Roy Lloyd '65 is president of the International Forgiveness Institute. He, Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu, and Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Robert Enright, Ph.D., co-founded the institute. The International Forgiveness Institute has projects going on all over the world, including significant ones in Belfast and Israel, among many other locations. For the third straight year the institute has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Lloyd said, "I doubt that we have much of a chance to receive it, given the good work done globally by so many others. But it's quite an honor in any case."

Gale A. Mattison '68 and his wife, Donna, moved to Hermosa Beach, Calif. to be close to family after nearly 40 years in their home in West Hartford, Conn.

John C. Reed '68 lives with his wife of 53 years, Virginia, in Sharpsville, Pa.



Reed retired after 33 years of practicing law and 17 years as a judge. He was the first Thiel graduate to be elected a Common Pleas

Court Judge in Mercer County. Reed and Virginia have nine grandchildren.

George Cyphers '69 lives in Oberlin, Ohio.

Karen L. (Sundberg) Schrank '69 lives in Shallotte, N.C. where she works as a volunteer librarian.

— 1970s —

Thomas Guskey, Ph.D. '72 was a presenter at the World Education Summit on March 23. His presentation was



titled "Designing and Evaluating Effective Professional Learning." He is Professor Emeritus in the College of Education at the University of Kentucky where he served as Department Chair, Head of the Educational Psychology Area Committee, and President of the Faculty Council. He has been a visiting professor at 10 other universities in the U.S. and a visiting scholar at universities in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. He began his career in education as a middle school teacher and earned his doctorate at the University of Chicago. He served as an administrator in Chicago Public Schools before becoming the first director of the Center for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning, a national research center.

Susan Heidecker '73, retired, lives in Staunton, Va. with her husband, Ernest.

Tracy (Fair) Robertson '74 retired from the Va. Department of Education and lives in Midlothian, Va. with her spouse, Gordon Robertson.

Craig Hanriot '75 and **Susan (Klinger) Hanriot '75** both retired and moved to their new home in Santa Ana, Calif. in August 2020. They enjoy spending time with their grandchildren.

Nancy (Siciliano) Kremm '75 and **John E. Kremm Jr. '75** live in Butler, Pa. Nancy is retired after being principal of St. Michael School. John is a former director of development at Thiel College.

Jonathan C. Childs '77 lives in Windsor, Conn. He works as a Talent Development Facilitator for Equus Workforce Solutions and is a certified professional resume writer and employment professional. He is engaged to Melissa Chick.

Firdaus Kharas '78, H'07 resides in Ottawa, Ontario where he is the Chairman of Chocolate Moose Media.

William G. Buchanan '79 celebrated his 32nd anniversary of employment as Clinic and Volunteer Coordinator at the Pitt Men's Study at the University of Pittsburgh's Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology in the Graduate School of Public Health. He is also involved with the Pittsburgh Opera and serves as chairperson of the Pittsburgh area of the American Guild of Musical Artists.

After nearly four years of leading the Northern Pennsylvania Regional College, founding President



Joseph T. Nairn, D. Mgt. '79 announced his retirement in late 2020.

Nairn began with NPRC in 2017. Nairn earned a Master of Education degree in student personnel services in higher education at the University of Vermont in 1983. He spent 25 years at Rochester Institute of Technology. For nearly a decade he was the primary RIT recruiter for India and Sri Lanka. He also was active in developing

partnerships for RIT in Turkey and the Dominican Republic. Nairn retired from RIT in 2008 to become the Executive Assistant to the President at Finger Lakes Community College in Canandaigua, N.Y.

Nairn has served as the president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors and has been recognized by Thiel as a Distinguished Alumnus and with a Service to Thiel award.

Joe and his wife, Terri, have three adult children, Caitlin, Thomas, and Craig.

— 1980s —

Al Aikens '80 and **Sandy (Scuffle) Aikens '81** have retired and live in Orlando, Fla.

Margaret R. (Dunn) Gillis '80 lives in Greensboro, N.C.

Kerry Ramsey '80 and **Beth (Cribbs) Ramsey '81** recently retired and reside in Pepper Pike, Ohio. Kerry was an Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, and Office of Investigations. Beth retired from being a senior manager of global color marketing for PPG Industries.

Jodie (Wagner) Ellison '84 and Jim Ellison live in Royal Oak, Mich. where Jodie works as a Shelter Manager at Royal Oak Animal Center. They have three children.

Chris Durniok '88 is a senior human resource director at Dairy Farmers of America. He resides in Greenville, Pa.

Marcie L. Barlow '89 lives in Wheelersburg, Ohio. She is employed by Scioto County as the Economic Development Project Manager.

Lisa J. (Lipscomb) Perry '89 was recently selected to lead the Pittsburgh Action Against Rape as the next Executive Director.



— 1990s —

Kendell C. (Hughes) Madison '90 lives in Columbus, Ohio.

Diane (Shemory) Marie '93 lives in Northumberland, Pa. She works as a RN for Geisinger Health System.

Jeanette M. Rich '95 lives in Kirtland, Ohio.

Rebecca (Adkins) Borland '96 lives with her husband, Howard, and their son in Arnold, Pa. She works as a case manager for ConnectiveRx in Pittsburgh with alumni **Heather Rommes '96** and **Beau Jones '96**.

Barbara J. (Dille) Chambers '98 lives with her husband, Burt, and their daughter in Candler, N.C. where she works as director of operations for Mercy Urgent Care. Chambers got her M.B.A. from Liberty University in 2016.

— 2000s —

Stephanie D. (Tischendorf) James '00 and her spouse, **Matthew James '00**, live in Findlay, Ohio.

Julie A. (Cufu) Schroeder '01 lives in Concord, Ohio.

Nikki (Colpo) Galbo '06 was promoted to Senior Diabetes Pharmaceutical Sales Specialist with AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals. She resides in Ridgway, Pa. with her husband, Nick, and their children.

Rev. Emilie E. Theobald-Rowlands '04 and **Matthew J. Rowlands '05** live with their daughter in Strongsville, Ohio. Emilie works as a pastor.

Ann Waldemarson-Baker '04 lives with her spouse, Mike Baker, in Byron Center, Mich. Waldemarson-Baker works as the Dean of UFP Business School at UFP Industries.

Adam Lee Cilli, Ph.D. '05 has written his first book, *Canaan, Dim and Far: Black Reformers and the Pursuit of Citizenship in Pittsburgh, 1915-1945*. It examines the social justice efforts of Black activists in the Steel City during a crucial period known as the Great Migration. Cilli is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford.

Jessica (Printy) Groves '05 lives in Mechanicsburg, Pa. with her spouse, Robert Groves, and their children. She works as a Brand Manager of loyalty strategy for The Giant Company.

Jennifer L. (Schmidt) Jones '05 and Evan Jones live with their children in Severna Park, Md. Jennifer works for Nationwide insurance.





Becky and Daniel J . Ackerman, J.D. '61

Residence: Murrysville, Pa.

Professional Experience: Daniel is retired. He practiced law for 16 years and served as a judge on the Westmoreland County Court of Common Pleas for 30 years.

Thiel Activities: He was a history major and a member of Delta Sigma Phi.

Reason for Giving Back: He has always been appreciative of his time at Thiel, and notes, "My law degree served me well during the years of my professional life, but the benefits of a liberal arts education, values and even friendships obtained at Thiel have proved enduring."

The Thiel Fund File

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

Ackerman compiles letters to mark his time at Thiel College

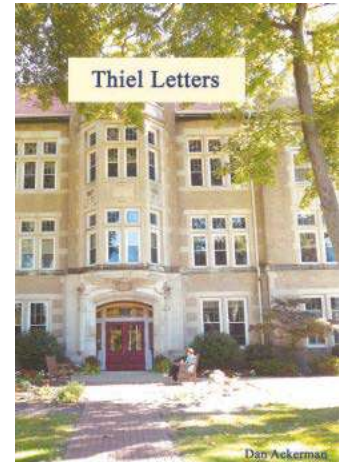
Daniel J. Ackerman, J.D. '61 compiled the correspondence he wrote while he was a student at Thiel College from 1957 until his graduation in 1961 to create "Thiel Letters."

The excerpts are sometimes mundane and sometimes moving, but put together, they represent the experience of a Tomcat in the late 50s and early 60s. According to the book's introduction, "The collection is not quite complete, but is more than sufficient for recalling memories which have long

been cherished, and the few which were sad. The letters also proved to be a vehicle for rediscovering events, which, though recorded, have over time, been forgotten."

Ackerman stored the letters in an aluminum laundry box which went back and forth to college through the mail.

Ackerman put the book together to tell the story of his time on campus. It is available to read in the campus archives.



Thiel Connect

New online networking platform helps you succeed before, during and after college through connections and community.

Join our community
connect.thiel.edu

— 2010s —

Jeri L. (Reed) Miller '05, her husband, Steve Miller, and their child live in Kempton, Pa. Jeri works as director of customer operations at Olympus America.

Justin M. Portik '06 and his wife, Alicia (Adams) Portik, live in Mentor, Ohio, where he works in CSR/Inside Sales for Infasco Distribution.

Andrew T. Tremel '06, his wife, Anna, and their children live in Springfield, Va. He works for the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center.



Stephan D. Ault '07 and his wife, Gina, live in Chesterland, Ohio. He works as a Project Manager and

Safety Professional for BMS CAT in Haltom City, Texas. Stephen graduated with a degree in conservation biology and was a member of the Thiel baseball team.

Amanda C. (Rooney) Stierli '07 is a program manager for the Civic and Defense Initiative at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. She lives in Arnold, Md.

Stephanie L. (Geer) Kitchen '08 and her spouse, Martin T. Kitchen Jr., live in Bartlett, Tenn. Stephanie works as a Navy mortician for the U.S. Navy.



Benjamin L. McWhorter-Rush '08 and his wife, Rachel, live with their child in St. Charles, Mo. Benjamin works as the Pastor of Spiritual Formation for the Church of the Shepard.

Tasha Holmes '09 and her son reside in Wyncote, Pa.



Danielle (Kaizer) Bonura '09 was crowned Mrs. Pennsylvania International on April 10 at a pageant at The Casino at Lakemont Park in Altoona, Pa.

Bonura graduated with bachelor's degrees in business administration and international business. She made her first appearance as Mrs. Pennsylvania International days after her win discussing her support of maternal mental health, raising awareness around issues of postpartum depression and anxiety and her support of state legislation that would increase early intervention services offered to families experiencing postpartum mood and anxiety disorder.

Bonura is pictured with her husband, William. He met Danielle in Roth Hall on his first day of school.

Justin Munz '10 lives in Prescott, Ariz. where he works as an assistant director of housing operations at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Katie A. (Sourbeer) Barch '11 and **Ben Barch '11** live in Trafford, Pa.



Elizabeth A. Dubnicay '11 lives in Munhall, Pa. She works as a project environmental specialist for GAI

Consultants Incorporated.

Tzoulia Niforos '11 lives with her son in Highland Heights, Ohio. Tzoulia is a teacher for Cleveland Public Schools.



Robert B. Shew '11 is employed at Access Corporation as a transportation supervisor. He lives in Mogadore, Ohio.

Amy (Nacey) Kearns '12 and her husband, **Jason R. Kearns '11**, live in Greensburg, Pa. She is employed at US Foods as a category manager. Jason works for Quest Diagnostics.

Audrey L. Rattay '12 lives in Cranberry Township, Pa. She launched her company, busyXploring, on November 9, 2020. busyXploring is an adventure brand and apparel line designed for the modern adventurer.



Peter Z. Garza '13 lives with his spouse, Kali Garza, and their children in San Diego, Calif. He works as a Navy diver.

Keisha M. Shaw '13 is a senior human resources analyst for the City of Philadelphia where she lives.

Jihan Y. Lewis '14 works as a contact tracer for NYC Health + Hospitals and lives in New York City, N.Y.

Cheryl Marshall '14 and Joseph Bundy were engaged in August 2020. Marshall is a sales auditor for rue21 in Warrendale, Pa.



Joy E. Tubero '14 lives in Independence, Ohio where she works as a regulatory affairs specialist for Applied Medical Technology.

Kristin L. (Madigan) Bissett '15 and **Brett Bissett '14** live in Beaver Falls, Pa.

Jacob A. Hayden '15 lives in North Canton, Ohio. He works as a Plant Manager for Group 31 Incorporated.

Brooklyn A. Ishman '15 lives in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Kathleen E. Bolyard '16 lives in Brookfield, Ohio.

Amanda M. (Lopez) Pyles '16 and her spouse, Kirkland, live in Girard, Pa.

Jeena R. (Markovitch) Swope '16 and her husband, Dustin, live in McKeesport, Pa.

Daniel M. Forringer '17 and **Samantha L. (Deems) Forringer '17** live in Orlando, Fla.

Amanda K. Hautmann '17 resides in South Euclid, Ohio where she is employed at University Hospitals as a Psychometrist I.

Dana Depaulo '18 and **Gino Russo '19** got engaged in September 2020. Dana is an assistant director of admissions at Concordia at Cabot. She is attending Slippery Rock University to obtain her M.B.A. Gino is employed as an IT infrastructure analyst for Highmark Health. They reside in Mars, Pa.



Tina S. (Kramer) Krolikowski '18 and Micheal Krolikowski live in Nescopeck, Pa. She graduated from Bucknell University with an M.S. in general experimental psychology in May 2020. Tina is currently a doctoral student and graduate/teaching assistant at Carlow University.



Terri Eddy '19 was named Thiel College's first young alumni representative to the Board of Trustees.

Eddy will serve a three-year term as a full voting member of the Board of Trustees. In her time since graduation, she has been employed by Ernst & Young as a staff accountant. In 2018, she completed an internship with Ernst & Young.

Hongyu He '19 is living in Nanning, Guangxi China.



Shyann Foreman '20 and **Shane Young '19** got engaged on December 22, 2020 at Buhl Park in Hermitage, Pa.

Quinn Ursprung '20 lives in Rehoboth Beach, Del. and works for USA Football. She is a senior coordinator of email and digital marketing.



— marriages —

John G. Newman '11 and Jeanchiara (David) Newman married on March 15. John's next duty station is Presidio of Monterey where he will learn Japanese at the Defense Language Institute. The couple resides in Anchorage, Alaska.



Evan D. Ditty '12 and Mackenzie (Maurer) Ditty married on December 12, 2020 at St. Bede Catholic Church in Pittsburgh. **Alexander Tischekno '15** was the best man. Evan is an assistant director of student affairs at Penn State New Kensington.



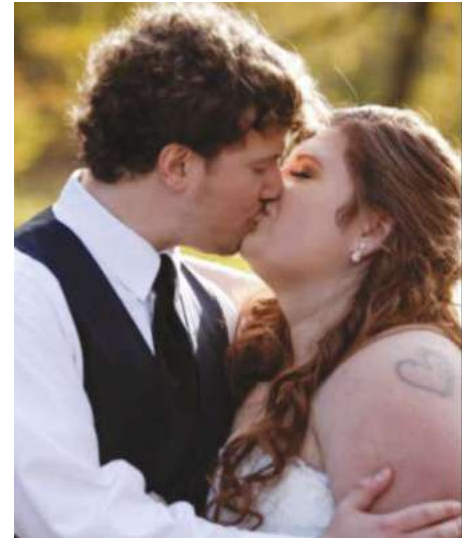
Andrew Dyson '11 and **Amanda (Pye) Dyson '12** married on September 26, 2020 at the Bella Terra Vineyards. **Tim Smith '10** was the best man and **Cory Borland '10** was a groomsman. Other Thiel graduates in attendance were **Marcy (Lee) Smith '11**, **Brittany (Hill) Contreras '12**, and **Joslyne Cook '14**. Amanda and Andrew live in McKeesport, Pa. where she works as a physical therapist for UPMC.



Meaghan A. (Paine) Maddox '13 and Benjamin Maddox married on April 13, 2019. They live in Avon Lake, Ohio. She works as a nanny for Childcare Solutions in Tremont and Cleveland, Ohio.



Rebecca L. (Leonard) Partika '16 and Micheal Partika married on October 10, 2020. They live in Youngstown, Ohio. Rebecca works as a therapist for Alta Behavioral Health.



Chelsey L. (Cook) Sorokes '16 and **William Sorokes '12** married on October 17, 2020. They live in Jeanette, Pa.



Drew Dellert '18 and **Annika (Schul) Dellert '19** were married on August 29, 2020 in State College, Pa. at the Grace Lutheran Church. The couple resides in Alexandria, Va.

TELL US WHAT'S NEW IN YOUR LIFE!
 Please contact the Office of Alumni Relations
 at alumni@thiel.edu

– births –



To **Tess K. (Hogue) Catlin '07** and her husband, **Stephen A. Catlin '08**: a son, Dominic Stephen Catlin, on October 1, 2020. Dominic joins his sister, Felicity. The family lives in Liberty Township, Ohio. Tess works as a public services librarian for Lane Public Library. Dominic is the grandson of **Phil '80** and **Laureen (Palmer) Catlin '80**.



To **Madison Evelyn Marie (Kendera) Anderson '09** and her husband, **Garrett Anderson '10**: a daughter, Davanee Lynn Anderson, on August 12, 2020. Davanee joins her brother, Colt. The family lives in Cresson, Pa. Madison works as a sales representative for VWR International.



To **Sarah L. (DiFrango) Kane '11** and her husband, **David J. Kane '11**: a son, Jackson Travis Kane, on October 23, 2020. They live in Strongsville, Ohio, where David works as AML Quality Control for KeyBank.

To **Jessica L. (Dailey) Kaufman '17** and her husband, Adam Kaufman: a daughter, Annalynn, on December 10, 2020. Annalynn joins her sister, Charlette. Jessica works as an emotional support teacher for the Keystone Charter School in Greenville, Pa. They reside in Grove City, Pa.



To **Tylor M. (Whitely) Takacs '18** and her husband, **Jason Takacs '18**: a son, Elias Takacs, on September 17, 2020. Jason became a certified physician assistant in August 2020.

Tomcat Cub Club

Enroll children today for milestone birthday gifts and eligibility for a \$1,000 legacy scholarship.



Learn more online or email [admissions@thiel.edu!](mailto:admissions@thiel.edu)

www.thiel.edu/cubclub

Pam (Miller) Despo, 72, of Jamestown, Pa., passed away due to heart surgery complications on November 6, 2020. Despo spent 24 years as the Thiel College campus nurse. She was married to Emeritus Professor of Biology and Paul M. Rike Professor of Life Sciences **Nicholas G. Despo, Ph.D.**, for 48 years, and loved to spend time with her children and grandchildren.

Dorothy "Dottie" G. Spence, 73, of College Ave., Greenville, passed away March 19, 2021 while in home hospice care. She was surrounded by her loving husband and family. In 2013, she married Daniel Spence and moved to Greenville where she became a neighbor of the College. Active in the Greenville Community, she and her husband enjoyed meeting the students who were the beneficiaries of their family's scholarships: the Betty Harter Spence '37 Endowed Scholarship Fund and the Nathan Warren Harter and Besse Roseberry Harter Scholarship.

CLASS NOTES

— in memoriam —

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

Gloria Adams
Renee Adams
Fredrick Sam Alexander '58
Timothy Michael "Toby"
Anderson '98
Pauline (Winner) Bachman '53
Irma L. (Clare) Baird '65
Thomas A. Balas '67
Gloria J. Bardella
Charles G. Barnett '50
Debra Ann Barrick '82
Colleen M. (Junk) Barwell '87
Ronald P. Beede '63
Richard Bobbie
Gloria F. (Bigelow) Bonczyk '71
Richard P. Bruckman '59
Adele (McCauley) Butler '50
Edward A. Burnett
Marilyn C. (McCutcheon)
Byerley '59
Margaret B. Callen
Marilyn P. (Namey) Cagna
Dorothy (Goldsmith) Caplan '39
Rev. Walter D. Carlson '70
Paris Carr
George C. Chomos '76
John F. Christman '66
Camillo Cianci II '83
Rev. Edwin T. Cochran '52
Chad E. Cook '71
Michael D. Cottrill
Gerard Davia '64
Pamela (Miller) Despo
Ruth Marie Dietz
Allen Dietz, II
Sharon (Kleve) Dunn '84
Mary S. Eddy

Bruce R. Ferko '78
Ronald G. Fontaine
Leo J. Frazier
Earl S. Free
Florence M. (Weir) Gillette '53
Suzanne E. Glosner
Rebekah Jane (Gillette) Greely '75
Michael L. Grinnell '64
Rev. Charles H. Gustafson
Rev. Donald D. Hake
Robert W. Harris
Jerry L. Hassell
Kelly L. Henderson
Robert W. Holderer
John Hood '65
Phyllis A. (Good) Hoople '72
Robert G. Hopkinson '59
Hazel I. (Ruff) Howell '45
David H. Huffman '81
Marilyn Lynn (Greiner) Johnson '58
C. Eugene Jordan
Betty J. Kiser
Deborah K. LaMotte
Edgardo R. Lob
William M. Luft '70
Holly M. (Janus) Machi '92
Nancy McCurdy
Sally (Hood) McIlvried '58
Alta McKay
Russell C. McQuiston
Virginia Means
Arch C. Messer
Anita (Hertel) Milo '60
Patricia (Moyer) Mitchell '51
Jean Mohr
Elizabeth A. (Hill) Nagy '61
Helen C. (Baruffalo) Newell '77
Rev. Robert J. Newpher

Jean O. Nichols
Paul H. Nye
Mark J. Oesterlin '86
Darlene V. Ours
Paul S. Parobeck '62
Richard L. Patterson '69
Virginia (Prussey) Perrotti
John Phillips
William C. Powell '46
Dr. Evelyn Ramming
Loretta (Myers) Rawa '57
Thomas Renz
Beverly Richards
Cynthia (Holcombe) Richardson
Dan Robert Roncaglione '71
Rev. Timothy A. Roser '79
Justin N. L. Royer
Edward Sawaya
Donald G. Saxe '50
Dennis S. Schell
Dixie Lee (Connors) Scobbie '75
Col. Roy H. Shelton '63
Mary J. (Cribbs) Shutz '53
Dorothy "Dottie" G. Spence
Paul E. Spring H'88
Richard Arthur Stobbe '71
Naomi (Edwards) Swartzbeck
Connie L. (Fennell) Tarr
Harry W. Taylor '66
John Volansky '56
Ralph F. Wagner '60
Joyce I. Weaver
Julia Weaver
Allan D. Wilkins
Theresa J. Young
Rev. Joseph J. Yurko '93
Mary A. Zarecky



Barbara and Louis Thiel are not the only key players in the College's origin story

By John Hauser '71

The first Founders' Day celebration took place on February 2, 1876, a tradition that continues to this day. As **Roy Johnson** describes it in *The History of Thiel College 1866-1974*, page 27: "Classes were dismissed, and a huge banner with a red and white background and 'Founders' Day' emblazoned in blue letters was flown from the flagpole." **Louis** and **Barbara Thiel** were the focus of the evening's dinner, with comparisons between Founders' Day and George Washington's birthday as "each man honored had traits of character worthy of emulation," even though Founders' Day is celebrated near Barbara Thiel's birthday since Louis' birthday was during the summer break.

Had it not been for **William Passavant**, however, the Thiels' decision to tithe any money received from the purchase of stock in a fledgling oil company might have gone elsewhere.

William Alfred Passavant was born in 1821 in Zelienople (named for his mother) to Fredericka "Zelie" and Phillippe Passavant, who came from Germany in 1807 to live on land that her father, Baron Dettmar Basse, had purchased just a few years before. He attended a Presbyterian institution, Jefferson College, in Canonsburg, and continued his studies at the Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg.

Passavant came to Pittsburgh as the pastor of the downtown First Lutheran Church in 1844. During the next 11 years, he started six churches. As one of the founders of the Pittsburgh Synod, at age 23, he served as Synod president for six years and another eight years as missionary superintendent, during which time he was instrumental in establishing 60 congregations in western Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois. While we know him as the "behind-the-scenes" founder of our College, Thiel is not the only institution that owes its existence to William Passavant's enthusiasm—and talent—for missionary work. Passavant Hospital (the first Protestant hospital in America and which is now part of UPMC), the first Protestant orphanage in America, the Lutheran Children's Home in Zelienople (now Glade Run Lutheran Services), hospitals in Chicago, Jacksonville, Ill., and Milwaukee and the Chicago Lutheran Seminary are examples of the many



institutions Passavant founded. It was to William Passavant that Louis and Barbara Thiel came with their \$4,000 tithe, asking his help in guiding them how it would be best used. It was his leadership in working with them—and the Pittsburgh Synod—to establish Thiel Hall in 1866 that led to the chartering of Thiel College four years later. Passavant continued to serve the College as a member of the Board of Trustees from 1869 until his death in 1894.

Those connections continue today. The William A. Passavant Memorial Center, our 2,000-seat auditorium, was dedicated in 1972. As can be seen above, his descendants remain connected to the College. Thiel also established the William A. Passavant Distinguished Service Award to recognize church leaders for their service. In keeping with Passavant's pursuit of humanitarian causes, the criteria was expanded in this unprecedented year to recognize such community leaders as **Bretton** and **Stacey Walberg**, who were given the award at this year's Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2021.

The world needs them. They need you.



Make your gift to the The Thiel Fund today!

No graduate gets there alone. Will you help them reach this milestone? Students who succeed are often helped by a supporter who offered aid, shared knowledge or simply believed in them. No matter the season, you can help give the gift of graduation.

Scholarships



Academics



Athletics



Campus Improvements



For more information on how to help,

Contact **Mark Batt '87** by email at mbatt@thiel.edu or by phone at **724-589-2157**

Make your online gift at thiel.edu/giving.



THIEL
COLLEGE



75 College Avenue
Greenville, Pa. 16125
www.thiel.edu

SAVE THE DATE

Oct. 1-3, 2021

WILD WITH PRIDE



Homecoming Weekend