

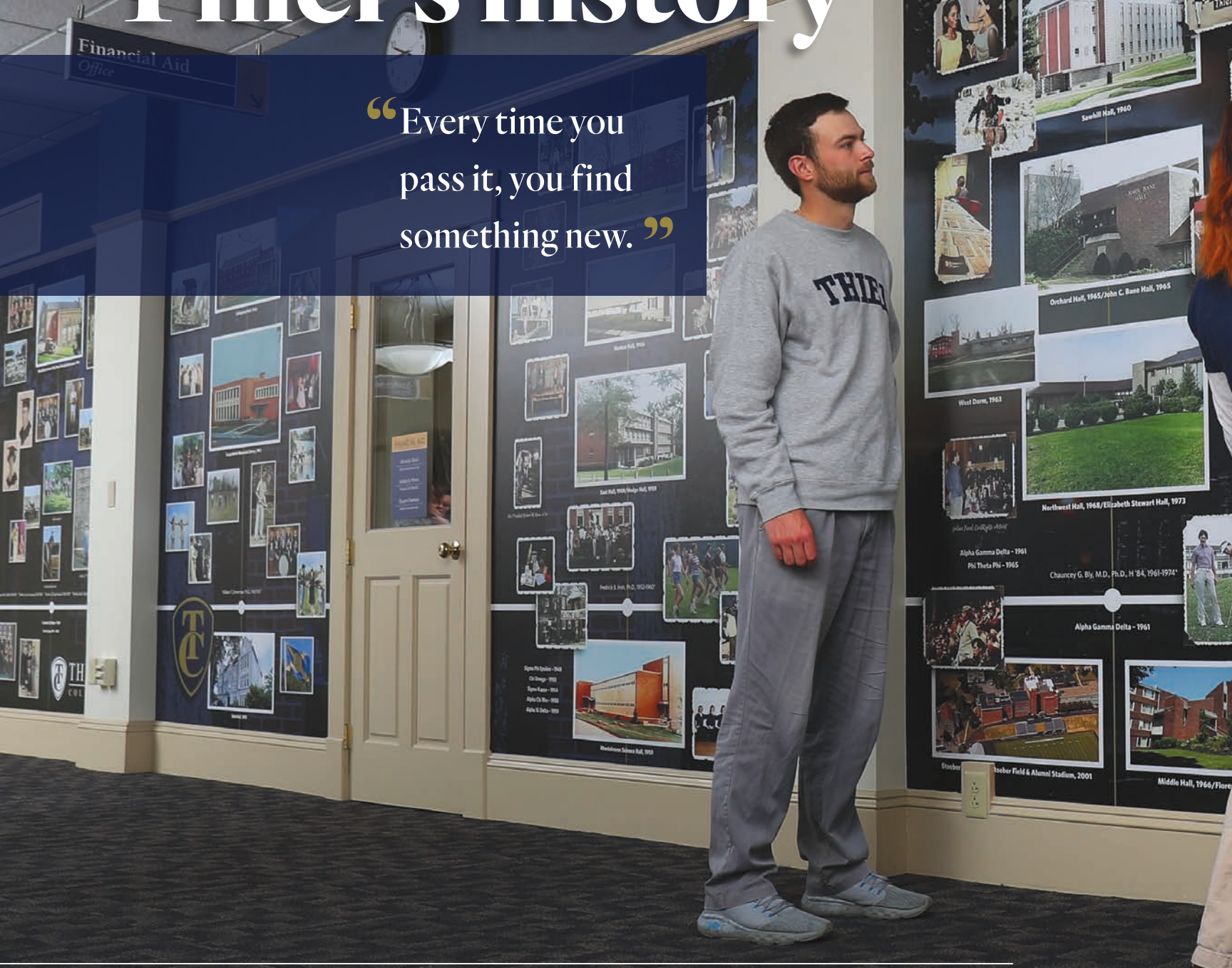
The Bell Launching Leaders



Undergraduate and graduate students set to fill roles as leaders the world needs now

Walking through Thiel's history

“Every time you pass it, you find something new.”



The mural on the first floor of Roth Hall is a tour of Thiel College history from 1866 to the present. It includes photo vignettes of both the significant and the fun campus events, occasions and happenings. The mural includes a list of Thiel's 20 presidents.



Thiel College

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

Dear alumni and friends of the College,

Commencement is a time to reflect on the influence Thiel College has on our students and the impact students and alumni have on Thiel. The stories in this edition of *The Bell* capture those mutual benefits. The commitment of students, alumni, and other stakeholders strengthens Thiel, and the positive influence of the College testifies to the power of Thiel's educational mission.

The dedication of the Dr. Carl '69 H'10 & Theresa Hoffman H'16 Biology Wing in the recently redesigned and renovated Rhodehouse Science Building reflects the impact that the College had on Dr. Hoffman who, after graduating with a biology degree, went on to medical school and a successful medical and professional career. Dr. Hoffman and his wife, Theresa, have generously supported the sciences at Thiel and in doing so have strengthened the College. Similarly, Dr. Frank Maenpa '69 H'21 and his wife, Diane, have supported the creation of innovative laboratory spaces and classrooms in the Rhodehouse Science Building as well as funding for scientific instrumentation. Their generosity also reflects the relationship between the College and Dr. Maenpa, whose scientific career got its start in the chemistry program at Thiel. The renewal of Rhodehouse has inspired students, reinvigorated science faculty, and sparked the generosity of many alumni. We welcome others to join in support of the science and allied health programs at Thiel.

As we think about these innovative connections that make Thiel College such a special place, this edition provides context about what makes a strategic plan such a vital document for the College. The *Thiel 2026: Launching the Leaders the World Needs Now* plan is a living guide to how the College can advance and thrive.

Commencement celebrated the newest group of alumni and leaders. Even as those graduates launched into their new ventures, momentum on campus continues. This summer, undergraduates are traveling with faculty to Italy and Yellowstone; graduate students are concluding their degrees; and new graduate students will join the campus community. The College is making substantial improvements on campus with more than \$3 million of investments in athletic and other facilities. This summer momentum rolls right into the fall of 2022 when we welcome the Class of 2026.

Go Tomcats!

Susan Traverso
Susan Traverso, Ph.D.

President of Thiel College

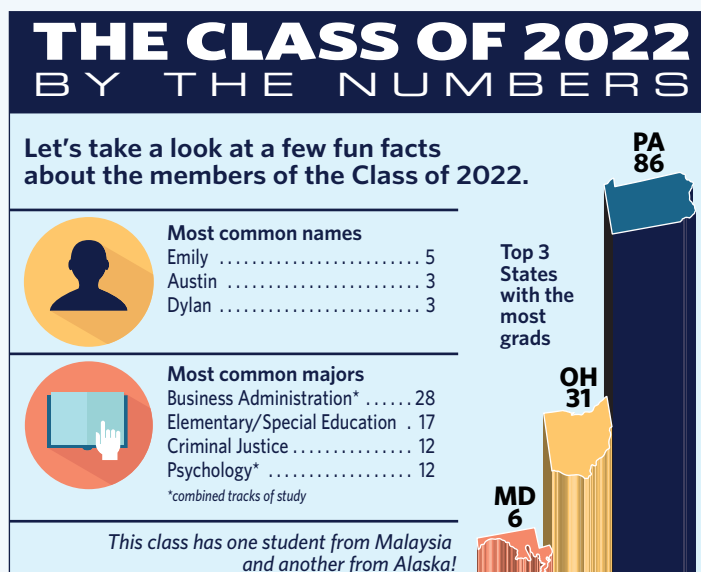
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On the Cover

From left to right **Zach Lyons '22, Alexeis Palonis '22, John Aarestrup '21, MBA'22, Emily Baker '22** and **Jamir Mitchell '22** are among the latest group of Thiel College leaders headed into the world following the College's 148th Commencement Exercises.



Leading examples

Thiel College celebrated graduate and undergraduate members of the classes of 2022 and 2021 by sharing their successes on social media. The students secured jobs or graduate school placements before graduating and are ready to take their place as the “leaders the world needs now!”



Letter to the editor:

The fight for disability inclusion

At some point in our lives, all of us will be touched by disability. In 2022, people who work in my field are still advocating for the rights of people with disabilities. My education at Thiel had a great impact on my path to where I am today. My education gave me a strong background for my advocacy work.

The professors and friends I met along the way gave me invaluable experience and insight into who I am as a person and who I wanted to be as I grew. I applied my experiences to a passion for working with people in the disability community. When I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in August 2020, I entered the disability community in a different “invisible” way. My Thiel education continues to help me through my new unique experiences when it comes to my diagnosis and my professional life.

There are troubling statistics still affecting the disability community today and the lack of awareness surrounding them makes it harder for professionals like me to make big changes in the wider society. I urge our Thiel community to advocate for better equity and inclusion in our local communities; to call for better accessibility; to call on people to stop using the “r-word,” and to vote people into your local governments who care about this community. An accessible and inclusive world benefits all of us.

Kristina Mitchell '10

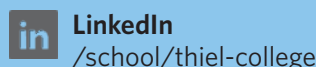
Quality Assurance Manager
Providence Center, Inc. (Maryland)



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



Thiel earns Military Friendly designation



The College was named a 2022-2023 Military Friendly® School, which “is the standard that measures an organization’s commitment, effort and success in creating sustainable and meaningful opportunity for the military community,” according to the Military Friendly® website. Out of over 1,800 colleges and

universities that applied for the designation, Thiel finished in the top 20 percent.

“Thiel College offers 24/7 support for military service members and veterans,” Veteran Liaison Mike Mason said. “As the Thiel College veteran liaison, I take great pride in supporting military service members and veterans throughout the entire college experience.”

Four students awarded Heinz Women in Global Leadership Scholarships

Four students will be making their first international trips this summer after being selected for the Vira I. Heinz Scholarship for Women in Global Leadership. The scholarship is offered to women with at least a 3.0 GPA and who have never traveled outside of the United States. Recipients for this year’s scholarship are:

- **Paige Long '24**, a 2020 graduate of Huntingdon Area Senior High School in Huntingdon, Pa., is majoring in psychology and neuroscience. She will be studying in Austria.
- **Jasmine Phillips '23**, a 2019 graduate of Western Reserve Local Schools in Hubbard, Ohio, is majoring in psychology and minoring in political science. She will be studying in Spain.
- **Kylie Vergnola '24**, a 2020 graduate of Maplewood High School in Guys Mills, Pa., is majoring in political science and sociology. She plans on studying in the Czech Republic.
- **Allison Walsh '24**, a 2020 graduate of General McLane High School in Edinboro, Pa., is majoring in business management and English. She will be studying in Ireland.



First cohort of P.A. students awarded white coats

Members of the first class of the College’s new Physician Assistant Studies program attended a ceremony to

receive their white coats on Saturday, April 2, which represents their completion of the first half of their studies in the 27-month P.A. program. **Alaina Bailey M.S.'23**, of Greenville, Pa.; **Hunter Baxter M.S.'23**, of Gibsonia, Pa.; **Hannah Burress M.S.'23**, of Robertsville, Ohio; **Mollie Kate Cavanaugh M.S.'23**, of Teachey, N.C.; **Samantha Crilley M.S.'23**, of Santa Margarita, Calif.; **Cameron Domblisky M.S.'23**, of Phillipsburg, Pa.; **Edwin Dordal M.S.'23**, of Staten Island, N.Y.; **Monica Ewansik M.S.'23**, of Gibsonia, Pa.; **Shane Fiorentini M.S.'23**, of Bethel Park, Pa.; **Abigail Gallagher M.S.'23**, of Woodbine, Md.; **Nisha Granat M.S.'23**, of Cambridge Springs, Pa.; **Lauren Haines M.S.'23**, of West Chester, Pa.; **Kayley Harnett M.S.'23**, of Edinboro, Pa.; **Lindsay Homan M.S.'23**, of Oil City, Pa.; **Heather Hughes M.S.'23**, of Ridgeley, W.Va.; **Jaskirat Kahlon M.S.'23**, of Sinking Spring, Pa.; **Kayla Kerr M.S.'23**, of Punxsutawney, Pa.; **Patrick Kregeloh M.S.'23**, of Coplay, Pa.; **Katarina Lewis M.S.'23**, of Austintown, Ohio; **Garrett Mang M.S.'23**, of Greensburg, Pa.; **Thomas McIntyre M.S.'23**, of Marietta, Pa.; **Perri Michaels M.S.'23**, of Cranberry Township, Pa.; **Robin Moore M.S.'23**, Emlenton, Pa.; **Gemima Muteba M.S.'23**, of Germantown, Md.; **Amy Neal M.S.'23**, of Erie, Pa.; **Kellianne Nerlich M.S.'23**, Pittsburgh, Pa.; **Krupa Patel M.S.'23**, Garden City Park, N.Y.; **Carolyn Peters M.S.'23**, of Chicago, Ill.; **Miranda Reesman M.S.'23**, of Vandergrift, Pa.; **William Sarniguet M.S.'23**, of Spring, Texas; **Karley Schlensker M.S.'23**, of Fairfield, Ohio; **Kayla Smith M.S.'23**, of St. Petersburg, Fla.; **Caitlin Thompson M.S.'23**, of Butler, Pa.; **Brenden Tully M.S.'23**, of Toledo, Ohio; **Bailey Volk M.S.'23**, of Corry, Pa.; **Julia Wagner '21, M.S.'23**, of Erie, Pa.; **Sara Wick M.S.'23**, of Mendon, N.Y.

Lichtenwalter selected for regional fraternity role

Business major **Charles Lichtenwalter '22**, of Erie, Pa., was named to the Undergraduate Advisory Committee for the Kappa Sigma fraternity. As a representative of Area 3 on the advisory committee, he ensures that undergraduate viewpoints are presented to the Supreme Executive Committee.



Work appointed as new Director of Financial Aid

Michelle Work is the new Director of Financial Aid at Thiel College. She accepted her first position with the College as a financial aid specialist in August 2019 where she remained until her appointment to the position of executive director. In this new position, she succeeds **Cindy Farrell '77**, who worked at the College for 43 years until her retirement.



Counselor's pandemic coping strategies article published

Melanie Broadwater '98, Counseling Center director, had her article, "Incorporating Creativity Into Outreach on a College Campus," published in *Counseling Today*. The website and monthly magazine is a publication of the American Counseling Association. She discussed the challenges brought about by the pandemic and how the Counseling Center adapted to the changing needs of students.



Kulik discusses Ukraine war with local TV station

Assistant Professor of Communication **Lana Kulik, Ph.D.** appeared on Youngstown television to discuss the crisis in Ukraine on February 24. Kulik is from Russia and has family and friends in both Russia and Ukraine.



Hanneman named MACL program director

Associate Professor of Sociology **Jared Hanneman, Ph.D.** has been named the director of the Master of Arts in Communication and Leadership program. The 11-month accelerated master's program graduated its first cohort this year.



Students and faculty member win IBS Awards

Of the eight award nominations the Thiel College Communications Department received for the 82nd annual Intercollegiate Broadcasting System Awards, three individuals were selected as winners at the yearly conference held on March 5. **John Ganiear '22** was named Best Business Director for his work with the WXTC radio station, **Peg Watts** was named Best Faculty Advisor, and **Jacob Orczeck '22** was awarded Best Program Promotion. The other individuals nominated were **Samantha DiBucci '23** for Best Station Promo and Best Variety Program, and **Ethan Stishan '22** for Best Station Manager. Orczeck was also nominated for Best Production Director and Ganiear for Best Newscast.

Johnson blogs about first-generation student experience



Thiel College biology major **Malajah Johnson '23** is writing about her experience as the first person in her family to attend college for a website dedicated to supporting first-gen college students. Johnson's blog posts appear on I'm First!, which Thiel College has partnered with to support and promote first-generation college students. Johnson, of Pittsburgh, is a 2019 graduate of Imani Christian Academy.

• [Find her stories at imfirst.org/blog/](https://imfirst.org/blog/)

More online

thiel.edu/newsroom to find all the latest updates on what's happening at Thiel!

Next generation of leaders benefiting from Nakles' scholarship



By Matt Beuermann '23

Member of the Board of Trustees emeritus **Barbara Nakles** and her late husband, **Dr. Ned J. Nakles H'94**, have been long-time supporters of Thiel College. Both advocates for the arts and education, the Nakles became involved with the College through the Lutheran Church, and

eventually joined the Board of Trustees. Upon her husband's passing in 1999, Barbara Nakles decided to establish a scholarship at Thiel in his honor.

"When my husband died, it was just logical that we should establish a scholarship there in his memory," Nakles said. The Dr. Ned J. Nakles Scholarship is awarded annually to students who are members of the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, in Latrobe, Pa., and hold or maintain an overall grade point average of at least 3.0. Nakles also supports the Dr. John L. Reiner Scholarship through the Trinity Lutheran Church that is offered at Thiel.

After joining the Board of Trustees and visiting the campus multiple times, Nakles felt a strong connection to the College. This connection, combined with an interest in young people, made it easy for Nakles to become involved with scholarships at Thiel.

"The idea was that the scholarships would be granted to local students because there were many students in the area who really could not afford to go to college," Nakles said. "Thiel really worked at finding help for those students, and we wanted to support them."

Nakles also understands the financial struggles that students go through in their pursuit of tertiary education on a personal level. After graduating high school in 1962, scholarship opportunities were limited for everyone, especially women. She attended Penn State for three semesters, supporting herself by working, but the workload became impossible for her to maintain, so she had to leave. Fourteen years later, in 1976, Nakles returned to college as an adult



Hallie Vogt '23 is majoring in business administration as well as minoring in psychology and religion. She is the recipient of the Dr. Ned Nakles Scholarship.

student and finally earned her degree from Seton Hill University, majoring in English with a minor in medieval studies.

"It took me quite a long time, but I did graduate from college," Nakles said. "Because of that experience, I really do recognize the problems that students have, and if we can help them in any way, we really should."

Hallie Vogt '23, a senior majoring in business administration human resources and minoring in psychology and religion, is the recipient of the Dr. Ned J. Nakles Scholarship. She says that scholarships are important because they help relieve some of the stresses of working long hours and give students more time to focus on their studies and extracurricular pursuits.

"The Dr. Ned J. Nakles Scholarship has allowed me to be more selective of how I spend my free time and maximize my college experience through community service, leadership, and fellowship," Vogt said.

While the COVID-19 pandemic of the past couple of years has made it difficult for Nakles and her congregation to be as close to Thiel as they would like, she continues to support these scholarships in the hopes that she can help students grow and expand their creativity.

"A lot of good things can come when you let people's creativity flourish," she said.



The many connections of the
Spence legacy

Lead gift for renovations at Academic Center latest tie for family to the College

Daniel Spence and his late wife, **Dorothy**, were more than just neighbors to Thiel College.

Daniel Spence can trace his family connections to Thiel back more than 100 years and has now secured that legacy will reach future generations of students.

The College recognized the generosity of Daniel and Dorothy at the College's 2022 Academic Honors Convocation April 8 in the William A. Passavant Memorial Center.

Spence and his wife have each provided \$2 million of a \$4 million gift to renovate the Academic Center. In their honor, the building will be re-named the Daniel and Dorothy Spence Academic Center. Spence said the motivation for their gift was to help generations to follow and to honor his family's longtime ties to the College.

"Dottie was always a very kind and generous person. In the final days of her life, she suggested that I should help people," Spence said. "It is my hope that this gift to help renovate the Academic Center will satisfy Dottie's

wish and will in fact help students for generations to come."

"One of the largest gifts in the history of the College, the Spence gift is inspiring the generosity of others, who like Dan and Dottie want to invest

and the **Rev. Dr. Nathan F. R. Harter '41**, were also Thiel graduates. William was inducted into Thiel's athletic Hall of Fame in 1986. Rev. Dr. Harter taught classics at Thiel in the 1950s.

Daniel's grandfather, **Nathan Warren**

Harter, came to Thiel in 1911 as professor of mathematics, astronomy and geology and to coach football, golf, and tennis. He was known to meet arriving students at the train station, help them get jobs, and, during the lean times of the Depression, work without pay in order to help keep Thiel afloat. Spurred by a "unanimous resolution of the student body," according to the *Greenville Record-Argus*, Harter Hall was named after him when he died in 1952.

The second-floor atrium of the Haer Family Science and Arts Connector, also a gift of the Spences, is

named the Nathan Warren Harter Atrium. Dan's grandmother, **Besse Harter**, was also active in the Thiel community, including, at one point, running the Ridgeway Hall dining hall.



*From left to right are **Dan Macri**, **Ruthie Foster** (the late Dorothy Spence's sister), **Daniel Spence**, **Virginia Leibach** (Dorothy's sister) and her husband **William Leibach** standing under the portrait of Daniel Spence's grandfather, **Nathan Warren Harter**, following the public announcement of Daniel and Dorothy Spence's gift of \$4 million to the College.*

in the success of students at Thiel," President **Susan Traverso, Ph.D.** said.

Daniel's mother, **Betty Harter Spence '37**, graduated from Thiel at the age of 16 with a degree in mathematics. Daniel's uncles, **William Harter '33**

#IOWordtip

Alumni offer advice to the Class of 2022

“The Door Opened. The Path Widened. The Tradition Now Continues.”

—Mark Renwick Thompson '84

“Leave your comfort zone—you won't regret it.”

—Quinn Ursprung '19

“Stay one more year!”

—Daniel M. Rotunno '95

“If it is to be, it is up to me.”

—Jeff Morris '06

“Your focus will determine your reality. Trust what you know.”

—Damen L. Taylor '95

COMMENCEMENT

“Never stop creating and chasing dreams: Learn. Grow. Forge Forward.”

—Cynthia Metzler '10

“Do more than is required. Do it well.”

—Janet S...

Commencement Exercises launch Class of '22

Mansfield Pediatrics founder **Robert Burns, M.D. '74** addressed the graduates and received an honorary doctorate during the College's 148th Commencement Exercises on May 8. **Kathryn Held, M.D. '75** was also awarded an honorary degree. She is president of the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements. She is also an associate professor at Harvard University and a radiation biologist at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Professor of Chemistry **Kathryn Frantz, Ph.D.** retired this spring and was awarded faculty emerita status.

Emily Baker '22, Brianna Bialota '22, Rachel Breckenridge '22, Megan Brewer '22, Courtney Grubbs '22, brothers **Alexander Lutz '22** and **Daniel Lutz '22,** and **Molly Shepler '22** were recognized as valedictorians, each graduating with a perfect 4.0 grade point average. **Sydney Pilarski '22** was the salutatorian.



More online

Go to **THIEL.EDU** to see a photo gallery, ceremony video links and news from the 148th Commencement.

Spaces in Rhodehouse Science Building dedicated to Hoffman, Maenpa

Spaces in the recently updated Rhodehouse Science building were dedicated in recognition of **Diane and Frank Maenpa, Ph.D. '69, H'21** and **Theresa H'16** and **Carl Hoffman Jr., D.O. '69, H'10** on May 6.

The second floor of the building will be known as the **Dr. Carl '69 H'10 & Theresa Hoffman H'16 Biology Wing**. In the wing will be the **Dr. Frank '69 H'21 & Diane Maenpa Interdisciplinary Research Laboratory**, **Tallbacka Lecture Hall**, **Maenpa Lecture Hall** and an **Instrumentation Laboratory**.



“Don't be surprised by how little you learn from your successes or how much you learn from your failures.”

—Philip W. Namy '62

“Travel now. Experience later.”

"n't forget to be kind."
—Moffield McClintock '64

"A million dollars will never be enough, but love is!"
—Kate MacQueen Ramtahal '96

"90% of success is showing up on time! Be present!"
—Rod Wilt '86

Legacies

Families celebrate their Thiel College connections



Michelle Stahl Reefer '90 and her daughter, **Hannah Uschock '22**.

"Know thyself.
 ...Greek
 Philosophy."
**—Audra Schell
 Ganiear '93**

"It's OK if it
 takes time to
 get there. :)"
**—Crystal
 Durachko '18**

"Have enough
 courage to start
 and enough
 heart to finish."
**—Sean
 Willins '99**

"It's OK to
 follow your
 passion, and
 not the money."
**—Sara
 Wise '04**

"Never Quit.
 Celebrate
 Victories. Don't
 be Afraid. Trust
 God."
**—Walter
 Rosado '07**

"You are your
 hardest critic.
 So, be kind to
 yourself."
**—Victoria
 Hermann '17**

"Treat everyone
 with great
 respect, no
 matter their
 position."
**—Meghan
 Speer '02**



Trustee **Nate Neely '95** and his daughter **Maddison Neely '22** on stage during the ceremony.



Jacob Orczeck '22 (center) and his parents **Laura (Werner) Orczeck '88** (left) and **Dr. Shawn Orczeck '87** (right). Sisters, **Jessica Orczeck '19** and **Katherine (Orczeck) Peese '18**, and brother-in-law **Blake Peese '19**.



Audra Schell Ganiear '93, her son, **John Ganiear '22**, and her mother, **Joanne Schell**, who was Director of Career Services from 1986 to 2008.



Sisters **Emily Harriman '22** and **Courtney Harriman '20**.



Karen Adams '73 and her niece **Katrina Deckinger '22**.

Experience the world. Never stop learning."
—Catherine (Sulc) Pribozie '00

"Tomcat: Never quit. Never quit. Never quit. Never quit. EVER!"
—Michael Capozzoli '94

Center for Speech-Language Services growing as a community resource

By Dick Davis

The Thiel College clinic within its Center for Speech-Language Services continues to provide free assistance to clients in need of speech, language, cognition, voice, and hearing screenings and evaluations. The Center and clinic opened about two years ago in the Glen Johnson Center on campus.

David S. Ford, Ph.D., the clinic director, Assistant Professor and a speech-language pathologist at the Center for Speech-Language Services, gives several reasons for its increase.

"I attribute growth to the fact that we have cutting-edge faculty working within the Center, using state-of-the-art equipment and all of the services we provide are free to clients," says Ford. "Since the start, we have been on an upward trajectory. Each semester, the number of clients we service increases. There is also



a fairly diverse client population, with respect to wide-ranging disorders, which gives our students the opportunity to work within the breadth of what our field has to offer."

Two clients of the Clinic praise its services and its staff.

Going to the clinic was a life-enhancing experience for **Margaret "Peg" Lehto**, 81, of West Salem Township in Mercer County. Surgery

for oral cancer 20 years ago and extensive follow-up chemotherapy and radiation left Lehto with a prosthesis for a reconfigured jaw and a liquid-only diet.

"The clinic staff taught me exercises to use to ensure better swallowing to avoid choking, which had become an issue in recent months due to a locked

Fifth graduate program, clinical mental health counseling, begins this fall

The inaugural class of students for the new Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's degree program will begin taking classes this fall.

This program will prepare students to become professional counselors who provide ethically, culturally, and developmentally competent counseling services that are evidence-based and that enhance the wellness of individuals, groups, families, and the greater community.

Graduates of this program will be prepared to become leaders and advocates who confront injustice and provide quality counseling services within diverse communities. The program intends to apply for national accreditation from

the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs soon after the first cohort graduates in 2025.

Licensed Professional Counselors are graduate-level-trained mental health providers dedicated to working with individuals, groups, and families in treating mental, behavioral, and emotional disorders and conditions.

For more information about the clinical mental health program or the business administration, communication and leadership, physician assistant or speech-language pathology graduate programs, contact the Office of Admissions at admissions@thiel.edu or 724-589-2345.

jaw from radiation treatment,” Lehto says.

“I praise the staff and students with all my heart. I read about the clinic about a year ago in the paper, reached out, and they helped me immediately. Student therapists Nicole Plassio and Madeleine Campbell connected with me and taught me proper exercises and techniques to breathe and talk. We have become good friends along the way.”

The students appreciated the chance to work with clients, too.

“Working with (Peg) was an absolute delight. She was always so willing to do the hard work involved even during the rough days,” said speech-language pathology graduate student **Madeleine Campbell M.S.'22**. “I always looked forward to getting to work with her.”

Nicole Plassio M.S.'21 said it was a wonderful experience working with Peg.

“The patients who I met while treating them at the clinic were nothing short of amazing and special,” she said. “Peg Lehto taught the student clinicians, including myself, a lot about what it meant to not only be a good clinician but a great person, too. There really are no words to describe how special Peg is, to the Thiel College Clinic—but also to everyone that she meets. She is a prime example of a patient who makes a clinician want to do (her/his) job and to be proud while doing so.”

Ashley Josay Zullo, Thiel’s vice president for enrollment management, is pleased with the progress of her son, Cameron, who started visiting the clinic last fall.

Five-year-old Cameron had some difficulty in Hermitage kindergarten pronouncing the letters “l,” “r,” and



***Madeleine Campbell M.S.'22** works with Greenville-area resident Peg Lehto during a visit to Thiel's free speech-language services clinic.*

“s,” which prompted Zullo to pursue speech therapy.

“As an employee, it was nice to receive valuable professional services for my son,” Zullo says. “It was also great see it with my son as a client. The student therapists are fantastic.”

Zullo says Cameron enjoyed his therapy time at Thiel as it became part of his weekly routine. He earned a diploma in December after visiting the clinic once a week for three months.

Students in Thiel’s Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology program provide services under the supervision of certified and licensed speech-language pathology faculty. It provides clinical experiences and helps students earn 400 clinical hours needed for certification and licensure.

Lehto adds her appreciation of the Clinic.

“I thank Thiel for starting the clinic and the Master’s program,” Lehto says. “We have a real need in the region for its services. Plus, it gives students a chance at a very rewarding career of helping people.”

Hermitage officials consult MBA students for help in growing food waste to energy program

Thiel College partnered with the City of Hermitage, Pa., to collaborate on research efforts to benefit the Food Waste to Energy Program that is operated by the Hermitage Water Pollution Control Department.

The Food Waste to Energy Program converts commercial food waste substances into electricity. To supplement the waste organics the facility is currently accepting, the program is looking to research whether residential food wastes might be utilized as well.

The program tasked Master of Business Administration students with helping to develop this research to determine the efficiency of converting residential food waste into energy. **Jeff Meier**, the Hermitage eCenter Executive Director, and **Tom Darby**, the Hermitage Food Waste to Energy Facilities Superintendent, were instrumental in beginning this collaboration with the College.

“This was a great opportunity for our program to be looked at by an outside entity with no knowledge of what we have been doing,” Darby said. “I feel that the students laid bare the main reasons our services have not been understood or even known about in our community. Our department is made up of technical personnel who are unfamiliar with trying to sell a product and a service. Hopefully, through this collaboration we can start to address some of those weaknesses (the) students discovered and start to be more connected to our community.”



More than a plan

New strategic plan is a living document that will guide the College as it launches the leaders the world needs now

President Susan Traverso, Ph.D.
Interviewed by Carol Brzozowski

Susan Traverso, Ph.D., president of Thiel College, always tells students “If you can figure out what your greatest values are and what brings you that deep happiness, stay close to that. Life is going to take you down a lot of different paths, sometimes with unrelated chapters. If you follow your deepest values, you’ll find your way to a meaningful and purposeful life, which is a phrase from our mission statement.”

Indeed, President Traverso’s life has taken her down different paths.

She has a Ph.D. in history from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She served in the Peace Corps as an English teacher in North Africa. Her career path led her to work as an associate professor, a dean, and a provost at other schools before landing at Thiel six years ago as its president.

In this Q & A, President Traverso discusses the successes of Thiel College’s last strategic plan and the driving factors for the new plan.

Q: You’ve led the College through the previous five-year plan. What have been some of its successes?

A: The last plan, ‘Thiel 2021: Student Success,’ moved the College from being an undergraduate institution to a college that offers five master’s level graduate programs and led to the addition of six new undergraduate programs.

We completely redesigned our approach to recruiting undergraduate students to make sure we were finding students who were excited about coming to Thiel, whose families were excited about it and ready to make an investment to help these young people be successful.

That started with recruiting through admissions and our specialized programs like our Dietrich Honors Institute and our athletic programs looking for talented student-athletes. We also increased the size of institutional scholarships based on merit and need.

The shift was a multi-year process and stood the test of COVID. Over the last two years—with the exception of highly-selective, nationally-known schools—nearly every other school saw a decrease in enrollment. Thiel grew enrollment.

The plan originally called for more substantial growth in undergraduate enrollment. We didn’t grow as much in undergraduate, but combining the graduate and the undergraduate numbers, we approached what had been targeted.

A third success was rearranging our finances and fundraising and getting a quiet start on what is now going to be a major fundraising campaign. This success has made possible a complete renovation of the Rhodehouse Science Building and residence halls.

Q: What are the driving factors leading to the goals articulated in the new plan, which includes innovation and leadership, being dynamic and bold, reach and impact, and resources and investment?

A: I view this plan as growing out of the strength of the Student Success Plan.

We want to build on the College’s commitment to student success and prepare students to be the innovative, future-looking, creative leaders the world needs. The focus on leadership and innovation in Goal One of the new plan reflects conversations with a wide range of stakeholders, including our regional employers. What we heard most often was they needed people who could innovate, look ahead and understand not only where their field is now and operate effectively—they wanted people who could lead in their field, see down the road, grow in that direction and grow their organization.

As part of the new strategic plan, we are implementing a new four-year undergraduate student development model, ‘The Tomcat Way.’ We want to work with first-year



More online

Find more information about the Strategic Plan at
<https://bit.ly/Thiel2026plan>

Marvin E. Hill '88
Retired Ohio State Highway Patrol captain

The strategic plan is critical in preparation of the new student, Hill said.

"The new student requires the ability to learn on campus and virtually because of the unfortunate pandemic," he adds.

The plan means Thiel is ready for upcoming challenges due to enrollment decline in the U.S., notes Hill.

"There is a lot of discussion about loan forgiveness as students do not want to take on debt that federal loans create," he says. "Students are looking for specialized certificates and technical skills that help them get employed immediately after college. Thiel should continue offering hybrid versions of these specialized and technical education opportunities."

Hill notes that greater diversity among the student population creates transformation in education, expectations, behavior and thought.

"Our world is evolving. Our society needs to catch up," he points out. "The world is fed up with racism and discrimination. It's absolutely essential and critical for Thiel College to continue educating in the realm of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in order to stay in stride with how our world is looking at global citizens."

For Hill personally, friendships and relationships are what made his experience at Thiel College "so impactful and memorable," he says. "We are Thiel College. I love my alma mater. Thiel College is where I got the courage to gain more knowledge. I'm thankful for great professors and mentors at Thiel."

“ We are Thiel College. I love my alma mater. Thiel College is where I got the courage to gain more knowledge. I'm thankful for great professors and mentors at Thiel. ”

Marvin E. Hill '88



students where they are, help them explore their future potential and sense of purpose, and then grow from that to engage them in a deep way.

The first goal overlays all aspects of Thiel's undergraduate education. It's going to be the hardest to realize since it will require a culture shift. When you're on campus, you're being asked to think creatively, engage in the world creatively, bring innovative ideas and grow as a leader.

The second goal of 'bold and dynamic' is a recommitment to every aspect of the Student Success Plan. You'll see recruitment strategies, strategies around adding to our graduate programs and making sure students succeed in graduating.

I think of Goal Three as maximizing our reach beyond the campus in a strategic way that will strengthen the College and the region. When we talked with campus stakeholders, trustees, and students, there was a lot of emphasis on the importance of Thiel being even more strategically tied to this region and specifically to Greenville.

Thiel has done this since its inception. We're the largest employer in the Town of Greenville. Goal Three establishes community outreach on equal footing with the educational work we do.

Strategies that will expand Thiel's community outreach include workforce development programs, enlarged use of campus facilities by community organizations, and faculty and staff providing their professional expertise to regional businesses and organizations.

Community outreach also includes students doing internships, clinical rotations, and workplace shadowing.

When you talk with employers about what they are asking of fresh-out-of-college graduates, they say, 'did they have an internship in which they did meaningful work where they developed as a leader?'

We want to make sure that the employers in our area are enthusiastic about taking on interns from Thiel during the academic year in a structured educational learning experience or over the summer and then opening career opportunities to them after graduation.

We also plan to have at least one degree program offered in a format in which people who have started college but never finished could enroll at Thiel and finish their college degree.

Goal Four is focused on resources. The most important resource is our faculty and staff, making sure we are

recruiting and retaining a talented group of faculty and staff from a wide range of backgrounds who bring enthusiasm, skill and innovation.

We're ensuring that we are making good use of and enlarging our resources. We envision a substantial fundraising effort in this five-year period that's well underway already and will further grow our endowment, the size of our annual fund effort and provide major gifts in support of programs, facilities and scholarships. We are fortunate to have many generous donors who can attest that Thiel changed their lives.

Q: How did the COVID-19 pandemic affect the way education was delivered by faculty and received by students and will be going forward?

A: It did rapidly introduce the ability and the skill of offering instruction remotely, but still at a high quality. We surveyed our students and, by and large, they felt that the faculty were right with them and they were having good instruction when students could not be on campus that spring of 2020.

Thiel's brand is personalized education. We love the small classroom where students and faculty build a classroom community and learn from each other.

In the fall of 2020 when many other colleges remained online, we invited students back to campus and, while following health guidelines, we resumed in-class instruction and campus activities.

The most important lesson we learned from COVID is the importance of our commitment to caring for people, which has always been part of the Thiel ethos. While COVID sparked tensions, we naturally avoided that tension or antagonism and came together as a community.

Q: What are we learning about today's workforce developments, such as the Great Resignation and the growing gig economy, that is informing how students need to be prepared for the future workforce?

A: The labor force's disruption reflects the desire for innovation, just what we are advancing in Goal One of the new plan. It's an expression of workers saying, 'we don't want the same old, same old. We want to be innovative (and) creative. We want to approach work in a way that could be combined with our life'. That could bring a lot of dynamic new energy (and) new ways of doing things. Our students who are graduating must be prepared to go into a labor market that's still going through a lot of disruption. At the same time, there's a lot of opportunity.

“Thiel has changed my life in a positive way. Thiel has given me a welcoming and supportive environment to hopefully make a positive impact on our next generation of leaders.”



Steve Kandray

Steve Kandray
Assistant Professor of Business and Marketing,
Assistant Director of the Haller Enterprise Institute,
Department of Business Administration & Accounting

Kandray notes that having a strong strategic plan is important for any institution's success and is of particular importance for Thiel College due to the changing landscape of higher education.

“Innovative technologies, changing national demographics and the pandemic have brought new challenges and opportunities that make good strategic planning especially critical,” he adds.

“Primarily, the plan strengthens Thiel's value proposition by positioning the College as not only a place where students succeed but a place where they can thrive as leaders. For Thiel, the strategic plan is a major step in differentiating us from other liberal arts colleges.”

On a personal level, Kandray views creativity and innovation as some of the key values expressed in Thiel College's strategic plan.

“As an educator, seeing these values emphasized inspires me to go above and beyond expectations and bring innovation to my teaching, class structure and assignments,” he notes. “The strategic plan invites all of us to focus on being more innovative regardless of our role in the Thiel community.”

“Thiel has changed my life in a positive way. In my two years here, I've met wonderful colleagues, inspiring students and a whole host of other great people. Thiel has given me a welcoming and supportive environment to hopefully make a positive impact on our next generation of leaders.”

Mike McKinney '02
Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students

McKinney notes during the COVID-19 pandemic, “many institutions paused their initiatives and held off on making new investments. Thiel did the opposite. We continued to push forward using our previous strategic plan.”

What Thiel was able to accomplish was remarkable, he notes: increased enrollment and retention, bond refinancing of debt, millions of dollars in renovations, and several new graduate programs. The new plan will follow suit, he says.

“Even when the external environment creates pressures for the institution resulting in some very tough decisions, the plan will be used to help sort through those decisions and ensure we remain focused on what’s important,” he says.

McKinney says he believes the plan will help the College “actualize some very important outcomes that Thiel not only needs as an institution, but also that our students need from Thiel, that Greenville needs from Thiel, and that our surrounding region and the world needs from Thiel and institutions like Thiel.

“It’s focused on launching leaders who will have seen and experienced the benefits of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment, who understand what is needed from good leaders, and who will take what they learned and experienced at Thiel and become influencers in their professions, organizations, and communities.”

McKinney says he benefitted from an education at Thiel that has impacted all areas of his life.

“ (The strategic plan is) focused on launching leaders who will have seen and experienced the benefits of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment, who understand what is needed from good leaders. ”

Mike McKinney '02



Q: Diversity, equity and inclusion are becoming more of a priority at institutions of higher learning. You are the first woman president of Thiel. What does this mean for Thiel?

A: The significance of my presidency is that our students can see that a woman can be a president just as a man can be a president. There are all kinds of differences—sexual orientation, race, gender, and religion—that can enrich leadership. We want to have a variety of people with different lived experiences in leadership roles because organizations make better decisions when they are more diverse.

When we updated the mission statement in the Student Success Plan in '21, we talked about students finding success in a diverse and inclusive learning environment. Thiel had always been committed to diversity. We were established as a co-educational institution when very few private schools were. While we were founded by Lutherans, we’re always open to all religious traditions, and founded right after the Civil War, the College was open to all students regardless of race.

About 25 percent of our entering class each year are students from racial minorities, primarily African-Americans. People are often surprised by that given our rural location. The racial diversity on our campus makes the College so much stronger because students learn best in environments where students are different, one from the other.

We’re also tremendously diverse in terms of the economic background of students as well as politically diverse. This allows for rich conversations across the wide range of background and political perspectives. This is not happening now in the wider world but is characteristic of the Thiel community.

Q: How do you see Thiel preparing graduates who want to stay in western Pennsylvania, what the region's needs will be five years from now and Thiel's role in community outreach and serving as a community resource?

A: I'm on the board of the Penn-Northwest Development Corporation of Mercer County. That organization is very committed to workforce development and recognizing that unless your workforce is growing and has the skills for the jobs that are in the county now, it can't grow.

We want to get students out into our region meeting people with the goal to grow the talent of Mercer County through targeted placement and internships or postgraduate job placements.

The local economy has changed since the '80s when there were larger manufacturing firms here, but there are economic opportunities growing in and around Mercer County. Employers I interact with regularly are hungry for talented, hard-working students.

Q: Please discuss the importance of having the guidance of the Board of Trustees serving as the eyes and ears necessary for successful strategies going forward.

A: Thiel has phenomenal Trustees. I am impressed with them because of the depth of their commitment and their strategic vision for Thiel. All of our interaction with the board is focused around the College's strategic goals and the progress we are making to achieve those goals. We have a set of metrics we're watching aligned to the goals to measure progress.

Over the last six years, the Board of Trustees has substantially diversified. The Board includes more non-alums, more women, people of color, different sexual orientations, and a range of faith backgrounds. They wanted to make sure that decisions about the College benefited from a variety of diverse perspectives.

Q: Is there anything you'd like to add?

A: I always want to take a moment to talk about the families—the parents and the grandparents—who have lots of options as their students are making a choice about college. They typically defer to their students to make a good choice to pick the college and are going to pick the right major. Many of them have saved in 529 accounts or they're working an extra job so their kids can go to college.

We love to see parents on campus—at athletic competitions, academic presentations, and, especially at commencement when they're so proud. I always want to make sure that they're not left out of the Thiel story. They support students—graduate or undergraduate—and cheer their students on their way through Thiel.

We're a family-friendly place. While other colleges and deans might make cynical comments about helicopter parents, we welcome the families as we work together to support student success.



Liza Schaeff
Director of Career Development

Thiel's strategic plan serves as a living document to help navigate the next five years and beyond to ensure sustainability and growth by meeting student needs, planning for student retention and positioning Thiel as a solid community partner, says Schaeff.

Innovation, technology, leadership—including faculty, staff, administration, and students—community partnerships and diversity, equity and inclusion are key components of the Thiel 2026 Strategic Plan, richly influenced by key internal and external stakeholders, she notes.

For Schaeff personally, components focusing on expanding existing partnerships and creating new collaborations with businesses and other organizations to expand programming, internships, and other opportunities for students is “especially exciting.”

By doing so, it provides local businesses with talent and students with meaningful learning opportunities... leading to sustained growth for both, she notes.

As a Tomcat Way committee member, she also finds the efforts to create confident, creative problem-solving future leaders personally rewarding.

“From a career development perspective, this programming helps students connect with their majors, personal calling, and experiences to become confident leaders and successful graduates and can help students achieve academic success,” she says.

Schaeff says she values being a member of Thiel's Academic Affairs staff and hopes to continue contributing to student success and retention.

“I believe in the mission and vision of the institution,” she says. “Being a part of the strategic planning committee allowed me to have a contributing voice in securing Thiel's future.”

“ I believe in the mission and vision of the institution. Being a part of the strategic planning committee allowed me to have a contributing voice in securing Thiel's future. ”

Liza Schaeff

The lineup card

A quick rundown of important moments in Tomcat athletics this spring.

Schaly wins 600th career game

Baseball coach **Joe Schaly** earned his 600th career win as the Tomcats defeated the Geneva Golden Tornadoes, 11-8, in a Presidents' Athletic Conference game on March 30.

Schaly took over a 2-20 program in September of 1999 and quickly managed to point the program in the right direction. During his 22 years as the program's head coach, Schaly and the Tomcats have won a regular-season Presidents' Athletic Conference championship and a PAC Tournament title.

During the 2005 season Schaly became the winningest coach in the program's history.

Bauman named Tomcat football coach

Sam Bauman was named the head football coach on Feb. 23.

He served as the College of Wooster's defensive coordinator the past seven seasons and was the special teams coordinator in 2013 and 2014. Bauman was the linebackers coach at the College of Wooster in 2013.

"I am very excited to be named the next head football coach at Thiel College," Bauman said.

Thiel opens the 2022 season on Sept. 3 in New Jersey against Montclair State. The Tomcats' first home game is Sept. 10 against Allegheny.

Thiel hosts, wins multiple events at Tomcat Invitational

The Thiel College men's and women's track and field teams hosted the Tomcat Invitational at the Dr. Barry '70 and Carol '71 Stamm Track & Field Complex on April 16. The Tomcats featured three individual winners and a relay team win. **Tumba Powell '23** (pictured left) won the high jump. She was also the anchor leg of Thiel's first-place 4x400-meter team, also including **Kaylee Suarez '23**, **Emily Main '23**, and **Sha'nia Stiers-Royal '25**. **Tessa Weaver '24** also won the shot put. **Peyton Ennis '22** won the triple jump for the second-consecutive year.

Wrestling team wins 23rd PAC championship

The wrestling team won its 23rd Presidents' Athletic Conference championship on Feb. 12 at Waynesburg University's Rudy Marisa Fieldhouse.

The team title was the first for the Tomcats since 2016. It also tied Thiel with past conference member John Carroll for the most in league history.

Thiel racked up 128.5 points Saturday to win the title. W&J finished second (103 points).

Evan Whiteside '24 (pictured on the left), who won the 125-pound title, is the first Thiel wrestler to be named the PAC's Most Outstanding Wrestler since **Brett Beltz** in 2016. PAC Newcomer of the Year honors went to Tomcat sophomore **Hunter Thompson '24**, who won the 133-pound title.

Craig Thurber, the Rod E. Wilt '86 Head Coach for Thiel Wrestling, was honored as the PAC Coach of the Year for the ninth time in his career.



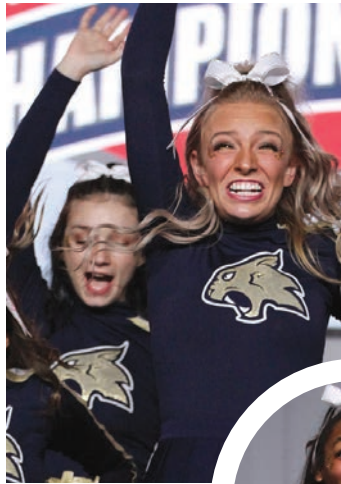
Tomcats are something to cheer about

Thiel College places second in the nation

The cheer team finished second at the National Cheerleaders Association College Nationals in Daytona, Fla. on April 8.

Competing in the Open Spirit Rally category, the Tomcats scored a 92.8 and finished second to Henderson University. Thiel was first in its category after the preliminary round. The 11 members of Thiel's team were making their first trip to nationals. "Taking a team to nationals is every coach's goal, so placing second in the nation is just the cherry on top of a fantastic year," said cheer coach **Randall Burnett M.A.'22**. "This team holds a special place in my heart because they have overcome so many obstacles."

Alumni of Delta Sigma Phi and other alumni offset the cost of the trip.



Beeghly upgrades include new playing surface, bleachers and scoreboard

Work is underway on renovations and upgrades for the Beeghly Gym and will be complete for the fall athletic season. The \$2 million in upgrades will include a new LED scoreboard, a refurbished main entrance, a new handicapped-accessible entrance, additional equipment storage areas, a new playing surface and an upgraded heating and cooling system.

The new competition floor will be named in honor of **Frank Maenpa, Ph.D. '69 H'21**, a member of the Board of Trustees and an avid supporter of the College, and his wife, Diane, in honor of their generosity and dedication to the College. Work began in early April and will last throughout the summer.



Match Day continues record-setting pace

The one-day fundraiser Match Day set records for money raised and total donors for its Paws Across America event on Feb. 24.

In addition to raising an event-record \$283,000, participants walked, ran or rode 2,752 miles (more than enough to cover the distance from New York to Los Angeles through Greenville, Pa., of course). For the seventh straight year, the number of donors for the event increased, with 579 donors contributing.

"Meeting our goal is tremendous, but breaking a single-day fundraising record is a testament to the enthusiasm and spirit of our donors and supporters," Thiel College Vice President for College Advancement **Roberta Leonard** said.

As an added incentive for participation, Match Day organizers set a goal to get participants to pledge miles in an effort to connect a pathway across the country. Students, faculty, staff and friends of the College spent the day walking or jogging laps at the Dr. Barry '70 and Carol Stamm '71 Track & Field Complex walking or running 625 miles. The 408 participants made 2,500 laps around the Colonel Charles "Bud" Manes '58 Track during a cold February day where temperatures were below freezing for most of the day. Their mileage was added to the 2,100-plus miles that were walked, jogged or rode by the members of the Thiel College community prior to Match Day.

Mogle takes role as director of the Thiel Fund

David Mogle is the new Director of The Thiel Fund, the largest source of unrestricted funds at the College.

Mogle will oversee the annual fund, which raises money for areas of the greatest need and scholarship at the College.

Prior to Thiel, Mogle was an Advancement Officer at The Marvelwood School, in Kent, Conn. from 2015-2019. Mogle joined the Thiel community in July 2020 as an admission counselor.

Mogle has a legacy connection to Thiel. His father, **David B. Mogle '71**, and his late mother, **Deborah "Debbie" (Ajak) Mogle '75**, graduated from Thiel.



More online

Infographic breaking down the day, photos and videos available at <https://bit.ly/TCmatchday22recap>

New programs honor alumni, emeritus faculty member and the region's educators

High school educators and influential alumni from the fields of communication and science were recognized with two separate programs earlier this year.

In February, **Steve Vinton**, a media and communication teacher from Penn-Trafford High School was named Communication and Media Teacher of the Year based on online voting and a nomination by **John Robbins '24**. As part of the recognition celebration, Thiel College graduate **Jim Cunningham '77** was given the 2022 James Pedas '50, H'89 Communications Professional of the Year Award. Cunningham is a senior executive producer at WQED Multimedia. Next year, local high school teachers will be awarded the Jim Cunningham '77 Media Mentor award.

In March, the College recognized Maplewood High School teacher **Jason Drake** with the 2022 Patrick C. Hecking, Ph.D. Science Educator of the Year Award and alumnus **Walter Binder, Ph.D. '73** with the Simon Chiu, M.D., Ph.D.

'73 Science Professional of the Year. Fort Cherry teacher **Pam Amos** won the Sarah Taylor-Rogers, Ph.D. '69, H'19 STEM Educator of the Year. The Science Educator of the Year award is named for Thiel College Emeritus Professor of Physics **Patrick Hecking, Ph.D.**, who retired in 2021 after 35 years of teaching at Thiel College.

The STEM award is named for former member of the Thiel College Board of Trustees Taylor-Rogers. She was the first woman to head the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. She passed away in June 2021.

Binder is a retired biotech executive. He was one of the founders of INOVA Diagnostics, a San Diego-based company specializing in developing and producing blood test kits for autoimmune diseases including systemic lupus erythematosus. The award is named for Chiu, who is an Associate Professor in the Department of Neuropsychiatry at Western University in London, Ontario.

– 1950s –



Bob Wetzler '54 turned 90 on Jan. 30. The photo shows him and his 96-year-old sister sitting on the couch with his niece, Linda, her husband, Bob, and his other niece, Carol, standing behind them. Bob's mother was raised in Erie and his dad in Beaver County. Anyone who might remember him with a saying from his dad, "The Lord Bless Thee and Keep Thee Going!"



Donald H. Amy '56 sends an updated photo from his home in Edmond, Okla. where he lives with his wife, Sue.

– 1960s –



Howard Smith '61 and his wife, Jo, settled down in Richmond, Va. He was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha and played on the Thiel tennis team.



Christopher Shinkman '62 sends a picture of his grandson, Ben, who is a junior at Georgetown Day School in Washington, D.C.

Margaret D. (Duncan) Haretos '64 lives in Boynton Beach, Fl.

Janet A. (Scofield) McClintock '64 and her spouse, Larry, reside in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Philip A. Olson '64 works as a Senior Evaluator for the U.S. Government Accountability Office in Lanham, Md. Philip and his spouse, Ann, have five children: David, Heather, Gregory, Christopher, and Matthew.

Gary Fincke '67 got his latest collection of short stories, *Nothing Falls from Nowhere*, published by Stephen F. Austin University in 2021. Them!, his chapbook of b-movie poems, was published in 2022 by Cervena Barva Press. A book-length collection of flash fiction, *The Corridors of Longing* (the title story appeared in Best Small Fictions 2020), will be published later in 2022. Fincke has coedited the international anthology series, *Best Microfiction*, since its inception in 2018. He and his wife, **Elizabeth (Locker) Fincke '68**, reside in Selinsgrove, Pa.



Gary Larson '69 just published his third book, entitled *Tom*. It is available through Amazon or through any bookstore. Tom is about a refugee who is sponsored to come to America and tries to pursue his own "American Dream." Gary also published a book



The Thiel Fund File

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

Gage Gladysz '20, M.S.'21

Residence: Greenville, Pa.

Professional Experience: Speech and Language Pathologist in the Greenville Area School District

Hobbies: Golfing, coaching, spending time outdoors

Involvement at Thiel: He is a volunteer assistant wrestling coach. A two-time qualifier for the NCAA Division III National Wrestling Championships (2019, 2017), Gladysz won the 197-pound title at the PAC Championships in 2019.

Reason for Giving Back: "Thiel provided me with a very positive college experience in both my graduate and undergraduate studies. It has prepared me, educationally and professionally, for my career as a speech and language pathologist."

of essays in 2021 titled *Peeling Back the Layers*, and a book of short stories titled *Harbor Yarns* in 2019. Gary and his wife, **Sarah (Boone) Larson '69**, live in Erie, Pa.

— 1970s —

Patricia A. (Muchko) Curran '75

and Joe Curran are celebrating their grandchildren, who are the joys of their lives. Their son, T.J., and his wife, Jen, have two children, Joseph and Nora. Their other son, Jake, and his wife, Lucy, also have two children, Scarlett and Cameron. Patricia and Joe are Grammie and Grandpap to two of their grandchildren and Grammy and PapPap to the other two.

— 1980s —

David A. Brown '81 works as a Sr. Vice President for Citibank in Delaware. He and his wife, Joanne, live in Bear, Del.



Kimberly A. (West) Deist '82 and her spouse, Jay, have two children, Katey and Dusty. They reside in Kalispell, Mont.

Daniel M. Hills '82 works as a Sr. Claims Auditor for Erie Insurance in Erie, Pa. He and his wife, Valerie, have two children, Brittany (Hills) Kowalczyk and Cole Hills.

Debra L. (May) Jones '82 is the president of Performant Solutions. She and her spouse, Gregg, live in Noblesville, Ind.

Tim Reese '82 lives in Sacramento, Calif. where he works as a Staff Services Manager II for the State of California.

Garry J. Ritter '82 works at the City of Allentown Bureau of Health in Emmaus, Pa. as an Associate Director for Environmental Health.

— 1990s —

Jon L. Amodeo '93 lives in Oakmont, Pa. and is a successful financial advisor with Northwestern Mutual.

Rebecca (Adkins) Borland '96 works as a case manager for ConnectiveRx. Borland and her spouse, Howard, live in Vandergrift, Pa. with their son, Ethan.

Thomas J. Shaffer '99 recently took on the role of Chief Human Resources Officer at Step2 Discovery in Streetsboro, Ohio. Thomas and his spouse, Micheleen, reside in Poland, Ohio, and they have three children: Mackenzie, Braeden and Ellison.

— 2000s —

Melissa (Lewis) Keebler '00 graduated with an M.S.Ed. in higher education administration from Duquesne University and she joined La Roche University as the Executive Director of Alumni Relations & Annual Giving. She lives in Pittsburgh with her spouse, Josh Keebler, and their two children, Nathalie and August.

Morris "Moe" '87 & Angie (Phillips) Hill '89

Hometown: Mansfield, Ohio

Professional Experience: Moe is a retired Staff Lieutenant of the Ohio State Highway Patrol with 29 years of service. He is an elder/associate pastor of Grace Evangelical Free Church. Angie has been a full-time mom taking care of Moe and their seven children for 33 years.

Involvement at Thiel: Angie was a member of the Thiel choir and a member of the madrigal singers. She was also a four-year member of the Organization of Black Collegiates. Moe was a four-year member of the football and track & field teams. Moe is also the recipient of the 1992 Thiel College Young Alumnus Award and was inducted into the Thiel College athletic Hall of Fame in 2002.

Reason for giving back: "Both Angie and I were college students when federal funding for schooling was cut substantially. We were both blessed to be recipients of grants from Thiel that helped us earn our degrees. Now, it's our turn to help someone else."



The Thiel Fund File

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



Jeff Linn '02 created an art piece to capture the life of recently passed alumnus **Theodore Mangan '06**. The creation includes a mural of Ted created by Thiel College Art Professor Sean McConnor.

Emily V. (Slade) Lobins '07 and her husband, Jake, have a child, Bo. Emily works as a senior specialist of supply QA for The J.M. Smucker Co. in Orrville, Ohio.

Syrell J. Rodriguez Carreras '08 graduated from Surgical Critical Care Fellowship and began work at West Virginia University Charleston Campus as an Attending Surgeon.

Deanna (Gartrell) '09 and **Steffon Portik '09** have two daughters, Cayden and Rylan. They live in Painesville, Ohio.

Andrew E. Howard '09 lives in Olney, Md. He works as an Assistant Principal at Oakland Terrace Elementary School.

— 2010s —

Ryan Hill '10 and **Stephanie Hill** live in Jamestown, Pa. He works as a Supervisory Natural Resources Management Specialist for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Saegertown, Pa.

Megg E. Andrews '13 lives in Orlando, Fla. and recently became an Operations Manager for the Walt Disney Company.



Benjamin R. (Hellner-Burris) Burris '15 and his spouse, **Santina (McGuire) Burris '15**, live in Pittsburgh, Pa. Benjamin is a Junior Software Developer for CGI. Santina is a certified veterinary technician at Northern Pike Veterinary Hospital.

Steven Morgan '15 and his wife, Christine, live in Murrysville, Pa. They have a daughter, Alaina Morgan. Steven is a research scientist for Meta Platforms, Inc.

— 2020s —

Kristen J. Brunner '21 lives in Baiting Hollow, N.Y.

Carlene E. Little '21 resides in Greenville, Pa.

– marriages –

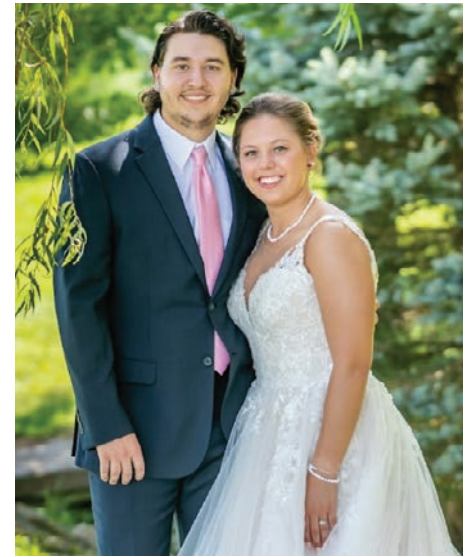


Emily N. (Whipple) Malovich '13 and Nathan Malovich on June 19, 2021. They live in Sharon, Pa. Also, in the photo are **Kristin (Wansor) Jones '13** and **Abby (Charsar) Ainsley '12**.



Jessica (Peters) Burkley '21 and **Jonathan Burkley '21** on January 22, 2022, in Pittsburgh, Pa. Also in attendance, Left side: **Mak Sanders '21**, **Ali Arter '21**, **Katie McKeever '22**; Right side: **Zach Lyons '22**, **Jenyfer Pegg '21**, **Dakota Forrest '21**, **Taylor Guth '20**, **Jacob Burkley '20**, and **Alyssa McClimans '21**.

Austin Hall '17 and **Ashley (Torres) Hall '18** on June 18, 2021. Austin works as a teaching assistant and graduate fellow for the University of Cincinnati.



Emma (Polinski) Kleckner '20 and **Dylan Kleckner '20** on August 14, 2021, in Volant, Pa. at Rustic Acres Farm. They now live in Niles, Ohio.



Kimberly (Yakemowicz) Leone '92 and **Rob Leone** on September 25, 2021. The photo includes Kim and other Thiel alumni and friends. Bottom Row: **Hannah Uschock '22**, **Lauren (Sozanski) Notz '88**, **Kimberly (Yakemowicz) Leone '92** and **Francine (Duncan) Simon '89**. Middle Row: **Charlie Lichtenwalter '22**, **Michelle (Stahl) Reefer '90**, **Amy (Gurtner) Reis '92**, **Carol (Jones) Ireton '91**, **Billie Shields '93**, and **Cathy (Anawalt) Lippert '90**. Back Row: **Robin Wise '94**, **Roni (Schetka) Wise '93**, and **Kimberly Riefstahl '94**.

– births –



To **John A. Reed II '11** and **Jennifer (Keller) Reed '11** a son, John A. Reed III, on January 9, 2022.

– gatherings –



Dan Cecchini '69 and **John Gibson '71** (left), **Logan Cribbs '69**, **Walt Treser '69** and **Mike Donato '70** (right), gather once a month at various venues for lunch and to reminisce of old times at Thiel. Here they gathered at the Freedom Diner in Cranberry Township. Missing from the photo but also regular participants are **John Schlotter '69**, **William Cooper '69**, and **Larry Simonetti '69**.

Alumni Award winners announced

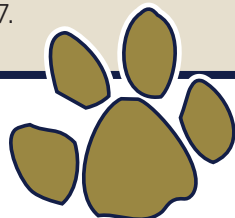
The 2022 Alumni Award Winners have been announced. Homecoming is September 23-25.

Distinguished Alumni: **Tracy (Fair) Robertson '74** and **Amy (Maliner) Zell '95**

Service to Thiel Award: **Leo Phillips '84** (posthumously)

Young Alumni: **Kayla (Ohlin) Emanuelson '13**

As part of Homecoming, the classes of 1962, 1972, 1982, 2012, 2017 and the decades of the 50s and the 60s are planning reunions. For more information, contact Alumni Relations at alumni@thiel.edu or call 724-589-2027.



Thirty alumni members recently attended a Cleveland Cavaliers Alumni event on January 31. There was a social hour prior to the game at the Hairy Buffalo across from Rocket Mortgage Fieldhouse.



Damon Dohar '92 and his children, **Delaney** (left) and **Deangelo** (right). Seated behind are **Mabry Harris '92** and **Byron Hopkins '92**.

The Rev. **Dr. Albert Urban Gesler Jr. '56** served 14 churches in the Erie County area. He started Meals on Wheels in Erie, as well as the Kearsarge Food Pantry. He served on the Thiel Board of Trustees, was named a Distinguished Alumnus in 2007 and received the William A. Passavant Award in 1998 in recognition of his service to Thiel and the Lutheran Church. His family includes his parents, the **Rev Dr. Albert U. Gesler, Sr '27, Nora Jane (Goodman) Gesler '26, George K Gesler 1921 H'53, Anna Johns Gesler 1921, Margaret Zundel Gesler '33, Beth Gesler Caldwell '60, Dr. Wilbert Gesler '63, Sara Gesler Klemmer '68, Lisa Engle De Los Santos '78 and Albert U. Gesler III '90.**

John Coppola '69 passed away on February 14. A memorial service was held in remembrance of him on March 19 at the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington, D.C. The service was attended by approximately 50 friends and family members, including **George Lyon '69**, who lives in Ariz.

Roseanne Gill-Jacobson was the Vice President of Student Services at Thiel College from 1999-2009. After leaving Thiel, she was vice president

for student life at Lourdes University, Sylvania, Ohio until her retirement in 2016. She also served as Director of Athletics for two-and-a-half years.

Leo Phillips '84 was passionate about Thiel College athletics and the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity. He was a member of the Army Reserves, coached football and volunteered at his local firehall. He was a member of numerous boards including the Thiel College Alumni Advisory Board. He was pursuing a doctoral degree in urban education at Cleveland State University.

John Vitale '47 H'90 was a Trustee Emeritus. He was a certified public accountant and a managing partner in the international accounting firm KMPG. He was inducted into the Thiel Athletics Hall of Fame in 1988. Vitale played on the 1940 and 1941 football teams as well as the 1940-1943 basketball teams. He was a member of the undefeated 1941 football team. His college education was interrupted by his service in World War II in the United States Marine Corps. Upon returning to Thiel, he led the 1946 football team to an undefeated season. He was named a Distinguished Alumnus in 1981.

Thomas West, Ed.D. '59 served as the Sports Information Director from 1959-1966 while a member of the Planning and Development staff at Thiel. He also served his alma mater as a member of the Board of Trustees and was named a distinguished alumnus in 2010. Before being president and CEO of National LambdaRail, Inc, Tom was the Assistant Vice Chancellor at California State University. He worked on creating computing tools and networks that would eventually reach libraries and organizations in education, healthcare, and the arts, as well as cultural and scientific institutions in Calif. Tom helped bring these resources across the U.S. through two of the most important national research and education networks, Internet2 and National Lambda Rail, both of which he helped found (the latter which he led for most of its history). The California Legislature recognized his futuristic visions and created a Legislative Resolution Honoring Tom West for his many substantive contributions to the quality of life among his fellow Californians. His brother, **Ronald West '67**, preceded him in death. He is survived by his wife, **Lynn (Soper) West '63.**



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

Mary E. Adams '43
 George W. Alexander '78
 John Anderson
 James A. Armour '62
 Dr. Fred E. Beil '66
 Gregory L. Bickle
 Edwin Bortner
 Dennis J. Bowser '88
 John Brown
 Carol Calvin
 Sandra Jean (Black) Caswell '80
 Edward B. Ceremuga
 Elizabeth Christoff
 Barbara (Du Bois) Cole '67
 Sharon (McMurtrie) Conaway '68
 Wilma O. (Olsson) Cook '67
 Joseph E. Cook '68
 Ruth B. Cooper
 Linda K. (Riley) Cribbs '71
 William A. Cusick
 Elaine (Barker) Danik '73
 Robert T. Dansak '57
 Jodi Marie (Hess) D'Antonio '95
 Charles H. Davis '50
 James A. DeFrance '68
 Gary C. Dennis '82
 Geraldine T. Dolata
 Marjorie A. (Schrimper) Donahue '50
 George Dufala Sr.
 Lois A. (Riethmiller) Fogal '50
 Bernard R. Forcier
 Robert W. Fouts '50
 Hal C. Franley '77
 Melissa L. Friedl
 Sandra (Simon) Froberg '60

Keith G. Gadsby '76
 Albert U. Gesler '56
 Roseanne Gill-Jacobson
 Rev. V. Donald Hall
 Marie S. Halliday '82
 David A. Harig '89
 John P. Harman '57
 Wendy Hauser
 Jean Hawes
 Lucille M. Hawkins '79
 Paula (Holl) Heaps '64
 Ray R. Henry '55
 Jodi M. Hess '95
 Betty Hinds
 Mary Carolyn Hovis
 Brian P. Hyde '94
 Shirley Z. Ibbs
 Richard A. Irwin '76
 Richard L. Klingensmith '58
 Margaret (Christie) Krum '57
 Carol (Zigler) Kusserow '59
 Anthony LaCamera '52
 John L. Lima
 Robyn C. Lohr
 James W. Lynn '67
 Theodore Thomas Mangan '06
 Marian (Tingley) Marburger
 Nettie Marini
 N. Jeffrey Mason '72
 Roy R. Mason Jr. '91
 Jacalyn Sue McCartney
 Dorothy G. McConnell
 Leigh A. (Davies) Milich '80
 John A. Miller
 Thomas W. Myers '70

Daniel R. Myers '88
 Ronald Nespor
 Tracey J. (Sutton) Nichols '82
 Ryan Nicklin
 James M. Parker '64
 William J. Peterson '50
 Leo M. Phillips '84
 Albert Puntureri
 Karen (Glatzert) Rainey '60
 Nancy J. (Tirk) Regan '60
 Norma Reinhart
 Leonard V. Ross '84
 Bonnie Jean (Reagle) Saxe '49
 Diane (Lehosky) Seeley '72
 Albert M. Seladi
 Elsie J. Shrawder '60
 Elizabeth Shriver
 Alice Siciliano
 Raymond A. Sistik '66
 Gail Smith '59
 Shannon Marie Songer
 Frank J. Spiegel
 Diane Steuart
 Ruth Ann (Jones) Terrian '58
 Barbara (Kelch) Toy '61
 Susan (Benish) Truchses '58
 John L. Vitale '47, H'90
 Charles Volansky
 William F. Warren '51
 Thomas W. West '59
 Carolyn A. (Hagel) Wickerham '52
 Evelyn Wilson
 Bruce R. Wolff



Science programs and academics receive major boosts from donors



Barry Stamm, M.D. '70 and Carol (Yeager) Stamm '71 have been dedicated and generous supporters of Thiel College. Dr. Stamm served on the Board of Trustees from 2011-2020 and is an emeritus member of the Board of Trustees.

Having spent a weekend in May for a Board Retreat and a Board of Trustees meeting, I could feel the excitement and enthusiasm for the future of the College. It is both exciting and palpable. The momentum in the past seven years has been overwhelming and continues to grow. In particular, the growth of the science programs at Thiel is being felt throughout the campus.

I was attracted to Thiel because of my Lutheran background and the strong science program that was known for its pre-med strength, and the ability to prepare students for various fields of science and medicine. Over the years those programs have experienced some challenges, as well as the facilities that housed them. In the past seven years, the picture has changed entirely.

The creation of the Dietrich Honors Institute from the gift of **William Dietrich II** has been very attractive to our brightest, most accomplished high school students. In 2013 the Pedas Communications Center was completed after a large gift from **Jim Pedas '50 H'89**. This center enhances communications skills for all students and prepares them for professional development post-graduation, regardless of their major field of study.

The Haer Family Science Connector was dedicated in 2017 and has added new modern labs, classrooms, computer areas, and collaborative study areas. **Fred Haer '65** went on to complete his post-graduate work at the U. of Michigan after majoring in chemistry at Thiel. Our Rhodehouse Science Building has undergone a multi-million-dollar renovation and this month the new biology wing was dedicated in honor of **Dr. Carl 69' H'09** and **Theresa**

Hoffman H'16 in recognition of their major donation. After majoring in biology at Thiel, Carl went on to a successful medical career. Now he and Theresa have chosen to pay it forward by giving back to Thiel in a heroic and historic way.

Also, within the Rhodehouse Science Building **Dr. Frank 69' H'21** and **Diane Maenpa** have sponsored new labs and have renovated the two large lecture halls. Dr. Maenpa also enjoyed a successful career in the sciences after majoring in chemistry at Thiel, and he has been a strong supporter of the College, in particular the science area. These additions to Thiel have all come as a result of dedicated, successful Thiel graduates who were motivated to give back to the College that gave them their start. And now, new young students will benefit from their vision and philanthropy.

In addition to new facilities and new faculty, the College has initiated five post-graduate programs, three of which are in science-related fields: Master of Science programs in physician assistant studies and speech-language pathology, and a Master of Arts in Mental Health Counseling. The College has also initiated a new nursing degree program that will graduate nursing students with a Bachelor of Science degree.

Finally, The President's House at 40 Eagle Street will now be known as the Heitzenroder House as a result of a generous gift from **Fred '70** and **Wendy Heitzenroder '70**. In May 2023, the College will embark on an \$8-9 million complete renovation and upgrade of the Academic Center, thanks to an overwhelmingly generous \$4 million cash gift from **Daniel Spence** and his late wife, **Dorothy**. The strong resurgence of its science and academic programs along with all of the other exciting developments are moving Thiel into the next decade with the kind of strength I remember from my days on campus.

I am excited about these new programs and facilities, and I could feel the enthusiasm from those around me during this most recent campus visit.

Please join all of us in rejoicing over the direction Thiel is headed and consider supporting this winning team. There are a myriad of opportunities and ways to support the College and its students and any member of the Board of Trustees or the Advancement staff would be happy to discuss with you.

The world needs them. They need you.



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For more information, contact David Hummel '83 - *Director of Alumni Relations*
dhummel@thiel.edu

