DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

I’m giving you fair warning: I’m about to ruin the end of one of the stories in this magazine.

OK, so it’s not like walking into “The Sixth Sense” knowing that Bruce Willis is dead. Still, I don’t normally like to use this space to rehash what you’ll find elsewhere in the magazine. But this little nugget is so good, I couldn’t resist.

The Donor Report on the other side of this issue includes an article about real estate developer Roy Johns Jr., whose foundation donates $10,000 every year to RMU for an endowed scholarship. One of that scholarship’s recent recipients, junior marketing major Tom Waterfield, says he hopes one day to follow in Johns’ philanthropic footsteps, and give money so that the next generation can have a shot at success.

“I think the best way to thank him (Johns) would be to succeed. That’s definitely part of my motivation to succeed: to help pay back everyone who has helped me,” Tom says.

In two sentences, Tom sums up everything that we are trying to do at Robert Morris University. We are in the business of changing lives: Namely, changing the lives of our students so that they can use their success to change the lives of others. After all, we can rarely pay back in kind the people who have helped us get where we are. Take our parents, for example. We might take care of them in their old age. If we are fortunate, maybe we’ll have the money to lavish them with nice things – perhaps a house or a car. But does that come close to repaying all that they did for us? No, and they don’t expect it to. We pay them back by doing for our children what our parents did for us.

Similarly, as the president of a university, I see evidence every day of people who pay back the people who helped them by making sure help is there for others. At this spring’s scholarship luncheon, Richard Harshman ’78, a member of our board of trustees, recounted how he wouldn’t have been able to afford to finish his degree were it not for an additional $1,000 in financial aid RMU gave him before his senior year. Rich, now the chief financial officer at Allegheny Technologies, is the first alumnus to donate $1 million to RMU. That includes a scholarship fund in honor of his parents, to whom he credits much of his success.

Of course, there are plenty of other ways to give back besides money, as our students demonstrate every year by volunteering thousands of hours of community service. Some choose to make community service their life’s work, as you will see when you read the article on page 12 about alumni Eileen Groetzinger Wilhelm ’85, John Denny ’85, and Dan Horgan ’02. I’d tell you more about them, but I wouldn’t want to spoil the end.

Sincerely,

GREGORY G. DELL’OMO, PH.D.
PRESIDENT
Gifts from the Heart ........ 12
From helping Bangladeshi girls learn to read to getting philanthropists more involved in their charities, these three RMU alumni give a lot more than money.

From Residence Halls to the Halls of Power ........ 16
Sen. Richard Kasunic ’67 used his degree as a stepping stone to Harrisburg. But he still remembers tobogganing on campus and shooting pool at the old barn.

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A professor who brings international students to her house every year for trick-or-treating. A transfer student who’s become a real star on stage. Meet two of the people who make RMU special.

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A decade after the university launched its first doctoral program, we offer a glimpse of some successful alumni of the D.Sc. from RMU.

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When accountant Laurie Roberts M’04, M’05 has to tackle a difficult problem at work, we hope the Pittsburgh Passion player doesn’t take it literally.
> A Colonial Goes to England

A semester in Japan through an RMU exchange program was the first time outside the country for Michael Wahl’06, M’08. His second trip abroad is even more auspicious: Wahl has been accepted to the University of Oxford, where he plans to earn a doctorate in social anthropology.

Beginning this fall at the legendary British institution, Wahl will focus his research on how employees from different countries and different traditions work together in multinational firms. The topic first captured his imagination during his time in Osaka, in classes discussing the differences between Japanese and American business culture.

Wahl eventually wants to become a professor. “I’m always shooting for something higher,” he says. “I think Oxford can help me push my limits to see how far I can go.”

> Make That Two Colonials…

Valerie Powell, Ph.D., university professor of computer and information systems, gave a presentation at Oxford Brookes University in Oxford, England, in July. Her talk concerned methods of integrating clinical data in computer medical and dental records, and drew upon a three-year British study that discovered some significant patient risks when records are not properly coordinated.
Ready, SET, Go!

“Engaged learning” is the hallmark of an RMU education, and this year the university is taking a big step towards making this true for every student. The freshman class is the first to participate universally in the Student Engagement Transcript, which was launched last year. The SET documents each student’s participation in activities outside the classroom, such as community service, professional experience, and study abroad. Potential employers who request a graduate’s transcript will also receive copies of the SET.

Shari Payne, Ed.D., recently named RMU’s first dean of engaged learning, oversees the program. She says she has heard from officials at other universities who want to create similar programs. “We are definitely at the forefront of a big trend in engaged learning,” Payne says.

Encouraging New Leadership

The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh held its third Black Male Leadership Development Institute on the RMU campus in June. The event, codirected by faculty member Rex Crawley, Ph.D., brought together 50 high school students for a week-long residential program with the theme of “Aspire to Greatness.” Led by successful mentors from various fields, participants attended workshops and other activities designed to instill good communication, leadership, and personal management skills.

Crawley’s research is in intercultural communication with a focus on black masculinity. He was recently selected as a member for the Minority Research Policy Group of Southwestern Pennsylvania, which will investigate ways to assist local minority communities.

Experts

Assistant professor of education Shellie Hipsky, Ed.D., has authored Differentiated Literacy and Language Arts Strategies for the Elementary Classroom. The book is Hipsky’s third, and it looks at classrooms where educators are using various research-based methods for teaching children how to read and write.

At the 10th Conference on Communication and Environment in Maine this summer, Ann Jabro, Ph.D., university professor of communication, presented her paper, “Application of Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Model and Integrated Model of Organizational Learning for Crisis Management to Scaled-Up Emergency Response Drills.”

Derya Jacobs, Ph.D., dean of the School of Business, is an invited speaker at the AACSB International Continuous Improvement Conference in Baltimore later this month. AACSB International is the premier accrediting agency for collegiate schools of business, and RMU recently received AACSB accreditation for its business school.
> Business Woman of the Year

Assistant professor of management Daria Crawley, Ph.D., was named Business Woman of the Year by the Onyx Woman Network, a Pittsburgh communications company for African-American professionals. Crawley, who joined the RMU faculty in 2005, was honored for her business education career and for her volunteerism. She is chairwoman of the WQED community advisory board.

Onyx founder and RMU trustee Ola Jackson ’87 said Crawley is “greatly admired for being a crucial influence to the students at RMU, as well as a role model for up-and-coming professionals.”

Crawley is an expert on diversity and has researched public policy legislation for a member of the British Parliament. She is former director of research for the Center for Organizational and Leadership Effectiveness, and previously worked at Transamerica Corp.

> Faculty Facts

Eighteen faculty members received promotions this year, including two new university professors: Dean Manna, Ph.D., professor of marketing and head of the department of marketing, and Murat Tiryakioğlu, Ph.D., professor of engineering.

The School of Communications and Information Systems has filled three leadership positions: Peter Draus, Ed.D., is now head of the department of organizational studies, Rex Crawley, Ph.D., is assistant dean, and David Wood, Ph.D., is associate dean.

Angela Macci Bires, Ed.D., is now head of the new department of health sciences in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences. Bires has been at RMU since 2006 as director of the nuclear medicine technology program.

> Strength and Smarts

Track and field standout Tara Maxwell ’09 can wing a discus and heave a shot put with the best of them, but she doesn’t leave it all on the field. The manufacturing engineering major graduated with a 3.99 cumulative GPA, earning her the title of Northeast Conference Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year.

The athletic conference also honored two RMU teams for earning the highest average GPA in 2008-09. Women’s tennis athletes finished with an average 3.52 in the past year, and the softball team members posted a 3.63, the highest team GPA of any sport in the league. In all, nearly 65 percent of all RMU’s student-athletes earned a 3.0 or higher GPA last year.

Maxwell is the second RMU female student-athlete in three years to be honored with the individual award. Former volleyball player Lisa Jaszka won the inaugural NEC Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year in 2007.

Maxwell is now working as a manufacturing engineer for Philips Respironics, where she already is overseeing the transfer of several new product assembly lines to the company’s Murrysville plant.
> Nursing in Nicaragua

Carl Ross, Ph.D., university professor of nursing, led another group of students to Nicaragua this summer to care for needy families at a barrio clinic in Managua. Lee Folk, a senior nursing student, has written a moving account of the trip. Here is an excerpt:

At that moment, the door opens. It is the wife, and she has brought along their daughter. She is nineteen years old, and nine months pregnant. Eddie’s grandchild is due to arrive in less than two weeks. She is here to convince her dad to go to the hospital. “Please, Dad. Come to the hospital. They can help you,” she tells him. The door opens again. The cab is waiting out front. Someone needs to decide. It is Eddie who finally relents. He will go to the hospital.

Dr. Ross begins dispensing orders to the crew. The room empties quickly. As Eddie is wheeled out, he takes my hand and says something to me softly in Spanish. I look to the translator. “He said, ‘God bless you.’” Then he is gone.

The Pepto Room is empty now. I am sitting alone on the exam table. The only sound is the steady hum of the air conditioner. And now it is my turn to cry.

Read the whole story at Foundations online.

> Giving Up for the Greater Good

The union representing RMU faculty members voluntarily gave up half their promised annual raise for this academic year to allow the university to shift another $180,000 to scholarships. The contract called for a 2.75% raise for the union’s 145 members in 2009-10, but with the difficult economic climate leading President Gregory G. Dell’Omo, Ph.D., to freeze staff salaries in March, professors offered to help.

“We wanted to make a contribution to the campus community. It is gratifying for us to do something to help students,” said Faculty Federation President Seth Finn, Ph.D., a professor of communications.

RMU staff generated another $570,000 for student scholarships by foregoing their pay increases this year. The university’s total pool of financial aid in 2009-10 is about $16 million, with 90% of students receiving some sort of assistance.

> Sticky Feet by the Foot

An article about “gecko tape” by Arif Sirinterlikci, Ph.D., associate professor of engineering and director of engineering laboratories, was published this summer in the journal of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers. The tape, developed at U.C. Berkeley, sticks by use of tiny hairs, similar to the way a gecko’s feet adhere to glass.
> How Cities are Mapped Out

The Society for American City and Regional Planning History named John McCarthy, Ph.D., assistant professor of history, as its executive secretary. The professional organization, which will hold its biennial conference in Oakland, Calif., next month, focuses on both scholarly research and the actual practice of urban planning. McCarthy is also a member of the organization’s board of directors, which includes faculty from Harvard, Penn and MIT.

> Alumna Speaks

Class of ’81 alumna Susan M. Kapusta, Ph.D., delivered the commencement address for the RMU graduate ceremony in May. Kapusta is general manager-community affairs for United States Steel Corporation and president of the United States Steel Foundation Inc.

> New Dean for Engineering, Mathematics and Science

Maria Kalevitch, Ph.D., has been named interim dean of the School of Engineering, Mathematics and Science. A professor of science, Kalevitch came to RMU in 2001; most recently, she created the university’s pre-medicine concentration. She has a Ph.D. in biology/microbiology from the highly regarded Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. Kalevitch replaces Winston Erevelles, who left RMU for St. Mary’s University in San Antonio, Texas.
> Simulation Center Gets Grant

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry awarded a $500,000 grant to RMU to create a simulation laboratory that can serve as a regional health care training center.

The university is designing a new building for the School of Nursing and Health Sciences to house the center, which would include high-fidelity simulation mannequins that can respond in a lifelike way to the various treatments and procedures students employ. The 23,000 square-foot simulation center is tentatively scheduled to be completed in 2011.

“Robert Morris University has proven itself as a leader in the use of simulation to provide clinical training to health care workers,” said state Rep. Mark Mustio, who helped to secure the grant. “Health care is our region’s largest industry, but it faces a critical shortage of skilled professionals, so this is will be a powerful workforce development tool.”

“Robert Morris University has an outstanding reputation for health care education,” said state Sen. John Pippy. “Using innovative technology, through simulation, to further develop and advance RMU’s health care education will ensure that the future of our region’s health care will be a positive one. We are pleased to provide this grant for the university and its students.”

> A Business Teacher’s Business Teacher

The OBTS - Teaching Society for Management Educators, a professional organization that publishes the Journal of Management Education, elected professor of management Nell Hartley, Ph.D., to its board of directors this spring. Read more about Hartley, an accomplished professor and a longtime fixture in the university, on page 22.

> Next Generation for Nonprofits

American Humanics, a national program aimed at training leaders for nonprofit organizations, awarded stipends to three RMU students this summer to allow them to pursue nonprofit internships.

The university recently started an American Humanics student organization. Students seeking American Humanics certification must, among other things, complete 300 hours of internship at a nonprofit organization.

Recipients of the $4,500 NextGen stipends were Jennifer Phillips, a hospitality and tourism management major who interned at Mercer County United Way; Andrea Beats, an accounting major who interned at YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh; and Joseph Kramer, a marketing major who interned at YMCA of Sewickley.
A 9-8 overall record earned the women’s team its first winning season. Under the direction of coach Katy Phillips, just missing out on the conference tournament after a 10-9 loss at Monmouth. Senior defender Mary Kate Egan, the school’s career leader with 70 caused turnovers, made All-NEC First Team; so did senior midfielder Kara Blakeley, who led RMU with 39 goals. Senior attack Ashley Levering, named to the All-NEC Second Team, shattered the NEC single-season record with 51 assists, giving her an average of 3.0 assists per contest, which ranked third in the nation.

> ALL-AMERICANS

Four female student-athletes were picked for ESPN The Magazine District II Academic All-America teams by the College Sports Information Directors of America. Seniors Susan Perich (elementary education, 3.73 QPA) and Brooke Panepinto (marketing, 3.61 QPA) and sophomore Annie Dubovec (mathematics, 3.97 QPA) garnered the honors in softball, while senior Mary Kate Egan (nursing, 3.95 QPA) was an at-large selection for the sports of field hockey and lacrosse.
**SOFTBALL**

Freshmen **Alexa Bryson** and **Jaci Timko** made a big impact in their first season of Colonials softball.

Ace pitcher Bryson, from Latrobe, was Pennsylvania’s Gatorade Player of the Year in softball her senior year and led the league in strikeouts. Timko, a Chartiers-Houston grad and the career home run queen in Western Pennsylvania high school softball, is from a family of athletes – most notably her aunt, Olympic gold medalist Mary Lou Retton.

The pair helped RMU pull out a wild 6-5 win against Butler during the team’s annual trip to Florida in March. In Bryson’s fourth start, the Colonials trailed the Bulldogs 2-1 in the bottom of the seventh.

But Timko led off with a bunt single, then scored on a double by senior **Brooke Panepinto** to send the game into extra innings.

After giving up an uncharacteristic three-run homer in the top of the eighth, Bryson recovered, striking out her last two batters. The Colonials then bailed her out with a four-run rally. Timko saved the day again, driving in the tying run with another bunt single before the Bulldogs gave up the game-winner on a fielding error.

The victory was part of a surge that saw RMU win three of its final four games in the Sunshine State. It was the third win for Bryson in what would stretch to a nine-game streak.

“That game was important because it allowed our veterans to mesh with the freshmen, who in essence were under the microscope at a very early stage in their careers,” said coach **Craig Coleman**, M.D. “I think it gave our youngsters confidence as well that they could play at this level of Division I softball.”

The Colonials finished second in the NEC with a 12-6 league record and 25-21 overall record. Timko recorded a .396 batting average – the third-highest single-season average in team history – with 61 hits, 32 RBI, and 10 home runs. Bryson made All-NEC Second Team with a 2.47 ERA, striking out 193 batters on the way to a 19-7 record, including 22 complete games. And Panepinto made All-NEC Second Team, finishing her career with a .345 batting average, which ties the school record.

> TENNIS

Under the guidance of coach **Jeff Layman**, the men finished with an overall record of 3-17, while the women posted an overall record of 3-19. Both teams fell in the quarterfinals of the NEC Championships. Junior **David Pinto** led the Colonials, winning eight singles victories. Senior **Maria Olausson** and freshman **Ekaterina Rudneva** each earned four singles victories to pace the RMU women, and they also teamed up for four doubles victories.

> GOLF

**MEN**

The squad under coach **Jerry Stone** earned its best finish at the NEC Championships since 2005, placing fourth with a three-day team score of 915 at Champions Gate Golf Club in Orlando, Florida. Sophomore **C.G. Mercatoris** earned All-NEC Second Team honors and placed sixth overall after leading the tournament with an opening day 4-under par 68. Mercatoris finished in the top 10 in six of the nine tournaments RMU played in 2009, averaging just under 75 per round. He placed fourth at the Western Pennsylvania Golf Association Amateur Championship at Allegheny Country Club in June, with a score of 212.

**WOMEN**

The team, also led by Jerry Stone, had its best showing ever in the NEC Championships at the Hershey Links Golf Club, finishing fourth with a three-day total of 978. Senior **Melanie Ice** finished seventh with a 236. Junior **Jacqueline Jurinko** was the only women’s golfer from the NEC named a National Golf Coaches Association All-American Scholar in 2009; the actuarial science major carries a 3.50 QPA.
> LEADING BY EXAMPLE

For Mary Kate Egan, the term student-athlete is one she takes seriously.

A four-year starter on defense in two sports, Egan was a leader and captain for both the Colonials field hockey and women’s lacrosse programs. Her abilities on the field earned her a pair of Most Valuable Player awards this year, one for each sport.

Egan, who now is working at an oncology unit at Shadyside Hospital, earned All-Northeast Conference honors twice in women’s lacrosse, including first team this year. She holds the school record with 70 caused turnovers, while her 83 ground balls ranks sixth in RMU history. And Egan was named to the 2009 ESPN The Magazine District II Academic All-America At-Large Team after carrying a GPA of 3.95 as a nursing major.

While her exploits on the field and in the classroom are well documented, Egan proved what an all-around student-athlete she was with her community service. This spring she led a women’s lacrosse team partnership with Girls Hope, an organization that works with at-risk youths. Team members cooked brunch for the girls, participated in breakdance sessions, spent an evening ice skating with the group at the RMU Island Sports Center, and finally helped the girls move into a new home in Coraopolis.

Time management is a challenge for any student. Egan passed with flying colors.

WRITTEN BY JAMES DUZYK M’00
PHOTO BY JASON COHN

ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY FOUNDATIONS • 11
A bolt of inspiration strikes without warning, often in unexpected places. For three Robert Morris University alumni, inspiration has put them on paths of helping others.

For EILEEN GROETZINGER WILHEM ’85, it happened this spring on a charity mission to Bangladesh, where she met a young girl who swam a flooded river rather than miss a day at school. “It was a defining moment in my life,” says Wilhem, who overcame obstacles of her own, growing up poor on Pittsburgh’s North Side.

On a cold night last winter, JOHN DENNY ’85 huddled with others under a bridge and felt the tug of heartstrings that binds even strangers to a moment of shared emotion. The right-hand man to prominent philanthropist and political power broker Elsie Hillman, Denny was part of a candlelight service recognizing homeless people who died that year. “There were eulogies given by some of the street people. The stories were just unbelievable,” Denny says.

DANIEL HORGAN ’02 had a revelation too, about how simple actions can have profound effects. It came thanks to a volunteer for the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, who told Horgan how she’d helped an elderly woman afford to buy her own groceries by giving her a donated TV to replace the one she was paying each month to rent.
All three RMU alumni share a passion for work that inspires volunteerism and philanthropy. And they each find value in becoming directly involved in projects they promote.

“Robert Morris made a big difference in my life,” says Wilhem, who studied banking and finance and was the first person in her family to receive a higher education. She always had a craving for knowledge. “As soon as I was old enough for a library card, that was my first real adventure,” she says. “I come from a poor family. I recognized our financial circumstances but everyone else in the neighborhood was in the same boat, so it was OK. What my parents did give me was the belief that I could do anything. “She attended night classes in order to work during the day and parlayed her education into a 38-year career as an executive with several top banks.

Until recently, she was managing director of Bank of America’s wealth management philanthropic group, where she helped people make smart financial decisions while giving away about $300 million a year. But in January, when the bank acquired Merrill Lynch, the resultant shuffle and reorganization eliminated Wilhem’s job. Rather than retire on her 28-acre ranch in Pinnacle, N.C., where she and her husband, Joe, raise show horses, Wilhem put her financial expertise to work as a consultant for local and international charities, helping developing marketing campaigns and strategies.

Less than two weeks after Wilhem got the news about her bank job, Geneva Global, a philanthropic consulting group based in suburban Philadelphia, called to see if she would be willing to travel to Bangladesh as a consultant. The organization is a partner of the Norway-based Stromme Foundation in a project to support several schools for girls in Asia. Venturing to one of the poorest nations on Earth seemed daunting, and when her husband of 41 years expressed concerns about her safety, Eileen asked for a week to consider it.

At the time, she was reading *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson, a chronicle of his work to build schools in remote, impoverished lands. A passage describing
Denny, director of community relations at the Hillman Company, has a kaleidoscopic range of stories relating to his activities. Some, like the memorial under the bridge, are sad. Others have brighter endings — Pittsburgh Social Venture Partners, for example.

“I was really intrigued with the idea of venture philanthropy,” says Denny, explaining how he came to organize PSVP in 2000 after hearing about a model of it in Seattle. It’s also called engaged philanthropy and has spread to several cities in the U.S., Canada, and Japan. Engaged philanthropy invests in building up nonprofits and making them better able to carry out their mission. Denny rounded up several program officers of local foundations and a handful of venture capitalists, corralled them in a room, placed the concept on the table, and the result was a new brand of philanthropy in the region.

“We are a dual-mission organization, applying the venture capital model to strengthen nonprofits that are working to prevent child abuse and neglect in Allegheny County,” Denny says. “The second part of our mission is to build a whole new generation of engaged philanthropists.” Denny is chairman of the group, which currently consists of 45 partners. Each partner makes a commitment to donate $5,000 a year over two years, and also their own time and expertise as consultants for the nonprofits.

The impact PSVP has had on curbing child abuse and neglect is difficult to measure. But the effort is impressive. PSVP has invested in 11 nonprofit organizations serving at-risk kids since 2001, including $763,000 in grants and more than 4,000 hours of professional, hands-on consulting work to strengthen business operations within the nonprofits. Denny accompanied his son Patrick, 13, on a church mission to Haiti in June. The weeklong trip, coordinated by the Pittsburgh-based Haiti H2O

Education is about the only escape from poverty in Bangladesh, where 84 percent of the people live on less than $2 a day. For cultural and financial reasons, girls have limited access to schools, and fewer than half of Bangladeshi girls complete primary school. Wilhem met with villagers in homes made of sticks and grass, and toured several schools of similarly modest construction. The Stromme Foundation’s model is to provide some money, while requiring the villagers themselves to supply some of the funds and materials. The foundation-supported schools teach adolescent girls basic education, hygiene, and job skills.

One teenager became the talk of her village after swimming a flood-swollen river. “She had to go to class in wet clothes, but she couldn’t miss this program and the difference it made in her life,” Wilhem says. “It just moved me. I will never, ever forget these girls,” she says. “I owe it to those girls to tell their story as much as I can.”

Mortenson’s experiences in Bangladesh convinced Wilhem that much can come of the work of “one individual with a lot of passion.” She called back the next day to accept the assignment, and in March she got on a plane. (Mortenson will be at Heinz Hall on April 28 for the Pittsburgh Speakers Series, sponsored by Robert Morris University.)
organization, introduced members of the Fox Chapel Presbyterian Youth Group to a country plagued with intense poverty. Most of the visit was in rural areas of Haiti, whose nine million residents live in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

“The people are very friendly and welcoming, always willing to talk and receive any help offered. Although most find happiness in small ways, it was apparent to me that they know just how miserable things are for them in Haiti,” Denny says.

Horgan, who graduated summa cum laude with a degree in corporate communication, is executive director of Pittsburgh Cares, a nonprofit dedicated to encouraging volunteerism and maximizing the impact of regional nonprofit organizations. He appreciates the value of partnering. Horgan teamed with Denny recently to help start PSVP-Kids, an offshoot of PSVP that engages elementary and middle school children in projects raising money to improve their schools and neighborhoods.

While he was a freshman, Horgan started an outreach program for students wanting to do volunteer service. That campus calling soon expanded significantly, when Horgan created the Allegheny County chapter of America’s Promise, a national youth development and advocacy group formed by retired Gen. Colin Powell. The organization supports programs to ensure all children have caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, effective education, and service opportunities. Horgan was recognized by Powell and George W. Bush for his commitment to youth and civic leadership, and was selected for the organization’s national board when he was only 19.

That zeal for volunteer work makes Horgan a natural fit at Pittsburgh Cares. “So many people are willing to give back, but so many times they just don’t know where to start,” Horgan says. “That’s why I full-heartedly believe in The Pittsburgh Cares mission, because if you can make it easy for people, they will do it.”

Karen Zimmerman, community relations coordinator for the regional behavioral health care and child welfare agency, praises Horgan for his willingness to get involved at the ground level of worthwhile projects.

“The Bradley Center has been the beneficiary of a wonderful volunteer leader in Daniel Horgan,” Zimmerman says. “His insight into the needs of our organization are phenomenal. Not only does he see the paint and weeds that require attention, he gets through to the hearts of our young residents through arts and crafts therapy. Making the right connection, bringing volunteers into our facility who yearn to make a difference in the lives of the young boys and girls, and providing the materials and guidance to complete vital projects has endowed The Bradley Center with much-needed support over the years.

“There are touches of Daniel throughout our center,” she says.

WRITTEN BY DAVID BROWN
ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAWN POGANY
It was only the first year Robert Morris students came to class in Moon Township. But even in 1964, the intramural rivalries were heated, according to Pennsylvania state Sen. Richard Kasunic, who was a freshman in that inaugural year.

“You talk about intensity,” he says. “It got real intense. And it wasn’t just hall versus hall; it was floor versus floor in some cases.” Kasunic also fondly recalls tobogganing in the winter and hanging out at the old barn that served as the student union. “That’s where I learned to play pool,” he says.

What he appreciates most about his college days are the close-knit ties he had with his professors. “Your instructors knew who you were,” he says. “You felt so comfortable. You weren’t just another number.”

Kasunic was born in 1947 in the Fayette County coalmining town of Monarch. His father, Walter, worked in the mines for more than 40 years. His mother, Gertrude, was a homemaker and took care of him, his two sisters, and younger brother.

After graduating from Dunbar Township High School, Kasunic earned an associate’s degree in business from Robert
Morris, then got his bachelor’s degree from Youngstown State University. He served in the Pennsylvania National Guard for six years, then came home and took an office job with the county commissioners, working his way up to chief assessor. It was there that he got his first taste of politics, working on election campaigns for the commissioners and row officers, district judges, and some Democrat statewide races.

When a national brewing company came to Fayette County looking for a location for their new brewery in the early 1980s, it seemed to Kasunic like a great opportunity for the county. But the company realized there was no suitable water source or major highway nearby, and the deal fell through. “It lit a fire in my belly,” he says. “Here was this golden opportunity for several hundred jobs and we weren’t prepared.” Kasunic took it upon himself to get involved and work for change. “If you want to see change, if you want to see something happen, you better roll up your sleeves and do something about it. Just don’t sit around and grouse about it.”

Kasunic was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 1982. He represented the 52nd Legislative District for six terms before being elected to the Pennsylvania Senate. Now he is in his fourth term representing the 32nd Senatorial District, principally Fayette and Somerset counties.

“I love the outdoor opportunities that we have here in Pennsylvania,” he says. “Anytime I have the opportunity, I like to get out and do a little hunting or fishing.”

Well known in Harrisburg as an avid outdoorsman, Kasunic is minority chairman of the Senate Game and Fisheries Committee. In addition to being a lifetime member of the National Rifle Association, he is a member of the Dunbar Sportsman’s Club, the South Connellsville Sportsman’s Club, and the Ruffed Grouse Society, a conservation group that improves habitats for the official Pennsylvania state bird.

Kasunic has focused much of his legislative efforts on highway construction and conservation. He’s also secured millions of dollars in funding for water and sewage projects. “I’m a firm believer that, if we use good judgment and common sense, we can provide the jobs that people need and at the same time be the protectors and stewards of our environment.”

The one thing Kasunic wants people to know is that, despite his 27 years in office, he’s still just the same person who grew up in the coalmining patch of Monarch. “I still live there today, as a matter of fact,” he says. “I’m just the common guy who never forgot where he came from.”

WRITTEN BY VALENTINE J. BRKICH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE DOWELL
Sitting across the desk from Joe Walton, inside the stadium that bears his name, I watch a smile grow across his face as he recalls his first year as head coach of the RMU Colonials.

“Our first field was the old softball field behind John Jay,” he says, chewing on an unlit cigar, “and it was only 80 yards. The grass would only last a couple days of training camp before it was a dust bowl; when it rained it was mud.

“We definitely had some things to overcome, but I knew that coming in.”
Overcome they did. That first season in 1994, Walton led a team of 64 freshmen to a 7-1-1 record. They won their first game just 21 days after the start of training camp and went on to win the next four in a row. Not bad for a school that had gone 73 years without a team.

This fall Walton will begin his 16th season as the head coach of a team he started from scratch. He has led the Colonials to two NCAA Division I-AA non-scholarship national championships, five Northeast Conference titles, and two Eastern College Athletic Conference Bowl victories. But this kind of success isn’t such a surprise when you have a man like Joe Walton at the helm. After all, football’s been a part of his life for as long as he can remember.

Joseph Frank Walton was born on December 15, 1935, in Beaver Falls, a bustling steel town where it seemed almost everyone worked in the local mill. “It was a fabulous place to grow up,” says Walton, “a great place for kids. In the summer we’d play baseball, in the fall we’d play football, and in winter we’d play basketball. That’s all we did.”

One of the kids he played against regularly was Tito Francona, who would later hit 125 home runs in the major leagues. To hear Francona tell it, Walton helped him with a career decision. “I liked football so much,” says Francona. “But playing against Joe… he turned me into a baseball player.”

Walton knew that he was destined for a life on the gridiron. “Football was always different. It was serious,” he says. His father Frank had played guard for the Washington Redskins and coached football at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. With the Beaver Falls Tigers, Joe Walton played end, fullback, and halfback. In his junior year in 1952, he led all Beaver County players in scoring with 120 points, and the next year he was named to the all-state team.

He got a football scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh and started at tight end for three seasons. He was twice an All-American with the Panthers, setting records of 14 touchdown catches in a career and eight in a single season. Walton also was an Academic All-American his senior year.

In 1957, he was drafted in the second round by the Redskins, his dad’s old team, and played tight end. He ended his impressive professional playing career with the New York Giants, finishing with 178 receptions for 2,623 yards and 28 touchdowns.

Walton spent some time in the moving business, but he was soon drawn back into football. In 1967, he landed a position as a special scout for the Giants before taking over as a coach of receivers. Then, in 1974, he returned to the Redskins, rising eventually to offensive coordinator. It was during this time that he groomed a future Hall-of-Fame quarterback named Joe Theismann.

The New York Jets gave Walton his first head coaching job in 1983. Over the next seven seasons, he led the Jets to an overall record of 54-59-1 with three playoff appearances. He was let go after a disappointing season in 1989. The following year, he served as offensive coordinator for the Pittsburgh Steelers under Chuck Noll. When Noll retired in 1991, a new staff came aboard, and Walton was once again out of football.

When RMU decided to start a football program, one of their first tasks was finding the right man for the head coaching job. University trustee Charles L. “Corky” Cost had played with Walton at Pitt and felt he’d be a good fit for the position. It was the perfect challenge for a man who felt he was too young to quit coaching. Walton’s wife, Ginger, put it best during the team’s inaugural season in 1994: “He missed it,” she said. “Something was wrong, and I could tell it was tough on him. Then along came Robert Morris, and everyone...
Radakovich retired last year, and John Banaszak, a former member of Pittsburgh’s legendary “Steel Curtain” defense, stepped up to take his place as assistant coach. After his pro career ended, Banaszak had a successful stint coaching at Washington & Jefferson College before Walton invited him to RMU. “When I think of Joe Walton, I think of the relationship that he has with our student athletes,” Banaszak says. “The respect that those kids have for Joe and the program is tremendous.”

For ten years the Colonials played their home games on the Moon Area High School field, about a mile from campus. That changed in 2005, when the university unveiled its $10 million stadium and sports complex. An anonymous donor offered to contribute $1.5 million under one condition: It had to be named Joe Walton Stadium. The team played their first true “home” game on September 17, 2005, when they defeated Butler 49-13.

Walton has led the Colonials to an impressive 96-61-1 record in 15 seasons. His 2000 team finished a perfect 10-0, the first undefeated season for any program at RMU. He has seen three former Colonials move up to...
the NFL: running back Tim Hall (Oakland Raiders), offensive lineman Hank Fraley (Philadelphia Eagles and Cleveland Browns), and defensive back Robb Butler (San Diego Chargers).

With all his success on the field, Walton says fostering strong students gives him the greatest reward. “I really enjoy the kids, their enthusiasm, their desire to learn,” he says. His wife Ginger, who passed away in 2007, told him she could see he was happiest at RMU. “I remember she used to say to me, ‘You should have been coaching college all the time, your whole career,’ because she knew I enjoyed the atmosphere, the people,” says Walton.

“The best thing I ever did was come here.”

PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY JOE WALTON
ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY MITCH KRAMER ’08

Check out Foundations online to see interviews with Joe Walton’s former teammates and fellow coaches.

HE’S ONE OF MY BEST RECRUITERS. PLAYERS’ FATHERS ARE BIG FANS OF WALTON’S. BY THE TIME THEY LEAVE JOE’S OFFICE, WE USUALLY HAVE THEM SIGNED.

MIKE RICE | RMU MEN’S BASKETBALL COACH
For Nell Hartley, Ph.D. teaching isn’t just talking – it’s showing. That’s true whether she’s delivering a classroom concept or helping foreign students understand the American phenomenon of Halloween.

“If you’re going to teach organizational behavior and things like trust, leadership, and respecting diversity, then you’d better be real,” says Hartley. “The best way to teach these topics is to model them.” So every year she and her husband, Tom, a retired architect, throw a Halloween bash in their big Victorian house in Sewickley and invite RMU’s international students to help them pass out candy. Meanwhile she hides out on the porch, draped in a moose pelt and bear mask, popping out to spook trick-or-treaters.

Hartley came to RMU as a part-time instructor 30 years ago, and soon became the first female full-time professor at the School of Business. Her teaching bona fides are impressive. Her 2006 paper, “Management History: An Umbrella Model,” was one of the most widely downloaded papers on the Internet after it was published in the *Journal of Management History*. An occasional corporate trainer and consultant in addition to her university work, Hartley was recently named to the board of the Organizational Behavior Teaching Society, an international educators association.

Both her daughter, Britt, and her son, Robert – who passed away from cancer in 2005 – studied at RMU. Hartley says she tries to treat every student she meets with kindness and care. “I truly, truly love and respect the students here,” she says. “I’ve been offered other jobs, but I’ve chosen to stay because Robert Morris over the years has allowed me to be who I want to be with my students.”

Joel Stafford ’87, a manager for a Maryland health care network, brings his family to visit with the Hartleys each year. “Her generosity is tremendous, and her desire to hear how I am doing is genuine,” he says. “She is a real jewel for RMU.”
As a child, she may have been more comfortable in the stands, but today Maria Mauti wants nothing less than center stage. On a trip to Cedar Point, Mauti’s godfather pushed her to go into a mock recording studio. When her recording wound up being played over the park loudspeakers, it was her first step into the limelight, fueling a passion for performing.

A car accident spoiled her plans to study dance in college. After a year at Point Park University as a musical theatre and ballet major, Mauti took the advice of her dad, Joseph Mauti ’78, and transferred to RMU last year. She soon landed a lead role in the school production of Elton John’s remake of Aida, followed by roles in High School Musical and Godspell with the Pittsburgh Musical Theater, which is headed by RMU professor Ken Gargaro, Ph.D.

“It wasn’t until I came to RMU that I had the confidence and freedom I needed in order to truly follow my dreams,” Mauti says. “When Ken Gargaro looked at me and said, ‘You’re a star!’ I realized the potential I had here. He really became like my musical dad and gave me the experience I needed to know that anything is possible.”

Her younger brother Daniel was adopted from Cambodia, and twice Maria has gone there as a volunteer. She taught English in Phnom Penh and helped at an “AIDS village,” where families go to receive treatment for the disease together rather than being separated. Cooking, singing, and playing guitar for the children, Mauti gained a new perspective on her future dreams to manage a charity or nonprofit organization.

WRITTEN BY AUBREY DIVITO
Entrepreneurs of a Different Kind

It was ten years ago this fall that computer and information systems professor Fred Kohun, Ph.D., spent an anguished weekend, wondering what to tell the 14 people who had signed up for Robert Morris University’s first doctoral program.

His bosses wanted the new D.Sc. in information systems and communications to be an applied, professional degree, akin to a J.D. or M.D., not theoretical like a Ph.D. The program had to appeal to aspiring executives, not just with convenient scheduling but in its subject matter and coursework. Instead of a dissertation, students would take a problem from the business world and research it with a field project.

“I was panic stricken,” recalls Kohun, associate dean of graduate programs and associate provost for research, accreditation, and program support. “I’d struggled all summer trying to figure it out. I was ready to give them their money back and say, ‘Come back next year.’”

Instead, he stayed up until 2 a.m. before that first Monday of classes, reworking the curriculum, trying to graft a research methodology and structure onto students’ existing expertise in communication and information systems. He succeeded, and the formula he devised is still largely the one being followed today.

Kohun was bred to tackle such a tough challenge. His father, who had fled the Soviet Union as a teenager, made his son read Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina in Russian. Kohun studied psychology, then history, then economics, before homing in on the emerging field of information systems—a marriage of computer programming and systems analysis geared towards solving concrete business problems.

“I now realize that we were entrepreneurs of a different kind,” says Jeryl Schreiner D’02, a member of Kohun’s first RMU doctoral cohort. She is a cofounder of Pittsburgh’s Idea Foundry, a nonprofit incubator for young high-tech companies, and also president of her own entrepreneurial consulting firm, WillowRock Inc.

The three-year D.Sc. program, in which the entire cohort meets for intense classroom sessions for one full week
and then three subsequent weekends each semester, has graduated more than 100 professionals in its first decade. Here is a sampling:

A longtime senior-level administrator in various federal posts, Marie Savoy D’09 found out about the program from a coworker, who had heard Kohun extolling it during a visit to the capital.

Two weeks before she earned the degree this spring, Savoy was named associate director for management for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve. She is now in charge of all administrative operations for the agency that governs the country’s central bank, and she says RMU paved the way for her promotion.

“This is a highly skilled, highly educated group. I come to them as a peer, able to talk to them about complex issues,” Savoy says. “They were very happy here that I was getting my doctorate, and they told me so.”

Savoy’s big family, which includes five children and 21 grandchildren, gave her a memorable celebration. “I got home from commencement and they had ‘Welcome home, Dr. Grandma’ on a sign in the yard,” she says.

Jerry Macioce D’03 got to come home thanks in part to his doctorate. For years the Shaler native was a network infrastructure and IT consultant in Washington, D.C., and he commuted from the capital to RMU.

He had at least one astounding story to share with his cohort: Macioce was walking down a Pentagon corridor on 9/11 when the hijacked plane hit, and he quickly had to evacuate his staff to safety.

Westinghouse Electric hired Macioce in December as director of systems enterprise integration, and this spring the Pittsburgh nuclear energy powerhouse promoted him to chief information officer, putting him in charge of the computer systems used by the Westinghouse’s 13,000 global employees.

The doctorate played a big part in helping him land the top-level corporate post, Macioce says. “It just makes you unique. To be an executive, you have to be successful and unique,” he says. “You have to stand out among your peers, because everybody can write a business case.”
When U.S. Steel needed to buy zinc for its galvanized steel lines, Michelle Hough D’02 was the person who made the calls. As a member of the first cohort, she arranged for her classmates to tour the London Metals Exchange. Hough had plans of one day heading the corporation’s IT operations, until something Kohun said inspired her to radically switch gears.

“I remember Fred saying in class one day, ‘If you want to do something, find a way to do it.’ I said, ‘Yeah.’ The RMU program opened up a lot of windows for me to change my life from the path I was on. It really had the effect of shaking me up and making me see things differently.”

So Hough went into teaching. Now she is a Penn State professor specializing in business strategy. This spring Hough traveled to Malta to teach for a semester on a Fulbright Scholarship – her second, after having received one to teach in Denmark.

When he began to doubt government agencies’ ability to steer youths from broken homes along a straight path, therapist Christopher Spann D’08 formed his own group. Lifeboat Ministries, based in Homewood, connects volunteer mentors with young people who are referred by parents or school counselors.

“I believe in the kinetic energy of human beings trying to help each other,” Spann says. “If I help out 20 kids, that’s 20 less that the criminal justice system has to arrest. If they learn skills to help out others, those 20 may help out an additional 20.”

Most of his prior experience is in drug counseling. But Spann’s doctoral field project went in a different direction, examining how visiting online chat rooms can be detrimental to those trying to overcome sexual addiction.

“At graduation, when they announced the title of my project, people kind of went ‘Ewww,’” Spann says. But the project taught him valuable lessons, which he hopes to share by publishing a version of it later this year for other counselors to use.

As communications coordinator for the Allegheny County District Attorney, Karen Paullet ’02, M’05, D’09 helps prosecutors assemble cases into digital presentations they can show to a jury. That can include video footage from surveillance cameras, crime scene photographs, 3-D maps and diagrams, even primers on how experts analyze fingerprints or blood spatter patterns.

It’s not something Paullet, whose background was in finance, ever expected to be doing. Now she speaks about forensics at high schools throughout the region, and also teaches computer classes as an adjunct professor at RMU.

Paullet says when she was in high school she always dreamed of getting a doctorate. This spring her dream came true. “It’s the first time that I actually feel like, oh my gosh, I’ve actually done something important,” she says.

WRITTEN BY MARK Houser

Read more alumni profiles at www.rmu.edu/foundations.
1970s
PATRICIA FANNING CROUSE ’76 is the exhibit and graphic consultant at Exhibit Studios/Nimlok Central Pennsylvania, providing companies with visual marketing solutions. Pat and her husband, Mike, live in Mt. Joy, Pa.

RONALD J. MOCK ’78 was named to the board of directors of Allegheny Valley Bancorp Inc. He is managing partner of Mock Bosco & Associates P.C. and CEO of Independent Controller Services Inc. in Pittsburgh.

1980s
EARL MARTIN ’81, a former National City executive, is now with First Commonwealth Financial Corp. as a senior vice president and small business area manager. Martin will handle the south Pittsburgh region and will be based in Whitehall.

CHARLES PAGE ’81 is proprietor of Page’s Dairy Mart on the South Side of Pittsburgh. Four generations have helped run the ice cream stand since 1951. Chuck took over the operation from his father in 1986.

DEBORAH A. GRABE ’85 is general manager of processed products for U.S. Steel. She has been with the company for more than 20 years, and recently spent two years as a procurement manager at U.S. Steel’s operations in Kosice, Slovakia, before returning this year. Deborah resides in Sewickley.

CAROL HARRITY ’85 has been named vice president of strategic business management for Computer Sciences Corp.’s North American Public Sector line of business. Carol resides in Springfield, Va.

COLLEEN A. REDSHAW ’86 is the owner of Redshaw Solutions LLC, a supply chain and e-business consulting firm. Colleen resides in Canonsburg.

STEVEN FICKINGER ’87 won the Archie League Medal of Safety Award for heroic flight assists. An air traffic controller at the Roanoke Regional Airport, Steve successfully guided the pilot of a Piper Cherokee to a safe landing through 70 mph headwinds and low visibility last fall. Steve and his family reside in Salem, Va.

JEFF BELSKY ’87, M ’96 serves as vice president of strategy for the Pittsburgh Technical Institute.

JOHNENEBELSKY ’07 is an emergency room nurse for St. Clair Hospital. The Belskys reside in Moon Township.

CAROL HARRITY ’85 has been named vice president of strategic business management for Computer Sciences Corp.’s North American Public Sector line of business. Carol resides in Springfield, Va.

KEVIN AMOS ’88 was named CIO of the Year by the Pittsburgh Technology Council, winning in the growth category. Kevin is vice president for technology at the Green Tree search engine optimization firm Impaqt, which was recognized by Forrester Research as one of the world’s top search marketing companies.

 RANDY BELANSKY ’88 has been named to the board of Southwinds Inc., a nonprofit agency that provides quality residential care and life skills training for adults with developmental challenges throughout Allegheny County. Randy is the owner of Randy Belansky LLC in Coraopolis.

SANDRA FANTINI ’88 of Papernick & Gefsky LLC was recently named president of the 2009 board of the Professional Services Marketing Association. Sandra lives in Swissvale.

GARY HUGHES ’88 is senior pastor at the Antioch Baptist Church in Sewickley. Gary was associate pastor and senior program director at Mt. Ararat in East Liberty, and had assisted in other parishes. Prior to his call to ministry, he worked as an accountant. He and his wife Denise live in Mars, Pa.

JAMIE FALLONE SCARANO ’90 is the director of workforce inclusion strategy at UPMC, focusing on employee recruitment and development. Jamie resides in North Huntingdon.

MICHELLE DAVISON ’90 is a guest services representative at the Beaver Falls Holiday Inn. She resides in New Brighton with her daughter, Syndnee.

JOHN SWIATEK M ’92 joined GSP Consulting in Pittsburgh to direct the newly formed sports, entertainment, and marketing

Golden Grads Return to Campus
team. John formerly was president and managing partner of the Washington Wild Things minor league baseball team.

MARK DODDS M'93 is an assistant professor in sport management at State University of New York Cortland, where he has received the department’s Excellence in Teaching Award and the Civic Engagement Leadership Award for charitable fundraising. Mark and his wife, Jeannine, live in Cortland, N.Y., with their son, Spenser, and daughter, Quinn, who was born on March 31.

COLLEEN M. MITCHELL '95 recently relocated to Randleman, N.C., and is a financial advisor for Edward Jones. Colleen was previously associated with Wachovia Services.

GINO RIZZA M'95 became the borough manager of Dormont in May. Previously he operated his own construction company, and he has worked as an accountant and auditor with local financial institutions. Gino is a lifetime Dormont resident.

NICHOLAS NAVARI M'96 of Federated Investors is serving as vice president of the Pittsburgh Stock and Bond Association for 2009. Nick resides in Gibsonia.

NANCY STAMPAHAR '96 won a bronze medal at the Independent Publisher Book Awards in New York this June for her book, Peace, Love and Lemonade: A Recipe to Make Your Life Sweeter. Nancy is owner of Silver Lining Solutions and lives in Pittsburgh.

KRISTINA A. FAUSTI '97 has moved back to western Pennsylvania and will serve as director of legal and regulatory affairs for Fiduciary360, a global firm that trains investment managers. Kristina had been a special counsel with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington, D.C. Kristina is now residing in D.C.

BONNIE ANDRES DELUCA ’97 and her husband Mike had a son, Benjamin, on July 29. Bonnie is the director of account management at Benefit Coordinators Corp in Pittsburgh. Bonnie and Mike also have a daughter, Isabella, 3; they live in Sewickley.

JULIE J. HERSTINE '94, M'97 has received her Pennsylvania CPA license. She is an auditor with Cottrill, Arbutina Professional Services in New Brighton. Julie resides in Monaca.

WEB EXCLUSIVE

RON ANTONUCCI '74 and PAUL LAMPING '73 arranged a reunion of the Eta Lambda chapter of Pi Kappa Alpha this summer at the Pittsburgh Marriott North at Cranberry Woods. More than 30 brothers came from as far away as California.

For photos from this and other online exclusives, check out www.rmu.edu/foundations.
BOB O’KORN ’97 joined Benchmark Financial Network as a financial advisor. He previously worked for Charles Schwab. Bob and his wife, Caron, have two children, Joshua and Mary Alice, and are residents of the South Hills of Pittsburgh.

2000s

MICHAEL J. CERCHIARO ’00 is director of admissions and communication at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School in Coraopolis. He resides in Crafton.

JAMES HALL M’01 was elected secretary of the chapter of Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants. James is manager of tax administration for Pittsburgh Glass Works, and he lives in West Mifflin.

KRISTIN BROWN ’02 is director of development and marketing for The Early Learning Institute in Pittsburgh.

SCOTT BENZEL ’03 and his wife, Cyndi, became the proud parents of Baylee Rose on April 7. Scott is an assistant coach for the RMU Colonials football team.

GERARD MACIOCE D’03 was appointed chief information officer for Westinghouse Electric Co. He was the company’s director of systems enterprise integration for nuclear power plants. Jerry resides in Gibsonia.

GALEN MOORER ’03 was elected to the board of the North Side/North Shore Chamber of Commerce. Galen resides on the North Side of Pittsburgh, where he owns a Rita’s ice and custard franchise.

JEREMY TORRENCE ’04 and ABBY ELINETO RRENCE ’04 have moved to Beaver after five years in Florida. Jeremy is a service manager for FedEx and Abby is a sales representative with Cintas.

AMANDA FUNKHouser ’04 and her husband, Craig, became the proud parents of Evie May on February 22. Amanda is an accountant with Goff, Backa, Alfera and Co. Amanda and Craig also have a son, Colin, 3; they live in Imperial.

MICHAEL HEPLER ’04 married Dana Fink on June 20. The Heplers work for the Department of Defense, Office of the Inspector General, where Michael is a senior auditor. After a honeymoon in St. Lucia, they reside in Columbus, Ohio.

DR. CHARLES MANCE D’04 became vice president for information technology at California University of Pennsylvania in March. He previously was with Bayer Business and Technology Services as director of security, quality, and systems integrity.

PAUL MAVRINAC M’04 was elected president of the Pittsburgh chapter of the Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Paul is a senior manager at McCrory and McDowell in Pittsburgh.

MARCIE HAGER ’05 serves as controller for Guardian Storage Solutions in Pittsburgh. Marcie lives in Brentwood.

ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY PRESENTS

REGISTRATION/SPONSORSHIP DEADLINE MONDAY, SEPT. 14

For more information about registration and sponsorship opportunities, contact the RMU Alumni Relations Office at 412-397-2586 or rmualum@rmu.edu.
MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY RESEARCH. Merett resides in Crafton.

COURTNEY J. BLUMLING M’07 is office manager for Metalico Pittsburgh Inc. She resides in Aliquippa.

ASHLEY M. DESJARDINS ’07 is employed with the Carnival Cruise Lines as a teen activities director. Ashley lives in Salisbury, Md.

LAURA GAWRYLA ’07 and TYLER GETHING ’06 became engaged in March. Laura is an associate producer at WPXI-TV and a TV studio technician and student supervisor at Point Park University. Tyler is camera and audio operator for Azzar Training Systems in Canonsburg and head editor for “Joe’s Wildside Adventures,” an outdoors show on Fox Sports Net Pittsburgh and The Sportsman Channel. Laura and Tyler reside in the South Hills of Pittsburgh.

LEE TEBRUSCIC ’07 is a corporate comedy magician, and he performed his show recently at the Pittsburgh Improv comedy club as a fundraiser for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

> Colonials in the Big Apple

Hobnobbing at a New York alumni chapter party in May. When is your local chapter getting together next? Call 412-397-2586 to find out.
ADAM COUSLEY ’09 is a deduction analyst with Eaton Corp. in Moon Township. Adam is from Greenville, Pa.

Deaths

LAWRENCE R. BOYD ’30 of Washington, Pa., passed away on March 22 at the age of 100. He was believed to be the oldest living alumnus of RMU.

HARRY J. ALVERSON ’38 of Plum passed away on May 22 at the age of 92. A native of McKeesport, he went to work during the Great Depression as a clerk with Firth Sterling Steel and retired 30 years later as the company’s president. He had a second career as chief financial officer at Salem Corp., a steel industry service company in Carnegie.

ARTHUR R. WITHROW JR. ’48 of Neville Island passed away on January 13 at the age of 84.

WILLIAM M. HENDERSON ’50 of Fox Chapel passed away on June 14 at the age of 86. He worked as a trust officer for Pittsburgh National Bank for 46 years, retiring in 1992.

LLOYD D. DAVIS ’62 of New Florence, Pa., passed away on May 24 at age of 67. He was in the real estate and insurance business.

CHARLES KOHL ’73 of Moon Township passed away on March 30 at the age of 61. He was employed with RMU for over 20 years in the information technology department. He is survived by his wife, BETSY ’81, and son, BENJAMIN ’08.

IRA WESSLER, former professor of marketing at Robert Morris University, passed away on March 16. He was a member of the faculty for 24 years.

MELISSA ANN BARONE ’03 of Freedom passed away on July 19. Melissa was employed with Coventry Health Care of Cranberry Township and also volunteered with Animal Friends in Ben Avon.

E-mail us at rmualum@rmu.edu.

HOME COMING
SEPT. 26, 2009

COME CHEER ON THE COLONIALS AS THEY TAKE ON THE BRYANT BULLDOGS!

Free burgers, hot dogs, chips, and pop at the RMU Alumni Association cookout tent, opening at 10:30 a.m. Kids can enjoy balloon animals, caricatures, t-shirt painting, and more before the game.

Set up your own tailgate party. Call (412) 397-2424 to for rules and space availability.

KICKOFF AT NOON — DON’T MISS IT!
Laurie Roberts M’04, M’05 may look like a mild-mannered accountant, but don’t let that fool you. In addition to working at EG Conley’s North Hills office, she is also a fullback for the Pittsburgh Passion. The team had a strong season this year, going 7-1 in the Independent Women’s Football League before falling to the D.C. Divas in the playoffs in June. Roberts has been in the league four years, and also plays Gaelic football for the Pittsburgh Banshees.

A Troy Hill native and graduate of Perry Traditional Academy, Roberts received a bachelor’s degree from Allegheny College and then earned master’s degrees in business administration and taxation from Robert Morris University. When she’s not working or playing football, she also volunteers at the Sarah Heinz House, a Boys & Girls Club on Pittsburgh’s North Side that provides sports, recreation, and leadership programs for children and teenagers.

Did you play pickup football with the boys in Troy Hill, and did you beat them up? I remember playing sports with my brother, David, and my sisters, Jennifer and Rebecca. There was a group of about 10 to 15 kids that we played with. We were pretty competitive and aggressive, but it never came to blows.

Who were your favorite players as a kid? Who doesn’t love the Steelers growing up in Pittsburgh? The first players I remember watching were Louis Lipps and Rod Woodson. Of course, stories of the Steeler greats of the ‘70s, like Franco Harris and Mean Joe Green, were relived each season. I wish I could make a play like the Immaculate Reception before my career is over.

How have your RMU degrees helped you in your accounting career? My degrees were essential to my career. My undergrad was in mathematics, so I needed the accounting and tax classes in order to even sit for the CPA exam.

How do you find time for football practice during tax season? Fortunately, EG Conley is very supportive of the Passion and my playing football, and they allow for some flexibility in my schedule. Last year, when our practices were in the early evening, I would leave work, head to practice on the South Side and go back to the office to put in a few more hours before heading home. My brother and dad help with things around the house, from shoveling my walk and driveway when it snows to fixing anything around the house that would otherwise be broken until April 15th.

Have you ever tackled anyone in the office? Not yet. But there is a manager who played linebacker in college who’s asking for it.

Have you applied anything from your master’s degrees in business administration and taxation to the football field? We did a lot of group work at RMU, which made me a better team player and more adapted to working with various personalities and backgrounds. I worked full time while attending the grad programs at RMU, and that helped to further develop my time-management skills.

Your nickname is Rojo and RMU’s mascot’s name is RoMo? Are you, by chance, related? Is RoMo trying to steal my thunder? Just kidding!

What the heck is Gaelic football? It’s the national sport of Ireland. It’s kind of a mix between soccer, basketball, rugby, and volleyball. It’s pretty physical and fast paced, and it requires a lot of the skills used in soccer. It was a good fit for me since I played soccer from rec leagues growing up through college.

What do you find most rewarding about volunteering at the Sarah Heinz House? Sarah Heinz House was like a second home to me when I was growing up. The staff and volunteers had a very positive impact on my life. Heinz was the first place I played organized sports or was a part of a team. It’s nice to be able to give back to an organization that has done so much for me. I especially enjoy working with the teens, hoping that they see me as a positive role model that they can relate to.

Do you have a special accountant-esque type of celebration dance when you score a TD? Maybe something involving a calculator? Like the NFL, our league frowns upon the use of props in touchdown celebrations. However, I’ve had to take my ten-key to games to keep track of all the points we rack up on our opponents.

WRITTEN BY VALENTINE J. BRKICH | PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEVIN COOKE
Upcoming Events

> SEPTEMBER
18 RMU Night Pirates vs. Padres PNC Park, 7 p.m.
23 Irish singer Sean Tyrrell Massey Theater, 7 p.m.
26 Homecoming Weekend Football vs. Bryant U. Joe Walton Stadium, Noon
30 Pittsburgh Speakers Series: Pervez Musharraf Heinz Hall, 8 p.m.

> OCTOBER
30 Colonial Theatre presents “Rent” Through Oct. 4 Massey Theater, 8 p.m.
15 Alumni Leadership Open Meeting, Holiday Inn-Moon Township, 6 p.m.
22 Alumni Networking Luncheon, Wright’s Seafood Inn, Heidelberg, Noon

> NOVEMBER
1 Colonial Theatre presents “Sweeney Todd” Through Nov. 15, Massey Theater, 8 p.m.
5 Women of RMU Luncheon, Omni William Penn, Noon
11 Colonial Theatre presents “Sweeney Todd” Through Nov. 15, Massey Theater, 8 p.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on these and other upcoming events, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at (412) 397-2586 or rmualum@rmu.edu.

NAME ____________________________________________ YEAR OF GRADUATION __________________
PREVIOUS/ MAIDEN NAME ____________________________________________
ADDRESS _____________________________________________________________
CITY/STATE/ZIP __________________________________________________________
HOME PHONE __________________ WORK PHONE __________________
E-MAIL ADDRESS _______________________________________________________ 
PROFESSION/POSITION _________________________________________________ 
EMPLOYER NAME ______________________________________________________ 
ADDRESS _____________________________________________________________
CITY/STATE/ZIP __________________________________________________________
SPOUSE’S NAME ________________________________________________________ 
CHILDREN’S NAMES AND AGES ___________________________________________
NEWS ITEM ____________________________________________________________

MAIL THIS COMPLETED FORM TO: Office of Alumni Relations, Robert Morris University, 6001 University Boulevard, Moon Township, PA 15108-1189. Or, send your news via e-mail rmualum@rmu.edu or fax (412) 397-2142.