CONGRATS CLASS OF 2012

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Keeping the Faith
JIM GUFFEY ’89 HELPS REFUGEES MAKE A NEW HOME HERE . . . . . . . . . . . . . 12
The “American dream” was once the shorthand this nation used to describe the promise that any of us, no matter our background, could achieve success. Implicit in this narrative was that our children, if they worked hard, could do even better than we had, and their children better still.

Given the economic struggles of the last few years, some people have concluded that the American dream is a cliché, a cruel joke, and maybe it was a myth all along. Not Besart Stavileci.

The president of the Class of 2012 spoke of the American dream during his address at this year’s commencement. That dream brought him to Robert Morris University from Kosovo, where his family survived in the face of the devastation and deprivation of war: “I want to talk about that the American dream. I feel like only us, the foreigners, speak of it lately... But I want to remind you, my fellow graduates, this dream is yours.”

Besart is on his way to realizing that dream. (You can read about Besart on page 26, and see his speech at Foundations Online.) Perhaps because he worked so hard to arrive at this point, he does not take it for granted. In that sense he is not unlike many of his classmates and fellow RMU alumni who have also persevered in the face of tragedy and hardship.

You can read some of those stories in this Foundations. There’s Adam Werkmeister ’07, one of the youngest members of our President’s Council, who contributes to the scholarship that was created in memory of his sister, Amanda (page 24). She died unexpectedly of a rare heart disease two months before she was to graduate from RMU in 2010. Thanks to donors like Adam, students who never knew Amanda will get the chance to realize their dreams.

That spirit of service animates the work of Jim Guffey ’89, who, as executive director of South Hills Interfaith Ministries, provides services for struggling families from places like Burnsville and Thailand. Jim’s work seems far afield from sport management, in which he earned his degree, but as you’ll see from reading his story, his career is the direct result of the things he learned and the mentoring he received at RMU (page 12).

Jim’s path leads me to ponder our Golden Colonials, alumni who graduated at least 50 years ago. In the fall we invited them to write to us with their life’s stories, and we posted those we received at rmu.edu/goldencolonials. They make me proud of RMU’s role in helping them realize the American dream. The Golden Colonials came to Robert Morris University from Kosovo, where his family survived in the face of the devastation and deprivation of war: “I want to talk about that the American dream. I feel like only us, the foreigners, speak of it lately... But I want to remind you, my fellow graduates, this dream is yours.”

Fifty years from now, when historians look back on this time, 2012... what will they say about us?... They are going to take the measure of all of us. They are going to say, ‘Were the American people up to it? Did they understand what their collective and individual obligations were to set this great, great ship on a steady course to victory?’

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‘Fifty years from now, when historians look back on this time, 2012...’ It is the policy of Robert Morris University to provide equal opportunity in all educational programs and activities, admission of students, and conditions of employment for all qualified individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin and/or sexual orientation. It is the policy of Robert Morris University to provide equal opportunities in all educational programs and activities, admission of students, and conditions of employment for all qualified individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin and/or sexual orientation.
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Put Down the Phone and Slowly Back Away

Lecturer Yvonne Bland dared to ask students in her Survey of Mass Communication course in March to spend 48 hours without texting, talking on a cell phone, or using Facebook or other social media. Bland, a self-professed social media and Internet junkie, imposed the same conditions on herself. Shockingly, this cruel experiment did not violate any state or federal laws, or university policy. Students recorded their experiences in old-school blue books, the kind that alumni over the age of 35 may remember from their own final exams.

“I want to build awareness of just how dependent upon technology we have become,” said Bland. “We don’t see that technology is a big deal – that we are able to reach people 24/7, the instant gratification of realizing where our friends are all the time.”

Several local papers and TV stations covered the classroom discussion after the two-day experiment, as students admitted to rediscovering the simple pleasure of face-to-face conversations and eye contact. One sheepishly admitted to using the assignment as a welcome excuse not to talk to his long-distance girlfriend for a couple of days. Another marveled that people once actually wrote letters by hand.

We’d Like to Thank the Academy

The RMU Interfraternity Council won the 2011 Membership Recruitment Award, Division I, from the Association of Fraternal Leadership and Values, a national leadership organization.

We’ve Got the Power

To help rejuvenate a pond damaged by abandoned mine runoff at the Wingfield Pines conservation area, a team of senior engineering majors installed a water-driven turbine. The Allegheny Land Trust owns the 80-acre site along Chartiers Creek in Upper St. Clair. The turbine is in an overflow pipe that handles a constant flow of mine drainage, and it is designed to generate energy to aerate the pond, one of several on the industrially scarred property that have been monitored for several years.

“It’s very rewarding to work on a project that has real-life implications, and to help Allegheny Land Trust improve the ecology at Wingfield Pines,” said Eric Rabent, who built and installed the turbine with Chris Chavez, Ben Schermerhorn, and Brian Bevilacqua under the supervision of professors Yildrim Onurtug, Ph.D., and Tony Kerzmann, Ph.D.

New Downtown Campus

Beginning in the fall, Robert Morris University will offer its M.B.A. program and several signature graduate and undergraduate degrees at its new downtown campus in the Heinz 57 Center on Sixth Avenue. The new campus, next door to the Duquesne Club, will hold evening and weekend classes in organizational leadership (both bachelor’s and master’s programs), master’s programs in Internet information systems and information security assurance for enterprise systems, an executive-focused bachelor’s program in computer information systems, and certification programs in computer enterprise systems. The Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management also will move to the Downtown Campus from its current home in the Regional Enterprise Tower. For information or to enroll, call (412) 397-5200.

First Bowling, Then Global Domination

The School of Engineering, Mathematics and Science hosted the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Qualifying FIRST Tech Challenge, in which high school student teams had to build a robot that could bowl. More than 200 students from 19 schools participated in the event. The university also hosted the Allegheny County MATHCOUNTS competition, organized with the Pittsburgh chapter of the Society of Professional Engineers, in which 167 middle school students competed to reach the state finals.
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“Colonial Sports Center” is going to need to build an addition for its trophy case. The student-produced TV program won a 2012 Communicator Award from The International Academy of Visual Arts. Over the years, in addition to a previous Communicator Award, the sports program has earned multiple Aegis Awards and the Mark of Excellence in Sports Reporting from the Society of Professional Journalists.
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We’ll All Work for Him Some Day

Among the speakers in San Francisco at this year’s MacIT conference was junior computer and information systems major Mike Boylan, who also works as the university’s systems administrator for Apple machines. Boylan and Rich Trouton, the administrator for Macs at a research campus of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute in Virginia, spoke on transitioning from golden master to modular imaging. (We don’t know what that means either.)

Boylan developed his Mac chops as the system administrator for Fox Chapel School District before coming to RMU. He is a Presidential Scholar and president of the university’s student information technology advisory council.

Sharing their Wisdom

RMU has launched the CEO Lecture Series in partnership with Pittsburgh Quarterly magazine. In March J. Christopher Donahue, president and CEO of Federated Investors, addressed a full house at Massey Theater, explaining how Federated weathered the recent financial crisis without laying off any employees, and sharing wisdom he has gained as a business leader as well as a parent. Richard P. Simmons, retired president and CEO of Allegheny Technologies Inc., inaugurated the CEO Lecture Series with a talk in November.

Next up on September 25 is Kim Tillotson Fleming, chairman and CEO of Hefren-Tillotson. (To see both talks, go to rmu.edu/ceolectures.)

Skating Off with the Trophy

Senior finance major Chad Fritz won the Jamison Roth Student-Athlete of the Year award, presented by College Hockey East. Fritz, who has a 3.48 GPA, was captain of the club men’s ice hockey team. He is also a member of the National Society for Leadership and Success and National Society of Collegiate Scholars.

Another Year of Changing Lives

The Corporation for National and Community Service has named RMU to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service learning, and civic engagement. This is the fourth time the university has earned this distinction.

Building Boom Continues

An initiative to give each of the university’s five schools its own clearly identifiable home will be one step closer to completion this fall. Construction is almost finished on the latest addition to campus, a new School of Communications and Information Systems building. The three-story, 53,000-square-foot complex, on the site of the former Wayne Center, provides classrooms, faculty offices, and studio and lab space for the departments of computer information systems, communication, English, organizational leadership, and media arts. A large exterior video screen, visible to much of campus, will display student work and messages.

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**Jolly Good Fellows**

The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations at the University of Alabama, consistently rated one of the country’s best public relations schools, has awarded a Plank Fellowship to university professor of communication Ann Jabro, Ph.D. The fellowship, one of 15 awarded to PR professors this year, will support Jabro spending two weeks at BMW’s North American headquarters this summer. She plans to research BMW’s corporate PR practices and deliver a seminar.

Associate professor of media arts Hyla Willis, M.F.A., received a Heinz Endowment Fellowship for her six-week residency at the MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire.

**Thank You For Your Service**

Frank Flannigan, Ph.D., head of the department of finance, was honored by the American Society of Business and Behavioral Sciences with its Distinguished Service Award.

**Write it Down**

Jacqueline Klentzin, Ph.D., and Diane Todd Bucci, Ph.D., wrote "Part-time Faculty and the professor of learning. Klentzin is a Librarianship Journal of Academic Library: A Case Study" for the literacy and outreach librarian. Todd Bucci is a professor of English.

Val Howard, Ed.D., associate professor of nursing, wrote "High-Fidelity Nursing Education," an article on the university’s medical simulation programs published in Pittsburgh Quarterly, "Gershwin in Pittsburgh," revealing a long series of associations the American composer had with Pittsburgh, including his friendship with city native Oscar Levant. Suriano is the author of Gershwin in His Time: A Biographical Scrapbook 1926-1937, which has a foreword by Pittsburgh Pops conductor Marvin Hamlisch.

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**Take Two Dickens and Call Me in the Morning**

Sylvia Pamboukian, Ph.D., associate professor of English, has written Discovering the Novel: Medicine and Quackery from Shelly to Dashi, about the portrayal of medicine in Victorian literature. Pamboukian demonstrates how the Victorians’ ambivalences about doctors is reflected in works such as Finsler, Bleik Rusic, and the Sherlock Holmes stories.

**Now That’s Class**

The syllabus for "Math, Music and Art," a course taught by professors Heather Finson, Ph.D., and Monica VanDieren, Ph.D., was chosen by the National Collegiate Honors Council as a model syllabus for other honors courses. The syllabus is now published on the council’s website. The course examines cross-fertilization between the arts and theoretical mathematics in the creative process, and how both relate to symmetry, infinity, the search for truth and self, and improvisation. VanDieren, the co-director of the University Honors Program, is an associate professor of mathematics. Finson is an assistant professor of communication and media arts.

**An August Honor**

Communication professor Rex Crawley, Ph.D., was named to the board of directors to the August Wilson Cultural Center in downtown Pittsburgh. Named for Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning playwright and Pittsburgh native August Wilson, the center celebrates the art, culture, and history of African Americans in western Pennsylvania and beyond.

**And the Winner is**

Shellie Hipsky, Ed.D., associate professor of education, has been named a “SuperProfessor” by FacultyRow. The social media site for academics claims some 100,000 registered members, classifying roughly 200 as SuperProfessors based on the site’s evaluation of their excellence, passion, and clarity.

The RMU-produced video “Israel: A Deeper Meaning” was honored at the Media Communications Association’s International Media Festival in Las Vegas. Receiving a Silver Reel for External Communications was producer/director Michael DiLauro, M.F.A., director of the Academic Media Center and associate professor of media arts, and director of photography Raymond Zaparoni, the center’s videographer. The video documents the experience of RMU students while they studied and traveled throughout Israel. The experience was coordinated through the Center for Global Studies. (See the video at Foundations Online.)

**Coming In First**

Samantha Monda, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychology, was invited to the NCAA Scholarly Colloquium in Indianapolis to discuss strategies some student-athletes employ for academic success, a subject she explored in her dissertation. (To read a Q&A with Monda, go to Foundations Online.)
Jolly Good Fellows

The Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations at the University of Alabama, consistently rated one of the country’s best public relations schools, has awarded a Plank Fellowship to university professor of communication Ann Jabro, Ph.D. The fellowship, one of 15 awarded to PR professors this year, will support Jabro spending two weeks at BMW’s North American headquarters this summer. She plans to research BMW’s corporate PR practices and deliver a seminar.

Your Service Fellows

15 awarded to PR professors this year, to university professor of communication Ann Jabro

Thank You For Your Service

Frank Flanegin, Ph.D., head of the department of finance, was honored with the University’s Distinguished Service Award.

Write it Down

Jacqueline Klentzin, Ph.D., and Diane Todd Bucci, Ph.D., wrote “Part-time Faculty and the Professor of Learning.” Klentzin is a Librarianship Journal of Academic Librarianship Librarian. Todd Bucci is a professor of English.

Take Two Dickens and Call Me in the Morning

Sylvia Pamboukian, Ph.D., associate professor of English, has written “Dickens the Novelist: Medicine and Quackery from Stiffy to Dopey,” about the portrayal of medicine in Victorian literature. Pamboukian demonstrates how the Victorians’ ambivalence about doctors is reflected in works such as “A Christmas Carol,” “Bleak House,” and the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Now That’s Class

The syllabus for “Math, Music and Art,” a course taught by professors Heather Finson, Ph.D., and Monica VanDieren, Ph.D., was chosen by the National Collegiate Honors Council as a model syllabus for other honors courses. The syllabus is now published on the council’s website. The course examines cross-fertilization between the arts and theoretical mathematics in the creative process, and how both relate to symmetry, infinity, the search for truth and self, and improvisation. VanDieren, the co-director of the University Honors Program, is an associate professor of mathematics. Finson is an assistant professor of communication and media arts.

An August Honor

Communication professor Rex Crawley, Ph.D., was named to the board of directors to the August Wilson Cultural Center in downtown Pittsburgh. Named for Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning playwright and Pittsburgh native August Wilson, the center celebrates the art, culture, and history of African Americans in western Pennsylvania and beyond.

And the Winner is

Shellie Hipsky, Ed.D., associate professor of education, has been named a “SuperProfessor” by FacultyRow. The social media site for academics claims some 100,000 registered members, classifying roughly 200 as SuperProfessors based on the site’s evaluation of their excellence, passion, and clarity.

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GOALIES, BEWARE!

"Number 1 in America" is a title all sports teams crave, but only a few have the right to claim. In men's lacrosse, Robert Morris University seems to have a problem with sharing.

The Colonials were the nation's highest scoring team in NCAA Division I lacrosse this year — just as they were last year, and the year before that too. Their 14.33 goals per game average was nearly a goal better than the closest contender, Colgate. It is the first time since the NCAA started keeping records in 1995 that a Division I team has won the scoring title three straight years.

Last season's three top scorers graduated, so where did all the fireworks come from this year? Junior Jake Hayes scored a team-high 42 goals in 2012, including a program record seven goals in a single game. Senior Kiel Matisz put in another 40 goals and also contributed 24 assists. Both players ranked in the top 10 nationally in goals per game.

First-year coach Andrew McMinn, the team’s former offensive coordinator, managed the transition brilliantly as the Colonials finished 11-4, including a 5-0 sweep of NEC opponents. In the season finale at Joe Walton Stadium, McMinn’s team trailed No. 20 Bryant at halftime, with the right to host the NEC championship hanging in the balance. With their 13-12 comeback victory — the Colonials’ second win over a nationally ranked opponent this season after beating Ohio State in March — RMU earned its first regular season title. The Colonials also snatched Bryant’s spot in the national rankings with the win.

The run ended there, unfortunately, when defending champion Mount St. Mary’s bounced the Colonials from the tournament 16-15 in overtime. Still, RMU finished the season with a raft of NEC honors, including Coach of the Year for McMinn, Player of the Year and Offensive Player of the Year for Matisz, and 10 players earning All-NEC honors, including Hayes.

Looks like the pieces are in place to shoot for four in a row. Sharing's overrated.

WRITTEN BY MARK HOUSER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON COHN
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PHOTOGRAPHY BY JASON COHN
COLONIALS ROUNDUP

STEMMA PERFORMANCE

VOLLEYBALL
For the 13th year in a row, the Colonials played in the postseason tournament, losing to No. 1 seeded Long Island. The only senior on a very young team, Hannah Veith had another outstanding season, earning National Player of the Week honors, leading the league and ranking 20th nationally in hitting percentage (.370). Veith also continued an impressive streak for RMU volleyball, becoming the fourth Colonial in a row named NEC Scholar-Athlete of the Year in the sport.

TRACK & FIELD
Freshman Tara Van Schie was a sensation at the ECAC indoor championships in Boston in March, earning gold in the shot put (2.48 m), bronze in the high jump (1.53 m), and setting a school record in the pentathlon with 3,421 points, finishing eighth overall.

A javelin throw of 65.44 meters won silver for Chris Carpenter at the ECAC / ECAC-outdoor championships in Princeton in May.

Early childhood education major Casey Folga was named NEC Scholar-Athlete of the Year in recognition of her 3.93 GPA and winning pole vault of 3.48 meters — a new school record — at the NEC indoor championships.

ICE HOCKEY
Picked to finish last in the College Hockey America conference, the women’s team instead had a storied season, rolling off a school-record 19 wins and seizing the Colonials’ first championship trophy by defeating powerhouse Mercyhurst in front of a home crowd at the RMU Island Sports Center. The Colonials never trailed in the final, breaking Mercyhurst’s nine-year championship streak. For engineering the turnaround of a team that had won only 6 games the previous season, first-year head coach Paul Colontino, a former assistant at Mercyhurst, was named National Coach of the Year by U.S. College Hockey Online. Goalie Kristin DiCicco’s league-leading 1.97 goals against average and .928 save percentage ranked in the top 10 nationally, and her career-high 45 stops against the Lakers in the championship game earned her the tournament MVP honors. Freshman Rebecca Vint scored in each of her first six games and finished the season with 22 goals, a school record and third-highest among all Division I rookies.

The men’s team boasted the best penalty killing in NCAA Division I hockey since 2007, stopping 89.9% of opponents’ power plays. In the Atlantic Hockey playoffs, the Colonials dramatically won a three-game series against American International and seizing the Colonials’ first championship trophy.

LACROSSE
A headache for opposing teams, Colleen O’Donnell caused 2.44 turnovers per game, third in the nation, and ranked fourth nationally in ground balls per game (3.36). The Colonials ranked second in the country in ground balls per game (21.06).

STELLAR PERFORMANCE

COLONIALS ROUNDUP

BASKETBALL
For the fourth consecutive year, the Colonials played in the NEC championship game for an automatic March Madness berth, falling to No. 1 seed Long Island. Velton Jones led the team in scoring (16.0 ppg), as well as assists and steals. Freshman Lucky Jones also showed a scoring touch (8.5 ppg) and grabbed a team-leading 6.1 rebounds per game, earning him a spot on the CollegeGivens.com Mid-Major Freshman All-America Team.

Sophomore Artemis Spanou chalked up 20 double-doubles, fourth highest in the country, averaging 16.8 points and 10.6 rebounds per game. The team finished 18-13, advancing to the semifinals of the NEC tournament.

SOCCER
The women’s team had its first winning record, finishing 11-8-1. Ayana Davis scored 11 goals and 23 points, both second-most among NEC athletes, and helped the Colonials record the league’s second-highest goals per game average (1.75).

ROWING
The women’s varsity four boat won its heat at the Car-Du-Pitt-Romo Regatta in April, beating teams from Pitt, Duquesne, Carnegie Mellon, and John Carroll. In May the same boat advanced to the grand finals of the Dad Vail Regatta in Philadelphia, eventually finishing sixth out of 42 competing.

GOLF
Tess Wolfe shot her best round ever on the first day of the NEC championship, and then did two strokes better on the second day, with a two-over-par 74 at the Championship Course at LPGA International in Daytona Beach. She finished ninth in the tournament. Showing impressive consistency over the season, Brock Pompani averaged 74.8 strokes in 19 rounds, shooting over 79 just once and finishing in the top five times.

COLONIALS ROUNDUP

SOFTBALL
In another strong season, two new leaders emerged. With a league-leading 25 wins and 1.99 ERA, freshman Nicole Sleith won the league’s Rookie of the Year and Pitcher of the Year awards, while freshman catcher Samantha Santillo won the league’s Golden Glove with a .903 fielding percentage, the best career mark in team history. The Colonials won their second consecutive regular season title, but lost to Quinnipiac 4-3 in a 12-hour marathon that was the longest NEC tournament game ever.

FIELD HOCKEY
A trio of Australian freshmen helped the Colonials record their best season yet, led by Jamie Hartley, who in her rookie year set several team single-season records including goals (8), shots (72), and points (21). RMU also beat its first nationally ranked opponent in the sport, knocking out No. 15 Ohio 1-0 in overtime.
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They file off of the bus one by one, bouncing with energy after a long day at school. Their names are uncommon, and they hail from far-off places: Nepal, Thailand, and Burundi. Besides that, they’re just like any other kids you’ll find in western Pennsylvania — spirited, boisterous, and full of life. These are the children of refugees. Their parents came to the United States in the hopes of giving them a better life. And thanks to people like Guffey’s organization is so important. The charity offers field trips, family nights, and guest speakers to promote a sense of community. It also helps refugees learn and practice English, in partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

The agencies are required to provide services for resettled families for up to 90 days. After that, they’re on their own. That’s why Guffey’s organization is so important. The charity offers field trips, family nights, and guest speakers to promote a sense of community. It also helps refugees learn and practice English, in partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council.

Pantries at both Whitehall and Bethel Park stock food and household items, and Guffey says the pantries are set up to provide a realistic shopping experience for the families. For those who are unable to read English, picture cards are placed on the shelves to aid in identification. “It all goes back to the idea of respect,” he says. “When you treat these people with respect, it really goes a long way to helping them get back on their feet again.”

Through the Prospect Park Family Center, the ministries serve around 800 refugee and immigrant families living in a large apartment community in Whitehall. Established in 2007, the center provides free services, including home health care visits, child development screenings, group activities, and referrals. Family development specialists also work closely with the families, offering activities and information to promote child development.

The charity also offers free preschool. An afterschool program at the Whitehall Presbyterian Church for elementary school children, funded through the county and a Heinz Endowments grant, serves 65 students and has 15 staff members, as well as teachers’ aides who are usually refugee mothers. Jenet Kenyisaak, a refugee from Sudan, is an aide and has three children in the program: Kabang, a fourth grader; Jubek, a second grader; and Sasuk, a kindergartener. “My children are happy,” she says. “They enjoy the activities, and they love the homework help. It helps them in school. I hope the program continues.”

Guffey is the executive director of South Hills Interfaith Ministries, a human services organization that provides struggling families with valuable resources like food and clothing, as well as a variety of family support programs. The charity serves more than 1,300 needy individuals each year through its two locations in Whitehall and Bethel Park. Last year the organization distributed approximately 250,000 pounds of food and household products, and more than 7,000 clothing items. It also provided families with over $43,000 in utility assistance and donated more than $9,000 in back-to-school supplies.

The Walmart Foundation recently awarded a $30,000 grant to support the program.

Clustering such a diverse population in one place gives the people something they need — a sense of community. However, managing such a diverse population is not without its challenges. “First of all, you have the cultural issues,” says Guffey. “What do you do in an emergency situation when a husband refuses to let an E.M.T. touch his wife, simply because of his religious beliefs?” There can be political issues, such as concerns when refugee children place additional demands on the school district. Space is another issue. “Our current facility is pretty much...
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Most of the families living at Prospect Park were sponsored by Catholic Charities, which, along with the Jewish Family and Children’s Service, began resettling refugees here over a decade ago. Many of these refugees — Bosnians, Meskhetian Turks, Iraqis, Afghans, Burmese, Burundians, Bhutanese, Nepali, Sudanese, and Congolese — lived in refugee camps while waiting to get clearance to the United States. “Today, generations live in refugee camps,” says Guffey. “It’s all they know.”

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maxed out, and we’re limited in what we can do,” he says.

At RMU, Guffey was a sport management major. Two of his professors, Stephen Hardy, Ph.D., and Bill Sutton, Ed.D., pushed him to push himself beyond the classroom. “They told me to get out and get some real-life experience — do internships, volunteer. So that’s what I did,” he says. By chance a girl in one of Guffey’s classes lived in Marquette, Mich., where the Great Lakes State Games had some internship openings. “Four of us went up from the sport management department,” says Guffey. “That’s when I first fell in love with major civic events.”

During his final semester at RMU, Guffey interned with the Pittsburgh Marathon, where he made a ton of Pittsburgh connections. After graduating, he immediately got a job with the Pittsburgh Office of Special Events. “As Dr. Hardy always preached,” says Guffey, “it’s all about creating a network.”

In 1997 Guffey became director of operations for the Pittsburgh Three Rivers Regatta, and soon found himself surrounded by turmoil himself surrounded by turmoil. In 1999, the president, who then publicly accused Guffey of misusing regatta funds for personal gain. Connolly, a respected community figure who served on numerous boards, eventually pleaded guilty to tax evasion relating to money he kept from the regatta. Guffey was soon without a job, but he looks at the positive side. “It actually turned out to be a great learning experience for me, because I was able to learn the correct way to manage an organization’s books.”

Through his connections, Guffey was hired later that year by the American Heart Association as corporate relations manager for the Pittsburgh Heart Walk. One day he visited a local technology company, Ordine Choice, to see if they’d be interested in sponsoring the walk, and they ended up calling him back about an opening. Guffey saw it as an opportunity to see things from the other side of the table, and in 2000, he joined the company as their director of corporate sponsorship. “He hadn’t even seen my resume yet,” says Guffey. “But like I learned at Robert Morris, it’s all about doing good and respecting people. When you do that, it all comes back to you.”

In 2006, Guffey applied for the job and has been there ever since. “It’s easy to see that South Hills Interfaith Ministries is an extremely well-run organization, and it starts with leadership,” says Robert M. Connolly, Ph.D., head of RMU’s department of sport management, has known Guffey for years. “Jim was always professional, engaged, and involved, and he took advantage of every educational and professional opportunity that came his way,” says Synowka. “He’s a great guy.”

Even though he didn’t end up in sport management, Guffey says he is still grateful for the education he received at RMU. “Although this can be a difficult job at times, I love coming to work every day and doing what I can to help these people. It wasn’t what I thought I’d be doing when I was still back at Robert Morris, but my professors gave me the guidance I needed to get out there and be successful in whatever career I chose. They taught me how to find success.”

As an RMU alum, you belong to a singular group of individuals, young and old, who have all had the opportunity to experience what it means to be a Robert Morris Colonial. Whether you took classes downtown, online, or at the Moon Township campus, each of you shares a special, lifelong connection with other members of the RMU family.

But just because you’re no longer a student doesn’t mean you can’t still be an active member of the university. There are plenty of opportunities throughout the year where you can share your unique skills and talents with current students and other members of the RMU community.

As an alum, you can donate your time to worthwhile events like the Susan Holfacre 5k Memorial Run, Habitat for Humanity, or even Homecoming. You can also serve as a member of the Alumni Association Council, as a class representative, or as an activities coordinator for one of our alumni events in your hometown. You can also work through RMU’s Career Center to be a valuable resource for our students.

Your RMU experience doesn’t have to end at graduation. Stay connected with other alums and help make a difference, both for our current students and the community at large, by taking advantage of all the opportunities the Office of Alumni Relations has to offer.

For more information on the opportunities available and how you can get involved, email us today at rmualum@rmu.edu.

STAYING CONNECTED

By the Numbers

1,300 families helped
250,000+ food and household products distributed
7,000 clothing items distributed
$9,000 back-to-school supplies provided
$43,000 utility assistance provided

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When South Hills Interfaith Ministries sought a director of development and public relations in 2006, Guffey applied for the job and has been there ever since. “It’s easy to see that South Hills Interfaith Ministries is an extremely well-run organization, and it starts with its leadership,” says Robert M. Connolly, an accountant with the Massey Charitable Trust who recently toured the Prospect Park Family Center and visited the afterschool program. “Jim has all the necessary management skills and know-how, plus he is passionate, enthusiastic, and practical at the same time. He truly is one of the Pittsburgh region’s outstanding nonprofit leaders.”

Dave Synowka, Ph.D., head of RMU’s department of sport management, has known Guffey for years. He actually selected Guffey as one of his subjects for his doctoral dissertation research at the University of Pittsburgh. “Jim was always professional, engaged, and involved, and he took advantage of every educational and professional opportunity that came his way,” says Synowka. “He’s a great guy.”

Guffey had acquired the Heart Walk. One thing led to another and his resume got forwarded to the United Way, where he eventually met with William J. Moyer, the organization’s president and chief professional officer, and was hired on the spot as a corporate relations manager. “He hadn’t even seen my resume yet,” says Guffey. “But like I learned at Robert Morris, it’s all about doing good and respecting people. When you do that, it all comes back to you.”
maxed out, and we’re limited on what we can do,’ he says.

At RMU, Guffey was a sport management major. Two of his professors, Stephen Hardy, Ph.D., and Bill Sutton, Ed.D., pushed him to push himself beyond the classroom. ‘They told me to get out and get some real-life experience — do internships, volunteer. So that’s what I did,’ he says. By chance a girl in one of Guffey’s classes lived in Marquette, Mich., where the Great Lakes State Games had some internship openings. ‘Four of us went up from the sport management department, says Guffey. ‘That’s when I first fell in love with major civic events.’

During his final semester at RMU, Guffey interned with the Pittsburgh Marathon, where he made a ton of Pittsburgh connections. After graduating, he immediately got a job with the Pittsburgh Office of Special Events. ‘As Dr. Hardy always preached,’ says Guffey, ‘it’s all about creating a network.’

In 1997 Guffey became director of operations for the Pittsburgh Three Rivers Regatta, and soon found himself surrounded by turmoil when founder and president Eugene Connelly fired the event’s vice president, who then publicly accused Connelly of misusing regatta funds for personal gain. Connelly, a respected community figure who served on numerous boards, eventually pleaded guilty to tax evasion relating to money he kept from the regatta. Guffey was soon without a job, but he looks at the positive side. ‘It actually turned out to be a great learning experience for me, because I was able to learn the correct way to manage an organization’s books.’

Through his connections, Guffey was hired later that year by the American Heart Association as corporate relations manager for the Pittsburgh Heart Walk. One day he visited a local technology company, Ordine Choice, to see if they’d be interested in sponsoring the walk, and they ended up calling him back about an opening. Guffey saw it as an opportunity to see things from the other side of the table, and in 2000, he joined the company as their director of corporate sponsorship. ‘He hadn’t even seen my resume yet,’ says Guffey. ‘But like I learned at Robert Morris, it’s all about doing good and respecting people. When you do that, it all comes back to you.’

Immediately Guffey sent a resume out to a man he knew at Heinz. Coincidentally, the CEO of Heinz contacted him to inquire about the permit for Point State Park, which Guffey had acquired for the Heart Walk. One thing led to another and his resume got forwarded to the United Way, where he eventually met with William J. Myer, the organization’s president and chief professional officer, and was hired on the spot as a corporate relations manager. ‘It’s easy to see that South Hills Interfaith Ministries is an extremely well-run organization, and it starts with its leadership.’

When South Hills Interfaith Ministries sought a director of development and public relations in 2006, Guffey applied for the job and has been there ever since. ‘It’s easy to see that South Hills Interfaith Ministries is an extremely well-run organization, and it starts with its leadership,’ says Robert M. Connolly ’77, an accountant with the Massey Charitable Trust who recently toured the Prospect Park Family Center and visited the afterschool program. ‘Jim has all the necessary management skills and know-how, plus he is passionate, enthusiastic, and practical at the same time. He truly is one of the Pittsburgh region’s outstanding nonprofit leaders.’

Dave Synowka, Ph.D., head of RMU’s department of sport management, has known Guffey for years. He actually selected Guffey as one of his subjects for his doctoral dissertation research at the University of Pittsburgh. ‘Jim was always professional, engaged, and involved, and he took advantage of every educational and professional opportunity that came his way,’ says Synowka. ‘He’s a great guy.’

Even though he didn’t end up in sport management, Guffey says he is still grateful for the education he received at RMU. ‘Although this can be a difficult job at times, I love coming to work every day and doing what I can to help these people. It wasn’t what I thought I’d be doing when I was still back at Robert Morris, but my professors gave me the guidance I needed to get out there and be successful in whatever career I chose. They taught me how to find success.’

WRITTEN BY VALENTINE J. BRKICH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL WILL ’08
They can perform surgery at a hospital, conduct enemy surveillance on a battlefield, or beat the smartest of competitors on a TV game show. No, we’re not talking about Rhodes Scholars – this is a story about robots, and how one RMU alumna is part of a pioneering enterprise employing robots to perform manual labor in a futuristic way.

Sana Ali M’10 is an applications engineer at Pittsburgh-based Seegrid, a nine-year-old spinoff of Carnegie Mellon University’s mobile robot lab. The company’s robotic industrial trucks are revolutionizing how inventory moves across floors at manufacturing and distribution sites.

The typical unmanned industrial vehicle requires floor magnets, buried wires, or costly lasers to pick up and move materials in a warehouse. But Seegrid’s two robotic stars – a pallet truck that lifts 8,000 pounds and a tow tractor that hauls 10,000 pounds – incorporate state-of-the-art vision technology that saves businesses time and money.

Here’s how it works: Cameras mounted on a robot take pictures of the environment. The images are recorded in the robot’s memory, and converted into maps made up of 3-D grids. The robot is able to see the grid – hence the company’s name – and understand where it is at all times as it lugs heavy loads from one place to another autonomously. If someone or something gets in its way, the robot stops or slows down until the obstacle moves away.

“No other company has this technological ability to move from point A to point B using cameras,” explains Ali, who hails from Qatar and received her master’s in engineering management from RMU. “The robot remembers, I am going to make that turn and follow that path.” The technology, she adds, “is so smart and yet so simple.”

Working with sales account managers, Ali travels to potential customer sites to see how many robots a business might need and if the facility is compatible to motorized coworkers. Savings to the bottom line – not to mention workers’ feet and knees – are behind Seegrid’s success in a torpid economy. In just the past few years, the company has doubled its staff to 67 employees and expanded its headquarters at RIDC Park West in Findlay Township. Customers include Giant Eagle, Genco Supply Chain Solutions, and Daimler Trucks.

Watching the robots in operation leaves Ali literally speechless. “Amazing,” she says, pausing. “I have no words.”

For Ali, who spent nearly six years as an industrial engineer at Pittsburgh-based FedEx Ground before joining Seegrid in November, a typical day at the office is clearly atypical. Recently, she observed an air hockey game in which a humanoid robot competed with its human creator, the head of Seegrid’s research and development. “The robot kept watching and learning the other player, watching every move. It got so smart that after a while, there was no way you could beat it.”

In time, Ali sees Seegrid’s vision-guided solutions adapted for various industries, including defense and medicine. “This technology could be the right path to so many things,” she says. But with the excitement of artificial intelligence and the arrival of “thinking” robots come concerns about what happens when mechanical workers replace real people on the job.

“Lots of people wonder about this. That’s why industrial engineers, who try to minimize costs, are the most hated,” Ali says, laughing. While she doesn’t deny that robots can lead to a reduced workforce, she says the emphasis is not on eliminating workers but reassigning resources. If robots can handle the monotonous, time-consuming, and dangerous jobs, companies can allow employees to focus on other, higher-value tasks. “We’re not about replacing people, but at the end of the day, what is your goal?” Ali asks. “To be the most productive using minimal costs.”

Seegrid is the magnum opus of co-founder Hans Moravec, the company’s chief scientist and an adjunct robotics professor at CMU. The Austrian-born Moravec is known as a visionary in the field of artificial intelligence, and his books include Mind Children: The Future of Robot and Human Intelligence and Robot: Mere Machine to Transcendent Mind. In “Rise of the Robots,” a 2008 essay he wrote for Scientific American, Moravec predicted that by 2040, robotics will introduce “a freely moving machine with the intellectual capabilities of a human being.”

These human-like automatons, according to Moravec, will have a conscience and be capable of reasoning.

Ali isn’t looking into any crystal balls. She takes one day at a time, loves her job, and has great admiration for Moravec. “He’s why Seegrid is here,” she says.
They can perform surgery at a hospital, conduct enemy surveillance on a battlefield, or beat the smartest of competitors on a TV game show. No, we’re not talking about Rhodes Scholars – this is a story about robots, and how one RMU alumna is part of a pioneering enterprise employing robots to perform manual labor in a futuristic way.

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WRITTEN BY JIM TALERICO
TALERICO IS AN ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH AT RMU

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOE APPEL
On an autumn night in 2002, Robert Morris University launched its Pittsburgh Speakers Series at Heinz Hall with a lecture by Benjamin Netanyahu. Then between terms as prime minister of Israel, Netanyahu gave an impassioned address — one that drew its fair share of protestors — calling on America to attack Iraq and topple Saddam Hussein from power.

Few of the 70 speakers who have been a part of the Pittsburgh Speakers Series since that night are as controversial. But each has been just as memorable and thought-provoking.

For ten years, RMU has been inviting important personalities to town to share their views and engage in discussions with audiences interested in the world and eager to learn more. The series has welcomed winners of the Pulitzer and Nobel prizes, world leaders, statesmen, distinguished journalists, authors, and other celebrities to enlighten, inspire, and entertain audiences with their diverse opinions and profound insights.

The university is proud to be a part of elevating public dialog in our community. We thank the subscribers who have made our first ten years of Pittsburgh Speakers Series a great success.

And we look forward to many more scintillating seasons to come.
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Two tragedies motivated twin brothers Dwan and Donald Walker, fellow alumni from the Class of ’99, to make a change in their hometown of Aliquippa.

The first was in May 2009, when a 15-year-old Aliquippa resident was struck and killed by a car driven by another teenager, who was intoxicated. Diedre, the Walkers’ younger sister, urged Dwan, a hefty, gregarious man, to speak at the boy’s wake to young people who were crying and trying to make sense of the tragedy. Reluctantly, he approached them and told them that they could prevent future tragedies by keeping themselves and their friends from making foolish choices.

Dwan spent months knocking on doors, talking to people about their hopes.

The Walkers want to change the image of the city by making it a more vibrant place to live and work. Goals include a new recreation center and swimming pool, as well as infrastructure improvements to prevent flooding and improve cell phone reception, which is spotty at best. “Love, support, and prayers carried us to where we are,” Dwan says.

Both Walkers loved their student days at RMU, where they were members of the Colonials football team and roommates their freshman and sophomore years. Dwan majored in communications, and Donald studied media production. They recall fondly that several professors gave them special encouragement and support. “They put their arms around us,” says Dwan. “RMU made us well-rounded. We learned to deal with people at all levels.”
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Seeing the effect he had, Diedre told him he should run for mayor. Initially he shrugged it off, but stepping outside the church, he suddenly felt inspired. “Something just hit me,” Dwan says. “It lit a fire in me.” That night, he told his family that he intended to run. Soon he was talking to friends and neighbors and planting the seeds for a campaign.

The second tragedy came that September, when Diedre was shot and killed by an ex-boyfriend who then committed suicide. The crime deeply affected the community, and some 2,000 people came to Diedre’s funeral. Dwan and Donald were devastated. But after an intense period of grieving, they resolved to improve their hometown and make it a safer place. Dwan resumed his plan to run for mayor, and Donald joined him, running for city council.

Despite the hard times their city has faced since the late 1980s, when the former J&L Steel mill closed, the Walker brothers are loyal to Aliquippa and hopeful for its future. They both coach in local youth leagues. “You’ve got to love where you’re from,” says Dwan. “It makes you who you are.”

Dwan holds a day job as a FedEx account executive, and is in the municipal office after 5 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, often until 10 at night. Donald is a wraparound therapeutic support specialist, working with students who have mental and behavioral problems. He is also a substitute teacher for the local school system. He is 10 minutes older than his brother, and is, by far, the quieter one. “I’m methodical,” he says. “My brother’s the energy person.”

While Dwan and Donald are new to politics, it does run in the family. Their great aunt, Jessie Bell Walker, was a longtime city councilwoman. (Her son, Myron Walker ’08, is the all-time leading scorer in Colonials basketball and the reason the twins came to Robert Morris.) The Walkers ran on the “One Aliquippa” ticket, named to emphasize the importance of unity and leadership to transform the town. Dwan spent months knocking on doors, talking to people about their hopes.

The small city’s population of around 9,400 is less than 40 percent black, though it is widely perceived to be mostly black. Aliquippa had never had a black mayor, but Dwan says he was not concerned about racism during his run. He did worry that it would be difficult to win in a community that had long been dominated by an influential group of politicians. The incumbent mayor, Anthony Battalini, had been in office for 12 years.

In the 2011 Democratic primary, Dwan beat Battalini by a 2-to-1 margin. Unopposed in the general election, he was sworn in this year as mayor, with Donald taking a seat on city council. When some of the municipal staff, including the city manager, left their jobs, Dwan asked fellow alumnus and longtime friend Samuel Gill M’05 to help. Gill is now city manager.

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If you secretly enjoy complaining about your commute, steer clear of Lisa J. Hogan D’09. Here’s how Hogan, an assistant professor and assistant program director of the school of nurse anesthesia at the University of New England in Portland, Maine, spends her Thursdays:

3:30 A.M. — Get up, drive to the bus station, and take the bus to Boston.
7 A.M. — Catch the early flight to Pittsburgh.
8:30 A.M. — Rent a car at the airport and drive to the Holiday Inn on University Boulevard.
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5 P.M. — Head to campus for a four-hour doctoral night class.
10 P.M. — Return to hotel; set alarm for 4:45 a.m. to catch Friday morning flight back to Boston, take the bus back to the car, and drive to work in Portland.

Now consider this: Hogan, the former chief nurse anesthetist at Emerson Hospital in Concord, Mass., only started working on her Ph.D. in instructional management and leadership at RMU after she finished her doctorate in nursing practice (D.N.P.) at RMU. In other words, this is the second time she’s making that commute from New England — while married, with a teenage daughter, and working a full-time job. When Hogan earns her second RMU doctorate in 2014, she’ll be the first person in the university’s history to do so.

“It’s apparent I’m an overachiever,” says the former track coach, who still holds a pair of Massachusetts high school records in long-distance running from the days before she started long-distance commuting. “I’m typically in the middle of one adventure and thinking what the next adventure is going to be.”

As if getting one doctorate, let alone two, isn’t enough, Hogan’s capstone project for her D.N.P. won Georgetown University’s first National Nursing Patient Safety Award for Education in 2011. Her project undertook to train operating room staff at Emerson to eliminate unnecessary noise before and after surgery. Noise from banging instruments, moving noisy equipment, talking loudly, and cleaning up can be a distraction at an already stressful time, just as anesthesia providers are trying to help patients relax. Now for her Ph.D. dissertation, Hogan is planning to work on the flip side — measuring various ways anesthesia providers can shut out unavoidable noise before and after surgery.

Her mother became a nurse while Hogan was in high school, but the idea had been in Hogan’s head long before that. In kindergarten she told her classmates she wanted to be a nurse but the idea had been in Hogan’s head long before that. In kindergarten she told her classmates she wanted to be a nurse. When she grew up, and also be in the army. She did both, getting commissioned as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve in order to earn her M.S.N. degree. In 2003 she was assigned to Walter Reed Medical Center for several months as a nurse anesthetist, treating soldiers gravely wounded in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.

One memory that won’t leave her is a young soldier with a shiny new prosthetic leg, standing over his friend in bed who had a head injury and was unconscious. There were young wives, some still teenagers, carrying babies on their hips, sitting at their husbands’ bedside. “I was supposed to relieve their pain, but I realized there was so much more of a medication that would relieve their pain.”

Hogan was at Emerson when she began looking for an opportunity for educational advancement. She found the D.N.P. program while searching the Internet. She hadn’t heard of RMU, but its program appealed to her because of its combination of online and on-campuses, which encourage student cohorts to provide mutual support and enrich learning. The universities in her area that offered a D.N.P. either were entirely online programs, which seemed too isolated to her, or required students to be on campus several days a week.

As a veteran, Hogan receives the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits that cover tuition and a stipend, which she uses to cover her plane tickets and hotel room. She said she was looking for a “veteran friendly” program, and praises the university’s Veterans Education and Training Services Center for its assistance. “I literally had to do nothing, they were so accommodating and ready to help me.”

The D.N.P. program paid career dividends. Hogan got her current job at the University of New England partly as a result of her degrees. She says, ‘Every degree I’ve gotten in nursing has opened more doors for me. The Ph.D. will open that much more.’

And while she still gets occasional quizzical stares when friends, family, and colleagues find out she goes to school in Pittsburgh, Hogan says she feels almost like she’s coming to her second home when the plane touches down every Thursday.

“I didn’t know what to expect at RMU,” Hogan says. “But I have so many friends and colleagues here now. There’s such a sense of community and belonging. I would probably move here, if I didn’t love the seacoast so much.”

WRITTEN BY MARK HOUSER

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Two months before graduating in 2010, senior business major Amanda Werkmeister died suddenly and unexpectedly of a rare heart disease. The passing of such a popular student, who had been Homecoming Queen the previous fall and was a regular volunteer with her Delta Zeta sisters, stunned friends and family.

Her older brother, Adam Werkmeister '07, does what he can to honor the memory of his sister and only sibling. As a member of the President’s Council, which comprises donors who give $1000 or more a year to the university, Werkmeister contributes to a scholarship in Amanda’s name at their alma mater.

“They took it upon themselves to feel that each of their students is a member of a family, and for the president of Robert Morris to show up at a funeral and console the family of a deceased one speaks immensely to me,” Werkmeister says. “They really do care.”

Although Werkmeister admits he came to the university as a nervous young student, he now has a big job at Bechtel, managing letters of credit granted by the Federal Reserve for the defense contractor’s naval reactors program. The funds he manages are used to install the nuclear reactors that power Navy ships and submarines and to train sailors who operate the reactors. Responsible for managing potentially billions of dollars, Werkmeister plays a crucial role in making the fleet nuclear-powered and safely operated.

“It enhanced an ability that I had. I wasn’t going into IT,” Werkmeister says. “I was going into accounting, but I really have a strong IT background just from doing it as a hobby. I build computers and I fix them. All the people in my department (at Bechtel) will usually come to me for questions. So I never left the help desk.”

“Anything I do directly impacts the U.S. Navy,” he says, “so if I mess up, I could be messing up pretty big. The sailors and everybody else could be at risk. It is a very important job that we all have at my company, and we all take pride in it.” Werkmeister has also been working as project lead on a development to employ automatic invoicing software systems for his company. Although he graduated with a degree in accounting and works as a cash manager for Bechtel, Werkmeister credits his present involvement in information technology to his interest in computers, which he says was only enhanced by his time at RMU.

As an undergraduate, Werkmeister became a student supervisor for ResNet, an IT organization that helps resident students with computer problems. The on-campus help desk at the time was mostly busy with faculty and staff problems, so Werkmeister and the other founding members of ResNet borrowed chairs, desks, and office furniture the other departments weren’t using, and developed the organization. Eventually, he was working on 10 to 15 computers a day at ResNet.

“It seems to me that Robert Morris picks the right kind of people for the school,” he says. “I firmly believe that good education will come from a university with award-winning programs, but a truly outstanding education comes from a university that has a real soul.”

WRITTEN BY MATTHEW CHICHOWICZ
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOE APPEL
Two months before graduating in 2010, senior business major Amanda Werkmeister died suddenly and unexpectedly of a rare heart disease. The passing of such a popular student, who had been Homecoming Queen the previous fall and was a regular volunteer with her Delta Zeta sisters, stunned friends and family.

Her older brother, Adam Werkmeister ’07, does what he can to honor the memory of his sister and only sibling. As a member of the President’s Council, which comprises donors who give $1000 or more a year to the university, Werkmeister contributes to a scholarship in Amanda’s name at their alma mater.

“They took it upon themselves to feel that each of their students is a member of a family, and for the president of Robert Morris to show up at a funeral and console the family of a deceased one speaks immensely to me,” Werkmeister says. “They really do care.”

Although Werkmeister admits he came to the university as a nervous young student, he now has a big job at Bechtel, managing letters of credit granted by the Federal Reserve for the defense contractor’s naval reactors program. The funds he manages are used to install the nuclear reactors that power Navy ships and submarines and to train sailors who operate the reactors. Responsible for managing potentially billions of dollars, Werkmeister plays a crucial role in making the fleet nuclear-powered and safely operated.

“Anything I do directly impacts the U.S. Navy,” he says, “so if I mess up, I could be messing up pretty big. The sailors and everybody else could be at risk. It is a very important job that we all have at my company, and we all take pride in it.” Werkmeister has also been working as project lead on a development to employ automatic invoicing software systems for his company. Although he graduated with a degree in accounting and works as a cash manager for Bechtel, Werkmeister credits his present involvement in information technology to his interest in computers, which he says was only enhanced by his time at RMU.

As an undergraduate, Werkmeister became a student supervisor for ResNet, an IT organization that helps resident students with computer problems. The on-campus help desk at the time was mostly busy with faculty and staff problems, so Werkmeister and the other founding members of ResNet borrowed chairs, desks, and office furniture the other departments weren’t using, and developed the organization. Eventually, he was working on 10 to 15 computers a day at ResNet.

“It enhanced an ability that I had. I wasn’t going into IT,” Werkmeister says. “I was going into accounting, but I really have a strong IT background just from doing it as a hobby. I build computers and I fix them. All the people in my department (at Bechtel) will usually come to me for questions. So I never left the help desk.”

He credits his understanding of how to improve and finish projects to the versatility of classes at RMU.

“It seems to me that Robert Morris picks the right kind of people for the school,” he says. “I firmly believe that good education will come from a university with award-winning programs, but a truly outstanding education comes from a university that has a real soul.”

WRITTEN BY MATTHEW CICHOWICZ
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOE APPEL
Although Susan Van Cleve, D.N.P., encourages her patients to get a lot of sleep, she has no time for a nap. Besides being an associate professor of nursing at RMU and a pediatric nurse practitioner providing behavioral and mental health care to children and teens in the South Hills, Van Cleve is president of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, or NAPNAP. The professional organization works to improve health care for infants, children, and adolescents and to advance the role of nurse practitioners in providing that care.

Promoting the role of nurse practitioners and advocating for children’s health has long been a priority for Van Cleve, who teaches in the university’s Doctor of Nursing Practice program. She was a founder of the Three Rivers Chapter of NAPNAP in 1993 and has been an officer in several nurse practitioner organizations in her career.

Her expertise focuses on assessing and treating children with developmental, behavioral, and mental health issues, such as ADHD, autism, anxiety, genetic syndromes, depression, and anxiety. “I love to work with children and families,” she says. “Children are receptive to change, and it is interesting to note how parents will change their own habits to benefit their child’s health.”

Helping students to be the best they can be and guiding them in their careers is what Van Cleve says she enjoys most as a professor. For example, take a research course she teaches about writing grants. “I can see the students improve their writing. It’s fun to watch the growth and understand how their problem-solving skills develop until they reach that ‘aha!’ moment. The most gratifying part of teaching is when a student is able to understand a concept, fact or analysis and integrate it into practice.”

WRITTEN BY SARA MEIER ’11
PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY SUSAN VAN CLEVE
Although Susan Van Cleve, D.N.P., encourages her patients to get a lot of sleep, she has no time for a nap. Besides being an associate professor of nursing at RMU and a pediatric nurse practitioner providing behavioral and mental health care to children and teens in the South Hills, Van Cleve is president of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, or NAPNAP. The professional organization works to improve health care for infants, children, and adolescents and to advance the role of nurse practitioners in providing that care.

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PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY SUSAN VAN CLEVE
I made a lot of personal and professional connections at Robert Morris, and they’ve enhanced my career opportunities. Considering what I received, I am pleased to return something to the university each year.

TOM MARCHELIN M’06,
SOMERSET YACHT ATTORNEY FOR ALCEDA

The jazz guitar legend, winner of 19 Grammys, brings his four-piece Unity Band to campus for an evening concert on the lawn. Smooth jazz under the stars.

For just $84 a month, President’s Council members like Tom are part of something important. They give the gift of opportunity to RMU students. They invest in the future prosperity and growth of our region. They change lives.

To find out more about joining the President’s Council, please contact Jim Crawford Young, at (412) 397-5452, YOUNGJ@RMU.EDU. Or contribute online at RMU.EDU/GIVE.
“I made a lot of personal and professional connections at Robert Morris, and they’ve enhanced my career opportunities. Considering what I received, I am pleased to return something to the university each year.”

TOM MARCHLIN '90, SENIOR Tax ATTORNEY FOR MALIN, ALCEDA

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www.rmuedu/give

PNC BANK PRESENTS
RMU’S JAZZ CONCERT SERIES
PAT METHENY AT RMU
FRIDAY, AUGUST 10

The jazz guitar legend, winner of 19 Grammys, brings his four-piece Unity Band to campus for an evening concert on the lawn. Smooth jazz under the stars.

LAWN TICKETS JUST $20. CALL (412) 322-0800.

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Pat Metheny at RMU concert on the lawn. Smooth jazz under the stars. The jazz guitar legend, winner of 19 Grammys, RMU’s jazz Friday, August 10

NOTES

She was in its first graduating class in 1968, and Fran and her husband, Roger, have established a scholarship for CCAC students. The Diess live in Gibsonia.

TOM LEWIS '83 was appointed architectural market manager for Centria Coating Services in Moon Township. He has been with the company since 1988. Tom lives in Aliquippa.

DEBRA BURK ‘84 is vice president of human resources at Ansys. She lives in Clinton.

JAMES KERESTES ‘94 is the food and beverage supervisor at the Loews Don CeSar Hotel in St. Pete Beach, Fla. James lives in St. Petersburg.

TOM MCKINNEY '62 was elected president of the Retired Federal Employees RMU.

TOM MCKINNEY '62 was elected president of the Retired Federal Employees WWW.

TERESA “TERI” WEINER SAVOLISKIS '90 '94 is executive administrator for the UPMC Heart and Vascular Institute. Teri resides in Pleasant Hills.

JAMES R. GEHPART '75 is vice president of technology at the Herndon, Va., headquarters of Score Association, a national organization supporting small businesses. Jim has 18 years of executive experience in information technology in the legal, health care, nonprofit, security, and retail industries.

70s
F. J. “MIKE” HEPLER ’73, a decorated Vietnam veteran and president and CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania, was given the Gen. Matthew Ridgway Award by the West Point Society of W. Pa. for his “hands-on involvement in positive youth development in Western Pennsylvania.” He lives in Richland Township.

1980s
FRANCES “FRAN” N. DUCES '91, assistant dean for academic management at the Community College of Allegheny County, was commended in a proclamation from Allegheny County Council for her 37 years of work at CCAC. She was in its first graduating class in 1968, and Fran and her husband, Roger, have established a scholarship for CCAC students. The Diess live in Gibsonia.

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**CLASS NOTES**

**Dennis J. Loughran M’97** is a partner with Louis Plung & Co. in charge of its entrepreneurial services department. He lives in Pittsburgh.

**Rob Diana ’01** was named vice president of operations for Kopp Class. In 25 years at Kopp, Rob has been IT manager, production manager, and director of operations. He lives in McKeesport.

**Doug Yakich ’86** was named one of two national “IBM Icons” in recognition of his inspiring story of coping with Crohn’s disease since the age of 17 and his advocacy for those afflicted by similar chronic diseases. Doug, his wife, Jacque, and their daughter, Isabella, live in Glendale, Calif.

**Garth Ericson ’89** and his wife, Deborah Joyce, on January 5. Garth is the director of parks and recreation for Manchester Township. The family resides in York, Pa.

**James M. Sacco ’84** is a police officer for Findlay Township. Jim and his wife, Jennifer Holub Sacco ’84, live in Moon Township.

**2000s**

**Anthony Williams ’00** is a manager, and director of IT, at Kopp Glass.

**Katie Schmidt** is married to her husband, Michael. Katie, welcomed their first child, Andrew, born on March 28, 2011. Katie is an account manager of talent acquisition at a pharmaceutical company.

**Stephanie Weis ’99** is the author of fantasy novel “The Star Child” under the pen name of Stephanie Keyes. She is also a full-time corporate educator and curriculum designer. Stephanie and her husband and two sons live in Bethel Park.

**Jenna DiBuono ’00** is an internal auditor for UPMC. The couple lives in Coraopolis, and their two sons, Stone, and Gavin, in Oakland.

**Jayson Council M’04** and his friends Nate Mitchell and Dr. Ksawme Williams hold a free foot and ankle clinic for senior citizens in the city’s Lincoln-Lemington neighborhood. Jayson is the director of student services and college relations at Rutgers University. He also operates the Council Foundation, a nonprofit group that promotes community events and awards scholarships to high achievers in Newark, N.J. He lives in Washington, N.J.

**Kaya Jenkins Druga ’04** is the talent acquisition contract professional at Amys. She resides in Imperial.

**Chad T. Reilly ’04** is director of membership for the Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association, a national membership organization based in Robinson Township. Chad and his wife, Amy Kotula Reilly ’04, live in Imperial.

**Ashley Henry Shook ’04** was appointed to the Allegheny County Airport Authority board of directors. She is a lobbyist for Duane Morris Government Strategies. Ashley and her husband, Jeff, reside in Ross.

**Don’t Miss the Show!**

**Homecoming | Sept. 29**

Saturday Night Football | Fireworks | Class Reunions | Free Concert | Tailgate Alley

Details at RMU.EDU/HOMECOMING
Class Notes would love to hear from you. Email us at rmualum@rmu.edu.
JOHN J. STRAUB M’07 was promoted to captain in the U.S. Marines. He serves as a communications officer in the Marines’ Security Cooperation Group in Virginia Beach, Va.

KRISTINA JORDO ’10 is the marketing, social media, and public relations coordinator at Printing Industries of America in Allegheny Township. Kristina lives in McKees Rocks.

ADAM C. MIHLFRIED M’08 is a director of software development for emCharts, a Pittsburgh company that provides patient management systems for emergency medical service staff. Adam lives in Pittsburgh.

EVAN ASHTON ’09 is corporate partnerships manager for the Fort Wayne TinCaps, a minor league baseball team affiliated with the San Diego Padres.

SANA ALI M10 is an applications engineer for Seegrid Corp. She lives in Coraopolis. (Read more about Sana on page 16.)

KEVIN “KIP” KUZIOR M’11 is tax manager of Koppers Industries. He lives in Bulger, Pa.

NATHAN LONGPRE ’11 joined the Springfield Falcons of the American Hockey League. He previously played with the Chicago Wolves. Nathan is from Peterborough, Ontario.

BRANNIE MCLAUGHLIN ’11 was selected to the 25-player U.S. Women’s National Team for the 2012 International Ice Hockey Federation Women’s World Championship in May. The team took silver in her third major international tournament with Team USA. Brianne stopped 9-of-9 in her game vs. Finland. Brianne was volunteer assistant coach for the RMU women’s team last season.

CHRISTIE WELSH LAIDUS ’05 and her husband, Nick, are the proud parents of Jordyn Olivia, born January 13. The family lives in Oakdale.

BRYAN MILLS ’06 M’08 and KERRY MCKINNEY MILLS ’05 are the proud parents of Brooke McKenzie, born April 14. Kate is a major gift officer at RMU. They live in Bethel Park.

ADAM C. MIHLFRIED M’08 and KELLY MCMURTRY M’08 were married on May 19. Adam lives in Pittsburgh.

KATE MCKENZIE GATTO M’00 D’12 and her husband, Shawn, are the proud parents of Brooke McKenzi, born April 14. Kate is a major gift officer at RMU. The Gattos live in Mt. Lebanon.

JEFF BLASKO ’05 is the assistant special teams coordinator and tight ends coach for the University of Kansas Jayhawks. Previously he was a quality control coach for offense and quarterback coach at the University of Florida, and was on the sidelines for the team’s Gator Bowl win over Ohio State.

CRISTINA ZIMMER ’08 is a graphic designer for MarketSpace Communications. She lives in Vandergrift.

KEVIN J. BAZNER ’06 M’08, is the interactive workshop facilitator for Campuspeak, a college speakers agency. Kevin is the coordinator of Greek life at Midwestern State University and on the board of directors for Downtown Wichita Falls Development. He resides in Wichita Falls, Tex.

DOUGLAS BEASOCK ’06 is a senior implementation analyst at FNC Bank. He lives in McKees Rocks.

LINDSEY WRIGHT BRADLEY ’06 is the corporate events director of Hello Productions in Pittsburgh. Lindsey and her husband, Kyle, live in Pittsburgh.

JOSHUA A. DLUHOS ’06 M’09 is a trust officer and account manager for FNC Institutional Investments. Joshua and his wife, MEGAN THOMPSON M’11, met while graduate students at RMU. Megan works for YouthPlaces. They live in Bethel Park.

CHRISTOPHER CROLEY ’06 and JORDHANNA WHITE ’08 were married on June 24, 2011. Chris is a certified personal trainer and CEO of Croley Fitness and Jordhanna teaches early education. The couple resides in the Philadelphia area.

JORDHANNA WHITE ’08 is a career development consultant with Graham-Kelsey. She married Salvador on October 7. She is a career development consultant with Graham-Kelsey. She married Salvador on October 7. The couple resides in Pittsburgh.

KEVIN J. BAZNER ’06 M’08 is the assistant special teams coordinator and tight ends coach for the University of Kansas Jayhawks. Previously he was a quality control coach for offense and quarterback coach at the University of Florida, and was on the sidelines for the team’s Gator Bowl win over Ohio State.

ANASTASIA ROSE DRAMATIKIS ’06 married Fernando David Lopez on September 24. She is a career educator and advisor at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo while pursuing her M.A. degree in educational leadership. Anastasia and David reside in Fortaga, Mich.

MICHAEL HEPLER ’04 and his wife, Chris, are the proud parents of Jake Michael, born on January 31. Both work for the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General. Michael is a team leader and senior auditor. The Heplers live in Gahanna, Ohio.

JENNIFER STOESSLE ’04 married Kelsey Salvador on October 7. She is a consultant with Graham-Felton Consulting. The couple resides in Upper Montclair, N.J.

BRIANNE MCLAUGHLIN ’11 was selected to the 25-player U.S. Women’s National Team for the 2012 International Ice Hockey Federation Women’s World Championship in May. The team took silver in her third major international tournament with Team USA. Brianne stopped 9-of-9 in her game vs. Finland. Brianne was volunteer assistant coach for the RMU women’s team last season.

MBA NIGHT WITH THE PITTSBURGH SYMPHONY OCTOBER 19

Join alumni and faculty from the School of Business for dinner and networking at Heinz Hall, and Mahler’s Symphony No. 2.

Tickets just $20. Call (412) 392-3224.

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“Smart choice” for online programs in nursing, health care administration, psychology, computer science

U.S. News & World Report Says

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RMU.EDU/ONLINE
CHRISTIE WELSH | LAUDIS '05 and her husband, Nick, are the proud parents of Jordyn Olivia, born January 13. The family lives in Oakdale.

ANGELA WOOLSEY | JORDHANNA WHITE '03 were married on June 24, 2011. Chris is a certified personal trainer and CEO of Croley Fitness and Jordhanna teaches early education. The couple resides in Philadelphia.

KATE MCKENZIE GATTO | FERNANDO DAVID LOPEZ on October 7. She resides in Upper Montclair, N.J.

JENNIFER STOESSEL '04 is a consultant with Graham-Kelsey.

LIADIS '05 and '05 of Jordyn Olivia, born January 13. The family lives in Oakdale.

The Mills family lives in Portage, Mich.

KEVIN J. BAZNER '06 M'08 is the assistant special teams coordinator and tight ends coach for the University of Kansas Jayhawks.

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CHRISTOPHER CHAPMAN '07 and Bridget Allen were married on October 15. Christopher is a senior hardware engineer in Westerville, Ohio, and Bridget is a pediatric speech-language pathologist in Columbus. The couple lives in New Albany, Ohio.

DAVID GUENTHER M'10 is senior integration analyst at Direct Energy in Pittsburgh and a board member of Glade Run Foundation, a Lutheran charity providing group homes and mental health services in western Pennsylvania.

ASHLEY HIMES '07 is manager of the Carnegie office of Northwest Savings Bank. She lives in Beaver.

KRISTIAN SEAMAN '07 is an account executive for Partner Ink.

JAMES PREZIOSO '10 is an associate software developer at emCharts, a Pittsburgh company that provides patient data management systems for emergency medical service staff. Adam lives in Pittsburgh.

JOHN J. STRAUB M'09 was promoted to captain in the U.S. Marines. He serves as a communications officer in the Marines’ Security Cooperation Group in Virginia Beach, Va.

KRISTINA IORD '10 is in the marketing, social media, and public relations coordinator at Printing Industries of America in Allegheny Township. Kristina lives in McKees Rocks.

ADAM C. MIHLFRIED M'08 is director of software development for emCharts, a Pittsburgh company that provides patient data management systems for emergency medical service staff. Adam lives in Pittsburgh.

EVAN ASHTON '10 is corporate partnerships manager for the Fort Wayne TinCaps, a minor league baseball team affiliated with the San Diego Padres.

PAMELA GOLUBSKY D'09 co-authored Pedagogical and Androgynous Thinking and Learning with Information Communication Technologies, her seventh co-authored book. She lives in Pittsburgh.

DREW W. KREITZ '10 is an associate in the tax services group of Grossman Yanuk & Ford. He lives in Allison Park.

BRANINE MCLAUGHLIN '11 was selected to the 25-player U.S. Women’s National Team for the 2012 International Ice Hockey Federation Women’s World Championship in May. The team took silver in her third major international tournament with Team USA; Brianne stopped 9-of-9 in her game vs. Finland. Brianne was volunteer assistant coach for the RMU women’s team last season.

SANDE RAISER MILLER '11 joined the faculty at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, teaching both graduate and undergraduate courses in education, library science, institutional technology, and school administration and supervision. She lives in Mars.
Make sure you don’t miss the next big thing. Stay tuned to RMU.EDU/ALUMNI.

So many people came to hear Linda Kuga ’81 talk about being a top Pepsi exec that we had to move our lecture into the William Penn Hotel ballroom.

AMBASSADOR LINDA KUGA ’81

Coach Rocco Coniglio kept everyone smiling.

In Memoriam

JOSEPH T. MCCARTHY ’50 of Mt. Lebanon passed away on February 7 at the age of 88.

MARY ANN MARCINIK KOVAC ’57 of Latrobe passed away on November 16 at the age of 77. She was a retired secretary from Holy Family Church and had been a volunteer at the Latrobe Elementary School.

WILLIAM MCCOY BECK ’58 of Conway, Ariz., passed away on February 4 at the age of 73. She was a retired secretary from Holy Family Church and had been a volunteer at the Latrobe Elementary School.

DONNA TRONCATTI CROSSON ’62 of Clearwater, Fla., passed away on November 18 at the age of 68.

WILLIAM J. LOUGHAN ’71 of Hadley, Pa., passed away on November 16 at the age of 66. He was an executive for Kemper Insurance and a U.S. Navy veteran who served in Vietnam. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Riegelman Louisian ’71, and their three sons.

MARY ANN MARCINIK KOVAC ’57 of Latrobe passed away on November 16 at the age of 77. She was a retired secretary from Holy Family Church and had been a volunteer at the Latrobe Elementary School.

JESSE WILLIAM GRANCHI ’75 of Cross Creek Township, Pa., passed away on December 14 at the age of 58. He was employed by JCPenney Properties.

KEVIN JAMES MCLAUSTER ’77 of Moon Township passed away on April 3 at the age of 56.

DALE R. MCDONOUGH ’77 of Glenville, N.Y., passed away on March 25 at the age of 60. Dale worked 32 years with JCPenney and was a retired director of managing assets and vice president of JCPenney Properties.

GERARD T. MANKO M’03 of Moon Township passed away on November 16 at the age of 77. He was a retired secretary from Holy Family Church and had been a volunteer at the Latrobe Elementary School.

MICHAEL Haines ’05 died tragically on February 26. He was an armored truck guard for Ganda Cash Logistics. He was one of the founding members of RMU’s Phi Delta Theta chapter and sat on the fraternity’s chapter advisory board. Donations to the Phi Delta Theta Michael R. Haines Memorial Scholarship can be made online at RMU.EDU/HAINES.
Make sure you don’t miss the next big thing. Stay tuned to the alumni events calendar at RMU.EDU/ALUMNI.

So many people came to hear Linda Kuga ’81 talk about being a top Pepsi exec that we had to move our lecture into the William Penn Hotel ballroom.

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RMU.EDU/ALUMNITOUR

An unforgettable private tour of Italy with RMU President Greg DelOmo and his wife, Polly. We’ll fly direct from Pittsburgh to Paris, then on to Pisa and the romance of Italia!

To learn more about the trip and how to join our tour group, contact Jay Caision at (412) 397-6404 or go to rmu.edu/alumnitour.

The tour is open to all alumni and friends of Robert Morris University.

2012 ALUMNI TOUR ITALY

SEPT. 29 – OCT. 8, 2012

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SEPT. 29 – OCT. 8, 2012

An unforgettable private tour of Italy with RMU President Greg DelOmo and his wife, Polly. We’ll fly direct from Pittsburgh to Paris, then on to Pisa and the romance of Italia!

To learn more about the trip and how to join our tour group, contact Jay Caision at (412) 397-6404 or go to rmu.edu/alumnitour.

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And as the university’s winningest coach, Coleman is still a dugout mastermind; he was named NEC Coach of the Year this spring – just as he was last spring.

at Pitt. Under his leadership, RMU’s athletics program and its 23 Division I teams have seen unparalleled growth and success on the field and in the classroom.

thought about the Ayatollah Khomeini. Then we’d re-edit it to look like we were asking

lose on Saturday afternoon, watch us win on

video to show us scoring our only touchdown

relationship with our partners

to do this. The two of us spent

athletic director, whose dream it was

Marty Galosi

First of all I have to give credit to

tournament to Pittsburgh?

How did you end up wooing

team was horrible and almost always

lost, so we’d re-edit the game video

university TV station. Our football

programming and manager of the

Was this one student I recall who was

somewhat introverted when he first

came here. He ended up getting involved

with the campus TV station, both

behind the scenes and in air, and that

involvement gave him greater self-

confidence and communication skills.

How did you develop a passion

coaching softball? When I was 17, my sister’s team needed a coach,

so my dad and I volunteered. Then, when

I came to Pittsburgh for my residency, I

coached a traveling team, which led me
to getting the coaching job here.

What’s something that most people wouldn’t know about you? That I’m a

C-SPAN junkie. I couldn’t tell you a single network show that’s on TV today,

but I can identify most Congress members by their voice alone.
And as the university’s winningest coach, Coleman is still a dugout mastermind; he was named NEC Coach of the Year this spring – just as he was last spring.

at Pitt. Under his leadership, RMU’s athletics program and its 23 Division I teams have seen unparalleled growth and success on the field and in the classroom.

Before he became athletics director in 2005, 1 thought about the Ayatollah Khomeini. Then street “interviews” and ask people what they lose on Saturday afternoon, watch us win on Sunday. Our slogan was, “Watch us win Saturday, would re-edit the video to show us scoring our only touchdown to make it look like they’d won. If we lost to Princeton 38-7 on Saturday, we’d also do “man on the street” interviews and ask people what they thought about the Ayatollah Khomeini. Then we’d re-edit the video to make it look like we were asking them about the university president.

How did you end up wooing Marty Gales, our senior associate athletic director, whose dream it was to do this. The two of us spent a lot of time building a relationship with our partners – Visit Pittsburgh, the Consol Energy Center, the Pittsburgh Penguins. The selection committee was really impressed that such a competitive bid came from a university. Plus, we have a lot of time building a relationship with our partners. So I consulted other college programs, and they gave me advice on how to steadily build the program over time. Winning 300 games is quite an accomplishment. How’d you do it? Longevity. But seriously, I have a passion for the sport and the competition. I’ve had some tremendous assistant coaches. The university commitment, particularly from President Dell’Omo. And you can’t win without good players. We pride ourselves in encouraging our kids to have personality – we actually look for it. Those kinds of athletes play better, and it’s much more interesting for the coaches.

Can you share a story about a student you’ve encountered whose life was positively affected by coming to RMU? There was this one student I recall who was somewhat introverted when he first came here. He ended up getting involved with the campus TV station, both behind the scenes and on air, and that involvement gave him greater self-confidence and communication skills. It’s just another example of how RMU really does change lives.

First of all I have to give credit to Ed Nicholson, RMU’s athletics director, whose dream it was to direct an athletics program. I mentioned to Dr. Nicholson that I had an interest in the athletics director position, and he encouraged me to apply. Winning 500 games is quite an accomplishment. How’d you do it? Longevity. But seriously, I have a passion for the sport and the competition. I’ve had some tremendous assistant coaches. The university commitment, particularly from President Dell’Omo. And you can’t win without good players. We pride ourselves in encouraging our kids to have personality – we actually look for it. Those kinds of athletes play better, and it’s much more interesting for the coaches.

2 In your time as athletics director, RMU’s teams have seen a lot of success and our athletes have excelled academically. Do you see a correlation between the two? I think they feed off of each other. As our teams become more successful, it increases the name recognition of the university, which makes it easier for coaches to recruit those kinds of students. And there’s a lot of competition between schools to recruit these types of scholar-athletes. When you have smarter athletes you win more games. When you win more games, it helps with name recognition, and so forth.

3 What’s the secret of the softball program’s success? When I first took the job, the program was in terrible shape, and it wasn’t well funded. So I consulted other college coaches, and they gave me advice on how to steadily build the program over time.

4 In your time as athletics director, RMU’s teams have seen a lot of success and our athletes have excelled academically. Do you see a correlation between the two? I think they feed off of each other. As our teams become more successful, it increases the name recognition of the university, which makes it easier for coaches to recruit those kinds of students. And there’s a lot of competition between schools to recruit these types of scholar-athletes. When you have smarter athletes you win more games. When you win more games, it helps with name recognition, and so forth.

5 What first got you interested in studying medicine and psychiatry in particular? I became interested in becoming a psychiatric technician in high school. I’m not sure why. I guess I’m just fascinated with the human mind and human behavior in general.

6 How did you jump from a career in psychiatry to directing an athletics program? Ed Nicholson, RMU’s athletics director at the time, had a son who was going to medical school, and he asked me to give him some advice on choosing a program. I mentioned to Dr. Nicholson that I had an interest in the athletics director position, and he encouraged me to apply.

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