

# What's Up @ Widener

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## Story Idea?

- Send story ideas and items for the Noteworthy section to Allyson Roberts, [alroberts@widener.edu](mailto:alroberts@widener.edu)

## Spotlight on Sports: Widener Congratulates its Top Scholar-Athletes

Widener seniors Meghan Fitzsimmons, Shawn McDevitt, and Matt Sosna, were honored by the Middle Atlantic Conference as the top scholar-athletes in their respective sports. They recently received recognition for their accomplishments at the league's annual awards luncheon.

This year, Fitzsimmons placed fourth on the volleyball team with 2.52 digs per set, ending sixth in school history with 1,136 career digs, and third with 32 aces. She helped Widener reach the postseason for the first time in school history, defeating the City College of New York in the ECAC South Tournament, and making the Commonwealth Conference Tournament.

Fitzsimmons sports a 3.877 grade point average in elementary education, is a three-time member of the MAC Academic Honor Roll, and has made the Dean's List each semester. The tri-captain was named to the inaugural MAC Fall Sportsmanship Teams in 2007.

McDevitt is also a three-time member of the MAC Honor Roll. He was named twice to the *Philadelphia Inquirer* Academic All-Area Team for men's swimming and helped the Pride win four straight MAC titles. Owner of the school record in the 200-yard backstroke and the 400-yard freestyle relay, McDevitt is a six-time gold medalist at the MAC Championships.

McDevitt sports a 3.331 grade point average in accounting. He made the Dean's List in the fall of 2005 and the summer of 2007.

Sosna this year was named second team *CoSIDA* Academic All-America. He is the 44th Academic All-America in school history, coming on the heels of being tabbed first team *CoSIDA* Academic All-District the last two years and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* Men's Basketball Performer of the Year this season. He was also named the Small College Player of the Year by the Boys' Basketball Club of South Jersey and second team All-Commonwealth Conference. Sosna helped Widener win a third straight conference title and an NCAA tournament bid.

The 6-3 center ended seventh in the league with 13.8 points per game, first with a .599 shooting percentage, fifth with 6.9 rebounds per contest, fifth with a .783 free throw percentage, and second with a .444 three-point percentage.

Sosna owns a 3.938 grade point average in civil engineering. He recorded a 4.0 grade point average each of the last three semesters and has been on the Dean's List all seven semesters to date of his academic career.



Shawn McDevitt and Meghan Fitzsimmons pose with President Harris after receiving their MAC Scholar-Athlete Awards.

## Stephanie Connolly Named McGowan Scholar



*Stephanie Connolly, a junior management major, has been selected as a William G. McGowan Scholar.*

Stephanie Connolly, a junior management major in the School of Business Administration, has been selected as a William G. McGowan Scholar and is eligible to receive up to \$18,000 toward tuition.

Connolly was selected based on her academic performance, faculty recommendations, leadership qualities, commitment to the community, and two essays—a personal essay and an essay on William G. McGowan.

In addition to her academic achievement, Connolly is a shortstop on the Widener softball team and serves on the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, where she participates in various charity projects. She is also a member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southeastern Pennsylvania and is a member of the Alcohol and Other Drug Coalition at Widener.

“It’s an honor to receive this scholarship. I just can’t believe it,” Connolly said. “There are so many talented students in the School of Business Administration. It’s inspiring to read about Mr. McGowan, and it’s great that the charitable fund can help so many students pay for their education. I’m very grateful.”

McGowan was founder and chairman of MCI Communications. He founded the William G. McGowan Charitable Fund, Inc. prior to his death in 1992. The William G. McGowan Scholars Program recognizes and rewards students who have superior character, a track record of excellent academic performance, leadership potential, and involvement in academic, campus and community activities. For more information on the McGowan Scholarship visit [www.mcgowanfund.org](http://www.mcgowanfund.org).

## Celebrating Our Community Partners

Widener recently recognized its community partners, who help link students, faculty, and staff to the Chester community and beyond. Dr. Arlene Dowshen, coordinator of the Academic Service-Learning Faculty Development Program, explained that without strong community partners such as those in attendance, Widener’s civic engagement efforts would not have the same success.

According to Dowshen, Widener currently has 52 faculty members who have made the commitment to connect curricula to societal issues through civic engagement. More than 70 different service-learning courses have been taught on campus with cooperation from more than 50 partners. Furthermore, about 1500 students have benefitted from a service-learning course.

“I’ve found that integrating service learning with my regular coursework has helped me grow as a person, student, and professional,” said Widener student Chelsea Rogers, who addressed the group. Rogers provided insight as to how her experiences with service learning, whether it was as a tutor to area children or as a researcher working to help revitalize areas of Chester, have not only helped others, but have also helped herself. She has built a professional network and improved her overall knowledge with hands-on learning and a different perspective to course material.



*Widener recently thanked all of its community partners at an annual commemorative event. Widener President James T. Harris III posed with representatives from the following partners in attendance: Bernadine Center, Chester Community Improvement Project, Chester Education Foundation, Chester Upland School District, Chester Weed and Seed Program, Delaware County Office of the Aging, Dolores Freeman, PHENND, Reverend Jim Ley, SCI Chester, Talent Search, United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Unity Center, and YWCA of Chester.*

*Partners unable to attend included: Chester Economic Development Corp., Chester Historical Preservation Society, Chester Senior Center, Main Street Elementary, and Salvation Army.*

## Faces of Widener: Georgeann Gardner

Pretty much everyone in Kirkbride Hall knows Georgeann Gardner's smile, as she is an active member of the School of Engineering's team. Gardner, senior secretary to the assistant dean, has worked at Widener for eight years, spending all of her time on campus in Kirkbride. However, she has not always held the same position; she first worked as a department secretary for electrical engineering.

Before joining the Pride, Gardner served as a teacher's aid. Needless to say she has always enjoyed interacting with students. Her favorite time of year is during orientation in the summer when she meets the new freshmen. She likes watching them mature as they spend time at Widener. "It's nice when they come back and visit," she added.

For Gardner, her days on campus seem to fly by. "I would be bored if I wasn't busy all of the time," she said.

Gardner, a Delaware County resident, looks forward to an occasional family lunch to break up her day. Her daughter, Christina, is a graduation specialist in the Office of the Registrar and her son, Bob, is a biology major, who just finished his sophomore year at Widener. Gardner is also taking classes, working toward her bachelor's degree in liberal arts with a minor in English literature.

Although she has a packed schedule, she admits that she "truly enjoys taking classes."

When Gardner takes a break from her busy life on campus, she spends time with her recently retired husband, Bob. Though she is typically the conservative type, she took a ride on his motorcycle last week!



**Georgeann Gardner,**  
Senior Secretary to the Assistant Dean  
School of Engineering

## Students Divide and Conquer to Care for Our Earth

To commemorate Earth Day on April 22, Presidential Service Corps (PSC) members joined forces with the Chester City Shade Tree Commission to educate fourth grade students from nearby Stetser Elementary School on the importance of greening up the city. The young students chipped in to plant a new tree in Washington Park and each decorated and filled a planter to place in or around their homes.

The following day, members of the Chemistry Club returned to Washington Park to clean up the grounds,



especially the playground, where many of the Stetser children spend time after school. Participants included Chemistry Club members Erika Druckenmiller, Hao Feng, Kaitlyn Gerhart, Paul Gorman, Tam Lieu, Brittney Offenbacher, and Tim Rudolph, led by advisors Dr. Louise Liable-Sands and Dr. Andrea Martin, assistant professors of chemistry.

*Chemistry Club member Hao Feng helps clean up Washington Park in honor of Earth Day.*



*Members of the PSC joined forces with the Chester City Shade Tree Commission to plant a tree and flowers with Stetser Elementary School students.*

## CAPS Scoops Out Career Advice



The Office of Career Advising and Planning Services (CAPS) recently held its annual Scoop event to promote the resources and guidance it offers to all Widener students. Attendees learned how CAPS counselors can help them explore career options, obtain internships, apply to graduate school, or find a job. In addition to this valuable information, all students left with a delicious ice cream sundae.

Throughout the summer, CAPS operates Monday—Thursday, 8 a.m.—5:30 p.m. in Victory Hall. For more information, call 610-499-4176.

## Students Take on Slovakia at EuroSim 2009

A group of Widener students recently traveled to Canisius College in Buffalo, NY, for EuroSim 2009, a simulation of the governing process of the European Union. Participants hailed from institutions throughout the world to take on this year's topic of counter-terrorism and policing under the Lisbon Treaty.



*EuroSim participants included (from left, front): Elin Berlin ('10), Katlyn Culhane ('12), Laure Burman ('10), and (back, from left) Brian Nowicki ('11) and Colin Densford ('10).*

The Widener group became particularly familiar with Slovakia as most of the members took on roles as the country's leaders.

At the conclusion of this year's event, Parliament walked out of the final plenary session, demonstrating its disagreement with the proposal passed by the prime ministers. In a formal vote, however, the prime ministers passed the final proposal.

EuroSim 2010 will take place at the University of Antwerp in Belgium. Widener will host EuroSim 2011 and welcome more than 220 students and faculty members from institutions in Europe and throughout the United States.

Also exciting news for Widener, Dr. Rebecca Jones, assistant professor of government and politics, was elected North American director of the Trans-Atlantic Consortium for European Union Studies and Simulations (TACEUSS), which runs EuroSim.

## Points of Pride...

Widener University is pleased to announce the Tau Alpha Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. Alpha Kappa Alpha established by African American women in 1908, is a part of the National Pan-Hellenic Council. The Tau Alpha Chapter here at Widener is the first AKA sorority in the region as well as the first multicultural sorority on campus. The community-service driven organization's mission is to continue to support diversity on campus. The members of the sorority are females of all grades and majors. Congratulations to the founding members of Widener's Tau Alpha Chapter: Erica Agosto, Chantale Belefanti, Bertha Blamo, Nyree Cephas, Shaunta Davis, Sable Dickinson, Moya Grierson, Tanya Heath, Sharon Jones, Alethia Lazarus, Lauren Martin, Latrice Mason, Rosalee Murray, Linda Robinson, and Tiffany Walker.



*Tau Alpha members at a recent Probate Show.*

## Delaware Governor Speaks on Law Campus

The Delaware Campus welcomed Gov. Jack Markell to the Ruby R. Vale Moot Courtroom on Friday, May 1, when he spoke as part of a one-day conference put on by the Delaware State Bar Association.

The event, known as the Haile L. Alford Memorial Conference, is sponsored by the bar's Multicultural Judges and Lawyers Section. Markell's remarks focused on the conference's main theme: the economy. He discussed the state's fiscal shortcomings and the \$778 million budget deficit. Delaware, he said, needs to attract new businesses and entrepreneurs—in addition to curbing spending.

"The country is going through the most difficult time in 60 years, and Delaware is not immune to that," he said. "We cannot cut our way to prosperity."

The Haile L. Alford Memorial Conference found a home at Widener Law three years ago, when Dean Linda L. Ammons extended an invitation to the bar association to hold it on campus and make it a full-day program. Friday's event also featured a panel discussion on the effects of the economic downturn on in-house counsel and a panel on serving Delawareans of color in the economic downturn.

The program was chaired by Rafael X. Zahraiddin-Aravena, who leads the Multicultural Judges and Lawyers section.



Delaware Gov. Jack Markell addresses the Delaware Campus as part of a one-day conference put on by the Delaware State Bar Association.

## Widener H.E.L.P.S. with Spring Cleaning



Widener students packed a classroom with recycled goods from residence halls and donations as part of a new spring cleaning initiative. The student group, Widener Humanitarian Endeavors Leading Progressive Service (H.E.L.P.S.), recently set up a system to collect the goods May 1—6 in drop-off bins throughout campus and in the Metropolitan Hall classroom. For larger items, junior Doug Schultz (*pictured left*) drove through campus on a Moped to pick up the donation. Members of the Presidential Service Corps, various athletic teams, and the Honors Program all chipped in to collect and sort the goods. The items benefit City Team Ministries, the United Way, and Salvation Army.

## The Tale of Two Cities: OLLI Members Tour PA

Members of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute on Widener's Exton Campus embarked on two educational journeys this semester, exploring two of Pennsylvania's great cities: Harrisburg and Philadelphia. Special Events Committee Co-Chairs, Pat Whiteford and Elaine Helminski, planned tight itineraries for the trips to keep attendees engaged throughout the daylong adventures.

In Harrisburg, more than 40 OLLI members toured Pennsylvania's Capitol (*pictured right*), admiring the beautiful rotunda, and visited the State Museum. In Philadelphia, an equally large group of members took a Mural Arts Tour and stopped by the Comcast Building for a glimpse of the city's newest addition.



## New Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree Announced

Widener's School of Nursing is pleased to announce a new Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree, effective fall 2009.

"Another milestone has been achieved at Widener's School of Nursing," said Dr. Deborah Garrison, dean. "The School of Nursing is a nationally-recognized leader in advance practice education, and the addition of the DNP program will continue to emphasize Widener's dedication in preparing students as nursing scholars."

The DNP degree program is designed for nursing students seeking a practice-based doctorate and is a complementary addition to the research-intensive Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. The DNP degree prepares advanced practice nurses (APNs) for leadership at the highest levels of clinical competence in primary care, adult health, community health, emergency/critical care, and/or psychiatric/mental health nursing.

"Advanced practice nurses that we will be preparing in the DNP program will provide a critical leadership role in treating patients and will provide an essential safety net to improve access to care. Advanced practice nurses are critical to health care delivery system improvement and health care reform in this difficult economic climate," said Dr. Shirlee Drayton-Brooks, director of the Family Nurse Practitioner and the Doctorate of Nursing Practice programs. "The program will allow the type of capstone evidenced-based clinical inquiry projects that will influence direct care for those in need."

The School of Nursing is accepting applications for fall 2009. The curriculum is offered in two levels. "Level I is comprised of the current advanced practice master's curricula. Individuals who hold a master's degree and certification as a nurse practitioner or as a clinical nurse specialist are eligible to apply to Level II, the DNP completion curriculum leading to the Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree," explained Garrison.

Courses for either level are offered in the hybrid format, both online and in the classroom. The program ranges from two to four years depending on the entry level and course load. For more information about the new DNP program or other graduate and undergraduate programs within the School of Nursing, visit [www.widener.edu/son](http://www.widener.edu/son), or call 610-499-4212.



## Happy Birthday "SimBaby"

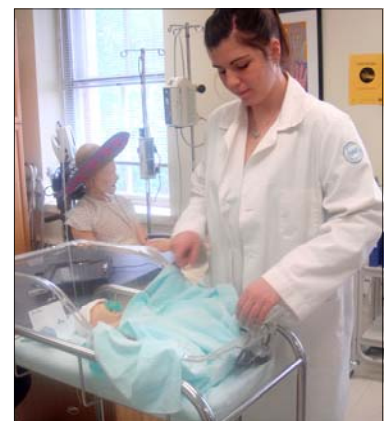
Cinco De May was not the only reason to celebrate May 5 this year. Widener's School of Nursing held a birthday party for the new "SimBaby." The celebration was held in Old Main in honor of the School of Nursing's new simulators.

The school recently received a grant from the Ethel Sergeant Clark Foundation, which provided the school with money for a new "SimMan," Clark, and "SimBaby," Ethel.

Dawn Ferry, coordinator of the resource center, played a big part in expanding the use of simulators in Widener's nursing program since she joined the staff three years ago. Since then she has helped add five simulators—the program now has a total of six including three "SimMen," two "SimBabies," and Noelle, a birthing simulator.

"Students really like using the simulators," said Ferry. "It has definitely helped them learn. They have the ability to pull everything together from their book work and labs to real life."

The event included birthday hats, cake, snacks, and tours of the simulators. Noelle even "gave birth" several times throughout the day. There was also a "name-the-baby" contest for one of the new "SimBabies," and the name was just announced; the "SimBaby's" name is Evan!



*Julianne Necci, a sophomore in the School of Nursing, monitors, Evan—the "SimBaby," who was recently born in Old Main!*

## Noteworthy

**Badr Algharairi, Kevin (Todd) Allebach, Jennifer Barnes, Soleman Kaldes, Shawn McDevitt, Elizabeth Moran, and Eric Rothamel**, students within the School of Business Administration, recently participated in the Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP) National Collegiate Conference in Oklahoma City. The students represented seven of the 10 semifinalists selected to present papers, giving Widener University a strong presence at the conference. Kaldes earned second place for the paper “KPI: Business Implementation,” and Moran earned honorable mention for her paper “An Open Source Revolution: Open Source Enterprise Resource Planning.”

**Nicole Blees**, a junior communication studies major, was recently honored as a 2009 “Philly’s Future” Scholarship Award Winner by The Philly Ad Cub based on her academic excellence and professional and personal contributions to the field. In addition to a \$1,000 scholarship, she will receive a one-year membership to the organization and have her name appear in the September issue of *Ad News* magazine.

**Theresa Bova**, a senior hospitality management major, received the Pennsylvania Tourism & Lodging Association’s 2009 Spirit of Hospitality Student of the Year Award. She accepted the award alongside her advisor, Dr. Joy Dickerson, and School of Hospitality Management Dean, Dr. Nicholas J. Hadgis (*pictured right*).



**Anthony Carter, Kelsey Helman, Luke Lorenz, and Matt Patterson**, senior management majors with marketing concentrations; recently competed in the National Collegiate Sales Competition in Kennesaw, GA. Patterson finished in the top quarter of the students due to his composure in a very difficult selling situation. The students competed in a videotaped role play using business professionals as buyers and in a “sales idol” elevator pitch contest. **Dr. Mary Shoemaker**, associate professor of marketing, coached the students for the competition.

**Dr. Annalisa Castaldo**, associate professor of English and director of women’s studies, will help kick off the Chamber Shakespeare Series: *Macbeth* at The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre on May 13 at 7 p.m. Castaldo will deliver a lecture on *Macbeth* as three actors interpret her exploration into Shakespeare’s literary masterpiece. Castaldo worked with The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre earlier this year as a participant in Connoisseur Shakespeare: Scholarship and Performance, which included an in-depth look at five Shakespeare plays. Castaldo participated in the lectures for *Henry IV- Part I* and *The Winter’s Tale*.

“**Connections: A Timeline of Our History**” received a 2009 Preservation Award for Special Programs/Projects from the Heritage Commission of Delaware County. The Commission noted that the timeline teaches the history of Widener University using an interesting and unique approach that also pulls in notable events that occurred in both the surrounding community of Chester and the United States.

**Dr. Sarah N. Roth**, assistant professor of history, was selected to participate in a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Summer Institute at Johns Hopkins University. The Institute, “Slaves, Soldiers, Rebels: Currents of Black Resistance in the Tropical Atlantic, 1760 – 1888,” will run for five weeks.

**Gail Farally-Semerad**, technology training and communications coordinator, and **George Thompson**, web content manager, were selected to present the paper, “The A.R.T. of CMS Training” at the Special Interest Group on University and College Computing Services (SIGUCCS) Fall Conference in St. Louis, MO. The paper details the training of Widener University staff and faculty on the basics of content management through the Lifelong Learning Professional Development series.

## TWO-WEEK PEEK

### *A Look at the Next Two Weeks in Widener Events*

#### Thursday, May 7

8:30–11:30 a.m. [SBDC Seminar: First Steps](#); *Widener SBDC*

**Summer Day 1 Classes Begin: Main Campus**

#### Monday, May 11

8 a.m.–11 p.m. Cap and Gown Distribution; *University Center Bookstore, Main Campus*

6–8:30 p.m. [SBDC Seminar: Understanding Your Credit Report](#); *Widener SBDC*

#### Tuesday, May 12

8 a.m.–11 p.m. Cap and Gown Distribution; *University Center Bookstore, Main Campus*

8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Symposium: Hands-on Technology, Techniques in the Courtroom; *Ruby R. Vale Moot Courtroom, DE Campus*

#### Wednesday, May 13

8 a.m.–11 p.m. Cap and Gown Distribution; *University Center Bookstore, Main Campus*

#### Thursday, May 14

8 a.m.–11 p.m. Cap and Gown Distribution; *University Center Bookstore, Main Campus*

1:30 p.m.–2:30 p.m. ROTC Commissioning Ceremony; *Front Lawn, Old Main*

2:30 p.m. ROTC Reception; *University Center Webb Room*

### Commencement 2009

#### Thursday, May 14

1:30 p.m., Old Main Front Lawn  
**ROTC Commissioning Ceremony**  
Widener's Freedom Battalion will commission 15 cadets as second lieutenants of the U.S. Army. For more information, call 610-499-4098.

6 p.m., Alumni Auditorium  
**Interfaith Baccalaureate Service**  
Take part in an interfaith service open to all members of the university community. For more information, email [chaplain@mail.widener.edu](mailto:chaplain@mail.widener.edu).

#### Friday, May 15

11 a.m., Alumni Auditorium  
**School of Nursing Nightingale Ceremony**  
School of Nursing undergraduates, families, and friends will take part in this annual tradition. For more information, call 610-499-4229.

2 p.m., Kapelski, Lecture Hall 1  
**Graduate Students Award Ceremony**  
The ceremony will honor master's and doctoral recipients of Commencement awards.

4 p.m., Alumni Auditorium  
**Academic Awards**  
The ceremony will honor recipients of undergraduate Commencement awards.

5 p.m., University Center  
**Graduates' Reception**  
All graduates are invited to celebrate their accomplishment with their families and guests.

#### Saturday, May 16

9:45 a.m., Quadrangle  
**Commencement**  
This main event will celebrate the achievements of the graduates of August and December 2008 and May 2009.

3 p.m., Delaware Campus Lawn  
**School of Law, Delaware Commencement**

#### Saturday, May 16

11 a.m., The Forum, Capitol Complex, Harrisburg  
**School of Law, Harrisburg Commencement**

For additional details about the commencement ceremonies, click [here](#).



#### Thursday, May 14, Cont.

3–4 p.m. Town Hall Meeting; *Alumni Auditorium*

6 p.m. Interfaith Baccalaureate Service; *Alumni Auditorium*

#### Friday, May 15

8 a.m.–11 p.m. Cap and Gown Distribution; *University Center Bookstore, Main Campus*

11 a.m. School of Nursing Nightingale Ceremony; *Alumni Auditorium*

2 p.m. Graduate Student Awards; *Kapelski Learning Center*

4 p.m. Academic Awards; *Alumni Auditorium*

5–6 p.m. Graduates' Reception; *University Center Atrium*

6–11 p.m. Commencement Ball; *Towne House Restaurant, Media, PA*

#### Saturday, May 16

7:30–8:45 a.m. Multicultural Student Affairs Pre-Commencement Breakfast; *University Center Lower Lounge*

9:45 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Commencement; *Quadrangle, Main Campus*

3 p.m. Delaware Campus Commencement; *DE Campus Lawn*

#### Sunday, May 17

11 a.m. Harrisburg Campus Commencement; *The Forum, Capitol Complex, Harrisburg, PA*