What do these people have in common besides their alma mater?
They have all made a gift to Widener University without writing a check or swiping their credit card. How? They included Widener in their will. Visit our new gift planning website www.widener.edu/plannedgiving to learn how you can make a gift to Widener through your will or estate plan. The website will also show you how you can:

- Make a gift that costs nothing during your lifetime.
- Give stock and realize larger tax savings.
- Get a monthly paycheck for life in return for your gift.

You can compare gift plans, check out the Will Planning Wizard, request information and so much more all with a few clicks of your mouse.

Discover the benefits of giving wisely.
www.widener.edu/plannedgiving
VISIT TODAY!
A User’s Guide to the Universe: Young alumnus Jeff Blomquist co-authors humorous book addressing science’s most enduring questions.

More than 3,000 Served: Widener’s Social Work Counseling Services has been helping Chester residents for a decade.

Active Duty Alumni: Widener alumni have been and continue to be well-represented among servicemen and women in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The GI Bill: The original program saved Pennsylvania Military College after World War II. Now, the GI Bill’s legacy continues with a new generation of veterans and their family members.

Widener ROTC: Students answer the call of duty in one of the region’s biggest programs.

A Widener Family’s Story of Love, War, Loss, and Recovery: Nathan and Casey Raudenbush met at Widener, graduated together, married, and had a son. The Army deployed Nathan to Iraq, where a roadside bomb killed him two years ago.

Inspired to Give Back: Two former Widener students return the great favors paid them by faculty members.

A Gift Becomes a Garden: Bonnie and Tom Bown ‘67 have donated $1 million to Widener, a portion of which will go toward building a sculpture garden behind Old Main.
Military Service: The Highest Form of Civic Engagement

When I look out my office window in Old Main, I can see the plaque commemorating the 68 Widener and PMC alumni who have lost their lives serving our country. It is a constant reminder to me that this institution, through all of its changes, is a place where graduates have always answered the call of duty for the nation. It is also a reminder that as a university we have a responsibility to not only train these brave men and women but also to support them when they return home after their service.

Of this institution’s 189 years in existence, 111 of those years—from 1899 through 1972—were under the banner of a military college. We have educated many a soldier, and that continues today at Widener University where we host one of the nation’s finest Army ROTC programs. When I look out my office window I can see the plaque commemorating the 68 Widener and PMC alumni who have lost their lives serving our country. It is a constant reminder to me that this institution, through all of its changes, is a place where graduates have always answered the call of duty for the nation. It is also a reminder that as a university we have a responsibility to not only train these brave men and women but also to support them when they return home after their service.

Of this institution’s 189 years in existence, 111 of those years—from 1899 through 1972—were under the banner of a military college. We have educated many a soldier, and that continues today at Widener University where we host one of the nation’s finest Army ROTC programs. We also have a long history of supporting veterans. Since the GI Bill was introduced near the end of World War II, the school has been a welcoming light for men and women returning home after military service.

That light is starting to shine even brighter. Three programs, two of which are new initiatives, show a multifaceted commitment by the university to take care of veterans. The Institute of Graduate Clinical Psychology this spring is hosting the Military and Veteran Behavioral Health Post-Master’s Certificate Program to train psychologists in the best methods for treating psychological issues suffered by troops and veterans. The Yellow Ribbon Program, a national program implemented here in the fall 2009 semester, commits money to match federal aid received by veterans, enabling it students to attend Widener this school year. And the Veterans Law Clinic, founded in 1997 by Professor Thomas J. Reed at the School of Law, has represented more than 200 veterans in their appeals to win much-needed benefits denied them by branches of the military and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Ensuring care for veterans is a crucial role the university will play in future years, particularly in light of the increase in troops deployed to Afghanistan. Many men and women from our university have served or are currently in Iraq and Afghanistan. They are risking their lives by standing in harm’s way, practicing the highest form of civic engagement—serving one’s country.

This risk has been proved all too real recently by alumni and their families who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Capt. Shane Mahaffee ’94, a graduate of the School of Law’s Harrisburg Campus, died ten days after a roadside bomb in Iraq detonated in 2006. Two years later Capt. Nathan Raudenbush ’05 died from injuries suffered by yet another roadside bomb south of Baghdad. Capt. Raudenbush’s widow, Casey, is now teaching at Widener in our School of Nursing, and a scholarship for their son to attend Widener has been established.

Some former Widener students are awaiting deployment. Three years ago on a service trip to Bolivia to build a school, I took a photo of Eric Buzzard ’07 in a rain forest that ran on the cover of the spring 2007 issue of Widener Magazine. He was then a junior and an ROTC cadet. He is now Lt. Buzzard, a U.S. Army platoon leader specializing in military intelligence, bound for Afghanistan this summer.

Other graduates are preparing for active duty as well. We are grateful for their service while they are away and at Widener we are prepared to care for them when they return home.

Dr. James T. Harris III President

Harrsбурg Campus Marks 20 Years

FORMER SCHOOL OF LAW DEAN

Anthony J. Santoro remembers when Widener’s Harrisburg campus opened in 1989, the construction calendar was so tight that the lobby windows were installed on orientation morning.

Getting the new campus off the ground was “the most arduous journey” of his life, Santoro told Trellis Gathered last fall to celebrate its two-decade anniversary. Law Dean Linda L. Ammons marveled at stories of the early challenges, given what a smooth operation the Harrisburg campus has become. “Thank you for blazing this trail,” she said.

Today, the campus is a vibrant component of Widener’s four-campus system. Only minutes from Pennsylvania’s state capital building, it remains the only law school in Harrisburg and now includes space for the university’s Social Work Education program and the School of Nursing.

The law program has grown exponentially. Seven full-time faculty and administrators held orientation for 250 law students in the fall of 1989. Now, the 21-acre campus employs 175 full- and part-time faculty, support staff, and administrators. The law school component has graduated nearly 2,700 alumni. This year, it is the school of choice for roughly 475 full- and part-time students. “It has truly grown into its mission,” said Professor John L. Gedid, founding vice dean.

The school launched a pilot project with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission in October, in which law students represent indigent people with formal complaints before the commission. The campus also unveiled an Environmental Law Center. “The center will attempt to answer, through scholarship, teaching, applied research, special projects, and clinical programs, the question of how law can and should be used to achieve sustainability,” said Distinguished Professor John C. Dernbach, the center’s director.

In January, the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Clinic—a 20-year fixture on the Delaware campus—expanded to the Harrisburg campus. And Harrisburg law students also began assisting convicted offenders living in halfway houses who have civil matters that are impediments to their successful re-entry to society, such as divorce issues or problems with a driver’s license.

At the October Founder’s Day event, Widener University President James T. Harris III applauded the school’s dedication to assisting people from all reaches of society. “This law school has reflected what is great about our country,” he said.

–Mary Allen

ON CAMPUS

PMC Alumns New Chair of Widener’s Board of Trustees

NICHOLAS P. TRAINER ’64, retired president of Sartomer Company Inc. of Exton, Pa. and a long-time Widener University trustee, is the university’s new chair of the board of trustees. A trustee since 1984, Trainer assumes the role from David W. Oskin who served as chair for nine years. Trainer previously served as vice chair of the board, and is a member of the Advancement and Trusteeship Committees. “For 25 years, Nick Trainer has provided Widener with invaluable insight as president of a multi-national corporation and the undying support and energy of an alum,” said Widener President James T. Harris III. “We look forward to his leadership as chair as Widener enters a new decade of growth and prosperity.”

trainer joined Sartomer in 1969 as a technical sales representative and worked his way up to president of the company by 1976. Under his leadership, Sartomer’s annual sales revenue grew from about $2 million in the late 1960s to more than $460 million in 2006 when he retired.

Oskin will remain on the board and will serve as honorary chair of the university’s upcoming comprehensive campaign. In other board moves, John H. Tigli Jr., president and chief executive officer of Cypress International, Inc., assumed Trainer’s position as vice chair. Paul S. Beideman ’79, retired president and chief executive officer of Associated Banc-Corp, was named treasurer of the board, replacing former PMC Alumnus New Chair of Widener’s Board of Trustees
ARTS AND CULTURE

Widener Faculty Member’s Painting Hangs in Vice President’s House

By Amy Faith Naylor ’10

WENDY HATCH pushes her students to release their imaginations onto the canvas as they coat it with colors. But when Vice President Joe Biden and wife, Jill, bought a painting by the 28-year-veteran Widener faculty member, it stretched beyond the reach of Hatch’s imagination. “It’s an honor to have Jill seek out one of my watercolors for her personal home,” she said.

Hatch, a Wilmington resident, also teaches at the Delaware Art Museum, and is well-known in the Delaware art scene and beyond with her colorful watercolor paintings. Six years ago Hatch heard that Jill Biden was hoping for “a Wendy Hatch watercolor painting” for a Christmas gift. Then-Senator Joe Biden called and spoke to Hatch about the painting. They had a pleasant conversation—but not a sale—and Hatch didn’t hear anything else. In 2008, Hatch received another call, not from a senator, but from the vice president. The Biden’s had purchased her painting from the Blue Streak Gallery in Wilmington and wanted her to come to Washington D.C. for a reception in the vice presidential residence on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Observatory. More than 100 guests attended the November 2009 event, including Michelle Obama’s mother, and prominent Delaware artists.

Hangs in Vice President’s House

Above: This Wendy Hatch painting hangs in the Bidens’ Delaware home. Below: Hatch, center, with Vice President Biden and wife, Jill.

New Football Coach Takes the Helm

WIDENER’S NEW FOOTBALL COACH is the first African-American to lead the team in the program’s storied history, and one of only six active minority head football coaches in NCAA Division III.

Isaac Collins, previously defensive coordinator for The Citadel, has taken over the program that began in 1879 when Widener was known as Pennsylvania Military Academy. “Widener has a great football tradition, and I am honored to be selected to continue that tradition,” Collins said. Collins, 38, played for the University of Rochester in the early 90s. Prior to The Citadel, he worked as an assistant coach at Lehigh University and the University of Delaware. He replaces former head coach Dave Wood who resigned in January. Widener’s first home game in 2010 is Sept. 11 against Thiel College; homecoming is scheduled for Oct. 2 against Fairleigh Dickinson University-Florham.

SPORTS

The 320 Challenge: A Widener-Swarthmore Showdown

Widener was known as Pennsylvania Military Academy.) Widener and Swarthmore’s last football game was played in 1988, a 36-3 Widener victory. Swarthmore, after a dismal stretch in the late nineties that landed it sixth on ESPN’s list of the ten worst college football teams of all time, dropped football at the end of the 2000 season.

Shafer said that although fan support of the 320 Challenge has been lukewarm in this first year, he hopes that the competition will grow into a popular event in future years. “It has great potential,” he said. For more details on the sports played and scores for all completed events, visit the Widener University Pride athletics website at widenerpride.com and click on the link for the 320 Challenge.

—Sam Starner
JEFF BLOMQUIST ELICITED A FUNNY REACTION FROM HIS FATHER when he told him about his focus in graduate school. “When I told my dad that I was studying cosmology, he said, ‘Like what, makeup?’”

Cosmology is not the application of mascara or blush, but in fact, is the scientific exploration of the nature of the universe—“Deep space, but deeper,” said Blomquist. His lifelong interest in the stars has led to his co-authoring A User’s Guide to the Universe: Surviving the Perils of Black Holes, Time Paradoxes, and Quantum Uncertainty. John Wiley & Sons published the book by Drexel University Associate Professor Dave Goldberg and Blomquist last month.

Blomquist, 25, from Elk Township, N.J., was a double major in physics and mechanical engineering at Widener, where he also participated in band, Theatre Widener, contributed work to the student literary journal, and volunteered in the Monday night viewings at the observatory. “He is a true scholar,” said Professor Harry Augensen, with whom Blomquist studied astronomy and went on a student research trip to Arizona.

Following graduation in 2006, Blomquist began working on a master’s in physics with a focus on cosmology at Drexel. There he took a physics class from Goldberg, who took note of Blomquist’s clever and prolific drawings doodled into his notebook during class. When Blomquist later worked as a teaching assistant for Goldberg, he drew cartoons that went onto the front of student study guides.

After graduation from Drexel in 2008, Goldberg asked Blomquist to work with him on a book proposal, and they landed an agent who soon sold the idea. They finished in summer 2009 and the book was released last month. Blomquist now lives in Philadelphia and works as a manufacturing engineer at Boeing in Ridley Township.

A User’s Guide to the Universe received significant pre-publication publicity, including an interview on Kurt Anderson’s public radio show “Studio 360.” It also has been chosen as the Main Selection of the Scientific American Book Club’s April catalog. Chapters pose provocative questions such as “Time Travel: Can I build a time machine?” and “Extraterrestrials: Is there life on other planets?”

Excerpt from Chapter 3:

Randomness: Does God play dice with the universe?

Say what you will about the physics of yesteryear. Maybe it was boring and you had to remember all the rules of levers, pulleys, pendulums, and the like. But at least you knew where you stood. When the twentieth century came along, all of that certainty went out the window. But if quantum mechanics just messes with the microscopic level, on our giant, human scales it seems like we can take a page from the book of Alfred E. Neuman. What, me worry?

Lots of people buy into the idea of a deterministic universe. And who could blame them? Everything we see around us can, for the most part, be intuitively or accurately predicted mathematically, and as for the rest, we just assume that it’s too complicated to figure out … for now. Albert Einstein was convinced that underlying apparent randomness there were deterministic rules controlling everything, making everything predictable. If you understand how things are set up to begin with, the laws of physics will tell you exactly how things will end up. The determinism of the universe seems built into the equations. But “seems” are for stockings, and that apparent determinism is a lie.

At a fundamental level, the universe isn’t just complex, it’s inextricably random. Radioactive decay, the motions of atoms, and the outcome of physics experiments all bend to the whim of some unpredictability. At its core, the universe is Einstein’s worst nightmare. Randomness may be our worst nightmare, too. Human beings simply aren’t wired very well for statistical thinking. If the odds are really obvious, or if our personal

Young Widener Alumnus Co-Authors and Illustrates Humorous but Educational New Book with Drexel Professor

The Simple Task of Explaining the Universe
There is virtual unanimity among scientists that global warming, which wouldn’t be so frightening if he didn’t believe it was real from his perspective. In this case, we don’t want this sort of one-time measurement to make Hermann an ally. Here’s why.

Sometimes the temperature is going to be above the average and sometimes below. If this range of values is large, then we won’t notice small changes from year to year. It’s actually not that unusual to have a temperature fifteen degrees above the average, but neither is it unusual for it to be fifteen degrees below the average. What happens next year when we have a cold winter in Philadelphia, and the temperatures in December are consistently in the twenties? Cousin Hermann assumes that all the fuss about global warming was for nothing, and goes back to building his tinfoil hat. He doesn’t see the problem because he focuses on the individual days and not the general trend.

Admit it. You’ve been guilty of worse. Even without focusing on the futuristic hellscapae that awaits our planet, Hermann still has plenty to worry about. Why do all the little particles in his glass of water move around all the time? How long will his pet neutron last? Maybe these aren’t things you’ve ever worried about before, but each is a consequence of randomness just doing its thing.

If the Answers in Genesis Creation Museum is correct, this scenario may have actually played out for some cavemen. And who are we to doubt them?

The Trilateral Commission is involved in this somehow, too. They have to be.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in this case. Sounds official. We’re sure Hermann would take that as a suspect.

Hermann lives in Philadelphia. Where, according to Wikipedia, the average temperature during December is about thirty-six degrees Fahrenheit. But lo, one particularly balmy Christmas, survival is at stake, our brains might give us a clue. “Don’t poke that Tyrannosaurus rex,” your brain might say. “It hasn’t turned out well for other people that tried that, and odds are it won’t turn out well for you.”

On the other hand, go to Vegas and ask a blackjack player who has just lost ten hands in a row what the odds are of his winning the next one. He’ll say that he’s due for a hot streak, or that the deck has gone cold. Optimist or pessimist, he’s wrong. His odds of winning his next hand are the same as they were on the last about 50–50.

Because (we hope) you don’t spend most of your waking hours in a casino, it might help if we introduce some of the nuances of randomness in a more familiar context. We’d like to introduce you to our family, the Blombergs, in the midst of a family reunion. Besides the normal demands for grandchildren, most of our irritation comes from relatives who really should know better, but for some reason persist in refusing to believe in the power of randomness.

Consider our cousin Hermann. He’s a smart guy, capable of building receivers, spacecraft. He also thinks that the government, scientists, and spacecraft. He believes that the government, scientists are manipulating scientific data as part of a massive conspiracy.

Hermann is obsessed with global warming, which wouldn’t be so frustrating if he didn’t believe it was made up. Lest there be any confusion on the subject: there is virtual unanimity in the scientific community that global warming is real and that it is man-made. What complicates it from a PR perspective is that according to the general scientific consensus, the average temperature on Earth will only rise about a tenth of a degree Celsius in the next ten years. That may not seem like a lot, but over time, the environmental impact will be devastating.

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Widener’s Social Work Counseling Services has been reaching out to residents for a decade
More than 3,000 served

By Sam Starnes

BRENDA JACKSON WAS 18, mother of a baby daughter and pregnant with another girl, when a judge sentenced the father of her children to prison. Forced to support her family, she went on welfare and worked when and where she could. “I stopped going to school,” she said.

Four years later she had a son, and a year later another girl, giving her four kids under 7-years-old. Three times in her twenties she attended classes to try to get off welfare, and to earn a high school diploma through the General Education Development (GED) program. All three times she quit.

But in October 2008 she learned about a program that would make her fourth time the charm. Jackson, now 33, enrolled in the Circle-for-Change program run by Widener University’s Center for Social Work Education’s Social Work Counseling Services (SWCS). The 10-week program teaches women on welfare life and career skills, and offers individual counseling. “It was a life changing experience,” she said.

Jackson graduated from the Widener program in January 2009, but kept studying for the GED test. That spring she passed, and in June was awarded her high school diploma. The diploma is proudly displayed in the two-story row home a half-mile from the Widener campus where she and her four children, now ages 8 through 15, have lived since August. In January, she landed a full-time job with benefits at a local grocery store, something she said she could not have done without SWCS’ help. “The program changed and inspired me,” she said.

Jackson is one of approximately 3,000 people who have benefited from the Widener SWCS program since its creation 10 years ago. Social Work Professor John Poulin created the program to provide Widener graduate and undergraduate social work students opportunities to do their field work near campus and to help local residents. “We were sending students all over the place, but there were very few going into our community,” he said.

Since it started in 2000, more than 130 students have put in about 130,000 hours, serving residents who turn to SWCS for counseling. The experience not only helps residents, but it provides great training for future social workers who will graduate from Widener. “It forced me to expand my skills as an educator,” said Shanna Perkins, a student in the master’s program who taught life skills to 11 members of the fall 2009 Circle-for-Change class. “I’ve gotten a lot of great experience.”

The students are directed by five full-time licensed social workers, all of whom are Widener graduates, said Cheryl Sadeghee, SWCS director of clinical services who earned her master’s in 2004 from the Center for Social Work Education. Sadeghee said the SWCS offices and counseling rooms, located in a wing of the Chester Community Hospital, formerly Sacred Heart General Hospital, are intentionally designed to be warm and welcoming.

In addition to Circle-for-Change, SWCS provides individual and family counseling; case management for vulnerable adults; information and referral services; educational and psychological testing services; school-based services; the Keys-for-Success program, targeting teenage dropouts; and the Friendly Visitor Program, in which counselors go out into the field to see shut-ins.

“It forced me to expand my skills as an educator,” said Shanna Perkins, a student in the master’s program who taught life skills to 11 members of the fall 2009 Circle-for-Change class. “I’ve gotten a lot of great experience.”

When residents from the former Chester Towers were forced to relocate after the housing project was demolished, teams of Widener students and SWCS staff visited before the demolition to prepare them and after to help make them “feel comfortable in their new home,” Sadeghee said. Although well-established after a decade of existence, SWCS continues to grow to meet the personal needs of clients and educational experiences of students. “Every year we are adding new therapy,” said Pat Mulholland, a supervisor. Sexuality counseling was added in 2007. “We have many people who come to us who have had a lot of trauma in their life—specifically sexual trauma,” Mulholland said.

Poulin said SWCS is also developing a plan to provide online sexuality counseling, collaborating further on the expertise in the School of Human Service Profession’s Center for Education’s highly-rated graduate program in human sexuality education.

Joanne Sullivan, a student working on a dual master’s in social work and human sexuality education, praised her experience gained at SWCS. “It is a great feeling to wake up in the morning and know you are going to better someone’s life,” she said. “That’s my job.”

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JOHN POULIN

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For more information about SWCS, call 610-859-6047.
At War, at Home: Servicemen and Women of Widener

By Maj. Brian Jones

Maj. Brian Jones, ’91, ’94 served as a resident assistant, graduate assistant, and director of housing and residence life while an undergraduate and graduate student at Widener studying hospitality management. A native of Pemberton, N.J., he was in ROTC at Widener and has served in the Army Reserve since 1991. Jones, 43, spent nine months in 2008 in Iraq training Iraqi military and was awarded a Bronze Star. He lives in Marietta, Ga., and works a human resources director for MetroPCS in Atlanta. He and his wife, Tamika, have two children.

MAN, WHAT A FEELING to receive the call in August 2007 alerting me that I would soon deploy for a mission to Iraq. I learned I would be deployed to work on a Military Transition Team (MTT) under the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (known commonly as “Min- Sticky”). My initial thoughts took me back to the early nineties—shock, anger, rejection, and acceptance. I found myself drawing on my experience managing dorm life when I was at Widener. It felt like the first day of student move-in where residents would jockey for space in the rooms while figuring out whether they were going to get along with a new roommate for the next two semesters. The lessons I learned working with Widener students and staff in the early nineties were very valuable to me as an Army officer adjusting to my new role.

The goal for me became to get my team trained to save each other’s lives—God forbid that ever happened—and focus on the mission. The training was intense, led by young and wily hardened veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. We trained in the frigid, cold climate that comes to the country. It could take up to a week for the weather to warm up. We averaged about 115 degree days with a lot of sandstorms. In one storm, I had difficulty seeing what was across the street. The desert environment required wearing something over your mouth and nose, as well as a great pair of sunglasses, to help protect the eyes from the sand and dust. We trained to save each other’s lives.

After the training was completed, we arrived at our duty location about 20 miles northwest of Baghdad in March 2008. Thoughts of family weighed heavy on my mind, and I wrote on my blog at the time about a phone call home: “My wife and I were talking earlier this week about our 4-year-old son, Tyler, and my sassy 2-year-old daughter, Leah. My wife told me that out of the blue Tyler said, ‘Daddy asked God for me to be a big boy, right?’ Chills went through my entire body, my eyes filled with tears, and I felt like I had a huge bubble-gum-jaw breaker stuck in my throat. What’s so compelling about my son’s comment is that right before I boarded the plane to come over here, I spoke to Tyler about helping out his mother. When we hung up the phone, I prayed for protection for both my children and wife. I also remember specifically asking God to watch over my children and for Tyler to have a maturity sprout and become a ‘big boy.’ I am pretty private about my religion and relationship with God, but I can tell you He is real and was touching my son."

ONCE WE ARRIVED IN IRAQ, we found out that we were going to coach, teach, and mentor Iraqi soldiers in all aspects of logistics. We would later logistically support the Iraqis in combat operations throughout the country that proved successful.

There was nothing sexy to report about our living arrangements. We lived in old British-style barracks. These barracks were once occupied by the defunct Iraqi Republican Guard defeated in the first Gulf War. The captain I replaced gave me a tour on my first day in Taji, where we were based. I was a little shocked at what I saw. There were demolished tanks, troop carriers, trucks, tires, and other trash dumped in a pile. It looked like your typical landfill and had the same smell too. I also saw Iraqis burning trash all over the place. There seemed to be no method or organization. They were just burning. The captain told me that the Iraqis burn everything and I would get used to the smell. I never got used to the smell.

The weather also soon became almost unbearable. In June it started to get very hot. We averaged about 115 degree days with a lot of sandstorms. In one storm, I had difficulty seeing what was across the street. The desert environment required wearing something over your mouth and nose, as well as a great pair of sunglasses, to help protect the eyes from the sand and dust. We trained to save each other’s lives.

I must admit that when I arrived I had what some would call the typical American preconceptions about another country and its people. But I began to appreciate the Iraqi soldiers, and developed strong relationships with many of them. After working closely with my Iraqi counterparts, I learned that you can’t typecast a person for the wrongs of others in the past. They loved their families and wanted the very best for their children—just like we all do as parents.

The Iraqi soldiers risked their lives and the lives of their families to wear the uniform. Many of them were targets of terrorists who were trying to derail the progress that was occurring in the country. It could take up to a week for my counterparts to get home and come back to the camp due to the surge in violence. They took extraordinary risks to get home and support their families, and I respected that enormously.

As I look back, I realize I learned that hard work will not always be rewarded in the way you expect it. Although I received the Bronze Star and I am very proud of that, I found more gratitude from the Iraqis I helped. Upon my return home, it was obvious that life continued to move on without me. That was a difficult thing to come to terms with. I think I was expecting my children to look and be the same as before I deployed.

I returned to children that were taller, reading, and my youngest talking a mile a minute. My wife had played the role of both mother and father. I didn’t know where I was going to fit in anymore, and often felt like I was not needed.

I was glad to learn that these were all normal feelings, but I just was not prepared to experience it. The journey back to my family and my playing a significant role again took some time. I knew that I needed to ease back into family life. I knew not to just jump in and fulfilling its that I typically did prior to my deployment. I tried to observe where I was needed and jumped in. After several months of morning-and-night routines with the kids, and resuming my own civilian work schedule, things just seemed to come together naturally. My advice to any other soldier in the same situation would be to partner with your spouse and keep the lines of communication open.

Although life continues to move on, one must figure out their place back in that journey and contribute. It took me a while, but I found my way.
Young Alumnus Afghanistan Bound

1st Lt. Eric Buzzerd ’07
Army Military Intelligence
Hometown: Medford Lakes, N.J.

THREE YEARS AGO WIDENER SENIOR and ROTC cadet Eric “Buzz” Buzzerd went to Bolivia on a student mission trip led by President James T. Harris III. This year, 1st Lt. Buzzerd, who will be promoted to captain this coming summer, will lead a platoon of 24 soldiers focusing on military intelligence from Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, N.C., into Afghanistan. “We are going this summer as part of the troop surge,” he said.

The 2007 business administration graduate and his troops will be among the 30,000 additional troops authorized by President Obama late last year that will push the number of U.S. forces there to approximately 100,000.

Buzzerd will be working with the Afghanistan National Army in his upcoming mission. His unit focuses on military intelligence regarding “high value targets.”

Buzzerd, 26, a native of Phoenixville, Pa., who attended high school in Medford Lakes, N.J., said the lessons he learned at Widener, both in the classroom and on student trips, have prepared him to lead his platoon. In addition to the Bolivia trip, he participated in alternative spring break trips building homes for needy residents in Biloxi, Miss.; Tbilasassee, Fla.; and Lake Jackson, Texas. He also credits classes taught by Associate Professor Dennis Laker in the School of Business as having tremendous impact on his day-to-day work. “His human resource management classes—that’s a large part of what I do,” Buzzerd said.

After graduation, Buzzerd worked as a Gold Bar Recruiter on Widener’s campus before attending officer basic course in Fort Benning, Ga. He then underwent military intelligence training in Fort Huachuca, Ariz., before he was assigned to Fort Bragg in 2008. He has bonded with other Widener alumni on the North Carolina base, including Capt. James Devlin ’06 of the 82nd Airborne who is currently in Afghanistan. He said there are about nine fellow Widener alumni at Fort Bragg. “There’s a Widener network here,” he said.

Buzzerd will be working with the Afghanistan National Army in his upcoming mission. His unit focuses on military intelligence regarding “high value targets.” He said his team conducts operations that isolate specific targets that are working against coalition forces. “We enable larger units, like BCTs (Brigade Combat Teams) to better perform intelligence collection.”

Above: Buzzerd is among a group of Widener alumni based at Fort Bragg in North Carolina.

Nursing/ROTC Grad in Iraq Summer 2009

1st Lt. Gayle Redditt ’07
Army Nurse
Hometown: Coatesville, Pa.

WHEN ROTC CADET GAYLE REDDIT graduated from Widener with a nursing degree and received her Army commission, her father, retired Lt. Col. Hugh Redditt, led her in the oath of office. “I knew from the time that I was a very little girl that I would go into the military,” she said. “My dad liked to say when I was seven that I had G.I. Joe sheets.”

The Army assigned her to the Bravo Company at Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center at Fort Gordon in Augusta, Ga., and in March 2009 deployed her to a military prison hospital near Baghdad. “I took care of detainees as well as fellow soldiers. I had heard horror stories about the detainees—that they were mean. But I didn’t have a bad experience. They wanted to feel better, and they treated me nicely and let me help them. My Iraq experience was very good. I had a lot of good people to work with.”

Translators were available in the hospital, but she didn’t always need them to communicate with the Iraqi prisoners. “I got really good at playing charades. I could usually figure out what they wanted by gesturing.” When she returned from Iraq in August 2009, she served in the Army’s Hometown Recruiter Assistant Program, visiting Widener’s campus where she attended freshmen orientation and spoke with ROTC cadets. She also represented Fort Gordon in the Miss Georgia USA pageant, a preliminary to the Miss USA and Miss Universe pageants.

In February, the Army assigned her to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, the largest American military hospital outside of the U.S., where she will serve three years. Redditt has German and Polish ancestry, and plans to visit Poland. “I’m very much looking forward to enjoying Europe,” she said. The assignment will extend her ROTC contract past the standard four years by a year and a half. She hasn’t decided yet if she will make a career of the Army, but is glad she followed her childhood dream of serving her country. “This is something I’m very proud of,” she said.

Above: Redditt, right, and 1st Lt. Girah Caraballo, a nurse from Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas, prepare to leave Iraq.

“I took care of detainees as well as fellow soldiers. I had heard horror stories about the detainees—that they were mean. But I didn’t have a bad experience.”
most people think Americans are robots—they don’t think we have feelings, “ she said. “I helped them see that we really aren’t so different. ”

Siemer also worked in the Widows Assistance Program (WAP), which was created to help Iraqi war widows obtain a stipend that is supposed to be supplied by the government, but often gets overlooked and is difficult to secure since most of the women can’t read. WAP provides female attorneys to help the women process their paper work so they can receive their money.

“This experience, though stressful and often times you see things you don’t want to, has inspired me, “ she said. Siemer grew up in an “Army family.” With her father a West Point graduate and her brother on his way to becoming one, it was inevitable that she would follow their paths.

“I never wanted to do active duty, but I did want to serve, “ she said. Her experience at Widener helped her in Iraq in ways she never imagined it would. “I was able to apply what I learned in class to the task at hand, “ she said. “I felt I had the experience as well as the confidence I needed to handle budget issues and manage plans. ”

She and her husband Jobie—a fellow soldier from Ohio whom she met in training in Fort Bragg—are considering visiting Uganda to help work on the country’s irrigation system. They are also interested in starting a youth leadership development program in the states.

She is currently working on her master’s degree in international relations with a concentration in conflict resolution. She hopes this degree will help her in future endeavors in the United States and abroad. “People often tell me that if I worked this hard towards my own business I could make a lot of money,” she said, “but I don’t think money can replace the rewarding feeling I get when I know I am making a difference.”
By Dan Hanson ’97

ELIZABETH MORAN ’09 has never fought in a war or served in the military. But to her father, Michael Moran, a U.S. Navy Reserve officer who did a tour of duty in Afghanistan, she deserves the benefits of a veteran. “We get medals and we get parades, but all of these people who are in the background don’t get recognition,” he said. “While we are deployed, it’s our families that carry the load.”

When Congress passed the Post 9/11 GI Bill in 2008, it allowed veterans to transfer unused education benefits to their spouse or children. With his daughter considering attending graduate school at Widener but unsure if she could afford tuition, Moran of Tinton Falls, N.J., helped his daughter. “The GI Bill made the difference, and I’m very thankful that my dad passed his benefits along to me,” said Elizabeth Moran, 22, an MBA student.

She is one of 61 students attending Widener with the help of the GI Bill. The students are a mix of veterans and family members pursuing undergraduate, graduate, and law degrees. The university is also participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, a part of the GI Bill through which the Department of Veterans Affairs will pay up to the highest public in-state tuition and fees for eligible veterans, and match a contribution by Widener to pay the remaining balance of the tuition. Eleven veterans took part in the program this year.

This recent influx builds on the legacy of the original GI Bill signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944. It had such tremendous impact on college enrollments that in 1947, veterans accounted for almost half of all college admissions. By the time the original GI Bill ended in 1956, almost half of 16 million World War II veterans had participated in the program.

At Pennsylvania Military College, the GI Bill could not have come at a better time. The college was mired in bankruptcy proceedings in 1943 when the enlisted reserve corps was called to active duty in June, depleting the

family members pursuing undergraduate, graduate, and law degrees. The university is also participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, a part of the GI Bill through which the Department of Veterans Affairs will pay up to the highest public in-state tuition and fees for eligible veterans, and match a contribution by Widener to pay the remaining balance of the tuition. Eleven veterans took part in the program this year.

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college’s enrollment overnight, according to A History of Pennsylvania Military College 1821-1954 by former PMC President Clarence R. Moll. After commencement that year, only 70 college students remained.

In June 1944, shortly after the GI Bill was signed, then PMC President Frank Hyatt sent what the PMC News referred to as “one of the most important notices in the history of the college.” In a letter to more than 400 former cadets and members of the enlisted reserve corps, Hyatt personally invited them back to PMC under the benefits of the new bill. To sweeten the deal, Hyatt wrote that veterans would be “excused from wearing uniforms or taking military training . . . and will be permitted weekend and evening freedom, depending upon the condition of their school work.”

Just three years later, in 1947, enrollment at the college reached 866, of which nearly 84 percent were veterans. R. Herberton Butler ’49 was among the first class of returning veterans on the GI Bill. He had celebrated victory over Nazi Germany with the throng of revelers on the Champs Elysées in Paris on V-E Day in May 1945. A year later, he was home in Swarthmore lugging a 150-pound box of tools for a mechanic. “I figured there had to be a better way,” Butler said. “I really didn’t have a burning desire to go to college when I got out of high school. We were working

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“My dad was a shoe repairman. Back in those days, poor people couldn’t go to college. The GI Bill gave me the opportunity to get an education.”

—Fred Shahadi ‘49

Not only did those first veterans on the GI Bill literally save the college, their presence is felt on campus today. Fred Shahadi ‘49 was taking night classes at Villanova University when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. Six days later, he enlisted, ultimately serving on a minesweeper that helped clear the way for the D-Day invasion.

Like Butler, Shahadi enrolled at PMC after the war. He went on to become the first president of the Veterans’ Student Government Association, the precursor to today’s Student Government Association. In addition, he said, veterans started the first fraternities at the college, and were responsible for founding The Done, the university’s student publication.

Shahadi, the only one of six in his family to graduate from college, said he would not have been able to attend college after returning from the war if not for the GI Bill.

“My dad was a shoe repairman. Back in those days, poor people couldn’t go to college. The GI Bill gave me the opportunity to get an education.”

—Fred Shahadi ‘49

A veteran with more than 19 years Army service, Shahadi and Butler’s experience is representative of how higher education opportunities were expanded in America. “Today, we look at the mark or badge of the middle class as a college education,” said Rachel Batch, associate professor of history at Widener. “Before World War II, most people in the country did not go on for higher education—that was for the elites. The GI Bill really made a college education accessible.”

Shahadi and fellow 1949 graduate Ollie Armitage spearheaded an effort to raise funds for a sculpture on campus commemorating the opening of the college to veterans. At Homecoming 2009, the university dedicated the sculpture on the front lawn of Old Main aptly named “Homecoming” depicting a veteran in civilian clothes shaking hands with a cadet. “I was thrilled to see this part of history represented,” Shahadi said. “It represents a big part of our heritage.”

Thomas J. Reed, a professor of law at Widener and director of the university’s Veterans Law Clinic, said the latest incarnation of the GI Bill offers more benefits than the original program. “What we have now is a much better plan for the veterans,” Reed said.

Reed said it is still too early to determine the legacy of the Post 9/11 GI Bill and its impact on college enrollment and the nation. However, the impact on those whom the Post 9/11 GI Bill is intended to serve is undeniable, said Army veteran Sandra Waller, a graduate student in Widener’s social work program.

“If it were not for the GI Bill, the college probably wouldn’t exist today . . . The GI Bill is undoubtedly one of the best things that has come out of Congress.”

—R. Heberton Butler ‘49

By Jennifer Dubisky

Widener University is the first school in the nation to host a new military program to train mental health professionals who treat troops returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan with psychological problems.

“With more than 1.6 million servicemen and women having been deployed—and the build-up of troops in Afghanistan expected to reach 100,000 this year—the demand for specialized treatment of returning troops is growing,” said Dr. Virginia Brabender, associate dean and director of the Institute of Graduate Clinical Psychology. “We need to prepare our mental health professionals for the current military culture,” she said.

Administrators from Widener, the Center for Deployment Psychology, the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for Advancement of Military Medicine partnered to present the Military and Veteran Behavioral Health Post-Master’s Certificate Program. Starting with a two-day conference on the Main Campus in April, training will focus on treating behavioral health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injuries (TBI), as well as developing assessment skills and advancing treatment.

The certificate program is open to licensed mental health professionals with master’s degrees who currently or are planning to treat veterans. The goal is to provide a better understanding of the military culture, as well as how to increase awareness of the PTSD and TBI symptoms. It also teaches the skills to identify with patients and acknowledge their struggles such as sleeping problems or suicidal thoughts, and how to address the behavioral needs for the family members of the servicemen and women. Faculty for the program consists of six experts from the Center for Deployment Psychology.

The certificate is offered through the Institute for Clinical Psychology’s Post-Graduate Center at Widener University. For more information visit www.postgraduatedcenter.org.
were conditioned to treat our nation's program's success and the overall growth national reaction was the same. I think women with respect and saw that the parents treated these men and uniform, " he said. "They observed how people in the airport or around town in just 10 years old when they first saw of the American military since 2001.

ROTC to the heightened awareness attributes the strength of Widener's Battalion commander since June 2008, of military science and Freedom programs nationwide. and ranks in the top third of the 273 60 students in the ROTC program, Corps program in the region, with the largest Reserve Officers' Training WIDENER UNIVERSITY HOUSES one of individuals and effective leaders. " the institution to produce civic-minded move forward to fit the vision President Peterson said. "We must continue to but we cannot rest on our laurels, "

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ultimately prepare the cadets to become on caring for soldiers both physically and mentally. These cadets will become responsible for a group of soldiers and their families, so we focus on how they can offer support before, during, and after combat.

All elements of the ROTC program ultimately prepare the cadets to become strong leaders (each cadet is committed to four years of service after graduation), with the core focus to train and educate them to become leaders of the military. "The military history of the school has provided us with a strong foundation, but we cannot rest on our laurels," Peterson said. "We must continue to move forward to fit the vision President Harris and the Board of Trustees have for the institution to produce civic-minded individuals and effective leaders." Cadets undergo specialty military training throughout the year, participate in morning physical fitness activities, and enroll in military science courses. "The military science component incorporates lessons learned in conflict," Peterson said. "Our upper-level courses place a growing emphasis on caring for soldiers both physically and mentally. These cadets will become responsible for a group of soldiers and their families, so we focus on how they can offer support before, during, and after combat."

Widener also partners with area institutions of higher education as the host school for Army ROTC activity. Immaculata University became the newest affiliate this year, with other partner schools including the Abington and Brandywine campuses of Pennsylvania State University, Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, Neumann University, Villanova University, and West Chester University of Pennsylvania.

Now this year, Widener’s ROTC formed partnerships with four area Army Junior ROTC programs at Delsea Regional High School, Norristown High School, Philadelphia Military Academy, and Roxborough High School. The cadets help these programs order supplies following Army rules and conduct physical training events. Lt. Col. Peterson, above right, leader of Widener’s ROTC program since 2008, with three Widener alumni from the class of 2009 serving as recruiters. From left, Lt. Robert Gold, Lt. Carrie Smith, and Lt. Keith Bright.

Serving Veterans Seeking Benefits

By Sam Starnes

FOR 13 YEARS, the Widener’s Veterans Law Clinic has been fighting for men and women like Michael Urban. Urban, 29, a graduate of Monsignor Bonner High School in Upper Darby, Pa., was 22 years old and in the Army’s B2nd Airborne when on a training jump over Fort Bragg in North Carolina he leapt from a C-130 plane and was sucked back and slammed against the fuselage. He then parachuted down and landed, thinking that he was not seriously injured, only bumped and bruised. But two months later his lungs collapsed. And they continued to collapse. He was discharged from the Army with full disability benefits in 2003. Two years later, much to his surprise, he received a terse letter that all of his benefits and health insurance had been revoked. He also was denied VA benefits. He fought the decisions on his own for two years unsuccessfully until 2007 when he learned about the Veterans Law Clinic at the Widener School of Law that offered free legal representation to disabled veterans. After a lengthy series of appeals, the VA awarded him a 60 percent disability last summer. Urban’s discharge review application was denied but is now under judicial review by the federal courts.

A senior in Widener’s Legal Education Institute with plans to attend law school, Urban said he couldn’t have had any of his benefits reinstated without the help of the clinic. “I’d still be arguing,” he said.

Since being founded in 1997 by Professor Thomas J. Reed, the clinic has provided pro bono representation to more than 200 veterans like Urban, and currently has more than 140 active cases, most of which deal with veterans appealing decisions to deny benefits of service. “VA benefits are not welfare,” said Reed, a former Marine Corps officer and law professor on the Delaware campus since 1981. “It’s like workers comp. It’s part of the contract. We are enforcing a contract with the military.” The cases involving veterans’ claims are often very complex and can take many years to resolve in the bureaucracy of the military branches and the Department of Veterans Affairs. “I’ve got some cases that have been open since we started,” Reed said.

A primary problem, Reed said, is a two-track system for disputes. Veterans often have to appeal to both the military retirement system and Veterans Affairs. Reed has authored a bill for U.S. Rep. Joe Sestak to simplify the system by having the VA hear all of the claims. The bill has not yet been filed. Having the VA hear all of the claims.

The VA’s system is failing to handle claims. “We are seeing a much larger number of cases referred to the clinic is increasing. Reed worries about how to continue funding the clinic. “What do we do about all the clients we are taking on?”

With the war in Iraq and escalation of fighting in Afghanistan, Reed said the need is growing. Because troops in those arenas often deploy for long tours of duty and see regular combat, the number of psychiatric cases referred to the clinic is increasing. "We are seeing a much larger number of cases come out of Iraq," he said. "They are under threat of fire every day."

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Casey Raudenbush appreciates the storylines of classic children’s movies like *Bambi* and *The Lion King* in a way she never thought she would. “I think Disney movies are the greatest thing ever now,” she said. “In pretty much every movie a parent gets killed.”

She says this knowing the day is fast approaching when her 3-year-old son Jackson will ask about his father, Capt. Nathan Robert Raudenbush, an Army tank commander killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq in February 2008. “I don’t know how to explain it to a child,” she said. She believes her son’s familiarity with the tragedy of losing a parent suffered by the doe Bambi and the lion cub Simba will help him cope with the loss of his own father.

Jackson was only 16 months old when he saw his father for the last time, but the son who turns 4 in June remembers. “He will point to a picture and know that is ‘da da,’ without being told,” Casey said.

She and Nate laid eyes on each other for the first time at the ROTC Welcome Weekend in August before classes began. Neither was impressed. She thought he was arrogant, turned off by his confident, playful (sometimes annoyingly so, she said) personality. He thought she was a snob, something she said she often gets, perhaps a Pennsylvanian interpretation of her cool, confident New England demeanor.

In the second week of classes, Casey woke early at 5:45 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 11, for physical training with other cadets promptly at six, a series of running, push ups and sit ups. After exercising, they all filed into the office and signed their ROTC paperwork committing them to the Army for four years after graduation. “We were official then,” she said. “There was no going back.”

After the paperwork, she said she returned to her room and went back to sleep, only to wake up later to see news of the terrorist attacks that started shortly before nine. The coverage was an ominous thing to watch, especially considering that she had just enlisted in the military for a long-term commitment, but Casey did not regret her decision. “I didn’t think about myself,” she said. “I was too busy thinking about everyone else in the World Trade Center towers.”
Nate and Casey’s mutual dislike flared up one day later in that fall semester. Casey and another woman in the ROTC program were struggling to learn “Land Nav,” the process of using maps and compasses to track location coordinates.

Nate breezed into the laboratory where they were working and looked down at the maps spread on the table and laughed. “He said, ‘What are you, stupid?’ I yelled back at him, and told him we were smarter than he was, that we had better grades.”

They kept their distance after that, maintaining a cool but cordial relationship in the Military Science course taken by all ROTC cadets. Romance with one another seemed the furthest thing from their minds.

Two years later, between their sophomore and junior years, life took a difficult turn for Casey. Her stepfather, Gary Fermino, the only father she had ever known, died of a heart attack at the age of 52. Later that fall, she and a boyfriend of two years who attended Villanova broke up.

“A very cold night in January 2003 marked the fast warming of their initially icy relationship. Both juniors, they connected because that’s my boyfriend’s name.”

The precocious little girl told Casey that she should name her baby Emily, but Casey told her they were having a boy. “You should name him Jackson,” the girl said, “because that’s my boyfriend’s name.”

Casey said the little girl hadn’t known that the name Jackson was one of the final two, so she and Nate took it as a sign. “We left that night knowing he would be Jackson.”

At an Army camp in the state of Washington attended by the ROTC cadets in summer 2004, Casey broke four ribs—three on her right side and one on her left—when she fell from the “Slide for Life,” a strenuous physical training obstacle. The challenge, consisting of a single cable running from a tower down over a lake, requires recruits to climb to the top and then slide down the cable.

She wasn’t strong enough to hang on, and her injury forced her to leave early. Shortly after the broken ribs she was diagnosed with asthma, and the combination of medical problems ended her commitment to the Army.

Their relationship grew stronger in their senior year, and in the spring they made plans to live together following graduation. After both donning the cap and gown at Widener’s 2005 commencement, they moved into an apartment in Clifton Heights, Pa. Casey started a hospital nursing job and Nate took temporary work at a chemical manufacturer while he finished a few summer classes to complete his computer information systems degree.

Nate officially finished school in August and received his commission as a lieutenant. He began working on Widener’s campus, recruiting students in the ROTC program, until he shipped off for the Officer Basic Course training in Fort Knox in Kentucky that November.

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A month before he left, Casey learned she was pregnant. They married in a small ceremony on Dec. 30, 2005, when Nate was home on a break from his training. Later when they learned he would be assigned to Fort Stewart in Southeast Georgia, Casey flew down and hunted for a house, picking out a brand new three-bedroom in Port Wentworth, a suburb of Savannah. They bought it and moved in March, happy they could live together and not on the military base. Nate commuted 45 minutes to the sprawling Fort Stewart compound where he was a tank commander, overseeing three tanks and a platoon of 11 men.

About a month later at 10:57 a.m. on Thursday, June 22, 2006, Jackson was born.

Nate’s brigade had returned from Iraq in early 2006, so when they moved to Georgia, there was no immediate threat of deployment, but they knew it was imminent. “We just didn’t know when,” she said. “We were prepared for that day to come.”

In summer 2007, Nate and Casey visited Pennsylvania with one-year-old Jackson and renewed their vows in a ceremony much larger than their wedding had been. The event doubled as a party to honor and wish Nate farewell as deployment loomed. He officially received orders in early October 2007 that his unit would be deployed to Iraq.

About the same time, Nate and a longtime girlfriend from high school also parted ways.

A very cold night in January 2003 marked the fast warming of their initially icy relationship. Both juniors, they connected because they shared the same last name for their son. His middle name would be Robert, the same as Nate and Nate’s father, Brian Robert Raudenbush.

The first name they narrowed down to two choices—Jackson or Jared—until that May when they met a 5-year-old daughter of a fellow officer at a Hail and Farewell party, an informal Army gathering thrown for troops deploying or returning.

The precocious little girl told Casey that she should name her baby Emily, but Casey told her they were having a boy. “You should name him Jackson,” the girl said, “because that’s my boyfriend’s name.”

Casey was the only little girl who didn’t know that the name Jackson was one of the final two, so she and Nate took it as a sign. “We left that night knowing he would be Jackson.”

Soon they were constant companions, a relationship made convenient by the fact that they were both residing in the ROTC house. “We pretty much lived together already,” she said.

They began taking weekend trips together, visiting their families, going out in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and even even traveling to Florida together. “We did our own thing,” she said.

A month before he left, Casey learned she was pregnant. They married in a small ceremony on Dec. 30, 2005, when Nate was home on a break from his training. Later when they learned he would be assigned to Fort Stewart in Southeast Georgia, Casey flew down and hunted for a house, picking out a brand new three-bedroom in Port Wentworth, a suburb of Savannah. They bought it and moved in March, happy they could live together and not on the military base. Nate commuted 45 minutes to the sprawling Fort Stewart compound where he was a tank commander, overseeing three tanks and a platoon of 11 men.

At an Army camp in the state of Washington attended by the ROTC cadets in summer 2004, Casey broke four ribs—three on her right side and one on her left—when she fell from the “Slide for Life,” a strenuous physical training obstacle. The challenge, consisting of a single cable running from a tower down over a lake, requires recruits to climb to the top and then slide down the cable.

She wasn’t strong enough to hang on, and her injury forced her to leave early. Shortly after the broken ribs she was diagnosed with asthma, and the combination of medical problems ended her commitment to the Army.

Their relationship grew stronger in their senior year, and in the spring they made plans to live together following graduation. After both donning the cap and gown at Widener’s 2005 commencement, they moved into an apartment in Clifton Heights, Pa. Casey started a hospital nursing job and Nate took temporary work at a chemical manufacturer while he finished a few summer classes to complete his computer information systems degree.

Nate officially finished school in August and received his commission as a lieutenant. He began working on Widener’s campus, recruiting students in the ROTC program, until he shipped off for the Officer Basic Course training in Fort Knox in Kentucky that November.

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In January 2009, Casey returned to Widener as a grad student and adjunct faculty member. She teaches junior and senior medical-surgery clinical rotations as well as a nursing practicum course, and is working on her master’s in nursing.

Iraq on his final journey home. “They guarded his body until they took him away,” Casey said.

The Army posthumously promoted Nate from first lieutenant to captain, and a military funeral was held at his childhood church, Green Tree Church of the Brethren in Oaks. Pa. He was cremated, and 25 percent of his ashes buried in the church’s cemetery.

Casey kept the rest of the ashes. She also kept the house in Georgia, which she now rents out. She said she has too strong a sentimental attachment to sell their first home.

In April 2008, she bought a home in Douglassville, Pa., 1.6 miles from Nate’s parents, Brian and Mary, in a new development on sloping land that had once been a farm.

With light hair and big, clear eyes, Jackson looks like his mother but has the playful personality of his father. On a rare warmish afternoon the week before Christmas 2009, Jackson and Homer, an energetic 3-year-old boxer that Nate had acquired as a puppy shortly before being deployed, ran frantic circles around the house in Douglassville.

Later, Jackson gave a playful pat on the back. “He’s a butt-smacker,” Casey said. “Nate was like that.”

He also is a little boy crazy about trains, with a set in his room and another in the basement. Casey said she takes him to ride the “choo choos” on the Strasburg Rail Road in Gap, Pa., about once a month. Since he turned 3 last year, she said Jackson has talked more, overcoming his taciturn nature of earlier years that concerned Nate and Casey when he was younger.

Their conversation turned to a doctor’s recommenda-
tion for Jackson to see a speech therapist because he spoke very little for a child his age. It was their last conversation.

Casey and a lieutenant showed up at her door the next day with the news. On Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 20, Nate had been riding in the front seat of a Humvee—a term for the large Jeep-like vehicles formally known as High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV)—in Buasyefi, 20 miles south of Baghdad, when a bomb detonated.

The bomb, what troops call an IED (short for “improved explosive device”), struck hardest on the passenger side, gravely wounding all three men in the Humvee. Casey said that Nate’s injuries caused his heart to stop beating and his lungs to stop working, but soldiers pulled Nate from the wreckage and gave him CPR, temporarily reviving him.

A trio of Widener nursing and ROTC graduates were with Nate at the end of his life. At the Baghdad Army hospital where he was taken, the nurse assigned to a surgeon treating him was Capt. Ann Matta (formerly Gockley), a Widener alumna and ROTC cadet from 2005, the same class as Casey and Nate. Also working in the hospital were Capt. Christine Bacsa ’04 and Capt. Heather Page ’06 (formerly Brown), Casey’s roommate during her senior year.

Casey said after an extended effort by the surgeon and Matta to save Nate, in which he was revived several times, he was declared dead. Then the Army nurses from Widener bonded together to wait with Nate’s remains before he left.

On Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008, Casey and a friend took Jackson to the beach east of Savannah. Her cell phone rang and she answered, expecting to hear Nate. The line was live and she said hello and spoke his name numerous times, but other times as long as 40 minutes. Casey was glad to get his calls. She heard from other Army wives whose husbands only called as long as 40 minutes. Casey was glad to get his calls. She knew what to do.”

Casey’s roommate during her senior year.

Capt. Christine Bacsa ’04 and Capt. Heather Page ’06 (formerly Brown), Casey’s roommate during her senior year.

Casey said after an extended effort by the surgeon and Matta to save Nate, in which he was revived several times, he was declared dead. Then the Army nurses from Widener bonded together to wait with Nate’s remains before he left.

But they did continue to hear his voice frequently. Nate called home on his cell phone at the end of each day in Iraq, usually around noon Eastern time. Sometimes the calls were short, as little as five minutes, but other times as long as 40 minutes. Casey was glad to get his calls. She heard from other Army wives whose husbands only called once a week because it was too expensive to call more often.

A chaplain and a lieutenant showed up at her door the next day with the news. On Wednesday afternoon, Feb. 20, Nate had been riding in the front seat of a Humvee—a term for the large Jeep-like vehicles formally known as High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV)—in Buasyefi, 20 miles south of Baghdad, when a bomb detonated.

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Leah Greene may not look like the typical university student, but her thirst for knowledge and appreciation of education qualify her as a quintessential scholar. She had only completed one year of college when she got married and left school. “You don’t need college now,” her father told her. “You’re married.” When her three children reached school age, she went back to school too and completed her bachelor’s degree at Temple, and later earned a master’s at the University of Pennsylvania.

After a long and rewarding career as a social worker, Greene, assistant director of Juvenile Court for Delaware County, retired in 1989. She decided to soak up as many educational experiences as she could, evaluating several universities before deciding to enroll at Widener.

Greene plunged into her studies, taking courses in literature, history, and women’s studies. She took a few courses with Dr. Ken Pobo and appreciated the energy he brought to each class. When Pobo suggested that Greene take his poetry writing course, she told him, “I can’t write poetry!” At Pobo’s urging, Greene overcame her reluctance and enrolled in the class. This exchange was not only the start of a close friendship between Greene and Pobo—it was the start of her deep affection for writing poetry. She is now a prolific writer, crafting poetry about the people who have touched her life.

As their friendship grew, Pobo would sometimes visit Greene and her late husband, Dr. Sheldon Greene, as they sat around their backyard swimming pool at their home in Swarthmore (Sheldon Greene passed away in 2009). They would discuss poetry and she would give Pobo her poetry to critique. She appreciated his honesty and at first took all his suggestions to heart. As time passed, Greene grew more experienced and confident about her writing and now, on occasion, differs with her teacher’s constructive criticism. “Even when we disagree, he’s still a great teacher,” she said.

A few years ago, the Greenes decided that they wanted to do something for Widener. They gave the university a significant endowment to create a poetry reading room on the second floor of the Wolfgram Library. Leah Greene thought that there were not enough books on modern poetry in the library, so proceeds from the endowment are used each year to purchase poetry books Pobo chooses. “Because Dr. Pobo has been so good to me, we wanted to give a gift to the university that would honor him,” Greene said.
At that instant Toscano realized their relationship was evolving from that of teacher and student to colleagues. The fund was a chance to give to the next generation of students while honoring this exceptional teacher. Toscano said: “Frank is an out-of-the-box kind of teacher and always finds creative ways to reach students. The fund will capture that kind of excellence and help spread it to other faculty.”

Lordi, a faculty member at Widener since 1976, said a great deal of what he knows about teaching was learned through on the job training. The fund in his name will provide the resources to help new and experienced faculty develop the cutting edge teaching skills to help their students learn to learn. “Once students realize that they can learn challenging concepts, it builds the confidence that they’ll need not only in their education but also to advance throughout their career,” he said.

Lordi recalls Toscano as a hard-working, committed, and goal-oriented student. “Carlo is a contributor,” Lordi said. “Certain students are so connected they want to give back not only financially which is much appreciated but also with their time. Seeing a student like Carlo advance in his career and want to share what he’s received with others is very encouraging.”

Lordi added, “Toscano has gone a step further and decided to honor his teacher and friend in a special way. He chairs the School of Business Administration’s effort to fund the Professor Frank C. Lordi Endowed Fund for Pedagogical Innovation and Teaching Excellence. The purpose of the fund is to provide resources for faculty to attend workshops and conferences that explore and develop innovative, state-of-the-art educational techniques. “The fund is a chance to give to the next generation of students while honoring this exceptional teacher.”

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President’s Council Dinner

The Four Seasons Hotel in Philadelphia hosted the Widener University President’s Council Dinner in November. President’s Council is the university’s premier giving organization and counts alumni, friends, faculty, and staff, along with corporations and foundations, among its members. The event is held annually to honor those who have provided significant support to the university. Honored guests have made an exceptional commitment of leadership, time, and personal resources to ensure Widener’s strength now and into the future.

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By Tom Bown ’67

It goes back many years to after my graduation in 1967 from Pennsylvania Military College and my return to the states from four-plus years in the United States Air Force. I realized that PMC had been there for me when it was my time for college, and I felt that through my life I should be there for PMC, now Widener. My wife Bonnie (we are married 43 years after dating since high school) joined me, as we were able, from the beginning in our support of the Widener Annual Fund. I have always wanted to make a significant contribution to Widener.

Fast forward to 2008; our businesses have come along nicely and I have been serving on the university Board of Trustees for 10 years and enjoying my involvement in working for Widener’s greatness. For many years I had quietly been contemplating being involved with improving the back of our wonderful Old Main building when its time came.

At least eight years ago I made a note to myself of the words “To honor Bonnie Bown, my girlfriend, fiancée, and wife through PMC, Widener, and life. Becky and Catherine’s mom.” My goal and plan was to surprise Bonnie when the time came that we could help build this addition to the art, beauty, and peacefulness of our campus.

The garden concept expresses our mutual interest in art and beautiful landscapes. My concept for the dome sculpture was to create a focal point at the center of campus that reflects the strength of our historic past, our present sense of community, and our bright future.

A freshman’s walk through the dome, crossing the large university seal embedded at its center, is meant to signify a place of beginning and an opening of the mind and spirit to learning and life in the campus community. At graduation, a walk through it will symbolize the completion of one phase of life and the beginning of another in the world community.

The design contemplates switching the visual focus of graduation from facing away from Old Main to looking through the dome sculpture and garden at the majestic beauty of Old Main as the backdrop. The garden design encompasses the ramps and steps for the presentation of degrees on the elevated platform surface, which is a permanent part of the garden.

Our gift, the majority of which is going to the Widener endowment, is to help ensure the future success of Widener so that Widener will thrive and be available for others as it was for us so many years ago.

President James T. Harris III is pleased to announce a $1 million gift to the university from Bonnie and Tom Bown ’67. The gift will be used primarily to endow the university with a portion going to beautify the campus by transforming the large parking area behind Old Main into a campus garden with verdant, tree-lined walkways. It is anticipated that at the center of the garden will be a 48-foot tall dome sculpture that echoes the iconic dome of Old Main. This oasis of green is envisioned by the Bowns to be a central campus focal point. It is meant to provide a peaceful and contemplative environment for current students as they enjoy campus life.

Through the years, the Bowns have consistently demonstrated their commitment to Widener and its mission in significant ways. Tom has served on the university’s Board of Trustees since 1997 and is currently chair of the Advancement Committee. He has also taken on the role as chair of the steering committee for the upcoming Campaign for Widener.

While the Bown Dome Sculpture Garden is still in the planning stage, we asked Tom to tell us in his own words about this gift.
Congratulations to the 2010 Alumni Award Winners!

Outstanding Alumni Award

Thomas Bown ’67
President, Charter Associates

Elizabeth Bayley PhD, RN
Retired Widener nursing professor

Alumni Service Award

Anthony Pontello ’61,’70
Retired engineer/owner Appco’s Sports Word in Secane, Pa.

John L. Geoghegan Citizenship Award

Gulio DiSerafino ’52
Retired Kearny (N.J.) High School principal

Jeffrey Frantz, ’10
Student

Please send your nominations for the 2011 Alumni Awards. To nominate someone or for more information, visit http://alumni.widener.edu/alumniawards.
Military Class Notes

1967
Dr. Charles E. Merkel Jr., BA, history, would like to express his appreciation to everyone at Widener for the great honor of being selected for the 2000 John L. Geoghegan Alumni Citizenship Award. A retired Army officer with a PhD in history from Florida State University, Merkel served in Afghanistan from September 2009 through January 2010 as a staff member of the Air Force’s newly activated 451st Air Expeditionary Wing. He was the first historian assigned to that unit, and he wore his PMC class ring proudly as he performed his duties at Camp Samak on Kandahar Airfield. Merkel is scheduled to return to the Middle East to serve with the Air Force in the spring of 2011.

1989
Lt. Col. Christopher Kennedy, BA, political science, who commands 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Division, recently deployed to Iraq for his third Operation Iraqi Freedom Tour.

2006
1st Lt. Rich Czekowski was stationed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and worked on a surgical intensive care unit. He was in the process of deploying to Afghanistan in early January until around August 2010. Capt. Crystal Gayle is working as a labor and delivery nurse with the 121st Combat Support Hospital in Korea. Capt. Heather (Brown) Page is stationed at Fort Campbell, Ky., with the 86th Combat Support Hospital, FORSCOM, as EMT head nurse. She also works at Blanchfield Army Community Hospital, Fort Campbell, Ky., on a mother–baby unit. Capt. Julie (Meier) Robertson is currently deployed in Iraq with the 47th Combat Support Hospital and working on a Multidisciplinary Care Unit. Her home station is Madigan Army Medical Center, Fort Lewis, Wash.

2007
1st Lt. Megan Dodge is currently working on an orthopedic/neurovascular floor at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. She became a board certified registered nurse (RN-BC) in November 2009, and is expected to deploy to Afghanistan in February 2010.

2008
2nd Lt. Michael Burns is stationed at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany where he works on a medical-surgical floor.

2009
2nd Lt. Carrie Smith is anticipating the Nurse Basic Officer Leader’s Course at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, from February–April 2010. After, she will be stationed at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

2010
1st Lt. Samantha O’Donnell is currently stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas, where she was in the Peri-Operative Course. She officially became an operating room nurse in January, after working on a medical-surgical floor for the past two years.

In Memoriam
William Batteiger ’38
Victor Mitran ’43
George Bowman ’49
Albert Chance ’49
Andrew Hyduke ’49
 Karl Kerth ’49
John Ryan ’49
Richard Connor ’50
Fred Klein ’50
William Paulus ’51
Robert Breimann ’52
Joseph Fabi ’52
Karl Bickel ’56
Allan Gale ’56
George Carter ’57
Robert Walsh ’57
Donald Leavitt ’58
Ronald McDonagh ’58
Donald Keyser ’61
Richard Pavia ’61
William Grzesinski ’62
John R. Hankinson ’64
Norman Goldberg ’66
Louis Hanson ’66
Gilbert Peterson ’66
Terry Grove ’66
Marvin Shipp ’66
N. Antonelli ’67
James Beauchamp ’67
Frederick Farley ’68
O. Tobin ’68
Jack Newell ’70
Donald Kosco ’71
Robert Rowe ’74
Walter J. Muller ’75
David Epright ’76

New Arrivals

Marriages
Melissa Saunders ’03, ’07 and Michael Maher ’04, May 9, 2009.


CLARIFICATION: The caption with a new arrival photo in the fall ‘09 Widener Magazine did not fully identify the parents. Samuel Kieffer ’04 and Margaret (Dwyne) Kieffer ’01, had a son, Samuel Arthur Kieffer Jr. in April 2009.

To David McNulty ’63 and Darla McNulty a granddaughter, Clara. Clara’s parents are Denise and Philip Mooney and sisters Darla and Micah.

Rudolph Bloom Jr., 87, a Widener University and Pennsylvania Military College administrator for 28 years, died Oct. 24, 2009. Bloom also was a self-taught pianist who played in jazz bands and composed several songs about Widener, including “Widener Blues,” recognized as the college song by President Clarence R. Moll in 1979. A World War II veteran with a bachelor’s degree in history from Pennsylvania State University and an MBA from Drewel University, Bloom became public relations director for PMC in 1964. In 1969, he began working for the school’s adult education program as assistant to the dean and assistant professor of management. He retired from Widener in 1992 as associate dean of University College. His service at Widener included 24 years as chair of the commencement committee.
The Widener Fund helps enhance the student environment by providing funds for extracurricular activities. The fund helps the campus to grow and allows Widener to provide students with alternatives. The Widener Fund made it possible for me to get involved with diverse activities on campus. This allows students to further their education and build a unified community.

Nina Rivera
Senior
San Antonio, Texas 
Elementary Education

It is important for the alumni to donate to the Widener Fund to help ensure that the strong ties between Widener students and Widener alumni stay alive. Widener needs the support of the alumni more than ever. Widener is expanding everyday, and proud alumni can have a hand in the growth and expansion of Widener Pride.

Pierce Trimmer
Senior
Philadelphia
Psychology major

“The Widener Fund helps enhance the student environment by providing funds for extracurricular activities. The fund helps the campus to grow and allows Widener to provide students with alternatives. The Widener Fund made it possible for me to get involved with diverse activities on campus. This allows students to further their education and build a unified community.”

Lauren Reap
Freshman
Atco, N.J.
Government and Politics and International Relations

Thank you for considering a gift to Widener University. You can also give online at www.widener.edu/giveonline.

Widener University

Widener Fund, One University Place, Chester, PA 19013
Phone: 610-499-1160 Fax: 610-499-1155

Your phone rings
...it’s a student on the line.

Why should you support the Widener Fund?

From the First Grade to the Terminal Degree
Widener Professor and Former First Grade Student Reunited in Doctoral Program

By Allyson Roberts

DR. ANNEMARIE JAY SMILED when she spotted a familiar name on a list of students taking Widener’s comprehensive doctoral education exam. “Could it be the same Ray?” she asked.

A second later Ray McFall walked through the door—the “same Ray” who 35 years earlier had walked into her first grade classroom when she was a young teacher. “As soon as I saw him again, I pulled him aside and told him that I was not afraid to hurt him if he told anyone how old I was,” Jay said.

Jay and McFall first met in 1974 at Lakeview Elementary School in Ridley Park, Pa., when she was at the start of her teaching career and he was a 6-year-old who talked too much. “I remember him opening up his desk and talking into it,” Jay said. “I think he was complaining about me in there after I’d asked him to stop socializing and get back to work.”

Since then, Jay worked as a reading specialist and curriculum supervisor for the Ridley School District and in administrative roles for the Upper Darby School District. She joined the Widener faculty full time in 2004 as assistant professor.

McFall took a different path to Widener. After graduating with an engineering degree from the University of Delaware, he quickly realized that the field wasn’t for him. “I liked being an engineering student, but not an engineer,” he said. He enrolled in Widener’s Center for Education with a goal of teaching math. He earned a math certificate, followed by a master’s degree, and then a principal’s certificate. After 10 years teaching math at Ridley High School, he joined the Marple Newtown School District, where he was appointed assistant high school principal in 2005 and then principal in 2008.

Although he has taken classes off and on at Widener since 1993, McFall didn’t cross paths with Jay until he took the exam in February 2006 for his doctorate in educational leadership. After passing the test proctored by Jay, he asked Jay to serve on his dissertation committee, and she sat next to him when he defended his work in November. “It must have been that great first grade education that got him this far,” Jay said.

After McFall presented his dissertation on Pennsylvania’s Classroom for the Future technology initiative, he left the room while his committee deliberated on approving the project. When the door reopened and McFall returned, Jay greeted him with a hug and a big smile. “Congratulations, Dr. McFall,” she said.

McFall’s dissertation is on the shelves of the Center for Education library. He also left a memento—his first grade class portrait. The 1974 photo adorns the wall of Jay’s office. “I am standing right next to her,” McFall said. “I wonder if that’s because I was talking too much that day.”