University Launches ‘My Leadership Moment’ Campaign Featuring Widener Students

The university recently launched the “My leadership moment” marketing campaign featuring Widener students from the Main, Delaware and Harrisburg campuses. The students have shared stories of how they became leaders during their time at Widener to create rich, multimedia content designed to strengthen the association between Widener and leadership.

Videos of the students featured in the campaign will rotate on leadership.widener.edu and will appear on the Widener University Facebook and Twitter accounts. Additional videos will be posted when they are completed. Share the videos from these social media accounts on your own accounts to help spread the word about Widener’s culture of cultivating leaders.

Also look for our student leaders on billboards situated on major highways. Right off Main Campus on I-95, drivers will currently see billboards featuring Alanna DiBiasi, physical therapy, class of 2015, heading south and Audrey Rucker, nursing, class of 2018, heading north. Tori Remondelli, engineering, class of 2016, currently appears on a billboard visible from I-95 and I-476, and Patton Vo, psychology, class of 2015, is on a billboard on the Schuylkill Expressway east of Conshohocken. There are a number of additional billboard locations, including digital ones. Some of the additional locations include Route 76 at Snyder Avenue in South Philadelphia, routes 183 and 283 in Harrisburg and Route 495 and Terminal Avenue in Wilmington.

Web and radio advertisements created for the “My leadership moment” campaign are also currently running online and on various radio stations and Pandora. Radio ads run on a wide mix of Philadelphia, Harrisburg/Lebanon/Lancaster/York, Wilkes Barre/Hazelton/Scranton and Allentown/Bethlehem stations. A television commercial, also featuring Widener students, is in the planning stages to air in November in the Philadelphia market.
Delaware Law Professor Erin Daly will spend this academic year working with a Haitian university as it looks to build a strong future.

Daly has been appointed vice president for institutional development for the Université de la Fondation Dr. Aristide, known as UNIFA, in Tabarre, Haiti, just outside Port-au-Prince. She will work with the school to develop new partnerships with American and foreign universities, and to help raise the school’s profile both within Haiti and internationally. Her task will involve working closely with former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and his wife, Mildred Trouillot-Aristide, an American lawyer who graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

Daly served as interim dean of Delaware Law School during the previous academic year. She also served as vice dean of the school under Linda L. Ammons, now dean emeritus. Daly is on sabbatical for the current academic year. She will be in Haiti from Sept. 24 through Oct. 13. She will speak at the university’s convocation when classes begin Oct. 5. Daly speaks French and is a recognized scholar on human rights and comparative constitutional law. She has written a book about the right to human dignity.

“I can’t think of any better way to spend my time during my sabbatical year than to work with a university whose mission is to empower students to work for social justice,” Daly said. “I feel immeasurably fortunate to be able to work with President and Mrs. Aristide to support their commitment to social change through professional education.”

UNIFA opened in 2001 with a mission to serve Haitians of all backgrounds, including those from poor or disadvantaged areas. Most will work in their communities after earning their degrees. The 2004 coup d’état that forced Aristide from office closed the school for several years. After re-opening it re-established its medical school and has added a physical therapy and nursing school. A law school opened two years ago.

Daly said Aristide, from his time as a priest through his political career, has focused on promoting human dignity and uplifting Haiti.

“It’s a natural fit for me, given my experience in professional education and my interest in various dimensions of human dignity,” she said.

Daly will return to the classroom at Delaware Law in the fall of 2016.
If you have worked with the Office of Development over this past year, you may have had a chance to work with Mike Felici, who was recently promoted to director of development for athletics and corporate partnerships.

Since joining the staff at Widener, Felici has built relationships with numerous Widener University and Pennsylvania Military College alumni. A number of them shared with him their passion for athletics at Widener.

“I had the opportunity to come in with a general focus, which gave me the chance to learn about the university as a whole and what programs alumni were most passionate about,” he said. “A common thread for many alumni was their time spent as a student athlete.”

Felici’s background makes him a perfect fit for his new role at Widener. A member of the Philadelphia Sports Writer Association, Felici has previously served as the sports information director for LaSalle University and for eight years as athletics marketing director and assistant athletic director at Temple University.

After his initial stint in academics, Felici worked for two consulting firms that focused on attracting corporate partnerships to universities. During that time, he led efforts at Penn State University, the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton University.

“It’s great to now be in a position that allows all of my skills to transfer over,” Felici said. “I even use my journalism background when interviewing and getting to know our alumni.”

No day is ever the same for Felici. He can rarely be found on campus as most of his time is spent traveling to meet with alumni and possible donors. Felici is looking to increase donor participation, especially with local alums.

“It’s a great feeling to get someone to donate to something you informed them about,” he said. “You understand how they would like to give back and give them an opportunity that personally aligns with their passions.”

One of the highlights of his first year at Widener was attending the Philadelphia Speakers Series featuring David McCullough. Another was welcoming his daughter onto campus this year as a member of the Class of 2019.

Off campus, the Blackwood, N.J., resident enjoys spending as much time as possible at Brigantine Beach, where he spent summers as a child. Felici is also a movie buff and has a running list of his top 100 favorite movies.

Remember to follow the blog created by the Middle States Steering Committee at https://widenermiddlestates.wordpress.com. The latest posts examine the accreditation process from different viewpoints. One links to an article by Doug Lederman in Inside Higher Ed, which presents the perspectives of accrediting agencies, the federal government and administrators. This piece takes up the question of the value of accreditation and the shifting nature of the process.

Another post written by Dr. Brigitte Valesey, assistant provost for teaching, learning and assessment at Widener, also addresses the value of accreditation in addition to the new Middle States standards. She offers her take on the Middle States re-accreditation process from dual perspectives as a working group co-chair and a Middle States evaluator. Check out Valesey’s post to learn what is different about the new Middle States standards and how Widener will approach preparing for the self-study using the new standards. Valesey also emphasizes the importance of this—or any self-study—as it provides an opportunity for reflecting on what we do well and discovering how we can make adjustments to achieve shared goals and outcomes.
Mielke Joins Office of Civic Engagement

Gretchen Mielke

Gretchen Mielke joined the Office of Civic Engagement as assistant dean in July. Before taking on this role, Mielke served as manager for general education and academic learning community assessment at American University, where she also served as program coordinator for the Community-Based Research Scholars and AU Scholars programs.

Throughout her career, Mielke has always found herself working in community engagement in different capacities. When she learned about the assistant dean role at Widener, she was excited by the opportunity to work directly with students.

“I want to work with students to help make them be extraordinary in their own right,” Mielke said. “It was obvious that Widener was a school that not only talked the talk, but also walked the walk.”

Mielke has experience with both domestic and global civic engagement, completing a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship in South Korea with an interest in comparing volunteerism in the United States and Korea. She also performed national campus consulting and AmeriCorps compliance as a program associate for the Bonner Foundation.

While at American University, she was responsible for living learning communities that focused on community-based research and worked with first-year scholar students that presented in interdisciplinary teams at a symposium. She worked closely with faculty to create the structure for the new program, which included training and assessment.

At Widener, Mielke is looking forward to supporting the university’s nationally recognized tradition of civic engagement and deepening campus-wide civic engagement initiatives.

“I want to be the bridge on campus,” she said. “Widener has so many best practices in place. I see a lot of potential to expand these across campus.”

Mielke hopes she can provide students with a deeper service experience that is more integrated during their time at Widener. “I want to build more strategic long-term partnerships for the students so they can make a greater impact,” she said.

Mielke earned her master’s degree in international relations from American University and her bachelor’s degree in American Studies at Dickinson College. A doctorate is next on her list of pursuits.

Off campus, the Easton, Md., native enjoys spending time with her dogs, Jose and Diego, both Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, and her husband, Chris. She is also an avid cheese lover. Another fun fact: Mielke, who is a triplet, had a sister attend Widener Law.

New Magazine Launches for Widener Law Commonwealth

Civitas, a new magazine for alumni and friends of Widener University Commonwealth Law School, debuted in Harrisburg at the beginning of the semester with its inaugural issue. The cover story features a debate between Emeritus Professor of Law John L. Gedid and Professor of Law Michael R. Dimino Sr. on the merits of electing or appointing Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justices. The magazine is available on the Harrisburg Campus, or can be viewed online at http://commonwealthlaw.widener.edu/alumni-friends/magazine/. It will be published twice a year, with the next issue due in February.

Civitas is edited by Sam Starnes, editor of Widener Magazine, and designed by Melanie Franz, a senior graphic designer in University Relations. University Relations Associate Vice President Lou Anne Bulik is executive editor. Students, faculty and staff are invited to discuss the magazine at an informal Meet the Editors drop-in session from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 23 in the Pit in the classroom and law library building in Harrisburg. Story ideas are welcome. Prospective writers and photographers for future issues are encouraged to attend.
The Office for Teaching, Learning and Assessment is proud to present the 2015-16 Faculty Fellows. The Faculty Fellows are available to consult with individuals or groups on any issue related to teaching, using technology teaching tools, participating in campus governance, finding time for research and other related issues. The Faculty Fellows coordinate campus events that facilitate discussion on thematic topics such as: Navigating the Tenure Process; Applying for Campus Grants; Creating an Engaged Syllabus; Preparing for Full Professor; Managing Disruptive Students in the Classroom; and Mentoring Students in Collaborative Researching. Faculty Fellows have previously assisted with campus initiatives such as Campus Learning Spaces and the High Impact Fair. If your committee could use pedagogical consultation, a Faculty Fellow may be able to assist.

The five Faculty Fellows have a passion for the pedagogical process and the higher education environment. They are enthusiastic about collaborating with campus colleagues in a confidential manner. The conversations can range from classroom management to curriculum redesign; conflict management among peers and supervisors; desire to reboot in energy for teaching; pragmatic issues such as classroom support with technology or other career development topics. Departments (or a small group of faculty) can request to have a Faculty Fellow collaborate with colleagues throughout the academic year for coaching or team development. One-on-one consultation, on a variety of issues, can also be arranged for short-term or ongoing mentoring. The Faculty Fellows have experience working with the graduate and undergraduate students and understand the unique needs of each population.

Early career faculty often have questions for other faculty but prefer a confidential conversation with someone outside of their department. As such, new faculty are assigned a Faculty Fellow outside of their School or College to create a connection with a mentor outside of their unit.

The role of the Faculty Fellow has evolved over the last few years but the goal of cultivating faculty success has remained the same. Widener understands that the expectations for the modern professoriate has grown from decades past. Managing multiple roles and responsibilities can be overwhelming as one strives to make a contribution in the field and campus community. The Faculty Fellows can offer perspective on managing this process.

Individual faculty members and academic administrators who are interested in working with Faculty Fellows should contact Dr. Brigitte G. Valesey, assistant provost for teaching, learning and assessment at bgvalesey@widener.edu or ext. 4485.

2015-16 Faculty Fellows.

Dr. Angie Corbo is an associate professor of communication studies and specializes in small group communication, leadership and organizational culture. She is passionate about teaching and strives to cultivate a dynamic classroom environment where students learn through high impact practices. Her research includes emotional intelligence and the synergy of interdisciplinary collaboration. As a Faculty Fellow, she enjoys consulting with faculty individually and mentoring new faculty. She also coordinates a brown bag lunch series on topics such as preparing for the tenure process, course development, campus governance and classroom conflict management.

Dr. Babatunde “Tunde” Odusami is an associate professor of finance and the assessment coordinator and chair of the assessment and assurance of learning committee for the School of Business Administration. He teaches security analysis and investment management, financial planning and quantitative methods courses in the undergraduate, MBA and Master of Science in Taxation and Financial Planning programs. He is also a faculty adviser to the university’s student managed investment fund. Odusami’s discipline-based research interests are risk modeling (financial assets and credit), portfolio optimization and asset pricing. His pedagogical research interest is evidence-based pedagogical improvement. He is passionate about supporting new faculty.

Dr. Hal Shorey is an associate professor in the Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology, where he serves as the dissertation coordinator and director of the PsyD/MBA Program and Organizational Development Services. In this context, he oversees Widener’s executive assessment and coaching programs for senior university staff and undergraduate student leaders and provides leadership development, consulting and conflict resolution services to university departments. His research focuses on application of personality development and attachment theory to psychotherapy, executive coaching and leadership development. Shorey is currently engaged in developing community leaders and neighborhood associations in the City of Chester.

Cont. on page 6
The Chester-Upland Soccer for Success program is holding a raffle for a chance to win 20 suite tickets to the Philadelphia Union vs. Orlando City match on Oct. 25. Raffle tickets are one for $25 or five for $100 and can be purchased at https://give.widener.edu/soccerforsuccess with all proceeds going to the Chester-Upland Soccer for Success program. The deadline to purchase tickets is Oct. 16, with the drawing scheduled for Oct. 19.

Widener University began the Chester-Upland Soccer for Success program in 2012 with a grant from the U.S. Soccer Foundation and has partnered with the Philadelphia Union, Crozer-Chester Medical Center and others to expand the reach of the program to nearly 400 children at eight different sites in the Chester and Upland communities.

The after-school youth development program uses physical activity, nutrition, mentorship and family engagement to address children’s health issues. In its first three years, the program has shown very positive results, introducing 1,080 participants to the game of soccer. Two-thirds of participants have improved or maintained their body mass index, and close to 75 percent of participants have improved or maintained their aerobic capacity.

According to Brent Jacquette, Widener men’s soccer coach and director of the Soccer for Success program, it costs about $250 to fund a child in the program for one season.

“The Soccer for Success program is making a difference in our community and we want to keep the momentum going,” said Jacquette. “This raffle will help us raise money to expand the program and help even more children in Chester to lead healthier lifestyles.”

For more information on the Soccer for Success program, visit http://chesteruplandsoccerforsuccess.org or contact Jacquette at 610-499-4542 or bijacquette@widener.edu.

Dr. Mimi Staulters is an associate professor in the Center for Education within the School of Education, Hospitality and Continuing Studies. She teaches courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels in special education and reading. Staulters’ approach to teaching emphasizes opportunities to engage in authentic tasks while encouraging reflection and critical thinking. She values community integration and service learning and supports undergraduate research. Her research interests include community-based and service learning projects to teach preservice educators, teaching learners with emotional and behavioral disorders and universal design for learning.

Dr. Itzick Vatnick is a professor and chair of biology. He has been the adviser of the Biology Club for several years. Vatnick was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and grew up in Israel. His academic training is equally diverse. He started at Vermont Technical College and continued at the University of Vermont, Cornell University and SUNY Binghamton. He has taught at Widener since 1993. His research interests range from microclimates and tree phenology in the Peruvian Amazon to influence of environmental pollutants, especially herbicides, on aquatic invertebrates and amphibians among several other topics. He is collaborating on projects with colleagues at Widener, Swarthmore College, The Wetlands Institute in New Jersey, Mitrani Desert Ecology Institute in Sede Boquer, Israel, and the University of Buenos Aires in Argentina. Vatnick is passionate about involving undergraduates in research and travelling abroad with them.
Freshman Dylan Pratzner of men’s soccer and senior Ryan O’Hara of the football team each earned weekly honors as announced by the Eastern College Athletic Conference on Tuesday, Sept. 15.

Pratzner was named the Corvias ECAC Division III South Rookie of the Week, while O’Hara garnered Corvias ECAC South Special Teams Player of the Week.

The freshman forward recorded two goals against Southern Virginia University on Saturday to lead the Pride to their first victory of the 2015 campaign. He recorded three shots and four points for the Blue and Gold.

O’Hara was 3–for–4 in field goals with a long of 38 yards in a 43–20 win over King’s College. The senior kicker also recorded four points-after-touchdowns. O’Hara also had field goals from 24 yards and 30 yards. He recorded nine kickoffs for a total of 556 yards with one touch back, averaging 61.8 yards per kickoff.

Noteworthy

Dr. Linda Knauss, professor in the Institute for Graduate Clinical Psychology, was elected to represent Pennsylvania on the American Psychological Association (APA) Council of Representatives for three years starting in 2016. Knauss also received a presidential citation at the APA convention this year for her contributions to APA, Pennsylvania Psychological Association, and work in the area of ethics. In 2016, Knauss will serve as president elect of APA’s Division 31: State, Provincial and Territorial Psychological Association Affairs.

Dr. Lori Simons, professor of psychology, Dr. Janine Utell, professor of English, and Dr. Brigitte Valesey, assistant provost for teaching, learning and assessment, presented the session “Engaging Faculty in Assessment through Shared Governance” at the recent Assessment for Student Success Conference held at Drexel University Sept. 9–11. In addition, Valesey presented “Deep Diving into the Revised MSCHE Standards for Re-Accreditation.” Valesey is a founding member of the Higher Education Assessment Leaders, representing institutions in the greater Philadelphia region.

Also at the Assessment for Student Success Conference, Dr. Nancy Blank, associate professor of criminal justice, Dr. Mimi Staulters, associate professor of education and alumna Megan O’Neill Hadjuk, ’05, Diakon Youth and Family Services liaison, presented the session “Assessment of a Service Learning Experience on University Students, Adjudicated Youth and Juvenile Justice Personnel.”

Khalil Williams, a senior communication studies major and the managing editor for multimedia for the Blue & Gold, is in his third week of a high-profile internship at the Philadelphia Inquirer. He earned his first byline in the Sept. 16 paper that lists him as an Inquirer staff writer. His story about Jane Goodall’s visit to a local school appeared on page B5 in the South Jersey edition and online.

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Two-Week Peek
A Look at the Next Two Weeks in Widener Events

Wednesday, Sept. 16
7 p.m. Women’s Soccer vs. Delaware Valley College; Home

Thursday, Sept. 17
9 a.m. SBDC Government Marketing Seminar; Widener SBDC
11:30 a.m.–6 p.m. SBA Student Organizations Table Day; Commonwealth Law, The Pit
3–5 p.m. Constitution Day celebration; Delaware Law, Main Law Building, student lounge
7 p.m. State Street Reading Series; Media Arts Center Gallery

Friday, Sept. 18
7 p.m. Field Hockey vs. Cabrini College; Home

Saturday, Sept. 19
8:30 a.m.–2 p.m. Mock LSAT exam; Delaware Law, Ruby R. Vale Moot Courtroom
1 p.m. Meet the Artists Reception; Widener Art Gallery
7 p.m. Men’s Soccer vs. Gwynedd Mercy College; Home

Monday, Sept. 21
12 p.m. 2015 Visiting Scholar in Residence Corporate and Business Law presentation; Delaware Law, Barristers’ Club
12 p.m. President’s Lecture with Dr. Ning Wang; Latham Hall
8 p.m. Stargazing; Widener Observatory

Tuesday, Sept. 22
6:30 p.m. Hispanic Heritage Month Cinema Night: A Better Life; University Center, Room C

Wednesday, Sept. 23
4 p.m. Men’s Soccer vs. Rosemont College; Home
5:30–6:30 p.m. Discussion about Faculty-Led Study Away Programs; University Center Atrium

State Street Reading Series Launches Second Season

When: Thursday, Sept. 17
7–9 p.m.

Where: Media Arts Center Gallery
609 W. State St., Media, Pa.

Widener is partnering with the Media Arts Council to host the second season of the State Street Reading Series. The series kicks off with readings by Dr. Michael Cocchiarale, associate professor of English at Widener, and Dr. Asali Solomon, assistant professor of English at Haverford College.

Readings will continue every other month at the Gallery and feature two local authors. The events will run for two hours, but each writer will only read for about 20 minutes to allow ample time for conversation and networking. Books by the authors will be available for purchase.

The reading is free to attend, and reservations are not required.

7 p.m. Women’s Soccer vs. Rutgers-Newark; Home

Friday, Sept. 25
7 p.m. Football vs. Lebanon Valley College; Home

Saturday, Sept. 26
7 p.m. Men’s Soccer vs. FDU-Florham; Home

Sunday, Sept. 27
1–4 p.m. ROTC’s Are You Fit Challenge; Memorial Field
9–10:30 p.m. Harvest Moon Lunar Eclipse Stargazing Session; Widener Observatory

Monday, Sept. 28
6:30 p.m. League of Women Voters presents “Amending the Constitution: How, When and Why,” with Dean Rod Smolla; Delaware Law, Ruby R. Vale Moot Courtroom
8 p.m. Stargazing; Widener Observatory

Tuesday, Sept. 29
4 p.m. Ruby R. Vale Distinguished Speaker Series; Delaware Law, Ruby R. Vale Moot Courtroom
5–7 p.m. Student Bar Association mentor-mentee meet and greet; Delaware Law, Barristers’ Club
6:30 p.m. Hispanic Heritage Month Cinema Night: Sugar; University Center, Room F
7 p.m. Women’s Volleyball vs. Hood College; Home
7 p.m. Field Hockey vs. Stockton University; Home

Wednesday, Sept. 30
12–2 p.m. Discussion about Faculty-Led Study Away Programs; University Center Atrium
7 p.m. Men’s Soccer vs. Stevens Institute; Home

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