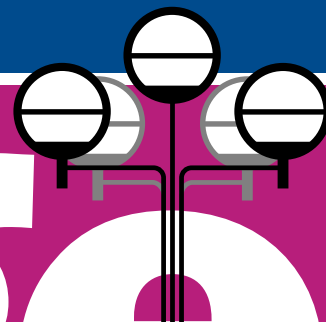


# the Bridge

Magazine for SUNY Polytechnic Institute Alumni, Faculty, Friends & Students

Fall 2015



**Commencement 2015!**

The Bridge is published by the State University of New York Polytechnic Institute Alumni Association to keep you informed of campus activities and news.

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## Upcoming Alumni Association Events

### Fall 2015

Wildcat Weekend - October 2-4  
Happy Hour in Buffalo, NY  
Happy Hour in Boston, MA

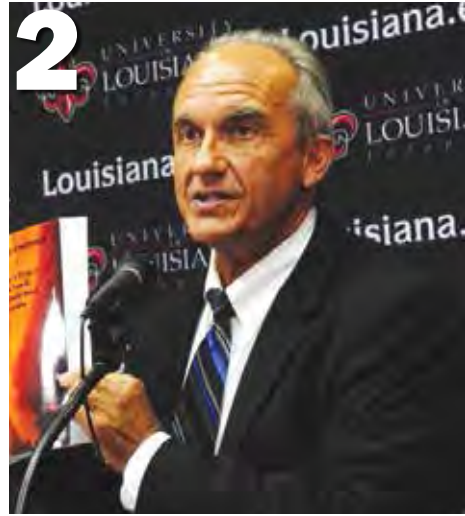
### Winter 2015-16

Happy Hour in NYC  
Happy Hour in Washington, D.C.  
Alumni Day at the Utica Comets  
Alumni Happy Hour in Syracuse  
Alumni Basketball Day

**On the cover:** Graduation day selfie.  
Photo by Lynne Browne '04 G'14

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# SUNY Poly Students Earn First Place in “Innovation Challenge”

Students from SUNY Polytechnic Institute and other area colleges competed over the course of two days last fall to create innovative solutions to the area’s most challenging social and economic issues. The inaugural “Innovation Challenge New York: Mohawk Valley,” supported by a grant from the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, was hosted October 24-25, 2014, on the Utica campus of SUNY Poly.

The theme was “Harnessing the DIY (Do it Yourself) spirit to build community, economic, and cultural sustainability in the Mohawk Valley.” The intent was to launch an annual student competition that will take ideas and transform them into actions, improving the quality of life in the region.

Last year, Robert Edgell, assistant professor of business management, took four SUNY Poly students to Philadelphia to take part in an “Innovation Challenge” event in which student teams competed to help a region solve social, environmental or economic problems in fresh and innovative ways. Inspired by the experience, Edgell decided to bring that same forward thinking to the Mohawk Valley.

“There is growing consensus in Herkimer and Oneida Counties that many of our brightest minds, educated locally, tend to migrate to other regions of the state or nation in search of economic and personal growth opportunities. In addition to this ‘brain drain,’ others are concerned about the lack of economic opportunities and entrepreneurial activity,” Edgell said. “This event brought students together with local DIY experts to help students become more entrepreneurial while increasing their propensity to remain in and be engaged with local communities. We also anticipate increased entrepreneurial activity, greater satisfaction with life in the area and increased area attractiveness to visitors and would-be residents.”

First place was awarded to a team of six students, four of whom attend SUNY Poly: Brenda Capron, John Hohl, Don Leska, Samantha Malcolm and Mary Riolo.

“The exploration day uncovered three unmet needs in the Mohawk Valley DIY ethos,” said Riolo. “Lack of a link between current DIYers and those that are successful at commercialization, lack of a central location that identifies the abundant resources that we have to support DIY, and under representation of the lower socioeconomic population in the DIY Space.”

The team came up with an idea for a website that would offer general DIY information as well as information on DIY resources specific to the Mohawk Valley. Team representatives said they also envision freestanding community centers in schools, churches, and senior centers where speakers, videos, and DIY resources would be made available. Their goal is to link current DIYers to the resources they need and to people successful at commercialization and bring those people and resources to the lower socioeconomic portions of the population.

Second place was awarded to a team made up of six students, three of whom attend SUNY Poly: Enrico Coloccia, Sulejman Jasarbegovic and Melissa Prest.

Their team developed the idea for a location-based app for use on personal mobile devices which would exploit GPS capabilities to alert users that they are near a business which is listed in the application’s database. It would serve both users as well as businesses whose location might prove challenging for signage.

For users, an alert would be presented when the device is in proximity of a participating business, helping users find the merchants. Users could acknowledge the alert and, through integration with the mobile device’s mapping application, they would be guided to the merchant. Businesses would pay a small fee to be a part of the app listings and would participate in incentives for customers who use the app, such as small discounts.



The 2014 Innovation Challenge New York: Mohawk Valley was led by SUNY Poly faculty Robert Edgell, assistant professor of business management; Daryl Lee, associate professor of communication and humanities; and Temple University’s James Moustafellos. ♦

## What would happen if the world were plunged into darkness? If electronics, lights, communications, just stopped working?

An electromagnetic pulse could make it happen. While it might seem like the starting plot of a science fiction novel or a big screen epic, protecting these infrastructures used every day by millions is the job of SUNY Poly graduate **Dr. Peter Vincent Pry '76**.

Pry is the Executive Director of the EMP Task Force on National and Homeland Security, a congressional advisory board with a mandate “to educate and help protect the United States from the existential threat posed by a natural or manmade electromagnetic pulse (EMP) catastrophe and other threats vital to U.S. national and homeland security that imperil the survival of the American people.” The

mission of the task force is to further policies to protect national critical infrastructures such as the electric power grid, communications, transportation, business and finances, and food and water from an attack by terrorists or nations, or from a rare natural catastrophe known as a geomagnetic superstorm.

In 1859, a massive burst of gas and magnetic field arose from the aura of plasma that surrounds the sun, reaching far beyond the sun and into Earth’s magnetosphere, creating the largest geomagnetic storm on record. This would become known as the Carrington Event after Richard Carrington, one of two amateur astronomers to make the first observations of a solar flare during the event. If something comparable to the Carrington Event were to happen today, studies show it would blackout electric grids and life-sustaining critical infrastructures worldwide, putting at risk the lives of billions. Natural and manmade EMP is an existential threat to modern civilization that cannot exist without electricity and electronics. NASA and the National Academy of Sciences warns that

when it comes to such another Carrington Event, the Earth is overdue for a recurrence. According to Pry:

“We are concerned about all weapons of mass destruction, including cyber attacks and physical sabotage against the electric grid and other critical infrastructures. But our biggest concern is with the biggest threat – a natural or nuclear electromagnetic pulse (EMP) that could plunge the entire nation into a blackout for months or years, perhaps permanently. The EMP Commission, on which I served, estimated that a year-long blackout could kill up to 9 of 10 Americans by starvation, disease, and societal collapse. EMP is why Iran wants the bomb, and is why North Korea has the bomb.”

Long before he was working to save civilization from catastrophe, Pry was a political science major with a concentration in history at SUNY Poly’s former Utica campus. He graduated in 1976, but even today remembers how much of an impact the education and professors from his college years left a lasting impression on the person he is today.

“John Zogby and Ron Sarner had the biggest impact on my education. Zogby, my history teacher, and I disagreed about almost everything. But he encouraged and had the great patience to debate endlessly with me about America’s history and its relevance to modern times. And he never punished me academically for my disagreement, but rewarded and I think even deliberately provoked argument. Nothing hones the intellect better than debate. Sarner, too, encouraged debate and independent thinking both in the classroom and in our papers. And both were always available to talk to students about the great issues outside class. Zogby and Sarner, and several of the other faculty too, were clearly natural teachers in love with teaching. This, I would sadly discover later, at some much more famous, but much less enlightened universities is a very rare thing – teachers who love to teach.”



Pry says that the discussions and debates with Zogby and Sarner stand out in his memory as some of the best experiences he had on the Utica campus. It was also while in college that his love of poetry found ways to flourish. While he cannot recall the professor’s name from his English literature classes that focused on poetry, the lessons within left an indelible mark.

“I love poetry and have written some over the years, not least because of her influence. She was one of the few people I encountered in life who shared a passion for poetry, and understood that love of the fine arts is part of becoming a civilized and roundly educated man.”

After reading Herman Kahn’s “On Thermonuclear War” at the age of 13, Pry always knew he wanted to work for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in the field of nuclear weapons and strategy.

“Because then, during the Cold War, I could not imagine a more important mission in life than helping preventing a thermonuclear holocaust. But to get to the CIA from Utica, New York, I knew the path would be a winding road, to acquire the experience and credentials that would make me qualified for a career at the Agency.”

He published his first book, a military history of important last battles while still a college student and then began writing the book that would get him into the CIA, “Israel’s Nuclear Arsenal.” He also worked in the Lutheran Immigration Service Refugee Resettlement Program as a volunteer, helping refugees fleeing from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia resettle in America.

“These people were victims of genocide. I will never forget a teenage girl who hung herself, because she could not live with the

memories and nightmares of the Cambodian holocaust under Pol Pot, who tortured and decapitated children. Because of my books and experience in the refugee program, the University of Southern California offered me a scholarship to work on a Ph.D. in their strategic studies program, studying under the late great William Van Cleave. Van Cleave served on President Reagan's Defense Transition Team when Reagan was elected president, and nearly beat out Cap Weinberger to be Secretary of Defense. Van Cleave gave me entry to the Washington elite, and my first job as a strategic analyst at the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. I worked at ACDA for one year, in 1984, and then went to work for the CIA in 1985."

In 1995, after working for a decade at the CIA, Pry joined the House Armed Services Committee staff, which served all 60 members.

"I left the CIA because Intelligence Officers are only allowed to assess the threat – not to propose solutions. My new job was all about finding solutions to the threats I studied at CIA, and more. My portfolios included nuclear weapons and strategy, Russia, terrorism, the Middle East, missile defense, NATO expansion, and EMP. I was the only one on the HASC staff who knew anything about EMP. So I ended up running all the EMP hearings before Congress, and served in the Congressional EMP Commission from 2001-2008. The EMP Commission

continues, unfortunately now diminished to a Congressional Advisory Board, as the EMP Task Force on National and Homeland Security."

He puts multiple skills to use for every facet of his work, all in an effort to help civilization survive and thrive in the face of insurmountable odds. And to do that, he says he calls upon everything he learned while in college.

"Learning to think and argue logically, being able to marshal facts to support your case, being willing to be reflective and self-critical if wrong, being able to write clearly and well, and especially being able to write about strategically and technically complex subjects in a way comprehensible to a non-expert – all these things SUNY Poly helped prepare me to do. Indeed, my current job sounds like a chapter out of Thomas Dye's Public Policy Analysis – which was a textbook in Ron Sarner's class!"

If you haven't guessed by now, Pry loves what he does. In fact, he says his past and current jobs don't feel like jobs at all because of how much he enjoys them. He considers himself quite fortunate to be able to make a good living by doing what he would choose to do voluntarily, as a vocation.

"My life has been like being a multi-millionaire who gets to spend his life exactly as he wishes. What could be more important than saving America and the world from nuclear

terrorism or from a natural Carrington Event that could put at risk the lives of billions worldwide? Knowing what I know, spending weeks on a beach at Cancun is no longer a satisfactory option for me. Unfortunately, what I do is hard on family life."

From the classrooms in Utica to the halls of Congress and lands across the globe, Dr. Pry dedicates his life to protecting the U.S. from EMPs, cyber-attacks, mass destruction terrorism, and other threats to civilian infrastructure. And he does so, armed with the education and wealth of experiences under his belt gained right here in Utica.

It's a decision he wouldn't have any other way.

"It turned out to be my best educational experience. At Ivy League schools, profs are usually too busy to teach, and you end up being taught by a teaching assistant. The profs are also usually too busy writing their next book or article to care about their students. There is no substitute for teachers who love to teach, and will spend time with students to continue the class, after the class. SUNY Poly was, and I presume still is, that kind of place. Plato's Academy was that kind of place too, and so was studying under Socrates. On reflection, I guess John Zogby and Ron Sarner are the closest I will ever come to knowing Plato and Socrates!" ♦



# Graduate of the Last Decade Spotlight

SUNY Poly Institute was **Amy Mlynarczyk's '13** first choice for college. An AACSB accredited business school in her hometown, it was an affordable option that, she says, provided an accredited education in her chosen field of study.



"It was the only school that I applied to early decision as I knew that it was the best fit for me. Many successful entrepreneurs and businesspeople are graduates, showing just how substantial the education might be."

Mlynarczyk majored in finance, receiving a bachelor of science degree in 2013, and decided to pursue graduate studies, graduating with an MBA in technology management, and a concentration in accounting and finance, in 2014.

"I always enjoyed working with numbers, so I knew I wanted to continue my education in a field that involved analytics," Mlynarczyk says. "Every company has a finance department, and since it is such an important aspect of any business, I felt compelled to learn more. Finance is such a crucial factor in personal matters as well. Managing finances, especially planning for the future, is a necessary factor for all business and on an individual level."

Her decision to pursue an MBA in technology management came when she reflected on the central role that technology plays within most organizations today. With so much technological progress made over the past few decades, Mlynarczyk says, companies have been able to run their operations more efficiently. As technology is constantly changing, she calls the skills to keep up with these changes an absolute necessity in today's workforce.

Mlynarczyk recalls several faculty members who provided her with the skills to succeed:

"Dr. Langdon is an excellent professor and academic advisor. His methods of teaching encouraged students to think outside-of-the-box and gave us the opportunities to research

further, especially if a topic sparked our interest. He led me in the right direction for planning out my entire academic career and to think in the long-term. Professor Orilio is an outstanding finance teacher. I enjoyed listening to his lectures and working on his assignments with fellow classmates. He applied his teachings to real-life situations, which has proved to be a valuable component to my future career. Lastly, Professor Wallis made accounting enjoyable and understandable. Because of this, after finishing my degrees, I even came back and took additional accounting classes. Each of these faculty members are extremely knowledgeable in their fields and know how to present that knowledge to their students, which made my time in class very worthwhile."

Mlynarczyk says when starting college, she would have never expected to end up where she is now, working in the Decision Support sector of the Finance Department at Mohawk Valley Health System, which is made up of Faxton-St Luke's Healthcare and St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Utica. She works as a Reimbursement Accountant, preparing financial and statistical reporting for management and administration, as well as outside agencies, including insurance providers. She also assists with the budgeting process and provides managers with access to the data required to efficiently operate the departments they oversee.

"Honestly, I did not realize the complexity of healthcare finance. I fell into an internship with Faxton-St. Luke's as an Accounts Payable Coordinator my junior year of college. From there, I've learned various aspects of the organization, from decision support to reimbursement. The great thing about this career field is that there will always be more to learn."

With new state and federal rules and regulations pertaining to healthcare, there is a great challenge to keeping up with the standards, but with healthcare such a necessary part of life, Mlynarczyk relishes the opportunity, finding her career path rewarding.

"There are so many unexpected opportunities in the community that students may be unaware of, but Career Services provides much insight into finding these potential opportunities."

One important aspect of most careers is the need to work together, and while pursuing her degrees, she found classes provided the opportunity for students to work as a group and achieve a goal - a common occurrence in the workplace. Often times, working together is not an easy task, especially if personalities clash, but it was through her classes at SUNY Poly that she says she students learn that while each teammate must have the necessary skills to succeed, working alone is not always going to achieve results.

"SUNY Poly prepared me for a future career in finance. I learned the skills and knowledge needed to apply what I have learned to my assignments at work. The instructors focused heavily on current events, which inspired me to understand what is going on in the community and on a larger scale. The application of what I learned to actual current events is a worthwhile learning experience that has helped with decisions and goals in my career."

Her college experience has left a lasting, positive impact on her, allowing her to explore various aspects of business in order to find and focus on her interests early on. It's because of that, and the diversity of programs offered, that enabled her to learn about topics such as finance, accounting, technology, and leadership all rolled into one.

*continued on pg. 5*

“The intermingling of these different skill sets are what has allowed me to thrive in my career, as I am able to apply what I have learned to situations that may arise where it is necessary that I take action and control the situation while using the particular business function that I have learned through my education.”

Although she did not live on campus while attending classes, Mlynarczyk says she spent much of her time there for various classes and activities.

“The close proximity to the heart of Utica gives the campus the feel of a suburb community without being too far away from off-campus activities and nightlife. I would

recommend SUNY Poly to any student who may be considering applying because I feel that my time spent there fully educated me and prepared me for a career and future success. It has made me a well-rounded individual.” ♦

## Every day, doctors across the country use healthcare software for patient data, billing, and other administrative tasks. And one of the people making that software possible is **John Siedman '12**, a Software Engineer and SUNY Poly graduate.

On a daily basis, Siedman works with business analysts, customer support, quality assurance, and his fellow software engineers to meet all the growing needs of their clients.

“I work on several different applications and problems from day to day. One day I could be just strictly coding and the next day I could be connecting into a client to help resolve a software related issue. On top of coding in several languages, I also deal with database issues and interactions. I troubleshoot software and hardware-related issues for clients. I utilize design patterns for the architecture of the application along with re-designing legacy code and architecture to essentially function optimally.”

Taking some technology courses and an internship for a computer repair store in high school convinced him that he wanted to work in the field of technology, but it was majoring in Computer Engineering Technology with a minor in Computer Science at SUNY Poly that truly set him on his path.

“I was always interested in computers and the science that made them tick. Technology is and was a growing field. The possibilities computers and associated electronics present to us is truly amazing, I am as excited as ever to find out what the future holds for our field,” Siedman said. “SUNY Poly really presented me with a lot of options, which I liked. Being 18 and unsure of what I wanted to do with my life, I wanted to have options. If I didn't enjoy computer engineering I could switch to computer science. If I wanted to be a civil engineer, or physics major I could also pursue that. The school had a lot of favorable programs to choose from.”

It was during that time that Siedman was advised by Dr. Daniel Benincasa, Associate Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, who left a lasting impression on the future engineer.

“He not only was my professor for numerous classes, but we would chat about life-related issues and he would give advice on what the real world would be like. The real-world advice would be more pertaining to the job outlook and how the market moves

in our profession. One thing I take with me every day is to never stop learning as the technology field grows and moves constantly. I learned that from the professors who taught me to seek out knowledge and to constantly learn throughout one's career.”

Siedman says it wasn't easy after graduating, as he found many employers looking for candidates with experience and know-how. In fact, he says it took sending out roughly 50-75 résumés before he was able to land interviews. A few months later, he was on the job at STI Computer Services in Norristown, Pa., as a software engineer.

“The only tip I can give to new graduates about interviews and obtaining a job is to really be critical of yourself. Look at your résumé from the side of the employer. If you were the hiring manager what would stand out to you as positives and what would stand out as a negative? At that point address the negatives as best you can. Work on your interviewing skills and discuss some of the negatives in detail within the interview. When I started asking myself the question: ‘Why would this company hire me?’ it helped greatly.”

Having the knowledge of computer interactions and the different layers a computer deals with help him to troubleshoot the problems he and his fellow engineers see almost daily. Having the understanding of hardware and hardware-related failure has also benefited Siedman, as he works in a mainly software world. These experiences have him recommending all students give greater thought into what they minor in and how the skills gained within could very well get put to use day in and day out.

“Getting a minor in computer science ultimately helped me secure my position and I would recommend anyone broaden their horizons in doing so. Obtaining a minor or having a double major can only open additional doors for you.”

He says he knows he's found a great crossroads where his skills meet his passions, because he enjoys what he does more and more each day, even though some days are certainly harder than others.

“However, when I solve a problem which has plagued us for a while I take great pride in that. Being able to be a problem solver and to continue learning each day is a unique benefit to our profession. I enjoy the challenge that each project presents, I also enjoy being able to constantly have a subject to learn about. This profession can truly be as involved as you wish, because of the fact that there are a ton of subjects to learn and utilize.”

For Siedman, the environment provided by SUNY Poly was crucial to the person he would become, crediting the ability to know almost everyone on campus and access to outlets for any help he needed made it feel like its own familial community, something he says is a tremendous benefit for young adults.

“SUNY Poly provided me with some of the best people and friends I have. For that I am forever grateful, but they also provided me with the opportunity to better myself. The academics challenged me and ultimately brought me a profession I enjoy. I went through a lot of personal growth at SUNY Poly, which I would say may be typical when attending college.”

Choosing a college to attend is a big decision, and Siedman says he challenges all students considering SUNY Poly to evaluate their core values and emphasize what they are attempting to accomplish during college. He says that when they do, he's confident many will find SUNY Poly to be the choice for them.

“If you don't want to be lost in the shuffle and want tutors or professors that actually care about you as a student I would recommend SUNY Poly. I had some of my friends visit the university during my time there, and they commented on the community feel. I would also challenge all students considering SUNY Poly to evaluate their core values and emphasize what they are attempting to accomplish during college. I strongly believe in doing so many will find it to be a great choice.” ♦

For **Steve Bulger G'13**, helping at-risk youth find their way to a better path and a better life was a passion that came very early in his college career. Today, as CEO/Executive Director of Kids Oneida, an agency whose very mission is to work with kids and families, he lives out that passion every day - something he says was made possible by his time in the graduate program at SUNY Poly.

"For the longest time I had regretted not continuing my education after graduating with my Bachelor's in Psychology and Political Science from Niagara University in 2003. I originally had dreams of going to law school but life took me in a very different direction," Bulger says. "After completing an internship at the Niagara Falls Boys and Girls club my freshman

year as an undergrad, I soon realized that my calling was working with troubled youth. I have worked in this field ever since."

After working in the field for five years, Bulger says he realized a master's degree was the necessary step to advance. While a bachelor's degree in psychology helped to propel his career in children's behavioral health, he felt a degree in business would provide him with the unique educational background to complement his professional experience. Juggling the responsibilities and schedules of the professional world with a return to class work can sometimes seem a bit of a challenge, but for Bulger, the online graduate options at SUNY Poly seemed to be the perfect way for him to reach his goals.

"The online HSM MBA track was the perfect fit for me as a working husband/father. I always made the excuse that I didn't have the time or the means to pursue a Masters.

I regretted not staying in school after my bachelor's but no longer made excuses for my decision as it led to the person I became. SUNY Poly allowed me to complete my MBA on my terms, at my pace, and conveniently online. It took me 4 years and 2 classes each semester to complete the program. Being close to campus gave me a rare combination of the flexibility of an online program with intimate involvement of dedicated professors."

One of those professors leaving a lasting impact was Dr. Jan Welker, Bulger's faculty mentor. He says the classes he took with her were without a doubt the most challenging courses he had enrolled in, and he loved it.

"She challenged me to reach my potential in the classroom, always relating it back to my career and real-life experiences. She took a genuine interest in me, the company I worked for, and my future."

For Bulger, it's been a career path dedicated to a cause, and an agency he loves, working for Kids Oneida from 2005 to the present. Starting in the entry-level position of Family Service Coordinator, he was promoted to the position of Residential Outreach Manager, became Director of Operations in 2010 while he was taking his graduate classes and then took the reins as the agency's CEO in 2014.

"Kids Oneida is a one of a kind nonprofit provider of intensive home- and community-based services to the most at risk youth in the Mohawk Valley with a vision of keeping families together. KO works with over 600 families every day in 12 different programs across seven counties. The organization collected \$9 million in revenue in 2014, employs 120 staff and contracts with 125 behavioral health professionals to provide children's mental health services."



Every day at Kids Oneida presents new challenges and new opportunities for Bulger to make a difference in the lives of children and families across the Mohawk Valley. Whether it's making sure the agency and its staff maintain and progress is goals, developing new business opportunities, promoting the agency, or any of the various other responsibilities that fall to him as CEO, Bulger says it would not have been possible if not for the foundation laid down in his graduate classes at SUNY Poly.

"I honestly feel that earning an MBA helped to propel my career to where I am now. Without the business foundation I received with my degree I am not certain how I could do the job to the level it deserves every day. While attending I worked full-time supporting my family raising two young children under 4 years old. All of that would not have been possible at a traditional school. It was all possible with the flexibility and commitment to me as a student."

It's why he says walking across the stage at the Wildcat Field House for graduation in 2013 and receiving his MBA in Health Services Management was such an emotional time for him as he realized one of his largest goals.

"To have my family in attendance, peers to walk across the stage with, and professors that encouraged me... "That day was truly the start of a new chapter in my life that has put me in the place I am now." ♦



# SUNY Poly Hosts Annual FIRST Robotics Competition

A room filled with robots, competing to see who has the skills and the programming to be considered a champion.

While it sounds like the setup for a science fiction movie, it's science fact that is happening with area students blending engineering and groundbreaking creativity skills to work, guided by the experience and knowledge of students and faculty at SUNY Polytechnic Institute's Utica campus.

The New York Tech Valley Regional Robotics Competition is a premier engineering challenge for high school students as teams work with teachers and volunteer mentors, conceptualizing, designing, building, programming, modifying and testing a robot to participate in a competition that changes each year.

"This is a competition, a collaboration, but most of all, a chance for students to get excited about science, math and engineering in a hands-on, experiential way that has become a trademark of SUNY Poly and the FIRST Robotics Competition," said Alain Kaloyeros, President and CEO of SUNY Polytechnic Institute.

Hosted and sponsored by SUNY Poly's Utica campus, FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) Team 5030, known as "The Second Mouse," is a regional robotics team; its 16 students from three area high schools – Utica, Holland Patent, and New Hartford – are mentored by four SUNY Poly students. The team's mission is to build a robot in six weeks in order to compete each year. Much like a business, there are designers, builders, programmers, mentors, students, fundraisers, outreach, community service, and social media teams. To be a part of the team does not require coming to the table with experience, as FRC is a learning experience in and of itself, giving each member the ability to learn and teach the skills necessary to be successful in various STEM fields.

Throughout their time on the team, students learn public speaking, finances, engineering, and other skills that they will also put to use in the real world.

Three of the SUNY Poly student mentors participated in FIRST robotics while they were in high school; they advocated for the chance to replicate their own experiences in real-world engineering problem-solving by facilitating a team of high school students on the Utica campus. These students maintain high academic standards while volunteering more than 20 hours weekly to the FRC Team. Justin Melnitsky and Dominick Ferone are sophomore Mechanical Engineering majors, Ben Weiss concentrates on Electrical Engineering studies and Jesse Conklin is a Computer Science major. Each of these three

disciplines is equally important for successful design, construction and functioning of an FRC robot.

Even after the robot is complete, the work doesn't stop there. Once the competition season is over, the team continues their work, preparing for the following year when a new batch of students will come in. Those new students are then taught the skills they need to get them prepared for the building season and the cycle begins anew.

In March 2014, the team was honored with the Rookie All-Star and Highest Rookie Seed awards, as well as achieving second place at the New York Tech Valley Regional.

FRC teams also actively participate in community service and this team is no exception, with more than 100 hours of service, conducting demonstrations and volunteering at robotics programs.

Of course, with a team name like The Second Mouse, they often get asked "What Happened to the First Mouse?"

The story goes that during the team's first year, their junior mentors were working in the shop late one night before the end of the season and chose to take a break and attend a skit show. While there, they heard someone quote actor Christopher Walken in the movie "Catch Me if You Can."

"One day, two little mice fell into a bucket of cream. One mouse quickly gave up and drowned while the other struggled to stay afloat. The second mouse wouldn't quit, and struggled so hard that he eventually churned the cream into butter. The mouse climbed the mounds of butter to escape from the bucket triumphantly. We are that second mouse."

Team members say that ever since that day, whenever they would get stressed or feel under pressure, they would quote that line, even saying it to each other before every match as they loaded their robot onto the field.

And thus, "The Second Mouse" became the name, and motto, of the team.

"We owe a great debt of thanks to our students and faculty, along with mentors from throughout the community, who are all involved every step of the way," said SUNY Poly Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Robert Geer. "They work hard to help encourage and foster an interest among students in science, technology, as well as leadership, which is what FIRST is all about and we at SUNY Poly are very proud of that."

The mentors provide unique guidance and support for the high school students who make up the FRC Team 5030 membership, sharing their wealth of competition experi-



ence, enthusiasm for the FIRST ethos, and inspired instruction in many of the required technologies relevant to a FIRST robot. Yu Zhou, assistant professor of mechanical engineering, is a senior mentor to the team, as is Elizabeth Rossi, K-12 Outreach Director for SUNY Poly, and Elizabeth Vanderhoef, a Physics/Forensics teacher at Holland Patent High School. The team also looks to FRC veteran and Provost William Durgin for guidance and support as well.

"When students are given the opportunity to show what they are capable of, they often rise to the challenge with quite extraordinary results," Durgin said. "We are elated to give these innovative young minds the chance to make their ideas a reality and test their mettle in a competitive, yet collaborative environment."

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) was founded in 1989 to inspire young people's interest and participation in science and technology. Its mission is to inspire young people to be science and technology leaders, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership. Based in Manchester, NH, the 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity designs accessible, innovative programs that motivate young people to pursue education and career opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math, while building self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills. For more information on the FIRST Family of Programs, see: <http://usfirst.org>. ♦

# Faculty Profile: Unni Pillai



**Unni Pillai**, Assistant Professor of Nanoeconomics at CNSE.

At home, he's a reader, runner, swimmer and, to his daughter, dad. But to students at SUNY Polytechnic Institute's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, Unni Pillai is a teacher challenging them to think about the ways that technological change impacts our lives and, in turn, our economy.

Pillai, Assistant Professor of Nanoeconomics at CNSE, recently delivered the prestigious William E. Weiss Lecture in Economics at Skidmore College. His talk, "The Semiconductor Industry and its Contribution to Economic Growth," discussed how the increasing computerization of the U.S. economy from 1975-1995 was accompanied by slow productivity growth in the economy. It wasn't until the second half of the 1990s, he says, that productivity growth accelerated, crediting Information Technology as the main driver behind the resurgence; the semiconductor industry playing a major role.

"The Weiss lecture is given every two years to foster discussion on contemporary economic issues," Pillai said. "There has been a lot of interest among the people in the Saratoga region about the economic activity that is being generated by the Global Foundries plant in nearby Malta. So they were interested in getting someone to speak about the semiconductor industry and one of the faculty members at Skidmore knew about my work."

Pillai teaches courses related to economics and technological change, including focusing on the role of technological change and economic growth, using game theory to understand competition among firms in high-technology industries, finance and valuation of companies in high-technology industries, and technology revolutions and the role nanotechnology is playing in many leading industries.

In the long run, he says, technological progress is the main driver of improvements in living standards within a country or a region and the main driver of differences in living standards across those areas.

"I try to understand how economic factors affect the rate of technological progress, in individual industries and in the aggregate economy. Such economic factors include government policies, market structure, competition among firms, the nature of technology in an industry, etc."

It's through technological progress that we see improvements in our economic well-being, he explains, adding that better technology makes individuals and companies more productive, leading to increases in average income per person. If that technological progress stops, though, Pillai says that our economic well-being will become stagnant too. On the other hand, he says, technological improvements in products and services are motivated by the prospect of economic returns.

"Companies pour millions of dollars into research and development to produce new or better products because they expect these investments to increase their profits (and returns to their shareholders). Economic

motivation drives technological progress, and improvements in technology in turn raise our economic well-being."

Growing up in Kerla, a coastal state in the southwestern part of India, Pillai completed his high school education before going to Singapore when he was 17 on a full college scholarship. He spent eight years in Singapore, four in college pursuing a degree in Electrical Engineering and the other four working there.

He says it was halfway through his degree program that he started to feel that his interest in the social sciences was getting stronger, and he began to explore ways in which he could pursue a degree in it. It was also while in Singapore that he says he got his first exposure to the rapid economic development of the city-state.

"Singapore was a fishing village in 1950s but became one of the richest countries by the turn of the century. In contrast, India had languished economically and still remained economically poor. The contrast was striking, and you couldn't stop thinking what caused the differences in the paths of the two countries."

Completing his engineering degree, he immediately began work on another bachelor's degree through an external study program offered by University of London through their London School of Economics and Political Science. This was also while working as an engineer at Advanced Micro Devices, also known as AMD.

"I was planning to do a degree in politics, but after my first year, I realized that economics would be the best way to combine my interests in social sciences with my belief in the importance of careful thinking through mathematical models. I completed the undergraduate degree in Economics, and then I continued to pursue a Master's degree in London School of Economics on a full scholarship. At this point, I was sure that I wanted to spend the rest of my life studying questions at the intersection of technology and economic development. So after the master's degree, I decided to pursue my PhD in Economics, and landed at University of Minnesota in 2003."

All of these pursuits made for what he calls a "very varied" college experience, part of which included getting used to a new country. He was involved in student activities during his undergraduate days, becoming the

General Secretary of the Student's Union. At the same time, Pillai was trying out different areas within electrical engineering to determine what interested him. He eventually found his way to circuit design, spending quite a bit of time in his senior year working on a final project in Very Large Scale Integration (VLSI) design, which is the process of creating an integrated circuit by combining thousands of transistors into a single chip. It was this project which landed him his first job in the semiconductor industry at AMD.

Now he puts all that experience in the semiconductor industry and his knowledge of economics to use at the Colleges of Nanoscale Science and Engineering.

"CNSE is an ideal place to pursue my research agenda on economic drivers of technological progress. Not only do I have as colleagues many physicists, chemists, biologists and engineers engaged in doing cutting edge research, but you would be hard pressed to find another university campus that houses as many corporate labs as CNSE does. The ability to interact with all the engineers and scientists, from both the academic and corporate world, was one of the main reasons for coming to CNSE/SUNY Poly. I get to observe on a daily basis, and from many different perspectives, the process of technology development."

The opportunity to do research in economics was what attracted him to a career as an academic, only to find how much he enjoyed teaching after he started it.

"Teaching, I figured out later, is also the perfect way to really understand a subject well. When someone is exposed to an idea or concept for the first time, as students are in a class, it is really new terrain and so you have all kinds of fundamental and basic doubts. When they voice these basic doubts, you as a teacher have to think really hard about basic stuff, which is always the best way to learn. I enjoy teaching more and more every year." ♦



## SUNY Poly Student Trains for New York City Marathon with Help from Campus Community

When SUNY Poly graduate student Irwin Ramirez of Brooklyn took off from the starting line on November 2, 2014, it was his first time taking part in the New York City Marathon.

Although Ramirez, who's pursuing a master's in computer and information science, has been a runner since early adolescence, this was different than anything that came before. The New York City Marathon is a roughly 26 mile course, running through the five boroughs of New York City, and the largest marathon in the world. Taking on such a monumental challenge took lots of preparation, dedication, and some help from SUNY Poly's Utica campus community.

Running started out as a hobby Ramirez enjoyed in his youth, but as his vision deteriorated, he became less capable of running independently. Enter Achilles International - a running club with members and chapters in over 65 locations in the U.S. and abroad that help pair guides with walkers or runners.

"Achilles has enabled me to continue enjoying my favorite sport, which is running," Ramirez says. "It is inspiring to also see others with different limitations be able to still participate in mainstream athletics. Moreover, I've had the opportunity to meet some very nice people."

No longer possessing peripheral vision, Ramirez has relied on guides running next to him, holding a tether so

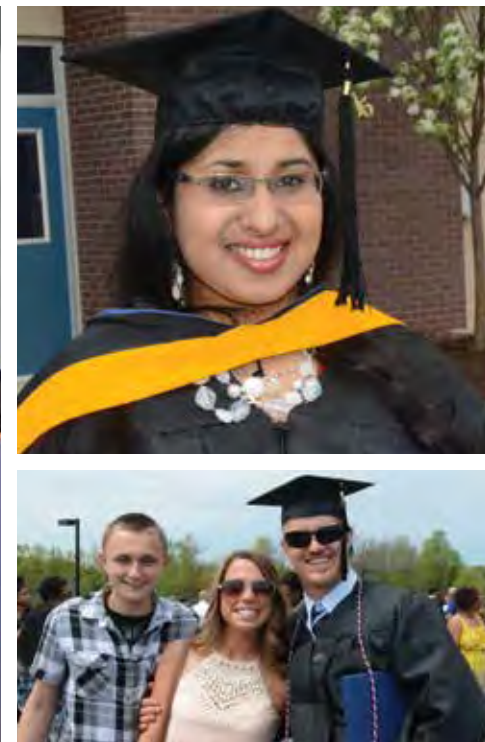
that he can feel in which direction he should run.

So when it came time to train, he needed a helping hand. Reaching out to faculty, staff and students in fall 2014, Ramirez found volunteers willing to step up to the task and put feet to pavement with him as he prepared for this lofty challenge. Running three days a week and on weekends, Ramirez and his helpful fellow runners ran the gamut of the Utica campus, conditioning his body and mind for the entire of the New York City Marathon.

"I ran in the cross country track outside and inside the Field House. It was a little challenging to run around campus since there are a couple of hills, but it was a perfect training ground to get me prepared for the marathon."

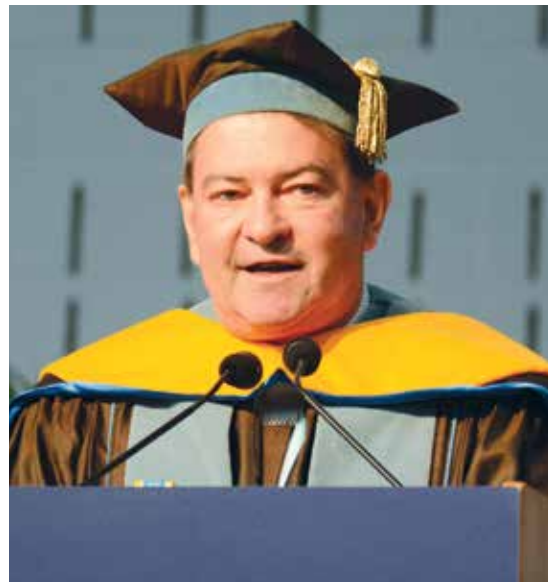
Ramirez hopes that his achievement – he finished the race with a time of 05:01:24 – will not only inspire others to push beyond the challenges on the way to their goals, but remind people never to take anything they have or can do for granted.

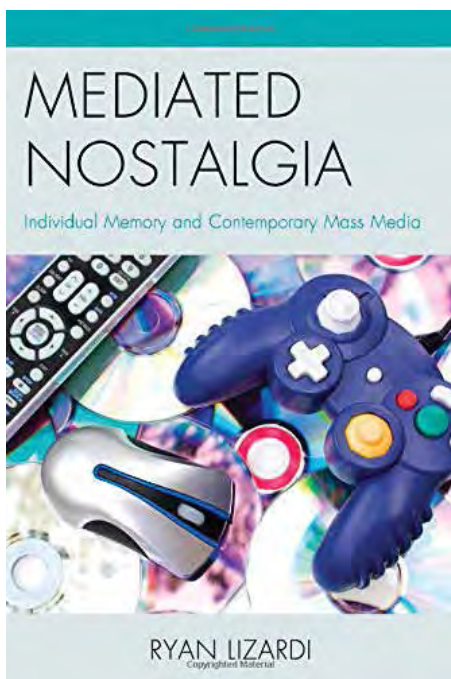
"I believe that people should appreciate what they have and not take anything for granted. We all have challenges and obstacles in life but if you are willing to prove yourself and your capabilities, you can achieve your goals. I also believe being healthy is important as is being involved in activities that provide you with a more fulfilling life." ♦





# Commencement 2015





## Mediated Nostalgia: Individual Memory and Contemporary Mass Media

by Ryan Lizardi

In some form or another, we all look back on the past, but Assistant Professor of Digital Media Ryan Lizardi makes it his mission to look at just how we get caught in the thralls of nostalgia, and just how clear the vision of our own past is. In his new book, *Mediated Nostalgia: Individual Memory and Contemporary Mass Media*, published by Lexington Books, Lizardi tackles the media's current obsession with nostalgia and how it presents the past to us in an individualized and idealized form.

Released in November 2014, Lizardi's work posits that the cultural implication of constantly returning to nostalgia is an increasing reliance on defining who we are, both as individuals and as a society, based on the media we consumed in our youth. It's a popular tactic for the media industry, and taking a look at film, literature, television and video games, Lizardi explains why it's also problematic.

"The book deals with a lot of different media, from television shows set in bygone eras to film remakes of countless classics from the 1970s and 1980s," Lizardi says. "It is all about how media companies try to exploit and capitalize on what different generations loved when they were children by continually revisiting these same media texts over and over."

The idea for the book came directly from Lizardi's research interests in the way media plays a role in our own reflections on the past. According to Lizardi, media messages drive people to believe they loved what they did in their personal past and the past of popular culture, creating an illusion of a shared connection.

He says the media wants people to long for something they had when they were young, and are constantly telling audiences that it is important to always be looking back. That explains why the consumer marketplace offers a constant stream of repackaged material such as special edition DVD box sets, classic Fisher Price toys relabeled as "Fisher Price Classics" and television shows based around the need to visit the past. It also accounts, Lizardi says, for why movie studios reboot their franchises, starting their stories from scratch with new casts and settings, just a few short years after the last film, such as the short, five-year window between the relaunch of Sony's Spider-Man franchise.

"I found a lot of my smaller projects contained notions about nostalgia and how media asks us to think about the past. Bringing together these smaller elements and trying to posit generalized and broader trends was probably the most interesting part of the whole process."

While it means less need for original material by media producers, it keeps audiences constantly out of the present and looking to their past for comfort and satisfaction, even if it's a romanticized past that never truly existed.

"After taking a breath, I would love to follow this research path to further try and understand how media asks us to think about and remember the past. This might entail another book that looks at future mediated nostalgia trends, because they are always changing, but I am also finding myself interested in the idea that decisions about how the past is digitally archived are increasingly being made for us as consumers. Not that we were able to pick which films and games were remade in the past, but that technologies like Netflix and YouTube often choose which media texts from the past are able to be replayed and remembered."

*Mediated Nostalgia: Individual Memory and Contemporary Mass Media* is currently available on Amazon.com. ♦

## Exploring SE for Android

by William "Amos" Confer and William Roberts

Exploring SE for Android, a book co-authored by William "Amos" Confer, assistant professor of computer and information sciences, and William Roberts, an alumnus with a master of science in computer science, has been published by PACKT publishing, Birmingham, U.K. The book is available at [www.packtpub.com/networking-and-servers/exploring-se-android](http://www.packtpub.com/networking-and-servers/exploring-se-android). "Our book not only introduces the reader to the Security Enhancements (SE) for Android open-source project, it walks through the process of securing new embedded systems with SE for Android. To our knowledge, this book is the first source to document such a process in its entirety, so that students, DIY hobbyists, and engineers of emerging areas where Android is seeing growth can produce products secured by SE for Android," Confer says. "Traditionally, only OEMs such as Samsung or Cisco can do this, and most commonly, the target device is a phone or tablet. We hope our book will change that, engaging a very wide audience in developing and understanding modern security tools."

Confer's co-author, William Roberts G'11, is a founding engineer for Samsung's KNOX Android security product and a security consultant for companies including Intel. Confer says the book not only introduces the reader to the Security Enhancements (SE) for Android open-source project, it walks through the process of securing new embedded systems with SE for Android. It's the first source to document such a process in its entirety, so that students, DIY hobbyists, and engineers of emerging areas where Android is seeing growth can produce products secured by SE for Android.

We worked very hard to ensure this text is not just another step-by-step technology book, though. In fact, it was my co-author's idea to model the book after the way I teach many of my courses, directing the reader to fail their way to success. We first give them the appropriate theoretical understanding of how security is gained and enforced, then throw a system at them that has never been secured that way (not even by us prior to writing the book). We then guide the reader through all our intelligent guesswork, embracing unexpected failures for the newly found idiosyncrasies they expose, and eventually enforcing our custom security policies."

Confer said, "Writing the book has been a real joy, not only because I can bring one of my favorite classroom techniques to a larger audience, but also because it allowed me to deepen a relationship with an alum." ♦

## Behind This Mirror & Letters to the Devil

by Lena Bertone

Lena Bertone teaches English and communications on SUNY Poly's Utica campus. When she's not teaching and helping others to hone their ability to tell stories, she's writing them herself, with two books seeing publication recently.

*Behind This Mirror*, published in January, is a collection of short pieces she had published in online and print magazines between 2011 and 2013. Sometimes they're a page, sometimes less, but in each, silly things happen to seemingly normal people, "seemingly" being the key word.

"Sometimes the people aren't so normal," Bertone says. "And sometimes the things that happen aren't so much silly as absurd or strange."

She describes her other book, *Letters to the Devil*, published in February, as a breakup story in which the heartbreaker is the Devil himself, and the letter-writer is his former lover and partner in cruel and devilish acts.

"She works through her grief and anger in the letters, and tells the story of their time together."

It took her roughly three months to write her first draft of *Letters to the Devil* in 2011. She then spent a few years revising and reworking it before it won The Lit Pub's prose contest. About a year later, it saw publication.

"That was a very productive time for me, during which I would write very short stories and have pretty good luck finding homes for them in magazines. Once I had enough stories, and they were thematically similar, I put them together and started sending them out to contests and small presses to see if I could find someone interested in publishing them as a

volume. Origami Zoo Press expressed interest, and then it was a full year before the book was published."

Jack London once said that you can't wait for inspiration to strike, that you have to go after it with a club. For Bertone, she found inspiration every day in the little things that get taken for granted or go unobserved in the world around her.

"My favorite kinds of stories are those that happen in the real world, but that also captures the magical things that can happen in the real world. I find everyday life to be strange and surreal, and I like to write about that," she says. "I'm currently teaching a class with a fairy tale theme, in which we talk about how the structures and metaphors of fairy tales are deeply engrained in our everyday lives, and shape our expectations of magic and happiness, and good and evil."

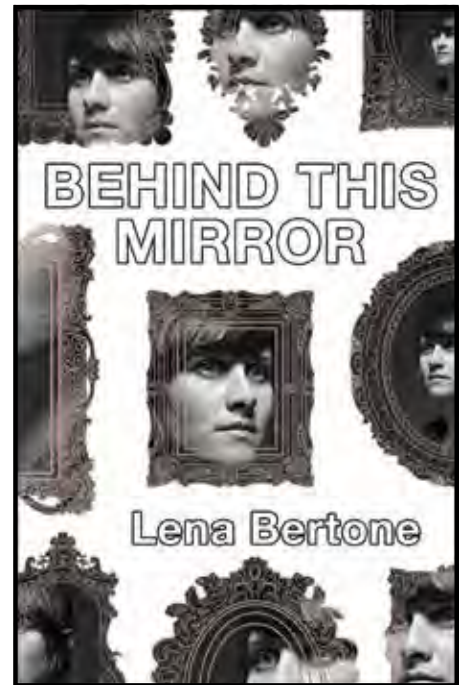
Though people often think of academic writing very different than creative writing, Bertone says that her experiences behind the author's desk certainly lend themselves to her perspective in the classroom.

"Both require close, careful reading, and the ability to observe from what you've read and analyze and transform it in your own writing. So, though I don't directly use my creative writing in my approach to teaching academic writing, I think it informs how I think about all kinds of writing and gives me a particular flexibility in talking to students about their writing."

With these two literary ventures now out of her head and into the hands of readers, she says that it's only the beginning, with countless other stories already begging to be told.

"I have a novel that's completed and I'm looking for a publisher for it; several stories that will eventually grow to (I think) novella size, based on the short life of an Italian scientist; and a novel-in-progress set in central and western New York that I've been wanting to get back to for about two years now. My goal every day is to write something - some words, a sentence, a paragraph, a tiny story."

*Behind this Mirror* is available at: [origamizopress.com/titles/behind-this-mirror](http://origamizopress.com/titles/behind-this-mirror) ♦



# Accreditation Delivers International Recognition for SUNY Poly Business Programs

## Rigorous Review Results in Full Five-Year Reaccreditation

In support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's commitment to provide world-class educational opportunities in New York State, SUNY Polytechnic Institute recently announced its Business Management programs have earned another full-term of accreditation by AACSB International – The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business. Following an extensive review, the AACSB Continuous Improvement Review Committee lauded SUNY Poly's Business Management programs and recommended accreditation be extended for a full five-year term: a decision that has now been ratified by the AACSB Board of Directors.

"The standards set forth by accreditation commissions such as AACSB ensure that academic offerings are of the highest caliber. SUNY Poly is extremely proud to report that its Business Management programs not only meet but exceed AACSB's stringent standards," said Dr. Alain Kaloyeros, President and CEO of SUNY Polytechnic Institute. "This internationally recognized reaccreditation is a testament to SUNY Poly's commitment to excellence and the expertise and dedication of its business faculty and staff."

"AACSB reaccreditation affirms what our students and alumni already know; the

quality of SUNY Poly's business programs is second to none," said Robert Geer, SUNY Poly Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. "I want to thank Robert Yeh, our dean, and all the faculty and support staff who played a role throughout this rigorous process."

"This success reflects the inherent quality of our Business Management programs as well as the teamwork and dedication of our faculty and staff," said William Durgin, SUNY Poly provost. "This accreditation success reflects the strong academic and professional qualifications of our faculty and their ability to deliver superior degree programs."

"The AACSB review team praised the positive impacts of the merger of the former SUNY Institute of Technology and CNSE, as well as the high proportion of business graduate students at SUNY Poly and substantial improvement on program assurance of learning processes," said Dr. Robert Yeh, Dean of SUNY Poly's College of Health Sciences & Management. "The report also confirms that the new leadership structure will enable continued growth of our Business Management programs. I extend my thanks to Dr. Kaloyeros, Dr. Geer and Dr. Durgin, as well as our faculty members, for their support."



Founded in 1916, AACSB International is the longest serving global accrediting body for business schools that offer undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degrees in business and accounting. Every five years, AACSB requires accredited institutions to undergo a review to maintain their accreditation. Its accreditation marks the highest standard of achievement for business schools. Less than 5 percent of the world's 13,000 business programs have earned AACSB accreditation. AACSB has been developing accreditation standards since 1919. ♦

# Thank you to our donors for their generous support!



The Foundation awarded scholarships to over 370 current students for the 2014-2015 academic year.

For more information on the SUNY Poly Foundation and to view the 2014-15 Annual Report, visit:

[www.sunypoly.edu/foundation](http://www.sunypoly.edu/foundation)



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# Athletics



## 2014-15 Wildcat Athletics Season Year in Review

### Fall

The 2014-15 SUNY Poly Athletics season kicked off in the fall, a historically successful season for the Wildcats. This year was no different, as the Men's Cross Country Team repeated as NEAC Champions, winning the NEAC Championship Race in November which was hosted by Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C.

The win is the third conference championship overall for the men's program. Head Coach Bill Tylutki earned his second-straight Coach of the Year Award, his third overall since joining the NEAC.

The team was led by senior stalwart Cody Russell (Fonda, N.Y. / Fonda), whose steady improvement and leadership abilities as a four-year runner would be rewarded at the end-of-the-year Wildcat Awards Ceremony when he was selected Male Wildcat of the Year, an award given out to the top overall male athlete each year at SUNY Poly.

Russell finished third in the November championship race, just behind teammate Jordan Sirtoli (West Winfield, N.Y. / Mount Markham), a graduate student and SUNY Poly's top finisher in 2nd place overall. Sirtoli had a tremendous season himself, emerging as one of the team's top runners the second half of



Cody Russell

the year and even being awarded the prestigious SUNY Chancellor's Scholar Athlete Award at year's end.

Over on the pitch, Wildcat soccer was putting together another exciting season. After a remarkable run of success, including three NEAC Championships in the last four years, the men's program finally had a long overdue "rebuilding year," missing out on the NEAC Tournament for the first time since joining the conference. Still, the team saw four players named to the All-NEAC squad, including impact seniors Ben Toach (New Hartford, N.Y. / New Hartford) and Brett Gruener (Ballston Spa, N.Y. / Ballston Spa).

As for the women, the program took a decided step forward in Coach Erin Schurr's third year at the helm. After qualifying for the NEAC Tournament the team up-ended the favored Chargers of Lancaster Bible College in the opening round of the tournament. The victory was a poignant one as it marked the Wildcats' first ever victory over the traditionally strong Lancaster team.

The season's other main highlight consisted of Kristina Strang (Rotterdam, N.Y. / Schalmont), who became SUNY Poly's all-time leading scorer. The senior's 15 goals on the year led the team and upped her career total to a program-best 38 goals. Strang was named to the NEAC All-Conference 2nd Team for her efforts, joining defender Erica Maisonet (Walkill, N.Y. / Walkill).

Finally, inside the Wildcat Field House the women's volleyball team moved forward with first-year head coach Dan Liberto. Liberto inherited a team coming off a record 29-5 campaign a year ago, but having just lost its senior stars Kaitlyn Harrington '14 and Taviot Jackowski '14 to graduation. Liberto did a fine

job in his rookie season on the bench, guiding a young team to a berth in the NEAC Tournament. The Wildcats have yet to miss the conference tournament since joining the NEAC in 2008-09. Rookie middle Megan Will (Remsen, N.Y. / Remsen) joined sophomore Emma Larson (Miller Place, N.Y. / Miller Place) as the team's representatives on the All-NEAC 2nd Team.

### Winter

There was a seismic change in the campus center gymnasium during the winter of 2014-15. And no, it wasn't just from the ice on the roof shifting around during an interminable winter, but the hiring of Rob Schoener, who took over the men's basketball program from SUNY Poly Athletic Director Kevin Grimmer, who stepped down after 18 seasons guiding the blue and gray. Grimmer amassed just shy of 300 wins in his remarkable career, and helped see the program through the transition from a 2- to a 4-year college.

"I'm extremely proud of the basketball program we've built here," said Grimmer. "My challenge of maintaining both coaching and



Kristina Strang

administrative responsibilities has been very enjoyable and productive but it's time to add a coach with a full emphasis on the team and our student-athletes... Rob is a proven winner – he builds winning teams and molds successful student-athletes. Our Wildcat basketball program is in excellent hands.”

With big shoes to fill, Schoener did an admirable job in his first year. With a young team (the Wildcats graduated just one senior this year), the team still managed to win 11 games while narrowly missing out on a NEAC playoff berth. Defensive intensity and grit were the hallmarks of the young team, who were led by the indefatigable point guard Maverick Hodge (Bronx, N.Y. / Samuel Gompers). The senior shouldered an almost impossible load, leading the team in scoring and assists while being second in steals and rebounds. The rangy point guard finished in the top 10 nationally in minutes played.

Without a single senior on the women's basketball team, one might've had the team pegged for a bit of a rebuilding year. But the team surprised all prognosticators by having one of its best years yet, winning the NEAC Regular Season Championship by finishing with a conference record of 16-2. It was the program's second NEAC Regular Season Championship – the first came during the 2011-12 season. While the Wildcats ultimately fell in the tournament (which SUNY Poly hosted) to the eventual conference champions Penn State Abington, the Wildcats were supported by a raucous home crowd at the campus center during a back-and-forth, hard-fought contest.

Not surprisingly as the regular season champions, the Wildcats cleaned up in terms of postseason awards. Team-leading scorer Geena Gallo (Ballston Spa, N.Y. / Ballston Spa) was named to the All-NEAC 1st Team while the Wildcats' top rebounder Lauren Knowles (Salisbury Mills, N.Y. / Washingtonville) made the 3rd Team. Rookie sensation Molly MacLachlan (Marcellus, N.Y. / Marcellus) took home NEAC Rookie of the Year honors after a tremendous debut season, during which time she picked up NEAC Player of the Week honors as well as being named to the D3hoops.com Team of the Week.



*Krista Pristera*

## Spring

New coach Dan Liberto engineered another successful season in the spring, as the men's volleyball program won its last five

conference matches of the year to edge out two other teams in a three-way tie-breaker for the final spot in the NEAC Tournament. There, the Wildcats were defeated by nationally-ranked Medaille College, finishing the year with a 15-13 overall record and an 8-6 mark in conference.

In a markedly improved NEAC conference (several teams were added this year, including Medaille and D'Youville, both strong programs), the Wildcats held their own. The team is well-positioned for the future as well, with A.J. Davids (Hilton, N.Y. / Hilton) returning for his senior season after three-straight selections to the NEAC All-Conference 1st Team, along with sophomore Bobby Nilsen (Bohemia, N.Y. / Connetquot) (2nd Team) and rookie Zach Goggin (Feeding Hills, Mass. / Agawam) (3rd Team).

As for the spring's outdoor sports, the teams fared well in spite of delays inflicted by a seemingly relentless Mother Nature. While all teams were forced to cancel games during the early part of their seasons, the plight of the softball team probably best exemplifies the struggle – the ladies didn't play a home game until April 16, and finished their season with doubleheaders on a whopping six consecutive days. Nevertheless, first year Coach Lauren Marleua '13 led the team to an 11-9 NEAC record and a berth in the conference tournament. The team was paced by pitcher and leadoff-batter Fallon Reinold (Holland Patent, N.Y. / Holland Patent), who earned her third-straight NEAC All-Conference 1st Team selection.

The team said goodbye to four-year senior Krista Pristera (New Hartford, N.Y. / New Hartford), who ended a brilliant career spent mostly at 3rd base for the Wildcats. Pristera received the Kiwanis Scholar-Athlete Award following the season.

As for the boys over on the bigger diamond, the baseball team thrived when forced – like the softball team – to jam much of their season into the final two weeks. The 'Cats won their final eight NEAC games of the year, which



*Men's Baseball Coach Kevin Edick and Jeff Albright*

put the team in position to snatch the NEAC #1 seed away from the Penn State Abington Nittany Lions when the latter was defeated on the final day of the regular season by a late-inning home run. The Wildcats were subsequently crowned NEAC Regular Season Champions for the first time since 2011,

earning the right to host the conference tournament on Peter A. Spina Field for the first time (the field was still being renovated in 2011 when last the Wildcats hosted – those games were played at DeLudis Field in Rome, N.Y.).

Kevin Edick earned NEAC Coach of the Year honors for his stewardship of the team, his second such award since the team joined the NEAC. Joseph Redmond (Stone Ridge, N.Y. / Rondout Valley) was named Pitcher of the Year after pulling double-duty as the team's ace and closer; he finished with a 3-2 record even as he compiled a league-high five saves. SUNY Poly took home a lot of hardware overall, with freshman phenom Josh Rodriguez (Syracuse, N.Y. / Cicero-North Syracuse) taking home NEAC Rookie of the Year honors at third base. Rodriguez joined Redmond on the All-NEAC 1st Team, as did senior Jeff Albright (New York Mills, N.Y. / New York Mills), who completed his best year by far in an outstanding four-year career. Albright would go on to receive the Kiwanis Scholar-Athlete Award following the season.

On the turf field, the men's and women's lacrosse programs entered their fourth year of existence in the modern era. The men equaled a program-best win total with five wins, while the women's team advanced to the NEAC Semifinals for the first time in program history, earning their first ever playoff victory by defeating the Cazenovia Wildcats in convincing fashion, 14 to 4. The team's nine wins on the year are the most since the program began in 2012.

The successful season was reflected on the all-conference roster, as five players were selected including a program-best four players to the All-NEAC 1st Team. The team's leading scorer, junior-transfer Meghan Serota (Black River, N.Y. / Carthage) led the way. She was joined by sophomore Krysta Beha (Marcy, N.Y. / Whitesboro), rookie defender Hope Cerasuolo (Johnstown, N.Y. / Johnstown), and the player who was also named the NEAC Defender of the Year, Tierney McGlynn (Watervliet, N.Y. / Watervliet). The league took notice of McGlynn's speed and aggressiveness – she was also an ECAC All-Region selection. ♦

# Class Notes

## 1970s

### Donald Palen Jr '75

#### *Behavioral Science*

is living in San Antonio, TX and owns four companies including Forward March Incorporated. He is also a retired Lieutenant Colonel from the US Air Force.

### Patricia Hryzak Lind '78

#### *Nursing*

was appointed Associate Director for Patient Nursing Services/ Nurse Executive at the VA Western New York Healthcare System located in Buffalo, NY. She received the Finger Lakes Region March of Dimes Leadership Award in 2013.

## 1980s

### Cathy Crampton Smith '83

#### *Business Public Management*

received a promotion to Human Resources Director at Johnson City Central School District in Johnson City, NY.

### Douglas Rosenthal '84

#### *Computer Information Science*

is a Site Supervisor at Premise Health.

### Gregory Bertolini '86

#### *Computer/Information Science*

has been hired at Xerox Business Services, LLC in Newport, NY as a Program Manager.

### Ron Ouimette '88

#### *Business/Public Management*

currently resides in Canandaigua, NY and is working as the President and owner of Red Wing Shoe Store RJO Boot Company Inc. in Cicero, NY.

### Keith Roach '89

#### *Electrical Engineering Technology*

has been named director of environmental safety and emergency preparedness at Faxton St. Luke's Healthcare.

## 1990s

### Michele Smorol Hettler '90

#### *Nursing*

recently received the recognition of 2014 Nurse of The Year at VNA Homecare in Syracuse, NY.



### Lorry Stubleby '93

#### *Nursing*

has been appointed as the Executive Director of Today's Options Clinical Programs at Universal American Corporation.

### Alan Cronauer G'94

#### *Business Management*

has been promoted to associate dean of academic affairs at Herkimer College.

### Fred "Fritz"

#### *Scherz, Jr. G'95*

#### *Business Management*

has been added to the Vernon Verona Sherill Central School's wall of distinction. This honor is given to graduates of VVS to recognize their individual achievements and contributions.

## 2000s

### Heather Mundy Burgdoff '00

#### *Accounting*

has recently been promoted to Commercial Lines Underwrite at Utica First Insurance Company.

### Mark C. Montgomery '00

#### *Psychology*

recently received a PhD in Education from Walden University. Shortly after he was promoted to Chief Academic Officer at Utica School of Commerce.

### Mary Gurtowski '01

#### *Business Public Management*

has been promoted to corporate secretary at M. Griffith Investment Services.

### Michelle Ercoline '03

#### *Business Public Management*

has been hired as a TRIO Counselor at Schenectady County Community College. She also serves as an adjunct professor for the college.

### Marianne Baker '84 G'05

#### *Health Services*

#### *Administration*

has been named as the director of quality management and regulatory affairs for Mohawk Valley Health System.

### Cheryl Manna '06

#### *Health Services Management*

has been promoted to chief operating officer at VNA Homecare.



### Brian Kuraszewicz '07

#### *Accounting*

CPA was named manager at Testone, Marshall, & Discenza, LLP in the Firm's Audit Practice Group.

### Jade (Lemmerman)

#### *Streifert '09*

#### *Communication*

#### *Information Design*

recently married Christopher Streifert at The Beeches in Rome, NY. Among the guests were alumni Kala Dunning and Phil Gogol. Additionally, Jade recently began a new business venture, Design By Jade, a graphic design and marketing consulting business.

## 2010s

### Michelle Sebastian '12

#### *Psychology*

is employed by Madison Oneida BOCES as a Case Manager.

### David Paciello '10 G'12

#### *Technology Management*

is employed by Crawford Group in Cambell, CA as a Data Analysis Program Manager Marketing Consultant.

### Brian Schneemann G '12

#### *Technology Management*

is a Business Consultant at Black Knight Financial Services in Jacksonville, FL.

### Ryan Beha '12

#### *Mechanical Engineering*

#### *Technology*

is employed by Bell Helicopter Textron as a mechanical systems analysis engineer. He is also currently pursuing a master's degree in Mechanical Engineering at University of Texas at Arlington.

### Wai Ho Timmy Lau '12

#### *Business Administration*

is a Researcher at JETNET, LLC in Utica, NY.

### Lonny Bice '12

#### *Computer Information Science*

is an Application Developer for Coriell

Institute for Medical Research in Camden, NJ.

**David Harrington '11 G'12**

**Computer Information Science**

is employed by Xerox in Webster, NY as a Software Engineer.

**Tiana Wyrick '12**

**Nursing**

is a Program Manager at Health Research Inc.

**Denise Brodock**

**Nicotera '12**

**Psychology**

is currently pursuing a master's degree in Mental Health Counseling at The College of Saint Rose.

**Jane Conway '12**

**Health Information Management**

is a Product Specialist at Elsevier in Atlanta, GA.

**Arielle Estroff G '12**

**Accountancy**

is a Senior Accountant at Affinion Group in Stamford, CT.

**David Portine '12**

**Electrical Engineering Technology**

is a Junior Engineer at Glottal Enterprises, Inc. in Syracuse, NY.

**Richard Rohmer '12**

**Mechanical Engineering Technology**

is a Sr. Product Engineer at Legrand in Syracuse, NY.

**Donna Anderson G'12**

**Nursing Administration**

is a Senior Nursing Director at Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown, NY.

**Frederick Woloszyn '12**

**Computer Information Systems**

is a Senior Field Service Technician at BAE Systems, Inc. in Endicott, NY and is also pursuing a bachelor's degree in Business Finance from Excelsior College.

**Kristen Mather '12**

**Sociology**

is a Advancement Services Assistant at Utica College.

**Susan Schmid '12**

**Nursing**

is a Health Care Surveyor for the state of New York.

**John Gleason G '12**

**Accountancy**

is a Manager of Field Services for Mele Companies.

**Adara Wilczak '12**

**Computer Information Science**

is a Programmer/Analyst for Morrisville State College.

**Willjavian Dawson '12**

**Communication**

**Information Design**

is employed by CNY Medical as a Behavioral Technician.

**Melissa Vargas '13**

**Sociology**

recently initiated a project with fellow SUNY Poly alumni. The group is called the Human Recognition Project, although they are still in the beginning stages of forming the group they have started their first project entitled "I'm not a bum, I am a human being." They plan to implement different projects within their local communities of NYC and Utica.

**Cory Mannion '13**

**Sociology**

is a Behavior Specialist Assistant at Upstate Cerebral Palsy in Ilion, NY.

**Brian Karis '13**

**Civil Engineering Technology**

is an Aviation Engineer at CHA Consulting in Albany, NY.

**Michael Schultz '13**

**Electrical/Computer Engineering**

is a Controls Systems Integrator at O'Brien & Gere in Syracuse, NY.

**Amy Mlynarczyk '13 G'14**

**Technology Management**

is working as an Reimbursement Accountant at Faxton St. Luke's Healthcare in Utica, NY.



Jennifer Phelan Ninh G'07 Business Administration, Greg Hassler, and Matt Paulini '09 G'10 Computer Information Science at Charlotte Douglas International Airport

**Sarah LaFont '13**

**Psychology and Community and Behavioral Health**

is currently employed by Syracuse University as a Graduate Research Assistant and is also studying there for a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology.

**Ryland Bingham G'13**

**Technology Management**

is working as a Business Alignment Analyst at Clearwater Paper in Lewiston, ID.

**Ameya Bhagwat '13**

**Business Administration**

is a Junior Financial Analyst at Dorf Ketal Chemicals LLC in Houston, TX and is studying at Texas Wesleyan University for a master's degree in Business Administration.

**Trevor Kalwara '13**

**Mechanical Engineering Technology**

is a Lead Manufacturing Engineer at TECT Power in Whitesboro, NY.

**Jeremy Joseph '13**

**Business Administration**

is employed by Peak Security Plus as a fireguard.

**Phyllis Myers '13**

**Health Information Management**

is employed by Monroe Community College as a tutor.

**Rayanne Schoonover G'13**

**Family Nurse Practitioner**

is employed by Utica Pediatrics as a Family Nurse Practitioner.

**Billy Comeau '13**

**Network and Computer Security**

is an Network Engineer for Cisco, Inc. in Raleigh, NC.

**Matthew Clark '13**

**Computer Information Systems**

is employed by Herkimer County as a Associate Network Administrator.

**Anthony Fassett '13**

**Computer Information Science**

is employed by Coriell as a Application Developer.

**Delicia Mccalla '13**

**Health Information Management**

is an administrator at Weill Cornell Medical College in New York City.



A group of alumni who participated in our wildcat weekend volleyball alumni game. From left to right: Alex Rahmel '10, Katrina Mayba '09, Courtney Harrigan '10, Hillary Pundt '09, Kim Oertel '09, Lindsay Meislin '10, Kevin Nelson '11.

**Eileen Miller G'13**  
*Family Nurse Practitioner*  
is employed by Bassett Healthcare in Cooperstown, NY as a Family Nurse Practitioner.

**Stacy Herrick G'13**  
*Information Design and Technology*  
is employed by West Virginia State University as a Communications Specialist.

**Valerie Yager '09 G'13**  
*Adult Nurse Practitioner*  
is employed by Masonic Care Community as a Nurse Practitioner.

**Teresa Corrigan G'13**  
Family Nurse Practitioner  
is a Family Nurse Practitioner at Payson Healthcare Management.

**Steven Bulger G'13**  
*Health Services Management*  
is the CEO and Executive Director of Kids Oneida in Utica, NY.

**Raju Gogula G'13**  
*Telecommunications*  
is a Senior IT Tech Analyst at American International Group (AIG) in Fort Worth, TX.

**John Castano '13**  
*Accounting*  
is an Auditor at NYS Dept. of Public Service Commission.

**Christina JeanPierre '13**  
*Civil Engineering Technology*  
is an Inspector at WSP Group in Briarcliff Manor, NY.

**Jennifer Schrader '04 G'13**  
*Family Nurse Practitioner CAS*  
is a Family Nurse Practitioner at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center in Utica, NY.

**Cathleen (Wall) Garzone '99 G'13**  
*Nursing Education*  
is an RN Case Manager at United Health Care in Minneapolis, MN.

**Susan Bardin '10 G'13**  
*Family Nurse Practitioner*  
has accepted a position of Family Nurse Practitioner at Ellis Medicine in Schenectady, NY.

**Mary Lee Berg G'10**  
*Nursing Education*  
is currently a professor of nursing at Onondaga Community College and has assisted in shaping the nursing curriculum there and presenting a project entitled Mapping Mania: Discovering New Paths for Assessment.

**Jeff Curtacci '13**  
*Computer Information Science*  
is an Assistant Programmer for Jefferson County.

**Patrick Araya '13**  
*Network and Computer Security*  
has been hired at CCNY Tech as a Systems Engineer.

**Mary Margaret Plado Costante G'13**  
*Information Design and Technology*  
is employed by Center for Family Life and Recovery, Inc. as a Community Communications Specialist.

**Colleen Mulligan '13**  
*Interdisciplinary Studies*  
is employed by Rome City School District as a substitute Teaching Assistant.

**Shane Miller '13**  
*Computer Information Science*  
is employed by GLOBAL-FOUNDRIES as a Systems Software Engineer.

**Craig Guettler '13**  
*Mechanical Engineering Technology*  
is a Product Design Engineer at M&G DuraVent in Albany, NY.



**Daniel Brim '14**  
*Computer and Electrical Engineering Technology*  
has been hired at Eric Mower and Associates as an IT Administrator.

**Justin Castine '13**  
*Computer Engineering Technology*  
is employed as a Automation Analyst at Novelis in Oswego, NY.

**Paul Mantelli G'13**  
*Family Nurse Practitioner CAS*  
is employed by Teamhealth as a Family Nurse Practitioner.

**Laura Covino G'13**  
*Information Design and Technology*  
is a Librarian at Center for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies in New York, NY.

**Michael Harris '09 G'13**  
*Computer Information Science*  
is a Software Engineer at SRC Inc in Syracuse, NY.

**Christopher Landy '11 G'13**  
*Technology Management*  
is an Administrative Assistant at Aetna Better Health of New York in New York, NY.

**Melissa Ann Meyer G'14**  
*Nursing*  
was recently hired as a Cardiac Intensive Care nurse at Yale/ New Haven Hospital.

**Carrie Warner '14**  
*Family Nurse Practitioner*  
recently began working as a Family Nurse Practitioner at Albany Obstetrics & Gynecology, P.C. in Albany, NY.

**Jessica Sass '13 G'14**  
*Technology Management*  
is employed by J&J Sass Electric as a treasurer.

To submit your Class Notes please contact the Alumni Office at [alumni@sunyit.edu](mailto:alumni@sunyit.edu).



**Thank you** to all who participated in our 6th Annual Golf Tournament on May 18, 2015 at the Yahnundahsis Golf Club. This event raised **\$80,000 for student scholarships**, a record-breaking amount for this tournament.



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