

Millersville University Exchange

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Melani to Address Spring Grads

The 152nd annual commencement ceremonies will be held on Saturday, May 10, at 10 a.m. in Biemesderfer Stadium. This year's commencement speaker will be Dr. Kenneth R. Melani, president and CEO of Highmark.

President and CEO since 2003, Melani is responsible for the day-to-day operations of Highmark, Inc.—one of the largest Blue Cross Blue Shield plans in the country with 19,000 employees serving more than 23 million people nationally through health, dental, vision and life and casualty insurance products and services.

During the ceremony, honorary doctoral degrees will be given to Dr. Charles R. Winter and M. Diane Koken '72.

A long time friend of the University, Winter donated \$1 million to support Millersville's planned visual and performing arts center. A world-renowned surgeon based in Lancaster, Winter's two daughters graduated from Millersville.

Koken is the former Commonwealth of

Pennsylvania's Insurance Commissioner. As Pennsylvania's longest-serving Insurance Commissioner (from 1997 to February 2007), Koken served in the administrations of three governors.

She was elected to the board of directors of Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company and Nationwide Mutual Fire Insurance Company in April 2007. Koken graduated magna cum laude from Millersville University in 1972 and earned a law degree from Villanova



*Commencement Speaker
Dr. Kenneth Melani*

University School of Law. Her father, the late James E. Koken, was a former biology professor at Millersville.

Immediately following the commencement ceremony, a reception will be held on the lawn between Byerly and Gerhart Halls. Light refreshments will be offered, and faculty, staff, families and friends may take informal photographs at this site.

In the event of severe inclement weather, two separate successive ceremonies will be held in Pucillo Gym.

Guests with special needs and small children who may not be comfortable in bleacher seating can view a live broadcast of the ceremony in the Student Memorial Center's (SMC) Reighard Multipurpose Room.

REMEMBER – no heels on the field at commencement. For more information, visit the spring commencement website at www.millersville.edu/~commencement/

Help Kids Save for College



Congressman Joe Pitts (PA-16) (pictured in the middle) announced the introduction of the Help Kids Save for College Act at Millersville University on April 7. Pitts was joined by Millersville student Sarah Harper and Vice President of University Advancement Jerry Eckert. The bill, H.R. 5591, would enhance popular 529 college savings plans by allowing employers to make tax-free, matching contributions to an employee's 529 account, up to \$500 a year.

Miller and Eastwood Honored

Millersville students Stacy Rudisill of Red Lion and Scott Starr of Hanover each received four awards, the most of any recipient, at Millersville's 50th annual Honors and Awards Convocation on April 26. Rudisill's awards include: the Gertrude Bettle Stoll and Esther Stoll Barlow Lowry Memorial Scholarship, the Blance Henninger Snyder '18 Scholarship, the Millersville University Alumni Association Scholarship and Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges. Starr's awards include: the Charles D. Spotts Award, the Neimeyer-Hodgson Student Research Grant, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania University Biologist Award and the Keever Biology Research Scholarship.

In addition to a host of student awards, Dr. Gary L. Miller '80 and W. Lee Eastwood were honored. Miller was named the 2008 recipient of the Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award. Miller works as a USDA research entomologist and has been described as an international authority on destructive insects and their identification and classification.

Eastwood was named as the 2008 Honorary Alumnus Award recipient. In April, he retired after 25 years of service to the University in a variety of roles. Most recently Eastwood was director of development, executive director of the Millersville University Foundation and director of planned giving.

Staff Activities

Dr. William Archibald, English, recently presented at the College Composition and Communication Conference (CCCC) in New Orleans, La., April 2-5. His presentation was entitled "Writing the Self to Change the World: The Memoir as Academic Inquiry." His research explored issues related to teaching a college memoir writing course. In addition, Archibald took Chryst Writing Center peer tutors to the Mid-Atlantic Writing Centers conference on April 12 at Temple University in Philadelphia. They gave individual presentations in a roundtable entitled: "The Difficult Tutoring Session."

Dr. Thomas P. Boyle, communication and theatre, presented a paper titled "Bustamante, Davis and Schwarzenegger: Professional and personal framing in the 2003 California gubernatorial campaign" at the Association of Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference. The study investigated the major state newspaper framing of then-citizen Arnold Schwarzenegger, then-governor Gray Davis and then-lieutenant governor Cruz Bustamante as they competed in the California gubernatorial recall-replacement election.

Dr. Gloria I. Chuku, history, recently won a research award from the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), which is based in Dakar, Senegal. The \$7,000 award is to expand a paper she presented to the Center in Dakar last summer into a publishable manuscript. The paper is titled, "Pan-African Feminisms—A Community-based Activism: Conceptualizing Common and Divergent Themes in the Liberation Movements of African-descended Women in Africa and the United States." In addition, Chuku presented a paper titled, "Resource Mobilization for World War II and Its Impact on Gender Roles in Southeastern Nigeria," at the "Re-Evaluating Africa and WWII" international conference held at Rutgers University, N.J., March 27-29. And, she presented a paper titled, "Human Rights and Women in Nigeria: The Igbo Experience," at the 6th International Conference of the Igbo Studies Association, Washington, D.C., April 4-6.

Dr. Cheryl Desmond, educational foundations, presented a paper titled, "Diggin' at the Roots: High School Youth, Community-Based Agriculture, School-Community Engagement, and School Progress," at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York City, March 24-28.

Dr. Abdelhadi Halawa, wellness and sport sciences, received an international award for his presentation at the first International Conference for Physical Education, Sports, and Health (ICPEH) held in Kuwait City, Kuwait, April 1-3. The research paper was entitled "The Effects of Social Changes on the Rise of Obesity and Overweight in the Middle East." The paper discussed the social and demographic changes that were adopted during the last 25 years, and how they contributed to the steady rise of obesity and overweight people in the region. The paper also provided recommendations for prevention and management strategies. Participants in the conference represented 21 countries, including the U.S.

Dr. Nazli Mollah-Hardy, computer science, recently had her paper, "The Universal Personal Internet Identifier," accepted for publication by the International Association of Engineers. She will present the paper at the International Conference of Information Security and Internet Engineering in July. In addition, Mollah-Hardy, along with White Wolf Security have been awarded a Keystone Innovation Grant for \$5,000 to build a system for "Interoperating Applications to Simulate a Self-Contained Real World Economy for Security Training."

Dr. Thomas Kruse, social work, delivered the presentation, "Teaching Group Skills Through Analysis of Student Simulation Video Clips" at the Social Work Baccalaureate Program Directors' (BPD) annual conference in Sandestin, Fla., on March 6. The presentation was supported by the social work department, the Faculty Grants Committee and the Office of the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences. It built on a previous presentation to the BPD's annual conference in Los Angeles, October 2006. Both presentations were products of Kruse's sabbatical leave in fall 2006, and are intended for use in social work classes.

Deb Miller, University Communications & Marketing, was elected to the executive board for AFSCME Council 89 at the April delegate assembly. She will serve a two-year term.

James Robertson, maintenance operations, took a leave from Millersville University during April to work with AFSCME Council 13 and AFSCME International on the Hillary Clinton campaign. Robertson returned to the University on April 28.

Dr. M.P.A. Sheaffer, English, sang as an alto ringer in a concert of Händel's Judas Maccabeus performed by the Richmond Hill Chorale of Sacred Music in New York on April 6.

Miriam Witmer, educational foundations, presented "The Color of Teaching: Mentoring to Recruit and Retain Students of Color in Education Programs" at the Pennsylvania Chapter of the National Association for Multicultural Education conference at Temple University on April 5. Witmer was also recently named the "Outstanding Mentor of the Year" by the Millersville Mentoring Alliance Advisory Council.

Sounding The Siren

Since the Virginia Tech tragedy, Millersville University has put an increased emphasis on campus security. Blue security phones have been added, the MU alert (text message) system is up and running. Later this month the campus will be installing sirens as one more way to alert the community to potential threats.

The campus community and area residents are invited to attend a public informational meeting on the sirens, Thursday, May 29, on campus. The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room of the Student Memorial Center. For more information call #3586.

The Exchange is published for employees of Millersville University of Pennsylvania on the first and third Thursdays of the month. Send news to the Office of University Communications & Marketing, Duncan Alumni House; email: janet.kacskos@millersville.edu or call ext. 3586.

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Births

Congratulations to Shawn Reinfried, physics and his wife, Renee, on the birth of their son, Samuel Luis Reinfried on September 7, 2007.

Congratulations to David Fitzgerald, academic consulting & tech services, and his wife, Christine, on the birth of their son, Ian Fitzgerald, on March 5.

Community Members Honored by CCERP

The Center for Civic and Community Engagement and Research Project (CCERP) at Millersville University recently recognized community members at an awards banquet on April 24. Actor and activist Richard Dreyfuss attended the event and spoke to a standing room only crowd later that evening.

The following people received awards:

- Philip and Lindy Malin for Malin's Monarch butterfly rescue.
- Millersville students Andrew Moyer and Claire Leidig for the "Silencing the Hate" campaign.
- Christina Miller, art, for Radical Jewelry Makeover
- Don Eberly, author and civic entrepreneur.
- Kennedy Kulish, an 11-year old who runs Operation Kisses for Kaedan and has raised over \$50,000 for children's needs.
- Mary Ellen Kiernan, Boys and Girls Club of Lancaster.
- Jim and Jen '89 Weber of Weber Advertising for their cookie sale to help feed people in Haiti and Jamaica.
- Deidre Citro, the new acting director for Mom's House, a non-profit resource.
- Dr. Hugh M. Herr '90, a double amputee, who is now a professor at MIT researching prosthetics.

Alumni Assoc. New Board Members

Ten alumni were recently elected to the Alumni Association Board of Directors for Millersville University. Terms for the newly elected run from July 1, 2008, to June 30, 2010. Existing member terms expire on June 30, 2009.

The 10 alumni newly elected include: Nicole Bomberger '01, Abraham Breslin '98, Aaron Clevensine '01, Gina Crawford '96, Lori Dierolf '91, secretary, Dr. Carl Ernst '60, Dr. Stacey Fink '72, Amy Hoffman '94, Jerri Anne Johnson '76, Daniel Sidelnick '75.

Other board members include: Dr. Richard Frerichs '64 president, William Martin '81 president-elect, Benjamin Gorman '00, treasurer, Dr Kathleen Brabson '70, past-president, Scott Bailey '98, William Benner '84, Don Geiter '95, Michael Henry '83, David Hernandez '71, and Stephen Powell '71.

Abstract Algebra

Dr. Ron Umble, mathematics, and his research collaborator, Mikael Vejdemo-Johansson, Ph.D. candidate at the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena, Germany, are currently studying applications of new algebraic models of geometric objects, called "A-infinity Bialgebras." These models were constructed in 2004



Dr. Ron Umble and Mikael Vejdemo-Johansson

by Umble and Dr. Samson Saneblidze from the A. Razmadze Mathematical Institute in Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia.

The main results in Vejdemo-Johansson's Ph.D. dissertation apply Saneblidze and Umble's work. Umble will serve as an expert examiner on Vejdemo-Johansson's Ph.D. jury this coming July. This spring, Vejdemo-Johansson visited with Umble at Millersville. Together they successfully extended the results in his dissertation.

Umble met Vejdemo-Johansson at a mathematics conference in the Republic of Georgia in June 2007 and they have been collaborating via email ever since. Vejdemo-Johansson joins a team of mathematicians led by Umble and Saneblidze that includes Dr. Ainhoa Berciano from the University of the Basque Country in Leioa, Spain, Dr. John Carter from Franklin & Marshall College and Millersville undergraduate Sean Evans.

These researchers consider algebraic structures that capture certain aspects of the real world. Applications of this research arise in string theory and quantum physics. Vejdemo-Johansson said that "this research is important because it will serve to extend the theoretical physicist's toolbox." But what makes this research particularly interesting is that it can be applied in many settings for a wide variety of different purposes. Carter and Umble are interested in "topological" applications; Vejdemo-Johansson is interested in purely formal algebraic applications.

According to Umble, "You never know whether or not the mathematics you discover is important until it actually is important. One hundred years from now people may look back on this work as nothing more than interesting mathematics. On the other hand, it's possible that this work will have a significant impact on the world of mathematics."

Borough Anniversary

Millersville Borough is turning 250 in 2011. The executive volunteer committee is headed by co-chairs Steven DiGuseppe '82, University Advancement, and Mary Ann Gerber '67, who recently visited Pike House on campus. Pike House was previously known as the John Miller house. According to Gerber, in 1763, John Miller purportedly built a home on the site. The house that is now standing at 225 1/2 N. George Street is the second structure that occupied the site. One of the previous owners of the house was Andrew Frantz, who was a trustee of the Millersville Normal School.



Who Makes Millersville Special?

This edition of the Exchange features Dr. John Wallace, biology. Wallace has been at Millersville University since 1998. He is a board certified forensic entomologist under the American Board of Forensic Entomologists and is currently the president of the North American Forensic Entomology Association. Wallace received his bachelor's degree from Penn State University, his master's degree from Shippensburg University and his doctorate from Michigan State University.

Q. When did you become interested in biology?

A. I recall catching turtles and crayfish in our local stream since I could walk, had pet ducks in the bathtub and collected caterpillars and reared them to butterflies since I was eight years old. Perhaps both genetics and my environment have helped me to this place in life today as my dad was a high school biology teacher and my mom was a nurse.

Q. What are some of the projects students are currently working on in your lab?

A. Undergraduate students in my lab are doing some exciting and rewarding research that pertains to three areas: 1) legacy sediment effects on macroinvertebrate community structure in streams; 2) spongillafly population dynamics and secondary production on freshwater sponges and; 3) blood spatter presumptive test kit modification for human DNA detection in maggot crops.

Q. What do you enjoy most about working with students at Millersville University?

A. I enjoy their desire to learn, their interest to do the work correctly, and their drive and determination to excel. In general, the students who have worked in my lab have had an amazing work ethic, and this has translated into major successes while at Millersville in the form of grant writing, publishing their research and winning awards, and ultimately being successful in graduate programs or with numerous state and federal environmental agencies.

Q. What are some of the most interesting things you and or your students have discovered while conducting research at Millersville?

A. Ironically, two of my favorite discoveries have not been in my major areas of research but in two areas generated by my students. For example, after 100+ years, there has been a statewide resurgence of interest in crayfish ecology/diversity all because of the curiosity of two Millersville students. These students brought to the state's and, quite frankly, the nation's attention the issue of bait-shop involvement in the introduction of non-native crayfish fauna. Their findings identified an invasive crayfish problem in the county and increased the biodiversity



Dr. John Wallace skydiving with the plane's co-pilot.

knowledge of crayfish taxa in the county by three-fold—in addition to spawning “sting”-like operations on crayfish sales in bait shops in other states. The second area where my students have contributed greatly to aquatic ecology has dealt with establishing novel methodologies in aquatic forensic sciences that have contributed new tools to estimate a post-mortem submersion interval based on algal growth and succession on mammalian carcasses, just to name a few.

Q. Do you ever learn from your students?

A. Are you kidding - every day! I learn from their endless curiosity, questioning, and thirst to learn. If you ask me who makes Millersville special, I'd say the students do.

Q. You do a lot of research on mosquitoes. When did you start to research them and what about them intrigues you the most?

A. I began my research efforts in 1992 focusing on larval mosquito feeding ecology during my Ph.D. program to examine the over-wintering eco-physiology of mosquitoes while working as a Research Fellow in the Vector Biology Lab at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind. Since my arrival at MU, I have focused my research interests on mosquito population dynamics in Lancaster County as well as in storm water management basins throughout Maryland to enhance control strategies for West Nile virus.

Q. Are you currently engaged in any other types of research?

A. My personal research interests have returned to the area of medical entomology.

I am currently working on an emerging disease, Buruli Ulcer, a necrotizing skin disease common throughout the equatorial regions of the world. My work focuses on the role of arthropods (specifically mosquitoes) and the environment in the transmission and maintenance of the mycobacterium that causes this disease. I have field sites throughout southeastern Australia and will soon be working in Ghana and perhaps Cameroon, Africa.

Q. What made you interested in becoming a member of the Center for Environmental Sciences?

A. Most recently, I would say that the National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates (NSF-REU) grant that Dr. Dominique Dagit and I were awarded has really put a big spotlight on the MU Center for Environmental Sciences in regards to watershed science for the next three years. MU is the only PASSHE university to be awarded an NSF-REU grant and the undergraduate students nationwide participating in the grant have and will continue to benefit from the research guidance of these faculty.

Q. What are some of your interests outside of the biology field?

A. Two major ones: first, exploring and having adventures with my two boys—this summer, we plan to make a stab at climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania; and second, making my wife laugh – doesn't get any better than that, I'd reckon.

Q. Do you have any favorite restaurants in Lancaster city?

A. In Lancaster City, I am partial to the fare at the Arts Hotel Restaurant (any meal), Annie Bailey's (Kobe burger), and Café East (sushi and sashimi).

Q. Where are some of your favorite vacation spots?

A. In no order of preference: Big Bass Lake with the O's, the rainforests of northeastern Australia, Phillip Island of southeastern Australia, north island of New Zealand, fly-fishing the Madison or Henry's Fork Rivers in Montana, anywhere in Guatemala or Costa Rica, wine-tasting in Napa, and paragliding in the Swiss Alps.

Q. What do you like to do to relax?

A. Mucking around in streams with my boys, fly-fishing with the flies I have tied, playing guitar, nature photography and cooking.