Millersville’s Presidential Search

As we say goodbye to Millersville University’s current president, Dr. Francine G. McNairy, the search for Millersville’s next president begins.

This summer consultants will begin to recruit candidates to become the next Millersville president. In September, the committee will review the candidate’s files and select 10-12 candidates for preliminary interviews. The interviews will be held in late September. In early October, the plan is to conduct interviews with four to six candidates. The committee will review feedback from the campus interviews and prepare recommendations for at least three candidates. Then the search committee will present the Council of Trustees (COT) with names and background on at least three finalists.

In Harrisburg, the Chancellor and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) staff will interview the candidates in early November. The Board of Governors will also receive input from the COT and will interview the candidates. Finally, in mid-November the Board of Governors is scheduled to vote on an appointment.

The following are members of the Presidential Search Committee:

**Council of Trustees:** Caroline Hoffer, Esquire, presidential search committee chair (pictured above); Dr. Robert Frick and Gerald Robinson, Esquire  
**University Executive:** Michelle Perèz, student affairs  
**Faculty:** Dr. Ronald Umble, mathematics; Dr. Cheryl Desmond, educational foundations (alternate); Dr. Rebecca Mowrey, wellness and sport sciences; and Dr. Jean Boal, biology (alternate)  
**Staff:** Rita Miller, housing & residential programs; and Deborah Miller, communications and marketing (alternate)  
**Students:** Jordan Smith and Patrick Hollowell (alternate)  
**Alumni:** Dr. Richard Frerichs and Lori Dierolf (alternate)  
**Optional Selections** (selected by the COT): Stephen Kepchar, senior vice president, Morgan Stanley; William Reuter, chairman and CEO, Susquehanna Bancshares, Inc.; and Dr. Tamara Willis, assistant superintendent, York City School District  
**Current PASSHE President:** Dr. David Soltz, Bloomsburg University president  
**PASSHE Liaison:** Gary Dent, vice chancellor for human resources and labor relations  
**Search Consultant:** John Thornburgh, senior vice president, Witt/Kieffer  
**University Support Staff:** Dr. James McCollum, Linda Bolin and Jennifer Hart, all from the office of the president

For more information on the presidential search, visit [millersville.edu/presidentialsearch/](http://millersville.edu/presidentialsearch/).
Millersville Paves New Career Path in Doctorate Programs

Millersville University students looking to pursue a doctorate degree in the fields of osteopathic medicine, dentistry and pharmacy will now be eligible for early acceptance thanks to a new agreement with Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM). While students will still be required to take specific courses at Millersville University and meet set qualifications, LECOM will hold up to five seats in each of these three programs for each graduating class at Millersville.

“This academic affiliation with LECOM will provide our students majoring in biology and chemistry opportunities to pursue post-graduate careers in medicine, pharmacy and dentistry, three of the most highly competitive health profession programs,” said Dr. Vilas Prabhu, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Students would be assured a seat in LECOM’s program as early as their sophomore year at Millersville University, as long as the academic expectations are met. All students are able to enroll in the program, although the required coursework lies mostly in science and mathematics.

“Students will now know at a very early point what they will be doing after graduation. They should have additional motivation to maintain high grades and to keep their post graduate studies targeted,” said Dr. Robert T. Smith, dean of science and mathematics.

Additionally, the departments of biology and chemistry are working toward developing a 3+4 program for the 2012-2013 school year. This will allow students to begin their programs at LECOM upon completion of three years at Millersville University and complete their Millersville degree through coursework at LECOM. The coursework would also count toward the students’ post graduate program, which would save students a year in their total programs.

Smith also notes that the projections in these job fields are expected to grow 20-25 percent within the decade.

For more information, contact Dr. Tim Ladd, director of allied health, at Timothy.Ladd@millersville.edu or 717-872-3792.

New Alumni Board

The Millersville University Alumni Association held spring elections on April 14. Ten alumni have been named to the board of directors and will serve two-year terms beginning July 1. The newly elected board members include:

- Jennifer Bertolet ’92, Arlington, Va.
- Sandra Brown ’76, Lancaster, Pa.
- Nathan Claycomb ’01, Strasburg, Pa.
- Jenna Craig ’10, Lancaster, Pa.
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- William Dewan ’93, Lancaster, Pa.
- Catherine Glass ’53, Millersville, Pa.
- John Held ’02, Hatboro, Pa.
- Greg Ortlieb ’09, Bridgeport, Pa.
- Dan Sidelnick ’75, Lebanon, Pa.
- Carroll Staub ’72/M ’90, Millersville, Pa.

The board consists of 19 voting members and meets quarterly. Additional board members include Lori Dierolf ’91 (President Elect), Stephen Focht ’70 (Treasurer), C. Eleanor Heller ’71, Michael Henry ’83, Jerri Anne Johnson ’76 (President), Cassandra Karamanos ’94, Patrick Leahy ’97, Kristin Waters ’05 (Secretary), and Patrick Witmer ’81.

The Millersville University Alumni Association, founded in 1861, consists of more than 59,000 living alumni in all 50 U.S. states and 36 countries across the globe. For additional information on MU alumni events, programs and services, visit www.villealumni.com.


16th Annual Community Parade Seeks Grand Marshal Nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for grand marshal of the 16th Annual Millersville Community Parade, which is scheduled for Saturday, October 13 at 9 a.m. The grand marshal has the honor of riding in the parade’s lead vehicle. The parade, a joint effort between Millersville University, Millersville Borough and the surrounding community, will be themed “That’s Entertainment” this year.

The grand marshal must be a Millersville resident and is selected based on his or her significant contributions to the community. Nominations can be submitted in the form of a one-page letter that explains the nominee’s specific impact on the Millersville community, which must include their address and phone number. All nominations must be received by the July 2 deadline, and the grand marshal will be notified approximately two months prior to the parade date.

Nominations should be mailed to: The Millersville Community Parade, Millersville University, c/o Alumni Services Office, P.O. Box 1002, Millersville, Pa., 17551-0302 or submitted via fax to 717-871-5050.

The Millersville Community Parade was established in 1997 by a group of volunteers dedicated to improving relationships between the borough of Millersville, Millersville University, Manor Township and surrounding communities. Since then, the Millersville Community Parade has quickly evolved into one of Lancaster County’s largest and most dynamic parades. Previous
grand marshals include John Herr, Lynette Trout, Dorothy Bender, Jim Eshleman, Dr. William Duncan, Dr. Joseph Caputo, Steven DiGuisepp, Harold “Skip” Rhodes, Ralph and Judy Anttonen, Benjamin F. and Polly H. Kauffman, Mary Ann and Phil Gerber (pictured above) and David W. Patterson.

For more information, contact Steven DiGuisepp, assistant to the vice president for alumni and community relations, at 717-872-3352 or Steven.DiGuisepp@millersville.edu.

The Millersville Mall

The Millersville University Mall is an online listing of preferred vendors with whom the University has discount pricing and a history of reliable goods and services available for faculty, staff and students. The MU Mall lists the amount of money you can save and the location of participating vendors.

“The MU Mall provides the University Community with a listing of vendors offering discounts, specials or value-added features. We encourage faculty, staff and students to check the listing often because new vendors are being added all the time,” said Charlene Domin, director of marketing.

To access the MU Mall: Click on the Faculty/Staff tab from the Millersville University’s homepage, look for the new MU Mall icon, log into your My’Ville account and click the Discounts and Savings tab at the top/center for a full list of vendors!

Employees and students can receive discounts at the Lancaster Arts Hotel, Enterprise, OfficeMax, Subway and Verizon Wireless, to name a few. A valid MU ID must be presented in order to receive discounts.

For more information, contact the purchasing office at pdidomenico@millersville.edu.

Reducing Amount of Waste and Recyclables on Campus

“Going Green” has been a continuing theme for Millersville University. The Millersville Sustainability Committee, Project Green Lancaster and Zero Waste Commencement have all contributed to the University’s green goals.

Here is a look at the University’s refuse, construction waste and recyclables totals for the last year:

Trash generation: 1,150,000 lbs. (575 tons)
Construction waste generation: 136,000 lbs. (63 tons)

Recyclables* generation: 480,000 lbs. (240 tons)
*Recyclables include aluminum cans, glass bottles, other metal cans and plastic bottles. The list also includes cardboard, high grade office paper, newspaper, light iron, batteries and fluorescent tubes.
Meteorology Students Take on New Weather Television Program

Students leaning toward a career in broadcasting within the meteorology field will now have the opportunity to participate in a new project entitled Weather Watch that will have students working in collaboration with MUTV-99, Millersville’s student-run TV station. Students will learn how to create, edit and produce [TV] episodes about how weather impacts our society. The first show was taped during spring semester.

Despite being in its early stages, the program has full support from Eric Horst, director of Millersville University’s Weather Information Center, and the more than 25 students that are currently involved with Weather Watch. The shows will be aired on MUTV-99 and later posted to the Weather Watch website (www.MUweatherwatch.com).

“The meteorology department on campus is known nationwide for turning out top-notch forecasters and researchers post-graduation; however, those interested in the broadcasting side are still regarded as the ‘black sheep’ of the family, and we wanted to change that by introducing an outlet for these students,” said Shane Brown, a junior meteorology major who co-created the program alongside senior meteorology major Matt Moore.

Each episode will contain a local, regional and national news piece, in addition to public service announcements and commentaries. Local and regional pieces will be filmed at specific locations in Lancaster County depending on where the weather stories are that week. This will give the show a real “news” feel to it. In total, the program will run roughly 15 minutes. Brown also noted that the program is intended to be both informative and entertaining.

“I strongly believe that Weather Watch will have a very positive effect on the student body and public. Through this show, potential students will be able to learn about our meteorology department and all that it has to offer,” explained Colin Thomas, a senior meteorology major and co-public relations/outreach member for the program.

Each of the students can assume one of the many roles involved during the show’s process, which includes video editing, camera operation, anchoring, reporting, scripting, storyboarding and other forms of social media management. “It’s a true team effort and we hope to create and display a great looking product that really highlights our department and the students involved,” said Brown.

For more information, contact Weather Watch at MUWeatherWatch@gmail.com or visit www.MUweatherwatch.com.
Millersville’s NBS Receives Multiple Top Honors

Thirty-two of Millersville University’s National Broadcasting Society (NBS) students used their skills to create multiple award-winning productions at this year’s national conference held in New York City, March 21-24. Millersville’s NBS chapter took home both individual and chapter awards. NBS won three production awards, the alumni coordinator award, the prestigious community service award, the Alpha Epsilon Rho honor society student of the year and National Chapter of the year.

Millersville students received the following awards:

Jessica Do, a senior from Hatfield, Pa., was named student of the year in Alpha Epsilon Rho honor society, the nation’s oldest broadcasting society.

Kaitlyn Fitzpatrick, a senior from Collegeville, Pa., and Samantha Galvez, a junior from Mechanicsburg, Pa., took first prize in the music/entertainment program category for their Millersville University Television program “Hollywood Headlines.”

Alex Dorsheimer, a junior from Terre Hill, Pa., won the ‘On The Spot’ competition, producing a news feature on Shakespearean theater while at the convention.

Galvez was also named alumni coordinator of the year for her outstanding work building and maintaining a new Facebook page for alumni and holding networking events for current and past chapter members.

The Millersville Chapter of NBS also took home the final award of the ceremony, national chapter of the year. Fitzpatrick, chapter president, accepted the award, surrounded by all 32 chapter members who attended the event. “This is a team effort and every person here shares this honor,” said Fitzpatrick.

The convention also included Millersville University alumna Andrea Sabia providing the keynote speech on the first night. As the manager of college relations for MTV Viacom, Sabia is in charge of the company’s internship program. She narrated her own career trail to provide numerous suggestions for the crowd of more than 300 aspiring broadcasters.

The students were accompanied by their advisor, Dr. William Dorman, professor in the Department of Communication and Theatre.
Networking the Space Weather Workshop

Networking helps people make more of themselves. And, so it was for the 11 meteorology students who accompanied Dr. Richard Clark, earth sciences, to Boulder, Colo., where they attended the 2012 Space Weather Workshop, which is co-sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Space Weather Prediction Center, the National Science Foundation (NSF) Division of Atmospheric Science, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Heliophysics Division and the NASA Space Radiation Analysis Group. Representatives from research centers, the commercial space weather services sector, international organizations and several federal government agencies participated in a variety of sessions relevant to space weather.

Students made up about 10 percent of the 300 attendees with Millersville students as the largest contingent at more than a third of the total number of students present. Funding from the NSF defrayed the lodging and registration fees for students, while internal funding sources from the University partially offset the airfare.

Networking may actually play a role in continuing NSF support for students to attend future workshops. When it became known that NSF had considered reducing or eliminating the funding for student travel to this workshop, the Millersville contingent corralled the head of the upper atmospheric research division at NSF and one-by-one made the case for why this funding was so important and necessary to them personally, as well as to the future generation of space weather professionals. Clark believes that this organic interaction between students and NSF will result in continued support for students to attend this gathering of scientists and professionals.

Students were exposed to the full spectrum of activities related to space weather and heliophysics from research to operations to policy. While at the workshop they had the opportunity to tour the Space Weather Prediction Center, Science on a Sphere and the High Altitude Observatory.

Dr. Lika Guhathakurta, project scientist for NASA program known as “Living with a Star,” gave the keynote address. There was also ample time for students to network with the who’s who in the space weather community.

Three Millersville students were invited to interview for internships while at the workshop, and each was offered a paid summer internship with the Air Force Research Laboratory either in Albuquerque, N.M., or in Hawaii.

Millersville University is nationally recognized as leading the way in developing an undergraduate curriculum in heliophysics and space weather. A joint earth sciences/physics proposal for a minor is about to start its way through the approval process. Clark presented a poster at the workshop explaining the details of the minor. The students attending the 2012 workshop are enrolled in ESCI 440, Space Weather and Environment.
“Toss Your Caps”

Millersville University staff and students took part in the “Toss Your Caps!” event on Friday, May 11 at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter spoke to the group. Dwight Horsey, student affairs, and Dr. Minor Redmond, academic services, accompanied the students from Millersville.

Need to Know:
Construction to Resume on West Frederick Street this June

The West Frederick Street construction project will resume on June 11 at the intersection of North and South Prince streets and will take approximately five weeks to complete. The Millersville Borough anticipates the intersection to be closed intermittently during the first week of the project. The remainder of the work will be completed on West Frederick Street from South Prince Street to the barber shop on 109 West Frederick St., and will be open to local residents during construction. Weather and additional unknowns throughout the process can affected stated times. For more information, contact Amy Boxleitner, streets superintendent, at 871-4645.

Need to Know:
HR News, Summer 2012

Faculty Contract Summer Session Pay Dates
Summer 1: June 1, 2012; Summer 2: June 29, 2012; Summer 3: August 10, 2012

Benefits
A Reminder to Employees Using ESS for Leave: Remember that if you are absent you must submit a request via ESS to cover your time off. Whenever possible, your request should be submitted to your supervisor in advance of your absence. If you are not able to submit the request in advance, then you must do so as soon as possible upon your return. If you are a supervisor who approves leave for any employee, it is your responsibility to ensure that your employee is submitting leave via ESS for any time they are absent. You must also process any leave submissions from your employees as soon as possible. Failure to ensure that your employees’ leave is submitted and processed by you in a timely manner will cause inaccuracies in your employees’ pay statements and leave balances.

Healthy U: The deadline for Healthy U, PASSHE’s wellness program, is May 31, 2012. In order to qualify for significant discounts in your healthcare premiums, you and your covered spouse/same-sex domestic partner will need to accumulate a minimum of 70 points each by this deadline. Individuals can choose from a wide variety of activities and programs to earn Healthy U points. The first two steps you will need to complete are taking the Pledge, and completing the Wellness Profile (worth 30 points): Access both of these items at www.highmarkblueshield.com. After you and your covered spouse/same-sex domestic partner have completed these two steps, you can then choose from any of the remaining programs and activities to attain the 70-point threshold. For more information on the Healthy U program visit www.passhe.edu/inside/hr/syshr/Pages/Healthy-U-Getting-Started.aspx. You may also contact the Office of Human Resources at x3017 with questions about Healthy U.

PEBTF Health Plan Updates (AFSCME, SCUPA, PDA employees only)
Reminder: Prescription Plan Change: Effective July 1, 2012 CVS Caremark will be the new prescription benefit manager. For details on this transition, visit pebtf.org/RxBenefitManager.

Voluntary Life Insurance Reminder: If you elected voluntary life insurance coverage for children, please remember that in order to remain covered upon turning age 19 (through age 24), your child must be a full time student.* You must notify the Office of Human Resources to end the voluntary life insurance coverage for your children if you no longer have any children who are eligible for this coverage. *Please note that the rules regarding life insurance coverage for children over 19 are different from the rules regarding their coverage under your health plan. To be eligible for coverage under your health plan, children over 19 through age 25 are no longer required to be full time students; however, they cannot be eligible for any employer-sponsored health coverage.

Fidelity Summer On-Campus Appointments: Matt Waterloo from Fidelity Investments will be on campus and available for individual appointments on June 14, July 12 and August 14. Check your email for further details including instructions for reserving an appointment.

Social Security Presentation: On June 7, at 2 p.m., Paul Wigerman from the Lancaster Social Security Office will be presenting on Social Security benefits in retirement. If you would like to attend, RSVP by contacting the Office of Human Resources at x3017 or human.resources@millersville.edu.

State Employee Assistance Program
The State System participates in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s employee assistance program. United Behavioral health has been chosen as the administrator for this program. State System employees and their family members are eligible to receive up to three free confidential counseling sessions to evaluate concerns and determine the best referral. Help is available for, but not limited to, many of the following issues: Stress, Job Burnout, Depression, Work-Related Problems, Eating Disorders, Financial or Legal Concerns, Anxiety, Death and Dying, Parent-Child Conflict or Relationship Problems. Services are available 24-hours a day, 7-days per week by calling 1-800-692-7459. Lisa Ulrich, benefits manager, is Millersville University’s SEAP coordinator who can answer questions about the program. The services provided by SEAP are strictly confidential. The System will not be notified unless you give written consent. To learn more about the SEAP program, visit passhe.edu/inside/hr/Benefits/tap%29/Pages/Default.aspx.

Tuition Waiver
Summer Session Tuition Waiver due dates
Summer Session III: May 25, 2012; Fall 2012: July 2, 2012; Winter 2012: October 23, 2012
To access the online tuition waiver, visit millersville.edu/hr/benefits/forms.php.

Employee Wellness
Upcoming events include Color Your Plate, a six-week Highmark email campaign, which will begin on July 9, 2012. Diabetes Awareness and Prevention newsletter campaign, a 12-month campaign, which will begin on September 17, 2012. To register for either or both of these programs, email human.resources@millersville.edu. For more information about the employee wellness program visit, millersville.edu/hr/wellness/index.php.
Need to Know:  
Call for Facilitators

The One Book, One Campus Committee has selected *The Influencing Machine* by Brooke Gladstone for the 2012-2013 academic year. Written by the co-host of National Public Radio’s “On the Media,” Gladstone covers a wide span of history to debunk the belief that the media exerts one-way control over the public. Instead of a machine that supposedly influences us, the media is just as likely to reflect the perspectives we already believe, given our ability to select and filter what we see and hear. The book challenges us to question our trust in “objectivity” and exposes many of our most powerful yet least noticed biases.

The goal of this program is to provide a shared intellectual experience for all new students, and present an opportunity for members of the Millersville University community to interact with students in an informal discussion that engages critical thinking. A highlight of the program is book discussions for all new students as a part of New Student Orientation on **Friday, August 24.**

The One Book, One Campus Committee is currently recruiting facilitators to lead discussion groups with incoming students during orientation. Faculty, staff and administrators are encouraged to participate. Facilitators will receive a copy of *The Influencing Machine* and a facilitator’s guide with discussion questions to assist you in planning your session. We will also offer optional training sessions in late July and early August. Discussion groups will be composed of approximately 20 students and an orientation leader. Academic programming related to our One Book will center on a panel discussion in mid-October with the author, a media artist (Martha Rosler, the Conrad Nelson lecturer) and an academic who specializes in media.

One Book hopes that faculty will consider integrating this text into their courses where appropriate. If you are willing to serve as a facilitator of a book discussion group on Friday, August 24, fill out this online form: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dE9WTGZIUjFMQUNJOEVhS3dxdmF1ZFE6MQ](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/viewform?formkey=dE9WTGZIUjFMQUNJOEVhS3dxdmF1ZFE6MQ)

For more information, contact Caleb Corkery, One Book, One Campus committee chair, at [Caleb.Corkery@millersville.edu](mailto:Caleb.Corkery@millersville.edu) or 717-872-3655.
5/17/2012 Activities

Here are the faculty and staff activities for May 17, 2012.

Faculty and Staff Activities

Dr. Sherlynn Bessick, learning services, recently presented her department’s current research in critical thinking, ADHD coaching and disability services at the 6th Annual Disability Matters Conference held in Newark, N.J., April 18-19. Bessick presented the importance of preparing all students with critical thinking skills throughout their education because it is one of the attributes of graduates that prospective employers value the most. Bessick also presented the importance of students with disabilities thoroughly understanding their disability to advocate for reasonable accommodations during their education and for future employment.

Dr. Richard Clark, earth sciences, was an invited presenter and panelist at the 2012 American Meteorological Society (AMS) Washington Forum at the University of California Washington Center, Washington D.C. The theme of the forum, which was organized by the AMS Board on Enterprise Economic Development, part of the AMS Commission on the Weather and Climate Enterprise, was “Toward a Weather, Water and Climate-Ready Nation.” The 170 participants represented all sectors of the enterprise. In addition to Clark’s presentation, which focused on the new Master of Science in Integrated Scientific Applications program at Millersville University, speakers included representatives from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Congress, U.S. Agency for International Development, the World Bank and the World Meteorological Organization.

Dr. Rich Mehrenberg, special education, has been accepted to serve as an expert reviewer for the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders (NPDC). As an expert reviewer, he will recommend evidence-based intervention practices for individuals with autism. More information on the project can be found at the NPDC website autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/.

Dr. James Pannafino, art & design, spoke at the Antonelli Institute, in Glenside, Pa., on April 25. The title of his talk was “The Future Of Interactive Web Design: Function And Technology.” On April 27 he spoke at Messiah College, in Grantham, Pa., on “Function and Time: Showing Passion in a Digital Portfolio.”

Drs. Karen Rice and Heather Girvin, social work, presented a workshop entitled “Differences in Power: An Ethnographic Study of Child Welfare Dependency Hearings” at the Human Rights,
Social Justice and Qualitative Research Forum held April 21 in New York, N.Y. The conference is part of Fordham University’s Be The Evidence Project, which is aimed at utilizing qualitative methodology to bring about social change.

Who Makes Millersville Special

This issue of the Exchange features John Baltzer, alcohol and other drug counselor/instructor at Millersville University.

Q: How long have you been working at Millersville University?
A: I began in the spring of 2005.

Q: What made you choose Millersville?
A: I was working at Wellspan at the time and friends of mine brought me the newspaper ad and told me that this job was a perfect fit. I have been very glad that I took their suggestion.

Q: What was the first job you ever had?
A: I’ve been working with adolescents and families since 1976. Beginning in 1984, I ran a residential program that evolved into a Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Problems (BDAP) licensed inpatient non-hospital treatment facility for adolescent males and their families with alcohol and other drug problems.

Q: Where did you attend college? What degree(s) did you earn?
A: A bachelor’s degree from Mansfield University (then Mansfield State College). I later became a Certified Addictions Counselor (CAC) in Pennsylvania and later an International Certified Addictions Counselor. Last year they were both renamed Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC).

Q: Why did you choose to become an addiction counselor?
A: Like much in life it was a process. In about 1985 while poring over some data, we realized that 90 percent of our clients and families had significant alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems. Not surprisingly, I began to see the impact that my family’s history of AOD issues had on me and became actively involved in recovery and therapy. Some time ago I found myself resonating strongly to Robert Bly talking about the derivation of the word ‘genius,’ which translated as “where our wound is.” It became clear that I was being groomed to do this work all along. Several years later, at the urging of a colleague, I pursued certification for the work I had been doing for some time.

Q: Do you know how many people you’ve helped throughout your career?
A: After a very quick mental accounting I’ve worked with more than 1,500 – there were those that I never reached. The remainder moved along the continuum of change to improve their understanding, intention or behavior and, as a result, the quality of their lives.
Q: What’s the hardest part about being an addiction counselor? What’s the most rewarding?
A: One of the most difficult things is caring about and watching those whose addiction has progressed to the stage where it is causing significant pain and unmanageability for themselves and those around them, but who are too sick to see it or those who aren’t ready to accept the help necessary to be whole and healthy. They invariably spiral into the abyss, dragging those that they love along with them. I have learned to accept that as a part of powerlessness, and it hurts much less than when I was the one responsible for saving everyone, every time.

The rewards may be as small as a watching a new insight flicker across their face, watching someone smile red-cheeked as they heard their distorted thinking spoken out loud or hearing about a first success with a new tool. I am deeply honored to frequently be the first person in the lives of those I work with that they have trusted. When people trust, they get down to the real deal. The hard work begins when they take two steps forward and one step back. They begin to blossom. I get to see them adjust or radically alter their paradigms. I delight in the many celebrations of risk taking (large or small). I see folks reduce their drinking to healthy levels; many chose abstinence and, with support, succeed. They gain the ability to trust others and to understand, as well as set, healthy boundaries. They learn to let go of toxic shame, hopelessness and their failure identity. They see how previous trauma, stress and their unresolved issues with their family of origin are causing pain; that they have learned to medicate with substances, food, sex, work, gambling, spending, etc. Many discover other DSMIV disorders that need treatment. This helps remove triggers that exacerbate their problems with AOD and make harm reduction difficult. Lots of folks that I work with find and learn to cherish their authentic selves. It is one of my many blessings, to be a part of their journeys.

Q: What is your role as Millersville’s alcohol and other drug counselor?
A: Many call me the AOD Guy. The secondary gain of my role is raising GPAs. I was hired to facilitate or consult in AOD “Harm Reduction.” Along with others I run an experiential “alcohol 101” program designed for freshmen called CHOICES. Most of the students I see in my office are there for Code of Conduct violations. Some of those are seen in BASICS groups with a follow-up session and most of the others in two Motivational Interviewing individual sessions. Students who are struggling with changing their AOD habits or those working on long-term sobriety come weekly or biweekly. Some students self refer. Others come at the suggestion of people who care. Some are levered by family, faculty, coaches, employers and the courts. My goal is to have each of these students take an honest look at their relationships with alcohol and other drugs, evaluate how well that is working out for them and, if necessary, how they can reduce harm, both in the short and long term. When appropriate I recommend and refer out for outpatient, intensive outpatient or inpatient treatment, as well as encourage reaching out to others for support. I frequently refer to others here on the Counseling Center team for other Axis I and II issues. I am a big supporter of AA and other 12 Step groups and a long time friend of Bill W. I act as consultant and do outreach for the University, parents, faculty, community and high risk groups like Greeks and athletes. Additionally, I do interviews or write articles for Student Health 101, the Snapper, Stall Talk, the Parent’s Newsletter and local media. I serve on several student health-related committees. I look for and accept any opportunity to spread the word. And, for those who chose to drink or use and still have the ability to do, I am here to help them discover
how to get all of the good things out of a relationship alcohol and other drugs and none of the less good things.

Q: Is there one piece of wisdom or advice you try to impart to your students or patients?  
A: To learn who we are at the core of our beings and we are capable of unimaginable change and acceptance. That we are each valuable, beautiful, loveable and capable. That we are created with everything that we need to not only survive, but to have a life of quality and grace, regardless of what has happened and what we have learned thus far in our lives. That we are neither dependent nor independent but inter-dependent. I guess that is more than one piece of wisdom. Consider it a four-fer.

Q: Your profession in particular must take an emotional toll at times, how do you cope?  
A: Believe it or not, this work actually nourishes me. The stress comes balancing the number of clients, outreach/Harm Reduction Work and the paper work. On weekends and over breaks I do what I love to do. This is a great job! I probably shouldn’t put this in print but, in addition to all this good stuff, they actually deposit money in my bank account every other Friday. What a deal.

Q: Do you do any work as a counselor outside of the University?  
A: For the last 11 years I provided counseling for a group home of 15 adolescent females that recently succumbed to the economy and cutbacks to social services.

Q: If you’re having a bad day, what’s the one thing that can turn it around?  
A: I take a deep breath and look for the truth and beauty around me, then remind myself of something that came to me relatively late in life; something that my wife has long believed, and had tried to convince me of for years: “John Ray, it all works out just the way that it is supposed to.” In much the same vein I will often recite the Serenity Prayer aloud.

Q: What’s one thing most people on campus don’t know about you?  
A: That coming to see the AOD Guy, as a result of leverage or sanction for an AOD violation is not only “Not as bad as I thought” but that folks usually learn something, are never judged and that we will likely spend a fair amount of our time together laughing and crying.

Q: If you weren’t a counselor what would you want to be?  
A: It would likely be more nature-oriented like fishery/wildlife management and research, but I never really thought about it.

Q: What’s the biggest change you’ve seen in the counseling profession since you began your career?  
A: That there has been a long, painful coming together of the medical, mental health and addiction fields. We now deeply understand the dynamics of addiction and what impedes and supports recovery. Historically it was a turf war that harmed our clients. The mental health worker would address only the underlying DSMIV diagnosis, the doctors would utilize a medicinal cure and the addiction folks thought that the alcoholism itself was the only or most important aspect of presenting symptomology. We now know that both depression and alcoholism are Axis I disorders and that remedying one doesn’t cause the other to disappear.
That while medication is often an integral part of recovery some drugs are addicting and when administered as the only treatment modality, rarely result in long-term sobriety. Like other important things on this planet, it takes a village.

**Q: If you were to create a bucket list, what would be one item on your list?**
A: To have a few dear friends climb aboard a float plane that had canoes lashed to the pontoons, land on a river that I couldn’t pronounce without help and catch salmon longer than my leg until the drag on my fly reel screamed UNCLE!

**Q: Who has been the most influential person in your life? Why?**
A: I thought about this question a great deal. There is no single influential person. I have been loved and supported and have learned much from family, friends and caring colleagues. I have read, listened to or talked with Tom Feldman, Gene Hill, Salvadore Minuchin, Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse, Ann Smith, David Treadway, Pia Melody, John Bradshaw and Bill Wilson, Thom Hartmann, Ed Hallowell and I am very grateful for their contributions and how it allowed me to help others, as well as improve the quality of my life.

**Q: Do you have a favorite weekend activity?**
A: I am a lover of family and the great out of doors (year round). That and activities with our grandbabies are tops on my list of what to do on the weekend.

**Q: Would you rather stay in and read a good book or go to the movies?**
A: Go to the movies. I read on vacations.

**Q: What one thing in your life has been the most memorable?**
A: Attending the birth of our two sons.