Recent Grad Has Sights Set on Helping Her Native Haiti

Growing up in Ouanaminthe, Haiti, exposed Millersville student Marie-Claire Charles to the desperate need for shelter, food and education among the runaway boys in her community. The need for improvement fueled Charles to come to the United States. While studying at Millersville, Charles made the decision to set a personal goal for herself of coordinating mission trips and service learning projects and of opening a house to shelter those in need in her hometown.

Charles, who graduated from Millersville with her bachelor of arts in international studies on May 10, plans to return to Haiti to help improve the living conditions of runaway boys living on the streets of Ouanaminthe, many of whom cross the border to the Dominican Republic looking for a way to survive.

“I have lived in Ouanaminthe and have seen the desperate need there,” said Charles. “I hope to provide shelter, food and hopefully education to them.”

Charles came to Millersville thanks to host families in Lancaster she was connected with from her high school, Institution Univers. She had the distinction of being one of five granted a scholarship to study in the United States.

After receiving the scholarship, Charles ended up in Lancaster, where the women of the host families, whom she refers to as “moms,” took turns hosting her, traveling alongside her and organizing fund raisers to pay her tuition.

“It didn’t take long until we became one big family,” said Charles “These ladies…my moms, are all and each very dear to my heart.”

A native Creole speaker—a language she describes as “simple but complicated”—Charles took linguistic and English as a second language courses at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC), dedicating her time to learning the language and academic styles in her new country. After spending two years at HACC, she transferred to Millersville at the guidance of her host families.

“I didn’t know much about the university, but when I came for a tour, I knew that I wanted to be here,” said Charles. “I wouldn’t have chosen anywhere else.”
As her three years of working towards her degree in international studies with a minor in business have come to a close, Marie-Claire has set her sights on returning to Haiti to help those in need.

“The realization of this goal will be my way of saying ‘thank you’ to my moms and the other people who have helped me in one way or another during these past five years,” said Charles. “My experience at Millersville University will forever be a significant part of my life.”

**University Joins Minors on Campus Task Force and Stop It Now Initiative**

Millersville University and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) system are participating in the “Minors on Campus Task Force” and a new initiative “Stop it Now!”

“The need for the task force and initiative emerged in light of new statistics released that one in six boys and one in four girls will be sexually abused before age 18 and because of concern over what happened at Penn State,” explained Dr. Aminta Breaux, vice president of student affairs and interim vice president of development and alumni relations. “The University is committed to making sure we do everything possible to protect children.”

Millersville’s police chief, Pete Anders, is serving on the Minors on Campus Task Force that is working on a policy each campus will be adopting. “We want to let parents and the community know that we can be trusted with the care of minors. We welcome parent questions and observation of any academic program or camp at Millersville,” said Anders.

The Stop it Now! Initiative is to raise awareness about child sexual abuse on college campuses. “We are developing a model that can be disseminated on campuses across the country,” said Breaux.

As part of the Stop It Now! Initiative, Millersville and other PASSHE schools have teamed up to develop a first-of-its-kind program that will train “Prevention Squads” to help prevent child sexual victimization on college campuses.

“We will be providing education and awareness to all of our employees to make sure they are knowledgeable about the initiatives and know how and when to make reports,” said Breaux.
Participants from all 14 PASSHE universities eventually will take part in an extensive two-day program developed in collaboration with Stop It Now! The pilot program will provide participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to help prevent children from becoming victims of sexual abuse. They will form “NOW! PASSHE Prevention Squads,” which will lead the prevention efforts at their respective universities.

“PASSHE’s staff and faculty have so many circles of influence and have the ability based on their positions to help to shape and create a culture of prevention,” said Deb Donovan Rice, executive director of Stop It Now! “If they prevent one child from being abused or create a safer and more protective environment for a child that has been victimized to ask for help through this program, then PASSHE has succeeded.”

Through the generosity of a donor focused on awareness and training in a college setting, Now! was able to take past research and its “Circles of Safety” modules to create a training program relevant to PASSHE universities to ensure that needs are met and issues are addressed. After the pilot training has been reviewed, it will serve as a training model for universities and colleges across the country. Training sessions were held in April and will begin again in October.

Flying with the Hawks

If you’re dreaming of spending a part of the summer on a beautiful mountain with trees, flowers, shrubs and lots of birds, you may want to speak to Dr. Aaron Haines. Haines is working on a service learning project on Hawk Mountain that involves calling, finding and counting broad-winged hawks. And, he could use some help.

“I’m looking for volunteers who would like to conduct research that will benefit the local community,” said Haines. “The broad-winged hawks come to Pennsylvania from South and Central America for one purpose, to mate. Hawk Mountain wants to find their nests and log the GPS coordinates. They also want to monitor the birds and what they eat and would eventually like to put transmitters on them to track their movements.”

Haines, who started in the biology department at Millersville in summer 2012, is no stranger to research. He opened the Millersville Applied Conservation Lab in 116 Caputo Hall, where he has been overseeing a soil research project that looks at whether soil has been baited for wildlife illegally.
“The purpose of the lab is to find applied solutions to conservation problems,” said Haines. “For example, the use of bait can be seen as an unfair advantage that can potentially narrow the distinction between game animal and domestic animal, which jeopardizes public trust protection given to game animals. While the use of bait to hunt wildlife is illegal in many states such as Pennsylvania, commercial baits to attract white-tailed deer are readily available to consumers at common retail sporting goods stores.”

Millersville students Meta Griffin (who graduated on May 10) and Tristan Conrad have been conducting a research project to help Pennsylvania conservation officers ID bait sites in the field. Many commercial baits contain distinct ingredients including sugars, proteins, chloride, phosphorous, magnesium, calcium, etc. The objective of their research is to conduct soil tests on areas where commercial baits had been placed in comparison to non-baited sites to determine if chemical signatures are left by commercial baits.

Their research was presented at the recent Made in Millersville: A Celebration of Student Scholarship and Creativity. The Applied Conservation Lab is also involved in other research projects. To see details on these projects, visit the Lab’s webpage at http://www.millersville.edu/academics/scma/biology/Applied%20Conservation%20Lab/Home%20Page.php.

The FPDC is Back, Grants Funding is Up

After a two-year hiatus, the Faculty Professional Development Council (FPDC) is funding grants again. FPDC grants program is funded by the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). Millersville faculty submitted 16 proposals and six were funded. In addition, Dr. Rene Muñoz, director of Sponsored Programs & Research Administration at Millersville, says overall funding for grants is up approximately 25 percent over last year.

“We requested about the same amount last year,” said Muñoz. “However, we were funded better this year. I believe we had better proposals, and we have some new faculty who are aggressively pursuing grants as well.” Last year Millersville received approximately $3.2 million in grants, and this year the number is close to $4.5 million.

The largest grant funded this year was submitted by Dr. Richard Clark, earth sciences. Clark, along with Dr. Todd Sikora, received $290,000 for the Plains Elevated Convection at Night
Exchange
May 15, 2014

(PECAN) study. Clark also received funding from NASA in the amount of $240,000 to participate in the final of four campaigns to study air pollution.

“We have participated in DISCOVER-AQ in campaigns to study the Baltimore-Washington airshed (Summer 2011), Central Valley, Calif. (Winter 2013) and Houston, Texas (Summer 2013),” explained Clark. “This summer we will be deploying the Millersville University Atmospheric Research and Aerostat Facility (MARAF) at Table Mountain near Golden, Colo."

A $1,000,000 grant to the National Science Foundation is currently pending. This grant, submitted by Dr. Judith Cebra-Thomas, biology, with help from five other faculty members: Drs. Natalia Dushkina, Ajoy Kumar, Robert Smith, Tyrone Washington and LaVern Whisenton-Davidson, would provide summer research experiences for Millersville students hoping for STEM careers.

**School of Education Receives Seven-Year Accreditation**

“Current and prospective students can be assured that they are enrolling in programs of national distinction with outstanding faculty and quality curriculum,” said Dr. Doyin Coker-Kolo, associate dean, in announcing that the School of Education has received accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) recently consolidated into CAEP, as the new accrediting body for educator preparation and informed Millersville that the school has met all of the accreditation standards.

The accreditation is good for seven years from 2014 to 2021. NCATE accreditation is a process by which Schools of Education are evaluated as a whole for their effectiveness in complying with external standards of excellence. It gives national recognition to all undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs and programs for other professionals including school psychology, leadership for teaching and learning and school counseling.

“It means that Millersville educator preparation programs continue to meet national professional standards in addition to standards set by the state,” said Coker-Kolo.
“This was a university-wide effort and is great news for our students, faculty, staff, community members and school district staff,” said Dr. Vilas Prabhu, provost and vice president for academic affairs. “We very much appreciate all the hard work and effort that has gone into making this a successful accreditation visit.”

A lot of time and work went into the accreditation process according to Dr. Helena Tuleya-Payne, interim dean of the School of Education. “From preparing the materials, participating in our poster-session/round table discussions, escorting and transporting our visitors, and attending our break-out sessions, the participation and dedication of our faculty, students, staff and school partners could not be more evident. We demonstrated consistently why MU is a special place.”

Millersville has been NCATE accredited since 1981.

**Women’s Rugby Plays at National Tournament**

The Millersville University Women’s Rugby Club has made headlines once again—this time for qualifying for the national sevens tournament held in Michigan on the first weekend in May. At the tournament, Millersville placed fifth and club member Megan McGuigan was selected to the all star team.

Six teams were divided into two pools of three teams each. Each team played a round-robin tournament within their pool, in which each team played every other team.

In Pool A with Millersville were South Dakota State University and Mount St. Mary’s University. Pool B was made up of Albright College, Tiffin University, and Wayne State College, the reigning National Small College Rugby Organization (NSCRO) champion.
After competing in Franklin & Marshall College’s Buggy Bash in early April and finishing in second place, the Marauders were given the opportunity to send an application to be considered for nationals and were chosen as one of six schools to participate.

“The Buggy Bash was our first time playing in a sevens match, and we went there just thinking we would gain some experience,” said Christina Houck, club president. “We ended up getting second place in the tournament, which we were very proud of.”

Wayne State knocked Millersville out of the running for the NSCRO championship in the semi-finals in November. The Marauders went on to finish third in the national championship, behind Wayne State and Smith College.

Need to Know

Summer 1 2014
Group Fitness Schedule
Classes Run: 5/12-6/6

- Faculty and Staff who do not have a fitness center membership can pay the $4 day fee to attend classes.

Yoga
Mon./Wed.- 6-7p.m.
Tues./Fri.- 12:15-1:15p.m.

Spin
Tues. - 5:30-6:30p.m.
Thurs. - 3:30-4:15p.m.
Zumba
Mon. - 7-8p.m.

Bodyworks
Thurs. - 12:15-1:15p.m.

5/15/14 Activities

Here are the faculty and staff activities for May 15, 2014.

Faculty and Staff Activities

**Admissions Director Announced for Millersville**

Millersville University has announced that Katy Ferrier has been named director of admissions for the University, effective May 2.

Ferrier obtained both her bachelor’s degree in psychology and master’s degree in education/school counseling from Millersville University prior to joining the admissions office in 2011. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in education from Temple University. During her tenure at Millersville she has held several positions, including admission counselor, assistant director/out-of-state recruitment coordinator and most recently as interim director of recruitment and operations.

Notably, she developed and implemented the University’s out-of-state recruitment plan, which increased out-of-state applications by 32 percent and increased out-of-state yield by 81 percent. Previously, Ferrier worked within Millersville’s housing and residential programs as a residence hall director.

Ferrier is a native of Chester County, Pa., and currently resides in Lancaster.
Dr. Sherlynn Bessick, Office of Learning Services, presented the ADA Amendments Act 2008 and new revisions related to documentation guidelines and service/comfort animals for post-secondary institutions at the Lancaster-Lebanon IU 13 Transition Fair for Students with Disabilities. The fair was held on March 26. She was also a keynote speaker for the Testing Agency Disability Forum held April 6-8 in Rockville, Md. She presented “International Test Takers with Disabilities Seeking Accommodations for High Stakes Testing: A Complex Case on Dyslexia.” And on April 30, she presented “The Challenge of Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders” for the Center for Academic Excellence in the McNairy Library and Learning Forum.

Dr. Judy Halden-Sullivan, English, co-edited and co-contributed to—with Thomas Fink—the book-length study “Reading the Difficulties: Dialogues with Contemporary American Innovative Poetry,” which was published by the University of Alabama Press in January 2014. She contributed both the book’s introduction and an essay titled “The Game of Self-Forgetting: Reading Innovative Poetry Reading Gadamer” (pp. 127-145) to this anthology.

Dr. Rich Mehrenberg, elementary and early childhood education, recently had his critique of the book “Generation Bullied 2.0,” published in the journal Education Review. The online version of the article can be found at the following site: http://www.edrev.info/reviews/rev1280.pdf.

Dr. E. Elliott Seda, educational foundations, was invited to present his paper titled “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Urban Teachers” at the Peace Building Conference: The Accretion of Peace: Ideas for Building Peace in our Communities, Harrisburg Area Community College, Harrisburg Campus on April 26.

Retired

Dr. Dennis Denenberg, professor emeritus of elementary education, was recently honored by Phi Beta Kappa for a “Behind the Key” feature. In their online feature they noted, “As a former public school social studies teacher, he has spent much of his life learning about America's heroes and sharing their stories with other educators. In true liberal arts fashion, Dennis Denenberg, a political science major, credits his freshman fine arts course at William and Mary for having the most impact on him.”

Obituaries

Madelyn Elicker, 85, died April 26. She had worked as an administrative assistant in the Millersville State College infirmary.
Edward Paul Hess, 63, of Lancaster, died April 23. He was an adjunct professor at Millersville University, where he taught classes in philosophy and psychology.

Who Makes Millersville Special

This edition of Who Makes Millersville Special features Dr. Alex DeCaria, earth sciences professor.

Q: How long have you been at Millersville?

A: I started at Millersville in the fall semester of 2000.

Q: Some of the courses you teach like atmospheric dynamics and thermodynamics sound pretty intimidating. How do you explain to people outside the university your areas of study?

A: I try to explain to them that meteorology is really the physics and chemistry of the atmosphere. To many people, meteorology is simply the pretty maps on TV and the local weather forecast. What they don’t understand is that meteorology is the entire study of the atmosphere and all the processes that occur within it. Our meteorology majors are required to take the same amount of mathematics classes as a physics major.

Q: One of your current interests is the use of Python programming language. That sounds scary. Can you tell us about that?

A: Computer programming and literacy have always been very important in meteorology. Python is one of the newer computer programming languages and is rapidly gaining usage in the
sciences for its intuitive syntax and ease of use. Rather than being intimidating, many students seem to enjoy learning it and using it for solving problems and displaying data graphically. And, it helps them get jobs and into graduate school.

Q: Why did you choose Millersville?

A: When I was finishing my Ph.D. at the University of Maryland, my wife and I were looking for academic jobs, primarily in the western U.S. where I am from. However, we saw a listing for the job at MU that looked like it had been written specifically for me. We looked it up on a map (I had never even heard of Millersville at the time), and decided to drive up to see the campus. We liked what we saw, and applied. I had another job offer at the Naval Research Laboratory in Monterey, Calif., but comparing the cost of living, quality of life and environment for raising children, we chose Millersville.

Q: What is your favorite part of being a professor?

A: Besides working with some very talented and enjoyable students, one of the main reasons I enjoy being a professor is that I am not allowed to ever forget anything I’ve learned, and in fact am still learning new things regularly. I feel like I’ve gained an entirely new Ph.D. just in the time that I’ve been teaching, since in order to teach something well you really have to understand it thoroughly yourself.

Q: If you could change anything in your job, what would it be?

A: As with most faculty, I suspect, I would love to have a robot to do my grading for me. I love everything about teaching except grading!

Q: Do you remember students you had when you first started teaching?

A: I certainly do! I always enjoy seeing former students at homecoming or at professional conferences. I especially remember many of the students during my first few years, as we were all new to campus and learning our way around.

Q: Did you always want to be a professor?

A: No. My goal for many years (since ninth grade) was to be a naval officer. Since I always enjoyed math and physics, I chose meteorology as my major in college, figuring that it was a good subject for a ship’s captain to know. I never intended on working as a meteorologist, let alone teaching it. But, after a few years in the Navy, I realized I didn’t want to drive ships the rest of my life, and since I had a meteorology degree, I was able to become a meteorology and oceanography officer. The Navy sent me for my master’s degree, and that is when I really fell in love with the academic aspects of meteorology and decided that I wanted to get a Ph.D. and teach it.
Q: You recently finished writing a book: “A First Course in Atmospheric Numerical Modeling.” Tell us about that project. How long did it take? Why did you write it?

A: One of the things I was hired to do was to develop a course on numerical weather modeling. After several attempts at trying to find a suitable textbook to use for the course, I decided I would just have to write my own. At the time there was another faculty, Dr. Glenn Van Knowe, who was also enthused about the project and agreed to write the book with me. It has taken nearly 12 years to finally finish the book, but I am glad it took that long because I have learned a lot in those years, and the book is better for it.

Q: You spent 11 years as a surface warfare officer and meteorology/oceanography officer in the U.S. Navy. Tell us about that.

A: Growing up in Utah, I always dreamed of traveling, and the Navy seemed to be an ideal opportunity. My older brother was also in the Navy, and his stories inspired me. I went through Navy ROTC at the University of Utah and was commissioned an ensign in 1985. I served over two years on the USS Enterprise, a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, as a surface warfare officer. I then switched to the meteorology career field and was stationed in Iceland; Monterey, Calif; Jacksonville, Fla.; and finally Guam. I really enjoyed the Navy and all the places I traveled to, but once I had children, the thought of leaving them for long stretches was sad. So, I left the Navy with the rank of Lieutenant Commander in 1996 in order to pursue my Ph.D. at the University of Maryland. My wife stayed in the Navy and is now retired.

Q: What was your very first job?

A: My first job was in high school, working at my local county public library putting books back on the shelves. I worked there for four years and have always had a soft spot in my heart for libraries ever since.

Q: Tell us all the places you have lived. Do you have a favorite?

A: I grew up in Utah and lived in the same house for 22 years, until I graduated from college. While in the Navy, I lived in the San Francisco, Calif., area; Iceland; Jacksonville, Fla.; and Guam. I also live in Bowie, Md., while attending the U. of MD. My favorite place that I lived was Monterey, Calif. We would love to retire there!

Q: What’s your favorite food?

A: There are too many to narrow down, but if I had to pick, it would my wife’s chicken enchiladas.

Q: Favorite vacation spot?

A: Anywhere in the mountains or by the ocean.
Q: Have you read any good books lately?

A: I just finished rereading “Moby Dick,” by Herman Melville. It is one of my all-time favorites!

Q: Did you have mentors/heroes growing up? If so, who were they and what were some of their qualities?

A: My mentor is Dr. Malcolm Harvey, my high-school physics teacher. I was rather aimless academically until I took his physics class. After that, I knew I wanted to study science. He is now retired and living on a cattle ranch in Wyoming, but I still go visit him every few years.

Q: Tell us about your family.

A: I am the youngest of nine siblings. My nickname in my family is Golden Boy because by the time my parents got to me, they were worn out, and I got away with a lot more than my older siblings. I am married to Marcia, who is a retired naval officer and meteorologist. Both my sons currently attend Millersville. Victor is a senior math major, and is heading to the University of Pittsburgh to work on his Ph.D. Michael is a first-year physics major.

Q: Anything else you want to add?

A: I have always been interested in trains and railroad photography. Both of my grandfathers were railroad men. I tell my wife, only half-jokingly, that the only career I would trade being a professor for is being a train engineer!