



## Academic Affairs Mission

Under the direction of the provost, the Office of Academic Affairs at Cal U comprises three undergraduate colleges and the School of Graduate Studies and Research. The Office of Academic Affairs supports the mission of building the character and careers of individuals by ensuring quality academic programs, classroom technology, student enrichment activities, and world-class instruction. California University of PA provides students with the tools they need to have a lifetime of success, both educationally and professionally.

# Academic Affairs Newsletter

## From the Desk of Acting Provost Dr. Barnhart

“It’s summertime, and the living is easy.”

That’s the old saying about summer. It may be easy, but summer is also a very busy time at the University. This year, we have a full schedule of summer courses, both face-to-face and online.

Cal U’s online offerings are a convenient way for students to earn a few credits while maintaining their summer job or enjoying their vacation from the academic year schedule. As I write this, enrollment for summer is between 4 and 5 percent higher than the same time last year.

We have important field work courses taking place in geology and other disciplines, as well as the storm chasing course taught by our meteorologists. Our students can be found all over the world, completing valuable internships and studying abroad. We have students this summer in faraway places like Thailand, Costa Rica and Norway, and closer to home in places like Nevada and Ohio.

There is also a full slate of cultural and academic activities on campus. For example, the Department of Theatre and Dance is again sponsoring the Mon Valley

Performing Arts Academy this summer. Steve Whitehead and Chris Allen are conducting “A Summer of STEAM,” with many activities at the Southpointe campus. Jodie Rooney and Marisa Gillis are preparing for another SEEK program, aimed at students entering first through eighth grades.

Whether you are working, taking courses, or simply relaxing, I hope that you have a safe and productive summer. Be sure to enjoy the time away from the regular routine of the traditional school year, and to stop and smell the roses.

*Bruce D. Barnhart*



Nine student delegates from the Childhood Education Department attended the *Student Pennsylvania State Education Association (SPSEA) Conference and Convention* in Hershey, PA, April 9-11, 2015. Pictured left to right are Hillary Stahl, Courtney Seman, Jessalyn Stanchfield, Alicia Mankey, Katie DeSantis, Briana O’Neal, Erica Johnson, Jessica Dethlefs, and Mia Rigatti.



Dr. Libby Larsen (Modern Languages, Philosophy and Socio-Cultural Studies) has earned two national certifications: a National Professional Certification of Mediation and a Certificate of Alternative Dispute Resolution, both 40-hour certifications in the rapidly growing fields of mediation and alternative dispute resolution.

Dr. Larsen is the coordinator for the new Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution, which includes courses written and taught by Cal U faculty in sociology, psychology, history and political science, communication studies, professional studies, and philosophy.

## Office of Sponsored Programs and Research

The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research reports that 13 Cal U faculty and staff received notification of new grant awards totaling \$124,724 during this quarter.

Mr. Craig Butzine (Marketing and University Relations) was awarded \$25,000 in additional funds from the PA Dept. of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the grant *Marchezak Farm Stream Mitigation Project*.

Dr. Jennifer Wilburn and Prof. Joseph Schickel (AET) were awarded \$24,586 from the National Science Foundation for the grant *Technicians in Energy, Advanced Manufacturing and Supply Chain Technology (TEAMS) Project 2015-2016*.

Dr. Susan Ryan (Earth Sciences) was awarded \$10,500 from the Gettysburg Travel Council, Inc., for the grant *Gettysburg Visitor Study 2015-2016*.

Dr. Sheri Boyle (Social Work) was awarded \$10,000 from Southwestern Pennsylvania Human Services CONNECT for the grant *Evaluation Services for the 21st Century Community Learning LEARN Afterschool Program 2015*.

Dr. Justin Hackett (Psychology) was awarded \$10,000 from the PASSHE Faculty Professional Development Council for the grant *Needs Assessment for the Child and Family Studies Institute*.

## Faculty & Staff Presentations

Cal U celebrated faculty and student research at the first *Strike a Spark Conference* held April 14, 2015, in the Convocation Center. More than 70 students presented abstracts and/or posters highlighting their research.

Dr. John D. Massella (Counseling Center) presented a keynote address "Gambling and the Crossover with Other Addictions" at the *Second Annual Problem Gambling Conference* at Cal U, April 2, 2015.

Dr. Thomas Mueller (Earth Sciences) presented "Together We Build: Academia and Industry" at the *ESIR Petroleum GIS User Conference*, in Houston, TX, April 8-10, 2015.

Dr. Mary O'Connor (Nursing), Dr. Alfonso Vergary (History and Political Science), Dr. Ambrus Price (History and Political Science), Dr. Gregory Spicer (Communication Studies), and Dr. Michelle Torregano (Childhood Education) were panelists in the American Democracy Project's presentation "Wicked Problems," a discussion on socio-cultural problems such as poverty, sustainability, and equality that are difficult, if not impossible, to solve, at Cal U, April 23, 2015.

Dr. Thao Pham (Social Work) presented a paper "Establish Roots: Localizing Human Trafficking in Spain" at the *Annual Society for Applied Anthropology Conference* in Pittsburgh, PA,

March 27, 2015.

Dr. Nancy Shaffer (Philosophy) presented "Dante Alighieri, Nicholas of Cusa and Twelfth-Century Platonism" at the *Annual Meeting of the Renaissance Society of America* in Berlin, Germany, March 26, 2015.

Dr. Craig Alan Smith (History and Political Science) presented a paper "Sitting by Designation: An Historical Analysis of Institutional and Interpersonal Dynamics when Retired Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark Served on Lower Federal Courts, 1967-1977" at the *Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference*, in Chicago, IL, April 18-19, 2015.

## Faculty & Staff Publications

Dr. Melanie J. Blumberg (History and Political Science), with William C. Binning and John C. Green, published "Report from Youngstown: Causes and consequences of local party endorsements" in *The State of the Parties: The Changing Role of American Political Parties*, 6th ed., John C. Green and Daniel Coffee (Eds.), Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2015.

Dr. Margaret Christopher (Social Work) reviewed an article "Effect of a randomized anti-stigma school-based intervention on received and delivered problem behaviors" for the *American Journal of Public Health*, April 2015.

Dr. Kevin Govern (Professional Studies) co-edited and co-authored the book *Cyber War: Law and Ethics for Virtual Conflicts*

with Jens David Ohlin and Claire Finkelstein (Oxford: Oxford University Press), May 2015.

Dr. Kevin Govern (Professional Studies) authored the column "The Arab League Joint Military Force: Countering Extremism and Political Instability" on the website *Jurist*, Academic Commentary page, April 2015.

## Faculty & Staff Accomplishments

Dr. John Cencich (Criminal Justice) was designated by the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) as an official delegate to the 13th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Doha, Qatar, April 12-19, 2015. Dr. Cencich is the incoming chair of the International Section of ACJS and a former United Nations officer.

Dr. Dawn Moeller (Student Services), Dr. Chad Kauffman (Earth Sciences) and Dr. Carol Bocetti (Biological and Environmental Science) co-organized and served as panelists for the event *The Human Relationship to Climate Change* at Cal U, April 28, 2015.

Dr. Michele Pagen (Theatre and Dance) directed *Showcase 2015*, an end-of-year performance of students who have been studying at the Mon Valley Performing Arts Academy throughout the year, May 2, 2015. Sixty students between the ages of 4 and 22 performed songs, scenes and dances for family, friends and the community.

Dr. Emily M. Sweitzer (Modern Languages, Philosophy and Socio-Cultural Studies) consulted with six writers of the television drama *Bones* on the development of a new professional character to be introduced for the fall season.



Dr. Christina Toras (Professional Studies) was selected as one of the winners of the 2015 Energy Leadership Awards by the Pittsburgh Business Times. The award honors individuals and organizations for their efforts at advancing energy business interests in Western Pennsylvania. Toras is the developer of and program coordinator for the land management programs at Cal U.



Dr. Michelle Early Torregano (Childhood Education) hosted *The Future is Today! Recruiting and Retaining African-American Men and Women in Teacher Education Programs* conference at Cal U, May 1, 2015.

The purpose of the Heinz Endowments-funded program was to provide junior high students a variety of on-campus multicultural experiences in an effort to motivate them to attend college and introduce teacher education as a career path. Students were given the opportunity to interrelate with current college students, graduate students and alumni, as well as esteemed educators in the teaching profession.

Dr. Torregano is the advisory board member representing Cal U.



## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS STAFF

**Dr. Bruce D. Barnhart**  
Acting Provost

**Dr. Daniel E. Engstrom**  
Associate Provost  
for Student Success

**Andrew Galla**  
Application Developer

**Kathy Gavazzi**  
Director of Summer College  
& Associate Registrar

**Marisa Gillis**  
Executive Staff Assistant to  
the Provost

**Pamela Murphy**  
Director of Regulatory  
Compliance

**Jodie Rooney**  
Academic Events & Act 48  
Coordinator

**Dr. Caryl Sheffield**  
Associate Provost

**Caleb Tom**  
Application Developer

**Dr. Stephen H. Whitehead**  
Associate Provost of  
Innovation

**Heidi Williams**  
Registrar

## Student & Alumni Accomplishments



Dr. Christian Conte (MS Community Counseling, '00) is starring in reality show *Coaching Bad* on Spike TV. In the show, Dr. Conte runs an anger management program for nine sports coaches with anger issues.

Alex Brown (student, Philosophy) completed an independent study in which he was accepted to attend classes at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome, Italy.

Amanda Lewis (student, BSN) was awarded the Mary Agnes Powers Memorial Scholarship from the Southwest Pennsylvania Registered Nurse Club and was accepted into Robert Morris University's DNP program for fall 2015.



Stephanie Moore (student, Communication Disorders) was selected by CMD faculty as the 2015 SWPSHA student honoree for her academic and service excellence at the Southwestern Pennsylvania Speech-Language-

Hearing Association's *Honors of the Association* event at Westmoreland IU, Greensburg, PA, April 18, 2015. Pictured are Dr. Samantha Procaccini, Stephanie Moore, and Prof. Nancy Carlino.

Kayla Zaken (student, Communication Disorders) was awarded the John Bitonti Memorial Scholarship on April 15, 2015. The award is intended to recognize an outstanding junior majoring in Communication Disorders. Kayla has a 4.00 overall GPA, is president of the Speech and Hearing Club, and participates in numerous volunteer activities. Pictured below are Dr. Samantha Procaccini, Kayla Zaken, and Dr. Barbara Bonfanti.

## Department & Program Accomplishments

The Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology has voted to re-accredit the Master of Science in Communication Disorders for a period of eight years beginning April 1, 2015.

Four Geographic Information Science students and Dr. Thomas Mueller completed a Demographic Mapping

Study for the Pittsburgh Pirates, May 4, 2015.

Social Work faculty Dr. Sheri Boyle and Dr. Norma Thomas, with Matthew Crutchman (student, MSW, and Executive Director, East End Community Center) presented "The Silver Generation Program: An Example of the Importance of Community Attachment and Aging in Place" at the *American Society of Aging*



*Conference in Chicago, IL, March 26, 2015.*

Dr. Marty Sharer and the Cal U Concert Band performed a joint concert with Community Band South at Upper St. Clair High School, April 13, 2015.