

# MUHLENBERG

WINTER 2015

THE MAGAZINE

## Randy Helm: Making 'Berg Better Wasn't Greek to Him

A Farewell Tribute to the  
College's 11th President



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WINTER 2015

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## On the Cover:

President Randy Helm, whose leadership is drawing to a close, poses in his office among ancient replicas and 'Berg memorabilia. A tribute to our 11th President is found on page 18.

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For upcoming events, news about the school and more, go to [Muhlenberg.edu](http://Muhlenberg.edu).



Alumni: Are you connected? Visit [www.MuhlenbergConnect.com](http://www.MuhlenbergConnect.com) for the latest alumni news and events.



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## The Kids Are Alright<sup>1</sup>

Well, if I thought I would solve all the world's problems – and Muhlenberg's – before retiring, I guess I was wrong.

There's still plenty left for people to worry about: terrorism, the economy, ethnic and religious prejudice, racial strife, Ebola, conflict in the Middle East, gridlock in Washington, global warming, carcinogens, college costs, Vladimir Putin, North Korea. . . . To quote from a song of my youth, "The whole world is festering with unhappy souls,"<sup>2</sup> or from one of our great contemporary philosophers, "We seem to be made to suffer, it's our lot in life."<sup>3</sup>

All this, of course, is bread and butter for the media, whose frantic alarms compete for our attention during every waking information-saturated hour.

Among our favorite and most venerable worries is the state of today's youth: their fecklessness, fragility and general unfitness to take the reins of society. Of course, members of my generation are fine ones to talk about the shortcomings of the rising generation, we of (formerly) long hair, bellbottoms, flower power, free love, hallucinogens and over amplified, overblown, pretentious rock music. But like all the generations before us, we claim the right to despair of today's student generation.

This is a trope that goes back at least 4,000 years to the ancient Sumerians and Egyptians. An Egyptian scribe around 1700 B.C. despaired of his students: "...thou forsakest writing! Thou givest thyself up to pleasures. Thou goest from street to street where it smelleth of beer..."<sup>4</sup> The fourth century A.D. philosopher Libanius complained that students disrupted his lectures by laughing, chatting about chariot-races, singing popular songs and "picking

their noses with both hands at once."<sup>5</sup>

And do not think for a moment that the Enlightenment and the Industrial Age saw any improvement in the morals of the rising generation.

In 1695, Robert Russell wrote a book of advice for the young, in which he despaired:

"I find by sad Experience how the Towns and Streets are filled with lewd wicked Children [who] curse and swear and call one another Nick-names..."<sup>6</sup>

In 1790, the Reverend Enos Hitchcock complained that, "The free access which many young people have to romances, novels, and plays has poisoned the mind and corrupted the morals of many a promising youth."<sup>7</sup>

In 1816, the *Times of London* inveighed against "The indecent foreign dance called the Waltz...It is quite sufficient to cast one's eyes on the voluptuous intertwining of the limbs, and close compression of the bodies.... We feel it a duty to warn every parent against exposing his daughter to so fatal a contagion."

In 1859, *Scientific American* opined "a pernicious excitement to learn and play chess has spread all over the country.... A mere amusement of a very inferior character, which robs the mind of valuable time that might be devoted to nobler acquirements...."

And in 1915, the psychologist Gail Harrison admonished, "We seem to have dropped into an age of entertaining, a breathless going from one sensation to another, whether it be mechanical toys for the five-year-old or moving-picture plays for the sixteen-year-old. It not only destroys their power to think, but also makes happiness, contentment, and resourcefulness impossible."<sup>8</sup>

It would seem, then, that today's college



students represent the latest (and therefore presumably the most degraded) manifestation of what the critic and literary theorist Northrop Frye once called "The Great Western Butterslide" – the common belief that western civilization has been steadily deteriorating since...well, since forever.<sup>9</sup>

Frye, of course, was anticipated in this by the Greek poet Hesiod (around 700 B.C.) who described the history of the human race as one long downward spiral into selfishness, wickedness, and frivolous lawsuits.<sup>10</sup>

One mathematically minded commentator has calculated that if each generation since the Sumerians has seen a 5% decline in virtue, then the current generation of students retains only three one hundred thousandths of the virtue of Sumerian youth. . . leaving them essentially devoid of any virtue whatsoever.<sup>11</sup>

To all of which I reply, in the words of another great college president<sup>12</sup>, "Horsefeathers!"

If there is one thing I am knowledgeable about, it is college students. Yes, there are some who treat college as an expensive four-year bacchanalia, best enjoyed on "the streets that smelleth of beer" – but not many. And

*continued on page 32*



*Dennis Williams '97 spoke at 'Berg's Celebration of Diversity event, addressing students, faculty, staff and alumni.*

## Diversity Strategic Plan Approved

Muhlenberg College's Board of Trustees approved the College's first comprehensive Diversity Strategic Plan at their fall 2014 meeting. The plan identifies six broad goals and numerous specific initiatives designed to make the campus a more diverse and inclusive community and provides the necessary resources to implement the plan. Building on past institutional efforts, the plan's six goals express Muhlenberg's diversity aspirations for the next five years. *The six goals outlined in the plan are:*

- Cultivate a campus community that is supportive of inclusion, justice and social equality.
- Actively recruit and retain a student body with increasing numbers of students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups.
- Actively recruit and retain more faculty and staff from those racial and ethnic groups that have had limited access to careers in higher education.
- Strengthen the depth and complexity of teaching and learning about diversity.
- Engage more deeply with the diverse communities of Allentown and the Lehigh Valley.
- Assign responsibility for the measurement, assessment and coordination of diversity initiatives.

President Helm, who chaired the Diversity Strategic Planning Committee, remarked, "The Muhlenberg community has strived to become more diverse and inclusive over many years, but we have been keenly aware that we could and should do better. This comprehensive

plan, our first such comprehensive plan aimed at building and sustaining a more diverse and inclusive campus community, will accelerate those efforts and enable us to fulfill more of our aspirations for the College."

The Diversity Strategic Planning Committee included four faculty elected by the faculty; two faculty appointed by the President; four students selected by the Diversity Vanguard; one student selected by the President of Student Government; three staff chosen by the President from self-nominations; one alumnus chosen by the President from self-nominations; one Trustee appointed by the Board Chair from self-nominations; five ex officio staff members; and the President, who served as chair of the committee. The Diversity Strategic Planning Committee engaged members of the Muhlenberg community – students, faculty, staff, alumni and parents – who contributed to the planning process by submitting potential initiatives; participating in small group discussions, a public forum and a gallery walk exercise; and commenting on the draft of the plan when it was posted.

The plan acknowledges that there is much work to be done and attempts to formalize a series of goals and initiatives that can be implemented and monitored broadly across campus. The plan challenges members of the Muhlenberg community to embrace the collaborative work that lies ahead. While the plan is an important step, the Diversity Strategic Planning Committee acknowledged that much work will be necessary if the College is to achieve the aspirations for inclusive excellence expressed in this strategic plan and hopes that future plans will build on the momentum achieved during its implementation.

## Wightman Awarded NIH Grant

Dr. Bruce Wightman, professor of biology, has been awarded a \$285,702 grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to support his study of Transcriptional Regulation of Cell Differentiation in *C. elegans* by tailless.

Wightman's laboratory focuses on understanding the molecular pathways – the series of specific steps—that allow cells to communicate with each other to create organized tissues and organs during animal development.

Nematode worms, the subject of Wightman's research, have a gene that functions in the development of several organs, including the uterus. Wightman's lab looks at how the NHR-67 protein formed by this gene controls and is controlled by other genes. The *nhr-67* gene (also called tailless or *Tlx*) is present in vertebrates, including humans, where it has been shown to be a key regulator of neural stem cell identity. An understanding of how *Tlx* regulates other genes is central to understanding neural stem cells, and an important first step in identifying potential candidates for therapy in neuro-degenerative disease. Wightman anticipates his research will advance understanding of tissue and organ development in all animals. The research will be performed in part by Muhlenberg College undergraduate science majors.

Wightman joined the Muhlenberg faculty in 1996. He holds a B.A. from Oberlin College and earned his Ph.D. at Harvard University. In addition to his work in the biology department, Wightman serves as the director for the College's Center for Ethics.



## 'Berg Honored by the Lehigh Valley Partnership for a Disability Friendly Community

Muhlenberg College was presented with a Certificate of Recognition from the Lehigh Valley Partnership for a Disability Friendly Community.

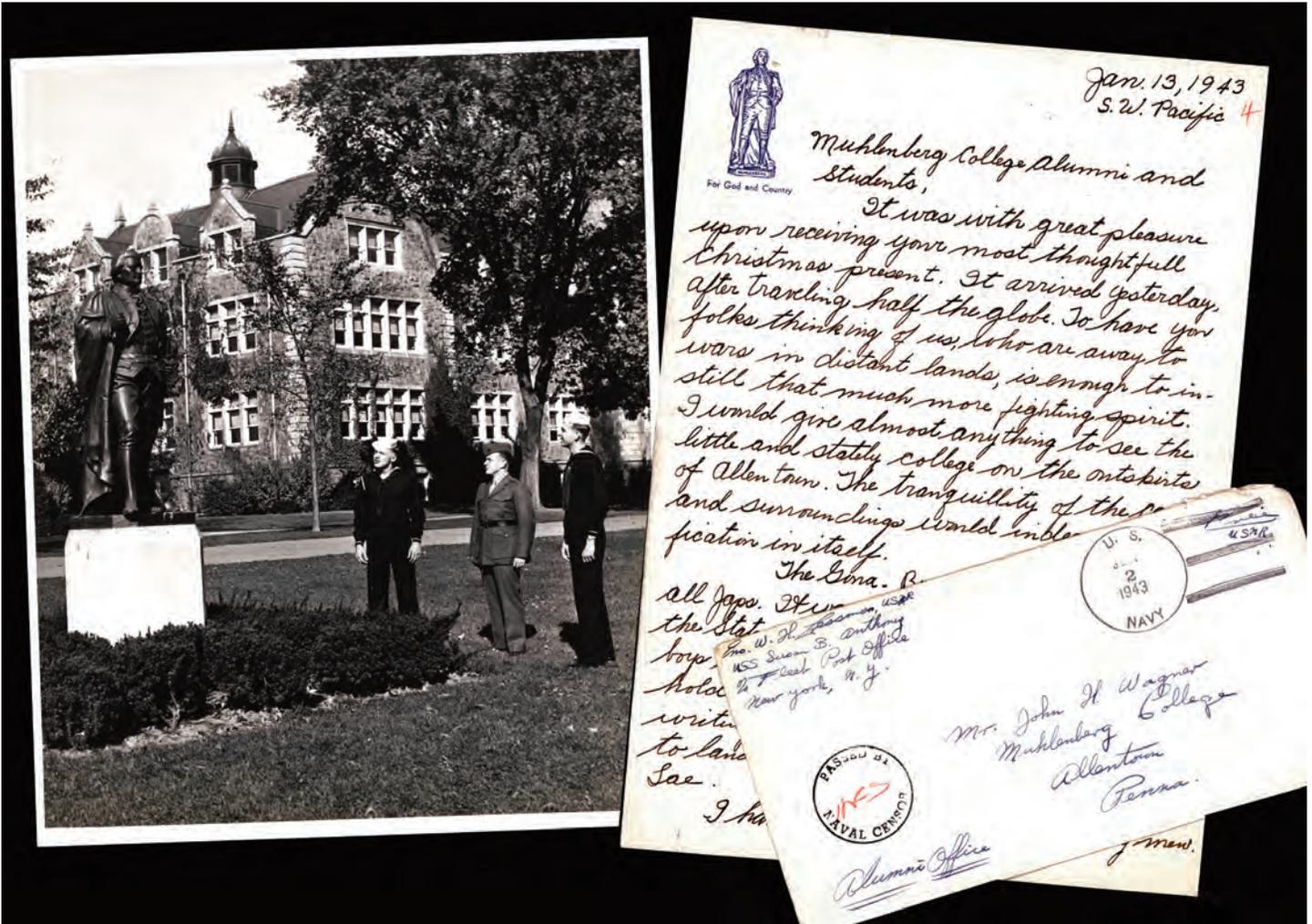
Bob Wittman, chair of the Community Awareness Committee, says, "Muhlenberg has done an outstanding job helping students with disabilities succeed. The community has also derived great benefits from the College's actions on behalf of people with disabilities."

Dr. Nelvin Vos, the convener of the Partnership and emeritus professor of English, pointed to the College's academic resource center, the office of disability services and the department of theatre and dance as offices that do outstanding work on behalf of those with disabilities. Certificates were awarded to each of these departments for their efforts, as well as to the College in general, for its commitment to being disability friendly.

The Lehigh Valley Partnership for a Disability Friendly Community has more than 75 members, including persons with disabilities, representatives from service provider agencies and organizations, caregivers, family members, government and community leaders as well as persons interested in advocacy for people with disabilities.

The Certificate of Recognition is presented on an occasional basis to organizations that do an exemplary job promoting the benefits of inclusion and those organizations that are create a more disability-friendly environment. The Civic Theatre was the first recipient in May 2014.

*above: Jessica Bien, general manager of the department of theatre & dance, Wendy Cole, director of the academic resource center, Pamela Moschini, director of disability services, and Michael Huber, dean of the college for academic life, accept awards on behalf of the College.*



## Trexler Library's New Exhibit Celebrates the Contributions and Correspondence of 'Berg Students and Alumni in WWII

Muhlenberg College's Trexler Library and Wescoe School co-sponsor "From the four corners of the earth: World War II as Revealed in the Muhlenberg College Archives," an exhibit located in the Library's Rare Books Room, located on Level B. It is available to view free of charge through June 2015.

The exhibit, curated by Special Collections & Archives Librarian Susan Falciani, was precipitated by the arrival in her office of almost 1000 letters and postcards from Muhlenberg students and alumni from the WWII era. The letters had been integrated into alumni records in development & alumni relations for decades, and because of their historical nature, Falciani was asked if the archives would like to keep them.

The files contain postcards, letters, V-mail and, importantly, carbon copies of replies written by Muhlenberg staff to the servicemen. While a few folders contain only change-of-address postcards, most contain letters describing battles and conditions on the front lines in the European and Pacific theatres, as well as at training bases throughout the US. Servicemen talk about visiting Hiroshima and Nagasaki months after the atomic bombs were dropped, about being held as POWs in Germany and about their training as paratroopers, just to give a few examples.

The exhibit celebrates these letters by showing interesting and varied examples, while at the same time capturing the atmosphere at the College during the war years, at which time it served as both a V-12 and a V-5 Navy training unit for officers. Photographs and documents from the period, as well as clippings from the *Muhlenberg Weekly* and *Muhlenberg Alumni Quarterly*, document the campus as training camp from 1943-1945.

For more information on the exhibit, visit [trexler.muhlenberg.edu/wwii](http://trexler.muhlenberg.edu/wwii).

## John Williams to Become President of Muhlenberg College

John I. Williams, Jr., an innovative and visionary leader with extensive experience in higher education, has been selected to be the 12th president of Muhlenberg College. He will begin his tenure at the College on July 1, 2015. Be on the lookout for a feature introducing Williams in the next issue of *Muhlenberg* magazine.



## Mallory Bernstein '14 Receives Fulbright Award

Mallory Bernstein '14 has been awarded a Fulbright U.S. Student Program grant to South Africa for an English Teaching Assistantship, the United States Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board announced recently.

Bernstein, who majored in chemistry and minored in public health, is one of over 1,800 U.S. citizens who will travel abroad for the 2014-2015 academic year through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Recipients of Fulbright grants are selected on the basis of academic and professional achievement, as well as demonstrated leadership potential.

Other recent 'Berg alumni who received Fulbright awards are Thomas Bertorelli '10, Melissa Bressler '12, Gillian Irwin '13 and Jennifer Melis '12.



## Public Health Major Approved

Muhlenberg College is pleased to announce that, beginning in the Fall 2015 semester, students will be able to declare a major in public health.

Muhlenberg was the first small, private liberal arts college in the country to establish a public health minor in 2006.

Public health at Muhlenberg is an interdisciplinary study that focuses on the protection and improvement of health for individuals, communities and populations at risk for injury and disease. The curriculum extends across the natural sciences, mathematics, social sciences and humanities to educate and empower students about health-related issues from varying points of view. They will graduate well-prepared for graduate work and professional careers in public health.

"Public health is already the largest minor program at Muhlenberg with typically more than 100 minors per year," said Christopher Hooker-Haring '72, P'08, P'10, dean of admission and financial aid. "I'm thrilled that our students with an interest in this important field will now have the opportunity to study public health as a major as well as a minor."

Students who study public health will gain an understanding of behavioral, economic, historical, political and social determinants of health and of the important relationships that statistics and science have on the design of public health interventions. Within the program, students are afforded the flexibility to choose electives appropriate to their field-specific interests. Students are encouraged to participate in public health related experiences including independent research study, service learning or other experiential learning connected to a course, internships within the community and community service unconnected to a course.

"Students at Muhlenberg have shown great interest in learning ways to impact the health and wellness of communities and society that don't focus purely on medicine," said Chrysan Cronin, lecturer of biology and director of the public health program (pictured above). "Our new major affords students the opportunity to draw from the wide range of disciplines at the College, studying health and wellness from different points of view, which is a key strength of a liberal arts education."

Save  
the date



Alumni Travel Program



AMALFI

An Exclusive Educational and Travel Experience

April 14-22, 2015



Volunteer Summit March 28, 2015

The Volunteer Summit affords Muhlenberg alumni the opportunity to hear from senior leadership, create new connections, receive training and provide input to help strengthen our volunteer program. Consider joining us for this day whether you are one of our seasoned veterans or someone interested in learning about volunteer opportunities at Muhlenberg College. It also provides an event when Muhlenberg can recognize the accomplishments of the Volunteer Award winners for their commitment to the College.

For additional information on any of these events, please call the Office of Alumni Relations at 1-800-464-2374 or check online at [MuhlenbergConnect.com](http://MuhlenbergConnect.com).

ALUMNI WEEKEND  
REUNION & HOMECOMING 2015

September 18-20, 2015

Once again we are celebrating Reunion and Homecoming in a single weekend. Classes of the '0s and '5s will be marking reunions. If you would like to help plan your class reunion, please contact us directly at 1-800-464-2374.

From the Desk of Natalie Kulp Hand '78, P'07,  
Director, Office of Alumni Relations

In reading through some archival materials recently, I came across the following excerpt from the Muhlenberg Monthly written in 1883, entitled "Our Alumni."

*When you wish to know the character of a book, you seek its index; when you wish to know the character of a college, you seek its Alumni. Although Muhlenberg is still too young for its graduates to have acquired any great distinction in the world, yet wherever they are, they are gaining an honorable name. Compare them with graduates of other colleges, and you will find them inferior neither in scholarship nor success. They occupy positions of equal, and, in many cases, of superior importance, and discharge their duties with fidelity to their fellows and with credit to themselves. The one hundred and sixty alumni, graduated in fifteen classes, are scattered throughout fourteen states of our Union and Canada, from Nova Scotia to California, from Minnesota to Tennessee. Wherever they are, Muhlenberg College is represented and its influence is put forth for good....May the time speedily come when "I am an Alumnus of Muhlenberg" will be as honorable in the college-world, as "I am a Roman" was in politics of yore."*

Fast forward to 2014.

Muhlenberg is no longer too young for its graduates to have acquired any great distinction in the world. Quite the contrary. Muhlenberg alumni have made their mark and succeeded in every discipline – law, medicine, the arts, research, literature, education and public service.

Muhlenberg's alumni population now includes women and numbers 26,261. They are scattered in all 50 states and 35 countries.

Even now, 131 years later, it seems to me that the truth remains that the character of Muhlenberg College is reflected in its alumni. Wherever you are, you represent Muhlenberg College.

And so I want to ask you to consider what contribution you can make to help the College continue to grow in stature and recognition. How can you help Muhlenberg continue to be a college of distinction at a time when many are questioning the value of a liberal arts education? How can you make certain that when you say "I am an alumnus/a of Muhlenberg" it continues to serve as evidence of our College's bold commitment to the human spirit and the possibilities inherent in tomorrow?

Dear Fellow Alumni,

This past summer, while out walking, I was passed by a group – some of whom were wearing jerseys and shorts that were emblazoned with the names of universities. I started to think about name recognition, Muhlenberg, branding and alumni pride. It reminded me of a conversation that I had with Jason Finkelstein '06 earlier in the summer. Jason told me that he had just moved to an apartment complex in Hoboken, and noticed an individual on a terrace wearing a Muhlenberg T-shirt. He yelled up, only to be told that there were several more Muhlenberg alumni living within a several block radius. It was purely by chance – seeing that Muhlenberg T-shirt - that he learned that members of the Muhlenberg family were living in his own neighborhood.

Has this happened to you? Muhlenberg is a nationally recognized school with a small student population; our alumni body numbers just over 26,000. We do not have Division I sports teams whose athletic apparel is sold in big box stores, and we do not have graduate programs. That is not who Muhlenberg is or ever intended to be. Yet, we need more people to know who we are and to learn about the amazing accomplishments of our students, faculty and alumni.

I am not a marketing guru, but after listening to enough experts and just thinking about society's habits, I think one thing is certain - the more an individual sees a brand, the more likely they are to remember it and to explore what it is.

So, how can we, as alumni, play a role in this effort? Let's consider a very simple approach.

Take a look in your closet and see what Muhlenberg clothing exists in your wardrobe. Do you have a T-shirt or a hat? Maybe you still have that perfectly broken-in sweatshirt from your student days? Or maybe it's time to pay a visit to the bookstore and see what they have...

My point is simple. Any alum can do their part by simply wearing Muhlenberg clothing – to the gym, to your kid's soccer game, while traveling or shopping. I am always on the lookout for Muhlenberg apparel and am curious, when I spot someone, if I know the person. And, even if I don't, I am always proud to be part of such an extended community.

I know I am not alone in this. Have you ever introduced yourself to someone you see who is wearing a Muhlenberg sweatshirt? Perhaps you were driving and noticed a Muhlenberg sticker on the back of a car. What emotions did it trigger; did you speed up to see who was driving, if only to smile at them?

I am going to ask that you find your Muhlenberg apparel and make a conscious choice to wear it and show your pride in the College – a simple request that can help us brand the Muhlenberg name.

Sheryl LeBlanc Guss '81, P'10, P'13  
Alumni Board President

## News of note

### Alumni Board Executive Committee

#### PRESIDENT

Sheryl LeBlanc Guss '81, P'10, P'13

#### VICE PRESIDENT

Stephen Hart '76

#### SECRETARY

Greg Adams '05

#### TREASURER

Mike Geller '04

If you are interested in serving on the Alumni Board or have a suggestion of someone who would be a good candidate, please contact Natalie Hand '78, P'07, Director of Alumni Relations at [nhand@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:nhand@muhlenberg.edu) or call 484-664-3304. Nominees should have a strong connection to the College and be able to provide leadership and representation for alumni.

### Class Notes

Your classmates would love to know what you are up to. Did you get married, engaged, have a baby, get together with Muhlenberg friends and classmates, celebrate a milestone birthday or anniversary, get promoted, move, retire... have anything to share? Please submit information to the Office of Alumni Relations in writing at 2400 Chew Street, Allentown, PA 18104, by email to [bergalum@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:bergalum@muhlenberg.edu), or by posting on [muhlenbergconnect.com](http://muhlenbergconnect.com).

#### Deadlines for inclusion in the *Muhlenberg* magazine are:

Spring issue: February 16, 2015  
Summer/Fall issue: June 15, 2015  
Winter issue: October 20, 2015

### Stay connected with 'Berg

wherever you are with campus updates, history, alumni news and contests!

Facebook: [Facebook.com/MuhlenbergCollegeAlumni](https://www.facebook.com/MuhlenbergCollegeAlumni)  
Twitter: @MuhlenbergAlum  
Instagram: @MuhlenbergCollegeAlumni

## Alumni Awards

*Nominations due March 2015*

### ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

- Alumni Service to the College
- Alumni Lifetime Achievement
- Alumni Achievement in a specific field
- Alumni Leadership
- Service to the College by a Friend

### ALUMNI RECOGNITION AWARDS

- Tricorn Award for Exceptional Service in the Past Year
- Young Alumnus/a Recognition Award
- Heritage Award

For additional information or to answer any questions, please contact Deborah Klinger, Events and Volunteer Coordinator, Alumni Relations at 484-664-3303 or at [dklinger@muhlenberg.edu](mailto:dklinger@muhlenberg.edu)



## East Hall Returns to Prominence: Dedication marks successful renovation project

*By Stephen Althouse,  
Director of Communication and Donor Relations*

When Peter Allen and Carole Bayer Sager wrote “Everything Old is New Again,” they must have been thinking about East Hall.

Muhlenberg’s oldest residence hall was dedicated October 24 in a grand ceremony that showcased the splendor of a renovation project that involved the collective efforts of the entire campus community and once again returns the facility to its status as a diamond-in-the-rough residency for students.

“I’m sure many of you here today can think back on your time at Muhlenberg and have some very vivid memories from East,” Muhlenberg College President Randy Helm told the assembled crowd prior to a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tour. “...After all, East has always been known for its quaint and quirky charm.”

In fact the building was so special for some individuals that they decided to name a space. Those individuals include Gregory Adams ’05 and Heather (Lenz) Adams ’07; the Muhlenberg College Alumni Trust Fund; Michael Geller ’04 and Lia Geller, a former student; Michael Guido ’98 and Carlyn Mastracchio Guido ’98; and Rebekkah L. Brown ’99.

Whether some of East’s allure had been stolen by the unending march of time is a matter of individual discernment. Nevertheless the decision behind East’s facelift was pragmatic, according to Richard Crist ’77, P ’05, P’09, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

“Yes, East Hall had undergone some small-scale repairs, maintenance and renovation over the years, but it was no longer considered a truly desirable building for upper class students,” Crist said during the ceremony. “The board of trustees recognized that a renovation of East could reverse that trend and decided it was worth the investment.”

That investment has paid off as the East Hall of today is now a state-of-the-art facility that meets the modern needs and expectations of students, while also retaining the unique character of the past.

“It was critical to us that the architectural integrity of this historic hall remain intact,” Helm noted.

Mission accomplished. Working closely with Spillman Farmer Architects, the College was able to preserve the original fireplaces and refurbish the original copper cupolas atop the south face.

Construction began on May 20, 2013 and

wrapped up on August 8, 2014 without a hitch, with East Hall ready, willing and able to welcome back students to campus a few weeks later.

It’s never easy to improve upon a classic, but Muhlenberg actually did just that with the renovation. Many would find it hard to imagine that the stylish and efficient modules that were added during the renovation weren’t always there. The modules proved so adroit at enhancing the value of East that it was recognized with an Award of Distinction (First Place in permanent modular construction – commercial housing over 10,000 square feet) at the 2014 Modular Building Institute Convention and was also awarded Best in Show for permanent modular construction at the same convention.

The renovation also added about 13,000 square feet, allowing this landmark building to accommodate additional students and to provide handicapped-accessible bedrooms and bathrooms, common areas for students to study and socialize, kitchen and dining areas for impromptu student gatherings, as Zachary Zimmerman ’15, the current Head Resident Advisor in East Hall, attested during the ceremony.

“As the resident assistants moved in over the summer, we were amazed at the transformation that had happened,” Zimmerman said during his comments. “The new space is beautiful, and the RA staff and the residents feel lucky to be in such a wonderful new space. As one resident put it ‘it feels like I’m living in a hotel.’”

As a four-year residential liberal arts institution, Muhlenberg houses about 90 percent of students in a variety of student-housing options.

“East currently has a mixture of seniors, juniors and sophomores living within its walls,” said Karen Green, dean of students. “Each of those students have different majors, different agendas and of course, different personalities. And the renovated East Hall is now equipped to serve as a home that will create memories years and even decades from now.”

Originally completed and named Berks Hall during the 1904-1905 academic year, the structure was one of three new buildings – together with the Administration Building (now Ettinger) and the President’s House (now the Wescoe School) that comprised the College’s new location in the West End of Allentown, according to information compiled by Susan Falciani, special collections and archives librarian at Trexler Library. Berks was informally termed “East” prior to World War II for the simple geographic location it occupied on campus and the name stuck sometime between 1943 and 1945.

During the renovation process, several artifacts were uncovered to the delight of Helm, a historian in his own right.

“They were usually discovered behind baseboards and mantelpieces,” President Helm said during his remarks. “These included beer coasters, used book sale flyers, pictures of sweethearts and postcards from home, to name a few.”

To learn more about the East Hall renovation process and to see photos from the event, please visit [www.muhlenbergconnect.com](http://www.muhlenbergconnect.com)

## Muhlenberg Challenges Galvanize Giving

In September 2013, Muhlenberg College launched two incredible challenges designed to inspire alumni, parents and friends to support students by establishing endowed funds for scholarships and educational enrichment opportunities ([muhlenbergconnect.com/muhlenbergmatch](http://muhlenbergconnect.com/muhlenbergmatch)). The College set aside \$10 million for the Scholarship Challenge and \$1 million for the Educational Enrichment Challenge and offers donors a 1:1 match for establishing endowed funds between \$25,000 and \$50,000.

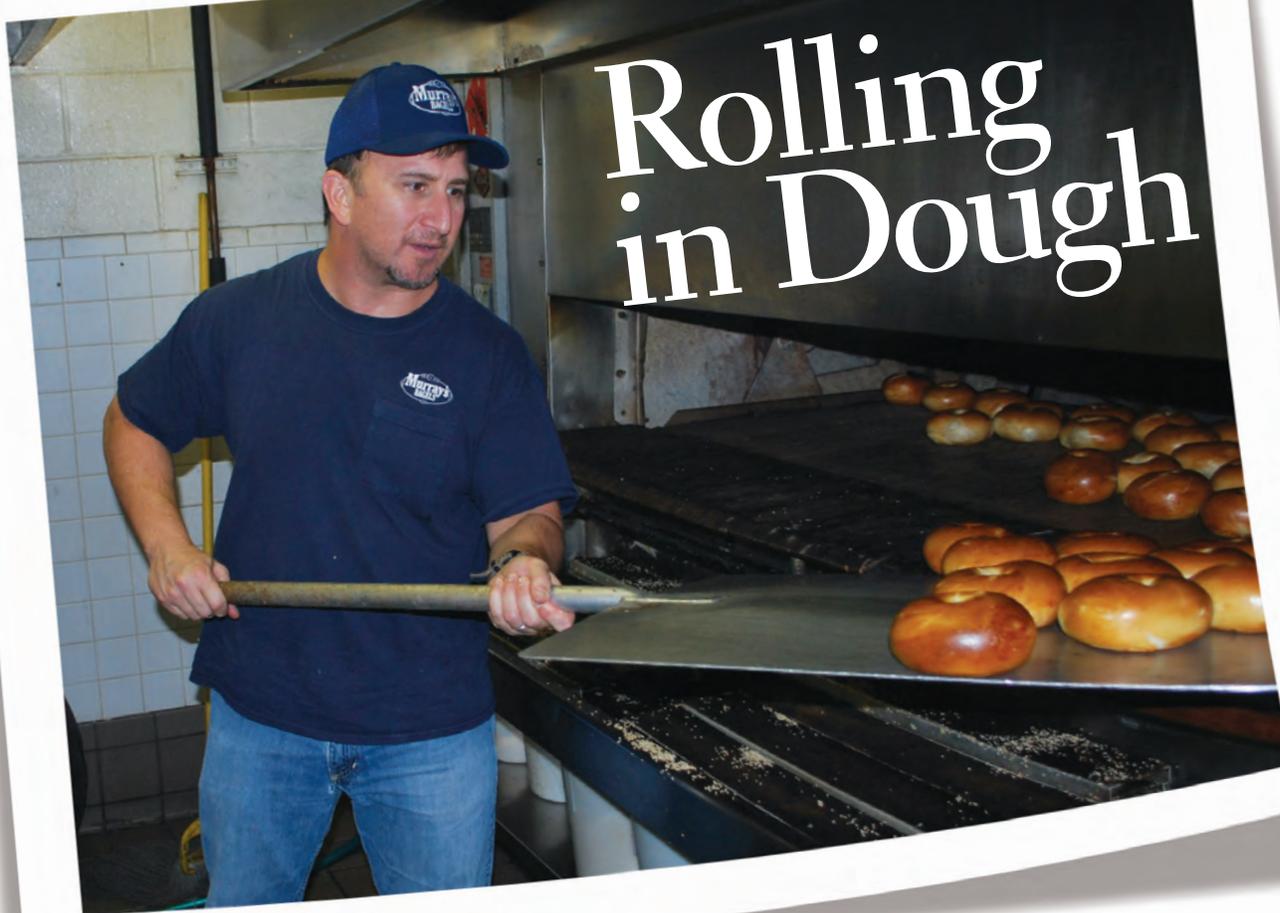
Muhlenberg College is truly grateful to the alumni, parents and friends who have established endowed funds in support of our students. For more information on the Match Challenges, visit [muhlenbergconnect.com/muhlenbergmatch](http://muhlenbergconnect.com/muhlenbergmatch) or call 484-664-3247.

Challenge	Gift Commitments	Match Funds Utilized
Scholarship Match	\$4,541,702	\$3,791,702
Enrichment Match	\$1,150,000	\$400,000
Total (both)	\$5,691,702	\$4,191,702

As of Dec. 17, 2014



With the help of the Muhlenberg Match program, Connie and Sam Beidleman '63 have established The Sam '63 and Connie Beidleman Scholarship. “We were very happy to make the investment,” Sam says. “And that’s what we consider it – an investment in the future of somebody here at Muhlenberg.”



Adam Pomerantz '90  
couldn't stand  
Wall Street,  
so he followed  
his heart and turned  
Murray's Bagels  
into the most popular  
nosh in New York City.

By David Chmiel

Murray Pomerantz knew the Lower East Side of Manhattan. He was born there; he shared the Eastern European roots of the Jewish neighborhood. His women's clothing store, Berent & Smith, catered to the matrons. Adam, his youngest son, watched him work.

"He was amazing," Adam says. "They came in ready to haggle. He'd say, 'The tag says \$30, but for you, darling, it's \$25.' It was a good business, but by the mid-'80s, 95 percent of these women had either died or moved to Florida. Hipsters were moving in, the neighborhood was changing. I saw that he needed to adapt, but I was 17. He was never going to listen to me."

"Sometimes he sold through his inventory, sometimes he didn't. It was a hard life. We lived in the Great Kills section of Staten Island — my father, my mother, Roslyn, my sister, Ellen, my brother, Matthew, and I. Many of my friends' fathers worked on Wall Street. They never had the issues we had. It made an impression on me. I wanted corporate success, a steady paycheck and chance to move up the ladder."

It didn't take Adam, Muhlenberg College Class of 1990, long to turn a longtime summer job into a position with Merrill Lynch. Four years later, he was a Vice President of Structured Finance/Mortgage Capital for the finance giant. Surely, it was everything he wanted. Hardly, he says.

"The money was good, but the life wasn't," Pomerantz says. "I worked with guys who were miserable. I was about to get married, and I knew I had to get out. I had a small window to

take control of the life I wanted.”

He had a plan, one that excited him more than any big deal or corner office ever could. He was leaving Wall Street to make bagels.

## The ‘Hole’ Story

“After four years, I realized that Wall Street was not what I wanted. I started looking for other options,” Pomerantz says. “I lived on 15th Street and couldn’t find a good bagel in my neighborhood, so I knew that there was demand for a good, old-fashioned bagel shop. Within two years, I found a location, quit my job and got to work.”

He had a name, Murray’s Bagels, but he had no idea how to make them. He also had to learn about building codes, health department requirements, ordering, hiring, design, in-store traffic flow, marketing, payroll, and everything else a small-business owner needs to know.

“I was lucky,” Pomerantz says. “My wife, Joanne, and I had just gotten married. She was working for an architecture firm, and she carried us through some tough times. I bought equipment and learned from an Egyptian bagel maker in Bloomfield, N.J. During the day, I sanded floors, hired help and did whatever else I had to do to open the doors. I borrowed money, begged my landlord to be flexible with the rent, got friends to find me plumbers and other help. About a year later, Murray’s Bagels was open, in a 600-square-foot store, with my father, Murray Pomerantz, working the counter.”

Eighteen years after that, Murray’s Bagels is a staple of virtually every “best bagel” list in New York City, straddling the line between neighborhood mainstay and tourist destination. He tripled the size of the original store, opened Leo’s Bagels (named for his wife’s uncle) near Wall Street in 2008, and now employs 60 workers.

“When we started, our older son, Ethan, was a baby. I didn’t cash a paycheck for two years,” Pomerantz says, “but our neighbors flocked to the shop, word spread, and the business took off. Now we sell more than 1,000 bagels every day in each location.”

Pomerantz stayed true to his father’s roots. “I wanted to make sure that we made authentic bagels, just like they made on the Lower East Side at the turn of the 20th century. Pretty simple, really...they are made with flour, water, yeast, salt and barley malt syrup. That is what gives them the golden shine on the outside, that snap when you bite into them. I don’t use preservatives, and we will never use a bagel rolling machine to make them. Ricky Greenbaum, the man who sold me all my equipment, told me I should take advantage of available technology, but I realized then, and continue to believe to this day, that a hand rolled bagel is far superior. I will never use a bagel rolling machine. I did use it to hold our fax machine for a while, but that’s it. Brian, our roller, is from Coney Island. He’s been doing it for about 50 years. Every bagel we roll looks unique, as it should.

“When I was at Muhlenberg, it wasn’t easy to find a great bagel,” Pomerantz says. “But I found a place about a 10-minute walk from campus that I used to go to. They are closed now. I went, probably more often than I should, to get my Jewish soul food.”

## Bullish on the Mules

Pomerantz is proud to be a Mule. “I will never forget my first visit. I had an awesome tour guide, Joanne, who was smart and funny. The campus was perfectly manicured, the kids seemed happy, the professors were enthusiastic. I knew it was the place for me.

“I was taught about the real world of business. Those lessons were very important lessons to

*continued on page 32*

## ALL ABOUT ADAM

### ADAM POMERANTZ

Owner: Murray’s Bagels, Leo’s Bagels

### BORN AND RAISED

Great Kills, South Shore of Staten Island

### FAMILY

Wife: Joanne; Sons: Ethan, 17; Will, 14

### HOME

Cobble Hill, Brooklyn

### MAJOR

Business administration, Class of 1990

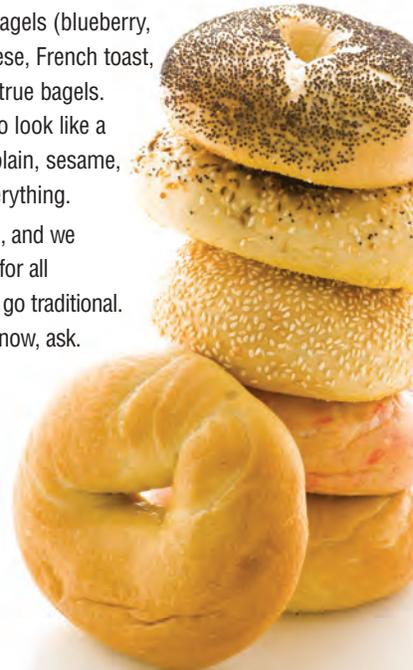
### BUSINESS

Murray’s Bagels (500 Avenue of Americas, New York, NY; murraysbagels.com);  
Leo’s Bagels (3 Hanover Square, New York, NY; leosbagels.com)

## BAGEL 101

Adam Pomerantz tops most New York “best bagel” lists. He prides himself on their authentic preparation and taste. Here are his tips for looking like a bagel aficionado:

- If a bagel is fresh, don’t toast it!
- If a bag of bagels all look exactly the same, they weren’t hand-rolled. If they aren’t hand-rolled, they aren’t authentic.
- “Specialty” bagels (blueberry, cheddar cheese, French toast, etc.) are not true bagels. If you want to look like a local, order plain, sesame, poppy or everything.
- I’ve seen it all, and we are prepared for all requests, but go traditional. If you don’t know, ask.
- If you ordered a cinnamon-raisin bagel with lox, you should have asked.



# Legends of the Fall



by Mike Falk, Sports Information Director

**I**t was a fall season to remember at Muhlenberg. Of the seven sports whose championship seasons are in the fall, five earned postseason (NCAA or ECAC) berths, as a team or individually. All four teams for which the Centennial Conference has postseason tournaments qualified for the playoffs – the first time that ever happened at Muhlenberg. Five of the teams earned regional and/or national rankings.

The Mules also got it done in the classroom. A record 39 student-athletes were named to the Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll, topping the previous fall mark of 37 set in 2005 and matched in 2011 and 2013. Three Mules – junior Bryan Auvil in football (first team), junior Tommy Hoffmann in soccer (first team) and senior Lance Dotzman in soccer (third team) – were named Academic All-Americans.

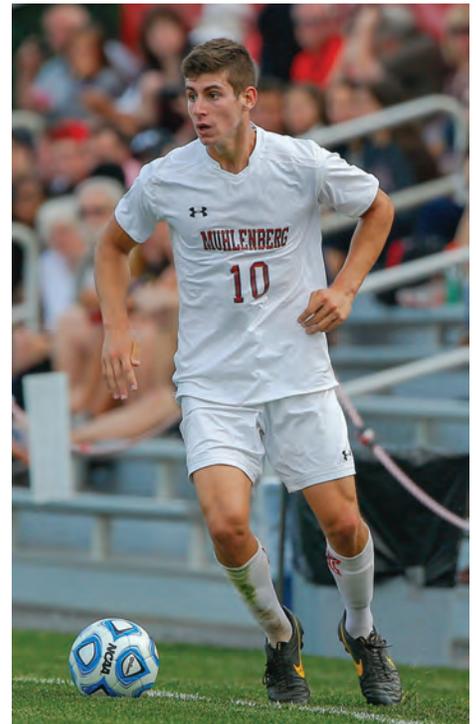
Muhlenberg is one of seven CC schools to sponsor field hockey, football, men's and women's soccer and volleyball. Of the seven,

the Mules compiled the best combined record in league contests. (see table on page 15)

Heading the list was men's soccer, which won its sixth CC championship. The Mules, who were ranked in the top 10 in both Division III polls heading into the postseason, captured their first CC title since 2005 with 1-0 wins against Dickinson and Haverford, earning the right to host the first two rounds of the NCAA Tournament.

Muhlenberg advanced to the "Sweet 16" for the fourth time in program history by getting past Baruch (4-0) and Catholic (on penalty kicks) and was picked to host for the sectionals as well. The season finally came to an end with a 2-0 loss to Tufts, which went on to beat two-time defending champion Messiah the next day. The Mules finished with a record of 15-2-3.

Football rebounded from a loss to Johns Hopkins in the fourth week to win its final six games and finish the regular season at 9-1 and earn a berth to the NCAA Tournament. Playing against a favored undefeated Widener



Senior Lance Dotzman was the third Mule to be named Centennial Conference men's soccer player of the year

Photo credits – Jim O'Connor/NISportPics.com and Bob Brandmeir

SPORTS



*Men's soccer won its sixth CC championship*



*Above: Football earned a berth to the NCAA Tournament*

*Left: Sophomore Nick Palladino set school records for completions (266), completion percentage (.691) and passing yards (2,998) in a season*





*Above: Volleyball advanced to the CC championship match for the second year in a row*

*Right: Junior Katherine Boll became the first Mule volleyball player to earn All-America honorable mention since 2004*



squad, Muhlenberg led late in the fourth quarter before falling, 36-35, on a field goal with 10.2 seconds left.

The Mules were bolstered by a record-setting offense that averaged 38.3 points per game. And as usual, their defense was stellar, holding opponents under 300 yards and 20 points per game for the 13th time in 14 years.

Volleyball advanced to the CC championship match for the second year in a row and received votes in the national poll and an NCAA regional ranking for the first time ever in a 25-8 season. The Mules fashioned a school-record 13-match winning streak in start-

ing out with a 20-2 record. In College athletic history, only the 1945 men's basketball team (20-1) reached 20 wins faster.

Field hockey tied its best CC record ever (7-3) and received votes in the national poll for most of the second half of the season. Muhlenberg posted a thrilling 3-1 win against then-No. 3 Montclair State early in the year and won eight of nine in one stretch. After falling 1-0 to fifth-ranked Franklin & Marshall in the semifinals of the CC playoffs, the Mules earned a bid to the ECAC Tournament.

Women's soccer set a program record by going undefeated (6-0-1) in its first seven

games and was ranked in the region for most of the season. The Mules qualified for the CC playoffs for the third straight year, dropping a close 1-0 game to eventual champion Swarthmore, and received an ECAC Tournament bid.



*Field hockey tied its best CC record ever*



*Senior Kayleigh Thies finished her career with 101 points and was the first two-time all-region selection in Muhlenberg field hockey history*

*Photo credits – Jim O'Connor/NISportPics.com and Bob Brandmeir*

## SPORTS

	Field Hockey	Football	Men's Soccer	Women's Soccer	Volleyball	Total	Pct
<b>Muhlenberg</b>	<b>7-3</b>	<b>8-1</b>	<b>7-1-1</b>	<b>6-4</b>	<b>8-2</b>	<b>36-11-1</b>	<b>.760</b>
Johns Hopkins	6-4	9-0	3-5-1	9-1	8-2	35-12-1	.740
Franklin & Marshall	9-1	4-5	8-0-1	1-8-1	6-4	28-18-2	.604
Ursinus	10-0	6-3	3-5-1	6-2-2	1-9	26-19-3	.573
Gettysburg	2-8	5-4	2-6-1	9-0-1	5-5	23-23-2	.500
Dickinson	5-5	3-6	6-2-1	5-4-1	2-8	21-25-2	.458
McDaniel	5-5	0-9	2-6-1	3-4-3	3-7	13-31-4	.313



Senior Colleen Touhey was named to the All-Centennial Conference first team and the CC Academic Honor Roll

In cross country, both Mule teams finished in the top 20 at the NCAA Mideast Regional (men 15th and women 17th), and Muhlenberg was represented the NCAA Championships for the 10th straight year. Jaryd Flank became the first Mule sophomore to qualify as an individual and posted the best finish ever (92nd) by a member of the men's team.

Of the more than 400 schools in Division III, Muhlenberg was one of only four to be represented at the NCAA Championships in all three men's sports (football, soccer and cross country).



Right: The Mules qualified for the CC playoffs for the third straight year



Sophomore Jaryd Flank (right) and senior Luke Munyan (left) finished 1-2, respectively, at the Cedar Crest/Muhlenberg Invitational, leading the Mules to the team title



Junior Melanie Tramontina (wearing headband) won the women's race

# United Nations Program Helps 'Berg Students Reach Across Borders

By Liat Kessler '15  
*Presidential Assistant, Public Relations*



Student volunteers at the United Nations are: Christopher Gallagher '15, Cynthia Pereira '15, Chayoot Chengsupanimit '16, Lucas Esposito, Alexa Potter '16, Joyous Pierce '16, Gabriela De Frutos '16 and Tyler Schoen '15, pictured above with two U.N. workers

**F**or Muhlenberg College junior Gabriela De Frutos, an internship with the United Nations seemed like the perfect opportunity – after all, it’s in her blood.

“My dad worked at the Mission of Spain to the U.N., and my mom works at the Mission of Chile to the U.N. in New York,” said De Frutos. “After college I want to pursue a career in diplomacy, so I thought it was a great opportunity to be at the United Nations and have some experience.”

De Frutos was one of nine Muhlenberg students who interned for two weeks at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, an annual two-week conference. The U.N. website describes it thusly: “The Permanent Forum is an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights.”

Muhlenberg students have been participating for 10 years. They volunteer for the Indigenous Peoples Centre for Documentation, Research, and Information (DoCip), an organization within the U.N. that handles documentation and other logistical matters for indigenous people participating in U.N. programs on a temporary basis. The students help with tasks like translating and data processing.

Besides De Frutos, the Muhlenberg participants in 2014 were:



Chayoot Chengsupanimit '16; Nicholas Farmer '15; Christopher Gallagher '15; Cynthia Pereira '15; Joyous Pierce '15, Alexa Potter '16; and Tyler Schoen '15, all made aware of the internship by Dr. Chris Herrick, professor of political science and director of the international studies program.

The team of Muhlenberg interns worked under the supervision of two DoCip workers. Gallagher, a political science and international studies double major, was pleased that he found himself doing meaningful work. "Of course I did all of the normal internship stuff like making copies and filing paperwork, but it was so much more than that," he said. "I felt like I was part of something greater. It was a completely different experience than I signed up for, in the best possible way."

De Frutos, an international studies major and economics minor, also emphasized the inclusive feeling she got during the program. "We were there in the meetings and had the chance to listen to what the different member states or Indigenous representatives thought about various topics," she said. "This summer was my second year doing the internship, and I found myself speaking to people in Spanish and French and also being able to help the other interns."

Since most of the students are international business majors, they were prepared and educated about the topics that were being discussed at the forum.

Chengsupanimit, a native of Thailand who is a double major in international studies (global trade and commerce concentration) and accounting, said, "As an international studies major at Muhlenberg, this internship was a great experience for me. Some of the indigenous issues that were brought up were topics discussed in my previous classes, such as globalization. Taking introductory courses in international studies gave me a better lens for understanding these issues."

Gallagher, who was abroad in Geneva for the semester before he interned, noted that most of the issues brought up at the Permanent Forum were topics that he understood from both his experiences abroad and his international studies at Muhlenberg. "After studying about the United Nations for so many years, it was nice to see how it operated," he said.

While Chengsupanimit and Gallagher found their classes prepared them for their time at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, De Frutos said that her work-study position in the political science department helped prepare her for the documentation portion of the internship.

Different aspects of the program moved the students in different ways. Gallagher was inspired by the individual speakers. "Quite a few successful individuals spoke who were still actively invested in the group that they came from," he said. "These were people who, although operating in developed countries, were trying to help the developing countries from which they came." Witnessing this solidified Gallagher's desire to work in some capacity with a non-governmental organization where he can help represent the United States on an international stage.

Chengsupanimit found interaction between cultures to be the most meaningful part of his internship. "There was a fantastic turnout for music performed by those indigenous groups, so while they were all from separate cultures, music brought them together." After he graduates, Chengsupanimit plans to work in accounting for a few years to help support his family back in Thailand. A student athlete, he also plans to continue his wrestling training in case he gets the opportunity to represent Thailand at the 2020 Olympic games.

For De Frutos, the most meaningful part of the internship was just the opportunity to walk where her parents walk. "I am very proud that at 19 years old I knew the inside and outside of the U.N. and I was able to really solidify my goals for the future," she said. De Frutos spent the fall semester abroad in Aix-en-Provence, France and is currently studying in Salamanca, Spain. She plans on taking the State Department Foreign Service Exam next year and having a future in diplomacy. That sounds like a family plan.

# Randy Helm: Making 'Berg Better Wasn't Greek to Him

by Jack McCallum '71, Guest Editor

**A**s the College's 11th president prepares to take his leave on June 30, it is time to ask a question with both classical and modern dimensions. To wit:

Is Peyton Randolph Helm, called Randy at his insistence, the only man in the history of the world to have both written a scholarly paper with the weighty title of "Herodotus VII.63 and the Geographical Connotations of the Toponym Assyria in the Achaemenid Period," *and* spent much of his adult life twisting the arms of well-heeled donors?

"I don't think there's much doubt about that," says Helm with a laugh. "I'm probably the only person who did just the Herodotus part."

That Helm is so securely a citizen of two worlds – the one academic, the other pragmatic – goes a long way to explaining his success during his 12 years as president, a time of much growth, and, just as importantly, much stability for the College.

"Randy was the right man for the time," says Dr. Christopher Borick, a political science professor who heads up the college's highly-regarded Institute of Public Opinion. "His personality, his approach to leadership, his pragmatic ideas about how a campus should run, were what was needed when he arrived at Muhlenberg."

Viewing Helm through a different lens, Richard Brueckner '71, P'04, P'10, chair of the Board of Trustees for eight years during Helm's tenure, says this: "There are always natural tensions on college campuses, not just between the academic side and the business side but lots of other ones. Randy bridged all the divides with supreme skill."

Helm's crossover touch went beyond the fact that his academic past gave him cred with the faculty, and his fund-raising chops did the same for the Board. Though reticent by nature, as he concedes himself, Helm reached out to the parents, to the community at large and to the students who will long remember his dramatic Freshman Orientation entrances. He was Batman, he was Indiana Jones, he was a gladiator, he was Dumbledore from Harry Potter, and, of course, he was Achilles. (He never attempted the Greek historian Herodotus who would've doubtless gone unrecognized.)

And there's this: Helm – descendant of a Confederate war hero, son of a lawyer, husband of a distinguished music professor – is also your guy if you need to put a righteous knot on that bowtie.



Helm was born in Louisville, Ky., in 1949, the middle son of Thomas Kennedy Helm, Jr., a lawyer with a flourishing regional practice, and Nell, a homemaker, who is still alive at 94. Randy was never attracted to the law, as was his older brother, his father's namesake who eventually took over the legal practice. But the dinnertime chats, framed by his legal-minded father, had a strong impact on his future as a scholar.

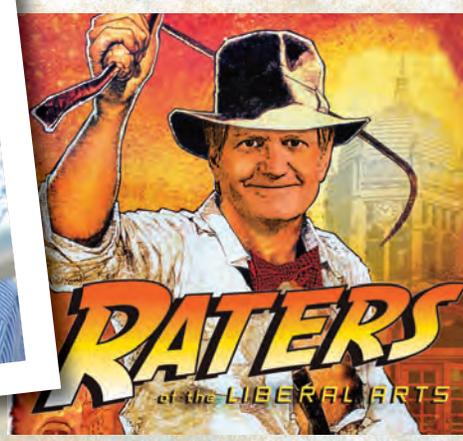
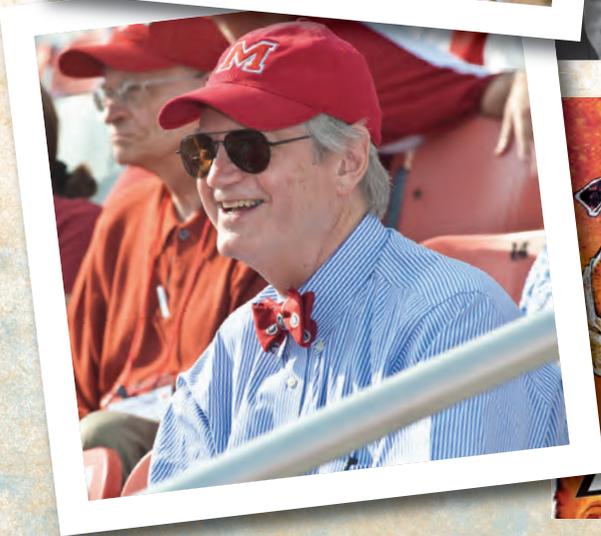
"My father loved the law and rational thinking," says Helm, "and one of the lessons he tried to communicate is that there are two sides to every question or issue. He told us: 'Only a fool would insist that he is always right.' My father was a very powerful influence on me."

Randy's career path – the academic part of it, anyway – started to form in sixth grade when the Assyrians and the Egyptians, standard middle-school fare, took hold of his imagination. "Who knows why that happens?" says Helm. "The ancients just spoke to me." And he spoke to them, signing on for five years of Latin, including one difficult stretch taught by, as he puts it, "the Bobby Knight of Latin instructors," as well as a couple years of Greek.

So by the time he was ready to leave his old Kentucky home, he was pretty sure he wanted to swim with the ancients. And when his Yale tour passed through the Sterling Library, he was New Haven-bound. "There were all these display cases filled with actual cylinder seals [small stone cylinders that the ancients rolled across clay to affix a kind of signature on a document] from Assyria," says Helm, still relishing the memory. "My brother was at Yale at the time, and, yes, that might've been a factor. But seeing those seals clinched it for me."

One could argue that Helm was at Yale at precisely the right time (1966 through 1970) for a future college president, who must be nothing if not skilled in the art of compromise. The campus was torn apart by student unrest over the Vietnam War, and the archaeology major from Louisville negotiated a path between the extremes.

"I didn't burn my draft card, I didn't throw rocks, and I didn't participate in a student strike," he says. "I had a lot of things I wanted to learn." On the other hand, he was not unfamiliar with the anti-war movement. As a deacon of the Church of Christ in Yale, he revolved in the same orbit as William Sloane Coffin, the Yale chaplain renowned for his anti-war





## COVER STORY

way. So I went to a barber and got a buzzcut, which at the time absolutely no one had unless you were heading for Vietnam.”

Do photos exist of the buzz-cutted best man?

“They do,” says Helm, smiling, “but you’ll never see them.”



One of Helm’s seminal experiences was going on a dig to Israel as a collegian. He continued his classical studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a doctorate in ancient history and became an adjunct assistant professor of ancient history and urban studies. (By “urban studies,” he deconstructed city plans of ancient Babylonia, not, say, the New York City park system.) It was during that time that Helm produced his dissertation on *Greeks in the Neo-Assyrian Levant and Assyrian in Early Greek Writers*, as well as the aforementioned Herodotus article, “Kind Hearts and Cold Cash: Dowry and Bride-Price in Homeric Society,” and a chapter on “Races and Physical Types in the Ancient Mediterranean.”

No dowry was involved when he married Patricia Burton, a grad student in music from Colorado, and they settled into a campus life,

views. Helm attended weekly meetings at Coffin’s house, which included discussions not just of the war but also of faith. Helm, a lifelong Episcopalian, emphasized that he never lost his.

But he did pick his spots for rebellion. At graduation, he eschewed the cap-and-gown for a suit and a black armband – “I’m sure we shortened the war by seconds, if not minutes, with that protest,” he says wryly – and took an even stronger stand at his brother’s wedding, where he was to serve as best man.

“My brother told me that his future wife’s family was very conservative, and he would appreciate it if I cut my hair,” Helm remembers. “I considered that a betrayal in the most fundamental

## HELM AT THE HELM: COLLEGE ACHIEVEMENTS, 2003-2014

### BUILDINGS/MAJOR RENOVATIONS:

'04-'05	Life Sports Center expansion completed
'04-'05	Newman Center doubled in size
'05-'06	New Science Building completed, including the creation of the Acopian Center for Ornithology
'06-'07	New residence hall completed– 2201 Chew Street
'06-'07	New Multicultural Center completed, housing international programs, multicultural programs, classroom and student space
'07-'08	The Village residence halls completed
'09-'10	Former TKE fraternity house redesigned as Rehearsal House
'09-'10	Seegers Union expansion completed in August '10, including opening of The Robert and Ilene Wood Dining Commons
'10-'11	Newly renovated and expanded Hillel opens, along with new facilities for sociology and anthropology
'13-14	East Hall renovated and expanded

### ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:

'04-'05	Muhlenberg offers accelerated graduate degree programs in Physical and Occupational Therapy through Thomas Jefferson University
'05-'06	New minor in public health
'05-'06	New film studies major
'05-'06	New major in finance
'05	Two new faculty lines approved for '06-'07 academic year in political science and film studies
'06-'07	New minor approved in Africana studies
'06	Two new tenure-track positions approved for '07-'08 academic year in neuroscience and sociology. A third (non-tenurable) line was added in film studies.
'07	Three new tenure lines approved for '08-'09 academic year in biology, art and music
'09-'10	Arts management concentration within the business administration major
'09	New tenure line in Africana studies approved
'11-'12	New Jewish studies major
'13	New general education curriculum passed by the faculty

completed by the arrival of sons in 1982 and 1985. The family of four lived in a Penn dormitory – these days, that would’ve been a surefire reality show – and for a while they loved it. But then Randy and Pat discovered that there was, in fact, great satisfaction in other dimensions of living learning communities. So Randy became Penn’s first College House Coordinator, developing living-learning programs across the Penn campus. Then he moved into fundraising where he became associate director - and then director - of the School of Arts and Sciences development office.

It was in the latter position that Helm, seduced by cylinder seals and ancient city plans, began asking for money. “You have to understand that I grew up in a house where you didn’t talk about money,” says Helm, “and in fund-raising that’s all you talk about. So it was an adjustment. But I came to realize – as anyone who fundraises has to do – that you’re asking on behalf of something you really believe in. I could never ask for five dollars for myself, but I found I could ask for five hundred thousand dollars for the college.”

Patricia Helm, now an assistant professor of music at Muhlenberg, says her husband’s transition was rooted in his intellectual curiosity. “He’s interested in a lot of different things,” says Patricia, a scholar herself who recently gave a lecture in Austria during which she spoke only German. “Randy authentically loves finding out about people. And when he finds out about them, he’s able to ask them for money. It’s just a gift that he has.”

His successes at Penn grabbed the attention of the administrators at Colby, a highly regarded liberal arts college in Maine, where in 1988 Helm was hired as vice president for development. It came with a pay raise so significant that Patricia asked her husband, “Are you sure you’re worth that?” She was kidding. He thinks.

Again, Helm had success as the man in charge of soliciting gifts of \$1 million and above and working on strategic planning with the Board of Trustees and the president, a force of nature named William Cotter, who Helm deeply respected. Eventually Helm became vice president for college relations, a position in

which he supervised 53 full-time employees.

As the years rolled on, Randy and Patricia became committed Colbyites. Randy found time to teach a classics course each year and Pat taught in the music department. Patricia also gave private piano lessons; her students included the daughters of Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Richard Russo. They loved raising their sons in the town of Waterville, where they still own a house and spend part of their summers. “I thought I’d be one of those old souls doddering around campus forever,” says Helm. “And if the thought ever entered my mind about becoming a college president myself, I always thought, ‘I could never be a president like Bill Cotter.’”





## SOME MORE RANDY DETAILS

### IT'S NOT THE SOUTHERN CHARM

A native Kentuckian, Helm says that he does not slip into a sugary Southern accent when he's asking for money. "I've never used it for that purpose," he says. "In fact, the accent only comes out after I've had a drink or when I'm under stress."

### THE LINCOLN-HELM CONNECTION

Ben Hardin Helm, a distant relative, was a Confederate brigadier general who died at the Battle of Chickamauga. "Ed Bonekemper '64 [an adjunct history professor] was very impressed when he heard that," says Helm, whose extensive toy soldier collection mixes together Greeks, Romans, Rebels and Yankees. General Helm was married to Emily Todd, whose sister was Mary Todd, Abe Lincoln's wife. Emily was a somewhat controversial figure, who, trading on the security provided by her brother-in-law, may have been smuggling messages to Confederate forces during the Civil War. "If that's true," says Helm, "don't hold me responsible."

### AN ARTS TRIUMPH

Helm first realized that "maybe I could be a fund-raiser" when, as the associate director of Penn's School of Arts and Sciences (he later became the director), he brought in distinguished people from the arts and political world for a weeklong campus immersion. They included novelist Norman Mailer, opera diva Beverly Sills and former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.

### I'LL BE BACK

For someone with a Ph.D. in ancient history and a command of ancient languages, Helm's movie tastes do not run to the sophisticated. "I rarely miss a Schwarzenegger or a Stallone, things like that," he says. His sometimes movie companion, Dean of Students Karen Green, puts it this way: "For Randy, the more explosions the better."

### PARTY GUY

Helm's predilection for donning a costume during freshman orientation has its roots, says his wife, in birthday parties. "He loves 'theme' parties," says Patricia Helm. "I can remember a Robin Hood party for one of our sons, cakes in the shape of ships, things like that. He's never been an actor on stage, but he seems to have a theatrical bent."

### THE CHALLENGE, NOT SURPRISINGLY, IS ...

As Helm sees it, Muhlenberg's next president will face the same economic challenges as every president of every small liberal arts colleges.

"Under the prevailing financial model, it's impossible not to increase tuition above the rate of inflation if you want to maintain your buildings, offer great programs and pay your faculty a fair wage," says Helm. "It just can't happen. Tuition supplies 86% of our revenue. We are tuition-dependent, just as most every small liberal arts college is. If income is stagnant, as it has been in our economy, it will remain a formidable challenge for parents to send kids to places like Muhlenberg without aid. We have to provide that aid, and we will."

But gradually he came to realize that he could be a president like Randy Helm. So when his name was put into nomination at Muhlenberg by Steve Dahnert '82, in 2002, he was ready for a new challenge. And the College was ready for a new direction.

Many factors about Muhlenberg attracted Helm, who took office on July 1, 2003, but he singles out three.

"I remember looking at the academic calendar and seeing that Yom Kippur was a college holiday. I'm not Jewish, but it showed me that this was a place where faith is welcome.

"Secondly, I noticed a welcoming attitude toward gays on the faculty, the staff and the student body. That is not always the case on college campuses.

"Finally, though Muhlenberg was most definitely a liberal arts institution, there was a pragmatism about it. They weren't snobs. You could take time to think here but you could also get a major in business administration. It was a place where things got done.

"Plus, there is one other thing: Everyone was nice to me. I know they're nice to everyone around here, but it still meant a lot."

And what did Helm want to add when he arrived?

"The only thing 'missing' was a classics department," he says, "but I wasn't going to come in here and start one and, anyway, I never thought it should be a priority. There was just so much great stuff going on, things that we should be getting more credit for, the main one being an extraordinary faculty that emphasized teaching. If you have that at a liberal arts college, you have so much."

In Helm, Muhlenberg found a scholar, a fund-raiser and, perhaps as importantly, a conciliator. Under Arthur Taylor, a strong personality, Muhlenberg had experienced enormous growth, but also a not inconsiderable degree of internal tension. Helm, more Athenian than Spartan, lowered the volume around the president's office — "He brought a leadership style focused on due process" is the way Brueckner puts it — with an easygoing call-me-Randy charm. He was open to new ideas, whether they came from

alumni, faculty or students.

One example is offered by Jacy Good, a 2008 grad. “I was a constant pain to Randy about the environment,” says Good. “I’m sure he got tired of seeing me and hearing me, but he never shut me out. We worked on things together because he cared, and the result was the Campus Greening Committee.” (That is an initiative that focuses on recycling and sustainability and is still going strong.)

No college president raises money alone, and Helm had assistance from a strong board and the considerable talents of former Vice Presidents Tilghman Moyer and Connie Harris, and more recently Rebekkah Brown ’99. Helm’s fund-raising strength no doubt had something to do with his academic background.

“Randy’s process is to do his research, put his points together and present the case, clearly and impactfully,” says Mike Bruckner, Muhlenberg’s vice president of public relations. “He professionalized the development operation and gave them more resources.” Helm also “Greeceinized” it to an extent; whenever he made a speech, there was an ongoing over-under number as to how many Herodotus mentions he would include.

Among Helm’s accomplishments in expanding and making major renovations to the campus (see *Focus on Philanthropy* on page 8 and *Helm at the Helm*, page 22), two stand out for him – the completion of the new science building and the Village residence halls.

“I met with [chemistry professor] Bruce Anderson, and we were told that the science building would cost \$30 million,” remembers Helm, “and I thought that was a lot of money. But I was noncommittal. So when Bruce was asked about it he said, ‘Well, when Randy heard 30 million, he didn’t blink.’ Later I told Bruce, ‘From now on you’re going to see me blinking like I have an eye infection.’”

“But we spent the money because it was necessary. We were starting to lose some of our best science students because of our facilities. Now they stack up with almost anyone’s.”

Helm called the Village project “a no-brainer” since the college had been stuck with dou-



blewide trailers in that area for over two decades. It cost \$11.5 million, and its modular construction was featured in the *New York Times*.

No college president leaves with the thought that he has accomplished everything on his wish list. Campus diversity is always a challenge, not just for Muhlenberg, but for most liberal arts colleges. Helm worked hard at it, helping to establish a new Multicultural Center and develop the College’s first comprehensive diversity strategic plan. “You cannot expect students from underrepresented populations to want to come here unless there’s something that can make it appealing,” says Helm. “You can’t wait until you have a critical mass to start building programs, because why would they come in the first place? We’ve made strides that I’m proud of. We’re as diverse as we’ve ever been, but not as good as we want to be.”

Bruckner is more emphatic about Helm’s success in that area. “I believe diversity on campus will be Randy’s long-term legacy,” he said. “No president here ever took it more seriously.”

Helm touched upon numerous other Muhlenberg memories during two long interviews, such as his initiation of the Board of Observers program (“I was careful to put that in during my honeymoon phase”), the establishment of partnerships with institutions such as Thomas Jefferson Hospital and the Allentown Art Museum and an expanded and strengthened Hillel program, which includes a new center, a new director and two kosher kitchens in the dining hall. But it’s obvious that his costumed appearances before the freshman class hold a special place.

“Freshmen are a little intimidated and insecure at that moment after their parents leave, and they’re on their own for the first time,” he says. “So it occurred to me that if the president shows up and doesn’t take himself too seriously, maybe that will help them relax. The first time I heard a student say, ‘Well, when I was a freshman he showed up as ...’ I knew it was a success.” And though there is no hard evidence that any Muhlenberg students were ever in dire need of bowtie instruction, the YouTube video of Helm ripping off a perfect one is available for viewing at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BO96fvVhinfo>.

You don’t need YouTube to view Helm’s 12-year handiwork. He made a difference in the classroom, where at Muhlenberg he continued to occasionally teach his beloved HST 207 “The Homeric Epic and Greek History.” He made a difference in the community, where on a regular basis he penned editorials trumpeting the benefits of the liberal arts education. And he made a difference in the campus at large where, with a curious mind and a relentless work ethic, he helped grow the facilities and increase the endowment to almost \$250 million from the \$70.5 million when he took over.

It was his beloved Homer who wrote in “The Odyssey” that “each man delights in the work that suits him best.” Peyton Randolph Helm found himself suited to two different kinds of work – to conjure up the ancient past while living very much in the practical present. And as he takes his leave, Muhlenberg is much the better for it.

# W

hen one reflects on Muhlenberg over the last 12 years, the sense of progress, strength and accomplishment is striking. Our college stands on a firm foundation, ready to embrace the challenges and opportunities ahead of us, positioned not just to survive but to thrive in a rapidly-changing world. This position of strength is the culmination of more than a decade's worth of hard work and collaboration by faculty, staff, alumni, students, parents and friends, all led by Muhlenberg's eleventh president, Peyton R. "Randy" Helm. As we embark on a year of presidential transition, it is important for our community to pause, look back and celebrate the many achievements of the past 12 years.

The most obvious and dramatic changes to our campus involve bricks and mortar. The Life Sports Center is only 10 years old, but it is already hard to remember what life was like before its modern facilities. The New Science Building, 2201 Chew Street and the Multicultural Center are all integral parts of the campus community, and all were built on Randy's watch. The Village, with its innovative construction methods, was completed in the summer of 2008. While some mourned the loss of the TKE House, we all joined in the celebration of the completion of the Rehearsal House as well as the much-anticipated Seegers Union expansion, including the extraordinary Wood Dining Commons. The building trend continued in 2011 with the opening of the renovated, expanded Hillel, in addition to the new sociology / anthropology facilities. The return of East Hall to its former glory (complete with expansion and copper cupolas) completed an exceptional era of infrastructure expansion and enhancement.

The inner workings of an institution like Muhlenberg are less visible but every bit as important. Muhlenberg has operated with a balanced budget for 59 straight years, an incredible accomplishment, and its endowment has grown from \$73 million to more than \$247 million over the past 11 years. The Talents Entrusted to Our Care: The Campaign for Muhlenberg raised more than \$110,000,000, and the Muhlenberg Match challenge—still available for participation—provides \$11 million to match scholarship and research gifts.

The academic experience has been enhanced with a new general education curriculum and the addition of new faculty positions in Africana studies, art, biology, film studies, music, neuroscience, political science and sociology. There are now new majors in film studies, finance and Jewish studies and new minors in Africana studies and public health.

And the world outside has taken notice. The theatre program, consistently ranked in the top 10 countrywide by Princeton Review, achieved the #1 rank in 2011. Muhlenberg was further recognized as the #1 liberal arts college for the support and services offered to military veterans and their families. We were also the first liberal arts college in the nation to achieve Hillel accreditation. The recognition goes on and on.

As an alumnus, I want to thank Randy for his stewardship of Muhlenberg. He has kept the core essence of my alma mater while making necessary improvements and changes. He is leaving Muhlenberg better than he found it.

As a parent, I want to thank Randy for the quality of care and education received by my children. Their Muhlenberg experience truly prepared them for life outside The Bubble. I also want to thank him for engaging so many parents in support of the College, making it no accident that 49% of parents support the college through financial gifts.

As a trustee, I want to thank Randy for his ethical leadership, his financial prudence, and his commitment to the success of the entire Muhlenberg community.

As board chair, I want to thank Randy for his professionalism, his candid counsel, and, most of all, his friendship.



*By Richard C. Crist, Jr. '77, P'05, P'09  
Chair of the Board of Trustees*

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