



Foundations

ROBERT MORRIS UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE > WINTER 2007

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Molding the Future

How an RMU alumnus is using lasers and a little technical magic to change an industry.

Daring Girls to Dream

An alumna draws on her experience to light a fire in today's youth.

Corps Courses

Jason Miller '06 completed part of his RMU degree from the battlefields of Iraq.



DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS,

I hope that your 2007 is off to a wonderful start. I am certain this will be another year of excitement and accomplishment for Robert Morris University, as we continue to expand our program offerings; attract students from, and expose enrolled students to, new regions of the country and globe; and celebrate the achievements of our faculty, students and staff in the classroom, on the athletic field and in the professional community.

You may have heard that RMU recently decided to refine the University's health care focus by terminating our efforts to establish a School of Osteopathic Medicine. Instead, we will be directing our resources at addressing the region's health care shortage in other critical areas, such as nursing, patient safety, imaging technology and allied health.

Building on the success of our bachelor's and master's degree programs in nursing, we are excited to begin offering a doctoral-level nursing program, as well as a certificate program in patient safety, made possible through a Jewish Healthcare Foundation grant. We also hope to win approval for several other proposed programs in the coming year.

Included in this issue are many stories of our students' accomplishments, from the selection of video works in film festivals and screenings, to scholarship awards, to international travels. As many of you know from experience, having students who are engaged and active not only enhances their learning, but also allows them to evolve into professionals who are both highly successful and involved in the community. We're happy to profile one such alumna within these pages who, through a series of books, is encouraging young girls everywhere to follow their dreams.

As always, we look forward to hearing about your latest accomplishments, and hope that you will visit our new website at www.rmu.edu. Best wishes to you and yours in 2007.

GREGORY G. DELL'OMO, PH.D.
PRESIDENT

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It is the policy of Robert Morris University to provide equal opportunity in all educational programs and activities, admission of students and conditions of employment for all qualified individuals regardless of race, color, sex, religion, age, disability, national origin and/or sexual preference.

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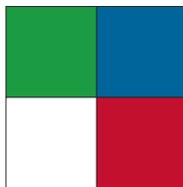
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Ellen Langas Campbell '79 is writing a series of books encouraging young girls to hold onto their drive to succeed. The next volume is coming soon.



Corps Courses 16

Jason Miller '06 answered the call of duty, but he wasn't about to put his education on hold. The Marine found a way to complete his degree from across the globe.



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An RMU professor is tackling a fundamental unknown about human behavior: Can people act randomly? He's enlisted the help of his students to find out.



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Take a look back at the fall festivities, including the football team's dramatic victory, and find out how RMU's mascot got his name.

CAMPUS REPORT

> COLONIAL THEATRE HITS 10TH PRODUCTION SINCE 2003 REVIVAL

In October, RMU's Colonial Theatre presented Neil Simon's comedy *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, its 10th production since the theatre's revival in 2003. The play, which was directed by **Barbara Burgess-Lefebvre, M.F.A.**, assistant professor of communications, gives a glimpse into the life of a Jewish teenager who struggled to deal with family and hormones in lower-middle-class Brooklyn in 1937. The 2006-07 season also included productions of *West Side Story*, which ran Nov. 8-12, *Assassins*, which ran Feb. 14-17, and *Children of Eden*, which played March 21-25. For more information, call 412-397-5454 or visit www.rmu.edu/theatre.

> WALTON FOOTBALL SHOW DEBUTS

Head Football Coach **Joe Walton** debuted *RMU Football With Joe Walton* on the CW Network (formerly UPN Pittsburgh) on Sept. 9. The 30-minute television program aired every Saturday night throughout the Colonials' season and included highlights and previews of RMU games as well as interviews with RMU coaches and players.



WILLIAM SUTTON

> SPORT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM INDUCTS THREE TO HALL OF FAME

RMU celebrated the 30th anniversary of its sport management program and inducted the first three members to the program's hall of fame during the University's third annual Sport Management Conference on Oct. 27.

The inductees included **Stephen**

Hardy, Ph.D., former head of the Department of Sport Management; **Victor Gregovits '86**, Cleveland Indians senior vice president of sales and marketing; and **William Sutton, Ed.D.**, associate department head and professor in the University of Central Florida's DeVos Sport Business Management Program. Also attending the conference were Hank Steinbrecher, former secretary general and executive director for the U.S. Soccer Federation, and representatives from the Pittsburgh Penguins, U.S. Open, Orlando Magic, Altoona Curve, Nemaquin Woodlands Resort, New Orleans Hornets and Buffalo Bills.

> NURSING CAMP FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The School of Nursing and Allied Health conducted an overnight nursing camp in August for 25 seventh- and eighth-grade students from schools in Beaver, Washington, Greene and Fayette counties. The program's activities included: a visit from and tour of a LifeFlight helicopter; interaction with nurses from a variety of work settings and backgrounds; introduction to nursing skills such as blood pressure and pulse readings, measuring glucose and reading a heart monitor; and sessions on topics such as how nurses care for our hearts and lungs, what to do if someone is choking or experiences heart failure, the importance of exercise and healthy eating, and immunizations.



MARKET PLACE CAFÉ

> RENOVATIONS ENHANCE NICHOLSON CENTER

In September, RMU celebrated the grand re-opening of several newly renovated areas in the Edward A. Nicholson Center. The most dramatic was the expansion of the Market Place Café, which quadrupled its size to provide more dining options in a relaxed, indoor setting. The Barnes & Noble Bookstore also added 1,000 square feet of retail space by relocating to the first floor. Additional space in the building was freed up by the move of the Health and Fitness Club, Rec Room and TV Lounge to Jefferson Center last spring.

RMU REFINES HEALTH CARE FOCUS

Consistent with Gov. Ed Rendell's "Prescription for Pennsylvania" program and its expanded role for advanced nurse practitioners and other health care professionals, the RMU Board of Trustees voted in January 2007 to refine the University's health care focus by terminating efforts to establish a School of Osteopathic Medicine. The University will instead direct its resources at continuing to address the region's health care shortage through programs in nursing, patient safety, imaging technology and allied health.

"We have reevaluated the ever-increasing costs associated with the creation and launch of a School of Osteopathic Medicine and have concluded that continuing to funnel significant resources to create a medical school at a time when we have the opportunity to make a real difference in addressing ongoing shortages in other areas does not make sound financial sense," said RMU President Gregory Dell'Omo, Ph.D.

New health care programs planned for fall 2007 include a Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) completion program for advanced practice nurses with master's degrees and a certificate program in patient safety funded by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation.

CAMPUS REPORT



LISTWAK, KIENER, FIEDLER AND DELL'OMO

> SALVATION ARMY'S KETTLE CHALLENGE

Several members of the RMU community competed in the Salvation Army's Second Annual Kettle Challenge at St. Clair Country Club to raise funds for Allegheny County social services and disaster relief as well as the Pittsburgh Family Crisis Center and Shelter.

Representing the University were **Jeff Listwak**, vice president for financial operations; **Dan Kiener**, senior vice president for business affairs; **Jon Fiedler**, a senior economics major and golf team member; and **Gregory Dell'Omo, Ph.D.**, president.

> AMERICA TALKS COMMEMORATES ANNIVERSARY OF SEPT. 11

In September, the Center for Documentary Production and Study recognized the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks with a screening of *America Talks*, a student-produced documentary. When the 45-minute documentary premiered in 2002, it was featured on a segment of CBS's *The Early Show* and shown at screenings throughout Western Pennsylvania. The film, which won a Golden Triangle Award from the Pittsburgh chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators, included interviews and footage from Ground Zero, the Pentagon, Shanksville, Pa., and the White House. The special DVD edition features interviews with RMU students who worked on the video and a behind-the-scenes look at its creation.



INTERIOR OF CONCORD HALL

> RIBBON CUT ON NEW RESIDENCE HALL

The University unveiled Concord Hall, its newest student living space, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Sept. 18. The \$10 million apartment-style residence offers comfortable, contemporary housing for 150 upperclass students and represents the latest phase of construction aimed at

meeting increasing demands for housing at RMU.

> CENTER AIDS AREA VETERANS

The Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC), an arm of RMU's Massey Center for Business Innovation and Development, partnered with other veterans organizations to host workshops throughout the region in August. The sessions helped military personnel and veterans who are looking to enhance their job skills in order to enter the private sector or who are hoping to start or expand an existing business. The VBOC is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Veterans Business Development.

> EXILED CUBAN ECONOMIST VISITS CAMPUS

Antonio Morales-Pita, Ph.D., an exiled Cuban economist and part-time DePaul University professor, visited RMU in September to discuss his book, *Havana-Merida-Chicago: Journey to Freedom*, which documents Morales-Pita's life from his first 52 years in Cuba to his 1996 arrival in the United States. The Department of Finance and Economics sponsored the event.

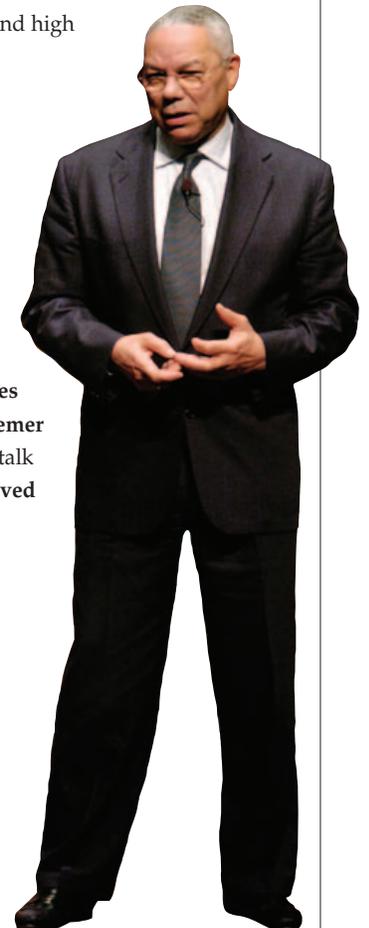
> STAFF ALL-STAR SINGS AT PNC PARK

Staff member **John Tucci** was selected to perform the *Star Spangled Banner* at PNC Park during a Pirates baseball game in September. He sings at RMU and high school sporting events year-round.

> POWELL HIGHLIGHTS

PITTSBURGH SPEAKERS SERIES

Former U.S. Secretary of State **Colin Powell** spoke to a packed Heinz Hall on Dec. 6 as part of RMU's 2006-07 Pittsburgh Speakers Series. Other speakers included screenwriter, playwright and director **Nora Ephron** on Sept. 27, Apollo 13 commander **James Lovell** on Nov. 8, Ambassador **Paul Bremer** on Jan. 31, nationally syndicated radio talk show host and film critic **Michael Medved** on Feb. 28 and environmental attorney and advocate **Robert F. Kennedy Jr.** on March 21. The series concludes with former White House press secretary **Ari Fleischer** on April 25. For more information, call 412-392-4900 or visit www.pittsburghspeakersseries.org.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

> The University's interdisciplinary committee on discrete mathematics applications published the second edition of its textbook, *Discrete Mathematics Applications for Information Systems Professionals*. The book's co-editors and co-authors include **VALERIE J. HARVEY, PH.D.**, professor of computer and information systems; **E. GREGORY HOLDAN, PH.D.**, assistant professor of mathematics; **MARK M. MAXWELL, PH.D.**, director of the actuarial science program and associate professor of actuarial science and mathematics; **ACHARYA SUSHIL, PH.D.**, assistant professor of software engineering; **DAVID F. WOOD, PH.D.**, head of the Department of Computer and Information Systems and professor of computer and information systems; and **PETER Y. WU, PH.D.**, assistant professor of computer and information systems.



> **ZBIGNIEW CZAJKIEWICZ, PH.D.**, professor of engineering and head of RMU's Center for Applied Research in Engineering and Science (CARES), helped lead Lean Six Sigma health care workshops hosted by Six Sigma Connections for Healthcare and CARES. The

workshops focused on executive orientation, leadership training, physical training and green-belt training.

> **JEANNE BAUGH, ED.D.**, and **VALERIE HARVEY, PH.D.**, professors of computer and information systems, and **PETER WU, PH.D.**, assistant professor of computer and information systems, received awards for papers presented at the Information Systems Education Conference in Dallas in November 2006. Baugh received a Distinguished Paper Award for *The Disconnect of the Non-Computer Information Systems Major to the Information Systems Literacy Course*, and all three received a Meritorious Paper Award for *Self-Paced Learning and On-line Teaching of Entity-Relationship Modeling*, on which Wu was the primary author and Baugh and Harvey were contributing authors.



> **TIMOTHY HADFIELD, M.F.A.**, associate professor and director of media arts, had his artwork featured at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Santiago, Chile. The exhibit, titled *Gandhi group: Santiago*, included drawings, photographs, paintings, prints and installation works. The Gandhi group is an international artists collection that Hadfield formed in 2000 whose membership includes current or past heads, chairs, directors and deans from art institutions in the United States, Germany, Ireland, England and Chile. The group's name reflects its belief in internationalism.

> **ERSEM KARADAG, PH.D.**, assistant professor of hospitality and tourism management, traveled to China this summer to present his study, *Comparing Market Segment Profitability Analysis With Department Profitability Analysis as Hotel Marketing Decision Tools*, to the Four Seasons Shanghai and the Guilin Institute of Tourism. His study was published in *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly* last spring.



> **MARIA V. KALEVITCH, PH.D.**, associate dean of the School of Engineering, Mathematics and Science and associate professor and head of the Department of Science, published a book, *Microbiology Laboratory Manual for Students in Health-Related Professions* as part of Pearson/Prentice Hall's Customary Laboratory Program for Biological Sciences. She also co-authored *Natural Growth Inhibitors and Phytohormones in Plant and Environment* and has published more than 60 articles in leading national and international scientific journals.



ROONEY VISITING SCHOLAR FROM ISRAEL

RMU hosted **MOSHE MA'OZ, PH.D.**, a professor of Islamic studies and Middle East history from Hebrew University of Jerusalem as the fall 2006 Rooney International Visiting Scholar. Ma'oz served as an advisor to Israeli prime ministers David Ben-Gurion, Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin. During his stay, Ma'oz helped RMU's School of Communications and Information Systems with research projects and presented several community lectures, including *Islam and the West: Clash or Dialogue*, *The Shi'a Arab Crescent: Myth and Reality* and *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: War or Peace*. His visit was co-sponsored by the School of Communications and Information Systems and the Office of Academic Affairs.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

> STUDENTS SUPPORT JUVENILE DIABETES RESEARCH

RMU students raised \$800 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation in the fall through several events. About 120 students participated in the JDRF's Walk to Cure Diabetes, held at Schenley Park in Pittsburgh. Two first-year students, accounting major **Lauren Rodgers** and nursing student **Ashlee McCafferty**, each raised \$100.



> PREPARING FOR DISASTER

Several RMU undergraduate nursing students participated in an on-campus disaster drill as part of their community health and health promotion course. Students assumed the role of community health care professionals responding to a bioterrorist attack in which a deadly virus was dispersed in multiple locations throughout the United States. In addition, 40 of RMU's nursing students participated in the Pittsburgh International Airport's tri-annual emergency response exercise in September. Students acted as victims during the exercise, which simulated an airline disaster.

> FILM SCREENING FEATURES STUDENT WORKS

The video works of RMU students were featured during the Film Kitchen screening at the Pittsburgh Filmmakers' Melwood Screening Room in July. Among the films shown were senior media arts major **Brad Grimm's** *Smokey Misconception*, a 23-minute documentary shot in Istanbul, Turkey, and 2005 communication graduate **Erica Peiffer's** *NGO Centro*, which examined Central American economic development. Also shown were films from two RMU-sponsored exchange students from the University of Applied Sciences in Dortmund, Germany. **Daniel Erb's** shorts, titled *Wholey's Food Market*, *Sunday Morning Walk* and *Nine Eyes on Pittsburgh*, and **Stefanie Gartmann's** shorts *Sports* and *Sparetime* were filmed during the students' stay at RMU in the summer of 2004.

> BUSINESS COURSE GOES INTERNATIONAL

Five RMU students traveled to Cuernavaca, Mexico, this summer to get a firsthand glimpse of another culture. The trip was led by **Joseph Correa, Ph.D.**, professor of management, as part of his International Business course. Organizational studies graduate students **Timothy Johnson** and **Desiree Williams**, business administration graduate student **Mark Emrick**, marketing major **Mohamed Baro** and accounting major **Kristina Daferede** joined students from Tecnologico de Monterrey in Cuernavaca and Chatham College in visiting four Mexican cities, touring two manufacturing facilities, spending a week in Spanish classes and listening to guest speakers discuss the history and culture of the country.



> PENNSYLVANIA GOVERNOR'S SCHOLARSHIP

Nancy G. Florence, an organizational studies major in RMU's School of Adult and Continuing Education, received the Pennsylvania Governor's Scholarship during the Pennsylvania Governor's Conference for Women at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in September.

> MEDIA ARTS STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

Three RMU media arts students traveled to Valparaiso, Chile, in October 2006 to exhibit their work as part of the *Valparaiso Zona de Diseño (Valparaiso Design Zone)* international exhibition, which included the work of artists from universities and Chilean professional graphic design agencies. Senior **Jennifer Leech**, senior **Brenda Swisher** and sophomore **Brian Nikonow** were accompanied by **Norma Gonzalez, M.F.A.**, assistant professor of media arts, who served as a judge for the competition portion of the exhibition.

> MAGAZINE HIGHLIGHTS STUDENT DESIGNS

The July–August issue of *STEP Inside Design* featured the works of two RMU students. Media arts students **Kevin Felix** and **Christian Diamante** were included in an article covering diversity in the design industry. The students' works were selected as examples of excellence among minority students from programs across the nation.



DOCUMENTARY EXCHANGE STUDENTS

Last summer the Center for Documentary Production and Study hosted students and faculty from the University of Applied Sciences in Dortmund, Germany, and the University of Bahcesehir in Istanbul, Turkey, as part of the center's international documentary exchange program. The visitors shot short documentaries related to the Pittsburgh area, helped out with projects at the center, met local filmmakers and explored the Pittsburgh region. Pictured from left to right are German students **CHRISTINA BUCHMANN** and **FLORIAN MICHAELSEN** and RMU graduate student **ALEX WILSON**.

SCOREBOARD



RAY GENSLER

FOOTBALL

Robert Morris, under the guidance of Head Coach **Joe Walton**, finished with an overall record of 7-4 in 2006, including a mark of 5-2 in the Northeast Conference, to tie for second place. A total of 10 Colonials earned either first-team or second-team All-NEC accolades, led by the defense, which had seven representatives. Senior defensive lineman **Ray Gensler** garnered first-team honors and established a new RMU career record for sacks with 19. He also tied the single-season sack record with 11 in 2006. Fellow senior defensive linemen **Matt Brunck** and **Colyn Haugh** took home first- and second-team accolades, respectively. Also, senior defensive back **Mike Niklos** garnered first-team honors, while senior linebacker **Jeff Rommes**, junior linebacker **Chad Wengert** and junior safety **James Kazil** took

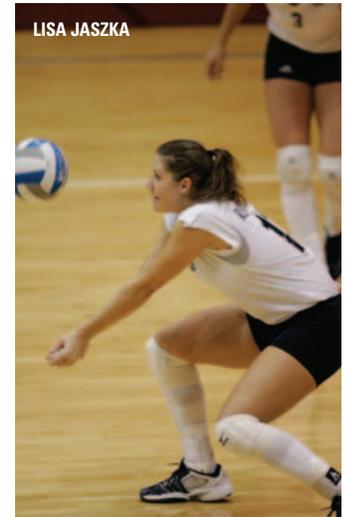
JARVIS POWERS

home second-team accolades. Rommes' 75 tackles led a Colonial defense that finished first in the nation in I-AA in total defense, allowing an average of 228.4 yards per game. Brunck finished with 74 stops, while Wengert notched 73. Off the field, Gensler garnered *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-America honors for carrying a 3.91 grade point average as a manufacturing engineering major. On offense, senior tight end **Jarvis Powers** was named to the All-NEC First Team after leading the club in receptions (31), receiving yards (421) and touchdown catches (5), while junior center **John**

Steilner was named to the All-NEC Second Team. Rounding out the all-conference honorees was junior return specialist **Mario Hines**, who was named to the All-NEC First Team.

VOLLEYBALL

RMU advanced to the NEC Tournament championship game for the eighth straight season in 2006 and faced Long Island for the third straight time, but the Blackbirds downed the Colonials, 3-0, for their third consecutive league crown. Led by fourth-year Head Coach **Rob Thomas**, RMU finished the season with an overall record of 17-16, including a mark of 5-3 in league play. Senior middle blocker **Janette Schneider** and sophomore libero **Alaina Gibson** were named to the All-NEC First Team, while junior outside hitter **Emily Wolthuis** garnered All-NEC Second-Team honors. Wolthuis paced the Colonials in kills with 338, while Schneider finished with 321 kills and an attack percentage of .362, which ranked second in the conference and fourth in the RMU single-season record book. Gibson led Robert Morris with 455 digs, an average of 3.99 per game that ranked third in the conference. In just two seasons, Gibson has posted 983



LISA JASZKA

career digs, a total that ranks sixth all-time at RMU. Also in the career record book, Schneider finished fifth all-time at Robert Morris for kills (1,049) and second in attack percentage (.322). Schneider, along with senior opposite **Lisa Jaszka**, garnered *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-District II honors in 2006. Jaszka owns a perfect 4.00 grade point average as an elementary education major, while Schneider has posted a 3.91 GPA as a communication major.



EMILY WOLTHUIS

SCOREBOARD



JACEK PRZEDNOWEK

and ranked second on the club in points with 16. Przednowek will enter his final season in 2007 with career totals of 23 goals, seven assists and 53 points. His goal total currently ranks tied for seventh all-time at RMU, and his point total ranks ninth. Off the field, senior **Mark Klabnik** was named to the *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-District II men's soccer team for carrying a 3.80 grade point average as a manufacturing engineering major.

MEN'S SOCCER

Under the direction of ninth-year Head Coach **Bill Denniston**, Robert Morris posted an overall record of 9-7-4 in 2006, including a mark of 4-2-3 in the Northeast Conference. The Colonials advanced to the NEC Tournament for the second straight year but fell to Monmouth, 3-0, in the semifinals. Junior forward **Jacek Przednowek** paced RMU in scoring, notching nine goals and four assists for

22 points.

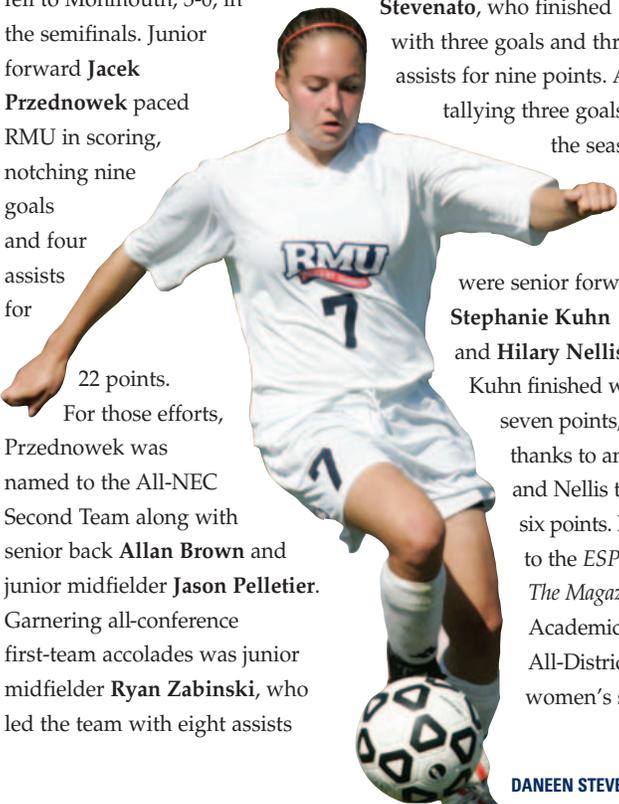
For those efforts, Przednowek was named to the All-NEC Second Team along with senior back **Allan Brown** and junior midfielder **Jason Pelletier**. Garnering all-conference first-team accolades was junior midfielder **Ryan Zabinski**, who led the team with eight assists

WOMEN'S SOCCER

RMU finished its 2006 campaign with an overall record of 6-13-0, including a mark of 2-7-0 in NEC play to finish tied for eighth. Under the direction of sixth-year Head Coach **John Kowalski**, the Colonials were led by freshman midfielder **Daneen Stevenato**, who finished with three goals and three assists for nine points. Also tallying three goals on the season

were senior forwards **Stephanie Kuhn** and **Hilary Nellis**.

Kuhn finished with seven points, thanks to an assist, and Nellis tallied six points. Named to the *ESPN The Magazine* Academic All-District II women's soccer



DANEEN STEVENATO



SARAH SCHROTT

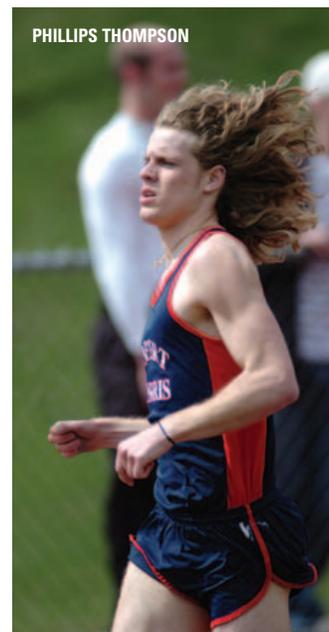
team in 2006 was junior defender/midfielder **Taryn Reichard**, who carries a 3.98 grade point average as an environmental science major.

CROSS COUNTRY

Led by Head Coach **Michael Smith**, the Robert Morris men's team finished fifth with 173 points at the 2006 Northeast Conference Championships, while the Colonial women notched a sixth-place finish with 151 points. The top performer on the men's side was junior **Phillips Thompson**, who finished 12th with a time of 26:35.10. Finishing 31st for the men was junior **Kevin Forsythe**, who crossed the finish line at 27:25.90. The top runner for the Colonial women was freshman **Emily Ingle**, who finished 14th with a time of 19:09.30. Also taking home a top 25 finish was junior **Sarah Antonaitis**, who finished 24th with a time of 19:54.80.

FIELD HOCKEY

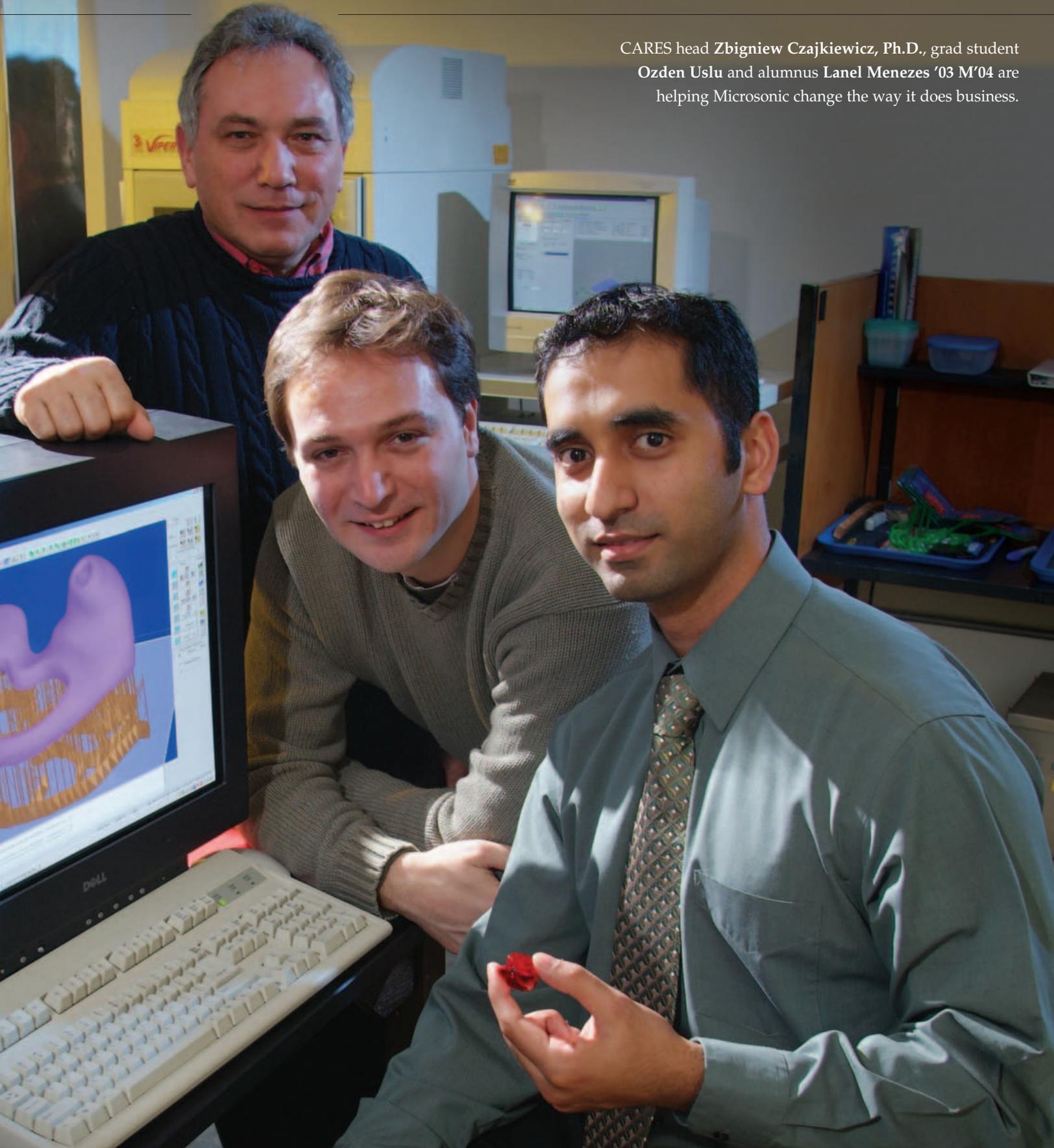
Led by third-year Head Coach **Lisa Bell**, RMU finished its 2006 season with an overall record of 3-14, including 2-7 in the Northeast Conference. Sophomore forward **Sarah Schrott** finished with six goals and four assists to pace the Colonials offensively, while junior goalie **Kate Dunlap** finished with 153 saves and a save percentage of .753.



PHILLIPS THOMPSON

MOLDING THE

CARES head Zbigniew Czajkiewicz, Ph.D., grad student Ozden Uslu and alumnus Lanel Menezes '03 M'04 are helping Microsonic change the way it does business.



FUTURE

Even on a slow day, the shop floor in the Microsonic laboratory is a busy place. The company, which is based in Ambridge, Pa., about 15 minutes from Robert Morris University, is one of the country's leading manufacturers of custom ear molds.

Technicians are at work in most of the plant's dozen or so work stations, and the grinding and polishing machines emit a steady drone. At one station, a tech is sitting in his chair, his attention focused on the hard plastic ear mold he is shaping with a hand-held grinder. Another is polishing an ear mold on a buffing wheel.

And in a little two-room suite near the back of the building, the future is unfolding. That's where **Lanel Menezes '03 M'04**, head of research and development for Microsonic, is working on a technology that will someday change the way the company does business.

From his computer, Menezes rotates a three-dimensional image of an ear mold, manipulating the subtle curves and undulations to make the piece a better fit. Then, with a few clicks, he sends the design to the next room, where lasers zap a vat of crystal clear liquid and the ear mold emerges, complete and ready for final polishing.

Microsonic is developing this new manufacturing approach in conjunction with RMU's Center for Applied Research in Engineering and Science, or CARES. It's a mutually beneficial arrangement: The company taps the University's expertise, and RMU students get the opportunity to tackle a real-world engineering challenge.

To make the project work, Menezes and the CARES engineers had to quickly absorb 40 years' worth of ear mold know-how. Every person's ears and ear canals are unique and constantly changing. "Your ears and nose are the two things that never stop growing," Menezes says.

For a proper fit, a hearing aid must be custom-made for the individual who wears it. The ear mold is the portion of the hearing aid that is inserted into the ear canal, holding the hearing aid snugly in place and blocking out extraneous sound. Microsonic's main product is ear molds for hearing aids, although it also manufactures custom ear plugs for swimmers and musicians, as well as earpieces for electronics

such as personal music players and the communications earpieces worn by law enforcement officers.

Traditionally, the process of making an ear mold goes like this: A patient visits an ear specialist, or audiologist, and the doctor squirts a clay-like substance into the patient's ear canal. After 10 minutes, the doctor removes the clay, which has hardened into a perfect representation of the person's ear. The doctor then packs it up and ships it to Microsonic.

The little boxes arrive by the dozens at Microsonic, where the impressions are unpacked and placed in little metal trays. A technician inspects the impression; the finished ear mold will only be as good as the impression, so bad impressions have to be retaken. The technician cleans the good impressions and fine-tunes their shape, filling small imperfections with molten wax. Then they are taken to the molding room, where they are grouped into clusters and a cement-like compound is poured over them, leaving a cavity shaped like the original impression. The final ear mold is made from this casting by pouring the melted material into the cast and allowing it to cure.

A technician removes the ear mold from the cast and trims excess material, using scissors, small grinding tools and polishing wheels. Holes are drilled for venting and for the tube that pipes amplified sound into the ear. Finally, the ear mold is tumbled in a polishing machine to smooth it.

While Microsonic has perfected this approach over the decades, the traditional process has its limitations. For one thing, doctors have to mail the impressions to the company. The castings are discarded shortly after the ear molds are finished, so the ear molds can't be replaced. Making some complex shapes is difficult or impossible, because there are



some things that tools just can't do, like drilling a hole that isn't straight. And the intensity of the necessary training makes adding new workers expensive and time-consuming.

It takes six months before a new employee can produce a finished ear mold, Menezes says, because it takes time to develop the manual dexterity and precision required to hand-shape a plastic part half the size of a walnut. There's also a lot to learn about ear anatomy. When Menezes was hired, he recalls, his trainer spread 120 ear molds out in front of him and handed him a single impression. He was required to pick out the ear mold that matched the impression – in less than 10 seconds. Even with this training the process is subject to human variability, Menezes says. For example, at one point impressions are dipped in wax, and the thickness of the wax coating depends on the length of time they remained submerged.

One way to overcome some of these hurdles is through a set of manufacturing technologies first developed for rapid prototyping. Instead of starting with a solid piece of material and cutting, grinding, trimming or molding it into a final part, rapid prototyping machines start with a 3-D model of the finished product and then build it, layer by layer, from powdered or liquid materials.

Rapid prototyping is quickly being adopted by industry as an alternative manufacturing technique, according to **Zbigniew Czajkiewicz, Ph.D.**, head of CARES. "The technology is cheaper for some applications where you're making a limited number of parts," he says, "or when the parts have to be customized and are very intricate."

Microsonic had been looking to add a rapid prototyping division to its arsenal for several years when Menezes graduated from RMU and started his job hunt. As it

happened, Menezes' uncle, RMU professor **Joseph Correa, Ph.D.**, belonged to the same YMCA as Microsonic founder Miklos Major. At Correa's request, Major agreed to interview Menezes, who was finishing up his final semester in RMU's Master of Science in Engineering Management program. Menezes also had earned a Bachelor of Science in Engineering at the University and had experience with rapid prototyping and reverse engineering – just what the company was looking for. The company hired him as a research and design engineer.

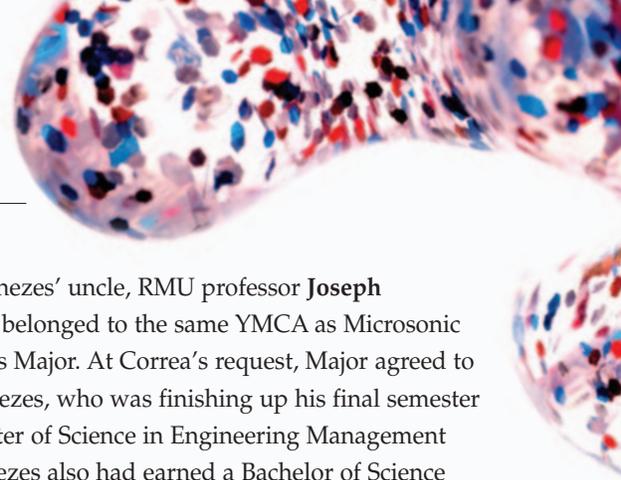
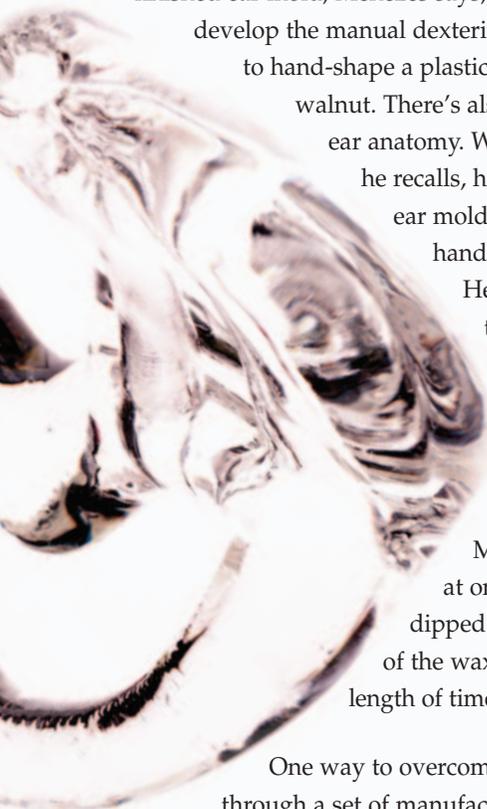
Creating a rapid prototyping process for Microsonic was a series of significant challenges, and Menezes soon enlisted the aid of his former professors. CARES and Menezes divided the research to prevent duplication of effort.

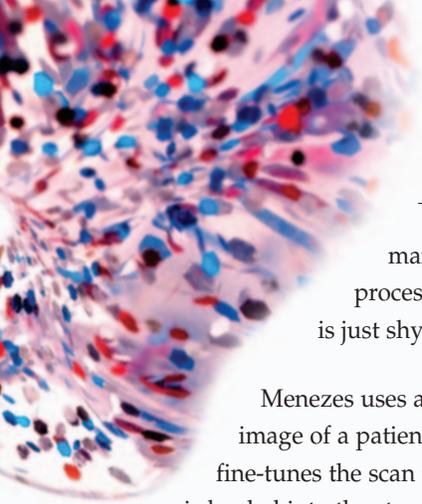
The first difficulty was learning how the computer images translated into a physical product. "A digital representation on the computer screen doesn't do absolute justice to a real-life, physical model," Menezes says. "Since an impression is scanned as a triangulated model, accurate dimensions for curved contours were hard to measure. This led to an intense trial and error period before we could get products that were accurate to a fraction of a millimeter." Although he selected software designed for the ear mold industry, it had to be adapted to Microsonic's designs.

Another challenge was selecting the specific material from which to make the ear molds, says **Ozden Uslu**, a student in the Master of Science in Engineering Management program and the lead CARES researcher for the Microsonic project. The material had to be totally clear and nontoxic. The company already used a dozen different materials for its ear molds, but none of them would work for rapid prototyping. Uslu went through hundreds of materials to find one that met Microsonic's standards.

RMU also helped find funding for the project. Innovation Works, part of the Ben Franklin Foundation, awarded CARES and Microsonic a \$40,000 innovation adaptation grant. The program supports small manufacturing companies that are trying to adopt new technologies.

After more than a year of research and testing, Microsonic has started producing ear molds with its new rapid





manufacturing technology. The process, known as stereo lithography, is just shy of wizardry.

Menezes uses a 3-D scanner to create a digital image of a patient's ear impression. He then fine-tunes the scan to create a final design, which is loaded into the stereo lithography machine.

A clear liquid resin is poured into a reservoir in the stereo lithography machine, and a platform, honeycombed with holes, sits just under the surface of the resin. The machine takes the 3-D computer model of the ear mold and translates the image into a series of slices. Then it uses a laser to trace a slice of the ear mold, hardening a small portion of the resin's surface. Then the platform lowers by 0.004 of an inch, and the laser hardens another slice. The ear mold is built slice by slice.

The result is a finished ear mold with a texture that looks like a fingerprint, needing only a final polishing. Designing the ear mold on the computer takes about 10 minutes; the stereo lithography machine can produce a batch of 60 ear molds in about six hours.

Aside from its speed, the new process has several other advantages. The machine isn't encumbered by many of the limitations of hand tools, so Microsonic can create more intricate designs. Previously, any venting or sound holes in the ear molds were bored with a drill, so they had to be straight. The new process can make curved holes that better fit the ear mold's shape. If a patient steps on an ear mold and breaks it, the company can simply build a new one from the customer's 3-D computer file. And down the road, doctors will be able to scan impressions right in their office and transmit the file electronically, eliminating the need to mail impressions back and forth.

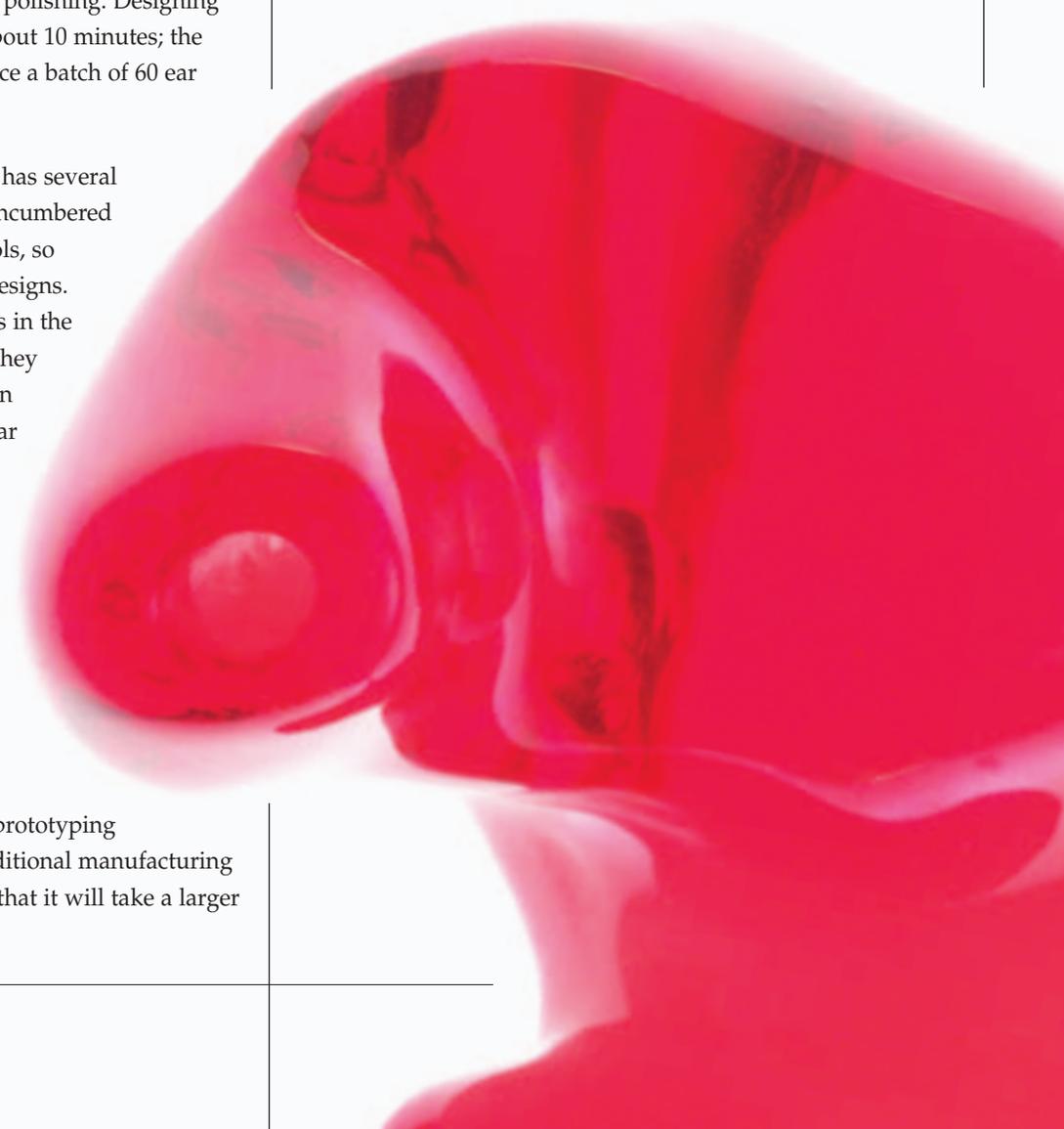
While Menezes doesn't foresee rapid prototyping completely replacing Microsonic's traditional manufacturing process anytime soon, he does expect that it will take a larger

share in the next few years. He's working on plans to add another stereo lithography machine, hire more technicians and find more materials that will work with the machines. And he's putting together a program to market this new service to Microsonic's clients, starting this spring.

RMU is also looking to expand its investment in this technology. The University is seeking a \$250,000 grant from Pennsylvania's Keystone Innovation Zone program to build a rapid prototyping center, which would provide services and training to local companies.

"This is the future of manufacturing," Czajkiewicz says. "In 50 years, we will not have machines that are cutting metal. Everything will be made this way. The applications are endless."

WRITTEN BY **JOSH EARL** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KEVIN COOKE**



DARING GIRLS



All through high school, **Ellen Langas Campbell '79** had a straightforward career plan: She was going to be a secretary. Her parents were of a traditional bent – her father spent his childhood in Greece – and they encouraged her on this path.

TO DREAM

“As a youngster I didn’t have a keen sense of what I could aspire to,” she says. “In the 1970s, I think male-female roles were still a little more defined than they are now. It was a transitional time.”

Two things helped change her direction. The first was a part-time job at Hertz Rent-A-Car. Langas was put in a room with a typewriter and 2,000 blank key chain tags and charged with filling in each vehicle’s make, model, color and license plate number. When she was done, she stuffed them into their holders. The experience left her wondering whether she could put her talents to better use.

The second was enrolling at Robert Morris College. Through her experiences at Robert Morris, she learned what it meant to dream big dreams – and then pursue them.

Now Langas is looking to share that lesson with today’s generation of young girls through her “Girls Know How” series of children’s books. The third installment, tentatively titled *Smart Alex*, is due in bookstores this spring.

Each book in the series focuses on a specific career field: in *Will Stephanie Get The Story?*, journalism; in *Raising the Roof*, construction; and in *Smart Alex*, teaching. The plots revolve around girls who are striving to overcome a conflict or challenge and are helped along the way by a fictional adult character. These grown-up characters are based on real-life female role models, people like Marcia Bullard, editor of *USA Weekend*, and Linda Alvarado, president of Alvarado Construction. The books conclude with an interview with these accomplished women.

“The books are fictional and fun,” Langas says. “I felt this would serve as a good introduction to the concept of following your dreams.”

Langas’ pursuit of her own dreams led her on a career path with as many twists and turns as one of her novels. And chapter one took place at Robert Morris.

As pivotal as her time at Robert Morris was, Langas’ decision to attend was all but a foregone conclusion. George Langas, her father, was the school’s maintenance director.

“When you have the opportunity to go to college at a good school like Robert Morris, you do it,” she says.

The family, including Langas’ mother, Angie, and sister, Rita, lived in a house on campus. “It was wonderful. I thought we had the world’s biggest backyard,” Langas recalls. The house, which was located near the present-day Sewall Center, was the former service quarters for Oliver Kaufman’s Pine Hill Farm estate. Stables and an orchard stood nearby. A slate-bottomed pool lay hidden among the trees. The family attended basketball games and Colonial Theatre performances regularly.

“The college was small, and everyone knew everyone,” she says. “We watched it evolve.”

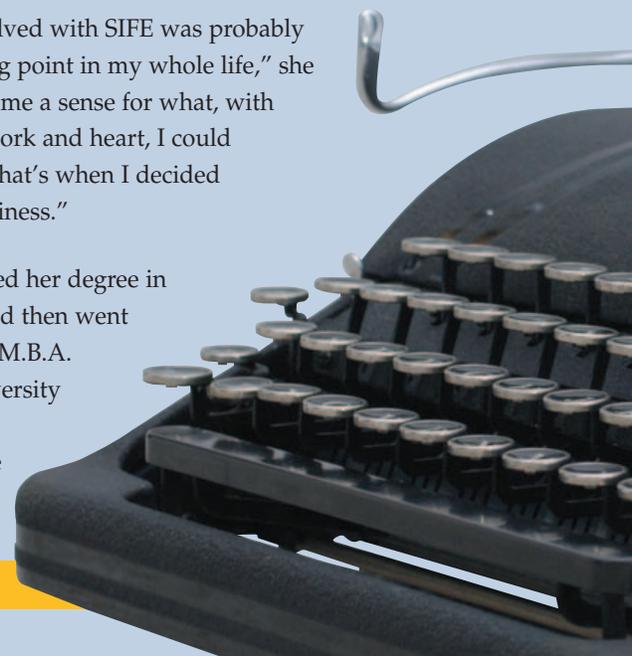
Langas elected to major in marketing, and during her second year, a professor asked her to help start a new student group on campus. The group was to be a Robert Morris team for the national organization Students in Free Enterprise, or SIFE. The group’s main mission was teaching others in the community how business works.

“It was at a time when capitalism didn’t have a positive connotation. Entrepreneurship wasn’t a buzz word back then,” she says.

The students organized educational programs for elementary schools and their fellow college students. They also created a business award to recognize successful local enterprises. For its efforts, the team won a first-place award in SIFE’s national competition.

“Getting involved with SIFE was probably the big turning point in my whole life,” she says. “It gave me a sense for what, with a little hard work and heart, I could accomplish. That’s when I decided to go into business.”

Langas finished her degree in three years and then went on to earn an M.B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh. With the hope of someday





starting her own business, Langas accepted positions in different areas related to marketing, sales and advertising.

She stuck with that plan until, in 1986, her career took an unexpected turn. Langas was living in Philadelphia at the time, working for an advertising agency. One Sunday, she was reading the newspaper and came across a big display ad that read, "Do you want to be a TV show host?" The idea appealed to her.

"So on my lunch hour, I scheduled an audition," she says. "I didn't know what I was getting myself into."

The audition took place in a rented office. Langas was seated behind a table in a dimly lit room. The camera started rolling, and someone placed an ordinary No. 2 pencil on the table in front of her. She was instructed to "sell" the pencil – for five minutes.

"I was very intimidated," she says. "It was extemporaneous, and I didn't know what to say about the pencil, so I started creating what I thought were hard-to-believe attributes that this pencil might have.

"I felt ridiculous," she recalls. "I went home and I just wanted to cry because I had embarrassed myself, I thought."

The TV executives disagreed. Langas was offered a second audition and then a job with a TV-shopping network that came to be known as QVC.

"Much to the chagrin of all my classmates, I took a \$10,000 pay cut and left my career," she says. "But who had the last laugh?"

Eventually the brass discovered Langas' marketing background, and the company drafted her to start its public relations and consumer affairs departments. After seven years with QVC, she rose to the rank of vice president of consumer affairs and public relations.

In the mid-1990s, ownership of the network changed hands, and Langas decided the time was right to step out on her own. She founded NouSoma Communications, a marketing and public relations company with a client list of zero.

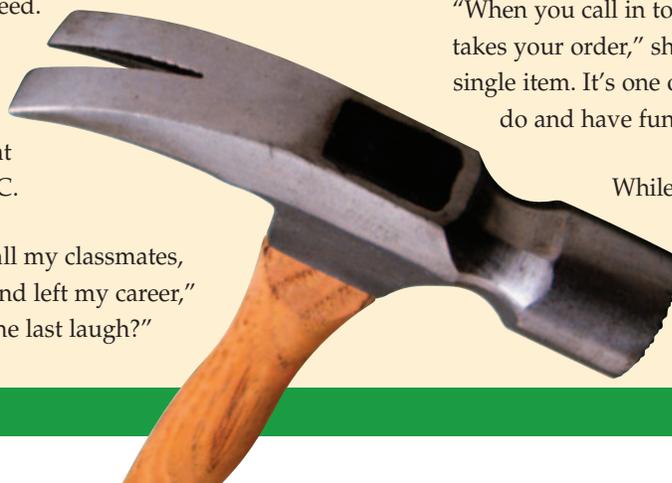
Before long she was approached by Students in Free Enterprise, and her first client as an entrepreneur was the very organization that sparked her interest in starting her own business.

"I had the wonderful experience of working with an organization that was on a fast growth curve," she says. In five years, Langas helped build SIFE from an organization of 180 local teams in one country to one with more than 800 teams in 30 countries. And after landing SIFE, Langas' business took off.

Langas also has maintained her connection to QVC. Each week, she records voice-overs for the network's latest offerings.

"When you call in to the automated number, that's me that takes your order," she says. "Every week, I record every single item. It's one of those little things that you get to do and have fun."

While her corporate career has been marked by success, the inspiration for her latest enterprise came from a different direction – the home front and her two daughters, Stephanie and Veronica.



"Once my girls started getting toward middle school, I was so much more sensitive as a mother to how I could positively impact my children," she says. "I felt that the most critical age is the middle school age. Prior to middle school, based on research, boys and girls are very similar in their levels of ambition and the type of jobs they say they'll seek. When they get to middle school, girls particularly are very influenced by social consciousness and body consciousness.

"They often tend to drop their ambitions so they fit in with the popular crew. They can derail their futures. It's like a chain reaction. Maybe they don't take the honors math class because it's not 'cool,' and then later they don't get into the college they really want to attend. It's a pivotal time."

She hit on the idea of writing books as a way of reaching girls in this stage in their development with a positive message.

Being an author was a new challenge for Langas, who'd never written a story before. With each book, she hit a roadblock, some kink in the story that she had trouble getting past.

"Once I can picture it from beginning to end, the writing flows very easily," she says. "It takes a while sometimes before I can see what happens, and that's frustrating."

In *Smart Alex*, the main character, Alex, is a troublemaker. Langas sends her to detention, where the girl meets a teacher who inspires her.

"I couldn't determine what subject this teacher teaches, and how Alex would get interested," Langas says. "Should it be

reading? Should it be English as a second language? Then I decided it would be math. There would be a math team competition.

"It sounds boring. My girlfriends just laugh at me when I bring this up because I'm so enthusiastic. I'm actually working now with the national organization Math Counts, and we're going to introduce that organization in the book."

Langas has put her marketing savvy to work in promoting the books and her message. To come up with the theme for her latest book, she surveyed girls to find out what careers they were interested in. A small army of "kid testers" read her chapters and give her feedback, and elementary school reading specialists help her make sure her vocabulary and subject matter are suitable for her target audience. She also hosts career workshops in bookstores, libraries and elementary schools when a new volume comes out.

Langas has been pleasantly surprised by the success of the books. While planning a career workshop at Barnes & Noble to launch *Raising the Roof*, she worried that only a few people would come. "I don't think I have ever felt so excited and nervous, wondering what the outcome would be," she says. "A hundred people showed up. The kids were so enthusiastic, and they participated and recognized the series from the first book.

"It was extraordinarily rewarding because it was something that I actually created. I had really dedicated my career to making other people's dreams and company initiatives come true. This is the first time I had ever done something that was original and close to me. I can't think of anything more rewarding than that."

WRITTEN BY JOSH EARL | PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEVIN COOKE



A soldier in camouflage uniform is sitting on the floor in a room with peeling paint. He is leaning against a wall, resting his head on his hand, and looking at a laptop computer. A backpack is next to him. The word "CORPS" is written in large, white, serif letters on the right side of the image.

CORPS

COURSES

While his classmates were reading about history in books, **Jason Miller '06** was writing about the history he's seen first hand. Miller, a social science major who earned his degree in December, completed part of his studies from the remote battlefields of Iraq.

Miller, 31, was a junior at Robert Morris University when his Marine Reserve unit was activated in January 2005. He is a staff sergeant in Kilo Company, 25th Marine Regiment, 3rd Battalion, an infantry unit based in Wheeling, W.Va.

"I just wanted to get done with my schooling," Miller says. "I approached my advisor, Dr. Kathy Dennick-Brecht, who is an angel. If I didn't have that woman, I'd still probably be a junior. I said 'I have orders to deploy to Iraq. What can I do to continue my education?'"

Traditional undergraduates weren't allowed to take online classes at RMU at the time, so administrators found a way to reclassify Miller as a student in the School of Adult and Continuing Education, which offers distance learning programs.

From January to March, Miller's unit was stationed in California to prepare for combat. There Miller was able to finish off the first of four courses he planned to take.

Once he reached Iraq, things got more challenging. Miller's main concerns shifted from assignments and grades to

dodging enemy fire and avoiding roadside bombs. His company was stationed in Al Anbar province, where Sunni militia groups were putting up fierce resistance. Al Anbar, which includes the city of Fallujah, has proven to be a deadly region for U.S. military personnel; fighting in the province has claimed more than 1,100 American lives.

Kilo Company's mission was to patrol the nearby cities, often on foot, providing security and aid to the local populace. Miller spent the first three months of his deployment leading a team that defended the Marines' camp with mortars. The second portion he spent on foot patrol with his fellow Marines.

"Anytime you go to war, it's kind of like being a car salesman," Miller says. "It's either feast or famine. You will go, go, go for three weeks, and then it'll be quiet for four or five days, and then you'll go full-bore again where you don't have time to do anything but sleep and patrol."

Instead of playing cards or reading a novel during those lulls, Miller hit the books, a diversion he found therapeutic.

"I could actually think about something else. Whenever you're on the ground with a weapon in your hand, you're always thinking about what could happen," he says. "Whenever I took my gear off and sat down and started reading my book, I could actually get my mind off of the what-ifs. Even if it was just for an hour."

Through much of his deployment, Miller was essentially taking online classes without access to the Internet. "I basically just threw my book in my pack," he says. "Whenever I had an assignment due, I'd go to my commanding officer and say, 'Sir, can I use your computer?'" He would type up his work, save it on a thumb drive and hand it to a friend who would come through periodically on a supply convoy.



book's lessons to his company. "It really made me understand the type of war that we're fighting over there," he says.

It's ironic, but the same military service that pulled Miller out of RMU's classrooms was also what encouraged him to pursue a college education. Miller describes himself as having been an unmotivated high school student. "By the time I reached the 12th grade, I was burned out with school," he



Miller was able to complete two psychology courses and his social science seminar while in Iraq, helped in part by his professors' flexibility. Online learning works through a combination of e-mail and postings on a website. For one class, he wasn't able to turn in some of his homework until four weeks after the class had ended. "My professors were very understanding," Miller says. "If I had something else going on they'd say, 'You know what, don't worry about this deadline.'"

Miller found the knowledge he was gaining in classes was also relevant to the battlefield. "Psychology is something that you can apply every day," he says. "The reading that I did helped me understand the people over there. A lot of times these young Marines go in and they want to be aggressive. But when there are innocents involved, you can't be aggressive. The population is getting pushed from both sides. A lot of young guys don't understand that. If you can gain the Iraqis' respect, you'll be a lot more successful in the end."

For his social science seminar, Miller had to write a 25-page research paper, and he chose Kilo Company as his subject. Miller's paper examined *War of the Flea*, a book by Robert Taber about guerrilla warfare as waged by groups such as the Irish Republican Army and the Vietcong, and applied the

says. "I had no idea what I wanted to do. My family would have loved to see me go [to college], but it wasn't something I aspired to out of high school. The fact that I didn't apply myself didn't help my college hopes. Whenever you have a C average in high school, your parents are less inclined to pay for your college. They would have, if I would have asked them, but I just wasn't interested."

One thing he did know was that he wanted to see the world outside of western Pennsylvania. In 1992, soon after his high school graduation, Miller enlisted in the Marines. Military service also appealed to him as a means to conquer personal shortcomings. "I lacked self-discipline, and I knew it. I didn't apply myself in high school," he recalls.

Miller spent nine years on active duty before leaving the service to work at his family's industrial fire protection business. But soon after, hijacked airliners felled two of the world's tallest buildings on Sept. 11, 2001, and Miller felt the call of duty. He re-enlisted as a member of the Marine reserves.

During his active service, Miller discovered a latent ability: teaching. For two years, he ran a supporting arms class that included a classroom instruction component. "I found out that I enjoy teaching. I like to help people be better," he says.

Miller decided that he had a future as a teacher, and after leaving active duty, he enrolled at RMU to pursue a secondary education teaching certification. He chose to major in social science because of his interest in history and because of the example set for him by his high school instructors. "My social studies teachers were all the tough teachers in the school," he says, and while they made history easy to understand, they also pushed him to do his best.

Miller explored other area colleges before settling on RMU. "The University's program is designed to prepare you for any subject that you may have to teach in social studies. Some of these other programs just tell you to take 60 credits of history and then go take your tests," he says.

"I had a lot of great professors at Robert Morris," Miller says. He was particularly impressed with their breadth of



Going back to school as an older student had its advantages. "I found it easier to apply myself as a 30-year-old sophomore because I wasn't distracted with girls and beer and all the things college students are distracted by," Miller says. "I was paying for my own school. And I knew that an education is valued in our society."

Dennick-Brecht, his advisor, was impressed the first time she met him with his strategic approach to his education. "He was always a consummate professional," she says. "He knew exactly what he wanted from the program, and never varied from that plan." In the classroom, his fellow students tended to look to him for leadership, she recalls.

College helped him to refine the skills he had, but it also showed him a few things he didn't know. "I was cocky," Miller recalls. "I felt like I knew how to teach before I went back to school. I have since learned that higher education is something that is a worthwhile endeavor for anyone. You have to be able to express yourself intelligently on paper and in person. I didn't have that before I went to school. I had the working knowledge of history. I knew history, and I knew battles."

knowledge, which extended well beyond the subject they were teaching. And many of them either held full-time jobs elsewhere or had held jobs outside academia at some point; they were able to understand that he was taking five classes – four night classes and a Saturday course – while holding down a full-time job and raising his two daughters, Brienne and Jaiden.

Since graduation, Miller has been working as a full-time substitute at Monaca High School in Beaver County, Pa., while looking for a full-time teaching position in social studies. His enlistment in the Marines is up in April, and he's not sure whether he'll extend his service this time. "I need a job," he says. "My days of flying around the world as a gunfighter are limited. I need to settle down; I need to get established."

But Miller will always carry with him the lessons he learned while in Iraq. "My time over there changed my perspective on everything. Before I went over there I was a stress monster. I was constantly worried about everything. My attitude now is, 'Do I have a roof over my head? Yes. Am I getting shot at? No. Well, then that's a good day.'"

WRITTEN BY **JOSH EARL** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KEVIN COOKE**
ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY **JASON MILLER '06**

rAnDOMness?

WRITTEN BY JOSH EARL

Stephen Paul is fascinated with the idea that people believe stuff, even stuff that seems crazy to other people. His exploration of this idea has taken him down an unusual path. Paul, an assistant professor at RMU who holds a Ph.D. in experimental psychology from the University of Kansas, is conducting a research project to determine whether human beings can behave randomly.

Studying people's beliefs is difficult, because many deeply held beliefs can't be proven in a laboratory, Paul says. But while researching beliefs about paranormal phenomena, he hit on something that could be tested: the human understanding of randomness.

Scholarly literature on psychics often refers to simple tests for psychic ability, such as predicting a string of random numbers selected by another person. But are these tests really random, or are self-proclaimed psychics able to manipulate the results? Are human beings capable of random behavior?

To help address this, Paul designed a computer program that tests a person's ability to create random patterns. A subject in his study is asked to click buttons arranged in a seven-by-seven grid. After 15 clicks, the program presents the user with a fresh grid, and the process starts over. For his early testing, Paul required the subjects to repeat the exercise 150 times, clicking as fast as possible.

His initial set of test subjects were students in his General Psychology class in need of extra credit. "The students can't stand it," he says, chuckling. The experiment takes about 30 minutes to complete, and before long the students start checking their watches impatiently."

After a human subject completes the experiment, the program adds up the

number of times each button in the grid was clicked. If the clicks were truly random, the number of times each button was clicked should be almost equal. The program displays the results visually by coloring in the buttons: green means a button was clicked an average number of times, pink or red means it was clicked more than average and blue means it was clicked fewer times than average.

Paul likes to review the results with his students after they complete the exercise. First he shows them what computer-generated random results look like. The computer's responses show no pattern. Most of the buttons are clicked an average number of times, while a few are just above or below average. Usually more than 90 percent of the buttons are green.

"Then they'll see what they did, and I'll hear them go 'Oh, my gosh, I didn't realize ...' That's what's fun for me," Paul says. On the human-generated grids, patterns jump out in bright reds and blues. Some people favor the corners, while others ignore them. Almost everyone avoids the buttons that form a plus sign around the centermost button. Fewer than half of the buttons are green.

His early results seem convincing, but Paul plans to continue experimenting, changing parameters such as the size of the grid and the time limit.

Paul foresees some potential applications for his research. Military units might benefit from understanding how people behave on the battlefield. Cryptographers might be able to use it to create codes that are tougher to break.

But Paul's main objective is gaining a deeper understanding of how people think.

"It all comes down to this idea of what we believe," he says. "It's one thing to ask a person what they believe about the future of mankind. I'm looking for something that I can put in the lab."

ADVANCEMENT



A LETTER FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as president of the RMU Alumni Association for the past three years. During this time, we have seen dramatic changes to RMU and its campus, including the renovation of John Jay Center, the addition of the School of Nursing and the School of Education and Social Sciences, and the construction of Joe Walton Stadium and Concord Hall. We also have welcomed RMU's newest president, Gregory G. Dell'Omo, Ph.D.

The association itself also has seen many changes and advancements. We introduced additional programs through the Women of RMU, partnered with the School of Business to present the *Speaking of Business* lecture series, established *Foundations* magazine, added alumni services such as health insurance products and presented achievement awards to some of our outstanding alumni.

As you may know, President Dell'Omo is leading the University through a strategic planning process that will guide RMU into the next decade and beyond. This, along with the planning for a major capital campaign, will lay the groundwork for RMU to become a premier academic institution that provides a highly engaged and active learning environment designed to nurture and build leaders for a global community.

As I step down from my presidency, I challenge the Alumni Association to continue to do its part to help Dr. Dell'Omo lead the University into its bright future. Please continue to be involved in the RMU community – by mentoring a student, attending a lecture, supporting the University with a gift each year, enjoying your favorite collegiate sport or participating in one of the many on and off campus opportunities detailed at www.rmu.edu.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve Robert Morris University. As always, if you have suggestions on how we can better serve you, or if you have questions or comments about our programs and events, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at rmualum@rmu.edu or 412-262-8481.

THOMAS A. HUNLEY '84



WARNER JOHNSON

WARNER JOHNSON NAMED DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

Robert Morris University recently named Warner Johnson its new director of alumni relations. Johnson joins RMU from Saint Vincent College, where he held the same position since Sept. 2003.

"I'm glad to be part of the RMU family, and I look forward to meeting the alumni and friends of this fine University," said Johnson. "One of my main goals for the upcoming year is to have the alumni become more engaged with activities happening both on and off campus. Some of those events include Homecoming, RMU Night at PNC Park and local alumni socials. I also would like to enhance the University on the Road program. This program can help alumni in other cities and states to stay connected to RMU through programs in their areas."

Prior to Saint Vincent, Johnson worked with the Metropolitan YMCA of Pittsburgh in various capacities, including as associate executive director for the downtown YMCA, executive director of the Mon Valley YMCA, and a school-based outreach coordinator. From 1993 to 1996, he served as a student development coordinator with the Community College of Allegheny County.

Johnson earned his Bachelor of Science in sociology from Saint Vincent College and a Master of Arts in social and public policy from Duquesne University. He was the recipient of a Bruce Scholarship from the National Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution and resides in North Versailles, Pa., with his wife and three children.

ADVANCEMENT



JAY CARSON

NAMED VP OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Jay Carson became Robert Morris University's new vice president for institutional advancement in October 2006. Carson previously worked at Saint Vincent College as vice president for institutional advancement and chief development officer.

After earning a bachelor's and master's degree from the University of Pittsburgh, Carson entered private practice as a psychologist. He also worked with organizations such as the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens and United Cerebral Palsy.

Looking for a career change, Carson took a job as the associate director of annual giving for the Andrew Carnegie Society, where he learned the fundamentals of raising money. He later became the director of development for the College of Fine Arts at Carnegie Mellon University, where he supervised development of major donors and oversaw fund-raising events. Within his first year, he brought 900 new donors to the university, and later he helped raise more than \$210 million as a member of the university's capital campaign team.

Carson's background in psychology allows him to better understand the motivations and needs of donors. Being sensitive and listening to the needs of others is a key part of a successful fund-raising strategy, Carson says.

"The other part is trying to be a high-level matchmaker between university ideas and donor interests," he says.

This approach has worked well for Carson. He raised \$30 million for the Purnell Center for the Arts, \$3.8 million for the Intelligent Workplace and \$75 million for a capital campaign at Saint Vincent College.

At Carnegie Mellon, Carson's strategy involved traveling around to different states and recreating the university environment through events, parties, speakers and other activities, giving outsiders an insider's perspective as to what the university stood for. The idea was "we take the campus to them," Carson says. He plans to use this same approach at RMU.

Other strategies Carson will rely on at RMU are special events, an emphasis on planned giving, gift work and peer screening.

Carson anticipates that his greatest challenge will be shaping the story of the University and then teaching others to tell that story. "When people hear about RMU, they are surprised," Carson says.

A large part of that storytelling will be a focus on RMU's students. He sums this up in a slightly altered version of President Bill Clinton's famous campaign strategy: "It's the students, stupid."

"I've cracked the fund-raising code," he says. "People will give a gift if it positively impacts the students. It's important to help a cause that you really believe in," he says.

WRITTEN BY JESSICA KRZNARIC '07

ADVANCEMENT



TAX LAW BENEFITS SENIORS

Philanthropically inclined senior citizens have another reason to be generous this year. A federal pension law, enacted in August 2006, gives additional tax incentives to some retirees who make a charitable gift by Dec. 31, 2007.

The new rules benefit seniors who will reach the age of 70½ before the end of 2007 and who receive income from an individual retirement account, or IRA.

Under previous rules, seniors were required to begin withdrawing IRA funds once they reached 70½. These mandatory withdrawals were considered income, and the federal government taxed them at the appropriate marginal income tax rates.

But for some seniors this IRA income is unneeded, and it can trigger higher taxes on other sources of income. Even if the money was given to charity, the taxes still had to be paid, so some seniors found themselves paying higher taxes for income they didn't need.

The Pension Protection Act, which President George W. Bush signed on Aug. 17, 2006, allows seniors to make a tax-free withdrawal known as a charitable IRA rollover.

Instead of making the required withdrawal and paying income tax, seniors can designate up to \$100,000 of IRA funds to be sent directly

to a charitable organization. This gift fulfills the withdrawal requirements but isn't considered taxable income. The gift also doesn't count toward the caps on tax-deductible charitable giving, allowing the retiree to further reduce their taxable income by making other charitable gifts.

For example, a senior who pays taxes in the top income bracket wants to establish an endowed scholarship at Robert Morris University. The retiree turns 70½ this year and will be required to make a \$100,000 withdrawal from his IRA, which will be taxed at a rate of 35 percent. Under the previous laws, the senior could make a gift to RMU, but Uncle Sam would take a \$35,000 bite first. The final gift would come to \$65,000.

This year, the donor can simply have the money transferred directly from his IRA to the University. Since the retiree never receives the money, the transfer is not considered taxable income, and the full \$100,000 can be used to fund the scholarship.

If you're interested in more information about charitable IRA rollovers, contact Dan Murphy, associate vice president for institutional advancement, at 412-262-8566 or murphy@rmu.edu.

NEW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OFFICERS NAMED

The Robert Morris University Alumni Association named new officers during its annual open meeting on Saturday, Feb. 17. The meeting took place at the RMU Island Sports Center, in between the Colonials' men's and women's NCAA Division I ice hockey games. Approximately 85 people attended the meeting.

James A. Vitale '81, account executive with Tyler Mountain Spring Water Co., was approved as president of the Association, succeeding **Thomas A. Hunley '84**. Hunley, chief operating officer of PNC Bank Branch Banking, became the new alumni representative to the RMU Board of Trustees. **Scott M. Kovaloski '85**, manager of health and welfare benefits consulting for Alcoa, was named Association vice president.

New RMU staff members **Jay Carson**, vice president for institutional advancement, and **Warner Johnson**, director of alumni relations, were introduced at the meeting, and University President **Gregory G. Dell'Omo, Ph.D.**, said a few words as well.

CLASS NOTES

60s

REBECCA PHARES '66 is a sales associate for Coldwell Banker Real Estate Co. She and her husband, Gilbert, reside in Pittsburgh.

70s

BILL WAXMAN '71 was promoted to associate professor of marketing at Edison Community College. He and his wife, Betsy, reside in Vandalia, Ohio.

80s

JOHN BARTLING '82 is a managing partner with Stonebridge Real Estate Partners in Addison, Texas. John resides in Dallas.

DIANE M. PEARSON '85 was honored as one of Pennsylvania's 50 Best Women in Business in May 2006. She also was selected as a reviewer for the Certified Financial Planner Certification Examination in Denver, Colo. Diane is the director of financial planning for Legend Financial Advisors in Franklin Park, Pa. She and her husband, Alex, live in Pittsburgh.

THANE KOLARIK '86 was promoted to general manager of Mozart Management. Thane lives in Allison Park, Pa., with his wife, Shirley, and their children.

JOHN RAMSEY '86 started a company, Ramsey Partners LLC, in November 2006. John previously worked for Clark

Consulting. Ramsey Partners helps community banks to develop sound financial strategies. John and his wife, Laura, live in Salem, Ohio, with their children, Gordon, Elizabeth and Olivia.

CHERYL (POZEL) TALERICO '87 is the marketing manager for Sisterson & Co. LLP. She lives in Pittsburgh with her husband and two children.

EDWARD MARRA '88 was named director of accounting operations with Amtrak. He and his wife, Cheryl, reside in Levittown, Pa., with their daughter, Katie.

HAKAN ERDINC '89 was named senior business relationship manager by Wells Fargo & Co.'s central coast business banking group. He resides in California.

GREG INCARDONA '89 is president-elect of the Pennsylvania Association of Mortgage Brokers. Greg and his wife, Beth, live in Jefferson Hills, Pa.

90s

PAUL ROELL '90 is a regional scout for the Minnesota Vikings, a position he accepted after 15 years as a scout for the Indianapolis Colts. He resides in Kansas City, Mo.

TOM BURMAN M'91 was promoted to athletic director at the University of Wyoming. He resides in Wyoming.

JON O'DATA M'93 opened a Merry Maids franchise in New Castle, Pa. Jon and his wife, Judy, reside in Rochester, Pa.

KATHY MILLIGAN M'93 married James DiLonardo on June 2, 2006. The couple resides in Mars, Pa.

JASON LENER M'96 was hired as the deputy director of athletics at Miami University (Ohio) after working for 10 years at the University of Pittsburgh. Jason and his wife, Jodi, live in Ohio with their children.

JASON LONGNECKER '97 and his wife, Alyson, became the parents of Amelia Claire on Sept. 28, 2005. Jason is a senior employee benefits specialist with The Principal Financial Group. The family resides in Belle Vernon, Pa.

FERNANDO MANALAC JR. '97, M.D., is participating in a categorical internal medicine residency at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh.

DOUG MARTIN M'97 was one of 44 educators to receive the Disney Teacher Award in 2006. Doug, who is a teacher with the Fox Chapel (Pa.) School District, traveled to Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif., in July 2006 with the other winners to attend a six-day workshop. He and his wife, Linda, reside in New Sewickley, Pa.

STEPHANIE THOMPSON '98 is engaged to **ERIC HENDERSHOT '99 M'06**. The couple is planning a June 16, 2007, wedding.



You
Can Make
a Difference

Gifts to the University Fund help Robert Morris University to provide student scholarships, enhance campus facilities and enrich the living-learning environment.

Make a difference today with a gift to the University Fund.
Give online at www.rmu.edu/universityfund
or call 412-262-8471.

CLASS NOTES

ANDY BRENNEMAN '99 and his wife, Marlo, became the parents of Kamryn in April 2006. The family resides in York, Pa.



SCOTT DIETZ '99 was named manager of education

initiatives for Catalyst Connection. He oversees several of the organization's programs, including its technology literacy projects and its partnerships in the technology industry.

ERIC HENDERSHOT '99 M'06 is engaged to **STEPHANIE THOMPSON '98**. The couple is planning a June 16, 2007, wedding.

BRIAN PALIOTTI '99 was named chief financial officer of Lenel Systems International, which is a UTC First Security Company. He and his wife, Christine, reside in Pittsford, N.Y.

GWEN (LEIDY) SIMS '99 and her husband, Michael, became the parents of Samantha Adrienne on June 5, 2006. The family resides in Columbus, Ohio.

JASON TOMASZEWSKI '99 published a book, *50 Things Every Guy Should Know How to Do*. Jason resides in Waterbury, Conn.

00s

JASON KATRENCIK '00 married Leigh McCartney on May 13, 2006. Jason works as an assistant manager for Eat'n Park Restaurants. The couple resides in Bulger, Pa.

PHILLIP ASBURY '01 married Christine Lintner on Oct. 7, 2006. Phillip is a software developer for Highmark.

TODD AHERN '01 M'05 and his wife, Terri, became the parents of Matthew David on July 11, 2006. The family resides in Glenshaw, Pa.

CHRISTEN (FISCHL) RINGLING '01 and her husband, Chris, became the parents of Braden on July 30, 2006. Christen is an application developer for U.S. Steel. The family resides in South Park, Pa.

CHRISTOPHER ADESSO '03 is engaged to **KYLEE MALINKOWSKI '03**. Christopher is an office manager for Prion Manufacturing. Kylee is an account manager for Venturi Staffing Partners. The couple is planning an Oct. 20, 2007, wedding.

MICHELLE TRIMBLE '03 is an inside sales representative for Progressive Insurance. She resides in Columbia Station, Ohio.

KEVIN ORLOSKY '03 is engaged to **MELISSA RENNIE '05**. The couple is planning a Sept. 8, 2007, wedding.

BEN RAIBLE '04 is an event manager for Robert Morris University. He resides in Irwin, Pa.

NICOLE CONNELL '04 married Chad Wagner on Oct. 21, 2006. Nicole is a business assistant at UPMC. The couple lives in Bethel Park, Pa.

JOSH MARINO '04 married **ANGELA STORY '06** on June 16, 2005. The couple resides in Moon Township, Pa.

JAMES OGG '04 is engaged to Michelle Rain. James is a teacher in the South Allegheny School District, near Pittsburgh. The couple is planning an October 2008 wedding.

MELISSA RENNIE '05 is engaged to **KEVIN ORLOSKY '03**. The couple is planning a Sept. 8, 2007, wedding.

TOM CLANCY '06 is a public accountant with Exler and Co. He resides in Pittsburgh.

ALICIA FISHER '06 is an account executive with Benedict Advertising. She resides in Daytona Beach, Fla.

MELISSA MUSICO M'06, former director of sales at the RMU Island Sports Center, is an account executive for corporate sales with the Cleveland Cavaliers. Melissa resides in Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

ANDREW TRAN '06 has been promoted to assistant foodservice director at Philadelphia University.



HOWARD SLAUGHTER JR. D'06 was

appointed to the board of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency by Gov. Edward G. Rendell. The agency helps obtain affordable housing for Pennsylvania residents who

are poor, elderly or disabled, and it provides education programs for renters and home buyers.

ANGELA STORY '06 married **JOSH MARINO '04** on June 16, 2005. The couple resides in Moon Township, Pa.

CARSON WALBURN M'06 was named director of the SAE Foundation, where his responsibilities include managing fund-raising programs and donor relationships. Carson previously worked as executive director of development for Washington & Jefferson College and as assistant director of the Harvard Business School Fund.

Deaths

GREGG G. CARLISLE '78 died June 21, 2006. Gregg was a member of the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity.

DONALD NEDZESKY '82, of Phoenix, died in August 2006.

Includes news submitted between Aug. 15 and Dec. 1, 2006. Submit news by April 13, 2007, for publication in the spring issue.



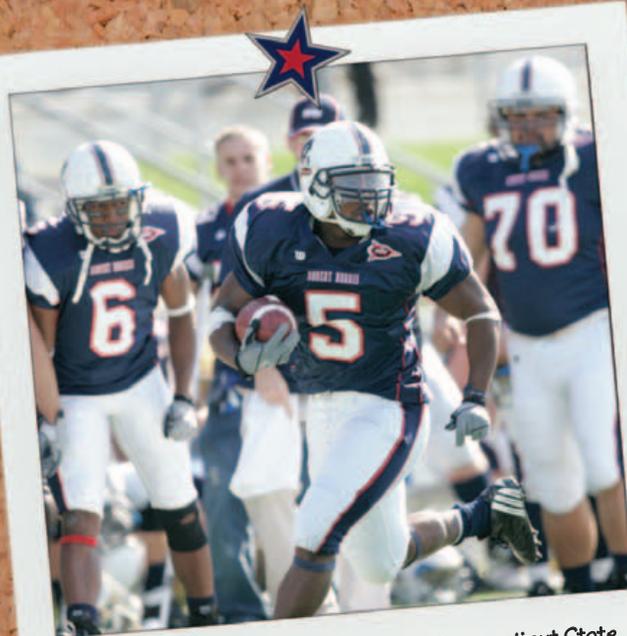
The women of Zeta Tau Alpha and other RMU Greeks hosted parties before the game in Tailgate Alley.



The University's academic schools set up informational displays in Sewall Center.



The Alumni Achievement Award was presented to Ellen Langas Campbell '79 (second from right) and the Young Alumni Achievement Award was presented to Amanda Chaborek '00 (second from left).



The football team defeated Central Connecticut State, 23-17, in double overtime.



Melony Murray, third from left, was crowned RMU's homecoming queen.

HOMECOMING 2006

RMU celebrated Homecoming and Parents and Families Day on Saturday, Oct. 14, 2006. The day kicked off with hospitality tents and tailgating. Pre-game festivities included temporary tattoos, balloon and caricature artists, a climbing wall and entertainment from the pep band. Other highlights from the day included the alumni flag football game, presentation of the Alumni Achievement Awards and a faceoff between the women's ice hockey team and Union College at the RMU Island Sports Center.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR - Homecoming 2007 is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 6!



The day turned out to be cold and blustery, and alumni bundled up for their pre-game tailgating.



Alumni got a chance to meet the new RMU mascot, and a name-the-mascot contest was held during the football game.



Upcoming Events

> MARCH 07

21 Pittsburgh Speakers Series: Robert F. Kennedy Jr., 8 p.m., Heinz Hall

21-25 Colonial Theatre Production: *Children of Eden*, Massey Theater

23 International Dinner and Celebration, 6 p.m., Sewall Center

28 Women's History Month Luncheon, 11 a.m., Sewall Center

31 Concert: Taking Back Sunday with Underoath and Armor for Sleep, 6:30 p.m., Sewall Center Arena

> APRIL 07

11 Documentary Premiere: *Prisoners Among Us*, Massey Theater

12 Student Documentary Premiere: *Heroes of Post 639*, Massey Theater

19 Student Documentary Premiere: *Nursing in Nicaragua*, Massey Theater

25 Pittsburgh Speakers Series: Ari Fleischer, 8 p.m., Heinz Hall

26 Speaking of Business Luncheon, Duquesne Club, Pittsburgh

> MAY 07

5 Commencement, 10:30 a.m., Sewall Center Arena



RMU NIGHT AT PNC PARK

Join fellow alumni and University representatives for an evening of Pittsburgh Pirates baseball on **SEPT. 8, 2007**, as RMU takes over PNC Park. President Gregory G. Dell'Omo will throw out the first pitch, and RMU will be in charge of changing the bases. The Pirates will play the Chicago Cubs, and it's Roberto Clemente bobblehead night.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on these and other upcoming events, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at **412-262-8481** or rmualum@rmu.edu.

ALUMNI NEWS

NAME _____ YEAR OF GRADUATION _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

PROFESSION/POSITION _____

EMPLOYER NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

SPOUSE'S NAME _____

CHILDREN'S NAMES AND AGES _____

NEWS ITEM _____

MAIL THIS COMPLETED FORM TO: Office of Alumni Relations, Robert Morris University, 6001 University Boulevard, Moon Township, PA 15108-1189. Or, send your news via e-mail rmualum@rmu.edu or fax **412-262-8642**.

Put Your Business on the FastTrac®!

Thinking of starting your own business? Want to grow the business you already own? Gain the knowledge and skills you need to succeed with FastTrac®!

The Massey Center for Business Innovation and Development at Robert Morris University is now offering entrepreneurial training courses featuring the nationally renowned FastTrac® curriculum at deep discounts to RMU alumni.

FastTrac® will provide the business insights, leadership skills and professional networking connections you need to launch or grow your own business. Classes meet from 6–9:30 p.m. just one night a week for 10 weeks.

While this course is priced upwards of \$600 elsewhere, the Massey Center is offering it to RMU alumni at a **special discounted rate of just \$325 per person!** Further discounts are offered to veterans.

Classes are offered at Robert Morris University's Moon Township and downtown Pittsburgh locations.

Take hold of your future and register today! Contact the Massey Center at 412-397-6842 or mcbid@rmu.edu.





THE NEW COLONIALS MASCOT MADE HIS FIRST APPEARANCE ON SEPT. 9, 2006, WHEN THE RMU FOOTBALL TEAM TOOK ON DUQUESNE. THE UNIVERSITY SELECTED THE NAME "RoMo" FOR THE MASCOT FROM A LIST OF SUGGESTIONS BY FANS WHO PARTICIPATED IN A "NAME-THE-MASCOT" CONTEST AT THE HOMECOMING GAME.

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