

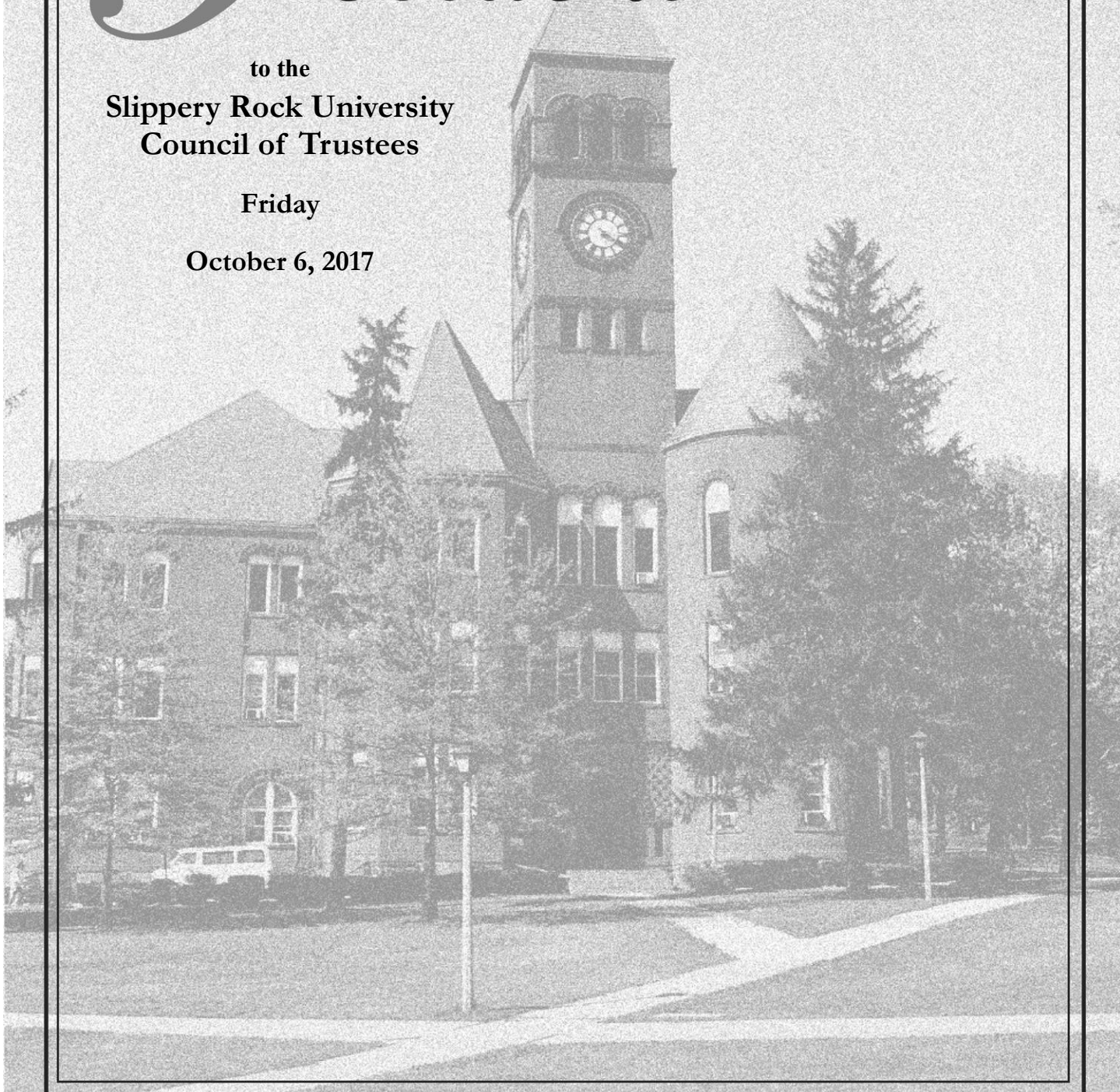
# REPORT OF THE

# *President*

to the  
Slippery Rock University  
Council of Trustees

Friday

October 6, 2017



## SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

President's Report  
Oct. 6, 2017

To borrow the words of famed radio commentator Gabriel Heatter, there's "good news tonight."

Despite a decline in the number of college-bound students at colleges and universities across the country, Slippery Rock University has again bucked the trend. SRU's 15-day enrollment numbers for the fall 2017 semester boast 8,895 students, an increase of 0.16 percent compared to fall 2016. This total includes 7,638 undergraduate and a record 1,257 graduate students.

New freshman enrollment is up by 33 students to 1,597, eclipsing SRU's previous institutional high of 1,586 from 2014.

In addition to being our largest freshman class, this is also one of our smartest. The incoming freshmen posted increases in overall high school GPA (3.43/3.39); and average SAT score (1,007/1,000).

The University also showed diversity growth with increases in Asian (8.33 percent); Hispanic (3.09 percent); Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (12.5 percent); two or more races (14.44 percent) and Unknown (4.67 percent) students.

I am extremely proud that once again our University is one of a few institutions to officially post an enrollment gain for the fall semester.

This success doesn't just happen. It is the result of strategic decisions, hard work, and as Benjamin Disraeli would say, "constancy to purpose."

At SRU, we work very hard to make sure we deliver a high-quality education, at an affordable price, one that meets the needs of current and future students and current and future employers. We continue to invest in market-driven programs such as our physician assistant and cybersecurity programs, among others. New academic programs, scholarships and a very vibrant living and learning environment are three things that combine to help set SRU apart from other institutions. As is our responsiveness to delivering coursework in a variety of formats and venues that meet student needs.

Providing an exceptional learning environment to support our in-and-out of class learning experiences also contributes to our success and work along those lines was evident throughout the summer.

The most noticeable of all exterior changes that occurred over the summer was the demolition of the former Kraus Hall. The now empty lot will be used as a staging area for materials and trailers when the renovation projects for SRU's performing arts buildings - Miller Auditorium, East Gym and West Gym - begin later this year. Long-term plans for the former Kraus Hall space are undetermined.

The first phase of a \$4 million improvement project for Bailey Library was completed during

the summer. Ongoing improvements, which will continue through the fall, include an additional computer lab and study spaces, a redesigned entryway and an expanded café. The project is scheduled for completion in December.

Other significant changes from the summer include second floor renovations to Rhoads Hall; improved accessibility to the Gail Rose Lodge; the replacement of the Swope Music Hall loading dock; and asphalt maintenance and seal coating to several parking lots. An underground condensate line, that returns water from the McKay Education Building to the boiler plant, was also replaced.

There were also considerable upgrades related to classrooms, technology and sustainability. Altogether, approximately \$6 million in improvements were completed during the summer.

We continue to draw students to the University because of our commitment to quality and our invitation to them to *Experience the Difference*.

On the quality dashboard, SRU continues to garner state, regional and national accolades. Since the last Council meeting, the University was:

- Named among the 2018 "Best Regional Universities - North" by U.S. News & World Report.
- Named as one of only 26 "Top Public Schools – Regional Universities" by U.S. News & World Report.
- Named a "National College of Distinction," a "Pennsylvania College of Distinction" and a "Public College of Distinction" by collegesofdistinction.com.
- Awarded 47 badges of distinction including 32 "best" designations ranging from "Best for the Money" in Pennsylvania to "Best for the Money without Aid" nationwide from College Factual.
- Named one of the best colleges in the Northeastern region by The Princeton Review.
- Designated as a "Creative Colleges," in the 3rd edition Creative Colleges, a resource book for college-bound students pursuing a degree in the creative arts.
- Ranked among Pennsylvania's Top 25 MBA programs by Top Management Degrees.
- Named a "Top College for Federal Work-Study Financial Aid" by the Student Loan Report
- Named one of Pennsylvania's best four-year colleges by Schools.com.
- Named one of the nation's best online schools for its master's degree in special education: autism by Online Schools Center.
- Nationally ranked (online master's degree in history) by Affordable Colleges Online.
- Named one of the nation's "Great Colleges to Work For" by The Chronicle of Higher Education. This is the seventh time in eight years SRU has won the distinction. The University earned special recognition in the "Compensation and Benefits," "Job Satisfaction" and "Professional/Career Development Programs" categories.
- Recognized by MONEY Magazine as one of the nation's best value universities, making the list of the publication's "Best Colleges for the Money."
- Named a 2017 "Most Affordable Online College for a Master's in History" by onlineu.org.
- Named to The Sierra Club's "Cool Schools" list.
- Received accreditation for its Bachelor of Science in computing degree from the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET.

- Ranked among this year's "25 Best Affordable Online Master's in History Degree Programs" by Grad School Hub.
- Recognized as a one of the Top 20 best online colleges in Pennsylvania by [onlinecollegeplan.com](http://onlinecollegeplan.com).
- Ranked among the 2017 "Most Affordable Online Master's in History Degrees" by [AffordableColleges.com](http://AffordableColleges.com).
- Named a top 10 "Best Online and On- Campus College in Pennsylvania" by [www.schools.com](http://www.schools.com).
- Named a "Best Online College in Pennsylvania for 2017" by College Choice.

Contributing to our commitment to provide a safe, secure learning environment, Slippery Rock Borough was ranked among "The 30 Safest College Towns in America."

Our currently No. 12 ranked football team continues to garner attention on the field and around the world. SRU has been featured for five consecutive Sundays on ESPN's Sports Center. Our first exposure, a highlight video of wide receiver Milly Raye, went viral and had more than 4 million hits. I'm told that if all goes well, SRU's uniforms will be featured as part of ESPN's "Gear Up" segment prior to Saturday's Game Day broadcast.

Of course this kind of exposure isn't possible without exceptional student-athletes, coaches and an exceptional athletic communication staff. In addition to cultivating the relationship with ESPN, the athletic communication office (University Communication and Public Affairs) recently launched the "Rock Athletics Digital Network".

The expanded digital network still allows fans to watch live and on-demand events for free on desktop computers and mobile devices through the official website for no charge, but also expands the market by providing a free download application for Amazon Fire TV devices, Apple TV boxes (4th generation and newer), Android TV devices and Roku devices. SRU is one of the only schools in the nation at any level that has its own network apps available on these devices.

Sunday, Oct. 22 all eyes will turn to Indianapolis, Indiana where SRU's own Sabrina Anderson is in the running for the NCAA Woman of the Year Award.

Anderson, who received her bachelor's degree in exercise science in 2016 and her MBA in 2017, is a two-time Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference Scholar-Athlete of the Year, a conference record holder and a three-time Academic All American. She is the first SRU student-athlete in the 2-year history of the NCAA Women of the Year Award to be named a national finalist.

As you can see, during this interregnum between presidencies the work of the University continues. We are sustaining the momentum that has propelled us forward and adding new energy by experimenting with new ways of doing things to assess whether we could be more effective and efficient. We're grappling with issues, producing alternative solutions and teeing them up for the new president to make decisions. We are indeed, a University on the move.

As has been the custom for presidential reports, I close this submission by sharing with you samples of many of the accolades earned by our students, faculty staff and alumni.

## STUDENTS

**Marcus Martin**, a senior safety management major from West Mifflin, became the NCAA Division II record holder in career sacks and tackles for loss when No. 25 Slippery Rock improved to 3-0 with a 33-7 win over Lock Haven.

For a second consecutive season, the Slippery Rock University **women's volleyball team** received the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) Team Academic Award. Slippery Rock concluded 2016-17 with a team GPA of 3.30.

**Sabrina Anderson** and **David Reinhardt** were named the 2016-17 PSAC Pete Nevins Scholar-Athletes of the Year, marking just the second time ever and first time since 1993-94 that an institution has swept the league's top individual honors.

**Thirteen Slippery Rock University athletic programs** recorded a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in 2016-17 including SRU field hockey, which produced the highest GPA of any field hockey team in the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference

A total of 205 Slippery Rock University **student-athletes** were named Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference Scholar-Athletes for maintaining above a 3.25 grade point average during the 2016-17 academic year. This represents a 13.3 percent increase compared to the 2015-16 academic year. Of the 205, 21 recorded a perfect 4.0 GPA.

Three members of the Slippery Rock University track and field program were named to Academic All-America honors. **Sabrina Anderson** and **David Reinhardt** were named to first team honors, while **Jacob VanHouten** was named to second team honors. The three selections for Slippery Rock give the university a total of four Academic All-Americans in 2016-17 (Marcus Martin, football) and bring The Rock's all-time total to 89 honorees, which ranks sixth-best among all Division II institutions in the nation since the inception of the award in 1970.

**Madeline Marshall**, Mentor, Ohio, was named the PSAC Outdoor Track and Field Female Freshman of the Year after being the only freshman in the league to qualify for two national championship meets in 2016-17

**Josh Bonnici**, a senior music major from Grove City, and **Wes Woodward**, a senior music major from Erie, each earned \$7,000 scholarships from Mu Phi Epsilon, an international professional music fraternity with more than 75,000 members.

**Malika Fields**, a Slippery Rock University junior with a dual major in communications and Spanish from Pittsburgh, is working in the prosecution department of the Pennsylvania Department of State as part of a 15-week internship sponsored by Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education.

## FACULTY / STAFF

**Sara Tours**, assistant professor of elementary education and early childhood at Slippery Rock University, conducted four presentations at the European Early Childhood Education Research Association Conference at the University of Bologna in Bologna, Italy.

**Brett Barnett**, Slippery Rock University professor of communication, recently had his essay, "League of the South's Internet Rhetoric: Neo-Confederate Community-Building Online,"

published in *The Journal of Hate Studies*, an international, peer-reviewed scholarly journal devoted to the study of what hate is, where it comes from and how to combat it.

Slippery Rock Director of Athletic Communication **Jon Holtz** and the department led all Division II schools by capturing 10 CoSIDA awards for publications and digital design. The office finished 2016-17 with a total of 14 national awards from four different organizations.

**Deanna Brookens**, SRU art instructor; **Deborah Baker**, SRU director of special events; **Victoria Davis**, a senior dual major in literary, film and cultural studies, and gender and diversity studies from Pittsburgh; **Jacquelyn Stubenraugh**, a senior biochemistry major from South Park; and **Midge Eidson**, a 1981 health education graduate; were named SRU's "Women of Distinction" for 2017.

**Dallas Jackson**, assistant professor of physical and health education at Slippery Rock University, has assumed the presidency of The National Consortium for Physical Education for Individuals with Disabilities.

**Kevin McLatchy**, a Slippery Rock University library technician, had his artwork, titled "Late Summer Creek," featured at the 81st National Midyear Show at the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown, Ohio.

**Colleen Cooke**, professor of parks, conservation and recreational therapy, presented research at the Association and Therapeutic Humor annual conference. Cookie's experimental research project examined therapeutic humor as a recreational therapy intervention and how humor can improve quality of life.

**Robert Ogoreuc**, assistant professor of physical and health education, has been elected to the National Water Safety Congress as a member at-large on its Board of Directors.

**Cara Kriebel**, a Slippery Rock University senior budget analyst, has been selected to participate in Leadership Butler County, a nine-month program that provides participants with exposure to issues, resources and opportunities for service in the Butler County area.

**Jonathan Anning**, associate professor of exercise and rehabilitation services, was named a fellow of with the National Strength and Conditioning Association, a nonprofit professional organization that serves more than 45,000 members.

**Brad Wilson**, Slippery Rock University associate provost for transformational experiences, is one of 60 community leaders selected for the Leadership Pittsburgh Class of 2018.

**Bobby McGraw**, Slippery Rock University women's basketball coach, was one of seven individuals inducted into the Mars Athletics Hall of Fame. McGraw is a 1990 graduate of the Mars Area High School, where he starred as a basketball and football player.

## ALUMNI

**James McCorkle**, a 2007 Slippery Rock University graduate with a bachelor's degree in park and resource management, has been appointed manager of Parker Dam State Park by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

**Jackie Altenweg**, women's basketball class of 2002; **Gerald Hendershot**, men's basketball class of 1981; **Noreen Herlihy**, former women's soccer coach; **Jack Jarvie**, men's soccer class of 1959;

**Meghan McGrath Buzio**, women's soccer class of 2007; **Melissa McKavish Dabkowski**, women's basketball class of 2003 and **Brian Polk**, football class of 2001 were inducted into the SRU Athletic Hall of Fame class of 2017. Members of the 1970-72 **men's golf team** were celebrated with a Special Recognition Award as part of the ceremony.

**Richard Bennett**, '65; **Kelly Blake**, '07; **Dan Campbell**, '91; **Earl Fair**, '54; **Emer Flatley**, '13; **Bill Ringler**, '80; **Jack Thomas**, '63 and **Matt Veres**, '87; were inducted into SRU's Soccer Ring of Honor.

**Meghan Jourden-Messerich**, a 2003 Slippery Rock University graduate with a bachelor's degree in resort and tourism management, was named superintendent of recreation for the Sycamore Park District in Sycamore, Illinois.

**Matthew Vannoy**, a 2009 Slippery Rock University graduate with a bachelor's degree in secondary education: social studies and history, has been hired as assistant principal at Sharon Middle School.

**Geno Bonetti**, a 1979 Slippery Rock University graduate with a degree in physical education, has been appointed to the board of directors of the United Spinal Association, a national nonprofit organization that improves the quality of life for all Americans with spinal cord injuries and disorders.

**Kelly Austin**, a 2001 Slippery Rock University graduate with a master's degree in student personnel administration, has been named associate vice president for administration in the Office of the Vice President for Commonwealth Campuses at Penn State University