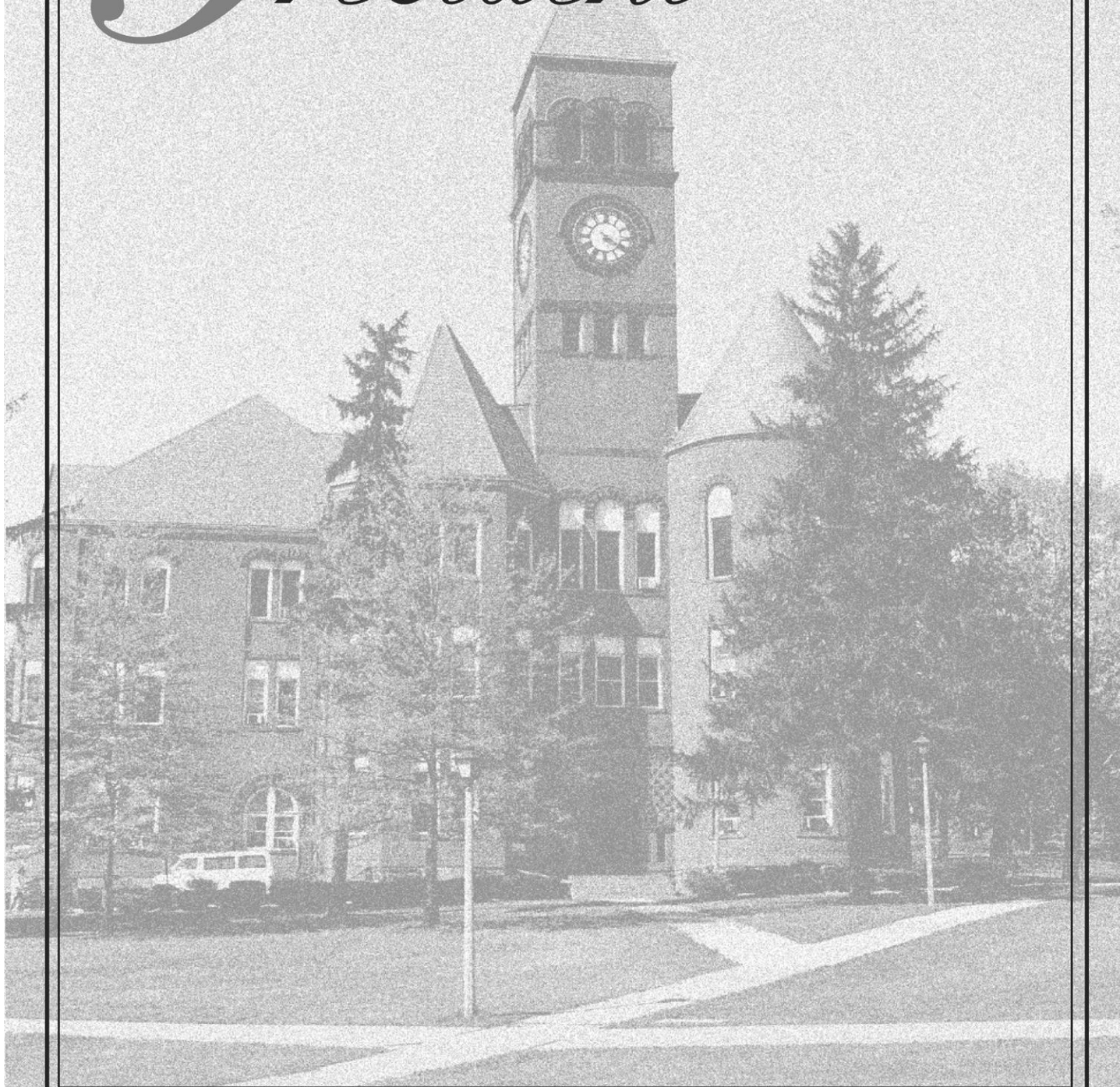


REPORT OF THE

*President*



# SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

March 23, 2018

*People who succeed have momentum. The more they succeed, the more they want to succeed and the more they find a way to succeed. This University has momentum. It continues to find ways to succeed.*

During a recent trip to Florida to meet with donors and potential donors to the University, I had the pleasure of attending several Slippery Rock University alumni receptions. I met nearly 250 graduates from various years, brought news of the “U,” answered lots of questions and listened to one amazing story after another they were excited to share. Our alumni are doing remarkable things in their careers and the communities they touch. They are great ambassadors for the University around the globe.

The alumni were equally excited to catch up on what’s been happening at “their” University. As I shared at each gathering, when I was selected to serve as interim president, I declared that my agenda would be continuity and change. I pledged to lead the University onward and upward, maintaining the momentum that had propelled us forward over the last five years and creating new opportunities to better meet the needs of the region and student interests. Our goal would be to insure that the new president would join a University on the move. And indeed he will.

Our reputation for attracting talented students and offering them high-impact opportunities in the classroom, on campus, and in the workforce—opportunities that lead to personal and professional growth – continues to help us buck a system-wide enrollment decline.

SRU's 15-day enrollment numbers for the spring 2018 semester reflect 8,368 students, an increase of 51 students or .61 percent, when compared to last year's figure of 8,317; A modest, albeit positive position. Graduate student headcount decreased by two students (.17 percent), from 1,172 to 1,170, while undergraduate headcount increased by 53 students (.74 percent), from 7,145 to 7,198. Credit hours generated totaled 112,906.5 as compared to last year's 112,458, reflecting an increase of 448.5 hours (.40 percent).

The University works constantly to make sure we are delivering high-quality programming in the areas that are not only sought after by our students, but by employers as well. We are not only focused on educating, but also on being an institution that is helping to shape the workforce of the future with market-driven programs that will meet the needs of our students and the state.

The Master of Science in Hospitality and Tourism, that I trust you will approve later in this meeting, is a perfect example of a market-driven initiative. This online program will be the first master’s degree in the discipline in the State System and was developed in response to the “dynamic and increasingly complex environment in which hospitality and tourism businesses must operate, anticipated industry growth, and the related need for committed, well-educated management.”

Pennsylvania, as you may know, ranks ninth in the U.S. in tourism industry employment. Pittsburgh in particular is experiencing a hospitality renaissance. The greatest challenge to support this renaissance, according to Matthew Sterne, a board member for the Greater Pittsburgh Hospitality and Tourism Council, “continues to be the need for talent, and this requires the combination of education and experience.”

The University has two additional academic programs in development, a Master of Science in Social Work and an Ed.D. in Educational Administration and Organizational Theory, which we'll be bringing forward for your consideration. Both of these programs leverage our strength at the undergraduate level and meet student and commonwealth needs for flexible, cutting edge degrees.

Along these lines, I'm pleased to report Slippery Rock University has been approved as the first institution in the state to offer the Endorsement for Movement from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. SRU will now offer a 12-credit hour program, through the Department of Dance, that will lead to students obtaining the Creative Movement Endorsement credential.

Great students and great programs demand great facilities. A major enhancement to our learning environment is Bailey Library. A March 29 open house will showcase renovations to the library, which began in May 2017 and were completed in January 2018 at a cost of \$4 million. The renovations include a redesigned entrance and lobby area with enhancements made to T&B Naturally, a café operated by AVI Fresh. There is also a new circulation desk and service point that includes laptop circulation, updates to the library's HVAC system and completely renovated restrooms.

A vast array of technology has been added to the building, including a room for liaison classes with 49 computers and two other learning spaces that now have nine and 10 computers, respectively. Additionally, new projectors and interactive white boards were installed in collaborative group study areas and a new face-up book scanner was added on the third floor.

Office upgrades include a new hub for most librarians, library administration and the Office of the Associate Provost of Transformational Experiences and a new location for the Office of Community-Engaged Learning.

While times and spaces at SRU may change, one thing that has remained consistent throughout the University's history is student engagement. While space prohibits me from sharing all the ways in which our students are helping to shape the community in which they live, I would like to share two examples.

Dream Chasers, a service-learning program, has opened a book of the human condition to reveal stories from the solemn to the sidesplitting but altogether meaningful for everyone involved.

Dream Chasers pairs SRU students with residents at a nearby nursing home for an entire semester. Students record residents' life stories for a booklet they provide them at the conclusion of their time together. The service in Dream Chasers is about capturing people's stories and the legacies they impart. The learning is a question that drives the program: How does capturing the wisdom from the stories of others empower us to write our own?

This past semester, nine SRU students were each paired with a resident at the Quality Life Services' Trinity Living Center in Grove City, visiting with their partner for 90 minutes during seven Saturday afternoons. Students reported these meetings as having a life-changing impact.

Another exciting project is our Rock Star Neighbors program. Rock Star Neighbors partners SRU students with the SRU/Student Government Association Preschool and Child Care Center to provide individualized attention for children from Slippery Rock Area Elementary School who are enrolled in the center's after-school program. SRU students are paired with a child for the entire semester, with the pair participating in activities every Tuesday afternoon for two hours.

SRU students from a variety of majors are vetted and trained to mentor children in academic skills,

social skills and community engagement.

The University embraces high-impact practices that are important to student learning, development and satisfaction, and serve our communities through service and service learning. Research has shown that HIPs can have a transformative influence on students' personal development and educational goals.

Our Honors and Student Leadership Convocation, April 8, kicks off a month-long celebration of student success at SRU.

A signature event during the Salute to Success Month is the annual "Symposium for Student Research, Scholarship and Creative Achievement," April 12 in the Smith Student Center. This year's event will feature 170 participants who will put their research, art exhibits and live performances on display. This year's presenters helped push the four-year participant total to more than 660 since the 2015. The symposium will include oral and poster presentations, live performances and exhibits in the areas of science, business, education, communication, computer science, the arts, history, exercise science, contemporary culture and more.

While these programs are primarily internally focused, the University continues to garner regional and national recognition.

Included among recent accolades:

- The Slippery Rock University field hockey team recorded the highest cumulative grade point average in all of NCAA Division II to earn the 2017-18 National Field Hockey Coaches Association / Zag Sports National Academic Team Award. Slippery Rock owned a cumulative GPA of 3.71 after the fall 2017 semester, which is the highest team GPA in program history. Under the guidance of head coach Julie Swiney, Slippery Rock has led the country in cumulative GPA five times (2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2017) in addition to ranking second in 2012 and third in both 2015 and 2016.
- Slippery Rock University's online Master of Science in Data Analytics degree was ranked among the top 28 online math programs for 2017 by Accreditedschoolsonline.org.
- The University was ranked fifth in TheBestColleges.org's "Top 25 Online Master's in Elementary Education for 2018."
- Our master's degree in data analytics was ranked among the nation's top five most affordable degree programs by onlinecoursereport.com.
- Slippery Rock University was ranked among the world's most environmentally friendly colleges and universities by the University of Indonesia's GreenMetric World University Rankings. SRU was ranked 20th in the United States and 142nd in the world.
- U.S. News & World Report ranked our online bachelor degree programs and online graduate programs in criminal justice and education among the best in the nation.
- We were recognized as one of the top public colleges for scholarship funding by the Student Loan Report, an online resource that "aims to cover all student loan news around the world."
- SRU's Office of Communication and Public Affairs earned 36 national and regional awards from four separate rating associations for their work in print, social media, web and video production. Among these awards were a gold and three silver medals for the design and usability of our website – the front door to the University.

Although our success is the result of many people throughout the University working together to achieve our mission and vision, I would like to acknowledge a few individuals who have been selected to receive the University's top awards. They are:



### **President's Award for Outstanding Academic Advising**

Bruce Boliver

Assistant Professor of Hospitality, Event Management and Tourism

### **President's Award for Excellence in Teaching**

Jonathan Helmick

Assistant Professor of Music

### **President's Award for Scholarly and Creative Achievement**

Aaron Cowan

Associate professor of history

### **President's Award for Outstanding Service**

Deb Pincek

Executive Director for ASA Resources

### **President's Award for Outstanding Service**

Brian Ringler

Semi-skilled laborer

As is customary, I'll end my report by sharing select accolades earned by our student, faculty, staff and alumni.

## **STUDENTS**

- **Denton Zeronas**, a senior secondary education-social studies major from New Castle, was recently appointed to the Slippery Rock Borough council, becoming the first person to serve on the council while enrolled as a full-time student at SRU.
- **Matt Keenan**, a senior sport management major, was awarded the 2018 Bill Esposito Memorial Award by the Eastern College Athletic Conference Sports Information Directors Association (ECAC-SIDA). The Award is presented annually by ECAC-SIDA to a graduating college senior that wishes to pursue a career in athletic communications. Keenan is the first Slippery Rock student to win the honor.
- **Amanda Brush**, a senior exercise science major from Harleysville; **Maria Darling**, a senior dual exercise science and psychology major from Freedom, New York; **Grascen Hilsinger**, a sophomore exercise major from Mechanicsburg; and **Falco Meden**, a sophomore exercise science major from Clairton, won the Fitness Challenge Competition at the American College of Sports Medicine Mid-Atlantic Regional Chapter Conference.
- Senior defensive end and 2017 graduate **Marcus Martin** was named the 2017 NCAA Division II Ron Lenz National Defensive Player of the Year and a first team All-American by the Division II Conference Commissioner's Association.
- **Amy Brunner**, a 2017 graduate with a bachelor's degree in history, presented her poster, "Written in The Rock: Engaging Student Organizations at Slippery Rock University," at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference's fall meeting.
- Men's basketball standout **Micah Till**, a redshirt sophomore from Upper Marlboro, Maryland majoring in homeland security, was named to first team All-Region honors in the Atlantic Region by the Division II Conference Commissioner's Association. Till was also named to first team All-Conference honors by the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference.
- Redshirt junior pole vaulter **Courtney McQuaide** placed fifth at the NCAA Division II National Championships, earning her first team All-America honors from the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association.

- **Amber Davidson**, a senior biology major from Warren, Ohio; **Matthew Heffelfinger**, a senior exercise science major from Emmaus; **Christina Eisenreich**, a senior music therapy-instrumental major from West View; **Kelly Holzberger**, a senior athletic training major from LeGrangeville, New York; **Amy Massack**, a senior chemistry major from Russellton; **Megan Moser**, a junior mid-level mathematics major from Mars; **Grascen Shidemantle**, a senior biology major from Slippery Rock and **Austin Shirk**, a sophomore biology major from Elizabethtown, presented research findings at the National Collegiate Honors Council Conference in Atlanta.
- **Marcus Martin**, '17, scored the only offensive touchdown of the game for the East team during the 93rd Annual East-West Shrine Game when he caught a four-yard touchdown pass from Ohio State quarterback J.T. Barrett late in the third quarter. Martin snuck out of the backfield into the flat and was wide open for the score.
- Senior defensive end **Marcus Martin** was named the national Defensive Player of the Year. **Martin**, senior wide receiver **Marcus Johnson** and senior offensive lineman **Ian Parkwere** were named All-Americans by D2football.com.
- **Tyler McCarthy**, a senior with a major in political science from Wexford, is working for the state Department of Environmental Protection as part of a 15-week internship sponsored by Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education.
- **Elizabeth Mason**, a doctoral student in special education from Etters, has been honored as an "Outstanding Teacher" by the Shippensburg University School Study Council.
- Women's basketball sophomore guard **Brooke Hinderliter**, from Seminole who is majoring in school wellness education, was named to the 2017-18 All-Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference Western Division second team.
- **Tajionna Anderson-Clinton**, a senior theatre major from Pittsburgh, became the first SRU student to win the regional competition of the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival's Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship. As a regional winner, Anderson-Clinton now advances to the national KCACTF Irene Ryan Scholarship competition, April 9-14 at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

## FACULTY / STAFF

- **Brittany Fleming**, assistant professor of communication, was named "Adviser of the Year" by the National Broadcasting Society/National Electronic Media Association.
- **Joanne Leight**, professor of physical and health education, was awarded the 2017 Ethel G. Encke Award by the Pennsylvania State Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. The award honors a person who has offered exceptional service and leadership to the health and physical education profession.
- **Andrew Winters**, instructor of philosophy, presented his paper, "Emergence as Irreversible Phase States: A Process Account of Embryology," at the 2017 Nordic Network in Metaphysics Conference in Finland.
- **Bruce Boliver**, assistant professor of hospitality, event management and tourism, received the 2017 Dedication to Success Award, from the Resort and Commercial Recreation Association. The award recognizes a professional for his or her ongoing commitment and dedication to the growth of RCRA through creative ideas, promotional efforts and continued support.
- **Jim Dombrosky**, assistant professor of hospitality, event management and tourism, received the 2017 Outstanding Professor Award from the Resort and Commercial Recreation Association. The award recognizes a professor's commitment to, and excellence in, the delivery of education for the commercial recreation profession.
- **Hannah Brewer**, assistant professor; **Randall Nicholas**, professor; **Joanne Leight**, professor; and **Gary Clark**, assistant professor, all in physical and health education, were published in the

Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance. Their article, "Preparing Physical and Health Education Teacher Candidates to Create a Culture of Wellness in Schools: New Curriculum, New Message," considers a new model for teacher preparation that is based on inspiring youth to build healthy behaviors that last a lifetime.

- **Heather Hertel**, associate professor of art, was recently elected as interim president for the Mid-America College Art Association, a national art non-profit organization serving both academic and non-academic artists and groups throughout the U.S.
- **John Golden**, assistant professor of business, and **Li Pu**, associate professor of communication, received a \$29,010 award from ASIANetwork for their proposal, "The Development and Benchmarking of Contemporary Sustainability Indicators for Rural Ethnic Chinese Villages: A Case Study of the Social, Economic, and Ecological Issues of Two Gelao Villages Near Chongqing Municipality."
- **Fran Bires**, who recently retired as the director of the McKeever Environmental Education Center and SRU's Macoskey Center for Sustainability Systems Education and Research, received the Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Educators 2018 Keystone Award.

## ALUMNI

- Former Slippery Rock University offensive lineman **Brandon Fusco**, '16, signed a three-year contract to play for the Atlanta Falcons. He will join his third team in the NFL after previous stints as a starter for the Minnesota Vikings and most recently for the San Francisco 49ers.
- **Joyce Carr**, a 1989 graduate with a degree in special education, has been named president of the School Administrators Association of New York State.
- **Erin Lawrence**, a 2010 graduate with a master's degree in education, was named the 2017 Outstanding Educator by the North Carolina Science, Mathematics and Technology Education Center.
- **Bob Murray**, a 1971 and 1974 graduate with a bachelor's degree in education and a masters of science in physical and health education, has published "Food and Fitness After 50: Eat Well, Move Well, Be Well," a book he coauthored with Christine Rosenbloom.
- **Renee Dubuc**, a 2014 graduate with a bachelor's degree in sport management, has been named the director of institutional services for the Mid-American Conference.
- **Christine Gorham**, a graduate with a degree in finance, was recently appointed a regional director for Caddis, a national health care real estate firm headquartered in Dallas.
- **Kenneth Cross**, a graduate with a master's degree in special education, was recently hired as the director of special education for the Trinity Area School District in Washington.
- **Marcus Poindexter**, a 2007 graduate, is the new project manager for the Partners for Healthy Community, a patient-centered outcomes research institute study conducted by the University of Pittsburgh's School of Health and Rehabilitation Science in collaboration with the Homewood YMCA.
- **Lisa Graff**, a 1989 graduate with a degree in communication, was named director of education, retention and engagement for Erie Homes for Children and Adults Inc., an Erie-based agency that specializes in providing advanced medical care for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout northwestern Pennsylvania.
- **Adam Katchmarchi**, a 2012 graduate with a degree in health and physical education, was named executive director of National Drowning Prevention Alliance, a non-profit organization created to provide the public with drowning prevention and water safety education and programs.
- **Bill Wilson**, a 1991 Slippery Rock University graduate with a master's degree in physical education, was hired as the athletic director and development officer at the University of Montana Western in Dillon, Montana.

- **Keith Krass**, a 2017 graduate with a degree in safety management, was named Intern of the Year by the Heavy Construction Systems Specialists, receiving the grand prize of a \$10,000 scholarship.
- **Dagnis Dreimanis**, a 1996 Slippery Rock University graduate with a degree in finance and economics, was elected as a council member for HansaMatrix.
- Slippery Rock University Hall of Famer **Jim Ward** earned the ultimate prize for a career in football earlier this month when he became a Super Bowl champion after the Philadelphia Eagles claimed victory in Super Bowl LII. Ward, a 1998 graduate of SRU and a member of the 2012 SRU Athletic Hall of Fame induction class, serves as the Midwest area scout for the Eagles' scouting department.

Yesterday was an important day for the University as President-elect William Behre was formally introduced to the University community. We welcome Dr. Behre and look forward to his joining the University July 1.

Respectfully submitted

Philip Way  
Interim President