

"Share Our Pride"

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MCKEESPORT HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

AUGUST 2011

A+ Alumni

**4 more awards
added in 2011**



Alumni Scholarship Facts & Figures

In 2011, more than \$60,000 in financial aid, a record amount, was awarded. Since the early 1990s, when the alumni & friends association first began coordinating scholarship efforts, more than \$393,000 has been awarded.



Dr. Linda L. Croushore, president of the MHS Alumni & Friends Association, is shown at left with the winners of the new scholarships added this year. Left to right are Zachary DiBeradin, first recipient of the All-Alumni Scholarship; Tyler Volpe, the Vern G. Sharbaugh Scholarship; Alexis Kost, the Rick Keller Memorial Award; and Thomas Neri, Alexander Uhal, Alexandra Moninger and Matthew Pucalik, the Kenneth and Evelyn Frew Scholarship Fund. At right is attorney J. Terrence Farrell, representing the Frew Estate. For a complete report on the 2011 scholarships, please turn to Page 3.

HALL OF FAME RANKS GROW WITH NEW CLASS OF 7

Seven more high-achieving alumni have been chosen to join the McKeesport High School Hall of Fame, bringing total membership to 163.

The Class of 2011 includes:

Donald I. Moritz, Class of 1945 – Lawyer and successful businessman who guided the development of Equitable Gas into the far-reaching business it is today.

Florence Bonczek Innes, Class of 1952 – Humanitarian who battled her own hearing loss and dedicated her life to helping others with similar impairments.

Charles Scott Harrison, M.D., Class of 1955 – Founder and CEO of CURE International, which provides orthopedic care to children in the developing world.

Robert P. Sedlock, Sr., Class of 1955 – Transportation expert who oversaw installations of major transit system projects throughout the U.S.

Richard A. Anderson, Class of 1964 – President and CEO of St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network in Bethlehem, Pa.

The Rev. Alonzo Burney, Sr., Esq., Class of 1965 – Lawyer and ordained minister who has dedicated his life to justice and faith.

V. James DeVincentis, Class of 1971 – Co-owner of Pryzborski Productions, Inc., a media company that produces commercials for local and national clients.

They will be inducted at the annual Alumni Recognition Night sponsored by the MHS Alumni &

Friends Association on Saturday, October 15, at Stratigos Banquet Centre, North Huntingdon Twp.

The event begins at 6 p.m. with a reception, followed by dinner at 7 p.m. and then the program and induction ceremony.

This is the 24th class elected to the Hall of Fame.

Attendance is by reservation only. Cost is \$40 per person. Contact the alumni office for tickets (412-678-9215; 410 Ninth Street, McKeesport, Pa. 15132).

Deadline for reservations is Friday, Oct. 7. Deadline for ads in the program book is Monday, Oct. 3. Reservation and ad forms can be found online at www.tcfpe.org (click on McKeesport Alumni).

See Page 2 for more on the 2011 inductees.

Donald I. Moritz, Class of 1945

After Donald I. Moritz received his law degree from the University of Pittsburgh, he had to decide whether to join Harvard Law School as a teaching fellow or enter the business world. He chose the latter, beginning a successful career that saw him rise to the presidency of Equitable Gas in 1978. In that post, he steered what was a medium-sized public utility into the multi-billion multi-resource operation it is today. Moritz was involved in numerous industry related associations and, in keeping with his belief in service, was on boards for such organizations as the Pittsburgh Symphony, Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, and area hospitals and universities. He presently serves on boards for the symphony, Phipps Conservatory and Seton Hill University.

Charles Scott Harrison, Class of 1955

Scott Harrison, M.D., is Founder and CEO of CURE International. Initially an orthopedic surgeon, he also trained in pediatric orthopedics. His subsequent work as a spine surgeon and his expertise in reconstructive spinal surgery (he was inducted into the prestigious Scoliosis Research Society) led to his commitment to Africa and surgery on the disabled children of that continent. When he could find no organization which was meeting this need, he formed CURE. CURE is the synthesis of his experiences as a professor of orthopedics, a co-founder of a network of for-profit rehabilitation hospitals, and his work as the Chairman/CEO of an international medical device company.

Richard A. Anderson, Class of 1964

Richard A. Anderson swam his way to success at McKeesport High School and along the way learned "priceless lessons" in leadership, initiative and teamwork that he put into practice during his career in health care administration. He has served as President and Chief Executive Officer of St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network in Bethlehem, Pa., since 1986, making him the state's longest-tenured health care leader. Anderson has overseen St. Luke's successful evolution from a single hospital to six hospital sites and the largest geographically distributed health care network in southeastern Pennsylvania and western New Jersey, providing services at more than 150 locations.

V. James DeVincentis, Class of 1971

V. James DeVincentis is co-owner of Pryzborski Productions, located in Pittsburgh's Strip District. His company has produced award-winning commercials at the regional level for clients such as Giant Eagle and Allegheny General Hospital and at the national level for Auto Zone and others. In addition, Pryzborski Productions owns several U.S. patents in the high-definition camera field and has licensed agreements with SONY, Panasonic and Canon. He credits his success as an entrepreneur to his people skills and his

Florence Bonczek Innes, Class of 1952

Florence Bonczek Innes was just six years old when her hearing loss was discovered. It would be many years before the Americans With Disabilities Act was signed into law, but Innes battled her way through grade school, high school, college and art school, facing down anger, isolation, and challenges with personal relationship and communication issues. At 32, she became president of the Self Help for Hearing Loss in Sarasota, Fla., and began a career that has been devoted to helping others with hearing loss. She opened a center called Advocates For Better Hearing, Inc., and went on to serve on state and national organizations dedicated to assisting children and adults who are hard of hearing.

Robert P. Sedlock, Sr., Class of 1955

Robert P. Sedlock, Sr., credits strong family discipline and demanding educators for guiding and supporting his lifelong career in music, military, politics, transportation, private business, and contributions to transportation systems in state and federal government. He began his career in transportation at McKeesport Transit Bus Co. and later moved on to the Port Authority of Allegheny County, where he engaged in design and construction of the Light Rail System for Pittsburgh, now known as the T. He also was involved in the development of light rail systems in Colorado and New Jersey. Now semi-retired, he continues to consult and is active in the Masons.

Alonzo Burney, Class of 1965

For many years, Alonzo Burney has balanced careers in the law and the church. In 1972, he earned his law degree from Duquesne University and worked his way up from law clerk to trial attorney to law firm partner. He now maintains his own practice in McKeesport. In 1989, he accepted a call to the ministry and preached his initial sermon in January, 1990. Burney was associate minister of Bethlehem Baptist Church in McKeesport until he was chosen as pastor of Mt. Bethel Baptist Church in Trafford in 1996. He also serves as adjunct professor in the Department of Criminal Justice and Intelligence Studies at Point Park University and is a member of the Criminal Justice Panel of the U.S. District Court.

business sense and marketing background, developed at Kent State University as an undergraduate and then at Ohio University, where he earned a master's degree in broadcast administration. A swim champion at McKeesport Area High School, he won more titles at Kent State and is a member of its Athletic Hall of Fame. DeVincentis represents Kent State as a board member of the NCAA Athletic Department Council. This year, Kent State honored him for his service by naming the Football Team Room after him.

Expanding scholarship program gives financial boost to 31 seniors

Thirty-one members of the McKeesport High School Class of 2011 received more than \$60,000 in financial aid – a record amount – this year through the scholarship program sponsored by the MHS Alumni & Friends Association.

The 2011 sum reflects the addition of four new scholarships over the past year and the first-ever award made from the All-Alumni

Scholarship Fund, established with contributions large and small from the alumni association's general membership.

"Our association, which is marking its 25th year in 2011, always has been about giving back, and the All-Alumni fund is a direct expression of that commitment...and of a desire to keep the tradition of Tiger excellence alive," said Dr. Linda L.

Croushore, president of the group.

Since the early 1990s, when the alumni & friends association first began coordinating scholarship contributions, more than \$393,000 has been awarded.

The 24 separate funds presently included in the program either have been established through or are administered by the alumni association, in partnership with the underwriters and/or high school staff members. They are open to all seniors intent on pursuing post-secondary education, whether they are college-bound or headed to career or technical school, business school, art school or culinary institute.

The newest grants are:

The Kenneth and Evelyn Frew Scholarship Fund, established in memory of McKeesport alumni Kenneth Duane Frew (Class of 1943) and his wife, Evelyn Jane Henderson Frew (Class of 1944). It provides awards for seniors intent on furthering their education at a college, university, business or technical school, with preference given to those pursuing a career in engineering. First winners are Thomas Neri, \$5,000; Alexander Uhal, \$5,000; Alexandra Moninger, \$2,500; and Matthew Pucalik, \$2,500. Neri, Uhal and Pucalik are headed to Penn State Behrend and Moninger to Penn State Main Campus.

The Rick Keller Memorial Award, established by family members in memory of Rick Keller, a 1971 graduate of McKeesport High School. It provides a \$1,000 grant for a student interested in pursuing a career in the healthcare professions. First winner is Alexis Kost, who will attend Saint Vincent College.

The All-Alumni Scholarship provides a \$250 grant from funds contributed by members and supporters of the MHS Alumni & Friends Association. First winner is Zachary DiBeradin, who will attend Waynesburg University.

The Vern G. Sharbaugh Scholarship. This award, established by

Continued on Page 4



The 2011 scholarship winners included, seated l-r, Sage Webb, Kayla Donahoe, Brendaliz Alvarez, Ethan Kisan and Joshua Walls. At rear from the left are Jessica Hawthorne, Cara Halloran, Christine Mahan, Brandyn Shank, Melissa Druskin, Alicia Hawthorne and Justin Smith with McKeesport Area Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Timothy M. Gabauer.



High school principal Mark P. Holtzman, Jr., is shown with the additional scholarship recipients. Seated l-r are Rahmel Neal-Means, Jessica Mols, Krista Young, Rashontala Murtaza and MarQuis Samuels. At rear l-r are Taylor Queen, Holtzman, Mario Altieri, Carissa Kratz, Sara McBride, Alyssa Gradich, Brandi Stalter and Natalie Betters.

Expanding scholarship program aids 31

family members to honor Vern G. Sharbaugh (MHS 1965), is offered for a varsity football player who exemplifies excellent character, dedication and leadership on and off the field. First recipient of the \$500 award is Tyler Volpe, who will attend Slippery Rock University.

The other 2011 recipients are:

- **Thomas Neri, Melissa Druskin and Joshua Walls, winners of the Arthur N. Rupe Foundation Scholarship**, in the amount of \$2,000 each. Neri is headed to Penn State Behrend, Druskin to Duquesne University, and Walls to Saint Vincent College. Arthur N. Rupe, a 1935 MHS graduate and a 2002 McKeesport High School Hall of Fame inductee, established this award in 2001.

- **Joshua Walls and Christina Mahan, winners of the Mary V. Tomko Scholarship, in the amount of \$3,000 each.** Walls, as noted above, will attend Saint Vincent; Mahan is headed to Penn State Greater Allegheny. The Tomko scholarship was established in 1999 by Chris Casciato (MHS 1976 and 1999 MHS Hall of Fame inductee) in his grandmother's honor.

- **Jessica Hawthorne, winner of the \$1,000 Walter C. Shaw Memorial Scholarship.** Hawthorne will continue her education at the University of Pittsburgh Greensburg. The Shaw scholarship was established in memory of Walter C. Shaw, one of the founders of the G. C. Murphy Co., by his daughter, Elizabeth Shaw Gamble, a 1937 McKeesport graduate.

- **Ethan Kisan, winner of the \$1,000 Marlene Keller Farkas Memorial Scholarship**, established in 2001 by family members to honor the memory of Marlene Keller Farkas, a 1941 graduate of McKeesport High School. Kisan will attend Penn State Altoona.

- **Justin Smith and Brandyn Shank, winners of the Albert T. Fallquist Memorial Scholarship, in the amount of \$2,000 each.** Both plan to attend Penn State Behrend. Established in 2002 in memory of Albert (Abby) T. Fallquist, longtime chemistry teacher and varsity baseball coach at McKeesport High School, this fund provides continuing support to previous winners throughout their college careers. This year, six graduates will receive \$2,000 renewal grants.

- **Sage Webb, Cara Halloran and Alicia Hawthorne, winners of the Nick Bakalis Memorial Award.** Webb, who will attend Robert Morris University, and Halloran, who is headed to Carlow University, each received \$1,000; Hawthorne, who received \$500, will continue her education at Penn State Altoona. This fund

was established in 2002 in memory of Nick Bakalis (MHS 1949), by his daughter, Melissa Bakalis Milbank (MHS 1975), and his wife, Eleanor Frum Bakalis (MHS 1951).

- **Carissa Kratz, winner of the \$1,000 Justin R. Misura Memorial Award.** Carissa will attend the Culinary Institute of America. Established in 2004 in memory of Justin R. Misura, a 2001 graduate, by his family and friends, this award is offered annually to graduates planning to enroll in an accredited culinary arts program.

- **Kayla Donahoe and Brendaliz Alvarez, winners of the Dr. Mary Jo Sharbaugh Cerepani Scholarship.** Both will receive \$500 and will attend the Community College of Allegheny County. Dr. Cerepani, (MHS 1977 and 2008 MHS Hall of Fame inductee) underwrites this award, which is earmarked for students who plan a career in nursing, the field in which Dr. Cerepani works.

- **Tyler Volpe and Mario Altieri, winners of the Zon Fleckenstein Memorial Scholarship**, established in memory of Zon Fleckenstein, a 2005 McKeesport Area graduate, by his parents, Jim and Lisa Roka Fleckenstein, and brother Zar Fleckenstein. Each received \$500; both will attend Slippery Rock University.

- **Mario Altieri and Justin Smith, winners of the Yecies Family Awards, in the amount of \$500 each.** Richard Yecies (MHS 1965) funds these awards in memory of his brother Robert S. Yecies (MHS 1961) and his father, William H. Yecies. One is earmarked for a student with an interest in history and the other for a swim team member. Altieri will attend Slippery Rock University and Smith, Penn State Behrend.

- **Brandi Stalter, winner of the \$500 Bechtol Family Scholarship**, earmarked for a student planning a career in teaching. Stalter will attend Slippery Rock University.

- **Sara McBride, winner of the \$500 Garden Club of McKeesport Scholarship.** The Garden Club of McKeesport, a volunteer organization located in Renziehausen Park that is committed to giving back to the community, began offering this award in 2008. McBride will attend Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

- **Alicia Hawthorne and Taylor Queen, winners of the Gerald Grayson Scholarship, in the amount of \$500 each.** Hawthorne will attend Penn State Altoona and Queen, Thiel College. This scholarship was established in 2009 in honor of Gerald Grayson, outstanding Tiger athlete and later girls' basketball coach, by Carla Coleman (MHS 1990), a star player for Coach Grayson.

- **MarQuis Samuels, winner of the \$500 award from the Neenie Campbell Memorial Fund**, established to honor longtime McKeesport High basketball coach, C.P. "Nenie" Campbell. Samuels will attend Salem International University in West Virginia. This award is renewable, based on grade point average. Another \$500 from this fund goes to the varsity basketball program for items not included in the school district budget.

- **Tyler Volpe, winner of the \$500 Kathy McCall Sportsmanship Award**, established by family members and friends of the late Kathy McCall (MHS 1972) to recognize the accomplishments of outstanding McKeesport student-athletes. Volpe will attend Slippery Rock University.

- **Rahmel Neal-Means, winner of the \$400 Richard and Robert Fetters Memorial Gift**, established in 1997 by Beryle Fetters Nathan in memory of her brothers, Robert Fetters (MHS 1935), and Richard Fetters (MHS 1941). This award is given annually to a senior selected by the high school administration on the basis of merit and need. Neal will attend the University of Akron.

- **Brandyn Shank, winner of the \$300 Sam Liberatore Memorial Scholarship**, established in 2002 in memory of Sam Liberatore (MHS 1963). The award is made annually to a senior member of the Tiger baseball team. Shank will attend Penn State Behrend.

- **Rashontala Murtaza, Krista Young, Natalie Betters and Alyssa Gradich, winners of the Antoncic Family Scholarship, in the amount of \$250 each.** Established by McKeesport physician Dr. Rudolph A. Antoncic, Jr., (MHS 1961 and 2004 Hall of Fame inductee), this fund honors the memory of former McKeesport Area School District teachers, coaches and support personnel. Murtaza and Gradich will continue their education at LaRoche College, Young at Carlow College, and Betters at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

- **Jessica Mols, winner of the \$250 Lou Guarascio Memorial Award** for a member of the marching band. She will attend Slippery Rock University.

Dr. Croushore commended all those who provide a financial helping hand to today's McKeesport students. Gifts large and small are accepted on an ongoing basis, she added, noting that donors who lack the means to establish a scholarship of their own can contribute to the all-alumni fund. For more information, call 412-678-9215 or go to www.tcfpe.org and click on McKeesport Alumni. You may direct email to mhsalumni@tcfpe.org.

Tech High's 'last class' celebrates 50th reunion

Nearly 200 people gathered Aug. 20 at Stratigos Banquet Centre to mark the 50th reunion of the MHS Class of 1961, the last class to graduate from McKeesport's "Tech High." Classmates came from as far away as California, Florida and Anchorage, Alaska, to renew old acquaintances and relive high school memories.



Reunion Committee Co-chair Judy Brennan Joyce joins the Tiger in welcoming classmates.



At left, l-r, are classmates Kathy Churchman O'Brien, Hana Weisberger Cofsky, Susan Weiss Haas and Judi Shermer Wolf, who served as moderator for the program. Wolf is a member of the MHS Hall of Fame.



Classmates Sharen Gibbons Thomas and Scott Finney, at right, catch up. At left is Sharon's husband Gary Thomas, a 1960 McKeesport grad and member of the MHS Hall of Fame.



Left to right are committee member Karen Miller Kost and reunion co-chairs Judy Brennan Joyce and Ina Jean Bell Marton, one of the Class of 1961's five members of the MHS Hall of Fame. Also on the committee were Adrienne Kapisak, Paulette Sullivan Watson and Bruce Brinkos.



Left to right are classmates Robert Slack and Judy and Charles Snyder.



Class of 1976 marks 35th reunion

Members of the Class of 1976 gathered for their 35th Reunion over the weekend of August 12-14 at Seven Springs Resort in Champion, Pa. Eighty-two people attended.



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"Share Our Pride"

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REUNION UPDATE

The Class of 1971 will observe its 40th Reunion Sept. 24 and is asking that *all* McKeesport alumni join the party at the Boston Waterfront that evening. Sign-in begins at 5 p.m. For more details, contact:

Barb Firda (mshs1971@comcast.net)
or Cindy Graham (cjg613@gmail.com)

Other upcoming reunions include:

Class of 2001 (10th)

Nov. 26 • 7 PM • Dave and Buster's
(Waterfront - Homestead)

Contact: MHS2001tigers@gmail.com

Information also on Facebook - McKeesport
Class of 2001

Class of 1991 (20th)

Nov. 26 • 7 PM • Dave and Buster's
(Waterfront - Homestead)

Contact: mahsclassof91@hotmail.com

Information also on Facebook - McKeesport
Area High School Class of 1991

Class of 1948 (63rd)

Sept. 15 • Youghiogheny Country Club
12:15 - 4:15 PM - Luncheon

Contact Phil Feinert at 412-731-1669 or
Ron Sandmeyer at 215-698-4122 for more
details.

It's time to renew!

Notices went out in August, asking that you renew your membership in the alumni & friends association and include an extra contribution for the annual Give-Back Gift and the All-Alumni Scholarship Fund. Give-back funds are earmarked for worthy projects at McKeesport Area High School. Membership dues cover mailing, printing and other incidental costs. We need your continued support!

MHS Hall of Fame members in the news

Retired Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice **Cynthia A. Baldwin**, a 1962 MHS graduate and 1990 Hall of Fame inductee, was honored as one of the New Pittsburgh Courier's 50 Women of Excellence for 2011.

William E. Stewart, also a 1990 Hall of Fame inductee, died July 5, 2011. A 1949 MHS graduate, he and his brother founded McKee-Stewart Equipment Co. and went on to form MS Associates and other holding companies.

256 receive diplomas at 128th Commencement

McKeesport Area High School marked its 128th Commencement June 8 when 256 members of the Class of 2011 received their diplomas in an outdoor ceremony at Weigle-Schaeffer Stadium.

Valedictorian was Melissa Helen Druskin and salutatorian was Thomas Holden Neri.

Class colors were cobalt blue and ruby red; class flower was a white rose dipped in candy-apple red, class song was *Dynamite* by Taio Cruz; and class motto was: *Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away* (author unknown).

YEARBOOKS AVAILABLE

McKeesport Area High School has a surplus of yearbooks from various years. The years available and prices for each are: 2003 to 2008 - \$25; 2009 - \$30; and 2010 - \$40

Contact Lyndsay Brown if you're interested in purchasing one or more (412-664-3650; lbrown@mckasd.net).