

# the Bridge

A Magazine for SUNY Polytechnic Institute Alumni, Faculty, Friends & Students

Winter 2017

# Wildcat



# CHAMPS!

Lacrosse and Basketball Teams Take Top Prize



# The Bridge

Winter 2017

The Bridge is published by the State University of New York Polytechnic Institute Alumni Association to keep you informed of campus activities and news.

**Publisher:** Courtney Kerwin '15  
**Editor:** David Dellecese  
**Production:** Lynne Browne '04, G'14  
Patrick Baker '15  
Matthew Kopytowski

Find out more!  
Visit us online: [www.sunypoly.edu/alumni](http://www.sunypoly.edu/alumni)  
**Call: 315-792-7273**  
E-mail: [alumni@sunyit.edu](mailto:alumni@sunyit.edu)

**Address change?** E-mail [alumni@sunyit.edu](mailto:alumni@sunyit.edu),  
call 315-792-7273, or write SUNY Polytechnic Institute Alumni Office, 100 Seymour Road, Utica, New York 13502.

*This publication is printed on recycled paper.*

# Contents



## Wildcat Champs



## Faculty Profile



## Alumni Spotlight



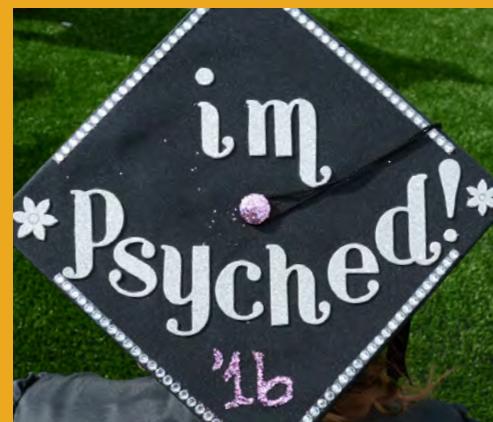
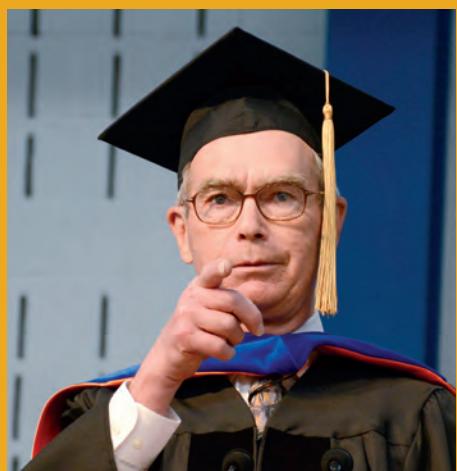
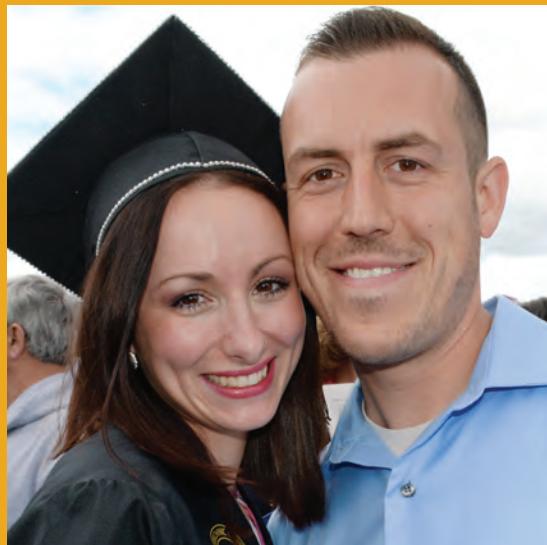
## Portraits of Hope



## Wildcat Year in Review



# Commencement 2016



With her master's degree and bachelor's degree already under her belt and her interest in manufacturing constantly growing, **Shravanthi Lakshmi Manikonda '11** knew not only what the next step in her journey would be (a PhD) but exactly where it would be as well.

"SUNY Poly's CNSE was an ideal choice," she says. "SUNY Poly is unique because of its proximity to so many companies. This alone will provide ample opportunities in terms of internships and future career prospects. So, if you are looking at various schools, keep this very important point in mind while making your final choice."

Pursuing a PhD in Nanosciences and Nanoengineering from SUNY Poly's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE), she chose to specifically concentrate on Chemical Mechanical Planarization process, which she says is a critical step in semiconductor fabrication.

"I got a chance to work in a CMP lab during my master's and that fueled my interest. I was eager to continue in the semiconductor field for my PhD."

It was while continuing in this field that she met Dr. Robert Geer, who was her faculty mentor and advisor. Shravanthi attributes her professional growth to the 'well-informed and technically sound' Dr. Geer.

"As a mentor, he was supportive of my career growth. He provided me with suggestions and guidance which helped jumpstart my career. Some of his tips I use even today in my day to day activities at work."

Being at SUNY Poly not only gave her a feel of what to expect once she graduated, but also gave her the chance to get her foot in the door to her future career by way of internship opportunities, which brought her one step closer to the semiconductor industry.

Today, Shravanthi is a Principal Integration Engineer at GlobalFoundries, responsible for new product introductions at Fab 8 in Saratoga County.

"I am involved all the way from the design/planning stage to the final product demonstration stage for new products that are introduced. In my role, I work with all different kind of engineers (design, customer, device, process, test, etc) across the fabrication facility."

And each day she's not only seeing every product through each stage of its evolution. She's also putting to use what she learned while studying at SUNY Poly's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) in Albany through courses such as Semiconductor Process Overview, Semiconductor Metrology, Semiconductor Device Engineering, and Design of Experiments - all giving her a strong foundation for her current role.

"Many of the concepts that I learned from these courses, I put to use even today in my day to day job activities," she said. "I am thankful to SUNY Poly for giving me the opportunity to complete my PhD. I sincerely believe that my time at SUNY Poly opened the door for the career opportunities that came my way. I also made many friends during my time there. I am still in contact with my close friends from SUNY Poly and we check in with each other regularly. As one of my close friends put it, we have known each other for so long, we are now practically family."

During her time at SUNY Poly's CNSE, Shravanthi served as Public Relations Officer for the University of Albany Indian Student Organization, where she was involved in numerous events.

"One of my most favorite memories was the time we spent organizing Diwali, the Indian festival of lights. We invited students and faculty and lots of my friends from many different countries joined in the celebrations. Everyone had an amazing time and I was very happy in how well the event was received and enjoyed by everyone."



Fostering an open and diverse scientific community drawing from an array of experiences and viewpoints is a crucial aspect of developing world-class innovators in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). And the increasing involvement and support of women STEM students like Shravanthi is essential to the growth of America and its economy - something she knows all too well.

"STEM is the backbone for development of any country, especially a superpower like the United States. To continue economic development, it is highly vital that our future generations be well versed in the field of science and engineering. The gender diversity in STEM fields in the USA is also lacking and it is vitally important to bring a balance. More women in STEM fields will bring diversity in perspective at the workplace which will be beneficial to everyone. In addition, women are highly influential in shaping the future generations. STEM educated moms might lead to our future generations to be more interested in STEM fields which will in turn be beneficial to the overall development of the country." ♦

For some, college provides the path and training ground to their future career. For others, it's where they cement the relationships that can forever change their lives.

## For Katie Bellegarde '11, SUNY Poly was both.

Today, Katie and her husband Brian both work for Bechtel Marine Propulsion Corporation (BMPC) at Knolls Atomic Power laboratory, one of the largest locations for BMPC – Brian as Records Management Professional and Katie as Talent Acquisition Specialist.

"I handle our hiring process from A-Z for a few of our directorates that span multiple sites," she says. "Everything from writing the job description to determining salary to relocation is handled by my office."

Earning her B.S. in Business Administration from SUNY Poly in 2011, Katie followed it up with graduate school at Union Graduate College in Schenectady. There, she worked as an intern in the Benefit Operations Department at General Electric while earning her MBA. It certainly wasn't her first foray into the internship arena, getting experience under her belt interning in the Human Resources Office at SUNY Poly during her undergrad pursuits.

"That internship gave me a great foundation in not only HR, but also working in a professional setting. Having this internship as an undergrad helped me to get my internship in grad school at GE. All of my previous roles have provided me with the skills to move on to the next level in my career, but it really all started at SUNY Poly."

It was during her time juggling her graduate studies at Union Graduate College with her internship at GE that she accepted a full-time role with a recruiting agency where she worked for 2 ½ years while simultaneously finishing up her MBA.

In July 2015, she started with BMPC and although she says recruiting may not have been exactly what she planned on doing, it was a great jumping point into Human Resources as it forced her to learn the business inside and out.

"It's a great place for me because it's the sales and social side of HR. It's a great fit for my personality because I get to talk to new people all the time and help them make a great career move! I also get to help new grads enter our company and start their own career, which is very rewarding."

But before she found her perfect fit in the career world, Katie was laying down a foundation of knowledge and experience at SUNY Poly that would propel her to where she is today, and unknowingly doing so beside her future spouse.

"Brian and I both took courses from Dr. Langdon. He was a great professor and consistently brought real world examples into the classroom. We both also took Economics from the late Al Madle, who made us laugh in every class. I took an HR class with Tony Panebianco, who was the VP of HR at the time. His class is what hooked me on HR and helped me see that as my career path."

A lot of the time it may be programs, studies, or research that make the headlines, but for Katie, SUNY Poly meant so much more. Her life-changing connection runs so much deeper than that – a connection that starts in the lane of a bowling alley. She applied to SUNY Poly as a senior in high school when she discovered the school had an NCAA bowling team.

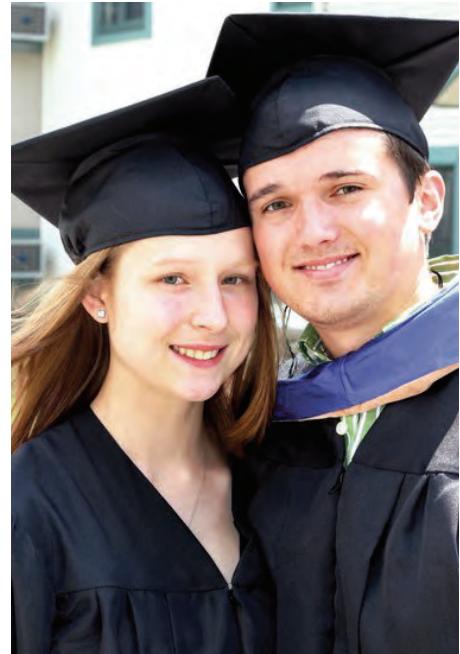
"That was a big factor as I was looking to continue bowling after high school. I was specifically looking for an accredited business program and a school that was within a few hours of my hometown."

Bowling trips to Penn State, New Jersey, and Kutztown fill the memories of her time here, with Thursday bowling at Pin-O-Rama in Utica followed up by free Friday movies at the Uptown Theatre and Buffalo chicken pizza from the Cat's Den.

And of course, there was the bowling meeting in September 2008 that changed everything. A meeting for the men and women bowling teams was being held when she first spotted Brian.

"We were in the Campus Center and he walked down the stairs...the rest is history."

The relationship had the full support of bowling coach Bob Richie, whom Katie says was their biggest fan.



"He jokingly told us we had to be together from the very beginning and he was always our number one supporter as a couple. He treated us like his son and daughter. He was one of our first calls when we got engaged."

"If I hadn't gone to [at the time] SUNY Institute of Technology, I wouldn't necessarily have met Brian and I definitely wouldn't have the foundation of the education I have now. My family and my career are very important to me, so SUNY Poly has impacted both of those in a big way," she says. "It was a great opportunity for me when I was there, and it's an even better opportunity now that it's SUNY Poly. It's a great way to get a top-notch education in a number of growing fields while still being affordable." ♦

He helps those who can't see find their way to a fulfilling and productive life. He's written several books on apparitions, ghosts, and spooky phenomena throughout Central New York and investigates some of the most haunted of places the area and its history have to offer. But few things quite frighten **Dennis Webster G'10** like the stairways of Donovan Hall.

"I got lost in Donovan Hall on my first day. I still recall saying I wanted to meet the architect of that building and ask them what they were thinking when they designed it. Was it just to confuse the student body? I really wonder if there's students lost for all time wandering those maze halls of Donovan, not able to escape!"

When Dennis was pursuing a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) at

SUNY Poly, he was looking to enhance his already-existed knowledge base after a bachelor's degree in Business Management from Utica College. At the time, he was director of manufacturing at the Central Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CABVI) in Utica. The power of knowledge became immediately apparent when Dennis was instantly promoted to Vice President of Manufacturing upon his graduating from the MBA program at SUNY Poly.

In 2016, he was promoted to Senior Vice President - a path that was forged thanks to the knowledge he gained and honed while at SUNY Poly.

"The skills I obtained from the MBA program made the difference. I translated the skills I was taught directly into my company. I work with people who are blind, helping to create jobs and mentor growth. I truly love living a life of serving others. We opened up a manufacturing division in Syracuse and already have over a dozen blind employees. Seventy percent of the blind are unemployed so it's satisfying to give a job to someone who wants to work."

Work is something Dennis knows quite a bit about, working hard to not only rise through the ranks at his day job, but also to pursue passions such as writing.

"I'm optimistic and love to learn new things. I've always been drawn to the shadows, the cobwebs, the creaking door hinges. It was a natural progression to move into writing and ghost hunting."

And in much of his writing, you'll find the same ghostly tone that has influenced his other life as a paranormal investigator. His roster of published works continues to grow, with Haunted Utica, Wicked Mohawk Valley, already on store shelves and even more to come.

"I love the unknown. I love reading and writing. Writing books takes an incredible amount of time yet writers are moths to the flame in this regards. I had an interest in ghost hunting and followed the Ghost Seekers of Central New York for years on all sorts of investigations. I now have three ghost books out and am a full-fledged member of the group and a paranormal investigator."

When a paranormal investigation is conducted, Dennis says that he and his teammates with The Ghost Seekers of CNY make sure to do plenty of historical research on the building and the land it sits on. They interview people who claim to have had ghostly interactions at the location and use everything from night vision video cameras, to electro-magnetic devices in an effort to capture evidence of the otherwise unexplained.

"When we capture something, we try our best to debunk it, yet if it's genuine, we accept it as paranormal evidence."

Of all the sites he's visited with the team, he says it's the Stanley Theater in downtown Utica that remains the most thrilling investigation.



"It's the crown jewel of Utica and loved by everyone. To prove the stories true was absolutely thrilling. We captured a ghost moving across the ladies bathroom in the basement and it is very rare to catch an entity on video camera. We did a fundraiser for the Stanley after the investigation where we showed the public that footage. They were blown away."

And whether it's investigating the paranormal, writing his latest book, or helping those who are blind find work and fulfillment, for Dennis it was the groundwork laid at SUNY Poly that's helped him each step of the way.

"SUNY Poly has had a huge impact. It increased my intellectual capital, made me new friends, gave me appreciation for the beauty of the campus and now my son Jake is a student and repeating my love for the place," he says. "I could've went for my MBA at other, more expensive schools but SUNY Poly offered high quality at a great price. I would encourage any student to come to SUNY Poly as the view of the Mohawk Valley is stunning, the campus is beautiful and spread out. You'll get a fantastic education at a low price and keeping student loans down is important as you go out and start your career." ♦

A personal moment witnessing cultural ignorance, inspiring artwork that is receiving national media attention. A dedication to education and shining a spotlight on the beauty of Africa. And it's all coming from the brush, mind, and spirit of SUNY Polytechnic Institute graduate **Dennis Owusu-Ansah '12**.

"After witnessing my friend get teased by a group of men for wearing a kente cloth on our way to church, I figured something must be done to change the perspective of people who are not familiar with the African culture," Owusu-Ansah told CNN.

That was the event that changed everything for the then 26-year-old, who decided he needed to use his artistic talents to create stories from which his audience could learn more about the African culture.

"They had no idea what my friend was wearing. One of the guys shouted 'That man has a blanket wrapped around his body like it's winter time.' I saw this incident as an opportunity to educate people about who we are, and what we stand for through my art."

Currently based in New York City, Owusu-Ansah received his Business Administration degree in 2012 from SUNY Poly, but it was his artwork that blended some of the world's biggest celebrities with authentic African clothing and cultural attire that took the

social media platform Instagram by storm and drew national media attention.

"With bright block colors contrasting intricate patterns, the images have transformed the likes of Drake, Rihanna and Beyoncé into powerful African icons in traditional dress with traditional names," Esra Gurkan of CNN wrote about Dennis' work.

The decision to focus on trending celebrities within the entertainment world was a conscious choice, realizing the massive influence those artists have amid their fans.

And by dressing those world-famous celebrities in African clothing, he hopes he can help bring about some awareness to traditional culture and spur those who see his art to educate themselves and others on African culture.

"Africa isn't only about what the media portrays on television," Owusu-Ansah told the news network, adding that it is "a continent rich in history, diversity and traditions."



The Ghanaian artist says that the piece he is most proud of is a painting of Kanye West and Kim Kardashian in traditional African garb.

"It was very challenging," he told CNN. "I lost hope and almost gave up on that piece because it wasn't coming out as I expected. I worked on this painting for four days straight."

With more than 24,000 followers of his work on Instagram as of this writing, it seems that an awareness of not only African culture, but Dennis' work inspired by it, is only getting bigger. ♦

## Scholarship Recipient

### **Why did you choose SUNY Poly?**

I chose SUNY Poly because of the educational opportunity which this campus and school both provide. When deciding on which college to attend, I wanted to be sure to choose the one that could both cater to my education, as well as provide a solid, growing foundation around my major which would one day lead me into a successful career.

### **What does your scholarship mean to you?**

My scholarship means more than words can express to me. I am more than happy to work as hard as I can to prove that I am an able and successful student. Not only

does my scholarship give me even more incentive to work my hardest every day, but it provides a solid foundation for me to further my education to achieve success in the career of my dreams in the future.

### **What do you want to say to the person who funded your scholarship?**

To the person who funded my scholarship, I wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart. My academic success has always been incredibly important to me, and with a scholarship, I not only feel the incredible incentive to work my best, but I am also given the determination to be involved, and to achieve great things. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you!



### **Nicholas VonDollen**

**Hometown: Guilderland, NY**

**Major: Computer Science**

**Graduation Year: 2019**

Sometimes you just can't decide. For some, it's between ketchup and mustard. Others, it might be between cola or ginger ale. For **Kevin Drinkwine '12**, it was what to study in college. Rather than limit himself to just one field of study, he decided to indulge numerous interests with a dual major and three minors at SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Utica.

"I was very torn between my interest in electronics and computer programming. Both of these fields are filled with tough puzzles to figure out. The natural blend of these two fields was Computer Engineering but I was still interested in getting a very thorough education in both fields."

He credits his faculty advisor, Dr. Daniel Benincasa with suggesting he pursue both his biggest interests and work toward two degrees at SUNY Poly. After spending hours going through the student handbook, Drinkwine mapped out a path that would allow him to obtain degrees in both Computer Engineering as well as Electrical Engineering Technology. That also led to his three minors – Computer Science, Computer Information Systems, and Applied Mathematics.

"I chose SUNY Poly because I could tell that the professors really cared about their students. Throughout my time at SUNY Poly I met many professors eager to explain their coursework further. The professors at SUNY Poly really made my education worthwhile. And I can't thank Dr. Benincasa enough for his outstanding mentorship, guidance, and friendship."

Dr. B, as Drinkwine says Benincasa was often called, sought him out on accepted students day, making a fantastic first impression on the then soon-to-be student. Dr Benincasa explained the various programs and what they could lead to in Drinkwine's future.

"I could tell then that he really cared about his students, which meant a lot to me. Dr. B lived up to my first impression of him and more through many one-on-one academic sessions, increased credit hour forms, and IEEE club advisor meetings. I was able to

prosper. Dr. B inspired and encouraged me to accomplish everything I wanted to do and get from my education."

During his senior year, Drinkwine landed an internship as an Application Developer with a local company, Northern Safety and Industrial, a distributor of personal protective equipment, safety and industrial supplies that was on campus recruiting.

"Northern Safety was a great place to work. The team was supportive, provided lots of free food, and was really focused on growing their team's talent."

That internship turned into a full-time job for Drinkwine during his last semester, allowing him to walk across the stage at graduation and right into the workforce. Motivated by a desire to continually broaden his skills, have an engineering job, and move closer to his home in Delmar, NY, he sought out a job at GlobalFoundries in Malta, NY.

"At GlobalFoundries I've followed the technical career track first as an entry Factory System Engineer and later a Senior Recipe Management Subject Matter Expert."

For those outside of the industry, the term recipe management might conjure up images of the Betty Crocker Cookbook, but be assured what Drinkwine is cooking up is the latest technology that's powering our lives and industry.

"Recipes are pieces of machine instructions written on tool software that tell where the wafer should go in the tool and what should happen to the wafer (add/remove chemicals, pattern, bake, etc). There are over 200,000 recipes, and growing, that are being managed in FAB8 inside our recipe management



system. My job is to ensure the engineers are using the system correctly, recipes are being managed appropriately, and that the engineers have the tools they need to run a 24-hour fab."

Drinkwine says that the skills he uses every day in his career are skills that were created and sharpened during his time at SUNY Poly, learning how to program, how computers work on multiple levels, and how to solve complex problems. With this knowledge, he was able to graduate with a diverse understanding of computers and computer integrated devices.

"Going to SUNY Poly started my career on the right track. Not only did SUNY Poly prepare me for the workplace by broadening and specializing my knowledge, they also provided coaching on how to interview so I was able to land my first two jobs on the first try. SUNY Poly is extremely affordable and between working part-time my first three years and working full-time my senior year, I was able to graduate debt free and ready to go to work the next day." ♦

# Earn a Master's Degree at SUNY Poly!



**Matthew Brundage**  
BS Business Management '15  
MBA Technology Management '16



**Jenjira May Htoo**  
BS Communication and Information Design '14  
MS Information Design and Technology '15  
SUNY Chancellor's Award Winner

## Areas of Study

### College of Arts & Sciences

- **Data Analysis (post-bachelor's certificate)\***
- **Information Design & Technology (MS)\***
- **Computational Mathematical Modeling (post-bachelor's certificate)**

### College of Engineering

- **Computer & Information Science (MS)**
- **Network & Computer Security (MS)**
- **Systems Engineering (MS)**

### College of Health Sciences & Management

- **Accountancy (MS)\***
- **Family Nurse Practitioner (MS and post-master's certificate)**
- **Nursing Education (MS and post-master's certificate)\***
- **Technology Management (MBA)\***

*Concentrations in: accounting and finance, business management, health informatics, human resources management, marketing management*

### Colleges of Nanoscale Science & Engineering (Albany NanoTech Complex)

- **Nanoscale Engineering (MS and PhD)**
- **Nanoscale Science (MS and PhD)**
- **Medicine and Nanoscale Science or Nanoscale Engineering (MD/PhD)**

### Non-Degree (Non-matriculated) Study is Available

**>> [sunypoly.edu/non-degree](http://sunypoly.edu/non-degree)**

\* Available Online

### Learn More!

Contact the Graduate Admissions Office

**Call: 315-792-7347**

**E-mail: [graduate@sunypoly.edu](mailto:graduate@sunypoly.edu)**

**[sunypoly.edu/graduate-admissions](http://sunypoly.edu/graduate-admissions)**

**SUNY** POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE



**The \$60 application fee is waived for SUNY Poly Alumni.**



SUNY Poly Women's Lacrosse NEAC Champions

# Wildcat Champs!

## Historic Season for the Women's Sports Program

Wildcat women's sports have had a great deal of success in the past. Earning regular season titles and having high winning percentages have been commonplace over the past seven years in the NEAC. One hurdle however has always remained for the women; a berth in an NCAA Division III Championship Tournament. The 2015-16 season saw that hurdle in the history of women's athletics at SUNY Poly cleared by not one, but two teams; The Wildcat Women's Basketball and Women's Lacrosse teams.

It all started in the winter with a historical run by the women's basketball team. The team had high expectations entering the 2015-16 season. A "core four" of seniors were the heart and soul of the team. The four, consisting of two 1,000 point forwards; Lauren Knowles and Geena Gallo, a dynamic point; Emily Alicea, and tough big; Erika Charbonneau had been playing together since the winter of 2012.

The four, with the spring addition of a sharp shooting transfer; Stevie Ray, set the tone and character of the team leading the Wildcats to a 20-5 regular season and an outstanding 17-1 record in the in the NEAC. The Wildcats dominated their opponents averaging a 10 point differential and a 4 rebound differential on the glass. They averaged an outstanding 70.2 points in NEAC play and had three players average double digit scoring totals for the season.

The Wildcat's entered into the NEAC Championship Tournament as the number two seed overall behind a great Lancaster Bible team who had handed the Wildcats their only conference loss of the season. SUNY Poly hosted Penn State Abington in the first round of the tournament and handily walked away with a 12-point victory which sent the Wildcats to Lancaster for the NEAC Final Four. The next game for the Wildcats was a Semi-Final matchup with the Gallaudet Bison. The Wildcats took care of business yet again with a 65-55 win to advance to the Championship game against the #1 seed Lancaster Bible Chargers.

SUNY Poly Women's Basketball NEAC Champions



The Championship game did not start out as planned for the Wildcats who got off to an ice cold start. Lancaster got out to a quick 20-7 lead in the first quarter, taking advantage of the slow start by the Wildcats. The Cats' would have to make a monumental comeback to claim the NEAC Title. Down 32-18 going into the third, SUNY Poly began to chip away at the lead that the Chargers had built over the first two quarters. The Wildcats cut the lead to a very manageable five points going into the final quarter and kept battling. The Wildcats went on to take their first lead of the game with just 1:23 remaining in the game and extended it to five points on free throws. The Wildcats held onto the lead and earned their first ever NEAC Championship trophy and their first trip to the NCAA Championship Tournament.

The first round of the Championship Tournament was hosted by Montclair State, a team who had made it to the NCAA Final Four in the year prior. The game started out as a back and forth battle, the two teams trading blows. The first quarter ended with the Red Hawks up 16-11 thanks to a 6-0 run by the Hawks to end the quarter. The battle continued in the second with neither team able to find their offensive rhythm. Through the first half both team shot sub 35% from the field. Despite the stagnant offense and stingy defense, the Red Hawks extended their lead to seven heading into the locker room at the half. The scenario felt very familiar for SUNY Poly, who had mounted a similar comeback just two weeks before. Wildcat Nation could sense a comeback brewing.

The fans would almost get the comeback that they asked for. The Wildcats triumphantly battled themselves back into the game after going down 13 points. The Wildcats ended the third with an 8-3 run to bring them back to within eight points and carried the

momentum into the fourth, starting the quarter with a 7-0 run to get within one point of the Red Hawks. Unfortunately for the Wildcats Montclair's experience proved to be too much as they were able to slow down the tempo of the game and make some big defensive stops, holding the rallying Wildcats down. The Red Hawks secured the win at the free throw line going 7-8 to close out the game. The final score was 55-48, ending the historical season for the Wildcats.

The Wildcat fan base would not have to wait long for another program to qualify for the NCAA Tournament. The women's lacrosse team, a program just five-years-old, would make 2016 a year to remember by going 11-3 in the regular season and earning the third seed in the NEAC Tournament after a three way tie atop the conference standings required three layers of tie breakers to be referenced.

The Wildcats dominated the regular season scoring a whopping 228 goals and registering 112 assists. The team was the best scoring program in the NEAC with 13.41 goals per game, nearly three goals better than the next best team. The goal differential between the Wildcats and their opponents was a phenomenal 7.25 on average. Krysta Beha and Mari Ames ended the season as the two best offensive players in the NEAC with 86 points each. Beha had 57 goals and 29 assists while Ames had 47 goals and a NEAC best 39 assists. The Wildcats garnered six NEAC All-Conference Awards, the NEAC Coach

of the Year; Erin Schurr, and the NEAC Offensive Player of the Year; Krysta Beha.

In the NEAC Championship Tournament the Wildcats faced Morrisville State in the Semi-Finals. After going down 6-3 in the game, the Wildcats kicked it into gear. The team scored seven unanswered goals in the last 25 minutes to put the game away, securing a spot in the championship game against the host; Cazenovia.

The championship game went scoreless for the first 18 minutes, a sight unseen for the high powered Wildcat offense. Poly would get on the board in the 19th minute, but Caz answered right back. The Wildcats took a 3-1 lead heading into halftime after two unanswered goals. In the second half, the Wildcats put their foot on the gas and they would not look back. The game ended 9-4 in favor of the Wildcats, earning them their first NEAC Championship in the short history of the program.

The team celebrated their victory, but soon would set their sights on the NCAA Tournament where they would be matched up with the Red Devils of FDU-Florham, a team that was riding a 10 game winning streak and had earned their second bid to the NCAA's in as many years.

In the first-round matchup the Wildcats would get off to a hot start scoring three unanswered goals right out of the starting gate. The Devils of FDU had an answer for the Wildcats. They scored six unanswered

goals to end the first half and headed to the locker room holding a 6-3 lead. FDU would start the second half where they left the first, scoring another five goals and taking an 11-3 lead. Facing a big deficit with time ticking away, the Wildcats got the offense back in gear and started to chip away at the lead. Krysta Beha and Meghan Serota got the team rolling with back to back scoring plays; both goals by Beha assisted by Serota. Nichole DiPiazza found the back of the net, assisted by Mari Ames. Ames netted her third goal of the game, again assisted by Krysta Beha to bring the Wildcats within four goals. However the clock was not on the Wildcats side. With a few more minutes, the outcome might have been changed; but alas time expired and the Devils got to celebrate their victory and a date with Middlebury in the second round of the tournament.

2015-16 was the most exciting year for women's sports in SUNY Poly's history. Both of the programs exemplify what being a Wildcat stands for. Their tenacity, dedication, and drive to be great have brought their programs to new heights. We as a community are extremely proud of the achievements that these young women have accomplished. It is something that the seniors will always remember and something that the future teams will use as a benchmark for future success. ♦

## University Conferences and Events

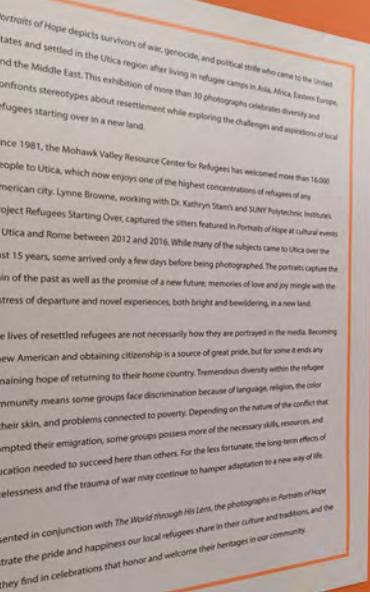


**When you hold an event at SUNY Polytechnic Institute, you have the opportunity to meet in an exceptional environment in an effort to strengthen your corporate mission, strategic plan, and leadership team.**

*Equipped with professionally-delivered educational components, SUNY Poly is the ideal location for your next meeting conference, retreat, or special event! The University Conferences and Events team of in-house experts strives to promote the SUNY Poly as a unique and stimulating venue for conferences, meetings, professional development programs, retreats, and other special events. SUNY Poly is more than a conference venue – it is a place to be inspired, it is a place of hospitality. Conference with confidence in state-of-the-art meeting facilities and enjoy professional catering with local flavours. Contact the Office of University Conferences and Events today!*

**University Conferences and Events**  
**315-792-7818 or 7819**  
**corporate\_events@sunyit.edu**

**SUNY POLYTECHNIC  
INSTITUTE**



## PORTRAITS OF HOPE

Faces of Refugee Resettlement in Central New York



# Portraits of Hope: Faces of Refugee Resettlement in Central New York

They come from all over the world to make their home in the City of Utica and its surrounding areas.

And now their faces, their lives, their stories are a sight to behold at a photography exhibit at the area's most prestigious museum – an exhibit that owes its creation to a SUNY Polytechnic Institute faculty member Kathryn Stam and staff member Lynne Browne.

**Dilasa Ranamagar, Bhutanese-Nepali refugee, age 12.**



of internationally-recognized photographer Steve McCurry.

"While McCurry's photos give us a glimpse into places from around the world, my photos are of people who have traveled from around the world to live in Central New York," Browne said. Most of the photos were taken at cultural events in Utica and Rome. "I find each event enlightening – I really love listening to the music and watching their performances. We all have a great opportunity to learn from other cultures, but especially in our area...we only have to open our hearts."

Kathryn Stam is a professor of anthropology at SUNY Polytechnic Institute and co-curator of the Portraits of Hope exhibit. She first began meeting refugees while an interpreter for Thai and Lao languages, interpreting at medical and social services appointments for those still settling to make their home in Central New York. From there, she began doing volunteer work at the Midtown Utica Community Center, which serves refugees from many different countries.

"It changed my life," Stam said. "I enter each day with a new sense of purpose, to be helpful and welcoming to our newest neighbors."

For more than 200 years, the City of Utica has attracted immigrants and refugees from across the globe. The immigrant communities that had settled in the city included Italian, Irish, German, Polish, and Arab populations and by 1910, those born in other countries made up almost 30% of Utica's population.

When the mills that employed many closed in the 1950s, General Electric, Univac and Griffiss Air Force Base became primary employers. But in time, as manufacturing plants began to downsize, then close, and the Air Force Base closed, the city's population sharply declined – losing roughly 40 percent of its people between 1960 and 2000.

But as the 21st Century dawned, the numbers of refugees seeking new lives in Central New York was again on the rise. Those that have resettled in the Utica area over the past several decades have become an economic engine, starting small businesses, buying and renovating properties, and adding a sense of life to city streets.

"Refugees have helped revitalize our community and bring new languages, ideas, and arts to this region. They have joined the workforce in many different industries. What matters the most to me is that our city had the opportunity to offer humanitarian assistance to vulnerable people who desperately needed a new and safe place to live," said Stam. "I ask myself what we can do for them instead of focusing so much on what they can do for us. The greatest benefits they have brought to our community might not be fully visible to everyone for some time, and that is okay with me."



**Desmond AJ Thwee, Karen refugee, age 19.**

Refugees often arrive with nothing, only the hope that here they can start over, creating better lives than those left behind in their war-torn home countries. That hope carries them through and has been captured through Browne's lens for all to see.

The Portraits of Hope project began in Fall 2012 when Stam asked Browne to take photos of newly arrived refugees from Nepal and Thailand who were performing at a music festival in Utica. Many performances and

thousands of photos later, the exhibit features refugees from around the world who have made their way to Utica, NY.

"I didn't know what I was getting into when I said I would go to the first event and take photos," Browne said. "It was a beautiful fall day and I was looking forward to trying to capture some great moments at the festival. It's been a wonderful experience learning about the different cultures in our area."

"As an anthropologist, one of my goals is to raise awareness about cultural diversity and improve communication between people from different cultures. Sharing the photos that Lynne took at cultural events seemed like a great way to highlight refugees' cultures in Utica and send a message of friendship and welcome. The photos, and the looks in the eyes of the participants, are windows into their world," Stam said. "Lynne and I have been working together to document cultural performances and events, and then giving back to the community by sharing the photos and stories. The photos were put on display as much for the participants and their families to enjoy as they were for the rest of the community. We were so pleased when Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute asked us to have an exhibit there. Personally, I love Lynne's photos so much and want to show them to everyone!"

The exhibit runs through December 31, 2016. ♦

**Gala Exhibit Opening event at the Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute, June 11, 2016 (below). Ku Say, Karen refugee and Don dancer (right).**



# Career Services Receives \$25,000 Grant

First Niagara is supporting the ongoing mentoring work of SUNY Poly's Career Services Center with grants totaling \$35,000 from the bank's Mentoring Matters program.

Thirty-seven not-for-profit organizations across First Niagara's footprint will share in a \$1 million grant award that directly benefits more than 400,000 children participating in these programs.

"The relationship between a mentor and a mentee can have a lasting, positive effect on a child both academically and personally," said David Kavney, First Niagara Central New York Market Executive. "Through our strategic partnerships with organizations like SUNY Poly, we are able to cast a wide net of support to programs and initiatives in the communities where our customers and employees live, work and do business."

Since launching Mentoring Matters in 2007, First Niagara has provided a total of \$850,000 in grants to Central New York mentoring organizations and \$8.33 million across the company. The program was created with the goal of supporting organizations that help children improve their grades and school attendance, enhance their self-esteem, avoid

the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and have a better opportunity for a brighter future.

The grant funds will go to support the SUNY Polytechnic Institute Career Services Mentoring Program, which helps students gain access to the professional workplace via site visits, informational interviews, and job shadowing. This grant will also enable opportunities for workshops, panels, career services presentations and assistance with other career services events.

"On behalf of the SUNY Polytechnic Institute Foundation, I'd like to extend our genuine appreciation for First Niagara's support of the student mentoring programs here at SUNY Poly," said Dr. Robert Geer. "Their tremendous investment will have a significant impact on the resources that we are able to provide to the students who work with our Career Services Office. I am very proud to say that First Niagara Bank is a true philanthropic partner of SUNY Poly and our Foundation."

Dr. Geer presented First Niagara Vice President of Commercial Lending and Senior Relationship Manager Karen Constabile with a plaque to commemorate their generosity and commitment to student development,



*Dr. Robert Geer presents First Niagara Vice President of Commercial Lending and Senior Relationship Manager Karen Constabile with a plaque to commemorate their generosity and commitment to student development, during the Career and Graduate School Fair last March.*

during the Career and Graduate School Fair last March.

"We are extremely excited about this opportunity for students to obtain mentoring and leadership development through collaboration with employers as well as alumni," said Sim Covington, Director of Career Services. ♦

## Thank you to our donors for their generous support!



**The Foundation awarded scholarships to over 370 current students for the 2016-2017 academic year.**

For more information on the SUNY Poly Foundation and to view the 2016-17 Annual Report, visit:

**[www.sunypoly.edu/foundation](http://www.sunypoly.edu/foundation)**

# Faculty Profile: Lauren Endres

Growing up in Toronto, Assistant Professor of Biology Dr. Lauren Endres has long held an interest in biology.

"My interest in biology first sparked as a senior in high school and then really took root while I was an undergraduate student at York University. I had fantastic professors who excited my interest in many biological processes including those that control how cells express their genetic material, and the possible outcomes of altering genetic material by mutation."

After completing a senior thesis project at York University in Toronto that studied gene recombination events, she found herself wanting to delve further into the field of molecular biology as a graduate student, leading her to a master of science degree as well as her doctorate at the University of Toronto. She says her ongoing interest in biology is fueled by trying to understand the precise ways in which cells respond to their ever-changing environments.

"In particular, I am fascinated by how cancer cells hijack the normal pathways that control cell division and survival in order to drive their own uncontrolled growth."

All her post-secondary school experience was extremely positive, she notes, helping her achieve success as both a research scientist and a mentor. Now she works to instill the same excitement in biology that was instilled in her by her



**Lauren Endres, Assistant Professor of Biology**

own mentors, sharing all of her knowledge about cells, genetics, development and cancer that comes from more than a decade of study and research.

It's not just experience in the classroom that she brings with her to SUNY Poly either. In 2010, she was awarded a Ruth L. Kirschstein NRSA Fellowship to investigate the role of oxidative stress in cancer development, which she accepted

at SUNY Poly's College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering. Her research and teaching experience has lead to sixteen publications in leading science journals and two book chapters. She has also been a member of the Ribonucleic Acid Society (or RNA Society) since 2013, and has acted as a peer-reviewer for a number of top-ranked scientific journals.

And what made her choose SUNY Poly as the place to bestow all that experience and knowledge and help educate future health care professionals who will go on to serve their communities as doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, veterinarians, chiropractors, and laboratory technicians? She says it's the excitement.

"Excitement at being a part of a growing biology program and the opportunity to engage in collaborative research with faculty at a one-of-a-kind institute."

At this one-of-a-kind institute, Dr. Endres hopes her students leave her classes with a solid foundation of biology that will enable them to pursue advanced studies in their chosen field and perhaps, more importantly, an excitement to study the biological processes that give life to organisms.

"I hope to develop new courses in development and cancer biology, engage undergraduate students in hands-on laboratory research, and secure funding for my research efforts from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)." ♦

## SUNY POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE Foundation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return to:** **SUNY Poly Foundation**  
**100 Seymour Road**  
**Utica, NY 13502**

### **Yes! I would like to support the Foundation!**

Enclosed is my gift of:  
 \$1,000  \$500  \$250  \$100  \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check made payable to: **SUNY Poly Foundation**

One-time credit card charge  
Please charge my:  Visa  MasterCard  Discover  AMEX

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

CSC # \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Designate my contribution to:**

- The Annual Fund  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

The SUNY Poly Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.  
Gifts are tax deductible as allowed by law.

# WILDCATS

TM

## 2015-16 Season

### Fall

The 2015-16 season got started on the right foot for the Wildcats. Of the five competing fall season teams, all five competed in post season play and two teams walked away with NEAC Championships.

The men's cross country team won their third consecutive NEAC Men's Cross Country Championship. The Wildcats placed four runners in the top 15 to secure the win at Jamesville Beach State Park. Juniors John Hohl (Webster, N.Y. / Webster Schroeder H.S.) and Joseph Acey (Forestport, N.Y. / Adirondack H.S.) led the way for the Wildcats. The pair finishing within one second of each other, coming across the finish line in 7th and 8th place. The Championship win secured a NEAC Coach of the Year award for long time coach Bill Tylutki; his third in as many years.

The SUNY Poly women's volleyball team had their best season yet under second year coach Dan Liberto. The team finished the regular season 25-4 including an 18 match winning streak. The Wildcats went 11-1 in NEAC competition, and won the Regular Season Title and the right to host the Championship Tournament. The women played their hearts out, but were edged out in the NEAC Championship Match, just one match short of the NCAA Tournament. The Wildcats dominated the NEAC Individual Awards, garnering the NEAC Player of the Year; Morgan Eberley (Utica, N.Y. / Whitesboro HS), the NEAC Rookie of the Year; Sydney Johnson (Nine Mile Falls W.A. / Lakeside HS), and the NEAC Coach of the Year; Dan Liberto. The Wildcats also had three players take home All-Conference Awards.

Senior Morgan Eberley had one of the most decorated seasons in Wildcat volleyball history. Morgan finished out the season as the conference's top point scorer in overall and

conference statistics. Additionally, she was extremely consistent throughout the season, hitting nearly .300 and registering an outstanding 388 kills in 31 matches. Morgan finished with double-digit kills 19 times this season and scored double-digit points 22 times this season. Eberley was named NEAC player of the Week twice, was the NEAC Player of the Year and was the first player to be named AVCA Division III National Player of the Week and AVCA All-Region in program history. Her historical season is one that will be a benchmark for others to strive for.

On the pitch, both the men's and women's

soccer teams had very successful seasons. Both teams made it to post-season play, both earning the right to host the first round of the NEAC Championship Tournament.

The men's team went 11-5-2 in the regular season under 13-year Head Coach Peterson Jerome. The team qualified for the NEAC post-season for the fifth time in the last six years. The Wildcats had three NEAC All-Conference selections and had the third best scorer in the league; Nick McBride (Rotterdam, N.Y. / Mohonasen HS). Nick had a great season for the Wildcats. He was named to the NEAC All-Conference Second team after netting 12 goals in the regular season.

The women's soccer team finished their season 10-6-3 under Coach Erin Schurr and earned the right to host the first round of the NEAC Championship Tournament. The Wildcats won the quarter final game over Penn College in a thrilling 1-0 game that came down to a goal in the 84th minute, but came up just short of a NEAC Championship after losing in the semi-finals to a strong Penn State Abington team.

The Wildcats boasted four All-Conference selections; one first team and three second team, and had the Defensive player of the year Angela Bartlett (West Winfield, N.Y. / Mount Markham HS).

Bartlett had a phenomenal season for the Wildcats. Angela was named the NEAC Defensive Player of the Year and an All-Conference first team selection. Bartlett started all 21 games in goal, going 11-6-3 overall with 103 saves, a .798 save percentage and a 1.25 goals-against average while seeing the most minutes of all conference keepers; nearly 1,900 minutes of play. Bartlett also posted eight shutouts on the year, including seven in conference play in route to an 8-2-2 record against NEAC opponents.

### Winter

The winter season, usually frigid and cold in Utica, was anything but for the Wildcats. Fans got to witness history in the making as they watched the red hot SUNY Poly Women's Basketball team dominate their opponents, win their first NEAC Championship in program history, and earn the privilege to represent the NEAC in the NCAA Division III Championship Tournament.

The women finished 23-6 overall and won their first NEAC Tournament Championship, defeating Lancaster Bible 69-65 in upset fashion. By winning the NEAC Championship, the women earned SUNY Poly's first ever bid into an NCAA Women's Championship Event. The team lost a thrilling game in the first round of the championship event to Montclair State, but gained some extremely valuable experience along the way. The Wildcats had three players named NEAC All-Conference Second Team; Geena Gallo, Lauren Knowles, and Stevie Ray. Ray also earned a NEAC Tournament MVP award. Two Wildcats also achieved a career milestone this season; Both Geena Gallo (Ballston Spa, N.Y. / Ballston Spa HS) and Lauren Knowles (Salisbury Mills, N.Y. / Washingtonville HS) reached 1,000 points, a milestone that has only been achieved three other times in SUNY Poly women's basketball history. This season is one that will go down in the record books as the best in the history of the SUNY Poly Wildcats women's basketball program.

The Wildcats men's basketball team had a solid season this winter in Coach Rob Schoener's second season at the helm. The team



John Hohl



Morgan Eberely



Krysta Beha

finished 12-5 in the NEAC, which was good for second in the north division, and made a run at a NEAC Championship. The Wildcats had two players earn All-Conference Honors; Quayshaun Mitchell (Harlem, N.Y. / HS of Graphics Communication Arts) was named to the first team and Peyton Griffiths (Milford, N.Y. / Milford Central School) to the third team. The Wildcats were dynamic and extremely fun to watch. The team is young, graduating just two seniors and will certainly be in the running for a NEAC Championship next season.

Quayshaun Mitchell was at the heart of the Wildcats success this season. The junior averaged 18.1 points per game and grabbed 7.1 rebounds per game. The duel threat player made it look easy. He scored easily from the arc, in the post, and anywhere in between. This season Quayshaun surpassed 1,000 career points combined from his time here and at SUNY Delhi. His efforts this season earned him a first-team All-Conference selection and helped the Wildcats make it to the NEAC Final Four.

## SPRING

The spring season saw another women's team bring home a NEAC Championship for the first time. The women's lacrosse team 13-4 under

Coach Erin Schurr's guidance. The Wildcats dominated the conference statistics leading the NEAC in goals with 228, assists with 112, and a shooting percentage of 50.8. The Wildcats had five NEAC All-Conference first-team selections and one second-team selection. The Wildcats also collected two NEAC individual awards; Coach Erin Schurr was named the NEAC Coach of the Year and Wildcat midfielder Krysta Beha (Marcy, N.Y. / Whitesboro HS) was named the NEAC Offensive Player of the Year. With the NEAC Championship the Wildcats qualified for their first trip to the NCAA Tournament in the programs fifth season of existence. The Wildcats were knocked out in the first round by a strong FDU-Florham squad.

The SUNY Poly men's lacrosse program made progress this season, nearly qualifying for the NEAC Championship. The Wildcats finished 6-10 overall but went 4-4 in the NEAC. The team had three NEAC All-Conference selections. Senior captain Nick Levanti (Clayville, N.Y. / New Hartford HS) was named to the second team after leading his team with 35 points on 21 goals and 14 assists. Senior defenders Regan Seydler (Croghan, N.Y. / Lowville Academy) and Zach Evans (Whitesboro, N.Y. / Whitesboro HS) rounded out the Wildcats All-Conference selections with third team nominations.

This season was a solid one for the Wildcat softball program. The team finished 12-6 in the NEAC, securing a second place finish in the North Division. As a team the Wildcats

hit .306 in conference play, had a .378 on base percentage, and a .410 Slugging percentage; all very respectable numbers offensively. The Wildcats had an impressive 2.36 ERA in Conference play and had a total of 168 strikeouts in 202 innings this season. The team received a total of five All-Conference Selections and had the NEAC Pitcher of the Year/Player of the Year on their roster; Fallon Reinold (Holland Patent, N.Y. / Holland Patent HS). The Wildcats will look to continue their recent success, building on the strength of their young roster in pursuit of a NEAC Championship in 2017.

The Wildcat baseball team finished their season a little sooner than they would have hoped due to a rain-shortened NEAC Championship Tournament; however the season was yet another in a series of successful seasons spanning the last six years. The Wildcats went 9-5 in the NEAC earning the fourth seed in the Championship Tournament. The team went 18-19 overall and had a team batting average of .292, an on-base percentage of .366, and a slugging percentage of .375. The team will go into next season losing just three seniors. The Wildcats had three All-Conference selections. Connor Passalacqua (Whitestown, N.Y. / Whitesboro HS) and Tyler Vyce (Clifton Park, N.Y. / Shenendehowa HS) earned first team honors, and freshman Brett Flint (Amsterdam, N.Y. / Amsterdam HS) earned second team. With the bulk of their lineup and pitching staff returning, 2017 looks like it will be a promising year for the Wildcats. ♦



Fallon Reinold



**Thank you** to all who participated in our 7th Annual Golf Tournament on May 16, 2016 at The Teugega Country Club in Rome, NY. This Event raised over **\$80,000 for student scholarships**, which has led us to another record-breaking amount for this tournament!

Special thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, M&W Group and our Executive Sponsor, Key Bank!



# Class Notes

## **Patricia Burrows '98**

of Hopkinton, MA was recently promoted to Director of Information Experience at EMC where she leads information architecture and content development teams in designing content for all devices. Patricia also presented and led a panel at the Center for Information Development Best Practices conference this past September.

## **Vincent Guerriero '92**

was promoted to General Manager of Process Diagnostics & Control at Applied Materials in Malta, NY this past February.

## **Julie Darling '93**

of New Hartford, NY started a new job last August as the Associate Executive Director at Brookdale Senior Living.

## **Jennifer Lytwynec Mulready '01**

was recently promoted to Software Engineering Manager at BAE Systems of Burlington, MA in November.

## **Elizabeth Richer Forsell '80**

just retired from her Postmaster position at the United States Postal Service last July and is enjoying retirement in Raquette Lake, NY with her husband Mark of 35 years and their three daughters.

## **Dorthea**

## **King-Simpson '92**

formally opened her own training business, DEKS Consulting in 2013. She credits her success to the "world class education" she received while attending SUNY and studying psychology. Her company is "a knowledge transfer organization where Servant Leadership is our guiding principle, and 'going above and beyond' is our motivation." They coach individuals and teams to promote a positive workplace which enhances all levels in an organization.

## **Christopher Dare '09**

Lieutenant Junior Grade (LTJG) became a carrier qualified pilot and earned his wings of gold to become a Naval Aviator by successfully taking off and landing upon the CVN-73 USS George Washington ten times. Dare will now move to Virginia to train and become a pilot of the E-2 Hawkeye or C-2 Greyhound.

To submit your Class Notes please contact the Alumni Office at [alumni@sunyit.edu](mailto:alumni@sunyit.edu) or call 315-792-7110.

# For your Wildcat Adventures!

Take a picture with this page. Just tear it off and take Walter the Wildcat with you on your next trip, holiday, or out-of-country adventure! We will spotlight your photo in this new feature called

## “Wildcats Around the World.”

Please include your photo, full name, class year, and a description of where the photo was taken.



Share  
your  
photo!



@sunypolyalumni



SUNY Polytechnic Institute Alumni Association



#WildcatsAroundTheWorld



alumni@sunyit.edu

#WildcatsAroundTheWorld

SUNY POLYTECHNIC  
INSTITUTE  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

# SUNY POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

Alumni Association  
100 Seymour Road  
Utica, New York 13502

