

Spring Commencement 2009

Wilkes University held its annual spring commencement on May 16 at Wachovia Arena. It was a day to celebrate for more than 700 undergraduate and graduate students. John Brooks Slaughter, president and CEO of the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering, delivered the commencement address “Building Your Future.”



Top right: Commencement is a reason to smile for Caitlin Dukas and Wayland Davis, who graduated with degrees in psychology.

Inset: Tricia Stefanick receives her doctor of pharmacy degree from President Tim Gilmour.
PHOTOS BY MICHAEL P. TOUEY

“ A commitment to EXCELLENCE is unquestionably important. You who graduate today, in particular, must recognize that the FUTURE is what you will make it to be. It depends upon what you do today and every day and tomorrow thereafter. Your DESTINATION IN LIFE will be determined by your acts and not by your intentions. ”

– John Brooks Slaughter,
president and CEO, National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering,
Spring 2009 Commencement Speaker

Leadership Program for Youth Highlights Outstanding Leaders Forum

When Elie Wiesel was a teenager, he and his family endured the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps Auschwitz and Buchenwald. Years later, Wiesel chronicled his experiences in the memoir *Night*. His story comes to Wilkes University when Wiesel—now a Nobel Laureate—is the guest speaker for the annual Outstanding Leaders Forum on Nov. 17.

Night has been translated into more than 30 languages and has sold millions of copies since its original publication in 1956. It is required reading for many of today’s high school and college students.

High school students in northeast Pennsylvania will have a special opportunity in conjunction with Wiesel’s visit to Wilkes. He will interact in a question-and-answer session with about 120 students from area high schools

who will participate in a Leadership Day sponsored by the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership. The program, now in its third year, brings students from about 10 high schools in the region for a day of leadership training.

In order to allow as many students and community members as possible to hear Wiesel speak, tickets to the public lecture on Nov. 17 are \$10. The lecture is at 8 p.m. in the F.M. Kirby Center for the Performing Arts.

For more information, please contact the Wilkes University Special Events Office at (570) 408-4306 or 4330.

Lawrence Reed of the Foundation for Free Enterprise to Deliver Kirby Lecture

The Foundation for Economic Education is one of the oldest and most respected economics institutes in the United States. Its president, Lawrence Reed, will deliver the Allan P. Kirby Lecture in Free Enterprise and Entrepreneurship on Oct. 8, 2009. He will speak at 7:30 p.m. in the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts. The Kirby Lecture kicks off Homecoming Weekend activities at Wilkes.

The foundation, based in Irvington, N.Y., promotes and researches free-market, classic liberal, and libertarian ideas. The foundation publishes the journal *The Freeman*, for which Reed writes the column "Ideas and Consequences." In 1998, he was elected chairman of the foundation's board of trustees and re-elected chairman in 1999 and 2000.

Before assuming this role, Reed served as president of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy for its first two decades and remains president emeritus of the center. Under his leadership, the Mackinac Center emerged as the largest of over 40 state-based free-market think tanks in America.

As a freelance journalist, Reed's interests in political and economic affairs have taken him to 69 countries on six continents since 1985. From firsthand experience, he has reported on hyperinflation in South America, voodoo in Haiti, black markets behind the Iron Curtain, reforms and repression in China and Cambodia, recent developments in Eastern Europe, and civil war inside Nicaragua and Mozambique.

Reed holds a bachelor's degree in economics from Grove City College and a master's degree in history from Slippery Rock University, both in Pennsylvania.



Lawrence Reed of the Foundation for Free Enterprise will deliver the Kirby Lecture on Oct. 8.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVES NEXT PHASE OF LAW SCHOOL PLANNING INITIATIVE

Wilkes University's Board of Trustees approved the proposal for a new law school on June 5, setting the stage for the next phase of planning for the professional school. The board's action clears the way for the administration to develop a business plan to secure the necessary financial resources, identify a suitable building for the new school and seek final board approval. The proposal was approved contingent on the University being able to raise the necessary funds without taxing the university's other schools, programs or priorities.

Tim Gilmour, Wilkes president, said he hopes to seat the inaugural class of 60 full-time students and 25 part-time students in 2011. "Creating a law school for northeastern Pennsylvania is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that will have a significant impact on Wilkes University and the surrounding communities by increasing graduate-level educational opportunities, creating jobs, and speeding the region's economic recovery," says Gilmour.

The new law school curriculum will incorporate Wilkes' emphasis on building close relationships between students and mentors. It will also stimulate the region's economy by creating new jobs and bringing hundreds of students to downtown Wilkes-Barre and will supply talented lawyers to lead the region's law firms, businesses and government entities.

Initial work on the project began in 2004 with discussions that led to the formation of a preliminary feasibility committee. In May 2008, Loren D. Prescott Jr. was appointed dean of the Wilkes Law School Planning Initiative (proposed).

For more information about the law school initiative, contact Prescott at law@wilkes.edu or visit www.law.wilkes.edu.



Wilkes pharmacy students Kevin Brittain, left, and his brother, Alex, work at Triangle Pharmacy, in Mountain Top, Pa., their hometown. PHOTO BY VICKI MAYK

Family Legacies Mark First Decade of Wilkes School of Pharmacy

At Triangle Pharmacy in Mountain Top, Pa., customers know what to expect: personal service, a friendly staff—and, for the last decade, one of the Brittain brothers working behind the counter.

Jeff Brittain, Pharm.D. '05, and his brothers Kevin, Pharm.D. candidate class of 2010, and Alex, Pharm.D. candidate class of 2012, have all worked at the pharmacy in their hometown. And all three have gone on to study pharmacy at Wilkes.



Jeff Brittain, Pharm.D. '05 and wife Kristy (Hulings) Brittain, Pharm.D. '05 are part of the Brittain family legacy at Wilkes. PHOTO COURTESY JEFF BRITTAIN

As the School of Pharmacy prepares to celebrate its 10th anniversary, marking a decade since graduating the first class, legacy families already abound in the professional school. According to Bernard Graham, dean of the Nesbitt College of Pharmacy and Nursing, about 25 pairs of siblings have graduated or enrolled in the professional program.

“Almost 10 percent of our graduates are related to each other, not counting marriages,” Graham states. The statistic is surprising for a program that accepts only 70 students annually.

The Brittains are among three legacy families in the pharmacy program with a special distinction: three siblings in the same family

attended the Wilkes School of Pharmacy. Two other families have had three siblings attend Wilkes School of Pharmacy. The Breznak family includes Valarie, Pharm.D. '08; Daniel, Pharm.D. candidate class of 2010; and Christina, Pharm.D. candidate class of 2013. The Graver family includes Kristen (Graver) Rudelitch, Pharm.D. '03; Kimberly Graver, Pharm.D. '07; and David Graver, Pharm.D. candidate class of 2011.

In the case of the Brittain brothers, the Wilkes connection extends to their father, attorney Robert R. Brittain Jr. '70, and Jeff's wife, Kristy (Hulings) Brittain, Pharm.D. '05.

Jeff says he chose the career after working at Triangle Pharmacy. “I liked the job, saw the relationship that the owners had with their customers and thought I'd give it a whirl,” he says.

Kevin followed in his brother's footsteps working there and soon found himself choosing the same career path. “Seeing the impact that pharmacists can have on patient care convinced me,” he says.

Their younger brother Alex says he “looked at pharmacy schools all over the east coast,” but found the best choice was close to home at Wilkes. “I like that the classes are not large. You can get to know people and your professors on a more

personal level,” Alex says, echoing a sentiment voiced by his siblings.

After graduating from Wilkes, Jeff served three years as a captain in the U.S. Air Force. He now works as a clinical pharmacist at Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, S.C. His wife, Kristy, is teaching at the university. He says attending Wilkes—a relatively new School of Pharmacy—had advantages. “Everything was current and based on the latest practice in the field.”

“Almost 10 PERCENT of our graduates are RELATED to each other, not counting marriages.”

— Bernard Graham, dean of the Nesbitt College of Pharmacy and Nursing

Attend the Pharmacy Reunion during Homecoming Weekend, Oct. 9-11. See page 19 for details!



A Visit From The Colonel

In the spirit of TV shows like “Candid Camera” and MTV’s “Punk’d,” Wilkes University surprised high school seniors accepted to Wilkes with an unexpected visit from the University’s Colonel mascot.

As the May 1 College Decision Day approached, Wilkes reached out to undecided students by showing up at after-school jobs, the local gym, and even during class. The students’ everyday routines were filled with the Colonel’s unique antics as students were recognized for their positive accomplishments such as merit scholarship earnings and their acceptance to Wilkes.

At Valley View High School in Archbald, Pa., the Colonel entered fourth-period calculus with music and a bull horn to present merit scholarship earnings. The Colonel also made stops at Gerrie’s Fitness Center in Conyngham, Pa., Fino’s Pharmacy in Dallas, Pa., and Holy Redeemer High

School in Wilkes-Barre, congratulating students in unique and fun ways while providing them with a glimpse into the Wilkes University community.

“When selecting a college, students want to feel like they are more than just a number,” says Jack Chielli, executive director of marketing communications at Wilkes. “Approaching undecided seniors in this way allows Wilkes to not only reach out to these particular students, but to also let their friends, classmates and co-workers see the type of attention that Wilkes offers. It’s the type of interaction you simply can’t provide at an open house or a campus tour.”



Left: Dallas Senior High School senior Mary Ketchner gets a visit from The Colonel.

Below: The Colonel works out with Ryan Rinehimer, a senior at Hazleton Area High School, at Gerrie’s Fitness Center in Conyngham, Pa.

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