What It Means to “Be Colonel”

The university launched an advertising campaign last fall in support of our admissions efforts that asks “What does it mean to Be Colonel?” The answer to this question is at the heart of the undergraduate experience at Wilkes. To “Be Colonel” means going the extra mile, showing strength of character, being an innovator, mentoring and much more. I urge you to read more about the campaign in the On Campus section and to visit www.BeColonel.com, where you can watch videos about students and faculty who personify what it means to “Be Colonel.”

The alumni featured in this issue of Wilkes magazine truly reflect what it means to “Be Colonel” in their lives and in their careers. Drew Landmesser ’77, director of production for the San Francisco Opera, displays passion and innovation in his work. Whether bringing an opera to a baseball park or introducing new technology in the opera house, Drew’s contributions to the arts make him a Colonel we are pleased to call our own.

Bonnee Breese ’93, pictured on the cover, makes her mark in another field of endeavor—secondary education—but she too clearly knows what it means to “Be Colonel.” In her work as an English teacher at Overbrook High School in Philadelphia, she mentors her students to set high standards. A poster that dominates her classroom states her expectations in bright red letters: “College is a given.” This fall, one of her students followed in her footsteps to become a member of Wilkes’ freshman class.

Sometimes being Colonel means showing strength of character when we support a loved one who needs help meeting everyday challenges. The Joseph family, the centerpiece of our feature about autism, boasts three Wilkes alumni who have helped their brother, David, make his way in the world. The feature offers an overview of the challenges faced when a family member is diagnosed with autism.

In this issue of Wilkes magazine, we continue to inform, entertain and educate—while helping you to keep up with the achievements of former professors and classmates. We try to accomplish those things with good writing, outstanding design and creativity. I’m pleased to say we’ve been rewarded for our efforts: Wilkes magazine has earned a prestigious Gold Award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) for excellence in magazine publishing.

Dr. Tim Gilmour
Wilkes University President
FEATURES

8 Operatic Odyssey
Drew Landmesser ’77 is production director for the country’s second largest opera company

12 Class Act
Bonnie Breese ’93 earns teaching honors—and a White House visit

16 Starfires Glow Again
The beat goes on for Wilkes alumni playing in the Starfires

18 Puzzling Prognosis
The increasing incidence of autism poses challenges for families

DEPARTMENTS

2 On Campus
6 Athletics
20 Alumni News
22 Class Notes

Have a story idea to share?
Contact us at wilkesmagazine@wilkes.edu or Wilkes Magazine, 84 W. South St., Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766.

Bonne Breese ’93 and her students at Philadelphia’s Overbrook High School share a joy of learning that leads to college education. PHOTO BY DOUGLAS BENEDICT PHOTOGRAPHY LLC