Letter from the Editor

Traveling Freckles

Jaimi Luckett

On our alumni Facebook page, Kate, our resident alumni FB admin recently asked folks to describe items on their bucket list. A few days later there was also a post asking people what the title of their life would be, if it were a novel. Traveling Freckles would be my title. Now I don't want to see that in the Kindle bookstore before I'm ready, because I know you all think it's such a fabulous book title!

For reasons that only my closest friends get to know, before I have a publisher (I'm a tease, I know) this title describes the experiences that have shaped my life and the ambitions that I have for the future. Each chapter in the novel of our lives has the potential to be defining. It can shape the next chapter, much like those choose your own story books, I used to love as a kid. Many of the posts included ambitions of finishing degrees, traveling, watching loved ones cross the graduation stage, and excerpts from different career and life experiences that have brought our students to where they

Featured Communities

Prior Learning Assessment
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Milestones

Submit Your Milestone Today

Class of 2009

Curtis Williams

(Bachelor’s in Criminal Justice) has started playing as a
As you think about the next chapter of your life, it could mean a different career path or new celebrations. As we embark on the summer, we will be hosting a virtual career fair May 15-17 that will allow students and alumni to engage in conversation with a variety of employers. If you are searching for a new chapter to embark on, this could be a spring board to the start of a great read! For those who have closed this chapter on their recent educational venture or are about to close it, we will be celebrating with them at Commencement 2012 in the National Harbor. Whatever chapter you are in at this moment, I hope it is one you will be able to look back on and be proud of.

As always, best of luck in your studies this semester and keep up the great work!

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**Class of 2011**

**Bradley Edwards**

(Bachelor’s in Legal Studies) from Plaquemine, Louisiana, is celebrating his graduation and enrollment in the master’s in legal studies program [...]
Get Your School Gear at the New Fan Shop

We are pleased to announce the grand opening of the new AMU Fan Shop! Based on feedback from many of our students and alumni to have more school-spirit merchandise available, this greatly expanded store includes apparel and merchandise for the whole family—even the four-legged members! From dog collars and polo shirts to workout apparel and desk chairs, there's something for everyone. To check out the new store, visit www.amu.skorfanshop.com.

The AMU Fan Shop is not operated directly by APUS. It is operated by SKOR Sports. Below is additional information to help make your shopping experience a good one:

- **Customer Service**: SKOR's normal business hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST. If you have questions about your order, email csr@skorsports.com or call toll-free at 888-451-3905. You should receive feedback within 48 hours.

- **International/Orders**: Customers placing and shipping orders outside the U.S. and Canada should call the customer service number (888-451-3905) and place their order over the phone. Currently, international shipping is unavailable via online ordering.


The original campus store still exists and you can access both stores by visiting www.apus.edu/shop. If you have any questions or want to provide feedback, please email us at marketing@apus.edu. Happy shopping! We hope that you enjoy the new items as much as we do.

Contributed by Amanda Venkatesan

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Meet You on The Quad!

Are you ready to CONNECT and NETWORK with fellow community members? As we hinted during our last edition we have been cooking up a new student and alumni community to help keep you involved and engaged! Join us on The Quad, your new single sign on community that is accessed from the comfort of your campus! So, what exactly is The Quad? The Quad is your hub for university engagement, involvement, communication, and networking. While we plan to continue launching new involvement initiatives within this platform, check out a few of the many things you can do on The Quad today!

Online Directory
Otherwise known as the heart of the system, once you have created your profile within The Quad, you will be able to search for fellow students and alumni via general and advanced search fields in order to send private e-mails or “notes” to one another. Searches will allow you to view blogs, photos, and profiles of fellow members.

Mentoring and Networking
The Quad will be the NEW home for our Global Mentor Network! You will be able to take part in mentoring groups that are based on programs and interests as well as reach out to one another to offer or receive 1:1 mentoring assistance through the online directory.

Recognized Student and Alumni Organizations
Recognized organizations to include honor societies, professional organizations, and clubs will have a private group for each organization to convene, chat, and connect with fellow members. Each group page will include real time chat, a whiteboard, calendar of events; poll options, a map of where fellow members are located, and Facebook connect capabilities.

Interest Groups
General interest pages will be developed around a region, interest, hobby, etc. and will provide you with opportunities to engage in real time chat, whiteboard notes, calendar of events, poll options, a map of where fellow members are located, and Facebook connect capabilities.

Integration of Social Media
Your profile page integrates with social media, the Facebook connect option will allow you to push your activity to your Facebook newsfeed.

Polls
From the silly to the serious, polls will be established to further engage you in the community. Are you excited yet? Run on over and join us on The Quad! Here are your directions for getting connected!
Earning Credit without Taking the Course? Who Knew!

APUS recognizes that not all learning happens in a traditional classroom setting. Have you considered your prior learning to earn credit for what you already know? A recent PLA student commented that he had been considering returning to school for quite a while, but it was not until he discovered that he could get credit for his prior learning that he made the commitment. He earned 21 credits via portfolio and is on target for a summer 2012 graduation. To date, students have been awarded 156 credits via portfolio at APUS. Consider this scenario as just one of many examples of how you could earn credit toward your degree via a PLA portfolio.

Megan knew she had prior learning. She also knew that juggling her family and college work was quite the daunting task! Could she do this? When would she have time? What about the tuition? A family of eight is expensive! She has six children ages nine to one, she homeschools her oldest children, and she teaches Sunday school when her hectic schedule allows. Clearly there had to be some learning there that she could apply toward her concentration requirements! Homeschooling elementary aged children had to count for something, right?

Then she thought about the courses that would be required for a degree in child and family development. While thinking about her degree plan she started reminiscing about her job in Ohio at an afterschool program with inner city children and their parents. She had so much fun managing the program each day. She was responsible for everything from staffing, to administrative tasks, to helping the children with their homework each afternoon, and organizing their activities. She also worked on communication methods between the children and their parents and taught the parents effective skills for parenting.

Back to reality, as her children are running all over the house, she realizes that she has to get her degree. She wants this for peace of mind and to set a good example for her children, but she also needs to save time and expense and she really wants to focus on learning new things, not material she already knows. So, Megan takes the first step and emails pla@apus.edu and makes an appointment to speak with a member of the PLA team over the phone, during nap times... of course. After speaking with an advisor, she applies and is accepted to the PLA program.

Her first portfolio will be for CHFD 331- Parenting. She will use her learning from her job at the afterschool program in Ohio. She also found she could do portfolios for other courses in her concentration and core requirements such as CHFD 215-Intro to Child and Family Development, CHFD 210- Childhood Educational Development and CHFD 308-Infant and Child Development. And when she last spoke with her advisor, she realized she could do a portfolio for her electives. She once was the owner of a cleaning business. She started the business from scratch and eventually sold it to another family. She realized that BUSN 316- Entrepreneurship may be an option for her as well. “WOW, she thought, I really can apply what already know. This will be a very rewarding way to complete my degree. And since my first portfolio evaluation is included in my tuition for the PLA course and all subsequent portfolios are $250, each I know my husband, Doug will be happy with the tuition savings!”

For more information please email pla@apus.edu or find us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/PriorLearningAssessment.

Contributed by Elizabeth Jackson
Five Hired at Virtual Career Fair: Next VCF May 15-17, 2012

The university held its fourth Virtual Career Fair from February 28 – March 1, 2012. The event presented a unique opportunity for jobseekers to interact with more than 90 recruiters from companies like Hewlett Packard, Verizon, AT&T, L-3, SAIC, Goodyear, NSA, IRS, and the Department of the Treasury. The virtual career fair site utilized instant chat functionality to facilitate communication between jobseekers and employers. Jobseekers were able to search available jobs and submit their resumes online, while employers updated their profiles to share presentations, handouts, and streaming media about their companies. So far, five APUS students and alumni have been hired as a result of this event and as interviews continue we expect this number to increase.

The next Virtual Career Fair will take place May 15-17, 2012, including information sessions from CSX Railroad, CACI, and Hewlett Packard. Many of the employers that participated in this most recent event are expected to make a return appearance. To participate in the Virtual Career Fair make sure you register for NACElink and upload your resume at http://www.apus.edu/nacelinkjobs. If you have questions about this event or your NACElink account, please contact nacelink@apus.edu.

Contributed by Grace Williamson
Congratulations to the 2012 Alumni Award Recipients!

Our alumni awards program was started in 2011 and we currently have four alumni awards we accept applications yearly to include, the Distinguished Graduate Award, the Alumni University Service Award, the Alumni Community Service Award, and the Alumni Education Award. We only grant these awards if we receive qualified candidates who meet the selection criteria and this year the competition was steep! Congratulations to this year’s recipients: Thomas Alexander, Bill Tubbs, and Frances Arias.

The 2012 Distinguished Graduate Award recipient is Thomas Alexander.
This award recognizes an exceptional graduate who has set themselves apart by making significant contributions to our nation and/or their community. This individual also shows a strong commitment to supporting a lifetime of military or public service. Thomas earned his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the University of Colorado in 1953 and then spent 20 years serving in the Air Force. In August 1998, he completed his Master of Arts in Military Studies and since then has written eight books that have earned him numerous accolades.

The 2012 Alumni Community Service Award recipient is Bill Tubbs.
This award recognizes exceptional alumni who have gone above and beyond normal service for their community, or to society as a whole. Bill has certainly proven his commitment to community service as a six year member of his Community Planning Advisory Council for his county, through his volunteer roles with the California State Military Reserve and the California Veterans Honors Program, and through his charity work with the St. Andrews Society and the San Francisco Bay Area Queen’s Club. Mr. Tubbs received his Master of Arts in Military History in August 2011.

The 2012 Alumni University Service Award Recipient is Frances Arias.
This award recognizes an alumnus who has shown outstanding service to the university and Frances is a worthy recipient. During her enrollment with the university, she was an active participant in our Sigma Iota Rho student organization and upon graduation has continued her service to the university by becoming an active member of our University Ambassador program and serving on the Alumni Advisory Board. Frances received her Master of Arts in Military Studies in February 2012.

The alumni awards program is open to all alumni and we are currently accepting applications for our 2013 awards. You can also nominate deserving alumni by submitting the nomination form on our website. If you have questions or would like more information, please visit our alumni website or contact us at alumni@apus.edu. We hope to read about your accomplishments soon!

Thank you to all the alumni who submitted award applications this year. Please join us in congratulating our 2012 recipients!

Contributed by April Airhart
The Golden Eagles are Going Green

Spring is here and a new burst of color is permeating all areas of the campus—Green! It’s not the green leaves and grass that we’re talking about, its environmental sustainability. Recently there have been some exciting developments in line with the university’s long term commitment to environmentalism: a new sustainability Facebook page, grand opening of the new solar array, and our Think Global, Act Local campaign!

The new Facebook page has launched for sustainability efforts, which is a great place to find news, updates, and commentary about all of the university’s corporate efforts to develop and launch green initiatives. One of the recent posts was about the ribbon cutting ceremony for the grand opening of the Charles Town campus’ new solar array—the largest solar array in all of West Virginia! Another post captures the fun of “Jeans and Green Day” with some great photos of campus staff members celebrating Earth Day by sporting jeans with green tops to benefit the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. Look up these posts, and “like” this great new page today!

Would you like to get in on going green? Now through the end of May we are encouraging you to “Think Global, Act Local” by taking small steps in your life to make a big environmental impact. Wherever you are, whatever you are doing, there are small ways to make a difference:

- Clean Up Your Corner! We are asking you to literally clean up a little area of the environment near you. Spend one hour picking up trash, recycling, and/or using sustainable products to improve the area around you. Share the cleanup pictures and story on your favorite university Facebook or LinkedIn page, and stay tuned in to see what the rest of the university is doing to support the campaign!
- Make the Pick 5 Pledge! Fill out the EPA’s “Pick 5 Pledge” form and commit to do five things to help the environment. Again, please share your pledge with everyone on Facebook and LinkedIn!

Want to be featured in this newsletter? Write a 500 words or less story about your “extraordinary environmentalism.” The student or alumni who can demonstrate their extraordinary commitment to environmentalism in the most creative and riveting way will have their story published in the next issue of the newsletter! Send your story to studentaffairs@apus.edu by June 1!

Contributed by Kate Anderson

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Prepare for the College Experience with Online Tools

Whether you’re a prospective, new, or experienced student, there’s an arsenal of supplemental online tools that could help you get better organized and enhance your online experience. Here are a few that are currently available:

**TimeTracker (to-do-list with a clock):** This simple tool lets users know when they’re spending too much time on one item, and it prompts the user to reallocate wasted time to other productive efforts.

**Comapping (mind mapping):** Students can use this software to manage and share information, take notes, and improve their overall planning and organization.

**Dropbox (virtual file storage unit):** Similar to Google Docs, this online service is free and can be accessed from anywhere—a mobile phone, smartphone, laptop, desktop or any computer away from home. Documents are mobile, because they’re stored privately on the Internet.

**Zotero (bibliography tool):** This Firefox extension helps students track their sources while developing research papers. The tool aids students in accurately preparing bibliographies by collecting research citations and making them easily searchable. Sources can be added to many file formats, including Open Office and MS Word.

For more online learning tips and advice, be sure to visit [www.onlinelearningtips.com](http://www.onlinelearningtips.com).

Contributed by J. Mason

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University News Articles

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Sending Love from a Distance

If you live far from your parents, you’ve no doubt encountered how difficult it can be to truly thank them on Mother’s Day and Father’s Day. Sure, most women love a nice bouquet of flowers, but isn’t it time we look beyond the obvious and find some new and creative alternatives to gift giving? Check out our list of options for great gift ideas to say thank you to those special people in your life!

- **Name a Star using the International Star Registry**: Starting at $54.00, your star will forever be housed in the registry and they will even send you the exact coordinates so your loved one can see it for themselves!
- **Send a Fruit Bouquet**: Do you have a health conscious parent? Or even one who loves a delicious chocolate covered strawberry? You can pick from a wonderful selection of fruit bouquets and get same delivery, too!
- **Photo Keepsakes**: A photo is worth a thousand words! There are numerous ways to design your own personal blanket, coffee mug, or apron and this is sure to please parents and grandparents alike! Just google photo keepsakes.
- **NASCAR Racing Experience**: If you’ve got a parent with a real need for speed then look no further! For as low as $129.00 your loved one can take the ride of a lifetime!
- **Spa Treatments**: Send your parent off for a day of relaxation. It can be a perfect way to thank them for all they do! Spa Finder can help you create a memorable gift certificate that can be mailed, printed, or emailed the same day.
- If money’s tight and you just want to send a personal gift, consider grabbing your video camera and creating your own personally recorded message of love. Your parents will not only love it, but will appreciate that you took the time to create something memorable that will last for years to come!

For all of our students and alumni that are parents, we hope you each have wonderful Mother's and Father's Days. Even if you DO get a bouquet of flowers from your loved ones, remember, it's always the thought that counts!

Contributed by Tracee Figueiredo

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University Hosts Ribbon-Cutting for West Virginia’s Largest Solar Array

On April 23, APUS President and CEO Dr. Wallace E. Boston, joined by West Virginia Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito and local government and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) officials, presided over the formal ribbon-cutting marking the completion of the largest solar array in the state of West Virginia. The array, installed by Berkeley Springs-based MTV Solar, includes more than 1,600 solar panels on an innovative canopy structure in the parking lot behind the new APUS Financial Center, also scheduled for completion later this year.

The state-of-the-art installation includes American-made solar panels and 15 charging stations, which will allow employees and visitors to re-charge their electric and hybrid vehicles. Several such vehicles were on display to demonstrate the process, as guests were able to observe first-hand the charging receptacle as it accumulated solar energy to power the stations. The new array was constructed on a portion of what was once an old rail yard, a so-called “brownfield” site adjacent to the APUS Academic Center, which was built and opened on a similar site in November 2010. Such EPA-classified sites are typically abandoned or underused industrial and commercial facilities available for reuse.

The new array will provide approximately half of the energy requirements of the Center, or enough electricity to power:

- 30 average-sized homes, or 480,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually
- More than 1.9 million miles, equal to 120 commuters driving 15,000 miles per year

In addition to the electricity generated, there are many other benefits from installing solar panel carports such as sheltered parking and more efficient space utilization, and keeping asphalt cooler, thereby eliminating the “heat island” effect. Solar carports also help protect the asphalt from the elements, prolonging its life. To see a time-lapse view of the array’s construction, visit http://www.mtvsolar.com/videos.php.

“Integral to the APUS mission is a commitment to expanding access to affordable online higher education in a manner that supports local communities and respects the environment,” added Dr. Boston. “We’re truly excited to be part of this milestone in setting a high standard for other universities and local businesses to emulate.”

Contributed by Brian Muys

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**Inaugural Colloquium Makes History in West Virginia**

What better way to understand and appreciate local history than to bring together noted scholars, educators, and artists to discuss it? On March 10, APUS hosted its first-ever colloquium entitled, "The History, Identity, and Heritage of West Virginia's Eastern Panhandle," in Charles Town. Organized by APUS Archivist Bradley Wiles, the multi-disciplinary program featured a variety of local and national experts and was moderated by Professor of History Jeffery B. Cook, who is completing a book about former West Virginia Governor Aretas Brooks Fleming.

Following opening remarks by Dr. Fred Stielow, Vice President Dean of Libraries & Course Materials, on the origins of history and what it means to APUS, discussion topics ranged from the Civil War and West Virginia statehood to the use of geospatial technology in researching area history.

Nearly 70 people attended the event, many from neighboring states and representing libraries, archives, museums, historical societies, universities, businesses, advocacy groups, and government agencies. The presentations were followed by a screening of filmmaker Midge Flinn Yost's documentary, "Storer College: A Legacy of Light and Learning" at the Charles Town Old Opera House. The independent film chronicles the story of the historically black Storer College from its founding in Harpers Ferry in 1867, as a school to educate newly freed slaves, until its closure in 1955.

Colloquium panelists and attendees commended APUS for providing a venue for the study of the West Virginia Eastern Panhandle's rich history, and many noted that they would like to see the Colloquium become an annual event. "This enthusiastic response is further confirmation of our commitment to local history and heritage preservation, and lays a firm foundation for other potential programs in the future," said Wiles.

Contributed by Tiffany Young

Photo by: Bryan Clark, Spirit of Jefferson

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When Summer is in Full Swing: Three Tips to Staying Focused

Unaffected by winter malaise, a cheeriness hung in the Chicago air this past February, a month usually reserved for the stamping out of the latent hope for warmer days—a month in which a dull grayness encompasses the city and its residents (a la 28 Days Later). Unfortunately, I am already finding difficult the task of bottling the optimism with which I am filled about this summer, already excited about the Chicago Air Show and Independence Day fireworks at Navy Pier. Let’s face it; each year summer steals a small bit of our focus, as we begin to arrange our schedules, perhaps unconsciously, around one important criterion: “fun.”

Once Memorial Day hits, our dress code begins to reflect the attitude synonymous with summer, instilled in the catch-phrase and mantra, “hang loose.” For students, many of which are already loaded with familial and professional commitments, the summer—cookouts, vacations, weekends at the pool—can be a foil, hindering coursework, and frustrating concentration. Because of this, I humbly offer up a few tips, which help me each year to retain my focus once summer gets into full swing (and all of which point to an important maxim: we mustn’t sacrifice our focus to have fun).

1. **Keep to a schedule.** Oftentimes I find myself acting insensibly during the summer, opting to go have a picnic or to the beach with friends, when, in fact, I should be cleaning my home, or staying in front of my burgeoning workload. Life is all about opportunity costs—the perceived benefits one gains from choosing one thing over another. By keeping to a schedule, you will be able to make time for fun without having to sacrifice your personal or professional commitments.

2. **Don’t swim against the current.** Understand that fun is an important ingredient in maintaining a healthy life and reducing stress. Rather than swimming against the current, move with it. Although seemingly prudent, resisting fun’s charm can be counterproductive to maintaining focus (leading you to contemplate the fun you could be having).

3. **Make time for fun.** Go on vacation! Let loose! The summer provides a great opportunity for us to recharge our batteries, something necessary to ensure we have enough focus to ride out the rest of the year.

Contributed by Ryan Harding
Volunteering Goes Virtual

With so many students living on all corners of the world, Student and Alumni Affairs would like to introduce two new virtual service opportunities available for all students, alumni, faculty, and staff! You can take part in virtually mentoring a child to become a better reader, writer, and thinker through In2Books; or if you have an interest in small businesses, you can find a mentor or mentor others to help those small businesses succeed.

1. Mentor a Child without Leaving Home: The ePals Foundation is currently accepting registrations for virtual volunteers from around the country to participate in an exciting program called In2Books - a curriculum-based eMentoring learning experience for high-needs students that has helped participating students’ raise their standardized reading test scores and become better readers, writers, and thinkers since 1998. Volunteers are screened before they are assigned a student and approved volunteers will be contacted this summer for their assignments! Sign up to volunteer today!

2. Mentoring for Small Business Owners: We have also partnered with Micromentor, a free web-based mentoring program for small businesses. In three easy steps you can sign up to be a mentor or find a mentor to help your small business succeed. You will be notified via email when you have been matched with someone and connections can be made via email, over the phone, or even in person! Become a mentor or find your mentor today!

Ways Our Community is Currently Volunteering!

Currently, several of our students and alumni are volunteering as cyber guides and virtual judges for eCYBERMISSION, a free, web-based science, technology, engineering, and mathematics competition for students in grades six through nine. Teams can compete for state, regional, and national awards while working to solve problems in their community. As the competition concludes we look forward to feedback from our volunteers regarding this initiative! Our next eCYBERMISSION opportunity will begin in December 2012 and you can visit our service opportunities website for updates on this project.

Another virtual opportunity, offered year round, is our Thanking Those Who Serve initiative. Students, alumni, faculty, and staff are encouraged to send a postcard to thank military personnel serving overseas and others deployed in support of disaster relief. Send your personal message today!

We hope to continue to find new ways to serve on both a physical and virtual level. If you have any suggestions or questions, please contact us at studentaffairs@apus.edu. You can also visit our website for more information on our current and past service initiatives.

Contributed by Tracee Figueiredo

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Can't Attend Commencement? Send Us a Video!

If you are a member of the Class of 2012 and unable to attend the ceremony, we would like to offer you the opportunity to send congratulations to your fellow graduates via video! Videos will be played during the ceremonies June 15, 2012.

If you are interested in participating, here’s how it works:

- Email us at commencement@apus.edu with your name, address, and student ID.
- We send you a flip camera to record your video message.
- Record a 1-2 minute message directed to your fellow graduates. Be sure to include your name, degree program, current location, congratulations, words of encouragement, etc.
- Email the video file back to us at commencement@apus.edu on or before June 1, 2012.
- You keep the flip camera as our gift to you!
- Only members of the Class of 2012 are eligible to participate.

Space is limited! The first 30 graduates to respond will get flip cams and the chance to have their video message played during the two Class of 2012 ceremonies! Remember to be creative! We want original and exciting videos! Need an example? View a past video here.

If your video is chosen you will be asked to sign a waiver so we can play your video at the ceremony. Congratulations on your accomplishments! If you have questions, please contact us at commencement@apus.edu.

Contributed by April Airhart
Student Spotlight on Victoria Whitecotton: Belly Dancing, Leadership, and Community Service

After only two years of becoming an official U.S. citizen, emigrating from England, current undergraduate student, Victoria Whitecotton has by far surpassed the standard of success. In addition to working toward a second bachelor's degree from American Military University (AMU) and serving as the Golden Key Chapter President, Victoria has been a competitive tribal belly dancer for six years. Victoria has danced all over the world, including New Mexico, where she performed her favorite piece for the inaugural International Science Fiction Film Festival in 2011. "It involved Steampunk, light sabers, and was heavily influenced costume-wise by the film "Cowboys and Aliens."", Whitecotton stated.

Victoria is no stranger to hard work and dedication, as she serves as President for AMU’s chapter of Golden Key International Honour Society, one of the most prestigious societies in the university. Victoria is very excited for their upcoming service event, in which they will be supporting the Global Youth Service Day program. As Victoria stated, "As our chapter is online it is incredibly difficult to get all our members together in person, so we rely on individuals taking the initiative in their local communities on behalf of the chapter. For Global Youth Service Day, I am working with the Girl Scouts of the Texas-Oklahoma Plains April 21 to clean up Lake Meredith in Fritch, TX. Other Golden Key members are invited to join me if they're nearby, or set up their own event!"

As if pursuing a second bachelor's degree, holding a role of President, and organizing various events weren't enough, Victoria recently became a member of Saber and Scroll History Club and Sigma Iota Rho, Gamma Omega. Outside of her AMU accomplishments, Victoria is an active member of the Amarillo Steampunk Society, and is currently assisting with organizing a convention in Amarillo during the summer.

Contributed by Kristen Pearson

Alumni Spotlight on Jennifer Cindrich: The Heart of an Environmentalist

Vultures, snakes, and hogs! Oh my! These make up a story about a unique alum! We're talking about Jennifer Cindrich (Class of '09), environmentalist, wildlife rehabilitator, naturalist hunter, talented taxidermy artist, and compassionate role model for us all.

From an early age Jennifer had a unique connection with the natural world. Brought up in a small farming town in northern Indiana "where gardening and tapping maple trees in the winter were norms for us," Jennifer learned about nature, business, and the benefits of a strong work ethic under the guidance of her father.

In the early 1990's Jennifer used her strong work ethic by starting a company named Critter Ridder where she trapped, relocated, and rehabilitated wildlife. Through the success of this venture Jennifer became interested in furthering her knowledge in the field. She sold Critter Ridder, enrolled at AMU, and after a great deal of hard work and intense dedication she graduated with her
Bachelors in Environmental Studies with honors. Shortly thereafter Jennifer was hired by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as a Park Ranger and Parks Water Plant Operator in the 6,000 acre Pedernales Falls State Park.

When her father, the man who instilled all those noble qualities that lead to her life successes, became ill with stomach cancer, Jennifer did not hesitate to leave her Park Ranger position to spend time with him. After his passing, Jennifer rekindled her engrained entrepreneurial spirit and founded Pedernales Taxidermy and Wildlife Studio in Johnson City, TX, which is smack dab in the middle of the infamously rugged Texas hill country.

Jennifer, when not using her amazing artistic abilities in her studio, utilizes her AMU education by managing the wild hog population, conducting deer and turkey censuses, controlling wayward rattlesnakes, and helping to maintain the natural habitat on the 750 acre Loco Grande Ranch next door. She is a naturalist hunter on the ranch and on her own land, taking only what is good for the health and balance of the ecosystem.

Jennifer does all of this out of an unwavering commitment to the natural world because, "Our future depends on the environment that we live in, this knowledge should never be taken for granted or forgotten, but spread to everyone. For me, that is my soul purpose in life - to teach what I have learned, to bring back that which has been lost, and to create and give - no matter the personal cost."

Contributed by Kate Anderson

Faculty Spotlight on Buddy Maertens: A Look into Inspirational Photography

If you are searching for "the absolute ultimate person" to have as a friend on Facebook look no further than faculty member and Military Outreach Education Coordinator, Buddy Maertens. What sets him apart from the crowd on social networking is not only his unique proclivity to "like" your posts, make hilarious witty comments, and eschew a warm friendliness that makes you feel like old friends though you've never actually met, it is also his breathtakingly beautiful photography and inspirational quotes that he shares with his friends on a daily basis.

Growing up Buddy was a true "Army brat." Through the years his strong military family has moved as many as 30 times exposing Buddy to different and diverse places all across the globe. His family moved so much when he was growing up that he can make the unique claim to have attended four completely different high schools over the course of four years. To some this might sound like a life disadvantage, however, it was this constant moving that instilled within Buddy a deep appreciation of the immense world filled with magnificent views begging to be captured and shared.

Buddy’s interest in photography was the eventuality of all that moving and traveling. He has become adept at capturing the natural world in riveting and awe inspiring compositions that pay close attention to light, shutter speed, perspective, and frame. Though able to capture numerous subjects at a professional photographic level, Buddy prefers the majestic beauty of the U.S. National Parks.

As you look through a collection of his work, you will see and feel the soul of the park landscape and the otherworldly timelessness of the moment he captured there.
Buddy retired from the Army after serving 28 years as an Adjutant General Officer and has been with our university for over 11 years. He is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College, and Army War College, holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and History from North Georgia College, and an MBA from Western New England College. He is a full time faculty member teaching the COLL 100 Foundations for Online Learning Course. Moreover, he is a Military Outreach Education Coordinator for South Carolina and Eastern Georgia serving all the military installations in that region. He is also currently the President of the Council of Military Education – South Carolina (COMESC) for 2012.

His other hobbies besides photography include geology (fossils and minerals), meteorology, traveling, running and walking, collecting military insignia and coke bottles! He presently resides in Columbia, South Carolina with his wife, Nancy. Together they have two children and anxiously expect their first grandchild any day now! He and Nancy will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary this August.

Contributed by Kate Anderson

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Milestones

Every edition we invite students, alumni, faculty and staff to share their most recent milestones with us, so that we may share their news with you! We hope that you celebrate with them in these moments, as much as we have. If you would like us to celebrate a milestone in your life, please use our online form and submit your milestone today.

Class of 2007

Erica Mosley-Ferebee (Bachelor’s in Business Administration) recently started her doctorate program in organizational leadership at Argosy University.

Kevin Sheehy (Master’s in Military Studies) was promoted to Colonel, Armor, Deputy Brigade Commander, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, in the Oregon Army National Guard.

Curtis Williams (Bachelor’s in Criminal Justice) has started playing as a defensive lineman for The Tampa Bay Sentinels. The team is part of the National Public Safety Football League and is comprised of members of law enforcement, corrections, probation/parole officers, and fire fighters. Proceeds from their games are donated to The MacDonald Training Center, a non-profit vocational center for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Sentinels have won their first three games of the season!

Class of 2009

Troy Boyle (Bachelor’s in Legal Studies) was re-elected as the President of the National Atheist Party for a four-year term. The National Atheist Party seeks to politically represent U.S. atheists and all who share the goal of a secular government.

Class of 2010

Leo Barron (Graduate Certificate in Intelligence Analysis) is proud to announce the publication of his book "No Silent Night: The Christmas Battle for Bastogne", published by New American Library, a subsidiary of Penguin Books. Pre-order your copy today!

Fabian Consbruck (Bachelor’s in Psychology) has been accepted to the Doctorate of Psychology program at the Florida Institute of Technology. His doctoral concentration is in forensic psychology.

Class of 2011

Jeremy Abbott (Master’s in Homeland Security) was nominated and elected as the vice-chairman of the Autauga/Prattville Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in Autauga County, Alabama.

Roderick Fernandez (Master’s in Transportation and Logistics Management with honors) has been promoted to the rank of Senior Master Sergeant in the United States Air Force.
Roger Singh (Master’s in History with honors) presented a lecture at Northern Virginia Community College about his experience as an immigrant entitled “From Guyana to Wall Street.” His presentation was a great hit, and plans have been made for Roger to return as a speaker in the near future!

Robert Stuart (Master’s in Emergency and Disaster Management) returned from Afghanistan last November where he was the theater fire chief for the Defense Contract Management Agency. He is now proud to announce his new position as fire chief at Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal. Robert was promoted to Chief Master Sergeant after his first testing, and credits his master’s degree from AMU as a key factor in this achievement.

Class of 2012

Constance Anderson-Sweatt (Bachelor’s in Intelligence Studies) has started her own business, Midwest Consulting Services. While her goal before starting her education at AMU was to find employment with an established company or agency, it soon changed due to the well-rounded education she experienced. She says, “It is safe for me to say that not only did my degree give me the boost I needed, but it set me up to start and run my own business successfully.”

Ashley Cave (Master’s in Public Administration) has obtained her first government position in software testing & analysis working for FEMA at the new Winchester, VA location. She previously worked for a government contractor in a similar field, but credits her new GS-level job to her recently acquired AMU master’s degree.

Bradley Edwards (Bachelor’s in Legal Studies) from Plaquemine, Louisiana, is celebrating his graduation and enrollment in the master’s in legal studies program. He picked AMU, “due to the fact that this school offered far more than I could get at any online school. I learned a great deal, not only in my degree plan, but outside also. There are unlimited learning potentials with this school!”

Wayne Hellams (Bachelor’s in Legal Studies) is celebrating finishing his four year contract with the Army. Wayne joined the Army without college credits and has been working hard while on active duty to obtain his degree.

Karl Jackson (Master’s in Intelligence Studies) received an invitation to the Presidential Inaugural Conference in Washington, D.C., from January 19 - 23, 2013. The five-day conference planned around the inauguration features keynote addresses from political luminaries, interactive activities with political experts, historians, and analysts as well as a private gala celebration.

Vicki Kessel (Bachelor’s in Homeland Security) is doing amazing volunteer work while taking full time classes at AMU—five days a week she teaches English to students in Haiti via Skype! She has shared many of the lessons from AMU with her students in Haiti. Email Vicki at vickisvision@gmail.com if you would like to learn more about being a volunteer teacher via Skype. She exclaims, “You don’t have to be a teacher to teach, we’ll provide the lesson content, you provide the enthusiasm!”

Joseph Taylor (Bachelor’s in Homeland Security) recently participated in the Texas Emergency Management Conference in San Antonio, Texas, then took the Defense Support to Civilian Authorities (DSCA) LNO course in Austin. Joseph has worked with local first responders and emergency management teams on every hurricane and tropical storm that’s hit the Texas-Louisiana gulf coast since the year 2000.

Current Students

Eric Geary (Master’s in Environmental Policy and Management) will be promoted to 1st Lieutenant as a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Officer for the Washington State Army National Guard (U.S. Army) in May 2012. In addition, he has been made line commander for the Homeland Response Force (HRF) CBRN Enhance Response Force Package (CERF-P) Ambulatory Decontamination in response to state
side decontamination emergencies related to CBRN incidents. On the civilian side, he is busy conducting self-research and development of a business plan related to an alternative method of producing E85 (15% gasoline, 85% ethanol) fuel in the State of Washington.

**Leslie Holmes (Bachelor’s in Hospitality Management)** along with her husband Adam welcomed their first child, a boy named Landon Leo, into the world January 21.

**Matthew Krahn (Master’s in Military History)** an acting Arizona Capitol Museum Guild Historian presented, in conjunction with the Arizona Rough Riders’ Association, a symposium on the history of the First Volunteer Cavalry and their flag during the Spanish American War at the Arizona Capitol Museum in January. Read his riveting presentation.

**James Norcross (Bachelor’s in Criminal Justice)** was promoted to the rank of Police Sergeant on January 29. The promotion required James to submit a research paper, a 200-question written exam, and be interviewed by a board on the topics of leadership and management principles, human resource management, and labor laws. James happily reports, "My studies at AMU, particularly the courses for the Criminal Justice concentration in Organizational Law Enforcement Leadership, allowed me to answer all of the questions presented to me."

**Michael Schindler (Bachelor’s in Intelligence Studies)** was selected as Civilian Professional of the Year 2011 by Air Combat Command’s Intelligence Directorate. He went on to be selected as Air Combat Command’s winner in the same category.

**Faculty and Staff**


**Bob Barrett (Professor in Business)** has had several speaking engagements in Southeast Asia. On March 12, he chaired the International Education session and presented "Creating Online Content with Real World Application by Designing and Implementing Online Practicums for Virtual and Physical Environments,” at the 2012 Bangkok International Academic Conference in Bangkok, Thailand; on March 6, he presented "Creating Virtual Portfolios to Develop and Design New Career Pathways to Lifelong Learning and Education,” at the Tomorrow People Organization’s Seventh Annual Education and Development Conference in Bangkok, Thailand; and on February 2, he presented "Creating Virtual Learning Applications in Human Resource Management Courses: Developing Organizational Training Programs with the ISD Approach,” at the 2012 2nd Annual International Conference on Applied Social Science in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

**Amy Burkman (Associate Professor in Education)** published "Professional Development and the Elementary Novice Teacher,” in the Spring 2012 issue of the *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*.

**Thomas Clapper (Instructor in Arts and Humanities)** recently authored two articles "Retention In Online Courses: Surviving The First Week" and "Metacognition: Are Your Learners Really Thinking About the Content?" on The EvoLLLution, a grassroots online newspaper focused on higher education.

**Jan Flegle (Instructor in Arts and Humanities)**, representing AMU Radio, came in 3rd in her age bracket during the Jay Cullen "Share the Road” 5K in Cumming, Georgia on April 21. The annual race honors the memory of a church member of First Baptist Church who was killed while riding his bike. Jan finished with over 7500 steps!

**Gwendolyn Hall (Senior Vice President, Academic Operations Officer)** has been selected as a member of the Institute for Educational Management Class of 2012 at Harvard University. This is a two week long intensive “total immersion” experience that allows participants the opportunity to assess their leadership skills, renew their commitment to higher education, and develop tangible strategies for long-term
institutional success.

Yvonne Ho (Instructor in Arts and Humanities) published “Teaching with Technology: Ten Fun Ways to Use YouTube video in an Online Literature Class,” on Faculty Focus.

Jacques Koko (Instructor in Security and Global Studies) will release a new book, Determinants of Success in UN Peacekeeping Operations, in June. The book is available for pre-order on Amazon.

Michael Miner (Assistant Professor in Science and Technology) presented a lecture entitled, “Black Women in American Culture and History” to an audience of about 400 U.S. service members and support staff at the Norfolk Naval Base’s Annual African American History Month Celebration in February.

Charles Russo (Professor in Public Service and Health) presented two workshops at the March 2012 Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Annual Conference in New York City: “Combating Traumatic Stress: The Role of CISM Teams” and “Online Criminal Justice Training Policy and Procedures Standards Stress Management Integration.” In addition, Charles moderated the “Critical Incident Stress Management Integration Academy to Administrators” roundtable.


Tatiana Sehring (Senior Strategic Relationships Manager) recently secured a relationship with the Academy Board of Certified Environmental Professionals, the lead organization certifying environmental professionals and the premiere certification for all members of the National Association of Environmental Professionals. Graduate students may now use their CEP certification as possible transfer credit if they meet the requirements specified here.

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