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Convocation
Thursday, March 5, 2009
3:00 PM
McCray Hall

Sunny Pierce

Sunny Pierce played Gorilla Women's Basketball at PSU from 1977-1979. While at PSU, she was named 1st Team All CSIC Conference (77-78, 78-79), the CSIC Conference Scoring leader and Team MVP. She holds the record for most points scored in a single game (39 pts.), and was inducted into the Pittsburg State Athletic Hall of Fame in 1994.

Currently Pierce teaches Physical Education at Girard High School, where she has taught the last 29 years. For 26 of those years, she also served as the Varsity Girls Basketball Coach. Pierce has been Head Varsity Coach in 4 other sports at Girard. (Volleyball, Softball, Track & Field, and Cross-Country).

Pierce resides in Girard, Kan. with her husband John, a former Pitt State football player and presently, an assistant football coach at PSU, and their children Timothy, Cody, and Randi. Daughter, Nikki Webster, a former Gorilla Women's Basketball Letterman and her husband Andrew reside in Pittsburg.

PSU Alma Mater

On the plains of Southeast Kansas,
'Neath an ever cloudless sky,
Far away from surging ocean,
And the storm-bird's plaintive cry;
With her prairies rolling Westward,
Where the buffalo once were great,
With her ensign proudly waiving,
Stands our own Pittsburg State.

Refrain

Let us greet the Gold and Crimson
With a strong and cordial cheer,
Let our hearts be ever loyal
To our Alma Mater dear.

Let her worthy sons and daughters
For "Our Pitt State" proudly stand,
Shielding zealously her honor
In one brave, unbroken band;
Let them hold aloft her banner
With a stout and steady arm;
Rallying her children 'round it,
From the city, town and farm.

Refrain

Let us greet the Gold and Crimson
With a strong and cordial cheer,
Let our hearts be ever loyal
To our Alma Mater dear.

Convocation Program

Welcome & Introductions

Eddie Penner, President, Student Government Association

The Story of Apple Day

Randy Roberts

Commemoration Day Address

Sunny Pierce

Musical Selection by PSU Chorale

Directed by Dr. Susan Marchant

The Long and Winding Road

John Lennon and Paul McCartney

arr. John Langford

Seth Harley, conductor

Presentation of the 2009 Dr. Ralf J. Thomas

Distinguished Service Awards

Dr. Tom Bryant, President, Pittsburg State University

Becky Yocham, PSU Alumni Association President

Presentation of the 2009 Dr. Robert K. Ratzlaff

Outstanding Faculty Awards

Samantha Heady, Academic Affairs, Student Government Association

Golden Gorilla Awards Presentation

Dr. Tom Bryant, President, Pittsburg State University

Emily Walters, Past Golden Gorilla Recipient

Announcement of Apple Dessert Contest Winners

Eddie Penner, President, Student Government Association

Centennial Scholarships Presentation

Skannnd Tyagi, PSU Homecoming King

Patricia Condiff, PSU Homecoming Queen

Alma Mater

Apple Distribution

Faculty Association

Centennial Tower Bell Ringing by Award Winners

PSU Chorale

Susan Marchant, Director

Briana Baker
Jessica Baker
Stephen Baldwin
A.J. Beu
Molly Burke
Jayson Canton
Richard Cook
Derek Dixon
Kevin Dixon
Charlotte Evans
Mariah Feist
Karrie Fenech
Tracy Fogliasso
Seth Harley
Richard Harper
Andrew Hayse

Timothy Helms
Sonya Lawson
Sean Parks
Brittany Pittman
Aaron Powell
Tiffany Raftopoulos
Misty Ristau
Allison Rodriguez
Tyler Smith
Kristen Taylor
Daniel Troop
William Vance
Brandon Wade
Rebekah Wells
Hana Withington

Golden Gorilla Student Leadership Award Winners

Karen Allison
Samantha Arnold
Briana Baker
Ashley Birk
Andrea Cole
Emily Conrad
Sarah Dees
Maria Ferreira
Sonya Goetschius
Venessa Lee
Jessica Moore

Matt Osterthun
Eddie Penner
Lindsay Quall
Jazmin Ramirez
Marissa Ritter
Melissa Skelly
Paresa Tafreshi
Landis Tompkins
Skannnd Tyagi
Roxanne Wallace
Nathan Woodward

Dr. Robert K. Ratzlaff Outstanding Faculty Award Winners

Dr. Christine Fogliasso

University Professor, Department of Management & Marketing

"I am grateful for my friendship with Dr. Fogliasso and feel so lucky to have been close to her; a talented professor, a caring advisor, and a wonderful person."

--Ashley Elnicki, nominator

Dr. Mark Johnson

Professor, Department of Technology Management

"Dr. Johnson not only enlightens the students here, but brightens their lives by inspiring them to do more and be greater."

--Andrea Cole, nominator

Dr. Mark Peterson

Assistant Professor, Department of Social Sciences

"Mark Peterson is a valuable professor in the Political Science Department that makes an impact on every student that he teaches; his humor and sincerity make you never want to miss a class."

--Megan Villamaria, on behalf of Alpha Sigma Alpha, nominator

Dr. Ralf J. Thomas Distinguished Service Award Winners

Jim Bishop

Jim Bishop is a real estate broker and owner of Jim Bishop and Associates, a Pittsburg franchise of the national Coldwell Banker real estate firm.

Bishop was raised and attended high school in Parsons, Kan. He earned a BSBA in 1965 from PSU before heading into the Air Force, where he was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He went through pilot training and was assigned to a fighter squadron in Arizona before spending a year in Vietnam. After returning to the United States to serve with a New Mexico fighter squadron, he left the Air Force in 1970 and moved back to Pittsburg.

Bishop began selling real estate and in 1975 bought Crawford County Realty. Eight years later, he bought into the Coldwell Banker franchise, eventually leading his business to become one of the company's top franchisees in the country.

During his years in real estate, Bishop has served as president of the State Association of Realtors and as a director of the National Association of Realtors. He won the Kansas Realtor of the Year Award in 1997, and currently serves as president of the Pittsburg Board of Realtors. He has also served in various community organizations including the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, the YMCA, and the downtown revitalization committee.

At PSU, Bishop was co-chair of the fundraising campaign to build the Veterans Memorial; a volunteer with the Community Campaign; a PSU Foundation trustee and past-president; a lifetime member of the President's Society; and has established an endowed scholarship.

"The service I do for PSU is an opportunity for me to repay what the university has done for me," Bishop said.

His wife, Nancy (BGS '82) works as office manager for the Pittsburg orthodontics business owned by their daughter, Gina Pinamonti. Both Gina and their other daughter, Lisa Grosdidier, an accountant, are also PSU graduates.

Ivan Crossland, Jr.

Ivan Crossland, Jr., is CEO of Crossland Construction in Columbus, Kan., one of the largest construction firms in the Midwest.

Crossland, who grew up in Columbus, first attended PSU after graduating from high school in 1977. After one semester, he accepted a scholarship with the School of Architecture at the University of Kansas. But one year later, he returned to southeast Kansas, working for his father's new construction business. After working a few years, he began taking classes at PSU again, finishing his degree in construction engineering in 1984.

"Coming back to PSU after going to school somewhere else was like coming back to a really great experience with teachers who knew you and who cared," Crossland said. "You weren't just a number. Those people make you successful."

After working for Crossland as a job superintendent, he became president of the company in the early '90s. When his father passed in 2002, he became CEO.

Today, Crossland runs the company, which employs more than 800 people, with his five brothers. Married to Betty Lou Crossland (BBA '86), and father of Mattie May, 17, and Ivan, 14, Crossland has served as a PSU Alumni Association Board member, a Foundation Board trustee, and is a lifetime member of the President's Society. He serves on the College of Technology National Advisory Board, the PSU Construction Advisory Board Executive Committee, and with the Thomas Jefferson Independent Day School (in Joplin, Mo.) Board of Trustees. After graduating from PSU, he received the Outstanding Young Alumni Award.

"What you have to learn is that you can't take all your life, you have to give back," Crossland said. "You give back to your community and to your school because it's other people that get you to the places you go."

Acknowledgements

Joan Cleland
Crimson Club
Patricia Condif
Samantha Heady
JT Knoll
Dr. Susan Marchant
Cassie Mathes
Melissa McDonald
Cathy Pentola
Randy Roberts
Travis Smith

Eddie Penner
Student Activities Council
Student Government Association
Johnna Schremmer
Landis Tompkins
Skann Tyagi
Meghan Walsh
Emily Walters
Ed Wirthwein
Ron Womble

Apples are compliments of
Faculty Association and Marrone's.

Following the Convocation, Award
Recipients will proceed to the Centennial
Bell Tower to announce their achievements
by ringing the bell.

The Centennial Scholarships presented today are courtesy of the PSU
Foundation, Inc. and are made available through funds received during
PSU's Centennial celebration.

Any full-time undergraduate student enrolled at Pittsburg State University
during the Spring 2009 semester is eligible to participate. The recipient
must be present here today and must enroll as a full-time
undergraduate student in the Fall 2009 semester.