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Pittsburg State
Apple Day

Pittsburg State University
Apple Day Convocation

Thursday, March 3, 2016
3:00 PM
McCray Hall

Convocation Program

Welcome & Introductions

Kyle Hostetler, President, Student Government Association

Historical Presentation

Steve Cox

Curator of Special Collections, Archivist, and Associate Professor

Commemoration Day Address

Kendall Gammon

Chiefs Radio Network Field Reporter and Special Assistant to the President

Musical Selection by Members of the PSU Choirs

Directed by Dr. Susan Marchant

Scarborough Fair, arr. Yumiko Matsuoka

PSU Chorale

Presentation of the 2016 Dr. Ralf J. Thomas

Distinguished Service Awards

Dr. Steven A. Scott, President, Pittsburg State University

David Torbett, National President, PSU Alumni Association

Presentation of the 2016 Dr. Robert K. Ratzlaff

Outstanding Faculty Awards

Jackie Herring, Academic Affairs Director, Student Government Association

Golden Gorilla Awards Presentation

Dr. Steven A. Scott, President, Pittsburg State University

Announcement of Apple Dessert Contest Winners

Kyle Hostetler, President, Student Government Association

Centennial Scholarship Presentation

Ryan Schulteis, PSU Homecoming King

Ellie Stewart, PSU Homecoming Queen

Alma Mater

Apple Distribution

Unclassified Staff and Faculty Association

On Stage Photos and Centennial Bell Tower Ringing by Award Winners

The Story of Apple Day

On February 21, 1903, Governor William J. Bailey signed the bill creating the Kansas State Manual Training Normal School Auxiliary, the first name of what is today Pittsburg State University.

Classes began the following September in the city-owned Central School building at the northwest corner of Fifth and Walnut. Very soon the growing enrollment created a need for a larger facility. Senator Ebenezer F. Porter of Pittsburg led a successful fight for a building appropriation with the assistance of Principal Russell Station Russ, the faculty, and community leaders.

After the funding bill was passed, Clarence Price, then mayor of Pittsburg, was fined a barrel of apples for lobbying on the floor of the legislature. Senator Porter, it should be noted, graciously donated two boxes of cigars to the house for passing the bill.

Upon their triumphal return to Pittsburg, the story of the fine was told. In those days, students were disciplined for their absences. In the spirit of the celebration, Principal Russ and members of his faculty were fined a barrel of apples by the students because they had been gone to Topeka to help lobby. Thus, with the funding of the building we now call Russ Hall by the Kansas Legislature, the tradition of Apple Day was established in 1907.

Kendall Gammon

A Rose Hill, Kan., native, Kendall Gammon earned first-team NCAA Division II All-America honors as an offensive guard from "Football Gazette" as a senior in 1991, helping the Gorillas to a 13-1-1 record and the NCAA Division II National Championship. He earned first-team All-MIAA honors in each of his final three seasons (1989-91), helping the Gorillas capture MIAA titles in each season.

Following his collegiate career, Gammon was selected by the Pittsburgh Steelers in the 11th round of the 1992 NFL Draft. He enjoyed a 15-year NFL career as a long snapper with the Steelers (1992-95), New Orleans Saints (1996-99) and Kansas City Chiefs (2000-06). Gammon competed in Super Bowl XXX with the Steelers and was selected to the 2004 Pro Bowl.

Gammon returned to Pittsburg State in 2008 when he was named the development director for intercollegiate athletics. In 2015, he was named special assistant to the president.

In addition to his duties at PSU, Gammon also serves as the field reporter and pre-game host for the Kansas City Chief's radio broadcasts and is the author of two books: "Life's a Snap: Building on the Past to Improve Your Future," and "Game Plan: Leadership Lessons from the Best of the NFL."

Gammon and his wife, Leslie, have two sons, Blaise and Drake.

Dr. Ralf J. Thomas

Distinguished Service Award Winners

Shirley Palmer

Shirley Palmer (BS in Elementary Education 1965, MS in Elementary Education 1971, EdS 1979) has a long history of voluntary service and leadership for PSU. She has served in leadership roles on the Alumni Association Board, the PSU Foundation Board, the PSU Education Advisory Board, the Fort Scott Alumni Chapter and as a PSU Phonathon volunteer. As Alumni Association National President, Palmer traveled to nearly 100 percent of the Gorilla Gatherings across the U.S. and hosted every home football game in the Rua Press Box. Palmer developed a theme for her year as national president, "Ignite Your Passion for Pittsburg State," and designed lapel pins that she gave to outstanding members of each alumni chapter. Palmer, now retired, taught elementary school for 40 years, was named Kansas Teacher of the Year in 1982 and was inducted into the Kansas Teachers' Hall of Fame in 2002. Palmer served as the state representative from the 4th district for four years. Later, she served seven years on the Kansas Board of Regents, including one term as president. The Topeka Capital-Journal named Palmer one of seven Kansans of Distinction in 1993. Palmer continues to serve in her community as a 4-H club leader and as an Auxiliary Volunteer at Fort Scott Mercy Hospital.

Palmer and her husband, Ron, live on a farm near Fort Scott. They have two sons, Brian and Gary.

Monica H. Murnan

Monica H. Murnan (BS in Education 1987, MS in Special Services & Leadership Studies 1994). A native of Erie, Kan., Murnan was one of four children in her family to attend Pittsburg State University. Murnan has served two terms on the Alumni Association Board, with one of those years as president. As president, she represented the Alumni Association at a long list of Gorilla Gatherings and other functions both on campus and across the U.S. She has also provided important leadership to the College of Education through her service on the Education Advisory Board. Murnan began her professional career as a K-1 teacher in Wichita. She returned to Pittsburg to serve as the Executive Director of the Family Resource Center, where for 15 years, she worked with and mentored the many Pittsburg State students who worked for the FRC. Today, Murnan serves as the director of student support services at the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center, Greenbush. Murnan, who says her overriding goal is seeking equal access for all, whether it be in education, health care or mental health, continues to provide leadership in her community. She is in her third term on the Pittsburg City Commission, was a founding board member of the Community Health Center and has or does serve on the boards for Wesley House and the Pittsburg Public Library.

Murnan and her husband, Rob, who is also a PSU grad, have three daughters, Alexandria, Francesca and Gabrielle.

Dr. Robert K. Ratzlaff

Outstanding Faculty Award Winners

Clark Shaver
Associate Professor

"This man is solely responsible for everything I know about the field of electronics and was vital for my successful integration from the military. He reflects great credit upon himself, the EET Dept., and Pitt State. He owns an engineering firm and gives me great hope in owning a successful business."

- Seth Scott

Dr. John Thompson
Associate Professor

"Dr. Thompson goes above and beyond to make sure that his students do well not only inside of his class, but outside as well. He also uses a lot of his own personal resources to make sure students succeed. He has pushed me to succeed in my career field and in life. Dr. Thompson really took the time to make sure that I understood the material."

- Anonymous nominator

Dr. Xiaolu Wu
Associate Professor

"She always tries her hardest to encourage her students to achieve success. After having class with Dr. Wu, she has heightened my interest in microbiology and virology. She has made me develop a love for subjects I never thought I would have an interest in. She has positively impacted not only my college career, but my entire life as well."

- Malory White

Golden Gorilla

Student Leadership Award Winners

Samantha Bradshaw
Cassie Caswell
Trista Dugan
Ariel Everett
Lynzee Flores
TJ Graber
Heather Hartong
Allison Hayes
Michael Haynes
Kyle Hostetler
Andrea Hucke
Emma Huskey
Kyra Jones
Morgan Lynnes
Rylie Miller
Anthony Nelson
Viet Nguyen
Talara Sage Renfro
Haley Reynolds
Katie M. Russell
Ryan Schulteis
Emily Seib
D'Juan Thomas
Jordan Wiedemann
Kaylee Wiggins

The Golden Gorilla Award was established in 1997 to honor students who have made exemplary contributions in community service, academic excellence and campus involvement.

Congratulations to this year's nominees and recipients!

Members of the PSU Choirs

Dr. Susan Marchant, Director

Katherine Arbuckle
Lance Behning
Jesse Black
Courtney Blankenship
Kyler Brown
Magali Chase
Alexander Chesney
Justin Crossman
Josh Donaldson
Jocelyn Donegan
Justin Eichenberger
Rachel Evans
Macy Gerken
Whitley Groth
Mara Knight
Tyler Kuder
Jung Hee Lee

David McTeer
Anthony Nelson
Kara O'Keefe
Kathryn Parke
Raleigh Rothlander
Cooper Schmiedeler
Megan Shumny
Nicholas Skiles
Wyatt Smith
Austin Stapleton
Kendra Switzer
William Vance
Michaela Wagner
Brock Willard
Laura Wray
Madison Youngberg King

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.

Acknowledgments

Fawn Baker
Jon Bartlow
Shari Brogan
Crimson Club
Steve Cox
Jaime Dalton
Gorilla Activities Board
TJ Graber
Jackie Herring
Kyle Hostetler
Chris Kelly
JT Knoll
Brittany Long

Dr. Susan Marchant
Mary Mercer
Rylie Miller
Cathy Pentola
Eva Sager
Ryan Schulteis
Meagan Smejdir
Ellie Stewart
Student Government Association
D’Juan Thomas
Ron Womble

Apples are compliments of
Unclassified Staff and Faculty Association and Marrone’s.

Following Convocation all of today’s award
winners should convene on the stage for group photos.
Winners are also invited to ring the
bell following pictures.

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 PSU
during the 2016 Spring semester is eligible to
participate. The recipient must be present and must
enroll as a full-time undergraduate student in the
2016-17 academic year.

