

California University
JOURNAL

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 8 MAY 4, 2015

READ THE JOURNAL ONLINE: www.calu.edu/news/the-journal

Cable Industry Leader to Address Graduates

Thomas M. Rutledge '77, president and chief executive officer of Charter Communications Inc., will address graduates this week at Cal U's 180th Commencement.



Thomas Rutledge

Interim University President Geraldine M. Jones will confer degrees upon more than 900 undergraduates and 325 graduate students, although not all will attend the ceremonies. Students in the School of Graduate Studies and Research will receive their master's degrees at 7 p.m. May 8. Candidates will be vested in their academic hoods during the ceremony.

Undergraduates in the College of Education and Human Services, the College of Liberal Arts and the Eberly College of Science and Technology will receive their diplomas at 10 a.m. May 9.

Rutledge will address students at both ceremonies, which will be held in the Convocation Center. The doors open at 5 p.m. May 8 and at 8 a.m. May 9. Graduates' families and friends — Continued on page 4



Mallory Matsich, a senior graphic design major, talks to Strike a Spark judge Dr. Welfeng Chen about her project focusing on photographer Duane Michaels.

'Strike a Spark' Conference Showcases Research

The research, scholarship and creative activity of Cal U students and faculty were on display when the Cal U Center for Undergraduate Research presented its first Strike a Spark conference, "Innovation: From Peer to Public," April 14 in the Convocation Center.

More than 400 students and 60 faculty members stopped by during the daylong event to watch presentations and inspect posters prepared by faculty, students or faculty-student teams.

In an address that opened the conference, interim University President Geraldine M. Jones outlined the benefits of student research, a "high-impact practice" with positive effects.

"Our campus becomes more vibrant, our collective outlook more positive, when students and teachers are actively involved in intellectual and artistic exploration," the President said.

"You students may not realize it, but your participation in scholarly and creative activities has the power to shape your experience here at Cal U. If the educational research is correct, you may realize that your problem-solving skills have grown a little sharper. You're thinking a bit more critically and creatively. And you're communicating more clearly than when you first arrived on campus."

Conference organizer Dr. Gregg Gould, director of the Center for Undergraduate Research, noted that all three undergraduate colleges and the School of Graduate Studies took part in the event.

"I was absolutely thrilled by the level of participation, and I think there was a great deal of energy throughout the Convocation Center during the entire day," he said.

"Certainly students have their coursework and requirements for their major, but one thing that distinguishes — Continued on page 3

Three Named Spring Women of the Year



Enjoying a moment at the March 31 Women's History Month Banquet with Interim President Geraldine M. Jones are (from left) Shylyn Prentice, student recipient; Pearl Mitchell, staff recipient; and Dr. Vanessa MacKinnon, faculty recipient.

The President's Commission for the Status of Women has honored three members of the Cal U community with the spring 2015 Woman of the Year Award.

Dr. Vanessa MacKinnon, assistant chair in the Department of Exercise Science and Sport Studies and internship coordinator for the professional golf management program; Pearl Mitchell, chair secretary and undergraduate and graduate administrative assistant in the Department of Childhood Education; and Shylyn Prentice, who will graduate in May with a bachelor's degree in social science, received their awards March 31 at the 2015 Celebration of Women dinner.

Much of MacKinnon's research is focused on promoting women's participation in sports, particularly golf. She has published journal articles on the

topic and given presentations at international conferences.

During the past year MacKinnon conducted golf and life skills program for girls through a grant she secured from the Women's Sports Foundation. The program brought 25 girls to campus and enabled PGM students to gain experience teaching new golfers.

She was selected as one of 15 mentors for the WomenWin Foundation's Young Women in Sport Leadership Camp in Amsterdam. The camp allows mentors to share leadership, business and life skills.

"I feel very fortunate to combine my passion for golf, sports and physical activity with my passion for educating and empowering girls and women," MacKinnon said.

"Women are still underrepresented in — Continued on page 2



Walk a Mile in Her Shoes

Nearly 150 men, many of them wearing high-heeled shoes, paraded across campus on April 23 as Cal U participated for the sixth consecutive year in the international program known as Walk a Mile in Her Shoes. "By walking today you are showing you honor and value the women of Cal U and women everywhere," said Stephanie Gerber, a graduate assistant at the End Violence Center on campus. The event was sponsored by the End V center to raise awareness about sexual violence and men's role in preventing it.

Scholars Told to Expect Change

After praising Cal U's Presidential Scholars, two distinguished alumni reminded them of the challenges and uncertainties that lie ahead for even the most capable students.

Beth Bershok '84 addressed the University's top scholars at the 2015 Honors Convocation, held April 11 at the Convocation Center. Her comments followed remarks by interim University President Geraldine M. Jones.

After earning her bachelor's degree in speech communications: radio and television at Cal U, Bershok enjoyed a 26-year career in radio. Then changes within the industry prompted her to shift gears and begin a career in professional services marketing and practice development.

Bershok began her talk by speculating that many of the scholars — especially those who will be graduating soon — might assume they have their career trajectory mapped out.

"If you think the plan you have lined up in front of you is going to work out exactly ... that's very unlikely," she said. "That is why my message for you today is: Expect change and be ready for it."

Bershok was co-host and producer of the "Gary & Beth in the Morning" show on Lite Rock 92.9 FM from 1990-2008. The Pittsburgh Radio and Television Club honored her as the Best Pittsburgh On-Air Personality in 2005.

Both the Telecommunications Act of 1996 lifted the cap on radio ownership, opening the door to large media conglomerates. And the growth of digital technology dramatically changed the radio industry, she explained.

"Those changes reduced jobs and decision-making. Think about whatever industry you are involved or interested in, and fast-forward 10 years. I can guarantee you, the



Speaker Beth Bershok '84 addressed top scholars at the 2015 Honors Convocation.

industry won't look the same. In 20 years it may be unrecognizable."

After leaving radio, Bershok was hired as the marketing director for a boutique law firm. Currently she is regional marketing director for Herbein + Company Inc., a certified public accounting firm with more than 175 employees and seven offices across Pennsylvania.

Bershok encouraged the Presidential Scholars to follow four steps as they seek success in their own careers: assess strengths and weaknesses, be flexible, build a network, and continue to learn.

"You must be honest with yourselves, but these are things you can do your entire career to help you prepare for change — or even be the change-maker."

Before Bershok's address, President Jones congratulated the nearly 400 undergraduate and graduate students who were honored at the convocation.

In addition to meeting other requirements, undergraduate Presidential Scholars must maintain a grade-point average of 3.25 or higher,

and graduate students must have a GPA of 3.75 or higher.

"Your hard work, your diligence and your work ethic have led you to this special gathering," President Jones said. "I encourage all of our students here today, our best and brightest, to welcome the roadblocks and setbacks, as well as the satisfying moments of success. Experience them all, good and bad, and you will grow in maturity, judgment and wisdom."

The President began her remarks by congratulating the three Presidential Distinguished Merit Award recipients who were recognized at the start of the convocation — faculty members Dr. Sarah Meiss, honored for excellence in teaching; Dr. Kurt Kearcher, recognized for service; and Dr. Clarissa Conifer, honored for research. Each received a medalion and an award, plus a scholarship to be awarded in his or her area of study.

As Bershok concluded her speech, she quoted the animated rodent Remy, from the 2007 film *Ratatouille*: "The only thing predictable about life is its unpredictability."

Three are Women of the Year

— Continued from page 1

the leadership ranks of sports, particularly golf, and I am hoping to contribute to changing this imbalance."

Mitchell believes that "a kind, encouraging word can uncover the treasure in someone," and she provides that encouragement to students and colleagues in numerous ways, including as a member of the President's Commission for the Status of Women and a board member for Cal U Women United.

An associate pastor and director of women's ministry at New Beginning Full Gospel Church in Uniontown, Pa., Mitchell also is a member of the Cal U Community Clergy.

The mother of four and grandmother of seven is drawing on her personal and professional experiences to write a semi-autobiographical book, which also will address larger issues regarding women and family.

"I hope women can find themselves in it," she said.

Prentice, a social science major scheduled to graduate May 9, has been active with the Young and Gifted Gospel Choir, the Black Student Union and the Women's Center. She also was a Community Assistant and orientation leader.

Prentice was instrumental in establishing Cal U Women United, a group that empowers women and discusses topics such as social justice, racism, feminism and self-esteem.

"I feel completely humbled that my peers noticed my efforts to make this campus a culturally open and diverse space for minorities and especially women," she said.

"What makes college special is that we finally get a chance to learn about other people's cultures and sets of beliefs. I wanted to be a part of helping people evolve into better critical thinkers and raise the conscious level of our campus."

Robots Clash in Convocation Center

A record 78 teams from 60 southwestern Pennsylvania high schools and career centers competed April 24-25 in the 2015 Southwestern Pennsylvania BotsIQ Finals at Cal U.

BotsIQ asks students to design and manufacture 15-pound robots that battle one-on-one in a mechanical fight for survival. Students also submit detailed engineering and project plans, interview with industry leaders and market their teams as they compete for an array of awards.

This is the 10th anniversary of BotsIQ in southwestern Pennsylvania and the third year that the "Smart Sport" has held its regional finals in the Convocation Center. More than 1,000 students and dozens of volunteers, industry partners and mentors were involved.

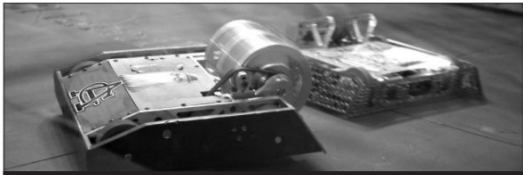
"We started this with the idea of getting young people interested in manufacturing and all of the academic disciplines of STEM," said Phyllis Miller, chair of the SWPA BotsIQ organizing committee. "We've accomplished that goal and are really excited about this competition's remarkable growth."

Cal U interim President Geraldine M. Jones welcomed the visiting students and families. "Like our University, BotsIQ is all about building skills that can lead to successful careers," she said. "Cal U is proud to play a part in bringing the BotsIQ experience to our region."

Hempfield Area High School's team Nexus won the Grand Champion award for the best overall performance in competition, documentation and team interviews. Plum Senior High School's team Knock Out was the definitive winner in the battles, ending the Championship Bout with a strike that disabled the robot from Bedford High.

California Area High School fielded one of the teams new to BotsIQ this year.

Cal U alumna Rob Ruddle '03, a technology



Cousin It Hella, a robot designed by students at Abbott Gallatin High School, battles the Murphy's Law robot, from South Fayette High School, at the Southwestern Pennsylvania BotsIQ Finals, which were held April 24-25 in the Convocation Center.

education teacher, said the high school started a robotics course three years ago. Now Ruddle shares BotsIQ advising duties with Matt Barber '07, while industry partner Rose Plastics assists with machining and donated some metal for the robot.

"It was challenging, but the students have shown an interest and we ran with it," Ruddle said. "This is an important experience that helps our students for many reasons, but perhaps most importantly they learn the value of doing extra work."

Team captain Bryce Hite helped to name the team's robot, Polish Hammer, after an effective wrestling move. He said he enjoys his role as the team's trouble-shooter.

"It's my favorite part — making sure every thing is working perfectly. We've been planning for months ... so this is a big deal."

The extensive documentation required of BotsIQ teams has piqued a career interest for junior Will Hartman, of Bedford High School.

"We tell our 'bot's story from the beginning in the

different sections of the binder we submit," Hartman said. "Working on this has given me a clear understanding of what's needed to become an electrical engineer."

Clairton High School sophomore Brandon Snowden helped to computer-design and then pilot his team's remote-controlled robot, called Sarge.

"You have to know when to turn the weapon on, when to turn it off, know where to go, have control of it and know how to drive it," Snowden explained. "You just have to stay focused."

KDKA-TV filmed the mechatronic mayhem for a 30-minute television show that aired May 2.

"This event showcases the students' incredibly skill and ingenuity," said U.S. Rep. Tim Murphy, of Pennsylvania's 18th District, in a videotaped address. "BotsIQ is a remarkable first step for our next STEM professionals who will lead us through the 21st century."

To see photos from the BotsIQ competition, visit Cal U's Flickr site, www.flickr.com/photos/calufspa.

Lavender Graduation Honors 4

Cal U recognized four students April 21 at its second annual Lavender Graduation.

The ceremony honored seniors Erin Reilly, who studied anthropology; Kyle Malinosky, a graphic design major with a theater minor; Nicole Shover, a graphic design major with a minor in women's studies; and Will E. Studer, who studied geology and environmental science. Each received a certificate and lavender cords that may be worn as a sign of community pride May 9 at Commencement.

Organized at Cal U by Lambda Bridges and the LGBTQA Program Office, Lavender Graduation recognizes the academic and personal achievements of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and ally students.

"This celebration is an important part of our University community," said Shetela Webb, coordinator of the Lambda Bridges LGBTQA Program Office.

Webb introduced Dr. Tim Susick, who spoke on behalf of the Office of Student Affairs, and thanked alumna Janice Zivic '64 for providing support for Lambda Bridges and the LGBTQA community at Cal U.

Student Shawn McCoy explained the history of Lavender Graduation and introduced the soon-to-be graduates. One and all, they emphasized the importance of finding a support system.

"LGBTQA organizations are important," Shover said. "It's important for youths to know they aren't alone ... so everyone can find their comfortable place."

Conference Showcases Research

— Continued from page 1

students when they go out looking for a job are the research projects and 'extras' they have done. Their experiences, successes — even failures! — and the way they've learned from their research projects are interesting things to talk about during an interview."

Senior Eric Robinson, who is completing dual degrees in graphic design and history, gave a presentation explaining the fine line between art and illustration. He worked on the critical analysis with Dr. Michael Slaven, of the Department of History and Political Science.

"Learning more about critical theory has helped me learn why things are the way they are," Robinson said. "The help was tremendous. I had so many faculty members backing me up that I feel it encouraged me to grow into my own. It has made me more confident in my own research."

Robinson also joined senior Malloy Matisich and four other students in creating a multi-piece poster presentation about the life and work of photographer Duane Michaels. The project stemmed from Dr. Cindy Persinger's course in Methods of Art History.

Matisich's poster and research compared the McKeesport-based photographer with contemporary and historic photographers.

"I had never done anything like this before, but this conference was an ideal place to display our work and talk about it," she said. "I want to work as a graphic designer, but I really like art history."

Junior Kerri Potter, an economics major, gave a presentation about her



Eric Robinson and Dr. Michael Slaven participate in a panel discussion about student-faculty collaborations during the Strike a Spark conference.

exploration of risk-taking and decision-making.

"Using gameplay allowed me to gain considerably more knowledge," she said. "For me, the project has confirmed my passion for research. I am certain now that I want to earn a Ph.D. in economics."

Dr. Paul Hettler, of the Department of Business and Economics, advised Potter on her project. He said student research helps professors break away from traditional thinking.

"I have always been impressed with the way students look at different topics. Fresh eyes produce fresh ideas. We have a responsibility to recognize that knowledge is way more than what's in books. This [research] helps to show students where the knowledge comes from."

Sophomore Jared Sofranko, a business administration major with an accounting and finance concentration,

delved into an entirely different discipline for his presentation, "The Auteur in Society."

Expanding on a project originally conceived for Dr. Mark Aune's honors class in arts and humanities, Sofranko examined mirror image theory in films by directors such as Spike Lee and Martin Scorsese.

"This was the first time I had made this type of oral presentation, and I definitely have more confidence moving forward," he said. "This was something I needed to be more familiar with doing."

Acting provost Dr. Bruce Barnhart believes the inaugural Strike a Spark conference provided an effective way to showcase the accomplishments of Cal U's faculty and students.

"It's really important that we recognize and celebrate the wonderful teaching and learning that takes place here every day," he said.

Intern, Professor Work at Augusta

Professional golfer Jordan Spieth and Cal U senior Tim Mooney both enjoyed first-time experiences at the 2015 Masters Golf Tournament last month in Augusta, Ga.

Spieth finished the tournament with a green jacket and his first Masters title. Mooney, a professional golf management major, ended up with some great material for his resume. He worked more than 100 hours during "Masters Week" as Cal U's first intern at the prestigious Augusta National Golf Club.

Tournament week at Augusta was also a thrill for Justin Barroner, an associate professor and program director for Cal U's PGM program. He was one of 42 PGA Professionals from across the nation who were invited to work with The Masters' three full-time golf professionals.

Mooney began his internship at Augusta in January, working from 7 a.m. - 5 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays. He focused primarily on merchandising, completing tasks that ranged from unloading trucks and taking inventory to distributing products to the golf club's multiple shops and setting up displays.

Mooney's workload doubled during the tournament, but the Pittsburgh native embraced the opportunity.

"I loved every minute of it. It was really something to see everything come together that week. You work many hours, but with good people who



"I loved every minute of it. It was really something to see everything come together that week. You work many hours, but with good people who motivate you."

— Tim Mooney, Cal U's first professional golf management intern at the Augusta National Golf Club

motivate you." During Masters Week, Mooney served as the floor operations manager

in Augusta National's newest shop, South Village, where he was responsible for all the glassware, artwork, ties, belts, hats and yard signs available for sale to patrons.

He believes the experience will be helpful next month when he begins his full-time job as an assistant golf pro at the Inverness Club in Toledo, Ohio. The club has hosted two U.S. Open and PGA Championship tournaments.

Mooney focused strictly on merchandising when he interned at Inverness last summer. When he returns as a full-time employee, he also will repair clubs and help to run ladies and junior tournaments.

"It's definitely going to help me ... moving forward in my career. It's really going to pay off over the next few years," Mooney said about his internships and Masters experience. "It's been great."

During his 10-day stint at Augusta, Barroner was involved with member relations and club operations. Among other duties, he helped to run the national finals of the Drive, Chip and Put Tournament at Augusta National.

Barroner hopes that his Masters experience can open doors for Cal U's PGM program, which has had a 100 percent job placement rate since graduating its first class, in 2009.

"When it comes to building our internship program and connecting our students with these top employers, this

was a world-class opportunity," Barroner said, noting that he worked alongside golf pros from such prestigious venues as Oak Hill Country Club in Rochester, N.Y., Muirfield Village Golf Club in Dublin, Ohio, and Medinah Country Club in Medinah, Ill.

"One of several reasons I did this was to build a rapport with these golf professionals and great sites." Mooney's successful internship also may pave a path for future Cal U students.

"There's no doubt this is a big deal for us. The students in our program are on cloud nine about Tim's internship there," said Barroner. "It shows them what can happen by doing the right thing in the classroom and on an internship."

Both Mooney and Barroner are hoping for the opportunity to return to The Masters next year.

"It's a dream come true. I'm still pinching myself," Barroner said. Mooney was most impressed with the conduct of those who attended the tournament.

"Everyone respects the game. Cell phones and cameras aren't allowed, and you don't hear people yelling during a golfer's backswing. It's just a tremendous atmosphere."

"I definitely want to come back. Augusta is a top-notch facility, and the experience has been very positive from top to bottom."

Commissioning Set for ROTC Cadets

Just two days before they graduate, ROTC cadets Joseph Haas and Joshua Wolfe will become second lieutenants — Haas in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard and Wolfe in the U.S. Army.

Haas, a psychology major, and Wolfe, who studied criminal justice, will receive the insignia representing their new rank at a commissioning ceremony set for 4 p.m. May 7 in Steele Hall Mainstage Theatre.

Capt. Joseph M. Ladisic, a 13-year veteran of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, will address the cadets, their family members and friends.

He currently holds dual assignments as the Southwest Regional Officer strength manager for the Pennsylvania Army National Guard and the commander of Bravo Company 1st Battalion 110th Infantry, based in Waynesburg, Pa.

Ladisic has served overseas as a civil affairs project manager with the provincial reconstruction team in Kunar, Afghanistan.

He has earned a number of awards, including the Bronze Star Medal, Army Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster, Army Achievement Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, and Combat Action Badge.

The commissioning ceremony is free and open to the campus community. The public is welcome to attend.

For more information, contact Staff Sgt. Jesse A. Maund at 724-938-1679 or maund@calu.edu.

Cable Industry Leader to Address Graduates

— Continued from page 1

are welcome to attend.

Cal U's 180th Commencement recognizes students who completed their studies in January and May 2015.

About the speaker

Rutledge earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Cal U in 1977, the same year he began his career at American Television and Communications Corp., a predecessor company of Time Warner Cable. During his 37-year career in the cable industry, he also served as president of Time Warner Cable.

Rutledge was chief operating officer of Cablevision from 2004-2011. He joined Charter Communications, a leading broadband communications company and among the largest cable operators in the United States, in February 2012.

He serves on the board of directors of the National Cable and Telecommunications Association, where he was chairman from 2008-2010. He also is a member of the boards of CableLabs and C-SPAN.

In 2011, Rutledge received NCTA's

Vanguard Award for Distinguished

Leadership, the cable industry's highest honor. He was inducted into the Cable Hall of Fame in 2009 and the Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame in 2011.

Through the years Rutledge and his family have been generous supporters of scholarships for Cal U students, including the Rutledge Internship Award, which provides financial support so juniors and seniors can accept unpaid or low-paying internships outside the local area.

In 2008 he received the W.S. Jackman Award of Distinction from the Cal U Alumni Association. In recognition of their leadership and community service, Rutledge and his wife, Karen, received the 2010 Job Johnson Award from the Foundation for California University.

The couple lives in Greenwich, Conn. They have two grown children, Alisha and Tom.

Both Commencement ceremonies can be viewed live online at www.calu.edu. More information, including links to directions and parking information, is available at www.calu.edu/events/commencement.

The California Journal is published by California University of Pennsylvania, a member of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education.

Geraldine M. Jones
Interim University President

Dr. Bruce Barnhart
Acting Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs

Robert Thorn
Vice President for Administration and Finance

Dr. Nancy Pinardi
Interim Vice President for Student Affairs

Craig Butzine
Vice President for Marketing and University Relations

Christine Kindl
Editor

Bruce Wald
Wendy Mackall
Jeff Bender
Writers

Office of Communications and Public Relations 250 University Avenue California, PA 15419 724-938-4195 wald@calu.edu

INTEGRITY · CIVILITY · RESPONSIBILITY