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Alumnus to Address Graduates

Alumnus Thomas L. Bakaitus Jr. '83 will address graduate and undergraduate students at the University's 184th Commencement.

Master's degree candidates will receive their diplomas and be vested in their academic hoods at 7 p.m. May 12. Undergraduate Commencement will be held at 10 a.m. May 13. Both ceremonies will be held in the Convocation Center arena.

In all, more than 1,200 students are expected to graduate, including those who choose not to attend Commencement.

University President Geraldine M. Jones will confer the degrees and personally greet each graduate who walks across the stage. Graduates' families and friends are welcome to attend.

In keeping with Cal U's tradition of inviting distinguished alumni to address the graduates, Thomas L. Bakaitus Jr., Class of 1983, will speak at both ceremonies. He is a certified public accountant, partner and operating officer at Herbein + Company Inc., a CPA firm employing more than 180 people in eight offices across Pennsylvania.

A partner in the firm since 2001, Bakaitus is partner-in-charge of all aspects of Herbein's western Pennsylvania operations,



Thomas Bakaitus Jr.

managing the firm's Pittsburgh, Greensburg and Allison Park offices. He also serves as assistant secretary of Herbein's executive committee. His experience includes individual, partnership, corporate and start-up tax planning and preparation, as well as client representation before federal, state and local taxing authorities.

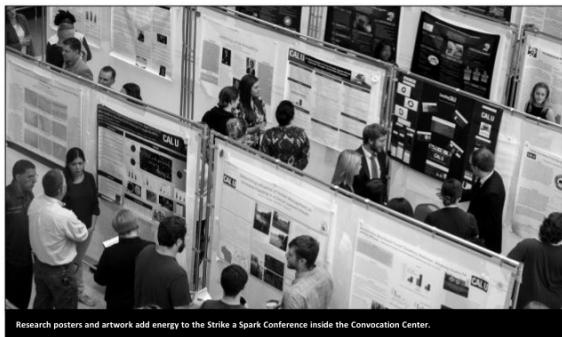
Bakaitus earned his bachelor's degree in administration and management at Cal U, where he was named the 2011 Alumnus of the Year by the College of Liberal Arts. He also holds a Master of Science in Taxation from Duquesne University.

Pittsburgh Magazine recognized him as a Five-Star Wealth Manager in Individual Tax six times between 2010 and 2017. The National Academy of Public Accounting Professionals selected him as one of the 2015 "Top 10 Public Accounting Professionals" in Pennsylvania.

A member and past president of the Allegheny Tax Society, Bakaitus serves on the board of directors for the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh and Penn Technical Institute. He also is a member of the advisory committees for several for-profit and nonprofit entities.

Bakaitus and his wife, Cal U alumna Beth Bershok '84, live in Pittsburgh.

Both graduation ceremonies can be viewed live online at www.calu.edu. For more information, visit www.calu.edu/events/commencement.



Research posters and artwork add energy to the Strike a Spark Conference inside the Convocation Center.

Event Spotlights Scholarship

Building on the momentum of its first two years, the third annual Strike a Spark conference took place on April 26 in the Convocation Center.

Presented by the Center for Undergraduate Research and the Faculty Professional Development Center, the event showcases the research, scholarship, creative activity and application of students and faculty.

This year's event was held on a Wednesday to enhance class participation, and more students gave senior thesis presentations. Research posters and artwork were moved to the Convocation Center lobby to add energy to the event.

"The planning committee gave a lot of thought to evolving this year's conference without losing the elements that have been successful," said Dr. Gregg Gould, director of the Center for Undergraduate Research.

"It's encouraging that more and more students and faculty are seeing this as a great place to have their hard work recognized."

Sophomore Michael McGarvey, an athletic training major and a Navy veteran, presented his study of "Alternative Treatments for Resistive Combat Post-Traumatic

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Student Media Bring Home Awards

The hosts of CUTV's "High School Roundup" weren't at the 77th National Intercollegiate Broadcasting Systems (IBS) Conference in New York when the show won the Best Sports Program award.

Instead, they were at East Stroudsburg University doing what they do best — televising sports.

"Obviously, you take a sense of pride when you receive awards, but really it's about our whole group," said sophomore Steven Ruffing, a communication studies major who hosts the weekly sports roundup with Anthony D'Agostino, Danny Beec and Matt Hagy.

"Getting involved with CUTV is one of the best decisions I ever made."

"High School Roundup" complements the CUTV High School Football Game of the Week, offering team standings, analysis and highlights from eight WPIAL conferences in the CUTV viewing area.

Fred Ryan '02, now a producer for Root Sports in Pittsburgh, began the show in 2000.

D'Agostino, Ruffing and Beec also helped Cal U to bring home the IBS Best Sports Play-by-Play award, for CUTV's broadcast of the Vulcan volleyball team's home win over Seton



CUTV won two awards, Best Sports Program and Best Sports Play-by-Play, at the National Intercollegiate Broadcasting Systems Conference.

Hill in November. Students Sarah St. Jacques, Sam Khune, Morgan Courtwright and Joseph Trently also had a hand in that production.

In addition, CUTV was a finalist in the Best Newscast category, and radio station WCAL was a finalist for Best Football Play-by-Play.

On the road

While classmates picked up their awards, the CUTV team was busy broadcasting Cal U women's basketball

as they played in the PSAC Championship's Final Four.

CUTV is the only school in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education that regularly broadcasts road games, airing football, men's and women's basketball, soccer and club hockey games live on YouTube or calvuicams.com.

In all, CUTV broadcast more than 70 sporting events during the athletic year.

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About 65 students and faculty members participated in an on-campus March for Science — a nonpolitical show of support for science education — on April 20.

Cal U Marches for Science

About 65 Cal U students and faculty members who believe that science matters made their voices public April 20 with a March for Science.

The peaceful, nonpolitical march started at Duda Hall and ended at the Convocation Center. It was held in conjunction with March for Science events that took place in Washington, D.C., and across the country on and around Earth Day.

Cal U's Geology Club and faculty members Dr. Kyle Fredrick and Dr. Tom Mueller coordinated the march, which was open to the entire campus community.

"This was just an appreciation of science and a way to show science is important in everyone's life," said junior James Bader, a geology major and the Geology Club president.

Members of Cal U's chapter of The Wildlife Society and the student-led Sustainability Club were among those who joined the march.

Fredrick, the Geology Club adviser, said that recent cutbacks in federal funds for the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration were natural triggers for the science-related demonstrations occurring in cities across the country.

However, Cal U's march was held to reinforce the importance of science for the campus and local community, he explained.

"I think scientists in general feel that the work we do is not being recognized as central to the mission of the country and an essential part of how we can move the country forward."

"Our University has announced a

re-emphasis on science and technology, and I think as a country we need to re-emphasize science and technology."

One of the enthusiastic student marchers was Helen Bednarczyk '15, a graduate student from Monongahela, Pa., who is studying planetary geology.

"Science touches every part of our lives, and that's why I am here today," she said. "I am proud of the University and my community's ecology efforts."

As the students ended their march and gathered for a photo, signs held high, Fredrick reminded them to advocate for themselves and speak up for science.

"All of us have the responsibility to inform and educate the public regarding important scientific advances and the importance of scientific research and results," he said.

"Science benefits all."

Three Receive FPDC Merit Awards

The Faculty Professional Development Center has recognized three professors for excellence in teaching, research, and use of technology.

Award recipients Dr. Marcia Hoover, Dr. Leandro Nunes and Dr. Mark Tebbitt will be recognized May 12 at the FPDC's annual Merit Award Luncheon, and at Commencement.

The FPDC merit award recipients are chosen by faculty committees. The awards are meant to assist faculty in their efforts to provide high-quality education for Cal U students.

Hoover, an associate professor and field coordinator in the Department of Secondary Education and Administrative Leadership, will receive the Technology Award.

She has consulted with faculty on the use of technology, developed technology training and conducted faculty workshops, assisted in the conversion of traditional courses to online formats, and served as the technical writer for an online courseware package.

As an educator, Hoover does more than use instructional technology — it's also her course content. For example, in the SEC 340 Technology Infusion course, she works with teacher



Dr. Marcia Hoover



Dr. Leandro Nunes



Dr. Mark Tebbitt

candidates as they learn to select appropriate technology and integrate it into the learning experience.

Hoover teaches this course at Elizabeth Forward High School, providing context for student learning. She also obtained a grant to acquire an iPad cart and 30 iPads for student use in the classroom or during field experiences.

Nunes, an assistant professor in the Department of Math, Computer Science and Information Systems, will receive the FPDC Teaching and Learning Merit Award.

He teaches both undergraduate and graduate courses in mathematics, statistics and computer science.

As a teacher, Nunes works to promote positive learning, spark enthusiasm and teach students to be responsible citizens. He uses PowerPoint, Beamer, YouTube videos and real-life examples to demonstrate how beautiful and exciting

mathematics can be.

In addition, Nunes is the founder and director of undergraduate research groups in mathematics at Cal U and at Universidad Distrital Francisco Jose de Caldas and Universidad de Antioquia, both in Colombia.

Tebbit, an assistant professor in the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences, will receive the FPDC Research Award.

He collaborates with an international team of researchers focused on the taxonomy, evolution, conservation and molecular systematics of plants found in South America and the local area.

He is engaged in a variety of projects with researchers based at Ohio State University, the Royal Botanic Gardens Scotland and several South American universities, as well as colleagues at Cal U. He also is working on a book-length scientific study of three groups of South American *Begonia*.

Tebbit's field research routinely takes him to remote parts of Andean South America where very few botanists have visited. He has made seven grant-funded plant-collecting expeditions to the region, where he is one of a very few botanical researchers worldwide with an active field research program in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Argentina.

Conference Spotlights Scholarship

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Stress Disorder," a project initially created for a course taught by Dr. Jamie Weary.

His work focused on two New Age treatments — MDMA and Stellate Ganglion Block, an injection of local anesthetic into the sympathetic nerve tissue of the neck.

"Many of my brothers and sisters have suffered and even died from PTSD, so this is something that means a great deal to me," he said. "I'm grateful I was able to present at this conference and make others aware of this problem."

Rudene Jackson, a social work major who will graduate in December, described the importance of positive role models for troubled youths. The research stemmed from a class taught by psychology professor Dr. Justin Hackett.

"This was my first time presenting at the conference. My research reaffirmed to me that I want to work with troubled adolescents, so this was really worthwhile."

Among the artwork displayed by sophomore Mary Aston Richards, a fine arts major, was a drawing that depicted the "Life Cycle of the Plague of the Black Death," an epidemic that killed more than 20 million people in Europe in the 1300s.

Richards had planned to exhibit her drawing as part of Cal U's St. George's Day celebration, but chose to show it first at the conference.

"This was my final project for an advanced drawing class, and it just seemed like a natural fit to display it here first," she said.

Dee Beck Oches, chair of the Department of Natural and Applied Sciences at Bentley University, in Waltham, Mass., delivered the conference's keynote address, "Developing Transdisciplinary Skills for Solving Wicked Problems."

He defined "wicked problems" as complex or intractable social or cultural issues with no right or wrong solutions, such as economic inequity or fossil fuel dependence.

"These are really going to require people with original ideas, creative approaches, inquisitive mindsets, collaborative engagement and the ability to work across disciplinary and socio-economic boundaries," he said.

"The skills that many of you (students) are developing through the research and creative works you are presenting today will let you leave Cal U with a sense of capability to make a valuable contribution in addressing the grand societal changes we are facing."

Junior Haley Wable earned first place in the Serene Leadership Institute's essay contest. Seniors Leah Seader and Andrea Ceja were the second and third-place recipients, respectively.

Trustees Meet June 7

The University's Council of Trustees will hold its second quarterly meeting of 2017 at 7 p.m. June 14 in the Grand Hall of Old Main. The meeting is open to the public.

Fishing Fest Opens with Park Dedication

“Every day is a great day for fishing.”

Despite cold and rainy weather, those words reverberated through the newly restored Pike Run stream area at California Rotary Park during the Pike Run Youth Fishing Festival.

The 22nd annual event, held on April 22, opened with brief remarks by University borough and county officials as they dedicated the area with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Through a contract from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, University-based Partners for Fish and Wildlife carried out the habitat restoration project in collaboration with the California Borough Recreation Authority, Pheasants Forever, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Washington County Conservation District and the Department of Environmental Protection.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife crews installed rock weirs to alter water flow, and constructed log dams and other features in the stream between Coal Center and the Route 43 overpass.

Cal U biology student have begun a five-year effort to monitor the stream's water quality, aquatic life and insect communities—a key part of the project.

University President Geraldine M. Jones opened the ceremony by acknowledging the work of students who organized the fishing festival, and noting its ties to Earth Day.

“This renovation creates a beautiful, welcoming gateway for visitors to California, including students and their families who are visiting Cal U,” she said.

“Having this beautiful park just a few blocks from campus is definitely an asset to the University, and to our community as a whole.”

Larry Maggi '79, chair of both the University's Council of Trustees and the Washington County commissioners, praised the work Partners for Fish and Wildlife and coordinator Jose Taracido.

“It's just so exciting to see what's



Participating in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the newly restored Pike Run stream area at California Rotary Park during the Pike Run Youth Fishing Festival on April 22 are (from left) Makayla, Nicholas, and Nichola Zayov, emcees from Labelle, Pa.; Geraldine M. Jones, University President; Jose Taracido, coordinator of the Cal U-based Partners for Fish and Wildlife; Larry Maggi '79, chair of both the University's Council of Trustees and the Washington County commissioner; and Pat Alfano, president of California Borough Council.

going on down here. This is what can happen when you get collaboration between federal, county, state, University and town,” he said.

“When I think back to how this area looked when I was a student here ... well, to see how far we've come is amazing.”

Taracido explained the work was done primarily to improve the water quality and create a more welcoming habitat for insects, fish and other aquatic life. The stream now is home to a wide variety of fish, from game species such as muskellunge and trout to tiny rainbow darters.

“Usually the work we do is hidden in farmland or rural areas, but this is not,” Taracido said. “So please enjoy it, because this is all for you. We are proud to have done this for the community.”

Pat Alfano, president of California

Borough Council, said there are plans to further improve the park and stream area by adding energy-efficient LED lighting.

“Many people have already commented on the wonderful improvements, and the fishing festival and all recreational activities here are just going to get better,” he said.

Nearly 40 students from the University's parks and recreation management program organized the event with faculty adviser Dr. Candice Riley.

Caitlin Michaels, president of Cal U's Parks and Recreation Society, was thrilled to begin the festival with the dedication.

A junior, she added event planning and tourism as a minor this year. During the preparation, Michaels enjoyed speaking at a few monthly California Borough monthly meetings and working with Cal U's public relations office.

“Everything went well because everyone kept up with communicating, so we were all on the same page,” she said. “This is like the ‘big dance’ for parks and rec majors like me. I was able to use all that I have learned in class and apply it to this event.”

Alan Lovall, of Republic, Pa., and his daughter Kendall, 6, enjoyed their first time fishing at the festival.

“Earlier this spring we were fishing at another place and people there were telling me all about this, so we decided to come,” he said.

“We really like it. All the people seem cool, and the main thing is my daughter and the kids are having fun.”

Kendall said she's been fishing since she was a baby.

“I like to fish, especially when I catch one,” she said proudly — and then she reeled in a fish.



Cal U Hosts German Badge Testing

Cal U student Nicholas Miller (right) runs among the lead pack as the 1,000-meter sprint begins as part of the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge testing held on and near campus April 21-22. A decoration of the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge has been available since 1972 to U.S. service members who meet rigorous proficiency standards. This is the fifth year the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs at Cal U has organized the testing for service members from across the United States.

SEEK Offers Two Sessions

SEEK, Cal U's annual Summer Educational Enrichment for Kids program, will offer two weeklong sessions for children entering grades 1-8.

Classes will be held July 10-14 and July 24-28. Sessions begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. daily.

Cost is \$135 per child for a full-week, full-day program, or \$90 per child for a full-week, half-day (morning or afternoon) program.

Participants are escorted between classes and supervised at lunchtime. Each child should bring a bag lunch; refrigeration is not available.

Since it was founded in 2000, the award-winning summer program has provided children with learning experiences that are entertaining, yet academically challenging. The curriculum is tailored to specific age groups and encourages all participants to reach their maximum learning potential.

For more information, contact the Office of Academic Affairs at 724-938-4407 or e-mail seek@calu.edu. Office hours are 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Lavender Graduation Honors 9

Nine graduating students, all members of the University's LGBTQIA community, were honored April 18 at Cal U's fourth annual Lavender Graduation.

"Today we celebrate their accomplishments and all they have added to our inclusive campus community," said Shelda Camarda-Webb, director of the Lambda Bridges LGBTQIA Program Office.

"They have made Cal U a better place to work and learn and grow."

Lavender Graduation was created in 1995 at the University of Michigan to recognize the achievements of graduating lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and asexual students, as well as their allies.

This year's event at Cal U honored communication studies and business major Taylor Brookings; sociology major Andrea Ceja; marketing major Karlistia Council; psychology and sociology major Madison Dulion; chemistry major Mikaylah Glenn; sport work major Nicole Ferguson; sport management major Alexandra Holmstrom; geography major Kyle Snyder; and Brandon Weasenforth, who will receive his Master of Social Work degree.

Each student received a certificate and lavender honor cords to wear at graduation.

Ceja and Weasenforth also accepted the Jan Zivic Outstanding LGBTQIA Leadership Award, which recognizes exceptional leadership and service.

Ceja is a Presidential Scholar who



Enjoying a moment outside the Kara Alumni House after the Lavender Graduation are (from left) Andrea Ceja, Jan Zivic Outstanding LGBTQIA Leadership Award winner; Shelda Camarda-Webb; Jan Zivic; and Brandon Weasenforth, Jan Zivic Outstanding LGBTQIA Leadership Award winner.

has worked extensively with the Rainbow Alliance, the University Honors Program and the Peer Mentor program, among other activities.

Weasenforth, who helped to create Cal U's first Lavender Graduation as an intern in the Lambda Bridges office, also is involved in the Multicultural Affairs and Diversity Education Office, where he facilitates the MADE Ambassadors program.

The leadership award is sponsored annually by alumna Jan Zivic '64, who returned as the ceremony's featured speaker. A staunch supporter of Lambda Bridges and Cal U's gay and lesbian community, she has endowed a scholarship for undergraduates involved in LGBT organizations and provides a monetary gift to accompany the leadership award.

Zivic reminisced about Cal U in the '60s, recalling that she once was restricted to campus for six weeks because she had been spotted riding on the back of a motorcycle — unseemly behavior for a female student.

"It is so thrilling to come back, to sit with my friends and to see all the changes," she said. "They are all for the better — but still not enough."

Zivic spoke directly to the student honorees, who each invited a mentor or friend to the graduation luncheon.

"I hope that the rest of your life provides a place for you to be who you are, to be safe, and most of all, to be respected," she said.

"Your community needs you. Your country needs you. We need you to speak up and be who you are, and do things that make us proud."

Student Media Bring Home Awards

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"The live-streaming has really brought CUTV full circle since we started doing football games in 1987 with two people running camera and then editing for the next two days," said Gary Smith '88, '01, CUTV's longtime director of operations and now the WCAL advisor.

"I don't know of many school television stations doing multicamera sports productions live on the road. We are basically fulfilling a mission that we set 31 years ago."

This spring CUTV broadcast all seven games of the 2017 NCAA Division II Women's Basketball Atlantic Regional, held March 10-13 at Hammer Hall. Four teams played on the first day of the eight-team tournament, and CUTV aired them all.

Under NCAA rules, a regional host cannot live-stream the event unless the service is offered to all the competing schools, Smith explained. So CUTV's crew delayed their spring break by four days to broadcast the regional nationwide.

Each game ideally was handled by 10 crew members: two each on camera and radio, two TV announcers, and two in the CUTV truck handling replays and graphics.

"I'm really blessed with great students," Smith said. "We had fans from other schools coming up to us telling how other fans who could not attend were watching from all over the country."

Versatility plus

During the four-game day, many CUTV crew members performed a variety of tasks. Colin Kirkwood, Dillon Gaudet and alumni Zach Probsa '16 and John Kotora '05 were among those who pitched in.

"That's why working well together is so important," Ruffing said. "The games just keep coming, but your adrenaline takes over. It was tiring but fun."

At his director's post in the media truck, Smith is an oasis of calm. His work ethic and sense of humor have a big influence on the student crew members, said Pam Delverne, director of technology services for SAL.

"Gary knows CUTV inside and out, and he keeps up with the industry's constant changes to give our students the best possible experience. He inspires them to find the love of television and producing shows."

D'Agostina, a communications studies major, is WCAL's station manager. He's a junior, and his resume already includes freelance production and camera work for sporting events that have appeared on ESPN3 and Fox Sports-1.

"I am already using what I've learned from CUTV in the real world," he said. "My experience here has been incredible. CUTV has become a second family to me."

Students Dig into Facts for Debate

No debate about it, four Cal U students learned rhetorical skills that will last a lifetime when they participated in a competition with other schools in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education.

For the first time, the Frederick Douglass Institute at Cal U, under the direction of Dr. Ayanna Lyles, participated in the Douglass Debate Society Tournament, sending two teams to the third annual event April 7-8 at East Stroudsburg University.

The competition is designed to increase the engagement of first-generation college students of color by encouraging them to think deeply and critically about contemporary issues and policies that impact Pennsylvania.

With Dr. Sheri Boyle and Dr. Loring Prest volunteering as co-coaches, students Donneth Henderson, Yareli Lara, Aaryn Smith and Tynisha Taylor dug into the topic, preparing arguments on both sides of the issue: "PASSHE should adopt a system-wide policy prohibiting hate speech on campus."

Student Omobukola Inegbenenjie

did not attend the competition but helped teammates with debate practice and research.

Teams were required to prepare evidence-based arguments on both the affirmative and negative sides of that proposition.

"The students, Loring and I met weekly at the start of the semester, and then two or three times a week as we got closer to the competition, to research responses to this topic," said Boyle, chair of the Department of Social Work. "The students didn't receive any class credit. They did a lot of research on their own time and really knew their stuff!"

Prest, who was on the debate team as a student at Brevard Community College (now Eastern Florida State College), volunteered to help the students with debate strategies. He also served as a judge for the competition.

"It comes down to critical thinking, extemporaneous public speaking and information literacy," said Prest, the electronic resources librarian in Manderson Library and a professor in the Department of Library Services.

"What does the proposition say and what does it mean?"

"Collegiate debate is all about evidence-based argumentation, so it was fun to see the students really dig in and do research."

"It shows there's room for an honest, respectful dialogue, and you don't have to harbor any aggression afterward," said Smith, a senior psychology major. "It teaches you to listen carefully to what other people are saying, so you can find a hole in their argument."

"It was 100 percent worth it, and it was very satisfying to work and discuss things with other students," added Henderson, a chemistry major. "It helped me be more confident in public speaking. And it taught me that you cannot allow emotions to cloud facts."

The Cal U teams did not win the competition, but that is really beside the point, as Prest explained.

"They had a great attitude. Some who aren't graduating want to do it again next year. We had a good time together, and it was a great opportunity — definitely worth it!"

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