Alumni Spotlight: Healthcare

Dr. Spina’s Dedication

Yearning to Breathe Free

Privileged and Honored
In this issue, our Alumni Spotlight focuses on some of the many outstanding healthcare professionals whose SUNYIT education supported their success.

Scholarship dollars help a SUNYIT nursing graduate realize her dreams.

SUNYIT faculty, staff and students work to celebrate refugee stories in Utica.

Winning year for the Wildcats

Upcoming SUNYIT Alumni Events

June 27  Philadelphia Happy Hour
April 19  SUNYIT at the Empire Brewfest, Syracuse
July 22  SUNYIT at the Saratoga Racetrack, Saratoga Springs
August  New York City Happy Hour
Sept. 27-29  Wildcat Weekend
October  Boston Happy Hour

Make sure you don’t miss these or other great opportunities to reconnect with your former classmates and friends. For details, stay tuned to the alumni events calendar at sunyit.edu/alumni/upcoming_events.

Are you receiving SUNYIT Alumni Event announcement e-mails? If not, be sure to send your e-mail address to alumni@sunyit.edu to join our mailing list!

Ceremony honors former interim president

President Yeigh welcomed Peter A. Spina, former interim president, back to campus in September 2012 for a ceremony naming the Wildcats new baseball field. The facility, now known as “Peter A. Spina Field,” was named in recognition of Spina’s philanthropic support for SUNYIT, his work as interim president from 2004 to 2008, and his personal performance as a student-athlete while attending the University at Albany as an undergraduate in the 1960s.

“It’s always a pleasure to welcome Dr. Spina back to SUNYIT,” Yeigh said. “This is a fitting tribute for someone who has given back in so many ways, so that future student-athletes will have opportunities for success here.”

Construction of “Peter A. Spina Field,” which was completed in 2011, was part of an upgrade in campus athletic facilities totaling more than $20 million that also included the new Wildcat Field House and Wildcat Field.

“On behalf of the SUNYIT Foundation, I want to express our appreciation for Dr. Spina’s support,” said Michael Evke ’84, chair of the SUNYIT Foundation. “Thanks to him, the next generation of successful SUNYIT students will get the chance to excel – just as he did as a student, athlete, faculty member, administrator and college president.”

From 1981 to 1999, Spina was president of Monroe Community College in Rochester, N.Y., and his career also included a number of positions at Suffolk County Community College in Selden, N.Y. His academic career began in the West Islip Public Schools in West Islip, N.Y., where he was a high school English teacher.

Peter A. Spina Field is home to the Wildcat baseball team and is also used for intramurals, summer camps and various community groups.
Alumni Spotlight: Successful Leaders in Healthcare

Frank Bassett ’89

There are many ways to determine a person’s success: being the best at something, loving what you do, finding a balance in life, making a difference – and Frank Bassett ’89 has accomplished all of these during his 24-year career. He long ago discovered his passion for aging services, and as Director of Long Term Care at Livingston County Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation, Mount Morris, N.Y., he’s making a big impact in the future of the industry.

Bassett’s mantra: “I must be willing to challenge convention and lead with the understanding that the culture I cultivate may one day be the culture in which I am cared for.” He has challenged convention by changing the environment of aging services into a neighborhood model that has been widely adopted across the state. “It’s great to influence the quality of life that residents experience in a nursing home.” In addition to quality, the model has also proven effective financially and has helped keep his facility public, as more and more counties look toward privatization to survive today’s difficult economic times.

Bassett credits SUNYIT with his start in the industry. “Students benefited from how well-connected faculty were. It allowed students to have internships that translated into employment after.” He also credits his leadership skills to his professors and classmates, saying, “They helped me think about persistence and being a change agent.”

And what about SUNYIT today? “Education has to be relevant,” Bassett says. “SUNYIT is not following trends but developing them and engaging students in the learning process – it’s cutting edge.”

Varinya Sheppard ’98 G’03

Varinya Sheppard’s path to her current executive-level position in healthcare was a natural progression. Decades of professional experience and a meaningful education have made her a well-rounded, successful leader.

After becoming a registered nurse nearly three decades ago, Sheppard accepted her first job as a charge nurse at St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Utica, N.Y. She now is Vice President of Nursing, a role that serves the hospital’s nursing departments, pharmacy and rehabilitative services. “Throughout my career at St. Elizabeth, I’ve worked in almost every department in varying roles. It’s shaped me to be the leader I am now.”

Her education has shaped her too. Sheppard earned a B.S. in nursing in 1998 and an M.S. in nursing administration in 2003. “As an undergraduate, I appreciated the blend of students in my classes. I wasn’t used to having classmates that studied anything but nursing – they brought a new perspective to things.” She had a similar experience as a graduate student. “I benefited the most from networking with other professionals from different settings in the healthcare field.”

Aside from her full-time job, she works as an adjunct professor at SUNYIT, sharing her knowledge with a new generation of nursing students. Sheppard says the nursing program is, “staying in tune to what is current in industry and academia” and describes it as some would describe her: “ever-evolving.”

“SUNYIT is not following trends but developing them and engaging students in the learning process – it’s cutting edge.”
Eve Van de Wal G’07 G’08

A single-page résumé would not do justice to Eve Van de Wal. Her career has comprised an array of roles with increasing clout in the healthcare field; a textbook example of climbing the corporate ladder. While her professional impact in the healthcare field is significant, her community involvement and educational accomplishments show a well-rounded, motivated, and driven woman.

Van de Wal began her career as a Registered Nurse working for more than a decade in the Critical Care unit of Utica’s Faxton Hospital. In the late 1990s she decided to venture into healthcare administration by taking a position with Excellus BlueCross BlueShield. Over the next 13 years, she would move up the corporate ladder in various managerial roles until being named regional president in 2008.

Before stepping into her role as regional president, Van de Wal pursued not one, but two master’s degrees, graduating in 2007 with a M.S. in health services administration and the following year with an MBA. For both degrees, choosing SUNYIT wasn’t a difficult decision for Van de Wal. “I could have gone to Syracuse University or Cornell. SUNYIT is local and provided me with an education that I value. I’m proud to have my degrees from such a great college.”

One of the experiences she valued most as a graduate student was learning from her classmates, many of whom came from different age groups and backgrounds. “It was a cross-generational group of students. We had different strengths. I learned from them and they learned from me.”

Van de Wal is a proponent of education and considers the educational goals of her employees a priority, counseling them individually. How does she find the time in her busy schedule? “Education is never wasted. It’s not only valuable to the individual but also positively impacts our company in the best way possible.”

Scott Perra ’79

Learning has been a lifelong pursuit for Scott Perra. His motivation to gain knowledge and willingness to challenge himself have helped him accomplish countless initiatives – many that other healthcare administrators may have shied away from. He credits his education: “My degrees were the building blocks for everything. I’m a lifelong learner.”

Perra recalls the educational field of health services management just starting to blossom during his time as a student at SUNYIT’s West Utica campus from 1976-1979. “My faculty came from varying fields and shared different perspectives. It was a learning environment, it was great.” From this he gained an objective view: “SUNYIT taught you how to learn, how to question, and how to analyze – to look at what’s in front of you differently.”

His learning spirit and critical eye undoubtedly set him apart throughout his career and remain a driving force in his work as President and CEO of Faxton St. Luke’s Healthcare.

When asked about SUNYIT today, Perra says current and future students will benefit just as he did: “SUNYIT has been great for me and provides a great education. The school is going in the right direction especially with the nanotechnology emphasis. The sky’s the limit for SUNYIT.”
Robert Scholefield ’86

Robert Scholefield’s range of experience in the healthcare field has provided him with a valuable perspective – one he applies to his approach as Chief Operating Officer of St. Elizabeth Medical Center. Prior to becoming a hospital administrator, Scholefield ’86 began his career as a staff nurse and then became a nurse manager. He looks back on his early career often, acknowledging the importance of his practical experience in his decision-making process: “I have the full picture of how the healthcare system works. The balance is beneficial.”

For Scholefield, it’s more than experience. His education helped to support the advancement of his career. “I wouldn’t be able to do this job without my education. It helped me understand the business side of healthcare.” He remembers learning from faculty who had worked extensively in the field and included real life applications in their coursework.

Scholefield considers SUNYIT an asset to the community and, as an employer, an important educational resource for his nursing staff. He is often asked about the value of education for healthcare workers: “It’s tremendous. Beyond learning from the professor, you can network with people from other places and learn from their challenges and struggles. There are still people that I connect with.”

Barbara Black ’77

Barbara Black ’77 will always remember her time as a nursing student, especially her harrowing winter commutes from Syracuse to the SUNYIT campus. Smartphone weather apps were unavailable three decades ago making for some “exciting times,” as Black recalls. In retrospect, traveling in Upstate New York’s inclement weather was a small price to pay for a great reward: an empowering spirit that guided her through her life and career.

“My classmates and I were pioneers. Thirty-five years ago nurses rarely went on to earn a bachelor’s degree – it was an empowering thing,” Black said. “When I graduated I felt like I could do anything.” Her tenacious attitude would eventually lead her to what she was meant to do – help other nurses gain a similar sense of self-assurance through continuing their own education.

Black has spent the last 15 years as the Director of the Center of Continuing Nursing Education at SUNY Upstate Medical University’s College of Nursing and has most recently been appointed the Assistant Dean for Continuing Education and External Affairs. The Center’s mission is aimed at enhancing the knowledge of practicing nurses with the ultimate goal of improving patient outcomes. Close attention is given to topics that will benefit today’s nurses the most – directing continuing nursing education to those areas that would have the greatest impact on their patients.

Directing such a venture is not an easy task. Black has been inspired by her experiences as a Registered Nurse, a clinical instructor, earning two master’s degrees, and raising her three children (now grown and working as a doctor, a lawyer, and a journalist). However, when asked about her professional success, she gives a simple, yet bold response: “I understand what it is to educate.” This understanding is reflected in her commitment to inspiring other nurses to continue their education.

Perhaps more poignant than Black’s professional drive is her selflessness; she has dedicated years of service in meaningful roles with non-profit groups like the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, American Heart Association, Rape Crisis Center of Syracuse, and 23 years as a member of a local Board of Education – the list goes on and on. With all that she’s done, she remains humble, “My education was the foundation for everything I’ve done. I wouldn’t have been able to do some of the things I did without the confidence I gained at SUNYIT.”
Josep Millard ’07

For more than 25 years, Joseph Millard dedicated his life to the science-based responsibilities of a medical laboratory technologist. He has since reinvented himself—a result of an inspiring dedication to the healthcare field and the motivation to grow as a professional.

Changing career paths wasn’t without challenges. “Going into an area that you don’t know anything about requires you to learn for yourself—you can’t stay stagnant.” His disciplined attitude and enthusiasm to advance in his career helped Millard earn a master’s degree in health services administration.

The attraction to SUNYIT’s program was the flexibility of taking courses online. “The online program with some classroom exposure was best for me—it challenged you to stay focused and dedicated.” With a full-time job and a family, Millard appreciated the convenience of the program yet stressed the necessity to work hard, “You have to dedicate yourself. There’s nobody there to make you do it except you.”

After earning his degree, Millard was promoted to the executive team of Carthage Area Hospital to oversee growing business and operational functions. True to his personality, he avoids being stagnant—by challenging himself. His latest project: the formulation and future operation of a new assisted living corporation, Meadowbrook Terrace.

Millard’s take on a SUNYIT degree: It’s not just the education, but the relevance of the content. SUNYIT is giving students options; they are keeping up with the changing world.”

Suzanna Myalik ’13

Hometown: Utica

Major: Nursing

Activities/Hobbies: Member of the Sigma Theta Tau, spending time outdoors, and photography

Scholarships: Edward V. Mele - The Mele Foundation Scholarship, Faxton Hospital Alumni Association Scholarship

“As a Utica native, I feel privileged and honored to be able to work toward my dreams in my own community. Ever since I was a child, I knew I wanted to work with people. When the time came to go to college and choose a major, I picked nursing knowing that this would be a career in which I could go far. SUNYIT was affordable and close to home. The programs offered allowed me to pursue both my bachelor’s and master’s at the same school, which I liked.

I am paying for college myself, so the scholarships that I have received have allowed me to obtain my education without having to place myself into debt. I am currently employed as a medical surgical RN at St. Elizabeth Medical Center, where I work 12-hour night shifts. I was able to obtain this job after my first year at SUNYIT. Thanks to the scholarships that I have received and the ability to obtain practical work experience, I am one step closer to reaching my ultimate goal of obtaining a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. In the future, I hope to stay in the area and give back to the community that has taught me everything that I know.”
Zogby Analytics, John & Kathy Zogby ’76 Announce Gifts to SUNYIT
Donations to support computer science, nursing scholarships

Zogby Analytics, a polling and research firm started by former employees of Zogby International, is honoring a SUNYIT alumnus with a donation to the SUNYIT Foundation. The money will provide scholarship dollars to future computer science students in memory of John J. Bruce, a Zogby Analytics employee and 1991 graduate of SUNYIT who died unexpectedly on November 11, 2012.

“John utilized his degree in Computer Science to build an important and globally recognized system for measuring public opinion,” said John Zogby, founder of Zogby International and senior analyst at Zogby Analytics. “His training of younger employees prepared them for an ever-changing industry. SUNYIT meant a lot to him, and it is fitting that an award be made in his name.”

John and his wife, Kathy Zogby, a 1976 SUNYIT alumnus, also made a donation in honor of her parents, George and Emily Ertel, that will support scholarships for SUNYIT nursing students. “Like many parents, they made great sacrifices to secure a first-rate education for me,” Kathy Zogby said. “My education at SUNYIT gave me a great start in life, and I am very thankful to my parents.” After graduation, Kathy went on to become a special education teacher with the Utica City School District; she retired in 2006.

“We are thankful for the support of corporations like Zogby Analytics and individuals like John and Kathy Zogby,” said Peter Perkins, director of development at SUNYIT. “Their financial support enables the SUNYIT Foundation to invest in our students, making possible their education and future success.”

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sunyit.edu/alumnibenefits
Dear Donors,  

My name is Abdullah Megid and I am a freshman at SUNYIT studying mechanical engineering technology. I am from Brooklyn, NY and your scholarship has helped me attend school at a time when I was a little skeptical of attending college. I was fortunate to have this opportunity since it allowed me to live on campus and have some wonderful experiences here at SUNYIT. So thank you for your efforts, I truly appreciate it!

Thank you,
Abdullah Megid '16

Dear SUNYIT Donors,  

My name is Emily L. and I am a freshman in Computer Information Systems. I am happy to be able to go to college for free this year with the scholarship money I have received. I plan to graduate with my major and obtain a job that will allow me to use the skills I learned and work from home to have a more stable family. Thank you for helping me and many others.

Emily L. '16

Dear Donors,  

My name is Hailey S. and I am from Red Creek, NY. I am a sophomore majoring in accounting and minoring in applied mathematics. I hope to become a CPA and possibly opening my own accounting firm. Thank you so much for allowing me to further my education.

Thanks Again,
Hailey S.

Dear Donors,  

My name is Megan G. and I am from Binghamton, NY. I am a sophomore in Biology. I am hoping to go into a career working with animals. Thank you for making college more affordable and help make college more affordable.

Megan G.

Dear Donors,  

My name is Matthew B. and I am currently studying Computer Science. I am very grateful for the scholarship money I have received. I plan to graduate with my major and obtain a job that will allow me to use the skills I learned and work from home to have a more stable family. Thank you for helping me and many others.

Matthew B. '16

Dear Donors,  

My name is Darren S. and I am from Pittsburgh, PA. Currently, I am a Junior in the Mechanical Engineering Tech program. With this degree, I hope to get into the manufacturing field and open my own business. Thank you for giving me the chance to attend college and get my degree.

Darren S. '14

Dear Donors,  

My name is Jordan B. and I am a Junior in Electrical Engineering. I am very grateful for the scholarship money I have received. I plan to graduate with my major and obtain a job that will allow me to use the skills I learned and work from home to have a more stable family. Thank you for helping me and many others.

Jordan B.
Take a look at some of our recent alumni happy hours!

Robin Carpenter-Dengel '94, Dennis Dengel '93 and Dana Martin '08

Kevin Grimmer, athletic director; Nicole Watson '83 and Walter Bing III '86

Mimi Vence, Jim Vence '85 and Richard Simms '88

Robin Carpenter-Dengel '94, Dennis Dengel '93 and Dana Martin '08
Peter Perkins, director of development; Paul Clements ’83: John Jefferson ’89; Dr. Peter Spina, Former Interim President; Kimberly Intino ’98; President Yeigh and Liz Freitag ’93.

Kaushal Mehta ’06, Hal Sitrin ’77, Christopher Melito ’95, Paul Steiner ’76, Steven Farber ’75 and guest.

Visit www.sunyit.edu/alumni for upcoming events
The exhibit featured photographs from refugees’ Facebook pages, and they reveal the many similarities we all have across cultures and religions.

The “Refugees Starting Over in Utica, NY” project was a series of events during fall 2012 that celebrated refugee resettlement in Utica. Refugees are people who have been forced to leave their country of origin and cannot return due to fear of persecution of personal safety. The greater Utica area has welcomed refugees since the 1970s and has continued to be a haven for people in need, responding to U.S. government policy to take in the victims of some of the world’s worst and most violent conflicts. Over the years, more than 14,000 refugees have come to Utica by way of the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees.

The intention of the project was to increase awareness of the cultures and lives of the refugees who live so close to our campus but with whom many of us, including students, do not have much contact. Events included an Asian Folk Music Hour at the Utica Music and Arts Fest, a lecture about human rights presented by Lindsey Kingston of Webster University, a collaborative art show at SUNYIT’s Gannett Gallery, a well-attended gallery opening with food, music, dance, film and storytelling, and finally, a multicultural puppet show for children. In addition to the events, a set of social media activities helped us learn more...
Bhutanese-Nepali refugee Pritha Monger holds a Nepali madal drum in preparation for Asian Folk Hour.
about the community, develop content for the exhibit, and publicize the events. Collaboration between students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members was one of our main goals.

I got involved in the project through Kathryn Stam, associate professor of anthropology, who received a grant from the President’s Opportunity Fund to do this project with instructional technologist Kevin Volo. I am from Utica and was interested in learning about the refugees in the city, but I had no idea how many new people I would get to know and how it would change my view of the city I have known for so long.

The project included a wide range of activities and opportunities to try web tools and skills. I developed an online presence for the project, including a website, social network pages on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, and a blog. As a student in SUNYIT’s graduate program in Information Design and Technology program, I am familiar with many information technology tools, but this project gave me the opportunity to develop my skills and figure out how to use them in an integrated way. I also had the opportunity to participate in months of interviews and interactions with different refugees, attend and document cultural events, curate art for the show, host tours of the gallery and coordinate with 30 community partner organizations that work with refugees.

**Among the project’s highlights:**

At the Asian Folk Music Hour and the World Music Events it was so exciting to see how happy and proud the refugees were to practice and share their culture.

The gallery opening was also an amazing event. There were over 200 people in attendance and more than half of them were from the refugee community. It was great seeing students, faculty, and staff talking and laughing with refugee students from Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar, Thailand, Bosnia, Belarus, Yemen, Somalia, Sudan, Iraq, and other countries as well.

Overall, I am so grateful to have been a part of this project through SUNYIT!

**Update:**

The “Starting Over” project received a “Best of Category” award for Community Projects in the SUNYCUAD (State University of New York Council for University Advancement) Annual Awards for Excellence. Photos taken at the Asian Folk Music Hour by Lynne Browne ’04 garnered “Best of Category” in the photography category.

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**How the Starting Over Project Began**

*By Kathryn Stam*

Associate Professor of Anthropology

In August 2011 at a COMPASS Interpreters training for medical interpreting, a fortunate introduction to a Bhutanese-Nepali refugee named Tek Monger was the beginning of the idea for the “Starting Over” project. He told me about the history of his people, their expulsion from Bhutan, the 19 years they spent in a refugee camp in Nepal, and their funny and surreal resettlement to the Utica area. I could hardly believe that more than 35 Nepali families had been living in Utica, just a few miles from campus, for several years, and I had not heard anything about them. I had visited Nepal several times and was interested in all things Nepali, yet had never read or heard about their situation: 100,000 people living in exile and waiting for a new future. I wanted to get to know them and other refugees like them, learn about their culture, and find ways to bring them closer to our students. Since that meeting, I have met refugees originally from Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Laos, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Iraq, Yemen, and Bosnia, just to name a few of the countries. I felt an urgent need to bring their stories and the images of their lives into view.

I hoped that we could use the skills that we teach about information technology and effective design to increase awareness about the refugee community, and I think we were successful in doing that. Katie Reilly’s website and other social media outlets were excellent in quality, and we plan to continue to use them for archiving the materials and continuing to promote awareness. The design of the logo, exhibit, and other materials was done beautifully by Kevin Volo and Michelle Sammon. Katie and I spent a lot of time going through photographs from refugee Facebook accounts and securing permission from the photographers.

As an anthropologist, it was very interesting to learn about the cultures and bring those experiences back to my classroom. Working with Katie, Kevin, and the many other faculty and staff involved made the project stronger and more creative. The project was a pure joy for me to do from beginning to end. I am very grateful to the President’s Opportunity Fund, the Provost, and the Committee for Cultural and Performing Arts for allowing the project to come into being.
The project teamed up with the Utica Firefly Storytelling Series to produce the Starting Over film (available at www.startingoverutica.com) about the Bhutanese-Nepali refugee community. Above: Bhutanese-Nepali refugee Tek Monger and local filmmakers Geoff Storm and Ryan Miller.

Refugee student Pawser Soe from MVCC tells a story about moving to the U.S. from Thailand. Students, faculty, and community members shared stories on the theme of “Starting Over” in Kunsela Lecture Hall as part of a Utica Firefly event on November 30, 2012.

Above and below: On September 15, 2012, the project-sponsored Asian Folk Hour at the Utica Music and Arts festival gave refugee community members an opportunity to share their traditional music and dance.

Bhutanese-Nepali refugees from Utica shared traditional songs and dances for SUNYIT and Utica community members at a World Music event on campus on November 30, 2012.
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**Settling in, not down**

This past year was the first that all of SUNYIT’s 12 varsity athletic teams had full access to new field house and turf field facilities for an entire academic year. Coming off a third-straight NEAC President’s Cup win in 2011-12, fall and winter sport teams quickly proved their on-field product would equal, if not surpass, their swanky new homes.

Women’s volleyball and men’s and women’s soccer teams settled into their new digs for their first full seasons, and they certainly liked what SUNYIT “had done with the place.” The teams combined for a fall home record of 16-8-2, good for a .615 winning percentage. Among the highlights in 2012-13...

**Women’s Volleyball**

The Wildcats hosted their first tournament in the four-court Wildcat Field House September 28-29, during Wildcat Weekend, and SUNYIT grabbed three victories in front of a packed house. With three courts all playing at once, Wildcat Weekend featured three volleyball matches indoors competing with the two soccer matches outside for the attention of the ample SUNYIT crowd. The Lady Wildcats won three matches on the weekend, all in straight sets, and even took a set from a formidable RIT squad in the Wildcats’ only loss on the weekend.

Behind the inspired play of All-NEAC second team selection Kaitlyn Harrington (Central Square, N.Y. / Paul V. Moore High School), SUNYIT used its success at Wildcat Weekend to propel the team to a 3rd-place finish in the NEAC and a fourth consecutive NEAC Championship Tournament appearance.

**Women’s Soccer**

The 2012 women’s soccer season was Erin Schurr’s first as head coach of the Wildcats. Schurr, an assistant for the team since 2010, took over a team in 2012 searching for an identity after the graduation of SUNYIT all-time leading scorer Nicole DiNitto in 2011.

Under Schurr’s guidance, the team quickly found it: returning juniors Stephanie Wurz (Whitesboro, N.Y. / Notre Dame High School) and Abbey Hanehan (Stillwater, N.Y. / Stillwater High School) emerged as SUNYIT’s go-to scoring tandem early in the season, while newcomer Dakota Hanley (Franklin, N.Y. / Franklin Central High School) came on strong in the second half of the season, including an incredible six-game scoring streak in which the junior-transfer scored 9 goals and helped guide SUNYIT to a 4-2 record over that stretch.

Wurz, Hanehan, and Hanley would all be named to NEAC All-Conference Teams at the end of the season, but the most impressive feat of the season would belong to the Wildcat team as a whole. An underdog heading into the NEAC Tournament, the Wildcats upset the favored Penn St.-Abington Nittany Lions in the first round of the conference tournament in a 1-1 game that was decided by penalty kicks.

SUNYIT would go on to lose to Penn St.-Harrisburg on penalty kicks in the first round of the NEAC tournament. The season was still a decided success, with the SUNYIT men turning in several memorable performances in front of capacity crowds.

Chief among these was the Wildcats’ 2-1 victory over Clarkson in early September. The Wildcats had a one-goal deficit for the first 85 minutes of the game; but with just 4:49 seconds remaining in the contest, first-year player Anthony Surber (Miller Place, N.Y. / Half Hollow Hills) brought the crowd to its feet with an incredible pass from just a few paces inside the mid-line. Surber placed the long pass perfectly on the head of a streaking Josh Kimber (Chittenango, N.Y. / Chittenango), who headed it home to tie the game 1-1.

Of course, great plays were made on both ends of the pass, as the junior Kimber’s header was truer than gravity, soaring crisply into the right side of the net. Wildcat star Diego Montaleza (New York, N.Y. / MLK) finished off the SUNYIT comeback, beating the keeper at the 86:03 mark – not even a minute after Kimber’s goal. Montaleza was the beneficiary of a great touch by senior Mario Gomez (Rome, N.Y. / Rome Free Academy), who kept the ball alive after the Wildcats booted it deep into Golden Knight territory.

Men’s soccer was well-represented on the post-season awards ballots. For the third-straight year SUNYIT keeper Malick Faye (Bronx, NY / MLK) received the NEAC Goalkeeper of the Year award, while teammates Montaleza, Kimber, and defenseman Tyler Fleming (Groton, N.Y. / Tompkins Cortland CC) were named to various All-Conference teams.

**Women’s Basketball**

The 2012-13 women’s basketball season was Lyndsey Brogiano’s swan song. A four-year starter, the Rome, NY native graduated from SUNYIT as the most decorated female athlete in the school’s history.

Last year’s NEAC Player of the Year, Brogiano garnered first team All-Conference honors again this season, and was even named a second team All-ECAC selection, an honor...
The Bridge

bestowed upon the best basketball players in the region.

With the signature class of her seven years at SUNYIT set to graduate, it was fitting that SUNYIT women’s basketball coach Jessica Skelton picked up her 100th win in 2012-13. Skelton has breathed new life into the SUNYIT basketball program since taking over the team in 2006. Under her leadership the team increased its season win total every year from the 2006-07 season right up through 2011-12, when the Wildcats set a school record by going 22-5, winning the NEAC regular season title, and hosting the NEAC Championship Tournament.

The women’s basketball team cemented their status as a beloved part of the SUNYIT family, due in no small part to the Wildcats four seniors: Kayla McNeil, Ashley Schmidt, Lauren Marleau, and Lyndsey Brognano.

The team finished with a 15-9 overall record while once again dominating conference play by going 13-4 in the NEAC. Ultimately SUNYIT fell in the NEAC Championship Tournament to Wells College, but not before giving the SUNYIT faithful a few more unforgettable victories over the likes of Cortland, Lancaster Bible College, and cross-town rival Utica College, whom the Wildcats defeated for the second straight season, 76-70 on January 2.

Men’s Basketball

The SUNYIT men’s basketball team made great strides after a rebuilding season, nearly doubling their win total while exhibiting flashes that will make them a definitive threat to take home the NEAC Championship in 2013-14.

The Wildcats grabbed their first win over MCLA at the 9/11 Heroes Tournament at Staten Island College. It was SUNYIT’s first year participating in the annual tournament, which commemorates several members of the Staten Island team who were victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Finally back on their home court after nearly three weeks on the road, the Wildcats defeated Utica College at home on January 2, 88-75. SUNYIT would later rack up three straight victories at home in January, and finished the season winning 6 of 10 at home.

The season’s end saw the departure of just one senior from the young Wildcats, good news for SUNYIT’s future but disappointing for all those with the privilege of watching Derek Rowe (Mexico, N.Y. / Mexico) over the past four years. A two-sport athlete for SUNYIT (basketball and lacrosse), Rowe was one of two SUNYIT athletes to win the Northwestern Mutual Student-Athlete of the Month award for the month of February, and he graduated in May with a double major in electrical engineering technology and computer engineering technology.

Men’s Cross Country

Derek Struck (Knox, N.Y. / Berne-Knox-Westerlo) burst onto the SUNYIT cross country scene in the team’s first meet of 2012, at home for the sixth annual SUNYIT Invitational. The 5’11” freshman dominated, setting a course record in the team’s first race. Struck was incredible as a rookie, finishing either first or second overall in three of the team’s first four races of 2012, including a record-setting performance in the home opener. In his record-setting performance at home, Struck broke the SUNYIT course record despite unseasonably hot temperatures, finishing the 6-kilometer course in 19 minutes, 53 seconds.

Dylan Parry (Voorheesville, N.Y. / Voorheesville) emerged as a veteran leader. The junior stepped into his role by making incredible gains in 2012, turning in personal-best finishes of eighth place at the Wildcat Invitational and even beating out Struck for fifth place at the NEAC Championship Race at the end of the year, where the Wildcats placed third.

For his efforts, Parry was named to the NEAC All-Conference first team along with Struck, while sophomore Cody Russell (Fonda, N.Y. / Fonda) and freshman Sean Reynolds (East Berne, N.Y. / Berne-Knox-Westlerlo) made the second and third teams.

Women’s Cross Country

The SUNYIT women’s cross country team competed hard in 2012-13, as first-year runner Carli Rogan (Colonie, N.Y. / Colonie Central HS) led the Wildcats throughout the season. SUNYIT’s best performance came at the Penn St.-Abington Invitational and even beating out Struck for fifth place at the NEAC Championship Race at the end of the year, where the Wildcats placed third.

For his efforts, Parry was named to the NEAC All-Conference first team along with Struck, while sophomore Cody Russell (Fonda, N.Y. / Fonda) and freshman Sean Reynolds (East Berne, N.Y. / Berne-Knox-Westerlo) made the second and third teams.

For up-to-date sports schedules and other stories find the Wildcats online: www.wildcats.sunyit.edu
Admissions Alumni Ambassador Program

Today’s generation of college-bound students seek more than a conversation with an admissions counselor or a campus visit – they want a perspective that only an alum can give them. Your experiences as a student and what you’ve done with your SUNYIT degree are powerful testaments to the quality of our school.

Help us by sharing your experience as an Alumni Ambassador alongside our admissions counselors at college fairs across the state and New England. Your participation will help support our important enrollment goals and further attract the best students to be a part of our close-knit SUNYIT community.

sunyit.edu/admissions/alumniambassadors

Class of 2017 Profile

This fall, SUNYIT will welcome its 11th freshman class. To see what SUNYIT and the Class of 2017 look like, check out the snapshot below.

Male/Female Ratio: 1:1
SAT Composite 1000+
GPA 3.1
Avg. Class Size 19
Underrepresented Population 13%

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Twitter
www.twitter.com/sunyitalumni

We want to hear from you!

Please send us your class notes, photos, address changes, SUNYIT memories and feedback. There are many easy ways to reach us:

Mail: SUNYIT Alumni Office
100 Seymour Road
Utica, NY 13502

Phone: (315) 792-7110
Fax: (315) 792-7266
E-Mail: alumni@sunyit.edu

www.sunyit.edu/alumni
Class Notes

1970s

Victor Markowitz ‘75 retired in 2011 after 30 years as an Instructor for the NYS Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. Victor lives in Spring Glen, N.Y.

Kim Schwartz ‘77 is the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Population Services International (PSI), a global health organization dedicated to improving the health of people in the developing world by focusing on serious challenges like a lack of family planning, HIV and AIDS, barriers to maternal health, and the greatest threats to children under five, including malaria, diarrhoea, pneumonia and malnutrition.

Jack Harris ‘78 sends his memories: “I had a really great time working at "The Loading Dock," the place that I have come to call "The Old Mill." I was even a bartender (as it was known back then) that have been my close friends for all of my adult life.”

1980s

John Paoni ’80 was appointed as program director at Advanced Wound Care of St. Elizabeth Medical Center in New Hartford, N.Y. John lives with his wife, JoAnn, in Ilion, N.Y.

Kim Richards ‘82 has been hired as the psychiatric nurse practitioner for Community Health Center of Utica.

1990s

Joyce Kapral ‘91 has joined the teaching staff at Mohawk Valley Community College where she will be teaching nursing classes. She holds a master of science degree in nursing from SUNY Health Science Center at Upstate Medical University and lives in Canastota, N.Y.

Laurie Nichols ’92 was recently appointed as Director of Human Resources at Slocomb-Dickson Medical Group in New Hartford, N.Y. She is a member of the National Society of Human Resources Management and the Mohawk Valley Society of Human Resources Management.

Nancy Winch G’94 retired in November 2012 after 20 years of service as the director of public health for Columbia County. In retirement, Nancy will pursue becoming a master gardener through Cornell Cooperative Extension, explore her Dutch-Irish genealogy and spend more time with her family of three grown sons and four grandchildren.

2000s

Robert Brown ’84 is an engineering specialist at General Dynamics Electric Boat and lives in Groton, Conn. He would like to send his appreciation to Dr. Dey, Dr. Tadros and Dr. Das for providing him with an excellent engineering foundation.

Michele LaPorte ’84 was honored as the recipient of the 2012 Lynda Ford Award for Lifetime Achievement in Human Resources by the Mohawk Valley Society for Human Resource Management and the Mohawk Valley Chamber of Commerce. She has over 32 years of experience in the HR field and is currently the facility labor relations manager for the New York Power Authority. She also received a master of science with a concentration in human resources management from Binghamton University and is a certified Professional in Human Resources (PHR).

James Stewart ’85 has joined Utica School of Commerce as an adjunct faculty member. He is a management consultant and life and health insurance broker in his consulting firm, Stewart Associates.

John Schneider ’85 writes: “I just retired last June after 27 years with General Motors. Effective October 22, 2012, I have accepted a new position with Johnson Controls here in Detroit, Michigan. I will be assuming the role of Health and Safety Engineer.” John fondly remembers Dr. Hamid Parsaei, Robert Zech, Eileen D’Agostino and Dr. Rahman Rabie.

Dennis Zech ‘85 says “Hello All.”

Christopher Melito ‘95 works as a member of the loan modification team for Bank of America in Sunrise, Fla. He sent this picture to show off a catch he made in December 2012.

Filomain ‘Fil’ Talerico ‘95 is the trauma and emergency preparedness coordinator at St. Elizabeth Medical Center in Utica, N.Y. She is responsible for the coordination and care for critically injured trauma patients. She is a member of the Board of St. Elizabeth College
Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y.  

**Amy Shaver ‘96 G’98** has joined Alfred State College as associate professor of nursing. Previously, she was director of the nursing program at Maria College. She earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nursing from SUNYIT and a doctorate in rural nursing from Rensselaer Polytechnic University. Amy lives in Albany, N.Y.

**Brenda Carney, MS, RN, FNP-C ‘97 G’08** has joined Faxton-St. Luke’s Healthcare’s Adirondack Community Physicians in Boonville, N.Y., as a family nurse practitioner. Brenda graduated with a doctorate in nursing from SUNYIT and lives in Ilion, N.Y. She has been with EDGE since 2011 and lives in Utica, N.Y.

**Dina Radeljas ‘05 G’08** was hired as the assistant director of vocational services for The Arc, Oneida-Lewis chapter of NYSARC, Inc. in her new role, Radaljas will provide for the development and implementation of vocational and clinical programs. She is currently pursuing a doctorate in psychology from Capella University and is also an adjunct instructor at Mohawk Valley Community College.

**Maureen Carney ‘08** has been promoted to controller of Mohawk Valley Enterprises Corporation (EDGE), where she will oversee the financial affairs at EDGE, its subsidiaries and other economic development organizations that contract with EDGE for staff support. She has been with EDGE since 2011 and lives in Ilion, N.Y.

**Jessica Wilbert, RN, MS, FNP-BC ‘07** has joined the office of Dr. Emile Wssel at Faxton-St. Luke’s Healthcare as a nurse practitioner. Jessica is also a nursing instructor at St. Elizabeth College of Nursing in Utica, N.Y., and is currently pursuing a post-master’s certificate in nursing education from SUNYIT.

**Pauline Mack G’02** has recently been promoted to data-warehouse architect in the information technology systems department at the Utica National Insurance Group in New Hartford, N.Y.

**Allison Greco ‘02** is a tax manager for D’Arcangelo & Co., LLC in Rome, N.Y. She was recently designated a certified valuation analyst by the National Association of Certified Valuators and Analysts. Allison is married with three children and is a native of Utica, N.Y.

**Antonius “Tony” Rivera ‘02 G’05** is now the assistant director for academic community engagement/coordinator of Bonner Service Leaders for Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y.

**Bill Read, Amy Mlynarczyk ’13, and Peter Perkins at the recognition for the establishment of the Day, Scarfile and Read Scholarship**

**Kevin Mereness ‘98** is a manufacturing engineer at ConMed and lives in Utica, N.Y.

**Jordan Ross ‘01** was recently promoted to manager of Indium Corporation’s engineered solders and thermal materials. He will also be responsible for new product launches and the development and execution of regional and application strategies.

**Pauline Mack G’02** has recently been promoted to data-warehouse architect in the information technology systems department at the Utica National Insurance Group in New Hartford, N.Y.

**Allison Greco ‘02** is a tax manager for D’Arcangelo & Co., LLC in Rome, N.Y. She was recently designated a certified valuation analyst by the National Association of Certified Valuators and Analysts. Allison is married with three children and is a native of Utica, N.Y.

**Antonius “Tony” Rivera ‘02 G’05** is now the assistant director for academic community engagement/coordinator of Bonner Service Leaders for Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y.

**Lynne Browne ‘04** received the John Hubbard Memorial Award in the Faces of Central New York Portrait Category at the 10th Annual Danella Photographic Weekend for her photographs “First Time for Everything.”

**Dina Radeljas ‘05 G’08** was hired as the assistant director of vocational services for The Arc, Oneida-Lewis chapter of NYSARC, Inc. in her new role, Radaljas will provide for the development and implementation of vocational and clinical programs. She is currently pursuing a doctorate in psychology from Capella University and is also an adjunct instructor at Mohawk Valley Community College.

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**Kyle Reybirtz ‘09** is an officer in the U.S. Air Force and lives in Woburn, Mass.

**Jeffrey Moro ‘09** was named client relations manager for the finance team of Blue Ocean Strategic Capital LLC, of Syracuse, N.Y. Jeffrey will provide client account support and maintenance and develop financial plans to meet client goals.

**Jacklyn Rosemeyer ‘09** is an account executive at the Fortus Group in Utica, N.Y. She will oversee a variety of key accounts nationwide. Jacklyn received the Fortus Group’s “Top Recruiter” Award for 2012, placing the most candidates over the year.

**Edward Benn ‘09** joined INFICON as an IT support technician.

**Dan Levett ‘10** has accepted a job at Community Bank, N.A. as a commercial credit analyst. Dan is engaged to Honora Gaffney ‘10 and they will be celebrating their wedding on August 17, 2013.

**Cory Wiest ‘10** is a senior program analyst at Albany Medical Center and lives in Albany, N.Y.

**Justin Hayduk ‘10** is a designer at Bechtel and lives in Glenville, N.Y. Justin is pursuing a graduate degree in mechanical engineering at Union Graduate School.

**Armela Bostandzic ‘10** is a data information clerk at BNY Mellon and lives in Utica, N.Y.
President Yeigh, Peter Perkins, Nick Alger ’96, Michele Sallsbury ’94, John Marsh, Mike Evke ’84, and Provost William Durgin at the establishment of the NYSTEC Scholarship.

Peter Nuzzolo ’10 is a computer instructor at City College of New York and lives in Staten Island, N.Y. He is pursuing a graduate degree in communication arts at New York Institute of Technology.

Michelle Camarda ’10 is a family nurse practitioner at the Richard E. Winter Cancer Center of Claxton–Hepburn Medical Center in Ogdensburg, N.Y. She lives in Hammond, N.Y., with her husband Tom.

Aubree Chandler ’10 is a procurement specialist at CXtec and lives in Rome, N.Y.

Kathryn Mannella-DeRosia ’10 is an administrative assistant at Indium Corporation and lives in Utica, N.Y.

Crystal Chapple ’10 is an R.N. staff nurse at Oneida Healthcare Center and lives in Sherrill, N.Y. She is a student in the M.S. in family nurse practitioner program at SUNYIT.

William Bass ’10 is an environmental scientist at Saudi Aramco and lives in Saudi Arabia. He is pursuing a graduate degree at King Abdullah University of Science and Technology.

Amy Rochford ’10 is a clinical research specialist at Synta Pharmaceuticals and lives in Southborough, Mass.

Tanya Marr ’10 is a PSL trainer at Upstate Hospital and lives in Whitesboro, N.Y. She is a student in the M.S. in family nurse practitioner program at SUNYIT.

Matthew Lacy G’10 is a district executive at Boy Scouts Of America and lives in Lowell, Mass.


Ayush Sahay G’10 is a software engineer at Lionbridge.

Diane Wicks-Miller G’10 is a senior manager, solution development at NTT America, Inc. and lives in Richfield Springs, N.Y.

Joe Alban ‘11 is a senior program manager at Albany Medical Center and lives in Ravena, N.Y.

Crystal Rickard ’11 is employed by American Mobile Healthcare and lives in Cold Brook, N.Y.

Sean Peterson ’11 is a PC Tech at Aspen Dental and lives in Syracuse, N.Y.

Matthew Brown ’11 is an associate embedded systems engineer at ATTO Technology Inc.

Amanda Duell ’11 recently completed U.S. Navy basic training at Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Ill. During the eight-week program, Amanda completed a variety of training, which included classroom study and practical instruction on naval customs, first aid, firefighting, water safety and survival, and shipboard and aircraft safety.

Patricia Timmler ’11 is a customer service representative at Axa Equitable and lives in Oneida, N.Y.

Nicole Clinch ’11 is a geek squad consultation agent at Best Buy and lives in Medford, N.Y.

Michelle Lewis ’11 is an office assistant at Carbone Auto Group and lives in Clark Mills, N.Y.

Susanna Tom ’11 is a benefits representative at ComMed Corporation and lives in New York Mills, N.Y. She is pursuing a graduate degree in human resource management at SUNY Oswego.

Jessica Bezon ’11 is a clinical instructor at Crouse Hospital College of Nursing and lives in North Syracuse, N.Y. She is pursuing a graduate degree in nursing education at SUNYIT.

Justin Hayes ’11 is a sales manager at Dave Hayes Appliance Center Inc. and lives in New Hartford, N.Y.

Deborah Chirillo ’11 is an R.N. at Faxton-St. Luke’s Healthcare and lives in Utica, N.Y.

Melissa Klock, RHIA ’11 is a release of information specialist II at Healthport and lives in Edwards, N.Y.

Matthew Crumb ’11 is an identity engineer at Identyport and lives in Austin, Texas.

Allan Sundberg, Jr. ’11 is a resident case worker at John Bosco House, Inc. and lives in Rome, N.Y.

Julianne Breen-Carney ’11 lives in Clinton, N.Y., and remembers Dr. Laura Francis-Gladney.

Kathryn Freiszat ’11 is a recruiting and research coordinator at KCO Resource Management and lives in Schenectady, N.Y. She is pursuing an MBA and an HR Certificate at Union Graduate College.

Devin Will ’11 is a customer service associate at Lowes and lives in Rome, N.Y.

Cynthia De Leon ’11 G’13 is a counselor/tutor/coach at Manhattan Youth After-School Program and lives in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Olga Gonzalez ’11 is a diagnosis-related group validator at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and lives in Copiague, N.Y.

Brett Patten ’11 is a software quality assurance engineer at Navicure and lives in Duluth, Ga.

Shanta Sanders ’11 is an accounts receivable specialist at Northeast Parent & Child Society and lives in Schenectady, N.Y.

Michael Shue ’11 is a computer operator aide at Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES and lives in Port Leyden, N.Y.

Christina Perri ’11 is a coder/abstractor I at Phelps Memorial Hospital Center and lives in Scarsdale, N.Y.

Wayne Pritchard ’11 is a production worker at Remington Arms Company LLC and lives in Frankfort, N.Y.

Aaron Swancott ’11 is an admissions counselor at SUNYIT and lives in Utica, N.Y. He is pursuing a graduate degree in sport management at SUNY Cortland.

Liz Berry ’11 is a financial aid officer at SUNYIT and lives in Canastota, N.Y.

Lindsay Berardino ’11 is a server at The Tailor and The Cook restaurant and lives in Utica, N.Y.

Michael Garling ’11 is an IT administrator at Thomas Electronics Inc. and lives in Canandaigua, N.Y.
Desiree Mendoza ’11 is employed by UCP and lives in Camden, N.Y. She is pursuing a graduate degree in clinical mental health counseling at Syracuse University.

Edin Music ’11 is a Training Coordinator at Walmart Stores Inc. and lives in Utica, N.Y. Edin is pursuing an MBA at SUNYIT.

Latisha Daughtry ’11 lives in Brooklyn, N.Y. She is pursuing an MBA at Long Island University Brooklyn Campus.

Jeanyhwh Desulme ’11 lives in Rochester, N.Y. He is pursuing a graduate degree in information technology at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Dan Stalloch ’11 lives in Ilion, N.Y., and is pursuing an M.S. in computer and information science at SUNYIT.

Julie (Barber) Rose G’11 is an admissions counselor at Alfred State College and lives in Hornell, N.Y.

Danielle Martorella G’11 is an office coordinator at Assist2Sell and lives in Utica, N.Y.

Bryce Oleski G’11 is a business account executive at AT&T and lives in Holland Patent, N.Y.

Danielle Laporte G’11 is an information assurance analyst at Booz Allen Hamilton.

Linda Young G’11 is a nurse practitioner at Ellis Medicine and lives in Schenectady, N.Y.

Tracey Wuest G’11 is an energy efficiency analyst at National Grid and lives in Sherrill, N.Y.

Melissa Breault G’11 is a family nurse practitioner and R.N. at Seton Health/St. Peter’s Partners and lives in Waterford, N.Y.

Ellen Herritt G’11 is an RN home telehealth care coordinator at Stratton VA Medical Center and lives in Albany, N.Y.

Kristin Glass G’11 is the assistant director of admissions for marketing and communications at SUNYIT and lives in New Hartford, N.Y.

Katherine DelPrato G’11 is a FNP at Upstate Hospital and lives in Syracuse, N.Y.

Sonja Nelson G’11 is a Supervisory Accountant at US Army and lives in Bel Air, Md.

Daniee Hurlbert ’12 is public relations and development director at the Utica Zoo and lives in Utica N.Y. She writes: “As director, I supervise the revenue center, membership department, donor management, advertising and graphics, special events, and community relations. I work directly with the executive director of the Zoo and I am part of the management team, which is composed of directors from animal care, education and grounds departments.” Daniee is also currently pursuing a Network + Certification through MVCC.

Frank Aceto ’12 was recently promoted to assistant manager of First Niagara Bank in Barneveld, N.Y.

Sarah Lalonde ’12 G’12 recently joined E.J. Noble Hospital as the nurse practitioner for the Russell Clinic and the Hermon-DeKalb School based clinic. She lives in Ogdensburg, N.Y.

Katrina Seran Ernest ’09 and Christopher William Mayba ’12, both graduates of SUNYIT, were married on October 13, 2012, at St. Peter’s Armenian Church in Watervliet, N.Y. Fellow SUNYIT alumni and volleyball teammates of the bride Courtney Ruether Harrigan ’10 and Lindsay Meislin ’10 were bridesmaids. Also in attendance were SUNYIT alumni Colleen Caraher ’09, Justin Harrigan ’11, Nick Hagerbaumer ’09 and Conor McGuigan ’09. The bride is working as a Project Coordinator for AWS Truepower, LLC, and the groom is working as an Inside Engineering Sales Coordinator for ATCO Emissions Management, both located in Albany, N.Y. Following a honeymoon in Aruba, the couple resides in The Capital Region.

Faculty Note
Russell L. Kahn, associate professor of communication, has published an article entitled “A Taxonomy for Choosing, Evaluating, and Integrating in-the-Cloud Resources in a University Environment” in the 2012-2013 edition of the Journal of Educational Technology Systems, Vol. 41, No. 2. The article describes how teachers can choose Web 2.0 resources to meet the needs of students’ different learning styles. Kahn has been a member of the SUNYIT faculty since 1990.

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Wildcat Weekend

September 27-29

sunyit.edu/wildcatweekend