

# CONNECTIONS

A Magazine for Alumni and Friends of Herkimer County Community College

Volume 2 | Issue 1



FALL 2007

# Growth, Change and the Heart of the Academic Enterprise

In our last edition of Connections Magazine, we proudly celebrated our collective milestone—the 40-year anniversary of Herkimer County Community College. We reflected on several advancements made in our four-decade history. A lot has changed in that time; from a student body that has grown significantly in enrollment and diversity to technological advancements in teaching, learning and communication. When I look back at the many changes, I am extremely pleased in what we have built together.



Growth and change are at the heart of the college experience—after all, the purpose of academic exploration is for students to think about old subjects in new ways, or address entirely new subjects by asking questions that will allow for their personal growth and development. From a non-human, operational standpoint, facilities tend to be an area on a college campus that experience the most fluctuation and growth. And they should be.

When I arrived at Herkimer in 1986, I was inspired by our faculty and the creative ways they utilized the campus library. They truly made it the core of the academic enterprise. Last spring, HCCC embarked upon a \$6.8 million renovation and expansion of the Library, with completion expected in spring 2008. For the next forty years and beyond, our Library needs to continue being at the center of the student learning experience.

This construction project will include an expansion and modernization of the Library, Learning Center and Bookstore, along with smart classrooms with updated technology, additional and enhanced study and reading areas, computer labs, lounge space for students and a Student Government Office.

The Library will be dedicated and open to the public on April 25, 2008. We hope you will be able to join us for this special event. Later that day, we will host our second performance in the Robert H. Wood Great Artists Series. The Ethos Percussion Group and the Lark Quartet will bring their internationally recognized talent to HCCC for an evening of outstanding music.

While the Library project has our full attention over the next few months, we are also working closely with the College Board of Trustees and the Herkimer County College Foundation Board of Directors, along with faculty and staff, to identify additional areas on campus in need of updating to keep HCCC at the forefront of community colleges in New York state. We will keep you posted on our facilities progress and as always, be assured that your support of our endeavors benefiting HCCC students is greatly appreciated. After 40 years, we are still building and we couldn't do it without you.

Ronald F. Williams, Ed.D.  
President

## CONNECTIONS

A Magazine for Alumni and Friends of Herkimer County Community College

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*Director of Athletics Donald Dutcher, HCCC President Ronald Williams and Dean of Students Matthew Hawes proudly display the The Pepsi/NATYCAA award, given annually to recognize overall athletic program excellence by a two-year college. (see page 12 for full story)*



# Radio-TV Broadcasting Undergoes Digital Conversion

*The Radio-TV Broadcasting program has come a long way since its beginnings in Johnson Hall in 1972 under David Champoux, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Emeritus. The television studio, HCTV; radio station WVHC 91.5 FM; editing suites and faculty offices are a focal point of the Technology Center, constructed in 1991. HCCC recently upgraded its labs from analog to digital equipment, providing state-of-the-art studios and editing suites for Herkimer students.*

Professor of Radio-TV Broadcasting Kal Socolof was appointed to the HCCC faculty in 1979, and has witnessed the program's growth first-hand. "My first year teaching here, we played back video on a black and white reel-to-reel machine, moving the reel with your fingers," Socolof said. "The industry is so fluid, you need to be two to three years ahead to stay current. We're already talking about what students will need in 10 years."

The digital conversion took place over five years, and now provides students with equipment they will use in the real world. The editing suites boast 10 AVID stations. This top-of-the-line editing equipment is the professional standard. Work can be saved to a server, and others in the group can access and edit the same footage simultaneously. "AVID" editing is often noted in movie credits.

### HCCC Alumnus Works on Major Motion Pictures

Shane Hurlbut '84 was the director of photography for the highly acclaimed sports drama "We Are Marshall" from Warner Brothers Pictures. This inspiring true story is set in Huntington, WV, a small town steeped in the rich tradition of college football. On a fateful night in 1970, 75 members of Marshall's football team and coaching staff were killed in a plane crash. Matthew McConaughey leads the ensemble cast as Jack Lengyel, a young coach who was determined to rebuild Marshall University's football program and in the process help to heal a community. Matthew Fox, David Strathairn, Ian McShane and Anthony Mackie round out the cast.

Hurlbut also worked with Jerry Seinfeld to lens a series of trailers for the animated feature "The Bee Movie" from DreamWorks Pictures slated to open November 2, 2007 nationwide.



Associate Professor of Radio-TV Mary Ann Carroll, a graduate of HCCC, studied under both Champoux and Socolof before beginning her teaching career at Herkimer in 1986. "They took a chance on me, and accepted my work experience in place of a master's degree, allowing me to work on my degree while teaching," Carroll said. "I have a lot of respect and gratitude for the people here, including Dave and Kal. There is a drive the pride in the program creates," she added.

Carroll said the year she graduated from HCCC (1980), the College had just converted to color broadcasting, producing the "Kaleidoscope" program that aired on local cable stations; as well as the "Saturday Magazine." "We've made amazing strides," Carroll said. "Four-year schools have been so surprised and impressed with our program." "They will look at us to see what we're doing," Socolof added.

The program also uses a mobile production truck, which allows for live coverage of athletic events and campus programs. A live student-produced newscast airs on HCTV, allowing students to rotate among the various jobs of news anchor, producer, director and camera operator. WVHC radio, which originally broadcast only to the McLaughlin College Center, began sending its signal to the local community in 1993. With the use of automation, the station is now on the air 24/7. While the general manager of the station is HCCC employee and alum, Michael Giudice '81, everyone else working at the station is a student. "While most colleges run their radio station as a student activity," Socolof said, "here it is part of the curriculum. You only work at the station if you're a Radio-TV major," he said.

HCCC's Radio-TV alumni have gone on to work in the field in varied positions. Locally, WKTU employs Herkimer grads Don Shipman '00, Nate Crosset '02, Kirk Tupaj '88, Pat Bailey '03 and Katie Drake '01 in positions ranging from morning anchor to videographer and advertising sales. Shane Hurlbut '84 has been director of photography for major motion pictures including "We are Marshall." Joe Stemmer '99 is a pre-production coordinator for "Days of Our Lives." Mary Romeo Sparagna '88 is a marketing consultant for Regent Broadcasting; and Heather Sasaki '94 is a director for NHK, the national broadcasting company of Japan. "Our alums are employed in the field throughout New York State, the U.S. and overseas," Socolof said. "It speaks to the quality of Herkimer's program," he added.

# A Class Act

*HCCC Announces*

## *the Alumni Class Gift Project*

This fall, HCCC unveiled a new way that alumni and friends of the College can 'endow the future' to support generations of students. The *Alumni Class Gift Project* will help establish individual class funds representing every graduating class from Herkimer County Community College.

These funds will create individual endowments representing each class. A class fund can be considered an endowment once it reaches \$50,000. After it becomes endowed, each fund will generate interest income to ensure that Herkimer remains and continues to grow as a premier educational institution.

The income generated each year will be used to meet the important funding priorities facing Herkimer County Community College. These priorities could include: student scholarships, facility upgrades, employee professional development, program development, instructional upgrades and technology upgrades or any other program deemed worthy by the HCCC Board of Trustees and the Herkimer County College Foundation Board.

The funds will be overseen and administered by the board of the Herkimer County College Foundation working closely with the Herkimer County Community College Board of Trustees and the College President.

Gifts of all sizes to the *Alumni Class Gift Project* are welcomed. These gifts will be recognized during the year in our Connections Magazine and in our year-end Annual Report. Gifts can also be made in memoriam or as an honorarium to a classmate or special professor.

Gifts and pledges of \$10,000 will be recognized perpetually in all appropriate publications. Gifts of more than \$10,000 can be pledged over a period of up to five years.

To make a gift, or to find out more about the new *Alumni Class Gift Project*, contact Vincent Casale, director of development, at (315) 866-0300, ext. 8459 or e-mail [casaleva@herkimer.edu](mailto:casaleva@herkimer.edu).

## **FOUNDATION ANNUAL RAFFLE**

Proceeds to benefit the works of the Herkimer County College Foundation, Inc., including student scholarships



## **Grand Prize** **2008 Harley-Davidson** **Road King Custom** **or \$12,500 CASH**

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**available for sale**

Drawing will be held at the  
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July 3, 2008

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Herkimer, NY 13350

For more information call:

**315-866-0300 ext.8459**

# New Dean Brings a Wealth of Experience, Interests and Talents to HCCC

## Dr. Daniel J. Murphy, Dean of Academic Affairs

*Music, travel, magic, books are just a few of the pastimes of Herkimer County Community College's new academic dean, Dr. Daniel J. Murphy. Currently, however, Dr. Murphy spends much of his time listening to the various stakeholders of the College and learning about the intricate workings of its operations.*



Daniel J. Murphy, of Barneveld, was appointed Dean of Academic Affairs in early April. He brings with him 25 years of experience in teaching, academic planning, student affairs and institutional advancement. Murphy taught professional and technical communication at SUNYIT, where he also held various administrative positions including chair of the Communication and Humanities Department, graduate program director, interim vice president for student affairs, dean of the school of arts and sciences, and vice president for resource development. While at SUNYIT, he received the prestigious State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching as well as the SUNYIT Student Association's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

At HCCC, Murphy is responsible for program development, supervision of teaching faculty and academic professional staff, and the operations of academic areas including the library, learning center, Internet Academy, College Now, academic advisement center and community education. Accepting the top academic leadership position at Herkimer was an easy decision for Murphy. He came to HCCC with some familiarity as he had taught courses at Herkimer in the late 1990's in the jointly registered professional and technical communication program. "I had gotten to know students and faculty here, and really enjoyed the people."

"I am pleased to have someone with Dr. Murphy's strong academic credentials and broad academic philosophy," said HCCC President Ronald F. Williams. "He is already making a tremendous impact here at Herkimer."

Murphy has made listening and learning a priority in his first several months in the dean's position. "I am trying to do a lot of listening, so I can be proactive and anticipate opportunities," said Murphy. He has spent countless hours

meeting individually with faculty and staff. “It is important to build a sense of partnership and understand the underlying factors of issues.”

Although listening and learning is high on his agenda, Murphy is moving right along on several initiatives, including the development of new programs. “We are taking a hard look at our academic offerings with input from various advisory groups, including students.” Several new programs have been proposed with approval expected soon for a few. Murphy is also leading the effort to revamp the registration process which currently consists of an ‘Advisement Day’ when students are advised and registered by faculty. Although he has not yet determined specific changes to the process, Murphy expects there to be a longer advisement period giving students and faculty more time to meet before registration takes place.

Assistant Professor of Mathematics Michael Oriolo, who is currently serving in the role of associate dean in the Math/Science/Allied Health/Physical Education division, is very encouraged by Dr. Murphy. “I really appreciate that his goals are based on the advancement of academics at Herkimer, and he wants to do the best he can for our students, faculty and staff.” Oriolo describes Murphy as inclusive and even-tempered. “He listens to everyone, takes advice easily, and is willing to try new things that are recommended.” Oriolo has been employed at HCCC in various teaching and administrative capacities since 1981.

HCCC Digital Graphics & Design Instructor Blake Pitcher ’99 had the opportunity to learn from Dr. Murphy when he taught as an adjunct at Herkimer, and later at SUNYIT for classes in both his bachelor’s and master’s degree programs. “Dr. Murphy has a way of explaining complex ideas in a simple, straight-forward manner.” Pitcher describes Murphy as being very approachable and easy-going, while holding students to high expectations. “We knew he meant business, and his style had a way of making us want to excel in his classes.”

A Rochester native, Murphy holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in English from Iona College and Boston College, respectively. He spent ten years teaching high school English in the Monterey, California area, before beginning work on his doctoral degree at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He earned

a Ph.D. in communication and rhetoric from RPI in 1994, and the management and leadership in education certificate from Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education. He has published numerous articles, presented at conferences nationwide, served on many committees and with various community organizations including the Genesis Group and the Rotary Club of Utica.

In addition to his exceptional educational career, Murphy has become accomplished in many unique interests. He has played the bagpipes for 38 years, and although he has played in numerous bands through the years, he now mostly plays for special occasions. He has made several trips to Europe including England, Scotland, Ireland and Italy. He is an avid reader of both fiction and non-fiction, and is particularly interested in books related to organizational management and education. He has served as president of the International Brotherhood of Magicians, a union of which he proudly carries a card. He and his wife, Mary, also a Rochester native and graduate of RPI, have lived in Barneveld for many years.

Dr. Murphy is excited about being at Herkimer and has many ideas for the future. His plans include meeting and collaborating with alumni representatives. “I am looking forward to working with alumni as they are critical to the long-term well-being of the College.”

Murphy’s optimism and understanding of organizational and social dynamics that affect the institution are evident. At a recent faculty/administrative staff meeting, he spoke metaphorically of the interpersonal interactions and social dynamics of the college community. “It is like a tapestry woven with the participation of each person affiliated with the campus. It is as if there are strands of all different colors, textures, widths, and styles, each as unique as the individuals themselves who collectively combine the strands in infinitely possible patterns where no one person is able to control the design of the whole. Sometimes when we weave our strands, the configurations change in ways we may not expect; sometimes the threads are constrained, stretch, perhaps even break. But if we can smooth frayed edges and tie some broken ends, then we maintain our participation, and the tapestry continues to evolve. No one can predict what it will look like at the end, but we all have a hand in the creation to the extent we choose to become involved.”

# Autism Author Finds Field Fascinating

*Veronica Zysk*

*Class of '83, A.A.S., Business: Accounting*

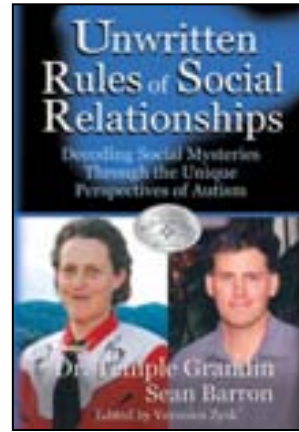
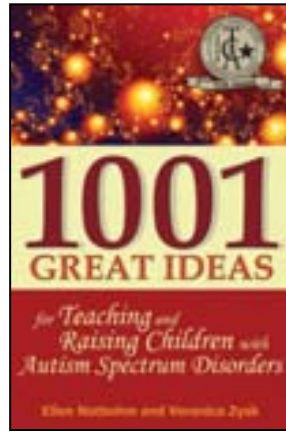


Veronica Zysk ('83, A.A.S., Business: Accounting) is self-employed as Managing Editor of Autism Asperger's Digest magazine, a position she has held since the magazine's debut in 1999. Zysk also writes, edits and speaks within the autism field. Autism is a life-long developmental disability, impairing various aspects of typical development. Individuals with autism experience difficulty in verbal and/or nonverbal communication, ranging from not speaking at all to being unable to interpret body language or participate comfortably in two-way conversation. The most outstanding hallmark of autism is difficulty with reciprocal social interaction. This can range from appearing to want social isolation to experiencing social awkwardness in attaining and maintaining ongoing relationships. Asperger's Syndrome refers to individuals within the autism spectrum who are verbal and are often quite gifted intellectually, but are still challenged socially.

While Zysk's degree from HCCC is in computer assisted accounting, she credits the business skills she learned at Herkimer as integral to her success over the years in her varied career. "While at HCCC, I had a job in the business office working for Jim Hill (Dean of Administration, Emeritus). He was a very positive influence on my life, as were many of my professors. Their personal attention and encouragement helped me gain confidence in stretching my own boundaries and learning to take risks if I wanted to get ahead. Jim provided "real world" advice, taught me to be a professional and trust in myself. It echoed from my professors as well."

Zysk attended HCCC as an adult learner, after attending William Smith College in the early 70's. "I was in the first computerized accounting class at HCCC, where we used punch cards and worked on a big main frame computer. I learned programming, which gave me the logical framework to easily pick up different application programs later on, like





Lotus, d-Base, and Excel,” Zysk said. Following graduation, she took a job in the business office of a Washington, D.C. law firm. Zysk then went on to work as assistant to the comptroller and assistant to the business manager of Ramada Corporation, managing 11 hotels on the east coast. When that office disbanded, Zysk took a “fascinating job” with a real estate development firm, as the assistant to the company president and his two sons. “I told them in the interview I wanted challenge, to learn new things. They were looking for someone with strong computer skills, so it was a perfect fit. The first day I came to work they had jokingly put up signs reading ‘door of opportunity,’ ‘door of creativity’ and ‘door of challenge’ throughout the office.” Zysk later went on to become a project manager, supervising the construction end of a 183-unit, million-dollar condo renovation project for the firm.

“My years at Herkimer helped me learn to rise up and face any challenge,” Zysk said. She credits HCCC’s small classes and accessible professors with teaching her important career skills like reliability, resourcefulness and staying focused.

When she was ready for a new phase of her career, Zysk became executive director of the Autism Society of America. “I wanted to do something meaningful, and they were looking for a director with a business background, rather than just a passion for the cause. I jumped into the fire, knowing very little about autism, but confident I could learn along the way,” she said. “It’s been a fascinating journey,” Zysk said. During her 5 ½ year tenure, the Society doubled the number of chapters, tripled staff, and became financially healthy. She initiated fundraising efforts, including a concert with the late Luciano Pavarati.

Zysk then transitioned to Texas, where she became vice president of administration for Future Horizons, now the world’s leading autism-specific publishing company. In 1999 she accepted the challenge to create the first national magazine on autism, the Autism Asperger’s Digest. “At that point, I also took the leap into self-employment. I love it!” she said. Zysk had been working from her hometown of Little Falls until recently, when she relocated to Waynesville, North Carolina. The magazine travels with her.

As managing editor of the magazine, Zysk chooses articles, writes some, handles all submissions, coordinates the photo shoots and supervises the layout; a schedule that becomes hectic at times. “Magazine work means meeting deadlines: I work weekends and evenings, doing whatever needs to be done to meet the publication date.”

Now an accomplished author, Zysk published her first book, *1001 Great Ideas for Teaching and Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders* in 2003. Since its release it has occupied a spot on the top 20 autism best sellers list with Amazon.com. She’s currently working on a sequel to release in 2008.

“There has been such a dramatic change in the evolution of understanding the disorder. It’s not just a behavior disorder. People with autism spectrum disorders have a lack of social understanding because their neurological ‘wiring’ is different. They have to be taught things we take for granted,” Zysk said. “Learning about autism has become my passion,” she added.

Zysk sees herself staying in this field until retirement, but is still “eager for challenge.” “If you stay focused on your goals, you find your own motivation,” Zysk said. “Herkimer County Community College gave me the personal and professional skills to help me realize my dreams.”

# HCCC Celebrates Our Newest Alums: The Class of 2007



*Following the ceremony, HCCC president Dr. Ronald F. Williams talks with the newest alumni and their families. Pictured here is Dr. Williams with Eileen Coyle.*



*Accepting the 2007 Alumnus of the Year Award on behalf of his daughter, Dr. Betsy Gekonge '99, is HCCC adjunct Christopher Gekonge.*

On Friday May 18, friends and family gathered to celebrate the accomplishments of the Class of 2007. There were 553 degrees and 15 certificates conferred by President Ronald F. Williams, Dean of Academic Affairs Daniel Murphy and Dean of Students Matthew Hawes. Graduates hailed from sixteen different countries, including: the Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, South Korea, Lithuania, Poland, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela and Vietnam.

The student address, *A Fork in the Road* was given by Joelle Hoke (Business: Business Administration, '07). Her message encouraged the Class of 2007 to stay connected with friends made at HCCC for a lifetime.

Three graduates received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence, given annually to students who earn a grade point average of 3.78 or higher and make a significant contribution to their campus and community. This year's winners were: Ryan Doyle, Vernon Center, Joelle Holk, Mohawk, and Ashley Saxe, Endicott.

The Herkimer County Community College Alumni Association selected Dr. Betsy Gekonge '99 as the 2007 Alumnus of the Year. She earned an A.S. degree from HCCC in science, subsequently completing a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and molecular biology from Hamilton College. She was recruited for a Ph.D. program at the University of Pennsylvania where she earned a doctoral degree in biochemistry and molecular biology. She has begun a post-doctoral research program at the world-renowned Wistar Institute in Philadelphia where she will continue ground breaking research into the pathogenesis of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). As a native of South Africa, Gekonge has been determined to promote knowledge and education of HIV/AIDS. She is the co-founder of Kids Circle International, an organization working to promote education and literacy in areas of Kenya affected by HIV/AIDS.

If you would like to nominate an individual to be considered for the 2008 Alumnus of the Year Award, please contact Vince Casale, director of development, at [casaleva@herkimer.edu](mailto:casaleva@herkimer.edu) or call (315) 866-0300, x-8268.

# President Williams to Retire in Spring 2008

*Dr. Ronald F. Williams has guided Herkimer County Community College for more than two decades. President Williams recently announced his intention to retire in spring 2008. Following is his retirement announcement to the campus community.*

“Since July 1986, Herkimer County Community College has been my life. Prior to coming to HCCC, I served seven years as President of Black Hawk College in Illinois. A college president’s job is one requiring 24 hour days, seven days a week. However, it is a job that can bring great satisfaction. Greatest among them is the ability to change an institution, making it better able to meet the evolving needs of students. During the past 21 years, I have had the opportunity to work with some excellent staff members who have created new academic programs, built new buildings, created the largest student housing complex of any community college, and created the second largest internet instructional program in New York State. I have worked with some phenomenal teaching faculty who understand the community college mission and have great expertise in meeting the learning needs of our students. The College’s athletic teams have won 27 national championships and 25 national academic team awards.

In 42 years, HCCC has had only two presidents; it is now time for the College to select its third. I have indicated to the Board of Trustees my intention to retire sometime this spring, the exact date yet to be determined. I thank

all those in the College community who have helped me achieve goals that at times seemed unreachable. My thanks also go to those in the community at large who have been so supportive, and also to our Board of Trustees who understand the needs of our college and of our students.”



*“In the end, it is all about what we do for students that will determine the greatness of Herkimer County Community College. This College has had an outstanding past and is positioned for an even greater future.”*

*Editor's Note:* The spring issue of *Connections* will chronicle President Williams’ history at HCCC, with photos highlighting the many lives impacted by his leadership. HCCC’s website [www.herkimer.edu](http://www.herkimer.edu), currently features a tribute to Dr. Williams. Photo memories will be added to this album as the campus community reflects upon the many contributions of HCCC’s second president.

**Class of 1971**

**William C. Plante**, Fort Covington, NY earned bachelor's and master's degrees from SUC at Cortland. He has spent 28 years teaching and coaching at Salmon River Central School. As men's varsity hockey coach, he holds the all-time New York State High School record with over 525 wins. His teams have won 20 league titles and 18 sectional championships. Plante coaches girls' varsity volleyball and led them to a sectional championship. He has been inducted into the NYS Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Greater Utica Hall of Fame, SUNY Institute of Technology Hall of Fame and the HCCC Alumni Hall of Honor. Plante serves as president of the NYS High School Hockey Coaches Association.

**Class of 1973**

**Mary Richards Hoy**, Tallahassee, FL recently retired and is enjoying the warm weather.

**Class of 1977**

**Paul Besic**, Silver Springs, FL continues to write music and some of his works have been recorded on CDs.

**Carol Gaudons**, Gloversville, NY graduated from SUNY Albany on May 19, 2007 with a master's degree in social work.

**Class of 1979**

**Kimberley Trombley**, Canton, NY is working in security and safety at St. Lawrence College. She has a 17-year-old daughter.

**Class of 1980**

**John Punzi**, Manassas, VA earned a Ph.D. in biochemistry at the University of Buffalo, and after completing post-doctoral training in protein chemistry he was hired as an

Assistant Professor at the University of Rochester (NY). Eight years ago Punzi moved to Virginia and joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Pesticide Programs where he developed computational methods to estimate dietary exposures to pesticides and reviewed data required for new pesticides to be approved for use in the U.S. Punzi is currently a senior scientist in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, where he manages laboratories involved in measuring pesticides on foods.

**Class of 1981**

**Michael J. Bromm**, Valley Falls, NY earned a B.S. in computer science through the Regents External Degree Program. He is a CPS Investigator for Rensselaer County.

**Fred Allen** (sports medicine) married **Kimberlee Birch** (environmental science & forestry) in December 1981. They moved to Cape Cod with their four sons, Joshua, Dustin, Nicholas and Lucas in 1996. Kim is a physician assistant and both she and Fred are certified clinical nutritionists working together in their own business. Their first granddaughter was born in November 2005. The couple enjoys a great friendship with their former chemistry professor, Joe Brown and his wife Sharon.

**Class of 1983**

**Michele C. Sebring, MSW**, Hernando, FL earned an A.A.S. degree from Niagara County Community College in 1990, a B.S. in business administration from Medaille College in 2001, and an MSW in 2003 from the University at Buffalo. Sebring is currently employed as a program counselor at Children's Home Society of Florida with

the Family Team Coaching Program. Sebring said she does not miss the snow in Central New York, but does miss the food!

**Class of 1986**

**Carole Ann Davies**, Cortland, NY earned a B.S. in special education from SUC at Plattsburgh in 1988. She taught in Boston for a year, then joined the Peace Corps and spent 2.5 years in Honduras. She taught at Cortland High School for 13 years and earned a master's degree in education administration. Davies is currently Director of Special Education in the Marathon Central School District.

**Class of 1987**

**Chris Bond**, Raleigh, NC is a television producer working on supercross motorcycle racing on CBS/Speed. Other credits include NHL Carolina Hurricanes and NASCAR.

**Edith Veach Mourey**, Big Flats, NY earned a B.A. in English Literature from Roberts Wesleyan College in 1989. In 1999, she authored *Elim: Living in the Flow*, a historical/biographical book for Elim Bible Institute in Lima, NY. She married John Mourey in 2000, and they have a daughter, Abbie, born in 2002. Mourey is working as a freelance writer in the Christian market.

**Lori Steet Stilwell**, Herkimer, NY earned a B.S. in business, a B.A. in education and a master's in education. She is a teacher with the Owen D. Young Central School District in Van Hornesville, NY. Stilwell has twin sons, Ryan and Andrew, born February 24, 1997.

**Amy Boser Klimczyk**, Frisco, TX is a licensed occupational therapy assistant at Senior Home Health Agency in McKinney, TX.

**Class of 1989**

**Brian Haak**, St. Johnsville, NY became Associate Counsel to the New York State Assembly Majority Conference in Albany, NY in January 2007. A graduate of Albany Law School, Brian was previously in private practice in Albany. He also spent 20 years in local government, as St. Johnsville town supervisor, town and village justice and trustee.

**Class of 1990**

**Emily Lee DeTraglia**, Sherburne, NY earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from SUC at Cortland in 2000, and a master's in curriculum development and instructional technology from SUNY Albany in 2003. She married Ramiro DeTraglia in 1997. The couple has a son, Ramiro Michael Joseph, born October 2006.

**ALUMNI UPDATE**

RETURN FORM TO: Alumni Association, HCCF, 100 Reservoir Road, Herkimer, NY 13350

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS OF: \_\_\_\_\_  
LAST FIRST MAIDEN

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

UPDATE INFORMATION \_\_\_\_\_

**ALUMNI DUES**

I would like to join the Alumni Association. My \$25 check (payable to HCCC Alumni Association) is enclosed for a one-year membership; \$250 for a lifetime membership.

## Class of 1991

**Bredt McSorley**, Fairport, NY is regional sales manager for HeartLand Express, which has corporate offices in Coralville, Iowa.

## Class of 1992

**Daniel Scheidegger**, Hawthorne, NJ and his wife Suzanne had their first child, Thomas Daniel, on December 29, 2005.

**Karen Sullivan Jones**, Ilion, NY earned a bachelor's degree in physical therapy from Utica College in 1997, and a doctorate in physical therapy from Utica College in December 2006. She is currently an instructor and ACCE in the Physical Therapist Assistant program at HCCC. Jones is a member of APTA, NYPTA, and serves as PTA Club advisor at Herkimer. She received the 2006-2007 Empire Who's Who award for teaching/working in the community. Jones also works per diem as a physical therapist in several local pt departments. She and her husband Doug have two children, Justin and Alyssa.

**Christopher Joy**, Utica, NY was married on September 11, 1999. The couple has a son, Aidan Christopher, born 9/4/02; and twin sons, Derek John and Dylan Anthony, born 7/19/06. Joy is employed by the foreign exchange division of Bank of New York.

## Class of 1993

**Allen Stern**, Atlanta, GA completed his MBA in 2005. He then opened his consulting business, OrganicStats, which focuses on helping companies get the most from their internet presence. He also runs a popular blog on Web 2.0 and social networking located at [www.centernetworks.com](http://www.centernetworks.com).

## Class of 1994

**Mark Baker**, Baldwinsville, NY became senior vice president/CIO of Alliance Bank in August '06. His twin sons, Mike and Chris, are students at SUC at Geneseo; daughter Julie is studying at St. John Fisher College.

**Anthony Vatrano**, Chicago, IL works for Pactiv Corporation as a regional sales manager for the Central U.S.

**Rebecca Herringshaw Hayes**, Ilion, NY married Jamison Hayes in May 1999. They have two children, Emily Marie, 8; and Avery Brynn, born June 21, 2006.

**Michael Kapala**, Utica, NY is program director for Dispute Resolution Center of Herkimer County in Ilion, NY.

**Duane Ely**, Bradenton, FL and his wife Melissa have three children, Josh, Jordan

and Alyssa. He is a firefighter for Southern Fire Rescue District. Ely says he follows the HCCC soccer program on the net—"Keep up the good work Pepe."

## Class of 1996

**Becky Morin Watson**, Hoosick Falls, NY and her husband Jason had a daughter, Abigail Eugenia Ann Watson, on December 9, 2006. Becky is employed at CLS Transportation in Hoosick Falls. She handles limousine, car and van transportation to northeast regional airports, train stations and Vermont hotels and inns.

**Brenda Blask-Lewis**, Herkimer, NY graduated cum laude from Utica College in 1999 with a bachelor of arts degree in political science. She recently completed a 45-hour real estate salesperson pre-licensing course, and is now licensed to sell real estate. Blask-Lewis owns McKeever Independent Abstract. She searches land records and prepares abstracts of title for parcels located throughout New York State. She is also an independent contractor for Mason-Dixon Energy, West Virginia. She and her husband David have four children, Ryan, Jessica, Eric and Krystina.

**Heather Bishop-Dumka**, Tilton, NH is midday host at 96.5FM, "The Mill," a classic rock station owned by SAGA Broadcasting Company. You can hear her live 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Monday through Saturday on the web at [www.965themill.com](http://www.965themill.com). Previously, she had been the midday host on Mix 94.1 for nine years.

## Class of 1997

**Heather Crossett Connell**, Frankfort, NY married Steven Connell on May 26, 2007. She is an LPN at the Rescue Mission of Utica.

**Rebecca Fuller Hensel**, Rochester, NY married Bryan Hensel on October 21, 2006. She is the assistant director/coordinator of pharmacy admissions at St. John Fisher College.

**Karen Harris Murphy**, Newport, NY is a prevention education specialist at Catholic Charities in Ilion, NY. She and her husband have three children, Kody, Cameron and Kaiden.

## Class of 2000

**Julien Fruitier**, Cogolin, France married on September 1, 2006 and the couple is expecting their first child in January 2008.

**Antonette DeRocco Balcom**, Minneapolis, MN graduated from the University of

Colorado at Colorado Springs with a B.A. in biology and a minor in chemistry.

**Leah Korce**, Montpelier, Vermont earned a J.D. degree from Vermont Law School in 2007.

## Class of 2001

**Frank Moracco**, Frankfort, NY graduated from Pepperdine University in Malibu, CA. He is a third grade teacher at West Frankfort Elementary in Frankfort, NY.

## Class of 2002

**Kim Robinson Hubbard**, Oneida, NY married William "Bub" Hubbard on January 14, 2006. The couple had their first child, Cameron William on January 3, 2007. Kim graduated from SUC at Cortland with a B.A. in English and a minor in anthropology.

**Richard K. Yung**, Herkimer, NY, graduated from Campus Peace Officer Academy for Onondaga Community College's new safety force on August 24, 2007.



## Class of 2005

**Dwight Barnett**, Jamaica, NY was named to the Premier Development League all-Eastern Conference Team. Barnett played for the Cape Cod Crusaders, scoring 16 goals and finishing second in the country for the PDL Golden Boot award. He is a senior at NCAA Division II Lynn University (FL).

## Class of 2007

**Steven Murdoch**, Brockport, NY is working toward a bachelor's degree from SUC at Brockport.

## In Memoriam

We extend our sincere sympathy to the families of the following deceased alumni and members of the HCCC family:

**David E. Van Vechten Sr.**, 58, Class of '69, Ilion, NY died May 8, 2007 in St. Luke's Home. He had been employed by the NYS Thruway Authority for nearly 30 years.

**James W. Sutliff**, 50, Class of '77, Liverpool, NY (formerly of Remsen) died unexpectedly on August 14, 2007. He was employed with Lockheed Martin, Liverpool.

**Linda S. Fresco**, 57, Class of '86, Frankfort, NY died June 21, 2007. She was a rural carrier for the Frankfort Post Office and an associate for Wal-Mart, Herkimer.



*Athletic staff members Pepe Aragon '91, Vicky Brown, Jason Rathbun '01, Tom Basel, Matt Lee '01, Sharon Howell '79, Rich Dommer, Amy Brelinsky, Kristy Lynch '99, Julie DelMedico, Don Dutcher '90, Katie Scanlon '01, John Campagna '82 and Dianna Ste-Marie.*

## Pepsi Cup: Honoring Athletics

HCCC recently received a Pepsi/National Alliance of Two-Year College Athletic Administrators (NATYCAA) award for the second consecutive year. Herkimer finished in third place nationally among non-scholarship Division III community college athletic programs both years. The Pepsi/NATYCAA awards are given annually to recognize overall athletic program excellence by two-year colleges at the national level.

Herkimer received the top-ranking among non-scholarship community college athletic programs in New York State. The Generals earned 140 points for national placements in men's soccer, men's and women's cross country, men's and women's lacrosse, baseball, men's and women's bowling, women's swimming and women's track and field.

## Mascot Tryouts



On Saturday, September 8, HCCC staff members volunteered as judges at the campus' first-ever mascot try-outs. The judges included Jason Palkovic, technical assistant, athletics; Ken Morrison, admissions assistant; Jeanne McAvo, secretary to

the president; and Vicki Brown, director of student activities. The College's General Herkimer mascot debuted in November, 2006 as a result of the generous financial support of the HCCC Alumni Association. The mascot's role is to further build tradition into campus life at HCCC and make appearances at campus activities and special events.

*Pictured here: Cynthia Gabriel '87, HCCC associate professor, English and president of the HCCC Alumni Association; HCCC's General Herkimer mascot; and Tim Dunn '00, HCCC Alumni Association board member.*

## In Memoriam:

# Former HCCC Basketball Coach Jack Alofs

Former Herkimer County Community College faculty member and basketball coach Jack Alofs passed away on May 14, 2007 at the age of 70. Alofs taught physical education and coached basketball at Herkimer from 1971 until his retirement in 1991.



During his 20 years at the College, Alofs achieved a 72 percent winning percentage (record of 391-155). Highlights of his 20-year career at Herkimer included a fourth place finish in the National Junior College Division I basketball tournament in Hutchinson, Kansas, in 1987, and a Division III Junior College National Basketball Championship in 1991. Alofs was twice named New York State Junior College Coach of the Year, and was inducted into the Greater Utica Sports Hall of Fame in 2000.

In 2005, Alofs published a book, *Jack Plus 5: Secrets, Strategies, Experiences and Fundamentals in Coaching Winning Basketball*. In his book, Alofs shared his coaching techniques and strategies, as well as many human interest stories about his experiences coaching high school and college basketball. When interviewed about his book in 2005, Alofs said "I worked with a lot of great kids at HCCC, and writing this book helped me relive a lot of memories."

Alofs was a graduate of St. Lawrence University where he earned a bachelor's degree in physical education and a master's degree in administration. A native of Gloversville, and more recently a resident of New Hartford, Alofs leaves his wife of 50 years Marguerite, three children and six grandchildren.

## HCCC Scores in USL

Ryan Pierce and Matt Tanzini, both former Herkimer Generals who now play professional soccer for the Harrisburg City Islanders, helped defeat the Richmond Kickers 8-7 in a nine-round penalty kick shootout after playing to a 1-1 draw through 120 minutes of regulation and overtime. Pierce converted the eighth and final penalty kick to help the Islanders claim their first United Soccer League Second Division Championship. The game was broadcast on the Fox Soccer Channel.



"It was great to watch both players win a professional championship on national TV," said HCCC men's soccer coach Pepe Aragon. "I am very proud and happy for them."

# HCCC's Message from the Alumni Association

President, Cynthia Gabriel '87

*"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."* ~ Maya Angelou

I am a proud graduate of HCCC's Class of 1987, with an A.A. degree in Humanities. I was a first-generation college student with a strong goal to become a successful teacher. I was anxious about facing the new experiences college presents, yet I knew I was in the right place for me. As I entered the doors of my local community college, I immediately felt a sense of belonging and peace. Students with diverse backgrounds came from near and far, but we quickly became an extended family. I immediately felt an immense sense of community.

My classes were taught by exceptional faculty who had devoted their careers to HCCC. The curriculum was exactly what I had been seeking, and I finally had the freedom to tap into my creative energy. I have many fond memories of my classmates and the times we spent together.

I continued with my education and when the opportunity to teach at HCCC presented itself, I made the decision to give back and return to the campus. Very often, my students ask me, "Why isn't HCCC a four year school?" They truly love it here, and build life-long bonds. I must say, that speaks volumes about our tradition of taking care of our students and making them feel part of our larger family, our campus community.

There have been many changes on the campus since my arrival on campus in 1985:

- The radio station is in a new building (not above the cafeteria), and it is digital and mobile.

- We have a technology building that actually connects to PE building (no more cold commutes to the gym).
- Our facilities are equipped with "smart" classrooms with state-of-the-art technology.
- We have built a new recreational gym, parallel to the gym we all ran around.
- We have an updated fitness center near the recreation gym.
- The Hummel Corporate and Professional Education Center is now located in front of the original entrance to the McLaughlin College Center, and provides an excellent training venue for local businesses as well as the campus community.
- There are computer labs on campus, catering to student needs and the Internet Academy.
- Yes...you can obtain an entire degree through the Internet Academy. We offer 18 degree programs and three certificate programs.
- The library is being renovated, and looking more majestic every day.
- There is new housing called "Reservoir Run."
- And for all of you athletes out there, we now have Wehrum Stadium for athletic events.

As alumni, I encourage you to take a trip back to HCCC, where it all began. The landscape may have changed, but we remain connected and committed to our students, who remain a part of our college family. You are a part of that—we welcome your return, and encourage you to reconnect with your extended family on the hill.



## Campus Move-In

On Sunday, September 2, members of the HCCC Alumni Association helped new students move in to the campus residence halls. In addition to a warm welcome, the Alumni Association provided snacks for students and families.

*Pictured: Alumni Association president Cynthia Gabriel '87, with Robert Brenchley, HCC Foundation president (seated) and Alumni Association board member Tim Dunn '00.*

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7th annual World Cuisine Festival:

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Women's Lacrosse Nationals:

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