



the Collage

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Kutztown University

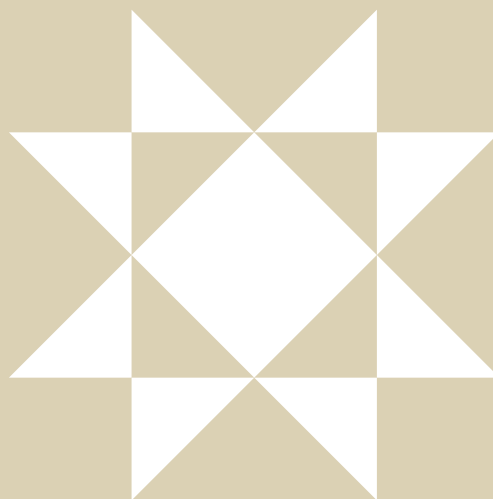
Fall
2025



Dr. Laurie McMillan
Dean of the College of
Liberal Arts & Sciences

DEAN'S CORNER

As I talked with student intern Emma Osborne about shifts in the format of this publication from monthly profiles to semester newsletters, the appropriateness of the title “*Collage*” became obvious. A collage brings together diverse elements that together say something new, something that is more than the sum of its parts. Emma’s new approach shows how bursts of text and image can provide a lens into the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (CLAS). Likewise, the College itself thrives because it is inclusive and interdisciplinary, reflective of our twenty-first century world in which humanities, social sciences, and STEM fields interact and overlap as we try to understand and address complex problems, systems, and solutions. Embracing our differences helps foster the vibrant intellectual and social communities where individuals can find a home and thrive. In this newsletter and beyond, I hope you find in CLAS a space where meaning emerges as we continue to connect with one another.



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Welcome Message

Hello and welcome to the Fall 2025 edition of *The Collage*. This semester we celebrate the importance of belonging, combining passion and profession, and the hard work of both students and faculty. We touch on the favorite Gen Ed courses of Stand-Out Students and how KU helps students understand themselves, others, and the world as a whole. The CLAS Dean’s office is also thrilled to celebrate the 20th anniversary of *The Collage*. A lot has changed over the years, but we have stayed dedicated to celebrating the amazing people and events that make our college, and the university as a whole, a place for discovery and innovation. Join us as we highlight students, faculty, and programs with special notes about our welcoming and inclusive environment.

-Emma Osborne, Writer/Editor of *The Collage*

Student Highlight



Dominic Zientara History: Paralegal Studies

Ancient history has always interested junior history major Dominic Zientara, so when Dr. Chris Saidi told him about the study abroad program in Livingstone, Zambia, he knew he wanted to learn more. The study abroad trip took students to the Livingstone Museum where Dominic had the opportunity to do research and work toward digitalizing the museum archives which contain hundreds of Zambian historical artifacts.

Dominic was excited to research African ancient history more in depth. His interest in this project came from the realization that when ancient African history is taught in schools, it is always about Egypt. He wanted to dig deeper and

get a better idea of the history of other parts of the continent. Besides ancient Egyptian history, he admitted to knowing “next to nothing about Africa.” This led to a conversation with Dr. Saidi about learning more of the continent’s history.

His main goals while at the museum were finding sources for his research on Pre-Colonial Tonga law and helping Dr. Saidi collect photos and information to apply for grants to create a system of digitalization within the museum. As of right now, the only way to get information about Zambian history from the museum is to reach out to the head of the museum or another staff member and hope they are able to find what you’re looking for; then they send pictures or scans via email. This can be hard due to their extensive collection and limited digital resources. Dominic said his research and the increased digitalization of items in the museum are important because “the rest of the world should be able to learn about Zambian history and the whole history of that entire area.” Dominic scanned selective documents he needed for research, but without proper equipment, they were not fit to be uploaded for other scholars to view. In the future, he hopes to get a grant to make the museum’s artifacts and documents accessible to a wider audience.

The Livingstone Museum taught Dominic the importance of prioritizing sources and having a strong work ethic. He recalls reading an “uncountable number of documents” to find documents useful to his research, so prioritization was a must while he looked through the archives. He found that it is a privilege to be able to pull up sources instantly in places like the U.S. where most sources are digital and accessible through search engines. Dominic hopes to make the artifacts in Livingstone just as accessible.



Dominic perusing the archives of the Livingstone Museum

A Sense of Belonging at KU

“I joined the Golden Bear Dance Company, and I’ve been with them since second semester of sophomore year...we’re all really good friends. And then this year, I’m also the vice president for Women in Politics.” **-Lily Haring, senior, Political Science major**



“I’m the student body president. Student government board for the past four years has been my thing that I’ve really enjoyed doing. I really like being able to connect with students when they come to us with issues. I think that’s super important that I’m able to represent them.” **-Cade Herndon, senior, Political Science major**



“I’ve been working with ResLife the past three years, so I’ve gotten really involved with everything that they do. I was a desk receptionist for three school years, and then this year I’m a transfer mentor...that department has been what has gotten me out the most and involved.” **-Courtney Bray, senior, Psychology and History dual major**



“I’m a part of a few clubs on campus...Ornithology Club does a lot of bird walks and I actually went owl banding with them. We didn’t find any owls, but it was still a cool experience.” **-Kylee Hager, senior, Computer Science and Game Development dual major**

Faculty Highlight

English professor, Dr. Sandra Leonard, was one of the recipients of the 2025 Undergraduate Research Committee Faculty Mentorship Award for her involvement with the KU Bears Research with undergraduate students to build a video game research lab in the library. One of Dr. Leonard's other current projects is reinforcing the importance of linguistics in our local community. In her linguistics classroom she tries to get students to think more deeply about language and how it evolves to create connections when understood at a historical level. She hopes to get students to notice how language conveys more than what they see on the surface.

Dr. Leonard loves teaching English at a university level for the engaging and innovative interpretations and conversations. She enjoys being able to talk with students who may bring a different background or discipline to the same reading she's done before. Language has always been a topic that interested Dr. Leonard since there can be so much historical context and intertextual reference within writing. Dr.

Leonard's interest in language and culture has led her to investigate how authors covertly reference other texts, and much of her research has been on how Oscar Wilde creatively uses plagiarism in his works.

Her current project with students involves looking into local dialects. Her linguistics class has been going into the community to record accents and dialects from the area around Kutztown. Her class has been working with Mr. Patrick Donmoyer and the Pennsylvania German Heritage Center to locate volunteers to help in their study of the dialect. This project also allows students to learn how to conduct ethical human research through interacting with volunteers and recording their dialects. It's been rewarding for Dr. Leonard to see her student interact with participants who speak "Pennsylvania German English" and learn how integral having a vast collection and understanding of different dialects can be.

Dr. Leonard started the project because she would see dialect catalogues that only



Dr. Sandra Leonard
English

included Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and some Lancaster accents, but never Kutztown. "It's really important because Kutztown area is home to a couple of versions of English or dialects of English that are found very few other places," Dr. Leonard explained. She seeks to help her students understand the importance of studying language as a way to better understand communities of people, using her expertise to guide students.

Student Highlight



Valerie Davidheiser
Environmental Science: Geography

Senior environmental science major Valerie Davidheiser has been educating others about the importance of the environment since she was in high school. Now, as an Environmental Educator at Wildlands Conservancy, she has continued her mission to make a difference through educating children about the effects of climate change by helping them connect to the world around them. Most of all, her time as an educator has proven that even one person can make a difference in the world.

Valerie volunteered at Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center in Nazareth, Pennsylvania during high school. She started working in the gardens and with other volunteers, but quickly moved her way up to assisting the environmental educators during the summer camp for children ages 6 to 8. In this role, she helped with educational events, hikes, and events with small animals such as salamanders. This experience fostered her love for environmental science and teaching children about the natural world around them.

Nearly four years later, Valerie is now an Environmental Educator at Wildlands Conservancy in Emmaus, Pennsylvania. Her time at Wildlands has solidified her goal of getting children to care about the environment by taking them on educational hikes, providing environmental demonstrations, and handling/presenting animals such as birds of prey, amphibians, and small mammals. She recalls a few times when after her lessons, children expressed their newfound love and care for the environment.

Children are the most rewarding group to work with for Valerie. "Children don't really respond very well to just speaking at them about things. They respond very well to getting out and doing and experiencing," Valerie said. The hands-on experience has proved to make a huge impact on their decision to help the environment. Simple demonstrations and hikes where children connect with nature and see its beauty make them want to take action to preserve the world around them.

Valerie loves working behind the scenes to educate and influence others in hopes of creating a better future for the environment, a little bit at a time. She said she would love to continue this line of work in state parks or game commission by becoming an educator. Her job has already shown that even helping one person understand the importance of preserving the environment can make a difference. The main goal of everything Valerie has done has been aimed at educating people about the effects of climate change and to "make a positive out of a negative" in doing so.

Faculty Highlight

Dr. Robert Portada, professor of political science, received the 2025 Weisenberger Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching which recognizes “a faculty member who has demonstrated superlative teaching skills and service to the university.” One of the markers of his teaching style is that he teaches his students how conflicts throughout history and all over the world offer lessons to analyze what is going on in the present day.

Making connections between history and current news is one of Dr. Portada’s main goals. He wants students to get out of the habit of scrolling through headlines and instead make connections to similar events in history. He hopes students “can start to make those linkages using frameworks drawn from international relations theory, democratization or revolutionary theory, and other subfields of the political science literature.”

One of the major events he believes is most useful to know about today is the Cold War and how “current US-China tensions mimic some patterns and dynamics of the US-Soviet relationship, due to structural similarities in the international system.” One of his favorite periods to lecture about is the French Revolution because there is so much

that students can learn about present day politics by having a deep understanding of that era. “It’s really rewarding when I see students making those connections in their work in the classroom,” Dr. Portada said.

Over the years, Dr. Portada has published scholarly work covering political dynamics in countries across Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. With expertise in multiple regions around the globe, he is able to reference different dynamics and case studies within the classroom when they relate to the subject he is teaching. He encourages his students at any level to build up a similar wealth of historical knowledge to also be able to interact with the lessons they are being taught.

“One of the things that I really love about political science is finding patterns of these dynamics throughout history.”

Dr. Portada feels his courses prepare students by building a “fluency in political science.” They often start in the intro classes learning the foundations of the discipline and later his upper-level courses focus on more advanced theories and concepts. He teaches by building upon students’ skills



Dr. Robert Portada
Political Science

in understanding history, concepts, and theories and views it as students “learning a language...a discourse, and hopefully [they’re] able to incorporate more data and evidence into these frameworks as it comes in.”

Dr. Portada studies patterns of conflict and cooperation throughout history, and he uses those patterns to illustrate and compare power relationships in the contemporary world with his students: “Understanding politics can be like understanding the weather...everyone’s going to have their favorite season, but political science, I think, is about knowing how and why the seasons change.”

Award-Winning Faculty



Dr. Andrew Vogel
2025 Chambliss Faculty
Research Award



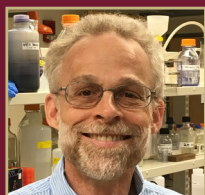
Dr. Carol Mapes
2025 CLAS Dean's
Outstanding Faculty Award



Dr. Robert Portada
2025 Weisenberger Faculty
Award for Excellence in Teaching



Dr. Christine Saidi
UGRC Faculty
Mentorship Award



Dr. Matthew Junker
UGRC Faculty
Mentorship Award



Dr. Todd Underwood
UGRC Faculty
Mentorship Award



Dr. Sandra Leonard
UGRC Faculty
Mentorship Award



Faculty Publications and Presentations

Publications

Dr. Moira Conway, Department of Geography, published "Analyzing the Impact of Warehouse Development in Rural Pennsylvania," with the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, August 28th, 2025.

Dr. Brooks Emerick, Department of Mathematics, published "One Algorithm to Rule Them All." *Mathematics in Industry Reports*. May 2025.

Dr. Moe Folk, Department of English, published "Introduction to Technical Writing: A Rhetorical Approach," through The Pennsylvania Alliance for Design of Open Textbooks (PA-ADOPT).

Dr. Sandra M. Leonard, Department of English, published "Will We Ever Know Wilde's 'Evil' Intentions?: Part Two of Solving the Riddle of an Unfinished Epigram" in the print magazine of the *Oscar Wilde Society*, Intentions, no. 133. June 1, 2025. <<https://www.the-tls.com/regular-features/nb/nb-june-13-2025>>.

Dr. John Lizza, Department of Philosophy and Government, published "The Necessity of Brain Flow Testing in Thoracoabdominal Normothermic Regional Perfusion: A Multidisciplinary Perspective," C. Lazaridis, J. Rafael Badenes, MD, PhD; John P. Lizza, PhD; Elizabeth Carroll, MD; Tracey Fan, MD; William Roth, MD; Michael A. Rubin, MD; William F. Parker, MD, PhD; James L. Bernat, MD. *Transplantation* 2025 doi: 10.1097/TP.0000000000005472. A Prescriptive Metaphysics of Death, Hastings Center Report 55 (1) 2025: 33-46.

Dr. Yun (Amy) Lu, Department of Mathematics, published "Identifying Knapsack Problems with Conflicts that Are Difficult to Solve Optimally Using General-Purpose Integer Programming Software" with Ms. Pei Hua

Lin, Dr. Myung Song, and Dr. Francis Vasko, *Operations Research Forum*. June 25, 2025. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s43069-025-00496-z>

Dr. Carol Mapes and Dr. Gregory Setliff, Department of Biological Sciences, published "First record of a gall-inducing mordellid in North America: *Pseudomordellina hattorii* (Coleoptera: Mordellidae) induces galls on common mugwort, *Artemisia vulgaris* in the Northeastern United States," *Transactions of the American Entomological Society*. August 15, 2025.

Dr. Myung Song, Department of Mathematics, published "Making Gurobi Competitive with the Best Specialized Algorithms for the Multiple Knapsack Problem with Setups: Implications for OR Practicioners" with Ms. Pei Hua Lin, Dr. Yun (Amy) Lu, and Dr. Francis Vasko, *International Journal of Computational and Applied Mathematics & Computer Science*. June 25, 2025. <http://doi.org/10.37394/232028.2025.5.2>

Dr. Glenn Walters, Dr. Jonthan Kremser, and Dr. Lindsey Runell, Department of Criminal Justice, published "The bullying victimization-depression association: Unidirectional or bidirectional, with effects that are direct or indirect?" *Victims and Offenders*, June 2025.

Dr. Wing Hong Tony Wong, Department of Mathematics, published "Paired ((n-1)-to-(n-1) disjoint path covers in bipartite transposition-like graphs," *Discrete Applied Mathematics* 376 (2025), 449-461, with Anna Coleman, Gabrielle Fischberg, Charles Gong, and Joshua Harrington. September 2025.

Presentations

Dr. Michael P. Gabriel, Department of History presented, "Richard Montgomery and the Other Invasion of Canada" at the Fort Plain Museum's American Revolutionary War Conference 250, Johnstown, NY, May 31, 2025.

Dr. Chris Habeck, Department of Biological Sciences, presented, "Effects of biochar and compost on the productivity of corn and peas grown in a glass house." Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Contributed Poster Presentation. August 11, 2025.

Dr. Brian Kronenthal, Department of Mathematics, presented "I spy... cages, algebraically defined graphs, and Moore!" at Villanova University, Villanova, PA. July 1, 2025.

Dr. Sandra M. Leonard, Department of English, presented "A Moment's Monument: Oscar Wilde's Appreciation of Dante Gabriel Rossetti." at the Interdisciplinary Nineteenth-Century Studies (INCS) Conference, Genoa, Italy. June 19, 2025.

Dr. Matthew Stone, Department of Biological Sciences, presented "Choco-lot of Birds: Comparing Avian Communities in Cacao and Forest Habitats." Ecological Society of America Annual Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Contributed Poster Presentation. August 11, 2025.

Dr. Todd Underwood, Department of Biological Sciences, presented "The Influence of a Periodical Cicada Emergence on the Body Condition of Veeries." Association of Field Ornithologists Conference, Ogden, UT. Contributed Poster Presentation. July 30, 2025.

Dr. Wing Hong Tony Wong, Department of Mathematics, presented "Bounds on the mosaic number of Legendrian knots" at the Mathematics of Various Entertaining Subjects (MOVES) Conference, Courant Institute of Mathematics, New York University, New York, NY. August 12, 2025.



Student Shout-Outs to Professors

"I look up to **Dr. Sherrod** a lot; with a lot of the things that she does, especially with how organized she is, and the geophysics that she does." -**Elizabeth Keim, Geology**

"[**Dr. Mashantonio** has] been really great at nurturing my drive and my opportunities here at Kutztown. He has helped me achieve things that I didn't think would be possible, as well as pushed me to my limits in some of the best ways ever. He's part of the reason that I got to present nationally at the IALE National Conference, as well as then continue to pursue research and even have the guts to apply to Yellowstone National Park for an internship this past summer." -**Morgan Herb, Environmental Science**

"[**Dr. Leonard**] was wonderful to work with. She guided us through our project, helped us write research grants, is currently helping us write our academic paper for *Digital Humanities Quarterly*. She's been a delight to work with and I'm excited to continue working with her." -**Hailey Duncan, Professional Writing**

Student Highlight



Laura Gotshall
Biology: Macro/Micro/Cell

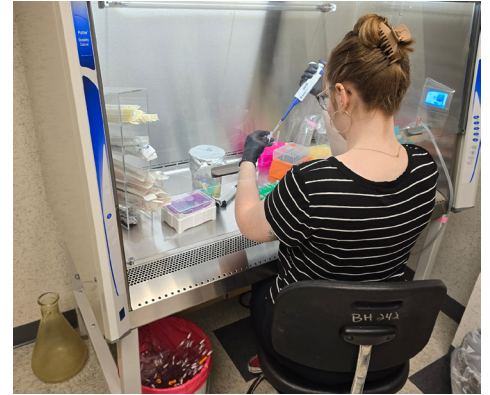
Through her experience in biology labs, senior biology major Laura Gotshall has found a passion for using research to help animals. Originally, Laura wanted to pursue pre-medicine and take a more human biology-oriented path in her major, but when her dog fell ill and she spent a lot of time at the vet, Laura realized she would rather focus on veterinary medicine and what she could do to help animals.

She felt the molecular biology concentration at KU best suited her interests. Her work in and out of the lab has given her many new skills and a lot of experience in doing laboratory research and experiments. She hopes her plans for graduate or veterinary school will take her to the next level of her career where she can focus on what matters most: helping animals.

Working in a lab setting has become one of Laura's favorite parts of the major. She wasn't sure at first how it would go, but once she started Laura realized she "really loved having experiments and getting to see real-time results with [her] work." From then on, she wanted to keep doing work in the lab. She points to her professors as a huge factor in helping her fall in love with lab work.

During the summer of 2025, Laura was given the chance to perform research in a lab with Dr. Cristina Cummings, professor of biology, who does research on cancer. The project involved isolating proteins from yeast cells and seeing if similar interactions happened in mammalian cells. This project gave Laura a new view on research. She said, "research gave me the opportunity to really think for myself, like how to organize the experiment and when things don't go right, really think about how far back I need to go to redo things and come up with ideas rather than just following a set of rules for the lab." Overall, she believes the lab work and learning the material boosted her confidence.

The People for Animals and Pre-Vet Club on campus has also helped Laura gain confidence and a sense of leadership. Laura found the club her freshman year and after being involved in it for her first year, she decided to take a leadership role as president, with the help of the biology department



Laura doing lab work during her summer research

chair and club advisor, Dr. Gregory Setliff. Her club sets up useful workshops involving veterinarian techniques like suturing, and they invite professional veterinarians to speak with the members. Students are given a chance to volunteer and gain experience in helping and caring for animals even before they start graduate school.

Laura hopes she is able to get more involved in cancer research because it could be beneficial for both animals and people. Her goal is to work in a lab again, furthering this research as she goes on to obtain an advanced degree. No matter what path Laura takes, she knows that KU has instilled the confidence and knowledge to push through any obstacles she may face.

Favorite Gen Ed Courses

"The poetry and poetics class with Dr. Vogel...allowed me to not only improve my writing skills, but improve how I interact with my classmates and it helped me feel more comfortable sharing my input and receiving input" -**Keiyana Mosely, senior, History major**



"Music classes...I have no experience in anything music related, but I really enjoyed them. You didn't need to know how to play an instrument or anything...oftentimes you just had to be willing to learn and to listen." -**Logan Wolf, senior, Political Science: Paralegal Studies major**



"I've taken two art history courses and those have been really influential in my life. I did not expect to be as invested as I am in art history...it broadened my horizons." -**Elizabeth Miller, senior, Biology major**

"I've taken Spanish three and four at Kutztown, and it's helped me keep up on the Spanish that I already speak and not forget how to speak Spanish. It's been really great that it's online and at your own pace." -**Lily Thomas, senior, Political Science major**





Belonging at KU

The Fall 2025 issue of *The Collage* highlights the importance of belonging and community in and out of the classroom in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Dr. Michael Davis
Physical Sciences



Dr. Ko-Hsin Hsu
Criminal Justice

Q: How do you define “belonging” in the context of a university environment?

● **Dr. Davis:** Belonging means that a student feels a connection to this university—to other students, faculty, the campus, and the community. It is the sense they feel recognized, valued, and involved with the activities and happenings at the university.

● **Dr. Hsu:** Everyone should feel equally valued, respected, and supported within the university community. It reassures them that their voice will be heard, they can make meaningful contributions, and they have opportunities to develop both personally and professionally.

Q: Why do you believe a sense of belonging is important at a university?

● **Dr. Davis:** Recently, one of the new terms that has been used to describe sustainable communities is “belonging.” When we are faced with the reality of climate change along with a multitude of social and economic issues, that sense of belonging is essential to building a community that everyone can feel they are invested in.

● **Dr. Hsu:** It provides students with an environment in which they can engage and involve themselves. When we feel connected and valued, we are more likely to speak up, contribute, get involved, collaborate, and stay committed.

Q: What role does belonging play in a student's academic success?

● **Dr. Davis:** If a student feels like they belong at the university...that will carry over to their well-being and make them persist at the university and be driven to greater academic success in the classroom.

● **Dr. Hsu:** When students feel they belong, they are more motivated to participate, connect, and try harder when facing challenges. When they feel they belong and have a sense of community, they are more likely to seek support.

Q: What strategies have you seen or used that effectively build a sense of community in academic setting?

● **Dr. Davis:** In my first year seminar, I center the course on the idea of community. Within the first year seminar framework, I have interactive days by having Board Game Days. These games are designed to facilitate teamwork and provide more interactive instruction of geography.

● **Dr. Hsu:** As an advisor to the Criminal Justice Association (2017–2025), I empowered students to take the lead in running meetings, inviting speakers, and planning community service projects. My role was to make suggestions, supervise, and support while encouraging them to take responsibility. The freedom and responsibility enabled them to build their community meaningful connections with one another.

Q: In your experience, how does interdisciplinary collaboration contribute to a culture of belonging at the university?

● **Dr. Davis:** The new Earth, Atmospheric, and Marine Science major being developed allows me to grow in both a geographic and atmospheric perspective. Through that pairing, I feel like I have a sense of belonging at the university, which is beneficial for getting satisfaction out of my profession and feeling like I am contributing to something meaningful to the students and to the university.

● **Dr. Hsu:** It exposes us to new perspectives and introduces us to see that our ideas are different yet welcomed beyond our major or department.

Q: What responsibility do faculty have in cultivating an environment of belonging?

● **Dr. Davis:** I believe that faculty should be as welcoming as possible to the students and make them feel respected and valued. I think developing methods in the classroom to go beyond simply calling on students can be really good at making them feel a part of the class and also to give them a sense of worth.

● **Dr. Hsu:** A community where everyone feels they belong needs efforts from everyone. Faculty create an inclusive environment and foster connections, and students make an effort to facilitate communication.

Micro-Internship Program from the Career Development Center

The Career Development Center's Micro-Internship Program has become a useful tool in helping students get experience in their field while being very accessible and low stakes. The Micro-Internship Program's mission is to provide short-term, real-world opportunities for students prior their long-term internship.

Evan Davalos is the Micro-Internship Coordinator and works alongside Jenelle Henry, an assistant director in the Career Development Center office. They work to gather opportunities for students and stay in touch with both the employer and student during the internships to ensure both parties are getting the most out of the experience. Students typically work 1-4 weeks for 10-40 hours, depending on the needs of the employer, and receive a \$250 payment at the completion of the internship.

The program is designed to help underserved populations get opportunities in their field they may not have access to otherwise, but the internships are open to all students. The Micro-Internship Program hopes to be able to offer opportunities to students in majors who don't usually receive them such as the visual arts. They are also looking to increase on-campus internships for international students.

The Career Development Center has already received very positive feedback from both employers and students. Jenelle encourages students who may be in doubt to challenge themselves if the opportunity presents itself. The internships are catalogued by major and new opportunities are posted every so often, so check the website frequently if interested. The listing provides a brief description of the job, who to contact, and the major(s) they are looking for. Students can get more information and look for opportunities by scanning the QR code here.



Course Spotlight: Math with Real-Life Applications with Dr. Brooks Emerick

Dr. Brooks Emerick, professor of mathematics, was inspired to create a Problems in Industry course in spring 2022 as part of a Mathematics Association of America (MAA) grant. In this course, Dr. Emerick divided his class into teams of three or four students to solve "real world" problems for four local companies: Vynecrest Winery, Kutztown Wastewater Management, Kutztown Borough, and a brewery in Emmaus. The problems ranged from calculating efficient distribution routes to whether another worker had to be hired for trash pickup.

After the grant was completed, Dr. Emerick decided to continue the course in spring 2024 but made modifications to the course by choosing a "real world" problem from only one local company (OmniTech) that five students worked on throughout the semester. Because of the positive experience for students, he plans to offer this course as MATH 210 in the spring 2026 semester. The course will once again partner with OmniTech, a manufacturing/automation company, that will emphasize problem solving using

mathematical modeling with technology. Dr. Brooks plans to also incorporate a series of other "real world" problems to prepare students for a series of jobs they may work for in the future.

Dr. Emerick doesn't believe students who want to enroll in the class need to take a large number of math classes to be prepared for the class. He believes passing calculus 2 and having an open mind is enough to be engaged and excel in the course. Students must also be willing to work with math programs to create technology to solve the problems presented in the class. "Once you're there, I can probably teach you what you need to know in order to solve the problem," Dr. Emerick said.

Being a part of this course has given students a lot more than just hands-on experience using math to solve problems. In the first version of the course, several of the students presented their work either at a conference or in front of town hall board members. Dr. Emerick pointed out that this course allows students to see the real-world applications of their math courses and get more interested in the field of mathematics. Taking part in this course and presenting your work is a "great addition to a resume, especially for graduate school," Dr. Emerick said.

Congratulations, December Graduates!

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean's office is proud to congratulate the Fall 2025 graduates. Though you have all traveled different paths to get here, you have come together nonetheless as the strongest, smartest, and most resilient versions of yourselves. You made every day count; you put your all into your assignments, activities, jobs, and internships. Every moment you've spent here has taught you something valuable. We can't wait to see what you make of those lessons.

Congratulations, Class of Fall 2025!

