

October 2022 Newsletter

The MBAC Welcomes New Officers

This year has been a difficult one for the MBAC. In January, we lost Tom Jollie '72, and if that wasn't hard enough, we also lost Fred Charles '73 in May. Both of these men were founding fathers of the MBAC, and their fingerprints are all over the organization. We would not be where we are now without the generosity, loyalty, and guidance of these two men.

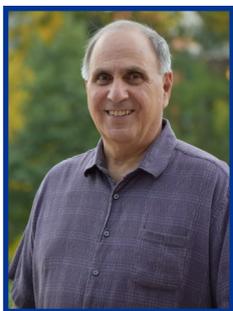
In order to keep our organization moving forward, we had to do the impossible and fill their positions. A few of our existing officers were moved to new positions, and we welcomed new alumni to our executive board. The new officers are as follows:

- President – Andy Garsteck '74
- Vice-president – Jim Murphy '76
- Treasurer – Gene Brisbane, MEd '74, '79 EDUC
- Secretary – Bernie Cobetto '73
- Artistic Design – Rich Hardway '73
- Social Media Coordinator – Dom Domasky '00



*Top Row: Andy Garsteck '74, Jim Murphy '76,
Gene Brisbane, MEd '74, '79 EDUC
Bottom Row: Bernie Cobetto '73, Rich Hardway '73,
Dom Domasky '00*

MBAC LOSES FOUNDING MEMBER AND PRESIDENT



It is with great sadness the MBAC announces the passing of Fred Charles, Esq. '72 on May 21. Fred was one of the founding members of the MBAC. He not only served as MBAC president, but was also a board director for the PGAA.

He led the MBAC through its infancy avoiding pitfalls and giving guidance and advice. He welcomed those who also shared his love for Pitt-Greensburg and the basketball program into "the basketball family." As he said to the early members of the MBAC, "We want to welcome all under our big tent." That welcoming attitude was evident in the MBAC community activities that Fred spearheaded, which included giving Christmas gifts to homeless children and aiding in the donation and distribution of Thanksgiving turkeys. To honor him, the MBAC will now call their scholar-athlete award the Fred E. Charles Scholar Award.

On page 2, the MBAC pays tribute to Fred.

ANDY GARSTECK '74 RECEIVES 2022 VOLUNTEER EXCELLENCE AWARD

Andy Garsteck '74, the newly installed MBAC president, was recognized by the Pitt-Greensburg Alumni Association (PGAA) with the 2022 Volunteer Excellence award on Saturday, October 1 at the Alumni Celebration Dinner. The PGAA awards are the most prestigious honors alumni can receive from Pitt-Greensburg.



*Andy Garsteck '74 (left) with
PGAA President
Robert P. Najim '93*

Andy has a long history on campus. Starting his education on campus during the '70-'71 school year, he played on the Pitt-Greensburg men's basketball team in his freshman and sophomore years. Andy graduated in 1974 from the Pittsburgh campus.

He is well-known on campus and in the area for his volunteerism. The award specifically recognizes his efforts as an alumnus who participates in and organizes MBAC activities and for setting up, planning, and volunteering at PGAA-sponsored activities. [Read more about Andy.](#)

A TRIBUTE TO FRED CHARLES, ESQUIRE '72

Fred Charles, Esq. '72 touched the lives of many with his personality, generosity, tenacity, caring nature, and love of life. His loyalty and dedication to Pitt-Greensburg was evident in the stories he shared about his time on campus. He was forever loyal to the basketball teams on which he played. Fred will be greatly missed.



Fred and Denise Charles

Members of the MBAC shared their memories of Fred:

"It is hard to put into words just what Fred meant to me. He was my brother, my mentor, my friend, my guide through my personal and professional life; he was my confidant and my best friend. Fred had a way of aggravating you and arguments did occur, but Fred also had the ability to not hold a grudge. We had mutual respect for each other, and we ran separate law practices. We often talked about how to handle a case. Fred's fingerprints are all over my life and can and will never be erased."

— **Denny Charles**

"The greatest respect I can show Fred is to express the pride that I had in our friendship. We became friends in 1968 and were friends until he left us, that's 54 years. Our friendship ran the gauntlet of emotions, and we were fortunate enough to watch it evolve into something more than we ever thought it could be. We shared so many things on so many different levels. I am just glad I got to know the real Fred, and Fred got to know the real me. I remember something he said near the end, 'Who would have ever thought we would be having a conversation like this.' I am proud to say Fred Charles was my friend."

— **Harry Bowser '72**

"Fred was the consummate promoter of the Men's Basketball Alumni Club, his church, and his clients. He would convey the most minute aspects of his memorable and entertaining stories. He had genuine relationships with friends and adversaries and was extremely loyal to his closest friends. Personally, I will never forget the trust he showed in me to not repeat the many sidebar conversations we had on a variety of issues. There will never be anyone like Fred...His mold is broken."

— **Andy Garsteck '74**

"Fred was our first true leader. His presence as a cool and focused influence on the growth of our organization was priceless. His photographic memory brought back many good times shared with teammates. His leadership was worthy of our dedication. As a legacy to him those who knew him should promote his ideas, his belief in God, and the love he shared for his wife, Denise, and his family. I look forward to catching a pass from him in the great beyond."

— **Bernie Cobetto '73**

"I remember Fred as a very confident young man both on and off the court. He became a lifelong friend that will not be easily replaced."

— **Rich Hardway '73**

"I am writing to express my sorrow and condolences in the passing and loss of our teammate Fred Charles. Fred was in a class ahead of me and was a great teammate. Fred was a continued supporter of the team and the program and had a great basketball mind. Fred has left us but many memories of him shall live."

— **Carlyle Carter**

"Fred attended Pitt-Greensburg before me. The contact we had on campus was limited, but as I began my law practice Fred and I became better acquainted. Fred had a vast knowledge of various aspects of the law and was always generous with his time. I considered Fred a mentor and many times he pushed me in the right direction. Fred was funny, witty, and engaging. No one I know could tell a story better than Fred. I never spent a moment with him that was not totally enjoyable. We of the MBAC will certainly miss our friend Fred."

— **Rob Domenick '75**

"I didn't play at the same time Fred did, so my recollections are from the last few years. I always appreciated Fred's friendliness when I ran into him, usually at my daughter's games. I admired how he supported not only the men's program, but also the women's program. He was clearly proud of his involvement with Pitt-Greensburg, and as such he was a great ambassador for the university."

— **Jim Murphy '76**

"My memory of Fred is as 'the Mayor.' He seemed more sophisticated to the young guys, always in control, always up to something, always fun to be around."

— **Jerry Fedele '75**

"Anytime I was with Fred I knew we were going to have a memorable experience. I loved hanging out with Fred. He was a good friend and I'll never forget him."

— **Gene Brisbane, MEd '74, '79 EDUC**

On the Bench

T. Jollie - F. Charles



art - R. Hardway 10/22

MBAC REMEMBERS DR. BERNARD H. COBETTO '45

The MBAC would like to express its deepest sympathies to the family of Dr. Bernard H. Cobetto '45 on the passing of the patriarch of the family on September 9.

Dr. Cobetto lived a long, productive life. At his death, he was 100 years and 11 months old. He had a lifelong association with the University of Pittsburgh and served as the first team doctor for the Pitt-Greensburg basketball team. He and his wife Ellen sponsored the Dr. Bernard Cobetto Lecture Series on the Pitt-Greensburg Campus. The lecture series recently marked its 15th anniversary with a presentation on Wednesday, September 28. [Learn more about the lecture series or watch the latest presentation online.](#)

It is the MBAC's sincere hope that their mentor will rest in peace, and his life of service to others will serve to inspire all that knew him. [View his obituary to read more about his life.](#)



SWEET SIXTEEN AND COUNTING

The MBAC is proud to announce that this edition marks their sixteenth newsletter. The first issue came out in Fall 2016. Plans are being made for a special 20th issue for January 2024, if all goes accordingly. Tentative topics include a recap of all the cartoons, a listing of all those alumni featured in the Where Are They Now stories, and a follow-up on the two coaches who have been with us since MBAC's inception.

The MBAC wants to hear from you — the alumni. What would you like to see included in the 20th issue? Please submit your ideas to pgaa@pitt.edu or harryb@zoominternet.net.

LIKE OUR NEW LOOK ON FACEBOOK

Through the combined efforts of Rich Hardway '73 and Dom Domasky '00, the MBAC Facebook page has gone through some changes this fall. From the season schedule to team highlights to special community projects to special visitors, it can all be found on the MBAC Facebook page. Watch for upcoming pre-season photos and more.



YOUTH CAMPS MAKE COMEBACK

This summer and early fall the men's and women's basketball coaches opened the gym to campers for the first time in quite a while. Coach Chris Klimchock, the men's coach, was assisted in his endeavors by his assistant coaches and players from the current roster. Both Chris and women's coach Darien Lantz '17 were pleased with the turnouts they had for their summer sessions. The excitement and enthusiasm from the summer camps flowed into the fall with additional camp offerings. Both coaches hope that the camps become a permanent fixture on campus as the monies raised from the camps are important to building the Pitt-Greensburg programs. If you have interested children or grandchildren in grades 3rd-8th, consider supporting your alma mater and sending them to the [mens' camps](#) or [womens' camps](#).



Above: Coach Chris Klimchock (right) poses with a co-ed group.

Left top: Campers practice their shooting skills.

Left bottom: Ball handling skills at work.

Below: Campers show their team spirit.



MEET THE NEW PLAYERS



James Evans-McQuay is a 6'0" shooting guard from Williamsport High School in Williamsport, PA. His coach was Allen Taylor.

What attracted him to Pitt-Greensburg was the smaller class sizes and the many opportunities for campus involvement. His academic interest at this point is in management information systems.

As for basketball, his goals are to reach his full potential as a player and build a bond of trust with his new teammates.

Ryan Greggerson is a 6'8" center/forward from Gateway high School in Monroeville. His coach was Alvis Rogers. His team made the state playoffs his senior year, and Ryan was also named to the All-Section First Team.

His two sisters attended Seton Hill University so he was familiar with the area, and he found the Pitt-Greensburg campus attractive. He wants to major in secondary education and become the best teacher he can be.

His goal for the basketball team is simply to do his part in helping the team win.



Armend Karpuzi is a 6'3" guard from Deer Lakes High School in Cheswick, PA. His coach was Terence Parham. Armend is proud that his team made the playoffs his senior year and that he was named to the All-Section Team.

The intimate size of the Pitt-Greensburg campus was a big factor in Armend's decision to attend. He is planning to major in management while achieving personal growth and developing connections with the people around him.

His commitment to the Pitt-Greensburg basketball team is simply stated. It is "to beat whoever is in our way."

Matthew Marinchak is a 6'1" guard from Ligonier Valley High School in Ligonier. His coach was Tim Gustin. Matthew achieved the goal of scoring 1,000 pts. and being named to the All-Conference Team.

Matthew was drawn to Pitt-Greensburg by the campus atmosphere. His major is early childhood education, and he is committed to maintaining solid As and Bs.

He is at Pitt-Greensburg because of the positive recruiting experience with Coach Klimchock and his future teammates.



Ben Thomas is a 6'3" guard from Greensburg Salem High School in Greensburg, PA. His coach was Mark Zahorchak. His favorite memories of high school are scoring 40 pts. against rival Hempfield High School and being named All-Conference Second Team.

He is undecided on a major at this time, but feels that Pitt-Greensburg is the best place for him to achieve a quality education.

He was attracted to Pitt basketball because he really liked Coach Klimchock and the other players that he met during the recruitment process.

AL HETER: AROUND THE WORLD WITH BASKETBALL



Al Heter with his children

Al Heter has become a globetrotter by playing against the Globetrotters.

Al, a former assistant men's basketball coach at Pitt-Greensburg, is in his second season with the Washington Generals, the Trotters' sole opponent. Renowned as the "Clown Princes of Basketball," the Globetrotters perform for audiences across the globe providing an entertaining mix of talent and comedy while winning virtually every game against the Generals.

"The Globetrotters are very good, and we're hoping to get them one of these days," Al, a 6-foot-7 graduate of Montour High School and Point Park University, said with a laugh. He rejoined the team this summer.

This season's schedule includes stops in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Europe, and numerous locales in the United States. That's why Al is a globetrotter, lower case, if not a Globetrotter.

"I play for the Generals every game, and we travel and literally do everything together with the Trotters," said Al, who was replaced as a Pitt-Greensburg assistant by Bob Davis. At any rate, he's having fun.

Despite the many defeats, Al says being a General "has been a great experience." He has traveled to numerous countries and about 40 states. They play at NBA arenas. They have played in Las Vegas and in Barcelona (Spain), where the Dream team won the 1992 Olympics gold medal. He also has played in Ukraine, which is at war with Russia.

"I've had teammates from Ukraine who do all kinds of tricks with the ball." He got to know one of them, Dmytro Kryvenko, a talented guard. "After the conflict started, I wished him and his family well."

Al may not be on the Pitt-Greensburg bench for now, but he is optimistic about the Bobcats' chances this winter.

"I think we have an outstanding group of guys back," Al said. "We also had a good recruiting class and one redshirt player from last year. "I like the energy of the new guys and talent of the holdovers."

COMMON GROUND FOR MORACCO AND BRISBANE MED '74, '79 EDUC

A very rewarding part of coaching high school athletics is the opportunity to watch those athletes compete at the collegiate level. While Coach Gene Brisbane, MEd '74, '79 EDUC has been blessed many times over in this regard, it's even more special when one of those players is going to study and play where he played.

Brisbane began his college experience at Pitt-Greensburg before getting both bachelor's and master's degrees at the Pittsburgh campus. And now, Tiana Moracco, a Derry Area grad and former player of Brisbane's, will begin her freshman year on campus making memories of her own. She is actually not the first of Brisbane's players to compete at Pitt-Greensburg, but she will be the first to play here since Brisbane became a member and treasurer of the MBAC. Some of his other former players who have been part of Pitt-Greensburg athletics include: Courtney DiBridge '15, Hannah Falscik, Emily Nelson '16, Hannah Wedow (Class of 2025), and Alanna Meloy (Class of 2025).



Gene and Tiana share a campus connection.

"Being able to watch Tiana play basketball here while being directly involved in athletics, gives more meaning to being back at Pitt-Greensburg," Brisbane remarked.

Tiana is looking forward to continuing her academic and athletic experiences on campus. She chose Pitt-Greensburg because its smaller size will allow her to forge relationships with her classmates and professors. She is eager to start her college career and looks forward to the academic and athletic challenges. She plans to major in biological sciences and was excited to be recruited as she heard nothing but good things about the women's team. She believes Pitt-Greensburg was the best choice for her.

"Sometimes your life goes full circle," Brisbane reflected, "I'm so glad I have been given the chance to come back to where it all began for me and being able to see Tiana get her adult life started here is like the icing on the cake!"

PITT-GREENSBURG WELCOMES NEW WOMEN'S COACH



Darien Lantz is a 2017 Bradford graduate.

When incoming Pitt-Greensburg Women's Coach Darien Lantz '17 (UPB) was a little girl, she walked into her district's newly built high school gymnasium, looked up at the freshly displayed banners commemorating team championships and individual milestones and asked her dad and soon-to-be youth basketball coach Paul Lantz, "How do I get my name on those banners?" After listening to her dad's answer she paused a moment before saying, "I'm going to be the first player to get both 1,000 points and 500 assists." Darien went on to achieve these lofty goals in her impressive high school career and just for good measure added 500 steals too. These individual accomplishments helped Darien's Towanda Area High School capture Pennsylvania's Northern Tier League championship, have a three-year run of playoff appearances, and become the school's first girls' basketball team to qualify for the state tournament.

Darien's goal setting and determination paid further dividends when she moved on to play at Pitt-Bradford where she became an integral part of the most successful team in the school's history. Darien's UPB team made four consecutive AMCC playoff appearances and became the first Panther team to beat an NCAA D-III ranked team. While playing at UPB, Darien continued to garner recognition, being selected for the Team Sportsmanship Award and being named the 2017 Scholar-Athlete of the year.

Following her playing career, Darien drew upon valuable lessons she had learned about goal setting, commitment, perseverance, and team chemistry as she began her coaching journey. She started out as a junior high coach in her native Towanda Area district before graduating on to junior varsity head coach and varsity assistant and then on to Thiel College in Greenville, PA. At every level, she concentrated not only on helping players develop better skills but also on building relationships. She believes an open-door policy allows her to learn about players' lives outside of basketball: their academics, goals, dreams, and work ethic. Her greatest satisfaction comes from watching one of her players achieve a personal success, be it on or off the court. For Darien, Xs and Os are only one part of the job; knowing the players and helping them navigate the many challenges of being a D-III student-athlete ranks high in her professional priorities.

"My biggest lesson learned," she reflects, "is patience and empathy," and her mission is clear and direct: helping her players stay on the path to success.

Darien pursued this opportunity because she believes Pitt-Greensburg women's basketball has untapped potential, and she hopes to attract quality players and people by highlighting the school's nationally acclaimed degree, its small classes and welcoming campus community, and its convenient location not only to nearby shopping, dining, and recreation spots, but also to the bustling and diverse city of Pittsburgh. Lantz will be assisted by her father Paul and by former Bobcat standout and head coach Kelsey Oddis, but behind the scenes she knows she can always count on support from her mom Deneen, her three older brothers, her five-year-old pit bull Rex, and her niece whom she spoils every chance she gets. Darien's experience and her support team, she feels, have helped her understand how important it is to be "present in the moment," and she hopes to instill that belief in her team as well. Having coached through a pandemic she has come to realize that "we only have a short period to compete in the game we love and it can be taken away at any moment." She wants her players to compete at their highest level, build life-long friendships, and be present in the moment. In her roles as senior women's administrator, student-athlete advisor, and head women's basketball coach, Darien is bound to be a familiar face on campus. She hopes to encourage her players to be active members of campus life and to support the many other school teams by attending their events and cheering them on.



*Top: Darien (left) with a group of summer camp participants and assistant coach Paul Lantz (right).
Bottom: Campers show off their certificates.*

Darien began her basketball journey by walking into a gymnasium and looking up. Given her goals, her proven commitment, her energy, and her many accolades, the prospects for Pitt-Greensburg women's basketball are looking up as well.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW: JOE MANCINI

This fall marked the first time in the last 20 years that Joe Mancini '18 did not return to the classroom. He graduated from Pitt-Greensburg with a BS in chemistry. In the fall of 2018, he continued his education at the Pittsburgh campus where he was enrolled in the School of Pharmacy. In April 2022, he graduated once again, this time with a Doctor of Pharmacy (PharD). Having spent eight years in college, Joe has spent one-third of his life with Pitt.

His family recognizes the impact Pitt — especially the Greensburg Campus — have played in his success.

“The education and support Joseph received at Pitt-Greensburg truly prepared and encouraged him to be independent. We watched him grow and mature, and we are so proud of the man Joe has become,” explains his mom, Michele.

Joe was part of the men's team from 2014-2018, and he left his mark on the program. Joe entered the record books on January 13, 2018, when he made seven 3-point shots in one game placing him second for 3-point shots made in one game. His record is behind the eight 3-pointers made by Mike Connelly '16. He also appears five times in the top ten 3-point shots attempted in a single game. Maybe more importantly Joe was a loyal friend and teammate to the players with whom he shared the court. He played for two different coaches during his years as a Bobcat. Each taught him different lessons that he knows will serve him well in life. His greatest memory from those years is winning the AMCC championship at Hilbert College, and teammates piling on top of each other celebrating at mid-court after the game. The win not only secured the championship, but it also secured a place in the NCAA D-III playoffs for the first time in school history. That year the team lost its home court when it flooded due to an accident with the sprinkler system. Without a home court to practice on, the team could have given up, but they accepted the challenge and ended up in the record books. Senior Night also stands out because he stood at mid-court with the family who supported him and his dreams. Last but not least, Joe remembers the antics at the end of the bench during his underclassmen years supporting the team. Off the court, Joe recalls the team's character sessions, which not only helped the team become what it was, but it helped the players become the people they are. He also credits the academics and the professors he had at Pitt-Greensburg with preparing him for the challenges of grad school. He notes that Dr. Matt Luderer's Organic Chemistry class was dreaded, but Luderer made the course compelling and fun, and he motivated his students to achieve their greatest potential.

As Joe begins his career, he is appreciative of the support system and partner he has as he faces all of the challenges of the “real world” — bills, house hunting, car shopping, and everything in between. Currently, he lives in Mt. Washington and is an associate at Destum Partners, Inc., which is located in Charlotte, North Carolina. He works exclusively with global biotechnology and major pharmaceutical companies to provide a wide variety of consulting and advisory services. Joe enjoys meeting new people as part of his job and is pleased to work for a company that is respected in the pharmaceutical world. His biggest challenge in this new career will be keeping up-to-date with the new and improved technologies and therapies. The market is extremely dynamic and since it is global so staying diligent is a must. As Coach Jackson used to say, “If you are not improving, you are falling behind.”

On the horizon, Joe would like to get married, have a family, and buy a house somewhere in the Pittsburgh area. He wants to stay in the Pittsburgh area because that's where many of the important people in his life live, especially his two nieces and five nephews, who are quite attached to their Uncle Joe. Also his future goals include buying a lake house and resurrecting Mancini's Pizzeria and Pasta House, his father and uncle's pizza shop. He also hopes to play a little golf along his journey, and he deserves a pat on the back for his recent hole-in-one.



Joe Mancini is now Dr. Joe after his recent graduation from pharmacy school.

**JOIN THE PITT-GREENSBURG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FOR
THE MERRY MINGLE ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2 AT 7 P.M. IN MILLSTEIN LIBRARY.**

FOOD & DRINKS - DOOR PRIZES - GAMES - UGLY HOLIDAY SWEATER CONTEST - AND MORE!

REGISTER NOW @ [HTTPS://WWW.GREENSBURG.PITT.EDU/ALUMNI](https://www.greensburg.pitt.edu/alumni)

COACH'S CORNER



It is great to be back. We are getting ready the upcoming season and looking forward to the progress we have made from year 1 to year 2. We had two seniors who have moved on from the program and have added five newcomers to the program. With the veteran players we have returning along with the new guys, we expect an extremely competitive atmosphere in practice. That type of atmosphere will allow for personal and team growth each and every day. Our non-conference schedule this year will be challenging and help to prepare us for AMCC play. We are very excited to return the floor on October 15th for practice and getting better one day at a time. Thank you for all your support and go Bobcats!

PITT-GREENSBURG 2022-2023 MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE



Tues., Nov 8	A	Carlow University	8:00 PM
Wed., Nov 9	A	Robert Morris University	7:00 PM
Sat., Nov 12	H	Grove City College	2:00 PM
Tues., Nov 15	A	Hiram College	7:00PM
Tues., Nov 22	A	PSU Shenango	7:30 PM
Sat., Nov 26	H	Geneva College	2:00 PM
Sun., Nov 27	H	Hood College	3:00 PM
Wed., Dec 7	H	Waynesburg University	7:00 PM
Sat., Dec 10	A	Franciscan University	4:00 PM
Thur., Dec 29	A	Juniata Tournament	TBA
Fri., Dec 30	A	Juniata Tournament	TBA
*Wed., Jan 4	H	Hilbert College	1:00 PM
*Sat., Jan 7	A	Alfred State College	1:00 PM
*Wed., Jan 11	H	PSU Altoona	7:00 PM
*Sat., Jan 14	H	PSU Behrend	2:00 PM
*Wed., Jan 18	A	LaRoche	7:00 PM
*Sat., Jan 21	A	Univ of Pittsburgh at Bradford	2:00 PM
*Wed., Jan 25	H	Mount Aloysius	7:00 PM
*Sat., Jan 28	H	Alfred State College	2:00 PM
*Wed., Feb 1	H	LaRoche	7:00 PM
*Sat., Feb 4	A	Hilbert College	1:00 PM
*Wed., Feb 8	A	PSU Altoona	7:00 PM
*Sat., Feb 11	H	Univ of Pittsburgh at Bradford	2:00 PM
		(Senior Day)	
*Wed., Feb 15	A	Mount Aloysius	7:00 PM
*Sat., Feb 18	A	PSU Behrend	2:00 PM

“*” - Denotes Conference Games

Can't make it to a game? Visit <https://pittgreensburgathletics.com/>, select men's basketball under Men's Sports, and click on schedule to see if the game is being broadcast online



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