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- DESLIN ALEXANDRE



UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH ATHLETICS MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2022

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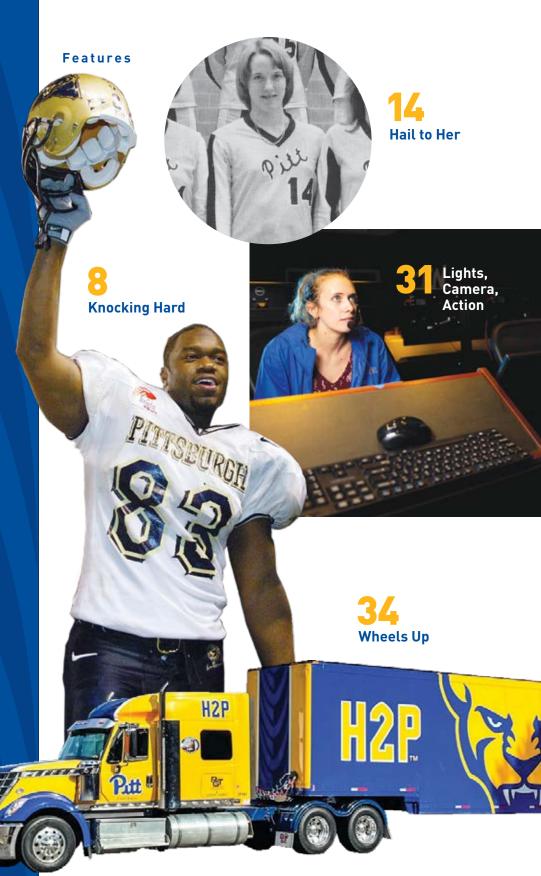
On the Cover: MAN ON THE MOVE

Deslin Alexandre represents the best of what it is to be a Pitt football player. See the coverstory beginning on page 18.

H2P (Hail to Pitt), the official magazine of the University of Pittsburgh Department of Athletics, is published by the Office of University Communications and Marketing and Pitt Athletics. Send correspondence to University of Pittsburgh, Department of Athletics, H2P, Petersen Events Center, 3719 Terrace St., Pittsburgh, PA 15261. ©2022 University of Pittsburgh #113562. H2P magazine accepts no responsibility for unsolicited contributions of artwork, photography or articles.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE ASSOCIATE ATHLETIC DIRECTOR, PHILANTHROPY AND ENGAGEMENT

Thank you.

As I look back on the past year, those two words continue to ring in my ears. It was an unforgettable year for everyone associated with

Pitt Athletics. Pitt studentathletes earned degrees,
won championships
and made a
significant impact
on our community.
Through it all,
you, our loyal and
generous Panther
Club members,
were there to
celebrate with us.
And without you,
none of the amazing
moments from the

past year would have been possible.

When Chris Bickell made his transformational \$20 million commitment to support Pitt football, he hoped that it would inspire others to give back under the common goal of elevating Pitt Athletics to national prominence. Well, mission accomplished. More than 12,600 rose to the challenge and made a gift to support Pitt Athletics. In total, \$40,376,379 in gifts and commitments were made over the past year, the largest fundraising total in the history of Pitt Athletics.

These numbers and statistics are impressive, and we are extremely grateful for them, but what I will remember most about the past year is the people, the moments and

the feelings of immense pride to be a small part of this incredible university. No

moment on the field has been more memorable than watching the clock strike 0:00 on Dec.
4, 2021, in Charlotte, North Carolina, seeing the confetti fall from the sky and looking around the stadium to see the joy on your faces. That moment proved that when the Pitt family

Lee Roberts proved that when the Pitt fam comes together in support of a common goal, nothing can stop us.

A more powerful moment for me was being present for the small ceremony to honor the student-athletes who have achieved the highest honor Pitt can bestow on a student-athlete: a place on the Varsity Walk. Pitt has an amazing history of individual athletes who have excelled in their sport, but to have your name carved into the Varsity Walk means that you were more than just a great athlete—you were an outstanding scholar, competitor, teammate, champion and representative of this

great university. But the honorees can't get their name on the Varsity Walk by themselves; they need coaches, athletic trainers, academic advisors, facilities, equipment and so much more to be successful. Your financial support through the Panther Club is the reason we can provide these Pitt legends with the resources they need to achieve the highest levels of success.

The important thing about reaching new heights is that it makes you realize what is possible. While the 2021-22 year was incredible, we know we can do so much more. We can win more championships, set more records, and carve more student-athletes' names into Pitt history forever. But we can't achieve any of our lofty goals without you. You have elevated Pitt Athletics, and your investment in our student-athletes will transform their future. And when we win those championships, I look forward to celebrating with you.

Thank you for what you have done, and what you will do, for Pitt.

Hail to Pitt!

Lee Roberts

Executive Associate Athletic Director, Philanthropy and Engagement



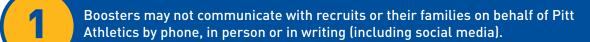






COMPLIANCE CORNER

NCAA Rules Every Pitt Panther Supporter Needs to Know





Free or discounted items or services may not be provided to student-athletes or recruits unless the benefit is available to the public or to all Pitt students generally.



Boosters may not provide academic assistance of any kind to student-athletes or recruits (e.g., test prep, SAT/ACT fees, academic expenses, tutoring, editing/completing coursework, etc.)



Student-athletes, recruits, recruits' families or coaches may not be invited to your club seats or suite as this constitutes special seating arrangements.



Game tickets, apparel, equipment or athletic awards may not be traded for or purchased from student-athletes with eligibility remaining.



Student-athletes may be employed provided they are paid the going rate for work actually performed.



Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) agreements must adhere to NCAA rules and Pennsylvania law and must be disclosed to the compliance office seven days prior to the student-athlete's participation.



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ob Junko enjoyed a nearly three-decade tenure with the University of Pittsburgh football program.

He was an invaluable and highly influential figure for the Panthers, first as a coach and later as an administrator.

The man known as "Junk" called it a career following the 2021 Atlantic Coast Conference championship season. He retired after spending an incredible 53 years in college football.

Junko initially coached at Pitt from 1982 to 1985, serving as defensive coordinator under head coach Foge Fazio. Junko returned in 1997 as defensive tackles coach under Walt Harris and also served the program as assistant head coach. In 2007, he transitioned from coaching to administration, serving as

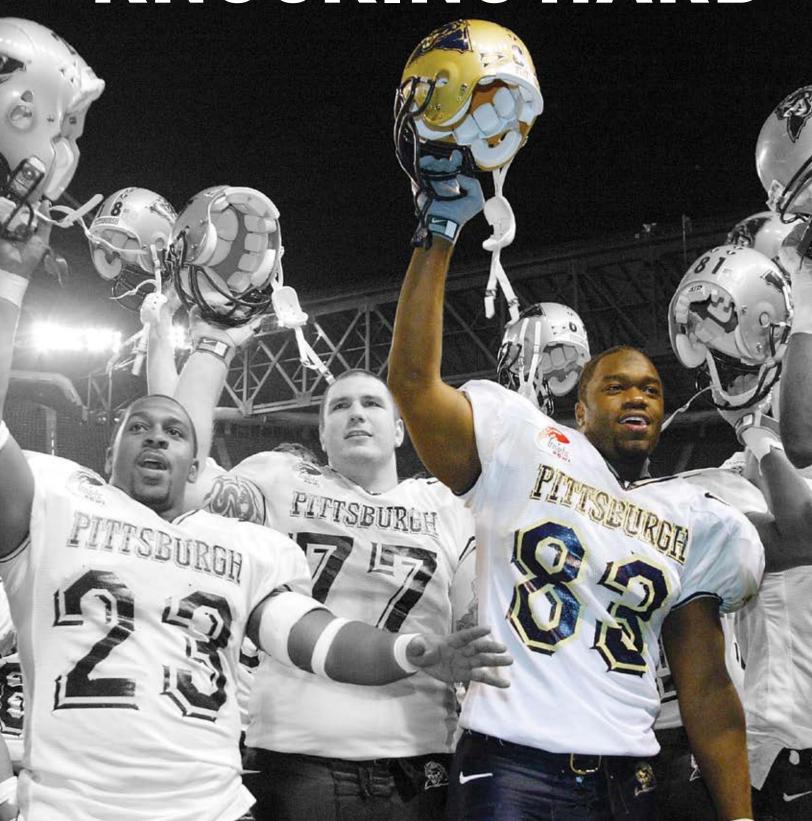
Junko was part of 20 bowl teams and worked with 18 first-team All-Americans.

Pitt's director of player development and high school relations.

Junko's Pitt career was highly accomplished. In total, he was part of 20 bowl teams and worked with 18 first-team All-Americans.

In tribute to Junko's countless contributions to Pitt football, former quarterback D.J. Cavanaugh (A&S '84) and his wife, Jeannine (NURS '87), made a generous commitment to rename the Duratz Athletic Complex defensive line position room the Bob Junko Defensive Line Room. It is a fitting honor for a man who remains widely beloved by the many players, coaches and staffers who had the pleasure of working with him.

Kris Wilson: KNOCKING HARD





For Kris Wilson, football has been a catalyst, whether he's behind the line of scrimmage or behind a lens.

Written by Josh Rowntree

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he former University of Pittsburgh tight end, who shone for the Panthers from 1999 to 2003 before being selected in the second round of the 2004 NFL Draft, has made considerable waves in the entertainment business, blending his experience with and love for football with a passion to tell stories.

Wilson grew up in eastern Pennsylvania, attending J.P. McCaskey High School in Lancaster. It was there that football provided him with his first

big break: a college scholarship offered to him by former Panthers coach Walt Harris.

When Harris brought Wilson to Oakland, the Panthers were coming off a dismal 1998 season in which Pitt finished 2-9 with an 0-7 record in the Big East Conference. But things began to change in a hurry.

"We sort of turned the program around," says Wilson, who led all Division I tight ends with nine touchdowns as a senior in 2003. "Over the five years we were there, we went to four bowl games, which wasn't happening in previous years. The thing I cherish the most is being a part of the group of guys who brought that resurgence at that time."

The year after Wilson graduated from Pitt with a degree in economics, the Panthers won the Big East championship and played in the Fiesta Bowl.

Wilson, meanwhile, was trying to make it in the pros. He had been picked 61st overall by the Kansas City Chiefs and played there for four seasons. After that, he made stops in Philadelphia, San Diego and Baltimore.

It was his time on the West Coast, however, that had the greatest impact on his life.

n San Diego, he caught the attention of the Chargers' director of player personnel, Arthur Hightower. Hightower took a liking to the 6-foot 2, 250-pound pass catcher who appeared to have a hunger for bettering himself in multiple avenues of life.

"Football gives guys a certain resolve, a certain work ethic, an appreciation for goal setting and achieving that goal," Wilson says. "Before football. I didn't have the work ethic that I needed to have. I didn't know how to reach for my goals and put myself through the process of achieving. Once I spent years and years playing football, it ignited something in me to where I became a lifelong learner."

Hightower saw that, as did others. Wilson was an intelligent, driven individual who wanted more from life. So Hightower suggested some NFL-sponsored enrichment programs, including a business and entrepreneurship program at Harvard.

Wilson jumped at the chance, seeing it as a path to get into the business world when his playing days ended.

But for all he learned in classrooms outside Boston, Wilson received his best advice during athletic competitions.

Every week, he would play pickup basketball with fellow students. One of them was going through Harvard Law School at the time and explained the benefits of getting a law degree. On his way home from Boston, Wilson realized that a law degree could be beneficial and that it would allow him to cast a larger net following his retirement from football, which came in 2011.

Once out of the NFL, he began law school at UCLA, specializing in sports and entertainment law.

"It was that education that helped me catch up to people who were in the real world while I was in the

football world," he says

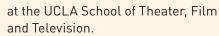
It was there, in the shadows of the Hollywood sign, that Wilson developed an affinity for filmmaking.

"While I was in school, I was taking all of these classes and learning about the industry, and I'm learning about the contracts in the business," he recalls. "I just remember the love that I've always had for creativity, filmmaking, music, the arts. That sparked something in me.

"I thought, 'I'm going through all of this so that I can be on the sidelines, watching other people create?' Nah, I wanted to be on the field. I wanted to be hands on in the process. I wanted to be the guarterback. I wanted to be the leader of a team."

He passed the California Bar Examination but decided against becoming a practicing attorney.





Before earning a Master of Fine Arts degree from UCLA in 2019, Wilson debuted "Mid-City Blue," a short film about police brutality and the dilemma that Black men face when working in law enforcement in the United States.

"You want police in the community who understand the community and have empathy," he says. "Sometimes these law enforcement officers feel 'That has to be me.' For a Black man, vou're faced with a lot of conflict."

Wilson drew from his own experiences, including a time that he was stopped by police while driving with his nephew in San Diego. He believes that he was unjustly profiled due to the color of his skin.

"It sparked the whole thing and made me impassioned to write about it," he says. "That first film I made ended up touching some people."

Indeed it did. "Mid-City Blue" was

nominated for a Student Academy Award in 2018. It won prizes at multiple film festivals, including Best Short Film at the Martha's Vineyard African-American Film





hile he was cutting
his teeth in the
television and
film industry, he
continued to keep in
contact with Hightower, who told NFL
Network about the work Wilson had
done in the entertainment industry.

That connection led him to Nate Boyer, who was in the process of creating a show called "Indivisible," which took an in-depth look at social injustice in NFL cities.

Boyer is a former U.S. Army Green Beret who played college football at the University of Texas and then briefly in the NFL with the Seattle Seahawks. He also is known for convincing former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick to kneel during the national anthem, instead of sitting on the bench, as a sign of respect to the military during his protests of social inequities in America.

After working on "Indivisible" in 2018, Wilson moved back to the East Coast, transitioning from NFL Network in Los Angeles to NFL Films in New Jersey. Once at NFL Films, he earned a chance to join the team that makes "Hard Knocks," the ultrasuccessful documentary miniseries that follows NFL teams through training camp each year.

He spent his first year as a production intern, logging footage and observing the process of making a television show while cameras tagged along with the Las Vegas Raiders. The following year, he was editing "Hard Knocks" as it documented the Los Angeles Rams and Chargers.

As an executive producer with "Hard Knocks," he climbed to the mountaintop of television, taking home an Emmy Award in 2020.

"It's unreal," he says of the award, which sits proudly in his mother's house in Lancaster. "I still have to pinch myself and tell myself that it actually happened and that I "It's unreal. I still have to pinch myself and tell myself that it actually happened and that I won an Emmy."

- Kris Wilson



won an Emmy."

This past fall, Wilson began to direct some of "Hard Knocks," helping to shape the look of the series while on location with the Dallas Cowboys.

"Their coaching staff—they have a lot of Pittsburgh connections," he says. "Their coach, Mike McCarthy, is from Pittsburgh, and his administrative assistant, Justin Rudd, worked for Pitt football while I played there.

"People from Pittsburgh tend to stick together. It's been a cool experience working on that show."

Wilson's next journey won't involve football—at least not yet. He is set to become a father to a baby boy this fall. One of his former Pitt teammates and fellow NFL players, Lousaka Polite, will be godfather to his son, showcasing the tight bond that has continued for Wilson and many of his former Pitt teammates well beyond their playing days.

"We grew up together, in a sense," he recalls of his years in

Pittsburgh, adding that many of the Panthers from that era constantly stay in touch via a group text message. "We were high school kids from all over the place who had to live together for years. Now it's so much deeper than football."

Wilson is part of a group that helped Pitt reach lofty heights on the football field. But the game has done the same for his life, and his appreciation for the sport he loves, and what it can provide, is immeasurable.

"People don't see the years and years of hard work that it takes to have success," he says. "This is all happening because of years of hard work behind the scenes. Kind of like football. I wasn't a blue-chip recruit. I wasn't a nationally known prospect until late in my career at Pitt.

"But now football is a through line in my life. Not only does it open doors, but it teaches you the lessons on how to be successful and step through doors—and stay."



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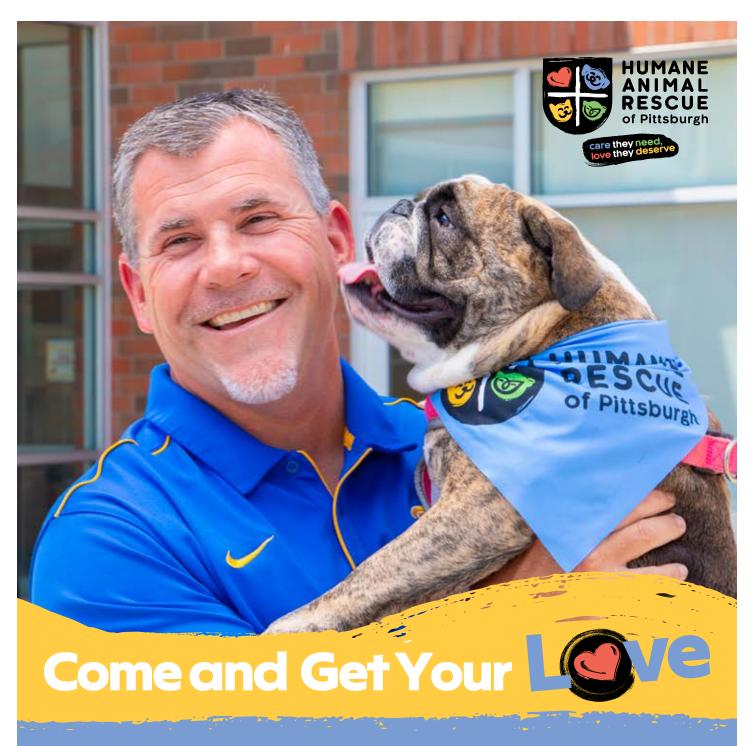


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FOREVER PANTHER IN BARCELONA





Sue Hershelman (front row, third from left)

When Norwin High School student Sue Hershelman heard that a volleyball club was starting up at the school, she thought, "Hey! A chance for me to get another photo of myself in the yearbook!" And so began her volleyball adventure.

Written by Sharon Blake

hat was in the early 1970s. Since then, her love for the sport has taken her from one opportunity to another, including playing on teams in Barcelona, Spain, a city she now calls home.

It was the passage of Title IX that landed Hershelman on the very first University of Pittsburgh women's volleyball team in 1974. Although the young women on that team were indeed making history, Hershelman

says that it felt more like just a continuation of what they had been doing in high school.

"Everyone, including the coaches, was still learning a lot about women in sports," she says. "The training, gaining that competitive edge, acquiring mental toughness and what our coach called that 'killer instinct.''

There were no tight spandex shorts for these women. Wearing baggy uniforms with 3-inch-wide vertical blue, white and yellow stripes on

the jersey sleeves and shorts, the "Pantherettes" played in front of few spectators, though the fan base grew each year. There were stellar winning seasons and even a national tournament.

From there, it was onto graduate school for Hershelman and to positions as a graduate assistant coach for women's volleyball at Pitt and eventually head coach of the Carlow University team. Along the way, her master's degree in linguistics and

The women and activists who came before us, who fought for equality to achieve Title IX, they were the real historic figures.

Our job was to do them proud—and that's what we did."

-Sue Hershelman

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages certification allowed her to teach English and public speaking skills to international students. But she yearned for her own international experience.

Volleyball once again opened the door.

A friend who had been playing the sport in Valencia, Spain, provided Hershelman's contact information to the Spanish Volleyball Federation, and soon she was invited to play in Murcia, a small southeastern town. She landed a job with the North American Institute as an English language specialist and settled into life in Barcelona, though she only planned to stay three or four years. Now, 34 years later, she and her husband, Daniel, enjoy life in the wooded hills six miles from the city, where wild boars roam freely. A selfemployed English language specialist, Hershelman teaches students of all ages. In her spare time, she plays a fast-moving tennis-style game called padel and is active in local environmental preservation.

When this Forever Panther heard that the current Pitt women's volleyball team was on an 11-day playing tour throughout Spain and Italy this past May, she arranged to attend their match against Barça and share two meals with them.

Over dinner at a high-end restaurant atop what was once a bullfighting ring, Hershelman bonded with the young women who are part of Pitt's first NCAA Final Four women's team in school history.

"They had seen the photo of my 1976 team and thought those baggy Harlem Globetrotter-like shorts were pretty amusing," she says with a laugh. The women also discussed other changes in the game over the years—its speed, strategy and the sheer power so obvious on the court today.

Senior Ashley Browske, who started all but one match at libero and led the Panthers last season with 3.03 digs per set, says that dynamic power seemed to impress Hershelman the most. "That's one of the things we focus on—having a big arm here," she says. "Sue is really proud of who we are as women and is super happy with

how the program has grown."

Another major change is that several current team members stand 6 foot 5, something unheard of in Hershelman's era. At one point, she walked over to one of the athletes who was seated. "She unfolded from the chair as she stood up," says Hershelman, who says she felt like "a shrub in the forest" while spending time with the women.

Looking back, she wants to give credit where it is due. "The women and activists who came before us, who fought for equality to achieve Title IX, they were the real historic figures," she says. "Our job was to do them proud—and that's what we did."

For Browske and the others, the visit with the Pitt volleyball pioneer helped to put things into perspective. Both generations share a love for the game and an appreciation for the program's growth.

Says the senior: "It makes us have so much gratitude for the spot we're in right now."



Forever Panther Sue Hershelman (center, front row) with the volleyball team after its 3-1 victory over FC Barcelona



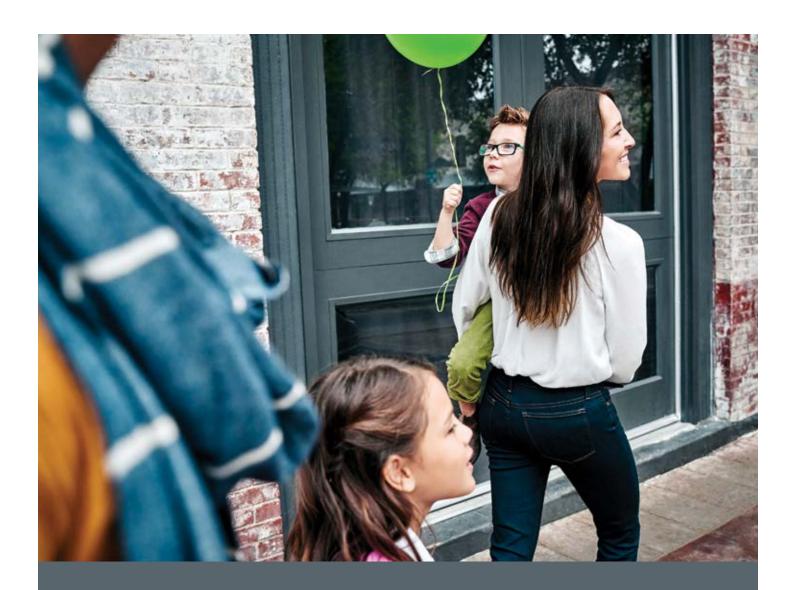




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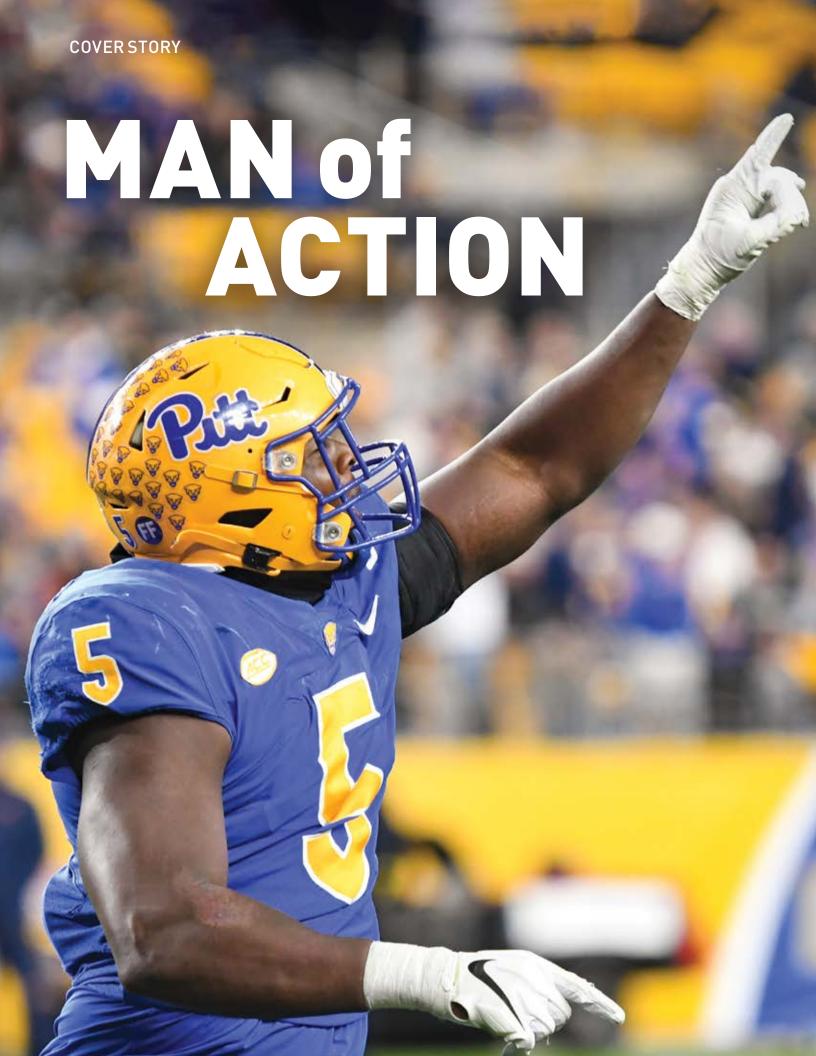
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Deslin Alexandre prides himself on being a man of action. Talk is, well, just talk.



Written by E.J. Borghetti

is dedication to deeds
rather than words is
a big reason why his
teammates voted him a
football team captain.
Alexandre's Pitt career,
which began in January
2017 as a wide-eyed
first-year student,
has been replete with
impressive actions and
accomplishments.

hat's not to say he can't handle himself in the verbal department. In fact, each of the past two years, Alexandre has represented the Pitt football team at the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) Kickoff, an annual summer gathering of media types to talk some ball in Charlotte, North Carolina.

When a reporter at this year's event asked him about Pitt's 2021 ACC championship season, Alexandre did not allow for any reflection or complacency.

"Last year was a great year. We were happy with what we did last year, but we're focused on this year now," Alexandre said. "We're focused on doing all the little things right to make sure we can replicate and have a better year than we did last year. Our team has been working really hard. We're not really focused on what we did last year because last year is last year. We're trying to do what we do this year."

That is music to Chris Bickell '97 Head Football Coach Pat Narduzzi's ears.

"Deslin is a leader," Narduzzi says. "He represents the best of what it means to be a Pitt football player. On and off the field, Deslin has made us incredibly proud."



From left: Alexandre reads to Pittsburgh Public Schools students to promote literacy, visits veterans who are avid Pitt fans but unable to attend games and assists Sister Pawla Witula with preparation and distribution of meals for the homeless at Divine Mercy Parish church.



In the classroom,
Alexandre graduated
with a bachelor's
degree in
communication,
boasting a 3.3 grade
point average. He was
twice honored on the
All-ACC Academic Football
Team and was a four-time
ACC Academic Honor Roll

Alexandre is now enrolled in Pitt's Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business.

student.

When it comes to community service, Alexandre is a pacesetter, within not just the Panthers football program but Pitt's entire athletics department. His efforts include service to veterans, the Children's Hospital Foundation, literacy promotion and voter registration.

Alexandre has become a fixture at Divine Mercy Parish church, located in the heart of downtown Pittsburgh. He works specifically with its Red Door program, which the parish began during the Great Depression to provide relief for those in need. This includes providing meals; clothing; and, most importantly, encouragement to the homeless.

Alexandre's number-one fan might just be Sister Pawla Witula, Red Door ambassador.

"Deslin has spent many hours at our church feeding and clothing the homeless," she says. "He is extremely passionate and gives from his heart. Deslin speaks to every one of the homeless visitors who he serves and gives them a sense of dignity. Even with so many commitments, he has made serving the community—and those our parish serves—a priority in his life.







"I am so appreciative of everything Deslin does that I posted a picture of him in our church bulletin. I am hoping his goodwill will inspire other young people to follow in his footsteps."

lexandre is hoping to expand his impact beyond America's borders. He was born in Haiti and is inspired to help the children of the impoverished country, which is estimated to have 1.2 million orphans and vulnerable children. Alexandre hopes to build awareness and mobilize resources for education. health care and nutrition.

"I want my blessings to benefit those who don't have the same good fortune and opportunities I've had as a college football student-athlete," says Alexandre, who recently was nominated for the prestigious Allstate American Football Coaches Association Good Works Team and the Wuerffel Trophy. Both awards recognize college football studentathletes for their dedication to community service and the positive impact they have made on the lives of others.

Deslin is a leader. He represents the best of what it means to be a Pitt football player. On and off the field. Deslin has made us incredibly proud."

-Pat Narduzzi

It would not be surprising if Alexandre received both of these honors. It also would not be a surprise for him to win any number of awards associated with his play on the field.

Alexandre is poised to be a threeyear starter on Pitt's perennially strong defensive line. Despite being hindered by a preseason shoulder injury, he went on to compile 41 tackles, 3.5 tackles for loss and 2.5 sacks last year. That production earned him an All-ACC honorable mention.

Alexandre saved some of his biggest performances for Pitt's biggest games. In the Panthers' Coastal Division title-clinching win over Virginia, he had two huge sacks. In the ACC championship game against Wake Forest, Alexandre matched his career high with six total tackles.

He takes great pride in Pitt's defensive line tradition and embraces the unit's expectations. Athlon Sports rated the Panthers' defensive front as the fourth best in college football

Alexandre's response to such praise? "We'll continue to work hard," he says. "We really just want to keep setting the bar higher and higher and never just sit there and feel happy with what we did. We always want more."

Spoken like a man of action. **@**



Fall Sports Preview

he Panthers' fall sports season is highly anticipated beyond the gridiron. A number of Pitt squads are looking to build on their monumental success from last season, including the volleyball program's 2021 NCAA Final Four appearance, men's soccer's consecutive ACC regular-season crowns and NCAA Elite Eight appearances and the Panthers' quickly ascending women's soccer and cross country teams.





Volleyball

SCHEDULE

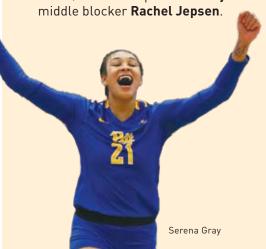
- Pitt will have 13 matches against teams that competed in the 2021 Division I NCAA Women's Volleyball Championship, including matches with four opponents that reached at least the Regional Semifinal: BYU, Ohio State, Georgia Tech and Louisville.
- The 2022 schedule begins with a pair of weekend tournaments on the road at Texas A&M Aug. 26-28 and at BYU Sept. 2-3. The Panthers will take on six opponents in that stretch, three of whom competed in the 2021 NCAA Tournament, including a true road contest against BYU. The Cougars landed at ninth in the final American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) poll of 2021.
- Pitt's first home matches of the regular season will be at the annual Panther Challenge Sept. 9-10 at the Fitzgerald Field House. The Panthers will host American, Bowling Green and Towson.
- Pitt will stay home to host two NCAA championship teams, Tennessee and Ohio State, Sept. 16-18. The Panthers defeated the Lady Vols on the road in 2021 and recently took down the Buckeyes in a scrimmage this April.
- To kick off ACC play, the Panthers will welcome North Carolina (Sept. 23) and NC State (Sept. 25) at the Fitzgerald Field House. Pitt also will host Miami (Oct. 14), Florida State (Oct. 16) and Notre Dame (Oct. 21).
- The Panthers will play home-and-home series against ACC foes Georgia Tech (Oct. 9 away, Nov. 23 home) and Louisville (Oct. 23 home, Nov. 18 away), who reached the Regional Final and National Semifinal, respectively. Pitt also will face Syracuse (Nov. 4 away, Nov. 11 home) and Boston College (Nov. 6 away, Nov. 26 home) twice apiece during its conference slate.



Lexis Akeo (left) and Rachel Fairbanks

KEY PLAYERS

- The Panthers will return three starters to the fold in 2022: AVCA All-American middle blockers
 Serena Gray and Chiamaka Nwokolo and seasoned libero Ashley Browske.
- Pitt is in good hands with rising senior setter
 Lexis Akeo, in addition to rising sophomore setter
 Rachel Fairbanks, who made a splash during her first NCAA Tournament run in December.
- Rounding out the returners are outside hitters
 Valeria Vazquez Gomez and Cat Flood, middle
 blocker Sabrina Starks, right side Eliana Posada
 and libero/defensive specialist Emmy Klika.
- Newcomers include transfers Courtney Buzzerio (right side, Iowa), Julianna Dalton (outside hitter, Washington State) and Cam Ennis (outside hitter, Texas A&M) as well as two first-year students: libero/defensive specialist Dillyn Griffin and middle blocker Pachal Janson







Women's Soccer

SCHEDULE

- Pitt opened the 2022 season by claiming the Rumble in the Rockies crown after shutting out both Gonzaga (1-0) and Montana (2-0) in Missoula, Montana. Amanda West tallied both game-winning goals, with assists on both from Landy Mertz. Caitlyn Lazzarini piled up a career-high 10 saves in the win over Gonzaga, helping the Panthers record back-to-back shutout wins to open a season for the first time since 2017.
- Ambrose Urbanic Field will host nine games this year, the first coming Aug. 25 vs. UMass.
- The Panthers close out the regular season with three-straight home games. They host defending national champion Florida State on Oct. 23 before closing out the season with 2021 NCAA Tournament team Clemson on Oct. 27.





Landy Mertz

KEY PLAYERS

- Under the leadership of fifth-year head coach Randy Waldrum, Pitt is coming off its second-straight 11-win season in 2021, finishing 11-7 with a 4-6 ACC mark. It returns with most of its 2021 squad, which outscored its competition 41-22.
- Amanda West enjoyed another stellar campaign in her junior season. She was named to the United Soccer Coaches' All-Atlantic Region Third Team. The only Panther to be named to multiple all-region teams, West garnered a selection for the third-straight year. Picked to the All-ACC Third Team, West earned All-ACC honors for the third time in her career despite missing seven games. West ranked second in the ACC in game-winning goals (five), tied for fifth in goals (10) and tied for sixth in points (23). She added yet another accolade by being selected to the CoSIDA Academic All-District Two Team, becoming the first Panther in program history to earn the honor.
- Sophomore **Sarah Schupansky** returns after a stellar first-year season that saw her finish second on the team in goals (seven) and assists (six).
- Landy Mertz returns for her senior campaign after leading the squad in assists with seven a season ago.



Sarah Schupansky



Cross Country

SCHEDULE

- The Panthers will compete in a total of four regular season meets and three postseason meets during the 2022 campaign.
- Pitt will open the season at home for the fourth straight season as it welcomes opponents from all over the country for the Panther Opener on Sept. 2 at Schenley Park.
- The third meet of the season will be in South Bend, Indiana, at the super-competitive Joe Piane-Notre Dame Invitational on Sept. 30. The meet will feature 34 institutions from around the country, including some ACC foes and regional opponents.
 - Pitt closes out the regular season on Oct. 15 as it heads to Stillwater, Oklahoma, for the Weis-Crockett Invitational hosted by Oklahoma State. The meet will give Pitt a preview of the course that will host the 2022 NCAA Championships in mid-November.
 - Postseason action kicks off on Oct. 29
 as the Panthers head to Charlottesville,
 Virginia, for the 2022 ACC Cross Country
 Championships hosted by Virginia.
 - The Panthers will look to build off a historic showing last season at the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional meet on Nov. 11 as they compete in the 2022 event hosted by Penn State. The Pitt men posted their highest finish in program history a season ago, placing fifth in the talented field of competitors.





Emily Brown



KEY PLAYERS

- Jack Miller will be looking to build off a strong redshirt sophomore campaign in which he was the top finisher for the Panthers in four of the five meets. The talented runner also earned All-Region honors for the first time in his Pitt career as he posted a 21st-place finish at the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional meet with a personal record 10K time. He also earned All-ACC Academic Team honors.
- Junior Luke Henseler returns to the squad looking to build on his strong finish to his second season as a Panther. Henseler posted a 37th-place finish at the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional meet with a 10K personal record time of 31:46.20.
- Sam Otis and Ethan Maher also will be key contributors for Pitt this year as they posted top-40 finishes at the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional meet last season and helped Pitt earn its best team finish in program history.
- Emily Brown will be looking to lead the Panthers women's squad once again this year after being Pitt's top finisher in four of six meets last season. Brown opened the year with a third-place finish at the Yinzer Classic before closing out her second season with a 75th-place finish at the NCAA Mid-Atlantic Regional meet.
- Sophomore Emily Jobes will be looking to build off her strong first season in which she posted the best finish on the team at the regional meet. She also earned two top-15 finishes to open her first season as a Panther.
- Sarah Hurst and Caroline Rusinski will be looked at to take another step forward this season after strong first seasons for Pitt. Hurst ran in the first four meets and was one of the Panthers' top finishers, while Rusinski competed in cross country for the first time in her career and posted a team-best 79th-place finish at the ACC Championships.

FALL HOME SCHEDULES

CROSS COUNTRY

Sept. 2 Panther Opener at Schenley Park

FREE ADMISSION

FOOTBALL

Sept. 1 West Virginia
Sept. 10 Tennessee
Sept. 24 Rhode Island
Oct. 1 * Georgia Tech
Oct. 8 * Virginia Tech
Nov. 5 * Syracuse
Nov. 19 * Duke

GAMES PLAYED AT ACRISURE STADIUM

MEN'S SOCCER

Aug. 25 Georgetown **West Virginia** Aug. 29 Sept. 5 Howard Sept. 16 * NC State Sept. 19 Akron * Virginia Sept. 30 Oct. 7 * Clemson Oct. 10 Denver Oct. 17 Duquesne * Notre Dame Oct. 28

> MATCHES PLAYED AT AMBROSE URBANIC FIELD

*DENOTES ACC MATCHUP

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Aug. 25 **UMass** Aug. 31 **Kent State** Sept. 4 Cincinnati Sept. 11 Liberty Sept. 22 Miami Oct. 1 Louisville Oct. 20 **Syracuse** Oct. 23 Florida State Oct. 27 Clemson

> MATCHES PLAYED AT AMBROSE URBANIC FIELD

VOLLEYBALL

Sept. 9 **American** Sept. 9 **Bowling Green** Sept. 10 Towson **Tennessee** Sept. 16 Sept. 18 Ohio State **North Carolina** Sept. 23 **NC State** Sept. 25 Oct. 14 Miami Florida State Oct. 16 Oct. 21 **Notre Dame** Oct. 23 Louisville Nov. 11 Syracuse Nov. 23 Georgia Tech Nov. 26 **Boston College**

> MATCHES PLAYED AT FITZGERALD FIELD HOUSE







Pitt Studios Producing Exceptional Shows and Talent

Written by Josh Rowntree

In 2018, the University of Pittsburgh unveiled Pitt Studios, a multifaceted, state-of-the-art broadcast production facility located at the Petersen Events Center.





our years and countless productions later, Pitt Studios has not only reached gold-standard status among similar facilities across the country but also has become a developer of on-camera and behindthe-scenes talent for the media industry.

Now the operators of the facility, in conjunction with Pitt and its Department of Athletics, are beginning to see the massive fruits of that labor.

'We are actively teaching and helping students gain professional opportunities," says Paul Barto, Pitt's associate athletic director for broadcast and video production. "This is [Pitt] Athletics really being

a leader in trying to grow academic curriculum. That's not really a common thing."

Barto joined Pitt in 2004 to lead what was then a somewhat new practice of schools producing video broadcasts of their own athletic

Eighteen years later, every on-campus athletic event at Pitt is broadcast in some manner, with ACC Network and Watch ESPN serving as the television and streaming platforms.

Pitt has six full-time employees dedicated to that production, plus others—like Barto—who serve in a variety of roles in the athletics department while also assisting or leading aspects of television production. On top of that, 10-15 students participate regularly, with another 20-30 in the mix at various

> 'It's almost crucial that we have the student resource," says Barto.

"There's no way that we could produce the number of linear and digital events that we do if we didn't have the student labor.

On the flip side, part of our mission is to provide educational opportunities and hands-on training. The more you get

hands on, the more experience you get, the more likely it is that you'll be able to find a job."

Pitt Studios was launched with the intention that a video production curriculum would be developed alongside it. Pitt now offers several

"We are actively teaching and helping students gain professional opportunities. This is [Pitt] Athletics really being a leader in trying to grow academic curriculum. That's not really a common thing."

-Paul Barto

courses in media studies and broadcasting and will be offering more in the coming years. In addition, the facility itself was literally built for education. Shadowing is performed through a control room viewing window or by pulling up a chair in the control room. Extra seats are available throughout the facility for student training.

This setup has allowed Pitt to funnel its students and graduates into a television production workforce that has been dealing with a shortage of qualified workers since the start of COVID-19. Having a professional environment in which to develop young talent is an impactful resource for the entire industry.

'Television is completely impossible to learn from a book," says Jack Reynolds (A&S '21), who committed to attending Pitt after seeing the initial construction of Pitt Studios in 2017. "You have to get hands-on experience."

Reynolds is a true Pitt Studios success story. In November, he will travel to Qatar for 43 days to serve as a technical director for the broadcasts



Sara Mackulin began working for Pitt Studios full time in July 2021. Over the past year, she has produced multiple nationally televised broadcasts on ACC Network.

of the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

"At Pitt, I was pushed into things that maybe I wasn't quite ready for, but it opened my eyes," says Reynolds. "Being able to get your hands dirty, work with the equipment—it was really, really valuable."

"He graduated last December," marvels Barto. "He'll be barely 22 and out there in the world doing network television for something like the World Cup."

Pitt's athletics programs and coaches have directly benefited from the quality and quantity of broadcasts, too.

"A coach can tell a student-athlete's family that, on some level, you'll be able to see every game that your child or relative plays," Barto says. "If you

live in California, you can still catch their games. That's a really important piece of it."

Pitt Studios does face its challenges. In order to broadcast all Pitt athletics events, there is a constant need for experienced workers and students to assist with the demanding schedule. So getting the word out about the opportunity and the potential of rapid job placement is vital.

And it goes beyond students at Pitt. Other college students and media professionals throughout the region have been able to get involved in Pitt Studios and its broadcast productions.

"It's really a citywide thing," says Barto, who has cast a wide net to find capable helpers. "We have a lot of talented people in this city, and we've been lucky enough to tap into them."

Despite the workload, the adversities and the obstacles, Pitt Studios continues to deliver some of the most highly regarded game broadcasts and college athletics shows in the nation.

For Barto, however, it hits far deeper than just the "fun side," as he describes it, of watching a broadcast go off successfully.

"The most important thing, the most fulfilling thing, is seeing people go on to other things," Barto says. "When I see these kids out there, getting jobs, getting work, it's everything."



A Well-oiled Machine

Written by Josh Rowntree



ny good football team needs a good front line. The University of Pittsburgh, in a sense, has a couple.

Leading the way for the Panthers, sometimes days in advance of a game, is the team that supports the team: the equipment staff.

"Our equipment staff is always working around the clock to make sure our team is equipped with whatever they need either at home or on the road," says Chris Dountas, Pitt's director of equipment services for football. Dountas, who recently rejoined the Pitt equipment staff after previously serving as the director of equipment services for Pitt men's basketball, has high praise for all of the staff and student managers who are tasked each week with the massive job of getting everything ready for Pitt's equipment needs.

Having to keep track and prepare the equipment of more than 100 college football players, plus the coaching and support staff, is a continuous process once the season

begins. Because of that, Pitt relies on a base of student managers who assist the football program. That group has grown during Chris Bickell 97 Head Football Coach Pat Narduzzi's tenure, from eight student managers to 14 over the last few years.

The heaviest lift is packing throughout the week. Not only are the student managers packing the essential football items, but they also are loading up all the essentials needed for the athletic training staff, strength staff and nutritionists as well as equipment needed for video operations. At the end of the day, it's all loaded for transport.

Along with supporting the daily equipment needs of the program, the equipment staff has to contend with the main event that comes each Saturday: game day.

Getting to that point, however, is a long, tedious process that doesn't really have a beginning or an end. It's constant work.

One aspect that is not uncommon in college sports but does present a unique challenge for Pitt's equipment team is that every game has to be treated like a road game, with gear being shipped to Acrisure Stadium (formerly Heinz Field) for home contests or whatever city the Panthers are playing in that week.

For home games, Pitt can use its on-campus movers, who expedite the process significantly by quickly shipping multiple smaller box trucks to the North Shore and then back to the team's practice facility on the

South Side.

That group of mostly Pitt students takes massive pride in what it does and has turned the program into a tight-knit

Student-athletes work with the group in the summer and typically form strong bonds with the Pitt movers. They become friends, have nicknames for each other and are treated like celebrities in their own way because of their importance to the program and the pride they take in their work. The bigger challenge for Pitt's equipment team comes when they truly must hit the road. That is where the anchor of that front line comes into play: the equipment truck.

Adorned in Pitt colors, logos and fonts, the equipment truck, supplied by PGT Trucking, hauls the football gear to any location where the Panthers are playing. The unmissable 18-wheeler has become somewhat of a rallying point for Panthers fans in cities across the

country and for those driving to the away games.

"We see Pitt fans all the time, going down south through Virginia and West Virginia, going to all the games down there," says Mike Carreon, who has driven the Pitt equipment truck for 15 years and has worked as a driver with PGT Trucking for 22 years in all. "They honk and wave at you, and they



"We are very fortunate to work with such a great sponsor in PGT Trucking."

-Chris Dountas

have the flags on their cars."

Steve Michener joins Carreon on the road, accompanying him on trips to places as close as Morgantown, West Virginia, and as far away as El Paso, Texas. By law, truck drivers are not allowed to drive for more than 11 hours at a time without rest, so Carreon and Michener share the driving duties. Having two drivers means the truck can keep moving throughout the night without having to stop for extended periods of time because one driver can rest while the other driver is behind the wheel.

The drivers and equipment team may be a somewhat unnoticed part of the football program's operation, but they are essential to the team's preparation. Carreon feels that

responsibility and the respect from those within the program for whom he is driving.

"Since day one, Pitt has treated us as part of the team, not just as drivers," he says. "They welcomed us in and made us feel like part of the team. You want to hold up your end."

"We are very fortunate to work with such a great sponsor in PGT Trucking," Dountas says. "They are an important asset to our success week in and week out. We have the best crew in the country, hands down!"

The job isn't glamorous. From washing worn jerseys to sanitizing everything—especially since the start of COVID-19—to working long and often late hours, working in equipment operations is a labor of love.

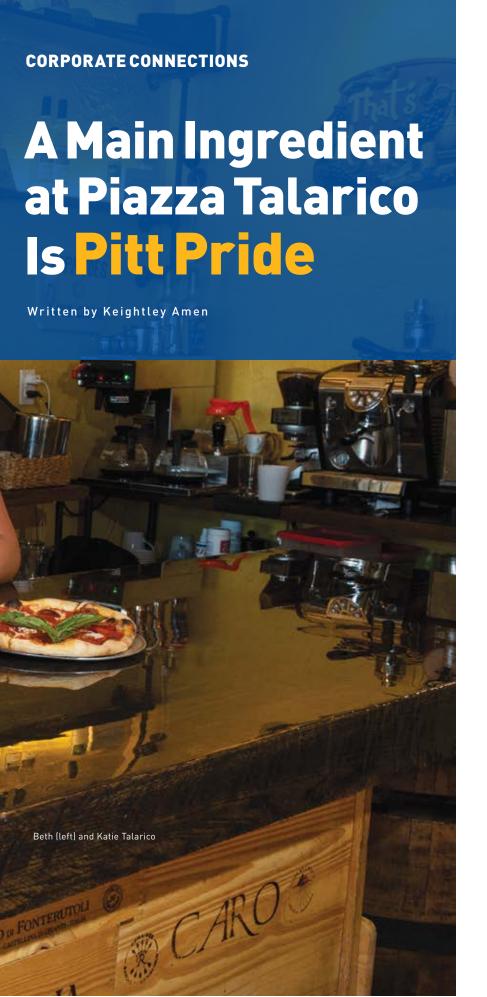
The tireless work ethic of all involved and the attention to particulars are what stand out to Dountas most.

"In order to make this operation work, you need to be extremely detail oriented," he says. "The equipment room serves so many Student manager Gibby Hribal

purposes, and we are thankful that Pitt has an amazing group of managers, staff and our drivers who know how to get the job done. We are a well-oiled machine and continue to be grateful for everyone who assists us with this endeavor!"







hen you visit
Piazza Talarico
and Papa Joe's
Wine Cellar
in Pittsburgh's
Lawrenceville
neighborhood,
you're sure to
get two things:
a delicious
traditional Italian meal and
a huge helping of Pitt pride.
And you're likely to run into a
University of Pittsburgh coach,

The restaurant and wine bar, which is owned and operated by two passionate Pitt graduates, is becoming known as "the Pitt Place."

player, recruit or visiting team.

Sisters Katie and Beth Talarico opened the restaurant in December 2017, and it's been a four-generation effort. Their father, Joe Talarico, an anesthesiologist and clinical associate professor at the University of Pittsburgh, encouraged his daughters, lent them the start-up costs and offered them advice based on his own wine-making business. Their mother, Deb, found the location on Penn Avenue and helped to design the venue's rustic Italian decor. The secret sauce, recipes and menu inspirations came directly from their Grandma Ida, and the owners' nieces and nephews help in the summertime.

"Our entire staff, if they're not already related to us, they might as well be. That's how close we are," Beth says. Rather than relying heavily on tips (which are optional at Piazza Talarico), employees receive a living wage, and the business shares 20% of its revenue with all employees.

The Pitt Place

restaurant."

Beth and Katie, who are a year and a half apart in age, both graduated from Pitt in 2015—Beth with a degree in communication and Katie with degrees in English writing and Italian studies. Even before you walk in the door, you know how proud they are of their Pitt roots: Individual letters spelling out "HAIL TO PITT" hang in window panels above the entrance.

ARCHMENT PAPER

"You'd be hard-pressed to find people who support Pitt athletics more than our family," Beth says.

They've been basketball and football season ticket holders since 2000 and regularly attend a variety of other games. "I don't miss a basketball game. It's an unwritten rule around here, so someone always has to cover for me at the

When the sisters started the business and needed ways to get the word out, they reached out to Pitt to advertise, eventually becoming a corporate sponsor. Now, Chris Bickell '97 Head Football Coach Pat Narduzzi, Pitt men's basketball Head Coach Jeff Capel and basketball Assistant Coach Jason Capel are regulars, along with their families.

The family restaurant has partnered with Pitt and the Capels to host an annual spaghetti dinner to raise funds for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), which took the coaches' father five years ago. Pitt coaches and athletes help to host, serve customers and sign autographs. In just

two years, the event has raised thousands of dollars.

"Ever since we went over there, met the whole family, had an unbelievable meal—that started a great relationship," says Jeff Capel. "We have so much love and respect for them. We're grateful for their support of our basketball program and for their friendship."

Word continues to spread throughout the Pitt network about the great food and support of Pitt athletics.

Basketball forward John Hugley and linebacker SirVocea Dennis frequent the restaurant, which also has hosted recruits and catered for visiting teams.

Eating at Piazza Talarico

When customers visit Piazza Talarico, they can choose from weekly specials; pizza; Italian-style sandwiches like the Goomba; macaroni dishes with "Grandma's Sauce"; and favorite Italian desserts such as gelato, cannoli and zeppole. They can eat or drink in the casual dining room, walk-up wine bar, patio in the back or small upstairs space for private events.

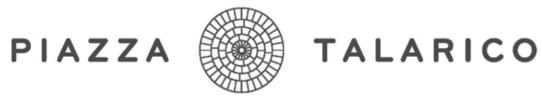
As satisfied customers leave, they may not see the "HAIL TO PITT" windows, but they may hear Beth shout, "H2P!" •

"We have so much love and respect for them. We're grateful for their support of our basketball program and for their friendship."

-Jeff Capel







3832 PENN AVENUE www.piazzatalarico.com



ACC, Big 10, Pac-12 Unity Tour

n July, University of Pittsburgh student-athletes Riley Patrick (lacrosse) and Daishon Spann (women's track and field) and Fumi Kimura, associate athletic director for culture, diversity and engagement, joined approximately 100 student-athletes and administrators from the Atlantic Coast, Big Ten and Pac-12 conferences in Montgomery, Alabama, to participate in an immersive educational experience and visit important sites associated with the civil rights movement.

The participants visited Selma, Alabama, and marched from the First Baptist Church across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, site of the March 7, 1965, "Bloody Sunday" attack that led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965. They also visited the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery Interpretive Center at Alabama State University, Civil Rights Memorial Center and Equal Justice Initiative Legacy Museum.

They heard from Sheyann Webb-Christburg, who is recognized as one of the youngest participants in Bloody Sunday; Lynda Blackmon Lowery, one of 300 people who participated in the 54-mile march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965; and Bryan Stevenson, founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative, a human rights organization in Montgomery.



Marchers carrying a banner in Harlem, New York City, New York, on March 15, 1965

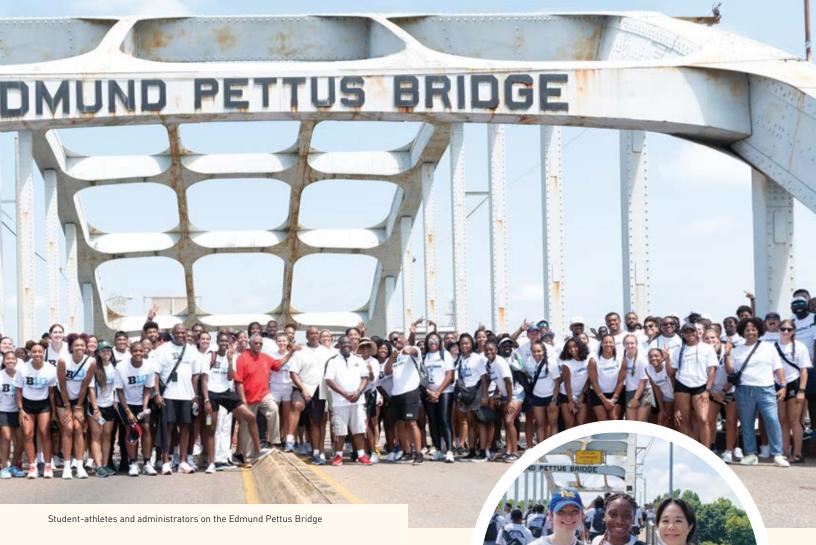


This experience significantly impacted me because I had the chance to learn about this moment in history in a more detailed way than I have ever been taught in school. I learned how much my vote matters and how influential voting during midterm elections [is] to help elicit change in my direct community. I also learned the power of practicing my freedom of speech and freedom to protest in an effort to educate and inform those that are not up to date with the injustices happening around our nation."

—Daishon Spann

The Unity Tour was an incredible experience. At times it was painful and traumatic, and at other times it was inspiring and empowering. Most of all, the shared experience provided the invaluable opportunity to connect on a deeper level with student-athletes and administrators, resulting in a building of community. Meeting colleagues in person for the first time and coming away as friends united in the fight against social injustice is powerful. Big Ten Commissioner Kevin Warren said this experience would change us, and he was right."

—Fumi Kimura



I was immersed in history beyond just facts out of a textbook. During the trip, we listened to both Sheyann Webb-Christburg and Lynda Blackmon Lowery speak about their firsthand experiences in Selma before and during the march from Selma to Montgomery. To hear these women speak of their memories so vividly, adding emotion and individual perspective to the facts, I felt an added dimension to what I had been learning. Another unique addition to the learning environment was the bond created between everyone there.

Every person on the tour had a shared passion for equity, diversity and inclusion, leading to immediate connections. As a collective, we walked across the Edmund Pettus Bridge; stood together on the floors of a warehouse where slaves were once held; and sat beside each other as we listened to the incredible words of Bryan Stevenson, a social justice activist, law professor at New York University School of Law, and the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative. This intimate feeling with the people around me helped propel the educational experience from purely factual to a completely life-altering event. With this deeper understanding of the civil rights movement and the history leading up to it and into today, I am better equipped to be an effective ally in the fight for racial equality. I will continue to build off of this trip for the rest of my life and will share the knowledge I gained. Overall, the ACC Unity Tour was an unforgettable experience unlike anything I have felt before, and I am so glad to have been a part of it."

-Riley Patrick

From left: Riley Patrick, Daishon Spann and Fumi Kimura at the Edmund Pettus Bridge





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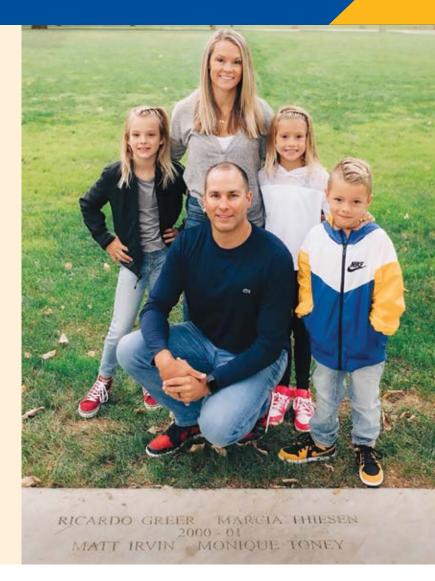




hey met at Pitt as studentathletes. Matt Irvin was a fouryear baseball letter recipient
and two-time team captain. He
graduated from Pitt in 2001
with a BA in political science
and history and later received
his JD from the University
of Pittsburgh School of Law.
Today, Matt is vice president,
associate general counsel and assistant
corporate secretary DICK'S Sporting Goods.

Jamie Briner Irvin's college gymnastics career came to an end in her third year of competition as a result of injury. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Pitt and a master's degree in education from Duquesne University. She has been coaching gymnastics and tumbling for many years and currently coaches tumbling at Pride Cheer Gym in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania.

The Irvins have three children: twin daughters Avery and Teddi, age 11, and son Cole, age 8.



Matt Irvin

Tell us about your time at Pitt.

My experience was great. I think my time at Pitt, particularly time spent within the athletics department, clearly shaped the person that I am today.

How so?

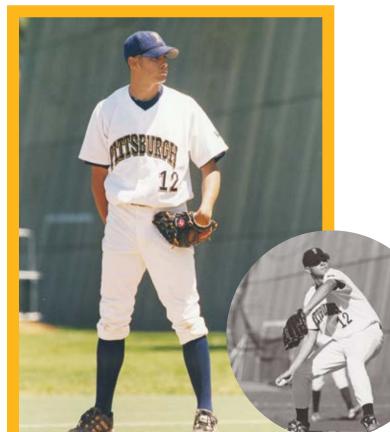
The people we were around, the opportunity to play a sport at the Division I level, not only from a competition standpoint but [also] what's involved, from physical training and time management to developing a strong-willed mentality that enables you to persevere through adversity—those were all transferable skills that helped once the athletic portion of my career was over and it was time to move into graduate school and the "real world."

What does Pitt mean to you?

I don't know how to tell my life story, personally or professionally, without somehow rooting it in Pitt. I met my wife at Pitt. The foundation of my career from an educational standpoint comes from Pitt, and my overall mindset and the way that I conduct myself in life are all products of my experience as a student-athlete at Pitt.

How has your experience shaped sports for your children?

In a lot of youth sports today, you see people who are overbearing or perhaps not focused on the right things. There's nothing wrong with wanting your kids to have great athletic careers that could potentially move to the college level or beyond, but during that process, it's important that you aren't too shortsighted. Whether that means not overworking them at a young age or letting them get exposure to other sports even if they're not quite as good as they may be at their primary sport. Sure, we talk about performance and dealing with pressure, but we also try to emphasize being a good teammate, being a good leader, learning how to handle a situation where things don't go your way and not always being overly results driven. Focus on the process. Results are great, but great results don't always mean we got there the right way.



Matt leading the Panthers on the mound

How does it feel showing your kids your alma mater and the facilities that were a part of your lives for four years?

The facilities that I played in are nothing like the facilities that are there today. Even just the overall feel of the campus has changed. A lot of positive change has been made to the physical appearance of the University as a whole. The athletic fields and facilities are just next level at this point. When we're in Oakland, we usually will stop by the Varsity Walk, and I'll show the kids my stone and we'll take a few pictures there. It's cool to tell that story.

What does having your name on Varsity Walk mean to you?

It's surreal at times. I feel like every time we go and walk around, I see another name that I didn't realize was there. I think the most recent one I saw there was Louis Riddick. There are just so many people there who have impacted the world in a lot of different ways, and to be in company with those folks, in some small way, is a pretty cool thing.

What's it like to come back to Pitt and watch current student-athletes compete?

My freshman year was Coach [Joe] Jordano's first year, and he was so instrumental in building the program and helping set the foundation for what the program

is today. The Big East was a good baseball conference, but the ACC—where they compete now—is a premier baseball conference. The kids today are just next level in terms of their talent, and I think the University has done a tremendous job building out support programs, particularly the Life Skills program. That program is something that was lacking when I was there, and I hope the student-athletes have a good appreciation for not only what they're getting athletically but the attention they're getting in other areas, like family skills and basic life skills, whether it be finance or how to balance a checkbook. It's tremendous and a world-class experience for them.

What do you feel when you watch your children compete?

Our kids compete in a number of different sports, but it's cool that our girls, Avery and Teddi, have focused on gymnastics and Cole's primary focus is baseball. Jamie can talk about her firsthand experience with the girls. From time to time Cole will want to look at pictures and watch videos, and he wears my number [12], which is cool.

What does it mean to you to be a Forever Panther?

I love the opportunity it provides to mentor student-athletes who are at the University today. I love that the mentorship program allows the mentor and mentee to shape the relationship. It can be formal or it can be as simple and casual as texting and chatting and periodically checking in and being there for support. It's great not only for the student-athletes but it's rewarding for me, too.

Are there any special moments at Pitt you'd like to share?

Receiving the Blue-Gold Award at the senior banquet was obviously a sentimental moment for me. It was the culmination of a lot of hard work and dedication, and having the opportunity to reflect on the mentors and people along the way who helped me get to that point in my life was rewarding. The second thing that comes to mind was the last game that I played at Pitt.



Jamie and Matt cheered each other on at their respective competitions.

Jamie Irvin

Tell us about your time at Pitt.

I think for me, coming from Chicago and kind of starting fresh at Pitt was probably the best part of my experience. Going into a new life, new friends, new everything was probably my best take. I got to grow up right out of the gate. Honestly, my greatest gain during my time at Pitt was getting out of my comfort zone and growing as a person.

What does Pitt mean to you?

Pitt was a starting-off point to my adult life. I'll always look back fondly at my time at Pitt. It shaped who I've become as an adult.

How did your experience as a student-athlete help shape the person you are today?

The drive that you need to have [as a student-athlete] to maintain good grades, to maintain your eligibility, to be motivated, to get up early, go to bed early—I feel like it's just shaped my drive and motivation in general. I function best with a routine, so I need those routine goals so I can navigate through life.



Jamie competing on the beam for Pitt

How has your experience shaped sports for vour children?

Well, both my girls are gymnasts. They naturally gravitated to the sport. I introduced them to it and off they went! They go to the gym 20 hours a week, so they obviously love it, and I'm just there to help them along. Also, as a former athlete and now a parent. I talk with my kids about healthy food choices more than diets. I'll ask, "What's a better choice?" or "What would be your best choice?" Rather than saying, "You can't have that."

How does it feel being able to show your kids your alma mater and the facilities that were a part of your lives for four vears?

We love to go to campus! If we're ever down toward the city, we always bring the kids to Fuel and Fuddle—it's our spot—and we always walk to Matt's stone on the Varsity Walk. It's just what we do. Fuel and Fuddle, Dave and Andy's and the Cathedral.

What does it mean to you that Matt's name is on Varsity Walk?

I think it's the coolest thing ever. I'm not sure my children fully grasp how special that is, but I think that they'll get there eventually. And I think it's pretty cool that they have two parents who were both student-athletes.

What do you feel when you watch your children compete?

It's pretty much what we live for. Honestly, I can't think of a better way to spend our weekends, and we're just having so much fun with the traveling. We always say how busy we are, but would we want to do anything else? The answer is no. We've had 14 weeks of baseball tournaments [this summer], and I've loved every minute

What does it mean to you to be a Forever Panther?

I think that Pitt does a great job. I always feel like we're invited to everything and feel welcome when we have time to attend things. I still keep in touch [with teammates]. Well. both of us do.

The son of one of Matt's former teammates was on a [baseball] team with Cole this year. Things kind of came full circle. What are the odds, right? 🔞





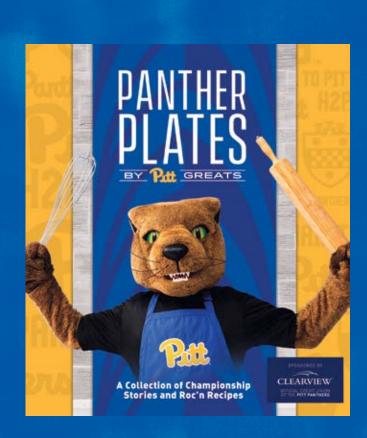


Become a member of the I.C. Light
Baseline Club, a new exclusive
pub-style area at the Petersen Events
Center for Pitt Men's Basketball
games. With access to bar seating,
select happy hour specials, and a
mobile registration system, the I.C.
Light Baseline Club membership is a
flexible, affordable way to see the
Panthers play!

Scan to join the interest list







Bring recipes and culinary traditions from Panther Nation to your tailgate or table.

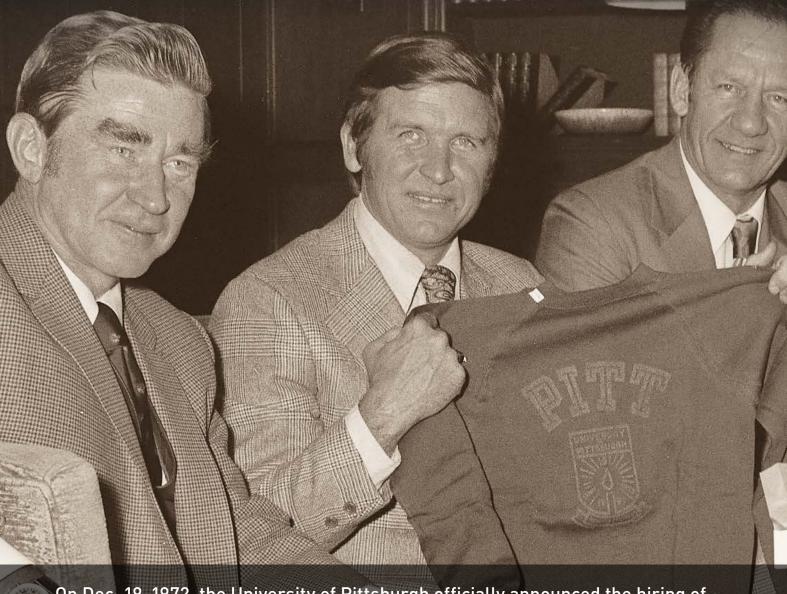
\$30 / Available from The University Store on Fifth or online at thepittshop.com.

Proceeds benefit the Pitt Student-Athlete Success Fund.





PITT MEMORIES



On Dec. 19, 1972, the University of Pittsburgh officially announced the hiring of 37-year-old Johnny Majors as the Panthers' head football coach. Four years later, he would produce an undefeated season and Pitt's ninth national championship. Pictured at the introductory press conference are (left to right) Chancellor Wesley W. Posvar, Majors and Athletic Director Cas Myslinski. The Johnny Majors Classic, which showcases the Panthers against the Tennessee Volunteers, celebrates the life and legacy of one of college football's all-time great coaches and mentors.





Petersen Events Center 3719 Terrace St. Pittsburgh, PA 15261

