President-Elect Positions Peirce for the Future

The Peirce College community extends warm wishes to President-elect James J. Mergiotti as he prepares to take the helm of the institution on July 1, 2009. He succeeds Arthur J. Lendo, Ph.D., who retires on June 30 after serving the College for 18 years.

Elected unanimously by the College's Board of Trustees on February 26, 2009, Mr. Mergiotti was chosen as the new leader of Peirce after a comprehensive national search. He was selected for his in-depth understanding of the College as well as his extensive business and higher education experience. The relationships he has established in his more than 20-year affiliation with Peirce will provide him with significant insight and support in his new role.

In creating tomorrow’s Peirce, Mr. Mergiotti will involve all stakeholders of the institution. He plans to conduct one-on-one and group meetings to engage alumni and all other constituencies in the College’s upcoming strategic planning process, which will identify several ways they can actively participate in the next Peirce era.

Mr. Mergiotti is currently the College’s executive vice president and chief operating officer, a position he assumed in January 2000, after serving as the institution’s vice president of administration (1998-2000) and college trustee (1988-1998). Prior to joining Peirce, Mr. Mergiotti held a variety of senior management positions in the finance field, previously working for an international public accounting firm and a major financial institution.

Have thoughts on the future of Peirce College?
Email your feedback to alumninews@peirce.edu or call 215-670-9037.
Alumni and Students Connect with Community

As part of an initiative organized by global nonprofit organization, Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE), a team of Business Administration alumni and students will teach Philadelphia high school students about capital markets this spring.

Team members Starlene Anderson ’06, George Bailey ’09 and Gary Thompson AS ’09, BS ’12 were initially challenged by SIFE to reach out to local secondary school students in Fall 2008. Drawing from their studies, they devised a series of interactive workshops to present to students attending Imhotep Institute Charter High School in the East Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. The workshops are aimed at increasing the students’ understanding of investment funds such as stocks and bonds.

“Our team will aid in expanding local students’ economic knowledge base, hopefully enabling them to make informed financial decisions in the future,” said Business Administration Professor Willie Brown, Ph.D., who facilitated the team’s planning.

“It is an inspiring project that will build their leadership and communication skills, preparing them to become contributing members of society."

At the conclusion of the workshops in April, the team members’ work will be entered into a special competition where they will be judged among 45 national institutions by SIFE and project sponsor, the Goldman Sachs Foundation. In the future, they plan to hold similar workshops for their fellow Peirce alumni and classmates on personal finance.

Additional Peirce faculty and staff supporting the SIFE initiative are Business Administration Associate Professor Michael Bentil, D.B.A.; Business Administration Professor and Faculty Chair Marie Gould, Ph.D.; Business Administration Professor James Tobin; and Dean of Students Rita Toliver-Roberts, Ed.D.

SIFE seeks to mobilize college and university students around the world to make a difference in their communities through outreach projects that educate people on business models and theories.

College Seeks Alumni Involvement in Reaccreditation

Peirce College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pa., 19104; 267-284-5000). As a member institution of the Commission, Peirce is periodically evaluated for reaccreditation. Beginning in 2009, the College will embark on a two-year reaccreditation process that will reaffirm Peirce’s mission, goals and effectiveness.

Watch for updates on this process, and ways you can participate, in upcoming issues of Peirce Perspectives. To learn more about reaccreditation, contact MSCHE Self-Study co-chairs: Edwin B. Miller, J.D., Professor and Assistant Dean, Legal Studies, at 888.GO.PEIRCE, ext. 9291, or emiller@peirce.edu, and Debra Schrammel, Dean, Academic Programs and Research, at 888.GO.PEIRCE, ext. 9270, or dschrammel@peirce.edu.

Spring Graduate Career Series

Alumni are encouraged to attend the final workshops in a series of career-related events hosted on campus by the Career Development Services department this spring. Topics include the following:

Information Technology Career Tips
April 22
6 to 7 p.m.
College Hall, Room 47

Mock Job Interviews
May 5 to 7
Please schedule an interview time by April 28

The series is hosted annually and provides Peirce students and graduates with the skills and confidence to secure, sustain or advance in their careers. To register for a workshop, contact Career Development Services at 888.GO.PEIRCE, ext. 9251, or email cds@peirce.edu.

The College will also host a Virtual Career Fair — April 25 to May 9. Participants are encouraged to register by April 17.

Alumni seeking new job opportunities or interested in announcing open positions to the Peirce community may contact Career Development Services for access to ResumeXchange, the College’s online job search and resume network.
Of all the colleges the James brothers could have selected to complete their education, Dennis ’83, Joseph ’94 and Barry AS ’83, BS ’07 each individually chose Peirce to advance his career.

Although similar in their desire to attend Peirce, the brothers pursued education for different reasons. Dennis, the first to enroll, transferred to the College for its Business Management Program after working for Verizon. “I wanted to improve my understanding of business and give myself an opportunity to someday advance within the company,” he said. A few years later, Joseph applied to the College upon the recommendation of a colleague for its exclusive Telecommunication Management Program. Barry attended after graduating from Cardinal Dougherty High School. He chose Peirce over other area colleges for “its size and reputation as a good business school.”

Despite their different educational motivations and pursuits, the brothers served as each others’ constant supporters during their studies. They also drew encouragement from the friendships they forged with classmates. For Dennis, in particular, the College helped develop more than just his business skills. “My special memories of Peirce center around two friends I made while taking night classes. We studied and struggled together over six years to obtain our degrees … we pushed each other to never give up…,” he said.

Today, the brothers enjoy careers in the same industry, Information Technology, in Philadelphia. Peirce was integral in creating enhanced job opportunities for Dennis at Verizon, where he now serves as an IT specialist. Joseph works in application development and telecommunications for the city of Philadelphia and Barry leads a technical support team for software company OSIsoft, Inc. They have all continued their education by achieving bachelor’s degrees and various IT certifications. In fact, Barry returned to the College to complete his B.S. in Technology Management in 2007.

With sound careers and fond college memories, the James brothers are appreciative of their time at Peirce and aren’t shy about expressing their pride in the institution. “I like how Peirce has grown and that it continues to maintain its high quality and excellence as a College,” concluded Joseph.

The College is delighted to welcome back Richard Patterson, Associate Professor, Information Technology, who returned to Peirce in January after a 19-month battle with cancer.

First diagnosed in May 2007 with non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma, Professor Patterson has vehemently fought the disease. “My motto has been ‘never surrender; never quit,’” he said, and he hasn’t.

An instructor for nearly 20 years, Professor Patterson is thankful to be back doing what he enjoys: interacting with his students and colleagues at Peirce. Hands-on in his teaching approach, Professor Patterson always seeks to instill “an ability to independently solve problems” in his students. He draws motivation from the prospect that there is “always something new to learn in teaching” and is constantly inspired by his students’ will to succeed. “I’m often amazed by how much the students can handle academically while also balancing the demands of work and family…,” he said.

Grateful for the support he has received from the Peirce community, he is hopeful that his experience will inspire others to overcome challenges on their paths to success.

In February, Administrative Accountancy alumnus Edward Sulek ’65 hosted a discussion on his recently published book Words of a Father, at the Barnes&Noble bookstore in Wilmington, Del. Mr. Sulek’s book is a compilation of short stories and poems based on his many life experiences, including his combat in the Vietnam War, parenting and personal romance.
One Graduate’s Perspective

In climbing the corporate ladder, a strong foothold is key. For William H. Morgan ’87, senior vice president of global human resources for the NASDAQ OMX Group, Inc., it was the educational foundation from Peirce College that enabled him to aspire to such successful heights.

With ambitions of becoming a computer programmer, Mr. Morgan came to Peirce initially for its Computer Science Program. While attending, he bolstered his studies with business and communication courses. He found the College’s Information Technology curriculum to be especially relevant; “Peirce’s laboratory environment was very similar to that of the business world,” he said.

A Philadelphia Stock Exchange employee for over 25 years, Mr. Morgan previously served as its executive vice president and CIO. He credits Peirce with helping him develop a unique combination of technical, business and communication skills. “Thanks to my education and experience, I am able to continue to learn, grow and change in this dynamic industry,” he said.

After completing his degree, Mr. Morgan went on to graduate from the Securities Industry Institute at the prestigious Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania. Lauded for his leadership in the IT field, he has received many awards and has been featured in numerous articles for his work. He also serves on several industry boards, advisory councils and committees.

As a word of advice to graduates, Mr. Morgan recommends pursuing careers about which they are passionate. “You’ll be happier, more productive and enjoy a greater sense of achievement if you love what you do,” he advised.