Pell grant cuts hinder community college students

By Susan Snyder

Enrollment at Community College of Philadelphia fell 4 percent last fall, and officials suspect tightened eligibility guidelines for federal financial aid are to blame in part.

Full-time student enrollment on its own took an even bigger hit, dropping 8.3 percent, from 5,540 in fall 2011 to 5,076 last fall.

Throughout the region, other community colleges also report dips or flat enrollment, and note that students who in the past would have received aid, known as Pell grants, are going without.

Changes in Pell eligibility guidelines over the last year come as Congress struggles to rein in ballooning costs and deficits in the program for low-income students. Costs more than doubled in four years, to $35.6 billion in 2010, because of an increase in recipients and a rise in the maximum award.

But college officials say the changes, which include a lower income cap to guarantee eligibility, fewer semesters of eligibility, and elimination of summer grants, will deny some of the most vulnerable students the chance to finish college.

“We are seeing more and more students coming to us with a lot of financial stress, many of them not qualifying for Pell grants,” said Karen A. Stout, president of Montgomery County Community College, where overall enrollment dipped 2 percent last fall. “It seems like they’re shutting out more and more community college students from eligibility.”

At her college, about 400 students, or 10 percent of those who typically qualify for a Pell, got a smaller grant last fall or no aid as a result of the income-rule change, Stout said. An additional 35 were affected by the other changes.

Montgomery County, Philadelphia, and other colleges are raising private donations and using institutional aid to help students bridge the gap.

Taj A. Meyer, 27, was able to attend CCP last summer on a scholarship the college created with private donations. She’s now on the premed track at Bryn Mawr College, and credits her experience at the community college with giving her a strong foundation in the sciences.

She was disheartened to hear about Pell cuts.

“It seems like one of the most challenging aspects by far of going back to school is the financial hoops one needs to jump through to actually make it work,” said Meyer, who financed her education with the help of Pell grants. “In academia, not everyone’s journey is the same, but it doesn’t mean it’s not important.”

Nationally, 3.35 million students attending two-year colleges in 2011-12 received $11.2 billion in Pell funds, said David Baime, senior vice president for government relations and policy analysis at the American Association of Community Colleges.

Enrollment at community colleges nationally dropped 3.1 percent in the fall of 2012, he said.

“We think the change in financial aid is very likely one of the factors,” Baime said.

A slightly improved economy and a reduction in high school graduates also could be contributing to the dip, he said.

The changes in Pell eligibility eventually could affect four-year colleges, such as Temple University, with a lot of Pell grant recipients. More than a third of Temple undergraduates received grants last year. Grants range from the program minimum of $555 to the maximum of $5,500.

One change reduces lifetime available aid from 18 semesters to 12.

“This means eligible students have less time to complete their degree while benefiting from a Pell grant,” said Craig Fennell, director of student financial services.

If they spend a lot of time at community college, that could become problematic, he said.

Temple will look at how many students are losing aid or are in danger of it because of the changes, Fennell said.

“Student loan borrowing is already at record high levels,” he said. “The loss or reduction of Pell grant eligibility will force many low-income students to borrow a larger amount.”

Community colleges are likely to be hit particularly hard because of the composition of their student bodies. At CCP, more than half nearly 16,000 students received $47.7 million in Pell grants last year, said president Stephen M. Curtis.

He noted the concentration of part-time and low income students, those in need of remedial courses, and the high percentage of students first in their family to attend college.

“You don’t see that everywhere, or at least not that whole combination of things,” he said.

Curtis said he was not sure how much of the enrollment drop is due to
Pell changes. The college last month sent letters to 516 students, notifying them they were not eligible for Pell for the spring.

Spring enrollment is running 4 percent lower than last spring's.

The college has heightened efforts, he said, to educate students about efficiency and financial planning.

"It's not like the old days, where you can try five different majors to figure out which is going to work best for you," he said, "because the more you do that, the more aid eligibility you're using up for when you go to the next step to finish the bachelor's degree."

He noted that almost a third of the students come to his college already having been somewhere else where they likely used up some eligibility.

Delaware County Community College saw about 500 students lose part or all of a Pell grant because they had exceeded the number of usable semesters, said Ray Toole, director of financial aid. More than 400 of them did not enroll, though there's no way of knowing the exact reason, he said. An additional 70 were affected by the income-rule change, he said.

Delaware County's enrollment, just under 20,000, was flat for the fall and is expected to be down from 2 to 4 percent this spring.

Like some other colleges, Delaware County is boosting programs to help students finish their degrees on time and get more counseling about financial aid.

At Peirce College, which caters to working adults, 51 percent of the 2,800 students get Pells, said President James J. Mergiotti. About 100 lost the grant because of the reduced semester eligibility, he said. Peirce gave some institutional aid and others obtained personal loans to continue, he said.

"I wish the policymakers had focused more on the working adult population," he said. "They're working on educational goals in other goals they have and often have to do that on a part-time basis."

Tyese Chessen, 25, a senior networking major at Peirce, lost his eligibility for the spring semester. He had been in school part-time for eight years and attended two other colleges before coming to Peirce.

"I thought maybe everything I worked for might go completely out of the door overnight," he said.

But the college gave him a $1,600 grant and helped him find a part-time job in the Philadelphia School District. And he stayed on track to graduate this June.

Community College of Philadelphia has been one of the strongest national voices in support of Pell grants. The college made thousands of "Save Pell" buttons to pass out at national meetings.

It also sponsored a "Speak up for Pell contest" in which students created videos for YouTube.

For her winning video, Kerrie Trube, 32, of South Philadelphia, played her guitar and told how the Pell grant funded her entire associate's degree in behavioral health and human services. She went to school part-time so she could continue to work. But now she won't have enough eligibility left to get aid to complete her bachelor's degree.

"Without having the Pell grant money, I don't know if I'm going to be able to afford it," said Trube, who hopes to become a drug and alcohol counselor, having battled drug abuse herself.

The Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges is collecting information from members on the impact of Pell changes, said Diane Bosak, executive director. The colleges collectively had a small enrollment drop last fall, but she said she was unsure of the cause.

Nevertheless, "any erosion in Pell is a big concern to us because so many of our students are Pell recipients," she said.

Enrollment at New Jersey community colleges fell 2.5 percent in the fall, said Lawrence Nespoli, president of the state's Council of County Colleges.

"It's probably a fair assumption that these changes explain at least part of the enrollment decline," Nespoli said.

Some county colleges, such as Burlington and Gloucester, say they've noticed no significant impact.

At Camden County College, fewer than 100 students lost eligibility because of the semester reduction and fewer than that as a result of other changes, officials said. But they don't expect enrollment to drop.

Bucks County Community College isn't sure of the impact but expects to know more at the end of the semester, said Barbara Yetman, vice president of student affairs.

At Montgomery County, Stout said she suspects the fall enrollment drop is tied to students' inability to pay, whether through lack of a
Pell grant or other hardship.

The school worked hard in the fall to keep students enrolled and anticipates a slight increase in spring enrollment.

“We’ve been trying to reach out to students to help them get emergency loans,” she said, “and do what we can in a very pro-active way.”

Contact Susan Snyder at 215-854-4693 or ssnyder@phillynews.com, or follow on Twitter @ssnyderinq

**Changes in Pell Grant Eligibility**

(1) Reduction in the number of semesters students can receive aid from 18 to 12.
(2) Lowering of the income threshold for automatically receiving a Pell grant from $32,000 to $23,000.
(3) Elimination of passing the “ability to benefit test” as an acceptable equivalent to a high school diploma or GED for entrance into college and aid eligibility.
(4) Elimination of summer grants.

**Taj A. Meyer lost her Pell grant,** but was able to finish CCP with private aid. She’s now on the premed track at Bryn Mawr College. ELIZABETH ROBERTSON / Staff Photographer
A general studies student at Community College of Philadelphia, Phillip Hartley Jr., 23, of Lansdale, said the majority of his tuition payments came from the federal Pell grant program.  TOM GRALISH / Staff Photographer
Peirce to offer its first master's program

Peirce College will begin to offer its first master's degree program in organizational leadership and management next fall, officials said.

The Philadelphia-based college, a nonprofit that primarily serves working adults and offers degrees in business, health care, information technology, and legal studies, was a two-year institution before adding bachelor's degrees in 1997.

The school expects from 25 to 30 students in its first program and eventually plans to add other master's programs, said president James J. Mergiotti.

Adrian Zappala, who had been assistant dean of the Heavin School of Arts and Sciences at Thomas Edison State College in New Jersey, will become Peirce's dean of graduate students, the school announced.

— Susan Snyder
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<td>215-664-1000</td>
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<td>Joen Marinos, <a href="mailto:joen.marinos@phoenix.edu">joen.marinos@phoenix.edu</a>; Tonio Taylor, <a href="mailto:president@temple.edu">president@temple.edu</a></td>
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The Review Year in Sports: Part II

In the second half of 2012, Ivy Ridge wins city title, Rox. native goes for Olympic gold, La Salle falls short of title

July 11
Glenn Ochal’s introduction to the sport of rowing failed to impress the then middle-school student from Roxborough.

Spending weekends on the banks of the Schuykill River, watching his older brother row for Roman Catholic High School, wasn’t appealing.

Now at the age of 26, the sport that once left Ochal out in the cold has propelled him to the quadrennial sporting event of the summer.

A graduate of Roman Catholic High School, Ochal has realized one of his life’s goals: representing the United States in this month’s London Olympics.

“I didn’t know much about the sport,” Ochal said of his introduction to rowing. “I like just doing something.”

July 11
The Ivy Ridge Panthers concluded their regular season schedule in an unconventional fashion Sunday afternoon, as well as a day early.

Ivy Ridge was scheduled to play Philadelphia County stalwart Del-Val in a possible league championship preview both Sunday and Monday. Instead, the Panthers seized an opportunity to prepare for another title run.

Del-Val, a team whose roster is full of members of Neumann-Goretti’s PIAA Class 3A state runner-up club, forfeited three games this season. The team needed to reschedule a number of games from earlier in the season when most of the team was playing for Neumann-Goretti.

With two games lost, Ivy Ridge manager Ray Bidus decided to take advantage of the open schedule by scheduling a Panthers inter-squad game Sunday at John Boyce Field. Not to be taken lightly, attendance was mandatory.

“I made it mandatory because our last game was July 3, and in the last two years it just seemed like when the playoffs came around, we had a lot of people at the shore,” Bidus said. “We didn’t have an opportunity to get together. That’s why I wanted to get them together and play in a game-type atmosphere.”

July 18
Last season Loudenslager ended Ivy Ridge’s season in a fashion that was unfamiliar to the Panthers.

Since 2005, the Panthers battled for the Philadelphia County American Legion championship each season. But in 2011 Loudenslager defeated the Panthers in a single-elimination playoff game, ending that streak.

Monday, the Panthers stood one win away from both another Philadelphia County championship, and a chance to avenge last year’s disappointing season-ending loss. They accomplished both.

Ivy Ridge scored four runs in the top first inning and Ralph Martinez pitched five scoreless innings, allowing only one hit, as the Panthers won their seventh league title since 2003, defeating Loudenslager 7-3 at the Jardel Recreation Center in Northeast Philadelphia.

“A lot of the guys from last year, when they heard that Loudy beat Rhawnhurst [in the other semifinal], a lot of them were like, good. It’s the revenge. That’s what we wanted,” Ivy Ridge manager Ray Bidus said.

After losing to Loudenslager 11-8 in the 2011 postseason, Ivy Ridge (22-6-1) exacted some revenge during the 2012 regular sea-
son, beating Loudenslager (11-9-0) in all three contests between the two teams. The Panthers rode an eight-game winning streak, the last two of which came via forfeit, into the postseason, and advanced to the best-of-three championship round by sweeping Bostleton, 9-4, and 10-0, in the semifinals.

In Sunday’s championship opener at John Boyce Field, the Panthers rallied from a three-run deficit, tying the game in the fifth inning before winning it on a Matt Stoffel RBI-single in the bottom of the seventh.

**July 18**

For the second-consecutive year, the 21st Ward Fillies FastPitch 18u softball team fell short of winning the tournament that they have hosted for the past five years.

The Fillies reached the tournament’s semifinals Sunday before falling to the Northwest Explosion 3-2 in the Class A Pony Softball National Qualifier Tournament at the Hagy’s Mill Complex.

The Explosion’s Jackie Desarro smashed Gabby Stamler’s offering down the right field line just out of the reach of Olivia Powers, driving in Emily Brandt with the game-winning run in the bottom of the sixth inning.

The Explosion went on to defend their 2011 title with an 11-2 victory over the Hillborough Hustle in the tournament championship game, earning an automatic bid to the Pony National Tournament to be held in Cary, N.C., July 27 to Aug. 2.

“That was a tough one. They played well, that’s all I can say. They played unbelievably,” Fillies head coach Phil Juliano said after the Fillies Sunday loss.

For eight players, their Fillies playing days either ended last week or will end at nationals.

**July 25**

The Roxborough Bandits celebrated another win Thursday evening, much the way they have celebrated all of their wins this season. But this win was different.

On a night where flying hats and gloves, players jumping up and down collapsing into a human pile would have been expected, the Bandits demonstrated the calm confidence that had brought them to that point.

Instead, after capturing the Main Line Junior Legion championship with a 7-3 victory over Haverford at the Hagy’s Mill Complex, the team displayed their satisfaction with more smiles and handshakes as opposed to a celebratory free for all.

“It’s a great accomplishment,” Bandits game-winning pitcher Mike Opiela said. “But we’re looking forward to regionals and going farther. This is big, but we’re looking farther.”

Thursday’s win marked Roxborough’s first Main Line League title since 2007, the organization’s 10th since its inception in 1994 and the first for head coach Bob Fuhrmeister, the first-year skipper.

Reflecting on the team’s return to prominence, and another league title, said Fuhrmeister: “That’s it. That’s our goal, nothing short, that’s what we wanted.”

The Bandits, the No. 1 seed from the Main Line League, will open regional play Saturday in Boyertown against Central, the No. 1 seed from the York League, in the first game of their double-elimination tournament.

**August 1**

The Roxborough Bandits battled back from a five-run deficit, scoring six unanswered runs in the bottom of the fifth inning to beat Berwick 6-5, in third-round play of the 2012 Pennsylvania Youth League Eastern Regional tournament Monday afternoon at Boyertown Junior High School East, holding off elimination from the
Bandits pitcher Mike Melady, pitching in relief of Justus Sanders, entered the game in the top of the third inning with two on and nobody out. Melady retired 14 of the 18 batters that he faced, allowing Roxborough to stay in the game and live to play another day.

Facing elimination, Melady, who doesn’t take the hill too often, ignored the pressure of the situation and used his fastball to retire Berwick batters.

“There wasn’t a lot of pressure [on us],” Melady said. “It’s just the opposite. There’s more pressure on them.”

With the win, the Bandits scored one victory away from the tournament’s championship game. Roxborough, passing Lower Macungie, the No. 2 team from Lehigh County yesterday. Results were unavailable.

**Aug. 1**

The Roxborough High School Sports Hall of Fame awarded $1,000 athletic scholarships to two seniors near the end of the 2011-12 school year. Frank LeGrady and Macey Latrese were selected by the Hall of Fame’s scholarship committee as the year’s recipients.

Please see Review on B3

Each year a scholarship is awarded to a male and female student. This year the awards were renamed the Bob Marshall Award (male student) and the Loretta Bunch Award (female student).

LeGrady was a wonderful asset to the sports community of Roxborough High School. He was able to find the perfect balance between sports and academics. He graduated with a 3.92 G.P.A. and played four years of baseball and was captain of the team. He also played soccer for two years where he was also captain. LeGrady was accepted to the University of Pennsylvania but choose to attend Saint Joseph’s University mainly because of his interest in their degree program.

Latrese was a three-year starter in varsity softball. She played various positions and as a senior was Roxborough’s No. 1 starting pitcher and co-captain. She is going to attend Peirce College in the fall.

**Aug. 8**

Mount St. Joseph’s Academy repeated as championship of the Lou Cappiella Summer Basketball League Thursday night with a convincing 55-22 win over Nazareth Academy at the Kendrick Recreation Center.

In dispatching Nazareth Academy, a Catholic Academies foe, the Mount remained undefeated this summer with a record of 11-0.

Senior forward Meg Geatens led the Mount with 26 points, 18 of which she scored in the first half. Caitlin Cunningham added 12 points.

“I just try to work hard in the paint. And get as many rebounds as I can. Take the shots I do, and make my free throws,” Geatens said of her, and the team’s success, during the 2012 summer season.

This summer marked the 16th year that the Lou Cappiella league featured some of the area’s top female high school basketball players. The league was started by basketball coach Brian Morris, the son of Manayunk native and hoops coaching dean, William “Speedy” Morris.

Cappiella, a respected union leader who never played sports or had children, passed away last September at the age of 84. He dedicated over 60 years of his life fostering local youth sports programs. The league was started as a tribute to his efforts and will live on in his legacy.

“I’ll have this league if I only have two teams,” Morris said.

Even though Cappiella hasn’t been able to attend games due to his failing health over the past few seasons, his spirit was always present on the court. And that spirit is still present.

“He was on our minds all the time,” said assistant league director Charlie Hart of Cappiella.

Added Morris: “The basketball league was important to Louie, and he was happy to have his name associated with it and what it represented.”

**Aug. 8**

After winning their first Main Line League championship since 2007 last month, the Roxborough Bandits accomplished one of their 2012 goals.

Last Sunday, the team also won their first Jr. American Legion regional game since 2007. Check off another goal.

Two days later, one game shy of an opportunity to play for the Pa. Youth Legion Eastern Regional tournament title, the Bandits’ season ended, just when it appeared that it would extend at least another day.

Roxborough led Lower Macungie by a run in the top of the seventh inning, needing just three outs to close out their opponents. Lower Macungie refused to allow the Bandits further glory.

Tyler Sweeney drove in two runs with a double to
left off of Roxborough's Justin Sanders, giving Lower Macungie their second lead since the first inning.

Teddy Tucker helped to end Roxborough's season with a two-out, bases-loaded, bases-clearing double, to give Lower Macungie a 7-3 victory.

Aug. 8

Three of the four Americans looked out into the press conference room [Saturday] wide-eyed and still.

From the look on their collective faces, it was clear they were both tired from racing, and were in a situation they had never experienced before. Only Scott Gault, the veteran of the group, and the only one who had ever been to an Olympics, seemed ready and relaxed.

Beside them to their right were eight of the most senior and most decorated rowing Olympians competing in the 2012 London Olympic Games in the men's four. Among the British crew alone - Alex Gregory, Pete Reed, Tom James and Andrew Triggs Hodge - there were 14 international medals, including nine world titles, three of them Olympic gold from the same event in 2008.

But there they were at this time. Gault, 28, (Piedmont, Calif.), Charlie Cole, 25, (New Canaan, Conn.), Henrik Rummel, 24, (Pittsford, N.Y.) and Glenn Ochal, 25, (Philadelphia, Pa.) on the same dais, with Olympic bronze medals around their necks. They came into the Olympics a new lineup, without an international medal among them, or an international race as a crew, and they had just run with the best in the world to claim the third Olympic rowing medal for the United States at this Games.

Aug. 15

Over the past few summers, the Roxborough Panthers and the Philadelphia Yankees have played some spirited baseball.

Since the start of the Philadelphia Adult Baseball League in 2010, both clubs have battled during the regular season only to meet again in the league's championship series. Each time the Yankees, an established team that has played together in various leagues, bested the experienced but upstart Panthers.

The Yankees’ playoff dominance changed Thursday as the Panthers knocked off their foes in the postseason at Latshaw-McCarthy in Norristown, this time in the new Liberty Bell Adult Baseball League.

Roxborough’s offense provided starting pitcher Eric Hubbard with all the runs that he would need in the first inning, and reliever Sean Quigley pitched a near-perfect seventh to preserve the Panthers’ 3-1 win in the third game of the best-of-three LBAFL’s semifinal round.

"It’s great to finally take these guys down in a best of three series," Panthers manager Joe Parry said. "Unfortunately, it’s not the championship, but we’ll take it."

Roxborough opened the league's championship series Saturday against the Liberty Bell Orioles in Wayne. (See page B3 for Game 1's game story.)

The Panthers, Yankees and Bucks County Bulldogs were anchor squads in the PABL. The league reorganized after the 2011 season, adding three teams: the Orioles; the Schuylkill Sidewinders; and the Delco Stallions.

In a play-in game, the Stallions beat the Bulldogs before falling to the Orioles in two games in one league semifinal.

Roxborough opened their semifinal series against the Yankees Aug. 4 with a 9-4 loss in Wayne. The Panthers forced a deciding game three with a 9-6 home win last Tuesday.

Aug. 15

After dispatching the Philadelphia Yankees for the first time in postseason play, the Roxborough Panthers opened the Liberty Bell Adult Baseball League championship series Saturday afternoon against the Liberty Bell Orioles.

Any momentum that the Panthers gained from stopping the Yankees eroded against the O’s at Wilson Farm Park.

The Orioles pecked away at the Panthers before scoring two runs in the bottom of the fifth. That was all they needed to top the Panthers 2-0 and take the first game in the best-of-five championship series.

Aug. 15

Roxborough Panthers manager Joe Parry sensed this season’s Liberty Bell Adult Baseball League championship series with optimism, and with good reason.

For the past two years, the Panthers played, and lost, to the Philadelphia Yankees in the championship round of the Philadelphia Adult Baseball League. This year, in the rebranded Liberty Bell Adult Baseball League, the Panthers topped the Yankees in the semifinals, only
to meet the upstart Liberty Bell Orioles. Parisse hoped that the third year would be the charm.

Instead, the 2012 season ended with the sentiment of wait ‘till next year.

The Orioles, a team comprised of players from a number of different leagues, stormed the established clubs to take the league championship Saturday afternoon with a 5-1 victory over the Panthers at Wilson Farm Park.

“It’s a rough one,” Parisse said. “Hopefully the fourth year’s the charm.”

**Sept. 5**

Each year, right around this time, after students are settled into the flow of a new school year, high schools, and colleges around the country celebrate homecoming, a time when graduates of an educational institution return to their scholastic stomping grounds, to see old friends, and share memories.

Roxborough High School hasn’t held homecoming festivities in recent memory. That changed last week.

The Indians hosted Prep Charter Saturday morning as one part of Roxborough Homecoming 2012. Even though the football team ended up on the wrong end of a 45-0 loss, Roxborough students, and graduates, embraced the spirit of Roxborough High.

“We’re trying to start new traditions and resume some old traditions,” Roxborough’s first-year athletic director Jeffrey McKenna said.

In addition to Saturday’s football game, a girls volleyball game, a boys soccer game, a dance and other festivities marked the return of homecoming to Ridge Ave.

The girls volleyball team hosted University City Thursday afternoon. In the evening, the school held back-to-school and meet-the-parents events.

“It was probably one of the most successful [parent nights] in all my years of teaching,” said McKenna, who has been a history teacher, first at Olney for 11 years before moving to Roxborough High School two years ago.

Friday the boys soccer team hosted Mastbaum. Later the school held a pizza party for the fall sports athletes. There they were individually introduced, with the lights dimmed and a spotlight shining on them. After the party, the school held a homecoming dance.

During halftime of Saturday’s game, the homecoming king and queen, seniors Isaiah King and Zhane Ford, and their court were introduced as they rode around the football field. Along with the king and queen, underclassmen in each grade voted on a prince and princess. The court included: juniors Keenan Ervin and Kayla Hadley; sophomores Walter Smith and Kevina Butler-Shaw; and freshmen Reginald Barnes and Brook Fleming.

Roxborough High School’s enrollment has declined over the last few years. The school’s current enrollment is near 500 students. The dance attracted approximately 150 of the 500.

“The turnout was good,” McKenna said. “The kids that I talked to said it was great.”

**Sept. 12**

Access Sports, an East Falls based non-profit organization, held their third annual Wiffle Ball tournament Saturday.

For the past two years, Camden’s Campbell’s Field hosted the event. This year, the games moved closer to home, much closer.

Philadelphia University’s baseball field served as the location for 16 teams, consisting of six players, vying for Wiffle Ball glory on numerous mini diamonds.

Located on Midvale Ave., Access Sports provides members of at-risk and special needs communities with tickets to sporting events, on both the professional and amateur levels. The organization was started over 10 years ago by Alyson Harris, a current Roxborough resident.

“Holding the event at Philadelphia University satisfied the intent of both organizations. Instead of paying a fee of over $2,000 to use Campbell’s Field, Philadelphia University provided their facilities for free.

The university has a history of community engagement and a relationship with Access Sports. Since the tournament’s beginning, members of the Rams baseball team have served as umpires.

Stephanie Spade, Philadelphia University’s associate director of athletics and co-chair of the Wiffle Ball tournament committee, expressed that community involvement for both the university and the university’s student-athletes.

“We’re always trying to develop more [community] engagement, especially with a non-profit that’s right down the street,” Spade said. “We are in East Falls. We
are in Roxborough and to be able to give back to the community is a positive.”

Oct. 3

Maalik Wayns graduated from Roman Catholic High School in 2009. Since then, the basketball star has been rising fast; first as a point guard for Villanova University and most recently signing with the Philadelphia 76ers on July 31, 2012.

On Tuesday, September 25th, Wayns visited Roman Catholic High School to be honored during “Maalik Wayns Day.”

As a junior at Roman Catholic, Wayns averaged 22.4 points, 5.1 assists, 4.8 rebounds, and 2.1 steals. He was also a two-time MVP in the Philadelphia Catholic League and also first team All-City and All-State in Pennsylvania. As a senior, Wayns averaged 19.2 points, 5.1 rebounds and 5.5 assists and won a Silver Medal playing for USA basketball at the 2008 FIBA Americas U18 Championship in Formosa, Argentina. That same year, he was named a Parade All-American and McDonald’s All-American at the end of the year. At Villanova, Wayns was named to the Big East All-Rookie Team and won Big East Rookie of the Week three times. Wayns finished with 6.8 points and 1.3 assists. During his sophomore year, success continued as he had a career-high 19 points against UCLA on November 24, 2010 along with 6 rebounds as Villanova won 82-70. During his junior year at Villanova, he was named 2nd Team All Big East, and 1st Team All-Philadelphia Big 5.

Nov. 7

They practiced the play all point. “But we kept telling the guys all week, this is only one step.”

“We have St. Joe Prep next week, and we’ll have to come back even stronger.”

Nov. 7

There was a time, not long ago, when Archbishop Carroll wasn’t considered anything more than a Philadelphia Catholic League pushover.

The recent years have been tough on the decorated program. But after a sluggish, one-win campaign in 2011, the Patriots vowed to improve drastically this season. The drop in PLAA classification certainly helped matters some.

Saturday afternoon at Cardinal O’Hara, the Patriots hung with West Catholic, the heavy favorite to win the division and perhaps compete for a state title. In the end, though, the Burrs were too much to handle, particularly in the fourth quarter of a 30-7 decision that gave West Catholic the PCL Class AA championship.

No one outside of the Carroll locker room expected the Patriots to do much. On two occasions, however, they kept pace with West Catholic, but were simply worn down in the later portion of those games. West Catholic clung to a 14-7 advantage early in the final stanza of this second meeting before scoring 16 straight points to close things out.

Nov. 14

There are a lot of ways to land in the Philadelphia Catholic League winner’s circle.

Saturday afternoon at Plymouth Whitemarsh High School, La Salle High snuck in — underneath.

All day long in the PCL Class AAAA title game, the Explorers and quarterback Chris Kane had beaten the Saint Joseph’s Prep blitz by throwing the ball quickly to its underneath receivers.

So in overtime, at the Prep 5-yard line and trailing by six points, the Explorers, Kane and wideout Sean Coleman went under one more time. And when Coleman latched on to his fourth touchdown pass of the day and Ryan Winslow nailed the extra point, La Salle was over the top. And its fans were over the moon.

La Salle had a dramatic 28-27 victory, the Prep was undefeated no more and the Explorers had their fifth straight Catholic League crown.

In another classic authored by these two genuine rivals, La Salle saw a 14-point, third-quarter lead disappear in 3:08, a seven-point fourth-quarter lead on the boards in 14 seconds, yet still had enough gumption left to pull out the win in its first overtime possession.

“The kids showed so much resiliency,” said Explorers head coach Drew Gordon proudly. “They just kept hanging in there.”

Nov. 14

Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame member John Chaney announced last week the nomination of legendary basketball coach William “Speedy” Morris to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

In his 44 years of coaching at the high school and college level, Morris has had nothing but success. At all five of his coaching stops, he has guided his team to a championship in his second year, often after taking over moribund programs. At Ro-
man, where he began his career and spent 14 seasons as head coach, Morris won six championships and still holds the best winning percentage in school history. He then moved to Penn Charter where he led the team to 41 wins in two seasons, winning the league championship in his second season.

That began Morris' 17 years coaching at the collegiate level. First, he took over the La Salle women's basketball team. Like Roman and Penn Charter, he was immediately successful, winning 43 games and a conference championship in his second season, when the Explorers advanced to the NCAA tournament. He then moved to take the head men's position at La Salle, becoming the only coach in NCAA history to ever make the switch from women to men. With the men's team, Morris continued his amazing success. He still has the most wins in school history and led the Explorers to four conference titles and six postseason appearances (four NCAA tournaments and two NIT tournaments).

In 2001, Morris returned to his roots in Philadelphia Catholic League basketball, taking over the reins of the Prep. In 2003, he won the first of back-to-back Catholic League titles, the school's first in three decades. His 235 wins are the most in school history and the team won the school's first PIAA district championship in 2012. Overall, his eight career wins.

**Nov. 14**

It may have been the first time that Germantown Academy coach Matt Dence squared off against Penn Charter, but that certainly wasn't the case for the Patriots. In what is currently the longest running prep school football rivalry in the United States, dating back to 1887, GA and Penn Charter met each other on Saturday afternoon in their annual Inter-Ac League affair.

And thanks to a great rushing attack which the Patriots could not stop, it was the Quakers coming out on top 35-7 at Germantown Academy in the 126th meeting between the two teams. The Quakers (5-4) received 231 yards and two touchdowns on 20 carries from tailback Eric Neefe in a game which was close until the final moments of the first half.

**Nov. 28**

The University of Notre Dame returned to football prominence this season. The Fighting Irish have finished an undefeated regular season and are currently the No. 1 team in the country with an eye on a national championship.

This year's squad of Golden Domers has woken up the echoes and excited the Irish faithful. Roman Catholic senior wide receiver and Notre Dame commit Will Fuller looks to provide some of that excitement in the future. Thanksgiving Day, Fuller thrilled the Roman crowd one more time.

Fuller caught two touchdown passes and threw for one as the Cahillites roasted Roxborough 48-0 Thursday morning at Roxborough High School.

Roman's Catholic League title hopes ended with a playoff loss to La Salle earlier this month. Disappointed with that loss, Fuller welcomed the chance to play one more game for the Cahillites.

"We just tried to make it fun," said Fuller about the game and the weeks that led up to Thursday. "That's what I do."

And what's not fun about scoring 48 unanswered points and totaling 250 yards of total offense against a rival?

"We dedicate this game to the seniors," Roman head coach Joe McCourt said. We have some fun in practice. ...We just try to keep it loose. Roxborough, I respect them. We don't try to run the score up. I try to get
as many guys in there as possible. We try to have fun, but we also know what this game means. It’s a rivalry game, so we want to come out and play well.”

On his way to contributing two touchdown passes, Fuller grabbed five passes for 104 yards.

Over his career at Roman, Fuller surpassed the city receiving record finishing with 2,380 yards. He hauled in 135 passes, 27 of those passes resulted in touchdowns.

**Dec. 5**

Turning 21-years old is a milestone in a person’s life, for the most obvious reason: becoming of legal drinking age. But not all young adults are drawn to that hangover ridden rite of passage. Jesse Biddle category is one of those people.

Biddle, a non-drinker, spent the day after his 21st birthday, Oct. 22, at Balance, a gym in Chestnut Hill, exercising, sweating, and working toward his future. And what a future he has.

Biddle, a resident of Mount Airy, graduated from Germantown Friends School in 2010 and was selected by the Philadelphia Phillies in the first round (27th overall) of that year’s draft. Since then, Biddle, a 6-foot-4, 225-pound lefty has moved up a level each season since he was drafted. Aaron Sistrunk, a co-owner of Balance and Biddle’s personal trainer, has worked with Biddle since Biddle was 15-years old. Sistrunk, who works with numerous high school, college, other amateurs, and professional athletes, has worked to transform Biddle from a high school kid to a professional athlete.

“He’s a very coachable kid,” Sistrunk said. “He remembers stuff that we did when he was 15, 16 that he was bad at but now he’s mastered it, over the years. He didn’t master it over six months. He mastered it over years and he gets out there every time because he wants to get better.”

**Dec. 12**

They were down by three touchdowns, and three of their best players were on the sidelines.

Their fans, staring up at both the scoreboard and the pouring rain, were making their way to the parking lot.

The Explorers of La Salle High never expected to be behind by three touchdowns early in the fourth quarter of the PIAA Class AAAA Eastern final to Coatesville.

Yet there they were.

“All we could do,” said quarterback Chris Kane, “was keep playing.”

That’s what they did, and the result was one of the most entertaining football games anyone has seen in many a moon.

True, the Red Raiders prevailed, 42-35, to earn a berth at next Saturday’s PIAA Class AAAA Championship final at Hersheypark Stadium.

But oh, what could have been. A couple of dropped passes that were potential game-tying touchdowns will undoubtedly haunt the Explorers between now and next season. And La Salle head coach Drew Gordon said he was leaning toward going for a game-winning, two-point conversion had La Salle scored.

But what Gordon said he hoped his team got out of the disappointing result was a lesson.

“I hope they learned the lesson that you never give up,” Gordon said. “We didn’t convert at the end, but it wasn’t for a lack of effort.

“We got our shot when we got inside the 20, and we thought we were going to win the game.”
Mount St. Joe’s wins another summer basketball title

Mount's Mary Kate Ulasewicz (left) wrestles with Nazareth's Bridget Watson for a loose ball in the Lou Cappella Summer Basketball Leauge championship game.
Rox. Panthers get past Yanks in semifinals, fall to Orioles in finals

Panthers pitcher and manager delivers a pitch during the championship series.
La Salle continues to dominate CL, District 12

Roman Catholic quarterback Mike Kier against La Salle in the Catholic League title game.
Rox., Roman Catholic renew Thanksgiving tradition

Roxborough and Roman battle Thanksgiving Day.
Ready, Set, ...

Roxborough's Glenn Ochal practices for the next race. Ochal, a graduate of Roman Catholic High School competed in the 2012 Summer Olympic where his team won a bronze medal.
Bandits win Main Line League championship

The Foxborough Bandits celebrate after winning the Main Line Junior American Legion baseball title at Hagy's Field in July. It was the team's first title since 2007.