Mentoring Matters!
Alumni Connect for Student Success

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” -Henry Ford

Thirty-eight members of the Peirce community have come together to participate in the pilot phase of a new Peirce student mentoring program. Throughout the 2012-13 academic year, nineteen students and their volunteer mentors are working together to:

• Enhance students’ academic experience, promote persistence, and increase satisfaction with the College

• Provide students an opportunity to gain career and industry insight, while expanding their professional network

• Provide alumni an opportunity to give back to the community while deepening their connections and engagement with the College

Mentors (alumni and one Board Member) and mentees (current students) were recommended and invited to apply, interviewed about their professional and personal goals, and then matched. A kickoff meeting was held in November to introduce participants to one another and the program. Mentors and mentees then delved into the important work of getting to know one another and developing beneficial relationships. Matches are asked to interact at least monthly and establish goals for the relationship. To support them, program staff check-in periodically to discuss the progress achieved.

Mentor Doreen Ziccardi ’08, a graduate of the Paralegal program, has worked extensively and enthusiastically with student partner Theresa Benoit. Doreen noted that “Theresa needed some guidance with her legal writing class and we have had some discussions about her employment options. We met in person at my home with regard to assisting and hopefully guiding her with her legal writing assignment. We have also spoken on the telephone and corresponded via email. Mentoring is a way of giving back to Peirce College, which is very important to me as an individual who has been successful in my endeavors because of Peirce. If I can help one person in my life achieve their goals, my mission as a mentor for Peirce College will not be in vain.”

The next phase of the mentoring program will begin in the fall and last through the 2013-2014 academic year. If you would be interested in receiving an application packet to be a mentor to a Peirce student mentee, contact Rosemary Connors in the Office of Institutional Advancement, 215-670-9323 or rfconnors@peirce.edu. Interviews for prospective mentors will begin this summer.
Dr. Adrian Zappala has joined the Peirce College team as the Dean of Graduate Studies. As Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. Zappala will oversee the first master’s degree program in Organizational Leadership & Management. He comes to Peirce with nine years experience in higher education, with a teaching background focusing on working adult learners, and extensive experience teaching at the graduate level.

Dr. Zappala most recently served as Assistant Dean, Heavin School of Arts and Sciences at Thomas Edison State College in Trenton, New Jersey. He earned a B.A. in History magna cum laude with a minor in Business Administration and an M.A.T. in Secondary and Special Education from Monmouth University. He also earned an M.S. Ed. in Educational Leadership from Monmouth, and holds a doctorate in Post-Secondary and Adult Education from Capella University.

“I’m very excited to hold this position at Peirce College, as my higher education portfolio has been focused on programs for adult learners,” Dr. Zappala noted. “The College’s rich history of serving the needs of working adult students presents me with a wonderful opportunity to work with students in the community who have identified the value of graduate education and are hoping to advance their careers.”

If you have questions for Dr. Zappala regarding the master’s degree in Organizational Leadership & Management, or wish to refer a friend or family member who is looking for more information regarding the program, he may be contacted by email at azappala@peirce.edu, or by phone at 215.670.9021.

A recent series of articles published in The Philadelphia Inquirer, entitled “Diminished Diplomas”, provided stunning statistics regarding the employment of individuals who possessed only high school diplomas. Specifically, the series cited that, in Philadelphia, between 2007 and 2011, 23 percent of people ages 18 to 34 with only high school diplomas were without work compared to only a 4.8 percent unemployment rate for similar aged Philadelphians with bachelor’s degrees. The series also noted that, nationally, of the jobs available today to people with only high school diplomas, just three of ten promise a family sustaining annual wage, calculated at $35,000 or above.

Those statistics demonstrate the critical importance of Peirce’s transformational work. Over 90% of Peirce students live in the Philadelphia region and nearly all of them remain in the area after graduation. The College’s career oriented programs are clearly a vehicle for enhanced employability at and beyond sustainable wage levels. Peirce also serves the region by playing a key role in building the quality of its workforce.

Many current and prospective Peirce students, unfortunately, fall in the categories described in the opening paragraph. They are trying to upgrade their skills and credentials to achieve higher levels of employment and income. That’s why they have chosen to attend Peirce. Government support is helpful in making their educational pursuits affordable. Peirce must, however, in several cases, provide institutional aid, in the form of scholarships to students to ensure that they can remain in school and earn their degrees.

We have been very fortunate in receiving support from the College’s alumni and friends to support institutional scholarships in the past but need higher levels of participation. When you contribute to the Annual Fund you actively join Peirce in solving the problems noted in the opening paragraph and in enhancing the region’s workforce quality. As you are setting your philanthropic priorities for 2013, please keep that in mind. Working together we can strengthen the region and the lives of its citizens.
For Dennis and Anita Vogel, 1959 was quite a significant year: not only did they graduate from Peirce, but they also were married. Fifty-four years later, they are still together, enjoying their three children and seven grandchildren, running a successful family-held business, and actively participating in the life of the school which brought them together in the first place.

Not too long after beginning at Peirce in 1957, the two Montgomery County, Pa. natives started experiencing a series of ongoing connections with one another. Whether it was commuting home on the same train, taking the same accounting classes, or performing with the campus chorus (Dennis was a vocalist and Anita was the piano accompanist), they were soon continually in each other’s orbit.

They were both also serious about their studies. Anita’s parents, neither of whom went beyond grade school, were emphatic that their daughter pursue an education that extended after high school. For his part, Dennis wanted to bring new ideas and information back to the family furniture business which his father ran and in which he had grown up.

After graduation, Dennis continued working with his father’s business. Anita eventually resumed working outside the home in the field which she had studied at Peirce: “accounting was where I was going to fly”. She interspersed time with her children with a career that included working with a CPA practice helping small businesses, as well as running her own bookkeeping firm.

When Dennis’ father’s company was sold in the late ’70s, the Vogels took time to assess Dennis’ next career move: “I wanted to move forth with a family business.” This conviction was the genesis of the development of the Rockhill Mini Storage Center, which today has 800 units for commercial and individual customers on a multi-acre site in Telford, Pa. The Vogels’ business has proven to be such a success that it has undergone several significant phases of expansion over the last three decades.

Now, at a time in their lives when many of their contemporaries have retired, the couple still works in the family business because they enjoy it. In fact, Dennis’ dream of working in a multi-generational environment has come true in spades: all three Vogel children work with their parents. At the heart of it all, Dennis is simple yet sincere in acknowledging Anita’s role as his partner in all things personal and professional: “I wouldn’t be where I am without her.”

The Vogels have always made it a priority to be actively involved in their church, civic organizations, community, and other area nonprofits. They have both been devoted supporters of Peirce, acknowledging the part their alma mater played in not only bringing them together, but also enabling them to flourish: “it was the education you needed to move forward.”

Engaged participants in College events and consistent generous donors to the Annual Fund at the President’s Roundtable level, they are also on the lookout to encourage and support the next generation of students who will benefit as they did by attending Peirce. These future students have an inspiring pair of guides to follow as they begin their path at Peirce: Dennis and Anita Vogel are a sterling example of utilizing a Peirce education as a springboard to a successful and fulfilling life.

On Tuesday, January 15, Peirce hosted a reception on campus to celebrate the launch of Graduate Studies—a milestone in the history of the College. Ninety-three members of the extended Peirce community came together to learn more about the program and to meet faculty and staff members.

Featured speakers at the event were Jim Mergiotti, Peirce’s President & CEO; Senior Vice President, Academic Advancement & Provost Pat Rucker; Adrian Zappala, Dean of Graduate Studies; and Steven Rodriguez ’07, an alumnus and one of the first students accepted into the program.

Peirce has been working on creating a master’s degree program that fits the needs of working adults in Philadelphia for some time now, and this event was truly a celebration of that. If you want to learn more about the master’s degree program, or want to submit your application to be a part of the inaugural class, visit the Peirce website at www.peirce.edu/MSOLM or contact the Graduate Studies Admissions Office at masters@peirce.edu or 215.670.9325.
Vote In The Alumni Association Board Elections

Elections are being held for two-year terms on the Alumni Association Board. Members work with the Peirce community to better connect alumni with one another and the College. Up to nine positions on the Board will be filled through this election, with terms starting in July 2013.

The names of candidates for the Board and their Peirce affiliations are listed below.

Glenda Custalow '10
Glenda is a current member of the Board, and chairs the Special Events Committee. She received both her AS and BS in business administration from Peirce. She is the office manager for an oral maxillofacial surgery specialist in Philadelphia, and a candidate for a Master's degree from St. Joseph's University.

Holly Frey '10
Holly is a current member of the Board, mentor, and speaker at on-campus events. She was a paralegal studies major, the Commencement speaker in 2010, and a winner of the Raymond L. Palzer Leadership Award. Holly is a paralegal with Hardwick Collier, LLC in Doylestown, and a student at the Widener School of Law in Wilmington, Del.

Karl Fritz '06
Karl has been an alumni mentor, guest speaker for CDS' Job Interview Skills program, and an active participant in networking events. He graduated cum laude with both an AS and BS in Business Administration. Karl is Director, Business Operations for The Philadelphia Zoo.

Atiya Goldsmith-Irby '12
Atiya was the featured student speaker at the 2012 Commencement ceremonies, at which she received her BS in Business. She has been a program speaker for both the First Year Initiative and Delta Mu Delta. Atiya is a Customs Compliance Specialist with Destination Maternity Corporation in Philadelphia.

Barry James '07
Barry has two degrees from Peirce: an AS in 1983, and a BS in Information Technology in 2007. He is a current member of three Advisory Boards and committees at Peirce, and has served as an event panelist for CDS and the IT program. He is a Technical Support Manager for OSIsoft in Philadelphia.

Kimberly Latona '04
Kimberly is a current member of the Board, and serves as chair of the Admissions Committee. She received her bachelor's degree in Business Management. She is an office manager at Voith & Mactavish Architects LLP in Philadelphia.

John McClay '61
John graduated from Peirce in 1961 and is a member of Sigma Gamma Omega. A resident of Newportville, PA, he is a member of the Board of Directors of GOAL, the Greenbelt Overhaul Alliance of Levittown.

Babette Pace '06
Babette was the 2012 recipient of the Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award. She currently serves as a mentor, a member of the Paralegal Advisory Board, and a speaker at career and admissions events. She received an AS as well as a certificate in Paralegal Studies from Peirce. Babette is a paralegal for the City of Philadelphia.

Kurt Schaefer '60
Kurt is a current member of the Board, and chairs the Scholarship Committee, a volunteer position he has held for over a decade. An administrative accountancy major at Peirce, Kurt is the assistant manager of Peirce & Hughes, a law firm in Media, PA.

Annette Stokes '89
Annette is a longtime member of the Scholarship Committee as well as a former member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. She received an associate's degree from Peirce.

Karen E. Wheeler '12
While a student at Peirce, Karen was vice president of the Paralegal Student Association, and a winner of the paralegal scholarship essay contest. She has spoken to new students in the legal studies and business programs. Karen is a communications intern with the Urban Affairs Coalition.

Please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement if you have any questions: 215.670.9323 or alumni@peirce.edu. Ballots must be received by 5:00 PM on Friday, April 5, 2013.
Many Peirce students are familiar with the juggling act of balancing their studies with home, work, and family responsibilities. But there is one particular group of graduates this June who have had an extra incentive to achieve: a public promise to their children. They are members of Peirce’s first graduating class of “Parent University.”

In 2010, Peirce College was selected by the School District of Philadelphia to provide an associate’s degree program for parents of Philadelphia schoolchildren who participated in Parent University. After participating in a scholarship program, selected students pursued an Associate of Arts in General Studies.

This cohort of adult students has been taking classes together over the last three years, first at District’s Education Center on North Broad Street, and now on-campus. They have been supported in this effort by a generous grant from the Lomax Foundation, a Philadelphia based family charitable foundation which promotes health, art, culture and education in the African-American community.

Most members of the Parent University community came to the program with no small amount of apprehension. One student admitted before enrolling in Parent University, she was intimidated trying to help her children with homework. “It’s no longer foreign to me…I love it.” And yet another participant admitted that the pricing and convenience of Parent U meant “she didn’t have any more excuses” not to get her college education: “This is my time.”

Throughout the program’s duration, the Parent University group has received help from a Peirce support system which includes faculty, the Walker Center, Admissions, and Academic Advising. They also have drawn strength and inspiration from one another as they have attended class together over the years. As one student noted, “We started out as strangers, and now we are family.”

Because of their belief in themselves, the example they are setting for their families, and the support of Peirce professors and staff, Parent University students are about to achieve a goal that many did not think possible – they will have college degrees.

**“This Is My Time”: Parent University at Peirce**

---

**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD ELECTION BALLOT**

Select up to nine nominees for a two-year term on the Peirce College Alumni Association Board. You can vote by completing this ballot and mailing it to the Office of Institutional Advancement, Peirce College, 1420 Pine Street Philadelphia, PA 19102 by 5:00 PM on Friday, April 5, 2013. You may also fax this ballot to 215-670-9084 or vote online at www.peirce.edu/alumni.

Select up to 9 (place an x in the box for each candidate you select):

- Glenda Custalow ’10
- Holly Frey ’10
- Karl Fritz ’06
- Atiya Goldsmith-Irby ’12
- Barry James ’07
- Kimberly Latona ’04
- John McClay ’61
- Babette Pace ’06
- Kurt Schaefer ’60
- Annette Stokes ’89
- Karen E. Wheeler ’12

Your Name: ___________________________ Class Year: ___________________________
Phone Number: ______________________ Email Address: ___________________________

---
When Cassandra Jean-Pierre receives her Peirce diploma this June, she will be thinking about the achievement that this moment represents: the 22-year-old business major from Northeast Philadelphia will be the first person in her family to graduate from college with a bachelor’s degree. She will also no doubt be reflecting on how this day almost did not come to pass: difficulties with financing the last year of her studies could have stopped her academic dreams in their tracks. However, Cassandra’s story is one with a happy ending, due to her drive to succeed, as well as the generosity of Peirce donors who support the scholarships she needed to finish what she started.

“I felt connected from the beginning”, Cassandra remembered. “You know when people tell you someplace feels like a family and you get suspicious? But I knew from the start that these people were going to have my back.”

When she started at Peirce, she admits she faced some challenges with her school assignments, but with hard work and determination, Cassandra rose to the occasion. “Peirce has helped me grow up academically and personally”, she asserts. Cassandra gives great credit for this transition to her relationship with Vice President of Student Support Uva Coles, her supervisor at her work-study job in the Office of Career Development Services (CDS). The level of responsibility given to and accountability expected from her at CDS helped Cassandra’s confidence grow both in and out of the classroom.

Her newly won self-assurance also helped her face a big challenge at the start of her final year at Peirce: there was a very real possibility she was going to run out of money to pay for school and not be able to finish. But instead of panicking or giving up, Cassandra explored her options and started applying for scholarships for which she was qualified. Her plan worked: because of the financial assistance she received through winning the Alumni Association, W.W. Smith, Arcadia, and FYI scholarships, she was able to resume her studies in the fall. She will graduate in June with a BS in Business with a concentration in management.

Cassandra has already mapped out her professional path - a career in...
Faculty Focus: Dr. Ahmed Omar ’03

When he first walked through the doors of 1420 Pine Street in the year 2000, Ahmed Omar was a recent immigrant to the US, looking to enhance his life through earning a college degree. While he had many professional aspirations at that point, it is doubtful that even he would have believed that 13 years later, Dr. Ahmed Omar is assistant professor and manager of Peirce’s Accounting program.

After finishing his degree in 2003, Dr. Omar went on to get his masters in accounting from La Salle University, taught at Burlington County College, and recently earned his doctorate in accounting from Argosy University.

The current Accounting program which Dr. Omar leads is built on a longstanding academic tradition of excellence at Peirce. The study of accounting principles has always held individuals in good stead in their careers, because, as Dr. Omar puts it, “accounting is the language of business.”

The current program rests on that foundation and is designed to prepare students for employment as accounting professionals with a variety of corporate, government and/or nonprofit organizations. It has received accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), making Peirce one of only seven colleges in the region to do so.

Perhaps the most telling indicator of the evolution of the study of accounting at Peirce is the fact that it is no longer a concentration within the overall Business program. The inaugural class of the new Bachelor of Science in Accounting degree program graduated this June. This is a significant step in furthering the professional education of individuals who seek career-oriented learning in this field, as well as paving the path to further credentialing like the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) designation.

Dr. Omar looks forward to working with full-time faculty and adjuncts who are professionals in the field in order to maximize career success for the students they teach. In addition, Dr. Omar has also demonstrated his belief in the program through his financial sponsorship of an annual scholarship.

Ambitious student, dedicated professor, generous alumnus: by any measure, Dr. Ahmed Omar is a Peirce success story.

Good News!

“Good News!” focuses on our graduates’ personal and professional accomplishments. To submit your “Good News”, email alumni@peirce.edu or send it to Office of Institutional Advancement, Peirce College, 1420 Pine Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19102. You can also post news anytime on the Peirce College Alumni Association Facebook page.

Bob D’Amicantonio ’77 was featured in the Main Line Times on the occasion of his family business’ 80th anniversary. Angelo D’Amicantonio & Son Shoe Store has been a mainstay of downtown Wayne, PA since 1932, and Bob himself is a very active volunteer in the local community.

Martha Terry-Hardy writes from the South: “I graduated in 1983 with a Fashion Merchandise Degree and it served me well. I moved to Texas that same year and have seen the world with my ex-military husband and again landed back in Texas. I am retired and have an antique collectible shop that I dearly love. Don’t get to Pennsylvania much but I am proud to say that Peirce is my alma mater.”

Ben Chhabria ’02 recently celebrated his 15th anniversary working at Peirce College. Starting out as a work study, Ben has progressed to his current position of telecommunications technician in the IT department.

Eileen Snyder ’06 is now Manager, Student Success Services for the Graduate! Network, Inc., a nonprofit whose mission is to increase the number of adults with college degrees in Greater Philadelphia.

Vivian Luckiewicz ’10 received an award from the National Federation of Paralegal Association for the outstanding work she has done in promoting certification among her colleagues.
Give to the Peirce College Annual Fund

Our commitment to the success of our students is ensured with your generous gift to the Annual Fund. Any size donation is welcome and will help our students achieve.

To donate, use the form on page 6 of the newsletter, or visit www.peirce.edu/alumni.

---

Calendar of Events

Saturday, April 13, 2013
Alumni Association Suburban Reception
5:00 PM to 7:00 PM
Fabio & Danny’s Station Café
135 North Wayne Avenue - Wayne, PA

Tuesday, April 16, 2013
Career Development Services presents Women in Leadership Panel
5:30 PM

Saturday, April 20, 2013
Alumni Association Penn Museum Tour
10:30 AM
University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology and Anthropology
33 and South Streets - Philadelphia
$10 per person

Saturday, May 4, 2013
Career Development Services presents Career Day
8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Monday, May 20, 2013
Spring Reception
5:30 PM to 8:00 PM

Monday, June 10, 2013
Commencement - Alumni Honor Guard
6:30 PM

For more information and to register, visit the Events tab on the Alumni page of the Peirce website at www.peirce.edu/alumni, or call 215-670-9323.