

# President's Report & Report to Donors: A Special Supplement

Fall 2014

Marketing & Communications Department, Armstrong State University

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT  
& Report to Donors  
*A Special Supplement*

Armstrong

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to our 2014 President's Report, where we have the opportunity to share highlights from Armstrong's locations in Savannah and Hinesville with you. I hope you'll be as impressed as I am with our faculty and students and with Armstrong's innovative, inspiring approach to learning.

Armstrong has a remarkable legacy of excellence, helping students start strong since 1935. We support student success and systematically work to make each element of our Strategic Plan a reality.

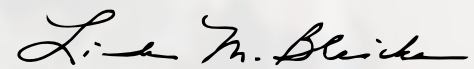
In these pages, you will see some of our accomplishments, from a growing economic impact to enhancements in technology. At Armstrong, we emphasize collaboration, creativity and community service. Our students learn to become leaders in their chosen fields and push to achieve their goals.

I hope you enjoy this President's Report and learn something new. Like you, I'm proud to be part of an exceptional community dedicated to student success, academic excellence, developing solutions, and giving back.

Whether I meet a bright-eyed incoming freshman or visit with a proud graduate, I'm always impressed by the enthusiasm we share for Armstrong. It's truly an honor to be part of the university's impressive legacy of success.

As always, thank you very much for your support and for your commitment to the Armstrong community.

Warm regards,



Linda M. Bleicken  
President



On June 6, Armstrong celebrated the grand opening of a new Alumni Center. Located off the entrance lobby of Burnett Hall, the Alumni Center serves as a gathering place and a permanent home for alumni on campus.



Armstrong earned the Peach Belt Conference's Commissioner's Cup for the third consecutive year and the Presidents' Academic Award for the second consecutive year. The Commissioner's Cup is determined by the points sports teams earned during the academic year. The President's Academic Award honors the university with the highest average GPA ratio for student-athletes, identifying which school's athletes are performing most ahead of the curve in comparison to the general student body.



Armstrong announced a waiver of all student fees beginning in the fall of 2014 for students who are active-duty soldiers. The university also launched a new Green Zone program to support active-duty military students and veterans on campus and was officially designated a Yellow Ribbon Program institution.

Armstrong is leading Savannah's initiative to support post-secondary education completion and workforce development through the Community Partnership for Attainment (CPA) grant supported by Lumina Foundation. Lumina Foundation's collaborative initiative unites public and private partners to increase the percentage of Americans with post-secondary degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025. Savannah is one of 35 U.S. communities selected for key funding, resources and tools to support strategic workforce development.

Treasure Savannah united more than 500 students, faculty and staff to volunteer at various nonprofit organizations across the area in the spring and the fall.



College of Education students participated in Teens for Literacy (TAL) and military outreach programs, including East Broad Street T4L Student Shadowing Day, Savannah Children's Book Festival and Military Family Day.



In January, Armstrong Day at the Capitol in Atlanta offered a high-profile opportunity to showcase the university's College of Health Professions to legislators from across the state.

The inaugural Moveable Feast lecture series featured Armstrong professors speaking and performing in historic venues across downtown Savannah, attracting a broad cross-section of the community and earning significant media coverage.



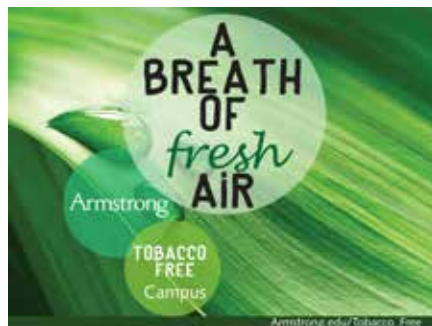
To date, nearly \$275,000 in Commitment Fund gifts and pledges has been raised since the fund's inception in 2012, helping current students complete their degrees, despite financial hardship.

#### TOP 10 UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS

- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1) BIOLOGY                 | 6) LIBERAL STUDIES         |
| 2) PRE-NURSING             | 7) CRIMINAL JUSTICE        |
| 3) NURSING                 | 8) ENGLISH                 |
| 4) REHABILITATION SCIENCES | 9) PRE-RADIOLOGIC SCIENCES |
| 5) HEALTH SCIENCE          | 10) PSYCHOLOGY             |

Funding for the construction of the new Armstrong Liberty Center in Hinesville and the renovation of the Armstrong Recreation Center in Savannah was approved by the Board of Regents.

Enrollment increased by 20% at the Armstrong Liberty Center during the 2013-2014 academic year.



Health sciences students and faculty played a leadership role within the USG system to help public universities become tobacco-free as of October 2014, using Armstrong's experience to assist other institutions to comply with the new policy.

**Armstrong enjoys unprecedented levels of social media engagement:**

-  13,527 followers on Facebook
-  1,187 followers on Twitter
-  815 followers on Instagram
-  11,739 followers on LinkedIn

## THANK YOU



By any measure, fiscal year 2014 was a record year for giving at Armstrong. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, we raised more money than ever before, from more donors than ever before.

As an Armstrong alum, I'm particularly proud of the fact that we raised more than \$1 million in private support, which provides scholarships and supports student success at our locations in Savannah and Hinesville. We also experienced a 73 percent increase in new donors, which is a testimony to the remarkable generosity of the Armstrong community.

I'd like to thank every one of our donors for believing in Armstrong students, faculty and staff. Every year, more and more individuals, community leaders and corporations are saying "yes" to Armstrong, helping our students Start Strong.

I'm also delighted that contributions to the Armstrong Commitment Fund helped so many continuing students who otherwise might not have been able to afford their education to graduate. Our donors are helping support the next generation of scientists, educators, healthcare providers, artists, police officers, historians and business leaders.

Together, we're creating a culture of giving at Armstrong and planting the seeds of philanthropy in the hearts of today's graduates so they can, in turn, pay it forward. We're proud to honor the Armstrong of the past, while creating the Armstrong of the future.

Our donors truly have the power to change lives. Thank you for your generosity, your support and your commitment to Armstrong State University.

William Kelso '88  
Vice President for Advancement

### THE POWER OF GIVING

Want to learn more about how you can support Armstrong?

Visit [Armstrong.edu/give](http://Armstrong.edu/give) today.



# scholarship students

BY RACHAEL  
FLORA

Armstrong's Office of Advancement raises funds to provide a wide range of scholarships for talented students. Please meet four rising stars at Armstrong in fields ranging from nursing to criminal justice.

## TIFFANY REISER

HOMETOWN: Savannah, Ga.  
MAJOR: Nursing  
Class of 2014

### Recipient of the Cathryn Barnett Shriver Presidential Scholarship

For Tiffany Reiser, college was a long-deferred dream. Prior to beginning her nursing education, Tiffany worked as a real estate appraiser for 13 years. At the age of 30, she began attending Armstrong as a nontraditional nursing student and eventually received a prestigious Cathryn Barnett Shriver Presidential Scholarship.

*"My number one obstacle has been fear and self-doubt," she confesses. "I wasn't sure college was a goal that I could accomplish."*

Not only did she accomplish her goal, she secured a job in the nursing field before graduation and currently works as a tech in the neonatal department at St. Joseph's/Candler Hospital.

"I've always been interested in women's and children's health," she says. "It's a wonderful field."

During her time as a student at Armstrong, Tiffany says she "loved every minute of learning."

Real estate is where life led me," she says. "But now I'm doing what I truly want to do."

## JULIAN TAYLOR

HOMETOWN: Lich, Germany  
MAJOR: Criminal Justice  
Class of 2016

### Recipient of the Camden County Deputy Sheriff's Memorial Scholarship

Above all else, Julian Taylor appreciates Armstrong's diversity.

"I like meeting people from different cities and backgrounds," he explains. "When the semester starts, I like meeting people every day."

After earning his bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Armstrong in 2012, Julian decided to pursue his master's degree in the same subject. Specializing in criminal justice was an easy choice for him.

*"I've always wanted to have a job where I'm giving back to the community," he says. "Public service has always been my interest."*

Julian plans to join either the FBI or Homeland Security as a special agent after he completes his master's degree. After being at the university for five years, he knows how valuable an Armstrong education can be.

"This school is a quality university," he explains. "Once you get your degree here, you are pretty much eligible to get the job you want. Armstrong holds its students to a high standard. Once you graduate, you can go anywhere from here."



## TIRAE STEVENS

HOMETOWN: Hinesville, Ga.  
MAJOR: Criminal Justice  
Class of 2015

### Recipient of the Mark C. Clayton-Kappa Alpha Psi Scholarship for African-American Students

Affectionately known as the "Superfan" of Pirate athletics, Tirae Stevens discovered her passion for sports after attending a volleyball game on campus with friends. Impressed by the high level of talent, she began supporting all of Armstrong's athletic teams.

Named the student manager of the women's basketball team in 2013, Tirae has transformed her job from casual fan to crucial team member.

"It has truly been a life-changer for me," she says. "By making me a student manager, I've been able to discover what my true passion is: sports."

Tirae has also become close friends with most of the athletes and is recognized by much of the administration, including President Bleicken, as "Ty the Superfan." But the managerial role, she says, has taught her to be responsible and more mature.

After she completes her bachelor's degree in criminal justice, Tirae plans to pursue her Master of Arts in Professional Communications and Leadership at Armstrong. Ultimately, she wants to work in collegiate sports administration, a fitting use of her passion.

***"Being at Armstrong has brought me out of my shell and shaped me into a strong and confident woman," she raves. "There's no denying that my heart rests with Armstrong."***

## STEPHEN C. GROTTO II

HOMETOWN: Savannah, Ga.  
MAJOR: History  
Class of 2015

### Recipient of the Hazelle B. Tuthill American History Scholarship

Stephen Grotto has always been fascinated by history.

"I grew up hearing stories," he says. "I remember being nine years old and watching the History Channel."

Stephen came to Armstrong after plans to attend the U.S. Air Force Academy fell through. He faced personal obstacles, such as family troubles and financial issues, but came through them stronger.

During his time as a history major at Armstrong, Stephen served as the president of the Phi Alpha Theta history honors fraternity, acting main executive of the French Club and a member of the Student Court.

***"I thought college was going to be totally different from what it is," he says. "I am being prepared for life."***

After graduation, Stephen plans to join the Air Force or Navy to fly fighter jets. He hopes to get into the War College and to earn a Ph.D. in Military History, but ultimately his goal is to work with troubled children who come from a bad home environment.

"Most people have been provided for. They have no idea what it's like to be wondering where you're going to be in a year or where your next meal is coming from," he says. "In some ways, I've been there and I still see those issues. The challenges and obstacles that life presents have no boundaries."

"Adversity affects everyone, regardless of ethnicity," he said. "It doesn't matter who you are or where you come from. You can do anything in life as long as you have the heart and desire to win."



## REPORT TO DONORS 2013-2014

Thank you for supporting excellence at Armstrong State University! The following report lists donors who made a gift to the university between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014. For more information about our giving societies, please visit [armstrong.edu/give](http://armstrong.edu/give).

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1935 marks the year that Savannah's leaders established Armstrong Junior College. Since then, Armstrong has progressed to the respected university that it is today. Annual support from donors keeps the university strong year after year. Annual gifts to the university are celebrated at the following levels:

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**HERITAGE SOCIETY**

Members of the society have chosen to name Armstrong as a beneficiary through a planned gift, such as a bequest in a will. The Heritage Society supports not only the present needs of the university, but also seeks to make provisions for future generations of Armstrong students.

Ruth E. '40\* and Frank '38  
Barragan, Jr.  
Ronald H. Binkney  
Janice L. '57 and Charles  
Castles  
Beth A. Childress  
Jo Ann Coleman  
Diana Baker Cummings  
'94, '98, '07  
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Mary Foy Space '44\*  
John A. Welsh, III

• denotes Founder's Circle member who has 3 consecutive years of giving at the Maroon & Gold level or higher

\* deceased

# FISCAL YEAR 2014 BY THE NUMBERS

From July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014






**2,511**  
DONORS



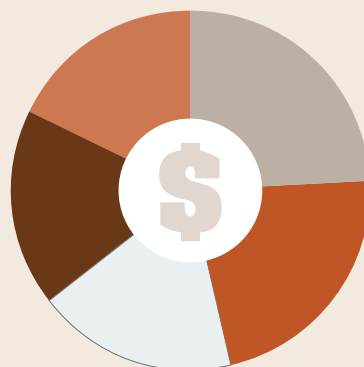
CONTRIBUTED GIFTS AND  
PLEDGES TOTALING

**\$1,029,484**






## Breakdown by total to fund type

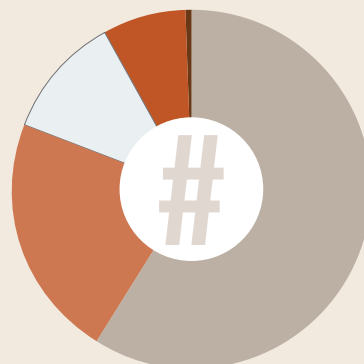
	Scholarships	\$398,245	38.7%
	Programs	\$223,521	21.7%
	Annual Fund	\$187,919	18.3%
	Armstrong Commitment	\$134,394	13.1%
	Athletics	\$85,402	8.3%

## OUR DONORS








### By Dollars Given

	Alumni	24.4%
	Business/Organization	22.0%
	Faculty/Staff	18.3%
	Foundation	17.6%
	Friend	17.7%



### By Number of Donors

	Alumni	58.9%
	Friend	22.2%
	Faculty/Staff	10.9%
	Business/Organization	7.5%
	Foundation	0.5%

## THANKS TO YOU

**ALUMNI  
GIVING  
increased  
41.8%**

First time donors  
increased by

**68%**

Welcome to  
our **1,040**  
new donors!

**514** donors contributed to  
**ARMSTRONG SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS**

**313** students received an average  
scholarship of \$1,392 from  
the Armstrong Foundation

**57%** of  
faculty and staff  
participated in the  
Campus Campaign,  
beating the national  
average of 25%!

### NEW FUNDS

Bettye Anne Battiste Award for  
Excellence in Education Research

William J. and Laura M. Day  
Memorial Fund

Hispanic/Latino Outreach & Retention  
Teens for Literacy

Dr. Mark R. Finlay Visiting Faculty  
Lecture Series

Dr. Irving Victor President's Endowment  
Mary Foy Space Scholarship for Economics  
Bonnie and James Heaston Scholarship

# DONOR Spotlights

BY BRITTANY D. McCLURE



## JOSEPH A. AND MARILYN M. BUCK LEADER SCHOLARSHIP

To Joseph and Marilyn Buck, Armstrong is more than just a university: it is a home.

"We truly grew up at Armstrong," Marilyn says with a smile.

Just one year after getting married, the Bucks moved to Savannah in 1968 when Joe accepted the position of director of student activities at Armstrong. In 1974, Marilyn followed when she became a nursing instructor.

"We put down roots really quickly and became a part of watching the campus grow," Joe recalls. "It got to be home so quickly."

As Armstrong grew, so did the Buck's family. They had two children, who were part of the Armstrong family from a young age. Joe rose to become the vice president of student affairs, and Marilyn quickly moved through the faculty ranks, eventually serving as head of the Department of Nursing, assistant dean of the College of Health Professions and dean of the college from which she retired in 2008.

Joe and Marilyn, now a professor emeritus of nursing, remained deeply connected to the students at Armstrong and were looking for a way to deepen their tie. The pair had always donated to Armstrong as faculty and staff members during the campus giving campaigns, but after Joe's retirement in 2006, they decided to start giving on a larger scale, providing \$100,000 to establish the Joseph A. and Marilyn M. Buck Leader Scholarship.

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"Both of us have been lifelong education supporters and have always valued giving back. The scholarship is just a great way to give back, and it is a nice legacy to leave."

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The scholarship, which will award its first recipient this year, goes to a freshman who exhibits exemplary leadership qualities and can be renewed for up to four years.

"Our hope is that the scholarship will be an incentive for freshmen to get involved at Armstrong at the leadership level and remain involved," Joe explains. "We believe that leadership can be taught, and with the right influences, like the one this scholarship can provide, students can become good leaders."

*To donate to the Joseph A. and Marilyn M. Buck Leader Scholarship, please contact the Office of Advancement at 912.344.2541 or [advancement@armstrong.edu](mailto:advancement@armstrong.edu).*

## MORRIS SLOTIN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Leon and Nancy Slotin considered their late son Morris "Moe" Slotin to be a true Renaissance man. He played basketball, wrote poetry and could fix anything he laid his hands on, including people.

"Moe was a fixer and a people person," Nancy says. "He took chances and was a true role model for how we should treat our fellow man."

After graduating from Savannah Country Day School, he spent one year at Georgia Tech before realizing it wasn't for him. According to Leon, Moe returned home to save the world. He volunteered for an underground newspaper in Savannah before returning to Atlanta in 1970 to work for *The Great Speckled Bird*, a bigger, counterculture publication.

"He was a child of the 60's, the Woodstock era," Leon explains. "He was a true hippie."

While living in Atlanta, Moe began a two-decade career as a roadie for top musical acts including Blue Oyster Cult, the Patti Smith Group, the B-52s, Aerosmith, the Talking Heads and Patti LaBelle. After 20 years of constant travel, Moe left the road to become a licensed journeyman mechanic for a Porsche dealership in New York City.

While in New York, he decided to make a dramatic career move into working with the human body. He completed a massage therapy program at the Swedish Institute in New York and, at the age of 39, entered the physical therapy program at Hunter College in New York City.



After marrying his wife, Bonnie, and having their daughter Micaela, Moe once again returned to Savannah in 1994, as a physical therapist and a clinical instructor at Armstrong.

In mid-September 2001, Moe suffered abdominal pains and sought medical help. When the results of his tests came back, he learned he was in the final stages of liver cancer.

He died on October 12, 2001 at the age of 51. That same year, Leon and Nancy established the Morris Slotin Memorial Scholarship.

For Nancy, an alumnus of Armstrong, this scholarship truly complements everything Moe believed in. Moe touched so many lives through his work in music, as a physical therapist and as an instructor. Now, thanks to this scholarship, he is able to continue his dream of making the world a better place.

The Morris Slotin Scholarship Fund awards scholarships to physical therapy students who have chosen the field as a second career, just as Moe did.

"This scholarship is helping mankind in some way," says Leon. "Moe would be very proud of his legacy."

*To donate to the Morris Slotin Memorial Scholarship, please contact the Office of Advancement at 912.344.2541 or [advancement@armstrong.edu](mailto:advancement@armstrong.edu).*

## JESSE STUART SHEAROUSE TRUST



Shearouse Plaza, located between the Learning Commons and Hawes Hall, conjures up memories of friends and classmates gathering for barbecues on a sunny day.

However, for some students, the Shearouse name represents an opportunity for an education, thanks to a generous family dedicated to helping Pirates through the

Jesse Stuart Shearouse Trust.

Jesse was born in Effingham County in 1936 and grew up in Savannah, attending Armstrong for two years. He then moved to Atlanta and graduated from Emory University in 1958 with a degree in accounting.

Following graduation, he went to work for a family-owned company that made Vicks Cough Drops. In 1985, Vicks was bought by Procter & Gamble, so Jesse worked

in a variety of positions at the company throughout his business career.

In 1990, Jesse became ill with an inoperable brain tumor and died six months later at the age of 55. Because he never married and did not have any siblings, he became concerned about his family name passing on with him. To ensure the legacy of his name, he provided in his will that 10 percent of his estate, managed by attorney Charlton Clark, should be set aside as a perpetual charitable trust. Of that, 90 percent of the income was to be paid quarterly to Armstrong.

To date, recipients of the Jesse Stuart Shearouse Trust have benefited from scholarship funding in excess of \$198,000. The scholarship generates \$15,000 annually and will continue to sustain the education of others and the Shearouse legacy for many years to come.

*To donate to the Jesse Stuart Shearouse Trust, please contact the Office of Advancement at 912.344.2541 or [advancement@armstrong.edu](mailto:advancement@armstrong.edu).*