83rd Annual Purdue Christmas Show Indeed ‘A Christmas to Remember’

Heart & Soul with Director Rhonda Blacklock
We have had such an amazing start to our year and have experienced so much during our first semester! This fall, our students continued to make Purdue proud as ambassadors for the University while performing during their busy fall schedule.

In August, we welcomed new and returning students in the Purduettes and Purdue Varsity Glee Club back to campus for our pre-season camp at Camp Tecumseh in Brookston, Ind. Once classes began, both ensembles performed free concerts on campus—the Glee Club's annual “First Nighter” concert in Elliott Hall of Music, and the “Picnic with the Purduettes” performance on Slayter Hill. The Glee Club and Purduettes also returned to the Palladium at the Center for Performing Arts in Carmel for a combined performance in a truly breath-taking venue.

In October, we welcomed PMO alumni for our annual Homecoming Weekend. All of our ensembles performed for and interacted with distinguished PMO alumni from different eras. The free “Fall Show” in November featured outstanding performances by the Purdue Bells, University Choir, Heart & Soul and the All-Campus and Community Chorale at the Long Center in downtown Lafayette.

The semester culminated with our pinnacle performance of the year: the 83rd annual Purdue Christmas Show! This year, “A Christmas to Remember” provided stunning performances from all of our ensembles, culminating in the collaboration of our PMO students and the “All-American” Marching Band from the Department of Purdue Bands and Orchestras. This was the first time the band has ever performed in the Purdue Christmas Show!

We are looking forward to a busy spring semester. During our annual Singing Valentine promotion in February, our students spread love to local residents. In March, the Purduettes will celebrate their 75th anniversary with a weekend of alumni activities and a celebration gala. Be sure to save the date for our fourth annual Purdue Day of Giving on April 26. Then in May, the Glee Club will embark on a two-week performance tour of Poland and the Baltics.

We are packing the calendar at PMO, and we encourage you to stay connected and come visit Bailey Hall any time you are back on campus!

Read on for articles about these events, distinguished PMO alumni, and more.

THANK YOU to all who attended last year’s Christmas Show! We look forward to seeing you this year at the 84th annual Christmas Show on December 2-3.

Familiar Faces Join PMO Staff

Two former PMO members are now on staff: Colton Withers and Kris Webster.

A 2013 graduate of the Purdue Varsity Glee Club, Withers has served since September 2015 as Director of Development for PMO. In this role, Colton serves as PMO’s main contact with the Purdue Research Foundation.

“I am honored to work with the generous supporters who helped make my PMO experience and those of countless others so memorable,” he says. A favorite memory from his student years is performing at the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris in 2013, when he traveled with the Glee Club on its European tour. “That life-changing experience would not have been possible without PMO’s generous donors.”

Withers assists PMO supporters in making contributions that require a bit of planning, including stock transfers, endowments and estate gifts. “My goal is to meet with as many PMO alumni, supporters and friends as possible.”
The 83rd annual Purdue Christmas Show delivered on the theme, “A Christmas to Remember,” giving audiences that surpassed 18,300 a performance they will long treasure.

Some 300 PMO students and staff began rehearsing last September for the magical, lyrical miracle, devoting all their free time to making it one of the best performances yet. This show featured a first-ever surprise: the “All-American” Marching Band joined PMO students at the end of Act 1 in a rousing rendition of “Hail Purdue,” performed in the aisles of Elliott Hall of Music. Complete with Santa Claus jumping out of the big bass drum, this year’s closing number is one that had every audience on its feet in a standing ovation.

To them, he says, “It would be my pleasure to treat you to a cup of coffee and hear more about why you support this wonderful organization and share our PMO memories.” Be on the lookout for his name in your email inbox or on your caller ID to hear more from Colton.

Kris Webster joined the PMO staff as Administrative Assistant in September.

A 1988 graduate of the Purduettes, Webster says, “I love working with PMO students and staff. Being a member of PMO was the highlight of my collegiate career, and the lifelong friendships I made are truly a blessing. PMO gave me confidence and the ability to get up in front of people and share my gift.”

“I loved being an ambassador for PMO and the University.”

Today, she continues her ambassador role as the first friendly face guests see when visiting Bailey Hall. Next time you’re on campus, stop by to get to know Kris.
For 25 years—from 1983 to 2008—Jae Israel-Kellogg devoted her life to PMO, serving as director, assistant director, musical accompanist, arranger, and mentor for the Purduettes and other ensembles. These included the Purdue Varsity Glee Club, University Choir, PMO Express, Choral Club, and the Purdue Indiana Extension Music Program.

Israel-Kellogg led the Purduettes in becoming a premier vocal ensemble. During her tenure, she traveled with many PMO ensembles, including the 1999 tour to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji with the Glee Club, Purduettes, University Choir, PMO Express and the Black Cultural Center’s Black Voices of Inspiration.

Now retired, Jae Israel-Kellogg lives on her sailboat on Marco Island, Fla.

To register for the Purduette 75th Anniversary weekend, go to giving.purdue.edu/purduettes75registration.
Lasting Ties

Jae Israel-Kellogg’s influence is still present in several musical selections in the Purduettes’ current repertoire, and she continues to support PMO and champion students’ educational experiences.

“PMO provides lifelong friendships, travel and career opportunities, scholarships, alumni connections, and a home away from home,” she says, making giving back to the organization important. “That way, each generation of students has the same or better opportunities than those before.”

In that spirit, the Purduette 75th Anniversary Legacy Fund is being established to honor her decades of service and leadership and provide ongoing travel funding.

Help Us Honor Her Service

PMO invites you to join in honoring Jae Israel-Kellogg and supporting current and future Purduettes. Together, alumni and friends can ensure every Purduette will have a once-in-a-lifetime travel opportunity while enjoying Jae’s favorite PMO saying, “No fun without music, no music without fun.”

To make your gift, visit giving.purdue.edu/Purduettes.
Outstanding Students and Alumni

PMO donors, alumni, and students shine. These stories highlight a few of our stars.

Alumni Honor Mom with Endowment

When Marjorie De Armond learned her daughter Jackie was accepted in PMO’s University Choir, she was elated and eager to see her perform. Sadly, her mother passed away in 1996, a few days before Jackie would first perform in the PMO Christmas Show.

“My fellow PMO students became my rock and life raft during that time,” recalls Jackie Knotts, who met Marcus Knotts, a Varsity Glee Club member, through PMO. They both graduated in 2001, then married in 2002.

Now, they are honoring her mother by establishing the Marjorie De Armond PMO Scholarship, a planned gift.

“Philanthropy has been a huge part of our lives,” Jackie says. “It came naturally to us to give back as soon as we were able.” Setting up estate plans to ensure the financial well-being of their two sons, they also made the commitment to Purdue.

“We don’t have a lot to give, and our last name will never carry weight like the namesakes of Bailey Hall, but it was important for us to make an impact,” Marcus says. “You know, every building needs doorknobs and light bulbs.”

They both remain loyal Boilermakers. Jackie is Associate Director of Alumni Engagement at Krannert School of Management; Marcus, Assistant Vice President of Planned Giving at Purdue Research Foundation.

In planning the endowment, Marcus considered the amount of money he spent at the coffee shop. Changing his coffee habits, he says, “I can see the money grow into something meaningful instead of being consumed before I get through my morning emails.”

Once the endowment is fully funded, it will keep giving long after they’re gone.

“I hope this scholarship will help others with a passion for music experience the kind of camaraderie I did,” Jackie says. “And, hopefully, another mother will see her child perform for the first time in the Christmas Show.”

Graduate Draws on PMO Lessons

Lessons mastered as a Glee Club tenor are proving valuable to Max Showalter, a 2014 Purdue graduate now pursuing a Ph.D. in oceanography and astrobiology at the University of Washington in Seattle.

While music and his research may seem worlds apart, he says, “I learned in Glee Club to ‘adjust and move on’—a great motto to keep in your back pocket. As a Ph.D. student, I have experienced a lot of frustrating and demoralizing failures in my experiments. This mantra helps me figure out the problem, fix it, and get on with the next step.”

He also taps his Glee Club lessons in time and project management and his performance skills. “I feel comfortable presenting my academic work to large crowds because of my time with PMO.”

Above all, he expresses gratitude for the positive attitude imparted through PMO’s culture and the friends he made and still stays in touch with today.

At Purdue, where he earned a degree in biological engineering, Showalter says he was inspired by the diversity and ability of microbial life, prompting an interest in unknown microbial life in extreme environments and how they survive.

“We don’t have a lot to give, and our last name will never carry weight like the namesakes of Bailey Hall, but it was important for us to make an impact. You know, every building needs doorknobs and light bulbs.” Marcus Knotts
His research today focuses on how microbes survive and adapt in the extreme arctic environment. Last summer, he traveled to Palmer Station in Antarctica as part of a training program led by the National Science Foundation. Along with training skills, Showalter brought home stories of close encounters with penguins and seals. His favorites occurred while aboard the icebreaker Laurence M. Gould or in one of the smaller rubber crafts, called zodiacs.

Although his singing these days may be limited to alone-time in the lab, he values and uses his other PMO lessons.

Moes Achieves Research Success
McCaela Moes, a senior Purduette from Brownsburg, Ind., studying biomedical engineering, is making her mark in the medical world through several opportunities at IU Health Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis.

She was first chosen, as a sophomore, for a two-week course where she heard lectures and shadowed in the operating room and cath lab. From that class, she was the only student selected for an internship. Her duties included serving as a bridge between Methodist and Purdue, overseeing supply transfer between the two entities and researching under Dr. I-Wen Wang, M.D.

Last September, she became the first student author to present her research under a physician at a conference in San Diego. She presented in front of thousands of attendees, hoping they would accept the validity of the research. The subject was well received, and she was told that her research was the most important presented that weekend.

Moes is now working on a paper she hopes to publish nationally, with medical centers across America adopting the findings she researched at IU Health.

Mark Your Calendars
All PMO performances and details are listed at www.purdue.edu/pmo, and we invite students, their families, donors, alumni, and friends to be among our fans in the audience.

To pique your interest, a few dates on our spring 2017 calendar:

**FEBRUARY 3 • 7:30 P.M.**
Purdue Varsity Glee Club Show
Indianapolis Scottish Rite
650 N. Meridian St. | Indianapolis, Ind.
Tickets available by calling 317-262-3100

**FEBRUARY 4 • 7:30 P.M.**
Purdue Varsity Glee Club
Song of Hope Concert
St. Mary Cathedral
1207 Columbia Street | Lafayette, Ind.
Tickets available by calling 765-430-0642

**FEBRUARY 9 • 6:30 P.M.**
Men’s Choral Festival
Elliott Hall of Music | Purdue University
No tickets needed

**FEBRUARY 14**
Singing Valentines
Orders available January 25–February 9 on PMO website: purdue.edu/pmo

**MARCH 24-25**
Purduettes 75th Anniversary Celebration Weekend
Details at purdue.edu/pmo

**MARCH 31 • 7:30 P.M.**
Phenomena
Student-produced rock concert
Elliott Hall of Music | Purdue University
No tickets needed

**APRIL 2 • 2 P.M.**
PMO Spring Show | All Campus and Community Chorale, Heart & Soul, Purdue Bells and University Choir
Long Center for the Performing Arts
111 N. Sixth St. | Lafayette, Ind.
Tickets available from PMO at 765-494-3941 beginning February 20

**APRIL 22 • 7:30 P.M.**
Purduettes Spring Spectacular Concert
Long Center for the Performing Arts
111 N. Sixth St., Lafayette, Ind.
Tickets available from PMO at 765-494-3941 beginning March 13

**APRIL 26**
Purdue Day of Giving

**MAY 13-7:30 P.M.**
Purdue Varsity Glee Club
End of Season Concert
Long Center for the Performing Arts
111 N. Sixth St. | Lafayette, Ind.
Tickets available from PMO at 765-494-3941 beginning April 3

**MAY 15-27**
Purdue Varsity Glee Club International Tour | Poland and the Baltic states
Details at purdue.edu/pmo

“I learned in Glee Club to ‘adjust and move on’—a great motto to keep in your back pocket. This mantra helps me figure out the problem, fix it, and get on with the next step.” Max Showalter
Yours in Song
All Campus and Community Chorale | Heart & Soul | Purdue Bells | Purdue Varsity Glee Club
Purduettes | University Choir

Ralph & Bettye Bailey Hall
359 Northwestern Avenue
West Lafayette, IN 47906
800-893-3041 | 765-494-3941
www.purdue.edu/pmo

Follow us online

Your PMO Staff
Serving Students, Alumni and Donors

Beth McCuskey, Ed.D.
Vice Provost for Student Life

Katherine Sermersheim, Ph.D.
Dean of Students

William E. Griffel
Director, Purdue Musical Organizations and Purdue Varsity Glee Club

Rhonda Blacklock
Director, Purdue Bells and Heart & Soul

Chrissy Crawley
Marketing & Communications Coordinator

Liz Ehrlich
Donor Relations & Recruitment Coordinator

Scott Hines
Assistant Director, Purdue Varsity Glee Club

Sarah May
Assistant Director, Purduettes and University Choir
Director, All Campus & Community Chorale and PMO Kids Choir

Rachel Mirkin
Scheduling & Events Coordinator

Andrea Ridge
Account Clerk

Marietta Taylor
Business Manager

Jeff Vallier
Director, Purduettes, University Choir, and Recruitment

Kris Webster
Administrative Assistant

Colton Withers
Director of Development

Purdue Day of Giving 2016 brought in funds to purchase new chimes for the Purdue Bells. Another 2016 Day of Giving purchase is the new van with our PMO logo.