Mel Horton ’85 receives college teacher of the year award

The following are the remarks made during the awards presentation honoring Dr Mel Horton as the South Carolina Association for Physical Education and Sport College Teacher of the Year for 2004.

Mel Horton earned her bachelor’s degree in health and physical education from Messiah College, her master’s in physical education from Winthrop University, and her doctoral degree in physical education from the University of Virginia. Horton is currently an assistant professor at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

“An innovative, creative, reflective, versatile, effective teacher”; “a professor who can do it all”; “a rare individual who ‘lights up’ a classroom”; “a teacher who loves to teach and takes the time to do it well”; “a role model who talks the talk, but also walks the walk”—these are only a few descriptions that Horton’s dean, department chair, and colleagues have said about her. Horton teaches pedagogy and adaptive physical education classes, and is involved in educational research and intensive writing. The dean states that “Each year Horton receives among the highest teaching evaluations in the College of Education. Her annual report always includes an analysis of how she is improving her classes and using student and peer feedback, even though there is little that needs improving.” Horton made the following statement in her annual review, “My personal goal is to encourage students to think on their own and to challenge them with content that is new, yet pertinent, as well as to encourage them to make connections between this content and content taught in other classes.” Her department chair said “Horton is the rare teacher who manages to have students ‘love’ her while maintaining academic rigor.” Her three degrees in a wide range of specialty areas, her teaching experience in five states from South Carolina to Maine, and her passion to teach for student learning make her a “gem” to our profession.

Horton also provides service to her profession through writing in scholarly journals and presenting at national and state conferences. She has published more than ten articles in scholarly journals including JOPERD and TEPE. While

"My personal goal is to encourage students to think on their own and to challenge them with content that is new, yet pertinent, as well as to encourage them to make connections between this content and content taught in other classes."
From the chair
“Year in Review” 2004–2005

The conclusion of the 2004–2005 academic year marked my 20th year at Messiah College. I have truly been blessed to be involved in Christian higher education and to be a part of the growth of Messiah College and the Health and Human Performance (HHP) Department over the years.

During the spring semester, the HHP Department had a record 195 students majoring in five disciplines and an additional five students enrolled in minor fields of study. Approximately 20 percent of the 2005 graduating class will enroll in graduate school, ranging from master's degree programs in physical therapy to sport management.

The next two years will be a critical time period for the HHP Department as we embark on the assessment process. Senior exit interviews were conducted in May to receive input about the department's strengths and weaknesses, and potential changes graduates would like to see in curriculum offerings. Three areas of particular interest to the department during the assessment phase will be the potential for a Wellness program (i.e., changing the format of the current one-credit Life Fitness course to a two-credit Wellness course and decreasing the required two activity courses to one), the feasibility of transforming the sport and exercise science major concentrations (i.e., pre-physical therapy, health and fitness, and sport management) to major fields of study and the impact of utilizing an outside accreditation agency for sport and exercise science.

The HHP Department lost one member of its faculty for the next academic year. Wanda Hilton decided not to renew her faculty contract for the 2005–2006 academic year due to family reasons. Also, assistant professor Barbara Burwell is planning to retire at the conclusion of the next academic year. The department decided to conduct the assessment process prior to rehiring for these two faculty positions to ensure that the needs of the department that are identified via the assessment will be met.

The next two years will be a time full of struggles and promise as we develop a curriculum that meets the needs of our students and society. Please keep the department in your prayers as we go through the assessment process.

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at Winthrop, she has made 27 presentations in different states (Alabama, Maine, Missouri, and Ohio) for different organizations (American Association for Active Lifestyles and Fitness and American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance) on topics concerning adaptive physical education, teacher education and technology. Horton is an active member of the South Carolina Association for Physical Education and Sport, currently serving as president-elect and has also served as chair and chair-elect. She has presided over and presented at many SCAHPERD conventions and workshops. She is also vice president of the Southern Academy for Women in Physical Activity, Sport and Health (SAWPASH).

Horton “talks the talk and walks the walk” when it comes to being a role model for her students and colleagues. She is an avid weight lifter and runner. “Students see Horton as an active, involved professional. They watch her teach K-12 learners and work with special needs children.” After spending the first 13 years of her career working with special needs students, she is a strong proponent for inclusion.

Congratulations to Messiah College alum Dr. Mel Horton for her continued commitment and outstanding service to the Health and Physical Education profession.

Andrew Locust selected to Who’s Who

Andrew Locust '99 has been selected to Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges in recognition of outstanding merit and accomplishment as a student at Millersville University of Pennsylvania Graduate School for 2005.

Locust is completing his Master of Education in sport management at Millersville. According to Rebecca Mowrey, graduate coordinator of the sport management program, “Drew has shown a dedication and determination to advance his academic and professional goals throughout his course study in the M.Ed. in sport management program here at Millersville University. Drew's academic accomplishments, leadership skills, and potential for continued success in the field of sport management have garnered him this national recognition.”

Currently, Drew teaches physical education at the Susquehanna Township Middle School.
"The church lady's" foray into women's professional football

Submitted by Bethany (Lash) Deamer '96

Football career
Playing women's professional football in the spring of 2003 for the Philadelphia Liberty Belles was one of the best experiences of my life. I had always loved football and participated in flag football competition during my high school and college years. While attending a graduate class, a female classmate informed me that she played women's professional football and that conversation intrigued me enough to try out and share the same passion for the sport with other women.

The Liberty Belles started practice in January and the official season ran from April through June. I was soon dubbed "the church lady" because I came straight from church to practice. Once we had our pads on, the real fun began. I played both offense and defense and also participated on special teams, but my favorite position was the corner position on defense. During one game against New York, the ball carrier got by me, but I made up for it in a last ditch effort by grabbing her ponytail and tackling her to the ground. The Liberty Belles ended with a 3–4 overall record playing teams from New York, Rhode Island, Boston, and Albany. The team traveled by school bus (due to financial restraints, we were not able to travel in first class accommodations), but we always had a great time together as a team. These women from all walks of life became my family.

I found that I had a lot of support from those around me. At first my parents thought I was crazy; they were waiting to watch future grandchildren, not watch me hitting in pads! My husband was also amazing. He was a standout football player himself and loved the fact that I always wanted to practice with him or listen to his advice. Not only was my family supportive, but my fellow colleagues were as well. During an assembly at the high school where I teach, the school's principal introduced both Brian Mitchell (former Philadelphia Eagles kick-off returner) and me as professional football players. It was and still exciting to be able to tell the high school girls that there are opportunities out there for them to play football aside from the occasional powder puff football game.

Through my professional football experience, I found a new appreciation for the game of football. One could often find me on hall duty studying my plays, pass patterns, and blitz calls. Although it was an amazing experience, I have hung up my "helmet" and will stick to playing sports that are a little easier on the body!

Teaching career
My experience at Messiah College in the health and physical education program was invaluable. The students always stated that our department had the best professors, and they were right. The faculty helped guide me to become a teacher. Spud Wentzell and Barb Burwell were very instrumental in my decision to go into education. I can specifically remember professor Burwell telling me that I would make a great teacher, and that made a lasting impression on me.

I began teaching at Owen J. Roberts High School in Pottstown, Pa, in the fall

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of 1997. I had originally applied for an elementary opening; however, God knew what was best for me and I was offered a position at the high school instead. Although I was apprehensive about teaching students only four years younger than me, I fell in love with them. Throughout the last eight years, I have coached middle school lacrosse, high school field hockey, powder puff football, and my husband and I served as Young Life leaders. I am thankful for the opportunities and relationships that God has given me through teaching high school students.

Parenting career
Nothing can top the birth of my son on October 14, 2004. After a heartbreaking miscarriage, God blessed us with a little boy, Austin Paul. Life has never been so sweet! I have been fortunate enough to be able to stay home with him for the time being. I can't wait for the day when, as a family, we can grab the football and go have a catch together!

Naomi Hepkins recognized for leadership skills

Naomi Hepkins, a senior athletic training major, was recognized by the Messiah College Women in Leadership Committee as a recipient of one of the Messiah College Women in Leadership Awards for 2005. The award is offered in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Best 50 Women in Business award program. Messiah College believes in the value of role models and provides its female students an opportunity to meet and network with outstanding female business role models. Nominees for this prestigious award must demonstrate leadership skills, show self-direction, articulate and demonstrate a sense of vocational purpose, reflect the mission and values of Messiah College, and desire to network with female business professionals.

Naomi has demonstrated her leadership skills on campus by participating in Kingdom Steppers, concert choir, Micah Committee, and student forum, and by serving as a Department of Health and Human Performance diplomat and as a member of the search committee for the associate dean of multicultural programs. Off campus, Naomi serves as music leader at her home church. In addition to actively participating in the College community, Naomi is able to balance a rigorous clinical schedule with research and graduate school preparation. Naomi is eagerly anticipating graduate studies in physical therapy after she graduates from Messiah College.

Congratulations, Naomi, on your prestigious award!
Ben Duke completes Boston Marathon
Submitted by Ben Duke ’05

During the fall of my senior year at Messiah College, I completed a class called Exercise Testing and Prescription. My professor in the course, Douglas Miller, is a great example of the lifelong application of exercise and fitness. His enthusiastic commitment to long distance running was inspiring to me as a student. At the beginning of the semester, he talked about a local marathon in Harrisburg, Pa. I decided to commit to training for the race. The Harrisburg marathon was exciting and encouraged me to challenge the limits of discipline and endurance. I finished with a time of 3:05:43, which qualified me for the Boston marathon.

Training for Boston was not an easy task. Winter temperatures created a challenging environment for training and led to many “cold runs” during early January and into February. Each week I trained by running at least four times with an average of 25 miles per week. Three and a half weeks before the race, I ran my longest training run of 19 miles.

On April 18, 2005, I found myself at the starting line in shoot number three with hundreds of other runners. The computer chip tied to my shoe provided split times at every five kilometers, enabling my family to track my progress on the Internet. From the start of the race, I got caught up in the excitement of the event, and by mile 13, I started to feel the effects of going out too fast. By mile 18 my pace had drastically slowed and I was not looking forward to the infamous “Heartbreak Hill” that I was steadily approaching. Although I successfully reached the top of Heartbreak, I still needed to push for another five miles, which I realized would be some of the hardest miles I would ever run. Finally, with a wide smile, I trudged down the last straightaway and crossed the finish—3:19:49.

Finishing at Boston is one of the greatest memories of my life. Not just because the race was finally over, but also because of all the emotions and feelings created by such an experience. For me the race was a parallel to my Christian walk by challenging my stamina, discipline, and character. The Bible tells us that as believers we must run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12:1b, 2a).

Mark Your Calendars!

HOMECOMING
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15
Health and Human Performance Reception
Sollenberger Sports Center 165
12:30–1:30 p.m.

The reception also serves as a retirement celebration for Barb Burwell, who will be retiring at the end of the 2005–2006 academic year!
Alumni news/notes

Want your classmates to know what you are doing? Send your update to jcole@messiah.edu, or send information to Jack Cole, Messiah College, Box 4501, One College Avenue, Grantham, PA 17027.

90s
Bethany (Lash) Deamer ’96 lives in Downingtown, Pa, with her husband and their son, Austin. Bethany was an HPE Teacher until the birth of Austin (10/14/04). She also played one season of women’s professional football for the Philadelphia Liberty Belles.

Ken Zook ’98 and his wife welcomed their second son, Micah Jonathan, on November 8, 2004. He joins their two-year-old son, Nathan. Ken was accepted to the physician assistant program at Lock Haven University.

Heather (Pollock) Hoff ’98 lives in Reading, Pa, with her husband and their two children, Nicholas and Neeli. She is the varsity volleyball coach at Muhlenberg High School.

Guy deBrun ’98 is an outdoor educator at the University of Maine, Department of Campus Recreation. His work includes credit and non-credit instruction in wilderness medicine, rock climbing, and other outdoor skills. Guy also supervises the rock climbing wall, outdoor climbing/ mountaineering program, and wilderness orientation program.

Patti Hector ’99 resides in Arlington, Va., and is the assistant director of Student Judicial Services at the George Washington University. In May 2003, Patti received her master’s degree from Canisius College in their college student personnel administration program.

2000s
Megan (Dietz) ’00 and Kevin Langdon ’01 live in Cambridge, Mass. They welcomed their first child, Ephraim Estie, into the world on December 26, 2004.

Sarah Hughes ’04 is an HPE teacher in Pelham, N.Y. She is also coaching junior varsity field hockey and junior varsity girls lacrosse.

Health and physical education students receive state recognition

Health and Human Performance Department, by the numbers:

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2005 Health and Human Performance graduates

Marie Nicole Attanasii, sport and exercise science ......................................................... Vienna, Virginia
Sherrie Lynne Baer, sport and exercise science ............................................................... Millersburg, Pennsylvania
Erin Estelle Bluey, sport and exercise science ............................................................... Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Brandis Krystal Bolin, sport and exercise science ........................................................... Athens, Ohio
Kyle M. Brobst, sport and exercise science .................................................................... Spring City, Pennsylvania
Alison Lane Carney, sport and exercise science .............................................................. Danville, Pennsylvania
Victoria Kay Downes, health and physical education ..................................................... Downingtown, Pennsylvania
Robert A. Dressler Jr., sport and exercise science .......................................................... Millington, Pennsylvania
Joseph Benjamin Duke IV, sport and exercise science .................................................... Westminster, Maryland
Adriel W. Dunn, athletic training .................................................................................... New Orleans, Louisiana
Justin Tyler Dykes, athletic training ................................................................................ Brookhaven, Pennsylvania
Elizabeth Catherine Farmer, therapeutic recreation ....................................................... Blue Ridge Summit, Pennsylvania
Brian C. Ford, health and physical education .................................................................. Martinsburg, West Virginia
Kerri Ann Gaetano, athletic training ................................................................................ Coram, New York
William E. Graves III, health and physical education ........................................................ Annville, Pennsylvania
Kathryn Rebecca Hall, sport and exercise science ............................................................ Landenberg, Pennsylvania
Geoffrey Albert Harner, sport and exercise science ........................................................ St. Helena, California
Jonathan R. Harwood, sport and exercise science ........................................................... Glen Head, New York
David Jacob Henninger, sport and exercise science ....................................................... Mt. Holly Springs, Pennsylvania
Melinda Jane Hoover, sport and exercise science ............................................................ Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Lane Renee Kieffer, sport and exercise science .............................................................. Halifax, Pennsylvania
Heather J. Kresge, health and physical education ............................................................. Palmyra, Pennsylvania
Seth McKim Lehman, health and physical education ........................................................ Dillsburg, Pennsylvania
Timothy E. McGann, sport and exercise science .............................................................. Havertown, Pennsylvania
Keren Dale Morgan, sport and exercise science .............................................................. Washington, New Jersey
Lori Beth Morse, sport and exercise science ...................................................................... Pattenburg, New Jersey
Faith Luella Moulthrop, therapeutic recreation ................................................................ Edgewood, Maryland
Emily Elizabeth Nye, sport and exercise science ............................................................. Orchard Park, New York
Laura Suzanne Nye, sport and exercise science ................................................................ Orchard Park, New York
Braden Jeffrey Peterson, recreation ................................................................................ Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Jessica Louise Price, sport and exercise science .............................................................. Elkton, Maryland
Christopher D. Regan, sport and exercise science .......................................................... Wellsville, New York
Rebecca H. Rich, athletic training .................................................................................... Millwood, New York
Amy Danielle Roman, athletic training ........................................................................... Camp Hill, Pennsylvania
Elizabeth A. Schatz, sport and exercise science .............................................................. Sellersville, Pennsylvania
Joshua M. Scotten, sport and exercise science ................................................................. Corning, New York
Jason Gregory Smith, recreation .................................................................................... Lewes, Delaware
Megan Nicole Thomas, sport and exercise science ........................................................... Downingtown, Pennsylvania
Aaron Heisey Thrush, sport and exercise science ............................................................. Milan, Pennsylvania
Jonathan Daniel Wentling, sport and exercise science .................................................... Cleona, Pennsylvania
Carey Jo Wolgemuth, health and physical education ....................................................... Manheim, Pennsylvania
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Alumni news & information

The Department of Health and Human Performance would like to include your alumni news in future editions of Strengthening the Core. Please take a few minutes to complete the following form.

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Send completed form to: Jack Cole, Messiah College, P.O. Box 4501, One College Avenue, Grantham, PA 17027
E-mail: jcole@messiah.edu