



# NEWSLETTER

## *President's Pen*

Dear Piedmont University Community,

We have lots of good things happening on campus! I am delighted to share that 92% of our Fall undergraduate students returned to Piedmont this Spring! Combined with increased enrollment of undergraduate and graduate students this Spring, we have responded to the challenges from the delays in FAFSA filings last year. Every step of this progress is a credit to the individual and collective efforts of faculty and staff to recruit, support, and engage our students in pursuing their own success.

I also want to mention we now have a Pep Band! The pep band debuted last weekend at the men's and women's basketball games to help celebrate Senior Day. Tunes from "Sweet Caroline" to "Georgia on my Mind" to "Take on Me" were played for the crowd. The pep band consists of students from Piedmont, Habersham Central High School, and North Habersham Middle School. It is under the direction of Dr. Emery Warnock, adjunct professor of music and wind ensemble director. We are excited about this new opportunity for our students and fans!

Sincerely,  
Marshall M. Criser, III

February 2025

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

Student Success	2
Piedmont Lions	3
Alumni Corner	4
Upcoming Events	5



# Nursing: A Family Affair

by Grace Wills

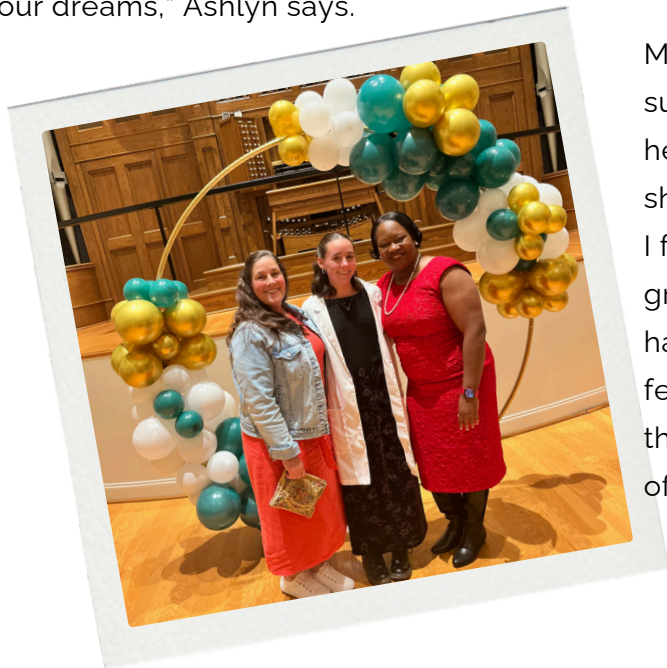


At Piedmont University, our students, faculty, staff, and alumni make up our "Piedmont family," but for some, that term is very literal. This year, there are two pairs of students related to one another: sisters Ashlyn McEntyre and Courtney Miller, and mother and daughter Marlene and Skyler Seeber. They share not only a major and classes, but also strength and support through the program.

Sisters Ashlyn and Courtney push each other to be their best, says the former. Having her sister by her side is both a comfort and a motivator. "We are both going to be first generation graduates, and it makes me so proud that we did not give up on our dreams," Ashlyn says.



Marlene, Skyler's mom, also says she enjoys the opportunity to support her daughter through the program. "I'm a year ahead of her in the program and have been through all of the things that she is going through now, and that is something I wish I had when I first began nursing school," she says. Skyler concurs, "I am grateful that my mom was there to encourage me because she has been through that herself and knew exactly how I was feeling." Skyler even got to share her very first day of clinicals at the same hospital as her mom, tackling one of the biggest days of a nursing student's education with her biggest supporter.



Ashlyn, Courtney, Marlene, and Skyler all chose Piedmont for its nursing program, among other perks. Skyler, a cross country runner, wanted to continue her running career and do nursing school at the same time; Piedmont was the only university that offered that. Her mom, meanwhile, says that the nursing program reached out to her directly. After touring Piedmont, she "just knew that it was where [she] was supposed to be." Skyler jokingly retorts that she chose Piedmont first, and her mom copied her.



As for the future, each of these students looks forward to helping others through their work and being fulfilled in turn. "Becoming a nurse has always been in my heart but I put that on hold to take care of my family first," Marlene says. "Now it's my turn to take care of me."



# Piedmont Athletics Awarded 2023-24 Overall & Men's CCS Commissioner's Cups



by Danielle Percival



Last Tuesday night inside Cave Arena, Piedmont Athletics was awarded the Overall and Men's Commissioner's Cups following the second year of competition in the Collegiate Conference of the South.

"Repeating as champions on the men's side as well as the overall is a tremendous accomplishment for our athletic department," Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Jim Peeples said. "I am so grateful to all our head and assistant coaches for their commitment to our student-athletes for building and maintaining a culture of excellence for Piedmont athletics."

The Lions delivered a clean sweep of the three cups a year ago (2022-23) and repeated earning two of the three with the overall and men's cups in 2023-24.

Piedmont finished last season with four postseason championship titles overall and two more regular season titles. In addition to men's cross country, men's track and field and men's golf's postseason titles and men's tennis's regular season crown, Piedmont women's tennis continued its run of dominance, with an undefeated regular season and regular season title, followed by a dominant tournament run and their second straight CCS Tournament Championship.



"We are incredibly proud of the dedication and hard work demonstrated by all our member institutions this past year," CCS Commissioner Beth Vansant stated. "The performances of Maryville College and Piedmont University are a testament to their commitment to excellence both on and off the field. Congratulations to both institutions for their remarkable achievements."



# Baseball Alum Goershel Has Great View of Truist Park from RaceTrac Office



by Terrie Ellerbee



When Chris Goershel peers out his office window, he sees Truist Park. He works for RaceTrac, an Atlanta-based convenience retail company that jockeys with other big-name companies for the title of largest privately held revenue generator in Georgia.

Goershel majored in business at Piedmont and interned as a broker representing companies seeking industrial space. That later became a “real job” for him at Colliers International, and he did it long enough to get to know the members of the RaceTrac team when they were looking for office space.

“‘Right place, right time,’ was a part of it,” Goershel said. “I always knew I wanted to get into real estate development. I lead the Southeast for the real estate team, which is focused on new-site acquisition. I oversee the site selection in each market & the real estate negotiations.”

Seven years have now passed at RaceTrac. Goershel leads a real estate team of about eight people for the Southeast region at RaceTrac. The company operates more than 800 stores in a dozen states.

RaceTrac’s office overlooking the home of the Atlanta Braves is poetic from an alum perspective. Baseball — and the attitude he picked up on from the coaching staff — brought him to Piedmont.

“It was about finding a school that would offer a strong education and also the ability to actually play and contribute to a team. That was important to me. And when I visited, I really liked the human beings they were. I felt like they really showed that they were invested in me and cared about me.”

Looking back, Goershel appreciates the discipline Piedmont coaches instilled in their players. At the time, maybe it wasn’t so fun.



“The best thing for me was that we had to be at a workout at 6 in the morning, at class at 8 a.m., and breakfast before — and I rarely missed a class. That work ethic really helped me out, helped me grow at Piedmont as an individual and as an adult, and then it continued into adulthood.”

Ten years after leaving Piedmont, Goershel still hears from professors and coaches.

“I’ll get a text from (Head Baseball) Coach (Justin) Scali because something happened that reminded him of when I was playing at Piedmont, or he will just check in to see how everything is going,” Goershel said. “A few of my best friends today were on that team. It’s the fact that I get a text from Athletic Director Jim Peebles every year wishing me and my family a Merry Christmas. It’s the relationships you build. That is one of those benefits you get from a small school.”



## Calendar of Events

### **February**

2/13-16 9 to 5 The Musical  
2/15 Museum Family Workshop  
2/16 Jacqueline Zander-Wall,  
mezzo-soprano, and Louise  
Bass, piano  
2/17 Preview Piedmont  
2/27 Conservatory of Music  
Faculty Showcase Recital  
2/27 Art Reception: Ben Steele  
Exhibit

### **April**

4/10-13 Steel Magnolias  
4/10 Piedmont Wind Ensemble  
4/10 Symposium  
4/15 Piedmont String Orchestra  
4/17 Piedmont Chamber  
Ensembles  
4/26 Great Composers Concert

### **March**

3/7 Criminal Justice & Forensic  
Science Prospective Student  
Day  
3/10-14 Spring Break  
3/18 Piedmont Camerata  
3/19 Disaster Drill  
3/22 Piedmont Athletic Lions  
(PAL) Games  
3/22 Museum Family Workshop  
3/25 Piedmont Singers  
3/28 Living Like a Lion

For event details, or to view the full calendar,  
please visit [here](#).