

OCTOBER 2020



In Memoriam: Dr. Gilda Crozier

Gilda Coppola Crozier, OD '43, FAAO, a trailblazer, innovator and teacher extraordinaire at the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO), passed away Friday, Oct. 9, 2020, at the age of 99.

Dr. Crozier, wife of **George E. Crozier, OD '49** — who she met at PCO and taught upon his return from military service and who would later become associate dean of Academic Affairs and leave a lasting mark on PCO — began her academic career as a clinical instructor at the College before joining the faculty in the field of anatomy in

1945. Her father-in-law was John E. Crozier, OD, FAAO, a founding member of PCO, and her brother-in-law was **John J. Crozier, OD '48, FAAO**, former vice president and dean of Student Affairs.

Over the years, she taught ocular anatomy, micro anatomy and vertebrate embryology. Dr. Crozier developed and introduced a number of courses, including normal and abnormal development of the eye and ocular biology. Along with Dr. Onofrey "Rybie" Rybochok and **Harold Simmerman, OD '30, FAAO**. Dr. Crozier was also responsible for changing the curriculum and introducing neuroanatomy at PCO, which continued thanks in part of the work of Dr. Lorraine Lombardi, professor emerita.

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Class of 2020 Battled Unprecedented Challenges

When **Ashley Senss, MMS '20** was asked to give the commencement address, she would have been just fine getting up in front of a big crowd at the Kimmel Center and delivering her remarks.

She used to be a lector at her church, so she was used to giving prepared speeches from the podium in front of large gatherings. So the commencement gig would have felt natural for her.

But because of the pandemic, a lot of things haven't been natural for a while now, including Salus University commencement ceremonies. So when Senss had to film her speech in advance in front of just a handful of people from the Salus University Communications Department in one of the Lombardi classrooms on the Elkins Park campus, it was a little more nerve-racking for Senss than what a Kimmel auditorium full of people would have been for her.

The University's 121st Commencement ceremony, which premiered Oct. 13 online, was filmed in advance by all the speakers in September. It was the second commencement — the first was the spring 2020 ceremony — offered virtually because of social distancing protocols forced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Dr. James Konopack Named Dean of CHER

When James Konopack, PhD, was offered the position of dean of Salus University’s College of Health Sciences, Education and Rehabilitation (CHER), one of his first thoughts was, disciplinarily speaking, it would be a homecoming of sorts for him.

"My background has been in the health sciences, particularly exercise science and health. I’ve just had this brief sojourn into the world of a business school for the past couple

of years, so this is very much coming back home to the health sciences," said Dr. Konopack.

He started his new position as the first dean of the newly formed CHER on Sept. 15, 2020.

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