

RECONSTRUCTING
A PIECE OF HISTORY >

A CELEBRATION OF
CHANGE ON CAMPUS >

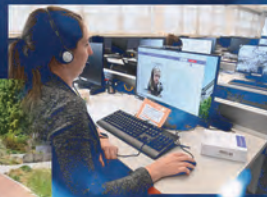
LUX — THE CONCLUSION
OF LIGHT THE WAY

CATHOLICU

Magazine of The Catholic University of America > Fall 2023



Healing in the Metaverse





THE BIG PICTURE

THE MAGIC OF SERSE

Yihan Ye, doctoral candidate in vocal performance, rehearses for the role of Arsamene in Handel's *Serse*. This contemporary take on the opera's classic narrative was set in the glitz and glamour of Las Vegas through creative set designs, costumes, and lighting. The stage direction of James Hampton, opera director and associate chair for music performance, and the music, which soared with a fresh rhythm under the direction of Maestro Simeone Tartaglione, added a richness and depth to this remarkable spring 2023 production from the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art. See the current season of events at arts.catholic.edu/performances-and-events.





20

Healing in the Metaverse

Before they even set foot in a physical hospital, nursing students will gain experience walking down the halls of hospitals or performing procedures through new simulation technology.



26

The 50th Anniversary of the Partnership Program

Fifty years ago, the first students from Catholic University’s Partnership Program — an initiative designed to build upon the progress made during the Civil Rights Movement — began to graduate.



32

Lux Celebrates the Conclusion of Light the Way

At the Lux event on campus, a crowd erupted in applause, celebrating the end of a successful Campaign that will continue to change lives through education and opportunity.

CATHOLICU

IN THIS ISSUE

Fall 2023, Vol. 36, No. 2

- 05 > FROM THE PRESIDENT
- 06 > IN YOUR WORDS
Comments from the University community
- 07 > STUDENT SPOTLIGHT
- 08 > AROUND CATHOLIC
The latest news on campus and in the community
- 38 > ALUMNI CORNER
Class notes and alumni news and events
- 55 > FACULTY ESSAY
- 56 > FROM THE VAULT
University Archives

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CARDINAL **ATHLETICS GIVING** **CHALLENGE**

Nov. 1–10, 2023

Join the competition during the annual Athletics Giving Challenge! Athletics alumni, University donors, parents, and friends — along with Cardinal student-athletes themselves — will take the field to support their favorite team. Taking part in the challenge lets Cardinal student-athletes who work hard both on and off the field, court, pool, or course know they have support from the whole community.

**Who will win this
friendly competition in 2023?**

YOU CAN HELP DETERMINE THE OUTCOME!

Look for more information in your mailbox soon or visit
cucardscompete.catholic.edu

CATHOLICU

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Peter K. Kilpatrick

One Year in Service

This July marked the anniversary of my appointment as the 16th president of The Catholic University of America. Even before I arrived on campus, I was greeted with well wishes from alumni, friends of the University, and so many others. My wife, Nancy, and I appreciate the support, time, and advice we have received.

Our faculty, staff, and especially our students have been gracious with their suggestions, too. From restaurant recommendations to stories about the many great memories made on campus, the feelings of love for this city and community are certainly apparent.

And all of this advice has been welcome as I have learned more about the University and how I can help it achieve its full potential. Whether it is in the classroom, the laboratory, or on the playing field, I believe that the University's best years are ahead.

Students — and their parents — seem to agree. This fall we will have the largest undergraduate class in recent memory. These students are enjoying the fruits of the work done by our University Advancement team that raised more than \$500 million through the Light the Way campaign, making it our most successful fundraising initiative ever. The new dining commons, Garvey Hall, named after my predecessor John Garvey, opened last fall and the construction of the Conway School of Nursing's new home is expected to be complete by 2024.

The investments being made provide the resources needed to recruit and train top talent, improve facilities and equipment, and most importantly, provide our students with a life-changing educational experience. Upon our founding, Pope Leo XIII prayed that the University would "give to the Republic her best citizens" and we are committed to fulfilling that mission.

During my installation address last November, I shared that our goal is to be recognized as the nation's premier Catholic research university. We are building our reputation for academic excellence and innovation through initiatives, including Biology Professor Venigalla Rao's groundbreaking research on better gene therapies, a unique collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution to explore disaster-resistant dome structures, and the nursing school's cutting edge virtual hospital designed to provide students clinical experience in the metaverse.

These are among many combined efforts over the past year demonstrating the character of this community. The people here are committed to a faith-informed education that drives a lifetime of learning and service. What I see every day is a spirit in this community that reflects what St. Anthony of Padua once said: "Actions speak louder than words. Let your words teach and your actions speak."

At the University, we understand that education is about more than accumulating knowledge. Pope Francis has described the importance of learning the language of "the head, the heart, and the hands." This means learning so that you can think about "what I feel and do; feeling what I think and do; of doing what I feel and think." Our goal is to educate the whole person to love God and his creation.

Living out our calling as the nation's flagship Catholic university means we welcome all who wish to pursue truth, knowledge, and service. From those who want to take a deep dive into the faith to those exploring the water's edge, we work to provide an environment of trust that fosters human flourishing. The prophet Micah tells us: Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God (6:8). From feeding those in need to advocating for society's most vulnerable through initiatives like the Guadalupe Project that helps promote a culture of life to celebrating trailblazers who paved the way for a more diverse campus, we walk the walk on our journey together.

The University's motto is *Deus Lux Mea Est*, God is My Light. From what I have seen over the past year, we are forging a bright path to carry out the University's mission in service to the Church and our nation.

IN YOUR WORDS

Comments from the University Community



Catholic University is committed to improving the environmental well-being of campus and the greater community. In 2020, the University launched a comprehensive five-year Sustainability Plan. Now more than halfway through the plan, we asked University community members to reflect on sustainability and the University's efforts.

WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY MEAN TO YOU?

For me as a theologian, "sustainability" means working with the beautiful grammar that God has inscribed in creation. God sets all of nature (including human beings) in right relationship; it is the human task to "till and keep" the land and its resources within the marvelous order that God has willed. We give glory to God by respecting and cooperating with that plan.

— **DAVID CLOUTIER, PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY**

Support for sustainability is not complicated. However, there are no steps that are too small. Taking public transportation to and from work, participating in the compost program, turning off the unused electrical devices and lights — all this should feel good. It is supposed to be a norm for everyone. Here, at the (University) we are encouraged to save our planet for the generations to come. I strongly believe that peace on Earth will come when we all will start to think about our planet as our home, keeping it clean and sustainable.

— **IRINA LESLIE, SUSTAINABILITY CAPTAIN, POWER PLANT**

Sustainability means safeguarding: safeguarding the people, planet, and future generations from harm. It's a preventative, necessary action to ensure an equitable future for the generations to come. It is bigger than the individual; sustainability is about survival. I'll be content 50 years from now if even the smallest of my actions now means a healthy future for those to come after me.

— **KAT KADERABEK, MASTER'S STUDENT
IN ARCHITECTURE AND NET ZERO DESIGN**

WHAT FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES DO YOU LOOK FORWARD TO?

We have already seen a collaboration with Compost Crew bring composting to the Pryzbyla Center and to Garvey Hall and I think this is a great first step, but I'm really excited to see the continued growth in our education within our community to ensure that ... we are changing the behaviors of our students, staff, and faculty. I am also very excited to see our attention to efficient lighting and our goal to convert 80% of our lighting capacity to LEDs.

— **STEVE KREIDER, DIRECTOR OF CAMPUS ACTIVITIES,
SUSTAINABILITY CAPTAIN, PRYZBYLA CENTER**

I'm looking forward to the 6MW solar array on West Campus, LEED and WELL certifications for the new nursing building, strategic partnerships with campus community groups, and laying the groundwork for electrification and zero waste. The University is poised to spearhead impactful initiatives that will integrate environmental stewardship into our core values.

— **ALEXANDRA HARRY NAPIER, DIRECTOR OF THE
OFFICE OF CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY**

I am most excited to continue to work with students to bring their sustainability ideas to life. Initiatives like Cardinal Closet, the community garden, our independent study, the food recovery program, and many others that make a significant impact on our community and environment were student ideas that we were able to turn into reality together. The students I've worked with are creative, driven, and passionate about sustainability, and I am excited to see what they come up with next!

— **GABRIELLE CHOATE, MANAGER OF THE
OFFICE OF CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY**

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS. WRITE TO US AT
cua-magazine@cua.edu



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

LEADING THE CHARGE AGAINST A HIDDEN OPPONENT

The mental health of athletes has come into sharper relief over the last several years. And junior Amanda Gomez is doing something about it, having introduced a student organization to Catholic University focused on destigmatizing athlete mental health struggles. In spring 2022, Gomez founded a campus chapter of The Hidden Opponent, which advocates globally for student-athlete mental health.

“Not every school makes it so easy to found a club,” said Gomez. “I’ve felt so encouraged in everything I’ve been involved in. It’s a place of really good opportunities, from athletics to academics to extracurriculars.”

Gomez, who is on the University softball team, said when playing a sport, every athlete has a visible opponent to compete against. But many people are unaware of the “hidden opponent” — mental health struggles — that athletes are also up against.

“It’s that little additional thing that you have to overcome to be successful, especially in college athletics where pressure and competition are really high,” said Gomez. “It’s common in athletics to ‘roll over mental health’ and just say ‘tough it out.’ And so that’s what we’re trying to stop; it’s OK to talk about it when you’re suffering.”

A business and digital art double major from West Chester, Pa., Gomez applied to be the University’s student ambassador of the organization and brought the club to campus when she was only a first-year student. Ambassadors help improve campus culture and promote conversations on campuses across the world.

Catholic University’s chapter has led efforts such as mental health awareness games where encouraging speeches are made to Cardinal athletes before they compete.

One example of its work came during Eating Disorders Awareness Week, which is held the last week of February. Throughout the week, the group invited students to write positive notes about themselves to place on a mirror in the Edward J. Pryzbyla University Center. The club also holds monthly gatherings and hosts events like Spikeball games for people to intermingle and de-stress.

“What I noticed most about students here is that they really want to make change,” said Gomez. “When given the opportunity, I found that a lot of people want to be involved and are looking to help out, either in the biggest or smallest ways.”

Gomez, who has played softball since she was at least 6 years old, is grateful she found the University because it is a place “that made it so easy for me to make an impact and to try and make things better beyond just our campus. ... No matter how young you are, you can be a leader and people will follow you.”

— C.E.

AROUND CATHOLIC





Chris Castrogiovanni works on Weatherbreak.



The Catholic University team at the Smithsonian.

Architecture Students Reconstruct a Piece of History with Smithsonian

Chris Castrogiovanni, M.Arch. candidate, leaned in as he carefully fit together 70-year-old metal rods, or struts, from one of the first large-scale, self-supporting geodesic domes in the world and the first in North America.

The dome had been in storage since being gifted to the Smithsonian in the 1970s. At 2,000 square feet, and 49 feet wide by 25 feet high, the building is slightly smaller than today's average U.S. home.

Originally built in Montreal in 1950 and later rebuilt in the Hollywood Hills as a home for architect Bernard Judge, the structure was reconstructed inside the iconic Flag Hall of the National Museum of American History, July 5 to 7, through a partnership between the museum and Catholic University's School of Architecture and Planning.

Nearly a year earlier Abeer Saha, curator with the museum's Division of Work and Industry, contacted Tonya Ohnstad, assistant professor of architecture and associate dean for graduate studies, with a rare opportunity for students to engage hands-on with a historic artifact. The result was the exhibit "Reconstructing Weatherbreak: Geodesic Domes in an Age of Extreme Weather."

Inspired by the theories of inventor and futurist Buckminster Fuller, architect Jeffrey Lindsay had designed Weatherbreak as a lightweight, stable structure that could resist extreme environmental weather, including winds up to 200 miles per hour.

Saha hoped the reconstruction would "convey that historical artifacts can inform our search for sustainable solutions in an age of climate change ... at a time when more than 24 million people are displaced by extreme weather events worldwide each year."

Ohnstad created a yearlong course around the reconstruction, overseeing student work with Lorenzo Cardim DeAlmeida, fabrication manager for the architecture school.

She also forged partnerships with Norsk Hydro, Architectural Systems, Inc., and DSI Spaceframes, companies that donated recycled aluminum and fabrication to replicate missing or broken parts, as well as a team from Washington University. Consigli Construction contributed financially.

"Working with iconic American objects like Weatherbreak is an honor. To bring it back to life in three dimensions so the public can understand its scale and the space it creates is humbling. Accessing this piece of history as a learning tool is a premier learning experience," Ohnstad said.

For Castrogiovanni, the opportunity to work on Weatherbreak led him to choose Catholic University.

"(Tonya) mentioned this project. I was just hooked after that. That was one of the main reasons I chose this school for graduate school. It's been a fantastic experience ever since," he said, noting that he had studied Fuller's groundbreaking work with dome structures while an undergraduate at Southern Illinois University where Fuller once served on the faculty.

The students quickly discovered that the reconstruction of the dome, the first time it would be put together in over 50 years, would be complex. Weatherbreak came with 1,000 metal struts in 16 lengths, some broken, and a single sheet of paper with a color code, but no instructions.

They researched geodesic domes, worked out mathematical calculations, developed scale models, and constructed two full-scale test models on campus in spring 2023, with professional fabricators traveling to Washington, D.C., to work alongside them.

"When we had to refabricate some of the pieces, I did the early drawings for (the engineers). We would go back and forth trying to perfect the new pieces," Castrogiovanni said.

Catholic University President Peter K. Kilpatrick, himself an engineer, pointed out that "this collaboration (with the Smithsonian) not only showcases the expertise of our students, but also fosters a critical conversation about the utility of geodesic domes in the face of extreme weather challenges."

In addition to withstanding hurricane-strength winds, these domes have been found to withstand stresses from earthquakes, are more energy efficient than conventional homes, and can be lightweight and portable.

The benefits interested curious visitors who stopped to watch the dome take shape and to ask questions. The project also drew the attention of the media, including *The New York Times* and The Weather Channel.

Michael Matthews, B.S.Arch. 2022, M.Arch. candidate, had a heavy course load, but became involved in the dome project through his interest in sacred architecture and the use of domes in church design. The Army veteran spent a semester at the University's Rome campus in 2021.

Having worked on the models for Weatherbreak, he said, "It was truly amazing to see the dome standing after they removed all the supports."

With the build behind them, University students finalized instructions and documentation that will remain with Weatherbreak as a permanent part of museum archives.

"I'm really honored to have been chosen to do this," said Castrogiovanni. "It's kind of surreal to have something in the museum that you've worked on, but having your name with it is incredible. It will forever be a part of the Smithsonian."
— S.G.

School of Canon Law Centennial

The School of Canon Law is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year since it formally opened in October 1923.

The canon law school is the only school in the United States to offer degrees in this discipline, and has an ecclesiastical faculty that prepares students for licentiate and doctoral degrees authorized by the Apostolic See. Students learn to use canon law in service of the Church, attending particularly to the needs and opportunities of the U.S. Church.

To mark the anniversary, the school is hosting several events. In March, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, archbishop of Boston, delivered the Father James H. Provost Memorial Lecture. In May, the school co-sponsored a multiday gathering of 75 canon lawyers on campus. And in October, the school will host an alumni reception in Milwaukee at the national convention of the Canon Law Society of America.



New Website Easily Identifies Campus Trees

Catholic University is known as a verdant campus, filled with trees under which one can sit and have a picnic lunch, study, or just relax.

Now the University community members can find their favorite tree with TreeKeeper, a website that uses an online geographic information system to identify every tree on campus by its species and basic characteristics. With just one click, anyone can visit catholicuniversitydc.treekeepersoftware.com and learn about the trees on campus.

The resource, created for the University's Planning and Design Management unit by Davey Tree over a period of several months, also lists the overall benefits of the University's 4,405 documented trees, including their approximate impact on greenhouse gasses, water, energy, air quality, and property value. Gray and yellow stars mark special or heritage trees that are protected and regulated by the city of Washington, D.C. The University earned Arbor Day Foundation's 2020 Tree Campus Higher Education recognition and is in the process of recertifying.

The site is used by campus groundskeepers to track tree maintenance but is also a tool to build environmental awareness and community engagement around the University's sustainability goals.

Gabrielle Choate, manager in the Office of Campus Sustainability, said that instead of walking past trees, the new site now provides an easy way for people to learn about the environment. "It's a great way to get to know your surroundings," Choate said. "The more we know and care about our environment and the plants and animals we share our spaces with, then the better stewards we become."



School of Theology and Religious Studies Has New Dean

Joseph E. Capizzi, professor of moral theology, has been appointed acting dean of the School of Theology and Religious Studies (STRS).

He has dedicated more than 25 years of service to Catholic University, with his most recent appointment being director of the Institute of Human Ecology, which he has

built into one of the leading centers of Catholic thought in the United States.

Previously, Capizzi served as area director for moral theology and associate dean of graduate studies in STRS. He has taught in the areas of social and political theology, specializing in issues in peace and war, citizenship, political authority, and Augustinian theology.

He holds degrees from the University of Virginia, The Candler School of Theology at Emory University, and the University of Notre Dame.

Capizzi succeeds Rev. Mark Morozowich, who has served as dean since 2012. Father Morozowich will serve as director and chair of the Bishop Basil H. Losten Center for Ukrainian Church Studies after a yearlong sabbatical.



CatholicU Magazine Honored at Catholic Media Awards

CatholicU magazine was honored with multiple accolades at the Catholic Media Association (CMA) Awards during the summer. Notably, it received several awards in the category for Best Layout of Article or Column — National General Interest Magazine. The publication received a first-place prize for the article titled “Class of 2026 Shines Bright!” and an honorable mention for “Perched on the Hill” in the fall 2022 edition. For the spring 2022 edition, it secured a third-place prize for the article “John Garvey: A Transformational Presidency.”

Additionally, *CatholicU* magazine received the first-place prize in the CMA’s St. Juan Diego Collegiate Awards in the category for Alumni Magazine of the Year for its spring 2022 and fall 2022 issues. The judges praised the magazine for its inclusion of “wonderfully uplifting stories about former and present students and faculty, athletic victories, and campus growth and development.”

The magazine’s art director, Kristin Reavey, also earned recognition with a first-place prize in the category for Best Single Photo. The judges applauded her work on the photo titled “Farewell Franciscans,” describing it as “attractive, with good exposure and nice, balanced colors.”

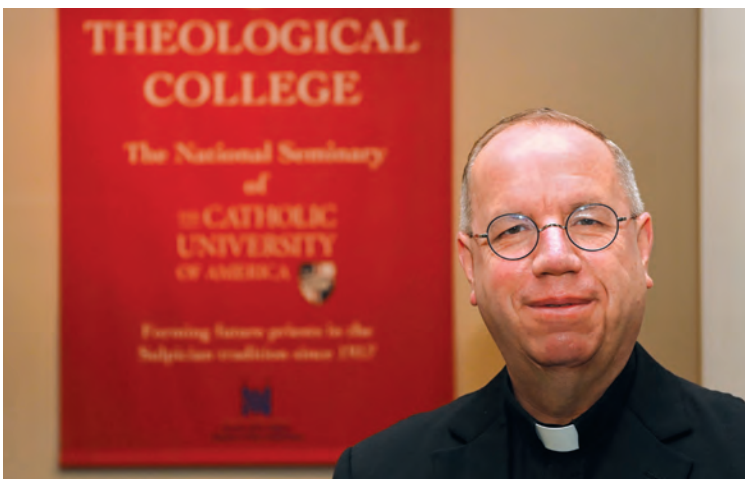
These awards demonstrate the magazine’s commitment to excellence and its dedication to showcasing impactful and visually engaging content for its readers. The awards were announced June 9 at the conclusion of the 2023 Catholic Media Conference held in Baltimore. The CMA represents more than 350 member organizations in the United States and Canada.

New Rector Named to Theological College

Sulpician Father Gladstone “Bud” Stevens was appointed rector of Theological College, the national seminary of Catholic University, effective July 1, 2023. This appointment was made by the Sulpician Provincial Council with the approval of Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory, archbishop of Washington and chancellor of the University, and University President Peter K. Kilpatrick.

A priest for the Archdiocese of Louisville in Kentucky, Father Stevens was ordained in 2000 and joined the Sulpicians in 2002. He serves as first consultor of the Provincial Council of the Society of St. Sulpice Province of the United States. Father Stevens earned a doctorate in theology from Marquette University, and he regularly teaches courses on the priesthood and the Eucharist. He is a chaplain for the Order of Malta.

Previously, Father Stevens served as rector of St. Patrick’s Seminary in Menlo Park, Calif., and as vice-rector of St. Mary’s Seminary and University in Baltimore. He will succeed Rev. Dominic G. Ciriaco, P.S.S.





When You Call the University, She Will Be Answering

When people dial the University's main number, they'll inevitably be welcomed with a South Carolina-infused drawl saying, "Catholic University, this is Roberta."

That's Roberta Mayo, who joined the University as a secretary in the School of Nursing in 1990. She eventually moved to the public affairs office, which is now part of University Communications, and serves as administrative assistant. She has been in the role for nearly 30 years.

"I bloom where God plants me," she said. "If you like what you do, you're not working. I don't consider this working. I just like people."

She has witnessed the tenures of five University presidents. Through the years, she has seen new technology implemented and new buildings rise on campus.

"I think it's better and more advanced," Mayo said of the process at CatholicU. "I've gotten to see these new buildings and the students fill them up. It's a blessing."

Even with new forms of communication available, Mayo stays true to the basics of her job. Her approach is rooted in understanding the humanity of the person on the other side of the phone. She is naturally curious and patient. Above all, she wants to provide a sense of positive direction to everyone on the line. She's sure famous people have called the number over the years, but they don't stick out. At the end of the day, it's about people.

"I can talk to 100 people, but I have to think I'm encountering this person for the first time," she said. "If you tell me what you're looking for, I can get you to where you need to go. Institutional knowledge is good."

"I just love helping people," she said. "I stayed at Catholic University because I love it."

Living the Gospel University Students Serve Around the World This Summer

Service is at the heart of an education students receive at the University — even during the summer.

More than 60 students traveled around the globe on service-oriented or mission trips, going to places such as Costa Rica, Honduras, Saint Lucia, El Salvador, Los Angeles, and Montana where they ministered to the spiritual and corporal needs of local residents.

Rev. Teo Brea, a University chaplain, went with 20 University students to the island of Saint Lucia for a two-week evangelization trip led by the University Campus Ministry and American University Catholic Campus Ministry. Students spent their time giving faith classes in an elementary school, running a parish retreat, and visiting homes in six different villages.

"Students returned from the trip expressing an entirely new way of seeing themselves and the world after living the Gospel literally for two weeks and being transformed in their faith," said Father Teo.

In Costa Rica, seven nursing students spent a week gaining clinical practice experience by collaborating with local organizations to host health promotion fairs, assisting the local homeless community, and visiting various clinics.

Sophomore Genesis Barboza said the trip gave her hands-on experience with patients for the first time.

"I met patients of unique backgrounds that were incredibly kind and memorable," she said. "It reminded me that being a nurse is beyond medicine, and all about making your patients feel safe and cared for."

Abigail Tremblay and Elizabeth Ulicny, senior nursing students, spent about two months in rural Honduras teaching English and attending to the medical needs of local children.

"Our mission here is truly to love the children and the community well with the same love Christ pours out to us," said Tremblay.



During an evangelization trip on Saint Lucia Island, 20 Catholic University students visited local homes, gave faith classes to children, and helped offer a three-night parish retreat, May 15–27, 2023.



The Next

INDIANA JONES™

Could Come From CatholicU

When *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny* arrived in movie theaters this summer, much of the marketing focused on it being the final adventure for the fictional archaeologist — and star Harrison Ford. Would it be the last time he dons his fedora?

While it may be the last time for “Indy,” it certainly isn’t for Catholic University’s aspiring archaeologists.

University anthropology and archaeology graduates eagerly put on a lookalike hat for the first time following Commencement ceremonies May 13. The newest anthropology and archaeology alumni gathered for a ceremony inside Hannan Hall where Clinical Associate Professor Joshua Samuels and Assistant Professor Laura Masur awarded fedoras just like the famed adventurer’s.

“Receiving my hat from my mentors from the anthropology department at CatholicU was the highlight of graduation,” said Maria M. Letizia, B.A. 2022.

The 15-year-old tradition formerly occurred when anthropology and archaeology majors successfully completed their comprehensive exams in the fall of their last year. Several years ago it became a post-commencement rite.

Masur teaches Introduction to Archaeology each semester and starts with a clip from *Indiana Jones* films to lay out the realities of the profession versus the blockbuster image. That context can be necessary for some students. The previous *Indiana Jones* franchise installment was *Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, released in 2008. Current students were just starting school at the time. Is receiving a fedora on the level of, say, Captain America’s shield or Thor’s Mjolnir hammer?

“At least 50% of the students have seen *Indiana Jones* and they still know it,” Masur said.

Generation Xer (Gen Xer) Samuels said, “I think anyone who grew up in the ’80s was a fan of *Indiana Jones*. I didn’t become an archaeologist because of the movies, but they certainly planted a seed. It’s not until you get older that you start seeing the franchise, and Indiana Jones himself, with a more critical lens. Nowadays I appreciate him for the visibility he lends to our field — How many other academic specialties have their own superhero? — but also for the many teachable moments about heritage ethics that his problematic adventures showcase.”

Samuels and Masur both emphasized that there’s a drastic difference between how the Indiana Jones character approaches archaeology and how those who toil in the profession do. The titular character of the movie series often had murky reasons and end results for his quests.

Added Samuels, “The anthropology faculty teaches our students how to advance dialogue and mutual respect to build bridges between communities. For archaeologists, this means understanding how knowledge of the past gets used in the present for recreational, economic, and political purposes, and how this impacts different stakeholder communities. Graduates from our archaeology program, therefore, get extensive practical training in field and lab methods, but also in consultation and community engagement to prepare them for successful careers in cultural resource management and related fields.”

The message connected with his students. Letizia, now an access services technician in Mullen Library, said, “While there may be some ethical and methodological issues with Indy, his presence on the screen aids in teaching people about anthropology as he is someone who many have heard about, which allows for educational moments on such topics.” — M.P.

Research Updates

Jandro Abot, associate professor, mechanical engineering, received \$21,000 for “Mars Sample Return” research at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center.

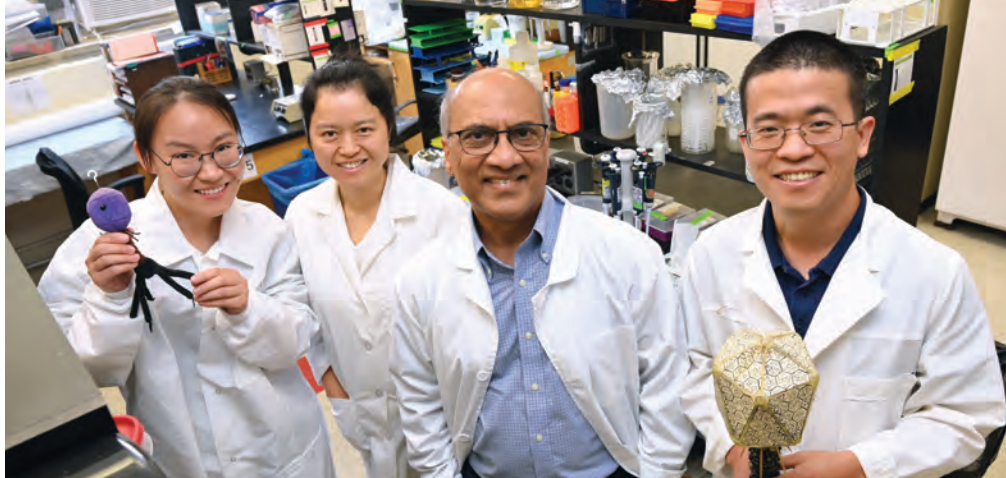
Patricia McMullen, dean emerita and professor, nursing, published “Research Focused Doctoral Nursing Education in the 21st Century: Curriculum, Evaluation, and Postdoctoral Considerations” in the *Journal of Professional Nursing*, Vol. 44, 38–53.

Brendan Rich, associate professor and chair, psychology, was awarded a \$35,658 grant by the Qlarant Foundation to support his research project, “The Resilience Builder Program-Universal Classroom Intervention.”

Brandon Vaidyanathan, associate professor and chair, sociology, conducted an international study of thousands of scientists that found that aesthetic appreciation is essential to human flourishing and the pursuit of knowledge. Vaidyanathan’s website, beautyatwork.net, showcases his research and findings from this study.

Andrew H. Weaver, professor, musicology, has been awarded a Claude V. Palisca Fellowship in Musicology from the Renaissance Society of America, which will fund a research trip to Europe for his project, “The Early Modern Music Print as Multivalent Political Object: European Politics and Habsburg Culture in the *Novus thesaurus musicus* (1568).”

Andrew Yeo, director, Asian studies, professor, politics, edited 10 peer-reviewed research articles in *Asian Politics & Policy*, on a special issue topic “Comparative Perspectives on South Korea’s Role in the Indo-Pacific.”



A Breakthrough on Gene Therapy Research

A new gene therapy technology being developed on campus could open the doors to healing and curing a variety of ailments, according to research by Biology Professor Venigalla Rao published May 30 in the international scientific journal *Nature Communications*.

Rao is the founding director of Catholic University’s Bacteriophage Medical Research Center. The center is devoted to researching the therapeutic potential of a type of virus called bacteriophage T4 that grows on E. coli bacteria and cannot infect humans. Bacteriophages of different types are part of the human microbiome, which is a community of microorganisms found throughout each person’s body that contributes to overall health.

Rao and his co-authors have shown for the first time that the exterior shell of a bacteriophage, called a capsid, can be coated with a lipid to smooth the transfer of lifesaving treatments into human cells. Their research also proves that the bacteriophage T4 has much larger payload capacity and engineering capability to deliver a wider range of therapies than the current technologies. In other words, there is great potential for a variety of treatments to be delivered more quickly, safely, and cost effectively to alleviate the suffering of future patients.

“We believe we have shown that there is a pathway to develop safe, effective bacteriophage-based gene therapy treatments with almost unlimited healing potential” for genetic conditions like sickle cell disease, diabetes, and cancer, Rao said. “This is a major step forward to expanding the existing gene therapy space, and also creating a new space for future therapies and cures.”

Report co-authors Jingen Zhu, Xiaorong Wu, and Wenzheng Guo continue working on the project under Rao’s direction at the Bacteriophage Medical Research Center, where most of the study was conducted. Purdue University structural biologist and longtime collaborator Andrei Fokine contributed to the work by proving the atomic structure of a new bacteriophage capsid engineered at the center.

“The actual therapy is years down the road, but this research provides a model for developing lifesaving treatments and cures,” said Rao. “What we are researching is like a molecular surgery that can safely and precisely correct a defect and generate therapeutic outcomes and someday cures.”

Current gene therapy research can be categorized into three major approaches that rely on the following vectors, or vehicles for treatment: adeno-associated viruses and lentiviruses, lipid nanoparticles, and synthetic nanoparticles. All of these treatments remain experimental.

Rao said progress in the field over the past three decades has been incremental because the current vectors have “very limited load capacity, limited engineering and cell targeting capability, many safety concerns, and the complicated processes to produce these therapies are extraordinarily expensive.” He said his team’s research on bacteriophage T4 proves that a new type of therapy that avoids these technological limitations and safety issues is “not only possible, but feasible.”

Rao said advancing to the next phase will require an influx of potentially millions of dollars, but he believes that with the right funding, they could take the technology to the clinic in as little as five years.

The ultimate goal, Rao said, is that unlike current medications that sometimes have to be taken for a lifetime to treat disease, a future bacteriophage-based drug “could lead to cures within hours to days.”

— M.B.

Germany Invites Music Professor to Honor Holocaust Victims with Concert in Berlin

Decades after the end of World War II, Germany continues a reconciliation with its past as music Professor Murry Sidlin saw firsthand when he conducted a concert in Berlin featuring the musical compositions of Holocaust victims.

The concert — *Hours of Freedom: The Story of the Terezín Composer* — was performed on May 8 by invitation of the German government. The concert-drama was created by Sidlin using music from 15 composers imprisoned during World War II in the Nazi concentration camp Terezín, in what is now the Czech Republic. Through a combination of music, narration, and multimedia elements, the concert memorialized the talented prisoners who secretly created “cultural miracles” within the walls of Terezín.

Sidlin, who teaches conducting and music from the Holocaust era at Catholic University, completed the concert performance in 2015. He has since brought the music and the history of these concentration camp composers throughout the world, including to New York City; Washington, D.C.; Jerusalem, Israel; and Terezín itself.

But the American conductor said bringing the concert to Germany was distinctly different.

“When it’s the German government that asks you to illuminate the music of those who were murdered by the Nazis, that is a monumental invitation. It’s humbling and inspiring,” said Sidlin.

The invitation to perform in Berlin came after Claudia Roth, German culture minister, attended the *Hours of Freedom* concert in Prague last November and told Sidlin they “must bring this concert to Germany.” Less than a week later, she informed the maestro they were at work planning the concert.

Sidlin said the concert, held on the anniversary of Germany’s liberation from Nazism, deeply moved the audience, who offered numerous ovations following the performance.

“I felt that it was much more than a concert; we were messengers,” he said. “This was our privilege to bring this music home and to share what we have learned with a very appreciative musical audience.”

From 1940 to the end of the war, approximately

150,000 Jews went through Terezín, with only 17,247 surviving.

In the early 1990s, Sidlin stumbled on a book about the music of Terezín, compelling him to research and discover more about the murdered composers who wrote it.

It was not easy to find the many original compositions from Terezín. Some of the music was in bad shape and some had been published obscurely.

“I had to go digging, but I was determined that this music would be heard,” said Sidlin.

Sidlin categorized the various composers’ works into nine sections that include *Longing, Hope, Pure Entertainment, The Broken Heart, and The Eyewitness*, among others.

“People asked me, ‘What is the music like?’ It is as different as the composers were different,” Sidlin said. Inside the music, there were even messages, thoughts that the composer wanted to send, he said.

Sidlin discovered that the cultural life in Terezín was founded largely on the initiatives of Rafael Schächter, a Romanian composer who famously assembled 150 fellow inmates into a chorus, teaching them to sing Giuseppe Verdi’s *Requiem Mass*, which they called *The Defiant Requiem*, by rote.

Sidlin was inspired to start The Defiant Requiem Foundation in 2008, a platform to preserve the memory of the Terezín prisoners. He also created a concert-drama *Defiant Requiem: Verdi at Terezín*, which combines Verdi’s music with video testimony from survivors of the original Terezín chorus and 1944 Nazi propaganda footage of the concentration camp.

Sidlin continues to bring *Hours of Freedom* to audiences around the world, giving the Holocaust composers something of the career they never lived to have.

— C.E.



Murry Sidlin, professor of music, conducts *Hours of Freedom*.

Art Professor Creates New Graduate Program for Change Through Creativity

Many students interested in the fine arts feel funneled into three distinct career paths: They can be teachers, researchers, or professional artists. With this in mind, Associate Professor of Art Education Delane Ingalls Vanada created a new graduate program last year to show students they don't have to choose and they can be all three.

"Most programs out there are going to focus on research and teaching. And that's odd to me," said Ingalls Vanada. "Our program is focused on being more balanced in training the artist, the researcher, and the teacher."

The Master of Arts in Art Education at the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art is designed around Ingalls Vanada's belief that

the best educators are active artists conducting research advancing understanding of the power of creativity to transform lives. Her goal is to invest in students' artistic growth so they can better assist others in a variety of settings, including art therapy and community development.

Ingalls Vanada said each of the students shares a passion for art as a way to address social, political, and cultural challenges across the world. The program has grown from two to 12 students since last year's launch. She credits the success in part to the flexibility, as students can complete their degree on a part-time basis in as little as 15 months.

"I designed this program for working professionals, so that they can keep their full-time jobs

and still pursue their dream," she said.

Each summer, students come to campus for one to two weeks for studio intensives where they create artwork together and visit the world-class art museums in Washington, D.C., for inspiration. The rest of the year, their classes are online with weekly virtual livestreamed classes.

"This way, they build connections and experiences with others working toward the same goal, which deepens commitment and learning when they are apart," said Ingalls Vanada.

She said the students gain a global perspective by participating in an international study of art education models in the U.S., Norway, and Brazil. Ingalls Vanada said her collaborators have developed online learning modules that are incorporated into the coursework to foster intercultural dialogue.

"Brazil and Norway focus on incorporating design and craft into teacher training," said Ingalls Vanada. "I'm looking forward to the students learning about how each of the countries shapes the next generation."

A four-year MADit (Mobility in Art and Design Teacher Training) grant from the government of Norway includes an exchange program with Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, starting with two students in spring 2024. The cultural exchanges are expected to continue with Brazil's Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul even after the grant ends.

"Our common research interest is in exploring the role of art and design education ... to prepare globally-minded citizens who will go on to teach future agents of change," said Ingalls Vanada. These goals are core to her own artistic formation that drives the art education program.

"In the U.S. we separate art and design, but I've always had my feet in both worlds," she said. By connecting different disciplines across continents, Ingalls Vanada hopes to expand the worlds of each of her students.

— M.B.



Delane Ingalls Vanada (right) and an art education graduate student smile during a studio session.



Saving Lives by Asking the Right Questions

Assistant Professor of Psychology Abby Adler Mandel focuses on understanding cognitive factors associated with depression and suicide, such as dysfunctional beliefs, attentional fixation, and problem-solving deficits, as well as how we can change these factors to produce better treatment outcomes and prevent suicide. Mandel serves as lab director for the Depression and Suicide Cognitions Lab and supervises the University's Counseling Center.

How has the University embraced the urgency of this topic with your suicide prevention research?

The University does care about students and student well-being. With the pandemic, I think there's been more distress overall across the

population. Students have been more vocal about the difficulties they're experiencing. It's a really good thing. The more that they share with me, the more I can work with them and be flexible and understanding.

How has public perception of the psychology profession changed?

There's much more value placed on it and how we view psychology. I teach a research methods class here and one of my goals is to help students realize psychology is a science. It is based on evidence and data and how that is collected. As for the field itself, there's an emphasis on individual experiences, maybe more so than historically. It's about what are the factors that impact their experiences with

depression and all the life experiences that contribute to that.

How has your research developed?

This study involves recruiting students primarily from our psychology research pool. They fill out some information about their current history and suicidal thoughts and answer self-report questionnaires on our online platform. We have them answer questions on their smartphones multiple times a day. They get a morning survey about their sleep the night before and random surveys throughout the day with questions like, "How much have you been thinking about the future and if it's worthwhile for you? How much have you been thinking about your negative experiences?" We are measuring potential issues — fixation, rumination, hopelessness, or experiences that are unbearable. We're trying to see how much they change from moment to moment and person to person.

How are you procuring funding?

When I started as a faculty member, I was given some money to be able to do some pilot projects. I aim to use this data to apply for grants from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Some of the initial findings that we've had are that "the world is good and meaningful and needs me" and has succeeded with lower suicidal ideation.

What do you find rewarding about your work?

When participants are answering these questions my hope is that they realize they're not alone and it'll resonate with them. Then we can help them and target ways to help them. Helping ask the right questions is rewarding in itself.

How does your work support the mission of the University?

One, it helps us gain knowledge about this world that God has created for us. The other big part is helping people live these fulfilling lives they have to their greatest abilities, to listen to one another and engage in good conversations. Helping to form students into good citizens by asking good questions. — M.P.

Cardinals Receiver Has Professional Dreams

Preston Jeffrey is catching touchdown passes from Catholic University Cardinals quarterbacks and attention from NFL teams.

Jeffrey entered the 2023 football season at the University with 117 career receptions for 1,705 yards and 18 touchdowns. The Smithfield, Va., native is a two-time All-NEWMAC First Team wide receiver who is majoring in biomedical engineering and will graduate this fall.

Listed at 6 feet tall and 155 pounds, Jeffrey is trying to help the Cardinals win a Landmark Conference championship this fall.

At the same time, he has eyes on the next level of football. Earlier this year, the Division III standout participated in what is known as a “Pro Day,” where he worked out for scouts from the Super Bowl runner-up Philadelphia Eagles and the Washington Commanders.

“I did not know what to expect going into the pro day,” Jeffrey said. “On the day of, I woke up, made breakfast, listened to some of my favorite songs to get me in the mood, and showed up at the time I was supposed to.”

Jeffrey’s lunch pail approach to the opportunity

drew respect from the Eagles’ scouting representatives, who were impressed with his arm wingspan and hand size, he said.

Mike Gutelius, B.A. 1992, Cardinals head coach, said there’s a reason Jeffrey has caught the eyes of professional scouts.

“Preston is one of those players that is at a talent level that comes around once a decade or so,” Gutelius said. “He has raised the bar for his position group, for the offense, and for the whole team.”

The scouts recommended that Jeffrey continue adding weight and Jeffrey believes he can address that question. The opportunity to work out for the Commanders and Eagles was a unique one, but he stiff-armed any doubts.

“I believe in my abilities and I knew that being nervous or anxious would only hinder my performance,” he said. “I also know that there are not many D-III athletes that get to have this experience so to be able to be one of the few is special and in turn leaves nothing to be nervous about but rather excitement.”

The world of professional football has expanded in recent years, with leagues such as the United States Football League and the XFL opening up more opportunities for players from Division II and Division III schools. No matter the league, Jeffrey wants to give professional football a shot.

Jeffrey added, “I have been trying to work on self-discipline as well, meaning pushing through the ‘this is too hard’ or ‘it’s only one day, I can skip it’ thoughts. This overall has helped my work ethic and I can already see improvement both on the field and off.”

Gutelius said Jeffrey’s journey was never easy, but one all Cardinals can admire.

“He has gone from being a quiet and introverted first-year player who suffered a season-ending injury to being an elite performer with a chance to continue playing this great game even after college,” Gutelius said. “When he finishes his eligibility and degree this fall, he will leave some huge shoes to fill. I will always be grateful to have had the opportunity to be his coach and I can’t wait to see him continue to grow as a football player, but more importantly as a man.”

— M.P.





Talbot Field Lights Up Night Sky for First Time

On March 29, the Cardinals took on the Johns Hopkins Blue Jays in the University's first-ever night game under the lights at Robert J. Talbot Field. University Trustee and Athletics Board of Visitors Member Juan Jones; his wife, Lisa; and their son, Christian, B.S.B.A. 2020, who was a four-year player on the Cardinals baseball team, were honored that night for their continued support of the University, as the lights were funded through the family's generous gift of \$2.3 million.

Prior to the start of the game, the Jones family posed for pictures with the team, University President Peter K. Kilpatrick, and Head Baseball Coach Ross Natoli. Christian Jones also threw the first pitch. The championship-level lighting is the first completed step in the Diamond Project, a four-phase improvement plan for Talbot Field.



New Athletic Director Aims to Make Cardinals Elite Program

Kevin Robinson Jr. believes the University's Division III program can become one of the nation's finest. The new athletic director laid out the roadmap for future success in an interview with *CatholicU* magazine.

How has settling into the new role gone so far?

I've been doing on-campus interviews since I got here, which isn't bad. It's an opportunity to bring people in that fit my energy, enthusiasm, and passion for athletics. I've been getting around, meeting the people on campus. It's very welcoming.

What are your goals?

I want us to be an elite athletic department. I want us to be in the top 20 to 25 athletic departments in the country. To do that, we have to improve our fundraising to give better resources to our student-athletes. We need to talk about the impact that fundraising has on our student-athletes.

How important is the student body?

The one thing I want to improve is how we get our student body over to our games. They need to take

a break sometimes and relax a little bit by checking out a game. Our student-athletes thrive off of that.

How will the program balance competitive success with classroom achievement?

When it says student-athlete, the student is first. We want to assure our athletes here at CatholicU that the excellence we're committing ourselves to is in everything we do. We have to be elite in everything we do. We have to be elite students.

What do you want to be the bedrock of the program?

I think I'm in the process of still developing it. Right now, it's about dominating today. I want everybody who comes in here to dominate the piece they're trying to do and just get after it.

Your sisters Kate (All-American, B.A. 2010, M.S.M. 2012) and Mary (B.A. 2012) were lacrosse stars here. Do you feel their shadow looming?

Every time I walk out in the hallway, I can't escape (Kate) looking at me. Her face is on the



Hall of Fame board out there. What she was able to accomplish in her time at CatholicU was just incredible. It gives me that family pride knowing my sisters were able to accomplish so much.

For people, what do you think they'll experience at Cardinal athletics events?

It's going to be done the right way, with humility. I want our fans to see our students represent the values of the University, the values of humility, integrity, courage, and justice.

What difference can alumni make in the department?

Be present! We want you there. Our alumni can help us with their time, treasure, and talent. We have a lot of great needs, whether they be capital projects, operational costs, and staffing needs that our alumni can help out with financially. — M.P.





Healing in the Metaverse

New Simulation Technology and the Conway School of Nursing

By Anne Klockenkemper, Anna Capizzi, and Matthew Palmer



“Part of nursing is a commitment to lifelong learning. I think incorporating this new (simulation) technology definitely contributes to that.”

— Elizabeth Mastoros

Conway School of Nursing
Dean Marie Nolan, Ph.D. 1989



Elizabeth Mastoros,
B.S.N. 2023

As Elizabeth Mastoros, B.S.N. 2023, neared graduation this past spring, she was able to glimpse the future of education on campus for Conway School of Nursing students. It floored her. Mastoros, a former Conway Scholar who is now a labor and delivery nurse at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Md., took part in a series of demonstrations of new simulation technologies that will be used once the nursing building, now under construction, opens in 2024.

Before they even set foot in a physical hospital, students will gain experience walking down the halls of hospitals or performing procedures — all in the metaverse.

The new technology will include a virtual hospital — a 3D-screen-based environment that will be accessed via a computer to help students strengthen critical thinking skills — and virtual reality headsets for practicing clinical procedural skills.

These technological innovations, happening right in the heart of the University’s campus, will be a central part of the Conway School of Nursing’s program.

“New simulations can help expose both students and nurses alike to different clinical scenarios and better prepare us for real-world situations,” Mastoros said. “Part of nursing is a commitment to lifelong learning. I think incorporating this new (simulation) technology definitely contributes to that.”

According to David Want, M.S.N. 2017, D.N.P. 2020, who is chair of the nursing school’s Simulation Committee and assistant clinical professor, the University has found a way for the metaverse to thrive within its mission of excellence in teaching.

“It is the art of the possible, involving the innovative use of immersive technologies such as extended reality — augmented and virtual reality — and other technology-enabled simulation-based and experiential learning modalities to create a virtual world with which we interact either on a computer screen or through augmented or virtual reality headsets or glasses,” said Want.

This new technology will build upon immersive learning already in use at the Tersigni Simulation Center in Gowan Hall to simulate experiences students may encounter in real-world practice.

The new 102,000 square-foot, \$84 million nursing and sciences building under construction along Michigan Avenue will include the new Cesar A. Caceres Simulation Center that will provide four times the space that exists in Tersigni. Funded through a gift from the Institute for Technology in Health Care, the center will include multiple spaces, such as high fidelity patient rooms that provide an acute care experience, a recovery room, and a debriefing room where student performance during simulations can be reviewed.



All undergraduate nursing students, about 150 to 200 per week, use the current simulation center. Want said the number will increase to 375 to 450 students per week when the Caceres Center is in use in the new building. What they learn is applied to clinical scenarios that include conducting a health assessment or a physical exam, as well as working on their therapeutic communication skills.

In the building's virtual reality suite, students will wear VR goggles or may work in an augmented reality setting with scenes projected onto the walls.

"I have never used VR before but was able to navigate it with ease as there were built-in instructions to guide users through," Mastoros said. "We were also able to give real-time feedback to the developers to help make the programs the best possible for our Conway School of Nursing curriculum."

Tata Consultancy Services is developing the VR headset technology that will be implemented in the new nursing building, along with another innovative educational product, the virtual hospital.

This 3D technology, seen on a 2D screen, will help undergraduate nursing students "practice prioritizing patients. It might be expanded in the future for graduate students," said Jeanne Moore, associate dean for innovation and online learning, clinical associate professor, director of the family nurse practitioner program, and a member of the simulation committee.

The virtual hospital "is an on-screen experience of virtually walking down the hall in a hospital and going into the rooms of different patients, reading their electronic patient record, assessing the patient, and making decisions about care," said Conway School of Nursing Dean Marie Nolan, Ph.D. 1989.

The hope is that this virtual hospital will eventually include multiple wings, including an emergency room, pediatric care, and an intensive care unit.

Above: Margaret Schiavone, B.S.N. 2023, in the Tersigni Simulation Center. **Left:** The new nursing and sciences building under construction along Michigan Ave. **Right:** Former University President John Garvey; Dr. William Ayers, president of the Institute for Technology in Health Care's executive board; and Scott Rembold, vice president for University Advancement, signed a \$5 million simulation center gift agreement April 13, 2022. Also pictured from left to right are Jeanne Moore, associate dean for innovation and online learning, member of the simulation committee; Elizabeth Hawkins-Walsh, professor of practice; David Want, M.S.N. 2017, D.N.P. 2020, chair of the simulation committee and assistant clinical professor; and Kim Morton, senior associate vice president for Schools and Planned Giving, University Advancement.



To make a situation more true to life, interruptions will be programmed into the experience. That way, Nolan said, with the needs of other patients built in, a student will learn to make decisions regarding whether to turn to the needs of another patient or to delegate aspects of care to a patient care tech and continue caring for the current patient. This will allow students to practice making decisions about prioritizing multiple aspects of care for multiple patients at the same time.

“Chief nursing officers from among our clinical partner hospitals have mentioned that it is common among new nursing graduates from all schools of nursing to initially find caring for multiple patients with competing priorities to be a challenge,” Nolan said.

While students will naturally become more comfortable over time and with practice, she said faculty wanted to figure out a way to provide additional experiences that will help them prepare to decide the best way to triage the needs of multiple people.

Want said that the COVID-19 pandemic magnified the need for simulation-based learning that involves technology such as virtual or augmented reality.

“Simulation is essentially built off experiential learning theory. It provides a safe space to practice and learn and make mistakes without the risk of harming a patient. Students then transfer those skills to real-life patients,” he said. “It’s a tool that produces better nurses that results in better outcomes and healthier people.”

Nolan said the VR goggle technology will provide a different experience by enabling students to practice procedures. One simulated procedure that has already been tested is the lumbar puncture.

“Pediatric nurse practitioners must learn to perform lumbar punctures on infants to test spinal fluid for signs of an infection,” she said. “The student ‘sees’ the lumbar puncture tray on the table and virtually picks up and opens sterile wipes, a drape, a needle, collection tubules, and a bandage and uses these items to perform the procedure on a virtual infant.”

Because the procedure is incredibly complicated — there are more than 50 separate steps — this virtual simulation will allow the students to practice them all; first in a novice mode that offers them prompts on taking the next step in the procedure, and then later in an assessment mode that simulates the procedure without the prompts and provides a score.

Photos courtesy of Tata Consultancy Services



The virtual hospital — a 3D-screen-based application — is a multipatient simulation that focuses on prioritization of care.





Zachary Brotzman, B.S.N. 2023, in the Tersigni Simulation Center in Gowan Hall.



Carol Risko, M.S.N. candidate, uses a headset during a demo for an immersive simulation of a lumbar puncture procedure.



Zachary Brotzman, B.S.N. 2023, a former Conway Scholar who currently is a nurse with the pediatric cardiac intensive care unit at Johns Hopkins Children’s Center in Baltimore, was one of the students who tested the technology planned for the new building.

“I was really, really excited to see how realistic it was and how interactive the environment was. That technology was really quite intuitive,” he said. At the time, “I was going into pediatrics and it was really quite exciting to see a pediatric patient being able to be interacted with in the virtual reality setting.”

It gave him “more awareness of what the world of pediatrics looks like,” Brotzman added.

The lumbar puncture VR procedure was designed for graduate nurse practitioner students, mainly acute care pediatric nurse practitioners. But, according to Moore, the procedure could be expanded to adult patients in the future.

“Allowing nurse practitioner students to practice it multiple times before being tested for competency — and before performing it on an actual infant — is a major contribution to nursing education and quality patient care,” Nolan added.

With both of these products, students will be better acclimated to some of the real-world situations they might face.

The simulations are still being refined. For example, Nolan said some faculty thought that the lumbar puncture simulation should include the sound of the baby crying since this sometimes occurs in the actual procedure.

“These immersive technology simulations are examples of some of the many approaches that our faculty use in the simulation center to prepare students to deliver high quality and compassionate care that respects the dignity of the human person,” Nolan said.

Mastoros, once a virtual reality neophyte, is already using the tools learned in the metaverse, including virtual reality sessions, to help her patients. The future is here, she said.

“I hope future nursing students embrace the technology in conjunction with their physical classroom environment,” Mastoros said. “VR technology has certainly helped me to become a well-rounded nurse. As my career is just beginning, I can use the tools I learned through the VR environment to help real-life people.” **CU**

“These immersive technology simulations ... prepare students to deliver high quality and compassionate care that respects the dignity of the human person.”

– Conway School Dean Marie Nolan





Left to right: Andi Cullins, Ronny Lancaster, Elvira “Mickie” Smith, and Kenneth Walker



50TH ANNIVERSARY *of the*

PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM *A Celebration of Change on Campus*

By Mariana Barillas

Fifty years ago, the first students from The Catholic University of America’s Partnership Program — an initiative designed to build upon the progress made during the Civil Rights Movement — began to graduate.

Partnership Program scholars from the Class of 1973 and later years gathered on campus this spring to remember, reflect, and renew the call for equitable education opportunities for all. They also reunited with the two trailblazers who led the program, both of whom received honorary doctorates from the University they transformed.

After a lifetime of advancing education access at the University and beyond, program co-founder Leon LeBuffe, B.A. 1966, Ph.D. 1973, and founding director Thaddeus Aubry Jr., B.A. 1966, stood together on the steps of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception during the Class of 2023’s Commencement ceremony.

LeBuffe remembers gazing into the diverse crowd of graduates, alumni, and their families. Reflecting on the program’s impact, he said, “I was proud of what I did but I was even prouder of the University.”

Aubry thought about his roots in the community starting with his alumna mother marrying his father at the Shrine. Aubry, once one of the few Black alumni, saw how much had changed at the University over his lifetime.

As his family watched him accept the honor, Aubry kept looking at his daughter, who was in the front row. “It was important to me that she was there. I wanted her to see what Catholic University was like,” he said.



Tony Fiorini

The bond between Partnership Program leaders Thaddeus Aubry Jr., B.A. 1966 (left), and Leon LeBuffe, B.A. 1966, Ph.D. 1973 (right), has spanned six decades.

Ronny Lancaster, B.A. 1973, who attended the ceremony, said he and his fellow classmates have never forgotten how much the Partnership Program prepared them to succeed at the highest levels in every aspect of professional life in the country.

“It is hard to find words to express the contributions these two men made ... and how they helped us all navigate and graduate from the University to lead successful professional lives,” said Lancaster.

BONDS THAT BREAK BARRIERS

It all started with a lifelong friendship forged between LeBuffe and Aubry on campus in the early 1960s. They were both active in the Civil Rights Movement and were among the over 200 University community members at the 1963 March on Washington where Martin Luther King Jr. proclaimed his dream for racial harmony.

Despite the progress made in the city they called home, Aubry and LeBuffe knew that the different colors of their skin still meant they lived in practically different worlds. They bonded over their desire to change that and stayed in touch after graduation.

Aubry started teaching at Ocean-Hill Brownsville school district in Brooklyn, N.Y., which was getting national attention for the majority Black community’s effort to address racial disparities by challenging the school system’s status quo. LeBuffe stayed in Washington, D.C., to work at the University’s admissions office.

It was 1968 and tensions across the country kept heating up. Aubry remembers when he heard the terrible news: Martin Luther King Jr. had been shot dead. His heart sank. This was a devastating blow to the Civil Rights Movement and he feared for the future of the country.

Grief, anger, and frustration fueled four days of protests that erupted at times into riots that devastated U.S. cities including the nation’s capital. Untouched by the fires, the University was perceived as living up to the reputation of higher education as an ivory tower. In a majority Black city, the campus remained almost entirely white.

Within the University community there was growing recognition that it wasn’t enough to say the door is open, you had to give people the keys to success. The University asked LeBuffe to lead the development of a

scholarship and retention program for marginalized city residents. He knew exactly who to call. Aubry accepted, believing that God, through LeBuffe, was calling him back to the University to transform it.

FIGHTING FOR THE FUTURE

The initiative, dubbed the Partnership Program, depended on the collaborative efforts of the University community and beyond to succeed. For Aubry and LeBuffe, the name also reflected how they saw, and continue to see, each other. “I never saw him as my boss. We were partners,” said Aubry.

They recruited 35 local high school students with high potential but low prospects for college because of financial limitations. By combining University support with private donations and public grants, LeBuffe and Aubry identified funds for substantial scholarships up to full tuition with room and board.

Ronny Lancaster was with his best friend, Kenneth Walker, when they first heard about the Partnership Program from a teacher. They had never considered the University an option before, but now they were presented with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. They both applied.

LeBuffe and Aubry identified more talented teenagers than they could fully fund, but worked to secure scholarships for as many students as they could. Lancaster suspects he applied toward the end of the process, because he got half tuition while others were fully funded. Nevertheless, he accepted because he correctly predicted the University’s academic reputation would help him gain entry to prestigious post-graduate programs.

The Partnership Program also presented an opportunity for LeBuffe and Aubry to prove that many students’ high school performance said more about their circumstances than their ability. Among their number was Walker, who was stretched thin because he worked full time after school. He didn’t make the initial cut, but Aubry and LeBuffe encouraged him to go to *The Washington Star* newspaper to ask for funding.

“I was too young to see how ridiculous that was,” said Walker. “But I got a full scholarship and an entry level job that led to my career in print and broadcast journalism.”

Aubry and LeBuffe created a summer college preparation course to be sure the Partnership Program scholars had the tools they needed to succeed.



In 2023, the University awarded both Aubry and LeBuffe honorary doctoral degrees.

Elvira “Mickie” Wise Smith, B.A. 1975, remembers the first time she set foot on campus.

“It just seemed like being in a totally different country. And I think mostly because it was totally untouched by the riots and all the devastation the city had undergone,” said Smith.

Aubry and LeBuffe had every expectation that a few students would decide by the end of the summer that the University wasn’t for them. To their happy surprise, not a single person dropped out. Before they had even begun their first semester of college, the Partnership Program students had shown they were in it to win it. For LeBuffe and Aubry, the dream for a better tomorrow was already becoming a reality.

A WORLD APART

The fall of 1969 marked what was then the largest influx of Black students in the University’s history, from approximately 10 to over 30. Among the group, the majority were Partnership Program participants.

“We shared the unique experience of being the first significant number of Black students on a mainly white campus, which was a whole education on its own,” said Walker. “Some white students were pretty active and vocal in their distaste for our presence.”

The instructors often weren’t much different. Walker walked out of one class; Smith said one of her professors refused to respond to her objections over a lecture where offensive stereotypes were presented like they were facts. Lancaster said he had hoped to find more of a welcome at a Catholic institution, but “there were individuals here and there who made it very clear that they were on your side.”

Walker said one of the instructors who made the biggest impact was Sister Thea Bowman, M.A. 1969, Ph.D. 1972, a Franciscan Sister of Perpetual Adoration who is on the path to sainthood after a life advancing appreciation of the Black Catholic experience. He said she served as “an example for those of us who thought about walking out of there for why we should stay.”

At one point, there was a small fire on Aubry’s desk while he was away from his office. He and LeBuffe strongly suspected malevolent intent. Aubry kept a scorched pipe stand as a symbol of the students’ experience: burned but not consumed.

PROGRAM’S FIRST SCHOLARS, BLACK ALUMNI HONORED

Over Commencement weekend in May, the Division of University Advancement and Office of Alumni Engagement hosted the 50th Anniversary Reunion Celebration for the Partnership Program at Catholic University. Held in Caldwell Hall, it was the first celebration of its kind honoring both the first Partnership Program students that graduated in 1973, as well as all Black alumni of the University.

“Tonight’s celebration shows how successful the Partnership Program was, as evidenced by the lives its graduates went on to lead,” University President Peter K. Kilpatrick said. “But it is also a reminder of the calling to continue to ensure that all our students feel welcome here and have the opportunity to earn an exceptional Catholic University education.”

A documentary, titled *No Longer Out of Reach*, chronicling the impact of the Partnership Program, was introduced by President Kilpatrick and premiered during the event. Directed and produced by award-winning filmmaker and journalist Chris Jenkins, *No Longer Out of Reach* features four of the program’s first participants along with the program’s first directors.

During the celebration, a number of Partnership Program alumni, including former University cross country and women’s track and field coach Joe Fisher, B.A. 1975; Andi Cullins, B.A. 1974; and Elvira “Mickie” Wise Smith, B.S. 1975, shared their experiences in the program.

Ronny Lancaster, B.A. 1973, called the reunion the “most memorable event for the Black alumni of Catholic University. Beginning with the awarding of honorary degrees to Dr. Leon LeBuffe and Mr. Thaddeus Aubry, to the premiere of a documentary chronicling the experiences of Black alumni as students, and culminating with a wonderful alumni reception Saturday evening. This past weekend was a most welcoming return to the CatholicU campus.” — A.K.



VIEW THE DOCUMENTARY NO LONGER OUT OF REACH AT
bit.ly/3MzDtbl



“ IF I LOOK AT THE PROGRAM AS A WHOLE, IT REALLY HAS CHANGED THE RELATIONSHIP THE UNIVERSITY HAS WITH THE DISTRICT AND PEOPLE OF COLOR.

— Thaddeus Aubry Jr., B.A. 196

Andi Cullins, B.A. 1974, said her time on campus taught her what the wider world was going to be like. After graduating, she embarked on a 40-year career as a corporate recruiter.

“We walked into certain challenges that were difficult. But in the end, even that turns out to be beneficial,” said Cullins, noting that “just about everyone who matriculated at that time has wound up at the top of their profession.”

Lancaster said LeBuffe and Aubry’s commitment to change made all the difference in the world. After graduating, he went to the Wharton School and Georgetown Law. Lancaster’s career includes executive leadership roles in the federal government and a Fortune 200 insurance company.

LeBuffe and Aubry were inseparable, “almost interchangeable because they had an equal amount of passion, skill, and dedication,” said Lancaster. He knew they could go to either of them for anything they needed and they would get the job done.

Smith said the Partnership Program provided a sense of belonging and “not only equality but equity.” She became a senior business analyst for the National Education Association and a doting grandmother.

“These were inner city youth who were not expected to do as well as they did. And they did, we just needed the opportunity,” said Smith. “It gave us the extra little lift we needed to be successful.”

Walker credits the Partnership Program for forming the foundation of his career as a veteran journalist for *The Washington Star*, *ABC News*, and *NPR*.

During those formative University years, Walker said they all became a family. They would often gather at Aubry’s house, which was just off campus. The place was almost never empty, with LeBuffe describing it as a social hub for the program. Fifty years later, he and Aubry talk about alumni like proud parents.

“I have to stop calling them kids ... that’s how I think of them. These individuals have done extraordinary things, each of them,” said Aubry. He frequently tells the Partnership Program alumni that “it wasn’t me, it wasn’t Leon. It was you. You saw an opportunity and took advantage of it.”

“They made a difference in their own lives,” said Aubry.

LIGHTING THE WAY FOR THE FUTURE

Aubry and LeBuffe left the University after a few years, but the Partnership Program continued in one form or another until the late 1980s. The University continues to partner with the local government and other organizations to connect minority students with scholarships and other support services. Today, hundreds of Black students are part of a campus community that is more diverse than ever.

“If I look at the program as a whole, it really has changed the relationship the University has with the district and people of color,” said Aubry.



AUBRY-LEBUFFE SCHOLARSHIP

The Thaddeus F. Aubry Jr. and Leon A. LeBuffe Scholarship supports educational diversity at Catholic University. Established by Black alumni who were, in large part, admitted through the Partnership Program, it honors the two men who led it. Each year, up to five students are recommended by the University’s Center for Cultural Advancement and the Black Student Alliance, and are awarded \$1,000 scholarships. During Cardinal Weekend, a reception is held to honor those scholarship recipients. To make a gift in support of the scholarship fund, visit advance.catholic.edu/giving/to/AubryLebuffeScholarship.

Generations of Black alumni gathered to celebrate 50 years since the first Partnership Program students graduated from the University during a reunion event in May. Pictured in the photos are Joe Fisher, B.A. 1975 (top); Michael Arrington, B.M. 1981, and Aya Williams, B.A. 1998 (center); and Angela Walker, B.A. 1990 (bottom).



LeBuffe said, “I think it had a permanent and fairly large impact on the University. ... In a sense (the program) continues today.”

Cullins said initiatives like the Sister Thea Bowman Committee, a University-wide effort to grow a culture of inclusion, are part of a new era where the campus “sees itself as more a part of the world and part of D.C. than I’ve ever seen it before.” Smith said she is especially pleased that the University has established a cultural center.

Javier Bustamante, director of the Center for Cultural Engagement, who is on the team implementing the committee’s recommendations, takes inspiration from LeBuffe and Aubry.

“Beyond providing academic support, these gentlemen had the more challenging mission of helping these students feel a sense of belonging,” said Bustamante. “We are about building a space where students can truly feel at home. And through that space, we hope to honor the legacies of Mr. Aubry and Mr. LeBuffe.”

Lancaster said that he and some of the other Partnership Program participants felt a need to pay forward what they had received. They spearheaded the creation of the Thaddeus F. Aubry Jr. and Leon A. LeBuffe Scholarship Fund, which has given scholarships to 25 University undergraduates since 2016. Each year, they gather for the award ceremony and mentor the next generation.

For the Class of 1973’s 50th anniversary, Cullins said she joined with other former Partnership Program scholars to work with the University to surprise Aubry and LeBuffe with honorary doctorates and plan their reunion to coincide with the ceremony.

Reflecting on the weekend, Aubry said it was “extraordinary” to hear from so many the impact the program had made. LeBuffe was similarly surprised and overwhelmed by the number of lives they had touched.

“I think it’s pretty rare when people remember something that happened 50 years ago,” he said.

Walker, who also attended, sees the Partnership Program as a story about the power of faith in action.

“Catholic University is a lot like the Church in America. It struggled with the whole nation with desegregation and multiculturalism, but they stayed the course,” said Walker. Thanks to the seeds of change planted by the Partnership Program, “I see the University growing, blossoming.” **CU**

Cecilia Engbert contributed to this story.

The Catholic University Alumni Association is working to increase the amount of affinity networks and programming for University graduates.

For more information, or to be involved, contact Sykeem Lewis, B.A. 2014, M.S.M. 2019, associate director of alumni engagement for affinity programming. He is looking to add groups based on interest areas such as the Student Government Association and Campus Ministry. If you would like to participate, email him at lewissy@cua.edu.



Photos by Steve Ruark



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LUX

CELEBRATES THE CONCLUSION OF

LIGHT | THE | WAY

THE CAMPAIGN FOR CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY



By Anne Klockenkemper



University President Peter K. Kilpatrick spoke during the Lux event.



University Board of Trustees Chair Victor Smith, J.D. 1996, left, and Campaign Co-chair Joe Carlini, B.M.E. 1984, helped announce the total amounts raised for the University's schools and athletics department.



Dennis Farrelly and Kendra Dunn, B.S.N. 2020, at the reception at Garvey Hall that preceded the Lux event.

“This Campaign entailed a huge effort by our entire community. But tonight isn’t just about dollars and cents. Raising money was the goal, yes, but it wasn’t the objective. ... Our Campaign centered on people and promise. About changing lives through education and opportunity.”

— University President Peter K. Kilpatrick

Kendra Dunn’s life — and the lives of those she now cares for as a critical care nurse — changed with a single moment: a phone call offering her a scholarship to attend The Catholic University of America.

“I had 24 hours to decide whether I wanted to accept a full ride to the School of Nursing, courtesy of a generous scholarship donor,” Dunn, B.S.N. 2020, said. “Needless to say, I was made an offer I could not refuse! Becoming a critical care nurse is really what brought me closer to Christ and grew my appreciation for life tenfold. I have my scholarship to thank for that. My years at CatholicU were the best four years of my life. I received an education beyond my wildest dreams from professors who impacted my life far beyond the classroom.”

That one call, she said, put her on a career trajectory where she found herself holding the “hands of the dying during the COVID-19 surges” and comforting some of the sickest patients in the hospital where she works.

The scholarship Dunn received was made possible by University Trustee Bill Conway and his wife, Joanne, who are also the benefactors of the Conway School of Nursing. That is just one example of the impact made by 28,654 unique donors who contributed to the University’s largest fundraising campaign in history, totaling \$518,544,740. There were notably 16,975 first-time donors. More than \$90 million was given by corporate and foundation partners.

The success of Light the Way: The Campaign for Catholic University — and recognition of the generosity of donors — was celebrated at a June 5



Campaign Co-chair and Board of Trustees member Enrique Segura opened the evening's program.

event, called Lux, that marked the conclusion of the Campaign, which far surpassed the original \$400 million goal proposed at the outset in 2019.

University President Peter K. Kilpatrick said that he was grateful for the leadership and foresight of his predecessor, former University President John Garvey, in starting the Campaign as it unleashed a wellspring of magnanimity among those who support the University and its mission.

"I am so moved by the generosity of the entire Catholic University Cardinal family that has made our community's transformation possible. Whether you gave \$1,000 or \$10 million, every gift mattered in the lives of our young people and our University," President Kilpatrick said. "This Campaign entailed a huge effort by our entire community. But tonight isn't just about dollars and cents. Raising money was the goal, yes, but it wasn't the objective. The core messaging of our Campaign centered on people and promise. About changing lives through education and opportunity."

There are now a half a billion ways that students, faculty, and staff have been positively impacted by the Campaign as various speakers spoke of other critical areas that were funded.

Arranged around three central fundraising themes — student success, faculty excellence, and academic environment — the Campaign exceeded its goals for each, with \$119.2, \$143.8, and \$156.2 million respectively being raised in those areas. The Campaign also generated \$30 million in support of graduate student scholarships and stipends, raised \$83 million in funding for research, \$88 million in undergraduate scholarships, and \$118.3 million for University-wide priorities and unrestricted support.

CAMPAIGN ACHIEVEMENTS BY SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT

\$2.4m

School of Canon Law

\$5.7m

School of Philosophy

\$6.5m

School of Architecture and Planning

\$7.3m

National Catholic School of Social Service

\$13.3m

Metropolitan School of Professional Studies

\$17m

Benjamin T. Rome of Music, Drama, and Art

\$19.4m

Department of Athletics

\$21.9m

School of Engineering

\$25.3m

School of Theology and Religious Studies

\$39.8m

School of Arts and Sciences

\$49m

Columbus School of Law

\$89.2m

The Tim and Steph Busch School of Business

\$109.7m

Conway School of Nursing



The University's location in Alexandria, Va., covers more than 18,000 square feet.



Catholic University has partnered with Pima Community College in Tucson, Ariz.

During the June celebration, Board of Trustees Chair Victor Smith, J.D. 1996, and Campaign Co-chairs Joe Carlini, B.M.E. 1984, and Enrique Segura, also a Trustee, along with President Kilpatrick, outlined how each school and the Department of Athletics received millions of dollars as a result of donor generosity.

The physical campus was transformed through gifts that made possible the construction of Carlini Field, the Garvey Hall Dining Commons, and the new nursing and sciences building for the Conway School of Nursing, which is scheduled to be completed next year. Screens on both sides of the room showed photos of progress made on these projects, as well as highlights from endowed chair installations throughout the life of the Campaign.

In a video outlining the improvements to physical spaces and the University's expansion through the Alexandria, Va., and Tucson, Ariz., campuses, a number of University students talked about their love for the Catholic University campus and voiced their appreciation to the 300-plus people in the room.

University Provost Aaron Dominguez also noted the way the Campaign supported faculty, especially through the creation

Dana Rene Bowler



Carlini Field is home to the Cardinals soccer and lacrosse teams.

of endowed professorships and graduate stipends. Holding an endowed chair is the highest honor in academia, he explained, with the position funded in perpetuity.

"At the start of the Campaign, Catholic University had 12 fully endowed chairs," Dominguez said. "During Light the Way, we set a goal to add 12 more endowed chairs, to double that number to 24."

Now through the generosity of donors, 16 new endowed chairs were added during this Campaign, for a total of 28 endowed chairs across the University.


The success and impact of the Campaign has not gone unnoticed. At the Lux event, then-Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, read a letter from Pope Francis praising Catholic University and the Campaign, and recognizing how the University is fulfilling its mission. The letter also recalled the Pope's visit to campus in 2015 for the canonization Mass of St. Junipero Serra, offered a blessing to the University community, and shared hope that the University would continue to thrive.

"I congratulate The Catholic University of America on its successful campaign and encourage its continued contribution



The new Garvey Hall Dining Commons is nearly 35,000 square feet.

to the Church’s ministry of evangelization,” the Holy Father wrote.

“Giving of our time and resources to help others is a concrete sign of charity for our neighbor that marks us as disciples of Jesus Christ (cf. Jn 13:35). Thanks to such generosity, students, faculty, and staff, both present and future, will be enabled to join together in advancing the truth and joy of the Gospel, promoting a culture of encounter and fostering the authentic and integral growth of the human family (cf. *Veritatis Gaudium*, 1) through scholarly research, teaching, and open and fraternal dialogue. In this way, the University will maintain its strong Catholic identity and continue to be a light within society, offering the beauty of the Christian message to a world athirst for hope and new life.” 

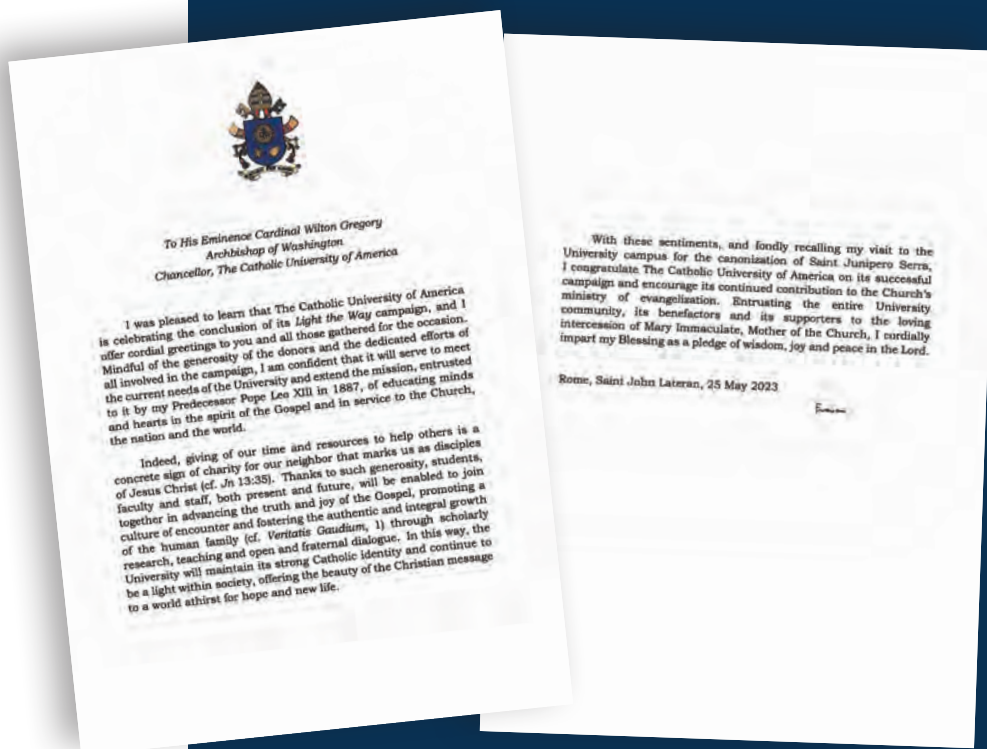
To His Eminence Cardinal Wilton Gregory, Archbishop of Washington and Chancellor of The Catholic University of America

I was pleased to learn that The Catholic University of America is celebrating the conclusion of its Light the Way campaign, and I offer cordial greetings to you and all those gathered for the occasion. Mindful of the generosity of the donors and the dedicated efforts of all involved in the campaign, I am confident that it will serve to meet the current needs of the University and extend the mission, entrusted to it by my Predecessor Pope Leo XIII in 1887, of educating minds and hearts in the spirit of the Gospel and in service to the Church, the nation and the world.

Indeed, giving of our time and resources to help others is a concrete sign of charity for our neighbor that marks us as disciples of Jesus Christ (cf. Jn 13:35). Thanks to such generosity, students, faculty, and staff, both present and future, will be enabled to join together in advancing the truth and joy of the Gospel, promoting a culture of encounter and fostering the authentic and integral growth of the human family (cf. *Veritatis Gaudium*, 1) through scholarly research, teaching, and open and fraternal dialogue. In this way, the University will maintain its strong Catholic identity and continue to be a light within society, offering the beauty of the Christian message to a world athirst for hope and new life.

With these sentiments, and fondly recalling my visit to the University campus for the canonization of St. Junipero Serra, I congratulate The Catholic University of America on its successful campaign and encourage its continued contribution to the Church’s ministry of evangelization. Entrusting the entire University community, its benefactors, and its supporters to the loving intercession of Mary Immaculate, mother of the Church, I cordially impart my blessing as a pledge of wisdom, joy, and peace in the Lord.

Rome, St. John Lateran, 25 May 2023
Francis



ALUMNI CORNER



2023 Cardinal WEEKEND

OCTOBER 13–15, 2023

REUNION YEARS

1963 | 1968 | 1973 | 1978 | 1983 | 1988 | 1993
1998 | 2003 | 2008 | 2013 | 2018 | 2023

We look forward to welcoming you back to campus this fall for your class reunion!

Find more information and register at engage.catholic.edu/cardinalweekend



► 1950s

Sister Laurette Bellamy, S.P., M.M. 1955, was recognized this summer for 75 years of service to the Church. Sister Laurette, 96, has ministered as a teacher, was music department chair at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College for many years, and volunteered in many capacities. She currently ministers as a parish volunteer at Sts. Francis and Clare Parish, in Greenwood, Ind.

► 1960s

Michael Morrissey, B.E.E. 1964, was honored to serve as emcee at the Willow Oaks Country Club in Richmond, Va., on March 15 to introduce Dr. Peter Kilpatrick, the 16th president of Catholic University, to the Richmond community. Among the VIPs in attendance, and also speaking, was Bishop of Richmond Barry C. Knestout. Joining in the event were alumni families and friends of the

University, high school students or graduates with an interest in attending the University, and members of the Benedictine and St. Gertrude's Catholic high schools in Richmond.

Robert "Bob" Crisalli, B.A. 1968, retired in December 2022 after more than a 50-year career in social work. He was a teacher for the Peace Corps in Kenya; a medical-surgical technician to fulfill his military obligation as a conscientious objector, having been a Brother of the Christian Schools (F.S.C.); counselor and administrator of several drug treatment and child abuse prevention programs; Hurricane Sandy crisis counselor and team leader; and an elder abuse counselor. He is a member of the Staten Island District Attorney's Hate Crimes Task Force, helped develop domestic violence policy for the NYC Administration for Children's Services, and was chair of the Staten Island Council on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Awesomesauce Photography



Michael Morrissey, B.E.E. 1964, was emcee of the Presidential Reception in Richmond, Va.

► 1970s

Cathy A. Costantino, B.S.W. 1977, M.S.W. 1978, completed her 30th year teaching as a part-time professor at Georgetown University Law Center, and her 10th year teaching at Fordham Law School. She teaches three courses: Negotiation, Mediation, and Conflict Management Systems Design. She has also taught at George Washington University Law School, Vermont Law School, Columbia University, and George Mason University. She is counsel at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) in Washington, D.C., and was recently honored for 35 years of federal service.

► 1980s

Karen Rampolla DeBonis, B.A. 1980, has published a memoir *Growth: A Mother, Her Son, and the Brain Tumor They Survived* (Apprentice House Press of Loyola University Maryland, May 2023) about a woman's naive expectations of motherhood and her inability to assert herself, even when her son's survival depended on it.

Patrick Hand, B.A. 1980, is a regular contributor to *Global Golf Post* and is the author of *The Age of Palmer: Pro Golf in the 1960s, its Greatest Era* (Canoe Tree Press, April 2023). He lives in Rapidan, Va., with his wife Katie.

Michele Joseph, B.S. 1984, was installed as a board member for Nonprofit Montgomery,



Shelter in Solitude: Alumna Pens and Stars in Award-winning Film

Siobhan Fallon Hogan, M.F.A. 1985, had no intention of writing her second film, *Shelter in Solitude*. The idea came to her in the middle of the night during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was like “divine inspiration,” Fallon Hogan recalled.

Set in the South in the early days of the pandemic, *Shelter in Solitude* tells the story of an unlikely friendship between a death row prisoner, Jackson, and his new guard, Valerie, a country singer with a fizzled-out career. Central to the storyline are the themes of faith and loneliness.

Valerie (Fallon Hogan) is desperate for love but looks in the wrong places. Despite her flaws, Valerie clings to her Catholic faith as the guiding force in her life. She urgently tries to evangelize Jackson (Peter Macon), who is furious with God and has only days left to live. The prison warden, Dwayne (Robert Patrick), happens to be Valerie's brother and is grappling with his own isolation from family and the moral burden of overseeing the execution.

Lighthearted moments come in the form of Valerie's eccentric personality — she pairs high heels with her prison guard uniform — and in the stunts of overzealous police officer Chris, played by Fallon Hogan's son Peter Hogan.

Longtime friend of Fallon Hogan, Dan Castellaneta, known for voicing Homer Simpson on *The Simpsons*, also makes an appearance in the film as a departing prison guard. Peter Macon, who plays Jackson, is known for his role on the television show *The Orville*, and Robert Patrick, who plays the warden, starred in *Terminator 2* and in Fallon Hogan's first film, *Rushed*.

Fallon Hogan described *Shelter in Solitude* as a “different type of story” in that it is “steeped in faith” but not overly pious.

“My characters are very flawed but they're deeply faithful. And their faith means everything to them, but they make a lot of mistakes in life and so that makes them more relatable,” she said.

Fallon Hogan said she received a “full, well-rounded education in the theater” at Catholic University. After graduating with her M.F.A. in acting, she moved to New York City. She recalled how during her first year in the city, Dominican Father Gilbert Hartke, the founder and former head of the Department of Drama at CatholicU, called her and said, “Irish, this Christmas, I give you the gift of courage.”

“It was exactly what I needed,” she said, after the discouragement of countless auditions and wondering about the future of her career. Father Hartke was “not only a mentor to everyone, but he was a friend,” she said. (Hartke Theatre bears his name.)

Fallon Hogan credits the M.F.A. in Acting program for the experience of performing in a one-person show as a student. While in New York, she decided to write and put on a one-person show. *Saturday Night Live* came and “that's how I ended up getting on *Saturday Night Live*,” Fallon Hogan said. “It opened so many doors for me for films and television.”

Over the course of three decades, Fallon Hogan has appeared on the stage and in film and television in productions such as *Forrest Gump*, *Men in Black*, *Seinfeld*, *Charlotte's Web*, and *Dancer in the Dark*. She wrote and starred in her first screenplay, *Rushed*, a mystery thriller drama that was released in 2021 and is now available for streaming on Amazon.

Shelter in Solitude received awards for Best Actress and Best Cinematographer at the Boston International Film Festival. The film premiered Sept. 26 at the Belcourt Theatre in Nashville, and released in U.S. theaters Sept. 28. It is available for streaming Oct. 12. — A.C.

A Leader in Nursing and Health Care Administration Retires After 47 Years

Like many first-year students, Cathy Brady-Copertino, B.S. 1976, entered Catholic University's nursing program not certain where she wanted to go with her future. One of nine children from a tightknit Maryland family, she'd grown up with the idea of becoming a nurse.

"My mother was Irish poor, growing up in New York," Brady-Copertino said. "She had wanted desperately to go to nursing school. It wasn't in the cards for her, but we all grew up with her admiration for nurses, her love of nursing."

The Bradys were also a musical family, and even as she pursued nursing, Brady-Copertino thought about switching to CatholicU's music program. Then one day, when working as a student nurse at Providence Hospital, she got her answer.

"There was a young man who had cancer," Brady-Copertino recalled. "He took out his guitar, and he was singing, and it was like a lightbulb went on. I could have a nursing career and music at the same time, combine both art forms, really. And I knew from that experience I wanted to go into cancer nursing."

It was an 'aha' moment that would take Brady-Copertino from working as an oncology nurse in hospitals that included Memorial Sloan Kettering and Holy Cross, to creating and managing cancer programs that have helped thousands in Maryland and abroad. This summer, Brady-Copertino retired from her position as vice president, cancer services, at Luminis Health's Decesaris Cancer Institute (DCI) in Annapolis, where she had held a number of progressive leadership roles over the years.

At her retirement gathering, DCI Medical Director Dr. Barry Meisenberg, described Brady-Copertino as "this powerful energy field ... like a meteorological force that influences weather for hundreds of miles around."

Under Brady-Copertino's leadership, DCI became one of the region's top cancer treatment centers, with more than a dozen programs. More than 2,500 new cancer cases are diagnosed annually, with over 500 cancer patients treated daily.

Brady-Copertino's energy field extends across the Atlantic. From 2006 to 2020, she partnered with a radiation oncologist to form Global Oncology Services Ireland, to establish cancer treatment centers and programs in Ireland.

Much has changed in health care since Brady-Copertino was a student at CatholicU. When she graduated, there were more nurses than jobs. Today, there aren't enough nurses, mainly, Brady-Copertino said, because there aren't enough nursing teachers.

What hasn't changed, said Brady-Copertino, is the quality of CatholicU's nursing program. "When I was trained at CatholicU, one of the hallmarks of the nursing program was their community nursing education. You went to class, and then did your immersion clinicals out in the field. So, we were down on Florida Avenue and Southeast D.C., these young nurses trotting



around downtown, taking care of the most vulnerable. It was the best education you could get.

"Now patients are being kept out of hospitals and are back in the community, so you've got to find a way to diversify your nursing workforce," Brady-Copertino said. "How do you train them to be an acute care nurse and a community nurse? I think CatholicU's nursing program still resonates as one of the top, if not the top, nursing schools in the nation, because it does teach all those skills."

Cancer treatment has made huge progress. Said Brady-Copertino, "The new treatments that are in development and that we are offering patients are extending life and quality of life significantly. It's so encouraging. But we haven't tackled yet the cost of this health care, so one of my pet passions is around how our health care systems invest in human capital that will advocate for patients to have access to the best care and the finances they need for these very expensive treatments."

Brady-Copertino still loves music. She and other medical staff at Anne Arundel Medical Center formed a band that plays at hospital and charity events. And for Brady-Copertino, even as she has achieved a remarkable career, that light that told her she wanted to be a nurse for cancer patients, especially children, has not dimmed. "The strength of those children and the wisdom of those children with cancer is remarkable. When you start out as a very young nurse, and you witness children dying of a disease that you can't do anything about, you feel helpless, until you understand that it is what you can do for that person, that day, that makes it better."

The young man who played the guitar at Providence Hospital died a few days after Brady-Copertino met him. "You think of patients through your career, and you never forget any of them," Brady-Copertino said. "I'll always remember that young man and each patient who came afterward." — E.T.

which advocates for and supports 200 nonprofits in Montgomery County, Md. She also serves as the co-chairperson of the advocacy committee. She is the CEO of Student Global Ambassador Program (SGAP Leaders), which fosters critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, emotional intelligence, and global awareness, to empower students to become effective leaders and problem-solvers. SGAP Leaders has impacted 5,000-plus teens in N.J., N.Y., D.C., Va., and Md. As part of the Georgetown University Incubator, she launched her for-profit company Next Generation Inc. in November 2022, which provides a pipeline for DEI committed clean energy companies to secure BIPOC, first-generation, and women ages 18–35 for jobs in the green economy.

Mimi (Maryellen) Schaub, B.A. 1985, M.A. 1991, associate teaching professor in the Department of Education Policy Studies at Penn State University, launched a new book *Motherhood, Childhood and Parenting in an Age of Education: An Invited Invasion* (Routledge, May 2023) at the University of Luxembourg. The book is about the fundamental transformation of motherhood and childhood as education, our largest social intervention, grows in institutional strength. It is about a change in parenting to a more schooled and cognitively based developmental approach, not just more demands but a change in the meaning of motherhood and also childhood. The book explores the increasingly cognitive and school-related expectations associated

with childhood as the partnership between parents and education intensifies in the joint project of human development.

Timothy Blair, D.M.A. 1988, was appointed as president of the board of directors of Kennett Symphony, the only professional symphony orchestra in Chester County, Pa.

Janice K. Lavoie, M.S.N. 1989, completed a postgraduate acute care nurse practitioner certificate at the University of Virginia School of Nursing in May. She is employed at Sentara Northern Virginia Medical Center as the urology department nurse practitioner.

Kevin Ryan, B.A. 1989, co-producer of *Parade*, won a Tony Award for best musical revival and received nominations for *Into the Woods*, *The Piano Lesson*, and *The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window* on Broadway.

► 1990s

Brig. Gen. Anthony J. Tata (Army retired), M.A. 1991, was elected to the board of directors of Coda Octopus Group, Inc. He has been the chief executive officer of Tata Leadership Group, a consulting firm, and the managing partner of Boundary Channel Partners since 2021.

Mariga Temple-West, B.A. 1992, published a military science fiction novel, *The Kissimmee Project*, (Severed Press, January 2023). She is a real estate agent with Weichert Realtors and plays

the violin with the Lansdowne Symphony Orchestra.

Louis Crishock, B.A. 1993, M.A. 1995, a foreign service officer with the U.S. Department of

State, was promoted to the senior foreign service, class of counselor. He currently serves as the U.S. senior Arctic official. He will mark 25 years of service with the State Department in January 2024.



Luis Rosell, B.A. 1984; John Mariani, B.S. Arch. 1984, B.Arch. 1985; Debra Japzon Gillum, B.A. 1984; and Kevin McDonald, B.S. Arch. 1983. The photo was taken at a gathering of friends in Alexandria, Va., on Dec. 10, 2022.



Kevin Ryan, B.A. 1989, with his wife, Clare (Neitzey), B.A. 1988, and his daughters Maeve and Maggie. Ryan won a Tony Award for best musical revival.

ALUMNI CORNER

Class Notes

Michael Gisondi, B.S. 1995, professor of emergency medicine, Stanford School of Medicine, has been appointed assistant dean for academic advising. He is the principal and founder of The Precision Education and Assessment Research Lab (The PEARL), co-director of the Scholarly Concentration in Medical Education, and a distinguished member of the Stanford Medicine Teaching and Mentoring Academy. He has been an award-winning advisor and mentor to students and residents in emergency medicine for two decades.

Monsignor Gerard McCarren, S.T.L. 1995, S.T.D. 1998, has been appointed rector and dean of Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology at Seton Hall University.

Ignacio A. Cortina, J.D. 1996, has been appointed by the Alliant Energy board of directors as a new independent director. He serves as executive vice president, chief legal officer, and secretary for Oshkosh Corp.

David Kelley, M.L.M. 1996, M.M. 1997, minister of music at Church of the Holy Comforter in Vienna, Va., won first prize at the 2023 Peter & Lois Fyfe Choral Composition Contest for his composition “Pentecost.” The Fyfe Award is supported by members of the Sewanee Church Music Conference, and his piece was performed at the 2023 conference in July. Also this summer he led his Holy Comforter choirs in a weeklong residency at Lincoln Cathedral, in Lincoln, U.K.

Alissa Memoli, B.A. 1996, was named president and chief development officer at Children’s Specialized Hospital Foundation. She came to CSH Foundation from the American Heart Association and assumed her new role in July. Children’s Specialized Hospital is New Jersey’s local Children’s Miracle Network Hospital.

Michael St. Pierre, B.A. 1996, has been named by the Diocese of Allentown as the fifth superintendent of Catholic Education, effective Aug. 1. A lifelong Catholic educator, he served the past seven years as executive director of the Catholic Campus Ministry Association.

Colleen Jarrott, B.A. 1997, J.D. 2002, has joined Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP as a partner in the New Orleans office. Formerly with Baker Donelson, she has more than 20 years of litigation experience in a wide range of industries, as well as advising oil and gas industry clients on legislative and regulatory matters related to carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration.

Richard G. Poulson, J.D. 1997, an attorney with Willig, Williams & Davidson has been recognized as a 2023 Pennsylvania Super Lawyer.

Michele Piotrowski, B.C.E. 1998, was promoted to vice president at Engineering Enterprises Inc., where she has worked for 21 years.

Jeffrey Wooden, M.A. 1998, has joined the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority as the director of emergency management. Before joining MNAA, he served as a senior



Outstanding Alumni Will Be Recognized on Cardinal Weekend

On Oct. 13–15, Catholic University will welcome alumni from around the country back to campus for Cardinal Weekend, the University’s annual reunion event. With school receptions, the annual tent party and football game, and special celebrations for those who graduated in class years ending in three or eight, there’s something for everyone.

On Friday night of Cardinal Weekend, the University will hold the Alumni Achievement Awards Ceremony. Typically held every other year — it was last held in 2019 — the event honors the extraordinary work and service of the University’s most distinguished alumni. After receiving nominations from the community, the Alumni Association Board of Governors convened a selection committee to choose alumni who are most deserving.

This year, the Alumni Awards will recognize two young alumni with the Young Alumni Achievement Award and four others with the Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award. They are:

Amanda Pellegrino, B.A. 2014

Brendan Duffy, B.A. 2013

Carol Spahn, B.A. 1990

Wanda Peters, B.S. 1988, B.S. 1989

Lt. Gen. (retired) Donald A Lamontagne, B.S.E. 1969

Peter Forlenza, B.A. 1988

This is also the first year when reunion events for the Columbus School of Law and Cardinal Weekend are being held at the same time, so all University alumni will be welcome back to campus together.

For more information and the full list of events, and to register for Cardinal Weekend, visit engage.catholic.edu/cardinalweekend.

manager of aviation security with Amazon at its Air Gateway Hub in Wilmington, Ohio.

Kevin Beirne, B.A. 1999, M.A. 2007, moved from his role as principal of Montini Catholic High School in Lombard, Ill., to president.

Melissa A. Jagel, M.F.A. 1999, has been appointed donor relations officer, west region, for Christendom College in Front Royal, Va. She is based out of San Diego, Calif.

Ryan McAllister, B.A. 1999, was elected Schoharie County Judge in November 2022 and began his 10-year term in January. He and his wife, **Debra (Ruggiero) McAllister B.S.N. 1999**, live in Cobleskill, N.Y.

► 2000s

Courtney Campbell, B.A. 2000, head of lending solutions at Digital Prime Technologies, was featured on the cover of *Securities Finance Times*, March 2023. She spoke about spearheading the firm's new digital asset lending platform, Tokenet, and how it plans to reshape the institutional digital lending market.

Michael J. Connolly, Ph.D. 2000, professor of history at Purdue University Northwest, published a book *Jacobitism in Britain and the United States, 1880–1910* (McGill-Queens University Press, January 2023).

James Frawley, B.A. 2001, was invited to do a TEDx Talk titled "Thriving Amid Constant Change: A Personal Accountability Framework," which outlines how



Architecture Alumna Terri Mestas Flies to Top of Airport Industry

As a child of Cuban immigrants, Terri (Caballero) Mestas, B.S.Arch. 1991, has never taken anything for granted.

"My parents came into this country with \$2.50," Mestas said. "They left (Cuba) with the clothes on their back. Their journey is incredible."

Mestas' parents built an architecture practice as they settled in Northern Virginia. As a 10-year-old, Mestas sat at a drafting table inside her family's firm, pressing on letters, and learning the basics of the business.

Eventually, Mestas and her brother, James, B.S.Arch. 2005, attended Catholic University and received architecture degrees. Mestas was a commuter student, which meant thriving in class and working in the family business for the rest of the day.

"I learned the practical side of architecture (at the family's business) and here (at the University) I got to be more creative and do a little more of the blue sky, dreaming big and visioning. I think there's beauty to both. Had I not had my experience here, it would have taken me down a very different path," she said.

All of her family's sacrifices have led to something special.

Mestas is chief development officer at Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA). LAWA owns Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), one of the nation's busiest hubs with more than 48 million passengers a year. LAWA selected Mestas to lead its \$30 billion capital improvement program in 2022. At LAX, the improvement program will touch terminals, airfields, facilities, cargo modernization, roadways, and more.

Mestas' career saw her become vice president of AECOM during a 15-year stint with the infrastructure consulting firm. Earlier this decade, she worked in Pasadena, Calif., as the director of design and construction at the California Institute of Technology.

The opportunity to steer Los Angeles' airport landscape was too tempting.

"Everybody knows LAX in the world," she said. "I don't care where you are in the world. There's a big opportunity to do something really special."

Mestas leads a team of over 400 employees, 31 prime firms, and 303 subconsultants executing work at LAX, Van Nuys, and Palmdale Airports.

Guiding the direction of LAWA is "a privilege," Mestas said, adding that her work will coincide with Los Angeles hosting the 2028 Summer Olympics. Mestas said that her leadership strategy stems from sharing a vision, highlighting momentum, and reducing obstacles for her team.

It's a long way away from the intense days as an architecture student at the Edward M. Crough Center for Architectural Studies.

Through the years, Mestas has returned to campus on recruiting missions for potential staff members. May 2 was her first visit inside Crough since she graduated. Mestas returned to talk about the unexpected roads architecture graduates can travel during their career.

Memories immediately flooded back as she peered from her favorite vantage point as a student on the second floor. She could watch all the action as a young person and dream of the future.

"It's taken me on so many twists and turns," Mestas said of her career. "I thought I was going to be drawing and designing. That's where my love was. It's not what I do at all. There's the operational side, the business side, the marketing side, and the going out and winning work side. There's what I do, there is an entity that has a bunch of money, and 'how do they spend it in a meaningful way?' It's really fun but not what you would think of with an architecture degree. My skills lend themselves perfectly to that." — M.P.

ALUMNI CORNER

Class Notes

we can prepare for change when we don't know what change is coming, at TEDx Downpatrick in Northern Ireland.

Kathleen Pluth, M.A. 2001, won in the hymn category of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress' songwriting competition. Her original text "Let the Earth Acclaim Christ Jesus" will be featured at the congress, July 17-21, 2024. The Eucharistic Revival Music Competition invited Catholic composers, poets, and songwriters to submit entries and was sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis.

Josh Foreso, B.A. 2003, was promoted to executive vice president at HITT Contracting in Falls Church, Va.

Nirmal L. Gomes, B.A.G.S. 2004, M.A. 2009, M.S.M. 2015, M.S.L.S.

2022, resource management specialist at CatholicU's Mullen Library, gave a presentation on "Transformative Leadership in the Academic Libraries" at the annual Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians 2023 conference, held in June at York University, Toronto.

Joseph McBurney, B.A. 2004, was sworn in by Rhode Island Gov. Dan McKee as an associate justice of the state's Superior Court. He served as an assistant attorney general in the criminal division in the Office of the Attorney General. He also is an instructor at the Rhode Island Municipal Police Training Academy, Rhode Island State Police Training Academy, and the Providence Police Training Academy.

Haley Jones, B.A. 2005, member engagement director of the American Staffing Association, has been named to the Staffing Industry Analysts list of top

diversity, equity, and inclusion influencers in U.S. and Canadian staffing. She has played an integral role in the development and management of ASA's growing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. She also leads the association's partnerships with organizations such as the National Urban League and the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy.

Summer K. Mersinger, J.D. 2007, was renominated by President Joe Biden for commissioner of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. She has served as a CFTC commissioner since March 2022, following the president's nomination and Senate confirmation.

John Stoelker, B.A. 2008, has been promoted to partner at McCarter & English LLP in the firm's Newark, N.J., office. His practice focuses on creditor rights,

bankruptcy, and commercial litigation. He represents lenders, financial institutions, secured and unsecured creditors, landlords, court-appointed receivers, and bankruptcy trustees in both state and federal court proceedings.

John Danneker, M.S.L.S. 2009, has been selected as the new dean of libraries at Western Washington University. He started in his new role in August.

Aryan Ofeany, B.S.Arch. 2009, has joined Mead & Hunt as a senior project designer. She offers extensive experience in the architecture and aviation industries, and her experience and location will be key as Mead & Hunt continues to grow and expand its aviation services in the mid-Atlantic region.

► 2010s

Elizabeth (Kuebler) Pigott, B.A. 2010, and husband Leigh welcomed their first child, John Edwin, in October 2022. The family lives in Tampa, Fla.

Amin Ganjalizadeh, B.A. 2011, owner and managing attorney, AG Legal, PLLC, was featured in *The Silicon Review*, June 2023. AG Legal is an immigration law firm in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that offers free initial consultations.

Susan Mulheron, J.C.L. 2011, chancellor for canonical affairs for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, completed her doctorate in canon law at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome in March 2023.



Natasha Wiltz, B.A. 2019, and Andrew Krema, BA. 2015, married on Dec. 30, 2022.



ALUMNI CORNER

Alumni Spotlight



Left: Kelly family at Matthew's Catholic University 2016 graduation. **Right:** Tracey Rossi with Shiobian Kelly, holding her husband's photo.

Family's Organ Donation Forges Cardinal Connection

Catholic University connections are strong, even when made in the worst circumstances.

Since 2014, ICU nurse Tracey Rossi, B.S.N. 1985, has worked as a transplant coordinator for LiveOnNY, the federally designated organization that oversees organ donation in the greater New York area. Part of her job is to educate people about the gift of life.

"You meet people on the worst day of their lives," she said, referring to those who have lost a loved one who is an organ donor.

In February 2022, Rossi met the family of 57-year-old Kevin Kelly at NYU Langone Hospital in Manhattan after he had suffered a fatal stroke.

"It was 4 a.m., they're pacing, they're distraught," she said, but in talking to the family, she realized there were many similarities to her own. "We live about 60 miles apart."

Kevin and his wife, Shiobian, were of a similar age to Tracey and her husband, Sid, B.A. 1983, J.D. 1986. Their children were close in age, too. She learned one of Kevin and Shiobian's sons, Matt, B.S. Arch. 2016, was a Catholic University graduate.

Matt recalled his family, including his brother Christopher, taking turns saying the rosary. "She witnessed that, and the conversation started flowing."

"We were able to bond," Rossi agreed. "The minute I said I went to Catholic University ... it didn't stop them from crying, but the comfort level in the room got a little bit better."

Kevin had decided to be an organ donor "when he was 17 and got his first driver's license," Shiobian said. He was kept on life support for several days, as organs have to be tested individually to make sure they are suitable to transplant.

"Tracey was the best," Shiobian said. "It was toward the tail end of COVID, and they let everyone come in and see him. My sisters and my brother, they felt it was too emotional, but my daughter Keegan and I didn't mind it; he was still with us."

Matt agreed the testing period helped give his family closure. "Because his death was so sudden — he had no prior health conditions — the fact

that we had those five days to process what was happening helped us all in that grief process.

"One of the most complicated things to test was the heart," Matt said, adding that his father "had the biggest heart in the world. Someone got his heart, and that's a good thing."

Ultimately, Kevin's organ donation saved five lives through the gift of his heart, liver, lungs, and kidneys.

Earlier this year, Rossi spoke about the experience, and the connection that has grown, during a golf fundraiser for LiveOnNY Foundation in Kevin's honor.

"I asked her to do it," Shiobian said, adding that while Rossi spoke, "you could hear a pin drop in the room."

As a result of that speech, many people Shiobian knows have since signed up to become organ donors. She and Rossi touch base "all the time." Rossi called her earlier this year to speak to another family who had experienced a similar tragedy.

Rossi said these connections are something LiveOnNY wants to foster to help more people understand, and choose, organ donation. Nationwide, more than 100,000 people are on a waiting list to receive an organ transplant.

Rossi and Matt, who text, have talked about how beautiful campus is, and their joy in seeing old friends whenever they return. This year, Rossi is bringing her 16-year-old daughter to Cardinal Weekend.

"I remember talking with Matthew, saying how the campus is revitalized, and it's so good to see the same people who are retaining those values we were taught."

Matt, who with his wife, Ellen, lost their infant daughter Kennedy due to a car accident not long before his father's death, recently welcomed a son they named Kevin.

"It's been a crazy couple of years," he said, explaining his family is working to donate a hospital suite where grieving families can mourn when they lose a baby. "I was telling Tracey, there are a lot of parallels to my dad's situation. Organ donor families could do with a room to go to that's just a bedroom" so they aren't surrounded by hospital equipment.

"Tracey is very much involved in her faith, and our Catholic values made our connection stronger. When something tragic happens, I feel our faith really comes out."

— A.K.

Politics Alumnus Creates Debate Team for the Deaf

In U.S. society, where civic debate often falls prey to disrespect and polarization, Catholic University alumnus Brendan Stern, M.A. 2010, Ph.D. 2018, is promoting healthy democratic discussion among a group that's historically been an untapped resource — the Deaf community.

An associate professor in the government program at Gallaudet University's School of Civic Leadership, Business, and Social Change, Stern established the first deaf debate team in the United States at Gallaudet in 2020.

"At the individual level, debate fosters critical thinking and public speaking skills," Stern said. "Gallaudet students deserve an opportunity to walk in the town square and debate topics across differences freely."

The 2023–24 term marks the team's second year of intercollegiate debate.

Gallaudet University, recognized as a global leader in promoting the education of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, was founded in 1864. Stern received a bachelor's in government at Gallaudet in 2006, and went on to earn a master's in American politics from American University in 2008.

A California native, Stern attended the California School for the Deaf and graduated from University High School in Orange County.

Although University High hosted the regional deaf and hard-of-hearing program, Stern found himself the only deaf student in his Advanced Placement courses. And even though Gallaudet's debate team is his brainchild, he never had the opportunity to be on a debate team. He did, however, excel on one winning team — the high school's basketball team.

A desire for academic excellence coupled with his love of basketball prompted a move East, where Stern attended Gallaudet and played hoops for four years on the school team. One of his friendly rivals was Catholic University.

"I have fond memories of playing CUA when Coach Lonergan (B.A. 1988) was around and coming off a national championship," Stern recalled.

After graduation, Stern coached at Gallaudet, moving up from an assistant coach to head coach of the women's, and then the men's, team. Despite the team setting a new school record for victories in his last year, Stern turned his attention to pursuing an academic career at Gallaudet.

When Stern decided to seek another master's degree and a doctorate in American politics, Catholic University seemed like a natural choice, although he admits that "while the religious nature of CUA gave me pause at first, it wasn't my deaf or Jewish identity that was challenged at CUA, but rather my progressive views."

Stern described himself at the time he arrived at Catholic University as "a hippie who believed that we had all the answers."

He was quickly dispelled of this notion, saying that his time at Catholic University was "transformative" thanks in large part to professors like David Walsh, professor of politics, and Claes G. Ryn, professor and founding director of the Center for the Study of Statesmanship.



"Their courses in political philosophy and political theory introduced me to 'new' ideas grounded in history, logic, and tradition," he said.

Stern said he's grateful to them "for challenging and critiquing my arguments based on their quality, or lack thereof, and for treating me as any other student. I am deeply indebted to them."

Today, Stern is executive director of the Center for Democracy in Deaf America (CDDA), a nonpartisan group at Gallaudet for which he laid the groundwork. In addition to the debate team, CDDA promotes other activities focused on healthy debate and civic involvement through American Sign Language.

One program, called "Agboola Dinner," brings a diverse group together for discussion. The aim is to build connections across ideological, racial, ethnic, and linguistic differences. Entering its third year, Stern said the project "is working to include students and faculty from colleges and universities" in Washington, D.C., and its suburbs. "We would love to collaborate with CUA," added Stern.

Gallaudet received the 2022 Students Learn Students Vote Coalition Award for Contributing to an Equitable Democracy. In accepting the award on Gallaudet's behalf, Stern noted that "the common problem facing us today is not that deaf Americans do not hear and speak, but that Americans do not have enough opportunities to listen and engage across differences in a divided country."

Stern is committed to enlarging those opportunities. He lives in the Washington, D.C. area with "the loves of my life," his wife Dana, and their two children, Mahalia and Elon.

— E.C.

ALUMNI CORNER

Class Notes

Rev. Dustin P. Dought, S.T.B. 2013, S.T.L. 2018, of the Diocese of Lafayette has been appointed executive director of the Secretariat of Divine Worship, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C.

Sophia Pileggi Lopez, B.M. 2014, M.M. 2017, completed a performance residency as part of a prize she won from the International Cochran Piano Competition in 2019. Originally scheduled March 2020 but canceled due to the pandemic and later the birth of her first child in 2022, the performance was finally arranged for June 2023. As part of the residency she received private branding consulting; private lessons with composer and pianist Julian Cochran; a CD recording session; and a performance opportunity at the Polish Radio Symphony Hall in Warsaw. Also, she is excited to share that her private piano pupil, Isabella Romero, the granddaughter of former University President John Garvey, won second prize in the Crescendo International Piano Competition in December.

Andrew Krema, B.A. 2015, and **Natasha Wiltz, B.A. 2019**, were married on Dec. 30, 2022, in San Juan, P.R., celebrated by **Rev. James Glasgow, Ph.B. 2016**. They were introduced by former University President John Garvey on Sept. 11, 2021, at the *Angels Unawares* CatholicU alumni event in Chicago. Natasha graduated from the University of Chicago Law School and is an attorney at the Federal Communications Commission. Andrew is pursuing a Ph.D. in philosophy at Loyola University Chicago. They live in Scarsdale, N.Y.

Michael Monahan, B.A. 2015, and **Emily Schauer, B.S.N. 2015**, were married on Sept. 25, 2021. They live in Monroe Township, N.J.

Jane O'Hagan Townsend, B.A. 2016, and **George Townsend B.A. 2017**, announce the baptism of their daughter, Emilia Jane Townsend, at Holy Rosary Church in Washington, D.C. Godparents are CatholicU alumni **Rosemary Townsend, B.A. 2017**, and **Daniel O'Hagan, B.S. 2018**.

Nicholas A. Brown, M.S.L.I.S. 2017, part-time faculty member of CatholicU's Department of Library and Information Science, was appointed assistant chief of the Library of Congress music division.

Ashley Ciacco, B.C.E. 2017, and **Kyle Loomie, B.C.E. 2016, M.S. 2017**, were married in Montauk, N.Y., on Oct. 7, 2022.

Enrique Reynosa, D.M.A. 2017, and **Anna Nizhegorodtseva, D.M.A. 2017**, members of Vitali Quartet, performed at Music at Penn Alps concert season in Grantville, Md., in June.

Christopher J. Wallace, M.Arch. 2017, and **Adrianna Matyas, B.S.Arch. 2016**, were married on Sept. 24, 2022, in Alexandria, Va., surrounded by family, friends, and many CatholicU alum. Adrianna is a project manager for Vericon Construction and Chris is a design manager for the U.S. Department of State Overseas Building Operations. They live in Alexandria, Va.



Schauer-Monahan wedding

Hailey Hawn



Ciacco-Loomie wedding

Kate Grace



Matyas-Wallace wedding

ALUMNI CORNER

Class Notes



Baptism of Emilia Jane Townsend with parents Jane O'Hagan Townsend, B.A. 2016, and George Townsend, B.A. 2017, and godparents Daniel O'Hagan, B.S. 2018, and Rosemary Townsend, B.A. 2017.



Dunning-Schiaffo wedding

Megan Dunning, B.A. 2018, and Brendan Schiaffo, B.C.E. 2018, were married on Dec. 3, 2022. They were joined in celebration by CatholicU alumni from the Classes of 2018 and 2019.

Alexander Santana, B.A. 2020, was featured in *Influence Magazine* as a rising star in Florida politics for 2023.

Rev. Jacob Henry Gruber, S.T.B. 2022, was ordained a priest by Bishop David Zubik for the Diocese of Pittsburgh in June.

► 2020s

Elise LaFleur, B.A. 2020, married Mitch Rabalais on Feb. 4, at St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church in Abbeville, La. Many alumni of CatholicU were in attendance. They live in Washington, D.C., where Elise works as the legislative correspondent for U.S. House Majority Leader Steve Scalise of Louisiana and Mitch is the press secretary for U.S. Sen. Katie Boyd Britt of Alabama.

Georgina Warren, M.S.L.S. 2022, announces the debut of her first book, *Tales of Virtuous Stepmothers*, a collection of 12 original fairy tales with illustrations depicting stepmothers as protective family guardians, the perfect remedy for the “wicked stepmother” myth. She created this book to celebrate the special bond she has with her own stepmother and to provide blended families with new stories to entertain and inspire future generations.

Share Your News!

Do you have news to share with your classmates? Submit a class note to cua-classnotes@cua.edu. If you moved or changed your email address or phone number, you can easily update your information: fill out a form at engage.catholic.edu/subscriptions, email cua-alumni@cua.edu, or call 202-319-5608.

Bitten by Film Criticism Bug

Sean O'Connell, B.A. 1996, had the great responsibility of writing about one of the most enduring comic book heroes of the last 50 years — Spider-Man.

O'Connell, who holds a bachelor's degree in history, is the author of *With Great Power*. It's his latest big swing in a career that includes being the managing editor of the popular entertainment site CinemaBlend and sitting on the board of directors for the Critics Choice Association.

O'Connell told *CatholicU* magazine how it all started at the University.

Your book *With Great Power* covers Spider-Man's role in film during the last 20 years. What makes the character so endearing?

It all comes down to his relatability. As was proven in the spectacular film *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, anyone can wear the mask. In the best Spider-Man stories, our hero succumbs to very human emotions. He'd much rather date a girl, earn some money working, or study hard enough to boost his grades than put on a pair of pajamas to go out and fight the villain of the week.

You're working on a Bruce Willis book next. How has it differed from your previous books?

The process has been completely different, which is extremely refreshing. Where *With Great Power* and my DC Comics book *Release the Snyder Cut* were interview heavy and dependent on breaking news coverage, *Bruce Willis: Unbreakable* has been a more critical analysis of his body of work. He's one of our last great movie stars, and I don't believe that he receives enough credit for the brave choices and creative risks he took as an actor.

Could you have imagined when you were at CatholicU that you'd be covering film full time? What were your interests then?

Never. CatholicU didn't start its Media and Communications Studies program until my sophomore year, so I was only able to minor in it. Dr. Glen Johnson taught those classes in the basement of McMahan, and he was outstanding. I saw every new movie at Union Station, Dupont Circle, or the two-screen Uptown. I just never realized you could make a career out of film passion until a co-worker and CatholicU alum John Gagliardi (B.A. 1996) opened my eyes. We both worked as Admissions officers and would sit around the conference center geeking out about movies. And John told me, "You really should talk about movies for a living." Boom. The lightbulb went off.

What lesson has stayed with you?

Dr. Johnson's knowledge only made me want to start over from the very beginning and rewatch everything with a fresh set of eyes. I still apply every trick he taught me when watching and critiquing a movie. I like to think I've developed my own voice as I've refined my opinions, but it all started in McMahan Hall.



How has your view of film criticism and reporting changed during your career?

I still believe in film criticism. I think audience members still value the opinion of a critic, if it's a critic they trust because your tastes line up. But I always encourage everyone to be the ultimate judge. Go see what you want to see. Engage with it. Embrace or reject it. Film is art. Art is subjective. And critical debate is timeless!

You met your wife at CatholicU. How did that happen?

Michele (LaMontagne, B.A. 1997) and I were a year apart. During my junior year, I was a Parent Orientation Adviser for the Orientation program. Cynthia Lee Morris ran an incredible program, and we were all so proud to be a part of it. Michele was an Orientation Adviser her sophomore year, and I noticed her out of the crowd of smiling, happy OAs. That was part of the gig. You had to be a bubbly people person to greet all of the nervous incoming freshmen. Anyway, Michele and I arrived for a training program, and we both were the last ones in line to grab breakfast in University Center West. There was one orange juice container left, and I demanded she take it. She tells me that's the moment that she knew. This was 1994, and we've been together ever since.

— M.P.

ALUMNI CORNER

In Memoriam

Richard V. Pawlewicz, M.S.W. 1949, Jan. 28, 2023.

Olive K. Jacobson, M.A. 1950, Ph.D. 1974, June 4, 2023.

Rev. Roman Stadtmueller, S.D.S., B.A. 1950, M.Div. 1954, M.S.W. 1987, May 10, 2023.

Cecilia A. Braam, M.S.W. 1951, April 11, 2023.

Richard J. Snider, J.D. 1951, Dec. 11, 2022.

Robert P. Stavrakas, B.A. 1951, Jan. 29, 2023.

Richard H. Bonvillain, S.T.B. 1952, Jan. 12, 2023.

James A. Flood Sr., B.A. 1952, May 13, 2023.

Rev. Frank J. McNulty, S.T.L. 1952, S.T.D. 1963, April 2, 2023.

Edward G. Emerling, M.A. 1954, Ph.D. 1970, March 6, 2023.

Edward L. Maillet, M.S.W. 1954, D.S.W. 1966, Feb. 24, 2023.

Joseph E. Jeffs, M.S.L.S. 1955, April 22, 2023.

Daniel A. Pompa, M.S. 1955, Ph.D. 1963, June 10, 2023.

John M. Bulla, B.C.E. 1956, April 5, 2023.

Margaret S. Wholey, B.S.N. 1956, M.S.N. 1987, March 4, 2023.

Sister Dennis M. Sullivan, C.S.J., M.S.N. 1957, May 22, 2023.

Sister Mary V. Kercher, O.S.B., M.A. 1958, Jan. 20, 2023.

Cosmo Lioni, M.M. 1958, Feb. 16, 2023.

Oscar H. Medina, B.C.E. 1958, May 28, 2023.

Paul Fedio, M.A. 1959, Ph.D. 1964, Feb. 9, 2023.

Dorothy H. Fowerbaugh, M.A. 1959, March 23, 2023.

James N. Maleady, B.Arch. 1959, M.Arch. 1972, April 7, 2023.

Richard A. Morel, B.A. 1959, May 10, 2023.

Dan Bowers, M.E.E. 1960, April 19, 2023.

Rev. James D. Daley, M.A. 1960, Dec. 26, 2022.

Rev. Andre G. Papineau, S.D.S., B.A. 1960, M.A. 1971, April 12, 2023.

Marjorie Hartman Tibery, B.A. 1960, June 22, 2023.

Sister M. C. Cordeau, O.S.C., M.S.N. 1961, April 4, 2023.

Eugene J. Hunckler, M.A. 1961, March 6, 2023.

Monica Koch, M.S.N. 1961, Feb. 8, 2023.

Lawrence P. Ulrich, B.A. 1961, M.A. 1962, May 3, 2023.

Lottie M. Wright, M.S.L.S. 1961, Dec. 8, 2022.

Mary L. (Sullivan) Fraser, B.S.N. 1962, Feb. 18, 2023.

Sister Agnes Imelda Frohnapel, O.P., M.A. 1962, July 1, 2023.

Joseph R. Gaubinger, M.A. 1962, Ph.D. 1967, March 14, 2023.

Rev. Edward E. Mehok, M.A. 1962, Feb. 19, 2023.

Sister Marie A. Pelland, M.A. 1962, May 24, 2023.

Leah K. Nekritz, M.S.L.S. 1963, Feb. 10, 2023.

Florence Santore, M.S.N. 1963, July 5, 2023.

Rev. George A. Wilkinson Jr., J.D. 1963, April 16, 2023.

Harold E. Shaar, Ph.D. 1964, May 11, 2023.

Ronald F. Boudreaux, B.A. 1965, Feb. 4, 2023.

Sister Claudette R. Huot, D.H.S., M.A. 1965, March 7, 2023.

Sister Kathleen Kane, S.S.M.N., B.A. 1965, March 8, 2023.

Samuel LaBeach, M.S.W. 1965, Nov. 22, 2022.

Monsignor James W. McLoughlin, M.A. 1965, May 13, 2023.

Mary M. Nickolaus, B.A. 1965, Jan. 2, 2023.

Sister Margaret A. Rooney, R.S.M., M.A. 1965, June 5, 2023.

Richard H. Rosswurn, M.A. 1965, Dec. 30, 2022.

Michael J. Wigglesworth, B.A. 1965, April 16, 2023.

Jerome F. Filteau, B.A. 1966, S.T.B. 1970, April 4, 2023.

Harvard G. Ayers, M.A. 1967, Ph.D. 1972, March 9, 2023.

Rev. Donald F. Buggert, O.Carm., S.T.L. 1967, S.T.D. 1979, June 23, 2023.

James A. Nugent, J.D. 1967, June 10, 2023.

Sister Teresa M. Bohren, S.S.J., M.S.W. 1968, May 18, 2023.

Joseph J. Christian, B.A. 1968, April 22, 2023.

Mary C. Cummins, B.A. 1968, M.S.W. 2001, March 10, 2023.

Margaret M. Kenny, B.A. 1968, Dec. 28, 2022.

Rev. Patrick M. McDonough, S.T.B. 1968, Dec. 14, 2022.

Thomas M. Novak Sr., M.M.E. 1968, May 15, 2023.

Rev. Thomas J. Tucker, O.S.F.S., M.T.S. 1968, Feb. 7, 2023.

Ann M. Chase, M.S.W. 1969, March 12, 2023.

Thomas M. Fogarty, B.A. 1969, Jan. 21, 2023.

Rev. Patrick D. McCool, O.S.B., M.S.L.S. 1969, Dec. 15, 2022.

Robert F. Murphy Jr., J.D. 1969, Jan. 24, 2023.

ALUMNI CORNER

In Memoriam

David B. Richards, M.A. 1969, June 24, 2023.

Mary M. Welker, M.S.W. 1969, Feb. 6, 2023.

Sister Rosemary Borntreger, S.P., M.F.A. 1970, March 6, 2023.

Sister Helen Cranley, S.C., M.S.N. 1970, April 18, 2023.

Sister Irene M. Fortier, D.H.S., M.A. 1970, June 9, 2023.

John R. Heard, M.M. 1970, March 26, 2023.

David Peter Langlois, J.D. 1970, June 22, 2023.

Barbara Bamford Lynyak, J.D. 1970, July 19, 2016.

Marie L. O'Brien, B.A. 1970, Feb. 8, 2023.

Sister Martha A. Wachtel, C.S.J., M.M. 1970, Jan. 21, 2023.

Helen L. Gallena, M.S.N. 1971, June 19, 2023.

Michael A. Higgins, J.D. 1971, April 3, 2023.

Monsignor Richard Moyer, M.S.W. 1971, June 27, 2023.

Rev. William J. Parham, B.A. 1971, M.A. 1972, July 7, 2023.

Ted S. Parker, B.A. 1971, Feb. 14, 2023.

Sister Anne Cunningham, S.C., M.A. 1972, June 2, 2023.

Bernard J. Dobroski, M.M. 1972, Feb. 19, 2023.

Rev. D. T. Grimme, B.A. 1972, March 17, 2023.



Monsignor Robert F. Trisco, Professor of Ecclesiastical History

Monsignor Robert Frederick Trisco, a prominent figure in the field of ecclesiastical history, died on July 29, 2023, in Washington, D.C., at age 93.

Born on Nov. 11, 1929, in Chicago, he graduated from St. Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Ill., with a bachelor's degree in 1951. In 1954, he was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Chicago. He then earned a licentiate in sacred theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome in 1955 and a doctoral degree in ecclesiastical history in 1962.

Monsignor Trisco served on the faculty at Catholic University from 1959 until his retirement in 2000. He became professor of Church history in 1975 and the Kelly-Quinn Distinguished Professor of Church History in 1999. He guided 25 successful doctoral projects, nurturing future scholars.

He held key positions such as executive secretary of the American Catholic Historical Association from 1961 to 2009 and as managing editor of *The Catholic Historical Review* from 1963 to 2005. From 1962 to 1965, then-Father Trisco served as *peritus*, or theological adviser, at the Second Vatican Council. Additionally, he participated in interfaith dialogues, including the International Commission for Comparative Ecclesiastical History and the International Joint Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

Monsignor Trisco was named an honorary prelate with the title of monsignor in 1992 and a protonotary apostolic supernumerary in 2005. He received the Centennial Award from the American Catholic Historical Association in 2019.

In 2020, Monsignor Trisco pledged \$650,000 in support of the John K. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library and Church history studies at Catholic University. The majority of this contribution will establish The Monsignor Robert Frederick Trisco Church History Library Endowment, enriching the University's collection and aiding future historians in their research.

A funeral Mass was celebrated by his former student, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, M.A. 1981, Ph.D. 1985, on Aug. 7, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Another former student, Rev. James Garneau, M.A. 1983, Ph.D. 2000, gave a tribute.

ALUMNI CORNER

In Memoriam

Irene V. Honn, B.A. 1972, March 2, 2023.

Sister Justina M. Miller, O.S.F., M.A. 1972, April 6, 2023.

Linda Susan Nash, B.A. 1972, June 19, 2023.

Edward H. Walters, M.M. 1972, March 11, 2023.

John J. Bergeron, J.D. 1973, Jan. 29, 2023.

Rev. Michael Brizio, I.M.C., S.T.B. 1973, March 27, 2023.

Thomas P. Goedde, B.A. 1973, Jan. 10, 2023.

Ulf Åke Wilhelm Grahn, M.M. 1973, Jan. 25, 2023.

Lawrence J. Kalcevic, M.S.W. 1973, Jan. 1, 2023.

Joan M. Kelly, M.A. 1973, May 5, 2023.

James Stephen “Steve” Skinner, B.E.E. 1973, Dec. 31, 2021.

Vincent E. Slomin Jr., Ph.D. 1973, Feb. 17, 2023.

Charles L. Weatherhead, J.D. 1973, Jan. 5, 2023.

Janet A. Donahoe, M.S.L.S. 1974, May 30, 2023.

Robert Paul Ingel, B.A. 1976, M.S. 1979, Ph.D. 1982, Feb. 7, 2023.

Carol J. Weyland, Ph.D. 1976, April 22, 2023.

Regina T. Crawley, M.A. 1977, May 12, 2023.

Anne M. Drachbar, B.A. 1977, Dec. 21, 2022.

Gwendolyn M. King, B.A. 1977, March 6, 2023.

Sister Thomas D. Hrynewich, S.S.M.I., M.Ch.A. 1978, Jan. 6, 2023.

Henry S. Rosenberger, M.S.L.S. 1978, Dec. 11, 2022.

Margaret K. Solorzano, M.S.L.S. 1978, June 1, 2023.

Ann H. Van Deventer, M.S.W. 1978, Dec. 22, 2022.

Mary R. Woods, B.A. 1978, Jan. 23, 2022.

Monsignor George R. Trabold, J.C.B. 1979, J.C.L. 1981, April 17, 2022.

Jill C. Cunningham, B.S.N. 1980, Sept. 11, 2016.

Stephen R. Hay, M.A. 1980, M.S.W. 1980, Feb. 6, 2023.

Betty A. Ottinger, D.S.W. 1980, Jan. 25, 2023.

Maryann Taranowski, attended the University fall 1980, March 21, 2023.

Rev. John W. Crossin, O.S.F.S., Ecumenical Expert, Alumnus, and Lecturer

Oblate of St. Francis de Sales Father John W. Crossin, M.A. 1975, M.A. 1978, Ph.D. 1982, died on May 12, 2023, at age 75. A teacher, theologian, author, and scholar, Father Crossin was an expert in the field of Christian ecumenism and interreligious dialogue.

Born on May 17, 1947, in Philadelphia, Father Crossin joined the Oblates after graduating from high school in 1965. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1976. Father Crossin received a bachelor's degree in mathematics at Allentown College of St. Francis de Sales (now DeSales University), master's degrees in both psychology and theology from Catholic University, and a doctoral degree in moral theology from Catholic University.

In 1999, Father Crossin was appointed executive director of the Washington Theological Consortium. During his 14 years there, he also taught at several theological schools, including the School of Theology and Religious Studies at Catholic University, Wesley Theological Seminary,

Virginia Theological Seminary, and Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary.

From 2012 to 2017, he served as executive director of the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, D.C. At this time, Father Crossin was also a visiting fellow at the Woodstock Theological Center at Georgetown University, president of the North American Academy of Ecumenists, and a consultor to the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity at the Vatican.

He then became director of spiritual formation at St. Luke Institute in Silver Spring, Md., until his retirement in 2022.

Father Crossin published numerous articles to theological and ecumenical journals, and authored five books on topics relating to ecumenism, the virtues, and friendship. In 2022, he wrote his last book, *Moving into the Ecumenical Future: Foundations of a Paradigm for Christian Ethics*.

A Mass of Christian burial was held on May 17.

Nancy Phelan Wfchech





Ingrid Merkel, Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Studies

Ingrid Merkel, M.A. 1963, Ph.D. 1966, retired associate professor of comparative literature and former vice provost and dean of undergraduate studies, died on June 2, 2023, at age 84.

Born in Cologne, Germany, on Dec. 30, 1938, Merkel studied literature and philosophy at the University of Cologne. Merkel came to the United States in 1962, and earned a master's degree in 1963 and a doctoral degree in German and comparative literature in 1966 at Catholic University.

Merkel then joined the University's Department of Modern Languages and Literature faculty, where she served for 42 years. In 1982, Merkel was appointed assistant academic vice president for undergraduate studies (later vice provost) to oversee undergraduate programs throughout the University.

In 1984, Merkel began the University Honors Program with an invitation to faculty members in the humanities, philosophy, social sciences, and later environmental studies to create an interdisciplinary and multicultural core curriculum of liberal studies for undergraduates. The faculty agreed enthusiastically to the project. A grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities enabled the start of the program, and Merkel served as director for 25 years.

Merkel was a beloved mentor to generations of Honors students, many of whom kept in touch with her for decades. The Dr. Ingrid Merkel Endowed Honors Program Fund was established in 2008 on the occasion of her retirement by contributions from faculty, alumni, and friends, and is used to support educational travel for Honors Program students.

In a collection of letters given to her upon retirement, former University President Bishop (then-Father) David M. O'Connell, C.M., J.C.L. 1987, J.C.D. 1990, wrote that for Merkel "being director of the Honors Program was more than a job — it was her passion. And the Honors students whose path she crossed were more than just students — they were extensions of her own family."

Merkel married Antanas Sužiedėlis, M.A. 1955, Ph.D. 1957, professor emeritus of psychology and former dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Catholic University, after they retired. Sužiedėlis, who has a pilot's license, and Merkel crisscrossed the continent many times in their small plane, from the Bahamas to Mexico, from the Yukon to Nova Scotia, and to Rhode Island, where they wed.

In 2020, Merkel published a novel, *The Shaman's Daughter*, which follows the journey of a young woman from Beringia in the late Ice Age who is sent through time to rectify a crime. She also published two chapters in German from a planned book based on her father's daily letters to her mother during World War II from the battlefield in the Baltics where he died.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held June 23, at St. Mary's Parish in Annapolis, Md.

Michael A. Bell, J.D. 1981, Feb. 5, 2023.

Most Rev. Macram M. Gassis, emeritus bishop of El Obeid, Sudan, M.Ch.A. 1981, June 4, 2023.

Joan L. Jacob, M.S.N. 1981, Jan. 27, 2023.

Christopher D. Kniesler, M.A. 1981, March 24, 2023.

William E. McKenney III, M.A. 1981, May 12, 2023.

Ulla E. Bogdan, M.A. 1982, Feb. 16, 2023.

Timothy C. Brown, B.A. 1982, April 6, 2023.

Lt. Col. Mary B. Padgett, M.S.N. 1982, March 2, 2023.

Lois H. Culler, M.S.L.S. 1983, Feb. 21, 2023.

James Joseph Dunphy, J.D. 1983, April 13, 2020.

Robert R. McGill, B.A. 1983, J.D. 1988, Feb. 1, 2023.

Bernadette H. Gersh, B.S.N. 1984, Feb. 5, 2023.

Corin F. Morris, M.S.W. 1984, Feb. 10, 2023.

Susan M. Bell, M.S.W. 1985, Jan. 25, 2023.

Michael F. Murray, B.A. 1985, May 4, 2023.

Peter L. Staesnick, Ph.D. 1985, Feb. 4, 2023.

Martin A. Zielinski, M.A. 1985, Ph.D. 1988, Ph.D. 1989, June 25, 2023.

Morton M. Rumberg, Ed.D. 1986, May 24, 2023.

Catherine A. Senftle, M.S.L.S. 1987, May 2, 2023.

Kathryn W. Chamberlin, M.S.W. 1989, Feb. 7, 2023.

Helen Mouton Landry, M.S.W. 1989, May 27, 2023.

Timothy E. Sheaff, B.A. 1989, June 21, 2023.

Edward C. Furtek, J.D. 1990, Dec. 15, 2022.

ALUMNI CORNER

In Memoriam

Joseph J. Reyda, B.A. 1990, June 27, 2023.

Courtney L. Nerenberg, B.A. 1991, March 23, 2023.

Joseph Thomas Noussair, M.Arch. 1991, April 7, 2023.

George T. Heery Jr., B.A. 1992, June 25, 2023.

David R. Dumaine, B.A. 1993, Jan. 25, 2023.

Julie Anne Burke, B.A. 1995, M.S.W. 1996, March 29, 2023.

Monsignor Raymond Goehring, J.C.L. 1997, March 18, 2023.

David Karl Hirsch, B.S.N. 1997, May 9, 2023.

Rev. Thomas G. Honold, D.S.W. 2002, Dec. 25, 2022.

Christopher Francis Ridgeway, B.C.E. 2010, March 17, 2023.

Motoko Howard, M.M. 2012, D.M.A. 2020, March 9, 2023.

Thierry Atangana, M.S.M. 2020, M.H.A. 2022, Feb. 19, 2023.

▶ FACULTY/STAFF

Billie Jo “Cookie” Brooks, dining services, who served for over 50 years, April 27, 2023.

Rev. James N. Gelson, S.J., executive assistant to the acting rector (1968–1969); special assistant to the President (1969–1970); consultant to the President (1970–1971), June 5, 2023.

Ingrid G. Merkel, M.A. 1963, Ph.D. 1966, retired associate professor of comparative literature and former vice provost and dean of undergraduate studies, who served for 42 years, June 2, 2023.

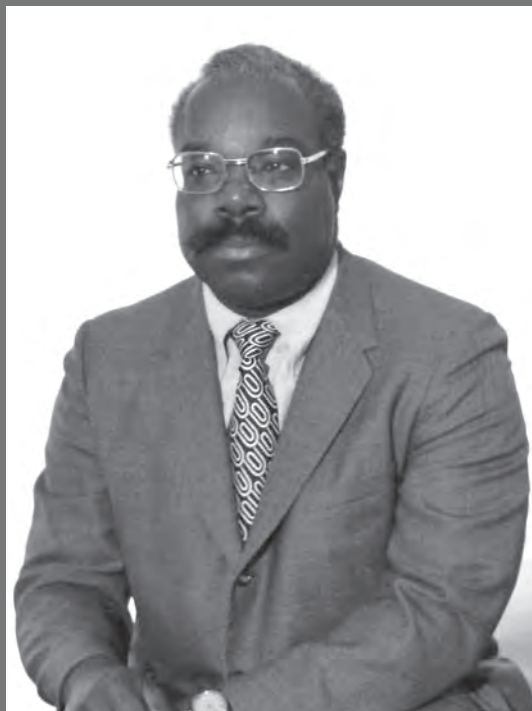
Thomas Aquinas Mulquin, B.C.E. 1987, senior director of facilities capital project management, from 2017 to 2023, May 2, 2023.

Jeanne Marie Olexy, B.M. 1976, M.M. 1980, former manager of user services in technology services, who served for 21 years, March 25, 2023.

Monsignor Robert F. Trisco, professor emeritus of ecclesiastical history, who served for 44 years, July 29, 2023.

Christopher Leonard Vetick, B.A.G.S. 2009, former assistant director of grounds and fleet maintenance, who served the University for 18 years, July 9, 2023.

Correction: Burton MacDonald, Ph.D. 1975, Oct. 20, 2022. In the spring 2023 issue we incorrectly listed his degree. We regret the error.



Robert Thomas Bowser Jr., Alumnus, Donor

Robert T. Bowser Jr., M.S. 1959, Ph.D. 1963, a pioneering microbiologist, died on Dec. 2, 2022, at age 94.

Bowser was born on Oct. 5, 1928, in Washington, D.C. He graduated from Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, then the premier high school for African Americans in Washington, D.C., and then attended Colgate University, where he was one of only two Black students, graduating in 1952 with a biology degree.

He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. Upon returning home, Bowser found academic success at Catholic University. In 1959, he earned a master's degree in physiology with a minor concentration in bacteriology, and a doctoral degree in microbiology in 1963.

In his career, Bowser did innovative research at the Navy Medical Center's Radiology Research Institute. Following President Richard Nixon's "War on Cancer" in the early 1970s, Bowser served as the Health Scientist Administrator in the National Cancer Institute's Division of Cancer Control and Rehabilitation. Later, he pursued epidemiology research. Upon retiring in 1986, Bowser began a photography business.

A lifelong learner and voracious reader, he applied his research background to all aspects of his life, including investments and social groups. Family and friends celebrated his kind approach to other people and his ability to earn and show respect.

Bowser was a faithful donor to Catholic University's recent campaign, Light the Way. Bowser's family encouraged gifts to the campaign upon his death, as well as the National Society of Black Engineers which supports Black students pursuing STEM careers.



The humanities force us to confront those depths and ends, and when we do it together, the result can be modesty, forbearance, and even a kind of friendship.

The Humanities as Common Ground

By V. Bradley Lewis



“I am a human being, and I consider nothing human alien to me,” wrote the Roman playwright, Terence. The quote has resonated with many writers across the centuries, none more famous than the French philosopher Montaigne, who had it engraved on a ceiling beam in his study. A humanistic education is often held to be liberating, and Terence, who began life as a slave, would have known all about that. But his words suggest another role for the humanities that seems particularly crucial today.

The humanities are not the only source of knowledge: Mathematics and the natural sciences are a necessary part of any education worth having. Nor are they the most intrinsically important: Theology is concerned with the highest object of human understanding and the ultimate destiny of all creation. The humanities encompass disciplines, and especially texts, that investigate and reveal the fundamental and permanent horizon of human experiences.

Those experiences are the common ground we need to navigate the hyperpolarized cultural and political environment of today. This may seem a strange claim to make, for the humanities have been among the epicenters of conflict within and beyond colleges and universities in recent decades. Acrimonious fights over the content or even existence of “the canon,” efforts to deconstruct traditional disciplines, and the politicization of curricula have made the humanities a battleground.

There can be but one solution to this problem: Join the battle. To champion or contest the place of this text or that subject in a humanistic education requires that one understand it, first on its own terms, and then critically.

A true critical understanding cannot be acquired in solitude, but must be a common effort. The best way to cultivate a genuine critical sensibility is, first, by close reading, and, second, in and through argument with other readers and critics. The natural sciences require specialized expertise and equipment; theology is grounded in the authority of divine speech. Some aspects of the humanities approach these necessities, for example, the initial learning of languages. But that is preparatory to confronting texts and other cultural objects.

The study of those things is best done around a table, examining together the claims, images, perplexities, and deeds of the thinkers, poets, novelists,

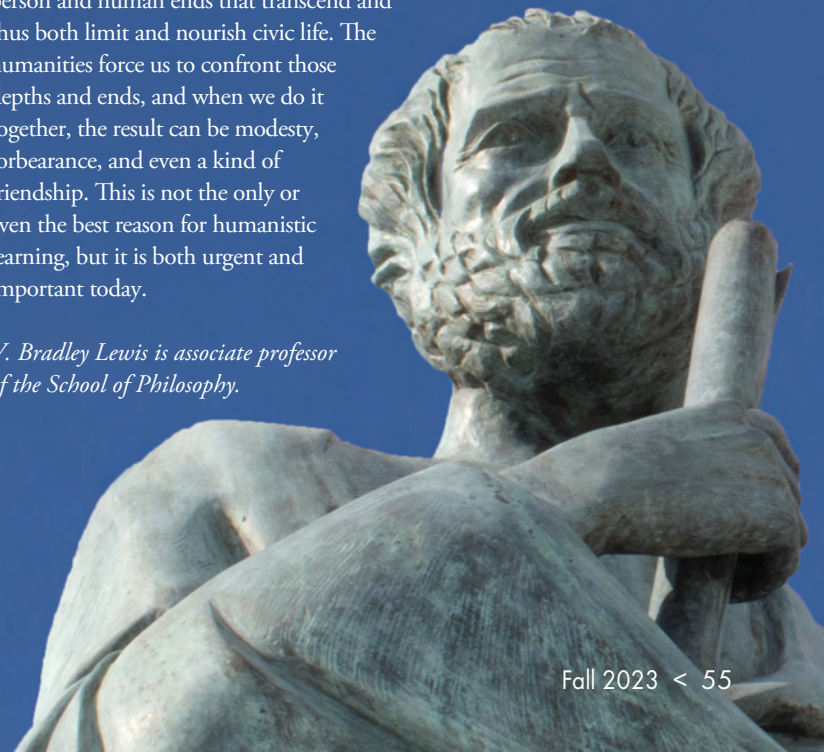
artists, and statesmen whose work has proven itself capable of sustaining such intense and unending inquiry. The test is always the extent to which we can recognize and understand our own humanity in theirs — their continuing ability to help us understand our own experiences and problems better than we otherwise could.

This does not mean that we will agree. Genuinely thoughtful and articulate disagreement is an achievement, not least because it is necessarily open to continuing the conversation. Learning in the humanities is always open-ended, always en route. In this respect, humanistic learning is like citizenship and civic life. Civil association never simply achieves its goal: It isn’t like building a house or baking a cake. It consists of an unending train of debates and deliberate choices among persons committed to a common future.

There are differences, of course: In public life decisions do get made, and they rarely satisfy everyone. Moreover, the more urgent often obscures and precludes the more important. But the best preparation for the disagreements and dissatisfaction of social life is the moderation and equanimity that comes from concern with the full range of human experiences in all their depth and complexity, an important fruit of which is the indispensable knowledge that politics is not the most important thing.

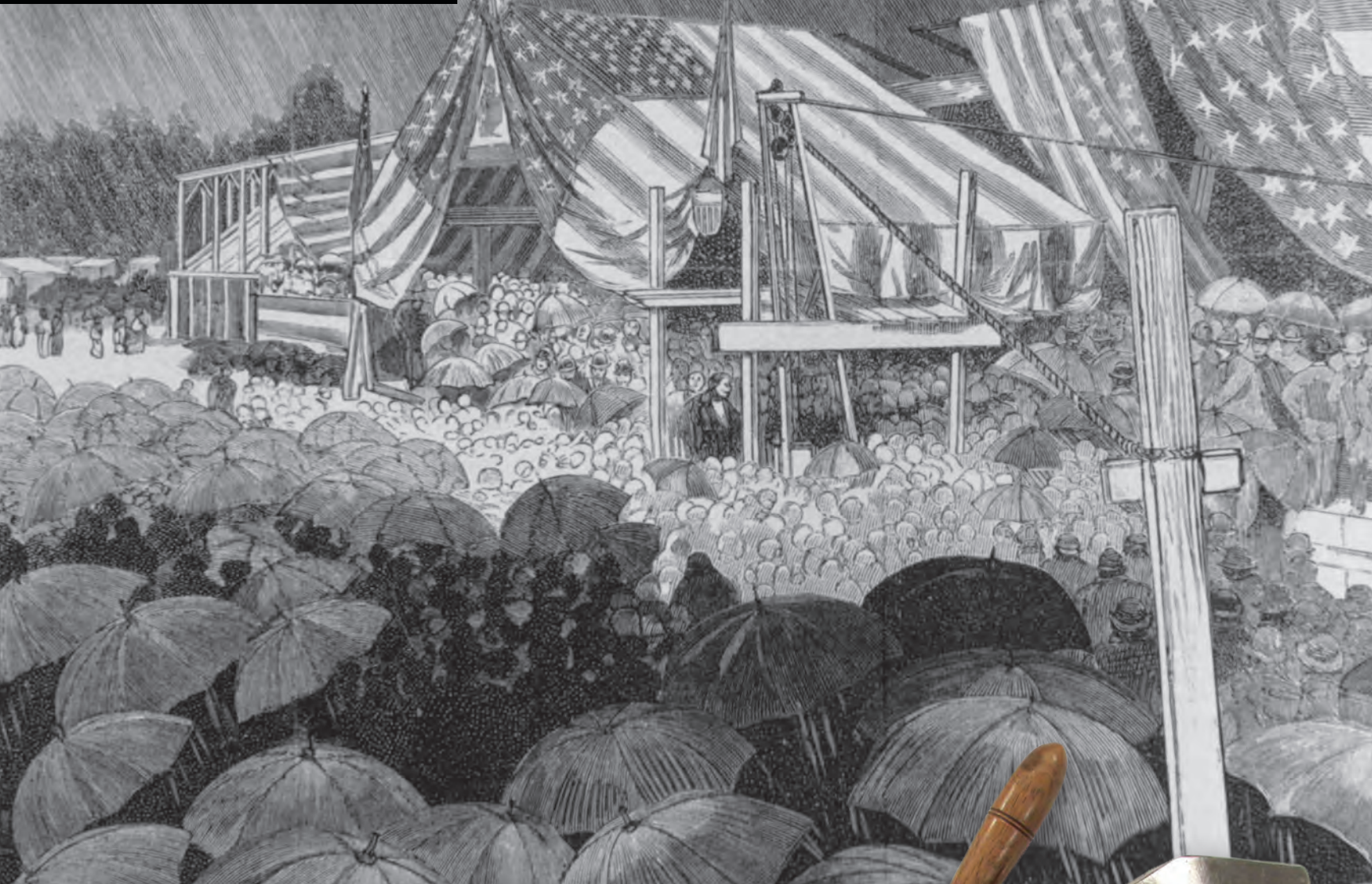
Aristotle teaches us that human beings are political animals, but also that we are more than this. There are depths to the human person and human ends that transcend and thus both limit and nourish civic life. The humanities force us to confront those depths and ends, and when we do it together, the result can be modesty, forbearance, and even a kind of friendship. This is not the only or even the best reason for humanistic learning, but it is both urgent and important today.

V. Bradley Lewis is associate professor of the School of Philosophy.



FROM THE VAULT

University Archives



LAYING A FOUNDATION 135 YEARS AGO

On May 24, 1888, a crowd of 3,000 gathered in the rain to witness the cornerstone laying of Catholic University's first building, Divinity Hall, today's Caldwell Hall. Among those in attendance were Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore and United States President Grover Cleveland. The pictured hammer and trowel were used in the ceremonial laying and dedication of the cornerstone, in which was placed a number of items, including copies of the day's local newspapers, coins, images of the nation's presidents from the past 100 years, and the Catholic Directory.

— *Shane MacDonald, Curator of Digital and Museum Collections,
University Libraries Special Collections*

Photos courtesy of The American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives





We make sacrifices to accomplish our dreams and goals in completing our studies, and your contribution ensures an education for those who can't afford it. I hope to pay it forward and help others in the future.

Scholarships Open Doors

Scholarships light the way for Catholic University students, helping them pursue their interests and find their callings so that they can give back to society through a life of service to the Church, the nation, and the world.

Herman Richard Pablo

Santa Rita, Guam
Columbus School of Law
Juris Doctor, Class of 2024

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