

ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF MUSIC > SPOTLIGHT ON THE SUN > LIGHT UP D.C.

CATHOLICU

Magazine of The Catholic University of America > Spring 2024



*The Ties
that Bind*



THE BIG PICTURE

A CARDINAL CROP

Students, faculty, and staff help to plant, harvest, and maintain the University's community garden behind Curley Hall. The garden fosters education and service, while providing food for the local and University communities as well. Learn more about the garden and the people who help it thrive on page 11.



CUA
Community
Garden

The sign is hand-painted in blue on a white background. It features decorative elements including a flower in the top left, two carrots in the top right, and a central vine with leaves and buds that frames the text. The sign is attached to a wire fence.

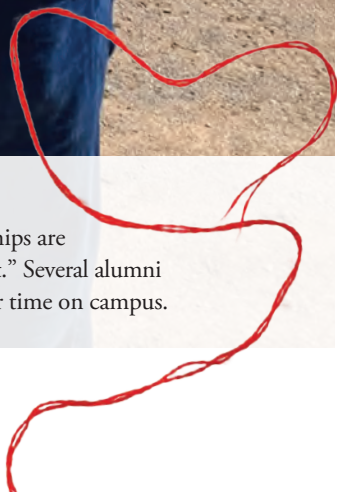




18

The Ties that Bind

Catholic University is a unique community, where life-long friendships are formed from a “small-town atmosphere in a large-town environment.” Several alumni share their stories about what has held them together long after their time on campus.



IN THIS ISSUE

Spring 2024, Vol. 37, No. 1

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 > ALUMNI ESSAY

56 > FROM THE VAULT

University Archives



28

Spotlight on the Sun

With the sun entering “solar maximum” — a particularly active period our nearest star enters every 11 years — space weather is a hot topic.



34

Light Up D.C.

This summer, the University will be home to the District’s largest solar array enough to fill 19 football fields. The switch flips on this sum

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Tell us what you think of the magazine, offer an idea, or comment on an article by sending an email to cu-magazine@cu.edu. Call us at 202-319-5600. Submit address changes at engage.catholic.edu/subscriptions.



ATTENTION!

Catholic University Alumni

WE ARE HOSTING

New City, New Nest

This event series helps introduce Catholic University graduates along the East Coast to fellow alumni in **Baltimore, Boston, New York City, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.**

Local alumni, please join us in one of these five cities to give a big Cardinal welcome to the Class of 2024!

For more details, watch your inbox and visit

[ENGAGE.CATHOLIC.EDU](https://engage.catholic.edu)

CATHOLICU

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Andrew Propp



Friendships That Stand the Test of Time

I recently was introduced to and read an impactful book, *The Friendship of Christ*, by Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson, one of the favorite authors of both our current Holy Father Pope Francis and of the late Pope Benedict XVI. According to Monsignor Benson, “the emotion of friendship is among the most mighty and the most mysterious of human instincts.”

Jesus himself demonstrated the importance of friendship in his lifetime as a chief means by which he evangelized and formed the apostles. During Holy Week we read in the Gospel how six days before Passover, Jesus made a stop in Bethany. He stopped to visit his friends — Lazarus, Martha, and Mary.

It would be the last time the four of them were together, and Mary marked the moment by anointing the feet of Jesus with a liter of costly perfumed oil. We often read this passage and note Mary’s devotion to Jesus. What we can undervalue is just how real the friendship was between Jesus and Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, and how devoted he was to them.

Monsignor Benson calls friendship with Christ “the one friendship in which final disappointment is impossible,” and he calls Christ the “one friend who cannot fail.”

While no friendship will surpass one’s friendship with Christ, St. Thomas Aquinas says “there is nothing on this earth more to be prized” than true friendship with one’s neighbor. It’s a lesson our students learn well.

A really good friend believes in us and comforts us. Friends come out of themselves to give to us without counting the cost. We were created for self-giving love, as St. John Paul II reminded us, and that is what friends do. So

not only is receiving the warm, heartfelt friendship of another good for us, but it is especially good for us to be the givers of that friendship.

When students come to Catholic University, they form strong and deep ties with those who will become their best friends for the rest of their lives. As you will see in this issue, friendships forged between our University students stand the test of time.

You will read about a group of alumnae who have been meeting every month since the 1980s. For more than 40 years, they have shared together many of life’s joys and sorrows. You’ll also read about a graduate from the 1970s who held his friend group together until he died of ALS in 2023. And you’ll read about an alumna who knows five decades of people on campus, and praises the small town feel of our campus. What connects all these stories is that they met their best friends here at this University.

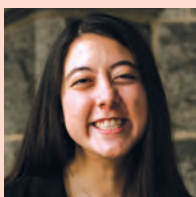
We live in a perilous time of loneliness and social isolation. Friendships give us the support we need to thrive and flourish. We should cherish the friendships we have, be grateful for the ones that last, and do what it takes to keep our friendships strong. We should also identify those around us in need of friendship. What greater act of love is there than to offer your friendship to someone in need of one?

While there is “one supreme friendship to which all human friendship points,” as Monsignor Benson writes, there are also many other friends in our lives who give us joy, help us bear adversity, and simply make life more fun. And for the readers of this magazine, they met many of those friends right here at The Catholic University of America

IN YOUR WORDS

Comments from the University Community

This spring, members of the Catholic University community celebrated the women who make the University special every day. Here is a sample of the tributes submitted about the students, faculty, and staff that were honored.



MAEVIS FAHEY, CLASS OF 2025

“Maevis is a relentless advocate for her fellow students at CUA. She is also one of the most compassionate and supportive people I have ever met. Every conversation she has brings out lots of joy in the people she is talking to.”

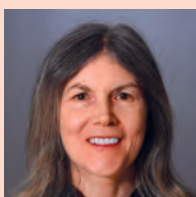
— **ANTHONY CURIOSO, CLASS OF 2026**



MAURA WENZEL, CLINICAL ASSOCIATE, CONWAY SCHOOL OF NURSING

“I am a freshman Navy ROTC nurse option here at CUA, and I met Dr. Wenzel at an event last semester where I spoke. Being a retired Navy nurse herself, she took me under her wing and has been there for me as a mentor during my everyday life as a midshipman and nursing student. Being in such a niche field, her kindness and willingness to support me, especially during some difficult situations, is something I will never forget.”

— **MICAH SANCHEZ, CLASS OF 2027**



JENNY PAXTON, CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DIRECTOR OF UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM

“Jenny is an amazing mentor, teacher, scholar, colleague, and friend who works tirelessly and selflessly to make the university a welcoming place to all and a place of vibrant and engaged inquiry and conversation — she inspires everyone around her to do better, serve better, and be better. I am so grateful to her for sharing her experiences as a woman in academia and serving as a mentor to so many of us.”

— **TARYN OKUMA, PH.D., ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**



JAIME WALLS, ASSOCIATE AD/ RECRUITMENT AND COMPLIANCE

“Jaime is a stalwart member of the Catholic Athletics community. She has touched countless lives in her work as an athletic trainer, administrator, coach, and beyond. She brings enthusiasm, positive energy, and humor to work, and for this I am grateful. Jaime is the definition of an awesome woman.”

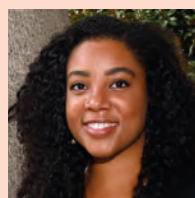
— **PATRICK DWYER, B.S.B.A. 2007, ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT**



SUSAN TIMONEY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE AND ASSOCIATE DEAN OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES, ADJUNCT ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

“Dr. Timoney is a great mentor and teacher! She is a fantastic support and truly desires the intellectual and spiritual success of her students. She is a great role model of a laywoman in the Church, and I am so grateful to have had her along my journey at Catholic University!”

— **MAGGIE DRESSMAN, CLASS OF 2025**



RYANE CHEATHAM, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, EMPLOYER RELATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

“Ryane works tirelessly to empower students in their job and internship searches. When we ask her questions or seek her advice, she always makes time to help. Ryane works many nights and weekends not only for CACS but also helping departments with their networking nights, resume reviews, and presentations. Ryane’s positive and friendly attitude make her a pleasure to work with.”

— **DAWN NOTTINGHAM, SENIOR ACADEMIC AND CAREER ADVISOR FOR BUSINESS AND NURSING**

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

ARCHITECTURE MAJOR IMAGINES “MAGIC” OF HIS OWN

As Walt Disney conceptualized his Disneyland park in Southern California, he famously remarked that it was fun to try and to do the impossible. To accomplish that dream, Disney created Imagineering, a hub for designers, engineers, and storytellers who pitched and created his park’s signature rides and attractions.

An entire industry of theme park designers has since sprouted up, with shopping centers, hotels, restaurants, and other amusement parks all featuring storytelling at their core.

Catholic University junior Luke Neely, an architecture major, is now on a career trajectory that will have him alongside those professionals. The seed for this path was planted when he received a gift from his parents: a book about the Imagineering hub found at a yard sale.

“I just kind of knew from middle school that this is what I wanted to do,” Neely said. “And, of course, the influence of growing up near D.C. with so many museums and zoos... it all ended up largely contributing to that love for this kind of immersive experience-making.”

His near-term goal is to become a show designer, the person who works on the exterior facade planning of a ride or attraction.

“There’s something really fun about designing that centerpiece element,” he said. “And there’s just so much cool stuff..., from understanding how it works to how that’s going to affect your design.”

On campus, Neely has created a student organization for others who share his interest in themed design. More than 20 students participate in the club’s activities, which include hosting speakers and sharing personal collections of memorabilia (like Neely’s map of the 1964 World’s Fair where the “It’s A Small World” attraction debuted).

When he was a first-year student, he found immediate success and was able to channel his theme park fascination into real-world honors, as he was awarded Best Undergraduate Oral Presentation at the 2022 University Research Day. His topic? Theme park crowd management.

“It was especially fun being that I already had so much backlog of weird theme park knowledge,” Neely said. “And I finally had a use for these mountains of obscure logic and stuff I’ve built up.”

He credits Research Day and Career Day fairs with helping to build his dream. He has developed his networking skills and met legendary attraction designers and leaders; he also has consulted with some popular YouTube creators on projects.

During the summer of 2022, Neely joined the Disney College Program, working on ferry boats that led people to Walt Disney World’s Magic Kingdom park in Orlando. During his time off, he would sit inside the park and sketch new facade elements he envisioned. As he had conversations with Imagineering team members, he realized many of them were architectural designers, not engineers.

At Catholic University, his architecture studies are building his theme-park dreams. Who knows where his imagination will take him next?
— M.P.



AROUND CATHOLIC



Hartke Theatre Comes Alive with the Sound of Music



Hartke Theatre was alive with alumni pride at packed performances of Rodgers & Hammerstein's beloved *The Sound of Music* this past fall. After the debut of the heartfelt homage to the original Broadway show, all three subsequent shows sold out.

Musical theater junior Emma Markey, who grew up idolizing Julie Andrews as Maria von Trapp in the 1965 film adaptation, said it is a dream come true to star in the show and share the character's infectious joy with a live audience.

"Mother Abbess, right before she sings 'Climb Ev'ry Mountain,' tells Maria 'you have a great capacity to love,'" said Markey. "Watching the movie is amazing, but I feel like when you're here, in the room, it's easier to share the love with everyone."

The enduring classic, inspired by the true story of how postulant-turned-governess Maria transformed the lives of widower Captain Georg von Trapp and his family, has been seen countless times by millions across the globe. But director Tracy Lynn Olivera, B.M. 1999, said few have heard the big, bold sound of the music as originally intended to fill a performance hall.

With 38 cast members and a 30-plus-piece live orchestra, Olivera said the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art production is larger than any musical on Broadway today. "Our huge ensembles create a giant choral sound," said Olivera, comparing the 20 playing nuns singing together to "a wall of angels."

Music Director Marc Bryan Lilley, B.M. 2006, head of the musical theater academic area, said the passion for the project was evident in the mountains people climbed to realize the dream of assembling the first full orchestra for a University production in years. Thanks to the runaway success, he expects more shows of this scale.

"You can appreciate the story without being Catholic, but the story resonates especially with so many in our community because it's about the power of faith and family," said Lilley.

For José Sousa, B.A. 2001, it is a tradition at family reunions to say grace to the tune of "Edelweiss." Now, Sousa said it's all "coming full circle" with his son Carlos, 11, learning his "do-re-mi's" as Kurt von Trapp.

"It's been great to reconnect with some familiar faces from my time at Catholic University and to experience how surreal it is to have our children in this cast," said the proud father. "The talent and dedication shown by everyone involved in the production is really inspiring and showcases how fortunate we are to have the Rome School in our backyard."

This was Carlos' first play but far from his first performance. He's always loved to sing with or without an audience, according to his family. "It's a fun role, and I have a lot of funny lines," said Carlos.

"I really liked the party scene, where I sing 'So Long, Farewell' because people went crazy when I hit the high note," he said, referring to when Kurt sings a scene-stealing "goodbye."

Carlos was among three of the seven playing the Von Trapp siblings who were from alumni families.

Elizabeth Roberts, B.M. 2004, and her husband Merrill, M.S. 2009, Ph.D. 2018, met when they both were studying at the University. Elizabeth said watching their son, Alan, 14, play Friedrich brings back fond memories of her performances on the very same stage when she was an undergraduate musical theater student.

"It's been really, really fun," said Elizabeth. Alan is one of six siblings, so he has plenty of experience to draw from for the role. "We're one short of the Von Trapp family. It's like typecasting," said Merrill with a chuckle.

Reflecting on the experience, Alan said one of his favorite things was getting a taste of what studying drama is like at the University.

"It's one of the better musical theater programs in the country. It's been a great look at CatholicU and the culture," he said.

The Sound of Music was presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of the Rodgers & Hammerstein Organization. — M.B.



Left to right: Dean Andrew Abela, Tim and Steph Busch, and President Peter Kilpatrick

Busch School Celebrates Ten Years, Looks Toward Future Growth

In early December 2023, the Busch School of Business celebrated its tenth anniversary with a special dinner reflecting on how far it had come and where it will go.

The event, which took place in Heritage Hall in Father O’Connell Hall, was emceed by Busch School student Lauren White, a senior accounting major in the Class of 2024, with a keynote by Busch School Dean Andrew Abela. Guests included key donors, friends and partners of the School, University leadership, and Board of Trustee and Visitor members. Major donors, Tim and Steph Busch, also offered their reflections about their role in the school’s foundation.

In his presentation, Abela noted that within the University’s Strategic Plan at that time, there was a charge to “Consider the start of a business school.” This was incorporated in the five-year plan and only two years into the process, they had completed the goal and established the school. “I think we did a little bit more than consider it!” said Abela.

At the school’s first Board of Visitors meeting, Tim Busch and his wife, Steph, made the generous gift to name the school and build out the physical space for the Busch School of Business. It took three years to renovate Maloney Hall, the University’s former chemistry building that was shuttered at the time. In the spring of 2019, Maloney opened to Busch School students for the first time. “The reason that we got so much done in such a short time was because this was a powerful community effort, particularly of the people in this room,” Abela emphasized.

Two videos played during the evening, one that highlighted key accomplishments, and the other showing where the school hopes to go in the future.

Abela highlighted the generosity of several donors who were “absolutely pivotal” to helping the Busch School come to fruition. Gifts included support from the Charles Koch Foundation (for research on virtue and

business), Steve and Mariann Means for the Maloney Hall design plans, and millions of dollars for labs, outdoor spaces, the St. Michael Chapel, and programs and institutes. None of it would have been possible, however, without the Busch family, Abela said. “Tim and Steph Busch brought so many people together in support of our school.”

With gifts to support the renovation of Maloney, the construction of the St. Michael Chapel, and others to fund scholarships and programs, Abela said that it was possible the school didn’t set its sights high enough. His goal is “for the Busch School to become the number one choice for faithful Catholic business education.”

President Peter Kilpatrick echoed that statement during his remarks later in the evening.

“What is our mission? Pope Leo gave us that mission. He told us, you need to advance the dialogue between faith and reason. Having faith in the Lord helps you ask deeper questions that you wouldn’t ask otherwise if you didn’t have that faith.

“It’s amazing that it took an entire village to help build the Busch School over 10 years, and it’s going to take two villages, or many villages, to build it over the next 10 years. But we’re very committed to that. The Busch School is the fastest-growing school in our University.”

President Kilpatrick also said the Busch School is helping to pave the way toward growing the University’s overall enrollment to 10,000 students, and for its students and faculty to live impactful lives of virtue. Donors and friends of the school are also key.

“Your leadership and continued involvement in our school are critical for the Busch School to meet its goals and the University to meet our goals,” Kilpatrick said, encouraging them to continue to spread the word about the school and all it is doing.

— A.K.

Giving Back to the Community: Our CatholicU Garden

As students pass by the Curley Hall Lawn during the warmer months, they see the University's community garden, thanks to the support of the Student Government Association and the generous leadership benefaction from the Giessuebel family. Joseph Giessuebel, B.A. 2022, M.S.B. 2024, was a key student advocate who helped create the garden and has worked with many community members to ensure its success.

Students work in the garden during the warmer months, focusing mainly on harvesting and upkeep.

Student involvement comes through the Nest, where all students can learn about the weekly garden gatherings and volunteer. This year, the garden hopes to incorporate a greenhouse with cold frames to grow produce during winter.

And it's not just students who volunteer in the garden. Nancy Kilpatrick (below), the University President's "First Lady," is often seen pruning and harvesting various vegetables and doing her part to be a good steward of the earth.

The garden emphasizes Pope Francis's call to creation, as students not only learn how to sustainably cultivate a garden but also how to appreciate it. Gabrielle Choate, the manager for the Office of Sustainability, says that the garden "raises awareness among volunteers and how to work with land and what goes on in the environment."

The community garden's produce goes to Cardinal Cupboard, which serves students, faculty, and staff who may not be able to comfortably afford regular trips to the grocery store. As a student who directly benefits from and helps to upkeep the garden, Justine Trudeau "believes the University's contribution to food security in the community is not only valuable but a responsibility."

Trudeau and Choate encourage students and community members to volunteer at the garden.

"As a student, this is how to care for your local environment and community. Gabrielle is always looking for more hands," Trudeau said. — D.M.



University Chancellor Cardinal Gregory



Helen Alvaré

Speaker Series Examines Catholics' Place in Dialogue

The President's Speaker Series has brought together some of the leading thinkers in the Catholic Church in America during the last year. This series is a residential initiative to bring prominent figures to campus to foster dialogue around key topics.

In December, University Chancellor Cardinal Wilton Gregory, archbishop of Washington, spoke on the decline of respect in national faith and political conversations and how the Church can seek to be more inclusive.

"You do not have to look very far to see what has become socially tolerable expressions of intolerance, hatred, and even incredible rudeness," said Cardinal Gregory. "Given the wide range of our national, local, ecclesial, and even our own family environments, we are directly challenged each day to practice respect with those that we encounter."

The discussion, titled "Celebrating Diversity," saw hundreds gather at the Della Ratta Auditorium to hear the nation's first Black cardinal address the topic of synodality and a culture of encounter in an increasingly diversified nation and Church.

The conversation between President Kilpatrick and the cardinal was the first in a series of speaker sessions that happened throughout this past academic year. President Kilpatrick said Cardinal Gregory's words should spark a renewal of thought and dialogue.

"The synod on Synodality is asking us to walk more intently on this rough road together, to look at our communities as places of vibrant life filled with diversity of all kinds, reflecting our God who made us all in his image," Cardinal Gregory said.

The second in the series took place in February at Heritage Hall, featuring a conversation with Catholic legal scholar and pro-life advocate Helen M. Alvaré, M.A. 1989, on the Church's place in the public sphere.

In the face of increased calls to force faith-based institutions to adopt policies at odds with their values, championing the Catholic Church's teachings on marriage, family, and sexuality is no easy task. Alvaré has advocated for the rights and freedoms of the faithful to practice what they preach before federal lawmakers, the U.S. Supreme Court, and the media. President Peter Kilpatrick and Alvaré examined how to speak about religious freedom without playing into secular society's impression that it is a license to discriminate.

The evening's conversation was inspired by her book, *Religious Freedom after the Sexual Revolution: A Catholic Guide* (Catholic University Press, 2022). She explained Catholics are getting wrongly "boxed in as anti-freedom," due to a new definition of freedom that emerged in our legal system during the sexual revolution.

"Religious freedom is freedom," said Alvaré. "What we are asking for is the freedom to be a witness for human flourishing ... a place of inspiration, strength, and solace." — M.P.

University Creates New Office of Emergency Management

In today's world, college campuses can never be too prepared. Within the past few months, the University has created a new Office of Emergency Management to enhance safety and welcomed Renaud D. Scott II as the program director.

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is tasked with emergency planning and management operations for the University. This includes the development and implementation of robust emergency preparedness programs that equip the campus community with effective response skills for emergencies.

OEM will offer comprehensive safety training for students, faculty, and staff, covering various emergency scenarios, so everyone is well-prepared to handle unexpected events. OEM will also ensure the University has the resources, protocols, and communications systems to respond to emergencies. If a situation arises, OEM will mobilize resources, personnel, and communication channels to address the situation swiftly and efficiently. Long-term recovery planning is also in the team's purview, identifying strategies for return-to-normal operations and how to address lingering emergency effects.

"We are delighted to welcome Renaud Scott to Catholic University," said Kirk McLean, associate vice president for public safety and emergency management. "His expertise and dedication to emergency management processes will certainly enhance our ability to 'Keep Catholic Safe.' We look forward to the positive impact he will make." — N.G.



Renaud Scott



NATIONAL Eucharistic Congress

From D.C. to Indy

The U.S. Catholic bishops are in the midst of a three-year Eucharistic Revival, and Catholic University is doing its part by serving as a premium mission partner at the 10th National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis this summer (July 17–21).

In preparation for that event, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage will kick off in May, as four teams of young adult pilgrims follow national routes before converging in Indianapolis a day before the Congress. A current junior, Danielle Schmitz, was chosen to be one of the pilgrims for the Marian Route (through the Midwest). See if one of their routes is passing near your city or town.

www.eucharisticpilgrimage.org

The University will host the "perpetual pilgrims" journeying along the East Coast "Seton route," as they arrive in D.C. on June 7. On June 8, a Mass will be celebrated by Father Michael Fuller, general secretary of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, followed by a Eucharistic procession that will end at the St. John Paul II National Shrine. The following day, Cardinal Wilton Gregory, archbishop of Washington and University chancellor, will celebrate noon Mass with the pilgrims, before they depart for Pennsylvania on June 9.

Then in July, the University is proud to be a premiere University sponsor of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress, which will be held July 17–21, at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, Indiana. The University will serve as the largest college or university sponsor of the event; Catholic University's discounted registration fee is \$299 (NECCUA299).

Supported by fine donor-friends, the sponsorship includes a program of activities specifically for priests, a break-out session on Catholic education, and an event for young adults on dating as a Catholic today. There will be areas where faculty, staff, alumni, friends, and students can engage with other attendees at the Congress, as well as engaging social events.

Don't miss this important, historic event and opportunity to connect with the Cardinal community and believers from around the nation. Registration and agenda details: www.eucharisticcongress.org — A.C.

Creation of Africana Studies Program a Milestone for University

Although Black History may be a focus for February and November each year, ongoing reflection and academic pursuits happen much more frequently across Catholic's campus — due in large part to student initiative.

In the 2023 academic year, the School of Arts and Sciences launched an Africana Studies program, which aims to foster excellence in research and teaching and examine the experiences and contributions of African peoples throughout the diaspora — with a core focus on their community engagement, activism, and preservation of their heritage.

Africana Studies offers an opportunity for students to access interdisciplinary content from culturally diverse perspectives, furthering their abilities to question assumptions, deepen thinking, lead courageously, and serve empathetically.

“The Catholic University of America has a global reach, it is part of the universal Church,” said Thomas W. Smith, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences. “We hold that every human life is sacred and that every person and culture is a lived response to God’s call. It will provide an important place of learning and reflection for all our students, particularly our students of color.”

Smith said there is a real need for this program.

“It will provide a focus for research and teaching about Africa (where the Catholic Church is growing fastest), as well as the cultures and achievements of the African diaspora,” he said.

The program officially launched in September 2023, with a ceremony featuring community and campus partners. It culminated years of efforts by University students, such as the then-president of the Black Student Alliance, Myciah Brown, and the Student Government Association. Brown received a bachelor’s degree in education studies and psychology in 2022 and is a communications coordinator for the University’s Center for Academic and Career Success.

“Our efforts to advocate for and now implement the Africana Studies minor pave the way for future generations to continue building upon this foundation,” Brown said. “I believe in the phrase ‘many hands make light work,’ and truly it would not have been accomplished without many people along the way.”

Program Director Rona Frederick, however, said that Brown and her fellow students were the main trailblazers. “I think the fact that it did materialize is a testament to the power of the students and how much they wanted this to happen,” said Frederick.

Grace Reed is a sophomore psychology major, who chose to add the Africana studies minor to expand her range of study.

“I want to work in the psychology field serving POC (people of color) and want to be educated to do so,” Reed said. “Another strong motivator is learning how hard the black students who came before me fought for the opportunity for this minor. I don’t want to let their hard work go to waste!”

Director Frederick sees the University’s ability to analyze its academic offerings and build out key programs as a step in the right direction.

“It is diversifying the curriculum, making sure there is representation of that community and it’s done with a sense of belonging,” Frederick said.

Senior Kayla Tingley, a Sociology major, was one of the students who joined Brown to advocate for the program’s creation.

“Black students deserve more,” Tingley said. “Africana Studies is more. It creates an academic space where Black students can learn their history, share thoughts, and engage in discussion that relates to their lived experiences.”

Brown foresees long-ranging and positive impacts of this new program.

“I envision the Africana Studies program expanding and evolving,” Brown said. “I hope to see increased course offerings, opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration, and the development of research initiatives that further contribute to our understanding of Africana Studies and its intersections with various fields”

— M.P.



Meeting a Saint's Mother: Inspiration and Hope

The mother of blessed Carlo Acutis, the first beatified millennial, shared in a standing-room-only Della Ratta Auditorium how her teenage son left an indelible mark on the world. Often called “the patron saint of the internet,” he created an online Eucharistic miracles encyclopedia before passing away at age 15.

“Carlo made me understand that God is really present in the Eucharist,” said Antonia Salzano Acutis. “When you are close to somebody who really loves the Eucharist, this person becomes contagious like a chain reaction.”

The Oct. 2 event, co-sponsored by The Catholic Project, Campus Ministry, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, was in the spirit of the National Eucharistic Revival. Blessed Acutis is an intercessor for this multi-year initiative to renew understanding and appreciation of the sacrament that culminates in this summer's National Eucharistic Congress.

The University students shared Blessed Acutis' impact on their campus ministry work. Student minister and theology junior Danielle Schmitz said she's inspired to a “life of radical holiness . . . simple and normal like his.”

Mechanical engineering junior Mike Bellacicco, a former resident minister, said Blessed Acutis is a witness to “what Christ wants from us and how we can get closer to him every day.” Former student minister and biology senior Ben Reese said Blessed Acutis helped turn his skepticism about Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist into a deep devotion.

Antonia Salzano Acutis thanked each of them with a relic of her son. One of the members of the crowd who met her afterward was Catholics for Hire CEO Will Deatherage, B.A. 2020, M.A. 2022. He told her Blessed Acutis inspires the young adults at his digital marketing company to share eternal truth through modern technology.

“She's a mother figure to the company,” said Deatherage, who also received a relic from her. “I will treasure her blessing, appreciation, and gift forever.”

Deatherage said the Holy Spirit's presence in the room was palpable and believes her witness will inspire young people to “orient their lives around God and make a difference in the world.” — M.B.



Antonia Salzano Acutis with a packed house of students and other community members who came to hear her speak.



The Catholic University of America's Council 9542 received the Outstanding College Council Award for the year.

Shining Knights: On Campus and Across the Nation

As snow fell on hundreds of students at the March for Life on Jan. 20 earlier this year, The Catholic University of America's Knights of Columbus Council 9542 held aloft the lead sign for the University.

Hours before the march, the Knights began the day before dawn, volunteering at a youth conference. It was just one day in a steady stream of service that the campus chapter commits to throughout the year. The sheer volume caught the attention of the National Knights of Columbus Supreme Council, which named Council 9542 first place for outstanding College Council for 2022–2023.

The award recognizes the college council that best exemplifies the mission and ideals of the order. The honor was announced at the 58th annual Collegiate Councils Conference, held Sept. 29–Oct. 1 in New Haven, Connecticut. A video posted on YouTube chronicled the University's council and its impact.

“It's an incredible honor for us to be recognized by the Supreme Council,” junior Liam Foley, the college council's Grand Knight said. “That just goes to show that the work we're doing is making a difference.”

At its core, Council 9542 is a group of undergraduate men dedicated to Christ and serving the Church. The University's council is known for its activity on and off campus, including organizing a vocations fair with more than 30 religious orders in attendance and a baby bottle drive that raised more than \$1,000. Council 9542 has also led a Hunger and Homelessness Awareness 5K to serve the local community while hosting Solidarity and Suffering Weeks to raise awareness of Christian persecution across the world. In anticipation of the National Eucharistic Revival, the group organized Holy Hours during Lent to increase a greater devotion to the Eucharist on campus.

The council annually participates in the national March for Life. Though rain, sleet, snow, and freezing temperatures, the Knights are there advocating for life.

“Marching together as brothers for such an important cause reinforced the unity of our council,” Foley said. “It is through work like this, when we're together fighting for and serving the most vulnerable in society, that we are able to bond the most.”

Sophomore Sean Morganstern agreed, adding: “Brotherhood is one of those essential things for the Knights. It's a fundamental element of the love and friendship between us on campus, in daily life, and when we're serving the greater community.” — M.P.



Left to right: Jeffrey Herrmann and Santiago Solares

Endowed Chairs Welcomed at School of Engineering

In the fall of 2023, the School of Engineering welcomed Jeffrey W. Herrmann and Santiago D. Solares as the first endowed chairs in the school's history. Both positions were funded through anonymous gifts directed by University Board of Trustees Member Leonard Leo and Light the Way: Campaign for Catholic University.

The two new positions were named in honor of Saint Abbo of Fleury, one of the great mathematicians of the 10th century, and Saint Albert the Great, patron saint of educators, scientists, and philosophers. The two new faculty members are friends and former colleagues who have reunited at Catholic University.

Herrmann holds the inaugural St. Abbo of Fleury Endowed Chair in Engineering. A Florida native, he earned a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a doctorate in industrial and systems engineering from the University of Florida. He then started a postdoctoral position at the University of Maryland and taught there for 28 years. Herrmann is driven by the study of human and robot decision-making, which he refers to as the essential activity of engineering.

Herrmann is at home with Catholic University's mission, stating, "It's not just about education, it's about forming the students, it's about serving the Church and making a difference in the world."

Solares is the first St. Albert the Great Endowed Chair in Engineering. Originally from Guatemala, Solares earned his bachelor's degree in chemical engineering at the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala. He then spent several years in the

corporate world at Pepsi-Cola International and Mars, Inc. He earned a master's degree in industrial engineering at the University of Miami and both a master's and doctoral degree from the California Institute of Technology. Solares joined the faculty of the University of Maryland in 2006 and then moved to George Washington University in 2014. His research focuses on nanoscale mechanics, which is the mechanics of very small things.

"I gathered enough experience in industry, in other universities ... such that I could come back and help strengthen Catholic education," Solares said. "That is my calling, and that's why I am here."

These two endowed positions will help attract new students to the school, thus helping the school's enrollment grow over the next five years.

"The establishment of an endowed chair is a testament to the importance of engineering education and research to the University's mission, and to the critical contributions the school will make, not just to the University's future, but to the future of our society as it is shaped by technological advances and the application of scientific principles" said Dean John Judge. "It signifies a commitment by the donor, by the administration of President Kilpatrick, and by all of my colleagues in the school, to advancing a profession focused on problem-solving, innovation, and creativity, and to ensuring that we are helping to shape the future of that profession and training its future leaders." — K.R.

AROUND CATHOLIC

Faculty News

Catholic Preaching Initiative Receives Lilly Endowment Grant

The excellence in Catholic Preaching Initiative, a project within the School of Theology and Religious Studies at Catholic University, was awarded a generous grant of \$1,128,941 from Lilly Endowment, Inc. This grant will help expand the initiative's mission to enhance the art of preaching within the Catholic tradition and further the proclamation of the Word of God.

The grant is part of Lilly Endowment's Compelling Preaching Initiative, a national effort that extends support to various groups, including seminarians, priests, permanent deacons, and lay women and men.

With this support, the University will develop curricula and resources that focus on homily preparation and delivery techniques, all rooted in the rich traditions of the Catholic Church and available in English and Spanish. The primary objective is to increase parishioner engagement and deepen their spiritual connection and faith-growth.

"What makes this grant unique is the ability to partner with the Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art, Catholic University Press, and Catholic Faith Technologies to ... make resources available across print and digital formats," said Susan Timoney, associate dean for graduate ministerial studies.

One new feature for the initiative is a preaching certificate program for lay men and women, designed to enhance preaching and teaching skills and enrich their ability to inspire and guide their communities. — N.G.



Basketball Teams Make Unforgettable Runs

The Raymond A. DuFour Athletic Center was home to two magical, intense, and heartbreaking Division III NCAA Tournament games in March.

The men's NCAA Tournament run concluded March 2 in a tense high-level battle between the Cardinals and the Profs of Rowan. Rowan picked up an 89–85 victory over the Cardinals, who won their first Landmark Conference championship since 2016.

In front of a sellout crowd of more than 1,100 fans against Rowan, Tommy Kelly, Jake Timby, and Enzo Sechi all scored 17 points for Catholic.

“They fought, they clamed, they battled their way back. It was incredible. It was an incredible game environment,” Catholic coach Aaron Kelly said. “The game wasn’t a moment in this one where the crowd wasn’t involved. The game wasn’t a moment where it didn’t feel like a heavyweight fight.”

The honors added up for the team, as Kelly and his staff were named Coaching Staff of the Year by the Landmark Conference. Jesse Hafemeister was named conference Player of the Year and made the all-conference first-team for the fourth time.

The women's basketball team also qualified for NCAA tournament play — having lost just three times all season. They traveled to Washington & Lee for the games and won their first NCAA tournament games since 2012–13. Carly Mulvaney scored 22 points in a 71–55 victory over Penn St.-Behrend.

In round two, the Cardinals lost to host Washington & Lee in Virginia, 80–70, despite Sarah White's 15 points. This amazing team ended their season 26–3.

“I’m just really proud of our grit and our heart,” coach Matt Donohue said. “I don’t know if it’s possible for me to express the amount of pride, appreciation, and love I have for this group. It’s without a doubt the greatest women’s basketball team in Catholic history, not just for what we did on the court, but who we are as people.”

Sophomore Anna Scoblick was named Landmark Conference Player of the Year, while Donohue and his staff were also named Landmark Conference Coaching Staff of the Year for an outstanding 2023–24 season. — M.P.

Basketball's DeGross Is the Best Buddy

Sienna DeGross believes in the dignity of each person, whether it's an opponent on the court, a classmate struggling in class, or a person with special needs.

“Sienna is easily one of the most selfless, caring individuals that I have ever had the privilege to coach,” said women's basketball coach Matt Donohue. DeGross, who will graduate this fall, wasn't someone who lit up the stat sheet for the surging Cardinals this season. In a data-driven world, DeGross provides the intangibles.

“Sienna ... always finds a way to put smile on the face of anyone and everyone that she interacts with,” Donohue said. “For Sienna, giving back to the world around her is not just about serving her community — she truly is on a mission to make the world a better place.”

The Cardinals started the season 20–0 and in the middle of all that success, DeGross was cheering on her teammates.

“The positive and inclusive attitude we have adopted this season shows in how well we have been doing,” DeGross said. “I couldn't be more grateful for the team that I have right now.”

Off the court, DeGross is a member of the Black Student Alliance and Catholic Athletes for Christ. She is part of the Best Buddies on-campus organization that pairs college students with adult “buddies” who have disabilities that make it hard for them to live independently. Though that engagement, she discovered that she wanted to pursue a master's degree in special education next year at the University of Notre Dame.

“It's quite amazing,” she said. “My biggest thing is making other people happy and making them feel included.”





The Music Man: Pearlberg Shares Vision for Pep Band

The game wasn't music on the sidelines of Catholic University athletics games until there was Christopher Pearlberg.

Pearlberg was hired in January 2024 to form the University's inaugural pep band and help foster a top-flight atmosphere at the University's Division III athletics games. Unlike the *Music Man's* Harold Hill, Pearlberg comes to town with extensive education and experience, namely a D.M.A. from Indiana University (2020) and time serving in a similar role for St. Mary's College of Maryland.

Pearlberg has been tasked with building a band from the ground up. *CatholicU* magazine met with him recently to ask a few questions about his vision for the program.

How did this job land on your radar?

The university has a great reputation for its strong music program and Catholic mission. I am very fortunate that this position was created; it is a job that aligns both my professional music work and personal values.

You're starting with a blank slate. What's your vision for the band?

It is very exciting to be building the band from the ground up! I found that during the interview process, our goals and ambitions for the band exactly matched. Athletic Director Kevin Robinson described it as "creating the soundtrack for Catholic Athletics." There is something about a live band that creates an energetic atmosphere, which enhances the entire experience of a game or event. We hope to get as many students involved as possible and play at games, campus events, and take trips around the country to play for as many audiences as we can.

You did this at St. Mary's as well. How long does it take to build a pep band? And what is involved?

I have found the greatest success in creating and sustaining musical ensembles through collaboration with other departments on campus. At CatholicU, we have a unified vision and mission for the band

which will make recruiting for and launching the band an efficient and successful process. It really takes a buy-in from everyone involved across the University to support something like a pep band. This was my experience at St. Mary's, and we were able to recruit members and perform with the pep band after a few weeks of rehearsals.

How can a good pep band impact the culture at games?

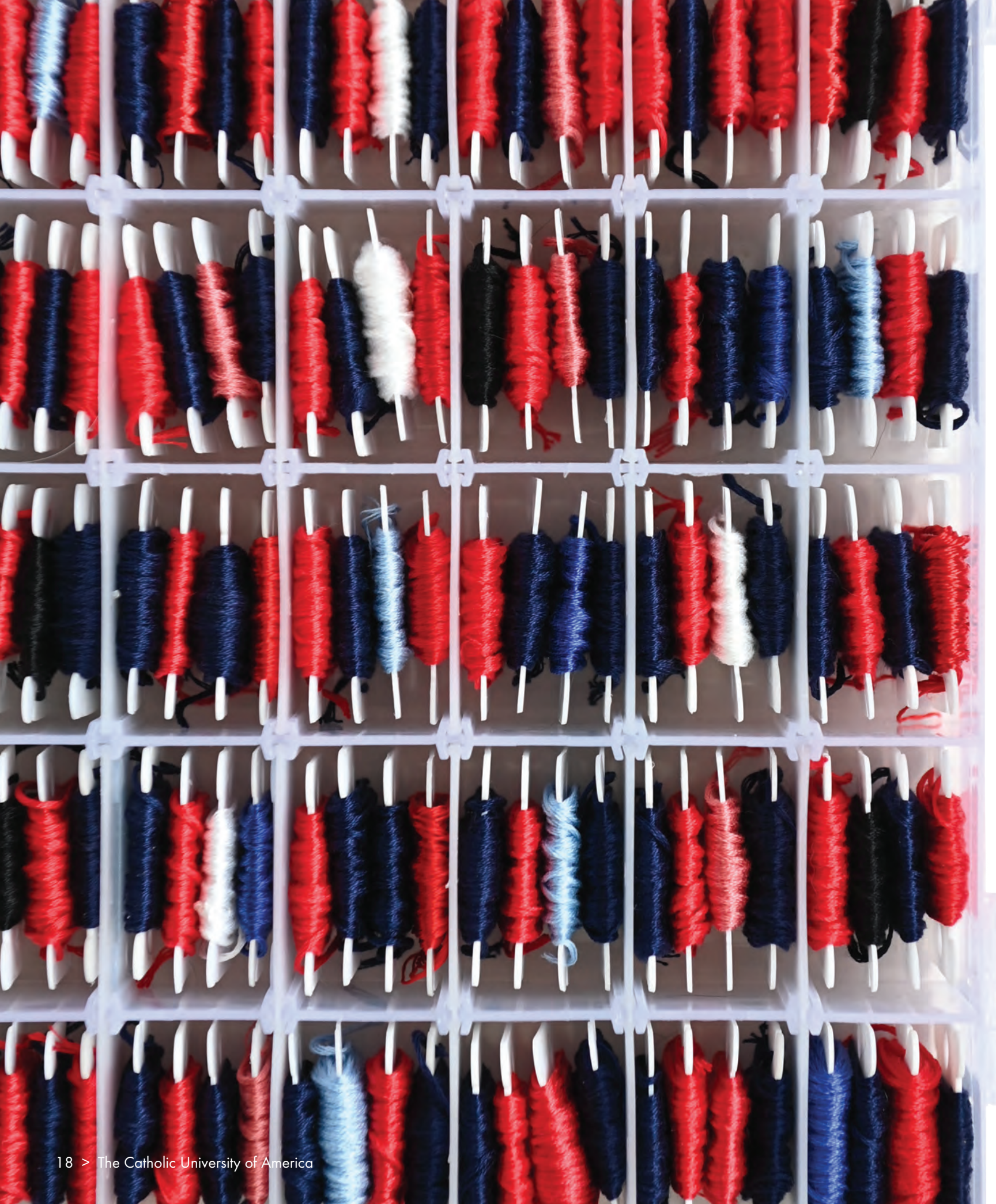
Music is the one art form that almost everyone has an experience with on a daily basis. It is difficult to find someone who does not love music! It has a unifying quality that cannot exactly be captured in words. A pep band serves a vital role in connecting the fans at games to the athletes who are playing, as well as giving the athletes music for motivation. A pep band can be a bridge for someone who may like music and discovers an interest in sports, or someone who was there to see the game, but has developed an interest in music. A pep band is very flexible in the places it can perform. It can be indoor or outdoors and move quickly from one location to another. The pep band has the potential to bring the culture already built at games to the wider campus community.

What are the keys to sustained success?

Maintaining high standards musically and organizationally while simultaneously fostering a culture that is creative, innovative, and enjoyable. Dedication is key, not necessarily musical talent or perfection — showing up and being present and consistent. Momentum plays a huge role in the success of a new group. There is also no reason why we cannot have fun while doing it; it is our entire job as a pep band!

What are going to be the hallmarks of the Catholic University pep band?

Our pep band will be something everyone will want to be a part of, either as a full-fledged band member, or as a fan, athlete, alumni, or audience member. On a local scale, we will bring energy and excitement to events, cultivating a dynamic campus culture. On a larger scale, we value being committed to the University's mission of service to the Church, the nation, and the world. A band is a microcosm of a society, where everyone is doing their part to make the whole thing work. It is the perfect vehicle to live out our Catholic values, so we can be effective ambassadors wherever we go. — M.P.





The Ties that Bind

By Matthew Palmer and Daniel F. Drummond



Ed Pfueller

Class of 1974 at the 2014 Tent Party, Cardinal Weekend.

CATHOLIC: WHERE EVERYONE KNOWS YOUR NAME

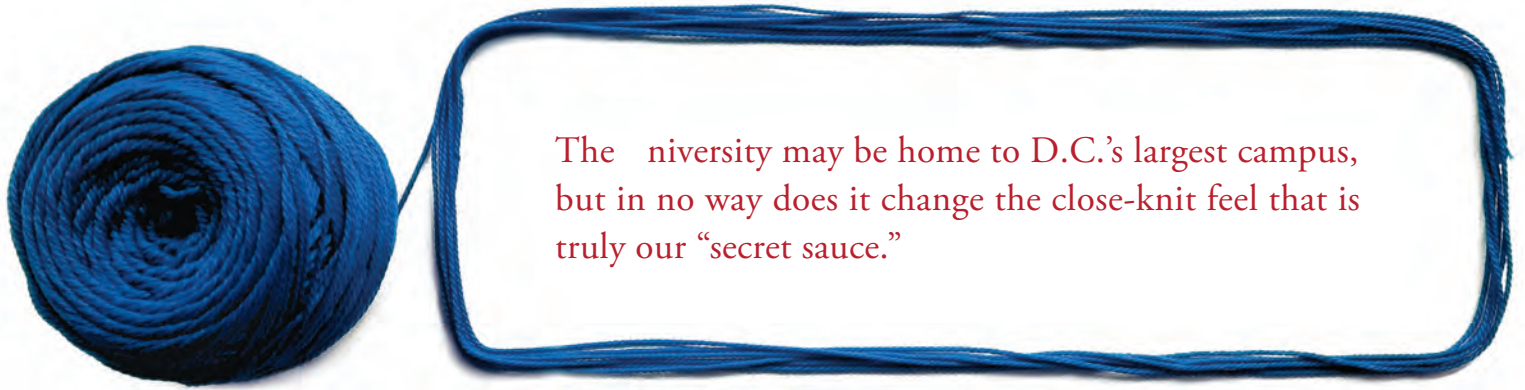


Franc Persico, a 1974 and 1976 graduate, feels The Catholic University of America deeply in the core of his soul. Following his years as a staff member and in leadership roles, Persico knows thousands of people who have walked the hallways, rolling hills, dorms, and cafeterias. He can see their faces and nearly all of them are friends.

“I know five decades of people that I can say, I have friends in each decade,” he said. “And they are friends that I could call today or tomorrow.”

Persico, now retired, served as chief of staff dean of students, and associate dean in the law school (to name a few). He chaperoned alumni trips and worked with student government leaders.

“I got to know them on a personal basis,” he said. “I can’t tell you how many weddings I’ve gone to, and things like that of people who were just students that I knew. It’s people who I can count on anytime.”



The University may be home to D.C.'s largest campus, but in no way does it change the close-knit feel that is truly our "secret sauce."

When someone asks Persico about what makes the University's community so unique for forming life-changing friendships, the tears begin to fall. He thinks about his pals from his student, alumni, and staff days over the decades and the drinks shared at the old Rathskeller inside Father O'Connell Hall.

Persico has seen it all. Some friends are gone, many are still here. Thinking about those people and the moments shared on campus fills him with pride and joy.

The University may be home to D.C.'s largest campus, but in no way does it change the close-knit feel that is truly our "secret sauce," if you ask Persico.

"A lot of schools can say this, but one of the reasons why Catholic is special in terms of friendships is the fact that it's a small place," he said. "It's just a small-town atmosphere in a large-town environment. ... People [come] from all over the country, who count on each other's experiences to improve their lives and enrich themselves."

Persico said the intimate teacher-student ratio and engaged staff create a tight-knit community in the heart of the nation's capital. When longtime faculty member Joan Barth Urban passed away, he called a former classmate. Even after five years apart, they picked up as if no time had passed.

Similarly, Persico remembers working for the Columbus School of Law, when he received word that a student's mother was deathly ill. Persico interrupted a class the student was in to share the news that he had to return home to Kentucky immediately. The student made it in time to say goodbye to his mother, and every year, he sends a Christmas card to Persico.

"It makes me cry," Persico said. "Those are the types of things that have meaning for you."

Persico and his friend, the late Mike Murphy, of the class of 1974, were instrumental in creating Murphy's Grill at the Edward J. Pryzbyla Center. In his final days, Murphy threw a party and pulled Persico aside with his plan to build a successor to the Rat.

"It was one of the places where we had those bonds that really came together," Persico said. "It's one of those things that he felt. And I'll tell you, this man had more friends than you could ever imagine. He felt that Catholic was losing

something by not having that kind of a gathering place. He was a political junkie ... and he would tell stories, and everybody would chit-chat and he got to know everybody on campus."

Seventeen years later, Murphy's is an integral part of the community where new friendships continue to form every day.

The feature pages that follow are just a few examples of lifelong University bonds and how they helped shape alumni connections that still thrive today.

Rui Barros



Left to right: Frank Persico, Patricia Murphy-Lynch, and Stephanie Persico

SISTERS AT HEART ... AND FOR LIFE

20

When the women of “Girls Night Out” walked onto campus to begin their studies in the early 1980s, none of them knew they would leave in four years with life-long friends.

The self-titled group, affectionately a better known as GNO, bonded during first year orientation, classes, cross country practices, evenings at nearby Colonel Brooks’ Tavern, and on campus at the Rathskeller.

“We’d be at a meet, come back, and walk straight to The Rat with our smelly uniform and often with a trophy,” Terry O’Hara Lavoie, B.S. 1987, said.



The common elements were always laughing, dancing, and supporting one another in faith.

They could have easily gone their separate way after commencement, but as some became mothers and professionals, they realized they needed each other. Most had remained in the Washington, D.C., area to begin the next chapter of their lives. Over the years, the group has expanded to as many as 23 members, some of whom didn’t even cross paths on campus.

With that new chapter came new relationships, challenges, and opportunities, and often the GNO group became hard to keep intact.

As Sue Johnson, a 1987 graduate, puts it: “I think being a good friend is a lot of work, if you really want to get good at it. A lot of people say to me, oh you have this group and that group. And I say, ‘because it’s important to me to maintain these friendships.’”

Invites to the GNO get-togethers have marked the progress of communication in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. At first, it started as mailed announcement letters. As the late 1990s arrived, emails were the next natural step. With mobile phones now ubiquitous, texts and calls can rally the GNO in a matter of seconds. The Zoo meeting brought 17 of them together in a day, as they shared memories, laughs, and glasses of wine. For them, it’s like a continuance of their time at The Rat, and the stories start flowin

Nearly 40 years after their undergraduate years, classmates and friends are still meeting up at least once a month at establishments such as The Iris Inn in Glen Echo, Md. The monthly gathering are sacrosanct, however. No significant others (n matter how much they plead) are invited, except for an annual Christmas party, where children and grandchildren may also attend.

“The significance of GNO is that we depend on each other,” said O’Hara Lavoie. She had children after many of her “sisters” and when she had her first baby, two GNO friends “just showed up in the hospital... I just had a baby and there they were!”

BETTER THAN GOOGLE

Many have remained in the Washington area in the decades after graduation. Some might meet up for a quick coffee and offer “auntie” advice each other’s children.

“It’s great because they feel so comfortable talking with my sisters,” Alexis Bakos, B.S. 1986,



Girls Night Out, classes from throughout the 1980s, at Irish Inn, Glen Echo, Maryland.

said. “These are my sisters. So for my children to go to these friends and share some of their deepest emotions to me is a blessing.”

When a GNO member faces a parenting issue — for instance, a child with a learning disability — they know where to turn.

“I don’t go to Google, I go to GNO,” said Bronwyn Haley, who has decades of government leadership experience. “This is the resource if you need medical advice and if you need good, girlfriend advice.”

It’s well-won expertise, as GNO also includes engineers, service industry, and health care professionals. O’Hara Lavoie, for instance, is the co-founder of Culmore Clinic, which provides compassionate medical care, counseling services, and specialty referrals to uninsured adults. Bakos is a program director in the Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology at the Institute on Aging, where she oversees extramural research on palliative care and symptom science. She

previously was appointed to the U.S. House of Representatives Health and Long-Term Care Subcommittee as a Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Fellow and served as Congressman Edward Roybal’s Health Legislative Assistant on the House Select Committee on Aging.

SAFE SPACE

Anita Freres, a 1983 graduate, gets emotional when talking about the faith and life journeys of the individuals in the group. While there are decades shared between them, GNO does not have groupthink.

“Everybody is able to voice how they feel, and this gives us that safe space,” Freres said.

No matter the accomplishments or the would-be loves in her life, Bakos has always prioritized the connection with her GNO sisters.

“There was something about Catholic University, a shared values kind of thing, that is so incredibly special,” Bakos said.

Over the years, parents have aged and encountered deathly illnesses, and spouses have passed away. GNO has been there, every step of the way.

Karin Schuette Mulquin (B.E.E., 1987) was devastated as her husband, Tom, battled cancer before ultimately dying in 2023. At the time, he was senior director of capital projects at the University.

Some GNO members shared their medical advice for chemotherapy, provided comfort in Mulquin’s darkest days, and set up camp at their house to provide any resources following her husband’s passing.

“These women were amazing in supporting me,” said Mulquin. “They were part of our cancer journey, and I couldn’t have done it without them.”



MATT KURKJIAN: THE SEAM OF A TEAM

There are exactly 108 stitches on a baseball – but there is only one seam on the ball, with the thread weaving its way through its curvatures.

At Catholic University, the late Matt Kurkjian (B.A., Mathematics, 1978) was the seam among his teammates on the University baseball team, his friends, and everyone he touched, connecting them as only he could.

“My brother was the ringleader of everything he did,” said Tim Kurkjian, Matt’s younger brother. “He just pulled everyone together.”

Indeed, he did. Matt, who passed away in September 2023 from ALS (or Lou Gehrig’s disease), played third base on the University’s baseball team from 1974–78. This was a team that almost made it to the NCAA Division I College World Series in 1977. More importantly, it was a team that — with Matt as a leader — has remained close even after the last at-bats of the players’ college careers.

“He was a part of a group of guys that did a lot of good things for Catholic University and for a lot of people,” said one of his close friends and baseball teammates, Val Van Deventer (B.A., Accounting, 1978 and M.A., Finance, 1985). “His legacy is still with us.”

BASEBALL IS LIFE

During Matt’s freshman year, he met friends for a lifetime when Hall of Fame Coach Bob Talbot told him and others on the team to build a batting cage. Sure enough, Matt and teammates Mark Travaglini (B.A., Accounting, 1978) and Van Deventer, got the job done, with the cage lasting for many years until the baseball field was moved to its current location.

Coach Talbot “just handed us a shovel and post-hole-diggers and said go at it ... That’s how we met,” said Van Deventer.

Added Travaglini, “We built a bond from the get-go that has lasted forever. When I think of Matty, I don’t think of him as a friend. I think of him as a brother. I would have done anything for him; he would have done anything for me. Those friendships are hard to find in life

“The four greatest years of my brother’s life were spent playing baseball at Catholic University,” said Tim Kurkjian, adding that one of the best years was when his other brother, Andrew, who was a senior, and Matt, who was a freshman, played on the same team.

Teammates like Van Deventer recall Matt as a fierce competitor who “played with spirit and passion on the baseball field and focused on



Courtesy of Mark Travaglini



Left: Joe Janela, Matt Kurkjian, and Mark Travaglini shared a laugh at graduation. **Right:** Chris DiPasquale, Kurkjian, and Travaglini years later at Travaglini's daughter's wedding.

winning." And win they did, compiling a stellar record in the four years that they played ball together.

"If you gave me nine of them, we would have won every game," Van Deventer added. "He never backed down from anything. That's the spirit he had. It was the spirit he had on the team."

Catholic University head baseball coach Ross Natoli knew Matt as a competitor, a teammate, and most importantly, a friend for 39 years. He said that Matt was "far and away the heart and soul of each team he played on during his Hall of Fame career" at the University. Whether on or off the diamond, Matt "was the best teammate on the planet, the ultimate teammate!"

"It's not just about the talent on the team," Travaglini said. "The better you got along the more you loved each other, the better you achieved."

THE ULTIMATE PHONE TALKER – AND FRIEND

Friends and family alike all agree that Matt liked to talk.

"My dad, his superpower was bringing and keeping people together," said his daughter, Lane Kurkjian. "He made people feel like they mattered. He called in and checked in on people. No one could talk on the phone like my dad. He was the ultimate phone talker."

"Matty just made an effort to stay in touch with everybody," Travaglini said. "It's a special skill."

To keep up with his many friends, he kept in his wallet a piece of paper folded up like an accordion. On it were their names, phone numbers, and birthdays.

His son, Mike Kurkjian, said that with that list, "he might call you for your birthday or to

talk about nothing in particular. You would have to get him off the phone because he would talk to you forever."

Lane Kurkjian recalled the hours that her father would spend on the phone organizing trips to North Carolina's Outer Banks with friends or organizing his two softball teams, one from his Catholic University days, the other with his friends from elementary and middle school. Seeing him in action and being able to be with her dad brought the two of them closer together.

"As a daughter, it was the best thing ever," Lane said as she spoke about how she and her brother would run the bases before going out for pizza after softball games.

Mike Kurkjian said that the number-one priority for his father was being present for his family and friends. Even when Matt was getting sicker, he was always looking out for other people,



"We built a bond from the get-go that has lasted forever. When I think of Matty, I don't think of him as a friend. I think of him as a brother. I would have done anything for him; he would have done anything for me. Those friendships are hard to find in life"

— MARK TRAVAGLINI



asking how they were doing, and seeing how he could help them.

One of Matt's favorite phrases was "I'm happy every day," his son said, even if wasn't feeling well. That kind of optimism and persistence in maintaining friendships and his joy in living endeared him to so many people.

And fellow baseball players weren't the only people to whom Matt endeared himself during his college days. Mike Graham (B.A., American History, 1978), who played on the University's football team, was one of Matt's friends. The connected through the Riff Raff group, which was formed by a group of guys at the University in the late 1970s and named after a character in the cartoon series *Underdog*.

Graham explained that he was an "honorary"

member — which meant he had to wait to be invited to the Riff Raff group's outings — but was always happy to get an invitation, nonetheless. It was always a good time, and Matt was, of course, in the middle of the fun.

Remembering the good times they had in college, Graham said of Matt, "He was one of the nicest, kindest, and funniest people I have ever met in my life. Whenever I saw him, he made me feel good — just because of his smile and his greeting."

Graham said that it was Matt and other friends who made attending Catholic University such a wonderful experience.

"We all picked the right school at Catholic University, and that's what brought us together," Graham said, adding that he and his friends "lived life to the fullest."

REMEMBERING #2

In April 2022, the Catholic University baseball team honored Matt at a game in which every player wore his No. 2 jersey number and "M. Kurkjian" on the back of their uniforms. Matt threw out the first pitch, with many of his teammates from the 1977 team in attendance.

Throwing that pitch took guts and courage, as ALS had started to ravage Matt's body.

"One of the first things that he lost were fine motor skills," said Mike Kurkjian. "He had to relearn how to throw. It was impressive, but not surprising to me, that he relearned and could still throw."

Even off the baseball field, Matt had an impact on just about every person who came into contact with him. From his elementary school friends to those he worked with, Matt made a difference in people's lives by being a good friend. That was evident when more than 400 people came to Matt's celebration of life held at the Pryzbyla Center in November 2023.

As Tim Kurkjian remarked, those at the celebration "all told the same story: he kept us connected."

And just about everyone in the room, his friends and family said, would refer to Matt as their best friend. Or as Travaglini put it, "a five-finger friend — someone who is one of those special people you can count on one hand who will always be there for you."

Lane Kurkjian recalled making the floral arrangements for Matt's memorial with family members who had come in early, some from as far away as England and Canada, to attend the event at the Pryzbyla Center. They had all gathered at her farm and were in her barn house. It was one of her favorite memories of the time surrounding the memorial.



Courtesy of Lane Kurkjian

Matt Kurkjian and his children, Mike and Lane




Matt Kurkjian surrounded by friends and family at Catholic University baseball event where everyone wore t-shirts that had Matt's #2 on the back.

"It was a representation of what my dad could do ... pulling people together," she said. "Quality time was his focus."

Mike Kurkjian said that the crowd at the event was a reflection, too, of the connection his father had with baseball, as a player and a coach to area teams.

"If you played baseball over a 30-year period within a 100-mile radius, he was probably friends with you," he said. "All of his players loved being with him."

In remembrance of Matt's impact on Catholic University and especially its baseball team, the team created an annual award called The Ultimate Teammate Award, and a banner with his uniform's No. 2 on it hangs on the outfield fence at Talbot Field.

This year, the University hosted the inaugural Matt Kurkjian ALS Awareness Invitational Tournament. Catholic University won the tournament 2-1, winning two straight games to take home the crown. Doing it as a complete team. Just as Matt would want. 

Tell us about the long-standing friendships you have formed at The Catholic University of America — what have they meant to you? Email us at cua-magazine@cua.edu and we could share it in a future edition of the magazine.

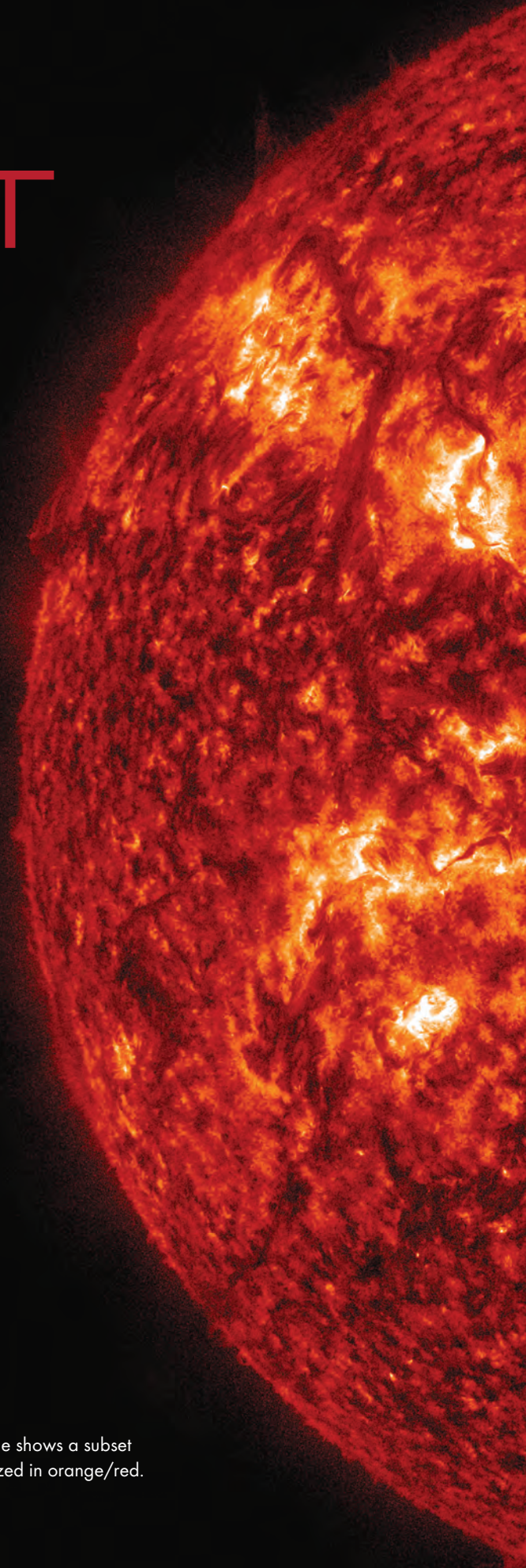
SPOTLIGHT ON THE SUN

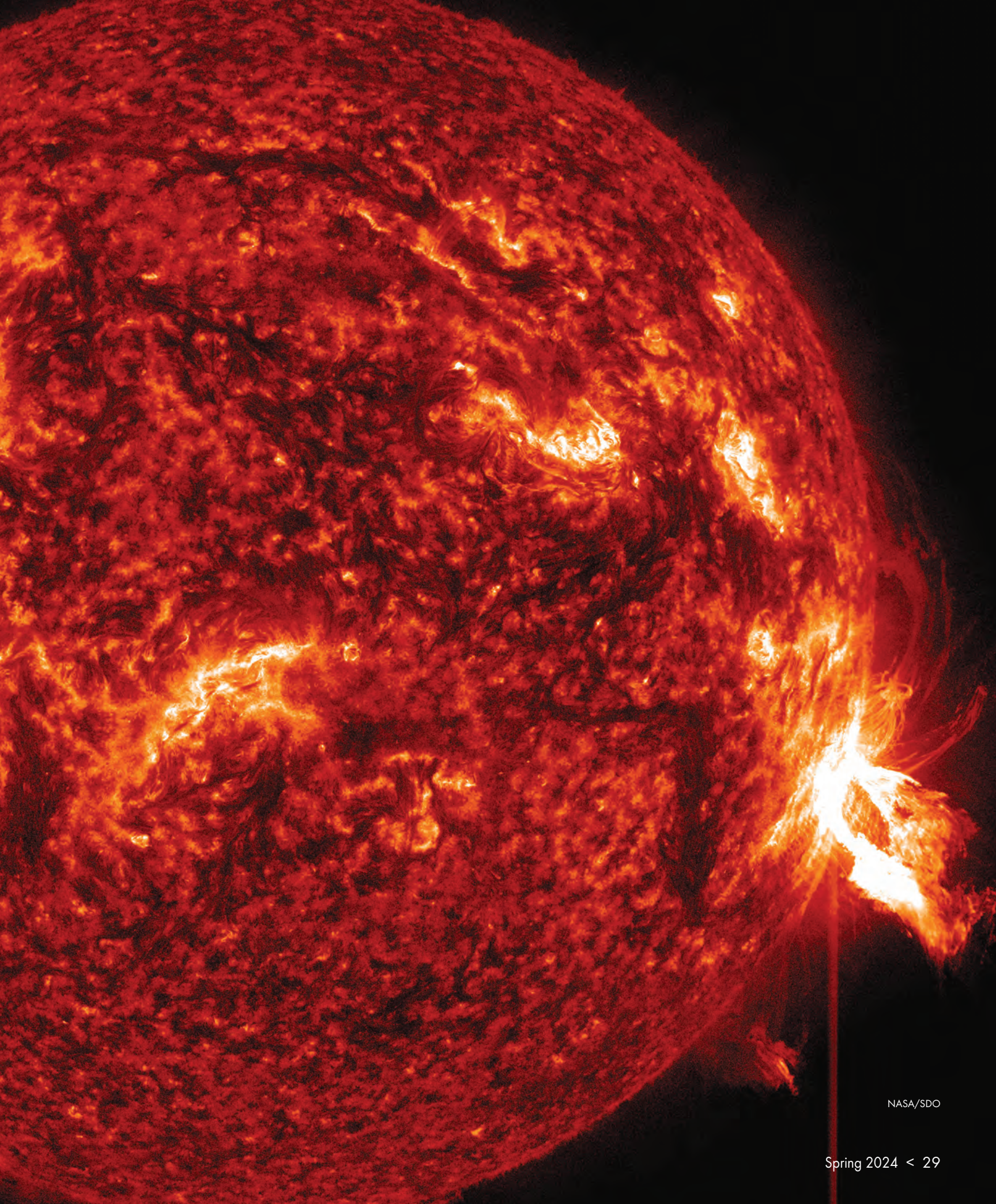
By Mariana Barillas

This year's forecast:

Sunny with a chance of solar storms. As the sun enters a “solar maximum” phase, an active period that it enters every 11 years, space weather is a hot topic.

NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory captured this image of the sun on Feb. 16, 2024. The image shows a subset of extreme ultraviolet light that highlights prominences and the chromosphere, and which is colorized in orange/red.





NASA/SDO



Director of the Moon to Mars Space Weather Analysis Office Yaireska “Yari” Collado-Vega, Ph.D. 2013, in the team’s headquarters

Meteorologists can tell us if it’s going to rain or snow, but their knowledge base is largely limited to below the stratosphere. Space weather researchers examine variations in the space environment around the Earth, extending from the sun to the upper layers of our atmosphere.

Solar storms, or bursts of electromagnetic energy, can send shockwaves through the solar system. They can cause stunning lower-than-usual aurora borealis but can also wreak havoc on staples of modern life, including satellites, cell phone service, the internet, and GPS. Back in 2003, the northern lights reached as far south as Australia, astronauts in the International Space Station took cover, and communication problems disrupted commercial flight operations.

The sun continuously emits energy, so there’s always another event of varying intensity on the horizon. That we seldom notice a solar storm underway is thanks in large part to researchers and innovators focused on space weather.

The Catholic University of America is a leading institution at one of the largest, if not the largest, hubs for heliophysics research in the world. In 2021, the University received \$64.1 million — the largest grant in University history — from NASA to lead PHaSER (Partnership for Heliophysics and Space Environment Research). Thi

cooperative agreement with five other higher education institutions supports the agency’s heliophysics division at Goddard Space Flight Center, one of NASA’s major centers for space science and exploration in nearby Greenbelt, Maryland.

About 100 space weather scientists who drive discovery in the division are University employees — and this number doesn’t include researchers in PHaSER’s sister cooperative CREST II (Center for Research and Exploration in Space Science) and many other alumni who work at Goddard.

Physics Research Professor Robert Robinson, who leads PHaSER as its principal investigator, explained the rise in visibility of space weather has to do with society’s increasing reliance on technologies, especially in communications, which are sensitive to solar events.

He said interest is “blossoming,” especially among the next generation. Space weather is an emerging and evolving field, offering ample opportunities to boldly where no researcher has gone before.

“Young people and students are excited to make a difference and be pioneers,” he said

OUR PART IN THE UNIVERSE

Cardinal community members are crucial contributors to many of NASA’s highest-profile projects, including the Artemis program that aims to send humans back to the moon as soon as 2025 and will lay the foundation for a future mission to Mars.

“There’s never been a better time to study space weather,” said Yaireska “Yari” Collado-Vega, Ph.D. 2013. She directs the Moon to Mars (M2M) Space Weather Analysis Office, the only NASA space weather analysis and forecasting group with a scope that extends beyond the region between the Earth and the sun to reach into deep space as far as Jupiter.

The nine-person team, seven of whom are University employed analysts and researchers, is a proving ground for emerging real-time analysis techniques and supports the development of improved computer models for predicting the space radiation environment.

It’s a big job because the sun’s explosive temperament is notoriously hard to predict.

“Right now, the amount of warning we might have can be as little as ten minutes,” said Collado-Vega. Their goal is to collect as much information as possible to help move the needle on lead time for future Artemis astronauts to take cover in their ship or on the moon’s surface to protect themselves from the radiation environment.

Failure isn’t an option, so the sun never sets on the

Moon to Mars (M2M) Office. They work in shift monitoring the sun every day (including holidays). In the leadup to the Artemis missions, they have provided 24/7 mission-critical support for some of NASA's highest-profile projects including the 2021 James Webb Space Telescope launch.

This careful monitoring is essential because even a small solar event can cause major impacts. When a minor geomagnetic storm hit the Earth's atmosphere during a 2022 SpaceX launch and nearly 40 brand-new satellites began falling from the sky, Collado-Vega was on speed-dial and provided an assessment to NASA's headquarters.

"In less than an hour, I sent a whole summary of everything that was happening — the flare, the coronal mass ejections, how they arrived, what happened upon their arrival — everything," she said. The catastrophe brought new visibility to space weather and led to an industry-wide effort to build better collaboration among agencies and private enterprises.

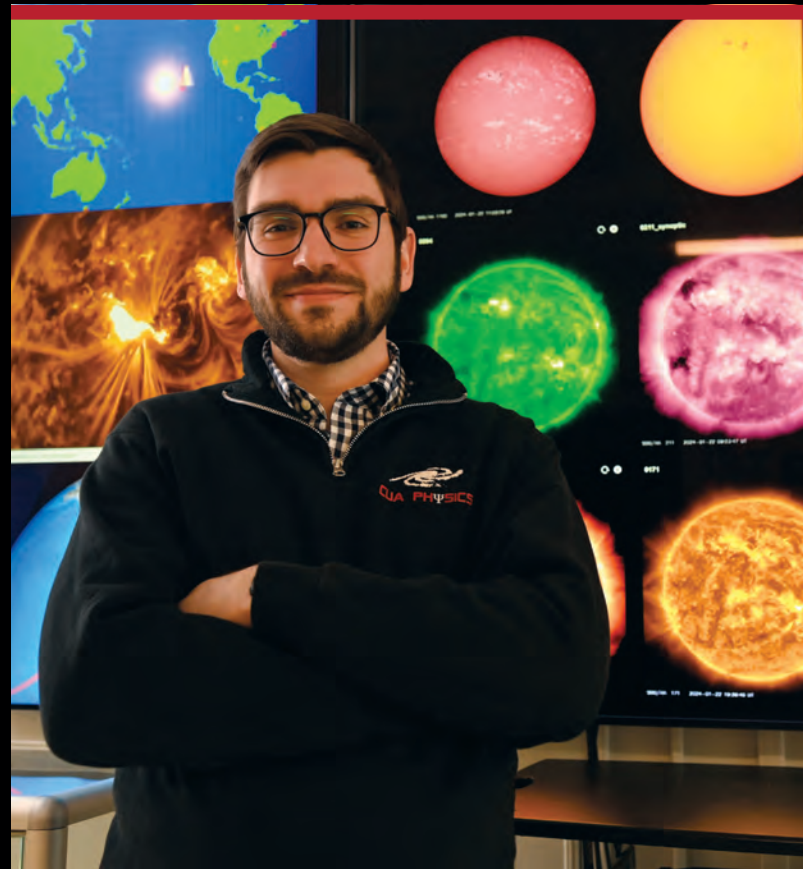
For the M2M team, it's all in a day's work.

Each morning begins with an all-team meeting, where they gather in front of a big screen to share their analysis of the most recent solar activity with representatives from across the agency and from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Space Weather Prediction Center, the country's official source for space weather alerts and warnings. This "tag-up" is usually in the "WOW" room that gets its name because that's the first thing people say when they step inside and see the 180-degree floor-to-ceiling big screen. Today, it's in a shared workspace that feels less like an office and more like a situation room.

Usually, these morning meetings last no more than 5–10 minutes. With the sun more active, it's more common for them to extend to as much as half an hour. And overnight, the sun was especially busy.

"You came on a great day," said M2M deputy director Michelangelo "Michel" Romano, B.S. 2015, as he marveled at time-lapsed videos of last night's stunning and gargantuan explosions that travel hundreds of miles per second. Thankfully, Earth's magnetic field shields us from its worst effects and makes life on our planet possible.

It's times like these when Romano thinks about the glory of God's creation. He chose to study at the University because he wanted to delve deeper into both his Catholic faith and space science.



Top: M2M Deputy Director Michelangelo "Michel" Romano, B.S. 2015, sets his sight on the sun. **Bottom:** The team huddles for their morning meeting where they discuss the latest solar activity.

“I love diving into the physics of something that is dynamic, chaotic, and complex to appreciate the order and structure that comes not just from somewhere but from Someone,” said Romano, a message he instills in the three children he is raising with his wife Patricia, B.S. 2015, whom he met when they were both studying physics.

Romano said he got his first internship at NAS Goddard, thanks to faculty investment in student success and the connections forged on campus. He said the small class sizes made him “feel like more than a number,” and the University is a “great pipeline” to Goddard, especially with the launch of space weather academic concentrations since he graduated.

WHAT LIES BEYOND

The University is an innovator in training the future generation of space weather researchers, offering a rare minor available to any undergraduate, regardless of major. The Master of Science in Applied Space Weather Research is the first degree of its type and Robinson’s brainchild.

He explained that space weather is rarely a standalone course of study at most universities but is typically spread out among different disciplines such as meteorology, physics, and electrical engineering. Robinson saw a need for a program that put all the pieces together. He also believed it needed to be much more than “research for research’s sake.”

“To really understand the full impact of a space weather event, you need people with a lot of different expertise,” said Robinson. “We try to give the students a multidisciplinary view of the knowledge they need to tackle this problem.”

The undergraduate and graduate curricula combine several branches of physics with skill development in observation techniques including data mining and computerized forecasting methods. The courses are taught by University faculty, PHaSER researchers, and NASA civil-servant scientists.

The master’s degree program director and Associate Professor of Physics Vadim Uritsky said there is high demand in a wide variety of industries because of the threat solar events pose to critical civilian infrastructure, both in space and on the ground. He said the “solar maximum” is uncharted territory for a lot of new technologies, such as driverless cars, that did not exist the last time the sun was this active.

One of the program’s first graduates, Samantha Carlson, M.S. 2022, manages the Federal Aviation Administration’s newly established space weather-specific research program, where she works to build upon the agency’s knowledge base. It’s important especially for flights that go over the Earth’s poles — regions where the impact of space weather is more pronounced — because they sometimes need to be rerouted or canceled to avoid exposure to an event.

“We’re looking at space weather’s effects, what are

our strengths and what are our weaknesses ... It's about determining what's already in place to combat issues and staying ahead of the game," said Carlson, who credits her fast-track into the field to the faculty's fostering a learning environment for students to pursue their individual interests.

The number of students pursuing the master's degree is a handful a year but is growing along with the discipline's visibility. Physics Research Associate Professor Dr. Gang Kai Poh, who is also a researcher at Goddard, said this year the program reached its highest ever enrollment.

He said a big focus for the program this year is the April 8 total solar eclipse, which will be the last visible event in the United States for the next 20 years. His students built sensors that will be deployed along the path of totality, where the moon completely blocks the sun, to detect changes in the Earth's magnetosphere during the event. The data will be submitted to NASA for analysis

For Poh and his colleagues, creating opportunities like these and inviting leading scientists from across the country to class to speak with students is all part of building the University into a hub for innovation.

"The whole idea of this degree program is to train the students so they can join industry, academia, or NOAA Space Weather Prediction Center as forecasters to be leaders in their field," said Poh.

For space weather science at the University, the future's looking bright. [CU](#)



Associate Professor of Physics Vadim Uritsky teaching at the University's Space Weather Center, an on-campus lab where students can study space weather events in real-time and learn forecasting skills.



LIGHT UP D.C.

By Matthew Palmer





“The array will save an estimated 7,115 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year, and contribute to Mayor Muriel Bowser’s goals to make Washington, D.C. carbon-neutral and climate-resilient by 2050.”



Students tour the solar array project as part of an energy course.

For most of 2022 and 2023, there were hills of dirt as far as the eye could see on the University’s West Campus. But within the last year, a person could stand in front of the Rome School of Art and Music and watch the land transform just across Harewood Road — thanks to construction crews bringing in thousands of supplies and equipment.

By late fall in 2023, the 25-acre project began to take shape, as dozens of solar panel sheets covered the open fields. By spring of this year a lingering switchgear was all that was left to be delivered, while work with the local power company tied up loose ends.

This summer, the University will be home to the D.C. area’s largest solar array, one that is big enough to fill 19 football fields.

The work is already drawing praise from local leaders. The University won the 2024 Clean Energy DC Award from D.C.’s Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) in March for “its impressive solar array and sustainable operations.” The sheer enormity of the project has left many speechless.

“Witnessing this large-scale project in development helped my understanding of the process of construction and management,” said junior mechanical engineering major Kathleen Delate. “So much detail and hard work goes into the installation of the solar panels, as well as the process of converting solar energy into the energy we use in our everyday life.”

Delate was one of many students from Dr. Sen Nieh’s Introduction to Energy and Energy Systems course who were given a fall 2023 tour of the developing array.

The buzz around the project, not just from a pollinator habitat created there, was palpable. Curiosity reached its peak this spring.

“It’s just been amazing,” said Alexandra Harry Napier, the University’s director of the Office of Sustainability. “There’s been a lot of enthusiasm. Not many universities are going this big!”

IMPACTING THE COMMUNITY VIA FAITH

The planned June debut of the six-megawatt array is the result of a partnership with Standard Solar, which will own, operate, and maintain the system. Standard has developed, delivered, funded, and acquired more than 200 commercial and



Alexandra Harry Napier leads the University's Office of Sustainability.

community solar and solar + storage projects.

Once online, the array will bring clean energy savings to D.C. residents, nonprofits, and businesses. It will be another visible sign of the University's care for creation.

"The project will provide locally generated, renewable energy to our campus, and local residents and businesses," said University President Peter Kilpatrick. "The array will save an estimated 7.115 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions per year, and contribute to Mayor Muriel Bowser's goals to make Washington, D.C. carbon-neutral and climate-resilient by 2050."

Before the new array, the University already hosted 2,600 solar panels that dot the main and north campuses. Locations include Aquinas Hall, Flather Hall, Gibbons Hall, Pangborn Hall, the Raymond A. DuFour Athletic Center, the Grounds, the Maintenance Building, and the O'Boyle Parking Lot — with 677 kW of total installed capacity.

The University's efforts stem from a continuum in the Church's consistent teachings on the care for creation. In a message to the University community, President Kilpatrick emphasized the words of Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis.

"To respect life in all of its forms is to also care for the environment in which we live," President Kilpatrick said. "This is the message, and invitation, of Pope Francis. It is a message we are listening to — and that Catholic University is acting upon."

The University became one of the first

universities in the world to sign onto a groundbreaking Vatican initiative, the Laudato Si' Action Platform, by committing to a plan for environmental sustainability in 2021. The initiative is named after Pope Francis' 2013 Encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, which is a roadmap for Catholic care for our common home, Earth.

"It's really great to see a positive step into renewable energy because it will greatly help the surrounding community and also the Catholic University community now and in the future," Delate said. "Taking steps toward renewable energy is great as a student here because as Catholics we should always be taking steps to be good stewards of this world that God provided for us."

The University was named in *Princeton Review's Guide to Green Colleges for 2023*.

"At The Catholic University of America we're committed to Pope Francis' call for environmental responsibility. Through education and innovative operations, we're taking meaningful steps toward a more sustainable future," said Alexandra Harry Napier.

CARING ABOUT THE FUTURE, TODAY

Gen Z, the generation of students enrolled or currently looking at higher education institutions, is one of the most environmentally conscious in history. A 2021 Pew Research study found that

"among social media users, nearly seven in ten Gen Zers (69%) say they felt anxious about the future the most recent time they saw content about addressing climate change."

At Catholic University, the array project includes aspects that help mitigate its impact on the local environment. The array is being installed on a previously undeveloped portion of the 173.4-acre campus, and the University has arranged for many of the removed trees to be salvaged by the District of Columbia's Urban Forestry Division.

Trees that had been growing on the site were milled into benches, and stump seating will be donated to local schools and parks. Wood byproducts were slated to go to the University of the District of Columbia's Center for Urban Agriculture, and higher-quality wood will be milled into lumber and donated to schools and nonprofits. The University's sustainable actions on the site continue as new trees were planted along the perimeter of the array. Wildflowers have also been seeded between the panels, and beekeepers will tend to hives onsite.

An estimated 25% of the University's electricity will come from the array, while the rest will be sold back to the grid. The University offsets 100% of its electricity usage through the purchase of renewable energy credits (RECs). RECs are tradable, non-tangible energy commodities that represent proof that 1 megawatt-hour of electricity was generated from a renewable energy source, such as solar or wind.

On a broad scale, the University focuses on efficiency by installing energy-efficient appliances such as ENERGY STAR-certified lighting, IT equipment, A/V equipment, and kitchen equipment. The Facilities team regularly upgrades buildings to more efficient equipment when undergoing renovations and also uses a building automation system to increase control over all campus building heating, ventilation, and air conditioning.

This Energy Project was the most significant energy conservation effort on campus in recent years. The solar array supports not only the University's sustainability efforts but its educational mission as well.

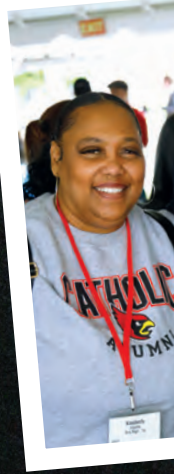
"The students are really interested and have been asking: 'Can we tour it?' A big part of this project is that it's a learning opportunity for our students and staff," Harry Napier said. [CU](#)

ALUMNI
CORNER



Cardinal
WEEKEND

2  23



Photos by Rui Barros, Steve Ruark, and Atala Photography



63

class years represented



35+

events



83

405

reunion gift contributions



1,200+

attendees



1

fantastic weekend of alumni fun!



▶ 1940s

Monsignor James C. Turro, S.T.L. 1948, a Jersey City native and the oldest priest in the Archdiocese of Newark, turned 102 years old. His home parish of Our Lady of Mercy Church in Park Ridge marked his Jan. 26 birthday by singing “Happy Birthday” at the 11 a.m. Mass on Jan. 28.

▶ 1970s

Arthur Morton, B.A. 1970, was in a terrible motorcycle accident in 2015 and became a paraplegic. Since then, he has sailed multiple times with Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB) and is in a program to use a ReWalk, an exoskeletal system that allows him to walk. Out of the accident came a book, *Better Than Before: One Couple’s Journey After a Tragic Accident* (Encouragement Books, April 2022), written by his wife, Angela DiCicco, about their journey. The have been married for 13 years and live in Annapolis.

Dean Rakoskie, B.E.E. 1972, was recognized as Georgia’s 2022–2023 VFW All-American State Commander at the 124th VFW National Convention held in Phoenix, Ariz., in July 2023. This recognition gained him the distinction of being a Triple Crown recipient (All-American Commander at the state, district, and post levels); he is only the seventh State Commander from Georgia to earn the Triple Crown award.

Edward “Ted” Green, Ph.D. 1974, medical anthropologist, former Harvard AIDS prevention project director, and former member of the Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, bares his personal and professional adventures as a rebel researcher and intrepid traveler in his stunning memoir, *On the Fringe: Confessions of a Maverick Anthropologist* (Black Rose Writing, October 2023).

Paul Scimonelli, B.M. 1974, D.M.A. 2003, former part-time faculty member of the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama and Art, has written *Joe Cambria: International Super Scout of the Washington Senators* (McFarland, March 2023). The biography traces Cambria’s memorable career and how he subverted baseball’s color line years before Jackie Robinson broke it, signing light-skinned Cubans — many of African descent — who could pass in the all-white Major Leagues.

Monsignor Michael Clay, B.M. 1975, M.L.M. 1978, M.Div. 1982, D.Min. 1996, adjunct associate professor in the School of Theology and Religious Studies and a member of the International Commission for the Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Disciples of Christ Church, was among commission members received into an audience with Pope Francis during their June 2023 meeting in Rome.

(Paul) Boghos K. Garmirian, Ph.D. 1975, has written *The Road to Cigars: A Memoir* (Cedar Publications, September 2023), chronicling his journey as a young man in Beirut, Lebanon, to a cigar



Monsignor Michael Clay greeted by Pope Francis.

maker in the United States. As a cigar importer and distributor of PG Cigars since 1990, his memoir discusses the various experiences that led him to produce cigars in the Dominican Republic and the public figures he met, as well as the good life he pursued in America, which made it all possible.

Larry Roeder, M.S.L.S. 1977, and Barry Harrelson, M.S.L.S. 1979, have written *Dirt Don’t Burn: A Black Community’s Struggle for Educational Equality Under Segregation* (Georgetown University Press, November 2023), the story of how Loudoun County, Virginia, which once denied educational opportunity to Black Americans, gradually increased the equality of education for all children in the area. An inspiring, true story of a Black community shedding new light on the history of segregation and inequity in American education.

James W. “Jim” Dean Jr, B.A. 1978, president of the University of New Hampshire, will retire in

June 2024, having served six years as president of the state’s flagship public research university and more than two years as interim chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire. His retirement will conclude a 40-year academic career, of which more than 25 years have been spent in leadership roles. Before becoming president of UNH in 2018, he served as executive vice chancellor and provost at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, after his time as dean of UNC’s Kenan-Flagler Business School.

Jorge E. Ponce, M.S.L.S. 1978, has written *Examining the Past to Understand the Present: Th Journey of a Cuban-American Refugee and What Led to His Conversion from Democrat to Republican* (Fulton Books, June 2023). This book captures the author’s challenges, disappointments, and victories along his life-journey, revealing key events that shaped him and his views on the nation’s political climate.

► 1980s

Elizabeth A. Johnson, C.S.J., Ph.D. 1981, a distinguished professor emerita of theology at Fordham University, and one of the most influential voices in feminist theology and ecological ethics, received the illustrious Civitas Dei Medal from Villanova University. This prestigious award honors Catholics who have exemplified the pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness. At the award ceremony, she delivered the lecture, “Ask the Beasts, Ask the Galaxies.”

William Carr, D.M.A. 1982, a distinguished pianist and resident of Malvern, Pa., showcased his musical prowess at the Broadway in the Burbs *No Name Pops*

concert at Immaculata University in February. This concert featured him playing the third movement of Leroy Anderson’s piano concerto in C Major. Carr, who became a Steinway Artist in 2005, has been associated with Immaculata University for 31 years.

Rev. Patrick Griffin, C.M., M.A. 1982, Ph.D. 1984, executive director of the Vincentian Center for Church and Society at St. John’s University, has been named to the Niagara University board of trustees.

Faye Lari, M.S.N. 1983, a psychiatrist, has joined Garrett Regional Medical Center’s Regional Behavioral Health Center, known as Family Health

& Wellness. A Maryland licensed physician and surgeon certifie with the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, she will provide office-based comprehensive mental health and substance abuse services.

Lisa Ann Walter, B.F.A. 1983, Montgomery County (Md.) native and *Abbott Elementary* actress and comedian appeared in seven stand-up shows around North America, including two shows at Bethesda Theater this past September. She won the *Celebrity Jeopardy* championship in January, taking home \$1 million for the Entertainment Community Fund.

Paul W. Callahan, B.A.G.S. 1985, has written a new book on the U.S.

Civil War and Maryland, *When Democracy Fell: The Subjugation of Maryland During the U.S. Civil War* (BookBaby, October 2023).

Robert Farrell, M.S. 1985, Ph.D. 1989, published the sixth edition of his book, *RNA Methodologies: A Laboratory Guide for Isolation and Characterization* (Elsevier Academic Press, 2022). The publication of this book coincides with the 30th anniversary of the publication of the first edition in 1993. He is a professor of biology and director of academic affairs at Penn State York, where he first began teaching in 1991. He is a well-regarded researcher in the area of transcriptional and posttranscriptional control of gene expression and all things RNA.



Athletics Giving Challenge Smashes Records

Every year, the 10-day Cardinal Athletics Giving Challenge inspires alumni, friends, and student-athletes themselves to make gifts in support of University athletics teams.

The 2023 challenge was the most successful year ever, with 4,363 donors making 3,480 gifts totaling \$519,906. This bested last year’s previous record-breaking total, \$372,440.

The categories for both men’s and women’s teams were “Most Gifts” and “Highest Participation,” with the top teams in each category receiving prizes of \$3,000, \$2,000, and \$1,000, respectively. Participation prizes were awarded based on the percentage of each team’s alumni and student-athletes who made a gift.

Most gifts for women’s teams went to softball, lacrosse, and basketball. For the men, most gifts were for basketball, baseball, and lacrosse. Women’s teams with the highest participation were golf, softball, and rowing; men’s teams with the highest participation were golf, rowing, and baseball.

Follow “catholicu_cards” on social media to find out about the 2024 challenge this fall! — A.K.



ALUMNI CORNER

Class Notes

Siobhan Fallon Hogan, M.F.A. 1985, co-produced, wrote, and served as lead actress in the film *Shelter in Solitude*, which is now available on Amazon Prime.

Most Rev. Michael Olson, B.A. 1988, M.A. 1989, bishop of Fort Worth, Texas, received the Catholic University of America Theologica College 2023 Alumnus Lifetime Service Award on October 4.

The Catholic University of America announced the election of two bishops to its Board of Trustees: **Most Rev. John Barres, S.T.L. 1989**, bishop of Rockville Center, N.Y., will serve as a bishop fellow, while **Most Rev. Robert Barron, B.A. 1981, M.A. 1982**, bishop of Winona-Rochester, will serve as a trustee.

Hope C. Tarr, Ph.D. 1989, Ph.D. 1992, debuted her historical fiction novel *Irish Eyes* (Lume/Joffe Books, December 2023), which spans 24 years in the life of an Irish immigrant woman, from the Gilded Age through the Jazz Age in New York City. An award-winning author of more than 20 historical and contemporary romances and four screenplays, *Irish Eyes* is the launch of her American Songbook series for Lume/Joffe Books

Most Rev. Thomas R. Zinkula M.A. 1989, an eastern Iowa native and former local priest, has been appointed by Pope Francis to be the 11th archbishop of Dubuque. Formerly bishop of Davenport, Iowa, he was installed on Oct. 18, 2023.

► 1990s

Juan Carlos Iturregui, J.D. 1990, managing partner of Milan Americas, LLC, a consulting practice specializing in business, regulatory, and public policy issues, has been nominated by President Joseph Biden to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Dominican Republic.

Mary Bryant Shrader, J.D. 1990, has written a book, *The Modern Pioneer Cookbook: Nourishing Recipes From a Traditional Foods Kitchen* (DK, August 2023). Along with her book, she is a YouTube creator and teaches viewers how to cook traditional nutrient-dense food on her Mary's Nest YouTube Channel.

Marilú Salvador, B.A. 1993, M.A. 1997, has almost 30 years of experience in the public, private, and non-profit sectors working in the areas of human and social development. She has been a teacher, mentor, facilitator, and director of educational programs. She served as the National Director of Education for the Ministry of Education of Panama and led the "Aprende Al Máximo" Program, a national movement for the improvement of educational quality with equity. She founded The Creating Center in Panama and is the director and CEO of that organization. She is a member of the CALI Class XI (Central American Leadership Initiative) and a member of the Aspen Leadership Network.

Amy Adams Samuelson, B.S.Arch 1993, B.Arch. 1994, has been named principal at BL Companies, an employee-owned, multi-disciplinary architecture, engineering, environmental, and land surveying firm

Scott N. Flesch, B.A. 1994, J.D. 1997, has joined Miller & Chevalier Chartered as a member in the government contracts counseling and litigation practice. He brings more than 25 years of legal experience in the U.S. Army, most recently serving as its chief trial attorney.

Rev. Francisco Antonio Estepa, Ph.D. 1997, was installed as the 12th president of the University of San Carlos in Cebu City, Philippines in September. He served as the 8th president of the USC from 1999 to 2002. He aims to focus on academic excellence, research and innovation, community engagement, local and global partnerships, technology and infrastructure, enhanced students' campus experience, and good governance.

Colleen Jarrott, B.A. 1997, J.D. 2002, a partner at Hinshaw & Culbertson, has been appointed to the 35-member advisory council of the LSU Mineral Law Institute, which is based at the Paul M. Hebert Law Center. The advisory council is charge with helping to develop energy-related educational events as well as programming for the Annual Mineral Law Institute, which is the oldest annual conference dedicated to mineral law in the United States.



Bishop John Barres (left) and Bishop Robert Barron (right)



Left to right: Carol Spahn, Wanda Peters, Lt. Gen. Donald Lamontagne, Peter Forlenza, Brendan Duffy, Amanda Pellegrino

Kelly Farrell, B.S.Arch. 1998, M.Arch. 2000, has been promoted to co-managing director of the Gensler Los Angeles office. He strategic approach to design and ability to build consensus with clients and partners to develop forward-thinking, sustainable, and impactful design solutions has earned her the trust of clients and an esteemed industry reputation.

Most Rev. Jeffrey M. Fleming, J.C.L. 1998, coadjutor bishop of Great Falls-Billings, succeeded Bishop Michael W. Warfel as the new head of the diocese.

Aleksander (Aleks) Dardeli, J.D. 1999, joined Save the Children as chief operating officer in September 2023. In this role, he is responsible for developing and executing organizational strategy, driving transformation programs, strengthening accountability for results, and providing leadership and direction for the global humanitarian organization.

Rev. Kyle Ingels, B.A. 1999, has been appointed vicar general for the Diocese of Colorado Springs, effective July 1. He has served a director of campus ministry at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS) since 2014 and will complete his service in June. He will continue serving as vocations director for the diocese.

Jason McFarland, M.A. 1999, Ph.D. 2010, a liturgical expert for more than two decades, has assumed the role of executive secretary to the Bishops Commission for Liturgy, in addition to his role as director of the National Office for Liturg

Alumni Awards Highlight Six Outstanding University Graduates

On October 13, as part of the 2023 Cardinal Weekend reunion celebration, The Catholic University of America Alumni Association recognized six alumni — two Young Alumni Achievement awardees and four Distinguished Alumni Achievement awardees — who have excelled in their various fields since graduating.

The Young Alumni Achievement awardees were Brendan Duffy, B.A. 2013, and Amanda Pellegrino B.A. 2014; the Distinguished Alumni Achievement awardees were Peter Forlenza, B.A. 1988; Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Donald A. Lamontagne, B.S.E. 1969; Wanda Peters, B.S. 1988, B.S. 1989; and Carol Spahn, B.A. 1990.

The event was led by Chris Pierno, B.A. 2011, M.S.M. 2017, president of the Catholic University Alumni Association, and Mary Card-Mina, B.A. 1993, J.D. 1996, the Association vice president.

“The six alumni we salute tonight are truly representative of the diversity of our graduates,” Card-Mina said. “Working in the fields of law, creative arts, space exploration, and international development, they all strive to improve the lives of others. They showcase the best the University has to offer and continue the mission of their alma mater.”

“By sharing their achievements, we tell the University’s story and showcase to all current and future students the value and potential of Catholic University education,” Pierno said.

The ceremony was held in the Della Ratta Auditorium in Maloney Hall and attended by family and friends of the honorees, as well as other Catholic University alumni. Videos highlighted the accomplishments of each honoree, who then came forward individually to receive their awards.

President Peter Kilpatrick spoke about the great accomplishments the six honorees have achieved.

“From Brendan’s work at the Supreme Court and in our legal system, Amanda’s creativity in her novels and television writing, Pete’s expertise in finance and his generous dedication to philanthropy, Don’s service to our nation in the Air Force, Wanda’s scientific accomplishments at NASA, and Carol’s leadership at the Peace Corps, these six individuals are all examples of the caliber of graduates Catholic University has produced over the years and continues to produce today.”

The Alumni Awards are traditionally held every two years. The awards committee reviews many nominations, looking for graduates who have distinguished themselves among their peers in a given industry and, in some cases, are unsurpassed, especially in service to the Church and nation. — A.K.

HONOR AN OUTSTANDING MEMBER OF YOUR CLASS. SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATION TODAY!

engage.catholic.edu/award-nomination-form

for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. He will work part-time with the Bishops Conference and will continue as a teaching and research academic at Australian Catholic University.

► 2000s

Danielle Pagé Helenski, B.A. 2000, was the 2023 winner of the Connecticut Association of School Librarians (CASL) Bunny Yesner School Library Media Program of the Year Award, honoring a school library program that exemplifies the principles outline in AASL's National School Library Standards for Learners, School Librarians, and School Libraries. The award recognizes the recipient's commitment to providing an exceptional library media program that supports student learning and development. She is a school library media specialist for Hamden Public Schools.

Shawna Longo, B.M. 2001, has joined the Westfield Public School District (NJ) visual and performing arts department as supervisor. She also serves as chairperson of K-12 Educational Technology and Innovation through Music for the board of directors of the New Jersey Music Educators Association.

Pedro Ribeiro, B.A. 2001, has been appointed vice president for public affairs and communication at the University of Notre Dame and assumed his duties on Oct. 2, 2023. As vice president, he will provide strategic communications and governmental relations advice

to the president and other senior University leaders, communicating about and advocating for the mission and priorities of Notre Dame. Also, he will oversee the offices of public affairs, University communications and *Notre Dame Magazine*.

Ryan Carney, B.A. 2002, was hired by K&L Gates, a global law firm active in five continents, a will serve as a government relations advisor in public policy and law practice. For the past nine years, he served as a Congressional chief of staff on Capitol Hill

Lisa Goldblatt, J.D. 2002, has joined Albers & Associates, a prominent full-service law firm in Maryland.

William J. Phelan, IV, B.A. 2004, M.A. 2007, J.D. 2007, was promoted to litigation partner at the national domestic law firm of Cordell & Cordell, where he has been for 10 years. He practices family and appellate law out of their Philadelphia, Pa., office. He was also recently selected to the 2023 *Irish Legal 100*, an annual compilation of the most distinguished legal professionals in the United States of Irish ancestry.

Bekeh Ukelina, M.A. 2007, became director of the Center for Gender and Intercultural Studies at the State University of New York, Cortland in 2022 and was promoted to professor of history and Africana studies in 2023.

David G. Adams, J.D. 2008, has joined Mintz in the firm's corporate practice in their Washington, D.C., office. He is a seasoned regulato

and enforcement attorney with 20 years of experience in the financial services industry.

Steven M. Ayr, J.D. 2008, an attorney with Casner & Edwards has been named a "Go To Business Transactions Lawyer" by *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*. He serves as deal counsel for founders and companies in the sale of their business and has established himself as a critical resource to clients and colleagues for business transactions.

Matthew Ripa, M.F.A. 2008, has joined Lycoming College for the 2023–24 academic year as a visiting professor of theater.

Josh Borean, J.D. 2009, has been elevated to partner at Ice Miller LLP. He serves early and growth-stage companies raising capital through seed and venture capital financing, representing their interests in their capital raising legal needs, as well as their general business contracts, which often include software licensing, software as a service subscription, and service agreements.

Sister Gianna Maria Solomon, B.S.N. 2009, a Sister of Life, has been named superior of her convent and mission. She works at New York's St. Andrew's Center, a crisis pregnancy mission, and lives at Visitation Convent, both in Manhattan.

► 2010s

Lindsey Paola, M.A. 2010, was promoted to chief operating officer of the Nashville Soccer Club effective

August 2023. She will oversee day-to-day business operations, encompassing operational approvals and human resource matters, as well as play a pivotal role in leading inter-departmental projects and ensuring the development of junior staff members.

Bob Bartlett, M.F.A. 2011, an award-winning playwright who specializes in productions meant to be seen in unlikely places, including a forest, a laundromat, and his backyard. His latest, *Love and Vinyl*, explored browsing for love and vinyl in the digital age which took place last summer at KA-CHUNK!! Records in Annapolis.

Kirk Kasa, B.C.E. 2012, and **Caitlin Walters, B.A. 2012**, welcomed their daughter Emmy Kasa on Oct. 19, 2023. The family lives in Brooklyn, N.Y.



Emmy Kasa

ALUMNI CORNER

Alumni Profile



Merritt Groeschel,
J.D. 2013 (left), and
Kate (Teeling) Talbot,
B.A. 1990 (right)

Alumni Bridge Gap in Refugee Services

Afghan women refugees, a few holding young children, nestle side by side on cushioned benches in a small, renovated bus-turned-mobile-classroom. A solar-powered monitor displays the words “Living in America, Week 5,” as part of a slideshow introduction to U.S. culture. This week’s focus covers acceptable small talk topics and information on trash disposal.

Before the lesson begins, Leah, a teacher aided by a translator named Marzia, announces optional screenings to identify signs of possible developmental delays in children. The women also practice small talk in English: “I like your scarf;” “I like your hair.”

Outside, children play on colorful carpets set on the sidewalk, part of free childcare services. After the lesson, everyone gathers to share a walnut cake made by one of the refugees.

This welcome workshop is a program hosted by non-profit Solutions i Hometown Connections (SHC), founded in 2017 by Merritt Groeschel, J.D. 2013, and Kate (Teeling) Talbot, B.A. 1990, to empower refugee families in the Washington metro area through education and personalized support.

Groeschel and Talbot met in a tutoring group that assisted newcomers in nearby Maryland. In 2015, Groeschel and her family sponsored a Syrian refugee family, and from that experience she discovered that once refugees are resettled, they often are not connected to the broader community and resources.

“We realized that there was a real gap in services, and we came in to fill that gap,” Talbot said of SHC. “A lot of individuals, especially women with lower literacy, were literally left at home and left behind.”

Since its beginning in 2018, SHC has grown from 10 students in a class to more than 360 students in both the online or in-person programs, which include English learning, preschool, citizenship preparation, and the mobile workshops that travel to refugees’ apartments.

“That’s our way of reaching the most isolated people who don’t have the digital literacy skills yet, who maybe don’t have the confidence to leave their community. We see ourselves as a bridge,” Talbot said.

SHC has assisted over 2,000 refugees; the majority are from Afghanistan. Program funding comes from grants from the Maryland Office for Refugee and Asylees, while operational costs are covered by fundraising. The organization also relies on hundreds of volunteers from local churches,

synagogues, mosques, high schools, and universities. SHC employs a staff of 24; many are former students of SHC.

“We’re giving them a step to go somewhere else in the future,” Groeschel said. “We’ve been able to hire several women who have never worked outside of the home ... [but can] work for a few hours a week [for SHC] while we’re doing classes.”

SHC also provides legal referrals through the Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Clinic at Catholic University’s Columbus School of Law.

Stacy L. Brustin, clinic director, said that it is “rewarding for me to partner with SHC, having supervised Merritt Groeschel when she was a student attorney working in the Civil Practice Clinic during her time at Catholic University.”

Professors and Catholic University students work to obtain Special Immigrant Visa status, humanitarian parole, and family reunification for SH Afghan families. Students also conduct “Know Your Rights” presentations to assist families grappling with complex immigration application and interview procedures, Brustin said.

Groeschel said her own time working in the legal clinic was an experience that she still values. She said her path was nontraditional, as a mother of three who had been out of school for 10 years. She had her fourth child during her third year of law school and felt moved that the University allowed her to return to school.

Talbot has strong family connections to the University, as her husband Greg Talbot, J.D. 1997; her mother-in-law, Barbara Talbot, B.A. 1966, M.A. 1978; and her father-in-law, Robert J. Talbot, B.A. 1960, are all alumni. (The Robert J. Talbot Field baseball field bears her father-in-law’s name.

Talbot, who studied English, said her time at the University shaped who she is today and provided the support, friendship, and shared values that are important to her.

“When I went to Catholic University in 1986, it was a new community. I was away from home for the first time and was unsure of where everything was and how to get places, living in a city for the first time,” she said. “But that community that I met, and the people I met, I am still close to today. That is something I carry with me.”

— A.C.

ALUMNI CORNER

Alumni Spotlight

Paola A. Nazari



Jones-Fricchione wedding

Patrick A. Fricchione, B.A. 2014, M.S.B.A. 2015, former Campus Ministry staff member from 2017 to 2022, married Caitlin M. Jones on Sept. 23, 2023, in Annapolis, Md., with several alumni in attendance. Their wedding was officiated by **Rev. Frank S. Donio, S.A.C., B.A. 1989, M.A. 1993, D.Min. 2012**. The couple lives in Washington, D.C.

Chelsea Padro, M.A. 2014, has joined the faculty of Girls Preparatory School in Chattanooga, Tenn., as a drama teacher and theater director. Previously, she worked at St. Andrew's Sewanee School, where she served as the theater director since 2019.

Pete Schramm, B.M.E. 2014, M.S. 2015, published his first book *Pathfinders: Navigating Your Career Map With A Personal Board of Advisors* (November 2023). This comprehensive guide empowers aspiring leaders and professionals to build and leverage a personal board of advisors, offering actionable strategies for mapping out professional growth, applicable insights to career mapping, and real-life examples for accelerated personal and professional growth — who to connect with, what to discuss, and how to map out your career together.

Marjory Serrano-Coyer, D.M.A. 2014, a violinist, along with pianist,

Hsin-Yi Chen, released their new album *Sonatas Venezolanas*, featuring compositions by two Venezuelan composers, Angel Sauce and Nelly Mele Lara, who, despite being relatively unknown outside of Venezuela, played crucial roles in the development of classical music education in Latin America, especially within Venezuela. These works were found by Serrano-Coyer at CatholicU while pursuing her D.M.A. with a specialization in Latin American music.

Mariela Andrade, B.A. 2015, received a United States Attorney's Office FBI Servi Award from the FBI Washington field office.

Bridget Drumm, B.A. 2015, married Patrick Looby on July 22, 2023, with CatholicU alumni in attendance. Alumni attendees included **Beth Anne Kramer, B.S.B.A. 2010, Maria Melissa Reid, B.A. 2015, Cristina Curtin, B.S. 2015, Erin Livesey, B.A. 2015, Maura Drumm, B.A. 2017, Ryan Williams, B.A. 2015, Kerry Buckley, B.A. 2015, Patrick LaPorta, B.C.E. 2015, Colin Sweitzer, B.A. 2015, Katrina Andrews, B.A. 2015, and Christopher Kramer, B.M.E. 2016**. Bridget is the assistant director of wellness promotion at West Chester University. They live in Jenkintown, Pa.

ALUMNI CORNER

Class Notes

Rev. Matt Kiehl, S.T.B. 2015, was named vicar for vocations for the Diocese of Richmond. He plans to guide seminarians and men who are discerning to become priests through their experiences by sharing the joy of the priesthood and stressing that they must have a deep relationship with God as they journey through discernment and life.

Casey O'Neill, B.S.N. 2015, and **John Scotto, B.S.B.A. 2015**, were married on Sept. 23, 2023, surrounded by family, friends, and many CatholicU alumni. Casey is a registered nurse at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and John works for Morgan Stanley in wealth management. They live in Manhattan.

Matthew Yost, B.M. 2015, is the new middle school principal at The Madeleine Choir School in Salt Lake City, Utah, his alma mater. After graduating in 2015, he spent eight years as a teacher and later administrator at Great Hearts, an Arizona charter school network.

Patricia Craig, M.A. 2016, Ph.D. 2022, has joined the faculty of Hillsdale College for the 2023–24 academic year, as an assistant professor of classics.

Jennifer L. Meszaros, M.S. 2016, was selected by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission as the new NRC resident inspector at the LaSalle nuclear power plant in Marseilles, Ill., operated by Constellation Energy Company. She joined the NRC's Region III office in 2022. While taking part i

an extensive inspector qualification program, she served as the acting resident inspector at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant and participated in inspections at Region III plants.

Greta (Hausmann) David, B.A. 2017 and **Victor David, B.A. 2014, M.S.M. 2017**, announced the birth of their twins, Eleanor Gretchen and Henry Theodore on Oct. 15, 2023. The family lives in University Park, Md.

Catrece Ann Tipon, B.S.N. 2017, was featured on an episode of *2 BMore* Podcast about the Asian Pasifika Arts Collective and increasing representation of Asian Americans and Pacific Indigenous Americans in everyday life. She is a Filipino-American nurse, photographer, and choreographer based in Baltimore.

Gregory Buckley, B.C.E. 2018, has joined D&B Engineers and Architects, as engineer II, in the wastewater division in their Woodbury, N.Y. headquarters.

Shane Owens, Ph.M. 2018, Ph.D. 2020, joins the theology department at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, as an assistant professor.

Gabriel Ashton Brown, B.M. 2019, and **Benjamin Kramer Kwalick B.M. 2019**, were married on Sept. 23, 2023, in Dalton, Pa. The wedding was officiated CatholicU faculty member **Jay Brock, M.F.A. 2009**, and the bridal party included **Christina Jordan, B.M. 2019**. They live in Dalton, Pa.

Caiti Kramer Photography



Drumm-Looby wedding

David Welch Photography



O'Neill-Scotto wedding

Kaitie Tamaro Photography



Brown-Kwalick wedding

ALUMNI CORNER

Class Notes

David Welch Photography



Yarasavage-Pierro wedding

Katie Tamaro Photography



Schlottmann-Cypher wedding

► 2020s

Martha Drennan, D.Min. 2020, has been named director of adult faith formation for the Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire. She works with parishes to support, develop, and provide resources for young adult and adult faith formation, along with lay ministry formation and the implementation of the catechumenate process (RCIA/OCIA), in addition to sacramental preparation and Rite of Election. She also provides resources for the directors of College Campus Ministry, develops and implements an annual young adult retreat, and keeps campus ministers informed of developments within the diocese.

Marie Kottenstette, B.A. 2020, **Austin Howe, B.A. 2020**, and **Zach Morelli B.A. 2021**, are featured actors in an award-winning historical biopic, *The Liberator*, an original feature film based on the life of Daniel O'Connell. Marie also served on the crew as an assistant producer.

Bradley A. Pierro, B.S. 2020, and **Samantha E. Yarasavage, B.S. 2020**, were married on Aug. 12, 2023, at St. John Chrysostom Church in Wallingford, Pa. The couple was surrounded by family and friends, which included University alumni from 1962 to 2021. Samantha is a senior audit associate at CohnReznick LLP and Bradley is a financial planning professional. They live in Sterling, Va.

Stephen P. Cypher, B.M.E. 2021, and **Julia A. Schlottmann, B.S.Arch./B.C.E. 2022**, were married on Sept. 23, 2023, in

Leesburg, Va. surrounded by family, friends, and many CatholicU alumni including **JP Swift, B.M.E. 2021, M.S.M.E. 2022**, as best man; **Samuel Gawarecki, B.C.E. 2021; Leo Nardo, B.M.E. 2021; Kat Kaderabek, B.S.Arch. 2022; Kali Tanguay, B.S.Arch. 2022; Elizabeth Pacious, B.S. 2022; Elise Parker, B.B.E. 2021, M.S.E.M. 2022;** and **Isabella Wagner, B.S. 2022**, as part of the bridal party. Steve works for Raytheon and Julia works for SGH. They live in Sterling, Va

Christopher Thomas Sullivan B.A. 2021, Alexandra Jane Kilgore, B.A. 2021, and Rachel Elizabeth Figueroa, B.S. 2021, received their master of education degrees from the University of Notre Dame – Alliance for Catholic Education on July 15, 2023.

Mary Boneno, B.A. 2022, married Benjamin Fugate on June 24, 2023, at St. Stephen Church in Cleveland, Ohio. They were joined in celebration by friends, family, and CatholicU alumni. They live in Cleveland, where Mary works in the Secretariat for Parish Life at the Diocese of Cleveland and Benjamin is a law student at Case Western Reserve University.

Liliana Lomas, B.A. 2022, and Christopher Wysocki, B.M.E. 2022, were married on Oct. 7, 2023, in Coppell, Texas. Chris is an automation engineer at Schneider Electric and Lili is the web content specialist in University Communications. They live in Dallas.

Abigail Treacy, B.A. 2022, married Aidan Cyrus on Sept. 2, 2023. Abigail is a graduate student at the University of Notre Dame and works part-time for EWTN. The couple lives in Fort Scott, Kan.

Lisa Levinson, Ph.D. 2023, who led Shenandoah University’s Eleanor Wade Custer School of Nursing in an interim capacity for two years, has been named the new dean of the nursing school. A registered nurse and a perinatal clinical nurse specialist, she has been at Shenandoah since 2006 — starting as an adjunct professor before joining the faculty in 2015. She then served as the nursing school’s associate dean for undergraduate programs before taking over as the school’s interim dean in fall 2021.



Rachel Elizabeth Figueroa and Christopher Thomas Sullivan at The Grotto at the University of Notre Dame on July 15, 2023.



Lomas-Wysocki wedding



Treacy-Cyrus wedding

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) has announced that Quinn Evans is the recipient of the Architecture Firm Award for 2024. The annual award is the highest honor the AIA bestows on an architectural practice. Of Quinn Evans’ 200+ staff, four are alumni of the Catholic University of America: **Kathryn Slattery, B.Arch. 2001, J.D. 2013**, principal; **David Gavin, B.S.Arch. 2010**, associate; **Anthony Harris, B.S.Arch. 2001; Antonio Paz, B.S.Arch. 2009**.

ALUMNI CORNER

In Memoriam



Remembering Father William Byron, S.J.

Two years ago, Frank Persico approached Father William Byron, S.J., and wanted to re-introduce himself. The two men had worked closely during Father Byron's 10-year presidential tenure at The Catholic University of America. Persico, who served in many administration roles at the University, wanted to be respectful of the priest, now in his 90s.

Father Byron excitedly greeted him, "Oh, Frank, how are you?"

That was Father Byron, who died at 96 on April 9. Throughout his life he was a prolific author, economist, professor, and pastor. He officiated the weddings of several alumni since leaving the University and remained a close personal friend to so many people from its community.

"He was extremely intelligent, but he was also very intuitive," Persico said. "He could read people, and he could get along with everyone. He endeared himself to alumni and friends because of the way he was and how he would greet people. When he was talking to you, you felt like you were the only person in that room."

Prior to the priesthood, he was an Army paratrooper and attended St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. Ordained for the Society of Jesus in 1961, Father Byron earned a doctorate in economics from the University of Maryland, two theology degrees from Woodstock College, and a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a master's in economics from Saint Louis University.

Father Byron served as president at both Catholic University and the University of Scranton (1975–1982). He also served as interim president at Loyola University New Orleans (2003–2004). A Jesuit, he was the first member of a religious order to lead Catholic University.

His Catholic University tenure tripled the University's endowment while

fundraising for the Centennial Village residential spaces, the Edward J. Pryzbyla Center, and the Columbus School of Law building.

"Father Byron was known for being an inspiring intellectual who had an ability to connect powerfully with people and with ideas," said University President Peter Kilpatrick. "Here at Catholic University his legacy is all around us."

The main 238-seat dining area in Garvey Hall is named Byron Dinin Room in honor of Father Byron.

Van Smith, who was a University trustee during Father Byron's tenure, together with his son, Victor Smith, J.D. 1996, chairman of our University's Board of Trustees, and his daughter, Susan Smith Newell, J.D. 1993, M.A. 1994, a member of the Columbus School of Law's Alumni Council and former member of its Board of Visitors, donated to the dining commons project to honor Father Byron's important role in the history of Catholic University.

"He had a gift to be adept at working with people both outside and inside the University," Persico said. "He had connections in Washington that were amazing. He knew everybody, from the Supreme Court people all the way down to Congress and the Senate."

Not to mention his interactions with then-President George H.W. Bush and First Lady Barbara Bush at a University fundraiser, plus former First Lady Nancy Reagan.

"I think he was successful in moving CatholicU up quite several rungs in notoriety because of his ability to meet with and understand people," Persico said.

— M.P. and D.F.D.

Rev. Edward E. Carroll, Ph.B. 1946, S.T.L. 1950, M.S.W. 1954, Nov. 28, 2023.

Rev. William J. Amann, B.A. 1949, M.A. 1950, Aug. 3, 2023.

Charlotte Elizabeth Olson, B.S.N. 1949, M.S.N. 1956, Sept. 16, 2023.

Ralph A. Bellas, B.A. 1950, Aug. 2, 2023.

John Kull, B.C.E. 1950, B.Arch. 1952, July 25, 2021.

Robert E. Matthews, B.M.E. 1950, Aug. 17, 2023.

Sister Mary C. Reese, M.S.N. 1950, Aug. 17, 2023.

Rev. Robert D. Ashenbrenner, O.S.F., attended the University from 1951 to 1954, on Jan. 1, 2024.

Sister Mary Foeckler, S.C.N., B.A. 1951, July 23, 2023.

William F. Gallagher Jr., B.E.E. 1951, Sept. 14, 2023.

Frances S. Carlin, attended the University fall 1952, Nov. 27, 2023.

Mary M. Kuhar, M.S.N. 1952, Sept. 20, 2023.

Noreen Casey Emerson, attended the University from 1953 to 1955, Dec. 21, 2023.

Brother Thomas J. Murphy, C.F.X., B.A. 1953, Dec. 12, 2023.

Ann E. Brennan, B.A. 1955, July 25, 2023.

Gretchen E. Krylow, B.A. 1956, Oct. 10, 2023.

Michael T. Lyons, B.S.Chem.E. 1956, Nov. 26, 2023.

Joseph S. Wholey, B.A. 1956, Aug. 24, 2023.

Brother Bernard Hanson, F.S.C., B.A. 1957, Oct. 29, 2023.

Claude A. Vachon, M.A. 1957, Dec. 11, 2023.

Sister Karen M. Kennelly, C.S.J., M.A. 1958, Dec. 15, 2023.

John F. Boyne, B.A. 1959, Aug. 31, 2023.

Lucy Hepburn Johnson, B.A. 1959, Aug. 1, 2023.

Rev. Roger G. Nilles, M.A. 1959, Aug. 4, 2023.

Robert E. Taeschner, M.F.A. 1959, Feb. 9, 2024.

William M. Amrhein Jr., B.A. 1960, July 15, 2023.

Sister M. Rose Bowen, M.A. 1960, Feb. 2, 2024.

Rev. Geoffrey P. Chase, O.S.B., S.T.L. 1960, Aug. 1, 2023.

Brother Cornelius E. Hubbuch, C.F.X., B.A. 1960, Dec. 2, 2023.

Rev. Benjamin F. Madden, O.F.M.Cap., M.A. 1960, J.C.L. 1997, July 14, 2023.

Maynard F. McLaughlin Jr., B.C.E. 1960, Sept. 21, 2023.

Bernard W. Adamec, B.Arch. 1961, Aug. 26, 2023.

Elizabeth L. (Flynn) Koch, B.S.N. 1961, M.S.N. 1965, Dec. 15, 2023.

William F. Delaney, B.A. 1962, J.D. 1965, Jan. 28, 2024.

Alice Gertzog, M.S.L.S. 1962, Aug. 11, 2023.

Edward B. Johansen Jr., B.M.E. 1962, Dec. 4, 2023.

Dorothy L. Mekar, M.S.W. 1962, Nov. 23, 2023.

Henry F. Nardone, M.A. 1962, Ph.D. 1963, Nov. 24, 2023.

Sister Mary Thomas M. Ruffing, M.S.L.S. 1962, Aug. 1, 2023.

Donald M. DeVito, B.E.E. 1963, Oct. 18, 2023.

Monsignor Charles J. Fahey, M.S.W. 1963, Nov. 5, 2023.

Joan M. Fenton, B.S.N. 1963, M.S.N. 1973, Jan. 13, 2024.

William A. Fox, B.S.Chem.E., 1963, Sept. 7, 2023.

James J. Greeves, M.E.E. 1963, Sept. 25, 2023.



Noreen Casey Emerson

At the recent funeral of Noreen Casey Emerson (d. December 21, 2023), who attended Catholic University from 1953 to 1955, it was a Cardinal affair. Many of her family members were Catholic University graduates, and they gathered to celebrate her life.

Alumni family members: **John Emerson, B.A.G.S. 1985** and (m.) **Sheila Awkward Emerson, B.A.G.S. 1984**; **Tom Emerson, B.S.Arch. 1987** and (m.) **Freda Batcock Emerson, B.A. 1986**; **Margaret Emerson, B.A. 1983**; **Andrew Emerson, B.A. 1985**; **Ted Emerson, B.A. 1985** and (m.) **Sabina Coronato Emerson, B.A. 1984**; **Anthony Coronato, B.A.G.S. 1985** and (m.) **Elizabeth Kneser Coronato, B.A. 1987**; **Will Coronato, B.A. 1987, J.D. 1990** and (m.) **Darlene Propst Coronato, B.A. 1988**; **Paul Emerson, B.A. 1989** and (m.) **Catherine Janoske Emerson, B.A. 1987, J.D. 1992**; **Mary Emerson Slimp, B.A. 1989**; **Elizabeth Emerson, B.S.Arch. 1996, B.Arch. 1997**.

Noreen's husband, **James Emerson, M.A. 1954**, who passed away in May 2012, also was a graduate.

ALUMNI CORNER

In Memoriam

David F. Grimaldi Sr., J.D. 1963, Dec. 30, 2023.

Elizabeth L. Strassburger, M.S.W. 1963, Dec. 9, 2023.

Maj. Thomas L. Collins, USAF, Ret., B.A. 1964, Jan. 22, 2024.

Brian H. Desilets, Ph.D. 1964, Dec. 22, 2023.

Judith H. Southard, B.S.N. 1964, M.S.N. 1979, Nov. 1, 2023.

June M. Tessier, B.S.N. 1964, Dec. 28, 2023.

David F. Bishop, M.S.L.S. 1965, Nov. 28, 2023.

Mary L. Harrison, M.S.W. 1965, Nov. 28, 2023.

John J. McLaughlin, B.A. 1965, J.D. 1968, Oct. 25, 2023.

Rev. Ora R. McManus, M.A. 1965, Ph.D. 1987, Feb. 13, 2024.

Patrick D. McNelis, J.D. 1965, Dec. 26, 2023.

Richard M. Murphy, B.Arch. 1965, S.T.B. 1965, Aug. 26, 2023.

Thomas E. Patton II, J.D. 1965, Jan. 2, 2024.

Carroll J. Treacy, M.A. 1965, Feb. 19, 2024.

Joan T. Wrenn, B.A. 1965, Aug. 17, 2023.

João F. Bezerra, attended the University from 1966 to 1967, Nov. 5, 2023.

Rev. James J. Caldarella, attended the University from 1966 to 1969, Jan. 25, 2024.

Joyce Fernandez, M.S.W. 1966, Dec. 2, 2023.

Virginia F. Parr, B.A. 1966, Jan. 14, 2024.

Nellie L. Powell, M.S.L.S. 1966, Jan. 6, 2024.

Sister Ann M. Sakac, O.P., M.A. 1966, Ph.D. 1969, Jan. 24, 2024.

Rev. Alan M. Syslo, C.S.V., S.T.B. 1966, Jan. 7, 2024.

Sister Ruth Bearer, C.S.J., M.S.W. 1967, Jan. 15, 2024.

Richard T. Close, Ph.D. 1967, Aug. 1, 2023.

Sister Gertrude Myrick, M.S.L.S. 1967, Jan. 9, 2024.

Howard E. Rovegno Sr., B.A. 1967, Dec. 22, 2023.

Lois H. Bowman, M.S.L.S. 1968, Oct. 18, 2023.

Mari Lyn Henry, M.A. 1968, June 24, 2023.

Liam M. Kelly, M.S.L.S. 1968, July 1, 2023.

Jean E. Rossi, M.S.L.S. 1968, Feb. 21, 2024.

Elizabeth A. Stallings, M.S.L.S. 1968, Dec. 7, 2023.

Monsignor Arthur B. Calkins, S.T.B. 1969, M.A. 1971, Feb. 3, 2024.

Edward E. Crawford, Ph.D. 1969, Sept. 7, 2023.

Peter J. Doris, B.A. 1969, Nov. 18, 2023.

Maureen T. Fitzgerald, M.A. 1969, Dec. 30, 2023.

George H. Frein, Ph.D. 1969, Oct. 4, 2023.

Sister Eleanor Harrison, O.S.B., M.A. 1969, Jan. 21, 2024.

Clarence Kelly, B.A. 1969, Dec. 2, 2023.

Rev. Charles F. Strobel, S.T.B. 1969, Aug. 6, 2023.

Margaret R. Dear, M.S.N. 1970, Ph.D. 1980, July 19, 2023.

Deborah P. Ferris, M.A. 1970, Aug. 6, 2023.

Sister Mary Grace O'Brien, C.V.I., M.A. 1970, Sept. 4, 2023.

Richard C. Scalise, J.D. 1970, Nov. 1, 2023.

Lt. Col. Stephen W. Welde, USAF, Ret., B.A. 1970, Oct. 15, 2023.

Patricia K. Fogarty, B.A. 1971, J.D. 1974, Aug. 21, 2023.

Sister Nancy J. Hagenbach, S.H.C.J., M.A. 1971, Dec. 27, 2023.

Sherwood Andrew Moulton, B.A. 1971, August 2, 2023.

Rev. Patrick J. Sullivan, C.S.C., Ph.D. 1971, Feb. 10, 2024.

C. R. George Dove, M.Arch. 1972, Oct. 23, 2023.

Jacquelyn G. Furman-Black, Ph.D. 1972, Sept. 27, 2023.

Bruce E. Goodro, B.A. 1972, Ph.D. 1978, Sept. 12, 2023.

Monsignor Terence M. Moore, M.S.W. 1972, Dec. 19, 2023.

John R. Graff, J.D. 1973, Dec. 28, 2023.

Carol S. Hargan, M.A. 1973, Nov. 21, 2023.

Richard L. Reiter, M.M. 1973, Jan. 22, 2024.

Cathy R. Sweeney, B.A. 1973, Jan. 22, 2024.

Edward J. Wise, J.D. 1973, Sept. 16, 2023.

Samuel E. Wynkoop Jr., M.S.W. 1973, Dec. 28, 2023.

John P. Burns Jr., J.D. 1974, Nov. 13, 2023.

Rev. Gordon E. Dickey, M.S.W. 1974, Feb. 4, 2024.

Sharon I. Gallagher, M.S.N. 1974, Dec. 21, 2023.

Eric D. Henderson, M.S.L.S. 1974, Sept. 26, 2023.

Kevin V. Kelly, B.Arch. 1974, Aug. 12, 2023.

Charles E. Callahan Jr., B.A. 1975, M.M. 1976, D.M.A. 1978, Dec. 5, 2023.

Sherie A. Purcell, M.S.L.S. 1975, Aug. 2, 2023.

Michael A. Hamlin, M.A. 1977, Sept. 12, 2023.

Don A. Hawkins, M.Arch.U.D. 1977, Oct. 5, 2023.

Brenda Jacobs Roup, U.S. Army (Ret.), M.S.N. 1977, Aug. 11, 2023.

Alexandra J. K. Finucane, J.D. 1978, July 7, 2023.

Ann C. Hart, M.M. 1978, Aug. 14, 2023.

Sister Ann A. Kelly, D.C., M.M. 1978, July 1, 2023.

Matthew B. Kurkjian, B.A. 1978, Sept. 4, 2023.

Sister Patrice Wales, S.A.C., M.T.S. 1978, Oct. 17, 2023.

Rev. John P. Cunningham, M.A. 1979, Oct. 1, 2023.

William J. McLaughlin, Ph.D. 1979, Nov. 6, 2023.

Jay V. Mueller, B.A. 1979, Jan. 1, 2024.

Keith A. Searls, M.S.L.S. 1979, Dec. 9, 2023.

John M. Braithwaite, B.A. 1980, Aug. 12, 2023.

Brent J. Budowsky, J.D. 1980, July 23, 2023.

Florencia R. Radelat, Ph.D. 1980, June 24, 2023.

Margaret C. Ahmann, M.S.L.S. 1981, Sept. 26, 2023.

Rev. Robert J. Hoeffne , M.A. 1981, Jan. 28, 2024.

Julius Chapman, Ed.D. 1982, Oct. 24, 2023.

William F. Delaney, Ed.D. 1982, Aug. 14, 2023.

Michael P. McCarthy, M.L.M. 1982, Oct. 20, 2023.

John E. Berg, B.S. 1983, Sept. 5, 2023.

James A. Ciccarelli, B.A. 1983, B.S. 1983, Aug. 23, 2023.

M. Gale Dugan, M.A. 1983, Dec. 4, 2023.

John R. Hartnett, J.D. 1983, Jan. 5, 2024.

Rev. Peter M. Mongeon, M.A. 1983, July 31, 2023.

Jeanne A. Zmigrodski, M.S.W. 1983, July 17, 2023.

James W. Luce, M.Div. 1985, Jan. 15, 2024.

Jane Cantor, M.S.W. 1986, July 10, 2019.

John S. Gorman, J.D. 1986, Feb. 5, 2024.

Janet M. O'Neil, M.S.W. 1986, June 27, 2023.



Monsignor John F. Wippel, Professor of Philosophy

Monsignor John F. Wippel, Theodore Basselin Professor of Philosophy, died on Sept. 11, 2023, at age 90.

Monsignor Wippel was born in Pomeroy, Ohio, on Aug. 21, 1933. As a Basselin Scholar and seminarian at Theological College, he earned his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Art degrees in philosophy from The Catholic University of America in 1955 and 1956, respectively. In 1960, he earned a Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the University. He was ordained priest of the Diocese of Steubenville, Ohio, on May 28, 1960.

After spending a year as an instructor in the School of Philosophy, Monsignor Wippel was awarded the Penfield Scholarship and pursued doctoral studies in philosophy at the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium) and had his Ph.D. conferred on Jan. 6, 1965.

He resumed teaching in the School of Philosophy in 1963, later serving as an assistant and associate professor before being named an ordinary (full) professor in 1972. Monsignor Wippel was named Theodore Basselin Professor of Philosophy in 2001. He also served as assistant academic vice president for graduate studies and academic vice president, a position later called provost, from 1989 to 1997.

Monsignor Wippel's academic focus was metaphysics, specifically metaphysical reflectio in the 13th century. He published several books and edited, co-authored, or co-edited books and numerous articles. He served as president of the Society for Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy and as president of the Metaphysical Society of America.

Among his many awards and distinctions, Monsignor Wippel received the Cardinal Mercier Prize from the Catholic University of Louvain in 1981 for his *The Metaphysica Thought of Godfrey of Fontaine*. Louvain also accorded him the rare honor of a postdoctoral degree in philosophy, the *Maitre-Agrégé de l'Ecole Saint Thoma*. In 2005, the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto bestowed on him an honorary Doctor of Letters.

A funeral Mass for Monsignor Wippel was celebrated by Bishop Jeffrey Marc Montforton of Steubenville, Ohio, on Sept. 20, 2023, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Bishop Michael Olson, B.A. 1988, M.A. 1989, of Fort Worth, Texas., preached the homily.

Joan Barth Urban, Professor of Politics

Joan Barth Urban, professor emerita in the Department of Politics of the School of Arts and Sciences, died on Dec. 10, 2023. Urban was 89 years old.

Born and raised in Garden City, N.Y., Urban was the valedictorian of her undergraduate class at Northwestern University, and earned a Master of Arts degree in Russian Studies from Harvard University in 1959. She completed her Ph.D. in Government Studies from Harvard in 1967.

Urban was a leading expert in Communist studies and famous for her knowledge of politics in the Soviet Union and Russia. As a graduate student, she was able to travel to Moscow in 1960, when she joined a trip promoting American kitchen appliances. While in Moscow, she was arrested and held under suspicion that she was an American spy. She appeared in newspapers all over the world but was eventually released and returned to the United States.

As a professor of political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), she was introduced to a recent immigrant from Hungary, Laszlo Karl Urban, who was serving as a teaching assistant at the university. They eventually married in 1963.

Urban joined the Catholic University politics department in 1967, teaching for more than 40 years until she retired in 2009.

Urban was the author of *Moscow and the Italian Communist Party* — the winner of the American Historical Association's Marraro Prize in 1986 — and *Russia's Communists at the Crossroads*, a Choice selection as "Outstanding Academic Book" in 1997. She edited or co-authored several collective volumes and published numerous articles and chapters on international communist affairs and post Soviet Russian politics.

Her research was funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ford Foundation, the United States Institute of Peace, the National Council for East European and Eurasian Research, and other institutions. She was also a research associate of the George Washington University's Institute of European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies and a visiting scholar in Moscow at the Institute of Scientific Information on the Social Sciences of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Urban is preceded in death by her husband, Laszlo, and her brother, Robert Barth. She is survived by her daughter, Rebecca Grayson, and grandson, Dominic Grayson; her brother's wife, Kelly Barth, and her nephew and niece, Duncan Barth and Laura Stock.

Rev. Thomas J. Burke, O.Ss.T, S.T.D. 1988, Aug. 11, 2023.

Rev. Michael P. Greb, O.F.M.Cap., M.Div. 1988, Oct. 26, 2023.

Ted McClanahan, Ph.D. 1988, July 1, 2023.

Mark S. Elliott, B.A. 1989, Nov. 14, 2023.

Julie Holmes, B.A.G.S. 1990, March 30, 2023.

Carol A. Terry, J.D. 1990, Sept. 21, 2023.

Most Rev. Mario Eduardo Dorsonville, S.T.L. 1991, D.Min. 1996, bishop of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana, Jan. 19, 2024

Elizabeth A. Brandon-Brown, J.D. 1991, July 14, 2023.

James R. Finan, B.A. 1996, Aug. 2, 2023.

Jason C. Davis, M.S. 1997, Sept. 1, 2023.

Joe W. Weidenbenner, M.R.S. 1997, July 24, 2023.

Hope W. Carter, J.D. 1999, Feb. 8, 2024.

Rev. Michael J. Cronin, J.C.L. 2002, Aug. 16, 2023.

Lea Jablonsky Uhre, M.S.L.S. 2002, Sept. 16, 2023.

Megan M. Ruddy, J.D. 2005, Sept. 11, 2023.

Michael Gill, J.D. 2010, Feb. 3, 2024.

Matthew E. Davis, attended the University from 2012 to 2017, Feb. 14, 2024.

Cheryl A. Anderson, B.C.E. 2014, Aug. 20, 2023.

Timothy J. Heines, Ph.M. 2015, Aug. 8, 2023.

Jonathan Kirby, B.M. 2016, M.M. 2018, Nov. 24, 2023.

Catherine H. Bruno, attended the University from 2019 to 2021, Sept. 2, 2023.

► FACULTY/STAFF

Lynetta Church, cleaner in custodial services, from 2009 to 2023, Dec. 10, 2023.

Sylvia Davis-Watson, administrative assistant at the Columbus Law School from 1992 to 2013, Feb. 6, 2024.

Vernon Ennels, special police office Department of Public Safety, from 1997 to 2016, Dec. 14, 2023.

Jessie Mae Lanier, public safety assistant, Department of Public Safety, from 2007 to 2019, July 25, 2023.

Robert D. (Bob) Miller II, O.F.S., professor of theology, who served for 15 years, Nov. 22, 2023.

Alfred Harrison Richardson, who served as administrative assistant in the University Archives from 1994 to 1999 and at the time, was a member of the Crosier Fathers and Brothers and was known as Brother David, Oct. 15, 2023.

Joan Barth Urban, professor emerita, Department of Politics, who served for over 40 years, Dec. 10, 2023.

Monsignor John F. Wippel, B.A. 1955, M.A. 1956, S.T.L. 1960, Theodore Basselin professor of philosophy, who served the University for over 60 years, Sept. 11, 2023.

Catholic Education Needs More Mother Setons and John Conveys

By Kevin J. Calkins

I was born in 1974 in Staten Island, N.Y. That same year, 220 miles southwest in Washington, D.C., The Catholic University of America hired John Convey. We were destined to connect at some point in our life journeys! John went on to serve on the faculty for 44 years — including 10 years as University provost — and held the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Chair in Education from 1990 until he retired in 2018.

This past September, I visited the newly dedicated Seton Shrine Museum at the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Emmitsburg, Md. The museum portrays Mother Seton's vision, faith, ingenuity, hard work, and selflessness in an inspiring way, as a great patron for Catholic schools. Knowing John Convey as I do, I cannot think of a more deserving contemporary leader to have served Catholic schools in her name.

John's wealth of knowledge about K-12 Catholic schools, reflected in an extensive body of publications throughout his career, earned him the admiration and respect of Catholic University colleagues and the broader academic community. His expertise in Catholic school research and evaluation is well known. John is the recipient of numerous awards from the National Catholic Educational Association, and in 2005, received the Benemerenti Medal from Pope Benedict XVI, in recognition of his service to Catholic University and Catholic schools.

As one of John's doctoral students, I learned much from him about statistics and how to design a research study. I asked if he would be my dissertation advisor when it was time for me to conceptualize and complete a doctoral dissertation. He said yes. His ability to connect with students through his affable demeanor and infectious curiosity about the subjects he taught was unsurpassed and made him a popular teacher.

One of John's former students and a friend of mine, Erick Chittle, Ph.D. 2017, said, "John is a man of great intellectual and administrative ability, but what is most impressive is his Christ-centered care for the students whom he served."

John now holds the title professor emeritus. "Emeritus" literally means "veteran soldier." Those who have worked with him and observed firsthand his service and commitment to Catholic education know the distinction is well deserved.

After I graduated from Catholic University, I asked John if he might work with me to expand my dissertation into a published research article. He said yes again, and I was grateful and honored to have him as a co-author.

When I recently reached out to John for advice on an article I wanted to write, he again said yes. It so happens he was in the hospital recovering from back surgery at the time but, being the "veteran soldier" he is, he was happy to help.

I continue to learn from John. His knowledge and his wisdom, so inexhaustible and so generously shared, have made me into a better statistician, researcher, and Catholic. John leads by example, teaching me (often without words) that faith, hard work, kindness, selflessness, and lightheartedness are necessary to be an effective educator and, more importantly, a *Catholic* educator.

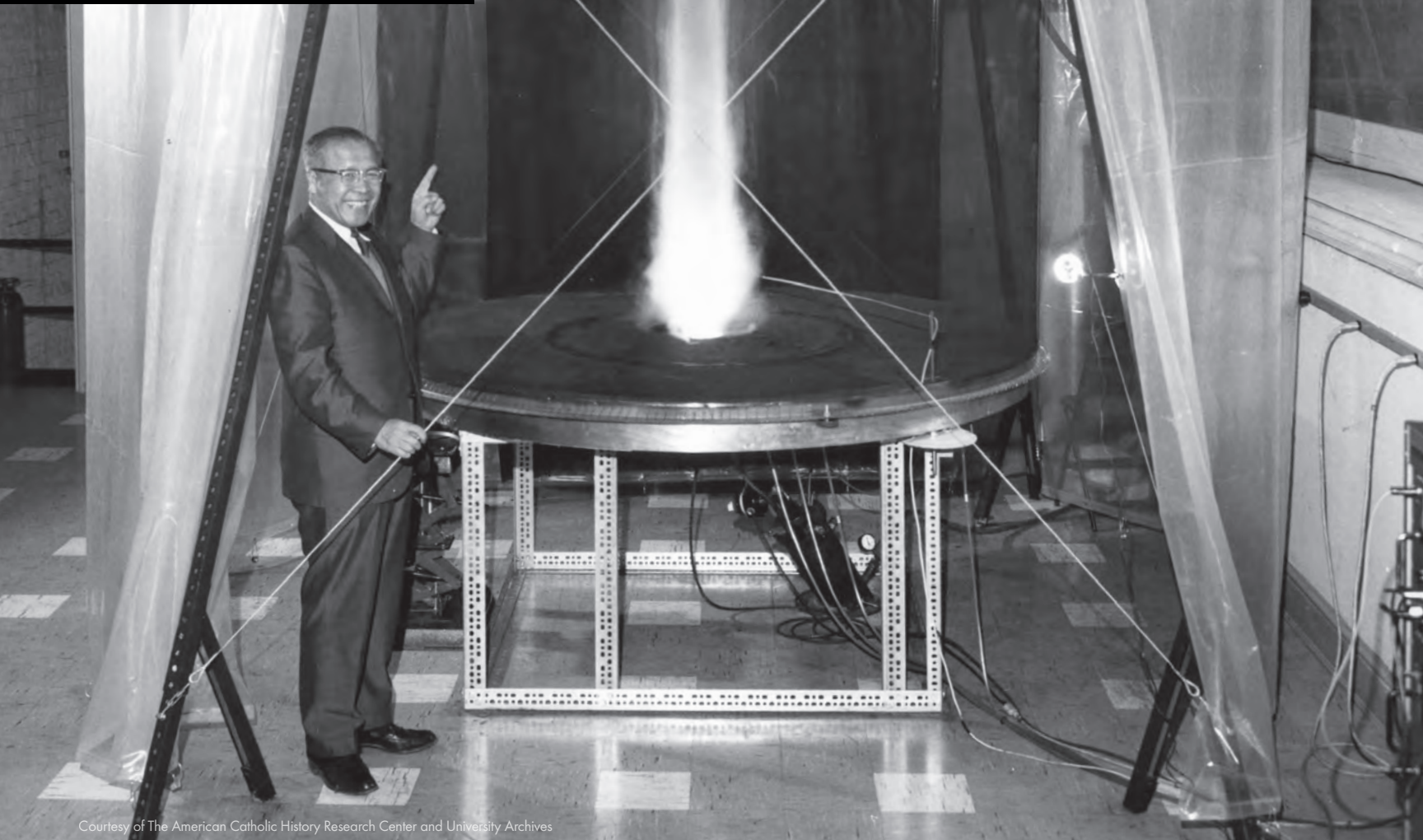
My highest aspiration is to provide others the modeling and guidance that John provided me during my time at Catholic University and to this day. And with more Mother Setons and John Conveys, Catholic education will survive and truly thrive.



Kevin J. Calkins is president of Cathedral Catholic High School in San Diego. He received a Ph.D. in educational leadership from The Catholic University of America in 2018.

FROM THE VAULT

University Archives



Courtesy of The American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives

In 1969, an artificial tornado started swirling elegantly at a Catholic University lab. According to the University's *Envoy* magazine, it was "generated within a rotating screen six feet in diameter and nine feet high" for researchers to study a natural tornado's "peculiar elements responsible for near-the-ground destruction." The machine was the brainchild of Dr. Chieh-Chien Chang (1908–2004), co-founder of the University's Space Science and Applied Physics Department and faculty member from 1963–1977.

A refugee from China as a result of the Sino-Japanese War, Dr. Chang built an illustrious career in America and made significant contributions in the fields of fluid mechanics, aerospace engineering, plasma physics, and meteorology.

His life and research reflect a transpacific identity and the changing nature of American and Chinese relations during the twentieth century.

— *Tian Atlas Xu, Ph.D. 2021*

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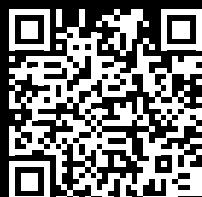
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