

UNIVERSITY GAINS  
NEW GROUND



TEACHERS  
OF THE YEAR



STUDENT WRITING CONTEST:  
A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER

Magazine of The Catholic University of America > Spring 2021

# CATHOLICU



A CARDINAL  
MAKES HISTORY



## THE BIG PICTURE

### POP OF COLOR

"Why do you never visit while I'm dreaming?" is the title of studio art major Kyle Wyborski's painting, which he debuted at his senior art exhibit in April. "I saw a still photo from *The Wizard of Oz*, featuring Judy Garland's Dorothy asleep among the poppies. There was something incredibly striking about the photo's simple color scheme, which I thought would lend itself to a large-scale, pop-art inspired piece."





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### **A Cardinal Makes History**

Cardinal Wilton Gregory is the archbishop of Washington and the chancellor of Catholic University, and in November 2020, he became the Church's first African American cardinal.

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## Teachers of the Year

Empty classrooms and online learning were a large side effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. For teachers, it has been a year of reinvention as they continue to find new ways to connect with their students in a virtual world.



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## Student Writing Contest: A Year Like No Other

Personal stories of the pandemic, told through the eyes of students, are shared in the winning entries of *CatholicU* magazine's student writing contest.

### CORRESPONDENCE

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

Cover: *Catholic Standard*, photo by Andrew Biraj



SAVE THE DATE



# 2021 Cardinal WEEKEND

OCTOBER 15-17, 2021

## REUNION YEARS

1970 • 1971 • 1975 • 1976 • 1980 • 1981  
1985 • 1986 • 1990 • 1991 • 1995 • 1996 • 2000 • 2001 • 2005  
2006 • 2010 • 2011 • 2015 • 2016 • 2020

We look forward to welcoming you back to campus this fall for your class reunion! Find more information throughout the year at

[engage.catholic.edu/reunions](http://engage.catholic.edu/reunions)

# CATHOLICU

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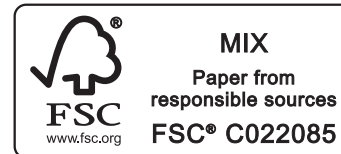
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*CatholicU*, the magazine of The Catholic University of America, is distributed three times annually by the Office of Marketing and Communications. Correspondence for the magazine should be sent to the Office of Marketing and Communications, The Catholic University of America, 620 Michigan Ave., N.E., Washington, DC 20064. (ISSN 1086-7473)

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# Making Our Way through Uncharted Territory

When Christopher Columbus and the crews of the *Nina*, the *Pinta*, and the *Santa Maria* set sail from Spain in 1492, they knew they weren't going to fall off the earth's edge. But would they find monsters? That was another question.

In 15th-century Spain it was a well-accepted fact that the earth was round, and that if you headed west from Spain, you would eventually reach Asia. There was a lot right about that assumption, but there were still some unknowns (and more than a few tales of monsters). It took a brave explorer to leave the safety of his home to find out for himself what lay beyond the Canary Islands.

In early 2020, the world faced a great unknown with COVID-19. For the first time in recent history we confronted a global pandemic from a highly contagious disease we had not seen before and knew little about. No one could foresee how it would play out, and unlike Ferdinand and Isabella, we didn't have the option of dispatching an explorer while we watched and waited. We all had to sail together.

One thing we did know was that COVID was contagious, and that if we wanted to stop the spread we needed to keep our distance. COVID required us to rethink every human interaction. We switched from handshakes to elbow bumps. Then we stood back and waved. We changed other behaviors as well. In early March of 2020 I came back from London with a bit of a headache and a sore throat. My symptoms were so mild that in other circumstances I would have gone to work without thinking about it. But we were in a pandemic. I went to the doctor immediately to get tested.

When I was diagnosed with COVID, the outflow of support and concern reflected the magnitude of the moment more than my actual illness. By the time I received my test results I was feeling fine, though I couldn't smell (still can't). I was reminded that, as President of the University, I was someone people looked to for answers, for direction, and to set an example. I felt a little like Christopher Columbus setting sail into the great unknown of the Atlantic Ocean, hoping the stories of monsters wouldn't turn out to be true.

It only took a few weeks for the entire world to go virtual. We shut down our study abroad program, closed our residence halls and dining services, moved our classes online, and sent faculty, students, and a lot of our staff home.

The neighborhood was quiet. Jeanne and I would take Gus for a walk and not encounter a single person on campus. There were no sports. No in-person Masses. All events were cancelled. There was very little human interaction. I had Zoom calls from morning to night, and though I was occupied all day



President Garvey leads students as they head out for a day of service in honor of Earth Day 2021.

with all the things involved in running a university, I felt isolated. And if I felt it, I know others did too.

We have come a long way since then. There were moments when we all felt like we'd never shake another hand again, but the vaccine has given us hope that we will be able to sign off Zoom soon enough. The University never shut completely. We welcomed first-year students in person last fall and had a far more robust on-campus presence this spring than any other university in the District of Columbia. We were cautious and sensible, tested a lot, went to class (six feet apart, with masks), and played ball.

Much of the credit goes to our faculty, staff, and students who followed the rules and collaborated on the creation of processes and programs that worked for us at this time. Our success this year, and our ability to plan for an in-person fall, were possible only because our students complied with everything we asked of them (apart from a few blips). Our faculty and staff performed beyond every expectation this year, even when pay and benefit cuts became necessary in order to preserve jobs.

A University is a complex organization, and COVID quadrupled that complexity. Plans changed on an hourly basis. What we were asked to do by the District, the federal government, parents, students, all had to be balanced against what we could deliver or afford. And doing all that amidst so many unknowns required a lot of patience, teamwork, and grace. To everyone who journeyed with Catholic University during this pandemic, thank you.

## IN YOUR WORDS

Comments from the University Community



### MORE WOMEN IN STEM

I attended the Catholic Sisters College after World War II on the GI Bill. I met my then future wife Grace Stout there. I was a music theory major with a minor in piano. Grace was a major in pipe organ. The Catholic Sisters College was a small school of music at that time. Grace was attracted to the school by Conrad Bernier [Catholic University music professor and renowned composer and organist].

After a year at the Sisters College, I went into construction and over a period of 50 years, my company built \$250 million worth of construction volume in Washington, D.C., Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware.

I was attracted to the “STEM” article (winter edition, page 22) in the magazine. We need more female architects, engineers, and project managers. My company worked with three female architects over a period of 30 years. My company, at its peak, had 10 project managers — four of them female. We need more girls interested and participating in STEM jobs. The U.S. is especially in need of structural engineers.

I was next attracted to the article on sacred music (page 16). When Grace was preparing to graduate from the sisters, they gave her a program for pipe organ to play for the graduation recital, which included the very challenging Bach Fugue in G Minor. The recital was dominated by the perfect playing of that piece. I told her admirers she played flawlessly without missing a note. They wanted to know how I knew that. I turned the pages for her while she played!

— ARTHUR A. ROMER, JR.

### MEMORIES OF THE SHRINE

I read with interest the recent article on the history of the National Shrine (winter edition, page 36). I am a graduate of Catholic University with three degrees. I arrived there as a seminarian in 1955. I was housed in the Theological College seminary building. My room had a modest desk next to a window with a perfect view of the Shrine. While there, the construction continued, so I had a first-hand view of this for two years. And each day, I walked past the Shrine on my way to class.

The article brought great memories, and a bonus: revealing to me the history of the Shrine. I have been back to D.C. several times over the years, and always make it out to the Shrine.

— BILL BROWN, B.A. 1957,  
M.A. 1958, M.S.W. 1960

### “GRACE AND JUSTICE ON DEATH ROW”

Thank you for the article featuring alumnus Brian Stolarz (winter edition, page 51) and his work on the death row case of Albert Dewayne Brown. I have just read Mr. Stolarz’s book, *Grace and Justice on Death Row: The Race Against Time and Texas to Free an Innocent Man*. Moving indeed from learning about law, the iniquities, and how broken the system can be, contrasted by the heartfelt sacrifice of professionals who are committed to doing the right thing. God Bless Mr. Brown, Mr. Stolarz, and his team.

— LINDA DAVIS, B.S.N. 1984

### HOW LONG TO OVERCOME?

I have a daughter at CatholicU (Archdiocesan scholar), and always look through the *CatholicU* magazine with interest.

The advocacy of the Black Lives Matter movement in the Winter 2021 edition (“How Long to Overcome?” page 28) leaves me deeply troubled. Either the editor did not intend or understand that BLM advocacy would come across as a significant part of the magazine, or Catholic University somehow thinks the BLM movement is enough in line with Catholic teaching to be promoted in its pages. Neither seems remotely possible. Perhaps the editors have never read the original founding documents of BLM (before they were sanitized due to widespread outrage)? Little of the founding mission had to do with racism. It had very much to do with “dismantling the nuclear family” and promoting a “nonbinary” mentality.

The only defense I can imagine is that you are not aware of the message that is being so clearly conveyed. After all, nowhere in the magazine are BLM beliefs explicitly endorsed, and it is true that the broad topic of racism is well within the proper domain of Catholic action and discussion. I fully endorse fighting racism. But choosing to ally yourself with something as radical and anti-Catholic as BLM is quite different.

CatholicU could fully endorse Martin Luther King Day and its noble goals, without capitulating to the radical agenda of BLM, and thereby greatly weakening its Catholic identity.

The University, like the Catholic Church, should not be reactionary, or unnecessarily divisive, but nor should it openly promote, in picture and implication if not in words, one of the most anti-family, anti-life, anti-democracy platforms on the world stage today.

— PAUL SWOPE

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS. WRITE TO US AT  
[cua-magazine@cua.edu](mailto:cua-magazine@cua.edu)





## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### A MICROPHONE IN HIS HAND AND A STORY TO TELL

“I’ve always imagined having a microphone in my hand, a camera in front of me, and a story to tell,” says Joseph Olmo, who earned his B.A. in media and communication studies last fall. “Even as a kid, I would grab a pen and stand in the living room or in front of a mirror, play the theme of ‘NBC Nightly News,’ dress up in a suit, and start reading off the day’s news.”

Olmo didn’t wait for his college graduation to begin to realize that dream. He worked full time as a news anchor for WDVM, a local Maryland television station, while balancing his time as a student.

His road to local news began in 2018 when he contributed to the crowd-sourced, volunteer journalism outlet *The Arundel Patriot*, where he interviewed candidates during the midterm election season. From there he networked with other local journalists and began freelancing for the Spanish-language Central America TV (CATV) network, eventually traveling to El Salvador in 2019 to cover the country’s presidential inauguration.

After his return to the United States, Olmo began to do freelance reporting for Spanish-language shows, including “*Tu Salud Tu Familia*,” a health-based television program that airs on the Telemundo 44 (WZDC) network.

“I was assigned to go out every week and find a story about someone who was experiencing whatever topic we were talking about in that particular episode, such as breast cancer, lung cancer, diabetes, lupus,” says Olmo. “I was humbled that people would trust me to come into their homes and tell their stories.”

Olmo has learned that networking, building experience, listening, and asking questions are essential activities for any student entering the journalism field. Another necessity for success, he believes, is passion.

The new graduate credits CatholicU as a driving force in his career. “The University has taught me something priceless: to think critically and decisively. We receive large quantities of information within, sometimes, a matter of minutes. And having that critical-thinking skill base is essential in being able to pick out which details are key, to then relay them in a digestible, easy-to-understand manner to our viewers.” — J.F.

# AROUND CATHOLIC

# TUCSON



## University Gains New Ground

**C**atholic University has grown its presence in higher education by expanding operations to Tucson, Ariz., and Alexandria, Va.

Catholic University-Tucson, which launched in the fall of 2020, offers an affordable and high-quality option for Tucson residents to receive an undergraduate education. The Catholic University-Tucson program partnered with Pima Community College to enable high school graduates to earn a four-year business management degree from CatholicU without leaving the Tucson region.

Program courses are administered by the Metropolitan School of Professional Studies (MSPS) and delivered through an online hybrid-learning model developed by faculty in the Busch School of Business. Andrew Abela, dean of the Busch School, believes the Catholic University-Tucson program will invest

in a new generation's dreams while helping Tucson families and growing the local economy.

"The expansion to Tucson is a natural extension of what the University does, prepare the next generation of Catholic leaders," confirms University President John Garvey.

CatholicU's new campus in Alexandria, which was announced this spring, will provide more convenient access and a broader range of evening courses to students and working professionals in Northern Virginia. Occupying the second floor of the Catholic Charities USA headquarters building, the Alexandria location will offer a range of academic programs beginning in the summer of 2021.

The business school and MSPS will offer a Master of Science in Nonprofit Management program as well as other opportunities for bachelor's degree



completion, paralegal studies, and workforce development courses in project management, financial planning, and human resources. The School of Engineering's Master's in Engineering Management program will also relocate to the Alexandria campus this summer.

"Although the cloud of the COVID-19 pandemic may for a time obscure the scene taking shape in front of us, there are indicators of significant unmet educational demand in the region," Garvey says. "As a longtime community partner and a university that — as we've just seen in Tucson — welcomes opportunities to share our knowledge, research prowess, and a distinctively Catholic educational experience where we perceive that need, we're of course very pleased to add Alexandria to the places where talented and motivated students can find The Catholic University of America." — G.O.



The expansion to Tucson is a natural extension of what the University does, prepare the next generation of Catholic leaders.

— President John Garvey



## Cardinal Health Ambassadors Set Positive Example

A team of Catholic University students is working to project good examples when it comes to pandemic health precautions. The students are part of the Cardinal Health Ambassador program, an initiative that encourages students to follow social distancing and masking guidelines through positive reinforcement and peer-to-peer education.

Steve Kreider, director of campus activities, said the program was started as a way to “promote healthy decision making and good behavior on campus.”

“The idea is to have a presence of peers who can lead others and model good behavior when it comes to wearing face coverings, washing hands, and practicing physical distancing,” he said.

As part of the program, student ambassadors are organized into pairs. During two-hour shifts, they provide gratitude and encouragement — occasionally in the form of raffle tickets — for students they encounter who are socially distancing effectively. — K.B.

# Students Interview Broadway Stars with New Podcast

Two students in the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art are interviewing Broadway stars as part of their podcast series, “Whatcha Doin’?” Seniors Sophie Williams, a musical theatre major, and Brandon Horwin, a drama major with a performance arts management minor, decided to start their podcast as a way to stay creatively engaged while stages were shut down because of the coronavirus pandemic.

In early episodes, Williams and Horwin interviewed their own friends and colleagues, including Catholic University professor Eleanor Holdridge, chair of the Department of Drama. As the months passed, they began to meet new people through the podcast, including Tony Award-winning actors, directors, and playwrights.

Interviews for the show have included Tony Award-winning Broadway producer Hal Luftig, Tony Award-winning actress Beth Leavel, film and stage star Anita Gillette, and actor and singer John Treacy Egan. Williams and Horwin ask subjects about their careers, their favorite stories from the theatre world, and how they have kept busy during the pandemic.

“Talking to these people, so many of them are well established in their careers and they’re still going, they’re still doing what they love, moving up the ladder and having a good time,” Williams said. “I think this shows that even though your career might have a slow start for the first 15 years, it doesn’t matter and you should keep going.”

Both Williams and Horwin agreed that making the podcast has been a great way to stay engaged in the arts during a difficult time.

“As a musical theatre major, usually by this time

in our senior year, we would be going to open calls, auditioning with people, and networking,” Williams said. “We can’t really do that in a pandemic because there’s not any sort of theatre scene to operate within right now. This podcast is something I can do for my peers, to help them get connected with other people and learn what opportunities are available.”

Podcast episodes are available on Spotify and YouTube under “Whatcha Doin’? with Brandon Horwin and Sophie Williams.” — K.B.



## Community Reflects on Dr. King's Example

Members of the Catholic University community spent a week learning about the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the current state of racial justice in America during the MLK Teach-In this January. The weeklong series of events, discussions, and online activities was planned in place of the University's annual MLK Day of Service, which could not be held this year because students were under quarantine.

Emmjolee Mendoza-Waters, B.A. 2001, M.S.W. 2009, associate director of campus ministry and community service, said she hoped the teach-in would be an opportunity for members of the community to reflect on the life of King and how to "become a more welcoming brother or sister, whether it be in the CatholicU community or the communities that we're a part of."

The teach-in was a joint effort of Campus Ministry, Athletics, Residence Life, Campus Activities, and various student organizations.

The keynote speaker was social entrepreneur Marcus Bullock, whose tech company Flikshop helps people in prison stay connected to their community. Additional events included discussions on allyship and advocacy in action, a Civil Rights Walking Tour where students could learn about important people and events in CatholicU's history of civil rights, and a virtual Mass at St. Teresa of Avila Church in Southeast Washington. — K.B.

**Visit [magazine.catholic.edu](https://magazine.catholic.edu) for event recordings and a link to the Civil Rights Walking Tour.**



## Quarantined Students Continue March for Life Tradition

For every year in recent memory, toward the end of January, hundreds of Catholic University students, faculty, and staff have bundled up and headed downtown to participate in the annual March for Life demonstration against abortion.

Although cold weather, snow, and rain never kept students indoors, this year, a pandemic did.

CatholicU students who had recently returned to campus to begin the spring semester were asked to quarantine for 14 days before participating in public activities. In addition, the national March for Life organization canceled the in-person march at the Capitol due to the pandemic and recent unrest in Washington, D.C.

"It is truly disappointing to know that the 48th annual March for Life will have to be a virtual event," said Rev. Jude DeAngelo, O.F.M. Conv., University chaplain, in a letter to students. Since he arrived at CatholicU 10 years ago, Father Jude has participated in every March for Life with the University's contingent. "We've marched on bright sunny anniversaries and on overcast days. We've walked in blizzard conditions and rainy as well."

Although students couldn't travel downtown, they participated in a number of other pro-life activities, including the annual Vigil for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, which was livestreamed, and a virtual Youth Rally for Life hosted by the Archdiocese of Washington. Closer to campus, students prayed a Rosary for Life on Zoom with the campus Knights of Columbus and the Divine Mercy Chaplet for Life online with Campus Ministry staff. The House also hosted a Zoom Friday event with night prayer.

"Our inability to march with our customary force and energy does in fact leave us the opportunity to grow in grace," Father Jude said in his letter. "It may be the moment for a calm, loving dialogue with others who struggle much with the Church's teachings ... This may be the moment when a loving, non-combative, non-judgmental dialogue rooted in prayer and sacrifice might open up another's heart to the beauty and sacredness of human life. It might be a time of great healing." — M.M.H.

## Students Break Ground for New Community Garden

Students from the Student Government Association Environmental Initiative, Catholic University Environmental Club, and staff from Facilities Planning and Management joined forces in late March to break ground for a new community garden, located on the north side of Curley Hall.

This student-led effort established the garden to bolster the campus community's connection to nature and each other. The garden will incorporate Franciscan garden values that discourage the use of pesticides and herbicides.

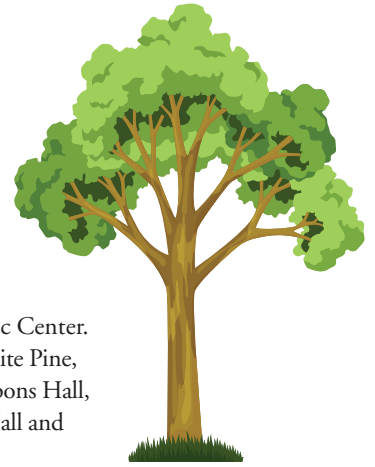
"The new community garden is an expression of Pope Francis's call for action in *Laudato Si* to serve the community and the earth," says Holly Thompson, initiative director and junior environmental studies major.



## University Earns Tree Campus Recognition

Catholic University was honored with a 2020 Tree Campus Higher Education® recognition by the Arbor Day Foundation for its commitment to effective urban forest management. The Tree Campus Higher Education program honors colleges and universities for effective campus forest management and engaging staff and students in conservation goals.

At the last estimate, the University has more than 1,500 trees on the main campus and near the Raymond A. DuFour Athletic Center. The most common trees on campus are the Leyland Cypress, White Pine, and Ash trees. Many new trees were planted recently around Gibbons Hall, behind Regan and Ryan halls, and up the hill between Aquinas Hall and Centennial Village.



## Four-Year Energy Project Complete

Thanks to a three-phase project that began in 2016, the Catholic University campus is now running more smoothly and efficiently. Literally.

During winter months, the campus used to be dotted with steaming manhole covers, a visual symbol of the antiquated heating system used in many University buildings that was nearing the end of its useful life. Aged 30 years or more, many components of the system were older than most students. Equipment often needed 24/7 operators to maintain basic operations, and the state of continuous repair and maintenance was costly to the University.

The Energy Project converted the steam-based system to a more efficient hot/chilled water system. The drastic renovation changes the energy distribution, improves efficiency at the Power Plant, and lowers operating costs.

The efficient chilled- and hot-water loop significantly reduces losses in heating and cooling. During the winter or heating season, hot water leaves the Power Plant at 160 degrees Fahrenheit and comes back to the plant at 150 degrees. During the cooling season, chilled water leaves the Power Plant at 42 degrees and comes back at 50 degrees. The improvements save the University in utility costs and help it meet broader sustainability goals.

"We are very grateful for our partnership with our outside consultants and contractors on this extensive project; but even more importantly, we thank the University community for their extended patience with the disruptions in campus buildings and on the grounds," said Debra Nauta-Rodriguez, associate vice president for Facilities and University architect. "The project provides both environmental benefits and financial savings that serve us all." — M.M.H.

## Conways Honored as Top 50 Donors

Bill and Joanne Conway, the namesakes of the Conway School of Nursing, were recently included in a *U.S. News and World Report* list of America's top 50 donors of 2020, thanks to their \$20 million gifts to both CatholicU and the University of Virginia.

The University's largest benefactors to date, the Conways have invested \$80 million in the nursing school since 2013 to fund scholarships and the new building. Their support has enabled nearly 82 students to pursue their nursing degrees.

Bill is a member of the University's Board of Trustees and co-founder and co-chairman of The Carlyle Group. He and Joanne are focused on a goal to solve the persistent shortage of nurses in the United States by educating 20,000 new nurses.

## BY THE NUMBERS

The Conway School of Nursing was ranked **#27** on the *U.S. News and World Report's* list of the 2022 Best Graduate Schools for Nursing, marking a significant jump from last year's ranking of **#36**.

The school's online graduate nursing program was ranked **#5** on a list of 194 nursing programs across the country, thanks to its high scores in faculty credentials and training, student engagement, and student excellence. CatholicU was also named to the *Princeton Review* 2021 ranking of the Top Online Nursing Programs.

# CatholicU Chooses Clark Construction Group to Build Nursing School

The Catholic University of America selected Clark Construction Group to construct the new nursing and sciences building, the future home of the Conway School of Nursing. Clark will partner with an all-star design combination of Ayers Saint Gross and Robert A.M. Stern Architects to build the facility. Funding for the new building has been made possible in part through \$40 million in gifts from Bill and Joanne Conway.

Expected to open in 2024, the facility's exterior will remain true to the collegiate gothic style of many other buildings on campus. At more than 102,000 square feet, it will double the size of the current nursing education facilities, and provide space to double the current number of nursing students

and dramatically increase the faculty. The Conway School of Nursing has been a key provider of top nursing talent throughout the Washington, D.C., and mid-Atlantic region for decades.

The new nursing and sciences building will be located adjacent to Father O'Connell Hall (formerly known as Graduate Hall, University Center, or Cardinal Hall) along Michigan Avenue, and it will include a new campus main entrance at the intersection of Michigan Avenue and 7th Street, N.E. It will be designed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold and WELL Building Standard certifications.





Dana Rene Bowler

## Continued Support from Sheehy Family Funds Additional Metro School Scholarships

The generosity of the Sheehy family to the Metropolitan School of Professional Studies (MSPS) continued in December 2020 with an additional \$325,000 gift. This most recent support will enable the school to offer additional undergraduate scholarships for continuing and adult learners.

“We expect 75 students will benefit from these funds. This gift will assist students across our undergraduate programs in D.C. and Alexandria,” said MSPS Dean Vincent Kiernan, adding the gift will also “support dual-enrollment students — individuals from D.C.’s adult high school programs who seek to take one or two college-level classes with us to get a taste of the college experience and to get a start on earning college credits.”

Portions of the gift will support students enrolled in the early childhood education program and undergraduate programs for addiction counseling, information technology, business, and social work.

“We are very appreciative of the Sheehy family’s continuing support to the undergraduate students of the Metropolitan School, many of whom would be unable to pursue college study without their generosity,” Kiernan said. — A.K.

# Giving Tuesday Raises Funds for Caldwell Chapel Renovation, Preservation

Thanks to a matching gift made by a donor parent couple, Giving Tuesday in 2020 focused on only one thing: the restoration and preservation of Caldwell Chapel.

Steve and Janece Brophy — parents of Kathleen, B.A. 2015, M.S.B.A. 2019 — learned of the important role Caldwell Chapel played in their daughter’s spiritual formation. This is why they decided to support the chapel’s renovation, generously vowing to match every gift made on Giving Tuesday up to \$250,000. All told, more than \$177,000 was raised to kickstart this project.

Located in Caldwell Hall, the chapel — originally called St. Paul’s Chapel — was the University’s first sacred space. While the building is named for Mary Gwendoline Caldwell, who gave the initial gift to give the University a home in Caldwell Chapel, the chapel’s existence is due to her sister, Mary Elizabeth “Lina” Caldwell, who made the gift to fund its construction. Both were built in 1888, and Lina later married in the chapel.

Priorities for the renovation include preserving its historical and architectural significance, adding heating and cooling systems, and installing an elevator to make the chapel accessible to all. The altar, sacristy, organ, choir loft, pews, and floors will all receive attention. The interior part of the restoration is expected

to cost approximately \$1 million. The University must raise at least another \$573,000 to complete the project.

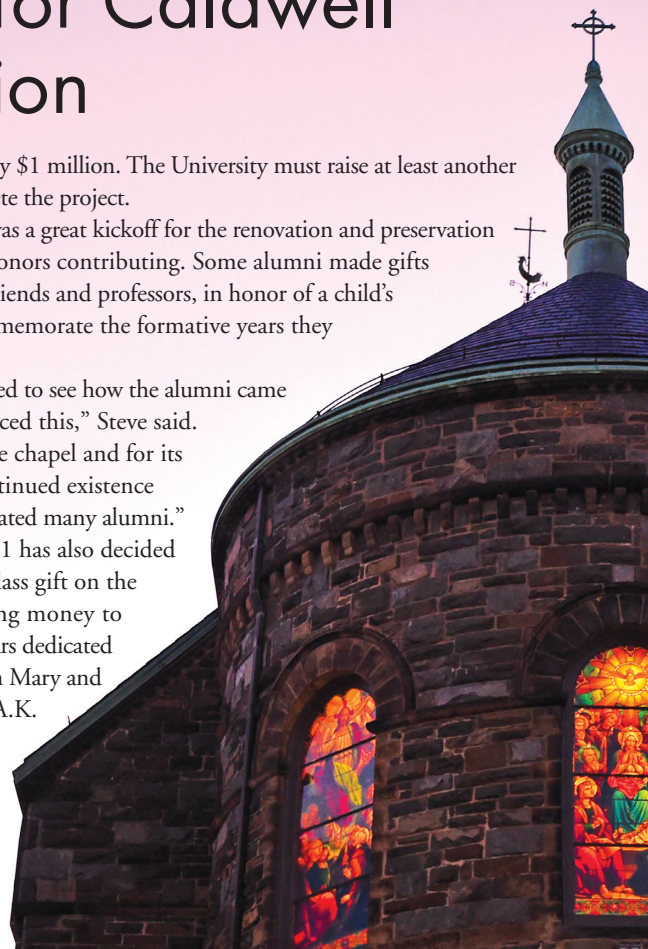
Giving Tuesday was a great kickoff for the renovation and preservation project, with 453 donors contributing. Some alumni made gifts in memory of late friends and professors, in honor of a child’s baptism, or to commemorate the formative years they spent at the chapel.

“We were delighted to see how the alumni came together and embraced this,” Steve said.

“The passion for the chapel and for its renovation and continued existence seems to have motivated many alumni.”

The Class of 2021 has also decided to focus its senior class gift on the chapel, and is raising money to preserve the side altars dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph. — A.K.

To learn more and to see videos about Caldwell Chapel, visit [engage.catholic.edu/gt2020](https://engage.catholic.edu/gt2020).







The Oliveira Lima Library.

## New Gifts Support Libraries

Monsignor Robert Trisco, professor emeritus of Church history, pledged \$650,000 in December to support the John K. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library and the study of his discipline at CatholicU.

The majority of this bequest will establish The Monsignor Robert Frederick Trisco Church History Library Endowment. Mullen Library currently offers more than 1.3 million books and print volumes, as well as access to tens of thousands of electronic journals and books. The gift will allow the University to continue to add to its impressive collection and ensure future historians have the materials they need.

“This will be one of the biggest endowments the library has ever received, and certainly the biggest endowment that’s dedicated to our collections,” said University Librarian Stephen Connaghan. “Church history is something that’s very core to the mission of the University. Having more primary and secondary materials that we can purchase through this endowment will be a great boon to future scholars.”

A smaller portion of Monsignor Trisco’s gift will be used to process archival materials he is bequeathing to Mullen Library, including his personal papers and correspondence. Any funds remaining will be allocated to processing papers from the American Catholic Historical Association (ACHA) and *The Catholic Historical Review*.

Monsignor Trisco has been a part of the Catholic University community for more than 60 years, as a faculty member, historian, and resident of Curley Hall.

“Catholic University was the place where I was able to carry out the work that I enjoyed, and I wanted to promote my own discipline,” he said. “Why is Church history important? To understand the nature of the Church as we have it today. I’ve taught both papal history and English Church history, as well as American Church history. I would like to see those fields developed.”

Another generous gift made in support of University libraries came from Raphael Della Ratta, M.A. 1994, who, earlier this year, pledged \$400,000 in support of the Oliveira Lima Library (OLL). This gift will provide continued operational funding for the library for two years, including staffing costs for the OLL’s director and librarian, and funds for travel and marketing.

Home to more than 60,000 rare and modern books — as well as pamphlets, periodicals, manuscripts, photos, letters, and hundreds of works of art and artifacts — the OLL is the most important private collection for 19th- and 20th-century Luso-Brazilian primary and secondary source material outside of Brazil.

This most recent gift follows a \$120,000 donation Della Ratta made to the library in 2019. Next priorities for the OLL include preservation and restoration of the artwork, cataloging and researching the collection, and increased accessibility for students and scholars. — K.H.B. and A.K.

## Ortner family gift supports Catholic K-12 education

Mike and Liz Ortner have a passion for education and helping children reach their full potential. To reflect that, the couple made a generous pledge to Catholic University through their Ortner Family Foundation, which focuses on supporting the classical education movement, serving the needs of the poor and vulnerable, and other endeavors related to the Catholic Church.

The gift supports the creation of the Ortner Fund for Catholic Classical Liberal K–12 Education and the hiring of an executive director to create an Institute for the Transformation of Catholic Education at Catholic University. The couple hopes that with these new initiatives, the University will become a leader in the renewal of the classical Catholic education, including the education of teachers.

Mike was founder and former CEO of Capterra, an award-winning technology company that he sold in 2015. While technology was his first love, he says his education didn’t really begin until after he graduated from college and began reading “everything I could get my hands on,” particularly the classics, especially Plato.

Now, Mike and Liz want to offer children the chance to learn from the greats early on.

“Classical, liberal, Catholic education — if done well and at the feet of great teachers — can transform the lives of children and, eventually, society,” he said. “They can get off to a good start; grow in virtue; learn to read, think, and write well; understand that life is less about them and more about serving God and others; and begin to gain an understanding of what it means to be human and to live a good life.” — A.K.

**To learn more about this gift, visit [engage.catholic.edu/ortner](https://engage.catholic.edu/ortner).**

## In the Media

**Duilia de Mello**, vice provost, global strategies, and professor, physics, was featured in *Sky & Telescope* about her project collaborating with amateur astrophotographers in Brazil to get deep images of galaxies.

**Nicholas Dujmovic**, assistant professor, politics, was quoted in *The New York Times* about the CIA's recent warning to former employees about the need to keep secrets.

**David Jobs**, professor, psychology, was interviewed by *USA Today* about Meghan Markle's interview with Oprah Winfrey and the dangers of not believing people who are suicidal.

**Karna Lozoya**, executive director, strategic communications, was mentioned in *The Atlantic* about The Catholic Project's podcast, "Crisis: Clergy Abuse in the Catholic Church" which was listed as one of the 50 Best Podcasts of 2020.

**Robert Miller**, professor, Old Testament, associate dean, graduate studies, was quoted in the Associated Press about the Bible President Biden used to take his oath of office.

Visit [magazine.catholic.edu](http://magazine.catholic.edu) for links to these articles.



Dana Rene Bowler

## Professor's Solar Plumelet Discovery Could Help Explain Solar Winds

Physics Associate Professor Vadim Uritsky and a team of American and British scientists led by him have uncovered evidence of small solar structures — or “plumelets” — that could shed new light on the sun's flow of high-speed solar wind. Uritsky's research was published in January in *The Astrophysical Journal*.

The surface of the sun is threaded through with a constantly changing combination of closed loops of magnetic field and open magnetic field lines that stretch out into the solar system. Areas of open magnetic field can create coronal holes, which look like dark splotches in certain ultraviolet views of the sun. Often embedded within those coronal holes are plumes, or geysers of solar material that stream outward from the sun for days at a time. Those plumes — which are easily observable by NASA satellites and other spacecrafts — play a large role in creating and shaping the characteristics of high-speed solar wind.

Using high-resolution observations from NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory satellite along with an image processing technique developed for this work, Uritsky and his collaborators found that the plumes are actually composed of much smaller strands of materials, which they call plumelets. Though earlier work has hinted at structure within solar plumes, this is the first time scientists have observed plumelets in sharp focus and obtained their quantitative characteristics. The team observed that plumelets move individually and oscillate on their own, which means they could be a major driver behind disruptions in the solar wind.

“We always think of the sun as a huge object, but what we've found is yet another proof that the small-scale activity on the sun is of tremendous importance,” said Uritsky, who also works as a solar scientist at NASA Goddard's Space Flight Center and heads the University's Space Weather Center and space weather degree program. “The sun is filled with energy, but the triggering of large eruptions such as major flares and plasma ejections that affect the entire solar system could be essentially driven by these little processes originated near the surface of our star.” — K.B.

## Latin American Music Center Receives Latin GRAMMY Grant

The Latin American Music Center (LAMC), housed in the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art, received a \$5,000 grant from the Latin GRAMMY Cultural Foundation in January. The grant will fund digital archiving and cataloguing efforts of the collection, which includes a complete and specialized library of scores, books, and recordings of Ibero-American music.

This Latin GRAMMY Cultural Foundation program provides grants to music institutions, nonprofit organizations, musicologists, and researchers around the world who are enhancing and preserving Latin music heritage. The Preservation Grants, with a maximum value of \$5,000, fund the archiving and preservation of Latin music and its unique customs.

“I have received numerous requests from scholars around the world asking for access to the materials that are housed at the LAMC, which evidences the need to digitalize the collection and make it available for research,” said Gustavo Ahualli, LAMC director. “On behalf of myself and the Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art, I would like to thank the Latin GRAMMY Cultural Foundation for this much-needed and appreciated support, which will allow us to make our collection available to musicians, researchers, and scholars for years to come.”

# University Establishes Bacteriophage Medical Research Center

Founded this spring, the Bacteriophage Medical Research Center will focus on advancing biomedical technologies using a unique bacteriophage T4 technology developed by Biology Professor Venigalla Rao.

Rao, who will serve as the founding director of the center, is among the world’s top experts on viruses and associated biomedical applications such as vaccine development and genetic therapies. His lab has developed

bacteriophage T4 virus platforms and systems to deliver vaccines against biothreat agents such as anthrax and plague, and viruses such as HIV, coronavirus, and flu. This spring, Rao was recognized with a highly prestigious fellowship in the American Academy of Microbiology.

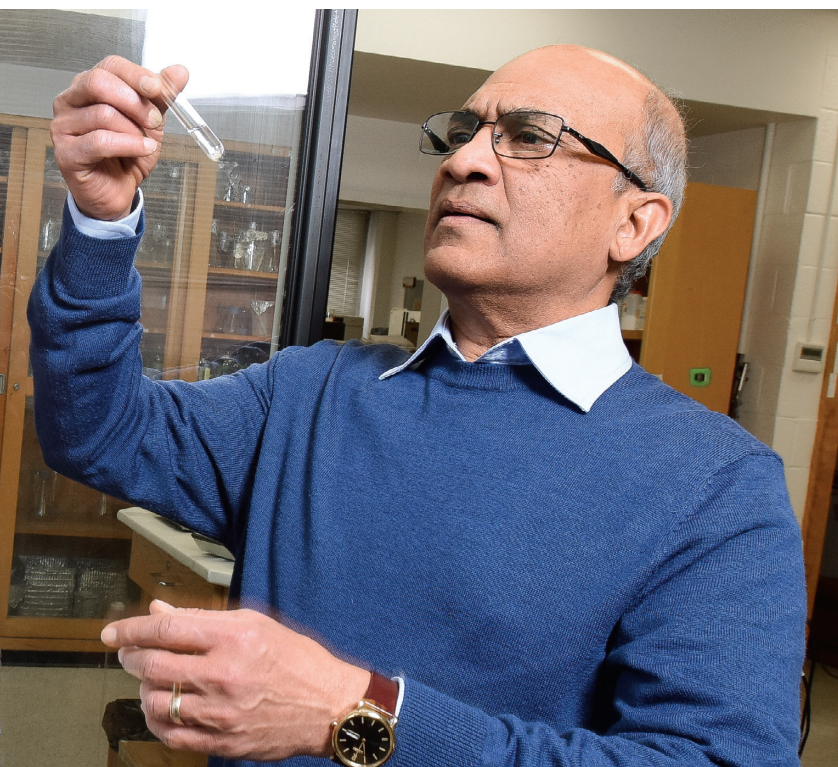
“The center will capitalize on Dr. Rao’s outstanding work over the last 40 years,” said Ralph Albano, the University’s vice provost for research. “In keeping with our tradition as a preeminent research university, this center will focus on the discovery and development of cutting-edge technologies, while also preparing students to become the next generation of life-science innovators. The technologies developed here have the potential to revolutionize human therapies and personalized medicine.”

The center will focus on generating external funding from governmental and nonprofit foundations for research aiming to treat genetic diseases, including sickle cell disease and muscular dystrophy. Other priorities will include creating additional intellectual properties, negotiating licensing agreements for genetic therapies, and establishing research opportunities for students and fellows in the biotechnology industry.

“It is an honor to serve as its director and bring a broad and sustainable impact to the University,” Rao says. “The center will create a new category of bacteriophage-inspired vaccines and gene therapeutics that will lead to unique research and development opportunities for the University and its students.”

Rao shared information about the new center, along with his own experience developing a coronavirus vaccine using CRISPR gene editing technology, as the keynote speaker for this year’s University Research Day. — K.B.

**To watch a video of his remarks, visit [research-day.catholic.edu](https://research-day.catholic.edu).**



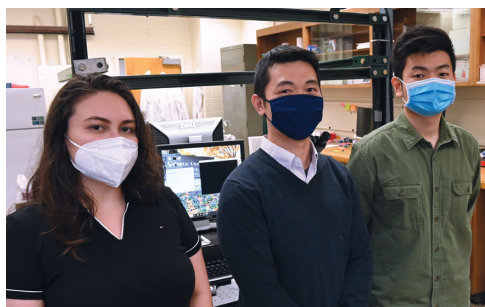
Dana Rene Bowler

## Computer Science Professor Awarded Grant for DNA Research

Hieu Bui, an assistant professor of electrical engineering and computer science, was awarded a three-year grant from the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory and the Defense Threat Reduction Agency totalling \$192,000. Bui and his research group, Bio-inspired Molecular Computing Laboratory, located in the School of Engineering, have been researching how to program nucleic acid systems with DNA nanotechnology for use in health care diagnostics.

Bui has been working with DNA nanotechnology for 10 years on technology that enables him to control and manipulate molecules like proteins and enzymes. By learning to design and program DNA and other matters at the atomic level, Bui has built a prototype of a system that uses DNA molecules to detect specific biomolecules and antibodies. Bui envisions his technology as a “first line of detection” for any disease, including COVID-19. Because it uses affordable technology and doesn’t require expensive heating or cooling equipment, it could be especially valuable for detecting diseases in remote areas.

“This technology in general can detect any kind of antibody as long as we can tag the antibody with a DNA signature,” Bui said. “We’re interested in doing this because certain diseases are hard to detect at an early stage because they only have very tiny fractions of antibodies present. To be able to identify them with high confidence, we could have better intervention methods and treatments.” — K.B.



Hieu Bui (center) with students in his lab.



ThirreeSarmkasa/Stock/Getty Images Plus via Getty Images

## Research Examines Mental Health Among Churchgoers

New research from Professor Brandon Vaidyanathan explores the link between religious involvement and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaidyanathan, chair of the Department of Sociology, worked closely with Research Associate Chris Jacobi to analyze the data, and they are collaborating with a team of students and faculty to publish research findings.

The study, funded by the John Templeton Foundation, looked at Catholic, Evangelical, African American Baptist, Mormon, Reform and Orthodox Jewish, and Hindu congregations. Vaidyanathan surveyed 12 different congregations between October and December 2020 to examine how faith communities have been affected by the pandemic and whether religious involvement has helped individuals cope mentally. More than 1,600 participants in D.C., Maryland, Virginia, and Texas took the survey.

Many respondents said they continued to attend religious services when they were able and reported that their connection to their community remained strong. The majority reported no change in their religious practices; in fact, 35% reported that their spirituality increased during the pandemic because they were able to pray or meditate more often, and 17% said they were devoting more time to reading sacred scripture.

“We suspect this is probably true for a lot of faith communities,” Vaidyanathan said. “Among those who are active in their faith communities, the pandemic has increased rather than decreased religiosity and that’s an encouraging finding for faith leaders.”

However, findings related to mental health revealed that, “Faith communities need to become places where people are more comfortable sharing problems with each other, especially during the pandemic.”

The study also looked at the relationship between a person’s religious involvement and their willingness to be vaccinated. Here, Vaidyanathan and Jacobi observed statistically significant racial differences, which were not explained by either religiosity or trust in scientific information about the vaccine. However, they note it is important to keep in mind that attitudes toward the COVID-19 vaccine are changing daily. — K.B.

# History ‘Turned on All of the Lights in My Mind’

Katherine L. Jansen joined the history faculty at Catholic University in 1995, fresh from a yearlong fellowship at the American Academy in Rome. With two colleagues — John Kromkowski of the politics department and Anca Nemoianu, who was then running the study abroad program — she founded the University’s Rome program. She is the author of the books *Peace and Penance in Late Medieval Italy* and *The Making of the Magdalen*. In 2020, she was elected as a fellow of the Medieval Academy of America; the previous year, she was appointed editor of *Speculum*, a prestigious interdisciplinary journal.

## What drew you to Italy?

I spent a very formative year in Italy when I was 10 years old. My father was an art historian who had won a fellowship to research in Rome and he took his young family with him for a year. He was working on a project on Renaissance tomb sculpture, and we kids were often taken along while he was photographing. So I spent much of that year in the churches of Rome, appreciating their beauty and some of their hidden treasures. I don’t think I realized what a deep imprint that year made on me until I got to college and found myself in an introductory Western Civ class. I had planned to be a biology major, but there was a lot of Italian focus in that class, and it turned on all of the lights in my mind. I started making all these connections to things that I saw in Rome as a kid. That was the moment I knew that I wanted to become a historian. It was an epiphany. I understood history’s explanatory power then and there.

## What is your favorite class to teach?

I love every class I teach at Catholic University, and all for different reasons. I love teaching in the Rome program and introducing students to the historically layered city. I love teaching the introductory course to the Middle Ages, because that’s when you get first-year students trying to figure out what it means to be a college student. It’s exciting to see them move to a deeper, more informed way of looking at history. I’ve also been very fortunate at Catholic University to have a lot of graduate students; I’m always gratified to see them develop into mature historians.

## Books you’ve written or edited frequently focus on preaching. Why?

There was an explosion of preaching in the later Middle Ages. Preaching became extremely important with the advent of the mendicant orders — Dominicans and Franciscans, primarily. They came of age in the 13th century. Given their mission to preach in a new way throughout Europe and beyond, they were itinerant, moving from place to place. As one eminent historian, David d’Avray, has pointed out, preaching was the mass media of the day. If one of these preachers came to town, you made sure to see and hear them. Preaching was important for the dissemination of Christian doctrine, teaching, and devotion, and was absolutely instrumental in the growth of devotion to Mary Magdalen.

## What is your next project?

My next book is called *The Relics of Rome*. It’s a series of case studies recounting the history of Rome through its relics. Each chapter will examine one relic, its history in Rome, and how it embodies a piece of Roman history.

— G.V.



# Cardinals Return to Play

This spring, the Department of Athletics faced an unprecedented challenge — juggling three seasons of sports simultaneously, all while adhering to COVID safety guidelines. Fall sports, cancelled the previous semester due to the pandemic, were moved to the spring semester.

Following CDC and NCAA protocols, the department created an action team that met multiple times a week to review game scheduling, operational needs, changing health guidelines, and more in order to keep athletes safe. Together, they designed safety protocols for staff, coaches, and athletes in each individual sport, taking into account whether sports were being played indoors or outdoors, and any travel plans. These measures included rigorous testing regimes, creative scheduling to allow for proper social distancing, and strict hygiene and mask requirements.

Balancing the many new policies and procedures took an immense amount of coordination, planning, flexibility, and education, said Jaime Walls, assistant athletics director.

“The department took on the scheduling, testing, and contact tracing for all of these athletes, with the bulk of the work falling on the athletic training staff. Their main job is to prevent, recognize, treat, and rehab athletic injuries,” she said. “With an athletic population of around 600 students, this has been a large undertaking.”

Matthew Donohue, head women’s basketball coach (pictured right), says he was “overwhelmed with gratitude” to have his team playing again, even if it meant “reimagining everything.”

“The opening days and weeks of practices were filled with equal parts anxiety, excitement, and uncertainty,” he says. “We all knew that practices, games, team meetings, and everything else in between would be unlike anything we had ever experienced, and that certainly proved to be the case.”

Basketball team practices took place with athletes and coaches in masks, in small groups, and with hand sanitizer available before and after every drill. Team meetings that would typically happen

in a locker room were moved into more expansive spaces to meet social distancing requirements. Still, the team was able to advance to the Landmark Conference Championship game, eventually losing by one point.

“I do not think that it is possible for us, as a coaching staff, to be more proud of this team,” Donohue says. “They sacrificed a great deal to be together and to be able to compete this year. Their character, team unity, and sheer resilience shined through.”

Tyler Ziegler, head coach of men’s and women’s swimming and diving, was equally proud of

what his student-athletes were able to achieve this season. Both the men’s and women’s teams earned titles in the virtual Landmark Conference championship. The event took place at four individual campus sites, with student-athletes from each school competing against their teammates. The results from all four sites were then compiled by the Landmark Conference.

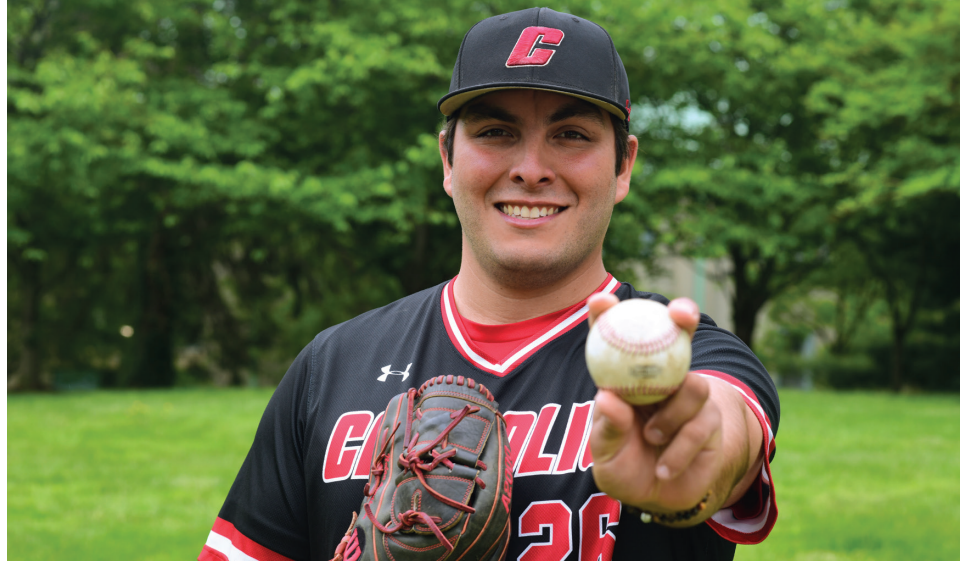
“I think being back in the pool gave us all a sense of appreciation for the opportunity and for our sport,” Ziegler says. “In what was most certainly the most unique year of my coaching career, and likely the most unique year any of our



athletes have faced, the team met every challenge we faced head on.”

Regarding the championship, Ziegler says it was a unique experience for swimmers not to have their opponents in the lanes next to them, but that the team still raced very well, with the men earning their fifth consecutive championship win and the women earning their second straight.

“What stood out to me most was the way that our team brought a championship environment to our own pool deck,” he says. “The level of support and energy was unparalleled.” — G.O. and K.B.



## Back in the Game

The crack of the bat, if not the roar of the crowd, was among the most welcome sounds of the spring semester. First baseman Nolan Lundholm, B.A. 2020, was one of hundreds of Cardinal athletes who got their negative COVID-19 test results, donned their masks, kept their distance, and returned to competitive play.

“I wasn’t ready to be done,” says Lundholm about the sudden stop to his senior season in March 2020. The team had just won seven out of eight games and was in the hunt for a sixth Landmark Conference championship. The senior baseball class was on track to be the winningest in the program’s history. Lundholm, who has played baseball since he can remember, was a pitcher when the team took the conference title his sophomore year in 2018. He got the win for the final game that season. In 2019, his junior year, he recorded 48 hits for a .356 batting average and led the team in on-base percentage. His fielding percentage was equally impressive at .993.

As he assimilated to online classes at his off-campus house on Monroe Street last spring, Lundholm was grateful for a few rainy days. “My teammates and I rationalized that we wouldn’t have been playing anyway. It helped us get through the first week without baseball,” he says. “Ultimately what helped the most was the realization that we were still part of the team.”

The coaching staff, led by Head Coach Ross Natoli, made that cohesiveness a priority, quickly implementing regular team meetings via Zoom in both large and small groups.

“There are so many things I love about the game, and the team aspect is top of the list,” Lundholm says. “One player can make a difference, but can’t carry a whole team. That’s what makes the game so special and it’s certainly true of CatholicU baseball.”

When the NCAA announced an additional year of eligibility for all spring sport student-athletes, Lundholm, who was about to graduate with a degree in marketing, started thinking about the possibility. But how?

It was Bobby Picardo, B.A. 2009, associate head coach, who first brought up the idea of a master’s degree. Before the pandemic, Lundholm had no immediate plans for graduate school. But now he is more than halfway through the University’s master’s in management program, while working as an event staff member for the Athletics Department and as a youth baseball coach.

Lundholm grew up in Missouri City, Texas, outside of Houston — a standout on the St. Thomas High School team, and a diehard Houston Astros fan, which begs the question: Is it a coincidence his name is Nolan? “My parents named me after Nolan Ryan [the Astros Hall-of-Fame pitching great]. My mom worked at the Astrodome as an usher and my dad, a police officer, worked security there.”

Lundholm was at Nationals Park in October of his senior year when the Astros came to town in the postseason. There were no hard feelings when his team lost the series. “CatholicU baseball has a connection to the Nationals. We help out at the Nationals Youth Baseball Academy in Southeast.”

“I look back now and I wouldn’t change anything,” says Lundholm. “I’m grateful for my time at Catholic and for the extra season, as strange as it’s been. And I’m grateful to be in the master’s program. I’m not sure exactly where my career will take me. But whatever I do, I will always be involved in baseball somehow and a management graduate degree will be an asset.” — E.N.W.





*“The Right Man at the Right Time”*

# A CARDINAL MAKES HISTORY

By Ellen N. Woods

He is the archbishop of Washington and the chancellor of Catholic University, and in November 2020, he became the Church’s first African American cardinal. His style of gentle, engaging, and decisive leadership is just right for the times.

**I**n the fall of 1958, 11-year-old Wilton Gregory entered 6th grade at Saint Carthage School. He and his younger sisters Claudia and Elaine were new to the small Catholic school on the South Side of Chicago. “Mesmerized” by the kindness and compassion of the priests and Dominican sisters, it wasn’t but a few weeks before he announced that he might like to become a priest one day. The response from Monsignor John Hayes, pastor of the parish, came swiftly. “Wilton, it would help if you were Catholic.”

Cardinal Gregory, archbishop of Washington and chancellor of The Catholic University of America, tells that anecdote often. He delivers the punchline with a broad smile, most likely remembering his early mentors.

Along with Monsignor Hayes, there was Father Gerard Weber, the associate pastor. “I had all the energy and mischief of an 11-year-old, and they were patient, encouraging, and loving,” recalls Cardinal Gregory, who faithfully attended catechism lessons after school on Tuesdays. He was baptized by the end of the school year. His mother and sisters followed a year later.

And thus began the spiritual life and career of the first African American cardinal.

## ASCENDING THE RANKS

Cardinal Wilton Gregory attended Quigley Preparatory Seminary South (now Saint Joseph’s College Seminary) of Loyola University and Saint Mary of the Lake Seminary in Mundelein, Ill. He was ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago in 1973. Three years later, he entered the Pontifical Liturgical Institute (Sant’Anselmo) in Rome, where he earned his doctorate in sacred liturgy in 1980.

In October 1983, Pope John Paul II appointed then-Father Gregory an auxiliary bishop of Chicago, where he served under another mentor, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, M.A. 1951. At age 36, he became the nation’s youngest bishop at the time. Ten years later, the pope appointed him bishop of Belleville, Ill.

When he was elected president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2001, he became the first African American to hold that office. He received his third assignment from Pope John Paul II in late 2004 when he was appointed Archbishop of Atlanta, a position he held for 15 years.

“The Holy Father decided he could get a little more out of me,” says the cardinal about his appointment by Pope Francis to become the seventh Archbishop of Washington in April 2019. The high-profile position in the nation’s capital puts a Catholic

# The Nation's First Black Cardinal: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

"It reflects the Church's affirmation of the fidelity and presence of the African American community within Catholicism. Personally, I am very humbled because I know for many African Americans, this is a moment of great pride. So many people have said to me 'I never thought I'd live to see the day,' and that brings tears to my eyes. It's not about me. I just happen to be the fortunate one to have this title at this time."

— *Cardinal Wilton Gregory, Archbishop of Washington*

"The Church of Washington, D.C., is blessed by our Black community. Now these parishioners have a leader who looks like them, and that can mean everything, especially to children."

— *Monsignor John Enzler, President and CEO,  
Catholic Charities of Washington*

"It is a reminder, especially for our students, that we are baptized into a Church that is as big as the world. I am an Irish Catholic from Western Pennsylvania, and here on the upper half of the Eastern Seaboard, we are surrounded by Catholics who look like me. God's people come from Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe — we are as big and diverse as the very planet He created."

— *John Garvey, President of The Catholic University of America*

"For Black people, Cardinal Gregory is a great source of pride and hope for their own advancement. For the worldwide Church, we see this as validation by Pope Francis that the Church is universal, and its leadership must represent that."

— *Bishop John Ricard, Ph.D. 1984, Superior General of the Josephites*

"It is a sign the Church sees us in a different way. For young people, this is a huge affirmation, a huge stamp of approval. When you see someone in a position of authority who shares your background, you feel empowered. You can see your dreams as a reality."

— *Father Robert P. Boxie III, chaplain at Howard University,  
2012 graduate of the Pre-Theology Program at Theological College  
(Catholic University's seminary)*

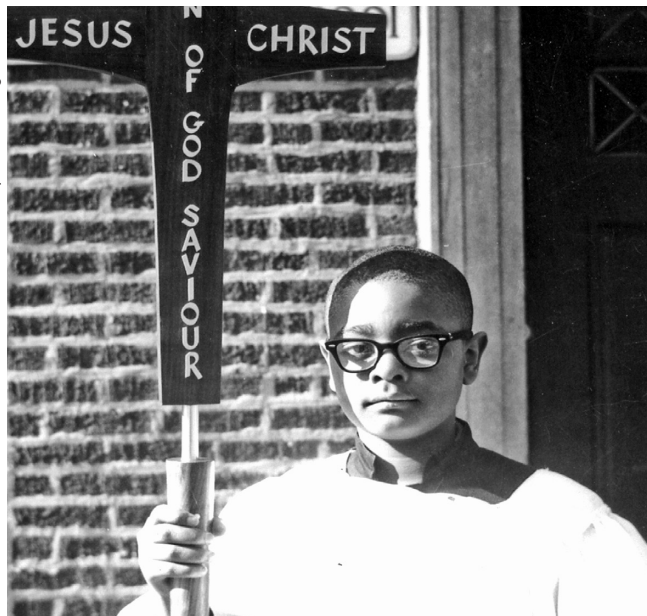
"It is wonderful to see an African American Cardinal as the chancellor of Catholic University. We hope that he will work with all students and members of the Catholic University community in order to create fundamental change and advocacy for minority students and all members of the Church. Inclusion is the best way to profess our faith and University mission."

— *Myciah Brown, Catholic University junior,  
president of the Black Student Alliance*

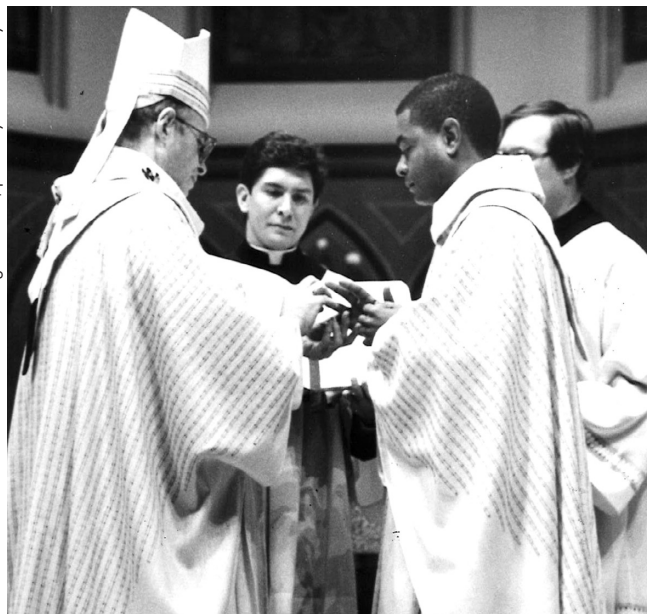
Courtesy of The Georgia Bulletin



Courtesy of The Georgia Bulletin



Chicago Catholic, photo by James Kilcoyne



“The Right Man at the Right Time”

# A CARDINAL MAKES HISTORY

**Top:** A family photo shows Wilton Gregory as a young child. **Center:** Cardinal Wilton Gregory as a 12-year-old altar server at Saint Carthage School in Chicago. **Bottom:** Cardinal Joseph Bernardin gives then-Chicago Auxiliary Bishop Wilton Gregory the bishop’s ring during his episcopal ordination on Dec. 13, 1983 at Holy Name Cathedral.

leader on the world stage and comes with an assumption he will wear the red cap of a cardinal. So it was not a surprise when Pope Francis announced on Oct. 25, 2020, that Archbishop Gregory would be among 13 bishops from around the world elevated to the College of Cardinals.

Still, it was a historic moment that made national and international news. The United States would have its first Black cardinal, and it came at a time of racial unrest across the nation. Cardinal-elect Gregory quickly became a sought-after media subject. The interviewers wanted to know about another often-told story from his childhood. This one seemed right for the times.

## TRUE TO HIS ROOTS

In September 1955, little Wilton Gregory took the hand of his grandmother, Etta Mae Duncan, and attended the funeral of Emmett Till. A 14-year-old Black boy from Chicago, Till was kidnapped, tortured, and lynched in Mississippi, where he was visiting family on a summer trip. His open-casket funeral would become a pivotal moment in the Civil Rights Movement.

“I was only 7 or 8. I don’t remember much, but I do remember seeing that young man’s horribly disfigured body. It left an impression,” says Cardinal Gregory. “Thousands of people came out to pay respects, and many youngsters like myself came with parents and grandparents.”

His maternal grandmother knew the importance of that moment. Duncan helped raise the Gregory children and was, says her grandson, “a prime mover in my growing up. She didn’t have a formal education, but she had an extraordinary understanding of the human heart.” It was her idea that her grandchildren attend the local Catholic school.

As Cardinal Gregory’s trajectory in the Church led him to the College of Cardinals, he has stayed true to his upbringing and remembered the people who supported him along the way.

When he was ordained a bishop at Chicago’s Holy Name Cathedral, his parents, grandmother, sisters, and other family members surrounded him. “They lit up the cathedral with pride,” he says. Also present were Monsignor Hayes and Father Weber. They became lifelong friends of the Gregory family.

During his installation as archbishop of Washington in May 2019, the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception was filled with supporters from the large circle of his priestly life, and Elaine and Claudia were front and center. The sisters always knew they would be there if and when the call came from Rome. The COVID-19 pandemic had other plans.

There would be no invited guests. Cardinal-elect Gregory was tested for COVID-19 prior to leaving for Rome in November 2020 and again when he arrived. He then quarantined for 10 days at the residence where the pope lives, *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. His meals

were left outside his door. He tested negative again just before the consistory at St. Peter’s Basilica, where he and the others were elevated in a scaled-back, socially distanced ceremony that included large screens showing the faces of cardinals from across the globe attending virtually in the now-familiar checkerboard of squares.

In his homily, Pope Francis referenced the story of Jesus and the 12 Apostles on the road to Jerusalem (Mark 10:32–45), where Jesus teaches: “For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Pope Francis cautioned the new cardinals, “The scarlet of a cardinal’s robes, which is the color of blood, can, for a worldly spirit, become the color of a secular ‘eminence.’ In that case, you will no longer be a shepherd who is close to his people. You will simply think that you are an ‘eminence.’ Once you feel that way, you are already off the road.”

By all accounts and by his own account, Cardinal Gregory treasures his role of shepherd far more than his title of “your eminence.”

“The part of my job that I absolutely love and would not abandon for anything is being with people in prayer, in the places they live, worship, and go to school,” he says. “It is important that the archbishop not be a name or a title but ‘the pastor who celebrates Mass with us.’”

Catholic Standard, photo by Andrew Biraj



Archbishop Wilton Gregory greets parishioners outside the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in May 2019.



Archbishop Gregory celebrated Mass in June 2019 at Saint Augustine Parish. Founded in 1858, it is the mother church for Black Catholics in the nation's capital.



When Saint Peter School on Capitol Hill was named a National Blue Ribbon School, Archbishop Gregory stopped by to celebrate.

Catholic Standard, photo by Andrew Birci

Catholic Standard, photo by Andrew Birci

Cardinal Gregory recalls another mentor. Father Myles Patrick McDonnell was the pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Glenview, Ill., where Cardinal Gregory served as associate pastor just after his ordination to the priesthood. “He was a priestly model. The one thing he required of me and the other two associate pastors was that we stood outside before and after Masses. He said those are the moments that people encounter you and he was right. That’s when you hear, ‘Can you pray for my father? He is going to have surgery.’ Or ‘I’m hoping to have a promotion.’ Or ‘My son is heading off to college. Can you say a little prayer for him?’ It’s a connecting moment and if you are not there, you miss the moment.”

The Archdiocese of Washington (ADW) is large and diverse with 655,000 parishioners who worship in 139 parishes in Washington, D.C., and five Maryland counties. Mass is celebrated in 29 languages in ADW parishes that range from a cathedral in downtown D.C., to large suburban parishes, to small rural churches dating to the 1700s. Worshipping at all of them has been a priority for the cardinal.

On Dec. 5, he was at Saint Martin of Tours Church in Gaithersburg, Md., as the parish was celebrating its 100th anniversary. “One week ago I was with the pope, and today I’m with you. That’s a celebration of the universality of the Church,” he told parishioners in his homily, as reported in the *Catholic Standard*.

“Cardinal Gregory came out to see us soon after arriving in Washington,” says Monsignor John Enzler, president and CEO of Catholic Charities for ADW. “He met with our staff, letting us know his appreciation for our work. He spoke at our staff retreat in a personal way. There was a lot of laughter. One thing about him, he laughs with his whole being.”

### THE RIGHT TIME

“Cardinal Gregory became a bishop two years before I did,” recalls his longtime friend Bishop John Ricard, Ph.D. 1984, the superior general of the Josephites. “Several Black priests became bishops during those years. It was the start of a sea change for acceptance of Black leaders in the Church. He was the youngest among us but we looked to him as a leader. He is visionary, intelligent, perceptive, sees all sides of a problem, and perhaps most important, he has a gift for relating to all people.

“It is often said that Cardinal Gregory lands in places where he is the right man at the right time. And that’s been very true throughout his career.”

That was the case when he was elected president of the USCCB in 2001, at the time the abuse crisis in the Church was coming to light following the explosive *Boston Globe* “Spotlight” series. The investigative reporting uncovered the shocking scope of child sexual abuse by priests and cover-ups by leadership in the Boston Archdiocese.

Catholics wanted accountability, and under then-Bishop Gregory’s leadership, the USCCB implemented the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People” in 2001. It included a bold zero-tolerance policy for priests and deacons who sexually abuse minors. “From this day forward, no one known to have sexually abused a child will work in the Catholic Church in the United States,” he said in issuing the report.

Kathleen McChesney, an FBI special agent, was brought to the USCCB in 2002 to become the first executive director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection. She reflected on Cardinal Gregory’s leadership for an article in the *Catholic Standard* when he was named archbishop of Washington.

She said he “was extremely well suited to lead the USCCB, particularly at the time when survivors were finding their voice and the media was paying particular attention to the devastating problems of clergy abuse. [Cardinal] Gregory is a listener and was not afraid to engage with survivors and sincerely apologize ...”

McChesney was awarded an honorary degree from the University at the May 2021 Commencement ceremony in recognition of her own work to address the abuse crisis.

Cardinal Gregory came to ADW at a time of further hurt in the Church following the release of the devastating Pennsylvania grand jury report on years of abuse in dioceses in Pennsylvania, and closer to home, credible reports of misconduct and abuse by ADW’s former archbishop, Theodore McCarrick. In 2019, McCarrick was laicized, or “dismissed from the clerical state.”

Catholics looked to their new archbishop for healing and hope. “Given the issues the Church is dealing with right now, Cardinal Gregory is an inspired choice as Archbishop of Washington. He



President John Garvey and Archbishop Gregory prepare to celebrate the University's 2020 virtual Commencement.

was indeed the right man at the right time in the right place," says University President John Garvey. Under Garvey's leadership, the University launched The Catholic Project, a proactive multi-pronged initiative to address the crisis and chart a new path forward. "We are grateful he came to our city at such a pivotal time. He has been a member of our University board for more than a decade. We see him as a partner."

Cardinal Gregory has been an authoritative voice on liturgy and other Church issues, including pastoral statements on the death penalty, social justice, and euthanasia.

In the summer of 2020, in the wake of George Floyd's death in Minneapolis, Americans took to the streets with a renewed cry for racial justice. Cardinal Gregory once again was a voice of healing.

Cardinal Gregory has said there is no person of color who has not felt the "bitter sting of racism." He recalls a time when as Archbishop of Atlanta he was the guest of a friend for a golf outing at a country club. He arrived without his clerical collar, and, assuming he was staff at the club instead of an invited guest, the archbishop was asked by a club member to load his golf bag into a cart. Cardinal Gregory recounts the story not with resentment or anger. Instead, he calls it an important reminder of the lived experience of people of color.

Stressing that he is talking about peaceful protests, Cardinal Gregory says, "Seeing people of all ages and races protesting gives me hope. This societal movement seems to have staying power. That inspires me to believe this call for justice will come with change."

Cardinal Gregory cautions, "The symbolism of actions such as removing a monument or renaming a street can be meaningful, but if the human heart doesn't change, in the end all we've done is remove a granite statue. The core is the human person, and we must soften the human heart and listen to one another if we are going to change racist attitudes."

At a time of racial and political division in the country, Garvey notes that Cardinal Gregory is the very spiritual leader the nation's capital needs right now. "He listens to all sides, perhaps even more so to those whose opinions differ from his. He reminds us that we belong to one universal Church, to all of humankind. He is a good shepherd." **CU**

## Proud to Call Him a "CARDINAL"

By virtue of his position as the Archbishop of Washington, Cardinal Gregory is chancellor of the University. Those duties include serving as a liaison between the University and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Holy See, and the Congregation for Catholic Education. He also serves as a fellow on the Board of Trustees.

Beyond the more formally outlined responsibilities, the chancellor is present at important activities in the life of the University, such as the Mass of the Holy Spirit and Commencement. His many opportunities to be part of the campus community allow him to interact with students.

"He's someone I talk to often," says President John Garvey. "He has a gift for giving advice without seeming to be giving advice. He asks questions to get you thinking."

"Catholic University follows the legacy of learning and discovery that our Church has pursued for centuries," says Cardinal Gregory. "It is a community where people are respected and challenged. As chancellor, I am honored to support the growth and development of this institution of faith and learning. It is a privilege that comes from my office and brings me much personal satisfaction and fulfillment."



Cardinal Gregory is a welcome presence at University events. In fall 2019, he supported the public launch of Light the Way: The Campaign for Catholic University.



# TEACHERS OF THE YEAR



By Katie Bahr

Empty classrooms and online learning were a large side effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. For teachers, it has been a year of reinvention as they continue to find new ways to connect with their students in a virtual world.

Every Monday and Friday, Bill Stevens, M.A. 2010, sits down in front of his computer in an empty classroom at The IDEA Public Charter School in Washington, D.C. A social studies teacher, Stevens has been conducting his classes completely online since March of last year, in accordance with his school's COVID-19 safety precautions.

"I teach my students in the same classroom where I taught last year," he said. "I still have the same stuff on the walls. And some of the students I teach now have never even been in the building before. They don't have an emotional connection to this place."

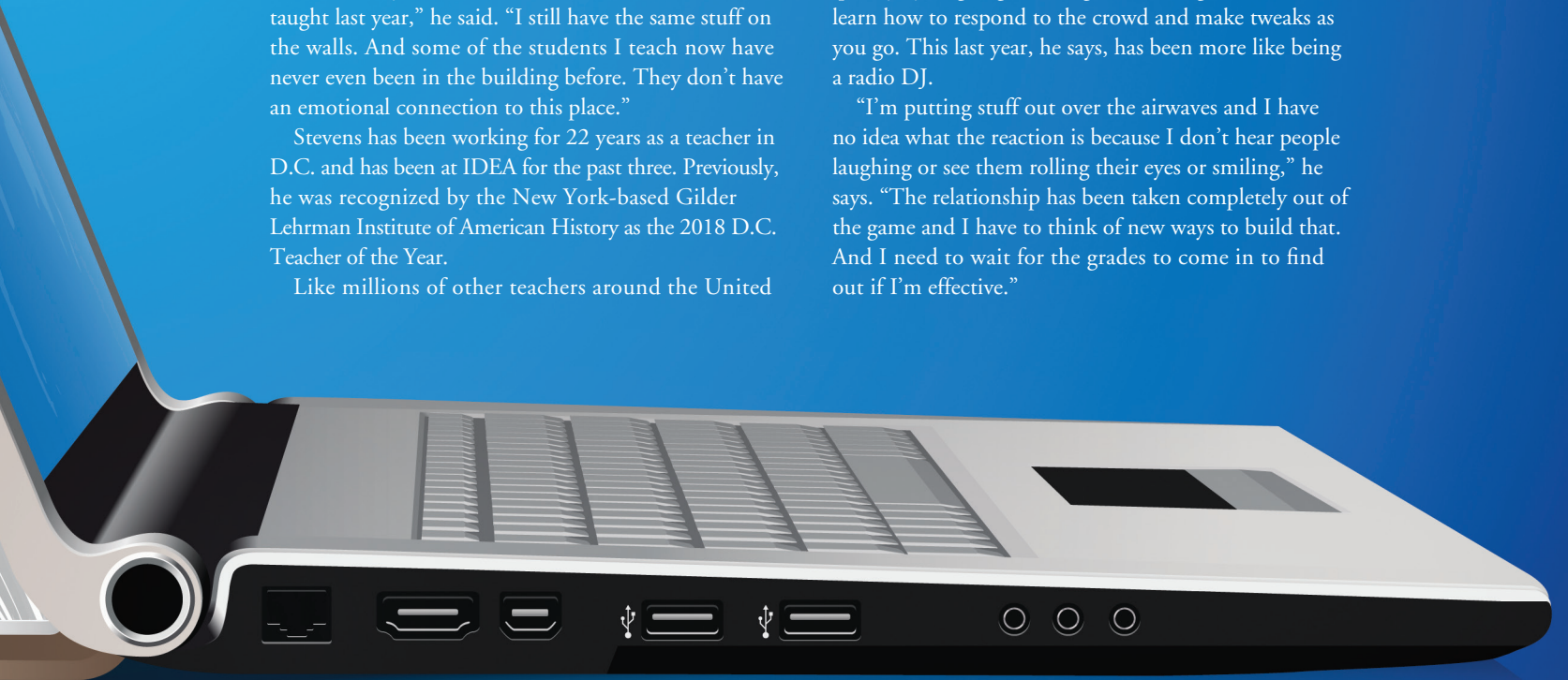
Stevens has been working for 22 years as a teacher in D.C. and has been at IDEA for the past three. Previously, he was recognized by the New York-based Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History as the 2018 D.C. Teacher of the Year.

Like millions of other teachers around the United

States, Stevens has spent the last year adjusting to an entirely new kind of classroom. He's had to change his lesson plans and shift his expectations. And despite years of experience, he's been left feeling like a total beginner.

Stevens compares teaching to working as a comedian. The first few years on the job, he says, are like performing standup comedy in front of an audience that responds quickly by laughing, heckling, or checking out. You must learn how to respond to the crowd and make tweaks as you go. This last year, he says, has been more like being a radio DJ.

"I'm putting stuff out over the airwaves and I have no idea what the reaction is because I don't hear people laughing or see them rolling their eyes or smiling," he says. "The relationship has been taken completely out of the game and I have to think of new ways to build that. And I need to wait for the grades to come in to find out if I'm effective."





Bill Stevens, M.A. 2010

Stevens is just one of many CatholicU grads who have been forced to adjust their teaching careers for a socially distanced world. Though the experience has been extremely challenging, he — like so many hard-working teachers — has been determined to make it work.

For him, that means teaching from an empty classroom or — on the three days a week when he’s at home — juggling parenting responsibilities with work, and occasionally teaching from the laundry room.

“Out of the millions of teachers going through this same thing, I’m not dealing with it any more effectively than anyone else,” he says. “I’m lucky. I’m a middle class person where I have space and I can put each of my kids in a separate room, but it’s still distracting. My kids have made me teach from the laundry room, but what if I didn’t have a laundry room? Many people don’t.”

## CHANGING PLANS

Sarah Washington, B.S. 2018, M.A. 2019, who participated in CatholicU’s 4+1 bachelor’s and master’s program in mathematics and secondary education, was in her first year of teaching honors Algebra II and Pre-calculus at Gonzaga College High School in

Washington, D.C., when the coronavirus lockdowns began in March 2020.

Before her school closed, faculty members gathered for a professional development day to quickly learn how to use Zoom and create virtual learning modules. At the time, they were planning for two weeks of virtual instruction.

“The next few months were crazy,” Washington says. “We were treading water as best we could.”

Gonzaga, like many other schools, finished out the school year virtually. Then, this fall, the school opened up for hybrid learning — welcoming back 30% of their students in person, with additional students taking classes online.

As a new teacher, Washington has had to ride the waves of the ever-changing safety policies by reorganizing, replanning, and really shifting her teaching style. One of the biggest challenges has been figuring out how to keep a classroom of in-person students interested, while teaching to an online class at the same time.

“You want to keep the students in the classroom having a good time, but there are usually way more students on Zoom than in the real room so it’s this tricky kind of back and forth,” she says. “There are days where you’re thinking, ‘Are they just sitting at home playing Xbox? Are they learning anything?’”



# TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

One thing that has helped, Washington says, has been communicating early and often. She now shares her lesson plans ahead of time so that students understand what's expected of them before they get to class. She's also been finding new ways to assess student skills instead of simply giving math problems and expecting the right answers.

Though her first year on the job hasn't been exactly what she envisioned, Washington says she feels a real purpose and passion for what she does.

"Being an essential worker, I definitely feel more important and more valued this year than I would have," she says. "For worse or for better, there are some things we can all take away from this past year."

Denise Getchius Staines, B.A. 2002, who studied elementary education at CatholicU, is a theatre teacher at Waterside Children's Studio School in Queens, New York. A big challenge for her over this past year has been learning how to share a love of the arts with her students.

In order to keep her performance schedule on track — a fifth-grade musical, choir performances, and an eight-minute Shakespeare performance she plans with an outside organization — Staines figured out how to hold theatre rehearsals over Google Meet, all while handling childcare for her three children.

"During a lot of the rehearsals and some of my recordings, I'm actually holding my baby," she says. "What else could I do?"

To continue the school's Spring Arts Festival, she asked parents to record students dancing their individual parts and then she used iMovie and a program called Flipgrid to compile the individual pieces into two-minute performances for each grade. The entire project took more than 40 hours of her free time.

Staines moved the Shakespeare program, which she organizes with the nonprofit Creative Arts Team, to a radio show platform. And she directed her fifth-grade students in a Zoom version of *Annie*, which was recorded and played on Facebook.

For Staines, putting on the musical was about more than just art. She believes that theatre is "the best and only medium in helping students understand what their potential is."

"As a theatre teacher, I get to see a side of a student that even the kid might not see in themselves," she says. "And then I can put them on the stage and they turn into a star and everyone sees it — their teachers, administrators, and their families."

Though these moments are more difficult to find through virtual learning, Staines says they have still happened.

"Because of Google Meet and Zoom, I could see the facial expressions of these students, or I'll get thank you notes from the parents. You're still able to see the feedback."

Though the experience of teaching during a pandemic has been a lot of work, Staines says she feels a new sense of pride, after seeing how her students and fellow teachers have risen to the challenge.

"If I didn't already know that teachers could do anything, I sure as heck know it now," she says. "I was doing this for 10 years before I had to change everything. While it was happening, I was so focused on making sure I was doing the right thing and trying to give the kids the best experience possible."

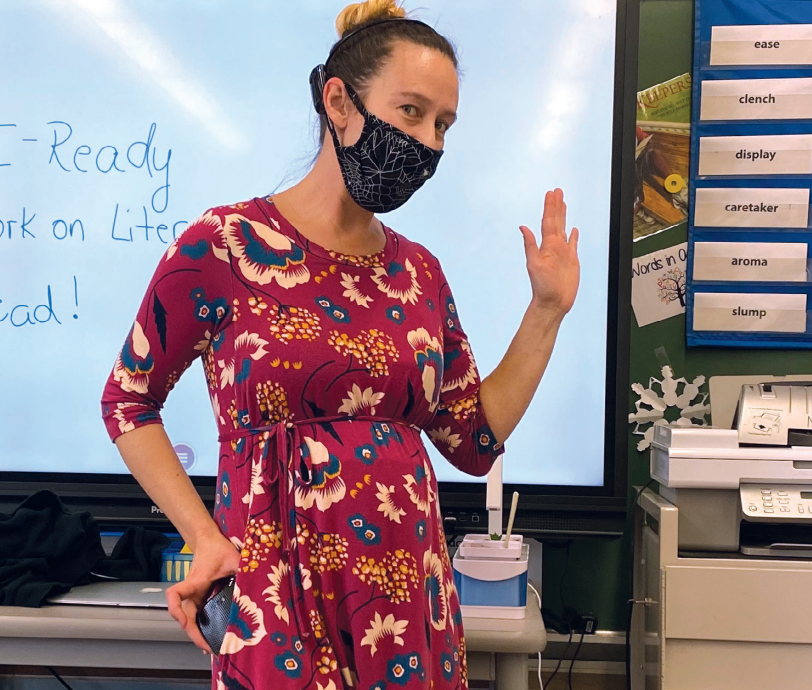


Sarah Washington, B.S. 2018, M.A. 2019



**"If I didn't already know that teachers could do anything, I sure as heck know it now."**

Denise Getchius Staines



Denise Getchius Staines, B.A. 2002, and Will Rost, B.A. 2015

“I don’t think it really hit me until afterwards what all had to go into it and just the sheer number of hours. I did a lot of work that looking back on it I can be proud of.”

## AN EXERCISE IN EMPATHY

As teachers have gained a new window into their students’ lives, they are also becoming more aware of the challenges they are facing, especially in cases of students with special needs or economic disadvantages.

Stevens works at a Title 1 school, which means at least 40% of the students are from low-income families. Often, he says, they are dealing with limited technology, hectic environments, and food insecurity.

“The inequities that have always been a part of our public education system grew during this past year,” he says. “You show up at someone’s house and you realize, here are three families living in a two-bedroom apartment. I’ve had students turn on their camera and it’s nearly impossible to hear them because of all the background noise that’s going on.”

Stevens and other staff at IDEA have spent time driving around the city to ensure his students have the food and equipment they need. Now when his students don’t do the required work, he looks at the bigger picture and the systemic societal problems that have exacerbated their difficulties.

“What I complain about now is not that my kids aren’t doing their work, it’s how come these kids don’t have the internet in the first place,” he says. “What’s happening is not their fault and intellectually I knew that before, but now I really know it.”

As an American history teacher, Stevens wants students to understand some of the circumstances which have led to today’s inequalities, as well as the people who are working to fix the problems. He draws inspiration for his teaching style from his history professors at CatholicU, who designed courses with his interests in mind.

“The teachers that touched me on a personal level reached out to me, tailored what they were doing to where I was, and offered support for the things I was interested in,” he says. “You need to engage people on a personal level and realize that there are many ways to get to the end goal.”

Will Rost, B.A. 2015, is a seventh and eighth grade social studies teacher at San Miguel School in Washington, D.C., an all-boys school that prepares academically and economically disadvantaged youths to succeed. One of the most important things he has gained during the pandemic is a deep sense of empathy for his students.

Rost knows that some of his students have had to take care of their younger siblings during school hours, or that they are embarrassed to have their camera on because of the other people in the room with them. In the early months, some students didn’t have access to the technology they needed.

“I’ve had students tell me, ‘Mr. Rost, I don’t have internet so I can’t complete the assignment today,’” he says. “In those situations, you have to say, ‘I understand. Let’s find a different way for you to complete this work,’ and that’s definitely a challenge. I couldn’t imagine being in sixth or seventh grade and going through what they’re doing.”

# TEACHERS OF THE YEAR



Sister Maria Frassati Jakupcak, O.P., Ph.D. 2020

Rost says he is grateful for the framework of education he learned during his time in the CatholicU Department of Education.

“Part of the conceptual framework was teaching us how to be reflective practitioners,” Rost says. “Whenever a student isn’t at the mark where they should be, I try to reflect on what’s going on and remind myself of their situation. We have to keep our expectations realistic and keep the workload manageable, keeping in mind that they’re regulating themselves. Sometimes they are able to complete the task as expected and sometimes not.”

Despite the many hardships of the year, both Stevens and Rost say they are inspired by their students.

“They are doing what students are doing all over the world — trying their best in this situation they’ve been handed,” Stevens says. “Some are tuned out because they don’t know what to do, it’s too overwhelming. But others are trying to fix this situation, and thinking, ‘I want to make the world a better place because of this.’”

## SILVER LININGS

Sister Maria Frassati Jakupcak, O.P., Ph.D. 2020, teaches 10th and 12th grade English at Marin Catholic High School in Marin County, Calif. Like Washington, she’s been teaching hybrid classes this year as her school gradually brings more students back to the classroom.

She thinks one of the biggest challenges has been a decrease in what she calls “life/school balance.” Just as it became hard for teachers to avoid the work of school from rushing into their home lives, it also became difficult for students to avoid the distractions of home from invading their school time.

“Many of my students who might struggle a little struggled a lot in this online mode of teaching,” she says. “If you are already prone to distraction and then you are supposed to do school on the same device that brings you Netflix, well, that is hard.”

That said, Sister Maria Frassati says she has been inspired by the resilience of her students.

“This isn’t the school year any of them wanted — either last year or this year,” she says. “But it is the school year they got and they have been fairly good about accepting that.”

Sister Maria Frassati found that some of her classwork actually had new relevance because of the pandemic. This year, she’s teaching a class on J.R.R. Tolkien and his ideas about fairy tales. Introducing her students to the fantastical world of *The Lord of the Rings* and asking them to write their own fairy tales provided a mental escape.


“Tolkien began his own work on what would become Middle Earth in the trenches of World War I. There was a great renaissance of interest in fairies about that time,” she says. “And it turns out that fairy stories — writing and reading them — are things particularly suited to troubled times.”

Another silver lining of virtual learning, she says, has been the opportunity to invite experts in the field to be guest speakers in her classroom. Sister Maria Frassati hopes to introduce her students to a friend with editing expertise, as well as Verlyn Fleiger, M.A. 1972, Ph.D. 1977, a leading Tolkien expert.

In her own time, Sister Maria Frassati has enjoyed being able to connect with her sisters from around the country. She was asked to teach a weeknight class on Shakespeare to a group of sisters in Michigan and was surprised when sisters from other states were also able to join the call.

“We are a teaching community, but we don’t often see each other teach,” she says. “Teaching always fits into my vocation, but I think all of this has made it clear that our teaching could easily have a reach outside our immediate classroom.”

Now that things are opening back up and she sees a light at the end of the tunnel, Sister Maria Frassati has simple advice for those going back into the classroom:

“Enjoy it,” she says. “I think one of the things the pandemic has given us is perspective to see how much we take for granted. Being in a classroom with other people, being able to go out with our friends — what a gift!” 



**“This isn’t the school year any of them wanted either last year or this year. But it is the school year they got and they have been fairly good about accepting that.”**

Sister Maria Frassati Jakupcak

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## STUDENT WRITING CONTEST

# A Year Like No Other



In February, as we approached one year since the COVID pandemic took hold in the United States, causing sweeping shutdowns and untold loss, we launched a student writing contest. We wanted to give members of the Class of 2020 and all current students the opportunity to share their experiences of the last year. We welcomed stories of hardship, triumph, or both. We urged students to “use *your* voice to tell *your* story.” Their voices were strong, compelling, and inspiring.



## How We Judged It

The student writing contest was judged through a two-part blind process by a team of 12 faculty and staff members representing different corners of the University. The submissions were evaluated by all judges, who then assigned rankings that informed the final decisions. As a writing contest, the essays were judged primarily on the student's ability to craft a compelling and engaging piece, ready for publication in the magazine.

The judges noted that their task was made difficult by the high number of well-written, insightful, and memorable essays.

### THE JUDGING TEAM

**Kathy Bagley**, senior director of communications, University Advancement

**Katie Bahr**, news editor, *CatholicU* magazine

**Javier Bustamante**, director, Center for Cultural Engagement

**Harrison Hanvey**, assistant campus minister for immersion programs and community service

**Amy Kerr**, associate dean of students and director of Residence Life

**Steve Kreider**, director of Campus Activities

**Maria Mazzenga**, curator, American Catholic History Collections Special Collections, University Libraries

**John McCarthy**, dean, School of Philosophy

**Taryn Okuma**, associate professor of English and director of the Writing Center Undergraduate Tutor Program

**Jennifer Paxton**, director of the University Honors Program and clinical associate professor of history

**John Kenneth White**, professor of politics

**Ellen N. Woods**, managing editor, *CatholicU* magazine



Graham Fassero

# 1ST PLACE

## A View from the Classroom

By **Graham Fassero**, philosophy major, Class of 2023

*Editor's note: This essay takes place in the spring 2021 semester. Students were under quarantine and studying online for the first couple weeks in order to help mitigate the spread of COVID. The previous semester, classes for the writer — and most upperclassmen — had been completely online.*

This semester began as the last one had ended. Twenty-five faces were tiled across the screen, separated from one another by a black grid, and my face was among them. I had started to like it, and I certainly didn't miss walking to class.

The professor lectured into her webcam. Last year, she would have been pacing in front of the class while we tried to read the dusty scribbles on the chalkboard. Now she sat in a white room with a cactus that had one little orange flower. I thought I might like to have a cactus. There was only a crucifix on the dorm wall behind me. I wished I were home.

A few students really were at home. One was sitting on his deck — it looked warm and green outside — maybe somewhere in the south. Another student leaned back in a gaming chair, holding a dog on her lap. Another sat with her back to a wide bay window, the sun brightening the walls around her and coloring the whole room gold.

# A Year Like No Other

“The professor lectured into the webcam. Last year, she would have been pacing in front of the class while we tried to read the dusty scribbles on the chalkboard. Now she sat in a white room with a cactus that had one little orange flower.”

Forty-eight weeks we had been online, or on break, quarantined, bunkered — I wasn't sure what to call it anymore. And two weeks we had been back on campus, watching our livestreamed classes as the snow turned to rain outside. The dorms were looking homier now after a few days. Flags were pinned on the walls. String lights ran around the ceilings. Someone had hung up a map of Middle Earth, and I could see a little blue phone booth sitting on a bookshelf. I saved a screenshot of the professor's cactus — it might make a good meme someday.

By Monday morning, the rain had stopped. There was mud everywhere, but I'd rather walk around puddles than mess with the Wi-Fi again. I went outside.

It was something of a victory to be back. Students with their packs over their shoulders rolled across campus like an army reclaiming its ground. Two lines converged briefly on the sidewalk, separated, and regrouped six feet apart.

When I found the classroom, I heard a murmur: real voices with rich vocal tones, the noises of notebook paper, and desks and chairs, and wet shoes squeaking. They were real noises, without any headphones or computer speakers. Nobody was muted.

I dropped my backpack onto a desk and sat down. The panorama of the room was a little shocking. There were solid walls with doorways, and open spaces with desks, and real, three-dimensional people that I recognized from our virtual classes. The room was full of life, and motion, and conversation, and it felt like nothing had changed since we left campus a year ago. I turned my head to see it all. None of the students looked quite the same as they had on camera. Most were taller than I expected.

Class hadn't started yet, and I already felt restless. I wished I didn't have to wear shoes. I was bored, but my mind couldn't wander like it did when we were online. This was a bracing, immediate boredom with a hard edge to it. I couldn't open my computer to escape. I was here, in this classroom, at this moment. I had a purpose — if I could find it — and it was here and now, because I was here and now.

I looked around and saw the guy behind me. I wondered whether I should introduce myself, but we already knew each other's names. I hesitated.

“Dude, I almost forgot how to get around campus,” I finally said.

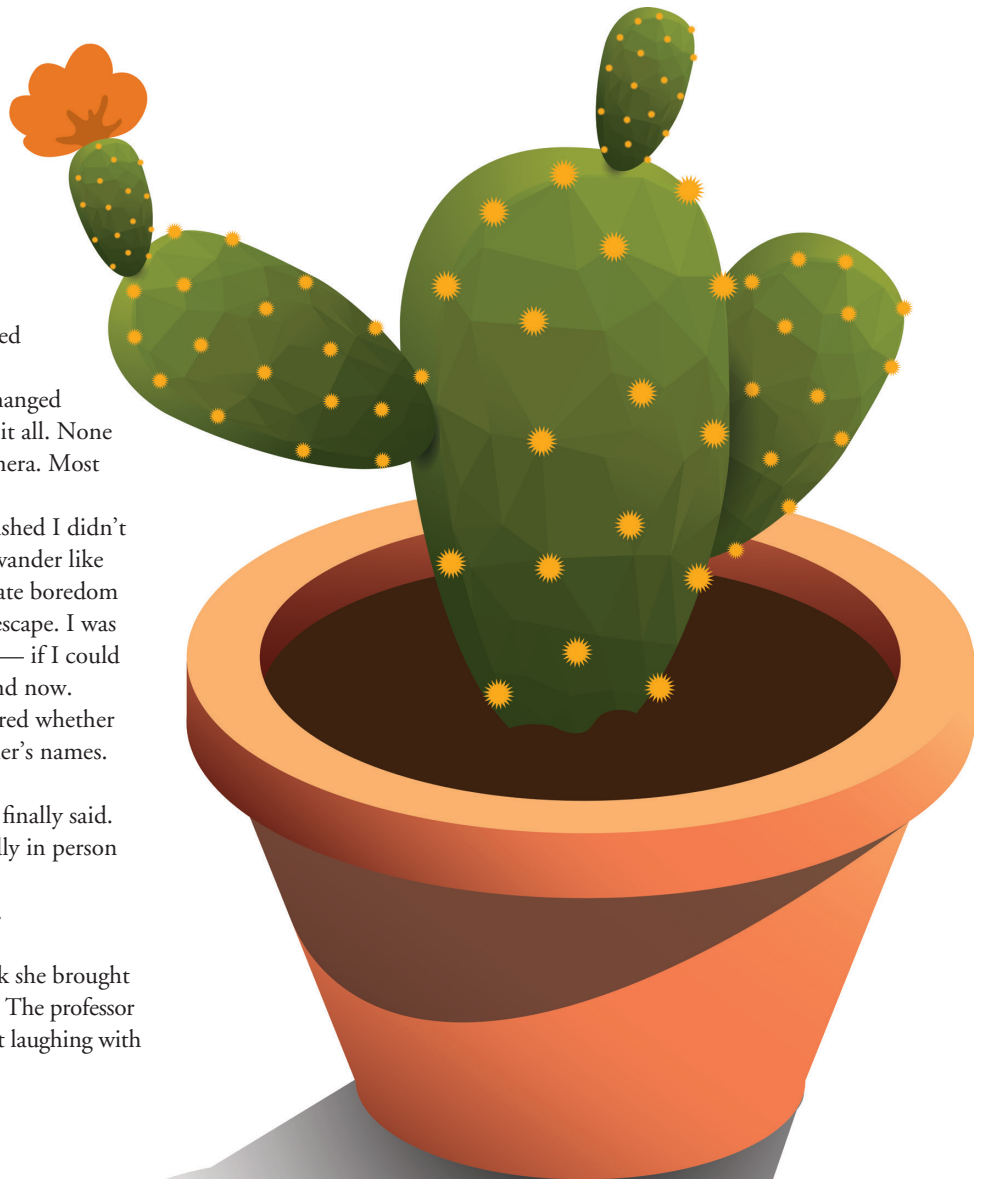
He laughed. Even with a mask, he looked more friendly in person than he had on video.

“I'm more upset about having to get dressed,” he said.

“I'm with you,” I agreed.

“Here comes the professor,” my friend said. “You think she brought the cactus with her?” I smiled and turned toward the door. The professor came into the room and looked at us for a moment, almost laughing with her eyes.

“Aha!” she said. “You're human!”





Liz Shoemaker

“And normalcy crept through wherever it could. My mom was still running late to graduation, even though it happened on the couch in my living room.”

# 2ND PLACE

## What a Lost Class Has Found

By Liz Shoemaker, politics and media studies major, Class of 2020

There are very few college seniors unfamiliar with the feeling of finality that at times seems to loom over senior year. Whereas freshman year was all about our firsts, senior year was all about our lasts. Last first day of school. Last time registering for classes. Last time attending banquets for sports and clubs. Last time that classmates and friends from the last four years will all be together. And so on ...

That was all to be expected. We had watched our friends do the same things during their senior years. We watched them note every “last” as they neared graduation and savor every moment with their friends before spreading out from Catholic as apartment leases in Brookland expired and classmates found jobs, graduate programs, or service elsewhere. We were expecting all of this for us — the class of 2020.

A lot of those moments we were promised disappeared very quickly last year, but we certainly got to experience a diaspora as our friends and classmates left Catholic. The only difference is that while the pomp and circumstance of graduation and the unbridled fun of senior week usually warms seniors up to the idea of moving on, we seemingly did it all in one weekend in March.

“Ok, so you’re going to stay in D.C.?” “Oh, you’re in Spain on spring break and you’re trying to get a flight home?” “No, I’m going to stay at home with my parents





# A Year Like No Other

I think.” “Well, we’ll definitely be together for graduation ... right?” “Oh no ... I think I left a cup of yogurt on my desk at work before they closed the office.”

These are the kinds of texts that I and many of my friends received the weekend of March 13, 2020. Everyone was suddenly facing significant challenges, instead of enjoying the last few exciting weeks of college.

It was tough. It was tough for both ourselves and our professors to adjust to online learning for the first time. It was tough to be separated from our friends. It was tough to not know when we’d be able to see each other again.

But now a year after the pandemic really “began” in America, 10 months after graduating as a member of the Class of 2020 in May, I don’t find myself asking for pity or sympathy. I cannot speak for all of my classmates, but I hope they feel the same. I’m still disappointed that my classmates and I did not get to experience a senior gala or celebrate the end of our very last finals week together, but I’m more proud of what we did do.

We did keep in touch. We did check in on each other when everything was uncertain. We did find ways to make Zoom meetings special. We ordered takeout and ate together over FaceTime like we were still crammed into a booth in the Pryz. And normalcy crept through wherever it could. My mom was still running late to graduation, even though it happened on the couch in my living room. I still got to walk around the University Mall and reflect on the last four years when I moved out of my apartment. I would’ve done that same thing with no pandemic. I might not have worn a mask, but you get the picture.

The Class of 2020 had an accelerated “growing up.” We started hobbies we might not have tried until much farther down the line. We learned how

to better communicate with each other. We learned how to care for each other. And care for each other we did, in the hardest of times.

When I tell people that I graduated in 2020, even now, people compare us to wartime graduates, or people who didn’t get the standard year of college. I think there is an inclination to refer to us as a lost class, a class that missed out on so much. I sincerely hope people don’t remember us like that. I wish they could instead remember us as being triumphant while looking the hardest times directly in the face.

Remember us as the class that figured it out and got through it. I hope that is the legacy we’ll leave behind at Catholic.

## 3RD PLACE

### Being in that Number: The Enduring Spirit of Mardi Gras in the COVID Era

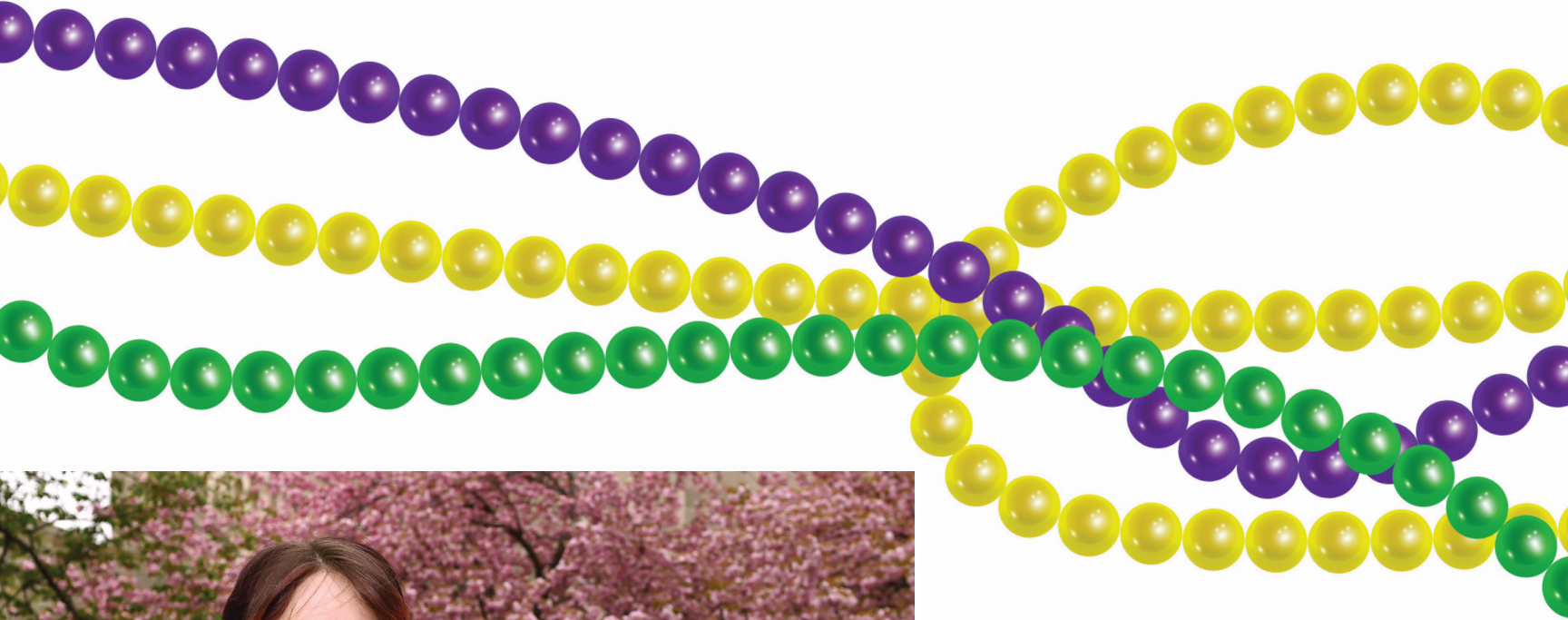
By **Kate Lorio**, English major, Class of 2021

“The city is dying,” said Louisiana Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser in describing New Orleans in December of 2020. Indeed, he had hit the mark in more than one grim way. New Orleans, a place whose lifeblood depends on the instinct to come together — represented by its ubiquitous parties, festivals, parades, and live music — was throttled by the COVID-19 pandemic in a particularly soul-stifling way. As the bars, fairgrounds, and social circles of New Orleanians closed and the hospitalization and death toll rose, residents found themselves swimming in more than the smothering humidity: an everyday horror in which a death march pervaded the city of jazz.

As the months of quarantine and silent streets staggered on, anxiety and ambiguity replaced the usual preparations for the Mardi Gras celebration that occurs before the solemn days of Lent. Historically a touchstone for joy during Louisiana’s darkest hours, the 163-year-old, multi-week assortment of elegant balls, technicolor floats, marching bands, and glittering trinkets flying through the air embodies the city steeped in both revelry and Catholicism.

Even after the destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina in August of 2005, the 2006 Mardi Gras had confidently sashayed on, as New Orleanians returned to their devastated streets to hear the marching bands echo once more off damaged buildings. Mardi Gras unites every Louisiana resident through that which runs in our blood: friendship, family, and festival.

As a lifelong Louisianian and a Catholic University senior, I have spent the past four years aching for my home in a particular way every spring. Living



Kate Lorio

in a city that does not cancel school for parades, my college years were the first in my life in which I didn't venture out into the streets of New Orleans with my family and friends to join the pageantry. Every year the week before Ash Wednesday is a little sadder, as I remember the brassy boom of trumpets coming from blocks away or my father hoisting my younger self on his shoulders to see the glowing floats. However, this year I was united in my yearning for Mardi Gras with more people than just my fellow transplants.

In light of the inevitable announcement that the festivities would be cancelled due to the coronavirus, all Louisianians would have to miss the celebration in 2021. None of us knew what would happen this year, until it started happening. Following the initial disappointment, every resident banded together in a burst of creativity and perseverance to create a COVID Gras.

**“Mardi Gras unites every Louisiana resident through that which runs in our blood: friendship, family, and festival.”**

Almost as if simultaneously moved by the kind of loony spirit that possesses anyone who lives in New Orleans, residents collectively decided to celebrate Mardi Gras more fervently than ever. Hosting live musicians for the neighborhood from their front porches and hiring the out-of-work float artists to turn their houses into papier-mâché, technicolored dioramas, Louisianians ensured that the show would go on.

I watched with joy from a 1,200-mile distance. Texts poured in every week of the month leading up to Fat Tuesday from family and friends eager to show me the maps directing drive-by tours of the new float houses (over 3,000 in total!), the costumes people were making to wear solely in their homes, and the bands with instrumentalists playing stationary in the streets, six feet apart from each other.

On Mardi Gras day itself, the final text came in. My mother had sent me a link to a project she worked on for the whole Mardi Gras period. A video accompanied by the songs we usually hear floating through the streets, it was filled with photos she had collected of all my extended family members and other loved ones celebrating Mardi Gras in their own new way. I cried out of happiness seeing my baby cousins in their purple, green, and gold rompers; my brothers smiling at the camera; and the bands parked in the road. In the most unexpected of years, for once, Mardi Gras could be brought to me in D.C. I couldn't help but feel that the soul of my beloved city had prevailed once more. Its unity and love stood defiantly in the face of despair, embodying the best of the human spirit which has come through during the COVID era.

# A Year Like No Other

## And the Honorable Mention Awards Go To...

### UNPRIVILEGED AND RIGHTLESS

By **Brayan Hernandez, politics and education studies major, Class of 2022**

On a hot, May evening of finals week, I was shaking as I dealt with various symptoms. With an apologetic opening, I informed all my professors that my father and I had contracted COVID. Three weeks later I trembled as I virtually watched my father intubated in the intensive care unit. He was unconscious, on the brink of death, and at many times the doctors could not assure us that he would survive. The times of uncertainty and fear brought by COVID were further strengthened by the possibility of losing my father, who had given up everything he had to get me to where I am today.

### LOVE, LOSS, AND CINNAMON FRENCH TOAST

By **Amanda Muscente, English major, Class of 2023**

March 13, 2021: It has been a few months since [my grandmother] left us. COVID-19 is still not over, my grief is not over, but there is hope. I am learning to fill that gap with love — with the things she loved. I dance to “Girls Just Wanna Have Fun,” her forever ringtone. I smile every time I see an elephant with its trunk up, a good luck charm for her. I make Irish soda bread with a family recipe only allowed to be used in March. I remember her and hold onto the love as if it was her hand. Saturday mornings have begun to have that magic again and sometimes, when I wake up, still foggy from last night’s dream, I swear I smell cinnamon.

### GROCERY SHOPPING

By **Kierstin Shea, English major, Class of 2022**

I got back to my beloved grocery store experience in July, living with my grandmom as she rehabbed her hip. Under the oppressive heat of the suburban Maryland sun, I went once a week to the local Giant for watermelon and seltzer, baby food to donate at church, and frozen waffles if my cousin joined me. I was glad to be back in the store because it was a familiar place, but it was no longer the comfortable and relaxed experience I so looked forward to each week. Now, there were arrows bringing me down each aisle and distances from other people to worry about. It was disorienting and stressful. A year out from the national toilet paper shortage, grocery stores are re-entering the calm place I know them to be. I’m waiting for the day I can once again linger in the aisles without worrying how far away other customers are standing.

### CLASS OF 2020: PANDEMIC EDITION

By **Katheryn Wethli, music major, Class of 2020**

As all the things I looked forward to doing were cancelled one by one, God gave me little blessings in return. Perhaps the greatest blessing he gave me was the support of my family. He gave me a new gratitude for technology and a greater admiration for my professors, who did not have any more answers than I did about the state of the world, but somehow still gave me hope and security. When I dreamed of graduating from The Catholic University of America, I never thought it would have taken place in my living room on Zoom. Yet, my graduation was more beautiful than I could have ever expected as my family surprised me with a party for the six of us. Finishing college during a pandemic was not easy, but the experience was more fruitful than I could have ever imagined! **CU**

TO READ THE FULL ESSAYS OF OUR  
HONORABLE MENTION AWARDEES, VISIT  
[magazine.catholic.edu](http://magazine.catholic.edu)

# ALUMNI CORNER

## Cardinals Reunited A Cup of Coffee a World Away

Their years at Catholic University overlapped. They knew each other as members of PEERS, the student organization dedicated to peer education about safe behaviors in college life. Santino Cozza, B.S. 2016, served as president of the organization and was a resident assistant. Zach Beckman, B.A. 2017, held the title of “Mr. CUA 2016.” They were friendly on campus, but only kept in touch after graduation through social media.

Last December, when they sat down for coffee on a U.S. Air Force base in Kuwait, it was a much-needed “homecoming.”

“It was comforting to reconnect and reminisce about Catholic University, a special place in both of our lives,” says Cozza. “Catching up with Zach, especially at that time of year, definitely felt like a gift from home.”

First Lieutenant Beckman and Captain Cozza had different paths to military service. “My grandfather and father were also Marines,” says Beckman. “The Marine Corps values of honor, courage, and commitment, along with professionalism, is why there was no other choice for me.”

Beckman enlisted right after high school, joining the Reserves. That allowed him to attend CatholicU, where he majored in politics. A year after graduation, he committed to active duty.

By his own account, Cozza had “zero” interest in joining the military. As a physics major, he aspired to graduate school and a career in medical diagnostics. He received a master’s degree in radiation physics from Hofstra University. As he neared completion of that degree, he missed the service aspect of his time at CatholicU. “Then, like clockwork, a recruiter reached out to me and I realized I could use my studies in radiation physics while serving others as a military officer.”

The decision to join the Air Force, says Cozza, was made with the support of his wife, Monica Rivera, B.A. 2016, whom he met at Catholic University. Monica, who majored in education, is an elementary school teacher. “Military spouses make so many sacrifices, especially during deployments,” says Cozza.

In Kuwait, Cozza was the officer in charge of bioenvironmental engineering, or as he explains, “My job was to keep airmen safe.” He evaluated hazards ranging from radiation, to chemicals, to noise. He provided support to three installations; one was where Beckman was serving as the platoon commander and communications officer for 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines.

Cozza returned home in January, and is now stationed in New Mexico at the Headquarters U.S. Air Force Safety Center, where his work is focused on safety for the development and operational use of all nuclear and directed-energy weapon systems. Beckman is still deployed.

The airman and the Marine look forward to catching up again when Beckman returns home. Until then, both savor their moment of shared coffee. “Seeing a familiar face from a time of such good memories — in an extremely different environment — was a great reminder that we do live in a small world and paths may always cross again,” says Beckman. — E.N.W.

*Read about two more “Cardinals Reunited” on page 47. They work together as hospital administrators confronting the pandemic.*



## ▶ 1960s

**William Jackson, Ph.D. 1962**, received the Julius Edgar Lilienfeld Prize from the American Physical Society for his outstanding contributions to physics and exceptional skills in lecturing to diverse audiences. He is the first African American recipient in the prize's 33-year history.

**Maria Termini, B.A. 1963, M.F.A. 1965**, announces the release of her latest book, *Through the Mountains to the Stars: Adventures in Latin America*, a collection of stories and photographs about her adventures as a curious, stubborn solo woman traveler in the Andes and especially Bolivia, where she roamed not as a tourist with a knowledgeable guide, but as a seeker of excursions well off the beaten track.

**William Alexander Lester Jr., Ph.D. 1965**, chemist and educator for the University of California, Berkeley, was selected as Chemist of the Decade for 2021 by the International Association of Top Professionals.

**Raymond Murphy, B.A. 1965**, was elected president of the Eire Philatelic Association, the largest group of collectors of Irish stamps and postal history. He is also the author of *Irish Official Mail 1922–1983*. He and his wife live in St. Petersburg, Fla.

**Bruce Cranford Jr., B.S.E. 1967**, a retired engineer from the U.S. Department of Energy, is a lecturer on energy, environment, and space for several counties,



## Sacred Music Took Paul Griffin from Maine to D.C.

As a child, Paul Griffin, M.M.S.M. 2020, was fascinated by the pipe organ at his church, St. Mary's of the Visitation in Holton, Maine. He figured out how to read music while examining his older brother's piano music and his grandmother's edition of Bach's "Two-Part Inventions."

"I basically figured out how to read music on my own," Griffin says, "so my parents said, 'OK, we'll put you in lessons.' We had a collection of CDs, and one of them was a Gregorian chant CD. I would listen to those chants and I would think, 'Why is this music so beautiful?'"

His father is a guitarist and all of his five siblings are musicians, too. Though he loves music of all kinds — he dreamed, for a while, of forming a punk rock band — his overarching love for sacred music in general, and Bach in particular, eventually brought him to the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art.

"Bach's music is of the highest order," Griffin says. "Every note he wrote is perfect. Many musicians say it was inspired by God. It's truly divine music, and it reflects a lot of theology — for example, the 'Clavier-Übung III' has many references to Trinitarian theology written into the score."

The University not only gave him ample opportunity to perform the sacred music he loves, it awarded him a full scholarship and graduate assistantship. He met an undergraduate soprano, Sophia Anastasi, who earned her bachelor's degree in vocal performance in 2020. They married and are living in Odenton, Md.

Originally, Griffin planned to give his public master's recital last spring, but the COVID pandemic prompted a postponement. Eventually, he submitted his recital online in November.

Now, Griffin is a general music teacher and director of choirs at St. Peter's School on Capitol Hill, with students in grades K through 8. The music program at St. Peter's Church is directed by another University alumnus, Kevin O'Brien, D.M.A. 2011.

"I couldn't be happier with life right now," Griffin says. "It's wonderful."

— G.V.

## ALUMNI CORNER

### Class Notes

colleges, and universities in the Washington, D.C., area, including the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, where he has also been a docent since 2003.

**Joe Galeota, M.A. 1969**, a member of the second cohort of the National Teacher Corps to be trained at the University, is in his 30th year of hosting a live TV call-in show for math help on a Boston cable channel. Because of COVID, the TV show is being broadcast from his basement. Before moving back to Boston in 1974, he taught in D.C. public schools, then for a long time in Boston public schools, followed by a short stint as vice principal in a suburban Catholic school, and finally nine years at Boston's Nativity Prep.

## ► 1970s

**James Marshall, M.M. 1974**, published four clarinet collections with Mel Bay Music. The latest is lyrical solos from the British Isles featuring the English Sonatina for young clarinetists, which caught the attention of London clarinetist Alison Eales, who has commissioned three pieces for her ensembles. She has premieres scheduled for fall 2021.

**Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Jonathan Morse, B.A. 1974, M.R.E. 1976**, medically retired from the United States Army. He served four tours in Southwest Asia, where he was a deputy command chaplain. He also served in a combat zone in Syria, where he was injured. He previously served at Aberdeen

Proving Ground, Fort Drum, Fort Belvoir, and Fort Jackson as a garrison Catholic chaplain. He was retired with the Legion of Merit medal.

**Ruth Schukman-Dakotas, B.A. 1974**, began her retirement in 2018, pursuing a new career in nonprofit management and cofounding Friends of St. Anne's Girls' School Fund (FOSA), supporting secondary and post-secondary education in Kapkemich, Kenya. As an outgrowth of FOSA, she cofounded the Virginia Wright Health Clinic Fund, supporting a health clinic in Kapkemich. She started her career at the University of Kansas Medical Center in 1978 as a radiation protection specialist. She later became the director of safety for the medical center. She left that position in 2006 to work for a consulting company, and went on to serve as radiation safety officer for five hospitals in the Kansas City metro area. In addition, she designed radiation shielding for X-ray rooms in hospitals across the country, including military bases. She has served on the board of advisors for a Catholic house of prayer, Shantivanam, for more than 20 years and volunteered at a Catholic Worker homeless shelter in Kansas City, Kan., Shalom House, for more than 30 years. She is active in her church, serving on liturgical and environment committees, and as a music minister, lector, and Eucharistic minister.

**Brother Bernard Seif, M.A. 1974**, has written *Being Who You Are: The Universal Vocation*, offering insights into our spiritual and psychological journey. He is a

clinical psychologist board certified in behavioral medicine and doctor of natural medicine with a specialty in Chinese medicine.

**Bob Smith, B.A. 1976, J.D. 1979**, has joined the franchise and licensing group at Akerman LLP as a partner in the Washington, D.C., office.

**Rafael E. Tarrago, M.A. 1977**, received the 2020 Jose Toribio Medina Award for his book *The Ignored Contender: A Select Annotated Bibliography of the Cuban Autonomist Party (1878–1898)*. The award was established in 1981 by the Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials to recognize outstanding contributions to reference and bibliography by its members.

**John Koppisch, B.A. 1978**, has joined *Discourse* — a new online magazine of economics, politics, and culture published by the Mercatus Center at George Mason University — as the assistant managing editor. Previously, he was an editor at *Forbes* magazine for 13 years after a stint at *BusinessWeek* and 12 years abroad at *The Wall Street Journal* in Hong Kong and the *Financial Mail* in Johannesburg. He started his career at the *Tower*, where he served as editor-in-chief for a year. His daughter, Julia Koppisch, is a senior finance major at the University.

## ► 1980s

**Jon Frederickson, M.S.W. 1982**, faculty member of the Washington School of Psychiatry, has published his fifth book, *Co-Creating*

*Safety: Healing the Fragile Patient* (Seven Leaves Press, 2020). He teaches therapists in the U.S. and internationally.

**Estelle Codier, M.S.N. 1983**, published her second book, *Emotional Intelligence in Nursing: Essentials for Leadership and Practice Improvement* (Springer Publishing, December 2020). After graduating from the University, she was on the faculty at the University of Hawaii, and became one of the first nurse researchers to explore emotional intelligence (EI) ability in nurses. Her doctoral research provided the first evidence that measured EI ability correlated with clinical performance in nurses. After 15 years of EI research, publication, and international speaking events, she has written the first textbook for EI in nursing.

**Michael J. Moriarty, B.A. 1983**, has been appointed to the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for a second five-year term. Described by *Commonwealth Magazine* as a “relentless advocate on the state education board for lower-income students,” he focuses on policies that will close achievement gaps in early literacy. In addition to 18 years of experience in educational policy, he practiced law for 20 years and is now executive director of OneHolyoke Community Development Corporation. He is a frequent speaker and panelist on education and affordable housing topics. In recent years, he earned a certificate in Catholic Social Teaching from the Busch School of Business. He is the proud father of fellow Cardinal **Aiden Moriarty, B.A. 2019**.

## ALUMNI CORNER

### Alumni Spotlight



## Communicating Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines

Shortly after the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, Michael Pratt, B.A. 2012, became the chief communications officer for Operation Warp Speed, a public-private partnership between the federal government, pharmaceutical companies, the military, and states to develop, manufacture, and administer COVID-19 vaccines as quickly as possible without cutting any scientific or safety corners.

The operation shows the power of people coming together, Pratt says. “When everyone rallies around the same goal, we cut through bureaucracy and partisanship, and things get done.” As a lead communicator during a time of crisis, Pratt says it was essential to “have hope, and be authentic and transparent.”

Pratt majored in philosophy and minored in rhetoric and writing. He credits his CatholicU education with preparing him for a career in policy and government communications. “Essentially, I’m reading complicated texts and trying to quickly understand and communicate the information so that people will understand and relate to it,” says Pratt.

After graduation, he worked for The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, building teams and systems to raise the profile of the institute.

This role led him to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as the communications director for the Office of the Secretary. Pratt worked with the secretary’s team to execute strategic communication on issues such as the opioid epidemic, kidney disease, and organ donation.

Once the pandemic hit, HHS leadership made COVID-19 its priority. “It was a novel virus that we were constantly learning about, especially in the early days,” says Pratt. “We were making sure people understood all the work behind the scenes, even early on in the pandemic, such as ramping up PPE [personal protective equipment] production.”

In May, HHS announced Operation Warp Speed. Much of Pratt’s work focused on crafting messaging that was cleared with scientists and policy and legal teams. “We worked with coalition partners, like the Ad Council, that were already trusted voices within communities, that had platforms, like early coronavirus PSAs, to help amplify the messages that people needed,” he says. Pratt also helped to create the #COVIDStopsWithMe campaign that the U.S. Surgeon General used when speaking to the public, and helped launch a radio ad campaign about vaccines.

“We knew it would be incredibly important to make sure people could trust the vaccine and the process, especially with communities of color,” Pratt says. “It was amazing and reassuring to hear scientists, like Dr. Anthony Fauci [director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases], who worked on vaccines their whole careers passionately say, ‘Yes, this vaccine is safe — we’ve seen the process, no corners are cut, and we have the gold standard for clinical trials.’”

“Michael was one of the key leaders inside Operation Warp Speed, and his work to strategically expand our capacity to communicate this critically important information about the vaccines to the right people, at the right time, in the right way was really invaluable,” says Paul Mango, former HHS deputy chief of staff for policy. “He was trusted by the scientists, the military generals, the media, and leaders in the health department.”

Pratt left his position at HHS as part of the change in presidential administration. When he reflects on his work with Operation Warp Speed, he says it is surreal now seeing people receiving COVID-19 vaccines. “People sharing on social media, seeing my wife’s grandfather get the vaccine — it’s an indescribable and warm feeling. I know I only had a small part in this, but it’s a mixture of being proud of the work everyone did, disbelief that we’re actually now receiving the vaccine, and being incredibly hopeful about where we’re going to be in the future.”

— G.O.

**Burton Clark, M.A. 1985**, was inducted into the National Fire Heritage Center Hall of Legends Class of 2021. He has been in the fire service for 50 years, working in urban, suburban, and rural communities. He began his fire service journey in 1970 with Kentland Volunteer Fire Department Company 33 in Landover, Md. He was a career firefighter in Washington, D.C., from 1972 to 1980, when he joined the faculty of the National Fire Academy, retiring as the management science chair in 2014.

**Brian Murphy, B.S.Arch. 1985**, has been appointed project executive for Chesapeake Contracting Group in the newly opened Northern Virginia office.

**Sister Barbara Reid, O.P., Ph.D. 1988**, was elected to the presidency of Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, as the first female president. Sister Barbara, a member of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Mich., has been a member of CTU's faculty since 1988, and served for nine years as vice president and academic dean. She is a widely respected biblical scholar, especially for her work in feminist biblical interpretation.

**Gordon Young, B.A. 1988**, announces the revised and updated paperback edition of his book *Teardown: Memoir of a Vanishing City*, which was released by the University of California Press in February. The book explores Young's attempt to reconnect with his hometown of Flint, Mich., after living in San Francisco for more than two decades. It details his

tragi-comic odyssey to rediscover the city that once had the highest per capita income levels in the world, but now has an unemployment rate pushing 40 percent. Along the way, he confronts the misguided policies, flawed leadership, and unforgiving economic trends that lead to disasters like the Flint water crisis.

## ▶ 1990s

**Joseph T. Holahan, J.D. 1990**, has been promoted to partner at Morris, Manning & Martin, LLP, in the firm's D.C. office. He is a member of the insurance and reinsurance practice and privacy and data security group.

**Carol Spahn, B.A. 1990**, was named acting director of the Peace Corps. She has been delegated the authorities and responsibilities of the director and will fill the role until the Biden-Harris administration selects an individual to serve in the position.

**William Durst, M.S.L.S. 1991**, retired after 36 years of teaching theology at Bishop England High School in Charleston, S.C. He continues teaching in his local parish and he and his wife, Mary, enjoy time with their seven grandchildren.

**Katherine Gehl, M.A. 1992**, presented at a virtual TEDx Talk her political innovation ideas from the recent book she co-authored with Michael Porter, *The Politics Industry: How Political Innovation Can Break Partisan Gridlock and Save Our Democracy* (Harvard Business Review Press, June 2020).

She explained how to reinvent our elections and get better results out of Washington. She is the founder of The Institute for Political Innovation, a nonpartisan nonprofit founded in 2020 to catalyze modern political change in America.

**Kathy Kelly, M.S.L.S. 1994**, is the Montgomery County Chair of Maryland Democrats for Life, a state chapter of Democrats for Life of America.

**Diann L. Neu, M.S.W. 1994**, has written *Stirring WATERS: Feminist Liturgies for Justice* (Liturgical Press, 2020). She is cofounder and codirector of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics, and Ritual (WATER). For almost 40 years, religious leaders and communities around the world have turned to WATER for feminist liturgies for justice. *Stirring WATERS* gathers 52 of these liturgies to help communities venerate powerful women of faith, develop a richer and deeper spirituality, and take real action for justice. Her contribution to the development of contemporary spirituality brings the art of meaning to the depth of reflection.

**Uyen Dinh, J.D. 1996**, has been named vice president for government relations and strategy for BlackSky, a leading provider of global monitoring services and geospatial insights.

**Joanne Smith-Farrell, Ph.D. 1996**, has been appointed chief executive officer and director of Be Biopharma ("Be Bio"), whose mission is to pioneer the emerging new category of engineered B cells as medicines.

**Marie Moutsos, B.S.Arch. 1997, B.Arch. 1998**, has been promoted to principal at Fox Architects. With more than 20 years of award-winning design experience, she is responsible for setting and implementing the firm's interior design standards. She guides and advises design teams on projects, providing overall design direction to ensure consistency throughout each project.

**Gerard Stegmaier, M.A. 1997**, was recognized in the *Washingtonian* magazine list of 250 Most Influential People for his work in data innovation and technology. He is a partner at Reed Smith LLP.

**LeeAnn Yang, M.A. 1997**, has been promoted to chief financial officer at CHC: Creating Healthier Communities, a nationwide nonprofit dedicated to addressing the barriers to good health, and will assume responsibility for finance, risk management, and other administrative functions. She will be a member of the executive leadership team and staff both the board finance and the audit and risk committees.

**Lee Cheek, Ph.D. 1999**, professor of political science and former dean at East Georgia State College, was awarded the James T. LaPlant Award for excellence in teaching and mentoring in political science at the annual meeting of the Georgia Political Science Association.

**Christopher K. Coffman, M.A. 1999, Ph.D. 2005**, senior lecturer in humanities at Boston University, along with Theophilus Savvas, has published *After Postmodernism: The*





St. Joseph's Health

## Cardinals Reunited As Colleagues, They Confronted the Pandemic

As a student sledding down a snow-covered incline near Marist Hall on a cafeteria tray, Jennifer (Kiley) Mendrzycki, B.A. 1994, never guessed that she and her contemporary, Rob Budelman III, B.A. 1995, would one day be joined on an even more wild ride as hospital administrators in charge of responding to the COVID pandemic.

In fact, she and Budelman didn't know each other during their overlapping years on campus. They first met nearly a quarter of a century later, after taking executive posts on the leadership team at St. Joseph's Health in New Jersey. At first, Mendrzycki, now a senior vice president, didn't realize that the person she interviewed for the job of vice president and chief development officer was a fellow Cardinal.

"I interviewed Rob before he was hired, but didn't look closely at his education background," Mendrzycki said. "I noticed it later. He hadn't been here very long, and I pulled him aside. When he said he graduated a year after me, I was amazed."

"We were both surprised," Budelman said, adding that he and Mendrzycki frequently cross paths at work. Due to the COVID pandemic, their interaction during the past year has been mostly in video conferences.

When their health system's first COVID patient arrived in early March 2020, Budelman happened to be the senior administrator on call. That evening, he helped open up a command center to respond to the crisis. And he was pleased to find that his work in development did not grind to a halt.

"I thought to myself, 'Who's going to want to donate, now that the world is shutting down?'" Budelman said. "But quite the opposite happened. We saw this outpouring of support — donations of masks, face shields, meals, and money. We really worked from sunup to sundown handling this influx of generosity."

"The outpouring from the community was phenomenal," Mendrzycki said. "We would bring food, gifts, and cards up to the nurses. We joined them on rounds, and at a certain point we were helping to clean out garbage cans. We would do whatever we could to support colleagues who were taking care of patients."

In crisis-response mode, the leadership team adopted an "all hands on deck" approach. When ventilators were running low, for example, Budelman was called on to assist with their procurement.

"It was stressful," Mendrzycki said, "because there were so many patients coming in and we didn't know a lot about the disease or how to fight it. It was a challenging time for everyone, and it was the same across the country."

In the effort to make sure as many patients as necessary could be accommodated, St. Joseph's Health added more than 100 beds during that period.

"We wound up in a place where we had enough beds," Mendrzycki said, "but we had made plans for the next place we were going if we needed more. Our sole focus was on how to take care of these patients and get them home safely."

As part of that focus, St. Joseph's leadership team worked hard to support nurses, doctors, and other hospital workers, and to supply them with everything they needed to treat patients and keep themselves well, including personal protective equipment and the most up-to-date information available.

"It was very different from what I ever envisioned myself doing," Budelman said, "but it was an experience I'll never forget. Beyond the heroism of frontline workers, healthcare is an exciting field to be part of because it's evolving daily."

Now friends as well as colleagues, Budelman and Mendrzycki both have fond memories of Catholic University.

"I loved the fact that you could be in Washington, D.C.," he said, "but it didn't feel like it because you had this campus with open spaces."

"We got some good snow," Mendrzycki said with a laugh, recalling those downhill trips on a tray borrowed from the dining hall. — G.V.

## ALUMNI CORNER

### Alumni Spotlight



## From Vietnam to CatholicU: A Love Story

Khanh Le, B.E.E. 1982, and Lynne Tran, B.E.E. 1983 — CatholicU sweethearts who married in 1986 — first met when they were just children in Vietnam, but only one of them remembers that meeting.

“There are other of our classmates who have similar stories,” says Khanh. “There were a lot of Vietnamese refugee students at the University when we were there, so we are not unique — except maybe for meeting our spouse at 5 years old.”

Lynne left Vietnam in 1975, on the last day before the city of Saigon fell. The majority of Khanh’s family stayed, largely because the men in his family, officers in the South Vietnamese Armed Forces, were arrested and sent to concentration camps. They had to bribe officials to be released, and then fled the country under threat of recapture. After a multi-country trek, one of Khanh’s brothers, already in the United States, sponsored the family’s entrance in October 1979.

Lynne and her family had settled in Arlington, Va., while Khanh’s family made their home in Rockville, Md.

“When I first saw my wife, she was a work-study student,” he says, recalling that she was working at a desk in Pangborn Hall. “But I never met her until junior year, when we took some classes together.”

Lynne vividly remembers, “He was the thinnest and poorest-looking guy in class.”

Both Lynne and Khanh were intent on school, Lynne had her work-study job, and Khanh worked full time to pay for tuition. “We were mostly focused on study. We had no time for anything else,” he says, adding he completed his B.E.E. as quickly as possible because he couldn’t afford to spend all four years in college.

The couple did make time for dates in The Loft. “It was a little cafeteria

area, and our favorite place on campus. Mostly we ate bread and butter on our dates, because we were so poor,” says Khanh.

But their history together, and the history of their two families, goes back a lot farther than their 1980 meeting. “My father was in the Engineering Corps of the South Vietnamese Armed Forces,” says Khanh. He was a civil engineer and went around the country building military bases. His father-in-law was an electrical contractor, and they’d known each other since about the 1950s.

“The last time my father and father-in-law met was in 1965. In 1980, when Lynne and I met, I told my parents who her father was and they said, ‘Oh, we know him.’ I think I actually saw Lynne when she was 5 or 6, when her family had come over to our house, but she doesn’t remember.”

Following graduation, Khanh received a scholarship to attend Stanford University. He worked for several companies in Silicon Valley and started five of his own. Now, he is an investor in start-ups that are largely involved in artificial intelligence.

Lynne worked for 16 years in the aerospace industry, including time at the Goddard Space Flight Center, where she worked on the Space Shuttle program. In 2000, she discovered a calling in real estate, and has since built a successful business.

Khanh and Lynne have returned to Catholic University several times to visit and pray at the Shrine. In 2014, they brought their children, Michael and Eileen, to visit campus. “We wanted to show them how we started out and to make sure they get the idea of how we worked hard and managed tough situations to become who we are today,” says Khanh. “We don’t want them to take things for granted.”

They recently decided to support Catholic University through a bequest as a reflection of their gratitude for all the University gave them. The bequest will create an endowed scholarship for the School of Engineering. — A.K.

*New American Fiction* (Routledge, November 2020).

**Mark Whitters, Ph.D. 1999**, has written *Memoirs of How It All Began: A Performance Interpretation of the Gospel of Luke* (Wipf & Stock) and received the 2020 Illumination Award, silver medallion, for biblical studies. He is a senior lecturer in Jewish Studies at Eastern Michigan University, Department of History and Philosophy, and does faith-based racial reconciliation in an organization called Detroit Community Outreach.

## ► 2000s

**Scott J. Privat, B.A. 2001**, was elected as district judge for Louisiana's 15th Judicial District - Div. A on Nov. 3, 2020, serving in Acadia, Lafayette, and Vermilion parishes.

**Scott Suozzi, J.D. 2002**, was named president of Operation New Hope, Jacksonville, Fla., the nonprofit home of the nationally recognized Ready4Work reentry program.

**Linda Crichlow White, M.S.L.S. 2003**, retired school library media specialist for Montgomery County Public Schools, and husband, Eric White, an adult services librarian for the Washington, D.C., Public Library, were featured on PBS's Matt Paxton's *Legacy List*. Linda, a member of several genealogy societies, and president of the D.C. chapter of the James Dent Walker chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, had lots of family papers

to share. The program can be found on the PBS website under "Turning the Page."

**Brian D. Banks, M.A. 2005**, was honored as a Top Lobbyist for 2020 by the National Institute for Lobbying and Ethics.

**Steven M. Ayr, J.D. 2008**, has been elevated to partner at the Boston law firm Casner & Edwards. He joined the firm in 2017 and practices in the business and corporate, emerging growth, and mergers and acquisitions groups.

**Theresa Bauman, B.A. 2008**, has been promoted to security officer II at the Office of Senate Security, where she has been employed since November 2018. She previously worked for the Senate Judiciary Committee and for former Congressman Tom Latham (IA). In May, she will mark 11 years working on Capitol Hill.

**Michelle Bond, J.D. 2008**, has been appointed chief executive officer of the Association for Digital Asset Markets.

**Christopher S. "Chris" Bourait, B.A. 2008**, has been promoted to partner at Reed Smith LLP in the firm's Pittsburgh office. He is a member of the labor and employment practice.

**Joseph L. Grabau, M.A. 2009**, received his Ph.D./S.T.D. from the faculty of theology and religious studies at the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium) in May 2019, where he also completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the history of church and theology research

unit. On June 19, 2020, he married Dr. Raelyn Ottenbreit, O.D., at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Lexington, Ky. Joseph was named assistant professor of philosophy and theology at the Mexican American Catholic College, in partnership with the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Assumption Seminary, and the University of the Incarnate Word's Pastoral Institute.

**Kenneth J. Lorence, B.A. 2009, M.S.M. 2014**, married Karen Olivo Rubio on Oct. 10, 2020. Ken's brother, **Nathaniel Lorence, B.S.B.A. 2014**, was his best man. Other alumni in attendance: **Dominique Santo, B.S.N. 2014; Sarah (Sozansky) Beil, B.A. 2009; Mark Arnone, B.A. 2009; and Angela Napoletano, B.S.B.A. 2009.**

## ► 2010s

**Kevin Kane, B.S.B.A. 2011**, and **Gianna Ramirez, B.A. 2011**, were married in December 2020. Kevin is a global team lead at Cloud International, focusing on identity and access management. Gianna is the co-chair of a fundraiser, Laughs for Love, on behalf of Mustard Seed Communities, and recently started a small image consultant business called JORGI. The couple lives in Somerville, Mass.

**Ryan Winn, B.A. 2011**, and wife Erin welcomed their first child, Charlie, in June 2020. The family will relocate to Kansas City after Ryan graduates with his M.B.A. from Texas Christian University in May to join Amazon's Pathways Leadership Development Program.



Rubio-Lorence wedding



Ramirez-Kane wedding



The Winn family

## ALUMNI CORNER

Class Notes



Birkofer-Lee wedding



Chevalier-Calabria wedding



Palmer-Dawson wedding

**Amy Yanzer, M.M. 2011**, is associate director of the Office of Worship in the Diocese of Madison. She also serves as an evangelization mentor for several parishes in the diocese. She and husband Paul have three sons, Henry, George, and Gabriel.

**Jesus Cepero, Ph.D. 2012**, is the new chief nursing officer at Stanford Children's Health. He has held nursing and operational leadership roles across multiple specialties, and has served for the past eight years as a chief nursing officer for large health care systems.

**Monsignor Larry James Kulick, J.C.L. 2012**, was appointed bishop of Greensburg, Pa., by Pope Francis.

**Kevin Dawson, B.A. 2013**, and **Betsy Palmer, B.A. 2015, M.A. 2016**, were married on Oct. 3, 2020, in a small, socially distanced wedding celebration in Star Valley,

Wy. Other Catholic University alumni celebrated with the couple both in person and virtually. The next day, Kevin and Betsy hiked in their wedding attire to the spot where they got engaged in Grand Teton National Park. Both now work at Catholic University. They live in Alexandria, Va.

**Rev. Dustin P. Dought, S.T.B. 2013, S.T.L. 2018**, has been named associate director of the Secretariat of Divine Worship by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C.

**Cecilia Ehresman, B.A. 2013**, has joined K&L Gates' Charleston office as an associate in the firm's labor, employment, and workplace safety group.

**John McCarthy, B.A. 2013**, was appointed to the Office of the Chief of Staff and will serve as the senior advisor to the counselor of President Joseph Biden.

Joe Portolano



**William Smith, M.A. 2013**, took over as chief executive officer of the May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust in October 2020. Previously, Smith spent four years leading the Santa Fe Community Foundation in Santa Fe, N.M., where he continues to reside.

**Paul Fontaine, M.C.A.T. 2017**, has been elected to the board of directors of Xavier Society for the Blind. He is assistant director of disability support services at the University. In addition to his 37 years of experience in information technology in both the private and public sectors, he has dedicated more than three decades of service to the Catholic Church and to people with disabilities.

**Virginia Birkofer B.S. 2018**, married Nicholas Lee on Oct. 3, 2020. Virginia is a data science consultant with Deloitte. They live in Houston.

**Sean Calabria, B.A. 2018**, and **Kianna Chevalier, B.A. 2018**, were married on Aug. 15, 2020. They live in Arlington, Va.

## Share Your News!

Do you have news to share with your classmates? Submit a class note to [cua-classnotes@cua.edu](mailto:cua-classnotes@cua.edu).

If you moved or changed your email address or phone number, you can easily update your information: fill out a form at [bit.ly/cuaupdate](https://bit.ly/cuaupdate), email [cua-alumni@cua.edu](mailto:cua-alumni@cua.edu), or call 202-319-5608.

## Alumna's Latest Book Explores Deaf Catholic Culture

In 2000, Lana (Brown) Portolano, M.A. 1992, Ph.D. 1998, and her husband Joe, M.A. 1989, adopted their daughter, Lena, who is deaf. Soon after, Portolano began researching different options for educating her.

"That was really my introduction to deaf culture," says Portolano. "As she grew, so did our circle of deaf friends and deaf connections in the community and in the Church."

Deaf individuals don't always find it easy to participate in religious services, and may feel excluded as a result. When the time came for their daughter's confirmation, the Portolanos looked for a way to help her connect to the Church. They went to St. Francis of Assisi in Landover, Md., a parish housed by the Center for Deaf Ministries.

Partly because of her academic background in the study of rhetoric, Portolano became fascinated by the preaching in sign language by deaf priests.

"It's difficult to become a priest if you have these special needs; in many countries, there is a stigma against having priests with that kind of disability," Portolano says. "I began interviewing these priests about their vocation stories."

Their stories feature prominently in her book, *Be Opened! The Catholic Church and Deaf Culture*, published in December by The Catholic University of America Press. She worked on the book for six years. In addition to deaf priests and pastoral workers, she also interviewed deaf congregants.

"These are stories directed by deaf people," Portolano says, "not from the point of view of the hearing mainstream. I tried to allow the deaf narrative to lead at every step. Not a lot of these stories were written down, because they're in sign language."

Her attendance at St. Francis of Assisi opened her eyes to the experiences of a community often relegated to the margins. It also enhanced and supplemented her own practice of prayer.

"In Mass, I often add my responses in sign language," Portolano says, "probably for the same reasons that deaf priests continue to sign even if their congregations are hearing: to witness these silent members of the Church who aren't often seen. It's a way to pray with your body, and that's very Catholic."

For the past several years, Portolano has taught in the English department at Towson University. She is especially pleased that her latest book has been published by Catholic University Press.

"It's wonderful!" she says. "It really felt like coming home."

Her previous book, *The Passionate Empiricist*, was a study of how John Quincy Adams used his expertise in classical rhetoric to persuade his contemporaries that the American government should support science. She is already at work on her next project, compiling a volume of Pope Francis's writings on disability.

"His attention to people on the margins is part of what makes him a notable pope," she says. — G.V.



## Joan Ward Mullaney, Social Work Dean

Joan Ward Mullaney, D.S.W. 1963, former dean of the National Catholic School of Social Service, died Sunday, March 21, 2021, in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

Born in Pittsfield, Mass., in 1931, Mullaney graduated from the College of St. Rose in 1954; earned a master's degree at Boston College in 1958, and a doctorate at Catholic University in 1963. She completed post-doctoral study at the University of Michigan, School of Public Health; Harvard University Medical School, Department of Community Psychiatry; and Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School of International Studies.

Mullaney joined the Catholic University faculty in 1963, and became an ordinary professor in 1984. She served as dean from 1974 to 1985. She was the first woman elected by the faculty to serve on the Board of Trustees. Mullaney was awarded the University's highest honor, the President's Medal. Pope John Paul II awarded her the Benemerenti Medal for service to the Catholic Church. She was named Outstanding Teacher of the Year by Catholic University students in 1990.

In the field of international social work education, Mullaney established, with the faculty of the Pontifical Catholic University, Santiago, Chile, a new degree, Master of Teaching Social Work.

As a leading social work professional educator and dean, Mullaney chaired the Washington, D.C., chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. She was a member of the White House Commission on Mental Health chaired by First Lady Rosalynn Carter. She was also a designated member of the Academy of Science, Institute of Medicine, for its landmark study of bereavement. Mullaney published research focused on interdisciplinary education, mental health services, and housing policy.

Mullaney was appointed by Smith College as visiting professor of research between 1972 and 1990. In 1985, she was named visiting scholar, Austen Riggs Center, Stockbridge, Mass., where she completed a research study of the Riggs Clinic and its role as a pioneer mental health program in early 20th century rural Massachusetts.

In 1993, she became a formal Mercy Associate of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. In 2009, she published a well-reviewed spiritual biography, *Frances Nevins Mid-20th Century Carmelite, Friend, Scholar, Wife, Nun and Mystic*.

**Sister Madeline Dorsey**, B.S.N. 1945, Feb. 13, 2021.

**Rev. Bonaventure Knaebel, O.S.B.**, M.S. 1946, Jan. 22, 2021.

**Anthony P. DeSpirito**, B.S. 1948, Jan. 14, 2020

**Rev. Henry W. Schneider**, B.A. 1948, M.A. 1949, M.A. 1954, Oct. 14, 2020.

**Brother Emery C. Mollenhauer, F.S.C.**, B.A. 1949, March 14, 2021.

**William J. O'Connell**, B.Arch. 1949, Dec. 28, 2020.

**James E. Cavalier**, B.A. 1950, Jan. 5, 2021.

**Teresa G. Elliott**, B.A. 1950, M.C.A. 1970, Jan. 20, 2021.

**Dolores G. Judge**, M.S.W. 1950, Oct. 25, 2020.

**Seymour Zucker**, B.M. 1950, Jan. 8, 2021.

**Margaret C. Snyder**, M.A. 1952, Jan. 26, 2021.

**Eileen G. Waugh**, B.S.N. 1952, Oct. 29, 2020.

**Maria Chang Yu**, M.S.W. 1952, Jan. 13, 2021.

**Rev. Bruce Charles Byrolly**, attended the University from 1954 to 1958, Dec. 25, 2020.

**Sister Ann Gormly, S.N.D.**, M.A. 1954, Ph.D. 1962, Jan. 8, 2021.

**Patricia Ann Dougherty**, B.S.N. 1955, Dec. 8, 2020.

**Rev. James J. Pillar, O.M.I.**, S.T.L. 1955, Dec. 19, 2020.

**William J. Turner**, Ph.D. 1955, Oct. 22, 2020.

**Rev. Geoffrey J. Deeker, C.S.S.**, attended the University from 1956 to 1960, Nov. 2, 2020.

**Jane S. Hunt**, B.A. 1956, Oct. 29, 2020.

**Marieanna Probst Kelly**, B.A. 1956, Jan. 12, 2021

**John Carter**, B.A. 1957, Feb. 4, 2021.

**Peter A. Eltink**, B.A. 1958, Oct. 20, 2020.

**John L. Moylan**, M.A. 1958, Jan. 15, 2021.

**Frances N. O'Donnell**, B.A. 1958, Sept. 15, 2020

**Nora Griffin Bombara**, B.S.N. 1959, Feb. 14, 2020.

**David A. Donohoe**, B.A. 1959, J.D. 1962, Feb. 9, 2021.

**Sister Irene Duchesneau, R.H.S.J.**, M.S.N. 1959, Dec. 5, 2020.

**Thomas F. Oltorik**, B.S. 1959, Oct. 27, 2020.

**Sister Mary E. Reilly**, M.A. 1959, July 12, 2020.

**Rev. Vincent Tobin, O.S.B.**, S.T.B. 1960, Dec. 22, 2020.

**Sister Mary Trinitas Bochini, S.S.N.D.**, M.A. 1961, Ph.D. 1977, Oct. 29, 2020.

**Rev. William C. Cahill**, S.T.L. 1961, Nov. 15, 2020.

**Mary Louise Nanna**, M.M. 1961, Dec. 2, 2020.

**Alexander Papademetriou**, B.C.E. 1961, M.C.E. 1963, Jan. 9, 2021.

**Mary M. Corley**, B.A. 1962, M.A. 1988, Oct. 26, 2020.

**Sister Charlotte Dusbabek**, M.S.N. 1962, Dec. 16, 2020.

**Kathleen Alice “Kay” Ford Victorson**, B.A. 1963, Jan. 4, 2021.

**Teresa Ellen Donato Gerber**, B.A. 1964, Dec. 25, 2020.

**James Vincent Halloran**, B.M.E. 1964, Feb. 16, 2021.

**Herbert Maisel**, Ph.D. 1964, March 30, 2019.

**Carol Tota Nitsche**, B.A. 1965, March 1, 2021.

**Phyllis B. Hemmer**, M.S.L.S. 1966, Nov. 19, 2020.

**Barbara Matous**, M.S.N. 1966, Feb. 24, 2021.

**Sister Christine Riley**, B.S.N. 1966, Jan. 13, 2021.

**Mary V. Wheeler**, M.S.N. 1966, Dec. 20, 2020.

**Jacqueline E. Wilson**, B.A. 1966, Jan. 8, 2021.

**Erwin “Roger” Bartman**, B.A. 1967, Ph.D. 1976, Jan. 12, 2021.

**Sandra W. Kenny**, B.A. 1967, Oct. 20, 2020.

**Rev. Joseph F. Krastel, C.Ss.R.**, M.S.L.S. 1967, Nov. 22, 2020.

**James J. Tini**, B.A. 1967, J.D. 1971, Jan. 9, 2021.

**Sister M. Cyrilline Biel, S.S.C.M.**, M.A. 1968, Jan. 25, 2021.

**Hugo R. Duhn**, S.T.L. 1968, S.T.D. 1981, Dec. 28, 2020.



## Jude Dougherty, Long-time Dean of Philosophy

Jude Dougherty, B.A. 1954, M.A. 1955, Ph.D. 1960, died at his home in Potomac, Md., on March 6. He joined the faculty at Catholic University in 1966, and became the first lay dean of the School of Philosophy in 1976, serving in that position for more than 30 years.

Dougherty was a prolific writer. He edited or authored books such as *The Good Life and Its Pursuit* (1984); *Jacques Maritain: An Intellectual Profile* (2003); *The Nature of Scientific Explanations* (2013); and *Interpretations: Reading the Present in Light of the Past* (2018), among others. Dozens of

articles appeared under his byline in various publications.

In December of 1971, Dougherty began working as editor of the peer-reviewed journal *The Review of Metaphysics*. He continued in that role for 44 years, overseeing the publication of more than 900 articles. He was general editor of the series *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, published by The Catholic University of America Press.

His 30-year friendship with Cardinal Karol Wojtyła led to an invitation for the cardinal to lecture at Catholic University in July of 1976. Cardinal Wojtyła became Pope John Paul II in 1978, and visited the University again in 1979. He was later canonized as a saint.

Dougherty held leadership positions in numerous professional organizations and received multiple honors and awards over the course of his career, including the James Cardinal Gibbons Medal from Catholic University's Alumni Association. In 1998, the University's Student Government Association and Graduate Student Association presented him with an award of special recognition.

While enrolled at Catholic University, Dougherty met nursing student Patricia Ann Regan, B.S.N. 1955. They were married at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Hoopeston, Ill., and were together for 62 years until her death in 2020. The couple had four sons and 10 grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Dougherty was held on March 15 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Monsignor Robert Sokolowski, B.A. 1956, M.A. 1957, Elizabeth Breckenridge Caldwell Professor of Philosophy, one of the University's longest serving faculty and long-time colleague of Dougherty, served as homilist.



## John Figura, Artist and Teacher

A longtime professor of art, John Figura, died on Jan. 6. Known as an inspiring mentor to students, he was an accomplished painter whose work, exhibited in both solo and group shows here and abroad, earned praise from critics.

“My paintings always have a narrative,” he once explained, “but I don’t want to spell it out completely. I want the viewer to bring his or her life experience to the looking experience. If the viewer is not engaging and getting something out of it, what’s the point?”

As the director of the Salve Regina Art Gallery, Figura organized dozens of exhibits on campus, bringing attention to the work of many artists. These shows greatly enhanced the creative community at Catholic University and introduced students to a myriad of internationally recognized artists. He also curated shows for other spaces in the Washington, D.C. area, often approaching the task with a spirit of improvisation.

“I don’t usually plan the works’ placement out ahead of time,” Figura told an interviewer. “I might do a little sketch of the room, thinking this could go here and there. I like to have the pieces arrive and have a few hours to move them around, trying different combinations. They should all feed off each other visually, but also be artistically different in order to create a dialogue.”

Figura began teaching at the University in 1988, and became a full-time clinical assistant professor in 1997. He redesigned the capstone studio art course to familiarize students with cutting-edge concepts through gallery and museum visits, and helped to develop a dual approach to studio courses, gearing them toward non-majors and majors at the same time.

Officially, Figura retired from Catholic University in 2019, but he continued to teach painting classes and serve as gallery director up until his passing. In 2019, he received the University’s award for Overall Teaching Excellence. To honor his memory, a student award in his name is being planned.

A funeral Mass was held on campus in St. Vincent de Paul Chapel, live-streamed on the University’s Campus Ministry YouTube channel.

- Francis J. DuVal**, B.A. 1968, Feb. 6, 2021.
- C. Michael Firmin**, M.S.W. 1968, Nov. 18, 2020.
- Richard A. Ryan**, M.A. 1968, Dec. 13, 2020.
- Jean L. Bainter**, M.S.N. 1969, Dec. 28, 2021.
- Robert E. Mannion**, J.D. 1969, Dec. 4, 2020.
- Robert S. O’Neil**, M.C.E. 1970, Feb. 3, 2021.
- Daniel Kobialka**, D.M.A. 1971, Jan. 18, 2021.
- Harold E. Allen**, D.S.W. 1972, Jan. 6, 2021.
- Sister Hildegard Grogan, O.S.F.**, M.S.N. 1972, Jan. 20, 2021.
- Rev. Alfred A. McBride**, Ph.D. 1972, Oct. 23, 2020.
- James R. Tompkins**, Ph.D. 1972, Feb. 5, 2021.
- Francis M. Anderson**, M.A. 1973, Jan. 3, 2021.
- Sister Kathleen M. Carroll, R.S.M.**, M.A. 1973, Nov. 21, 2020.
- Diane Dziduszko Gagliardi**, M.S.W. 1973, Aug. 16, 2020.
- Aeolian M. Jackson**, D.S.W. 1974, Jan. 27, 2021.
- Ralph W. Kelley**, M.C.R.P. 1974, Dec. 12, 2020.
- Rev. Dennis J. Gallagher, O.S.A.**, Ph.D. 1975, Nov. 22, 2020.
- David W. Patch**, B.A. 1975, Jan. 15, 2021.
- Rev. Philip Snouffer**, M.S.L.S. 1976, Feb. 18, 2021.
- Dennis E. Ahearn**, J.D. 1977, Feb. 19, 2021.
- Maria L. Gaston**, M.A. 1977, Jan. 30, 2021.
- Clare Josephine Senecal Kearney**, M.M. 1977, Aug. 23, 2020.
- James W. Wooldridge**, M.M. 1978, Feb. 7, 2021.
- Barbara Eugenia Foye**, Ph.D. 1979, Dec. 7, 2020.
- Rev. Gerald F. Digiralamo**, M.Div. 1981, Dec. 20, 2020.
- Ellen Drosnin Morrison**, M.S.N. 1981, Sept. 22, 2020.



**Patrick J. Morgan**, J.D. 1982, Dec. 1, 2020.  
**Muriel Aikens-Arnold**, J.D. 1984, Feb. 8, 2021.  
**John B. Ackley**, Ph.D. 1988, Feb. 11, 2021.  
**Constance C. Koch**, M.S.L.S. 1990, Dec. 9, 2020.  
**Bryan K. Gray**, J.C.L. 1991, Oct. 24, 2020.  
**Most Rev. Philip Wilson**, J.C.L. 1992, emeritus archbishop of Adelaide, Australia, Jan. 17, 2021.  
**Dianne Ganz Scheper**, Ph.D. 1999, Feb. 19, 2021.  
**Rev. Michael A. Vigil**, J.C.L. 2001, Feb. 2, 2021.  
**Rev. Michael J. Herbert**, S.T.B. 2004, Dec. 23, 2020.  
**Raymond Michael Stoddard**, M.A. 2012, March 23, 2021.

## ► FACULTY/STAFF

**Cyrilla Barr**, Ph.D. 1965, music professor from 1976 to 1999, Jan. 1, 2021.  
**Jude Patrick Dougherty**, B.A. 1954, M.A. 1955, Ph.D. 1960, former dean of the School of Philosophy for more than 30 years, March 6, 2021.  
**John Figura**, retired clinical assistant professor in the Department of Art and director of the Salve Regina Art Gallery, who served for more than 33 years, Jan. 6, 2021.  
**Marieanna Probst Kelly**, B.A. 1956, technical assistant in environmental health and safety from 1988 to 1994, Jan. 12, 2021.  
**Joan Ward Mullaney**, D.S.W. 1963, former dean of the National Catholic School of Social Service, who served for 12 years, on March 21, 2021.  
**James P. O’Leary**, politics professor, who served for over 40 years, Jan. 24, 2021.  
**Patricia May Whitlow**, former administrative assistant in the Department of Drama for 15 years, Nov. 18, 2020.



### Cyrilla Barr, Professor Emerita

An extraordinarily accomplished alumna and former teacher in the Rome School, Professor Emerita Cyrilla Barr, Ph.D. 1965, died on Jan. 1, at the age of 91. An authority on aspects of Italian medieval studies, women’s studies, and 20th-century musical patronage, Barr lectured widely in the United States and Europe.

She taught at Catholic University from 1976 until her retirement in 1999. Friends and colleagues in the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art remember her as a kind, generous person and a brilliant scholar and teacher.

Barr was the author of several books and articles. Her early work, *The Monophonic Lauda and the Lay Religious Confraternities of Umbria and Tuscany in the Late Middle Ages*, is admired by musicologists and historians of the period. In 1998, she published *Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge: American Patron of Music*, the biography of a philanthropist who made a profound historical impact. The Library of Congress published Barr’s monograph, *The Coolidge Legacy*.

The contributions of women to American musical life were examined in *Cultivating Music in America: Women Patrons and Activists since 1860*, a volume she co-edited with Ralph Locke, published in 1997. Barr’s deep interests in musicology and women’s history were combined again in the novel *The Trophy Bride’s Tale* (2010), based on a true story of domestic abuse in 16th-century Florence. Barr’s carefully researched novel relied on archival materials involving a young mother convicted of killing her husband.

After teaching at her undergraduate *alma mater*, Viterbo College, in La Crosse, Wis., Barr joined the faculty at Catholic University, eventually serving as the head of the musicology division in the Rome School. During her long career, she trained some of the nation’s premier scholars and teachers.

Barr received several awards and honors, including a Fulbright Scholarship to Italy (1963–1964) and a fellowship at Villa I Tatti, the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies in Florence, Italy (1974–1975). She was awarded several grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and earned Catholic University’s Outstanding Teacher award twice, in 1990 and 1993. A student award in Barr’s name is being planned in her memory.

## FROM THE VAULT

University Archives



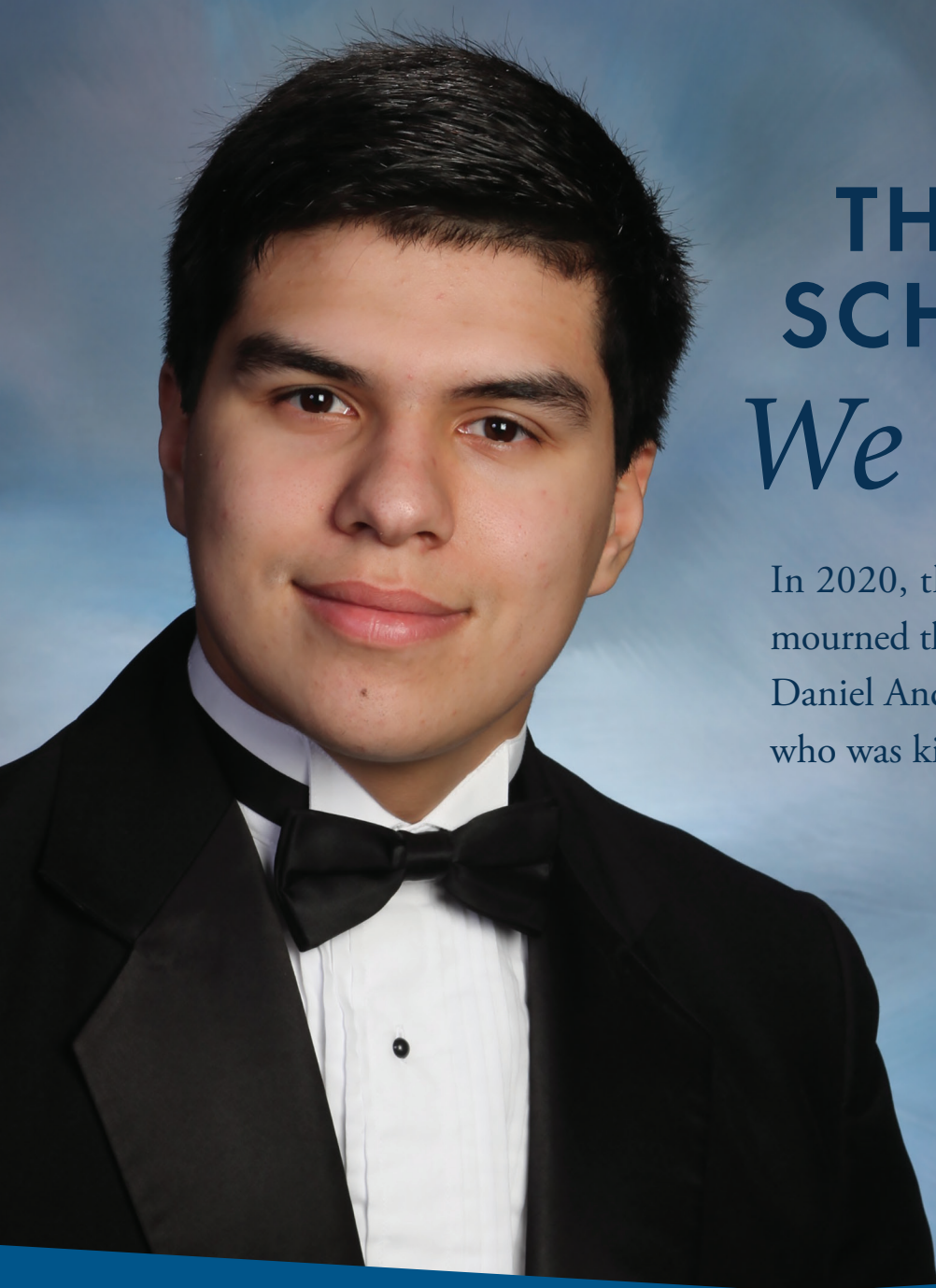
Courtesy of The American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives

## TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY

This photo from the 1950s shows a class of religious women and men learning the then-modern technology, electric typewriters. Today, classrooms have been updated with the latest digital technology, allowing students to participate both in person and virtually.

DO YOU KNOW THE LOCATION OF  
THE PHOTO ABOVE? WRITE TO US AT  
[cua-magazine@cua.edu](mailto:cua-magazine@cua.edu)





# THROUGH A SCHOLARSHIP, *We Remember*

In 2020, the Catholic University community mourned the loss of a bright light on campus — Daniel Anderl, a member of the Class of 2022, who was killed on July 19.

Following the news of this tragedy, a family of Catholic University alumni — Breda Shelton, B.A. 1980, and her husband, George, along with their daughter, Candace Sandifer, J.D. 2007, and her husband, Collin — approached the Division of University Advancement with a leadership gift to create a scholarship in Daniel's memory.

They were joined by other members of the University community, to date pledging \$71,268 in commitments and gifts toward the overall goal of \$100,000. Once fully endowed, this scholarship will ensure that we honor Daniel — and the faith and values he embodied while a student — through those who will receive it.

To help keep Daniel's love for Catholic University alive, you can make a gift to support the scholarship being created in his name by visiting

[engage.catholic.edu/anderl](https://engage.catholic.edu/anderl)

LIGHT | THE | WAY

THE CAMPAIGN FOR CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY





# CLASS OF 2020

*We can't wait to celebrate  
YOU this fall!*

At Cardinal Weekend 2021, we will hold a special celebration  
just for members of the Class of 2020.

**SAVE THE DATES**

October 15–17, 2021

More details will be provided this summer.

For more information, visit

[engage.catholic.edu/cardinalweekend](https://engage.catholic.edu/cardinalweekend)

Not in the Class of 2020? See page 4 for more  
information about Cardinal Weekend 2021.