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Photo by Susan Kahn

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THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS HAS JUST CONCLUDED one of the most important times of the year: Spring Commencement. Our students, now alumni, are ready to journey into the next phase of their lives.

In this issue of Syracuse University Magazine, there are many references to journeys by Syracuse community members and the footprints they leave behind. Students who forge their own path because they had no footsteps to follow. There is another who climbed to the highest elevations and left footprints where few had ever ventured.

There are as many different paths to travel as there are alumni of this University. It is good to be reminded of that each spring, as thousands of our graduates set out to forge their path in the world. Syracuse University has prepared them well. Yet, as the world has become more complex, our responsibilities have increased.

That is why the Invest Syracuse initiative, which supports our Academic Strategic Plan, includes new programs and services to strengthen the student experience and better prepare our students for the journey after graduation. We are bringing together academic and career advising to align academics with aspirations. We are hiring new faculty who work across disciplines, academicians who are both innovative and entrepreneurial. And we are working to ensure a global experience for each student to broaden their views.

Students come to us from all corners of the world and from neighborhoods that border our campus. They come with very different dreams. And most often, they are inspired by the support they receive and the experiences they have here.

It may be the lessons they receive in the classroom. It may be the support they receive from generous donors. Or it may be the influence of people they met along the way.

Take alumnus Daniel D’Aniello ’68. He says the people he met at Syracuse University gave him confidence to believe in himself. Now he and his wife, Gayle, have provided one of the largest single gifts in the University’s history: $20 million to support the construction of the National Veterans Resource Center. Dan is redefining what it means to expand a footprint.

Each graduate has a story to tell as they embark on the next steps of their journey. Commencement is a time to tell, to listen, and to treasure those stories.

Sincerely,

Kent Syverud
Chancellor and President
Tracks, Trails, and Findings

WHEN I’M OUT WANDERING AROUND WITH MY ground-sniffing sidekick Rufus, we’re always on the lookout for animal tracks. Well at least I am. Rufus may have other thoughts in mind, like eating a stick. Whether I can actually identify the tracks is questionable. Sure I can distinguish, say, between a dog paw and a squirrel print, but after that a lot of second-guessing occurs. Rufus, of course, scents trails where no discernible tracks exist, but he’d do much better if he looked up once in a while. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve spotted a rabbit quietly sitting and thinking it’s invisible 20 yards away. Meanwhile Rufus continues on its scent, only to finally raise his head in time to see the cottontail bobbing off into the brush. We followed plenty of critter tracks in the snow this winter, but whether some belonged to a loon or a loon was inconclusive findings, our digital footprints are tracked and analyzed, and in no time at all, any online window-shopping adventure turns into an onslaught of advertisements. I’m still scratching my head over inconclusive findings. These days, there’s little uncertainty about the trails we leave roaming the internet. Talk about a path of cookie crumbs. Our digital footprints are tracked and analyzed and, in no time at all, any online window-shopping adventure turns into an onslaught of advertisements. In a way, it’s enticing: Hey, this machine knows what I’m looking for—thanks for the suggestions! Click. Click. Only trouble is they’re also relentless. The more you explore, the more the savvy data collectors know about you and share with interested parties. And that’s just doing Google searches and visiting websites. Admittedly, I’d much rather have online ads popping up for fishing fly rods and barbecue sauces than lawn furniture and car parts, but sometimes serendipity can lead to the bargain of the day. If you’re active on social media, your life-reveals pile up even more. “So much information is compiled about us—and kept from us,” says iSchool professor Jennifer Stromer-Galley. “We have to pay to see our own credit reports.” Stromer-Galley is one of several faculty members who share their insights in “The Dynamics of Big Data” in this issue of the magazine. Thanks to our online interactions and algorithms, Big Data is a booming industry, so having a grasp on it is important. Beyond its implications with consumers and corporate decision making, it plays starring roles all over the place. It’s crucial to scientists, as computational research can drive discovery in leaps and bounds. As we roll into the Major League Baseball season, data-driven questions swirl in managers’ minds. Let’s also not forget the momentous shift it’s brought to political campaigns. Russian hacking into the 2016 presidential campaign may just be the opening salvo in an ominous, ongoing wave of cyber-fueled dirty politics that is far from cresting. I’m still amazed that folks were hoodwinked by the targeted trickery, but it’s certainly a warning to proceed with caution and to value legitimate sources. Big Data may tell us more about ourselves than we even know. So whether you tread lightly or plow paths all over the internet, don’t worry about getting lost. Your tracks will leave plenty of clues as to where you are.
THE UNIVERSITY HAS TWO transformative construction projects underway that will enhance campus life for students and deepen its long-standing commitment to military veterans. The University broke ground this winter on the National Veterans Resource Center (NVRC) and launched a major renovation of Archbold Gymnasium that will feature the creation of the Barnes Center at The Arch, a state-of-the-art health, wellness, and recreation complex. Both projects are part of the Campus Framework that supports the Academic Strategic Plan.

The NVRC received a major boost from U.S. Navy veteran and Life Trustee Daniel D’Aniello ’68 and his wife, Gayle, who will support construction of the project with a $20 million gift (see page 22). The facility—the first of its kind in the nation—will house the Institute for Veterans and Military Families as well as numerous other military-affiliated organizations, including the Army and Air Force ROTC offices and the University’s Office of Veteran and Military Affairs. The 115,000-square-foot facility will be LEED certified and feature universal design standards. It is scheduled to open in spring 2020.

For those who remember Archbold Gym from their days on campus, the renovated Archbold will represent a bold transformation that centralizes SU’s health and wellness services in one location and expands recreation offerings. The Barnes Center at The Arch is supported by a gift from Board of Trustees Chairman Steve Barnes ’82 and his wife, Deborah. In addition, College of Engineering and Computer Science alumnus Kwang Tan G’73 provided a $3.5 million gift for the renovations. In honor of his gift, the facility’s second floor will be dedicated in his name.

Among the building’s features will be a modern multi-floor fitness center, a rock-climbing wall, and a multi-activity sports court. It is scheduled to open in fall 2019.

“This new center brings into focus a vision for an environment that complements both living and learning,” says Tan, who earned a doctorate in electrical engineering at SU. “Students need to be engaged in both academics and their well-being. Health and recreational opportunities are essential to their experience. The Arch will provide them with the spaces, equipment, and services that will support them holistically throughout their time at Syracuse University.”

—From Staff Reports
The Science of Improving Public Services

SOMETIMES A QUICK REMINDER CAN MAKE A WORLD of difference. And for government agencies that want to ensure their initiatives are successfully working, an intervention, even as simple as a text message, can lead to a positive outcome. Behavioral scientists call this a nudge—positive reinforcement that encourages people to respond in a preferred way. “We can develop interventions, informed by behavioral science, that really open up this whole new world of thinking about policies and what we can and cannot do to help in the public sector,” says Leonard Lopoo, a professor of public administration and international affairs and director of the Center for Policy Research (CPR) at the Maxwell School.

Lopoo and Joe Boskovski G’14 are cofounders of the Maxwell X Lab, a unit of the CPR established in January 2017 that employs behavioral science techniques to help evaluate and improve public sector and nonprofit programs and also assist faculty by adding a behavioral science component to their research. Since human behavior is far from predictable, behavioral science relies on analyzing data from randomized control trials (RCTs) to determine whether a program is achieving its goals. Boskovski, who holds an MPA degree from Maxwell, pitched the idea of the X Lab to his former professor after working for the Behavioral Insights Team (North American Office), a British government initiative that partnered with Bloomberg Philanthropies’ What Works Cities Initiative in the United States. “We could sit here all day and hypothesize what might work better for a program, but we actually want to test everything,” Boskovski says. “That is the fastest and most cost-effective way to improve government services.”

The X Lab currently has several projects underway, including ones aimed at increasing reading time with children; developing a better understanding of where the greatest need for health coverage is in the state; and designing and evaluating new messages for a variety of City of Syracuse services. (One focuses on reducing foreclosure rates on owner-occupied residences by improving communication, including reaching out with personalized writing on the outside of envelopes.) They are also partnering with a Midwestern city to examine its 311 system that tracks non-emergency issues, such as potholes or snow removal, reported by residents. The goal: Address issues before they become costly problems.

For the RCT experiments, they set up two randomized groups of individuals—one that receives an intervention and a second that gets “business-as-usual” treatment from the program. “With an RCT experiment, you can accurately say exactly the amount an intervention is helping,” Lopoo says. “Most evaluations that aren’t done in this systematic way can’t do that.”

As an example, Boskovski cites a collaboration with the Onondaga County Health Department’s family planning service clinics, which sought to reduce the no-show rate for appointments. The first RCT found that new, behaviorally informed text messages increased attendance by 28 percent, and they are now testing another intervention to further improve outcomes. They estimate that fully implemented, these reminders will save the clinics around $200,000 a year. “We want to establish trusting relationships and feedback between the patients and clinics, which we believe works to increase follow through,” Boskovski says.

As Lopoo points out, government agencies are asked to do more and more with less and less, so it’s important to get the greatest return possible on public funds. With the X Lab, the behavioral science approach allows data to point the way forward—leading to improvements, sometimes only with a nudge. “This is an exciting way for the school to partner with the great work going on in the community and elsewhere to make people’s lives better,” Lopoo says. “It’s good for everybody.”

—Jay Cox

“...we actually want to test everything. That is the fastest and most cost-effective way to improve government services.”
—JOE BOSKOVSKI G’14
GOODMAN IMPRESS PROGRAM |
Ensuring a Competitive Advantage

FOR STUDENTS PLANNING A CAREER IN THE HIGHLY competitive business world, the Whitman School of Management’s innovative Goodman IMPRESS Program helps smooth the transition from classroom to office. Launched in 2014—with that class of first-year students who are now seniors—the program is designed to prepare students in a wide range of areas, including leadership development, communication skills, professional etiquette, and dressing for success. Named in honor of the program’s benefactor, Life Trustee Kenneth Goodman ’70, IMPRESS participation is a requirement for all Whitman students.

The IMPRESS competition commences immediately for incoming students, who are assigned to one of four groups, or “houses,” named after University-area streets Adams, Harrison, Marshall, and Waverly. Each house has its own insignia and faculty housemaster, chosen for excellence in teaching, communication, and student engagement. Students earn points for participation in such activities as attending Current Challenges Speaker Series presentations, which feature industry leaders in their respective fields; completing a certification program in Excel; or taking part in a networking roundtable. Students can earn up to a maximum 1,870 points (reflecting the year Syracuse University was founded), which count for the individual student, as well as his or her house.

The points are tracked using a “gamification” technology system, which captures the students’ progress on a daily basis, creating a culture of intense competition between the four houses. Each year, the house with the most points is awarded the coveted and hotly contested Goodman Cup. Now in its fourth year—with all undergraduates participating—IMPRESS has met with a high level of enthusiasm, according to Lindsay D. Quilty, the Whitman School’s interim associate dean of undergraduate programs. She credits careful planning in the initiative’s early stages for its success. “IMPRESS was born out of a brainstorming session that included faculty, staff, students, and alumni,” she says. “We considered everyone’s feedback, and we continue to poll various groups to ensure IMPRESS still provides relevant opportunities for our students.” Potential employers have taken notice. “This is an ideal program for recruiters,” Quilty says. “With a quick glance, they can see a student’s IMPRESS score alongside his or her GPA, and get an idea of the type of candidate they are interviewing.”

Noah Lawrence ’21, a first-year finance major and Harrison House member, has his sights set on scoring the most IMPRESS points in the program’s history. “I saw a lot of value in the IMPRESS program as a differentiator for Whitman students when searching for competitive internships or jobs,” says Lawrence, who notes the program was a critical factor in his decision to attend Syracuse University. “The business skills you learn in IMPRESS will prepare you to wow interviewers and develop a strong foundation for success, no matter what career path you choose.”

His favorite first-semester event? The etiquette dinner, where students learn to avoid potential pitfalls—and reap the career-building benefits—of a business meal.

As a member of the program’s inaugural class, accounting major Mackenzie Shine ’18 recognized early on how important the program’s peer mentors were in helping students get the most out of the opportunities offered. “I set a goal for myself to become a peer mentor and give my mentees the experience I wanted to have,” says Shine, who has been the Waverly House lead peer mentor since her junior year. “The IMPRESS program has been such an important part of my Whitman experience—everyone involved with it is dedicated to helping you succeed personally, academically, and professionally. Go Waverly!”

—Paula Meseroll
COMMUNITY ENERGY PROJECT | Inspiring Collaborative Sustainability

HIT THE LIGHTS. TURN DOWN THE THERMOSTAT. USE THE WASHER DURING OFF-PEAK TIMES. FOR PEOPLE CONSCIOUS OF THEIR ENERGY USE, THESE SIMPLE COMMANDS CAN BE A MANTRA FOR SAVING MONEY AND REDUCING THEIR CARBON FOOTPRINT. FOR AN INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM OF SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS, THE THOUGHT OF TURNING INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS INTO A COMMUNITY-BASED ENERGY PROGRAM IS A CHALLENGE WORTH PURSING. “THE IDEA IS TO GET PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY TO WORK TOGETHER TO MANAGE THEIR ENERGY USE,” SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES PROFESSOR JASON DEDRICK SAYS. “IT’S A COMPREHENSIVE VIEW OF ENERGY PRODUCTION AND USE AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD OR COMMUNITY LEVEL TO TRY TO CREATE VALUE FOR THE COMMUNITY AND THE INDIVIDUALS.”

Dedrick is joined on the project by architecture professors Bess Krietemeyer, an expert on energy visualization, and Tarek Rakha, who specializes in sustainable design and energy simulation. At the heart of their research is the green community of Mueller, a planned development neighborhood in Austin, Texas, built on a former airport site. Many of the residences have solar panels, and electric cars are common. Since 2010, the Austin-based Pecan Street Research Institute—which manages the nation’s largest residential energy research network—has collected data in real time on household energy use in the neighborhood and made it available to researchers. With expertise in smart grid technologies and energy management, Dedrick has worked for several years with a team of iSchool students gathering and organizing the data from upwards of 400 Mueller households.

But what to do with all that data? At the 2016 Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems (CoE) symposium, Dedrick found the answer when he met Krietemeyer and Rakha and they decided to combine their skills and collaborate. With a CoE faculty fellows grant, they created an urban energy model that incorporates the data and allows them to simulate, test, and visualize both individual and community energy usage. Last summer, they were awarded a $100,000 planning grant by the National Science Foundation, with their sights set on a follow-up grant to develop a full proposal and implement the program. “When you have data that allows you to investigate scenarios, you can understand how future scenarios can develop in accordance with what design decisions are made,” Rakha says.

They are working on an energy dashboard, an interactive platform that would make the data accessible (via a website or app) and understandable to a general audience. Through visualization and simulation models, for instance, they can show not only individual behavior patterns of energy use and ways to improve efficiency, but also show on the neighborhood scale the impact of such factors as the weather, the amount of solar radiation, various building materials, and the surrounding environment. “If you see something in isolation or a chart, it doesn’t make a whole lot of sense until you see it spatially,” Krietemeyer says, “so a lot of my work has been in visualizing it spatially and looking at ways to interact with it.”

This spring, the trio hosted community workshops in Mueller, gathering valuable feedback from residents on the dashboard’s design and information, and on how to generate long-term interest in a community-managed energy plan. While Mueller residents gave them insights on how to move forward, the researchers envision the project extending far beyond the boundaries of the green-minded Texas neighborhood. “Our goal is to develop knowledge that can be used anywhere and some tools, such as the dashboard, that can be customized in different communities with different kinds of data,” Dedrick says. “We’re looking to build a platform, in terms of technology and understanding communities, that would be applicable anywhere.”

—JAY COX
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT |  
Learning Life-Skill Essentials

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR LIFE BEYOND THE CLASSROOM is the main objective of Foundations, a student development series launched last fall. A campus-wide expansion of the athletic department’s S-Project life skills development program for student-athletes, Foundations workshops feature such topics as leadership, career development, financial wellness, community involvement, healthy relationships and self-care, and physical health and nutrition.

“We focus on what students need to know to have a successful life, with each workshop emphasizing interaction and takeaways,” says Tracy Tillapaugh G’15, internship placement coordinator at Falk College. Tillapaugh was instrumental in brainstorming and organizing the series with colleagues Mark Trumbo, coordinator of student-athlete engagement, and Derek Brainard, former financial literacy coordinator. The inaugural series attracted as many as 90 students per session, with 45 students attending all six sessions, far surpassing the organizers’ expectations. “We were a bit surprised—but very pleased—by the number of students who came to the workshops,” Tillapaugh says. Undergraduates who attend all sessions and submit an essay on what they learned in two of the sessions are eligible to receive a $1,000 scholarship. Winners in the fall semester were College of Arts and Sciences students Julianne Doherty ’20, Noah Goldmann ’21, and Gabriel Lizer ’21, School of Information Studies student Eldon Tsoi ’21, and Falk College student Zadia Wallace ’19.

Tillapaugh’s career development session had a significant impact on Lizer, a first-year student who enrolled as undecided on a major. “I was interested in every field—from politics to music industry—and overwhelmed with options,” he says. As a result of the workshop, Lizer made an appointment with Career Services to more clearly focus his educational choices. The workshop on financial literacy motivated him to learn how to budget his money, and to enhance his cash flow by applying for work-study positions on campus. “I now have three jobs on campus and plan to apply to be a financial advisor sophomore year, so I can transfer these necessary life skills to other students,” he says.

Goldmann was inspired to find a way to help others after attending the Foundations workshop by Syeisha Byrd G’12, director of community engagement at Hendricks Chapel. After hearing her message that one person can make a difference, he signed up for the chapel’s Young Scholars program, and tutors a fourth-grade student in math at the Central Village Boys & Girls Club. “My student’s face lights up every time he sees me and it’s the best feeling in the world,” Goldmann says. “I eventually want to work with kids teaching math, because that’s what I love to learn.”

To make sure the sessions are exciting, informative, and keeping the level of interest high, new topics and speakers will be added each semester. Spring 2018 workshops featured presentations on information literacy with iSchool professor Jeffrey Rubin ’95, G’98, president and CEO, SIDEARM Sports; career development with Erin Miller ’16, innovation and immersion recruiter for the iSchool and cofounder of Out There Productions; community engagement with the Reverend Brian E. Konkol, dean of Hendricks Chapel; and “A Comedic Guide to Money” with financial educator, comedic speaker, and author Colin Ryan.

Trumbo presented his workshop on leadership, stressing the importance of having a good foundation of core values. He is pleased to see the program he started for student-athletes offered to all SU students, and appreciates the support the series has received from campus faculty and staff. “I always knew that students need to learn life skills early,” he says. “I want them to start a budget now, take a leadership position now. The hours spent at Foundations workshops could impact a student’s life for the next 40 years.” —Paula Meseroll

“We focus on what students need to know to have a successful life, with each workshop emphasizing interaction and takeaways.” —TRACY TILLPAAUGH G’15

Former financial literacy coordinator Derek Brainard advises students on how to be responsible with money.
PROJECT: Citizen Science-Based Monitoring Framework for Contaminants of Emerging Concern in New York State Lakes

INVESTIGATOR: Teng Zeng, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, College of Engineering and Computer Science, with co-principal investigators David Matthews (Upstate Freshwater Institute) and Sharon Moran (SUNY-ESF)

SPONSOR: National Science Foundation

AMOUNT AWARDED: $99,938 (September 1, 2017-August 31, 2018)

BACKGROUND: Since the advent of large-scale commercial production of organic chemicals for use in industry and commerce, many of these compounds find their ways into lakes and streams by accident or after their intended use. One group of anthropogenic organic compounds—called contaminants of emerging concern (CECs)—is gaining increasing scientific attention in recent years because of the compounds’ potential to cause undesirable ecological effects. Large-scale monitoring of CECs in the aquatic environment is of critical importance to assess the sources and risks of these contaminants, but requires integrated solutions. To date, the majority of large-scale studies on the environmental occurrence of CECs were led by government agencies or international research consortia. Unfortunately, such efforts alone may not be able to deliver the sufficient amount of data needed to evaluate the full impact of CECs. Engaging citizens in CEC monitoring offers a promising means to enhance the spatiotemporal coverage and interconnectedness of CEC monitoring databases while raising public awareness of CECs. The major goal of this research is to evaluate the feasibility of establishing an educational and training-based framework to facilitate citizen volunteers in collaborating with professional researchers to investigate the occurrence patterns of CECs in freshwater lakes across New York State.

IMPACT: This interdisciplinary project involves the participation of both academic and practice-oriented investigators. If successful, this research will shed light on the prevalence of CECs in New York lakes, which may help environmental policy makers, regulatory and other government officials define a roadmap of needed collaborative research to refine future CEC monitoring strategies. This research will also advance our knowledge about the benefits associated with citizen-based CEC monitoring, which will have important implications for similar monitoring programs. More broadly, methods developed and lessons learned in this project may have the potential to transform our traditional CEC monitoring approach.

Finally, this research will provide interdisciplinary training and education to undergraduate and graduate researchers at the interface of environmental engineering and environmental sociology. The project results will be disseminated not only via standard scientific mechanisms, such as peer-reviewed articles and presentations, but also through outreach efforts to the interested public and stakeholders.

View from the shore of Onondaga Lake (with a sampling bottle).

Photo courtesy of Teng Zeng
EACH YEAR, THOUSANDS OF SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY students choose to expand their academic and cultural horizons by studying abroad. But for a long time, one segment of the student population lagged behind in study abroad participation. Due to their strict academic schedules and training plans, student-athletes found it hard to carve out time to study abroad.

But thanks to an intense push from Marie Kulikowsky G’00, Syracuse Abroad assistant director of summer programs, and Rick Burton ’80, the David B. Falk Endowed Professor of Sport Management, student-athletes have begun to populate Syracuse Abroad summer programs. They’re enrolled in programs in engineering, sport management, and health education, and across the globe: Australia, South Africa, France, and beyond. “Student-athletes are underrepresented in study abroad in general, and when I came across student-athletes on campus and mentioned study abroad, their typical answer was ‘I can’t, I’m a student-athlete,’” Kulikowsky says. “I wanted to change that and let them know that if they want to study abroad, they can. We will make it work.”

Alexis Dorner ’18, an international relations, political science, and Italian language, literature, and culture triple major, and a member of the women’s rowing team, chose to attend Syracuse specifically because of the strength of the study abroad program. But when she joined the rowing team midway through her first semester on campus, she thought her international dreams would have to take a backseat to her commitment to her team. However, the six-week Syracuse Abroad summer session in Florence allowed her the best of both worlds. “Doing a summer session allowed me to get the same experience as other students who travel for a whole semester,” she says. “If anything, being an athlete enhanced the experience. I signed up for a local rowing club in order to keep up with summer training, and that’s where I made several lifelong friends and got a view of the Arno River and the Ponte Vecchio that many people don’t get to see!”

From 2016 to 2017, the number of student-athletes participating in summer abroad programs increased from three to 15. “Syracuse is looking to serve as a leader in creating opportunities for NCAA student-athletes to study abroad,” Burton says. “Last year’s trip to Australia featured eight student-athletes from six different teams, and it was fantastic to see the cultural and educational benefits that come out of our activities.”

Bri Stahrr ’19, an English and textual studies and English education dual major, and member of the women’s lacrosse team, enrolled in Burton’s course Australia: Sport, History, and Culture. “Going abroad gave me the opportunity to immerse myself in another culture,” Stahrr says. “As a future teacher, I will be exposed to many different cultures. This trip prepared me for that.”

—Jennifer Horvath and Meghan Stark
MECHANICAL ENGINEERING MAJOR ELIZABETH Kretzing ’21 dreams of being an inventor and entrepreneur—and she sees attending Syracuse University as a way to achieve that goal. “I wanted to study engineering because engineers get to be pretty creative,” she says. Kretzing also knows that as one of five children in her family, she needs financial support to pursue her education. That’s why being named a Wilmot Scholar is already having a major impact on her life. “Without this scholarship, I wouldn’t be at SU studying mechanical engineering,” she says.

Kretzing and fellow students Nikolin Baco ’20, Bryan King ’19, and Jonathan Stryer ’18 are the most recent undergraduates to benefit from the generosity of Life Trustee Thomas C. Wilmot ’70 and his wife, Colleen, who established the Thomas C. and Colleen M. Wilmot Scholarship Fund in the College of Engineering and Computer Science (E&CS) in 1990. Since then, the endowed gift has provided approximately 90 scholarships to Syracuse students. “Education was getting expensive,” says Tom Wilmot, who earned a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from E&CS. “I wanted other people to have the experience I had here.”

Wilmot credits his Syracuse experience with helping him lead and grow his family business, Wilmorite Inc., a real estate development and management firm based in Rochester, New York. The Wilmots take pride in their scholarship recipients and realize they are making a difference in the students’ lives. “Many of the kids are incredibly bright,” says Wilmot, board chair of Wilmorite. “They are involved with so many things and taking advantage of all SU has to offer.”

For Syracuse University, supporters like the Wilmots are crucial to ensuring that top students receive the opportunity to study here. Last summer, the University launched a two-year, $40 million fundraising campaign focused exclusively on supporting need-based undergraduate scholarships and financial aid. The campaign is part of Invest Syracuse: Advancing Academic Excellence and the Student Experience, a $100 million initiative that seeks to provide all SU students with a distinctive, world-class learning experience. Currently, about 65 percent of Syracuse students receive financial aid, and the fundraising campaign seeks to build the resources necessary to expand access and affordability. The funds raised will support endowment and other gifts dedicated to financial aid, allowing the University to increase need-based grant awards and reduce loans in financial aid packages. The funds will also ensure that the financial assistance packages are competitive with those of other premier universities to attract and support high-achieving students. Such financial support will not only help students pursue their dreams of a college education, but also ease the burden—and worries—of student debt.

Like Kretzing, Bryan King is thankful to be a Wilmot Scholar. Along with majoring in aerospace engineering, he enjoys learning languages. He can speak Spanish and French and is now learning German, with the hope of working abroad one day. Like many students, he’s concerned about large loans for education and the accompanying debt. Reflecting on the scholarship assistance, he says, “A scholarship helps to lessen that burden.”

—From Staff Reports
HENDRICKS CHAPEL |

Bringing Together a Diverse Community

“[The Reverend Konkol] brings an old-soul wisdom and calmness, matched by an energy and a sense of urgency for meaningful engagement.”
—DAVID VAN SLYKE

ON A RECENT SUNDAY EVENING AT Hendricks Chapel, the Reverend Brian E. Konkol told a story about 5-year-old Brianna, who drowned in a sewage pit in 2006. The tragedy occurred in Guyana when Konkol, the seventh dean of Hendricks, was serving an Evangelical Lutheran parish there. Konkol told the story at the weekly Dean’s Convocation, one of the first programs he implemented at the chapel.

“Although some considered diving in to save the girl, not a single soul stepped forward,” Konkol told a rapt audience. “She was moving closer to death with each tick and each tock of the clock.” Finally, Ordock Reid—a stranger drawn to the commotion—dove in. Slowed by his dreadlocks (sacred to the minority Rastafarians in Guyana), Reid cut off his hair and jumped back into the human filth. Finally, he found the unconscious girl and pulled her out. Despite his sacrifice and heroic efforts, the girl died.

The anecdote echoed the Gospel excerpt Konkol read earlier: “I was a stranger and you welcomed me...” It also underscored a guiding principle for Hendricks Chapel amid an increasingly diverse student body in a highly polarized era. “It’s a lesson about what it means to be a community together,” he told the congregation. “Sometimes it means jumping into the sewage of life to help another, even if it’s a stranger.”

During his November 7 installation, Konkol described Hendricks as “a visible and vibrant and beating heart” that is “inclusive of all for the good of all.” “We’re all in this together,” he said, sharing a list of goals that align with recommendations of the 2017 Hendricks Chapel Review Report. Broad plans include reaffirming the chapel as a crucial component of University life, expanding programs that celebrate diversity and inclusion, continuing social justice initiatives, and highlighting music and arts.

He aims to “make sure that Hendricks is extremely visible,” noting that many members of Syracuse’s diverse campus community experience religion and spirituality beyond the chapel walls. In his first semester, he participated in the Pan Am 103 remembrance service and Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. He also lectured at Foundations, a life skills program (see page 8), and co-facilitated a discussion about fake news, among other campus speaking engagements.

Konkol has embraced the call to connect with the greater Syracuse community. He spoke at Thursday Morning Roundtable, the civic discussion program run by University College, and represented Hendricks at the local World Interfaith Harmony Assembly. He’s visited religious congregations, including the Islamic Society of Central New York.

Dean’s Convocation has proven popular, drawing up to 300 people to music and spiritual reflection from diverse perspectives. Before the weekly gathering, Konkol offers a free dinner to build community.

As evidence of the chapel’s renewed vitality, Konkol points to a 21 percent increase in fall fundraising over the previous year. More than 190 students applied for 23 spots on a winter break service trip to Puerto Rico. And the chapel’s social media engagement has increased nearly 200 percent. The dean frequently tweets upbeat messages, too.

Maxwell Dean David Van Slyke, who served on the search committee that selected Konkol, praised Konkol’s unique mix of gravitas and humor. “[He] brings an old-soul wisdom and calmness, matched by an energy and a sense of urgency for meaningful engagement,” Van Slyke said at the installation.

Konkol demonstrated those qualities in his talk about Brianna’s death. “Every day the poor and the marginalized are up to their eyes in sewage, literally and metaphorically,” he said. “Do we really care? Or do we stand on the sidelines and wait for someone else to jump in?” —Renée K. Godou
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY PRESS | Faculty Enhance Scholarship through Book Series

FOR 75 YEARS, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY Press has been devoted to serving scholars and scholarship, promoting diverse cultural and intellectual expression, and preserving the history, literature, and culture of New York State. Today, as the publishing arm of the University and a division of Syracuse University Libraries, SU Press maintains a global reputation for its award-winning books written by scholars from around the world. “SU Press is an international reflection of the University’s excellence,” says Alice Randel Pfeiffer G’77, G’86, director of SU Press. “We’re very proud of that.”

One vital aspect of that work is a commitment to publishing a variety of series in specialized areas—critically acclaimed books that demonstrate the breadth of expertise disseminated through SU Press. Syracuse faculty play a significant role in that effort, serving as series editors who shepherd book projects, provide essential feedback on proposals, and help guide individual series. “Series editors are our eyes and ears in a given discipline,” says Suzanne Guiod, SU Press editor in chief. “They help us identify senior scholars in specialized fields who can connect us with promising authors, projects, and peer reviewers.”

Additionally, series editors provide SU Press a presence at major academic conferences in their respective fields, which allows for opportunities to meet in person with current authors and potential new authors. “Series editors act as informal ambassadors for SU Press when they go out into the world,” Guiod says. “Some will also read full manuscripts and comment very carefully and closely. Others may not, but can direct us to the correct experts. They really are guides and advisors to us.”

Among the longest-standing series led by a faculty member is the award-winning Television and Popular Culture series edited by Robert Thompson, Trustee Professor of Television and Popular Culture at the Newhouse School. Currently celebrating 20 years, the series offers a wealth of volumes about American television programming. Another enduring series is the Modern Intellectual and Political History of the Middle East. Founded by political science professor Mehrzad Boroujerdi, the series publishes scholarship dealing with trends and events in the Middle East and North Africa since the 18th century. It includes academic monographs, books of public interest, translations of influential texts, and reprints of classic works. “I have been involved with Syracuse University Press for almost two decades as an author, book series editor, and member of the editorial board, and have benefited enormously from this affiliation,” says Boroujerdi, co-author of Postrevolutionary Iran: A Political Handbook, the newest book in the series.

He credits his affiliation with SU Press for enhancing his reach as a scholar, including the opportunity to be a book review editor with the International Journal of Middle East Studies. “The book series led to wonderful contacts with scholars I would not have known otherwise, and that has been really helpful,” says Boroujerdi, the O’Hanley Faculty Scholar in the Maxwell School. “I consider SU Press a hidden gem on campus.”

Additional series are led by faculty experts from diverse fields and focus on topics including perspectives on disability, gender and globalization, Judaic traditions, religion and politics, peace and conflict resolution, and writing, culture, and community practices. The newest series include one in Critical Arab American Studies, edited by College of Arts and Sciences professor Carol Fadda, and Syracuse Studies in Geography, co-led by Maxwell professors Tom Perreault and Robert Wilson and Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Geography Don Mitchell. “We’re excited about these young series and the new opportunities to showcase the prominence of Syracuse University’s programs,” Pfeiffer says. “And we’re grateful to connect with faculty this way in our goal of publishing the best scholarship we can.”

—Amy Speach

“SU Press is an international reflection of the University’s excellence. We’re very proud of that.”

—ALICE RANDEL
PFEIFFER G’77, G’86
TRIBUTE |

A Healing Legacy

INSIDE THE SKÄ-NOÑH—GREAT LAW OF PEACE CENTER, nestled on the eastern shore of Onondaga Lake north of Syracuse—stands a striking, life-size depiction of the Great Peacemaker, who, according to the Haudenosaunee, came to Central New York more than 1,000 years ago to teach warring indigenous nations how to peacefully co-exist.

Chief Irving Powless Jr. H’09, who died November 30, 2017, in Syracuse, served as the full-body cast model for that figure decades ago when it was created for a former living history site. Professor Phil Arnold, founding director of the Skä-noñh Center and chair of the Department of Religion, repurposed it as the Great Peacemaker when the center opened in 2015. It was a natural fit, he thought, for a man who for more than 50 years lived the lessons of the Great Peacemaker and dedicated himself to sharing them with others. “Chief Powless took as his mission to really help people understand the Haudenosaunee and their influence,” Arnold says. “He always tried to tell us the truth from the Haudenosaunee perspective. And he inspired many of us to try to communicate the importance of the Great Law of Peace. He was a tireless educator in that way.”

Sisters Stephanie Waterman ’83, G’04 and Freida Jacques ’80, members of the Onondaga Nation’s Turtle Clan, echo the significance of those teachings. In a statement responding to his passing, they wrote, “Irving’s life included a time where there were very few cars, when our water was clean, when we could fish in our streams, and when people thrived in our woods. In 2017 when he passed, we can no longer fish and swim in our streams. We worry about ticks, climate change, and unchecked capitalism that doesn’t consider the environment. Yet his humor lightened our day whenever he spoke. He knew that the teachings that our traditional people have were valuable and needed to be shared with the outside world. We could always count on him.”

Chief of the Onondaga Nation’s Beaver Clan and a member of the Haudenosaunee Council of Chiefs, Powless was a longtime friend to Syracuse University, which awarded him an honorary doctorate in 2009 for his work as an author, historian, ambassador, and steadfast advocate for Native sovereignty.

Attorney Joe Heath ’68, who serves as legal counsel to the Onondaga Nation, considers Powless his teacher and mentor. “He helped me understand I had a great deal to learn, primarily about sovereign treaties and history,” Heath says. In a series of legal issues, including the Interstate 81 expansion through Onondaga Nation territory, New York State’s attempt to collect tax revenue from Native cigarette sales, and Haudenosaunee efforts to reclaim its wampum belts from the state, Powless vigorously, and effectively, asserted Native rights, Heath says. “It was a constant effort to preserve the Nation’s sovereignty, and he put a lot into finding diplomatic resolutions. He had great wisdom and patience.”

Arnold says Powless had an encyclopedic knowledge of Haudenosaunee history, and over the last 20 years, he regularly invited the chief to speak to his classes. The encounters invariably had a powerful impact on students. “His talks were very provocative,” Arnold says. “He would bring home the devastation of Native peoples in a very personal way—in a way students could feel. He always conveyed the truth, and sometimes it was a painful lesson to hear. But he never shied away from his mission. And he did it in a very respectful and kind way.”

In Who Are These People Anyway? (SU Press, 2016), Powless shared the stories and history of the Haudenosaunee, and the overarching importance of living in harmony with one another and the natural world. It was a view that served the city and the region well, Heath says. “There’s a reason why in Central New York, the Onondaga Nation has such a positive relationship with its neighbors,” Heath says. “It happened because the Onondagas decided to have ambassadors, such as Irving and Oren Lyons [’58, H’93], tell the message that we all need to heal, in terms of both the natural world and the relationships between the Haudenosaunee and non-Native neighbors. That’s the kind of work Irving and the Nation helped bring to this community. That’s the kind of healing he brought.”

—Carol L. Boll
Collection Documents Civil Rights Struggles

The Special Collections Research Center at Syracuse University Libraries is home to the records of the Crusade for Opportunity (CFO), a significant collection that documents the work of the Syracuse anti-poverty agency. Originally founded in 1962 as the Mayor’s Commission for Youth, with a mission to combat juvenile delinquency, the organization changed its name and focus in 1964 to Crusade for Opportunity as it took up President Johnson’s War on Poverty initiative.

The CFO had a three-pronged approach to creating opportunity: better education, employment training, and community service. The organization delivered its programs through a series of neighborhood centers, which were placed strategically around the city. Educational programs included Head Start for preschool-age children and study centers for struggling high school students. Employment programs included Neighborhood Youth Corps and on-the-job skills training. The CFO also conducted research on the many issues that affected the poor in the Syracuse area, including racial discrimination, public school segregation, and the lack of employment opportunities.

Adhering to the “maximum feasible participation of the poor” mandate of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the CFO established neighborhood boards that were elected by the communities they served. The CFO’s Board of Directors was drawn from among these neighborhood board members. The more involvement the CFO elicited from the poor, mostly black, community, however, the more the local power structure believed they were losing control of decision making. In *The Urban Racial State: Managing Race Relations in American Cities* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2011), scholar Noel A. Cazenave wrote that the CFO “began as a mainly all-white establishment representing city hall and ended as a mainly black organization representing neighborhood residents.” This shift of power raised racial tensions and created stress between the establishment and the CFO. When concerns about the possible mismanagement of CFO funds emerged, the federal Office of Economic Opportunity cut CFO’s funding at the end of 1967, resulting in the organization’s demise.

“The CFO collection holds such promise for those of us teaching and researching at the intersections of literacy, poverty, race, and schooling in the City of Syracuse and beyond,” says writing and rhetoric professor Brice Nordquist, former faculty fellow in the Special Collections Research Center (SCRC). The collection includes reports, financial materials, correspondence files, newsletters, newspaper clippings, corporate office files, ephemera, brochures, pamphlets, minutes, and photographs. Its processing was partly funded by Alexander N. Charters, former dean of University College and an adult education scholar, as part of his efforts in promoting and expanding the University’s adult education holdings.

The records will be of importance to social historians interested in the civil rights movement and anti-poverty programs; political scientists concerned with community organizing and policy implementation; as well as educators focused on creating equitable educational opportunities. Highlights of the collection include research on the attempts to integrate Syracuse city schools during the mid-1960s. Also of interest is the transcript of a 1963 interview with five black teenagers who candidly describe some of the issues they face on a daily basis, including what they believe to be unfair treatment by the police. A telegram from the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. and correspondence with Senator Robert Kennedy are also of particular note.

“The challenges facing the organization in the pivotal 1960s—spatial and educational segregation, race-based discrimination and social control, wealth inequity, lack of access to health care, and town-and-gown tensions—are the same pressing problems of our own pivotal historical moment,” Nordquist says. “The SCRC’s release of this collection is right on time.”

—Dane Flansburgh
Knight Wins 2nd NCAA Championship

ANOTHER NCAA NATIONAL MEET. Another national title for Orange distance runner Justyn Knight ’18. At the NCAA Division I Indoor Track and Field Championships on March 9-10 in College Station, Texas, Knight cruised to the 5,000-meter title, posting a 14:14.47 in the victory. Less than 24 hours later, Knight aimed for the 3,000-meter championship, but was outdueled in the final lap by Northern Arizona’s Andy Trouard (8:04.94) to finish second (8:05.76). “I think, effort-wise, I came out here and I did what I could do, and I’m pretty satisfied,” Knight said.

The 5,000-meter win was Knight’s second national championship in 2017-18, following his NCAA cross country title last fall. In Syracuse history, he is the fifth student-athlete—and first in 37 years—to collect multiple NCAA individual championships. It was also his third overall national championship, as he helped lead the Orange to the 2015 NCAA cross country title. “That means a lot—to write stuff down in the history books for SU,” he said. “I care about this program very much. It means a lot to me. Syracuse is very dear to my heart.”

Earlier in the season, the All-American captured both the 3,000- and 5,000-meter titles at the ACC indoor championships for the third straight time and was named the meet’s MVP for the second consecutive year. Knight, who owns 10 ACC individual titles, also won the 5,000-meter invite at the Iowa State Classic (posting a then national best of 13:39.59), and was runner-up in the 3,000 meters at New York’s prestigious Millrose Games, where he was the only collegian in the 12-man field. In addition, Knight broke his own school record in the mile with a 3:55.82 at the John Thomas Terrier Classic in Boston, where he placed second and was the top collegiate finisher.

Also representing the Orange at the NCAA indoors were Paige Stoner ’18, who finished eighth in the women’s 5,000-meter race; and Matt Moore ’20 and Angelo Goss ’18, who competed in the preliminaries of the 60-meter hurdles. All four SU student-athletes earned All-America honors for their performances. —Jay Cox

The men’s basketball team (23-14) may have been the final team selected for the NCAA tournament, but that didn’t stop the Orange from advancing to the Sweet 16 with wins over Arizona State (60-56), Texas Christian University (57-52), and Michigan State (55-53). The team’s magical run ended with a 69-65 loss to Duke in the Midwest semifinals in Omaha.

Lawrence Moten ’95, the all-time leading scorer for both the SU men’s basketball team and the Big East Conference, had his No. 21 jersey retired in the Carrier Dome during halftime of the SU-Clemson game on March 3. Moten tallied 2,334 points in 121 games for the Orange. He is the 11th Syracuse player to have his jersey retired.

The women’s basketball team completed the 2017-18 season with a 22-9 record, falling to Oklahoma State, 84-57, in the first round of the NCAA tournament in Starkville, Mississippi. It was the Orange women’s seventh NCAA tourney appearance and 10th 20-win season under Coach Quentin Hillsman.

Track alum Jarret Eaton ’12 finished second in the 60-meter hurdles at the IAAF World Championships in March in Birmingham, England. Prior to the world championships, the 2012 NCAA champion collected the 60-meter hurdles title at the U.S. Indoor Track and Field Championships.

Laura Dickinson ’21, running for Canada, placed second at the Pan American Cross Country Championships in La Libertad, El Salvador, in February.

Former All-American Martin Hehir ’16 took fifth at the U.S. Cross County Championships in Tallahassee, Florida, in February. He covered the 10K course in 29:33.6.

Volleyball libero Belle Sand ’18 was named the Eastern College Athletic Conference Defensive Player of the Year.

Women’s ice hockey alumna Akane Hosoyamada ’15 competed in the PyeongChang Winter Olympics as a member of the Japanese team.
100 years of changing lives

In 1918, Syracuse University was one of the first colleges in the country to open its doors to part-time students. It was an insightful move that matched the drive, discipline, and needs of the people it served.

Since then, University College has helped thousands transform their lives with a Syracuse University education. Today, the need for part-time and online education continues to increase. Help keep these pathways open by supporting scholarships, grants, and initiatives for dedicated University College students. Their commitment—and yours—is the heart of Orange spirit. Visit parttime.syr.edu/100years.
Making Music with the Band

It seems natural that Tim Diem gravitates toward teamwork. After all, as the director of athletic bands, the College of Visual and Performing Arts music professor is responsible for ensuring the 170 members of the SU Marching Band (SUMB) are all performing in sync. That’s no easy task, but Diem has spent a lifetime in sports and music and doesn’t hesitate to respond when someone calls him “Coach.” As a former high school baseball coach and a musically gifted former athlete, he draws parallels between being a musician and an athlete, noting both require dedication—putting in time, practicing, and mastering the fundamentals. “It’s hard to do both,” says the Delano, Minnesota, native. “But I was lucky enough to do both and I loved that.”

Diem took over the Pride of the Orange last summer after guiding the University of Minnesota Marching Band for 16 years, including 11 as director. While high-stepping, fight songs, and designing shows capture his attention these days, when he headed off to the University of Minnesota-Morris (UMM) as an undergraduate, he was focused on playing baseball. But a blown-out knee and a torn rotator cuff ended his baseball ambitions and, after exploring a mix of majors, he shifted his efforts toward the other constant in his life: playing the piano and being in a band. “I love the sounds, I love making music,” he says. “I love putting my hands on the keyboard and seeing what I can do. It’s a beautiful feeling.”

Diem discovered that sensation at age 5 when he started taking piano lessons and a trip to the movie theater several years later sealed the deal. “My dad took me to see Star Wars and when that opening chord hit, I thought, ‘Wow, this is cool stuff!’” he says. “I’ve been hooked ever since.” He earned a bachelor’s degree in instrumental music education and piano performance from UMM and, after working as a music teacher (combined with coaching baseball and basketball) for a few years in Elbow Lake, Minnesota, enrolled at the University of Northern Colorado, where he received master’s degrees in wind conducting and collaborative piano performance and a doctorate in wind conducting. While his love for music is evident, playing solo on the piano proved to be a “lonely place” for him. “I like people,” he says. “In bands and directing, you make music with others and I like that.”

As Diem settles into his role with SUMB, the Sour Sitrus Society, and other duties, he can draw on Big 10 traditions he learned at Minnesota and immerse himself in the history and traditions of SU. He sees his role as the keeper of tradition. On his desk is a stack of old school songs that he’s digging into, including “Bill Orange.” “What did you do with pregame 50 years ago that might fit with pregame now?” he asks. “We want to keep that fabric, so the alumni come back and go, ‘I remember that when I was a student.’” Making that connection is important. When the Pride of the Orange takes to the Carrier Dome field, he wants everyone to be entertained. “The students are giving all this time because they want to represent the University, perform, entertain, and be ambassadors,” he says. “It’s just a great, special group of people to be around all the time. And the connection with all the alumni adds to it. I didn’t realize how great of an environment it was until I got into it, and, you know, this is a good way to live life.” —Jay Cox
Compassionate Commitment

KELSEY MONTONDO ’18 CRIED WHEN SHE LEARNED she had been selected as a Remembrance Scholar, an honor she considers “the most incredible experience of my life.” Each year, the scholarships are awarded to 35 of the University’s most accomplished students in memory of the SU students killed in the December 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. For Montondo, a Falk College public health major and nutrition minor from Buffalo, being a Remembrance Scholar helped her understand the event’s significance as part of Syracuse University’s history. And she developed a deep personal connection with Julianne Kelly, one of the victims. “I learned about her story and her values, what her family and friends said about her,” Montondo says. “It resonated with me. That’s exactly how I would like to live my life. I care so much about this person I never met. And it’s nice to think that I’m carrying on her legacy, and that, hopefully, I’m doing a good job of what she would be doing if she were here.”

Montondo’s compassion for others shines through in all of her activities at SU, including her enthusiasm for her studies. “I didn’t even know public health was a thing before coming to Syracuse,” she says. “And I fell in love with it. It’s the perfect fit for me, because it’s more of an overarching view of health care—learning about cultural competence and health literacy—rather than just focusing on the hard sciences.”

She especially appreciates the service learning classes that provided opportunities to volunteer at community-based nonprofit organizations. At ACR Health, which provides support to people with chronic diseases, she worked at a mobile clinic and designed a survey to help the agency better serve individuals with substance abuse disorders. She also assisted at West Side Learning Center, which offers programs for adult English language learners who are newcomers to the United States. Additionally, Montondo assisted with the Syracuse Lead Study, a research project led by Brooks Gump, Falk Family Endowed Professor of Public Health, exploring how lead affects the cardiovascular system in children.

Montondo’s extracurricular involvements also center on her care for those around her and her passion for promoting health and well-being. As president of Phi Delta Epsilon premedical fraternity, she offered guidance and support to her fellow students interested in the health professions and organized fundraisers for Upstate Golisano Children’s Hospital in Syracuse. She’s a counselor for Camp Kesem, a summer camp and peer support program for children affected by a parent’s cancer. And she helped establish a new student organization devoted to training service dogs. “We got our first puppy over the summer,” she says. “People on campus get excited when they see her, so it’s a great way to talk about why we’re training her and why people need service dogs.”

Among her most valued experiences at SU is her work as a certified New York State emergency medical technician for Syracuse University Ambulance (SUA), a student-run SU Health Services organization that provides round-the-clock emergency and non-emergency services during the academic year. Montondo’s efforts at SUA helped affirm her goals to become a clinical health care provider with a focus on preventative medicine. “It’s cool to be giving back by doing something beneficial,” she says. “I think that’s super important. But I’m in it for helping people—trying to make an uncomfortable experience a little bit better for someone.” —Amy Speach
FOR AS LONG AS SHE CAN REMEMBER, MAXWELL PROFESSOR GLADYS MCCORMICK has been drawn to politics and history. She grew up in Costa Rica in the 1980s, a time of turmoil in other parts of Central America. “Costa Rica was sort of a bastion of security and safety—we didn’t have the civil wars that were happening elsewhere,” says McCormick, a historian who joined the Maxwell faculty in 2010. “But this is a connected region and, much as it happens today, we saw the spillover of insecurity. The U.S. Embassy was bombed and there was an influx of refugees. So even as a kid, I tried to understand what was going on in the world around me.”

That desire eventually led to her interest in Mexico, a country whose history she finds fascinating. “I gravitated toward Mexico from a young age and I’ve lived there off and on for many years,” says McCormick, who was named the Jay and Debe Moskowitz Endowed Chair in Mexico-U.S. Relations in 2017. “It is much like Costa Rica, so it feels like home—but much bigger, more cosmopolitan, more international, and with more opportunities for women.”

In her research, McCormick examines the power and longevity of one-party rule in Mexico and explores the relationships between the country’s political system and issues of corruption, drug trafficking, and political violence. Because Mexico has essentially had one political party in power since 1928, its government provides a case study of authoritarianism, she says. “The story of how this kind of political system had been set up had largely been told from the perspective of urban centers and Mexico City,” says McCormick, who holds a bachelor’s degree from Hampshire College and a doctoral degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. But her research revealed an earlier time period when government officials used people in the countryside as a kind of “laboratory” to test control techniques they later transported to urban centers, including strategically deployed violence, manipulation of historical memory, and institutionalized corruption. “I was surprised and shocked,” she says. “It’s a pretty damning story.”

She shares her discoveries, gleaned through her study of declassified intelligence reports and oral histories, in her book, The Logic of Compromise in Mexico: How the Countryside Was Key to the Emergence of Authoritarianism (University of North Carolina Press, 2016). Her current projects include a book examining the history of political prisoners and the use of torture since the 1970s in Mexico, and a co-authored book on the history of drug trafficking and the drug trade in Latin America. “What we see in Mexico is a perfect example of a precarious state in which so many official actors have a foot in both the legal and extralegal worlds,” she says. “To envision tenable solutions that have long-term implications, we need to understand the origins of Mexico’s current security crisis.”

A beloved teacher of courses on such subjects as Latin America, political violence, and oral history methods, McCormick received Maxwell’s Daniel Patrick Moynihan Award for Teaching and Research in 2017 and a Meredith Teaching Recognition Award from SU in 2014. She also mentors students impacted by changes to U.S. immigration policies, and serves on the University’s Committee on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)/Undocumented Students. “A lot of these students represent the best of the best,” she says. “They value education and are committed to it. So it’s been a wonderful experience to mentor them—to be someone who relates to what they’ve gone through. They will eventually be among the ones who go out there and change the world.”

—Amy Speach
Faith and Religion in Migratory Communities

Since he was a child, Cameron MacPherson’s family impressed on him the importance of looking outward rather than inward—and of ensuring that the actions he takes in life make his world a better place. MacPherson ’16, a graduate student in Pan African studies in the College of Arts and Sciences (A&S), will continue to do just that as a recipient of the prestigious George J. Mitchell Scholarship for graduate study in Ireland. He is Syracuse University’s first Mitchell Scholar, and one of only 12 U.S. students selected from more than 300 applicants in 2017. He will study intercultural theology at Trinity College in Dublin.

A former member of the Renée Crown University Honors Program and a 2015-16 Remembrance Scholar, MacPherson earned a bachelor’s degree in international relations from A&S/Maxwell School and in television, radio, and film from the Newhouse School. He was an exemplary student-athlete, playing football for the Orange and receiving CoSIDA Academic All-America First Team honors. MacPherson was also a district finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship, but withdrew his application to pursue the Mitchell award. The Mitchell Scholarship Program, named to honor former U.S. Senator George Mitchell’s pivotal contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process, is an initiative of the U.S.-Ireland Alliance. The award introduces and connects future American leaders to Ireland and recognizes and fosters intellectual achievement, leadership, and a commitment to community and public service.

MacPherson will enroll in a one-year master of philosophy program in intercultural theology and interreligious studies. He has studied refugee resettlement, particularly with Congolese populations, since he was an undergraduate. “Over the years, I have learned the crucial role that faith and religion play in migratory communities,” he says. “Religious spaces not only create shared cultural experiences that perpetuate a distinct identity, but also enable the exchange of knowledge among newcomers to assist with integrative outcomes.”

At Trinity College, he will examine the dynamic processes that shape religion as a cultural identity and analyze the social role of faith in migratory communities. “Studying in Ireland will provide a unique perspective on how religion can be used to promote social cohesion and peace in the face of conflict, which often shape the cultural practices of refugees and other forced migrants,” says MacPherson, who plans to create multimedia scholarship as he investigates his research questions and their implications.

Last summer, MacPherson conducted research on grassroots social organizations in Boston’s Congolese community and served as a case manager at a Congolese Development Center. He has also interned with U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand’s office to learn more about public policy and refugee issues. A spoken word poet, he volunteers with Writing Our Lives, a creative literacy program for local middle school students.

MacPherson’s family is deeply rooted in the Syracuse University and greater Syracuse communities. His late grandfather, Dick MacPherson, was the legendary head coach of the Syracuse foot-
Ultimate Investments

IN HONOR OF THE SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY EDUCATION AND military service that established a foundation for his success, Life Trustee Daniel D’Aniello and his wife, Gayle, provided a $20 million gift for the National Veterans Resource Center | BY AMY SPEACH

TIMES WERE TOUGH AND resources were scarce when Daniel D’Aniello ’68 was a student at Syracuse University. So much so, he recalls, that his grandmother had to go into her china closet and empty the emergency sugar bowl of the precious few dollars set aside there to help him out in his second semester. “We just didn’t have enough money to even have a bank account,” he says.

Things are very different now for D’Aniello, a noted philanthropist and founding partner and Chairman Emeritus of The Carlyle Group, a global alternative asset management company based in Washington, D.C. Yet he remembers those leaner days with fondness and gratitude. A native of Butler, Pennsylvania, D’Aniello was an only child raised by a single parent—his mother. He says he knew back then there were no funds for him to go to college. Originally, an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy seemed to provide the perfect solution, until a physical exam in the spring of his senior year of high school revealed a slight heart murmur. It later proved harmless, but necessitated a new plan for achieving his education goals. “They told me to take a year at a prep school while they decided if I could be admitted, but I didn’t want that,” D’Aniello says. Instead, he sought the advice of his gymnastics coach, who helped him obtain invitations from three universities. Two were offers for full athletic scholarships. But the one he found most appealing, though challenging, was an offer for a half-tuition academic scholarship at Syracuse University that required him to maintain Dean’s List status.

D’Aniello’s decision to scrape together every penny he could to invest in that opportunity laid the foundation for a profoundly successful career. It also launched his lifelong relationship with Syracuse—the place he now thinks of as his “true north”—the alma mater he holds dear. And it instilled in him an appreciation for all those who offered him a helping hand along the way, and a commitment to giving to others in return. Those three factors recently came together in the form of a transformational $20 million gift to the University from D’Aniello and his wife, Gayle. One of the largest single gifts in the institution’s history, it stands as a powerful testimony to the value of a Syracuse University education, from one who knows. “I think of Syracuse as my foundation, my launching pad, my family,” says D’Aniello, who has two daughters, Dana G’04, a Newhouse graduate, and Bethany. “And I hope others who go there can be helped by my involvement.”

While at Syracuse, D’Aniello was a member of the gymnastics team and a Dean’s List student throughout his four years and received a full academic scholarship by his junior year. A member of the Beta Gamma Sigma honor society for business scholars, he earned a bachelor’s degree in transportation economics at what is now the Whitman School of Management, graduating magna cum laude as Class Marshal. “When I arrived at Syracuse, I didn’t know a soul. I didn’t know if I could make it financially. I didn’t even know if I could make it academically,” says D’Aniello, who received a 2017 Arents Award for Excellence in Business and Philanthropic Leadership, the University’s highest alumni honor. “But the people who reached out to me once I was there pulled me up and set me on a path of believing in myself. And that changed my life.”

The confidence D’Aniello gained as a student helped him prosper in leadership roles throughout his life, from his service as an officer in the U.S. Navy aboard the U.S.S. Wasp from 1968 to 1971 to earning an MBA from Harvard Business School as a Teagle Foundation Fellow. He then advanced in a number of corporate financial positions, including serving as financial officer at PepsiCo Inc. and Trans World Airlines and vice president for finance and development at the Marriott Corporation, before leaving in 1987 to form The Carlyle Group. Today, Carlyle boasts 31 offices across six continents, with $195 billion in assets under management. “You learn very quickly how important communications and interpersonal relationships are in the context of building leadership skills and being able to motivate people around goals and objectives,” says
D’Aniello, who in 2016 was recognized with the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation’s Lone Sailor Award for drawing upon his service experience to achieve success, while exemplifying the core values of honor, courage, and commitment. “That was enabled by the confidence I had received in building my foundation from a thatched hut to a brick building by the time I graduated from Syracuse.”

Widely respected for his generosity, D’Aniello considers it a privilege to share his wealth and success with others. His philanthropic work is far-reaching, with a focus on faith-based charity, education and the military, mental health, the performing arts, and free enterprise. He is co-chairman of the American Enterprise Institute, a member of the U.S.-China CEO and Former Senior Government Officials’ Dialogue of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Council for United States and Italy, an advisor to the John Templeton Foundation, chairman of the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, and a founding trustee of the Lumen Institute. “I came to realize early on in my life that there were people living their lives for me and that you have to pay back the people who are being good to you,” he says. “So it’s a terrific feeling to be able to help people and to invest in them. It’s very fulfilling.”

At Syracuse, D’Aniello has extended his generosity in countless ways through the years, consistently and broadly supporting the University, including serving on the Board of Trustees, the Chancellor’s Council, and the Whitman School’s Corporate Advisory Council. He has contributed to scholarship funds, student experiential learning, the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans with Disabilities, and the University-wide D’Aniello Family Speaker Series. He is advisory board co-chair and a strong supporter of the Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF), which is particularly meaningful to him as a veteran. “Dan D’Aniello touches so much of what we do at Syracuse University,” says Michael Haynie, the University’s vice chancellor for strategic initiatives and innovation and IVMF’s executive director. “He is one of our most committed alums. We could not do what we do here without him.”

D’Aniello’s most recent contribution to the University, announced in February, is especially grand. The $20 million gift supports construction of the National Veterans Resource Center (NVRC), a first-of-its-kind facility that will house the IVMF, the nation’s leading academic institute focused on the concerns of more than 20 million veterans and their families, as well as ROTC offices and other veteran-focused educational, vocational, and community engagement programs.

Slated to open in spring 2020, the NVRC will serve as an exemplar of academic, government, and community collaboration and will build upon and advance the University’s already strong national leadership in the veterans’ community. The NVRC will house programs designed to advance the economic success of the region’s and the nation’s veterans and military families, and also serve as a platform through which to seed, nurture, and coordinate veteran-connected academic research and technology commercialization.

Chancellor Kent Syverud calls the D’Aniello family’s gift a profoundly transformative one that will allow the University to fulfill its promise of being the best place for veterans. “The commitment that Dan and Gayle D’Aniello have made to Syracuse University, to our students, to our faculty, and to our veterans will have a tremendous impact on our University for generations to come,” he says. “Dan has dedicated his life to service—first in uniform and later as an entrepreneur, business leader, and philanthropist. Syracuse University is deeply grateful for the D’Aniello family’s support, which has the potential to change the lives of millions of veterans and military families.”

For D’Aniello, the gift represents an opportunity to further advance his alma mater’s vision and goals. “Gayle and I are proud and honored to be able to support current and future students, especially those who have served and will serve in our nation’s armed forces,” he says. “The University understands and appreciates the significant contributions made by veterans and military families, and the great role they play in our society. This new center will be a game changer in the ongoing efforts to better the post-service lives of our veterans and their families. I feel totally privileged to be in a position to help.” ∫
What Is Big Data?
In addition to routine digital information generated by corporations, institutions, and governments, Big Data includes the digital footprints left behind by our Google searches, online shopping sprees, and Netflix binges. Its volume expands every time we click a mouse, swipe a screen, tweet, text, like, share, post on Facebook, or watch a video on YouTube.

The Dynamics of BIG DATA

Thanks to our ever-increasing interconnectivity, we create enormous amounts of data—and Syracuse faculty are teaching students how to work with the information, as well as examining its benefits and liabilities

BY DENISE OWEN HARRIGAN

FIRST CAME THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION, which transformed the way we connect and consume. In its wake, we have Big Data—the revolution after the revolution—and it’s transforming the way we make decisions large and small. To the untrained eye, Big Data looks like digital debris—a tsunami-sized whirlpool of structured and unstructured numbers, letters, photos, videos, sound bites, tweets, likes, shares, and other fallout from our online escapades. But in the hands of astute data analysts, Big Data is an ever-more-precious commodity. Insights gleaned from organizing and analyzing Big Data are changing the way we buy and sell goods, trade stocks, play ball, loan money, practice medicine, conduct scientific research, allocate resources, and even campaign for president.

At Syracuse, Big Data is a big player. It’s steering academic programs in new directions, igniting interest throughout campus, and inspiring new research questions and innovative research methodologies. “Big Data is like a big city,” observes Newhouse professor Stephen Masiclat, director of the school’s graduate program in new media management. “There are many roads through it, and many ways to discover meaningful patterns in different disciplines.”

In the late 1990s, Amazon was among the first to spin its digital data into gold.
The company analyzed its sales patterns and developed a lucrative formula for suggesting additional items to online customers. Facebook and Google monetized their data by tracking their users’ online activity and targeting advertisements—and newsfeed—accordingly. Offering a word to the wise, School of Information Studies (iSchool) professor Jennifer Stromer-Galley notes: “The price we pay for ‘free’ Gmail and Facebook is our permission to track our online activity and advertise to us.”

DEMAND FOR DATA SCIENTISTS

As Big Data’s ability to deliver insights and increase revenue has soared, so has demand for data scientists, the information specialists who access, organize, and analyze ever-larger data sets. For the past two years, the website Glass Door has ranked data scientist as the top job in America, based on job openings, job satisfaction, and salary. In 2016, Burning Glass Technologies, the world’s largest database of labor market data, reported a 40 percent increase in the demand for data scientists and an average advertised salary of $105,000.

Last fall, Syracuse enrolled 169 students in a new master’s degree program in applied data science. The 36-credit program, a collaboration between the iSchool and the Whitman School of Management, is offered on campus and online. “The curriculum brings together the information science and management skills required to apply analytical concepts and gain actionable insights in a data-driven world,” iSchool professor Jeffrey Saltz says.

The timing was perfect for online student Tin Ho-ang of Seattle, who works with Boeing on a business intelligence team. When he learned of Syracuse’s new program in applied data science, he was earning a master’s degree in business analytics from the Whitman School—but leaning in a more technical direction. He had a computer science background, he says, but lacked the methodology that links statistics, math, and programming. Since Whitman and the iSchool jointly offer the program, Tin was able to transfer the five management classes he’d completed. “The two schools work in tandem, allowing you to go heavy on the technical side or the business side, which is quite flexible,” he says.

Like Tin, other students in the applied data science program entered with significant work experience in varied fields. Their data processing experience varied as well. “But today’s sophisticated data science tools help students with less technical background to catch on quickly,” says Saltz, who teaches the Introduction to Applied Data Science class.

Saltz joined the iSchool in 2014 after 20 years with JPMorgan Chase and Goldman Sachs, where he witnessed the increasingly vital role of Big Data in risk management and financial services. In his introductory class, Saltz has students work in teams. Their first challenge is to search for actionable insights “where you can take specific actions based on the analysis,” he says.

According to Deep Jatin Maniyar, an iSchool graduate student enrolled in the program, the challenge is in developing useful questions that can be answered from the data. “You need to be very curious to learn data science, and I have that in me,” says Maniyar, whose background spans engineering, electronics, and marketing. “But formulating the questions happens much better in a group setting. You start brainstorming by collecting different ideas from everyone.”

Such teamwork is integral to Saltz’s teaching agenda. When he worked in the finance industry, in positions such as chief information officer, he realized there were no best practices for communication and coordination across extended data science teams. Saltz’s academic research now addresses this need. As his student teams develop data science skills, they help him test the best methodologies for data team management.

The iSchool’s innovative and interdisciplinary culture is a major draw for Ernst & Young, which recruits more iSchool graduates than any other em-
“In addition to their analytic skills, we need graduates who have confidence in their communication skills and knowledge of the business domain,” says Yang Shim, the Ernst & Young (EY) principal who leads the firm’s digital, data, and analytics advisory practices for its financial services office. “I like to say that Big Data is a solution looking for a problem. If you don’t know how to articulate the business problem, you won’t know what to do with the data.”

Shim’s data and analytics practices have hired at least 10 iSchool graduates in each of the past two years. A recent EY survey found that 80 percent of top executives believe data should be at the heart of all decision making. With the digital transformation still accelerating, “the velocity and volume of Big Data will not lessen,” Shim says. “But it’s not about the size of the data. It’s about knowing what data is useful and using it to create value.”

Data visualization is another critical tool for data analysts. “Presenting findings in tables, graphs, and animation helps to clarify the data, at every stage of the process,” says iSchool professor Jeffrey Hemsley, whose elegant visualizations have been displayed in museums and art galleries. But accuracy is imperative. “By presenting data out of scale, you can misrepresent the data,” he says, and mislead viewers.

STORYTELLING SUPPORT

At the Newhouse School, students are analyzing data to construct solid stories as well as distribute content. “In journalism, it’s no longer enough to build a story around ‘he said-she said,’” says Jodi Upton, Knight Chair of Data and Explanatory Journalism at Newhouse. “Data has driven my storytelling from the moment I realized that data and documents could tell me things no interview could.” Upton joined the Newhouse faculty last year after working for 20 years as a data journalist, most recently as senior database editor at USA Today.

While data can add credibility and objectivity to public interest stories, it can be misused to mislead or deceive readers. “Data doesn’t lie, but it sometimes mumbles,” she says. “Determining the validity of raw data is one of the key skills we work on.”

Upton’s former student Mahima Singh G’17 recently employed that skill...
as a data intern with The Palm Beach Post. While comparing a local school district’s glowing report on teacher satisfaction with actual teacher satisfaction surveys, she found significant discrepancies. “At first I thought it was me,” Singh says. “But I sat down and manually did the math.”

The school district attributed its inflated teacher satisfaction rates to a change in methodology, but it also apologized to the community. “This is how data journalism helps reporters fulfill their First Amendment obligation to make our government and institutions accountable,” Upton says. “Our democracy really does depend on this.”

Long before Big Data—when the internet was in its infancy—Syracuse’s Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) was a pioneer in gathering, analyzing, and sharing huge amounts of government data, often collected through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). “TRAC was the first information resource in the nation to combine federal computerized records with the FOIA mandate,” says TRAC cofounder Susan B. Long, a professor of management statistics in the Whitman School.

For close to 30 years, TRAC has continuously used FOIA to provide greater transparency of government enforcement and regulatory activities. Its findings (shared at trac.syr.edu) are frequently accessed by government agencies and cited in the media and research journals. “We’re self-supporting and don’t serve a special interest group or promote a particular philosophy,” says TRAC cofounder David Burnham, a Newhouse research professor and former investigative reporter. “The numbers speak for themselves.”

With close to half of today’s news consumed online, according to the Pew Research Center, data analysis plays a key role in distributing news content. Because communications students often arrive with stronger verbal than math skills, Newhouse’s Masiclat warns students in his Applied Research in Content Management course, “There will be math,” he says. “My course is the cause of tremendous fear.”

Masiclat’s students post their stories on the class website (livablecny.com), then run Google searches to rate their performance against other stories across the web. “That’s the reality of journalism today,” he says. “By comparing their work with highly ranked stories, students begin to understand what quality markers propel stories to the top.”

Newhouse graduate student Peter Benson took Masiclat’s course last semester. “It was super fascinating to learn how the back end of the internet works,” he says. A big factor is the page on which your content appears in a Google search. “Most people don’t look past page two or three, and no one searches past 10,” says Benson, who learned to improve his page rank through what’s known as search engine optimization—adding key words or links to other sites.

For Newhouse professor Jodi Upton, data journalism provides a way to check the work of governments and institutions and hold them accountable.

“Data has driven my storytelling from the moment I realized that data and documents could tell me things no interview could.”  
—JODI UPTON

Social Media and Big Data
Social media offers a treasure trove of user information for data analysts. In fact, without the vast amount of social media content, Big Data would not be so big.
ACCELERATING COMPUTATIONAL RESEARCH

BIG DATA—IN FACT, DATA SETS OF ALL SIZES—IS CHANGING PARADIGMS AND DRIVING GROWTH IN THE research realm at Syracuse. The greatest increase in computer activity campus wide is research-related, says Eric Sedore, associate chief information officer. “Syracuse’s investment in computational research is essential if researchers are to move forward and secure grants.”

Sedore estimates that a dozen or more Syracuse researchers work with vast amounts of data, while hundreds more use data on a smaller scale. The University offers four computing resources that can be customized to researchers’ needs, including a 14,000-core virtual computing cloud known as Orange Grid. In an effort to utilize every available resource, Syracuse harnesses the power of campus computers sitting idle at night and converts them to research apparatus. “It’s unusual but not unheard of [at universities],” Sedore says. “The researchers’ demands keep growing: ‘Go faster! Store more!’ We’re super excited to do this.”

And when the computational re-search generates astounding results—such as when a team from the physics department played an influential role in the 2017 Nobel Prize for the discovery of gravitational waves—“We are thrilled to stand in the background and celebrate their success,” Sedore says. Here’s a look at some projects driven by computational research:

Engineering Pathways through the Blood-Brain Barrier

Before accusing Shikha Nangia of drug smuggling, consider her ultimate goal. “As scientists, we have not been able to get drugs past the blood-brain barrier to treat diseases like Alzheimer’s and brain tumors,” says the professor of biomedical and chemical engineering. With Alzheimer’s rates soaring, the quest has been elevated to urgent. “We have to figure out how to open and close that barrier so drugs can get through,” she says.

With a $500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), Nangia uses computer simulation to mimic drug molecules as they attempt to navigate the layer of cells that forms the blood-brain barrier. The goal is to engineer thermodynamically favorable pathways for the transport of the desired drug molecules.

In 2016, Nangia used part of another NSF grant to hire seven undergraduates and a Ph.D. candidate for a summer of computational research involving a new class of antibiotics.

Spurred by the fact that the vast majority of students are not familiar with this promising research methodology, Nangia is also introducing local high school teachers to computational research.

Tracking Tumor Cells

A combination of elegant mathematics and practical applications drew Professor Lisa Manning to the field of physics. But she was a postdoctoral student at Princeton before she began using computers to help bridge the gap between the theoretical and practical.

Today, one of Manning’s research groups is exploring cell migration by using tools from statistical physics to analyze large amounts of cellular data. Their findings suggest that cells in biological tissues can behave like glass, transitioning from solid to liquid. This disordered state might help explain how cancer cells, for example, change form, exit tumors, and travel through the body. “So much of cancer is mechanical,” Manning says.

Syracuse’s high-performance computer environment plays a central role in Manning’s widely lauded research. It’s also a major draw when she recruits graduate students and postdoctoral associates. “They come to my lab with advanced coding skills and teach me,” says Manning, who also credits Larne Pekowsky, the cyberinfrastructure engineer in Research Computing at SU. “Thanks to all this support, we can focus on the science.”

Social Media’s Endless Data Stream

Reza Zafarani doesn’t post on Facebook, but he is much indebted to the 2.2 billion people who do. The wealth of personal information shared on social media creates an endless stream of useful data for Zafarani, a professor of electrical engineering and computer science. As his textbook Social Media Mining (Cambridge University Press, 2014) suggests, Zafarani makes his living scanning social media for actionable insights.

He begins a research project by asking a question, such as “Can computers detect sarcasm on Twitter?” It’s often a loaded question, admits Zafarani. “We know that machines are not good at detecting nuance.” So in a study with colleagues at Arizona State University, Zafarani looked beyond the tweets in question for helpful information.

An expert in machine learning, Zafarani codes computers to make decisions based on multiple sources of data. In the sarcasm study, the user’s behavioral and psychological traits—as detected in previous tweets—were added to linguistic and other criteria traditionally used to detect sarcasm. Zafarani and his colleagues then developed a tool that detects sarcasm with 86 percent accuracy—versus the average human accuracy rate of 76 percent.

The complexity of Zafarani’s algorithms and sheer volume of social media—Twitter alone generates 200 million tweets per day—often make his research projects more data, “I make an effort to share my work, because I know it can always be improved with more feedback and more data,” he says.
sistent with increasing evidence that social media is a powerful player—and a generator of powerful data. According to the Pew Research Center, 62 percent of Americans access at least some of their news through social media. Hemsley, co-author of Going Viral (Polity, 2013), understands the magnetic appeal of social media. It bypasses the mass media gatekeepers and “gives a voice to legitimate causes,” he says. “Social media coverage of Occupy Wall Street, for example, changed our conversation about income inequality.”

Stromer-Galley, whose research focus is human interaction through digital technologies, agrees. “Social media seemed to have great potential for breaking power structures and promoting interactivity, especially in politics,” she says. But in her book Presidential Campaigning in the Internet Age (Oxford University Press, 2014), Stromer-Galley concludes, “Campaigns aren’t generally interested in promoting genuine interaction about strategy or policy.”

Facebook, though, has proven very effective in helping candidates attract voters and raise money. And with the aid of its user profiles, Facebook can steer political advertisements toward potential supporters. For the 2016 presidential election, Stromer-Galley and a team of students and faculty helped categorize the candidates’ Facebook posts and tweets for the website Illuminating 2016. The site (illuminating.ischool.syr.edu) was created to help journalists navigate the enormous volume of data generated by social media. The project is supported by the Tow Center for Digital Journalism at Columbia University as well as the Center for Computational and Data Science and the Behavior, Information, Technology and Society Laboratory, both at the iSchool. It was hoped Illuminating ’16 would give journalists a broad view of the candidates’ positions, over time. “We learned instead that journalists were more inclined to report on day-to-day campaign activities and did not take a longer view,” Stromer-Galley says.

The website will continue to track social media for the 2018 elections, especially state campaigns, which are often underfunded and underreported by journalists. “We believe strongly in using applied research to address social problems and improve our political system,” Stromer-Galley says.

DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

Big Data, with its extraordinary potential to generate insight and address problems, can be a double-edged sword. Data experts at the iSchool remind us that sharing information online can have unintended consequences. Consider the Facebook-Cambridge Analytica data scandal, for instance. Once we turn over an email address or turn on an app, our activity can be tracked. Facebook, Google, and many commercial ventures amass and make money from our data. “Few people know how complex and invasive this is,” Stromer-Galley says. “So much information is compiled about us—and kept from us. We have to pay to see our own credit reports.”

Marketers now engage in psychographics, which analyze our online activity and segment us according to five main personality traits: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (OCEAN). Armed with such information, “marketing can slip into manipulation,” Stromer-Galley says. “With Big Data, it’s so sophisticated, and internet laws are so lax. This is why we need information literacy classes.”

Some of the greatest perils are cyberattacks and major data breaches, adds Saltz. Our anonymity is also at risk. We may think our data is anonymous, but, by linking several data sets, one can re-engineer a person’s identity. “That’s why we’re always working ethics into the curriculum,” he says. “If the data is important enough to collect and analyze, it’s important to think through the impact of that analysis on people’s lives.”

“**The price we pay for ‘free’ Gmail and Facebook is our permission to track our online activity and advertise to us.”**

—JENNIFER STROMER-GALLEY
The Educational Model Program on Water-Energy Research serves as an interdisciplinary graduate-level training ground for scientists.
ROBIN GLAS IS A DOCTORAL CANDIDATE in Earth sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences who conducts research in the glaciated Andes Mountains of Peru. She’s interested in what happens as the glaciers melt away due to climate change and how that affects the people who depend on the glacial melt water for municipal and agricultural use. Geoffrey Millard G’16 is a doctoral student in civil and environmental engineering in the College of Engineering and Computer Science whose research includes examining the impact of acid and mercury deposition and climate change on aquatic ecosystems in the Adirondacks. Darci Pauser G’16 is a Ph.D. student in political science in the Maxwell School whose research focuses on countries along the Tigris-Euphrates and Jordan-Yarmouk river basins. She’s studying how policy makers in those countries negotiate and make decisions about managing the allocation and quality of water across transnational boundaries.

While their specific areas of study are diverse—as are the paths that led them to Syracuse University—they share a common status as graduate students who are invested in issues related to water and energy. All three are also participants in the Educational Model Program on Water-Energy Research (EMPOWER), an interdisciplinary professional development initiative for master’s and doctoral degree students focused on research at the interface of water and energy cycles.

“EMPOWER is about integrating your research—the central component of your degree—with career preparedness and exploring an area of professional specialization that takes you beyond your field,” Glas says. “It gets you out of your department and out of your office and brings lots of other fascinating aspects of science to the forefront.”

The program’s purpose is to develop new approaches to graduate training in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields that better prepare students for careers both within and outside higher education. “The goal is founded on the data that, most often, when people have a graduate degree in STEM, they don’t do research in an academic setting,” says EMPOWER director Laura Lautz G’05, Jessie Page Heroy Professor and Earth sciences department chair in the College of Arts and Sciences. “Even though, traditionally, when we are training Ph.D. students, we’re often thinking they’re going to become professors and do research, the reality is that most don’t end up in that kind of career. And so we are trying to augment these graduate programs to provide more training for the careers people actually do end up in: working in a research lab or doing research for a nonprofit, for example, or going into the energy industry, environmental consulting, or the government.”

Lautz offers several reasons for the program’s focus on the “water-energy nexus,” which describes the interrelationship between human needs for water and energy. “The water cycle and the energy cycle are explicitly intertwined, especially when it comes to fossil fuels,” she says, citing hydrofracking as one example of an energy production method that people have concerns about in terms of water quality and water management. “In that sense, it is a topic that requires people from different disciplines. And it is a natural field to bring students together from different programs who are addressing those issues from many perspectives.” Another reason Lautz notes is that issues related to water and energy are a national priority with broad implications for policy, health, and well-being. “It is also an area in which a lot of students are seeking graduate degrees,” she says, “but are planning to use those degrees to be competitive in sectors other than the professor path that might be more common in other disciplines.”

“EMPOWER is about integrating your research—the central component of your degree—with career preparedness and exploring an area of professional specialization that takes you beyond your field.”

—Robin Glas

EMPOWER trainees (from left) JR Slosson, Sam Caldwell, and Robin Glas with Earth sciences professor Chris Scholz

A SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT

EMPOWER, which grew from the earlier work of the University’s Water Science and Engineering Initiative, got its official start in April 2015, when a team of SU faculty from several disciplines
“We are trying to augment these graduate programs to provide more training for the careers people actually do end up in: working in a research lab or doing research for a nonprofit, for example, or going into the energy industry, environmental consulting, or the government.”
—Laura Lautz G’05

was awarded $3 million from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The grant, part of the NSF Research Traineeship (NRT) program, provides EMPOWER fellows with a one-year, $32,000 stipend. It also underwrites such components of the NRT program as the development of field courses, a seed grant program, and an external advisory committee of nationally recognized professionals.

One of only eight initial NRT programs in the country, EMPOWER is built around several core elements that combine broad training in management, policy, communication, and law with in-depth training in a self-designed focus area most applicable to students’ individual career objectives. Program offerings include a weekly Water-Energy Nexus Seminar and visiting lecture series, individually tailored career skills coursework at one or more of the University’s professional schools, science communication coursework at the Newhouse School, and an internship or other substantial career-related opportunity that allows students to integrate their research activities with a professional experience. “As an NSF-funded program, we’re essentially running our own kind of research experiment,” Lautz says. “The students are doing their research experiments, but in our experiment, the students are the subject. We’re figuring out how we can best meet their needs through testing new methods and assessing their impact on student outcomes. We’re trying things. We’re evaluating whether they’re successful. And then based on that experience, we know the best way to move forward.”

For students like Glas, Millard, and Pauser, the experiment is yielding positive effects. They cite such benefits as improved technical and professional skills, increased awareness of the broader impacts of water-energy research, and a strong sense of community among their colleagues and faculty in the program. “It’s more than just a one-year fellowship—it’s being part of a community of people who are interested in the same issue area,” says Pauser, who holds a master’s degree in public administration with a specialization in environmental policy from the Maxwell School and is the first social scientist to participate in EMPOWER. “So I’m excited to see what the other fellows do with their research and in their lives and careers. It’s a research network, but also a social network. A job network, too. If we want to solve all these complex problems, forming these connections is incredibly important. We can all learn from each other.”

The program is also widening students’ perspectives of career opportunities. For Glas, completing a six-month internship with the U.S. Geological Survey—a federal agency whose scientists study the country’s landscape, natural resources, and natural hazards—offered a glimpse of a professional world that was completely new to her. “That was amazing,” says Glas, a former middle and high school Earth sciences teacher. “I actually got to see how a federal office works—what’s the pay scale like and how do you get in and what’s the dynamic between the scientists and the technical people? So I learned all those ins and outs of the workings of a government office.”

Millard echoes her appreciation for the broader possibilities made evident through EMPOWER. “When I started, I very much felt like I wanted to work at a smaller, liberal arts university as a professor, and I do still think that I would be good at that job and enjoy it,” says Millard, who holds a master’s degree in environmental engineering science from the College of Engineering and Computer Science (E&CS) and a certificate of advanced study in sustainable enterprise from the Whitman School of Management. “But now I know that I would also be good at a variety of other things that would provide a continual challenge and help me grow professionally. I’ve learned a lot about what some of the other options are after I have a Ph.D. and I’m looking for work. Previous to going through the EMPOWER program, I don’t know if I would have the skill set, the confidence, or the knowledge of all the University resources that are available.”

POSITIONED FOR SUCCESS
EMPOWER’s first group of trainees began in fall 2016, followed by a second in fall 2017. To date, the program has served 30 students—three who graduated last year and 27 current participants—among them students pursuing master’s or doctoral degrees in chemistry, Earth sciences, civil and environmental engineering, mechanical and aerospace engineering, and political science.

The program’s leadership team is equally diverse. In addition to Lautz, faculty leaders include Charles Driscoll, University Professor of Environmental Systems and a Distinguished Professor in E&CS; civil and environmental engineering professor Chris John-
son; Earth sciences professors Christopher Junium and Christopher Scholz; chemistry professor Tara Kahan; Newhouse professors Donald Torrance and Erica Goode; Peter Wilcoxen, public administration and international affairs professor in the Maxwell School; and Donald Siegel, Earth sciences professor emeritus.

According to Driscoll, who is a leading advocate of scientific and technological literacy, the interdisciplinary training students gain through EMPOWER will position them for success in multiple fields and allow them to better analyze, interpret, and present their research findings in a context that will be useful to energy and water managers and the environmental community. The program’s commitment to an interdisciplinary approach also enhances the University’s capacity to become a national leader in graduate-level STEM education, he says. And in terms of the immediate benefits for graduate students, he already sees the program as a successful one. “Students have gotten together and worked closely with one another,” Driscoll says. “There’s a lot of interaction among different departments that I think students really like. And they’ve got a lot of new colleagues and friends and are learning from those interactions as well.”

Wilcoxen also points to EMPOWER’s strength as an interdisciplinary training ground for scientists. “One of the reasons I feel strongly about why this work is important is that in my career I’ve spent a lot of time working closely with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). And the EPA is a place where this tension between what can be done in the policy world and what the scientific evidence shows is really acute,” says Wilcoxen, also director of the Maxwell School’s Center for Environmental Policy and Administration. “The EPA is mandated to be driven by science, but it is constrained very tightly by what can actually be accomplished legally, under the rules it has to obey, and what can be done economically. And so there is a huge need for people who can cross that divide.”

Earth sciences Ph.D. candidate Kristina Gutchess, who was drawn to EMPOWER for the opportunity to take greater ownership of her graduate training, speaks to the merits of the program’s cross-disciplinary nature from a student’s perspective. “EMPOWER has introduced me to an array of different individu-
als I can collaborate with outside of the Earth sciences depart-
ment,” says Gutchess, whose research explores how water and
pollutants move through the environment and the ways that pro-
cess affects the quality of drinking water. “I regularly
interact with students from chemistry, from civil and
environmental engineering, as well as faculty and staff
from other departments. That’s really nice—to meet
other people and talk to them about their perspec-
tives. It also gives me exposure to seminars and con-
fferences that students in other departments are going
to that may interest me. And it has helped diversify
my research interests and increased my professional
network.”

STEPPING FORWARD TOGETHER
One key way EMPOWER trainees come together is
the Water-Energy Nexus Seminar, a one-credit foun-
dational seminar offered every semester. Held weekly
in the EMPOWER Collaborative Suite in the Heroy
Geology Building, the seminar regularly features
guest speakers who are scientists working in fields
outside of academia. Those visits become part of the
foundation from which students design the specifics
of their individual pathway through the program. “We
had someone come who works for the National Park
Service, for example, and someone who works for
Exxon Mobil,” Lautz says. “So students are engaging with Ph.D.
scientists in different career sectors, and they’re getting an idea
of what they can do with their degree. And they’re getting that
from day one.”

The seminar also provides opportunities to understand aspects
of academic careers that traditional graduate programs may not
cover, including participation in a mock panel reviewing actual
NSF funding proposals. Additionally, it allows trainees to team up
and lead sessions for one another—a highlight for many students.
“There are usually three or four students leading a discussion on a
couple of papers that a visiting speaker is going to be presenting
on,” Millard says. “So there’s an idea of some of the jargon that’s
in those papers, and you go through activities so you’re familiar
with the material. Sometimes the paper is really intense ground-
water modeling, sometimes it is really intense biogeochemistry.
But you get so much more out of the speaker’s visit than if you
were just going to their presentation. The seminar lets you lean
on other students for expertise you don’t necessarily have. And
everybody takes a step forward together.”

Other high points for EMPOWER trainees include the pro-
gram’s science communications coursework; workshops on such
topics as networking and social media, data management, and
negotiating a salary; peer mentoring opportunities; and the sum-
mer field excursion, which was held regionally last year and this
summer will involve travel to Lake Kivu in Rwanda.

For Lautz, one of the biggest highlights has been the students
themselves. “This is something I’m really passionate about—
working with and mentoring graduate students, helping them get
through their graduate program, have a positive experience, and
get where they want to go professionally,” says Lautz, who hopes
to share what the EMPOWER team is learning with other depart-
ments across the University. “So it is very satisfying to engage
with students in all these disciplines who are working on all these
interesting topics—to learn about what they want to do and fig-
ure out how we can better serve their needs. They are fascinating
people with interesting curiosity. They’re research scientists who
have energy and passion. What better group to work with? For
me, that’s been the most rewarding thing.”
You plan your career. You plan your retirement. Now plan to change a life.

Rosemarie Nelson ’90 and Tim Nelson's ’72 life together began during the first-ever game inside the new Carrier Dome. Since then, the Nelsons have combined their passion for SU Athletics and appreciation for their educations to support students both on the field and off. “We like giving to the University to use where it’s needed most,” they say. “It’s such a positive for the students and a huge benefit to our community.”

Anyone can plan an SU legacy.
You, too, can bring your passion to life at SU. A planned gift—no matter its size—has endless potential to support students’ educational dreams. Whether your gift is one of cash, securities, real estate, business partnership interests, retirement plans, or life insurance—it can truly make all the difference.

Meet the Nelsons and hear why they are committed to sharing their Orange spirit with future generations at changealife.syr.edu/Nelson.

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Rubin Global Design Studio leads students on exploration of progressive urban architecture in revitalized Medellín, Colombia

BY KATHLEEN HALEY
Students in the Rubin Global Design Studio researched, analyzed, and created building projects in contemplation of a South American city transformed through architecture. A weeklong trip to Medellín, Colombia, with School of Architecture professor Francisco Sanin, brought all of their work into focus. Once known for its drug cartels, dangerous streets, and extreme poverty, Medellín underwent a revitalization in less than a generation through progressive urban and architectural planning. In their travels throughout the city, students saw the details of the transformation in the unique cable car system that transports hillside dwellers to the jobs in the valley below; in the new libraries, community centers, and playgrounds; and in the artwork by local artists in poor and marginalized communities. The experience was a revelation for Christina Rubino ’19. “The government is using its funds to create top-of-the-line architectural projects in the poorest areas of the city,” she says. “This was the first time I had really been able to see how architecture can change a society and help people in powerful and meaningful ways.”

Supported by School of Architecture alumnus Todd B. Rubin ’04, the Rubin Global Design Studio has sponsored architecture students’ travel to international cities for the past six years to immerse themselves in other cultures. For the latest studio class, Sanin—who grew up and was educated in Medellín, and played a role in its comeback—was a fitting navigator during the studio and trip, which allowed students to experience a city that has benefited from new ways of thinking about urban architecture. “For our students, it’s a great opportunity to understand and experience one of the most interesting cities in terms of urban design,” Sanin says. “As a faculty member to be able to expose our students and school to these ideas is amazing, and as a person from Medellín to be able to bring and hopefully...
The city used architecture and urban design as a tool for social and political transformation. Within the span of four years the mayor had empowered the city and the city was completely turned around.”

—FRANCISCO SANIN
provoke new ideas from students is also quite exciting.”

Designated by Time magazine in 1988 as “the most dangerous city in the world,” Medellín was reawakened through the work of a progressive mayor—and his successors—and a continuing collective of politicians, city administrators, urban designers, artists, and architects, including Sanin. Beginning in the early 2000s, public buildings and spaces were constructed in neighborhoods plagued by violence and insecurity. The philosophy of then-Mayor Sergio Fajardo was to build the most beautiful buildings in the most disadvantaged areas to give dignity and provide opportunities for those communities—instead of creating impressive structures near the seats of wealth and power. By 2007, The New York Times was heralding this urban and political transformation.

Sanin has traveled back countless times to contribute to and promote the ideas of urbanism and thoughtful design to the city and through collaboration with the architectural community and colleagues at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB), which became a center of research for many of the projects implemented by Fajardo. “The transformation was a very long process with the participation of very many different people from all sectors of society,” Sanin says, including community groups and grassroots and international organizations.

Working with Fajardo and in celebration of the end of his time as mayor, Sanin was invited by the mayor to serve as the academic director of a series of events, colloquia, symposiums, and theater presentations to disseminate information about what was happening. Sanin and a friend and fellow architect, Alejandro Echeverri, also created a master’s program in architecture and the URBAM research center at Universidad EAFIT to further develop the ideas. In recent years, the city has won international prizes for its stunning transformation, including the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize in Singapore and the Curry Stone Prize in the United States, and was named most innovative city in the world in 2013 by The Wall Street Journal and Citi, with the Urban Land Institute. “The city used architecture and urban design as a tool for social and political transformation,” Sanin says. “Within the span of four years the mayor had empowered the city and the city was completely turned around.”

In telling the story of Medellín to his students, Sanin kicked off last fall’s studio with a lecture and panel discussion in September at the School of Architecture with three key people in the Medellín transformation: Echeverri, director of URBAM in Medellín; Jorge Pérez, former director of urban planning and former acting mayor of Medellín; and Alejandro Restrepo, current director of strategic urban projects for Medellín. The experts led students in workshops to help them develop projects examining the work that had been done, proposing new ideas, and addressing such issues as social segregation that limits interaction between communities.

ARCHITECTURE’S ROLE IN CHANGE

On their 10-day trip to Medellín during Thanksgiving break, students explored the city with Sanin—and Rubin, who also accompanied the students—and toured the sites they had been studying. Student Anita Karimu ’19 remembers their visit to Comuna 13—one of the most violent in the city and was transformed through a series of social and architectural projects, “It was inspiring to see how architecture on various scales can truly change lifestyles and tangibly experience how design decisions we make in the classroom can shape the world.”

Students rode the gondola system and could see how it made a difference to those living on the steep hillsides of the city of 3.5 million people. “The topography is so extreme that the only way to get from the top to the bottom was on these super-steep stairs, some not even paved, that people would take to the city center,” Rubino says. “They introduced cable cars to connect all of these villages into the city center, and they run at a very low cost so people can go to work and get water and all the resources they need very easily and
efficiently.” Rubino also noted an enormous community complex of pools in the city center and other architecturally interesting public buildings, such as newly built kindergartens, that had become centers of pride and resources for the entire community.

Officials with the local universities, UPB and EAFIT, provided the students with space to work and a guide to help them through the city. Sanin noted a special connection between EAFIT and Syracuse University, which had been recommended by the U.S. State Department in the 1960s to the South American university to help guide the university in establishing a business school. “We met with EAFIT’s chancellor who sent our Chancellor [Kent Syverud] a photo of Syracuse faculty arriving in the ’60s. It was a momentous occasion,” Sanin says.

Students also met with city officials, including Mayor Federico Gutiérrez; university students, with whom they engaged in conversations about their understanding of architecture; and members of other institutions in Medellín. Meeting with Gutiérrez in his private office, students heard about the heavy investments made in the transportation systems, technical issues, and social changes that had been brought about with jobs now more easily accessible. “It was a precious opportunity, as college students, to directly exchange our ideas on urban design and development with the mayor,” says Kefan Zhuo G’17.

As architects in training, students learned how urban design embraces the lives of the city’s residents. “One big lesson that many government officials emphasized was the need for urban designers to truly learn about and understand the culture of the people and the place in which they are designing before designs are made,” Karimu says. “The most successful urban interventions in the city were not the ones that copied ideas from other famous cities, but the ones that truly embodied Colombian culture and the way of life of the people into the design and program.”

During their time in Medellín, students visited the sites of their proposed projects. Rubino and her partner scaled steep stairs and pathways to examine a remotely located sports complex and soccer stadium with a school next to it. In their proposal, the students want-
ed to overcome the problem of a lack of public space due to the natural landscape and raised the school on a continuous plinth, cutting in the mountain. Within the space, they included shops, a tech center, and library on the same level as the school, with a public space connecting to the soccer stadium. “We solved the problem of topography, but still had elements that are true to the natural landscape while also making it easier for people to use the space,” she says.

Zhuo and his partner collaborated on an urban renewal proposal for downtown Medellín, called Urban Infiltration. They proposed using a series of paths to connect the inner voids of urban blocks to bring in more diverse activities and creating a linear megastructure above existing buildings. “The social idea of this project is residents are relocated into the upper level with better living quality, better ventilation and illumination,” Zhuo says. “Meanwhile the existing lower level is transformed into a mixed-use neighborhood.” Impressed by the students’ work, the city’s architect is planning a publication of their proposals with Sanin.

Just as important as meeting with city officials was the time the students spent among the neighborhoods and residents. “The people of Medellín are very friendly and welcoming, and even in the direst of situations they showed a high level of care and pride for their way of life,” Karimu says. Students met with residents in the cafes and on the streets, engaging with them about their experience of living in public spaces, oftentimes in public squares and even their own balconies, and how such improvements as the gondolas had impacted their lives. “The students were able to leave their preconceptions and embrace the culture and learn from it,” Sanin says.

CREATING BETTER CITIES
As a teacher of urban design and an advocate for the success of Medellín, Sanin has brought the ideas of the progressive city to the rest of the world. In 2017, Sanin was recommended by the city to present at the United Nations in May as a panelist at the Gateway Portals to the City conference. “The presentation was about the case of Medellín and showing how it is possible for architecture to play a transformative role in a city, and it is possible to do it if accompanied by the political and social vision,” he says.

Sanin also organized a forum of city architects in November as part of the Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism. The role of a city architect has now become more prevalent with the importance of urban design and public spaces—and their impact in collective life and sustainability, both social and ecological. “The idea is to come together and think about creating a global network of city architects who share ideas, projects, and initiatives on how architecture can help create a better city,” Sanin says.

Sanin continued to work with Fajardo on urban planning when he became governor of the state of Antioquia in Colombia, and is also involved in projects in South Korea, China, and Mexico. He is constantly fascinated by urban life and all that it offers. “There is a hopeful negotiation of all the differences and conflicts we have and perhaps in creating a more equitable and just society,” Sanin says. Collectively working together and teaching students to be not just expressive but responsible for those ideals is important, he says. “That’s where we start.”

For Sanin’s students, they saw the larger picture of urban architecture and the impact they could have on larger issues of life and society through their own professional lives. “Professionally, this trip helped me to look at my studio education as more than just an academic exercise but begin to see the real-world implications of what I design and the ramifications of different decisions I make,” Rubino says.

The relationship between urban design and architecture was another lesson learned for students. “I’ve become more interested in not just working on a singular building, but something within the urban realm,” Rubino says. “People are coming back to cities from the suburbs, and, through urban design, cities can be places not just for work but as truly livable spaces for families and people of all ages.”

The students were able to leave their preconceptions and embrace the culture and learn from it.”
—FRANCISCO SANIN
Life-Changing LEARNING

FOR A CENTURY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE has served as an advocate for continuing education, helping countless adults earn degrees through part-time study and achieve their dreams

BY EILEEN JEVIS
WHEN MONICA BROWN EARNED A bachelor’s degree in social work from Falk College in 2009, it had been more than 20 years since she first set out for college. Back then, she had to unexpectedly withdraw in her second semester. That was the first of many challenges to occur through the years, none of which got in her way. “I never lost sight of my goal,” says Brown, who pursued part-time studies through University College while also working full time as a single parent. “I knew I had to continue my education.”

She credits her success to many helpers along the way, including her parents and siblings for their emotional and moral support, as well as their assistance with child care. She’s especially grateful for the encouragement of the staff at University College for helping her move forward from one semester to the next while juggling employment, classes, and raising her son, Johnny. “I wanted to set a good example for my son—to show him that hard work and determination pay off,” she says.

Brown says one of her proudest moments was when her son began college. “I wanted to give him the opportunity,” she says. “What he did with it was up to him.” But not long after he began college, in December 2004, Johnny lost his life in a car accident. “I didn’t think I was strong enough to continue my own education,” says Brown, who took a semester off after her son’s death. “He was my motivation for working hard and earning a college degree.”

Again with the help of all those who have supported her through the years, Brown returned to her coursework and achieved her degree. Today, she is the executive deputy commissioner for the Onondaga County Department of Social Services—Economic Security. She feels fortunate to be able to use her skills and experience to advocate for others and recommend systems changes for the county’s most vulnerable. And she finds in her grandchildren a renewed sense of motivation. “They are a very large part of my life,” Brown says. “I taught them the importance of pursuing an education, and completing a goal you’ve set for yourself.”

Brown’s unique story is just one example of the countless compelling and inspirational stories of the adult students who enter Syracuse University through University College. There, they find staff and leadership teams who understand their challenges and act as advocates and champions—each step of the way.

HAVEN FOR NONTRADITIONAL STUDENTS

University College (UC) has been a haven for nontra-
ditional students since the evening of October 8, 1918, when SU Night School opened its doors to adults seeking degrees for career enhancement as well as lifelong learning. The intervening century has guided thousands of adult students to UC, where they have continued their education through part-time study—on campus and online—while continuing to work, raise families, and contribute to the communities where they live.

UC’s commitment to providing support, opportunity, and access is a focus of its mission statement, a document whose principles have guided the college for 100 years. The first director of evening sessions was M. Ellwood Smith, who earned a bachelor’s degree from Syracuse University in 1906 and returned as a faculty member in 1912. Smith was aware the University had space that remained unused for many hours at a time when the country needed more educational opportunities. He recommended a self-supporting night school, and the first evening session was launched on that autumn night in 1918. Known as Syracuse University’s School of Extension Teaching and Adult Education, the night school had the full support of Chancellor James Roscoe Day, who served in his role from 1894 to 1922.

In the decades that followed, adult education at Syracuse University would see 13 leaders take the helm to steer UC forward—offering access to thousands of men and women seeking a Syracuse University degree. The former administrators were forward thinking, innovative, and committed to providing a first-class education to adults, veterans and active military, and first-generation college students.

“It should be apparent that University College is more than a night school for people seeking degrees or professional upgrading,” said Kenneth G. Bartlett, who served as acting director of the school from 1943 to 1946 and as dean from 1946 to 1952. “It is an idea; an idea that, in an age of continuous change and interdependence, democratic institutions need the steady influence of a continuous education program...”

Jessica Peptis ’13 randomly found her way to University College by opening the phone book. A profoundly unstable home life led her to drop out of high school as a teenager, a common occurrence in her family. At age 18, Peptis gave birth to her first son and worked two jobs to support them. She earned a GED and promised herself she would return to school when her son started pre-K. “On the day I registered my son for pre-K, I walked home, put him down for a nap, and opened the phone book to ‘colleges,’” Peptis says. “The first college I saw was Syracuse University.”

Peptis called, set up an appointment, and was registered for classes within a few days. When she started at SU, she had two children and her biggest challenge was finding time to meet her many responsibilities. She worked at a day-care center and studied when the children slept. “I worked as many hours as I could, but still fell under the poverty line,” Peptis says. Government...
assistance helped her provide for her children, but making ends meet was still difficult. “Necessities such as food, electricity, and day-care costs were consistently difficult to obtain,” she says. “But I used these struggles as further resolve to earn my college degree and give my children stability.”

Peptis received financial assistance through the Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) at University College, which allowed her to continue to work toward her degree. While the program provided the financial assistance she needed, UC staff, instructors, and fellow students gave her the strongest support, Peptis says. “I found a community that was invested in my well-being; people who were willing to push me when I felt defeated in my pursuit.” She paid forward the opportunities given to her by working as a writing tutor with HEOP students, and designed College Survival Skills, a course that is now required for incoming HEOP students. “It strengthens their basic skills and gives them more confidence in their ability to continue college,” she says.

Peptis, now a married mother of four, works as a high school teacher in the Syracuse City School District. Her position allows her to give students the academic and emotional encouragement they need to graduate and continue their education through trade school or college. Through higher education, Peptis changed her circumstances and now counsels her students to do the same. “Since I’ve experienced many of the same struggles my students face, I’m often able to understand their perspective and help them briefly set aside the short-term goal of survival and focus on their long-term goal of graduating and pursuing a career,” she says.

CHAMPIONING CONTINUING EDUCATION
Alex Charters is known as one of the founding fathers of adult education. He began working as an administrator at University College in 1948, became assistant dean in 1950, and served as dean from 1952 to 1964. His wife, Margaret Charters G’71, G’04, reflected on his philosophy and passion for adult education in Syracuse University Publications in Continuing Education. “Alex saw the mission of adult education as assisting adults to obtain more control over their present circumstances and future destinies,” she said. “His entire life has been devoted to enabling the continuing education of adults. He believes that if democracy is to survive and peace and justice achieved, then all people worldwide must continue to learn throughout their lives.”

Charters donated his extensive collection of papers to the Alexander N. Charters Library of Resources for Educators of Adults, which is housed at Syracuse University and serves as a global repository for adult and continuing education collections.

In a 1991 article in The Courier, published by the SU Library Associates and part of the Charters’s collection, guest editor Mary Beth Hinton G’83, G’98 shared the views of Chancellor William Pearson Tolley ’22, G’24, H’69 on the importance of adult and continuing education, writing that he “championed adult and continuing education and made it part of the University’s ethos.”

“Alex saw the mission of adult education as assisting adults to obtain more control over their present circumstances and future destinies.”
—MARGARET CHARTERS G’71, G’04
STORIES OF LOVE AND FAMILY

According to Hinton, the University’s seventh Chancellor (1942 to 1969) said, “If you believe in education, you believe in adult education—educators sometimes forget that we’ve a whole nation of people of all ages who need to learn.”

Bea González G’04, who began her career at SU in 1984, served as dean of University College from 2007 to 2017. González, now vice president of community engagement at SU, shared Charters’s passion for providing access and opportunity to part-time students. “We must continue to provide pathways to our students by working with our partners to ensure true opportunity and access,” she says. “All of us have had the privilege of witnessing the success of the many students we have met throughout the years. By virtue of their experience and educational journey, they changed their own lives, the lives of their children, and those people close to them.

As University College moves into the next 100 years, I have no doubt that they will continue to set the bar high for quality higher education and continue to be advocates of lifelong learning.”

Since its beginnings in Reid and Peck halls in downtown Syracuse, UC has been an incubator for many of Syracuse University’s academic programs. These include the School of Social Work (1947), the Division of International Programs Abroad (now Syracuse Abroad; 1958), the Humanistic Study Center (1958), the University Regent Theatre (now Syracuse Stage; 1958), and the English Language Institute (1979), to name a few. The English Language Institute, for example, provides intensive English instruction to international students and visiting professionals at all proficiency levels.

“When you look at University College over the past 100 years, you see Syracuse University’s strategic response to the societal, cultural, economic, and global exigencies of each era,” says Mike Frasciello G’15, who was named dean of University College last September and holds a Ph.D. in composition and cultural rhetoric from the College of Arts and Sciences.

“Today, University College continues to be the agile academic unit through which the University is responding to disruptive shifts in higher education, the rapidly evolving educational and skills demands of a global and transient workforce, and the notable progression away from traditional place-based, full-time education.”

Today, the pathway to a Syracuse University degree starts well beyond Central New York. Through a growing portfolio of market-responsive online bachelor’s degrees and certificates in professional studies, UC is leading the University’s efforts to offer an SU education that extends over interna-

**Mr. and Mrs. Matt Patulski** were both veterans of the armed forces when they met while attending classes at UC. They married in 1949, and he graduated in 1950 with a degree in business administration. The newsletter doesn’t indicate whether Mrs. Patulski ever graduated, nor does it give her first name. But it does say they welcomed twin sons in January 1951.

**Lydia Bereginsky** was a displaced person living in the church that had sponsored her family’s flight from Russia. She was attending UC when she met her classmate and future husband George Brayman. Their 1951 wedding was reported to LINK by Herald-Journal society reporter Peg Bittle, who was also an SU alumna.

**Gloria Guerrieri** graduated with a liberal arts degree in spring 1951. While attending UC, she worked as a full-time secretary at SU and met her husband, Edward J. Walentuk ’48, G’53, a graduate of the College of Business Administration, who was the bursar at UC.
“Today, University College continues to be the agile academic unit through which the University is responding to disruptive shifts in higher education...”
—MIKE FRASCIELLO G’15

“Tional horizons. From creative leadership and cybersecurity administration to culture and the humanities, UC is opening the University to an increasingly connected and interdependent world. “The things I’ve learned in my classes at SU—teamwork, individual leadership, problem solving—were put to good use every day,” says creative leadership major Benjamin Vasquez ’18, a police officer from Geneva, New York, who interned at the White House last summer.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
University College is located on the corner of Adams Street and University Avenue—on the cusp of the community it serves. For more than a half century, UC has built bridges to the community, fostered partnerships, and offered educational programs as part of its philosophy of lifelong learning. Thursday Morning Roundtable, a weekly civic forum, was started at Syracuse University in March 1965. Lee Smith, who served as assistant dean for community service at UC from 1965 to 1998, developed the concept. He also established the Onondaga Citizens League and the Institute for Retired Professionals programs.

Smith and his colleagues envisioned a weekly civic forum as a vehicle to bring together a mixture of business, social agency, educational, and civic leaders to learn about and discuss community issues and problems. They saw it as education for community development and problem solving. It was also viewed as a way to capitalize on the University’s expertise and prestige in the community.

As the landscape of education evolves, each decade brings new possibilities. University College will continue to develop programs that reflect its engagement with a fast-moving and diverse global environment. Online courses, associate and bachelor’s degrees, responsive executive education, alternative forms of academic credentials and innovative ways in which to gain them are a few of the offerings that will connect UC with students. Their dreams are what drive University College.

“While University College has evolved over the past 100 years, our core mission has remained the same—providing educational opportunities to students whose only access to a transformative Syracuse University education is through part-time study,” Frasciello says. “It’s a mission that visionary Chancellors and University leaders welded to the core of our institutional culture, and one which Chancellor Syverud has challenged us all to reimagine for a modern university of the 21st century.”

As University College moves into the next century, it will remain an entry point for students, an innovator of professional degrees and non-credit programs, and an advocate for those wishing to expand their knowledge.”
Uplifting Voices

For more than four decades, the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble has shared the sweet harmonies of gospel music with audiences and provided its members with a spiritual home

By Gina Reitenauer

FOR BENJAMIN RODRIGUEZ ‘18, THE BLACK CELESTIAL Choral Ensemble (BCCE) provides a home away from home. This sense of home and family is shared by many other members of the gospel choir. “This is the place I found the people who make me feel similar to the way I feel at home—surrounded by love, positivity, acceptance,” says Rodriguez, a sociology and education dual major.

Currently in its 41st year, the BCCE is a student-run gospel choir that holds concerts during many campus events, performs at churches, and sometimes competes. Some events, such as engagements with other churches, vary from year to year. Under the Hendricks Chapel umbrella, the ensemble also has several staple commitments: Gospel Mania (a gospel music festival), Spring Break tour, and a performance at the University’s annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration to name a few.

While the size of the choir tends to fluctuate annually, both a small group and a large group have their advantages. For instance, Rodriguez explains that when just 10 people are up on stage singing a song, you can feel a certain energy. However, some events require larger groups to participate. The BCCE is working to expand campus outreach through a more open audition process, which allows students to become a part of the choir at any point during the semester.

Throughout such changes, the BCCE is supported by an active alumni group. Rodriguez thinks that’s part of why the alumni are there. “To keep us going, especially at our lowest,” he says. BCCE director Ashleigh Brown ’14 shares a similar view on the alumni’s importance. They serve as a reminder of the choir’s foundational goals—to provide a voice and create a spiritual home, says Brown, who notes the ensemble welcomes all ethnicities and races. For Brown and BCCE member Ormando Watson ’19, this connection makes them feel like part of an enduring tradition. “You look back at the history of the choir, even how it was started, and it’s rich,” says Watson, an anthropology major. “We’re leaving our mark on something that’s been going on for so long right now. It’s this legacy we’re making our impact on in the present.”

THE CHOIR’S BEGINNINGS

The BCCE was founded in spring 1977. Driven by the feeling that black students needed a spiritual home on campus, Seretta McKnight ’80 and classmate Lawrence Ford ’80 connected with longtime SU administrator Barry Wells, who was then the director of the Office of Minority Affairs. After much consultation, they invited others and a group McKnight refers to as the “Magnificent Seven,” came to be, including McKnight, Ford, Ervin C. Allgood ’82, Pamela Hayes, Hermione “JJ” James, Cheryl Lane ’78, and Parrrese Wade ’81. “One of the very things that was culturally integral to my own development and so many others is the ability to identify through music,” says McKnight, who describes gospel music as her “anchor,” noting the group was composed of like-minded people who felt the campus needed this type of outlet. While faith drove the group, McKnight says many different spiritualities were represented in the choir when it began, even those lacking in their belief. She also notes that 1977 was a turbulent year for the country, and over time the choir simply evolved...
to where that faith became embedded in the group’s purpose. “The reality is that it was the idea of how music could bring together and cross all types of barriers, real and imagined, between young people,” McKnight says. According to BCCE alumna Dakota Caine Holman ’83, who joined the choir in 1979, the group provided a sense of belonging for minorities. Her husband, Victor Holman ’82, who joined the choir in 1978, notes that despite change over the years, the BCCE has stayed true to its roots. He describes the choir as a “living legacy.”

Coming to nearly every BCCE event since she graduated, BCCE alumna Laurie Kingsberry ’82 believes it’s important for current members and alumni to connect. At a Coming Back Together event in 2014, Kingsberry learned the BCCE needed financial support and desired to help the group fundraise. According to both Kingsberry and McKnight, an act of God brought them together at a stoplight that same year. Ironically, just as Kingsberry was telling a story to a guest passenger about spending time at McKnight’s church nearby, she spotted McKnight sitting at the light adjacent to her. After screaming and beeping her horn, Kingsberry got McKnight’s attention. “I told her I had something on my heart that I wanted to try to do for the Black Celestial Choral Ensemble,” Kingsberry says.

CONTINUING THE LEGACY

Through their reconnection, they established The Alumni Group (TAG BCCE) and launched a fundraising campaign called “Legacy Lives” in 2015 to create an endowment to aid the choir financially and ensure its future. Thanks to both alumni and other supporters, the campaign is halfway to its $50,000 goal, which they hope to reach this year. According to McKnight, once the campaign concludes, the relationships that the BCCE has formed will continue to strengthen.

For the BCCE, the mission to share and grow in faith has served as a constant throughout the years. They seek to uplift the name of Jesus Christ, but membership is not limited to a specific faith. According to Victor Holman, the style of the gospel music might evolve, but the spiritual message is key to the choir’s relevancy.

BCCE member Deresha Hayles ’19 says that before some events they’ll remind themselves that each song is not merely a song, but might also minister to someone out there. “If it makes one person believe they aren’t alone in this big world, then we are doing the job we have set out to do,” says Hayles, an African American studies major. Whether on stage or in the presence of other BCCE members, she feels “warmth within her,” a sense of love and security—a reassurance that this is a place where she belongs. “What they’ve given me, I want us to be able to share that with others as well,” Hayles says. Victor Holman and McKnight note a similar passion in BCCE members. Holman says it comes from within, that they truly want to perform. As McKnight points out, you don’t need to be a singer to join the BCCE. “All you need is a heart and a willingness,” she says.
Rediscovering Your Syracuse Home

WHEN YOU’RE HERE, YOU’RE HOME. How many of you have experienced that incredible feeling while spending time on campus? Whether it’s been a year since your last time coming home or 40 years, I hope you’ll consider joining me on campus this October 18-21 for Orange Central homecoming and reunion weekend.

As alumni, we have set the foundation for the Syracuse University experience that our current students enjoy. Remember what your own experience meant to you; Orange Central is about rediscovering the Syracuse that transformed you.

While you’re here, you’ll notice transformations of a different kind happening on campus. Construction on the first-of-its-kind National Veterans Resource Center is well underway, and Archbold Gymnasium is going from outdated gymnasium to 7,000-square-foot fitness and wellness center. These projects are possible because of the support of generous alumni, and I hope that you’ll feel inspired to be part of this progress.

The goal this year is for more alumni than ever to take part in the weekend. This year the University will celebrate its inaugural 44th reunion for the Class of 1974. It is exciting to be able to bring together members of this class for a legendary reunion; so, if you’re a member of the Class of 1974, I hope you’ll join us in starting this special new tradition.

Also new this year will be Senior Citrus programming for alumni in the classes of 1938 through 1957. Even if you’ve already celebrated your 60th reunion, you’re Forever Orange! And, of course, there will be special reunions for the undergraduate classes of 1958, 1968, 1993, and 2008 and recognition for all class years ending in “3” or “8.” But even if you’re not in a milestone class year, the weekend will offer something for every graduate and your family members, too!

So I invite you to remember the feeling you had when you first stepped on campus, and plan your trip back home for Orange Central. I look forward to meeting many of you in person this fall.

GO ORANGE!

Tracy Barash ’89
President, Syracuse University Alumni Association

CLASSNOTES
NEWS from SU ALUMNI

SEND US NEWS OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS.
To submit information for Class Notes via the internet, go to cusecommunity.syr.edu and register. Items will appear in the magazine and in the Class Notes section of the online ‘Cuse Community. Items can also be sent to Alumni Editor, Syracuse University Magazine; 820 Comstock Avenue, Room 308; Syracuse, NY 13244-5040.

40s

Jean Smith Young ’44 (A&S) celebrated her 95th birthday in June 2017. She has lived at Asbury Methodist Village in Gaithersburg, Md., since 1995. She is editor of the 400-member Asbury Computer Club monthly newsletter. Every year she wins the top prize for her needlework at the Maryland Montgomery County Fair. She and her husband won the Maryland Outstanding Volunteer Award from the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame several years ago.

Patrick McCarthy ’48 (A&S) of Oneida, N.Y., and his wife, Patricia, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in April. A longtime fan and supporter of SU sports, he has competed for many years in the New York State Empire Games. At age 91, he continues to play competitive tennis twice a week and leads a group of fellow tennis-playing retirees in regular matches as a fun source of exercise and friendship.

Rosalind J. Elson Clark ’58 (SDA) of Jacksonville, Fla., received a showcase production of her translation and adaptation of the play Mr. Perrichon’s Trip at the Folger Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., in 1986. Her translation and adaptation of The Game of Love and Chance was optioned by the Case Theater in Mandrin, Florida, in the ’90s, and her play The Man Who Knew Nothing was published in Vision Literary Journal in the ’90s. She leads playwriting seminars in northeast Florida.

50s

Lorraine Chanatry-Howell ’55 (VPA) received the 2017 Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award, recognizing her professional accomplishments and longevity as a Marquis Who’s Who biographer. This past year she designed and donated a cross garden for the Parish of the Holy Cross in Bridgeton, N.J., where she lives with her husband, James. At SU, she reestablished the Catholic Action Award (which she received at her graduation in 1955) and established a graduate student award at St. Thomas More Campus Ministry. She also served as co-chair for her class’s 50th reunion, when she held a one-woman art exhibition and established a peace garden at St. Thomas More on Walnut Place.

60s

Lyn Lifshin ’60 (A&S) of Vienna, Va., a poet and writer who has published more than 130 books, wrote Refugees Who Have Lost Their Home. Other recent books include Little Dancer: The Degas Poems (NightBallet Press, 2017), Secretariat: The Red Freak, The Miracle (Texas Review Press, 2014), Femme Eterna (Class Lyre Press, 2014), and Malala (Poetic Matrix Press, 2014).

Carolyn Stranahan Jones ’62 (SDA) of Jacksonville, Fla., optioned by the Case Theater in Mandrin, Florida, in the ’90s, and her play Mr. Perrichon’s Trip received a showcase production of her translation and adaptation in Washington, D.C., in 1986. Her translation and adaptation of The Game of Love and Chance was optioned by the Case Theater in Mandrin, Florida, in the ’90s, and her play The Man Who Knew Nothing was published in Vision Literary Journal in the ’90s. She leads playwriting seminars in northeast Florida.

NOTES

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Azzah Aldeghather ’87 »

The Pioneering Path of a Saudi Architect

AZZAH ALDEGHATHER WAS A PRE-MED STUDENT AT the American University of Beirut in 1982 when she visited an exhibit of architecture students’ work. “I fell in love,” she says. From that moment, Aldeghather was determined to pursue architecture, even though it was a “forbidden” field of study for women in her home country of Saudi Arabia and her mother wanted her to become a doctor. But she was insistent, telling her parents, “If I am not going to study architecture, I am not going to study anything.”

Clearly, Aldeghather had found her passion, and she became a trailblazer in Saudi Arabia, recognized as its first licensed female architect and consultant. She is founder and principal at Mimaria Architectural Consultants in Riyadh.

The daughter of a diplomat, Aldeghather grew up traveling and living in different countries. When she decided to study architecture, her parents agreed they would allow her to if she gained acceptance to a top 10 program in the United States. “This was before the internet,” she remembers. “You just had to talk to people, to ask people.”

That is when Aldeghather learned about Syracuse as a leading architecture school and applied. She was accepted, stepped on campus, and immediately knew she had made the right choice. “My time at Syracuse was wonderful,” says Aldeghather, an enthusiastic and longtime supporter of the school. “I truly enjoyed each and every course. I remember all the professors with fondness, especially Werner Seligmann, with whom I bonded. His words of encouragement I hold dear.”

Upon graduation, Aldeghather headed to New York City with a solid job offer, but returned to Saudi Arabia when she learned her father was seriously ill. As time passed, he recovered. She stayed in Saudi Arabia, but was not officially allowed to practice architecture, though she did, with what she calls “amazing help” from the Arriyadh Development Authority. Her office was investigated by the mutawa, the Islamic religious police, a number of times, but she would move, set up shop elsewhere, and continue the work she loved, sometimes under immense pressure, including concerns about her father’s approval. “In the end, I realized my father had always been proud of me and had fully supported me,” she says.

In 2005, she wrote a letter to King Abdullah, explaining her problems and requesting legal status and licensing. “I wrote, ‘Islam does not say that women cannot work. Islam says men and women have the same rights for work.’” King Abdullah wrote back, “No objection.”

Unfortunately, the mutawa and some government officials still objected. Aldeghather fought for two more years and ultimately secured a royal decree allowing her to openly practice architecture professionally. The decree paved the way for other women in Saudi Arabia to earn professional licenses in engineering and architecture. Today, Mimaria employs two additional female architects and a female civil engineer, making it a leading visionary firm in Saudi Arabia, employing women in professional roles traditionally held only by men.

Mimaria focuses on whole systems design, an interdisciplinary approach to architecture that emphasizes a community’s particular needs and concerns regarding sustainability and social issues. Last spring, Mimaria was accepted into the Catalyst Program of the Buckminster Fuller Institute. Each year, the San Francisco-based institute challenges companies, individuals, and institutions to submit innovative solutions to address humanity’s most pressing problems.

Aldeghather is hopeful the project will have a positive impact and serve as a model for similar projects. She’s also grateful to be a role model for young female architects. For Aldeghather, the difficult road was worth it, as overcoming the challenges helped her grow. “I had to be 10 times better than the men around me,” she says. “And this made me a better person than I may have been if everything was easy.” —Kathleen Curtis
Jerrl Ketcham McDermott ’64 (A&S/MAX), a lifelong writer and poet, wrote Something, Somewhere: Fifty Selected Poems (Buttered Toast Press, 2017), a collection written over 30 years.

Jim Reilly ’65 (A&S) presented a concert of his compositions at Mind- eikken, the Norwegian Lutheran Memorial Church in Minneapolis, performing as both a pianist and singer. Earlier in 2017 he presented a similar concert as a benefit for public school music education in Minneapo- lis and St. Paul.

Charles Salzberg ’67 (A&S), a New York City-based novelist, journalist, and writing instructor, wrote Second Story Man (Down & Out Books), a crime novel.

Ralph Greenlee ’68 (WSM) and his wife, Barbara, wrote The Summer Olympics: Everything You Need to Know to be an Afficionado (Inde- pendent Publisher, 2017), which chronicles their attendance at every Summer Olympics since 1984 in Los Angeles through 2016 in Rio de Janeiro.

Bob Roth ’68 (UTICA), a college and career success coach and author, wrote OMG, The Things I Learned (Cozy Cat Press, 2017), a lively illustrated collection of stories.

Alice K. Boatwright ’69 (A&S), a New York City-based novelist, journalist, and writing instructor, wrote Second Story Man (Down & Out Books), a crime novel.

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Robert A. Fitch ’70 (A&S), L’73 (LAW), resident partner at Rawle & Henderson in the law firm’s New York City office, was recognized in the 2017 New York Metro Super Lawyers list.

Lois Mathieu ’70 (A&S), a poet and fiction writer living in Bloomfield, Conn., wrote Snow Raining on Gloss (Antrim House), a book of “honest, vivid, sensual poems that are revela- tory and replete with startling images.”

Paul Elliott G’72 (EDU) is a principal and partner at SHIFT, a Baltimore- based management consulting and recruiting company.

Alan Levy ’72 (A&S/MAX), a senior founding partner in the New York City law firm Levy Tolman, was named in the 2017 Super Lawyers list of the top 100 attorneys in Metro New York. This is the third time he received this recognition.

Barbara Bice ’73 (ARC) retired as school facilities branch chief after 30 years with the Maryland State Depart- ment of Education/Public School Construction Program and nearly 40 years with the state of Maryland. She represented Maryland as a founding member of the National Council on School Facilities and received the 2017 Civic Achievement Award from the Maryland Council on American Private Education.

Louis P. DiLorenzo ’73 (A&S/MAX), an attorney at Bond, Schoeneck & King in the firm’s New York City office, was recognized in The Best Lawyers in America 2018 and in the 2017 Chambers USA: America’s Leading Lawyers for Business directory for labor and employment—New York. He was previously named one of the top 10 labor lawyers in the U.S. by HR Executive Magazine.

Russell C. Petrella ’73 (A&S) is president and CEO of Beacon Health Options in Boston. A clinical psychologist for more than 40 years, he has been a fellow and president of the American Academy of Forensic Psychology and a board member and president of the American Board of Forensic Psychology.

Mark Zlikoski ’73 (A&S) received the 2017 alumni Humanitarian Award from SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse for his work as a doctor in northeastern Montana. The award recognizes alumni “who exceed expectations in improving the lives of those in need through selfless, courageous, creative, and compas- sionate acts without expectation of remuneration.”

Paul Dougherty ’75 (NEW) had three music videos he directed in the early 1980s acquired by the Mu- seum of Modern Art for its Club 57 exhibition, bringing the number of his videos that are part of the museum’s permanent collection to a total of five (moma.org/artists/34886).

Joanne E. Romanow ’75 (FALK), an attorney at Casner & Edwards law firm in Boston, was recognized in the 2017 Super Lawyers list of the top 50 women in Massachusetts in the area of family law.

Gerard Boehme ’76 (NEW) wrote Getting to Broadway: How Hamilton Made it to the Stage (Cavendish Square), which charts the course that Lin-Manuel Miranda and his team followed in bringing his record-setting musical Hamilton to Broadway.

Marie L. Ganim G’76 (MAX) is the Rhode Island health insurance commissioner and a member of the board of directors for the Rhode Island Quality Institute, a statewide health information exchange and a center for collaborative innovation in health care.

Allen Adamson ’77 (NEW/WSM) is cofounder and managing partner of Metaforce, a marketing and product consultancy firm in New York City (www.metaforce.co). He co-wrote Shift Ahead: How the Best Companies Stay Relevant in a Fast-Changing World (AMACOM).

Susan Tiger Dicker ’77 (A&S) received an Honorary Alumna award from Ithaca College “in recognition of her significant and long-standing involvement with the college and her dedication to enriching the quality of the experiences and the relationships within the Ithaca College community.”

Samuel J. Gerdano ’77 (A&S/NEW), L’83 (LAW), executive director of the American Bankruptcy Institute in Alexandria, Va., received the 2018 M&A Advisor Lifetime Achievement Award in March, honoring his signifi- cant contributions to the bankruptcy and restructuring industry.

Nelson Apjohn ’78 (A&S/MAX), a partner at Nutter law firm in Boston, was inducted as a fellow of the Ameri- can College of Trial Lawyers, one of the premier legal associations in North America.

Paul Dominanni ’78 (A&S) is the general counsel and senior vice presi- dent for Cedar Gate Technologies, a health care analytics and technology company in Greenwich, Conn.

Randa Awn Handler ’78, G’79 (NEW) is an international journalist, publicist, and publisher whose work includes a bestselling series of self- help books and an educational series of children’s books about U.S. history that are regularly used as lesson plans by elementary school teachers (randahandler.com). She has also written and illustrated several children’s books that seek to instill tolerance and a love for diversity in early readers, including The Boy Who Spoke to God (Open Road Media Young Readers, 2014) and The Thanksgiving Dinner Platter (Cubbie Blue Publishing, 2014).


Edward Katz ’81 (NEW/WSM) cel- ebrates 10 years as managing principal of Katnip Marketing in Westport, Conn., where he works with clients in the fields of health care, safety, entertainment, publishing, digital marketing, nonprofits, and politics. He is also on the producing team for Chasing Rainbows, a new Broadway- bound musical based on the life of Judy Garland, and is developing a new musical with a Rock and Roll Hall of Fame-induced band. He also reviews theater and films on WICC-AM 600 and at KotzReviews.com.

Richard S. Vosko G’81, G’84 (EDU), a priest of the Diocese of Albany who has been working since 1970 as a sacred space planner throughout the U.S. and Canada, received an honor- ary doctorate of humane letters from St. Bonaventure University for his contributions to the fields of religious art and architecture. An honorary member of the American Institute of Architects whose work is recognized for excellence in liturgical design, he
writes and speaks internationally on topics related to sacred places of worship.

James Ferguson G'82 (MAX) is associate director for faculty analytics at Smith College in Northampton, Mass.

David Finkelstein '82 (NEW/WSM) is founder and president of the SU alumni club of Westchester Fairfield (N.Y.), WestFairOrange, which hosts social and professional development events, football and basketball game watches, new student send-offs, and a "welcome home" happy hour for new graduates. He writes, "If you would like to attend events or help out, check out WestFairOrange on social media."

Larry D. Woodard '82 (A&S/MAX) is president and CEO of Graham Stanley Advertising, a digital advertising agency in White Plains, N.Y. He is a past chair of the American Association of Advertising Agencies New York Council and currently sits on the corporate board of International Speedway Corporation, which operates 13 NASCAR and IndyCar race tracks across the country. A former member of the Falk College Sport Management Advisory Council and Board of Visitors, he is also on the board of directors of the V Foundation for Cancer Research.

Barbara Call '84 (NEW) is senior director of content operations and strategy for International Data Group’s strategic marketing services department in Framingham, Mass.

Leslie Harrison '84 (NEW) wrote The Book of Endings (University of Akron Press, 2017), which was shortlisted for the 2017 National Book Award in Poetry.

Rick Van Warner '84 (NEW), a journalist with expertise in crisis management and media relations, wrote On Pills and Needles: The Relentless Fight to Save My Son from Opioid Addiction (Baker Books), described as "one family’s story, but it is also a wake-up call and crash course in opioid addiction."

Bonnie Bishop Boyce '85 (A&S/ESF) is cofounder and principal at SharpOrange, a communications consultancy that was launched in Boston in December (www.sharporange.com).

Jane Haselinede '88 (NEW), a journalist and former crime reporter, wrote Worth Killing For (Kensington Publishing), the third mystery novel in her series about a crime reporter haunted by her brother’s long ago disappearance.

Josh Koskoff '88 (A&S), third-generation principal of Koskoff & Koskoff & Bieder, the Bridgeport, Conn., law firm his grandfather founded, was named 2017 Attorney of the Year by the Connecticut Low Tribune.

Caris Vujecc '88 (NEW/WSM), an actor, producer, writer, and director living in New York City, is the understudy for actress Uma Thurman in the title role of the new Beau Willimon play on Broadway, The Parisian Woman. She is also creator and executive producer of The Pepper Project, an award-winning digital series (carisvujecc.com).

Chris A. Bolt '89, G'95 (NEW), news and public affairs director at WAER Syracuse Public Media, earned a doctor of education in executive leadership degree at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, N.Y., where he successfully defended his dissertation, "Environmental education in the public sphere: Comparing practice with psycho-social determinants of behavior and societal change," in August. It was digitally published in November.

Nate Sterner '89 (A&S/MAX) is president of Apple Outdoor Advertising, a billboard media company that is a division of the Stewart Companies based in York, Pa.

Robert Siegel ’86 (ARC) is principal of Robert Siegel Architects. In January, the firm moved to a "fantastic, light-filled space surrounded by over 200 acres of trees, trails, and beautiful landscape" in Katonah, N.Y.

Adam Zand '87 (NEW) is cofounder and principal at SharpOrange, a communications consultancy that was launched in Boston in December (www.sharporange.com).


Allison Buchsbaum Barnett ’91 (VPA), who owns Patina Gallery in Sante Fe, N.M., with her husband, Ivan Barnett, arranged for the H. Ross Perot firm in Dallas to acquire a photojournalism collection that documents computer history in the making. The acquisition includes 14 photographs from photojournalist Doug Menuz's collection titled Fearless Geniuses: The Digital Revolution in Silicon Valley 1985-2000, which was featured in a summer 2017 exhibition at Patina Gallery.


Rob Caiello G’92 (WSM), vice president of marketing and customer experience at Allconnect, an Atlanta-based firm specializing in sales and marketing solutions for energy companies, is a member of the board of directors of Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative.

Marc Butler ’93 (WSM), chief operating officer for BNY Mellon Albridge, was featured in Supreme Leadership (Leaders Press), a book by Alinka Rutkowska that shares the knowledge and experience of 34 business leaders who are celebrating their 25th anniversary in 2018. He lives in Bucks County, Pa., with his wife, Kathy, and kids Ellie and Hank.

Chris Dawson ’93 (ARC) is principal-in-charge at Chris Dawson Architect, an award-winning, design-driven architectural firm in Harrisburg, Pa., now in its ninth year.

Tara A. Ellis G’93 (NEW) is president and chief executive officer of the Food Bank of Western New York.

Philip Dahlín ’90 (ESF) is the global director of sustainability for Johnson & Johnson, overseeing environmental strategy, research, management, and policy and advocacy programs. He also leads the company’s environmental health programs, working in the nexus of environmental and human health. He earned a master of public health degree from the University of California, Berkeley, in 2017. He lives in New Hope, Pa., with his wife, Mary Arndtson, and their two children.

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Helping People Heal

LINDA FULLER’S DECISION TO BECOME A DOCTOR goes back to her childhood, when she saw the effects on her family of coping with the health challenges of two younger brothers—one with Down syndrome and a congenital heart condition that required open heart surgery, and one with cerebral palsy. “Being back and forth to the hospital and seeing the medical care involved was really eye opening,” says Fuller, a psychiatrist who was born in Corona, California, and grew up in Washington, D.C. “I felt a calling to medicine—to help people heal, to care for people.”

Her calling led her to Syracuse University, where she received a full scholarship to study biology in the College of Arts and Sciences. “In high school, I had always been at the head of my class. At Syracuse, I was challenged academically and had to work hard to get A’s and B’s,” says Fuller, also a varsity cheerleader and a charter member of the Iota Upsilon chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha at SU. “The academics were unparalleled. And they gave me the foundation I needed to get into medical school.”

While at Syracuse, Fuller participated in a community internship program at the VA Upstate Medical Center. One day, making rounds with a physician there, she raised a question that had been puzzling her. “We were at the bedside of a patient who had been visited by several consultants, and I asked why the doctors only made notes in the patient’s chart and they didn’t talk to each other about the patient,” she says. “The physician looked at me and said, ‘Oh. You sound like an osteopath.’”

Unfamiliar with the term, Fuller headed to Bird Library and began exploring osteopathic medicine. “The profession was started by an M.D. who believed there was a relationship between the body’s structure and function, and the body having an inherent ability to heal itself,” says Fuller, who was awarded a U.S. Navy Health Professional Scholarship to earn a medical degree from Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery. “It’s a holistic approach and that appealed to me.”

The scholarship came with an obligation to serve as a Navy doctor for three years following medical school. So the day after graduating, Fuller began an internship at the National Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. A rotation at a female psychiatry unit then inspired her to complete a psychiatry residency. “I just got the bug for psychotherapy,” she says. “I realized that you could treat physical illness, but unless you address people’s emotional and behavioral needs, there wouldn’t be lasting change.”

Fuller served in the Navy for 31 years before retiring in 2006. But her “retirement” ended five years later when she accepted a position at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence in Bethesda. There, she is part of an interdisciplinary team of specialists working to advance the care of active-duty service members with mild traumatic brain injury. “It is a dream come true,” she says, “to be able to work with an individual who has been deployed multiple times and ensure that he gets a state of the art assessment, understands everything about his health, and has a game plan to improve the quality of his life.”

Appreciative of the University’s role in her success, Fuller recently worked with the Office of Program Development to establish an Our Time Has Come Scholarship for undergraduate students. “Syracuse is the school that gave me the opportunity to move forward in life,” says Fuller, who received a Chancellor’s Citation in 1992 and loves returning to campus for the Coming Back Together reunion for African American and Latino alumni. “I will always be grateful.” —Amy Speach
ORANGE CONNECTION

Tapping into Portland Brewing

IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT RIVALS OREGONIANS’ love of coffee, it is their passion for craft beer. And nowhere is that more prevalent than in Portland. The city and suburbs boast 84 breweries, and if you ever want to strike up a conversation with a stranger, ask them what’s the best IPA in town, then sit back, pour yourself a pint, and be prepared to hear a well-constructed thesis.

It’s an educated and thirsty market, and two Syracuse alumni are more than happy to help quench that thirst, having cracked into the industry when it was on the brink of its latest stout growth spurt. McKean Banzer-Lausberg ’99 co-owns Migration Brewing, while Spencer Raymond ’10 is a co-owner of The Civic Taproom and Bottle Shop. A third beer establishment, Hopworks Urban Brewery, also has Orange ties: The architect of its cutting-edge brewpub is Roy Ettinger ’67, whose wife, Karen Welsh Ettinger ’65, is also a Syracuse graduate, and whose son, Christian, is the head brewer.

Banzer-Lausberg grew up in Portland, and went to high school downwind from the Henry Weinhard brewery. (“We could actually smell the beer when it was brewing,” he says.) Wanting to expand his horizons, he was drawn to Syracuse, where he earned a degree in marketing from the Whitman School of Management, gaining valuable business skills, including those in supply chain and operations management that would later prove to be surprisingly useful.

Following graduation, Banzer-Lausberg returned to Portland, worked for a brewery, then served in the Peace Corps in Morocco. After heading back to Portland, he soon figured out he wanted to get back into working with craft beer. He and some friends hatched the idea for a brewery, and in October 2009 got to work literally building it themselves. “There was a while there where I felt like I was going to be a construction worker for the rest of my life,” he says.

They poured the first beer at their 5,000-square-foot brewery and pub the following February. As Migration’s chief operating officer, Banzer-Lausberg runs the business side of things, and has been busy focusing on opening a second, larger brewery and pub this spring east of Portland. Having an inside view of what’s been a high-growth industry in a city that greatly values handcrafted items has been a fun ride. “The customer base is exceptional, and it is amazing to be in such an innovative industry right now,” Banzer-Lausberg says.

Raymond followed a somewhat similar path, growing up in the Portland suburb of Lake Oswego and heading across the country to the ‘Cuse for Newhouse’s lauded broadcast journalism program while also majoring in policy studies at the College of Arts and Sciences/Maxwell School.

After graduation, he worked the 2010 World Cup in South Africa for ESPN Deportes and later hosted an English-language TV show in Beijing before also ultimately returning to Oregon. When a contract job he had at a tech company was eliminated, he and a friend decided to open a beer-themed bar. A location was available across the street from the stadium of the beloved Portland Timbers and Thorns soccer teams, and he tapped the East Coast hustle he got his first taste of at SU to react quickly, opening The Civic Taproom on Thanksgiving weekend in 2014.

“I think it’s cool that all the way out here in Portland, a few of us Orange men have figured out little niches in creative ways, maybe in ways we never thought we would when we were at school,” Raymond says, “but we’re back in our home community and we’re doing something that I think is fun.”

—Jim Murez
Photographic Memories

A FASCINATION WITH PHOTOGRAPHY BEGAN EARLY in life for Carl Armani, who as a child would compete with his sister to be the first to read the family’s weekly issue of Life magazine. “With its vivid photographic essays, Life was a source of adventure and learning for me,” says Armani, whose most treasured childhood possession was a Kodak Brownie camera. “I fell in love with the photograph—nothing more than light on paper.” Enthralled by watching a neighbor develop photos in his home darkroom, Armani prevailed upon his father to build one in the basement of their house on Syracuse’s West Side. He also spent countless hours in the local library, avidly reading all he could, especially periodicals with extensive photo spreads. “I came from a working-class home and we didn’t have a lot of books in the house, so the library was a tremendous resource for me,” he says.

Armani enrolled in Syracuse University with the goal of becoming a secondary education teacher, but it was an opportunity for pilot training through the University’s Air Force ROTC program that changed his life trajectory. “I discovered I was made to fly airplanes,” says the College of Arts and Sciences graduate. And that’s exactly what he did: first as an Air Force pilot in Vietnam, then as a commercial airlines pilot for more than 35 years, retiring as an international captain flying European and Pacific routes. In addition, he and pilot colleagues established an insurance agency for high-risk aviation operations, then later founded a multi-asset investment group.

Photography continued to be his passion and consuming hobby, focused on large-format camera techniques in the style of such masters as Ansel Adams. A workshop with renowned photographer and teacher Howard Bond led not only to an improvement in Armani’s photographic skills, but also his decision to collect all of Bond’s photographs, including portfolios and single images. As the owner of one of only two complete Howard Bond collections, Armani considered donating it to a museum or university to keep it intact. In 2007, during a fraternity reunion and Armani’s first return to campus since his 1960 graduation, his wife, Marcy, suggested he donate the collection to Syracuse University. “I knew immediately that she was right,” he says. “Syracuse University was my first and only choice.” The collection was gifted the next year to the Syracuse University Libraries (SUL), with stipulations that included making it accessible to students, faculty, and members of the public wishing to view and even handle the prints.

Since then, Armani has forged close ties with SUL, serving on the advisory board that has overseen such projects as new storage facilities, protection for climate-sensitive materials, and bringing the Carnegie Library’s reading room—where he spent many hours studying—back to its former glory. He and his wife sponsored the refurbishment of one of the Stickley reading room tables, dedicating it in memory of Armani’s best friend, First Lt. Elgie Rath Jr. ’60, who died in a military aircraft crash in 1964. The Armanis have also established scholarships supporting social awareness entrepreneurship for Blackstone LaunchPad students who work part-time at SUL, which hosts the program at Bird Library.

Reconnecting with his Syracuse roots and giving back to the University have been rewarding experiences for Armani. “I’ve rediscovered an attachment to Syracuse University that means so much to me,” he says. “Sometimes when I’m on campus, I just walk up to the Quad and watch the students go by. I know how much the University will change each of them—as it did me.”

—Paula Meseroll
Matched for Life

IT WAS FEBRUARY 11, 2001. Meghan Meehan, an Alpha Chi Omega sister, caught the eye of Delta Kappa Epsilon brother Evan Fischbein during a fraternity mixer. The sophomores chatted for hours. Then, Meghan disappeared. “I remember asking a friend where she’d gone. I sprinted up the stairs behind her, and I asked if I could take her out. We exchanged numbers, and I called her the next day,” Evan recalls.

How does the couple so easily recall the date their Orange love story started? “Because on Valentine’s Day 2001, he gave me three roses,” Meghan says. “A rose for each day he’d known me. Fast forward 10 years, and our wedding weekend started on February 11, 2011.”

After going their separate ways while Meghan went to graduate school, the couple got back together and Evan popped the question on a stroll along the Hudson River in May 2010. “I remember looking at her and saying, ‘You mean more to me than anyone else in the entire world.’ As I’m talking while down on one knee, Spencer, my beagle, is wrapping his leash around me multiple times. There was a lot of fumbling,” Evan chuckles.

The couple got married. Each table had a Syracuse-themed name: Walnut Place, Hendricks Chapel, Carrier Dome, Newhouse, etc. They had a son. Born at 23 weeks—just 11 inches long and weighing 1 pound, 5 ounces—Benjamin Fischbein spent four months in the NICU at St. Barnabas Medical Center in New Jersey. He’s now a thriving 4-year-old. Evan and Meghan credit St. Barnabas with saving their son’s life, but their gratitude for the medical center doesn’t stop there.

A year after his son’s birth, Evan, an insulin-dependent diabetic for more than two decades, went in for routine blood work that revealed concerning results. Their nephrologist told him to start looking for donors; his kidneys were deteriorating. Despite sharing blood types, Evan’s brother Jesse was ruled out. Disappointed but determined, the family turned to social media. “It was very difficult for me to make that request so publicly, but the amount of support and people who responded was incredible,” Evan says.

They encouraged everyone to go through the vetting process at the transplant center. Meghan filled out the paperwork, but never heard from the center—and assumed she didn’t qualify. “Lesson learned,” she says. “Never ever assume.”

Evan started dialysis in May 2017, and the prognosis was grim. Soon after, the couple learned the transplant center had temporarily shut down its living donor program. Their case was moved to St. Barnabas Medical Center. Meghan underwent testing to see if she could be a match after all. “After everything was said and done, it was me,” she says. “The best phone call we ever got was on July 28, 2017. I have the message saved. They cross-matched our blood to make sure our cells wouldn’t fight. They were calling to say our cells got along. That was them saying, ‘This is good. It’s time to move forward.’”

Following surgery on October 18, Evan’s new kidney started functioning immediately. And, in another “Wow!” moment, Evan’s transplant nephrologist is Syracuse alum Dr. Ryan Goldberg ’95. “I’m just so blessed that I was able to give my kidney to him,” Meghan says. “I have it on my driver’s license that I’m an organ donor, but to think about being a living donor? And giving it to my husband? It’s me. I’m his match.”

And for that, Evan is forever thankful. “I’m blessed that I get to wake up every day and see the woman I love, my best friend, my wife,” he says. “But now it takes on a whole new meaning. She’s literally a part of me. She saved my life.”

—Kim Infanti

Lesson learned. Never ever assume.” —MEGHAN MEEHAN ’03
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Karen Iannella '93 (A&S/NEW) is president of the Boehringer Ingelheim Cares Foundation, a nonprofit organization based in Ridgefield, Conn., committed to improving community members’ access to health care and enhancing STEM education with a focus on people who are underserved. She is also head of U.S. communications and patient affairs for Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc.

Marianne Janack G’93, G’96 (A&S), the John Stewart Kennedy Professor of Philosophy at Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., received the 2017-18 Romanell-Phi Beta Kappa Professorship, awarded annually to scholars in the field of philosophy.

Stacey Simms ’93 (A&S/NEW) was named to the American Diabetes Association’s 2017 list “People to Know” in its magazine, Diabetes Forecast. She hosts Diabetest Connections, an award-winning weekly podcast, and is the first podcaster named to this annual list of 12 influencers and advocates.

Matthew Broderick ’94 (ARC) is president and CEO of Ashley McGraw Architects in Syracuse.

Thomas Dima ’94 (NEW) is a member of the board of directors for NewFest, New York’s LGBT film and media arts organization dedicated to bringing voice and visibility to the LGBT experience through storytelling. He is senior account director at UniWorld Group, the oldest full-service multicultural marketing agency in the United States.

Lisa Lezell Levine G’95 (VPA), a painter residing in Richmond, Va., collaborated with her friend, Heidi Thacker, on an art exhibition at the Richmond Public Library held in November. The show featured acrylic paintings based on scenes from around the world. The artists donated a percentage of their proceeds to the United Network for Organ Sharing, a nonprofit organization whose work helps save lives each day in the United States.

Shayna Smith Postman ’95 (EDU/VPA) is cantor at Town and Village Synagogue in New York City, where she has been choir director since 1998, and is a vocalist with New York’s Zamir Choral.

Mike Vaccaro ’95 (NEW) is in his 20th year as a college play-by-play announcer after first spending six years at Campbell University and now in his 14th year at University of North Carolina Wilmington, where he is assistant director of marketing and the radio voice of the Seahawks.

Megan Doscher ’96 (NEW) is chief of staff and senior policy advisor in the policy office of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration at the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C.

Robert J. Henke G’97 (MAX) is the majority staff director with the U.S. Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs in Washington, D.C.

Brian Michael Hoffman ’97 (VPA) proved that there truly is “no place like home” when he returned to Syracuse for the Syracuse Stage and SU Department of Drama production of The Wizard of Oz as the Cowardly Lion in December. Having worked professionally in his field since graduation, he writes, he was thrilled to finally come home to Syracuse in such a beloved role (brianmichaelhoffman.com).

Serena Wills ’97 (A&S/MAX), a Washington, D.C.-based writer, poet, and spoken word artist with extensive experience in the nonprofit field, wrote Crying Tears of Teal (CreateSpace/Divine Wryte, 2017), a book of poems to help raise awareness about ovarian cancer, many written at her mother’s bedside while she was sick with the disease (www.serenanwills.com).

Gina Perry Carey ’98 (VPA) celebrated her debut as a picture book author and illustrator with the release of Smoll (little bee books, 2017). Her next title, Too Much! Not Enough!, will be released in August by Tundra (Penguin Random House Canada), with another planned for 2019. She works from her home in New Hampshire, where she lives with her husband and two children.

Adam Blank ’99 (A&S/MAX/NEW), a partner at the Stamford, Conn.-based law firm Wofsey, Rosen, Kveskin & Kuriansky, was appointed to the State of Connecticut Task Force to Study Fully Autonomous Vehicles.

Wendy Coakley-Thompson G’99 (EDU) launched Duho Books (duhobooks.com), a boutique publishing company based in Washington, D.C., that publishes fiction and nonfiction for, by, and about the Bahamas and Bahamians.

Meredith Goldstein ’99 (NEW), an advice columnist and entertainment reporter for The Boston Globe, wrote Can’t Help Myself: Lessons and Confessions from a Modern Advice Columnist (Grand Central Publishing), a “memoir about love and family and finding your path” that features highlights from her Love Letters column.

Jason Stahl ’00 (FALK/WSM) is the deputy editor at Wonderlust-Travel.com, a luxury travel online publication.

Zachary R. Benjamin ’02 (A&S/NEW) is senior counsel at Bond, Schoeneck & King’s Syracuse office in the firm’s business law practice.


Amanda C. Raymond ’02 (A&S) wrote Son of Sherlock (Epiphany Mill Publishing, 2017), a novel for young adults about 13-year-old Jonathan Eaton, who discovers he is the son of Sherlock Holmes and sets out on an investigation to find out who his real mother is and why his identity has been kept a secret. Raymond lives in Los Angeles, where she started her own production company called 13 Curves Productions Limited, named for the 13 curves of Cedarvale Road in Syracuse.

Sara Hegarty ’03 (EDU), executive director of the American Heart Association in Toledo, Ohio, received a 2017 20 Under 40 Leadership Recognition Award from the city’s 20 Under 40 program, which honors young community leaders in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan.
Breona Jones-Rice ’19 started observing open heart and thoracic surgeries when she was still a high school student. Her passionate interest in biotechnology—and strong support from the Ruth and Herbert Meyer Scholarship—opened a door to Syracuse University, the school of her dreams.

As a biotechnology major, she’s eager to conduct hands-on research and eventually pursue a pharmacology degree, so she can one day help develop new and lifesaving drugs. And, as the first in her family to attend college, she aspires to become “one of the many who gives back to those who invested in her.”

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IN MEMORIAM

Notices of deaths must be accompanied by a copy of an obituary or memorial card.
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1922 Marjorie Mae McKee
1934 Sheila Wohl 1935 Frances Tricamo Falzer, Norma Ehegter Fody 1938 Sylvia Altshuler Krugman 1939 Clark S. Lankton
1940 Margaret Peck Delprione, Phyllis Hickman Demong, Clark E. McHuron, Frances Bibli Newhouse 1941 Mary Keneghan Boltz, Walter J. Graver, Jane Chandler Parker, Josephine Galaska Richardson, Jo Anne Schneider, Barton Tomlinson 1942 Mary Pierce Bauer, Zoe Schnapp Gould, Beatrice Costello Seaceast 1943 Caroline Giordano Cleary, William J. Drescher, Kathleen Behan Hapeman, Rose Gentile Page
Lisa Kelly ’03 (EDU) and Michael Lombardi ’03, G’12 (WSM) of White Plains, N.Y., announce the birth of their son, Alexander Deivid Kelly-Lombardi. Lisa is an attorney and real estate agent with a teaching certification in TESOL. Michael is a marketing strategy director at Ogilvy.

Drew Gray Miller ’03 (NEW) of Pittsburgh, an energy attorney and former Realtor with corporate law firm and government experience, was the Libertarian Party of Allegheny and Washington Counties (Pa.) candidate for the 18th U.S. Congressional District Special Election in March.

Adam Ritchie ’03 (NEW) is conducting a national speaking tour titled “Invention in PR,” discussing how public relations can be used to create newsworthy consumer products from the ground up.

Elizabeth Puchir Sheldon ’03 (WSM), together with three colleagues, filed a patent for their creation of a predictive analytics-based model used to identify vulnerabilities within The Hartford’s small commercial insurance book of business.

Benjamin Clymer ’05 (IST/WSM) is president and CEO of Hodinkee, a New York City-based online resource and eShop for luxury watch enthusiasts.

Emilio B. Nicolas G’05 (NEW), L’05 (LAW) is a partner at the law firm of Jackson Walker LLP, where he practices entertainment, media, and intellectual property law. He is married to Nancy Ham mel Nicolas L’05 (LAW), an assistant district attorney for Travis County, Texas. They live in Austin.

Alexander Roberts ’05 (WSM) moved to Metuchen, N.J., with his wife in May 2017.

Kristen Vaccariello Tozzo ’06 (A&S) and her husband, Vincent, announce the July 2017 birth of their son, Dean Paul, who joins big sister Sienna.

Benjamin C. Steuerwalt ’07 (EDU) and his wife, Jesika, announce the June 2017 birth of their son, James Peter.

Jennifer Burgomaster Tarolli ’07 (A&S/NEW) and Christopher Tarolli ’07 (A&S) of Rochester, N.Y., announce the birth of their second son, Colin John.

Alyza Bobbot ’08 (WSM) is owner of Alakaf Coffee Roasters, a family-run business in Duluth, Minn., that received Minnesota Business Magazine’s 2017 Manufacturing Award, recognizing its commitment to sustainability practices and its goal of becoming the state’s most sustainable coffee company.

Nilo Alcala G’09 (VPA), a Los Angeles-based composer and an SU College of Visual and Performing Arts Billy Joel Fellow, received a Copland House Residency Award that provided the opportunity for undisturbed creative work at American composer Aaron Copland’s National Historic Landmark home in Cortlandt, N.Y., in fall 2017. He was also one of three finalists chosen in the IGNITE 2017-18 competition to compose music for the Choral Composer-Conductor Collective C4, a New York City-based professional ensemble. And he recently released Onomatopoeia: The Choral Works of Nilo Alcala, an album featuring the Philippine Madrigal Singers.

Meredith Hale ’09 (VPA) is the metadata librarian at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Halley Quillinan Griggs ’10 (FALK) married Brian Griggs ’10 (WSM) in June in Newbury, N.H. Among their wedding guests were 45 fellow SU alumni.

Mike Gursha ’10 (NEW/WSM) is chief executive officer of Rookie Road (rookierood.com), a Portland, Oregon-based startup he launched with his brother, Doug, that creates educational content about sports and serves as a go-to source of information for people who want to better understand and participate in sports fandom.

Tricia Serviss G’10 (A&S), associate director of entry level writing in the University Writing Program at the University of California, Davis, co-edited Points of Departure: Rethinking Student Source Use and Writing Studies Research Methods (Utah State University Press).

Mike Friedman ’12 (WSM) cofounded TailOrder.com, a family-owned and operated fashion company that features stylish socks and donates 10 percent of profits to Tuesday’s Children, a nonprofit organization founded in the aftermath of 9/11 to help those impacted by the events of that day.

Shaun Loughlin ’13 (A&S/ MAX) is an attorney at Halloran & Sage in New Haven, Conn., where his practice encompasses matters in insurance defense and litigation.

Ronnie White Jr. L’13 (LAW) is an attorney in the litigation department at Mackenzie Hughes law firm in Syracuse. He is a founding member of the William Herbert Johnson Bar Association of Central New York, the region’s only African American Bar Association, and a member of the Onondaga County, New York State, and American Bar associations.

Grady Chambers G’15 (A&S) won the inaugural Max Ritvo Poetry Prize for his manuscript North American Stadiums. The award includes $10,000 and publication by Milkweed Editions in June 2018.

Kathleen Pulito ’15 (A&S) traveled to the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea as the media liaison for the Jamaican women’s bobsled team.

Phil Racicot ’15 (A&S/MAX) is operations director for Pittsburgh Three Rivers Marathon Inc., a nonprofit organization that promotes a love of running and enhances community access to health and fitness education and activities.

Alexandra Szczelinski G’17 (NEW) is a junior digital designer at Pinckney Hugo Group, a marketing communications firm in Syracuse.
Jami Gong ’91

Bringing More Laughter to Asia

Jameson “Jami” Gong was born and raised in New York City’s Chinatown, the son of immigrants from Hong Kong. A professional comedian, his first try at comedy took place as an SU sophomore, on a dare by friends to enter a stand-up contest on campus. The geography major worked in retail after graduation, and led historical walking tours of Chinatown that were filmed by the BBC, PBS, the Travel Channel, and others. After some soul-searching, he decided that making people laugh would be his full-time profession.

He’s performed all over the United States, including an appearance on Late Night with Conan O’Brien. When he wanted to bring entertainment back to Chinatown—which was going through hard times after the 9/11 attacks—he and his friends brainstormed and came up with the concept for a show, which they called “TakeOut Comedy” (www.takeoutcomedy.com). The first (sold out) performances took place in a neighborhood restaurant on February 6, 2003.

In June 2004, Gong carried the Olympic torch across the Brooklyn Bridge, in the New York City leg of the global torch relay leading up to the Athens Summer Olympics. Never one for sitting still, he now lives in Hong Kong, where he founded TakeOut Comedy Club HK, the first full-time comedy club in Asia.

Syracuse University Magazine contributing writer John Martin interviewed Gong about his comedic pursuits.

Why does your life’s work focus on humor?
I truly believe spreading laughter is my destiny.

Is there a recurring theme in your humor?
Life.

Why bring stand-up comedy to Hong Kong?
It’s an untapped market with huge potential. There was stand-up comedy here before we came, but we took it to a whole new level. We planted the seed, and now there are many comedy scenes all over Asia.

How do Hong Kong audiences differ from audiences in the U.S.?
We have a more diverse audience, so we have to be more worldly and general in our shows. On any given night, we can have people from Australia, Canada, China, England, France, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Malta, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, the U.S., etc. Comedy truly unites people.

Who are your major influences?
Bob Hope, Johnny Carson, and my mom.

Remember your first routine on the SU campus?
I wrote and memorized four paragraphs about my roommates, college life, and being Asian. I was very nervous. During the show, in a room with 200-plus people, all I remember seeing was my roommate in the back—laughing at me, not with me.

What was your most notable experience on stage—good, or not so much?
In the spring of 1992, I performed at the New York Comedy Club, with many friends in attendance and a packed room. I was arrogant and unprepared, and I blanked on stage. It felt like an eternity, and I still remember a gentleman in the middle of the room saying loudly, “Come on! You can do it!” I could not perform again until 1999. I tell that story in my stand-up comedy workshops, to help others make sure it does not happen to them. Be prepared for anything!

Any advice for would-be comedians?
Just do it! The more you think about it, the more you are not going to do it. Doing stand-up comedy is the greatest job in the world, and I’m blessed to do it for a living in a huge, unrealized market!

What’s next?
This is my calling—to continue to bring more laughter to Asia. I also love teaching stand-up comedy, and people invite me to different cities to instruct and consult. Recently, I flew to Jordan to teach stand-up comedy and meet with people interested in opening “TakeOut Comedy Amman.” I’m excited about all the possibilities!
TONIA O’CONNOR IS THE FIRST PERSON TO HOLD THE title of chief revenue officer at Univision Communications Inc., a job she started in July 2016. It means she oversees the media company’s two traditional revenue streams—advertising and distribution—as well as new revenue opportunities and partnerships. “And in today’s marketplace, where media and technology are converging, there are a lot of new opportunities,” she says. “Everything’s on the table.”

In the past when advertisers wanted to work with a TV network they bought 30- or 60-second spots to pitch a product. “It used to be very simple,” says O’Connor, who serves as chair of the Newhouse Advisory Board and was honored as a Newhouse “50Forward” recipient in 2015. “Now we have to create opportunities for the sponsors we work with to get them as close as they can to a very targeted base of consumers.”

She tells her team not to think of themselves as salespeople, she says. “We’re problem solvers. And that means spending as much time trying to identify the problem as solving it.”

Opportunities exist across the company’s TV, radio, and new streaming services, as well as on the social media platforms audiences use to access Univision’s content. O’Connor’s job is staying one step ahead of the curve. “It’s my job to identify the opportunities of tomorrow, too,” she says.

That’s no simple task when the media company you’re doing the job for is the leading Spanish-language network (with 100 million unique consumers in 2017 alone). Univision operates 62 TV stations and 58 radio stations in the United States and Puerto Rico, as well as Fusion Media Group, which runs the cable network FUSION TV. As O’Connor says, you need to know your audience, experiment, and give yourself the flexibility to break things and disrupt. “The biggest mistake we could make right now is not making any mistakes,” she says.

The job is not one O’Connor envisioned when she started studying broadcast journalism and international relations at Syracuse University 30 years ago (she graduated with a dual major in both programs). She had aspirations of being in front of a camera reporting international news. Her father served in the U.S. Navy while she was growing up in York, Maine. She remembers countless conversations about what was happening around the globe, especially politics, she says. “I loved the storytelling that happened around that.”

But shortly after graduating from SU, she pivoted to the business side of media, starting in telecommunications sales. She then spent 13 years in distribution at News Corp’s Gemstar-TV Guide, before joining Univision in 2008, where she focused on distribution and content licensing until assuming her current role. She is also a founder and continues to sponsor Univision’s Women’s Leadership Council, an initiative to help prepare younger women in the company to take on leadership roles through education and mentorship. The council is led by women, but the programming is open to anyone in the company, O’Connor says. “It’s about equal representation for everyone.”

While media is definitely changing, O’Connor says the practical curriculum she learned at SU helped prepare her for that. “It was engrained in me from the very beginning that media was not just about generating stories and ideas. You also had to be part of a whole apparatus that’s involved in delivering that content on what the medium might be,” she says—whether that’s learning how to operate a camera and edit footage or, today, learning Snapchat and other new social platforms.

Her advice for anyone in media today, young and old: “Never stop being a student. And it’s really important to always be a consumer, too.” Be curious. Ask questions. And always understand your audience, she says.

—Sarah DiGiulio

“We’re problem solvers. And that means spending as much time trying to identify the problem as solving it.”
IT’S NO SECRET SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI DISPLAY their Orange pride all across the world. What Sterling Boin did in October 2017 took the meaning of school spirit to new heights. Boin, the president of the SU Alumni Club of Colorado and a member of the Generation Orange Leadership Council, climbed to the summit of the famous El Capitan (elevation: 7,569 feet) and Lost Arrow Spire (6,930 feet) peaks in Yosemite National Park, all while showing off his love for Syracuse University.

From an orange and blue Syracuse “S” flag that he proudly waved, to appropriately colored blue and orange climbing ropes, Boin brought his SU spirit with him. “I knew from the start I wanted and needed to have that flag. It helped family and friends keep tabs of my progress from the valley floor, and it also gained exposure for SU as we climbed,” says Boin, who spent 3½ days climbing the face, via a route called Lurking Fear. “Syracuse is where I started climbing, with the outing club, so it was only appropriate that I bring the Syracuse flag with me on this adventure.”

Boin and his climbing partner, Donald Letts, faced a daunting challenge before they even started their climb: figuring out how to efficiently pack and haul about 200 pounds of supplies and climbing gear. An experienced climber, Boin trained for more than a year on the big-wall aid climbing technique (where climbers stand or pull on placed or fixed protections instead of free climbing), including hauling bags of rocks up walls around Denver to get accustomed to the weight of the gear. “That’s what shuts down most people who want to big-wall climb,” he says. “It isn’t whether they can physically handle the climb, but whether or not they planned out and practiced the logistics of hauling all of their gear.”

While Boin enjoyed the adventure, he admits welcoming the downhill portion of the trip. “The way down can be treacherous with heavy bags, especially if it gets dark out, and we were pushing the pace with a sense of urgency,” he says. “But it was also this sigh of relief that we weren’t vertical anymore, and that we were grounded. It’s crazy how much you miss standing on the ground when you’ve been hanging in a harness for three days.”

Once the trip was completed, Boin shared photos of his escapades on social media. “It was weird for people I had never met to congratulate me on the climb, but it was amazing to share that experience with so many people,” he says. “We were connected by my SU flag and I felt more connected to these people because we all shared something: being Syracuse alumni.”

Boin, a Bronx native who majored in finance and marketing at the Whitman School of Management, says a lifelong love of skiing led him to get involved with climbing. At Syracuse, Boin started doing triathlons, joined the SU cycling team, and was a photographer for The Daily Orange. He even completed an independent study, where the goal was to add a rock-climbing wall to Archbold Gymnasium.

After graduating, Boin moved to Denver, where he is a senior financial operations analyst with the American Alpine Club. He also works tirelessly to spread his passion for Syracuse to the residents of Denver. “Syracuse has done so much and meant so much to me that I want to share my experiences and my love of SU with everyone,” says Boin, who would enjoy taking a group of Syracuse alumni in Colorado out for a climbing event. “When I meet someone who is an SU graduate, they become like a brother or a sister to me. The bond is incredible.”

—John Boccacino
AUTHOR ANDREA DAVIS Pinkney ’85 tells a story to 600 students at Dr. Edwin E. Weeks Elementary School in Syracuse. She is part of the bestselling and award-winning Pinkney family, authors and illustrators renowned for their representations of social justice and African American culture in children’s literature. Andrea, husband Brian Pinkney, and his parents, Gloria Jean and Jerry Pinkney, were the featured speakers of the inaugural Jo-Linda and Dennis Keith Distinguished Speaker Series hosted by the School of Education.

As part of a two-day residency in February, they shared stories and songs and the influences that have inspired them to collaborate on hundreds of books for children and young adults. Their visit also included a public lecture at the University, a community event at Beauchamp Branch Library in Syracuse, and a gallery show and talk at the Community Folk Art Center. Gloria Jean and Jerry have collaborated on numerous books, and Jerry’s illustrations have been featured for decades in exhibitions around the country. Andrea, a 2008 Arents Award recipient, and Brian continue the family tradition, producing books solo and together, including ones on such historic figures as Sojourner Truth, Duke Ellington, and Rosa Parks.

Photos by Charles Wainwright
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