

MONMOUTH



**Building the cities
of tomorrow » P. 38**

PLUS: DANGEROUS ALGAE » P. 19

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Looking In



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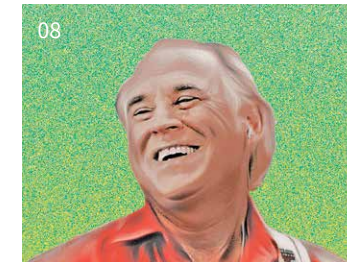


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Signs of Growth

Over the past year, Monmouth has increased access, launched well-prepared graduates into new careers, and achieved its highest-ever ranking in select national polls.

Since I first joined Monmouth, I have been impressed, time and again, by the drive and determination of our community. The very history of our University has been shaped by students, alumni, and faculty who have persevered in the face of uncertainty. From our earliest Depression-era days, we have served and supported students who have been committed to succeeding at Monmouth and beyond.

So while the past two years have tested our individual and collective resolve in ways unimaginable, it is hardly surprising that—together—we have faced these unexpected challenges with great patience, flexibility, and fortitude. Indeed, the strength of Monmouth's spirit has been on shining display over the past 22 months.

In so many ways, Monmouth experienced an exceptional fall semester as we returned to a fully in-person campus experience. Thanks to the good work and thoughtful planning of our Crisis Management Team, we put in place heightened health and

safety protocols that protected our community and provided the foundation for a successful semester.

We enrolled the most academically prepared and second-most-diverse first-year class in Monmouth's history and welcomed more out-of-state students than ever before. And, we continued to make the Monmouth experience as widely accessible as possible to a growing number of first-generation and Pell Grant-eligible students.

Thanks to the generosity of dear friends and donors, we unveiled new spaces across campus that enhance both our physical plant and our student experience, including the new OTD program labs, the renamed Tom Byer '67 and Susie Byer Financial Markets Lab, the new Par-ton Broadcasting Center in the OceanFirst Bank Center, and the interior redesign of the Great Hall for student use and activity.

We welcomed distinguished guests to campus—among them, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and U.S. Senator Cory Booker—to engage in critical discussions with our campus community. We enjoyed championship seasons across so many of our fall sports and academic competition teams, and our winter sports have likewise seen a strong start, notching early-season wins against well-known schools, breaking program records, and setting national ones.

All of this and more resulted in our highest-ever rankings in various third-party reports, polls, and publications, including No. 18 in the most recent *U.S. News & World Report* Best Regional Universities—North category. And, thanks to our increasing number of doctoral program offerings, Monmouth will soon achieve national doctoral university status, placing us alongside some of the finest institutions in the nation.

As evidenced by these examples and those on the pages that follow, we have responded to this challenging period with great purpose and perseverance, which makes me so proud to be a part of this community. While Monmouth continues to navigate through these challenges—at once pushing new frontiers and marking new milestones in the year ahead—I thank you for your continued support of our exceptional University.

»PATRICK F. LEAHY, ED.D., PRESIDENT

Correspondence



Our Spring 2021 issue

“I was a friend and classmate of Jeff’s when the news of Bob Marley’s passing broke, and I distinctly remember how moved and wiped out Jeff was after running the WMCX radio show that day.”

Yeah mon!

I fondly read Jeff Steinberg’s “Marley & Me” article (Spring 2021). I was a friend and classmate of Jeff’s when the news of Bob Marley’s passing broke, and I distinctly remember how moved and wiped out Jeff was after running the WMCX radio show that day.

Jeff was always very big-hearted; he treated a few fellow Hawks, including me, to a Rita Marley show in New York a few years later. I passed up a chance to hop onto Rita’s tour bus, but Jeff went backstage. After all, he was a part of the Marley family. Thanks for the memories!
»CHRISTOPHER E. CANE '84

Stomping Grounds

Readers shared their favorite places on Monmouth’s campus.

As a baseball player from 1985 to 1989, one of my favorite spots was (and still is) the field we played on—so many great memories with my amazing teammates. It was on that field that I learned many life lessons about the value of hard work and teamwork and about the importance of overcoming adversity. My education at Monmouth, and my experiences as an athlete, taught me to sit back, review a situation, make appropriate changes, and try again. The feeling of accomplishment after a setback provides the same high as the adrenaline rush that comes after hitting a home run. In fact, if it wasn’t

for key influences from coaches, professors, teammates, my parents, and friends, I know I would have had a much larger mountain to climb in life.

While the baseball field was my sanctuary, my ultimate favorite spot on campus has to be the old Life and Career Advising Center (LCAC) in the Student Center. It was there that I met my best friend: Mary Lou Travis '86, who is now my wife. It would be hard not to cite the LCAC as my favorite spot on campus given that I met my soul mate and lifelong partner there. It will always hold a special place in my heart. »RICK IRACE '89

Whether as a place to study for tests or to hang out in before and after class, the Great Hall was *the* place.
»NANCY FREEMAN '68

At the end of the lawn on the south side of the Great Hall is a small pond. I would often sit there for long periods of time looking at the water and watching the ducks swim; it helped me forget about my busy work and study schedules, assignments, and things that troubled me. It was always a peaceful time and never failed to reenergize me and help clear my mind. Afterward, I would take a long walk around the beautiful campus. I always look back at those times with fond memories.
»BASEM ZREIQAT '84

Third floor of the Student Center with Monmouth SGA!
»DAVID FASOLINO '22, VIA INSTAGRAM

Oddly enough, it’s the women’s second-floor bathroom in the Great Hall. It was *the quietest* place ever—especially in the winter, when the snow was falling. It was so warm in there! I’d hang out and read in the sitting room just outside the bathroom. I always wished the closet there were unlocked (it never was) because it was the coolest two-floor closet I have ever seen. Sometimes I would imagine being the woman whose bathroom that was: gold fixtures, a sitting room. Oh, and I definitely used the scale built into the floor—even though it was off a little.
»KAREN CARSON BODE '90

The “Old (original) Rugged Gate” in front of the Library on Cedar Avenue.
»WILLIAM C. BROWN JR. '99

The “Old Building” of the Guggenheim Library, back in the day.
»SCOTT LYONS '79, VIA FACEBOOK

The School of Science chemistry labs! That’s where all the magic happens!
»AMANDA PRASCSAK '21, VIA INSTAGRAM

The Varsity Weight Room, of course!
»TIM REHM, VIA TWITTER
Rehm is director of strength and conditioning for the Hawks.

The “classic literature” section in the old part of the Guggenheim Library, which was almost always deserted. I would pick a table by a window and just take in the atmosphere of the room: the smell of old



ABOVE: The Wagstaff family. Back: William; front: May (standing); Eva, seated holding Grace in her lap; Frances; and Evelyn.

books and paper, the decorative walls and ceiling, the old parquet floors, and the view looking out over the beautiful park. It was like going back in time for me, a romantic old soul lost in a bygone world. »ANNA (MURPHY) SMALL '90

As a transfer, commuter, and first-generation student, I spent a good deal of time doing homework in the former Murray Guggenheim House, now the library. I allowed myself to be distracted as I wondered what it might have been like to work in and around the house. Comparing the grand staircase with the one used by the help, I wondered how often the original wood walls of bookshelves were hand-dusted and imagined the home-life technology of the times. Sitting in the former bedrooms, I thought about the meals that were prepared in the kitchen and the flowers that would have been placed around the room.

Outside, among the flowers and the forgotten ground scape, I thought of the greenhouse that no longer stood and the small place where the person who ran the grounds and his wife raised their family of four girls. Walking the grounds as an undergraduate brought me an immense sense of calm and peace. While I am sure others have felt this way, there are few alumni who can join me in feeling a true connection to the roots growing on those grounds.

The family that once lived in the back-corner house is mine. William Wagstaff, born in Southport, Merseyside, England, United Kingdom, in 1884, and Eva M. Wagstaff (nee Rowe), born in 1893 in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York, were my great-grandparents.

My grandmother May, along with her sisters, Frances, Evelyn, and Grace, were raised there, in the shadow of this most eccentric of summer residences. While Eva helped in the big house a bit, William oversaw the grounds. For that he was paid a modest salary and provided housing. This was a typical arrangement for the times.

This was not his first job in the States. He was hired to do the same work on an estate in Connecticut immediately upon arriving at Ellis Island. Victorian Southport, U.K., was much like Monmouth County at the time, and so it is easy to understand why he might have had interest in relocating to the West End. The couple remained in the area until he passed away in 1951; at that point he was working at the Levine Estate in Deal, New Jersey. Eva lost her husband and housing in the same moment. She eventually remarried and moved nearby to the small house of her second husband in Elberon, New Jersey. The Wagstaff family members from that house in the shadows were buried down the street from the University at Glenwood Cemetery.

I am not the only family member to earn a degree from Monmouth University. The most famous was basketball star Walter Mischler '62. But I am the only one who returned later to join Monmouth's faculty for a brief time. The library and grounds remain my favorite spot on campus because of the family ties that I have to those spaces. »KIMBERLY M. CUNY '88

Monmouth Vol. 41, No. 1

Monmouth magazine is published twice annually by the Monmouth University Division of Enrollment Management.

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Lyon, France-based artist Gwen Keraval depicts cities of the future.



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[THE BUSINESS OF BUFFETT]

Singing All the Way to the Bank

Business professor John Inzero explains how Jimmy Buffett built a billion-dollar empire by selling a state of mind.

INTERVIEW BY TONY MARCHETTI

For nearly 50 years, Jimmy Buffett has been singing about the joys of leading a laid-back, carefree lifestyle. But behind his devil-may-care stage persona is a shrewd businessman, says John Inzero, an adjunct professor of marketing and international business.

Long before the music industry realized there was more money to be made selling tchotchkes and concert tickets than albums, Buffett was leveraging his fans' desire to experience his brand of escapism by selling them all the accoutrements associated with it.

Today, Parrotheads, as Buffett's fans are known, can buy everything from clothing to pickleball paddles to homes in gated communities—all licensed and marketed by his company, Margaritaville. This has made Buffett a very rich man. →

Inzero, who enjoyed a successful career “selling things people want but don’t need” before coming to teach at Monmouth in 2016, says business students can learn a lot from Buffett’s business ventures. He recently published a case study, “Inventing Margaritaville: How a beach loving singer songwriter built a business worth more than \$1 billion,” in *The Journal of Business and Economic Studies*. He shared with us some of his insights on how Buffett built his tropical-themed empire.

How did the idea for this research come about?

My wife and I were sitting on the patio sipping margaritas, and she said to me, “Play some Jimmy Buffett.” So I put on Radio Margaritaville (from SiriusXM), and we heard an ad for Latitude Margaritaville, which at the time was a new 55-plus community he was opening. They called it “55 and better!” And I thought that’s genius because so many of the people you see at his concerts, who have been following him all these years, are now in that age group.

So that struck a spark, and I started doing some research on his businesses and the escapist lifestyle he was selling. Then a few months later, *Wheel of Fortune* had an entire week during which the sole prize provider was Margaritaville. And I thought, that’s the hook. That was what tied it all together and made this case study important.

How so?

It made sense when you think about who the audiences are. *Wheel of Fortune*’s audience skews older and female, which is the same as Buffett’s. It showed he understood the demographics and psychographics of his fans, many of whom are Margaritaville customers.

How important is that in business?

There are three main academic themes that I get at in my case study. The first is the importance of knowing your unique selling point, or USP. What makes you different from everyone else who is out there? The next is brand positioning. It’s a crowded marketplace, so you have to establish your ground and stay on it. The third is the importance of knowing who

“Buffett is a fastball down the middle. He doesn’t really experiment. He’s as much of a musician as anyone else; he just does it within the context of his escapist, tropical theme. I think that was smart because that’s brand positioning.... [T]he lesson for students is that your message, no matter the medium, has to be the same.”

your customer is. I used to tell the people who worked for me that the single most important question in marketing is, who’s our customer?

How does Buffett’s business empire measure up in that regard?

His Margaritaville brand is built on selling the escapist lifestyle he’s been singing about for years. If you go back to his live album *You Had to Be There* from 1978, he says on it, “People ask me, where the hell is Margaritaville? And I go, ‘It’s anywhere you want it to be.’” That’s the point. Margaritaville is not a place; it’s a state of mind. And once you get this, you realize it’s a place that you want to be at—an escape and get-away from our everyday lives.

Now he’d been playing concerts forever and had developed this really tight-knit following—the Parrotheads. Over time, the demographics of his audience evolved. It was no longer people sitting on the beach listening to him. It was professionals—people with tough jobs and, sometimes, tough family lives too—looking for that two-hour-plus escape. You’d see it in the parking lots before concerts where people wore tropical-themed shirts and had inflatable shark hats and wading pools. That wasn’t stuff Buffett was selling; people were buying it to go to his concerts.

So this concept of escape grew and became bigger than the music itself. Buffett has a good business mind. He saw it happening and realized it wasn’t a fad. Fads come and go. He knew this was a trend,

and he was smart enough to figure out how to be both ahead of and driving the trend, selling this very specific lifestyle.

Now it’s more than just hats and clothing he’s selling. It’s stuff for home, stuff for your yard. You can buy your Margaritaville drinks and mix them in your Margaritaville blender. There are Margaritaville resorts all over the world. And that grew into the 55-plus communities. People who broke their backs working all their lives could now relax and escape. And if you look at the communities themselves, the decor, the colors, and the activities for residents all tie in with the brand, that tropical escapist concept.

In your case study, you write how even Buffett’s music is “on brand.” That seems like something most musicians would balk at.

It’s the nature of music to experiment, and everybody has a different sense of where they want to go with it. Bob Dylan was the original folkie. Then he went electric, went back to blues, played “Dust Bowl Ballads,” and moved on to American standards. Springsteen experiments too: He did rock, then folk, then more introspective things with a nod to Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie, and then he went back to rock. Paul Simon is all over the place, from New York City to world music.

But Buffett is a fastball down the middle. He doesn’t really experiment. He’s as much of a musician as anyone else; he just does it within the context of his escapist, tropical theme. I think that was smart because that’s brand positioning.

When I talk about integrated marketing communications in class, the lesson for students is that your message, no matter the medium, has to be the same. Otherwise, your market is going to get totally confused. It’s very clear what Buffett’s message is.

It’s not unusual for musicians to sell T-shirts and concert tickets. But is there anyone besides Buffett who’s had such success selling this sort of all-encompassing lifestyle?

Not that I’ve seen. When you think about the range of things he’s selling, he’s really selling a way of living. And I don’t know that there’s been another musician who has done that. You can buy a Bob Dylan T-shirt, but who has a Bob Dylan lifestyle? Frank Sinatra was crazy huge, and maybe people occasionally wore a fedora, but you didn’t decorate your home like Sinatra.

It all comes back to that concept of escape. It’s a very specific lifestyle. He saw it happening and built it continually from there.

Buffett is in his mid-70s and can’t go on touring forever. What happens to the Margaritaville brand when he retires?

Margaritaville Enterprises did something smart by not using Buffett as the visual of the brand. Obviously he’s the focal point, but when you see Margaritaville, you see a parrot. That can be anybody, male or female. That’s the emblem of the message the company is trying to get across.

Look at what happened when Walt Disney wasn’t around anymore. I’m talking about the original Walt Disney Company, before it started buying everything up. Disney did a lot of the same things, tying its brand into leisure. It has hotels, cruises, clothing, and other things like that. There isn’t anything after Disney because it’s *sui generis*—it’s unique.

The same applies to Margaritaville in my mind. It’s all about the theme. If you keep the dream of escape—of getting away from all of the craziness we deal with—alive, I don’t see any reason it can’t continue. ☺

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

photo ANTHONY DEPRIMO



The Perfect Pick

The resume is all there: A doctorate in psychology and neuroscience from Princeton University; eight years in the private sector as a research scientist at Kraft; academic leadership roles at Morgan State University and California State University, Los Angeles, where she was the dean of the College of Natural and Social Sciences; and an expert at getting government grants.

But if you ask Pamela Scott-Johnson, who started as the provost and senior vice president for academic affairs in August, the training she needed for the job started long before she got a bachelor’s degree at Spelman College or a high school diploma in South Carolina. It started with the lessons learned from her parents—both of whom were educators with a master’s degree.

It wasn’t the push they gave toward academics—and the watchful eye they had on her academic career. Sure, that helped, she said. But, rather, it was the eventual realization that all kids didn’t have the benefit of that upbringing.

“I’m not a first-generation college student,” she said.

She’s not. And she’s also a mom with two kids—one of whom is pursuing a doctorate. And doing it in a different way than she did.

“Kids today communicate in different ways than we did,” she said. “Their voices are different. How they find their voices is different. We need to help them find their voices.”

If you’re thinking Monmouth has hired a different type of leader, you’re right. Scott-Johnson understands that the relationship between a teacher and a student, a school and a student, and the world and a student is changing rapidly. That makes her the perfect pick for the job. »TOM BERGERON

A version of this article originally appeared in ROI-NJ. It is reprinted here with permission.

Flight Control

Claude Taylor is bringing a more personalized approach to first-generation student services at Monmouth.

BY TONY MARCHETTI

As a first-generation graduate, Claude Taylor knows how bewildering the higher education landscape can seem to students who are the first in their families to attend college.

“My [undergraduate] experience was one of struggling to navigate university jargon, and struggling to understand the sequence of what I call the time horizon of higher ed,” says Taylor, a 1992 graduate of West Chester University who serves as Monmouth’s director for academic transition and inclusion. “I missed the opportunity to do things like study abroad and internships, and some of that was related to the fact that I just didn’t know who to ask or what to ask about.”

In his current role, Taylor leads First to Fly: First Generation at Monmouth, a campus-wide initiative created in 2017 to provide academic and social support to students who identify as first generation. Although the term “first-gen” wasn’t as commonplace 30 years ago—“First-gen advocates of my generation will often say we didn’t have that label,” says Taylor—today’s first-generation students face some of the same challenges he once did.

Two of the most common are limited “social capital” in campus contexts and limited resources, says Taylor. The first relates to first-generation students not having a network of family members who attended college and whose experiences they can draw upon. “Continuing education students tend to have that built in,” says Taylor. The second, resource strain, is often due to first-generation students being more likely than their continuing education counterparts to have to work to fund their education or support themselves and their families.

Claude Taylor leads campus-wide first-generation initiatives at Monmouth. The University is part of a select group of colleges and universities to have earned national recognition as a “First-Gen Forward Institution” from The Center for First-generation Student Success.



Part of what Taylor does through First to Fly is connect first-generation students with mentors and advisors who help the students tap into the personal enhancement opportunities available at Monmouth. “We try to build some of those social capital and financial resources for the students,” he says, and credits University faculty and staff members with being incredibly helpful in these efforts.

At the same time, Taylor is at the forefront of national discussions seeking to dispel the notion that first-generation students fit neatly into a “monolithic” category.

“What we’ve come to learn in the four years that we’ve been building First to Fly ... is that the identity of first-generation students is deeply complex,” says Taylor. “There are so many variations of a first-gen experience. Students of color have a different first-gen experience than rural students who might be majority culture students. Urban students have a different first-gen experience than suburban students.... Students who are LGBTQ have yet another layer in terms of their identity.”

So Taylor is leading efforts to develop programs, initiatives, and opportunities that better align with the intersecting identities of today’s first-generation students. It’s about “engaging students where they are,” says Taylor, to create a more “student-centered approach to first-gen advocacy.”

One of the programs already underway is the First to Fly club, which is a student organization that helps first-generation students connect with their peers. There are also efforts to establish a Monmouth chapter of Alpha Alpha Alpha, the national honor society for first-generation students; a military affiliated first-generation student network; and a fellowship program that would provide professional development and leadership training for first-generation students.

“We really want to make sure that we’re seeking to help students not just survive their education here at Monmouth, but to thrive and develop into their full personhood,” says Taylor. “How we get them there is by working with and connecting them with their own wishes and desires and aspirations.”



Is Climate Change a Game Changer for MLB?

IT’S HARD ENOUGH to reach base when pitchers like Aroldis Chapman and Jacob deGrom throw the high heat. But what about when Mother Nature does?

A study by Associate Professor of Economics Eric Fesselmeyer found that Major League Baseball (MLB) umpires call pitches less accurately in uncomfortable temperatures, with performance at its worst in extreme heat conditions.

The analysis shows that the pitch-calling error rate is about 1 percentage point worse when temperatures are above 95 degrees, while accuracy is highest in games played in 80- to 90-degree weather. The research was possible because MLB uses pitch-tracking technology that measures whether non-batted pitches are strikes or balls as they cross home plate.

The results raise the prospect that America’s pastime could be impacted by climate change, as warming temperatures and more frequent heat waves threaten to cause a further decline in officiating.

“The drop in accuracy may seem small, but it is non-trivial for this high-revenue, high-stakes industry,” says Fesselmeyer. “Moreover, high temperatures cause an even greater decrease in accuracy on close-call pitches along the edges of the strike zone.”

Fesselmeyer’s research has implications beyond baseball. If workers as experienced and well versed in their craft as MLB umpires are susceptible to the heat’s influence, the results are especially worrisome for industries that rely on less-experienced and lower-skilled workers, such as agriculture, construction, and manufacturing, which are likely less capable of mitigating the impact of rising temperatures.

A paper summarizing Fesselmeyer’s work was published in the *Southern Economic Journal*. »KARL VILACOBA

The View From Here

The Boss, His Holiness, and more news from around campus.

A Double Shot of Bruce

“Bruce Springsteen Live!” an interactive exhibit on display now through March 2022 at the Grammy Museum Experience Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey, features a treasure trove of exclusive interviews, iconic performances, and artifacts culled from the Bruce Springsteen Archives and Center for American Music at Monmouth University.

Can't get enough of the Boss? Then be sure to check out the new “Artifact of the Month” series at springsteenarchives.org, which showcases some of the nearly 35,000 items from 47 countries that are housed at Monmouth.



GIVE INNER PEACE A CHANCE

“We should reduce and eliminate weapons and pay more attention to our inner peace, which is based on compassion, altruism. We must live side by side, and in this way, we can truly build a world of peace and happiness.”

— **The Dalai Lama**, speaking with a Monmouth University audience during an exclusive livestream event in September.



photos (from top) MATT FURMAN, CHRISTOPHER MICHEL/FLICKR

Throwing Their Weight Behind a Worthy Cause

The brothers of the Delta-Beta Chapter of Sigma Pi Fraternity at Monmouth University hosted and competed in a lift-a-thon that raised more than \$1,300 in support of mental health organizations in the Monmouth County area.

Power Trio

President Patrick F. Leahy and Polling Institute Director Patrick Murray were named to the 2021 NJBIZ Education Power 50 list, while Specialist Professor and Chair of the Department of Accounting Jeffrey Christakos was named to the NJBIZ Accounting Power 50 list.

News That Floats Our Boat

Now anyone can track the voyages of the R/V *Heidi Lynn Sculthorpe* in real time thanks to automatic identification system (AIS) technology. Like an E-ZPass transponder signals to toll-booths on the highway, an AIS transceiver aboard the *Heidi Lynn* transmits its position to receivers on land and nearby vessels. Monmouth's Urban Coast Institute is working with its partners on the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal project to create maps illustrating vessel traffic each year based on data collected from AIS-equipped vessels. Wondering where the *Heidi Lynn* is now? See for yourself at monmouth.edu/uci.



Good Press

The Outlook, Monmouth's student-run newspaper, was recognized as “Most Outstanding University Weekly Newspaper for 2020–2021” by the American Scholastic Press Association in its annual national competition.

It's Affirmative: Debate Hawks Are No. 1

Monmouth's debate team was named the 2020–21 Novice Point National Champions by the Cross Examination Debate Association. CEDA's novice division includes teams from approximately 90 universities and is composed of non-scholarship debaters who generally have a year and a half or less of debate experience.

THE MONMOUTH BRAG BOARD

18

Monmouth's ranking in the latest *U.S. News & World Report* Best Regional Universities—North roster. It is the first time the University has ranked in the top 20.

The Name Says It All

In “The greatest thing about every single Jersey Shore town,” NJ.com cited the Great Hall as the top attraction in West Long Branch, New Jersey, calling it “one of the state's grandest campus buildings.”

17

Consecutive years that Monmouth has been named one of the nation's best institutions for undergraduates to earn their college degrees by *The Princeton Review*.

OVERHEARD ON CNN

“What we're seeing is a correlation between your beliefs about the election and whether or not you've been vaccinated.... [W]e're basically a 50-50 nation at this point, not just with our election but [also] when it comes to conspiracy theories.”

» CNN SENIOR DATA REPORTER HARRY ENTEN CITING A JUNE 2021 MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY POLL ON THE LEAD WITH JAKE TAPPER.

5

Monmouth's ranking among more than 150 schools on the Peace Corps' 2021 list of top Peace Corps Prep certificate-issuing partners.

A Study in Superheroes

Maryanne Rhett's students are exploring inclusivity and intellectualism through an unexpected source.

BY MAUREEN HARMON

It was during her time as a teaching assistant that Maryanne Rhett, today a Monmouth professor of Middle Eastern and world history, discovered a new teaching tool. The class had been assigned to read *Persepolis*, a graphic memoir of a woman who lived through the Iranian revolution. "I started to realize that there were other avenues to present material than the traditional book," says Rhett. Not long after, she taught her first European history class using *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. "It was a way to introduce my students to Victorian-era themes, literary characters, and political ideas because they're all so deeply embedded in this superhero story."

Since then, Rhett has become a fan of the academic impact of comics—read broadly as strips, superhero floppies, and graphic novels and memoirs—often using them in the classroom. "I was floored at how much my students were able to delve in and take away. And they loved finding the Easter eggs. From there, it was, 'I'm not looking back; I'm just going to keep doing this.'" As she's done the work of teaching and studying comics, she's watched trends in how students receive the material and in the artistic works themselves.

It was around 2008 that Rhett saw a new pattern emerging: Comic book and graphic novel characters—specifically lead characters—were becoming more inclusive. Though Batman was the traditional white hero we've known since 1939, his sidekick Nightrunner, introduced in 2010, was a French Algerian Muslim. Nightrunner's debut was met with some criticism in the U.S. as stereotyping and misinformation around Muslims and jihadis skyrocketed post 9/11. But Nightrunner, says Rhett, helped pave the way for Ms. Marvel, who will make a Disney+ debut this year in a miniseries highlighting the life of Kamala Khan, a 16-year-old Pakistani-American.

It's the introductions of these characters that allow us to better explore the history and identity of a people, as Rhett recently highlighted in a piece written for *Das Goethe*, a biannual insert in *Die Zeit*, the publication of the Goethe Institute. The Ms. Marvel floppy comic opened doors: "A lot more people who weren't necessarily going to comic shops and buying comic books were accessing this material," says Rhett. "They saw themselves in these



"I was floored at how much my students were able to delve in and take away. And they loved finding the Easter eggs. From there, it was, 'I'm not looking back; I'm just going to keep doing this.'"

new characters, in particular in Kamala Khan." It was quite the untapped market: Ms. Marvel was the No. 1 digital seller for Marvel the year she first appeared in 2013.

It's not just the appearance of these characters that's important—Muslim characters have shown up in comics since the turn of the 20th century. The difference, says Rhett, is in *how* they're showing up. "At the turn of the 20th century, when we saw Muslim characters in, say, comic strips in the United States, they're all very Orientalized," she says. "The women all wear veils; they're all part of a harem. If they say anything, it's very rare. They're usually quiet, and very often they're there to be saved by a European or American hero."

Ms. Marvel's origin story is much different, and Rhett reads it as an exploration of culture and generational identity. "We learn of her grandmother experiencing partition of India and Pakistan and all the chaos that went with that," says Rhett. "There's this idea of a lot of shifting and moving and not having a home. Then Kamala's mom relocates to the United States with her father. And then, ultimately, Kamala feels dislocated from her sense of space—who she is in all of this—because of the superpower that she gains. These three women all have the experience of never quite knowing where they fit in."

Though the women grapple with identity in the scenes of comics, with the debut of Ms. Marvel, Kamala—and the generations that preceded her—have solidified their place in the outside world. Instead of being the one waiting to be saved by the white superhero, says Rhett, Kamala is doing the saving. ☺



Building a Knockout Resume

Junior business major Malik Nelson has a burgeoning professional boxing career.

BY MARK GOLA

It's 5 a.m., and Malik Nelson shuts off his alarm to start the day. He laces up for a 4-mile run, showers and eats breakfast, and then heads to class. Once classes end, he studies until 7 p.m. before heading to the gym for a three-hour workout session.

This isn't the typical schedule for a college junior, but then Nelson isn't your typical student. He's a business administration major who also happens to be a professional boxer.

"I came to Monmouth to educate myself and prepare for my post-boxing career," says Nelson. "I'm studying business and finance so I can be smart with money, build an investment portfolio, and learn how to operate a business successfully."

Nelson built a prolific amateur career, amassing 125 fights and seven national titles by age 17. The professional ranks were in his crosshairs, but he made a decision that was best for his long-term future. Nelson put boxing on hold to pursue his degree at Monmouth—an incredibly mature decision that he hopes will pay prize-money dividends.

With only three semesters remaining to graduate, Nelson returned to the ring this past summer to make his professional debut at the Prudential Center. He unleashed his relentless style of fighting, knocking down his opponent twice in the opening round before the bout was stopped in the fourth and final round of the super featherweight fight.

"Growing up as an amateur, I never got to fight in Jersey, so making my pro debut in front of friends and family was the best," says Nelson. "I was confident because of the work I put in during training. To any opponent I face, I will outwork you. My will to defeat you will make you want to quit, and I will never stop."

Nicknamed "The Natural," Nelson is trained by his father, Melvin Nelson, and his uncle, former International Boxing Federation cruiserweight champion Imamu Mayfield. His management team includes two Monmouth alumni, Bayaan Oluyadi '13 and Qasim Shaikh '20, who Nelson says have helped him succeed academically and in life.

"Balancing classwork and training can be tough, but staying mentally strong is the most important aspect to being successful," says Nelson. "The pressure doesn't really faze me. Pressure makes me fight harder."

Nelson is the rare student who can say that and mean it. 🥊



What's the Danger of Algal Blooms?

BY BREANNE MCCARTHY



Algal blooms are a normal part of the life cycle in water bodies. But when algae grow out of control, resulting harmful algal blooms (HABs) can prove toxic to the local ecology and impact everything from property values to human health. Jason Adolf, Ph.D., an endowed associate professor of marine science and HAB expert, explains.

1

ALGAE FORM THE food and energy base for all organisms in aquatic ecosystems, so when a bloom occurs, toxins can be carried up the food chain. That can lead to massive fish-kills and marine life die-offs. Some toxins can even be passed to humans who eat affected fish.

2

HABs CAN WREAK havoc on the economy. Take, for example, Lake Hopatcong—New Jersey's largest lake and a popular tourist destination. A 2019 algal bloom forced the state to issue an advisory leading to the closure of swimming areas at the height of the summer season, resulting in a 30% to 40% drop in business for restaurants and marinas in neighboring Roxbury Township.

3

HABs CAN NEGATIVELY impact home values. A 2020 study published in *The Journal of Real Estate Finance and Economics* showed that homes within 1 mile of the coast of southwestern Florida sold for up to 30% less in the months when there was a "red tide" algal bloom, compared with similar homes sold in unaffected counties.

4

HABs CAN BE dangerous to pets. A type of toxic algae found in lake systems creates a potent liver toxin that can lead to liver failure in dogs when ingested, as they tend to drink water as they swim. 🐕

A variety of human factors contribute to HABs. For tips on how to reduce your impact, visit monmouth.edu/magazine.

Free To Die or Forced To Be Free?

What the most influential social contract theorists might say about today's mask mandates.

BY STEVE NEUMANN

A September Monmouth University Poll showed that a majority of the American public supports guidelines for masking in their states to help stop the spread of COVID-19, with that support increasing in recent months. Yet many Americans remain strident in their conviction that being forced to wear a mask violates their civil liberties.

Whether you're for or against them, mask mandates get to the heart of the social contract—that centuries-old idea that citizens' political obligations depend upon an implicit agreement among the people to form the society in which they live.

So we asked an expert on social contract theory—Kevin Dooley, Ph.D.—to help us understand the history of these agreements in the hope it might inform the current debate over mask mandates. Dooley, an associate professor and chair of the Department of Political Science and Sociology, is the author of *States of Nature and Social Contracts*, which examines the ways the dominant historical figures employed the metaphor of the social contract to express their views of equality and freedom. Here, he gives us a primer on the theories of three of the most influential social contract philosophers and what they might say about today's mask mandates. Read more at monmouth.edu/magazine.

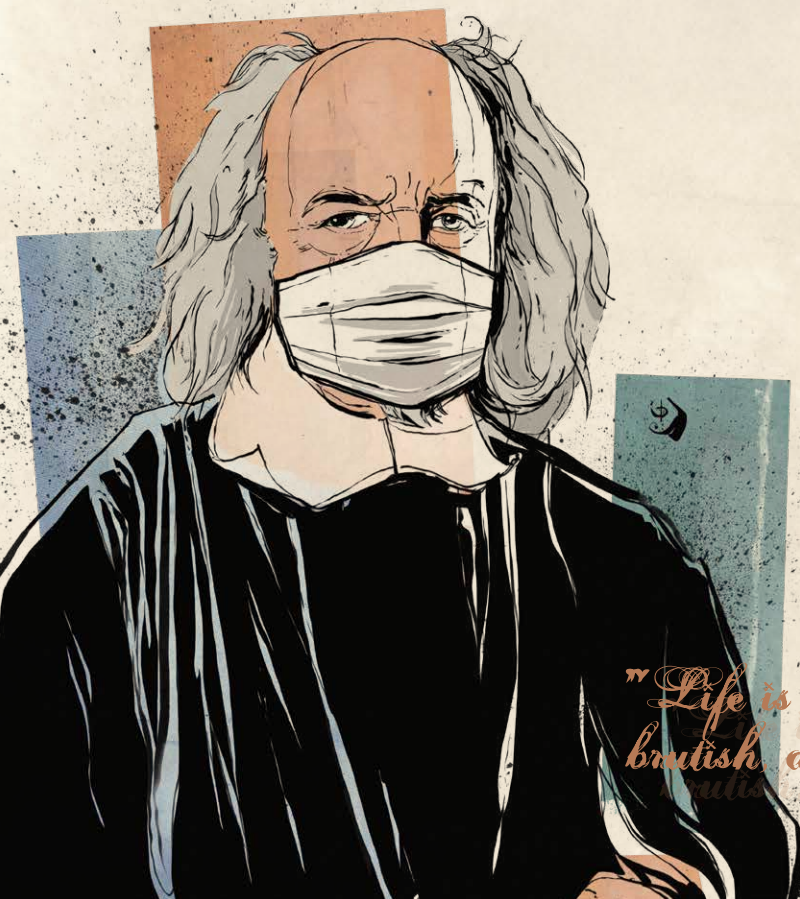
Thomas Hobbes

Hobbes was one of the founders of modern political philosophy. His theories culminated in his masterwork, *Leviathan*, published in 1651, which concerns the structure of society and the role of legitimate government.

THE 101: Hobbes argued that before the establishment of any social contract, life is essentially miserable. According to him, we would eventually get sick and tired of being sick and tired, so we would create a powerful central government in order to live freely and not be subject to the “war of all against all” that exists, in his opinion, in the absence of an ordered society.

ON MANDATES: Hobbes would see no violation of our liberty, says Dooley, because Hobbes believed we ought to submit to the authority of an absolute sovereign power. If that power says we must wear a mask to stop the spread of a deadly communicable disease, then so be it.

“Life is already too solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. Wear a mask!”



Jean-Jacques Rousseau

The Genevan philosopher influenced the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the development of political, economic, and educational thought during the 18th century.

THE 101: In Rousseau's social contract, each person enjoys the protection of the state while remaining as free as he or she was in the state of nature. The key to this is what he called the “general will,” which is the collective will of the body politic taken as a whole about how things must function for all citizens to be free. Under the right conditions, citizen legislators will converge on laws that correspond with the common interest. In other words, if we submit ourselves to the authority of the state collectively, we'll get security *and* live as free as we were before we agreed to create it.

ON MANDATES: Rousseau would definitely be in favor of a mask mandate, says Dooley. Rousseau's belief was that once all opinions are shared in a free environment after we turn over our individual rights, we can generate a consensus among all individuals. Those who still don't agree can be “forced to be free” in order to maintain our security and general level of freedom in our shared society.

“Forced to be free.”



John Locke

The Oxford academic's 1689 work, *Two Treatises of Government*, made foundational contributions to modern theories of limited government, ideas Thomas Jefferson incorporated into the Declaration of Independence.

THE 101: For Locke, the human ability to reason is the basis of our natural rights. His idea of the social contract consists of a limited government that safeguards life, liberty, and the pursuit of property. In his view, government resembles a trust, in which the citizens are both the creators and beneficiaries who get all the good stuff from it, while the government (the trustee) carries out the will of the people.

ON MANDATES: Although Locke emphasized individual liberty, he endorsed mandated military service, and because of this, Dooley believes Locke would likely be OK with mask mandates. Locke's reasoning might be that if a communicable disease could decimate the population in a way similar to or worse than war, then it's reasonable for citizens to accept a mandate designed to stop that destruction.

“Just do it. If it's reasonable.”



Bill Schreiber, Ph.D.

Chair, Department of Chemistry and Physics

ONE OF BILL SCHREIBER'S favorite spots in the Edison Science Building is the NMR Lab, which houses the most complex and expensive scientific instrument on campus: a nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectrometer. He gave us a tour. »BREANNE MCCARTHY

SAMPLE CHANGER

In most instances, an automatic sample changer is used. Information about each sample and the NMR experiment to be run are entered into the computer, and the samples are then processed. The resulting files are analyzed using specialized software to identify materials researchers are working with.



NMR SPECTROMETER

Faculty and student researchers use this to get essential information about the environments of hydrogen, carbon, phosphorus, and other elements in chemical compounds. In some cases, samples are run over a range of temperatures to explore changes that are occurring within complex substances.

THE FOG

At -320° F, liquid nitrogen is so cold that when released, it immediately causes water in the atmosphere to condense, creating a dense fog. It can be used to freeze things almost instantly, which comes in handy when students in the Science of Food and Cooking course make ice cream.

LIQUID NITROGEN

The NMR machine's core contains a powerful electromagnet with 10 miles of superconducting wire that must be cooled to -452° F using liquid helium, which is expensive and unrecoverable. Liquid nitrogen is used to cool the outer core of the machine to minimize the helium loss.



Interning (Virtually) Abroad

Gilman Scholar Mona Ray Cobb didn't earn any frequent flyer miles but still learned plenty interning with one of Spain's top football clubs.

BY AMANDA GLATZ '16

With borders around the world still closed to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, Mona Ray Cobb, a senior political science and legal studies student, had to get creative if she wanted to pursue a global education.

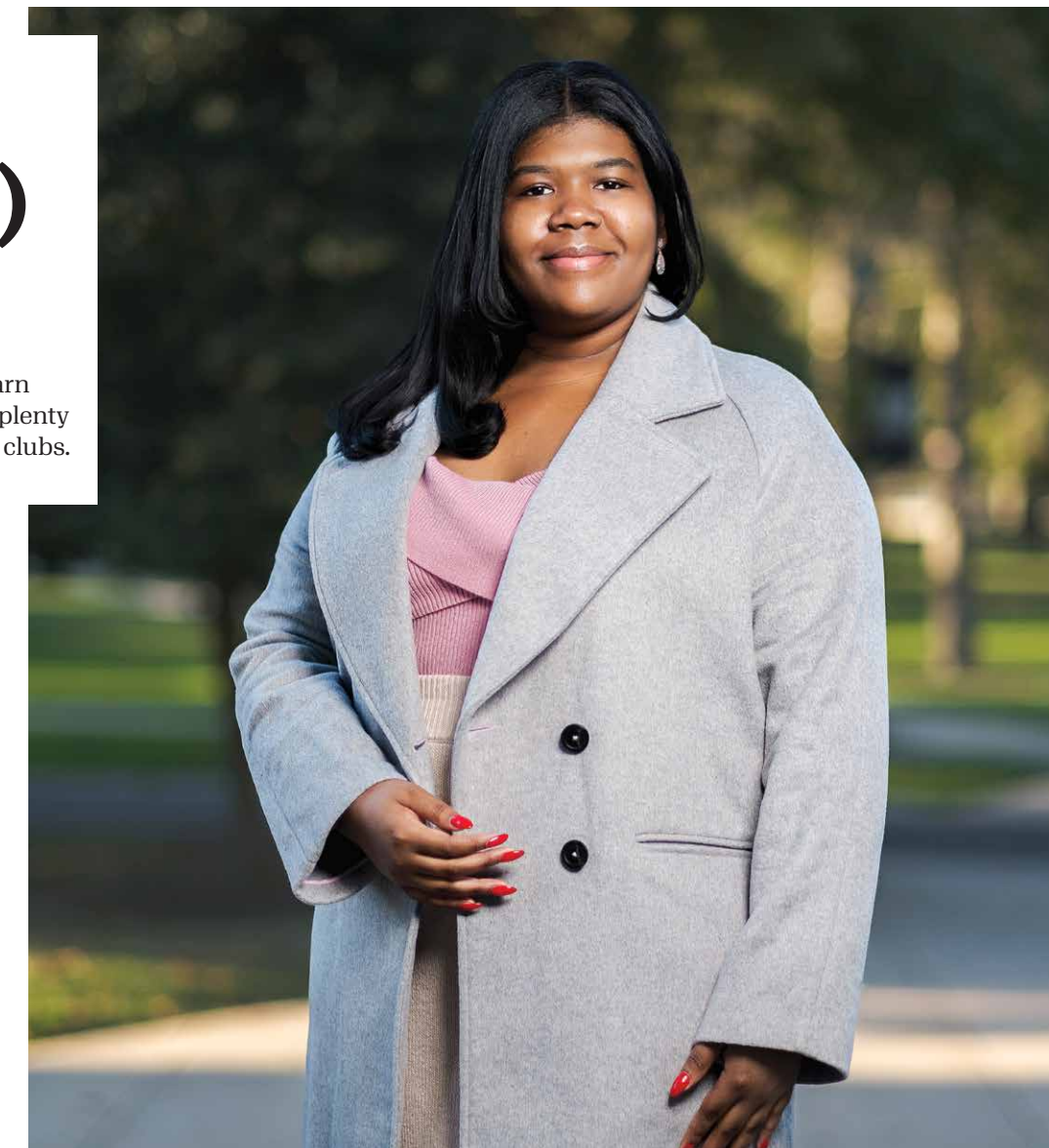
A recipient of the U.S. Department of State's Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, a grant program that enables "students of limited financial means to study or intern abroad," Cobb was supposed to study in France before the program suspended international travel due to COVID-19.

Instead, she coordinated with International Studies Abroad and her Monmouth advisors to find a solution that would satisfy graduation requirements while fulfilling the goal of an international experience: a virtual internship.

And not just any virtual internship—Cobb worked with Villarreal CF, one of Spain's top football clubs, right from her residence hall.

"Originally, I was unsure about working with Villarreal since I'm not much of a sports person," says Cobb, "but my advisors really showed me how learning about the organization's community involvement and nonprofit efforts would fit my career goals."

With a graduate program in public policy and administration hopefully on the horizon, Cobb is committed to ultimately pursuing work in nonprofits and securing educational opportunities for others. Hav-



ing benefited from supportive programming such as Monmouth's Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and other scholarships and counseling services, she has seen firsthand how they can impact lives.

"Before I started college, EOF gave me the tools and resources I needed to prepare for that transition. They helped me financially and gave me a network of people I could reach out to before I even came to campus," Cobb says. "Even when things were hard, such as not being able to study abroad during the pandemic, I had a counselor that would say, 'Here's another way.'"

Cobb finished her internship last semester, and will now complete a service project aimed at raising awareness of the Gilman Scholarship and educating her

fellow EOF students on ways to secure the financial means that would allow them to study abroad. "These programs have helped me so much, so I'm glad to give back and share that knowledge with others," she says.

While her experience with the Gilman Scholarship didn't lead to moving to a new city, Cobb has gained valuable insight from navigating today's complicated global landscape and stepping outside of her comfort zone by working in a new field.

"I thought my internship had to be perfect," she says, "but now I know that everything is a learning process. It's OK to step back, ask questions, communicate, and try new things." ☺

ATHLETICS

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[WOMEN'S BASKETBALL]

Building a Championship Culture

With new Head Coach Ginny Boggess at the helm, the future looks bright for Monmouth women's basketball.

BY MARK GOLA

When you first talk with Ginny Boggess, you quickly sense that you're speaking with a high-energy, confident professional. Those character traits—high energy and confidence—are precisely what she expects fans to see from her players on the floor.

Last April, Boggess was named the ninth head women's basketball coach in program history at Monmouth. She is tasked with building a new culture within the Hawks' program—a winning one that will ultimately make the dream of advancing to the NCAA championship tournament a reality. →

“We want to create an environment where players want to learn how to get better every day,” says Boggess. “The kids clearly love it here. No one entered the transfer portal, which says a lot about their commitment to Monmouth and to each other.”

“We need to instill toughness and discipline and establish our pace of play. Those are the key areas of focus in year one. We want to push the pace and get more scoring opportunities and points per possession.”

Although Monmouth is her first head coaching position, this is not Boggess' first rodeo. The West Virginia native has an extensive coaching background that includes stints as an assistant at Penn State, Marquette, Hofstra, Jacksonville, and Columbia universities.

Boggess helped turn around the women's program at Marquette. The Golden Eagles posted a 9–23 record in 2014–15 and, two years later, secured an NCAA championship tournament berth. She helped guide Marquette to three consecutive NCAA appearances before becoming the assistant coach and head recruiting coordinator at Penn State.

The Wingate University graduate has earned a reputation as an exceptional recruiter who develops talent. She pursues athletes who are self-motivated, competitive, and great teammates. When discussing prospective recruits with her staff, she always asks them to consider this question: “If you were still playing, would you want to play with her?”

“I've built a reputation as a recruiter, but I'm at my best when I'm teaching,” says Boggess. “Some of my recruits early on were not big-time prospects and went on to win

major individual awards and set program records. They made me look like a great recruiter, but it was really about developing those players.

“Here at Monmouth, I want to bring in players who are a good fit for the institution and will thrive in our system. I want to get to know them beyond their jersey and find out what makes them tick as a player, person, and student. That allows me to coach them a little harder because they can trust that I have their best interests at heart.”

Boggess understands the importance of connecting with players past and present. She recently hosted a Zoom meeting with women's basketball alumnae and a virtual happy hour. She welcomes all former players to visit her and, more importantly, to attend games and watch the Hawks play a style of basketball that will make them proud. Boggess delivered a direct message to Monmouth's 1982–83 team (NCAA qualifier) and 2010–11 team (WNIT qualifier) promising that more women's basketball banners will join theirs in the OceanFirst Bank Center.

Her confidence in achieving success is rooted in her coaching experiences, and her energy is amplified by the assets at Monmouth that will appeal to recruits.

“I absolutely love it here,” she says. “Monmouth offers a great education and access to internship opportunities in New York City and Philadelphia. The facilities are unbelievable, the housing is fantastic, and the location near the beach is the cherry on top.

“It is the perfect place to do my job, which is to empower young women and build leaders for life.”

Globe Trotter

Former Hawks center Kevin Owens dishes on his experiences playing professionally overseas.

BY MARK GOLA

FANS OF SIGAL PRISHTINA IN THE KOSOVO BASKETBALL Superleague are passionate about their team, so much so that when players aren't performing well, fans shower them with boos—as well as coins, broken glass, flares, and whatever else they can find.

Kevin Owens '02, who played for Sigal in 2009, dodged a few flares in his day. In his new book, *Overseas Famous: The Travels and Tribulations of a Basketball Globetrotter*, Owens documents the roller-coaster ride of life experiences and outrageous incidents he encountered while playing professionally in Europe, Asia, and Australia.

“I'm a lifelong Philadelphia sports fan, and the fans of Kosovo put unruly Philly fans to shame,” says Owens. “I had some incredible experiences traveling and living in different parts of the world. Being a pro basketball player overseas is very different than here in the States, and this book shares my experience of what it's really like.”

Owens played center for the Hawks from 1999 to 2003. His talent and work ethic earned him a roster spot on the Roanoke Dazzle in the NBA D-League, where he spent three seasons before pursuing a bigger paycheck in Australia. He played five seasons overseas and retired in 2010, witnessing more by age 31 than some do in a lifetime.

“The book begins when I'm in high school, goes through college, and then [goes through] playing professionally,” says Owens. “I loved my time at Monmouth and take the reader through the experience of playing Duke in the NCAA tournament in 2001. It was such a thrill to hear Monmouth being called during the selection show, but after not playing for over a week, you take the floor, and it's Duke!”

Owens is now a middle school teacher and founder of Overseas Famous LLC, a multimedia platform he created to give athletes living abroad a chance to share their stories.

“There were definitely some very lonely and challenging times during my time overseas,” says Owens. “But looking back, I was incredibly fortunate to do what I was I was able to do.”



“I had some incredible experiences traveling and living in different parts of the world. Being a pro basketball player overseas is very different than here in the States, and this book shares my experience of what it's really like.”

Huddle Up

A new group of Black student-athletes is working to foster meaningful dialogue on diversity and inclusion.

BY TONY MARCHETTI

In Fall 2020, following a summer in which demonstrations for racial justice took place across the country, a group of Black student-athletes and administrators created a new student group at Monmouth, the Black Student Athlete Huddle (BSAH).

“It was a very intense summer when it comes to questioning racial injustice in the U.S.,” says Prisca Blamon, a fifth-year student and thrower on the women’s track and field team who serves as co-president of BSAH. “And we felt it was imperative for us to have a safe space for Black student-athletes to be able to talk about how we’re feeling, being that we go to a predominantly white institution.”

Since then, the group has held biweekly meetings that serve as an open forum in which Black student-athletes from any team can talk with their peers about the stressors that are affecting them, be it “racial injustice, time management, institutional changes, etc.,” says Blamon.

“Being able to take time out to decompress and talk about life in general—I feel like not only can it make your day better; it can make your week turn around,” says Blamon. “It makes me feel like others are going through the same things that I’m going through, and we can get through it together.”

Kelsey Ellis, the compliance and academic coordinator in the Athletics Department, serves as a co-advisor for BSAH. She says the events of summer 2020 made it clear that



illustration DANIEL FISHEL

“Black student-athletes needed a space where they could feel comfortable and have an opportunity to express themselves and not feel ... undermined by the other populations that are on campus.

“We want everybody to understand our point of view ... and experiences,” says Ellis. “The goal, ultimately, is to find a way to merge our experiences and understand what everyone else’s are so that we can focus on the bigger picture and create peace and respect on both spectrums.”

To that end, BSAH is undertaking several initiatives to foster dialogue on diversity and inclusion across campus. Last fall, with help from the athletics communication staff, the group recorded sound bites of student-athletes discussing their personal definitions of social justice, which were shared on social media. They also filmed a series of vignettes in which Black student-athletes shared personal stories about their lived experiences and plan to show the videos on the Jumbotron at upcoming athletics events.

The group is also looking to partner with local K–12 schools to facilitate discussions on diversity and inclusion with the younger generation, says Blamon. BSAH received funding through a Monmouth University Diversity Innovation Grant to help with those efforts, says Blamon, and both she and Ellis credit University administrators and the Board of Trustees with being incredibly supportive of the group’s efforts.

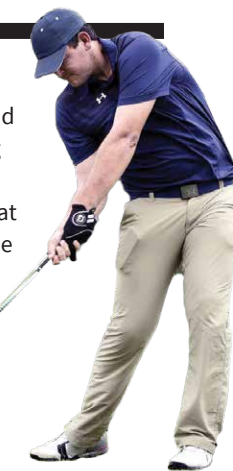
Blamon, who also serves as the social justice chair for the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference’s Student Athlete Advisory Committee, is excited about the impact these outreach initiatives can make.

“There are some people out there who believe that we’re just athletes,” says Blamon. “We want them to see that we are more than that. We’re people who realize that there are issues in society, and we want to be a part of the solutions. If we can just touch one soul with that message, it can set off a firework.”

Sports Shorts

MEN’S GOLF

Ron Robinson shot an opening round 64 at the Bucknell Invitational, tying the program’s single-round record. The team also set a school record at the invitational, shooting 276 in the opening round to best the school mark by four shots.



ROWING

Monmouth University added women’s rowing as its 24th NCAA Division I sport. The program will begin competing in Fall 2022 under new Head Coach Scott Belford, who previously oversaw the varsity crew program at Christian Brothers Academy in Lincroft, New Jersey.

WOMEN’S SOCCER

In November, the team captured the program’s sixth MAAC Tournament title (and 10th conference tournament title overall) with a 4-0 win over Quinnipiac, in the process earning the program its eighth NCAA Tournament berth.



WOMEN’S CROSS COUNTRY

Sammi Ragenklint became the first Hawk in school history to qualify for the NCAA Division I Championships.

MEN’S TENNIS

Niels Van Noord advanced to the Round of 16 at the ITA Northeast Regional Championships, becoming the second Hawk in program history to do so.



FIELD HOCKEY

Annick van Lange became the third Hawk in program history to score at least 50 career goals.

DOWN THE BAY

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A team of student filmmakers partnered with industry professionals to create a feature-length documentary that tells the story of New Jersey's largest body of water, the Barnegat Bay.

BY BREANNE MCCARTHY

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CH 2 

ON A MILD, CLEAR DAY LAST APRIL, JARED GARCIA '21 FOUND HIMSELF SLOWLY ASCENDING A 12-FOOT LADDER IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BARNEGAT BAY.

As a part of the crew working on *Drift*, a feature-length documentary about the Barnegat Bay and its watershed produced by Monmouth University Production Services, Garcia had traveled to the outskirts of Long Beach Island that day to film volunteers from Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey building and installing an osprey nest in the marshland. Once the nest was assembled and in place, Garcia had carefully climbed the ladder, one hand clasping each rung as the other balanced a camera rigged to a Ronin-S, an expensive and unwieldy gimbal, in hopes of filming a bird's-eye view of the bay from the nest.

"I was shaking in my boots the whole way up. I was mostly nervous for the equipment if I fell with the Ronin-S, but in my head, it's always about getting the shot," says Garcia. "I remember thinking [that] having ospreys fight for the nest at this particular moment would be a 'Nat-Geo' sort of amazing."

Garcia was nimble enough to capture the shots needed and, sure enough, just a few minutes after he was back on solid ground two ospreys arrived and began fighting for the nest. The fact that he was now ringside for an osprey fight in the middle of a marsh was perhaps fitting given his experience working on *Drift*.

"It was a very cool thing and something you don't get to see on a day-to-day basis," he says. "That's also how I'd summarize my time working with Production Services: It was a lot of being in very interesting places. But the whole way through it was very much a learning experience that I'm thankful I had the opportunity of being part of."

MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY PRODUCTION SERVICES, the creative team behind *Drift*, is a full-service production company housed in the Wayne D. McMurray School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The department produces high-quality video and digital content—everything from short videos, to TV shows, to mini and feature-length documentaries—for regional and campus clients. Its approach is unique in that Monmouth students work side by side with award-winning industry professionals during each phase of production: bidding for new projects, scouting locations, developing shooting schedules, working with state-of-the-art equipment, interacting with subjects during production, and editing video and audio material in post-production.

"Production Services is not a student organization; it's a quasi-professional organization," says Erin Fleming, director of the department and a seasoned produc-



ABOVE: Jared Garcia '21 ascends a ladder to film a bird's-eye view of Barnegat Bay.

RIGHT: Monmouth University Production Services crew members film Jason Kelsey, a teacher at the Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science, and Save Barnegat Bay student-grant recipients as they study the biology of the Sedge Island Marine Conservation Zone.



Nicole Amatucci '21 waits for the perfect sunset at David Beaton & Sons Boatyard in Brick Township, New Jersey.



er who, before joining Monmouth in 2012, was an international storyteller creating narratives for underserved communities and nonprofits throughout Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. “The students are not trailing a cameraman or trailing an editor. They work in conjunction with professionals. They’re stepping up to perform real industry skill sets, but they’re learning too, so it’s taking what they’ve learned in class and puts it on another level.”

Students must apply and be selected for the few coveted production positions that open each year. Those who make the cut are offered paid positions in which they can explore their passions while gaining hands-on experience in the field.

“I always look for students who are going to buy into what it means to be a production person while still being a student—maybe we have to shoot the sunrise at 5 a.m.; maybe it’s going to be a long day carrying heavy equipment, or you’re going to be in a swamp or underwater,” says Fleming. “So, I do look for passion. If you’ve got the passion, drive, and professionalism, I can teach you the technical skills.”

Jim Masi, a national Emmy award-winning director of photography and camera operator, has partnered with Production Services on several projects, including *Drift*. In addition to fulfilling his production responsibilities, he assists in running boot camps designed to teach students cinematography techniques using the department’s specialized equipment. It’s “rewarding,” he says, “kind of like working in a teaching hospital, where you’re still doing what the job entails but you’re also providing some instruction.”

“The gear that Erin has accumulated for the department, it’s equipment that I use out in the working world ... it’s gear that people use to shoot really high-end productions,” says Masi. “For the students to have that available to them is a really nice luxury, and the experience, I think, gives them confidence and a leg up.”

But the gear is only half of the story, says Masi, who has worked in the industry for 40 years. Equally important is that Fleming treats the students as professionals, with all of the expectations that come with that distinction. “That’s where Erin has really done these students a huge service,” says Masi. The industry is changing, he says, with jobs becoming “more beginning-to-end involvement.” Because Monmouth’s students are hands on in every phase of production, they “are involved even more than a lot of the professionals they’re working with,” which is what they’ll eventually experience once they begin working full time in the industry, says Masi.

That’s one of the reasons he feels confident every time he refers Monmouth students to profession-

al production companies that are hiring. The industry is still “90% word of mouth” in terms of who gets jobs, he says, and he’s seen firsthand how Monmouth students are “getting more and better experience than students in other environments.”

DRIFT WAS COMMISSIONED BY SAVE BARNEGAT Bay, a nonprofit dedicated to restoring and protecting the 42-mile-long arm of the Atlantic Ocean that is home to an eclectic ecosystem of barrier islands, maritime forests, and wildlife. The organization celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021 and charged Production Services with creating a film that would “help people understand, in one viewing, where we are in the storyline of the effort to protect the bay,” says Britta Forsberg, Save Barnegat Bay’s executive director.

Production commenced in June 2020, and, over the next year, Fleming and her team worked countless hours developing story lines, conducting intensive research and interviews, filming at dozens of locations across the bay area, and editing more than 300 hours of 4K footage into a 1 hour and 20 minute cohesive story. The five Monmouth students who were part of Production Services—Garcia, Nicole Amatuucci ’21, Azalia Whitlock ’21, Dan Rosario ’21, and Leah Frain ’21—were involved every step of the way.

The film opens with a brief history of the bay, then segues into five vignettes highlighting individuals whose lives, careers, and passions intertwine with the waterway, and includes a roundtable dis-

“WE HAVE SO MUCH TALENT ON CAMPUS, BOTH THE PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS, SO THERE’S NO REASON IF WE GET A GREAT PROJECT LIKE THIS THAT EVERYBODY CAN’T PUT THEIR MARK ON IT IN SOME WAY.”



OPPOSITE, TOP: Azalia Whitlock ’21 and Amatuucci clean and scan nature slides from a collection that once belonged to the late environmentalist Pete McLain. BOTTOM: Amatuucci, Garcia, and Dan Rosario ’21 film sailing and boating on the northern bay.

RIGHT: Erin Fleming and Amatuucci put the finishing touches on *Drift* in the studio.

cussion between five activists, including Forsberg. The mission of Save Barnegat Bay is embedded throughout the documentary, giving viewers a deeper understanding of the nuanced history and issues facing the bay and the communities that make up its watershed as well as what changes the area might see over the next 50 years. Fleming says she and her team conceived this format “as a way to encompass many of the complex issues that are at play in New Jersey’s largest body of water” and thus better illustrate the interconnectivity of humans, wildlife, and the environment.

Despite graduating last May, prior to the film’s completion, several students stayed on to work on *Drift* last summer. One of them was Garcia, who as a four-year member of Production Services had already worked on several of the department’s other projects, including the production of the Emmy Award-winning show *Jersey Matters*, which was shot in the Monty Television Studio in the Plangere Center. He is now working in the industry and says his experiences as part of Production Services helped him hone his skills as a camera operator and editor. “The hands-on experience working with these various pieces of equipment helped me tenfold,” he says.

Amatuucci, who started working with Production Services after transferring to Monmouth as a junior, served as associate producer, camera operator, and editor on *Drift*. She has worked on a handful of professional freelance gigs since graduating and credits her time with Production Services as the key reason for her success.

“Working in Production Services was a big boost to my confidence, and it really helped me to develop a lot of skills in different areas, from working with clients to shooting. I felt like I was able to get my feet wet in so many different areas of production,” she says. “Now when I go into jobs or different projects, I feel a sense of



confidence like I’ve done this before and I can do it.”

In addition to her core student production team, Fleming tapped others from the University community to work on the film. Sophia Parola ’18 and Specialist Professor of Communication Nick Messina ’18M handled the voiceover work; David Gould ’16 pitched in with studio-audio needs; Austin Staulcup ’23 and Jenna Capitelli ’21 handled graphic design of the movie posters; and Alyssa Dowd ’22 and Assistant Professor of Geography Geoffrey Fouad, Ph.D., provided geographic information system mapping services.

“We have so much talent on campus, both the professors and students, so there’s no reason if we get a great project like this that everybody can’t put their mark on it in some way,” says Fleming.

LAST JULY, SAVE BARNEGAT BAY HELD A fundraising event and private screening of *Drift* at the Bay Head Yacht Club. Forsberg, who served as the film’s executive producer, says that despite the fact that the documentary was shown while the party portion of the event was taking place in an adjacent room, viewers were glued to their seats.

“They watched the whole thing and they were blown away; they absolutely loved it.”

Fleming is now putting post-production finishing touches on the documentary and plans to enter it in the 2022 film festival circuit, where it will have its public premiere. (Dates and times for screenings will be posted at Driftdocumentary.com.) Already though, Fleming and a new team of students are at work on a short film for the Department of History and Anthropology about the Great Migration and the Black community’s historic role in Asbury Park. And there are plans for a second feature-length documentary follow-up to *Drift* that will focus on the conflicting interests of the people and groups that call the Barnegat Bay home.

As for former students such as Garcia, being able to see *Drift* through to the finish line provided a fitting end right before starting his professional career.

“I remember the first screening; it’s always a shock to see the work that you’ve put so much blood, sweat, and tears into for the duration of a year embraced by people,” he says. “*Drift* came at a very fitting point for my entire tenure with Production Services, and it was a great way to end my time at Monmouth.”

Building Tomorrow

As chief innovation officer at the American Society of Civil Engineers, Jerry Buckwalter's job is to analyze what the world will look like in 50 years—and to make sure that the vision encourages more immediate change.

INTERVIEW BY DAN MORRELL
ILLUSTRATIONS BY GWEN KERAVAL



Jerry Buckwalter '81 has spent much of his career forecasting the future.

He started in high-tech engineering after studying physics at Monmouth but gravitated to the kinds of big-picture, strategic roles his fellow engineers eschewed in favor of “designing the next box.”

Eventually landing at Northrop Grumman, Buckwalter was tasked with exploring future global scenarios for the military contractor to help shape long-term strategic planning. Now at the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), his key charge is championing the Future World Vision project, an immersive, collaborative, educational experience that imagines what the world's infrastructure systems might look like five decades from now.

“The research that I did at Northrop Grumman—that, because of its classification level, has never seen the light of day beyond the military and the intelligence community—has convinced me that there are many global trends converging,” says Buckwalter, naming autonomy, artificial intelligence, synthetic biology, climate change, and wild demographic swings, among others. “And we’re going to see more change in the next 50 years than we’ve seen in hundreds of years, maybe over a thousand years.”

Those massive changes will impact our infrastructure in extreme ways: Among the scenarios the Future World Vision project predicts are megacities built using materials with biological functionality, floating cities created in response to rising sea levels, and even large-scale settlements built on Mars. “The future could look so radically different,” says Buckwalter.

In this conversation with *Monmouth* magazine, Buckwalter discusses why it's important to understand where we're headed, how the pandemic's impact could shape future cities, and what gives him hope for 2070.

How is the Future World Vision project different from the visioning work you've done previously?

Future World Vision is the same kind of future scenario planning tool that I've used before, but now I get to use it in the public domain—and for a different purpose.

But I've also lived long enough now to realize that if you're dealing with something that's not in a restricted environment like I used to work in, and you've got to affect a wide range of people ... well, most people aren't nerds like me. They're not going to read a 300-page report. So we had to figure out how to turn our analysis into a visual, immersive, interactive project. Otherwise, it's difficult to understand, it never gets embraced, and action doesn't occur. I want to create action, and this is an effective way to do it. Because if we just keep designing the built environment the way we do now, climate issues, greenhouse gas and carbon footprint issues, and demographic inequities that are bad now will only get worse. This is the moment that we can really make a change. This project helps us prepare for how we're going to change that, because once these infrastructure assets are built, it's hard to change.

So this is a tool designed to force us to discover those things early enough that we can begin to change the way both civil engineers and political leaders think about the built environment—and define the outcomes we desire from a long-term perspective instead of just on short election-year cycles. That way, we can begin to do what our citizenry needs now but also begin to do what the next generation will need 20 to 30 years from now.

You described this as a tool. Who is it built for, and how do they use it?

It's an educational tool designed to help all vested parties collaborate for a better future. Some of the first adopters are a few univer-



sities that have taken the project material and research and are exploring ways to embed that into their engineering curricula. These students are going to be at the peak of their careers 30 years from now, and we're giving them a picture of what infrastructure will look like 30 years from now—which, by the way, will have features that are organic, bioengineered, powered by artificial intelligence, and adaptable, not just the concrete, glass, and steel that you see today.

So it's preparing students to be future leaders, not just what I'll call the "shovel-ready" engineers the industry needs when that engineer graduates next year. The forward-leaning institutions are starting to discover they have a responsibility to do both: produce engineers who are ready to do to work because we need them desperately, but who will also be tomorrow's leaders because they've thought about what infrastructure might look like 30 years from now.

Here's the nice part: It's a virtual platform. Once we download it to a professor and his or her students at, say, Mon-

mouth, we can give it to a similar professor in Shanghai or Bogotá or Amsterdam, and they can work on projects together. It increases the ability of students to think about the global world they live in and how infrastructure affects the way people live with cultural differences or with climatic differences. I also know some engineering consulting firms that are using it to help them think through how they do strategic planning for their engineering companies so that they're relevant in the future.

Over time, I also want this to be used by government leaders so that they can better communicate to their citizens. It can help civic leaders describe why you're building a road, why you're building a bridge—the benefit to quality of life or the societal benefit—by visualizing it. Infrastructure assets are long-life-cycle assets. If you build a bridge, it's going to be there for the next 50 to 100 years or longer. So why would you not look at the role of that bridge 50 years from now? That's what you're asking your taxpayers to fund and to support and to maintain.

The project was unveiled in 2019, but one of the disruptive global events that the team considered when building these scenarios was a global pandemic. What did you forecast about the impact of a pandemic—and how can it shape the future of cities?

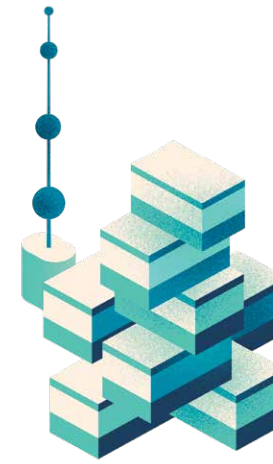
We weren't being that clever when we considered the possibility of a pandemic. We wanted to consider some disruptive elements because that helps people think through what they are going to do if those happen. We picked three of them: a global pandemic, a global GMO-based food shortage, and a catastrophic regime change somewhere in the world. What are the things we have to think about regarding our infrastructure should those three types of things happen?

Let's take the pandemic's impact on sustainability, for example. The first thing that we knew would happen is that people would lock down. The world always quarantines during pandemics. It has for thousands of years. So, therefore, emissions will go down because nobody's on the road. That's a sure phenomenon. Here's the next problem: When they do get back on the road, less of them want to use public transit because they can't socially distance. So we thought about, OK, well, what about the ubiquitous internet connectivity that enables people to work virtually and remotely? We saw that happen in spades with COVID-19. It simply accelerated what we thought in Future World Vision would be a five- to 10-year phenomenon to a six-month phenomenon.

But in the 10- to 20-year time frame, mass transit could easily be retuned to have individualized compartments so that people could get back to the kind of community, interpersonal interaction that the human psyche needs and not have to get in their cars. We can create those kinds of social separations through the built environment such that you could densely pack people in and still keep them safe.

Then we looked out further and said for ultimate sustainability, we actually see technologies on the horizon that, in 20-plus years, could create antimicrobial, wearable technology so that you can intermingle and be protected from a pandemic virus in a way that is not possible today.

You can use that same mental experiment with a food shortage or anything



“Engineers are great problem-solvers. I’m just trying to make sure they’re asking themselves those kinds of questions about the future so that we don’t create built environments that we regret 30 years from now.”

else, but relative to a pandemic, what we want the Future World Vision to do is allow, let's say, New York City's public transit system to consider not only how much funding it will need to get people to work in the aftermath of COVID-19, but also what would allow it to maintain normalcy if this happened again in 15 or 20 years.

Every four years, ASCE releases an infrastructure report card for the U.S., and in 2021, the country got a C-. It's the first time it's been better than a D since 1988. After months of partisan debate, a \$1 trillion infrastructure bill was signed into law recently, and while it's the largest federal investment in infrastructure in more than a decade, many note it's woefully late. Why is it so hard to get people to care about such a vital issue? And is that a challenge for Future World Vision?

We're in one of the peak eras of government mistrust. No matter what a leader says, there's a certain amount of the population that simply says, "I'm not listening because I don't trust them anymore." That's not partisan. That's on both sides of the aisle.

There is just so much superficial information—tidbits or soundbites—and it's not actually helping people understand the issues. We have to find a way to better impartially communicate complex interrelated issues in a way that's digestible to the average person. That is a heck of a challenge, but that's why we don't have the sense of urgency. We're confused.

I've studied many companies, industries, and governmental entities. There are a lot of examples of organizations that have a long history of experience, and, therefore, their managers make decisions to make certain investments or to go down a certain path that's perfectly rational based on the past. But if they haven't

experienced something like Future World Vision, they're not seeing that the past is sometimes not a proper guidepost.

I'll give you an example. If you go back to the early 1900s, London pulled together engineers from all over the world to deal with what was said to be the upcoming crisis: sanitary conditions on the streets of London and every major city of the world because of horse-drawn transportation and the dung that was piling up. They made projections—based upon population growth and feed for horses and carriage use—that in 20 or 30 years, London would be knee-deep in dung. Well, guess what? Not only was it wrong; it was ridiculous. Why? It was ridiculous because nobody could envision the horseless carriage.

Now let's take that a step further. When the automobile arrived, engineers declared it to be an environmental savior because all this dung was gone. We certainly think about that differently now, 100 years later. I've looked at all the analyses associated with electric cars and alternative power. Guess what? I don't believe we're thinking it through well. I think we might look back in 100 years and say, "Why did we think electric cars were going to solve this problem?" We latch onto things like, "Well it's electric. It doesn't produce greenhouse gas." Well, yes it does, because there are greenhouse gas emissions from the power sources that generate the power that charges the electric car. And what about additional issues associated with the lithium battery and the mining of materials? You have to look at all of that. That's the complexity of the way things emerge in the world. And if you're thinking about ground transportation, you should be weighing all those things.

Again, engineers are great problem-solvers. I'm just trying to make sure they're asking themselves those kinds of questions about

the future so that we don't create built environments that we regret 30 years from now.

You have a couple of beta projects underway, as you mentioned. What early impacts from the project are you seeing that give you hope for 2070?

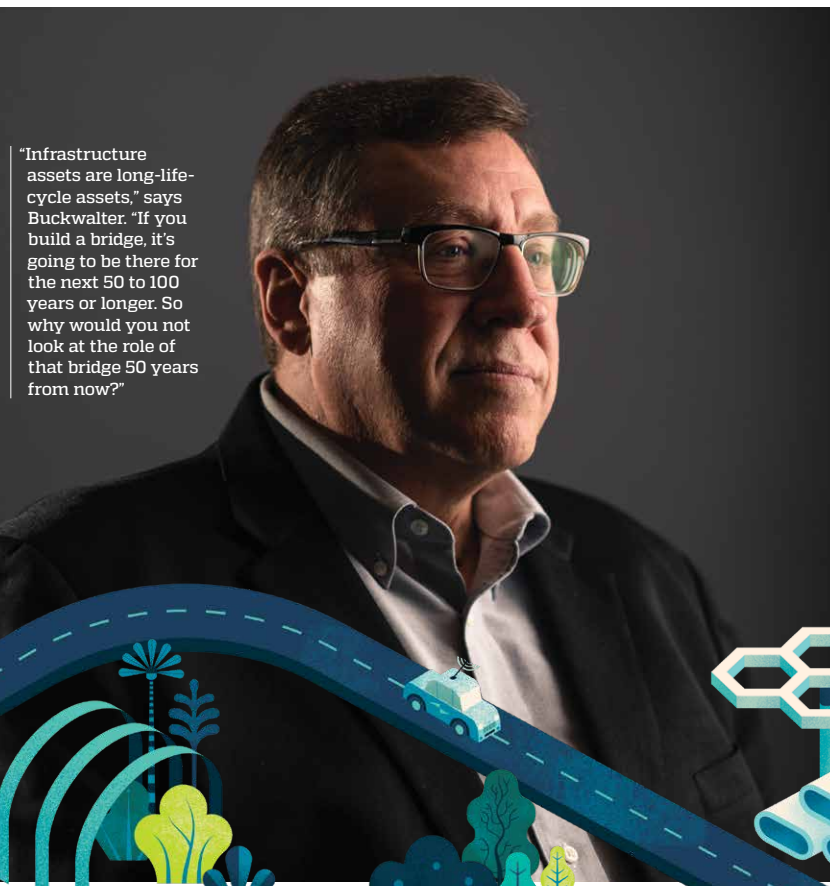
I'm seeing some early promise with new materials research and development. There is unbelievable promise there that could give us huge leverage in making massive changes to both quality of life and environmental conditions. I mean, we've been pouring concrete since the Romans. We then had a revolution with the advent of steel, and it made a massive difference. We could build skyscrapers. I think we're due for the next materials revolution. I find it very encouraging to think that if we get it right, something will emerge and allow us to have another structural revolution.

Another area is energy. There's a lot of focus now on alternative energy, but most of it is not addressing scalability. If we're going to tackle the United Nations climate goals, current plans are not getting us very close to those. The gap is unbelievable, but at least people are focused on it, so it's got a chance.

Another area is digital infrastructure. When we apply sensors and big data computational capability to our physical infrastructure, we will be able to greatly increase its productivity and usefulness. We will also increase the ability of our built environment to be more personalized to meet our needs. However, we will need to advance our cybersecurity capabilities to ensure that it is not misused as well.

Lastly is transportation. I think there are people starting to think about what autonomous transportation looks like. What are the benefits? What are the downsides? What does transportation as a service look like versus people owning cars? What about in, let's say, 20 years when autonomous transport could be aerial and surface transportation could be even less important? And then, by the way, what do we do with all the roads that we built? We don't need them anymore, or we won't be using them the same way we do now. I think there are people starting to think about the complex change that's occurring based upon shared, autonomous, alternatively fueled transportation. That's a good starting point. ☺

“Infrastructure assets are long-life-cycle assets,” says Buckwalter. “If you build a bridge, it's going to be there for the next 50 to 100 years or longer. So why would you not look at the role of that bridge 50 years from now?”





FAMILY TIES

When Kathy Brady was just six credits into her master's in nursing, she was diagnosed with a brain tumor.

That didn't stop her education.

BY MAUREN HARMON

IT WAS DEC. 22, JUST THREE DAYS BEFORE THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY IN 1998, AND KATHY BRADY WAS HAVING A GOOD DAY.

She had just brought her mother-in-law into town for Christmas, and she had picked up her daughter and her friends to take them to GoodSports, a sports complex in Wall Township, New Jersey, to play field hockey. She sat with a cup of tea and watched, content knowing all of her shopping was wrapped up. →

Brady felt just fine. Not ill at all. But as her daughter, her friends, and Brady left the arena, she collapsed. Grand mal seizure. Onlookers called an ambulance, which took Brady to Jersey Shore Medical Center. Everyone was perplexed. “There’s really no good reason for a 40-year-old woman to have a seizure out of the blue,” says Brady.

They took her in for a CT scan and did her bloodwork. When the nurse came into her room later, she relayed that the bloodwork was fine but that they’d like to talk with her in a private room about her scan. Brady had been a nurse for nearly 20 years at that point. She knew one thing: When they want to talk with you in a private room, it’s never a good sign.

WHEN KATHY BRADY WAS A LITTLE GIRL, she dreamed of being a nurse. She earned Girl Scout badges in bandaging and wound dressing. When she was old enough, she became a candy striper, bringing cards and flowers to patients in the hospital to brighten their day. “It was ideal if you got to work at the nursery with the babies,” says Brady. By 1980, she had earned her diploma from Ann May School of Nursing and went to work right away. But as her children came along—one, two, three, and then four—she moved from work in the intensive care unit (ICU), the critical care unit, and the pediatric ICU to part-time work in a pediatrician’s office. She liked the office, the staff, the doctor—it all worked for her as a busy mother, but there was something missing. “I realized I wasn’t using my acute care skills, my assessment skills,” she says. “So I decided to go back to school to get my nurse practitioner (NP) degree.”

That bachelor’s degree from Monmouth was just a start. She wanted the master’s too and headed right for it once that NP was tucked beside her name. She was six credits into that master’s at Monmouth when she had that grand mal seizure—and school was put on pause.

“I know where they’re coming from when they have problems. I understand that. I keep constant contact with them if they have any issues at all.”

In the private room that Dec. 22, the doctors told her they saw a tumor on the scan. Good news: It was benign. Bad news: It was huge. A mixed glioma, they told her, and, not surprisingly, it was pushing against her brain. Kathy Brady was a mother of four, just 40 years old, with no signs to speak of save the worst headache of her life about a month prior.

The master’s program was put on hold for surgery, for weeks of post-op physical therapy, for more seizures (“Apparently my brain doesn’t like to be messed with,” says Brady), and, later, for radiation every day for six weeks.

In the end, Brady was slower. Her words sometimes got lost, and she battled right-side paralysis that later—with work—lessened to right-side weakness. But her dreams to be the best nurse she could become didn’t slow much at all. When she was ready, she headed back to that master’s program and had a rule with the faculty: no exemptions. She wanted to be held to the same criteria and standards as the other students. “I didn’t want to be treated any differently,” she says. Brady did, however, accept accommodations for her slower cognitive functioning—additional time for testing, for example, independent studies, and, sometimes, withdrawals to go back and start a class again. It took her six years to earn her master’s, but she earned it alongside several classes of nursing students.



Kathy Brady '98, '07M, '21DNP at the May 2021 Commencement ceremonies and (below) at home with her husband, Don '81M, '94M. In addition to the endowed scholarship for nursing students, the Bradys also established an endowed scholarship for education students at Monmouth.



BRADY’S SURGERY REMOVED 80% OF HER tumor, and the 20% that remains shows no signs of further growth. “It’s stable,” says Brady. Last year, she earned a Doctor of Nursing Practice from Monmouth, and these days she teaches advanced nursing research at both Monmouth and the CUNY School of Professional Studies. She has found her spot as a nurse educator—passing on the skills she developed through school and practice. And her experience as a patient herself helps her empathize with her students who may need accommodations in her classes. “I know where they’re coming from when they have problems. I understand that,” she says. “I keep constant contact with them if they have any issues at all.”

Brady’s connection to Monmouth started with that nurse practitioner degree in 1998, but it has extended beyond diplomas. Monmouth is a family affair: Her husband, Don, a retired special education teacher, is also a two-time alumnus of the School of Education, and their son has a degree in business. But Monmouth is also just family: Brady was walked down the aisle for her master’s graduation by Janet Mahoney '87, who was then assistant dean of the nursing school, and Cira Frasier, a fellow faculty member, wheeled her into the January 2021 graduation ceremony in her academic regalia so she could watch her son and students graduate. As a way to give back, Don and Kathy recently established the Brady Family Endowed Scholarship in Nursing to support future nursing students. “It just seemed natural,” says Brady.

You could argue that Brady has already given so much to Monmouth through her teaching. She’s there for her students every semester in the classroom. Why does she continue? “I don’t know,” says Brady. “I think I just want them to do well. And I want to be a part of that success.”

Seems right. Brady, after all, has always pushed for her own success. As a 23-year survivor of a brain tumor. As a mom. As a teacher. And as a nurse. “I had to prove to myself I could do it.”



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[LOOKING BACK]

Snow Day!

Were there two sweeter words to hear when you were a student? And for that matter, is there any place more beautiful than Monmouth's historic campus when it's blanketed in snow? We want to hear stories about your favorite memories of being in the snow on campus. Write us at magazine@monmouth.edu or mail your responses to *Monmouth Magazine*, 400 Cedar Ave., West Long Branch, New Jersey, 07764. ☺

Alumni Roundup

Listed by graduation year.

1960s

» **Jack Howell '66** recently earned an executive certificate in public leadership from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, where he also completed the Senior Executive Fellows course in February 2021. Howell, who formerly served on the City Council for the City of Palm Coast, Florida, is the president and CEO of Teens-In-Flight, a nonprofit that provides free flight training to the teenage family members of military service members or first responders and to teens at risk.

» The Financial Markets Lab was renamed the **Tom Byer '67** and Susie Byer Financial Markets Lab in recognition of the Byers' long-standing support and dedication to the University and in celebration of Tom's successful career in the financial industry. Tom, who was elected to the Monmouth University Board of Trustees in 2013 and retired from the board in 2021, was recognized at a dedication ceremony held on campus on Sept. 24. During his tenure on the board, Tom served as a member

and vice chair of the Athletics Committee, a member of the Education and Faculty Affairs Committee, a member of the Investment Committee, and a member of the Admission and Enrollment Committee.

» **Winston Parks '67, '75M** recently made a five-figure gift to the cybersecurity program at Monmouth to help with the purchase of equipment and software necessary to move the program toward the future. Parks, who has a passion for cybersecurity education, was honored with a plaque installed outside the Cybersecurity Lab in recognition of the gift.

» **Tom Baranski '69, '74M** is the author of the recently published book *What the Hell Is Going On? By Six Essential Thinkers: Plato, Gödel, Sextus Empiricus, Einstein, Spinoza, Schrödinger*, a concise, enlightening, and entertaining study of matters that all humans care about—aesthetics, ethics, critical thinking, politics, happiness, and wisdom. Baranski, who is a private tutor and editor of several commercial mathematics and language arts textbooks, is the prizewinning author of "What Is Life?" published by the international magazine *Philosophy Now*.

1970s

» In April, **James Akers '70** walked more than 100,000 steps in 24 hours. Akers, who started seriously training for the Fitbit Ultimate Badge in December 2020, was able to achieve his goal and obtain the badge a month earlier than he had planned after walking 101,097 steps on April 7, 2021.

» **Jeff Zamek '70** is the author of *The Ceramics Studio Guide: What Potters Should Know*. The text, released by Schiffer Publishing, covers the many technical points Zamek learned while he was a student in the art department at Monmouth. Zamek is the president of Ceramics Consulting Services located in Southamptom, Massachusetts.

» **Ken LePosa '71** and **Barbara LePosa '72** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sunday, June 6, 2021, at the Molly Pitcher Inn in Red Bank, New Jersey. Their family organized the party at the Molly Pitcher Inn, the same location where the LePosas celebrated their reception after being married 50 years earlier on Sunday June 6, 1971.

» **James Clerico '72** staged "Songs From the Boardwalk" at Tim McLoone's Supper Club to help raise funds for Fulfill, formerly known as The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Clerico, who has performed in various groups throughout the New Jersey shore area, New York City, and Vermont, performed solo on guitar, covering a wide range of songs from the 1960s to the present.

» **Gerard Cannito '77** was named the "Tax Professional of the Year"

by the National Association of Tax Professionals (NATP). Cannito, who has been preparing taxes for more than 45 years, previously served on the North Carolina NATP state board of directors for six years and served on the national NATP board of directors for nine years.

» **Luther McClellan '79M**, the first African American graduate from the University of Memphis, is the now the namesake of the alumni mall on the University of Memphis campus. McClellan, a member of the Memphis State Eight—the first group of African American students admitted to the university in 1959—was recognized for his accomplishments at a naming ceremony at the University of Memphis this past September.

» **Michael Sperduto '79** is the 2021 Mackie Award recipient for his service to Immaculata High School in Somerville, New Jersey. Sperduto retired in 2006 after a 23-year career with Engelhard Corp. in Iselin, last serving as vice president and chief financial officer. Since retiring, he's dedicated much of his time to serving Immaculata's programs as a volunteer and financial supporter of various initiatives. Sperduto first started volunteering with the Immaculata football team in 2012. In 2013, he began volunteering as an assistant coach for the school's baseball team, and he is currently a varsity assistant running back coach. In addition to his athletics commitment, Sperduto served on the last two hall of fame committees as well as several golf classic committees. He has lent his financial experience to the school's advisory council and was a key member of the leadership team of the most recent capital campaign.



Jamilah McMillan '17

FIRST-YEAR STUDENT, THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY, SCHOOL OF LAW

Jamilah McMillan always thought she'd be a journalist. But her family's experience with the criminal justice system inspired her to pursue a law degree so that she can ensure the system works fairly for all. She was recently selected as one of Berkeley's first Public Interest Scholars.

HOW I GOT HERE

I worked as a paralegal in the Manhattan district attorney's office for four years, where I saw how prison and policing are often used to handle matters that are essentially social issues. During that time, I completed a Beyond the Bars Fellowship with Columbia University's Center for Justice, working to end mass incarceration.

MY CAREER GOAL

I want my work to be about helping the Black and Brown families that are disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system—to guide them in situations where they come into contact with the law and find ways to address the issues that affect them that go beyond policing and prison.

MONMOUTH MENTOR

Professor Rekha Datta helped me to look beyond—to reach my potential and figure out my path. As a first-generation student, it was so helpful to have someone like her to guide me.

»TONY MARCHETTI



Celebrations

ENGAGEMENTS

1. **Megan Elizabeth Meier '10, '19M** is engaged to wed **Kyle Titmas '10**.
2. **Carolyn Taylor '13** is engaged to wed **Kyle Durso '13**.
3. **Courtney Locke '15** is engaged to wed **Kyle Browne '14**.
4. **Kristin Waring '15** is engaged to wed **Michael Qualiano '16**.
5. **Samantha Barnwell '16** is engaged to wed **J.T. Berbrick**.
6. **Kristen Harger '17, '20M** is engaged to wed **Ken Magner '17**.
7. **Lauren Hill '18** is engaged to wed **Brandon Neyhart '18**.
8. **Alexia Hyams '19** is engaged to wed **Michael Zammit '16**.

WEDDINGS

9. **Alexandria Kostiuk '07** wed **Daniel Villanova '12**.
10. **Brittney Lauro '14, '15M** wed **Joseph Guido**.
11. **Cassie Hellwig '17, '18M** wed **Mike Knoblock**.
12. **Kelly (Santoriello) Kellett '18** wed **Joseph Kellett '18**.

BIRTHS

13. **Caitlin Cricco '06, '12M** and **Charles Roberts** welcomed a daughter, **Liv Roberts**, on June 30, 2021.
14. **Kristi (Tinnes) Brown '06** and **Justin Brown** welcomed a daughter, **Harper Mae Brown**, on July 18, 2021.
15. **Aimée R. Babbín '08, '14M** and her husband, **Rohan Chatterjee**, welcomed a son, **Dario Chatterjee** on Aug. 5, 2021.
16. **Timothy Newman '08** and his wife, **Sabrina**, welcomed their second child, **Amelia Sue**, on July 15, 2020.
17. **Theresa Burek Dowd '12** and **William Dowd '11** welcomed a son, **Jack Dowd**, on Nov. 10, 2020.

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 55

1980s

» Monmouth University Board of Trustees member **Michael Plodwick '82** was recognized for his service as board chair at a June board meeting where his portrait, which is hanging in the mezzanine of the Great Hall, was unveiled. Plodwick, a private investor who distinguished himself during a 20-plus-year Wall Street career, was first elected to the board in 2000. He served from 2000 to 2008 and, after being re-elected in 2009, served as board secretary. Plodwick served as board chair from 2017 to 2020.

» **Laura Brunetti '87** is the author of *ArtCare: Bridge to Hope*, an art therapy book that highlights Brunetti's journey with depression and trauma and how her art became a sign of hope and healing. Brunetti is the founder of Caring Canvas, a traveling art gallery that combines fine art with philanthropy. In addition to her work in art therapy, she has spent 20 years on the Monmouth County Mental Health Foundation Board as a volunteer and is also an artist gallery curator.

» The CEO Forum Group recognized **Krish Ramakrishnan '83M, '19HN** as one of its 2021 Top 10 Leaders In Innovation. Ramakrishnan is co-founder and CEO of BlueJeans by Verizon, a cloud-based videoconferencing service.

» **Kimberly M. Cuny '88** has been recognized with the 2021 Anna Maria Gove Award for Teaching Excellence at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), where she holds a faculty appointment in communications studies and is

an adjunct assistant professor in theatre and a part-time lecturer in public affairs. Cuny was a faculty member at Monmouth University before her appointment at UNCG in 2002.

1990s

» **David Calloway '91, '95M** was appointed the new vice president of sales for property management company FirstService Residential, located in Eatontown, New Jersey. Calloway, a formal regional director for the company, will oversee sales for FirstService Residential's East region, spanning Rhode Island to South Carolina. Calloway joined FirstService in 2016 as a business development director for the company's New Jersey and Pennsylvania high-rise division before transitioning to operations as a regional director. Prior to joining FirstService, Calloway was Monmouth's head men's basketball coach for 13 years and led the team to three NCAA Tournament appearances. He was named the Northeast Conference Coach of the Year in 2001 and was inducted into Monmouth University's Hall of Fame in 2018.

» **Beth Ricca '94M** is the executive director for career development at Monmouth University. Most recently, Ricca served as the director of the Cahill Career Development Center at Ramapo College in Mahwah, New Jersey, where she led all career development activities, including career advising, employer engagement, and student outcomes assessment. Under her leadership,

Ramapo increased the number of Fortune 1000 and Forbes Global 2000 companies engaged with their students by nearly 150%, and she received the 2021 National Association of Colleges and Employers' Excellence in Career Services Award. Previously, Ricca served for nearly a decade in multiple roles in higher ed and industry.

» **Kenneth Long '95M** was recently recognized among the "Power 30" by Lehigh Valley Business. Long, who is currently serving as interim president at East Stroudsburg University (ESU) in East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, has spent 34 years in higher education. Prior to his appointment as interim president, Long had served as ESU's vice president of administration and finance since 2013. Long, who holds a Bachelor of Arts in math and political science from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, previously worked in university administration at Kutztown University in Kutztown, Pennsylvania; the Uni-

versity of Toledo in Toledo, Ohio; and DeVry University, headquartered in Naperville, Illinois.

» **Tom Cardinale '97**, a tax partner with EisnerAmper, was recently a guest of CNBC's *Power Lunch* to discuss taxation rules on cryptocurrency.

» **Karen Odom '99M, '10M** is the chief operating officer of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Monmouth County in Monmouth County, New Jersey.

» **Christie Pearce Rampone '99, '05HN** is the girls technical director and mental conditioning director for the Baltimore Celtic Soccer Club. Rampone is a decorated athlete who is a three-time Olympic gold medalist and a former captain of the U.S. women's national soccer team during two gold-medal runs and one FIFA Women's World Cup title. She was recently elected to the National Soccer Hall of Fame.

» **Charles Wilson '99, '03M** recently published his first novel, *Prey for Dawn*, under the pen name Christopher Michael Blake. The horror novel was published through Breaking Rules Publishing and is available on Amazon and the Breaking Rules Publishing website.

National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs Inc. and serves as the director of the club's community programming. Additionally, she serves as the club's Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) Committee chairperson. She also serves on the Board of Trustees for Hope Academy Charter School, which is a K-8 charter school located in Asbury Park, New Jersey, and is a member of the Board of Trustees for the New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium.

» **Eric Pitarresi '04** was promoted to director of philanthropy, prospect research, and donor strategy at The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California.

» The Guardians Club at Monmouth hosted a virtual webinar with **Al Marasca '05**, a deputy U.S. marshal, about his experiences working as a missing child investigations coordinator and recruiter for the U.S. Marshals.

» In May, **Jennifer Pergola '05** held an online reading of her play, *Change or Death*. Audience members were able to enjoy the performance by actors via Zoom.

» **Chrissy Skudera '05** earned two certificates from the Poynter Institute, a nonprofit journalism school and research organization. She earned the Math for Journalists certificate and the Poynter/ACES Advanced Editing certificate. She adds these credentials to more than 12 years of experience in the writing and editing fields.

» **Kristi (Tinnes) Brown '06** and Justin Brown welcomed a daughter, Harper Mae Brown, on July 18, 2021.

2000s

» After spending years working as a special education teacher, **Danielle LaRosa '01** incorporated her background in early childhood reading and her love for music to publish her debut book, *When I Grow Up, I Want To Be a Song!*, a picture book about a young girl named Maggie who loves music so much that she dreams of becoming a song.

» **Greg Mescall '03** is the play-by-play broadcaster for the Fan Controlled Football league.

» **Kaneshia Jones '03**, director of global quality management for Amneal Pharmaceuticals, recently joined the Urban Coast Institute's Advisory Committee. Jones has over 17 years of experience driving quality improvement, continuous improvement, and operational excellence in the pharmaceutical industry. She is a graduate of the Marine Academy of Science and Technology in Middletown Township, New Jersey, and received her Bachelor of Science in biology with a concentration in molecular cell physiology from Monmouth University. Jones currently serves as the first vice president of the Central Jersey Club of the



» **Caitlin Cricco '06, '12M** and Charles Roberts welcomed a daughter, Liv Roberts, on June 30, 2021.

» **Subrina Mahmood '06** is the director of digital reporting and automation at TIAA, a financial services organization that is the leading provider of financial services in the academic, research, medical, cultural, and government fields. Mahmood has over 15 years of experience in driving financial reporting transformation at large financial services firms. She began her career working in financial research for a consulting firm, leading to financial planning and analysis. She is also experienced working in financial planning and analysis for the consumer retail cosmetics and retail energy sectors. Mahmood graduated cum laude from Monmouth with a Bachelor of Science in business administration with concentrations in finance and management and graduated with a Master of Business Administration from the C.T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston in Houston, Texas.

» **Alexandria Kostiuk '07** wed **Daniel Villanova '12** on a beautiful Jersey shore afternoon at Crystal Point Yacht Club in Point Pleasant, New Jersey. After a long year in quarantine and multiple postponements, the former Hawk TV station managers were ecstatic to be surrounded by family, friends, and many Hawk TV and fellow Monmouth alumni as they tied the knot. Those who attended included Dan Bachetta '07; Heather Baginski '12; Brian Bosmans '07, '09M; John Bosmans '06; Nora Bosmans '11; Roberta Carlin '08; Adam Evans '16M; Aileen (Bosmans) Evans '09; Dino Flammia '07; Tom Hanley '04, »CONTINUED ON PAGE 58

ACCOLADES: 1. Winston Parks '67, '75M (third from right) who recently made a five-figure gift to the cybersecurity program at Monmouth, was honored with a plaque installed outside the Cybersecurity Lab in recognition of the gift. **2. The Financial Markets Lab** was renamed the **Tom Byer '67** and Susie Byer Financial Markets Lab in recognition of the Byers' long-standing support and dedication to the University. There to celebrate the occasion were (from left) President Patrick Leahy, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Pamela Scott-Johnson, Susie Byer, and Tom Byer. **3. James Clerico '72** (third from left) staged "Songs From the Boardwalk" at Tim McLoone's Supper Club to help raise funds for Fulfill. **4. Monmouth University Board of Trustees member Michael Plodwick '82** (left) was recognized by President Patrick Leahy (right) and the board for his service as board chair at a June board meeting where his portrait, which is hanging in the mezzanine of the Great Hall, was unveiled. **5. Ariel Guzman '17** was recognized by the Institute of Real Estate Management as a 2021 30 Under 30 recipient.

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There's No Place Like Space

Arthur Paoella is studying which 3D-printed materials can survive the harsh environment of space. What he learns could advance satellite technology.

BY MEERI KIM

Like many people of his generation, Arthur Paoella '82 recalls being mesmerized while watching the Apollo 11 moon landing unfold on live TV. The sight of Neil Armstrong taking those first steps on the lunar surface helped instill what would become a lifelong desire to work in the space industry.

Now that dream has become reality. As a senior scientist at L3Harris Technologies, an aerospace and defense technology company based in Florida, Paoella oversees research and development of 3D-printing for manufacturing communications satellites. The hope is that the use of robust 3D-printed materials will translate to building more cost-effective, lightweight, and long-lasting satellites.

Recently, Paoella's main experiment, which focuses on whether and how 3D-printed materials survive the harsh environment of space, was aboard the International Space Station (ISS). Last year, he and his colleagues attached samples of various materials to a rocket that docked with the ISS. The samples were scheduled to come back to Earth in December (after this magazine went to print) for extensive testing.

"In recent years, 3D printing has become very popular in developing a number of things, particularly modeling and prototype forms. But I wanted to see

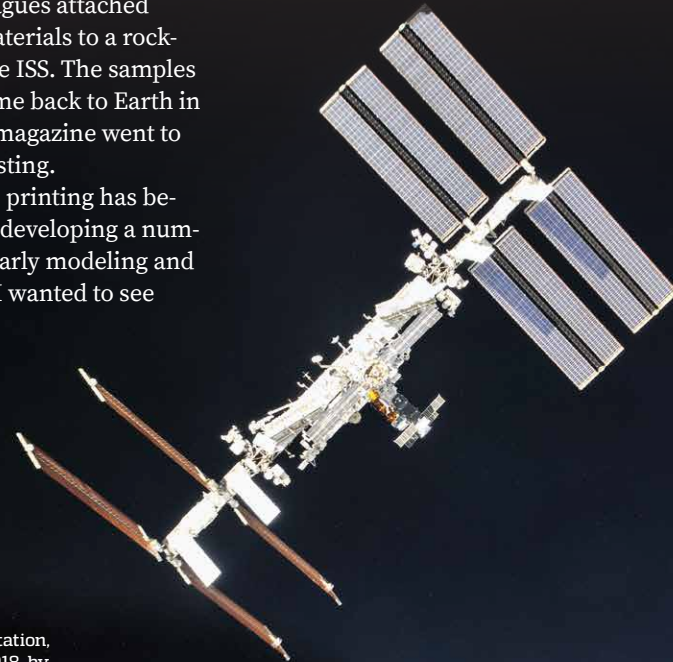
how the technique would work for a communications system in space," says Paoella, who received his undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from Monmouth and a doctorate in electrical engineering from Drexel University. "The space environment is very brutal. There's radiation, huge temperature extremes, and, in some cases, orbital debris such as micrometeorites."

The ISS circles the Earth every 90 minutes, roughly, meaning that the samples went from sunlight to darkness multiple times per day. On top of this temperature fluctuation, they were also

exposed to atomic oxygen in space. This elemental form of oxygen doesn't exist naturally for very long on the surface of the Earth but is abundant in low Earth orbit. Atomic oxygen reacts with other materials very easily, exposing satellites to damaging corrosion.

Assuming that some of the samples endure, L3Harris plans to incorporate those 3D-printed materials into new satellite designs. The company's diverse customer base uses satellite technology for applications like communications, imaging, and weather. In addition, 3D printing could allow for manufacturing on an as-needed basis in space—for example, if an antenna or radio is damaged, a 3D printer on the ISS could quickly create a replacement.

"As a kid, even at the age of 5 or 6, I had a curiosity with electronics. I took everything apart—anything that had electronics in it, I would just take it apart to see how it worked," says Paoella. "That's why I went into electrical engineering at Monmouth, because that was an interest that I always had, and then I eventually circled back into my fascination with space." ☁



Arthur Paoella's work involves testing how 3D-printed materials perform in low Earth orbit on the International Space Station.



The International Space Station, photographed on Oct. 4, 2018, by Expedition 56 crew members from a Soyuz spacecraft after undocking.



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'06M; Nikki (Wright) Flammia '08; Edward Hollema '09; Heather (Tyrrell) Hollema '09; Vince Iorio '09; Matthew Konieczny '12, '13M; Christian Lampe '10; Dan Mangini '10; Stephanie (Fetchko) Mangini '08; Rick Meeker '08; Frankie Morales '09; Patrick Perrotto '05; Ashley (Cattano) Robles '11; Felipe Robles '12; Jerri (Sirotiak) Seervai '08; Matt Siciliano, Class of 2006; Derek Verge, Class of 2007; Hanna Piekola Verge '16M; Christina (DiPrisco) Villanova '13; Raymond Villanova '13; and Ruben Woolcott '09.

» **Rebecca (Morton) Policastro '07** began a two-year term as vice president of communications for the New Jersey School Public Relations Association. Policastro currently serves as communications and district projects coordinator at the Freehold Regional High School District in Freehold, New Jersey.

» **Aimée R. Babbín '08, '14M** and her husband, Rohan Chatterjee, welcomed a son, Dario Chatterjee.

» **Dr. Hasan Memon '08** recently became board certified in addiction medicine by the American Board of Preventive Medicine. He is currently an assistant professor at the Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School Department of Psychiatry in Piscataway, New Jersey, and has a private practice called Garden Psych in Princeton, New Jersey.

» **Timothy Newman '08** and his wife, Sabrina, welcomed their second child, Amelia Sue, on July 15, 2020. Their daughter joins big sister, Aubree Sue.

» **Jenna Guzman '09** was recognized by the St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) in Leonardtown, Maryland, for exceptional courage and service in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and for ongoing efforts to advance agency performance. She was awarded the Excellence in Public Health Award, the topmost honor offered through SMCHD; the Outstanding Service Award,

which recognizes significant work to advance agency performance in the national accreditation process; and the Public Health Leadership Award, recognizing key leadership provided during the COVID-19 pandemic response. Guzman currently serves on the executive team as the director of community engagement & policy, overseeing communications, local health improvement efforts, policy work, health equity efforts, outreach, and quality improvement monitoring for the organization.

» **Victoria Lucido '09** is a partner at Aloia Law Firm in Bloomfield, New Jersey.

2010s

» **Megan Elizabeth Meier '10, '19M** is engaged to wed **Kyle Titmas '10**. The couple met at Monmouth University in the Carol Afflitto Conference Room in the Student Center during pep band camp in 2006. Both went on to graduate with degrees in music education and become band directors. Titmas proposed to Meier outside of Woods Theatre, where they shared many classes together.

» **Samantha DeAlmeida '12, '14M, '18M** is the president of the Associated Builders and Contractors of New Jersey (ABC NJ). DeAlmeida, who earned her bachelor's degree in political science and two master's degrees in public policy and homeland security at Monmouth, was previously ABC NJ's second vice president and government affairs liaison. Prior to joining ABC

NJ, she served as the New Jersey government relations director for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, where she worked to achieve legislative support for the organization's initiatives, resulting in several bills being signed into law by Gov. Phil Murphy. DeAlmeida previously served as deputy director of government relations and policy for the New Jersey Hospital Association and as a policy analyst for the New Jersey State Legislature. DeAlmeida, who also works as an adjunct political science professor at Brookdale Community College and serves as the director for a nonprofit that provides equine-assisted therapy to veterans with PTSD, was recently named to the 2020 Insider 100: Millennials, InsiderNJ's listing of the most influential up-and-comers in New Jersey politics.

» **Theresa Burek Dowd '12 and William Dowd '11** welcomed a son, Jack Dowd, on Nov. 10, 2020.

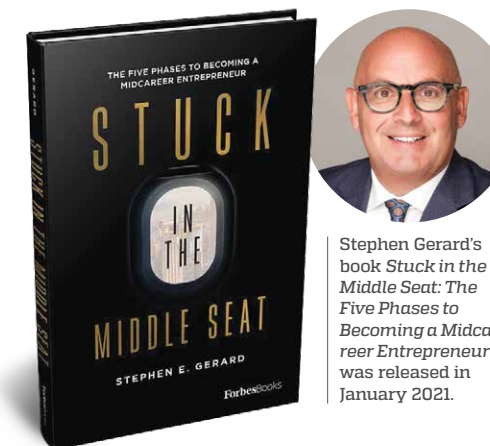
» **Courtney Ciandella '13** recently embarked on a freelance writing career after eight years as the sole marketing liaison for a commercial real estate company. In August 2020, she became a certified yoga instructor after completing a 200-hour intensive course and has since taught nearly 100 hours of classes at various yoga studios around the state. Her work as a writer has led to hundreds of published works, earning bylines from dozens of print and online publications. In her freelance business, she combined her love of yoga with her passion for writing, creating content for health and wellness companies all over the country. She has stayed close to her Monmouth University roots, currently residing in Asbury Park, New Jersey.

How To Find Success as an Entrepreneur

Passion plus planning plus proactivity equals success.

BY MELISSA KVIDAHL REILLY

Stephen Gerard '89M had 20 years of corporate experience in sales, accounting, and finance under his belt when he decided to change course and become an entrepreneur at age 40. He founded his first company in 2004 and has started, invested in, and bought and sold businesses around the world ever since. His new book, *Stuck in the Middle Seat: The Five Phases to Becoming a Midcareer Entrepreneur*, offers advice for anyone seeking to escape the 9-to-5 grind. He shared a few of his tips with us.

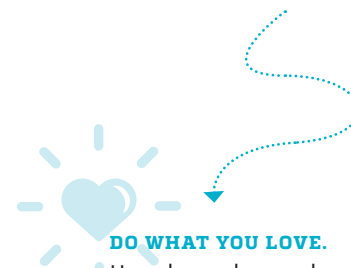


Stephen Gerard's book *Stuck in the Middle Seat: The Five Phases to Becoming a Midcareer Entrepreneur* was released in January 2021.



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE.

Midcareer can actually be the best time to become an entrepreneur, whether you've set your sights on starting a side hustle or launching a major corporation. Why? You've likely developed the necessary business and leadership skills by that time and bring significant know-how to the table.



DO WHAT YOU LOVE.

How do you know when you've found something you love? For Gerard, it must meet these three criteria: He can't wait to do it, he loses track of time when he's doing it, and he gets upset when someone interrupts him doing it. Though entrepreneurs can find a career they love at any age, midcareer professionals benefit from knowing what they like and don't like as well as their strengths and weaknesses.



FAIL FORWARD.

That means learn by making mistakes. Don't spend so much time thinking and planning that you never take a chance. Get out there and try to sell your idea. Understand that mistakes will be made, but it's all part of the process of adapting and advancing the idea. Alternatively, too many roadblocks may reveal that you need to come up with a different plan entirely.



REFINE YOUR IDEA.

For a business idea to thrive, it must meet a market need—and make money. Beware of trying to elevate a hobby into a business, Gerard says, recalling a time when he considered becoming a professional winemaker. "I wasn't that good at it, and I wasn't willing to put the time in to be good at it." Instead, talk to as many people as possible about your idea, refine it until it's a viable business, and get referrals to speak with business owners who have done something similar.



SLEEP ON IT.

Entrepreneurship is emotional. Each day brings a new challenge, and it's hard to determine whether the right reaction is to stay the course or completely panic. Gerard's tip? Sleep on it. "Everything looks different the next day," he says. "You'll have more clarity and a better idea of what to do."

Save the Date

Show your support for Monmouth students and programs through 48 hours of giving. Join us!



» The Florida Communication Association named **Katherine O'Connor '13M**, a communications professor at Florida SouthWestern State College in Fort Myers, Florida, as the 2021 Teacher of the Year. The award is given annually to communications faculty who have taught in the communications field for at least two years, have received letters of support from their colleagues, and have positive student evaluations.

» **Carolyn Taylor '13** is engaged to wed **Kyle Durso '13**. The couple met on the very first day of college during their freshman year and were fast friends. They weren't ready for a head-over-heels love at 18 but were close friends all through college and beyond. Durso joined the Army National Guard out of college, and Taylor moved back to South Jersey. But, in 2018, they took their friendship to the next level and started dating. In March 2021, they purchased a home together and got engaged the same weekend. The couple is planning their wedding with a bridal party that includes nine fellow Monmouth alumni.

» **Kyle Browne '14**. See note for **Courtney Locke '15**.

» **Nina Marie Costa '14** is the assistant director of public relations and entertainment marketing at UNICEF USA.

» **Dr. Anil K. Gupta '14M** is the chief medical officer at Monmouth Medical Center Southern Campus (MMSC), where he is responsible for the overall clinical vision of the medical center. Prior to joining MMSC, Dr. Gupta served as medical director of IT at Community Medical Center in Toms River,

New Jersey. He has 35 years of experience as a physician and spent 24 years in private practice as a board-certified cardiologist. A fellow of the American College of Cardiology and a member of the American College of Physician Executives, he also is the co-founder and former president of Monmouth & Ocean County American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin, an organization of over 500 physicians of Indian origin in the two counties. He is an active member of the Medical Society of New Jersey and the Monmouth-Ocean Medical Society.

» **Brittney Lauro '14, '15M** wed Joseph Guido at The Waterview at Port Jefferson Country Club in Port Jefferson, New York, on Oct. 24, 2020. Lauro is a licensed clinical social worker eating disorder therapist and recently started working for Equip Health, a unique virtual platform for eating disorder treatment serving clients in several states, including New York and New Jersey. Lauro, who is the current co-chair for the technology and innovations special interest group of the Academy for Eating Disorders, was invited to present at the International Conference on Eating Disorders 2021, where she presented "Using Technology to Improve Understanding and Therapy Training for Eating Disorders." She has also been a speaker for NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center's community lecture series.

» **Kristi Irace '15** is working as an associate scientist of bio-analytics at Novartis Pharmaceuticals, where she is involved with clinical trials to find a cure for various blood cancers.

» **Courtney Locke '15** and **Kyle Browne '14** were engaged at The Winery at Bull Run in Centreville, Virginia, on July 7, 2021. The couple, who have been together since July 2, 2012, are Monmouth University sweethearts. They met through mutual friends at one of the groom-to-be's Men's Club Ice Hockey games at Jersey Shore Arena, and the rest was history. Nine years later, and after a few years of maintaining a long-distance relationship, between New Jersey and Virginia, they said yes to forever. Locke is currently an engineer at Verizon in New Jersey, and Browne is a police officer at the Fairfax County Police Department in northern Virginia.

» **Erica Tenpenny '15** graduated from Stockton University with her Master of Science in occupational therapy.

» **Kristin Waring '15** is engaged to wed **Michael Qualiano '16**.

» **Samantha Barnwell '16** is engaged to wed J.T. Berbrick. The couple is planning a February 2022 wedding.

» **Antonina Luppino '16** teaches interactive design classes at Northern Valley Regional High School in Demarest, New Jersey.

» **Michael Qualiano '16**. See note for **Kristin Waring '15**.

» **Ariel Guzman '17** was recognized by the Institute of Real Estate Management as a 2021 30 Under 30 recipient; the 30 Under 30 program acknowledges the next generation of real estate management leaders. Guzman is a community manager with Greystar Real Estate Partners, an international real estate developer and manager

based in the U.S. Prior to joining Greystar, he was a manager with AvalonBay Communities, where he served on the National Apartment Association's Diversity & Inclusion Committee and received the Assistant Property Manager Award of Excellence from the New Jersey Apartment Association.

» **Kristen Harger '17, '20M** is engaged to wed **Ken Wagner '17**.

» After nine years of dating, **Cassie Hellwig '17, '18M** wed Mike Knoblock in Stockton, New Jersey, on April 25, 2021.

» **Lauren Hill '18** is engaged to wed **Brandon Neyhart '18**. The couple, who met as juniors in Specialist Professor John Burke's derivatives class and later connected during their senior year, were engaged in Key West, Florida, on July 27, 2021. They recently bought a house close to Monmouth's campus.

» **Kelly (Santoriello) Kellett '18** wed **Joseph Kellett '18**. The couple held their ceremony at St. Aloysius Roman Catholic Church in Jackson, New Jersey, July 18, 2020, but, due to COVID-19, held their reception one year later. The couple was able to celebrate their marriage surrounded by family and friends at Clarks Landing Yacht Club on July 16, 2021.

» **Allie Wilson '18, '19M** placed sixth at the 2021 Olympic Track and Field Trials after clocking in at 1:59:02 in the 800 meter, a personal best for the former Hawk. In her time at Monmouth, Wilson became a six-time Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Champion, a MAAC Championships Track Performer of the

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 63

Making Billboard's 40 Under 40

Lexi Todd '13 has found success in the music industry by pursuing her passions.

BY KELLEY FREUND

Lexi Todd's life is a balancing act between her left and right brain. By day, Todd serves as the director of business and legal affairs for a music publishing and talent management company. By night, she performs as a solo artist and as the frontwoman of the band Chevy Lopez, which she formed as a student at Monmouth.

Growing up, Todd always planned to pursue a career in music. She began voice classes at age 4, joined choir and band as soon as she was old enough, and learned to play the guitar. But when it came time for college, she says she "didn't want to turn what I was passionate about into something I had to do."

At Monmouth, Todd was a political science major with minors in Spanish and philosophy. She served as debate team captain, president of the Political Science Club, and lead attorney for the mock trial team. Her experiences here inspired her to further her education, she says.

"College was the first time I felt encouraged academically," says Todd. "I loved the college atmosphere and the intellectual discourse. I really blossomed at Monmouth and knew I wanted (and was well prepared) to go to grad school."

She studied entertainment law at Brooklyn Law School, and, after graduating in 2016, set out to find a part-time law position that would allow her time to work on her music. An internship for Primary



Wave Music turned out to be the perfect gig. The company is home to some of the most iconic songwriters, artists, and record labels, including Sun Records, Bob Marley, Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, and Whitney Houston.

What started as a part-time internship turned into a full-time job. As a musician with a law degree, Todd brings a unique perspective to the table—she understands complicated copyright laws but also the concerns of artists. Today, she handles contract drafting and negotiation and other legal matters to grow and secure opportunities for the company's library of legendary songs. In the past year, she ran point on over a dozen acquisitions totaling more than \$65 million.

"My job changes week to week, and I love that variety," says Todd. "It's kind of like a puzzle, and I enjoy trying to fit all the pieces together." 🎵

Todd and her partner recently purchased a farmhouse on 40 acres and are in the process of renovating it themselves.

Last August, *Billboard* named Todd to its 40 Under 40 list of young music executives. But she's also enjoying success as a solo musician. With neo-soul songs that delve into themes like the passage of time, self-care, and female empowerment, Todd has been showcased at iHeartRadio and chosen as a featured performer at New York Fashion Week.

Todd seems to have found the perfect balance between all of her passions, which means she's more than living up to her advice for Monmouth students.

"You don't have to choose just one thing that defines you in life. The fact that I'm a lawyer doesn't make me any less a musician. And vice versa. Why *can't* I do both things forever? Pursue whatever it is you're passionate about." 🎵



John '69 and his wife, Henni Kantor Kessler '68, pictured in 2017 at the dedication of the stadium that bears their names.

Kessler Stadium Opening 9.2.17

John H. Kessler '69

Trustee Emeritus, 1945-2021

BY PAUL S. DOHERTY JR. '67, '04HN

I first met John when we were students at Monmouth. I was in the Phi Delta Sigma fraternity, and we played his team in intramural football. He was just a heck of an all-around athlete and passionate sports enthusiast. He had a competitiveness about him that always showed through, but in a very positive way; you could tell it was part of his being. Years later, I'd kid him that my team must have won that game because, afterward, he joined Phi Delta Sigma. John always seemed to be on the winning team.

“He was always eager to do anything and everything to help; in turn, he made you want to do the same. His zeal was contagious.”

John and I lost touch for a while after graduation but reconnected in the late 1980s. He was always very passionate about Monmouth, and he helped reconnect me with the University. We became involved with the Touchdown Club, raising money to start the football program at Monmouth. I remember John calling me and some other fraternity brothers and saying that if we helped him raise the funds, he'd build the stadium. We did, and, sure enough, the stadium has his name on it.

That was the kind of enthusiasm John had, and he brought it to everything he did in life: his marriage to Henni, his work, his faith, and his support for Monmouth and other causes. He was always eager to do anything and everything to help; in turn, he made you want to do the same. His zeal was contagious.

One of our fraternity brothers, Paul Sperber '68, '00M, upon learning of John's passing wrote that he was “honored to have shared space and time with someone who could make such a mark on so many lives.” I think that describes John perfectly. He brought unfettered passion and enthusiasm to everything he did, and, in the process, he left Monmouth a better place. 🍷

The author is a Trustee Emeritus of Monmouth University.

photo ANTHONY DEPRIMO

Meet, and a three-time NCAA All-American; made multiple All-Academic teams; and holds seven school records for the Hawks from 2014 to 2019.

» **Jakob Henze '19, '20M** is a police officer with the Abington Township Police in Abington, Pennsylvania.

» **Alexia Hyams '19** is engaged to wed **Michael Zammit '16**.

» **Jenna Paterno '19, '21M** is the operations manager and historian at Twin Lights Historical Society in Highlands, New Jersey.

» **Logan Smet '19** is the assistant coach for the women's lacrosse team at Keiser University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Previously, she was the head coach for the 2023 and 2025 teams at MC Elite in Bethesda, Maryland. As a Hawk, Smet was a four-year member of the women's lacrosse team, tallying 24 goals, 18 ground balls, and 10 assists. Off the field, she was a three-time member of the MAAC All-Academic team.

2020s

» **Alexa Zuppa '20** is the owner of Otto's Coffee Shop, an online coffee retailer that sells 100% Hawaiian coffee. Zuppa, who is pursuing her law degree at Touro Law Center in Long Island, New York, began running the coffee shop, lovingly named after her Pomsky puppy, shortly after commencement. Each month, 10% of all proceeds are donated to a local animal shelter or foundation. 🍷

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Monmouth University encourages alumni to share news regarding career changes, awards and honors, marriages, anniversaries, births, and other life events for inclusion in Class Notes. All submissions are subject to editing for clarity and length. We welcome submissions of high-resolution digital images for possible inclusion with your class note; however, we reserve the right not to print submitted photos due to space limitations or issues with image resolution.

In addition to the news items sent by alumni, the University receives press releases from businesses and organizations announcing alumni achievements and subscribes to an online news clipping service that provides news items about alumni. These items are edited and placed in the appropriate class section.

Monmouth magazine staff members try to verify the accuracy of this information; however, the University cannot be responsible for incorrect information contained herein. If you would like us to correct any inaccuracies that have been printed, please contact the magazine at magazine@monmouth.edu.

In Memoriam

Alumni

- » Hartson Boyce '63 (May 21, 2021)
- » John J. Najjar '63 (June 25, 2021)
- » John Terzano '63 (April 1, 2021)
- » Mary Ann Greco '65 (Feb. 14, 2021)
- » Dr. Michael F. Monica '66 (June 3, 2021)
- » John Spencer Ryan '66 (July 18, 2021)
- » Van J. Deist '67 (May 26, 2021)
- » Gerald M. Chismar '68, '73M (Aug. 25, 2021)
- » Thomas Cobianchi '68, '73M (Jan. 22, 2021)
- » Jeanette Thornton-Powe '68 (March 10, 2020)
- » William D. Baker '70 (May 31, 2021)
- » Donald H. Lane '70 (July 9, 2021)
- » Arthur F. Nelson '70A (March 4, 2021)
- » Mary A. Veisz '70 (June 11, 2021)
- » Carmine P. Giordano '71 (Aug. 13, 2021)
- » Nancy S. Locilento '71 (Sept. 8, 2021)
- » Wayne C. Pomanowski '71 (Aug. 6, 2021)
- » Paul R. Stalets '71 (Aug. 5, 2021)
- » Kenneth F. O'Donnell '73 (June 12, 2021)
- » Constance Cartmell '74 (Aug. 9, 2021)
- » Steven A. Bleier '75M (March 20, 2021)
- » Margaret Juckett '75M (June 27, 2021)
- » Robert J. Smith '75 (June 21, 2021)
- » Audrey J. Kerber '76 (Jan. 3, 2021)
- » Joseph T. DeLeonardo '80 (Sept. 10, 2021)
- » Molly J. Burge '83 (Aug. 27, 2021)
- » Barry Bestle '84 (April 23, 2021)
- » Amery F. Meibauer '85M (July 24, 2021)
- » Gaye D. Iannelli '88, '00M, '13DNP (Aug. 25, 2021)
- » Susan Kushner Malaussena '90 (August 2019)
- » Barbara Griggs '91 (July 30, 2021)
- » Bettie Weiler '91M (April 13, 2021)
- » DeAnn Cheyne '94M (May 20, 2021)
- » Carol A. Ritter-Guthmiller '98 (June 8, 2021)
- » Owen P. Layden '00M (Aug. 2, 2021)
- » Rachel A. Davidson '01 (May 7, 2021)
- » Lesley S. Kittler '01 (June 2, 2021)
- » Daria Amoroso-McCue '07 (July 7, 2021)
- » Katelin E. Fawkes '07, '10M (Aug. 3, 2021)
- » Jacqueline Varygiannes '11 (Jan. 17, 2021)
- » Kylie Queen '21 (June 24, 2021)

Friends

» James B. Barlow Sr., former member of the Blue/White Club Leadership Council and the Business Council (Sept. 16, 2021)

Faculty & Staff

» Hans Hieslmair, former longtime adjunct professor in the School of Science (Feb. 13, 2021)

» Colleen Hoherchak '16, office coordinator in the Professional Counseling Program (Aug. 17, 2021)

» Irene “Reenie” Menditto, former director of student standards, advising, and services at the Honors School (Aug. 3, 2021)

» Ronald “Ron” Reisner, associate professor, Department of Criminal Justice (May 19, 2021)

LOCATION: ERLANGER GARDENS

Looking Out

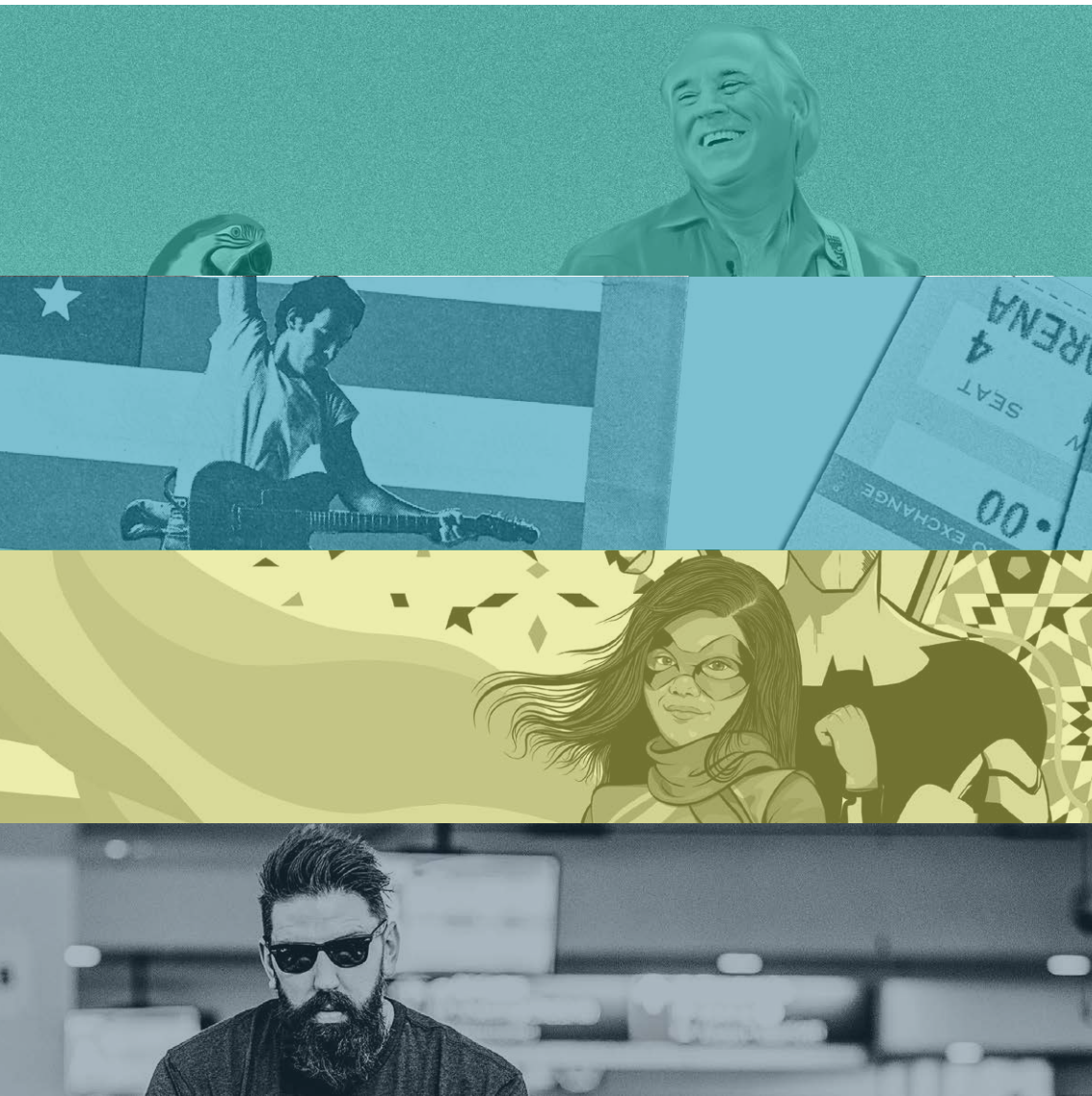




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FALL/WINTER 2021

4 Things You'll Learn From This Issue

1. What Jimmy Buffett has in common with Walt Disney. » **P. 08**
2. Two fun ways to get your Bruce Springsteen fix. » **P. 14**
3. Which Monmouth professor is stoked for the new *Ms. Marvel* TV show. » **P. 16**
4. Why Kosovar basketball fans put Philly fans to shame. » **P. 26**