

The magazine of Montclair State University

MONTCLAIR

Fall/Winter 2017



HOLLYWOOD EAST

NEW BUILDING OFFERS MOST
ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY OF
ANY SCHOOL IN THE COUNTRY



Alumnus Michael Price '81, a writer and producer of *The Simpsons*, returned to campus at Homecoming to discuss his career with School of Communication and Media Director Keith Strudler and to dedicate the Michael Price Audio Production Center. See story in Alumni News, page 46.

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MONTCLAIR

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

In October, I had the honor of delivering the "President-to-Presidents Lecture" at the annual meeting of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), where 200 presidents and chancellors gathered to explore issues facing higher education to ensure that we, as leaders, are doing our best to provide future generations with the tools they need to lead our country forward.

It was an honor, in this context, to use Montclair State as an example of a University that has put in the time and the work it takes to give its students the opportunities and excellence they deserve. In the nearly 20 years that I have been at the University, we have grown from 12,000 to 21,000 students. When I arrived, we granted about 2,200 degrees a year; today our university grants more than 5,200 degrees each year. We have added new colleges, schools, programs, research institutes and centers. We have added doctoral programs. We have built hundreds of thousands of square feet of instructional, laboratory and research space as well as residence halls and parking spaces. We rebuilt the entire energy infrastructure of the campus and hired hundreds more faculty and professional staff.

But that's not all. As you'll read in these pages, this summer saw additional fruits of our labor, when Governor Christie signed into law a bill, supported unanimously by both the New Jersey Senate and the Assembly, establishing Montclair State University as a public research university.

How did we manage these transformational accomplishments? The answer, which I shared with my fellow presidents, is simple: sweat equity. We did not stand and wait. We worked really hard and we worked really smart.

And our work never stops. As you'll read here, this fall we welcomed our first cohort of students in our Bachelor of Science in Nursing program; we are in the process of expanding our College Hall and Mallory Hall facilities to serve students better; and the School of Communication and Media just opened its new home – a technological wonder that, thanks to our strategic partnership with Sony, offers the most advanced digital film and broadcast equipment, technologies and studios at any university in the country.

We continue contributing that sweat equity, as do our students, many of whom are the first in their families to go to college. All this work and growth enriches the lives of our students, whose experiences at the University lead to the completion of degrees that will enable them to realize their potential and expand their opportunities. I hope you share the pride we take in the University's accomplishments because Montclair State's momentum has been made possible, in large part, to the generous support of our alumni and friends. For that, we and our students thank you.

Susan A. Cole

FEEDBACK

Enjoy the magazine?
Have a story idea for us?
We want to hear from you.

Email us at editor@mail.montclair.edu.
(We reserve the right to edit letters.)



OUR FAVORITE TWEETS

Vogue magazine included Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's visit to campus in its pages and tweeted about it. To read more about her visit, see page 12.



Alumnus Michael Price, a writer and producer of *The Simpsons* and *F Is for Family*, tweeted about his Homecoming visit and dedication of the room in his name. To read more, see page 46.



MAGAZINE HONORED



Montclair State University Communications received recognition for its creativity in its publications, digital media, writing and photography with four platinum and six gold MarCom Awards as well as five honorable mentions in the 2017 competition.

An international creative competition sponsored and judged by the Association of Marketing Communications Professionals, the MarCom Awards recognize outstanding achievement by creative professionals involved in the concept, direction, design and production of marketing and communication materials and programs. Of the awards won by the department, *Montclair* magazine received two platinum, three gold and three honorable mentions for writing, photography and the magazine as a whole. For a list of winners, visit montclair.edu/newscenter.



HEADLINES



New Jersey Designates Montclair State a Public Research University

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie signed legislation officially designating Montclair State a public research university. The bill – unanimously supported by both the New Jersey Senate and Assembly – is the latest recognition of the University’s recent growth and transformation. The University was designated a research doctoral institution

by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education in 2016 and as a doctoral degree-granting institution by the New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education.

“The University greatly appreciates the strong bipartisan support for this legislation,” says President Susan A. Cole. “Having

our home state recognize what has already been acknowledged in the national higher education community is both welcome and appropriate, and will further strengthen the University’s ability to contribute to the education of the state’s workforce, create new knowledge in fields important to the state, the nation and the larger world, and help fuel

New Jersey’s future economic growth.”

The new designation will also expand Montclair State students’ eligibility for Tuition Aid Grants, enhance the University’s ability to conduct business more effectively under regulations better suited to its needs, and enable it to compete more successfully for new research funding. ■

Candidates for Lt. Governor Debate on Campus



Journalism students and professional media covered the Lieutenant Gubernatorial debate.

Lieutenant governor candidates faced off in a live, televised debate on October 16 at the School of Communication and Media Presentation Hall.

Political dignitaries from both sides of the aisle and a capacity crowd gathered for *NJ Decides 2017: The Lieutenant Gubernatorial Debate*, co-hosted by NJTV and Montclair State, to hear the positions on New Jersey's most significant issues, including property taxes, attracting corporations to the state

and the aging New Jersey Transit system. Democrat Sheila Oliver, Phil Murphy's running mate, and Republican Carlos Rendo, Kim Guadagno's running mate and Woodcliff Lake mayor, took questions from NJTV viewers via social media, including a question on making New Jersey more affordable for millennials asked by a Montclair State University student.

The 60-minute debate was broadcast live on NJTV and livestreamed on its website and on Facebook Live. The debate was moderated by *NJTV News* Chief Political Correspondent Michael Aron and coverage of the broadcast included commentary and analysis anchored by *NJTV News* anchor Mary Alice Williams and correspondents Michael Hill and David Cruz.

On November 7, 2017, voters elected Murphy and Oliver to the state's top jobs. ■



Carlos Rendo and Sheila Oliver debated the issues affecting New Jersey.

University Receives Campus Suicide Prevention Grant

Counseling and Psychological Services staff psychologist and suicide prevention coordinator Jude Uy received a three-year Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grant to expand the University's leadership role in preventing violence and suicide on New Jersey's college and university campuses and to help strengthen Montclair State's commitment to destigmatizing mental health issues.

"Our primary objective is to support the mental health of our campus by decreasing the prevalence of suicide and serious mental health issues and providing resources to the external community and other campuses throughout New Jersey," says Uy.

The University is one of only 17 colleges and universities nationwide to receive the prestigious award administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The award supports the University's new Project Suicide Awareness Violence Education and Response (Project SAVER) and supplements existing Counseling and Psychological Services initiatives. It also supports the establishment of the University and College Alliance for Prevention of Suicide, or UCAPS – the first-ever New Jersey campus suicide and violence prevention consortium.

"I am hopeful that Project SAVER can help destigmatize and shift public attitudes about suicide, mental health and help-seeking," says Uy. "The grant will help us continue to create and sustain a campus culture of tolerance and acceptance – and foster the safety and care of our community." ■

Presidential Scholars Program to Begin in Fall 2018



Beginning in fall 2018, the University will launch its Presidential Scholars Program, which will offer \$5,000 scholarships – and additional programming – to highly accomplished first-time freshmen.

“As a newly designated public research university, we are intent on leveraging the capacity of the extensive educational programs and facilities we have built to advance our mission of serving the needs of New Jersey,” says President Susan A. Cole. “By making our outstanding education accessible to the state’s most valuable resource – talented, motivated students – this dynamic new program

allows the University to make a positive contribution to the state’s economic and social development.”

The University will automatically consider New Jersey applicants with a 3.5 GPA on an unweighted 4.0 scale in a rigorous course of high school study that includes, for example, additional years of math, science and world language; AP or IB courses; or courses for college credit. The Presidential Scholars Program will also provide scholars access to special academic and career preparation opportunities, including high-impact educational experiences across all four years of their undergraduate study.

“We anticipate that Presidential Scholars will be highly diverse and among New Jersey’s most ambitious and determined young people who are looking to maximize their college experience, explore opportunities and gain every possible advantage,” explains Director of Undergraduate Admissions Jeffrey Indiveri-Gant. “This program encourages them to put a stake in New Jersey ground and establish themselves as the next generation of leaders and professionals.”

As long as Presidential Scholars maintain program academic standards, they will continue to receive a \$5,000 scholarship for each of four years of full-time study at Montclair State – for a potential total award of \$20,000. ■

Middle States Commission Reaccredits University

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education reaccredited Montclair State after a two-and-a-half-year process of self-study and peer evaluation that sets the groundwork for a new strategic plan.

Recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as well as by the U.S. Department of Education, the prestigious accreditation reflects and confirms the educational quality of the University. The next Middle States accreditation review is scheduled for 2025–26.

Montclair State met all seven Commission standards — which cover mission and goals, ethics and integrity, educational effectiveness, assessment, governance,



leadership and administration – and was commended by the Commission for “the quality of the self-study process and report.”

The University’s self-study identified areas – from connecting with alumni in a more systematic way to enhancing the research culture at both undergraduate and graduate levels – that could advance its academic impacts and operational efficiencies.

“With these suggestions in hand and with the experience of self-study and its discoveries fresh in our minds,” says Montclair State University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Willard Gingerich, “we are turning this fall to the future and the creation of a new strategic plan.” ■



University Enrolls First Four-year BSN Class

Freshman Rokia Fane is part of the first cohort of 50 in the four-year BSN Class.

The School of Nursing welcomed its first class of 50 freshmen in its new, four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing, or BSN, program in August.

The BSN is the preferred degree for those wishing to become registered nurses (RNs). After completing the four-year program and earning their degrees, graduates will be eligible for licensure as RNs.

“By developing new programs, such as the BSN degree program, Montclair State has been able to proactively meet the evolving educational needs of New Jersey and beyond,” says President Susan A. Cole. “The School of Nursing was established to meet a demand for highly qualified nurses that is expected to continue well into the foreseeable future.”

The School enrolled its first cohort of 54 students in its inaugural Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) degree program in fall 2016. By earning a BSN

the new BSN program lays the foundation for graduate education and lifelong professional development through an innovative curriculum grounded in nursing

“We are looking to the future,” Smolowitz says. “We have recruited a very forward-thinking faculty who are fully committed to educating nurses prepared to meet the needs of individuals and populations in a rapidly evolving, technologically advanced health care system.”

School of Nursing students learn in a 50,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility featuring lecture halls, fully mediated classrooms, an anatomy lab and computer study areas. They develop and hone skills in specific procedures in specially designed nursing laboratory spaces, while a high-tech simulation center fosters student decision-making, problem-solving and interpersonal-communication skills. ■

“We have recruited a very forward-thinking faculty who are fully committed to educating nurses prepared to meet the needs of individuals and populations in a rapidly evolving, technologically advanced health care system.”

— JANICE SMOLOWITZ

degree, these RN graduates of associate degree and diploma programs can chart a path to career advancement.

According to School of Nursing Dean Janice Smolowitz,

as a human caring science. Admitted as freshmen, students will be prepared to provide compassionate, coordinated health care services for people within the context of family and community.

Hispanic Student College Institute is First of Its Kind in the Nation

With the launch of its summer Hispanic Student College Institute (HSCI), Montclair State – a recognized Hispanic-Serving Institution – took a leadership role in preparing the fastest-growing college-bound demographic for college and post-graduate success.

More than 200 high school juniors from across the nation attended the first-of-its-kind three-day institute in August. A mix of empowerment activities, college-planning workshops, a college fair, mock college interviews and hands-on career guidance encouraged participants to “think big” about their futures. Participants are eligible for scholarships and received certificates of



completion to include on their resumes.

“The HSCI provided these high-performing students with the tools they need to thrive in a college environment and make an impact at any institution they choose to attend,” says Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life Karen Pennington.

“Navigating the college preparation and search process can be daunting,

particularly for students who are the first in their families to attend college,” says Director of Undergraduate Admissions Jeffrey Indiveri-Gant. “Our goal was to help participants get a jump-start on preparing for college. We hope many of them will ultimately decide that Montclair State is where their future begins.” ■

School Hosts Journalism Workshop



For the second year, the School of Communication and Media welcomed 18 high-performing students from 11 New Jersey high schools to the annual Summer

Journalism Workshop – a program where students live on campus and are immersed in the fast-paced worlds of communication and journalism.

“We want students to not only learn skills in journalism and communications, but also to learn about the entire industry and the types of jobs that will be available to them,” says program co-coordinator and multiplatform journalism professor Thomas Franklin.

The workshop combines in-class lectures with hands-on instruction in multiplatform journalism, broadcast journalism and filmmaking as well as field trips to ABC News and the National Football League’s New York Giants’ public relations department. It also gives participants a firsthand taste of college life. ■

New Automatic Transfer Initiative Approved



Montclair State and Bergen Community College (BCC) have formalized a dual-enrollment automatic transfer initiative allowing BCC associate degree candidates to transfer seamlessly to Montclair State to pursue bachelor’s degrees in selected programs. The partnership not only creates a new pathway for students to pursue affordable higher education in New Jersey, but also expands the two-plus-two model that enables associate degree candidates to pursue four-year degrees.

To be eligible, students who enrolled in fall 2016 or later at BCC must pursue an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degrees. Program Participants can then choose one of 17 specially designated majors at Montclair State.

“Bergen Community College has long been a close collaborator and our largest source of community college transfers, and this partnership will capitalize on that relationship,” says Montclair State University Director of Undergraduate Admissions Jeffrey Indiveri-Gant. “We want to make the process of transferring to a four-year institution as seamless as possible.” ■

New Living Community Supports Success for Students in Recovery

For students struggling to recover from alcohol or drug abuse, college life can be especially stressful. A new substance-free living community, Residents in Recovery, gives students the academic and recovery support they need to succeed both in and out of the classroom.

A 2015 New Jersey law mandated that public institutions of higher education establish substance abuse recovery housing programs by 2019. “We are implementing a program before the law takes effect because we believe that offering students the support they need to lead a positive lifestyle is critical to their success,” says Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life Karen L. Pennington.

The Residents in Recovery living community is an environment in which students don’t have to worry about the possibility of

being exposed to drugs or alcohol. It is a nurturing and supportive community that considers the whole student when addressing the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, financial and spiritual dimensions of wellness by offering hands-on advising and programs on stress, sleep, nutrition, sexual health, alcohol and drugs, and activities such as yoga and meditation.

On-campus recovery services and programs are available to all students who need support – whether they live on or off campus. University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers assessment, counseling, recovery coaching and groups for students, while Exploring Change and Health Options (ECHO) provides strategies to help students change their relationship with substances. ■



Student Filmmakers Document MBA Study Trip to India



All Feliciano School of Business MBA students take a nine- or 10-day international study trip to explore countries with emerging economies, but they don’t always travel with a film crew. During this past spring break, a School of Communication and Media professor and two students accompanied an MBA cohort on their capstone trip to India, documenting the experience as they visited everything from multinational and regional companies to cultural landmarks such as the Taj Mahal. The trip was an adventure and learning experience for both the MBA students and the communications students. A defining feature of the MBA, other 2017 capstone trip destinations included the United Arab Emirates, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Morocco, Austria and the Czech Republic. ■

Celebrating 20 Years of Graduate Studies



Since opening its doors 20 years ago, The Graduate School at Montclair State has made a substantial commitment to expanding its master’s and doctoral degree programs, milestones that contributed to the University’s recent designation as a research doctoral university.

Celebrating two decades of work that transformed the program to meet the educational goals of qualified students and the needs of New Jersey, The Graduate School’s 20th Anniversary event on Nov. 9 gave Dean Joan Ficke the opportunity to highlight the “invaluable contributions of our faculty to the career and educational aspirations of our students.”

The University offers nearly 100 graduate programs as well as post-baccalaureate certificates and certifications, with many geared toward future teachers. *U.S. News & World Report* recently included the School’s graduate education programs among the nation’s top 100 in its 2017 Best Education Schools list, and also placed the school’s graduate programs in elementary and secondary teacher education among the top 15 in the country.

Nearly 4,200 students are enrolled in master’s or doctoral programs with the majority attending part time, but about 35 percent of students now attend full time, thanks to state-of-the-art laboratories, equipment, full-time fellowships and other resources that enable faculty and students to pursue research.

Environmental Management, the first doctorate offered in 1998, paved the way to expand the doctoral program. Today, more than 270 students are pursuing doctoral degrees in Audiology; Communication Sciences and Disorders; Counseling; Environmental Management; Family Studies; Mathematics Education; Clinical Psychology; and Teacher Education and Teacher Development. Notably, the National Science Foundation Doctoral Research assistantship supports full-time doctoral studies in Mathematics Education.

The offerings over the past two decades have been strategically selected to help shape the future and “illustrate the wide-ranging research opportunities we provide for the next generation of scientists and professionals,” Ficke said. ■

Chilean Partnership Expands to Include Theater Exchange

By supporting a collaborative theater exchange program, a U.S. Department of State grant will increase study abroad between Montclair State and Universidad Mayor in Santiago, Chile.

The Partners of the Americas 2017 Capacity Building Grant for U.S. Undergraduate Study Abroad allows recipients Heather Benton, a Theatre and Dance professor, and Wendy

Gilbert-Simon, the international engagement and global programs coordinator, to build on a 2016 spring break theater visit by Montclair State students to Universidad Mayor.

The new grant will support Devised Theatre Project of the Americas, a three-semester program for students from the two universities, who will jointly create and ultimately perform an original, bilingual theater piece.

This fall, students are also connecting online. Two phases of live collaboration and international travel will follow, with Montclair State students traveling to Chile during spring break, and with Chilean students visiting Montclair State in fall 2018. “Each exchange will include a weeklong developmental rehearsal process, a ‘work-in-progress’ showing and an itinerary of cultural explorations in each country,” Benton explains. ■



Women Entrepreneurship Week Draws Record Crowd

The fourth annual 2017 Women Entrepreneurship Week (WEW), titled “Women Changing the World,” harnessed the energy of women doing just that – making change in business, politics, education and the arts.

The first day of the conference, held in October at University Hall, featured a “fireside chat” with Evelyn McGee Colbert who discussed the founding of the Montclair Film Festival, which began as a simple festival and expanded into an organization with year-round programming and 10 full-time staff members. Other first-day events included a panel of female entrepreneurs

who started businesses that grew beyond their wildest imaginations; and a panel of C-suite executives, who explored how women can be

entrepreneurs discussing the areas of immigration, education, finance and film, in what was a called a powerful and inspiring event.

the same week. This year, the event grew to involve 76 universities and nonprofits in 22 states and 15 countries that hosted events celebrating women entrepreneurs. At Montclair State alone, a crowd of nearly 450 people broke attendance records.



A panel of female entrepreneurs discussed immigration, education, finance and film at a packed house.

“Universities want their young women students to see positive role models up on stage telling of their entrepreneurial journeys and how they got to where they are,” says WEW manager Sharon Waters, the program manager for the Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship. “As long as women

entrepreneurial within a large company or organization. The second day featured an evening panel of female social

Women Entrepreneurship Week started at Montclair State in 2014 and four North Jersey universities held events during

are underrepresented as entrepreneurs, the need for this type of celebration remains.” ■

University Hosts Genocide Prevention Conference



Students help in human rights workshops

Scholars, lawyers, high school teachers, students and members of the public came to campus in July for a three-day Genocide Education and Prevention Project conference.

According to Religion professor and event organizer Kate Temoney, the collaborative project

between Montclair State and George Mason University focuses on genocide education and prevention and providing resources to teachers. “Now, more than ever, it is important to recognize the dangerous rhetoric and acts of violence that can culminate in human rights violations and genocide,” says Temoney. “Education

and prevention are key to cultivating citizens who are resistant to violence. The conference explicitly connected genocide education and prevention – which is currently a novel endeavor.”

Scholars from Columbia University, the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, George Mason University and Montclair State, among others, gave presentations on everything from “Teaching Atrocity Prevention” to “The Role of Corporations in Mass Atrocity.”

The conference was sponsored in part by the Montclair State’s Holocaust, Genocide and Human Rights Education Project. Students who are part of the project and participate in human rights education internships attended lectures by renowned genocide scholars in the morning and toured the United Nations headquarters in the afternoon, says project director and Educational Foundations Professor Zoe Burkholder. ■

Poetic



Above (from left): Columbia University Professor James Shapiro, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Yale University Professor David Scott Kastan explore the themes of *The Merchant of Venice* during a conversation prior to the show. **Opposite page:** Ginsburg's grandson, Paul Spera, in the role of Lorenzo, seen here with Shylock's daughter Jessica (played by Michelle Uranowitz)

JUSTICE

Ruth Bader Ginsburg spends day on campus, tackles *The Merchant of Venice* at round-table discussion

by Laura Griffin



As it turns out, United States Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is not only a constitutional law scholar, she's also a well-versed student of Shakespeare.

At a round-table discussion of *The Merchant of Venice* at Montclair State on September 23, Ginsburg talked about Shakespeare's controversial play – including the issues of law, anti-Semitism, assimilation and conversion in the play.

Ginsburg, whose grandson appeared in the Peak Performances production of *Merchant* at the Kasser Theater, joined renowned scholars David Scott Kastan of Yale University and James Shapiro of Columbia University in a conversation prior to the performance.

In addition to having studied Shakespeare in school, Ginsburg has performed various roles with the Shakespeare Theater Company in Washington, D.C., which, she said, invites the Supreme Court of the United States justices to play “bit parts for lawyer's night.”

“In *Henry VI*, I was ‘Dick the Butcher’ who has the famous line, ‘First thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers,’ and I then have to explain that was not meant as a put-down of lawyers. It takes place during The Jack Cade Rebellion. Jack Cade is an anarchist. And you need the law to save the society from chaos.”

In introducing the panel, Montclair State English Professor Naomi Liebler lauded Peak Performances' unique and updated production as a thought-provoking piece for the current political climate.



"In all the ways that really matter, this perfect combination, this perfect brainstorm, is not at all surprising with its collection of 'others' in a place suspicious of and yet dependent on them for survival," said Liebler. "*Merchant* is the right play for us...not only because it vibrates with national and global issues but also because it speaks to this University's own embrace of diversity. It's a stroke of good luck we should have all of this right here, right now."

That good luck extended to the fact that Ginsburg's grandson, Paul Spera, was performing the role of Lorenzo in the Peak Performances production, giving the University the perfect opportunity to include the justice in the round-table conversation.

The production, directed by Karin Coonrod and performed by the Compagnia de Colombari, addresses the notion of "otherness" by having the Jewish moneylender Shylock performed by five actors of different races, ethnicities and even gender. In 2016, Coonrod premiered this production in the Jewish ghetto of Venice, its original setting. According to the program, Coonrod says, "Now we are in the New World after a shattering and divisive election that challenges our aspirations. The play calls us to witness the stranger in our midst and feel the extremities of rage inside our shared humanity."

The conversation took place in the new School of Communication and Media building's 187-seat Presentation Hall, with the professors wearing suits and ties and the justice sporting a brocade jacket and white crocheted gloves. When asked about her earliest exposure to Shakespeare, Ginsburg responded that her first experience was, coincidentally, *The Merchant of Venice*, but

it was not on stage because it had been banned from public schools in New York.

"So, then I decided to read the play," said Ginsburg, who grew up in Brooklyn. "And, of course, Shylock's famous speech, 'Hath not a Jew eyes' and Portia's speech 'the quality of mercy is not strained.' It also occurred to me that these are two wonderful speeches but neither character

a lawyer or a judge, so in a sense she is an outsider, too. That's why it's remarkable that she could do this to Shylock."

With its court scene, *Merchant* also gave Ginsburg a chance to discuss the play in legal terms. The courtroom scene is surprising, she said, because it starts as a civil case brought by Shylock and turns into a criminal case against him during the hearing

– something unheard of in the legal world, even though through his plays, Shakespeare appears to have known a lot about the law.

"Shylock was denied due process," she said. "The first thing, as someone suspected of criminal activity, he has a right to notice of what the charges are and to defend against them."

In the week leading up to the round table, the University community was abuzz about Ginsburg's visit to campus, and the conversation was attended by faculty, staff, students and invited

guests, including New Jersey Senator Lorretta Weinberg, State Supreme Court Justice Stuart Rabner '11 HON, and Ginsburg's daughter and grandson.

"When a person of important and substantial achievement visits the University, it offers an opportunity to provide our students with a model of what one can make of a life," says Montclair State President Susan A. Cole. Ginsburg's visit, she says, "makes real...a person who is the second woman to be appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, an accomplished American jurist, an advocate for women's rights and an example of the uses of education, all wrapped up within the context of a grandmother proud of her grandson and defying the prejudices we have about age in our society."



President Susan A. Cole welcomes Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the University.

is likable. There isn't an emergent hero or heroine. They're all flawed people."

Kastan and Shapiro – each authors of several books on Shakespeare – and Ginsburg discussed specific scenes and nuances of *Merchant* and whether the play is anti-Semitic because of its negative portrayal of Shylock, who is considered alien or "the other." Ginsburg pointed out that the female lead, Portia, who disguises herself as a lawyer-judge to pronounce judgment against Shylock, is conniving and hypocritical.

"In a way, she should have understood that status," Ginsburg said. "Portia is a woman pretending to be a man pretending to be a lawyer-judge at a time when she could not be

Two recent Montclair State graduates, who were English majors, had the opportunity to ask questions of the panel. Gustavo Vasquez and Allison Gormley asked questions about assimilation and conversion, and resistance to both, that impressed the panel.

“The questions confirm just what a great job Montclair State is doing,” said Shapiro of Columbia University.

Afterward, the former students were among only a handful of audience members who got to have their picture taken with Justice Ginsburg.

“It was humbling to get the opportunity to ask her a question,” says Vasquez, who majored in English and teaching. “It was a surreal experience, really. I feel like, ‘Did that just happen?’”

Gormley, who just started teaching eighth-grade English, says, “There are no words to describe the experience. Justice Ginsburg is a powerful female that I look up to. It was a little overwhelming.” ■



Ginsburg talks Shakespeare (above) and poses with recent graduates Allison Gormley and Gustavo Vasquez. **Below, left:** Lynda Gravatt (Shylock No. 3) delivers Shylock’s famous speech “Hath not a Jew eyes?” surrounded by, from left, Shylock No. 5 (Steven Skybell), Shylock No. 4 (Michael Rogers), Shylock No. 2 (Frank Rodriguez), and Shylock No. 1 (Sorab Wadia).



“IT ALSO OCCURRED TO ME THAT THESE ARE TWO WONDERFUL SPEECHES BUT NEITHER CHARACTER IS LIKABLE. THERE ISN’T AN EMERGENT HERO OR HEROINE. THEY’RE ALL FLAWED PEOPLE.”

– Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg



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Montclair State University
IT'S ALL HERE.

CONNECTING

T H R E A D S

Student mentors
support personal
growth of
middle school
boys in Newark

BY AMY WAGNER

On any given week at Newark's Brick Peshine Academy last spring, two dozen seventh-grade boys could be found reciting positive rap lyrics and poetry, playing basketball, talking about their feelings, learning why math is relevant and discovering how to be "the best versions of themselves" from their Montclair State student mentors.

The youth mentorship program **THREADS** – Truth, Honor, Respect, Education and Development of Self – is the creation of Educational Foundations Professor Jamaal Matthews, who believes that the last part, "development of self," is a process that takes time, patience and lots of support. **THREADS** offers just that through a weekly journey of empowerment and self-discovery.

Kyle Boomhower mentored 6th grade boys at BRICK Avon Academy in Newark.



The boys are regularly reminded that “no one becomes great without help,” as mentors often share their own adolescent struggles and how they learned to focus on the things that are important – family, schoolwork and developing character.

THREADS is supported by a five-year, \$750,000 National Science Foundation CAREER grant Matthews received in 2014 to explore urban students’ motivation in math during the middle and high school years. It is a vital project component of his research. Developed at the University of Michigan in 2001 and directed there by Matthews in 2005, the weekly after-school program had been dormant for several years before its 2016 reboot at Montclair State. In spring 2017, nine undergraduate students served as mentors.

While the 13-week curriculum is designed to help boys in the school-day program understand and appreciate the relevance of math in the real world, it also affirms and celebrates each boy. Additional units are devoted to self-respect and respect for women, controlling anger and stress and finding personal purpose.

“One of the most powerful elements of the program is its multigenerational structure and the flow of knowledge between the generations that promotes growth for the adolescent boys, the undergraduate mentors and myself,” says Matthews, who trains the student mentors. “The boys have a significant impact on the development of the mentors – and I am also profoundly influenced by both mentors and boys.”

I am because we are

As Matthews sees it, the rate of personal growth for mentors and students is exponential. “Our multigenerational structure reinforces ideals of community and legacy, and an understanding that no one becomes who they were meant to be alone,” he explains. “That’s why, on the first day of training for the mentors, I direct them to reflect on an African Ubuntu proverb that says, ‘I am because we are.’”

History major and current senior Kyle Boomhower mentored the inaugural THREADS cohort of sixth-grade boys from Newark’s BRICK Avon Academy in spring 2016.

He says his own early experiences with education bored and frustrated him, until a teacher encouraged him to think critically and conceptually. “I then made the decision to become a teacher myself in order to provide a rewarding and positive classroom experience for students,” he recalls.

Yet the path toward achieving his goal has not been straightforward. Dealing with drug addiction at the time, he failed out of Montclair State in 2009, after a single semester. After spending time in Paterson and North Philadelphia in what he calls a “heartbreaking and tumultuous time,” where he saw economic disparity up close, and after a stint in rehab, he eventually returned to Montclair State in 2014. “I resented the little suburban bubble I’d grown up in, because I was privileged at

the expense of others. So I committed myself to helping empower urban youth through education.”

Boomhower says THREADS gave him valuable on-the-job experience that confirmed his decision to become a high school history teacher in a disadvantaged district. As a mentor, he shared not only his passion for critical thinking and reflection, but also the difficulties he faced after bad decisions – from addiction and arrests to being kicked out of his home and failing his classes – with the boys.

“I hoped to show them that no obstacles are insurmountable and that the path



Boys listen as Saul Ocasio (standing, right) goes over a math lesson.

you choose in life is important,” he says. “The most rewarding component of the THREADS program was the opportunity to see the mentees grow as students and men. After working with these boys for a semester, I knew that I wanted to seek out further opportunities to work with kids, and have since worked with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.”

Empowering youth to create change

Mentor Jorgi-Anandi Ilmojahid was recruited for the THREADS program when taking an education class Matthews taught in spring 2016. “I wanted to mentor because I think it’s important to help middle school-aged youth build strength



THREADS mentors and mentees visit campus together.



“I think it’s important to help middle school-aged youth build strength of character and develop a strong sense of purpose for their lives.”

–Jorgi-Anandi Ilmojahid



Liyasha Moore (left) and Samueldo Mompoint (in white) talk with boys in the program.

of character and develop a strong sense of purpose for their lives,” the math major says.

Ilmojahid doesn’t like how young teen boys are stereotyped in society as troublemakers and rebellious. “In reality, they are eager to learn about the world, have an acute sense of justice and have an immense capacity to bring about positive change in their communities. It’s important for them to have people in their lives who will empower them to create this change.”

Before mentoring with THREADS, Ilmojahid worked in another youth program with young people ages 11 to 14, helping them think about how they might

want to affect change in themselves – and their communities. “Seeing how amazing these kids are affected my approach as a THREADS mentor in that I understood that junior youth don’t need or want to be treated like children. We can learn from each other.”

Working with young teens can be challenging, but for the mentors, the result is worth it. “Some days it was really difficult to keep the students focused and we mentors thought we hadn’t gotten our points across,” Ilmojahid explains. “But then when we’d hear what the boys had to say, it would just blow our minds. Knowing that the program meant something to them and that they learned so much from it was so rewarding.”

Serving as a mentor reinforced Ilmojahid’s determination to become a middle school math teacher, and, like Boomhower, teach in an urban school district. “These students have a huge potential for growth and endless capacity to contribute positively to their communities and to the world,” he says.

Uplifting the community

In spring 2017, Saul Ocasio mentored seventh-grade boys at BRICK Peshine Academy in Newark. “I wanted to be a

THREADS program mentor to play my part in trying to uplift my community,” the senior history major and Newark native explains.

The experience, he says, has made a significant impact on his life. Ocasio was deeply affected by his mentees’ personal realities. “I came face-to-face with the many issues these urban young men of color face daily,” he says. “The hardships that they’re forced to overcome will influence their future, as well as ours.”

Like Boomhower, Ocasio drew on his own life experiences to provide empathic guidance to his mentees. “My approach was heavily influenced by my own dealings with school systems that didn’t support me and the lack of hope and optimism I harbored as a student,” he recalls, saying that perspective drove his interactions with the students.

Ocasio says he benefited greatly from his experience as a THREADS mentor. “Being able to watch the students mature and begin to internalize the program’s lessons, ideals and concepts, and apply them to their own lives in order to grow was a truly gratifying experience.” ■

LOOKING FOR HOME

Students travel to Greece to film the human stories of the refugee crisis

BY AMY WAGNER

From a beach on the Greek island of Lesbos, Turkey appears as a short and scenic boat ride away. Yet for the hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers from Syria and other war-torn countries, the Aegean Sea passage between the two nations is a perilous “route of death.” For those who manage to survive the crossing in ill-equipped inflatable rubber dinghies, Lesbos has become a gateway to new homes in Europe.

This summer, a team of five students joined School of Communication and Media professors Steve McCarthy, David Sanders and Thomas Franklin on a 10-day journey to Greece where they shot videos focused on the island’s refugees. “The Syrian refugee crisis is one of the major stories of our lifetime,” says Franklin. “This was a very rich experience and great opportunity for the students and for us.”

The professors had each received awards from the University’s Office of International Engagement to defray travel expenses. Franklin, a photojournalist, joined colleagues Sanders and McCarthy who have taken students abroad to film in such countries as Tunisia and Austria in the past.

Acting as executive producers, the professors met well in advance of the early summer trip with their student producers who pitched stories and reached out to location sources and government officials – through social media and email – to schedule location shoots for individual five-minute videos.





Full page: Students Shawn Latham and Nadia Abbas interview a refugee family from Syria inside the family's trailer at the Kara Tepe camp in Lesbos. **Above:** Student Kristie Keleshian interviews films volunteers at a refugee community center in an abandoned industrial building near the Kara Tepe camp. **Right:** Students Allison Council and Kristie Keleshian shoot video of street scenes in Mytilene on the island of Lesbos.



Photos by THOMAS E. FRANKLIN



Above: Nadia Abbas interviews a Syrian refugee family in Arabic inside their trailer at the Kara Tepe camp in Lesbos. Abbas is fluent in Arabic and translated for many of the refugees. **Right:** Shawn Latham records audio on a hill overlooking Mytilene. **Below:** Danielle Weidner interviews a young Syrian woman and her family outside their trailer at the Kara Tepe camp in Lesbos.



Filmmaking boot camp

The trip was a far cry from an idyllic summer vacation on a legendary Greek isle. “We run this like a boot camp,” says McCarthy, an Emmy Award–winning producer. “We start early and shoot every day. It’s a steep learning curve of how to shoot in the field – I squeeze into a week what I can teach in half a semester. One thing that amazed me is that these students didn’t know each other ahead of time. Yet there was no drama. Once on the ground, they worked as a team.”

Franklin was impressed by the students’ work as documentarians. “They were very sensitive in interviewing refugee families who had arrived in Greece in inflatable boats after leaving everything behind in Syria,” he says. “These families had risked everything to seek better lives for themselves and their families. I was proud of our students, who stepped up to the plate as professionals.”

For senior Shawn Latham, the trip was transformative. “It was a culture shock for me in the most positive sense,” he recalls.

A Television and Digital Media major who is concentrating in Audio/Sound Design, Latham was initially uncertain as to whether the trip would be a good fit. “As a tech and operations guy, I was thinking it might not be my forte,” he says. “But I saw a great opportunity to learn more about the challenges of shooting on location in a foreign country – from scheduling interviews with people to crafting a story out of the experience. I realized I’d have to go out of my comfort zone to get experience like this.”

Latham had arranged ahead of time to film at the One Happy Family Community Center near the island’s city of Mytilene. Affiliated with Swiss Cross Help, the Center offers refugees activities and assistance – from clothing and language classes to internet access and food.

When the team arrived to film there, Latham noticed that three Pakistani brothers had started up a radio station at the Center.

While in Greece, Thomas Franklin produced his own short film, *The World Arrived on Our Doorstep*, about a British couple who have helped thousands of refugees on Lesbos. The film has aired on i24news.tv.

<http://bit.ly/2gDe5CL>



The School of Communication and Media team, from left: Kristie Keleshian, Allison Council, Steve McCarthy, David Sanders, Nadia Abbas, Shawn Latham, Danielle Weidner and Thomas Franklin, taken on a hill overlooking Mytilene

“The brothers were pretty much running the station by themselves,” Latham remembers. “They interviewed fellow refugees, played music from different cultures and served as a community conversation access point. I thought this was an innovative way to bring a community of strangers together and create a welcoming and prideful atmosphere.”

Because he is an audio guy, Latham switched gears and began making a short documentary about the radio station, interviewing Swiss Cross organizers and one of the brothers, who shared the story of his journey to Lesbos. Besides filming his own video, Latham captured the audio for his team members’ interviews. “I was mainly the guy with the headphones on who was carrying the microphone for most of the trip,” he explains.

Latham will forever remember the unexpected generosity of the people of Lesbos. One day, while filming on a relatively deserted part of the island, a boy from a nearby house approached the team with a bowl of cherries. Latham recalls the moment as a “small gesture of friendship to complete strangers that you don’t see everywhere.”

While Latham returned home feeling connected to world events like the refugee crisis, he believes that it is just as important to know the human toll of the events. “Most of the time we get sensationalized stories, not the human stories. You have to sift

through to find the stories of the people who are trying their best in the face of adversity who are helping others,” he says.

English and journalism major Danielle Weidner agrees that the people she met – and the stories they shared – left an indelible impression. “We all really connected with people who are completely culturally different from us, but who were so kind and loving,” she says. “I think when it comes down to it, we’re all human beings connecting on the same playing field.”

She interviewed a director of Movement on the Ground, a nonprofit organization based in the Kara Tepe refugee camp on Lesbos. “Movement on the Ground is trying to create an environment where people can come together and forget what they’ve been through – or at least cope with it and move on in a healthy way.”

Weidner also interviewed an Afghan refugee at One Happy Family, whose harrowing story will always stick with her. The young man had fled Afghanistan after his brother produced TV bits that mocked the government. After being assaulted by police in Turkey, he finally reached Greece, where local residents initially berated and insulted him. “I broke down and started crying in the middle of his story. I’ll never forget that moment,” she says, “because we just stared at each other and shared a moment of silence.”

Now that she is back on campus, Weidner plans to volunteer with Movement on the Ground, or a similar organization, in the future. “I’d read a lot about the Syrian refugee situation, but it didn’t feel real to me. But when I went there, reality smacked me so hard. I learned so much and grew so much as a person,” she says. “I realized things that I couldn’t even imagine were happening all over the globe – and I realized how good I have it here at home.”

Making human connections

“At some level, everyone is the same, no matter the situation. The important thing is to make that human connection,” says Sanders, who was impressed at how readily and genuinely the students connected with refugees. Even on their first day on Lesbos, where they were left waiting outside the gates of the Kara Tepe camp for hours, despite advance promises of entry, they didn’t hesitate to reach out to refugees who were coming in and out of the camp.

“The next day, as the officials were still back-pedaling and delaying our entry, two of the refugee families the students had talked to came up and greeted them. Once the officials saw that a relationship already existed with refugees who were willing to be filmed, they let us in,” Sanders says. “They learned firsthand that when things don’t go as planned, you can’t just shrug and throw up your hands. You need a Plan B, C and D.” ■

HOLLY

**School of Communication and Media's
new home is nation's most technologically
advanced university media production
facility, rivaling professional studios**



WOOD EAST

by Amy Wagner

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“Our students will gain the competitive advantage of mastering technology that not only meets industry standards but that in many instances goes well beyond.”

—Daniel Gurskis



Students work in a broadcast control room to produce *Carpe Diem*.

The new \$55.8 million School of Communication and Media building opened this fall to much fanfare, a red carpet event and buzz befitting what industry leaders are calling the most technologically advanced media and production facility of any university in North America.

“It is, in fact, more advanced than many professional facilities,” President Susan A. Cole told an audience of alumni, University board members, state legislators, faculty, staff and students at the opening celebration for what is being dubbed “Hollywood East.”

The building is a “toolbox” designed to inspire student creativity and give students the competitive edge they need for career success, she said, affirming that the School’s new 105,000-square-foot, cutting-edge home also supports the University’s commitment to serving the state and the nation as a national- and state-designated research doctoral university.

A national leader

“The new facility lets the world know that Montclair State is committed to being at the forefront of the communication and media industries,” says School of Communication and Media Director Keith Strudler. “From the quality of our graduates to the work produced by faculty, staff and the visitors we host on campus, we will be known as one of the nation’s preeminent schools of this kind.”

In the five years since the School of Communication and Media offered its first courses in 2012, it has garnered national attention for preparing students for highly competitive and evolving industries. The new facility gives students and faculty, as well as area filmmakers and media professionals, access to the latest technologies and production capabilities used in Hollywood.

“Our students will gain the competitive advantage of mastering technology that not only meets industry standards but that in many instances goes well beyond,” says College of the Arts Dean Daniel Gurskis.

“This dynamic working environment is the perfect complement to the School’s rigorous, transdisciplinary curriculum that allows students to pursue majors in communication, television and digital media, filmmaking, journalism, and public and organizational relations.”

Sony partnership

Building features – such as the first end-to-end 4K broadcast production studio and control room in higher education – are more advanced than those found at many television networks, thanks to a long-term alliance between the University and Sony Electronics designed to cover the new building as well as a range of future campus projects.

In his remarks at the ribbon cutting, Sony Professional Solutions Americas President Katsunori Yamanouchi stressed that Sony was proud to play a pivotal role in creating products and active-learning solutions that give students the experience and professional training they need to succeed.

“We’re well established with the Hollywood filmmaking community and we were looking to have a similar presence on the East Coast,” says Theresa Alesso, vice president of Sony’s Solution Services group. “This new building delivers the right combination of technology and collaboration needed for the future of education.”

Built for collaborations

High-tech features of the new multimedia facility, which links Morehead Hall with Life Hall, include a motion picture stage; an advanced audio suite featuring Foley stage for sound effects, performance stage and audio sound labs; a multimedia newsroom with 26 work stations and an anchor desk; and four broadcast-ready HD and 4K studios and control rooms. Other amenities include makeup and green rooms, as well as a set from Comedy Central.

Powered by Sony Digital Camera Projection and 7.1 Surround Sound, both the 187-seat Presentation Hall and the 40-seat screening room deliver immersive viewing



“The new facility lets the world know that Montclair State is committed to being at the forefront of the communication and media industries.” –Keith Strudler

Student Alex Chen runs the camera during a taping of *Carpe Diem*.

experiences. “The Presentation Hall is the best,” says Professor Roberta Friedman, director of the Film Forum. “I program Film Forum, our free films and filmmakers screening series. Films look and sound wonderful.”

Students also get real-world, hands-on training in a contemporary, broadcast-ready newsroom; interactive collaborative learning spaces; and high-tech multimedia labs. Inviting public spaces with sweeping views of New York City, informal learning spaces and glassed-in team rooms are configured to foster creative teamwork – the heart of any successful journalism, film, television or radio production. The building’s integrated design invites multimedia collaborations by bringing faculty, industry professionals, academic programs and students under one roof for the first time.

Welcome to Hollywood East

“Students, faculty and staff are all inspired and energized by this new building,” says Steve McCarthy, instructor and news producer for the School of Communication and Media. “It will attract students from all over the country.”

Students had been eagerly awaiting this semester so they could start using the facility and equipment. “The building’s new technologies and features are going to revolutionize the way students like myself are going to learn,” says senior Television and Digital Media major Avery Federico. “Learning on high-end equipment used in professional networks will give us a leg up in our job searches.”

Casey Owens hopes to produce late-night television shows after she graduates in May.

“My educational experience is enhanced because I’m working with broadcast equipment that’s actually used in the real world,” she says, noting that the switcher in one of the control rooms was used in the 2016 Rio Olympics. “It inspires me to believe that if I can learn how to use equipment like that now, I’ll have no problem with the equipment in a



Left to right: Students tape *Carpe Diem* and enjoy the common space of the new building.

professional environment after graduation.” Josue Dajes, the managing editor of *The Montclarion*, is excited to move into the student newspaper’s new second-floor offices, which offer panoramic floor-to-ceiling views of the New York City skyline. “The new facilities and technologies will make students more proficient and knowledgeable in their fields of study,” he says. “Yet it’s really up to us as students to take advantage of everything at hand to make our own futures.”

Rave reviews

Like Dajes, Journalism Professor Tara George, who is also *The Montclarion* faculty adviser and co-coordinator of the School’s Journalism and Television and Digital Media programs, is delighted to see the student-run news organization move from its former basement quarters into its new digs upstairs. “There’s state-of-the-art equipment that students can get their hands on, lovely open spaces for hanging out and great learning environments, including newsrooms for *The Montclarion* and for the radio station,” she says.

Professor David Sanders, who teaches the School’s audio and sound design courses, notes that, “After teaching audio practically out of a closet when I arrived 20 years ago, we finally have a world-class, fully professional audio recording facility. I’m really excited about the possibilities and level of professionalism it offers our students.”

For Patricia Piroh, associate director of Broadcast and Media Operations, it is especially gratifying to make the move to a building that is certain to be the home for “future generations of media professionals.”

Strudler sums up the building’s potential long-term impact this way: “Here we will create outstanding and thoughtful content that is limited only by our imaginations. With our media partners, we will make a vibrant hub of collaborative excellence. And we will foster a learning community that changes lives, our community and that will perhaps change the world for the better.” ■

Dean Daniel Gurskis speaks at the opening of the School of Communication and Media’s new building in September.



SOLVING **COSMIC** MYSTERIES

by Amy Wagner

**Faculty on LIGO team help
with historic detection of
neutron stars' collision**

An illustration of neutron stars
colliding, courtesy of LIGO



In a galaxy 130 million light years away and long ago, two neutron stars collided and collapsed into each other. But it wasn't until August 17, 2017, that scientists were able to detect the ripples of the gravitational waves and light produced by that collision – a cosmic first. The historic discovery was made using the U.S.-based Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory (LIGO); the Europe-based Virgo detector; and some 70 ground- and space-based observatories.

Montclair State physics faculty members Rodica Martin and Marc Favata are part of the international LIGO Scientific Collaboration team that made the discovery. A national- and state-designated doctoral research university, Montclair State has been a member of the LIGO Scientific Collaboration since 2013.

“We are proud to have two members of the LIGO team at Montclair State,” says College of Science and Mathematics Acting Dean Lora Billings. “Their contributions in unraveling the information provided by gravitational waves is a great example of the cutting-edge, collaborative research done in the College. The project also provides unique opportunities for our talented students. We hope that their amazing success continues.”

In addition to it being the first time the collision of two neutron stars – small, dense stars formed when huge stars explode in supernovas – has been detected using gravitational waves, it is also the first time a gravitational-wave signal has been accompanied by coincident detections with conventional telescopes.

“It is tremendously exciting to experience a rare event that transforms our understanding of the workings of the universe,” says France A. Córdoba, director of the National Science Foundation, which funds LIGO.

While averaging just 12 miles in diameter, neutron stars are so dense that a teaspoon of neutron star material has a mass of roughly a billion tons. In a distant galaxy, two neutron stars spiraled toward each other, emitting powerful gravitational waves before they crashed into each other, causing a burst of gamma rays. Their collision produced a “chirp” recorded by the LIGO and Virgo detectors that lasted nearly 100 seconds. This happened 130 million lightyears away, in a galaxy 50 times farther than the Andromeda galaxy – the nearest major galaxy to the Milky Way.

A momentous breakthrough

“This is a really big deal,” says Favata. “Neutron star collisions are one of the key sources that LIGO was hoping to observe – and now we have. It’s also the loudest source that our network of detectors has found so far.”

According to Favata, the discovery has resolved a persistent mystery as to the origin of short-duration gamma ray bursts (GRBs). “It’s long been suspected that these GRBs are due to the collision of two neutron stars, but that hasn’t been confirmed until now.”

The new observations also resolve long-standing speculation as to how heavy elements, such as gold and lead, are produced. A byproduct of the collision of the two neutron stars, these elements are distributed throughout the universe.

Equally important, Martin says: “The discovery involved lots of electromagnetic astronomers, all working together with LIGO/Virgo. Making joint observations with these partners – or ripples in the geometry of space and time – at roughly the same time that NASA’s Fermi space telescope detected a burst of gamma rays. The discovery prompted follow-up observations by telescopes around the world.”

Confirming Einstein’s theory of relativity

On August 17, LIGO and Virgo detectors registered gravitational waves – or ripples in the geometry of space and time – at roughly the same time that NASA’s Fermi space telescope detected a burst of gamma rays. The discovery prompted follow-up observations by telescopes around the world.

Together, the gamma-ray measurements and gravitational-wave detections provide further confirmation of Einstein’s theory of relativity, which predicted that gravitational waves travel at the speed

of light. In 2015, LIGO’s detection of gravitational-wave signals resulting from the merger of two black holes first validated Einstein’s theory and ushered in the new field of gravitational-wave astronomy. Earlier this month, LIGO founders Rainer Weiss and Kip Throne, as well as early LIGO Principal Investigator Barry Barish, received the 2017 Nobel Prize in Physics.

Contributing to a groundbreaking discovery

As part of the approximately 1,200-member LIGO team, Favata and Martin helped contribute to its successes.

Martin helped to design and install various components of the upgrade to the detectors – called Advanced LIGO. “My role in the discovery was to help build the upgrade that enabled the



“Neutron star collisions are one of the key sources that LIGO was hoping to observe – and now we have. It’s also the loudest source that our network of detectors has found so far.” –Marc Favata

recent discoveries,” she explains. “My current role is to develop and design optical components and instrumentation for future detectors. This will increase the sensitivity and allow us to observe even more distant events or sources that are currently too weak to detect.”

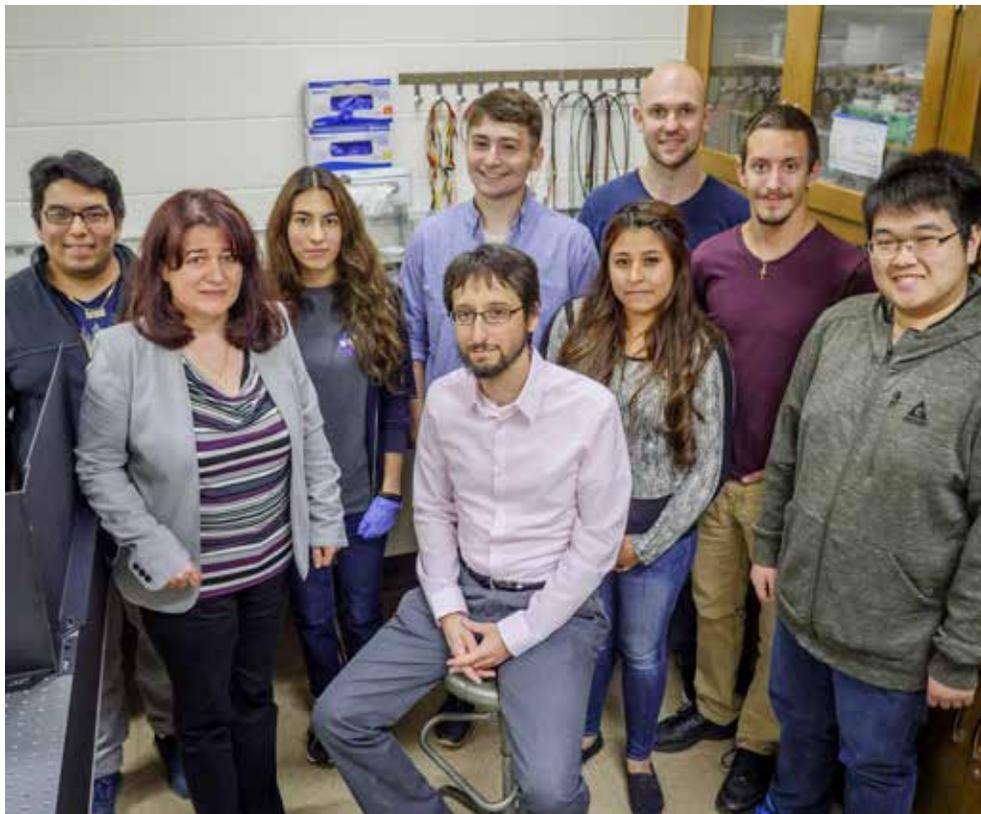
Favata helped develop some of the gravitational-wave models used to analyze neutron star collisions. He and Martin are also actively involved in education and outreach efforts on behalf of LIGO. These include

the soundsofspacetime.org website, which is being updated with sounds from the new detections, as well as informative exhibits of LIGO science. Both professors work closely with a team of eight students on experimental, theoretical and educational aspects of gravitational physics. The team is composed of undergraduates Valerie Avendano, Kevin Chen, Lita de la Cruz, Xavier Euceda, Nicholas Provost and Kevin Santiago, and graduate students Joseph DeGaetani and Matthew Karlson.

“This detection opens the window of a long-awaited ‘multi-messenger’ astronomy,” says Caltech’s David H. Reitze, executive director of the LIGO Laboratory. “It’s the first time that we’ve observed a cataclysmic astrophysical event in both gravitational waves and electromagnetic waves – our cosmic messengers. Gravitational-wave astronomy offers new opportunities to understand the properties of neutron stars in ways that just can’t be achieved with electromagnetic astronomy alone.”

More details are available at ligo.org.

Left to right: 1. An illustration of the first cosmic event observed in gravitational waves and light (credit: Karan Jani/Georgia Tech). 2. Rodica Martin works with student Valerie Avendano. 3. Martin and Favata and their students Kevin Santiago, Avendano, Nicholas Provost, Lita de la Cruz, Matthew Karlson (back), Joseph DeGaetani and Kevin Chen who are helping the LIGO team “listen to the universe.” Not pictured: Xavier Euceda



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RED HAWKS ATHLETICS

With an alumna coaching a current Red Hawk, U.S. field hockey team medals at the **'Jewish Olympics'** in Israel



TAKING ON THE WORLD

BY STEVE POLITI

Danielle Altersitz remembers opening the email from her field hockey coach at Montclair State and being confused – and plenty amused – about how the message began.

“I’m not really sure if you’re Jewish or not,” she says the note from Coach Beth Gottung read. “But if you are, you should check this out.”

Altersitz is, and in those first moments, she wasn’t sure what, exactly, her coach was sending to her. This was 2008, when Altersitz was an underclassman who, just a couple years earlier, wasn’t sure if she was even good enough to play her favorite sport in college.

Now her head coach was pointing her toward a tryout for an international competition. The U.S. field hockey team was preparing for the Maccabiah Games – or, as they are commonly called, the “Jewish Olympics” – and was recruiting potential players for the annual tournament that would be held in Israel the following summer.

Altersitz was intrigued but uncertain. Sure, she would love the opportunity to represent her country in an event that, she would later learn, is the third largest sporting event in the world with more than 10,000 participants across the globe. But she

wondered: Was she good enough to make that team? And was she ready for this kind of commitment?

The answers: Yes, and more than she could have ever imagined.

That tryout started an unexpected international career for Altersitz, who not only played on the silver-medal-winning team at the 2009 Maccabiah Games, but returned this summer as one of the coaches of a team that would again claim silver against some of the best competition in the world.

She is far from the first Montclair State athlete to take her talents from Essex County and compete against the world. Carol Blazejowski, now the University’s associate vice president for external relations, led Team USA to four gold medals and one silver in international competition during her three seasons as an All-American basketball player at Montclair State.

Montclair State athletes have discovered for years that they can take their talents beyond the fields and gymnasiums of New Jersey and even the country. Gottung, who has taken her team to Australia and other field hockey hotbeds, says the University’s coaches encourage international experience for reasons beyond the sport.

“We want them to take those international trips because it gives them an opportunity to see different styles of play,” says Gottung, who transitioned into an assistant coaching role after becoming director of development for athletics in 2015. “But even more so, it’s great for them to see the entire culture.”

Altersitz wasn’t the only Montclair State representative at the Maccabiah Games this summer, when 10,000 athletes marched in the Opening Day parade in Jerusalem. She was also coaching one of the Red Hawk’s current players on her field hockey team in Petah Tikva, a city in the central district of Israel. Yael Yonah, a freshman at the University, wasn’t only the youngest player but speaks fluent Hebrew and often acted as the team’s translator during its adventures.

“It’s hard to describe what an incredible experience it was,” Yonah says. “Danielle was an amazing coach from the start. No one had high expectations of us going in but we played well together. It was fun to be there with players who not only share a love for field hockey but also a love for Israel.”

And, for both, the entire trip was an adventure – not only a chance to compete against the best in the world with “USA” emblazoned on their uniforms, but to soak up a different culture and meet athletes from around the globe.

Team USA with their silver medals and the men’s team from Australia, which also won silver, at the Maccabiah Games in Israel



Red Hawk and Team USA member Yael Yonah (left) and coach Danielle Altersitz



"I would never have imagined that I'd have an experience like this when I started at Montclair State," says Altersitz, who is a seventh-grade teacher at Kingsway Regional Middle School in Woolrich, N.J., and a coach with the South Jersey Edge Field Hockey Club. "It was such an amazing opportunity, both as a player and a coach, to be part of something like this."

The Maccabiah Games were first held in 1932. They are held quadrennially and open to Jewish athletes from around the world and Israeli athletes regardless of religion, with competition in traditional Olympic sports such as swimming and gymnastics and some less traditional ones like bridge, futsal and lawn bowling. All told, athletes from 80 countries now compete in 45 sports in eight Israeli host cities.

Altersitz wondered if she even qualified. While her father is Jewish, her mother is Catholic and raised her in that religion, leading to an interesting dynamic in their household.

"My mother's name is Ave Maria," Altersitz says with a laugh, "and my dad used to sing her name to the tune of 'Hava Nagila.'"

But she met the qualifications, and to her surprise, earned a spot on the team as a sophomore. "We're all going to Israel!" her father, Russell, told the family, and the 2009 games became a trip for the entire Altersitz clan.

The trip this past summer was a bit different. Altersitz was chosen as a coach and had to quickly build a roster and meld the different playing styles with limited training. At only 29, she was coaching several athletes who were her age or older, but after twice serving as the team's captain in the European Maccabi Games in 2011 and 2015, the leadership role was not unfamiliar.

The team opened with a 7-0 victory over Israel – with temperatures reaching 120 degrees on the artificial turf field – and reached the finals of the tournament with



Danielle Altersitz in 2008 when she was a Red Hawk and played for TEAM USA

"IT WAS SUCH AN AMAZING OPPORTUNITY, BOTH AS A PLAYER AND A COACH, TO BE PART OF SOMETHING LIKE THIS."

—DANIELLE ALTERSITZ

an impressive 3-2 victory over a favored Holland team. In the final, however, Argentina won a hard-fought 2-0 victory to take the gold.

"It was disappointing not to win the gold medal," says Altersitz, who was hoping to add that medal hue to a collection that

now includes two silvers and two bronzes. Who knows? Perhaps in another four years, Altersitz will return to Israel and try to reach the top of the medal stand again.

"Maybe I won't retire just yet," she says. "We'll see." ■



YOU
CAN
PLAY

PROJECT SENDS MESSAGE OF INCLUSION FOR LGBTQ ATHLETES

One after another, a cross section of athletes from Montclair State look into the camera and deliver the same message: “If you can play, YOU can play.”

They are men and women. They are swimmers and basketball players and soccer stars. They are white and black and Hispanic. And their message is one of inclusion: Athletes should be judged on talent, heart and work ethic, not sexual orientation or gender identity.

The video is part of the You Can Play Project, an NCAA-supported initiative designed to spread the message that locker rooms should be safe and sports venues should be free from homophobia. Montclair State Director of Athletics Holly Gera attended the NCAA Inclusion Forum in April and decided that participating in that effort was important.

“We were very happy that our student-athletes and staff were enthusiastic about the project and that many students were interested in being a part of it,” Gera says. “It is an important message that we want to send, and it proved to be very meaningful for many of our students. Montclair State University is a diverse and welcoming

institution and we felt it was important that we were doing everything we could to ensure that our athletes felt safe and welcome.”

You Can Play was launched in March 2012. One of its founders, Patrick Burke, wanted to honor his late brother, Brendan, an openly gay student manager with the Miami (Ohio) University hockey team who went public with his story to combat homophobia in the sport. Brendan Burke, 21, had died in a car crash two years earlier.

What started as a movement in professional hockey quickly spread to other sports, including at the collegiate level. That Montclair State would join is no surprise: The University was named as one of “the 25 most LGBT-friendly campuses” in the nation for three years running from 2015 to 2017 by Campus Pride, which praised the LGBTQ Center on campus.

Ian Johnson, a player on the men’s soccer team from Morristown, wrote on a Red Hawks of Montclair State Instagram post, that he had worried about coming out as gay to his teammates. But their reaction made him vow to “be a role model for those athletes who struggle with coming to terms with their sexuality” while he’s a student at the University.

“Many people ask me, ‘How does your team react to it?’ My answer always is, ‘Like nothing has changed,’” Johnson wrote in the post.

“Before coming out as gay, I was terrified of the thought of being judged by my teammates and other people around me. However, to my surprise, everyone here at Montclair State has been nothing but overly supportive.

“I have some of the best teammates in the world. They are like brothers to me and they treat me the same way that they did before they knew I was gay. Montclair State’s pride in its LGBTQ community has only added to my decision to come out. The diversity of the school and that it’s a Stigma-Free campus made me feel sheltered in the classroom and on the soccer field.”

Johnson isn’t the only athlete who has embraced that message of inclusion. More than a dozen – gay and straight – are featured in the short video that shows them diving into the campus pool, sinking three-pointers and passing a lacrosse ball before joining to deliver this message:

“We are all champions. We are all Red Hawks for life. We play together. We win together. If you can play, YOU can play.” ■

– Steve Politi

SPORTS BRIEFS

INDUCTED

BRIANNA GILLIN



JACKIE FERRANTI



CORNELL HUNT



THOMAS BOWERS



A quartet of All-Americans from four different sports were announced as the new inductees for the Montclair State Athletics Hall of Fame. They are **Jackie Ferranti**, a softball infielder who was one of the most decorated players in NJAC history; **Cornell Hunt**, a football linebacker who was a three-time First-Team All-NJAC selection and the league's Defensive Player of the Year in 2008; **Brianna Gillin**, a lacrosse standout who is one of three players in school history to surpass the 300-point plateau; and **Thomas Bowers**, a lacrosse goalie who is arguably one of the finest to play that position at Montclair State. The official enshrinement took place October 12 at the Valley Regency in Clifton, and the quartet was honored at the Homecoming football game on October 14.

TRIP TO NCAA TOURNEY

For the second year in a row, the Montclair State field hockey team played in the NCAA Division III Championship tournament – one of five teams that received an at-large bid to the 2017 tournament field of 24 announced. It was also Montclair State's seventh overall appearance in the NCAA Tournament, including a run to the national title game in 2012. The Red Hawks' 2017 season came to an end in the second round of the tournament with a loss to Franklin & Marshall 2-1.

HONORED

ERIN SULLIVAN



MEGAN ROELOFFS



DANIEL BARREIRA



RYAN LONG



Four Montclair State athletes were named to the New Jersey Athletic Conference All-Academic Teams for 2016–17. **Erin Sullivan** (soccer) and **Daniel Barreira** (track and field) were named to the first team, while **Megan Roeloffs** (field hockey) and **Ryan Long** (baseball) were named to the second team. To be eligible for the squad, an athlete must be a sophomore, junior or senior in a conference-sponsored sport with a minimum 3.20 grade point average. A total of 122 Montclair State student athletes received honorable mention.

NOMINATED

Erin Sullivan, a senior defender on the women's soccer team and NCAA Player of the Year, was chosen as Montclair State's nominee for NCAA Woman of the Year. The award is given annually to graduating female college athletes who have exhausted their eligibility and distinguished themselves in academics, athletics, service and leadership throughout their collegiate careers. Sullivan was the anchor of a defense that allowed just 14 goals in 22 games and received the Red Hawks' Highest GPA Award for 2016–17.

STUDENT SKATES HER WAY TO 2ND OLYMPICS

Junior Isadora Williams will return to the ice in her second Olympics in February when she skates for Brazil at the 2018 Olympics in South Korea. "As a little kid, I always watched the Olympics on TV and aspired to be like the skaters I saw," says

Williams, who skated in the Sochi games in 2014. "It was such a surreal experience to actually be one of them – and to be the first Brazilian figure skater at the Olympics."

Williams, a Brazilian American, says she didn't

skate her best in Sochi and thinks the experience plus four more years of training – including juggling classes with three hours on the ice five days a week at Floyd Hall Arena – has improved her program immensely. "I'm looking forward to redemption," she says.



CONNECTIONS

ALUMNI & FRIENDS



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RED HAWK OPEN

The fifth annual Red Hawk Open brought more than 140 golfers to the Forest Hill Field Club in Bloomfield, New Jersey. The event raised \$120,000. The money goes toward supporting the University's 18 varsity athletic teams and toward the purchase of strength and conditioning equipment for the Panzer Athletic Center.

The day began with a barbecue lunch. After hitting the links, golfers and guests enjoyed an evening of cocktails, dinner, a silent auction and an awards ceremony.

Beth Gottung, director of development for athletics, expressed appreciation for both the alumni and sponsors who attend the annual event, and gave particular thanks to longtime lunch sponsor Schumacher Chevrolet for also providing the hole-in-one car, and to dinner sponsor New Jersey Orthopedic for serving as team doctors. "Their support and care for our student-athletes is invaluable," she said.

RED HAWKS CALLING

Don't be surprised if you get a phone call soon from a Red Hawk Caller. These hardworking students make a collective 250,000+ calls to alumni, parents and friends, seeking vitally needed support for Montclair State programs and services.



Annual gifts through The Fund for Montclair State have a direct and meaningful impact on the lives of our students by providing much-needed support for scholarships; improvements to classrooms, laboratories and campus facilities; new program development; and technologies that give our students an edge in an increasingly competitive world. All gifts, large and small, make a difference.

You can designate your gift to support the University's greatest needs, or to an area that is most meaningful to you – your school/college, department, program, sport, organization or to funds that provide direct and immediate support to students in need. If you'd like to make a gift online, visit montclair.edu/make-a-gift.



Alumnus and *The Simpsons* producer Michael Price and School of Communication and Media Director Keith Strudler, watch a clip from Price's latest creation, *F Is for Family*, during a Homecoming event.



Class of 1968 Reunion

Planning is underway for the class of 1968 50th Reunion. Mark your calendars to join your classmates on May 25, 2018, for a luncheon and to walk at the Commencement exercises.

On May 24, catch up with classmates at a casual reception at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Fairfield, New Jersey. For more information, visit montclair.edu/alumni/reunions or contact Deb Corasio in the Office of Alumni Relations at 973-655-4207.



SCIENCE IN ACTION

The College of Science and Mathematics' Science in Action day, which coincided with Homecoming, brought out nearly 200 students, parents and children to view demos of gravitational waves and the equipment used to measure them, learn about various species of reptiles and amphibians and how to protect them, and to ride a stationary bike to generate electricity to make a smoothie.

Other activities included creating Halloween-themed toys using basic chemistry, testing mental acuity against that of a robot's artificial intelligence and experiencing how it feels for someone else to take control of one's motor skills.

With a little chemistry magic – aka an empty soda bottle and liquid nitrogen – the atrium of the Center for Environmental and Life Sciences became a blasting zone with a volcanic eruption of ping pong balls into the air that then rained down on onlookers. Faculty as well as Acting Associate Dean Scott Kight, who organized the activities, and Acting Dean Lora Billings were on hand to answer visitors' questions.



PerksConnect

Connecting with Alumni Relations has its perks. PerksConnect is a new service providing benefits to alumni, both local and around the country, including deals and discounts on travel, insurance, event

tickets and more. This service is free for all Montclair State graduates. To get started with PerksConnect, just sign in to your exclusive alumni account at MONTCLAIRconnect, the portal for all things alumni. For more information, visit montclair.edu/alumni.



Book Fund Success

The Emergency Book Fund raised \$5,430 to help ensure that students have the resources they need to succeed in the classroom.

The fund helps students who are financially unable to purchase textbooks. Some 100 donors gave to this fund drive, and the Parents Fund at Montclair State made a dollar for dollar match for donations.

Established by Student Development and Campus Life, the Office of Financial Aid and the Office of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving, the Emergency Book Fund was created to supplement existing book scholarships and grants.

"We receive requests well over double the amount of the available grants and funds for this type of need," says Karen L. Pennington, vice president for Student Development and Campus Life, emphasizing the importance of this campaign. "Obviously, there is a tremendous need for book support and many students would not get the help they need without this Emergency Book Fund."



IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD: LOS ANGELES

In an effort to continue to expand Montclair State's West Coast alumni network, the Office of Alumni Relations partnered with the School of Communication and Media this past summer to host an event at NBC Universal Studios Hollywood in Los Angeles, California.

Alumni had the opportunity to hear an insider's view from Karen Horne '08, NBC Universal's senior vice president of programming, talent development and inclusion. In addition to mingling and networking with fellow alumni, guests also got an exclusive tour of the NBC Universal Studio back lots. Sixty-nine alumni, parents and guests took part in the event, which included a cocktail reception at The Studio Grill.

HOMECOMING 10.14.17





Red Hawks Return to the Nest

Thousands of students, alumni, families and friends celebrated Homecoming on October 14. The day included a campus carnival, school-based activities, family pancake breakfasts and a new car show, where all proceeds benefited the Red Hawk Pantry. The day culminated with an exciting game against Salisbury University.



MAKING ROOM



Alumni, beloved professors honored with room dedications

This fall has brought many alumni back to campus to attend room-naming ceremonies – some in honor of alumni and others in honor of beloved faculty.

Former United States Senator Robert G. Torricelli visited campus in September to cut the ribbon for a lecture hall in University Hall named after his mother, **Betty Lotz Torricelli**, who graduated from Montclair State in 1940 with a degree in English and was a lifelong teacher and librarian.

She instilled her passion for learning and service in her son, often turning the family's dinner time in their Franklin Lakes home into "teaching moments."

Torricelli, who served in the U.S. Senate from 1997 to 2003 and in the U.S. House of Representatives

from 1983 to 1997, says the wisdom passed down during dinner conversations shaped his political views and inspired his life of public service.

"It is a fitting and generous tribute to an alumna who distinguished herself over a long career as both a teacher and librarian," President Susan A. Cole said at the ceremony.

School of Communication and Media dedicates rooms at Homecoming

Alumni crowd-sourced to raise funds to honor and recognize beloved faculty by naming rooms in the new School of Communication and Media building in their honor. **John Diglio '69 MA, Larry Londino, Howard Travis and Christopher "Doc" Stasheff** were honored with their

own rooms and had unveiling celebrations at Homecoming.

For each unveiling, the honoree, an alumnus/a and School of Communication and Media Director Keith Strudler spoke.

"It touches my heart and makes me smile to see how much our students not only remember us, but still care about us. I realize now that we left a mark here, and although I never expected to be honored for it, I'm infinitely delighted and grateful for the distinction," said honoree Doc Stasheff.

In addition, **Michael Price '81**, executive producer and writer for *The Simpsons* and co-creator of *F Is for Family*, visited from the West Coast to celebrate the unveiling of the Michael Price

Audio Production Center at Homecoming. While he was here, Price also participated in a conversation with Strudler in Presentation Hall, where they showed clips from his shows and audience members were able to ask Price questions about his career and being part of an iconic cartoon. (See photo page 42)

Price advised future producers and screenwriters to take any job in the industry, no matter how small, in order to get a foot in the door. "You never know where it will lead."

Photos

1. Robert Torricelli 2. Christopher "Doc" Stasheff 3. Howard Travis 4. Michael Price (right) with President Susan Cole and Dan Gurskis 5. John Diglio (right) with James Benson '86 (center) and Keith Strudler 6. Larry Londino

CLASS NOTES

1940s

Helen Offinger Keegan '41 recently celebrated her 99th birthday. [1]

Dr. Alan Rosenberg '49 was asked to plan the National Day of Prayer for the fourth time by Mayor Carey Davis of San Bernardino, Calif.

1950s

Eleanor Bill Calvin '51 is president of The Schubert Club, a group of piano teachers, and continues to teach music in her home studio, Musique Classique.

Claridel "Pudge" Delaney '56 and **Ann Ward Jenkins '56** in 2018 will celebrate the 60th anniversary of their 3-month 4,000-mile adventure on their 3-speed Schwinn bikes. On their trip from Clifton, N.J., to Portland, Ore., they stayed at youth hostels and campsites, including a night at Yellowstone National Park. They became local celebrities as they rode through towns and received the key to the city of Portland upon arrival. [2]

1960s

Norine Nelthrop Boyd '60, owner and president of Norine's Corporation, launched Nomato, a company that specializes in all natural, no preservative, gluten-free and tomato-free products.

Alex Dobrowski '63 successfully completed the running of a marathon on all seven continents, along with his daughter Holly. At 77, Alex became the oldest person ever to run a marathon in Antarctica. [3]

Dr. Robert F. Marcus '65 has published his second book, *The Development of Aggression and Violence in Adolescence* (2017), with Palgrave Macmillan.

Don Doolittle '66, '72 MA and his wife **Vivian Fontana Doolittle '67** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They met in the Freeman Hall cafeteria in 1965 and recently visited campus for Vivian's 50th Reunion. [4]

Carol Brierley Moore '67, '73 MA was appointed the interim president for Columbia College in Columbia, S.C., after previously serving as the executive vice president.

Robert Lawrence Russo '69, '74 MA published a memoir titled *Oh, Bob! I Thought It Was Curtains!: Survival and Transcendence in a Homophobic World* in July.

1970s

Michael E. Cryor '70 MA was named to *The Baltimore Sun's* Business and Civic Hall of Fame.

Edward F. Buhner '71, '83 MA has written 24 novels and collections.

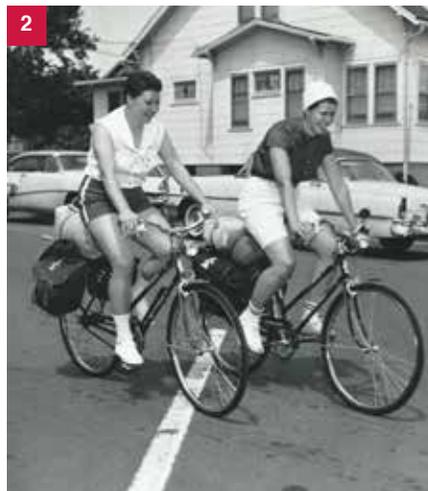
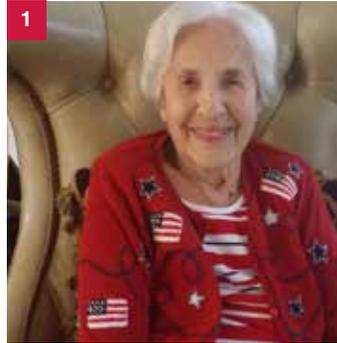
Maureen A. Conway '71 MA received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from William Paterson University.

Jonette DeMarsico '71 recently retired from a long teaching career and now is playing Marjorie Prime in Jordan Harrison's play of the same name in Port Orange, Fla., and directing *Love, Loss, and What I Wore* in New Smyrna Beach, Fla.

Irene Dec '73, '80 MA was elected co-chair of Palm Beach Score, a nonprofit small business mentoring program.

Donald Antisell '74 was honored for 30 years of employment with Anthony & Sylvan Pools.

John Herbst '74 has been awarded the Association of Midwest Museums' 2017 Distinguished Career Award.



Photos

1. Helen Keegan 2. "Pudge" Delaney and Ann Jenkins 3. Alex and Holly Dobrowski 4. Don and Vivian Doolittle

CONNECTIONS ALUMNI & FRIENDS



5

Robert R. Mayer '74, '84 MA was inducted into the 2017 Bloomfield (N.J.) High School Hall of Fame for his outstanding leadership as the head softball coach for the last 28 years.

Warren Webster Vaché Jr. '74 will perform in Ocean Grove's ever-popular "Summer Stars Classical Series" with the renowned Imperial Brass, the N.J.-based, 28-piece brass ensemble.



6

Michael C. Gabriele '75, an honorary chair at the New Jersey Folk Festival, discussed his book *New Jersey Folk Revival Music* at the Nutley Public Library in May.

Garret Keizer '75 is a finalist in the 2017 Notting Hill Editions Essay Prize. His essay, "Grub: A Man in the Market," will be published in an anthology along with the other finalists.

Leonard "Len" Harac '76 was recently appointed to the board of directors of Drone USA, a company that develops and manufactures low-altitude drones and related products.

Joseph V. Cosentino '77 published his fourth book in the award-winning Cozzi Cove series "New Beginnings" as well as a new novel, *Drama Luau*, the fourth Nicky and Noah mystery.

Charles "Chuck" Muth '77 has been appointed as the new chief growth officer of Beyond Meat, a company specializing in plant protein.

Teresa Skjold '78 recently received the New Jersey Driver Education Teacher of the Year award.

1980s

Michael Bocech '80 is now a physical education teacher at Monument Elementary School.

Joan McGeough '80 was honored as a Brand Builder in the Leading Women Entrepreneurs 2017.

Eileen Shafer '80 was named the first female superintendent of Paterson Public Schools.

Elsie Barrick '84 MA was named the West Essex Board of Realtors' 2017 Realtor of the Year.

Kevin Bradley '84 was named executive vice president and chief financial officer of U.S. Steel.

Tom Kaminski '84 is the featured reporter on the new collaboration with PIX11 and Newsradio 880 on local traffic and breaking news. [5]

Rev. Nelson J. Perez '84 was announced by Pope Francis as the new bishop for the Diocese of Cleveland.

Steven Weiss '86 is now a captain at the Bayonne Fire Department.

Peter H. Lori '87 is the executive vice president, finance; chief accounting officer and deputy chief financial officer at Univision.

Mary Carlomagno '89 published her first novel titled *Best Friend for Hire*. [6]

Sylvia Sylvia '89 was appointed to the New Jersey State Board of Education.

1990s

Kelly Sullivan King '90 MA continues to direct a successful drama club at Caldwell's Trinity Academy, now in its 24th year.

Caroline Nolan Chomiak '91 was recently hired as business lead for Purdue Pharma L.P. over-the-counter product franchise.

Martin Derby '92 MA was hired as senior geohazards practice leader at Golder Associates Inc.

Shawn W. Fitzgerald '92 is research director for IDC Insights' Worldwide Digital Transformation Strategies practice.

Judy L. LoBianco '92, '95 MA will be awarded the SHAPE America Honor Award for meritorious service by the Society of Health and Physical Educators America. The award recognizes notable contributions to the advancement of health and physical education.

Kristin Barber '93, '02 MA opened New Jersey's first cat café, Rahway's Kitty Hall, a place to sit down, relax, have a beverage or a snack, and even adopt a cat.

Gaspard Louis '93 and his dance company are beginning their 2017–2018 season at the Schimmel Center in New York City.

William Mesce Jr. '93 MA authored the novel *Legacy* as well as *The Rules of Scriptwriting and Why You Should Break Them*, which includes commentary from media industry veterans.

Jennifer Woods '93 MA of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation was recently appointed the new chair of the board of directors for United Way of Greater Mercer County.

Lisa Kasper '94 has been named director of admissions and outreach at Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Dawn Von Busch Romeo '94 co-authored *Jack and the Case of the Missing Sandwich* with her daughter, Cassandra. This book is the first in a series about a mystery-solving basset hound detective.

Talya Oded Tsuna '94 wrote a chapter titled "My Generations of Women" in the book *Aging Wisely... Wisdom of Our Elders* by Irving I. Silverman and Ellen Beth Siegel.

George Czergovits '95 MA was named one of Cedar Grove's 2016–2017 Teachers of the Year. He teaches sixth-grade science at Memorial Middle School.

UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION

**Did you move? Get married?
New email? New number?
Let us know!**

It's easy to update your information online through MONTCLAIRconnect, the online community exclusively for alumni of Montclair State University.

Visit montclair.edu/alumni, where you can also sign up for your alumni email account. You can also update your information by calling the **Office of Alumni Relations** at 973-655-4141.

Photos

5. Tom Kaminski 6. Mary Carlomagno

Wendy Gillespie '73

FROM BUSINESS TO BROADWAY

Wendy Gillespie is a successful business leader, a generous philanthropist and an education proponent, and yet she still continues to explore new paths. "If you let them, magical things will show up in your life," she says, recalling how her life took an unexpected turn.

In 2009, two years after her husband passed away, she was in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, where she met Jay Kuo, the composer and lyricist who was working on a project that would become the Broadway musical *Allegiance*. "I was fascinated by his idea for this project," she recalls.

Before long, she became one of the co-producers of the show, which was inspired by the experience of its star George Takei, and tells the story of one Japanese-American family torn apart during the internment camps of World War II. As an immigrant herself, Gillespie felt a personal connection to the story. Gillespie recalls how arriving to the United States at age 9 later

informed her valedictorian speech at Bloomfield High School in 1969.

"The theme they asked me to prepare focused on what being American means to me," she explains. "As an immigrant, you look at America differently. I've never taken it for granted. I vote and take my civic responsibilities seriously."

Gillespie's mother was from Khartoum, Sudan, and her father was from the United Kingdom, and they taught her to embrace diversity and respect others. "I was brought up to be accepting of those from different backgrounds and to appreciate every other human being," says Gillespie.

Those values helped propel her to success. After graduating from Montclair State College in 1973 with a degree in Spanish, she spent 13 years at IBM, including a stint in Japan, before she and her husband, Marty Capdevilla, founded Frontier Trading, a multimillion-dollar, binational business in San Diego that exported and distributed

grocery products to Mexico and Latin America.

She also gives back to the community, particularly to programs for youth, and became active in Junior Achievement, in which she'd also been involved as a high school student. She and Marty helped to create the Capdevilla Gillespie Center for Junior Achievement, home to BizTown and Finance Park, where students learn how to run successful businesses in a mini-city environment.

Being open to people and new ideas not only led her to produce *Allegiance* but also to reinvent herself as a Broadway producer – most recently co-producing the Broadway hit, *Come from Away*.

The musical is set in Gander, Newfoundland, where residents opened their homes to thousands of passengers stranded there after air traffic was shut down on September 11, 2001. The show, which opened in March 2017, was nominated for seven Tony Awards and won Best

Direction of a Musical. A highlight of producing the musical for Gillespie was visiting Gander. "The people were simply amazing – exactly as they are portrayed in the show," she says. "The show is a triumph of human spirit, when people step up to take care of others in their time of need."

For this interview, Gillespie reread a passage she wrote for her college yearbook. "Perhaps the most important lesson a person can learn is that the world is made up of people with whom we must live, work, love and understand...and through others we can expand the very dimensions of our existence," wrote Gillespie, who was already demonstrating leadership acumen as a student, becoming the first student representative to the Board of Trustees and treasurer of the Student Government Association. To this day, she says, the words still ring true. "That's pretty awesome. I wouldn't change a thing. I feel exactly the same way."

—Donny Levit

THE *Real* THING

Wamwari Waichungo '90



Even when she was as young as 6, Dr. Wamwari Waichungo planned to study math. She was good at it, and growing up in Nairobi, Kenya, she knew that it could offer plenty of career opportunities.

But while she was standing in a long line to register for math classes during her freshman year at Montclair State, Wamwari noticed a nearby table with a sign that said "Nutrition and Food" that had no students in line.

"I literally was standing in line and wondering, 'Huh. I wonder what that is?'" she recalls.

Her curiosity piqued, Wamwari stepped out of the math line and began speaking with Nutrition and Food Studies Professor John Specchio about the field, and the kinds of jobs it could lead to. Then 17 and cognizant of the money her parents were spending to send her to school in the United States, Wamwari was reluctant to change her plan.

"He told me, 'Try a few classes and see what you think,' and that's how I became a food science major," she says.

Actually, Wamwari had always been interested in food, but never

realized it could translate into a career.

Wamwari earned a Bachelor of Science from Montclair State in 1990, before undertaking a master's degree and doctorate from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She worked briefly for ConAgra Foods in Omaha, Nebraska, and Campbell Soup in Camden, New Jersey, before returning to Kenya to begin a career with The Coca-Cola Company.

Over the last 17 years, Wamwari has held several positions with the iconic global beverage maker, living in Lagos, Nigeria; Johannesburg, South Africa; London; and Cairo before returning to the United States to work at its headquarters in Atlanta.

Today, Wamwari is vice president for Global Scientific and Regulatory Affairs for Coca-Cola, overseeing a team of 140 people in 47 locations, responsible for ensuring regulatory compliance for all ingredients, products and packages used by the beverage maker worldwide.

Wamwari says her experience at Montclair State helped underscore the importance of taking chances.

"Sometimes it's good to go with your gut," she says. "I was a little uncomfortable about

switching from math, but I really felt curious about food science."

Following passion was another lesson.

"I'm sure I would have been great at math, but it wouldn't have been a great career," she says. "I just love food and have always been interested in it. Find something you love and you'll be successful."

Wamwari established the Waichungo Food Science Scholarship in 2015, and credits the support she found at Montclair State for helping her build the courage to ask for what she needed. As an international student, she frequently met with her advisers and professors for everything from navigating life in the United States, to finding part-time jobs and even secondhand books.

"Be bold enough to ask for help," she says. "There are many resources on a college campus that can help you."

—Suzanne Marta



CLASS NOTES

Trina Parks-Evans '96 was appointed assistant vice president of corporate diversity and inclusion at RWJ Barnabas Health.

Dr. David J. Ross '96, '98 MA was named dean of student services for the Ybor City Campus of Hillsborough Community College in Tampa, Fla.

Natalee Vaccaro-Bartlett '96 now serves as the superintendent of schools for the East Hanover (N.J.) School District.

Tara Morlando Zurlo '97, '99 MA earned a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Management (Higher Education) from the School of Education, Drexel University in June.

Thomas J. Muller '98 was promoted to the rank of sergeant at the Newton Police Department in Newton, N.J.

2000s

Trish Bogusz '00 MA was named principal of the Millstone (N.J.) Township Middle School.

Carolyn Jean-Phillipe '00 was elected to the American Health Council's Physician Board.

Jennifer Montesano '00 was named superintendent of Secaucus (N.J.) School District.

Carmen T. Morales '00, vice principal at the Newark Tech Campus of the Essex County Vocational Technical Schools, was sworn in as an Essex County College trustee in June.

James C. Vara '00 is associate attorney general at the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office.

Glen Fuzy '01 is working as senior operations manager of Basic Capital Advisors, LLC.

Beth Hibbits Garrett '01, an educator and athlete, was named the new girls soccer coach at Belleville (N.J.) High School.

Drew D. Krause '02 MAT was named the new principal of Ridge (N.J.) High School.

Dr. Matthew W. Lawrence '02 MA was named the new principal of Mahopac (N.Y.) High School.

Robert M. Siris '03 was appointed as the coach for the mens lacrosse program starting at Mercer County Community College.

CherylAnne Amendola '05 won the 2017 History Teacher of the Year award through the Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History.

Kelley R. Faulkner '05 will star as Miss Adelaide in Milwaukee Rep.'s production of *Guys and Dolls*.

Alex Guzman '05 MA was named the new principal of Middlesex (N.J.) High School.

Tamour Kousha '05, chief financial officer of New Jersey Community Development Corp., in Paterson, N.J., was named an *NJBIZ* CFO of the Year finalist.

Mark Maggio '05 was hired as Lodi (N.J.) High School's new football coach.

Kathleen Passuth Bombery '06 MA was elected as dean for the Health Sciences division of Savannah Technical College.

Dr. Yuri T. Jadotte '06 received the 2016–2018 Physician Training Award in cancer prevention and control from the American Cancer Society and a 2016–2017 research grant for the development of methods to increase the utility of systematic reviews and meta-analyses from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. He also traveled to the U.S. Virgin Islands this summer to assist in efforts to prevent and control the spread of the Zika virus. [7]

Natasha Parrilla '06, '11 MEd published a front-cover article, "A Foundation for Learning," in the August 2017 issue of *The Learning Professional*.

Louis Cappello '07 MA, superintendent of science K-12 at Bloomfield (N.J.) High School, will oversee STEM activities for grades kindergarten to five beginning in September.

Judith NahLamiley Mills '07 is taking her personal fight with lupus to the next level by raising lupus awareness in New Jersey, New York and Ghana.

Stacy Albanese '08, '17 MA, received a master's degree in Public and Organizational Relations from Montclair State in May 2017. (Pictured with younger brother Christian Penney '21, a freshman at Montclair State.) [8]

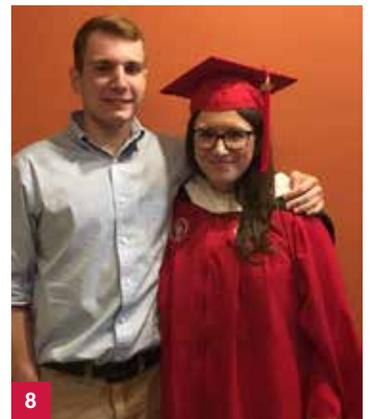
Raul A. Huaman '08, a guitarist/composer from Lima, Peru, has worked on a variety of projects including La FolieAustral, an Spanish indie-rock project, in which he serves as songwriter and producer.

Michael DiBartolomeo '09 MA was recently named vice president for enrollment management at St. Thomas Aquinas College where he will work to provide leadership for collegewide initiatives.

Rahfeal Gordon '09 headlined a global lecture at Carnegie Hall as part of his *Skyscraper World Tour*. [9]

2010s

Allison Andresini '10 is directing a wedding film titled *Bucket* along with screenwriter and actress **Gillian Holmes '12**. The film is a short comedy about love, marriage and expectations.



Photos

7. Yuri T. Jadotte 8. Stacy Albanese 9. Rahfeal Gordon

Arthur Souritzidis '10

HIGH ENERGY

Arthur Souritzidis dreamed a career in finance would enable him to one day fund his entrepreneurial ambitions, but the nation's worst financial crisis since the 1930s threatened to derail his plans to work on Wall Street.

Growing up in West Caldwell, New Jersey, Souritzidis was drawn to the world of finance watching the success of an uncle who worked as a stockbroker.

"His earning potential was uncapped," Souritzidis says. "I wanted a job where I could work hard and reap the fruits of my labor based on what I put into it."

Looking back, Souritzidis says he didn't appreciate the severity of the recession until he graduated from Montclair State University in 2010 with a degree in finance

and found himself in a limping job market. Always looking for opportunity, Souritzidis tried to learn all he could, listening to audio business books during his commute.

After a few months of working as an independent sales contractor, Souritzidis was introduced to Cameron Christensen, the founder of a solar power start-up now known as Momentum Solar.

"I was just trying to build a rapport so I could solicit him, but I ended up becoming his best sales rep," Souritzidis says.

Souritzidis became a partner in the company by 2011 and took over as chief executive in 2012 as the company skyrocketed to become an industry leader ranked No. 67 on *Inc.* magazine's list of

the 5,000 fastest-growing private companies in the nation in 2017 (up from No. 883 in 2016), and one of *Solar Power World's* Top 500 North American Solar Contractors.

Souritzidis was recognized by *Forbes* this year on its "30 Under 30: Energy" list. The company, which designs and installs customized solar power systems for the residential and commercial markets, now employs 700 people in New Jersey, New York, Florida and California.

Souritzidis, who now lives in Weehawken, New Jersey, says his finance training provided an important foundation, as he quickly became an expert on federal and state incentives, along with complex financing approaches, and was able to

take advantage of a fast-growing industry.

Navigating what some call the "solar coaster," Souritzidis says his approach has been guided by developing an expertise and visualizing his goals.

When an important deal early in the company's growth threatened to go sour, he recalls driving by the building at the heart of it, "gripping the steering wheel and just imagining solar on the roof."

"Always keep your eye on the end goal," he says. "If you stay confident and keep working to get there, life finds a path."

—Suzanne Marta

CLASS NOTES

James Doyle '10 was named one of two Outstanding Intermediate School Teachers for 2017 by the Optimist Club of Westfield and was honored by the Westfield Board of Education.

Daniel Erhardt '10, '16 MA was named the Educator of the Year for Region II by ASAH, the umbrella organization for special-needs schools and agencies in New Jersey.

Ashley Hollister '10 is pursuing her dream as a singer, recently touring with the American progressive rock band Trans-Siberian Orchestra.

Jon Preciado '10, '12 MBA, and Arielle Gellman '12, college sweethearts, got married October 14. Several other alumni and mascot Rocky the Red Hawk attended the ceremony. [10]

Andrea L. Doto '11 recently opened in *Bandstand* at the Jacobs Theatre, where she was the lead dancer in the ensemble. [11]

Jessica Murphy Sproul '11 married Joseph H. Sproul IV in Shrewsbury, N.J., on December 2, 2016.

Jessica L. Barton '12 MEd was selected as the 2017 Bloomfield (N.J.) School District Teacher of the Year.

Magdalena Doris '12, an Emmy-nominated reporter, started working for CBS 2 News in 2016 and has covered New York City since 2012.

Mitsuko Flynn '12 was promoted to director of education and community engagement for the Charleston Symphony Orchestra.

Paul Pilcz '12 and **Allison T. Strong '12** made their Broadway debut in the Roundabout Theatre Company revival of *Bye Bye Birdie*.

Michael S. Brewer '13 was awarded a full scholarship for the two-year MFA Professional Actor Training Program at the Katherine G. McGovern College of the Arts, University of Houston, Texas.

Raif R. Hyseni '13 MA performed at this year's Garden of Righteous ceremony, which honors non-Jews who risked their lives to save others during the Holocaust.

Patricia Monaco '13 MA was appointed assistant principal, Pre-K Elementary, student services by the Wayne (N.J.) Township Board of Education.

Cara Mangine Stokes '13 married William Alvo "Bill" Stokes III on May 27 in Columbia, N.J.

Teresa Yorkgitis '13, event and special projects manager for a luxury retail concept store called The Webster, ran the 2017 NYC Marathon to benefit Habitat for Humanity.

Samantha Boczon '14 is a guidance counselor at Secaucus (N.J.) Middle School.

Omer F. Demirel '14 is the president of Young Musiad USA and managing partner of Lilax USA, a textile company from Bursa, Turkey.

James D. Gianetti '14 debuted and signed his thriller novel, *The Town of Jasper*, at the Book Expo America in New York City.

Jennifer Tafro '14 has been named head field hockey coach at Ramapo College.

Matt Aziz '15 recently became the assistant athletic trainer at Felician University.

Tierney J. Conlon '15, former lacrosse player and coach at Montclair State University, has joined the Arizona State University lacrosse team as the assistant coach.

Nicholas Pietroniro '15 worked as the director of photography on the feature film *Sunset*, which is about a group of civilians who grapple with the imminent probability of a nuclear strike near their town.

Joseph J. Redmon '15 was named the new general manager of the New Jersey Jackals. [12]

Courtney Cholminski Savino '15 MA married Troy Savino in August 2016 at The Grove in Cedar Grove.

Kaitlyn Schoeffel '15 represented New Jersey and finished second runner-up in the Miss America Pageant in September.

Olutosin Itohan Araromi '16 was named 2015–2016 Miss Nigeria USA.

Robert Kennedy '16 was sworn in as a police officer in Berkeley Township, N.J.

Connor Manning '16 was sworn in as a police officer in Chatham Township, N.J.

Ryan D. Oxild '16 was recently hired as the youth services director at the Mendham (N.J.) Borough Library.

Niki Lynn Russo '16 received the Avis Spirit Award, given to those who exemplify Avis' "We Try Harder" theme, at Yankee Stadium. Russo received the award for her service to the community, raising funds to help send kids for free to Comfort Zone Camp, where she volunteers.

Maxx Wurzbarger '16 has been named the head coach of mens soccer for The Dolphins at the College of Mount Saint Vincent.

Chrisovalanti Beckus '17 is a Newman's Own fellow at Our Piece of the Pie in Hartford, Conn.

Sammie L. Davis '17 MA works as the coordinator of diversity and cultural life at Penn College.

Aaron Goodwin '17 joined the Madison (N.J.) Area YMCA as associate sports director.



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- Recorded webinars and workshops

Visit montclair.edu/alumni to learn more.

Photos

10. Jon Preciado and Arielle Gellman
11. Andrea Doto 12. Joseph Redmon

IN MEMORIAM



Mary DeFilipis, an academic adviser in the Feliciano School of Business, died unexpectedly in June at the age of 73. She joined Montclair State in 1993 serving in various capacities at the Hispanic Institute for Applied Psychology, the Psychoeducational Center and the Educational Opportunity Fund Program before joining the Feliciano School of Business in 2002. A memorial fund was set up in her name to provide a scholarship award to deserving Feliciano School of Business students who demonstrate extraordinary leadership, volunteerism and commitment to the University community.

Leonor L. Cunningham '37
 Mary Brady '40
 Jane Riehm McNeal '42
 Louise Vandenberg Heck '45
 Evelyn Kogan Robb '45
 Marie Fabiano '46
 Doris Bedford Rabasca '46
 Laurette Connors McNiel '47 MA
 Alba De Rogatis Quaresimo '47
 Emil Douglas Flynn '48, '49 MA
 Paul Kelley '48, '52 MA
 Marion Salvatore Bruno '49
 Dorothy Apgar '50
 Thomas J. Bain '50, '60 MA
 Paula Hauser Maxwell '50
 Nancy Wilson Amato '51
 John P. Roberts '52
 Lois K. Roberts '52
 Lorraine Colatrella Barone '55
 Herbert Jacobson '55
 John T. Sules '55
 Peter J. Wild '55 MA
 Dale Cocchiola '56
 Walter Gollender '57, '61 MA
 Judith Christiano Ketterer '58
 Salvatore V. Paleologo '58, '62 MA
 Kerry H. Davis '59, '68 MA
 William D. Graham '59
 Ruth Pannicke Kracht '59

Truman Rice '60
 Donald Wilderotter '60
 John Behnken Jr. '61
 Frank Kottlan '61, '70 MA
 Loretta Onorato Palliardi '61
 Michael F. Lepore '63
 Charles P. Bauman '63 MA
 Joan Huber '64
 Patricia Rembish Kay '64, '68 MA
 Gaetano T. Occhipinti '64 MA
 Robert A. Sexton '65
 John W. Wallace Jr. '65 MA
 Alvin M. Holtz '66
 Franklin Gould '66 MA
 Anthony J. Conti '68
 Trevor Newman '68
 Katharine Mulvaney '69
 Timothy Blasko '69 MA
 Linda Shanney Whipple '70
 David V. Bourque '70 MA
 John A. Dispoto '70 MA
 Joseph A. Eichinger '71
 Richard A. Guidetti '71
 Julia Evans Rogers '71 MA
 Lois Tydor '71 MA
 Marshall W. Brehm '72
 Michael B. Pollard '72 MA
 Clara Grandcolas Kolarsick '72 MA
 Allen Gebhardt '73

Lillian O. Grundfest '73 MA
 George Rupp '73
 Frank Summerfield '73 MA
 Ruth Costa '75
 Susan Geiger Kantor '75
 Marc Manela '75, '79 MA
 Elizabeth Pegel Welhorsky '75, '01 MA
 Arlene Rosner '76 MA
 Mario A. Marano '77
 Robert Bergman '77 MA
 Ruth Druck Barber '79 MA
 Blanche B. Kircher '80 MA
 Cheryl Eldridge Hart '81



John T. Riordan '59, '11 HON, educator and businessman, died in June at the age of 80. After graduating from Montclair State, Riordan taught French and Spanish at public schools in Princeton and developed tests at the Educational Testing Service there. He then joined Houghton Mifflin Company in Boston overseeing its educational publishing activities before becoming an executive and later, president and CEO of the International Council of Shopping Centers. A lifelong supporter of the University, he was founding chair of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences Advisory Council.



John J. Kirk, PhD, former director of the New Jersey School of Conservation (NJSOC), died in September at the age of 87. He began his career on the faculty of the University of Michigan before becoming supervisor of camping services for the State of Michigan. He became director of the NJSOC in 1963 and spent the next 37 years building it into the third largest environmental field center in the world and in establishing Camp Wapalanne and myriad other environmental education programs that served more than 300,000 students, teachers, graduate students, faculty and professionals.

Rita Kane '81
 William R. Nast '84
 Virginia Williams '84
 Ernest B. McCullough '85
 Grace Soucie '85
 Adele Blau Treff '85
 Sister Barbara Nesbihal '87 MA
 Maryfaith Marriott '91 MA
 Edward Nunno '91 MA
 Thomas Haney '95 MBA
 Vito Sessa '95
 David Janosz '96, '99 MA
 Michelle A. Intiso '01
 Peter N. San Filippo '02
 Marisa Rincon '08
 William George '10



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DOMENICA DESIDERIOSCIOLI | Professor Emerita, Exercise Science and Physical Education

Known as Dr. Desi, Professor Emerita Domenica Desiderioscioli retired in June after 51 years at the University as a much-loved professor, administrator, coach and mentor. “Dr. Desi was more than a professor,” says Kacie Kellerman ’17. “She was a friend as well as a mentor.” Since joining Montclair State in 1966, Dr. Desi taught health and physical education classes, coached women’s fencing teams, served as an acting vice president during Montclair State’s transition from college to university, and as department chair. “I learned from Dr. Desi about the importance of leadership,” says Judy LoBianco ’92, ’95 MA. “She instilled in me the drive and desire to lead in my profession in order to serve others rather than myself first.” Although most visible as the Grand Marshal at the last six Commencement ceremonies, Dr. Desi is best known to her students for her caring. “As a freshman, I was amazed by Dr. Desi’s passion for physical education, its history and importance,” recalls Steven Wehrle ’07. “Fifteen years later it amazes me how her passion and advocacy for her students and the subject have never faded.” Says Eric Eder ’94, “The importance of giving back is something I learned from Dr. Desi.” Her mentorship made a difference for Christine Baccarella ’71. “I was most fortunate to have had her as a professor at the beginning of my career. She has truly been a blessing in my life.”

—Robert Gano

Read more about Dr. Desi at montclair.edu/lasting-lessons/Desi. Let us know which faculty members made a difference during your time at Montclair State at editor@montclair.edu.

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