

The magazine of Montclair State University

# MONTCLAIR

Fall / Winter 2019



## GENIUS

ENGLISH PROFESSOR AND  
RENAISSANCE SCHOLAR  
NAMED MACARTHUR FELLOW



**THE BIG PICTURE**

University Photographer Mike Peters captured the moonrise over Morehead Hall in September.

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MacArthur "Genius" Grant winner Jeffrey Alan Miller, who discovered the earliest known draft of the King James Bible, visited the St. James Episcopal Church in Montclair for this photo. (Photo by Mike Peters)



# MONTCLAIR

The magazine of Montclair State University

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Each new academic year brings new milestones and causes for celebration – and this fall we celebrated Professor Jeffrey Alan Miller’s designation as a MacArthur “Genius,” or, more formally, a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellow. In this issue you will read about Professor Miller’s research and his discovery of the earliest version of the King James Bible. The accomplishments of our extraordinary faculty continue to amaze. I think of Professor Marc Favata, chair of the Physics Department, recipient of prestigious grants and recognition by the National Science Foundation and the Simons Foundation and part of the international LIGO collaboration (the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory). Dr. Favata’s work is focused on the detection of gravitational waves, ripples in the curvature of spacetime created by the collisions of black holes and neutron stars. And Professor Laura Lakusta of the Psychology Department, also a recipient of NSF grants and this year’s Montclair State University Distinguished Scholar. Dr. Lakusta studies the interactions between language and cognition and how nature and nurture work together to drive human development.

And, of course, fall also brings a new class of graduate and undergraduate students, as well as new programs and facilities to enhance the student experience and ensure that our students receive a rigorous education and a diploma that will be a meaningful asset as they seek to realize their professional goals.

From its earliest days, Montclair State has differentiated itself as an institution intent on providing a comprehensive and rigorous higher education to a population of students that is, in every way, truly reflective of the diversity of the society we serve. We have always cared about student success, and we have always cared about creating a supportive environment for teaching and learning. With our new designation last spring as doctoral and research university, our deeper research engagement gives us yet another resource as we provide even better educational opportunities for our students and new avenues for successful completion of meaningful degrees.

When alumni return to visit, they are invariably impressed by how much the campus itself has grown, with numerous new buildings and programs and a student population of 21,000. One part of campus or another has been under construction for the last decade, and, as you’ll read in these pages, our new College Hall project recently connected us to our past when construction workers found a message in a bottle placed in a wall by workers during construction of the building in 1907. When what was then called Montclair Normal School was built, it represented the hopes and dreams of future teachers. There was no way those who built it or those who were its first students and teachers could have envisioned that the school would one day become the state’s second largest university, offering more than 300 programs of study.

When College Hall reopens next summer, it will once again be a symbol of hope for a new generation. We keep pushing forward, and we do it together, each of us contributing to the sum of the whole. We do it one teaching and learning experience at a time, one scientific discovery at a time, one student at a time, seizing each day to shape the future. We could not have gotten to this place without your generous support, and on behalf of our deserving students and faculty, I 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@montclair.edu](mailto:editor@montclair.edu).  
(We reserve the right to edit letters.)

Like and follow Montclair State University on Facebook



Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @montclairstateu



Write to us at [editor@montclair.edu](mailto:editor@montclair.edu)

## OUR FAVORITE TWEETS AND POSTS

 **montclairscm**



**montclairscm** Congratulations to our #MontclairSCM students and alumni for taking home a national student RTDNA Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Video Reporting! The students were awarded for their reporting efforts in Puerto Rico.

October 16

 **Governor Phil Murphy** @GovMurphy

A big congratulations to @montclairstateu English professor Jeffrey Miller on earning a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship! New Jersey is home to the best and brightest.



Montclair professor Jeffrey Miller among MacArthur 'genius' grant winners  
Jeffrey Alan Miller, an associate professor in the university's English department, received one of the coveted MacArthur fellowships.  
[northjersey.com](http://northjersey.com)

 **James Ellsmoor** @jellsmoor

When a glitch led the @montclairstateu state-of-the-art #microgrid to realize that an outage had occurred, it kicked in and isolated the University from the main grid, fired up its generators and seamlessly powered the entire campus for nine hours.



Microgrids Are Powering The Future At MSU  
A centralized power source can create issues if it unexpectedly goes offline. When a glitch led the Montclair State University's microgrid to believe that an ...  
[forbes.com](http://forbes.com)

 **Montclair State U** @montcla... · 10/10/19

With solo shows at @MuseumModernArt, the @whitneymuseum & a momentous public performance, Montclair State alumnus Pope.L, '78, is having quite the New York moment!

Congratulations, Mr. Pope.L! Thank you for filling the world w/ art.



With solo shows at MoMA, the Whitney, and a momen...  
[artbasel.com](http://artbasel.com)

# HEADLINES



The microgrid protects campus from power outages on the grid.

Then, in May 2016, a series of unfortunate events left the University in the dark, forcing the postponement of final exams: First, while the gas turbine at the CHCP was offline for annual maintenance, a car struck a power pole near the University, taking down one of two electricity feeders from PSEG to the campus. Next, a large turkey vulture sitting on a power line spread its wings, bridging two lines causing the fuses to blow and taking out the second feeder (and the turkey vulture).

That's when Vice President for University Facilities Shawn Connolly developed the plan to create a campus-wide microgrid that would be local, independent and automated – able to isolate itself from the regional electric grid, essentially “islanding” the entire campus from the vulnerabilities of the public grid.

“Montclair State’s microgrid is an excellent use of innovative technology to help the University manage their energy use more efficiently,” says Dave Daly, PSE&G president and COO. “Their system integrates seamlessly with PSE&G’s electric grid and is a positive step toward a more cost-effective energy future.”

According to Connolly: “It definitely helped to have a collaborative energy partner” in PSEG. The University’s partnership with the utility also includes support for the PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies, which conducts transdisciplinary research in climate change, energy studies and community resilience. ■

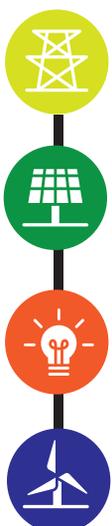
## Microgrid Gives Campus Constant Power

Montclair State is the first university in New Jersey with an innovative microgrid that can generate its own power if necessary, basically guaranteeing that the lights will never go out while also saving nearly \$4 million a year in energy costs.

The microgrid follows years of enhancing the University’s energy

infrastructure. After Hurricane Sandy and the resulting power grid outages, University officials realized the need to become more power-independent.

So with the longterm in mind, the University built the Combined Heating, Cooling and Power (CHCP) plant in 2013, increasing efficiency and dramatically reducing the University’s carbon footprint.





## NEW EXCHANGE PROGRAM LETS STUDENTS “STUDY ABROAD” IN THE U.S.

The University joined the National Student Exchange (NSE) program this year, providing opportunities to undergraduate students for study across the United States and Canada.

Montclair State students are headed to California, Quebec, Louisiana and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and NSE students on campus are from Hawaii, Indiana, Tennessee and Utah, with two from Utah who are visiting from France and Switzerland, wanting to see more of the United States.

“While studying away either internationally or within the U.S. is the best way for students to immerse themselves in other cultures, studying alongside students from other parts of the U.S. and the world adds to the vibrant diversity of campus,” says Domenica Dominguez, director of international engagement, Office of International Engagement. ■

## Governor Helps Launch STEM Innovation Fellowship

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy visited Montclair State University in August to congratulate and inspire 30 elementary school teachers engaged in the New Jersey STEM Innovation Fellowship, a new program designed to improve math education for public school students across New Jersey.

“This fellowship is about creating the New Jersey where opportunities and innovation blossom for all of our residents,” Murphy told the teachers. “It’s about creating an educational culture that will continue to draw educators who want to work in an innovative and supportive atmosphere.”

University President Susan A. Cole said she sees mathematics as a language and a way of articulating the world and to think about things differently. “We just have to make sure that everyone has access to this language,” she said. ■



N.J. Governor Phil Murphy



N.J. Assemblywoman Britnee N. Timberlake (left) and Assemblyman Thomas P. Giblin (center right) joined Governor Murphy and President Cole to launch the STEM Innovation Fellowship.

In the most recent rankings, **MONTCLAIR STATE** makes the following national lists:

### U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

- ★ Top Performers for **SOCIAL MOBILITY**
- ★ Most **ETHNIC DIVERSITY**
- ★ Best Colleges for **VETERANS**
- ★ **#79** among all public schools in the nation
- ★ **#166** among all national universities

### WASHINGTON MONTHLY



- ★ Best **BANG FOR THE BUCK** Colleges in the Northeast
- ★ Best Colleges for **STUDENT VOTING**

# Study: When to Tell Children They Were Adopted

When it comes to telling children that they're adopted, a new Montclair State study suggests that the earlier the better. Counseling Professor Amanda Baden's latest research on adoption shows that adults who don't learn of their adoptions until after the age of three suffer greater emotional distress and overall lower life satisfaction than those who learn at a younger age.

"Delaying Adoption Disclosure: A Survey of Late Discovery Adoptees," a survey of 254 respondents, is the first study of its kind undertaken in the United States and was published in the *Journal of Family Issues* – and written about in *The Atlantic* – this summer. Its findings challenge decades-long recommendations as

to when adoptive parents should tell their children. Previous advice included waiting until after the age of 4 or even after childhood to disclose adoption status.

For adoptees who find out later, it is the sense of betrayal from a long series of lies that causes the most distress.

"Growing up thinking that you know your heritage and then learning that what you have been told was false is extremely distressing," Baden explains. "It can trigger larger issues around identity – and identity is already pretty complex." ■

## DRAWING TO VISUALIZE CHANGE



Getting back to basics in the digital era, graphic artists from around the world brought their pens and paper to campus for an international forum on graphic recording and visual facilitation.

Thomas E. Franklin, an assistant professor at Montclair State and award-winning photographer, gave a keynote address on the convergence of art, journalism and visual storytelling, while graphic recorders translated his words into images on large sheets of paper.

As host to the International Forum of Visual Practitioners, the University showcased its School of Communication and Media. "The ability to create and present compelling stories across multimedia platforms is critical for leaders in digital media," says Yi Luo, associate professor and coordinator of the graduate program in Public and Organizational Relations. ■



David Sibbet pioneered visual facilitation.

## Google Exec Takes Helm of Feliciano Center

Former Google senior executive Carley Graham Garcia became the executive director of the University's Feliciano Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation this fall, succeeding founding director Dennis Bone, who retired.

Garcia spent the last 12 years at Google, most recently as head of external affairs, responsible for public policy, government relations and community engagement for the New York City region. Feliciano School of Business Dean Greg Cant says Garcia's leadership and experience at Google will be key to the next phase of the Center, which includes building upon community relationships and expanding its network of partners.

"She's going to really help imagine and create what we're going to do as we prepare people for the skill sets that will be essential for the careers of the future," says Cant.

Garcia says the Center will focus on resilience, whether as an individual, a business, an industry or community. "You can only learn if you can build, then pivot and change," she says. "We want to teach students the skills not only to survive, but to thrive in a constantly changing business landscape." ■



Carley Graham Garcia

# CATCH A CALI CONCERT



The new Cali Signature Series began in October and continues this semester with the following concerts:

- The world-renowned Shanghai Quartet, November 26, at 7 p.m. in the Leshowitz Recital Hall.
- The Beatrice Crawford Memorial Concert *Considering Matthew Shepard*, December 8, at 3 p.m. in Kasser Theater.

The Signature Series concerts are “quite eclectic, quite different. We hope to give people who come an overall taste of what is happening here – and there are really good things happening here at the Cali School of Music,” notes Thomas McCauley, interim director of the John J. Cali School of Music.

For more information go to [montclair.edu/cali](http://montclair.edu/cali). ■

## MUSICIANS PLAY CONCERT TOUR IN KOSOVO



The Fourth of July was particularly memorable for four faculty and 10 students of the John J. Cali School of Music, who performed American patriotic songs and traditional Albanian music in Ferizaj, Kosovo.

Montclair State's Balkan Ensemble, the only ensemble of its kind in the United States, was invited by the Kosovo government and received a standing ovation from more than 600 people. Joint concerts with the singing and dancing Kastriotet Ensemble of Kosovo received the same response from enthusiastic crowds in Macedonia and at a wedding during the ensemble's week-long tour. ■

## Professor's Music Added to Hall of Fame

Adjunct Professor Joseph Coco's CD, *World War III Is Here*, was accepted into the permanent collection of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, in 2018. The CD, which is included in the museum's collection of protest music, reflects today's political divide in the United States. Coco teaches rap and rock as cultural phenomena.

The album is one of 58 albums Coco has released, including others accepted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame's permanent collection. ■



# EXHIBIT: IMMIGRANTS SEEKING REFUGE



**Left:** Photos of immigrants seeking refuge. **Below:** Thomas E. Franklin at the opening of his exhibit

Award-winning photographer, multimedia journalist, documentary filmmaker and Assistant Professor Thomas E. Franklin exhibited his work focused on issues related to human migration at the Armstrong-Hipkins Center for the Arts – Blair Academy. The Pulitzer Prize finalist is a multimedia and visual storyteller who explores global issues with local and regional impact, including immigration, refugees and policies related to undocumented residents and asylum seekers. The exhibit, “Seeking Refuge: Images of the displaced by war, poverty, and persecution,” was the culmination of his work on forced migration in the past five years in Athens, Lesbos, Guadalajara, Tijuana, San Diego, Washington and New Jersey. ■



## Saving the Planet, Growing Jobs

Montclair State is taking the lead in the fight to save the planet from the destructive effects of climate change – specifically on issues of clean energy and sustainability.

In September, the University’s Clean Energy and Sustainable Analytics Center brought leaders in government, technology, education and business to campus for the second year in a row to share information and discuss initiatives that put the state at the forefront of clean and sustainable energy worldwide.

“New Jersey is ground zero in the battle to protect our planet,” said Bob Gordon,

New Jersey Board of Public Utilities commissioner, in his keynote speech at the conference, which was held shortly after the global student-led Climate Strike and the U.N. Climate Action Summit in New York.



Public Utilities Commissioner Bob Gordon

The Clean and Sustainable Energy Summit addressed several aspects of the New Jersey Energy Master plan – a road map to becoming 100% clean energy-reliant by 2050 – with sessions on offshore wind farms, affordable solar energy, an improved and efficient power grid, data analysis and more.

While New Jersey faces more intense climate impacts than other states – due largely to dense development and 130 miles of coastline – it can also harness its coastal winds for accessible and affordable renewable energy. ■

# The Art of Eco-Exploration

Newark middle school students spent their days in local forests, streams and lakes this summer as part of STEM activities in the University's Passaic Basin Eco-Explorers Program. Run by the Passaic River Institute, the program also gives students a chance to study environmental science, ecology, computer technology and biodiversity with an aim to stimulate interest in careers in science.

"This year, students visited and studied areas from the headwaters of the Passaic River to its mouth at Newark Bay," says Meiyin Wu, director of the Institute. "We hope to increase students' interest in the feasibility of attending college and pursuing a career in science by introducing them to a university environment."

The program, which was expanded to a month long, was made possible by substantial financial support from the Victoria Foundation and Landsberger Foundation, through the Soar capital campaign. ■



## Alumna Wins Emmy for *Snow Report*

Halley O'Brien '08 won a regional Emmy Award in August for her work as host of *The Snow Report Show* presented by *SKI Magazine*. O'Brien had been nominated five times for a Heartland Regional Emmy before her win for the 2018-19 season. "I couldn't be prouder of the quality content we produce every week throughout the winter season," O'Brien, who is also the show's executive producer, said in a press release. "I am so over-the-moon excited!" Jon Jay, digital content editor at *SKI Magazine*, said that "everything she produces is as authentic as it gets, and she has an astounding amount of energy and enthusiasm for her work." ■

Halley O'Brien '08



### BILLBOARDS SPOTLIGHT STUDENT SUCCESS

If you've traveled on Route 46 near Montclair State, you've likely seen the University's billboards – and perhaps recognized the smiling face as Shantelle Jones '19, who was on the cover of this magazine in the spring. When Jones saw it, she pulled over to reflect on her path to fulfilling her dreams. "It felt so surreal as I stared at it, letting the euphoric feeling sink in," Jones recalls.

The outdoor advertising campaign, also featuring other students, on billboards and NJ Transit stations on the Montclair-Boonton line highlights the ways the University complements and meets the aspirations of the students who choose to study here. ■



# Through the EYES of a CHILD

Alumni's documentary follows one family's struggle with addiction  
By Amy Wagner

*Life with Layla* tells the story of one family's struggle with addiction, as seen through the eyes of 7-year-old Layla. (Photos courtesy of Ken Spooner.)

**W**hen Ken Spooner and Mike Mee graduated from Montclair State in 2013, they set out to make films that would tell important stories, and their documentary *Life with Layla* does just that.

The film, which won the Montclair Film Festival's New Jersey Films Competition award, tells the story of one family's all-too-common struggle with addiction, through the eyes of 7-year-old Layla. Her Aunt Melissa overdosed on heroin before the film begins. As her Uncle Greg's heroin

addiction escalates during the course of the movie, Layla and her mother, Cait, are determined to bring him home to save him from a similar fate – and try to hold their family together.

“As filmmakers, we’ve seen what heroin has done to our friends, community and our state,” says Spooner. “With *Life with Layla*, we wanted to expose addiction for the disease it really is.”

Cait is equally passionate about spreading that message and took part in the making of the film in order to do that. “As

emotional and hard as it was to watch the film, we are grateful our story was shared in a positive way and showed how much addiction can impact a family including children,” she says. “We hope people get to see this film and that our story helps end the stigma – but most importantly breaks the cycle.”

*Life with Layla* was four years in the making. Co-directors Spooner and Mee began filming in 2015, shooting a total of 80 days during that time – and completed post-production in April 2019, shortly before the Montclair Film Festival. Their



Michael Mee, above left, and Ken Spooner worked four years on the film.

“As filmmakers, we’ve seen what heroin has done to our friends, community and our state. With *Life with Layla*, we wanted to expose addiction for the disease it really is.”

—KEN SPOONER '13

former professor, School of Communication and Media News Producer Steve McCarthy, joined the team as a mentor in 2015 and as producer in 2017.

The story unfolds over nine months when Greg was on the run after his sister Melissa’s death. “As filmmakers, we try to stay as objective as possible and be a ‘fly on the wall’ at all times,” explains Spooner. “However, we were immersed in their world for so long that friendship was inevitable. Cait and Layla are like family – and we are extremely grateful and lucky to have them in our lives.”

“Layla is such an amazing little girl,” adds Spooner. “She’s smart, funny and wise beyond her years. I’m most proud of her for having the courage to talk about her life on camera. Her future is so bright – and I’m excited to see where she will end up in life.”

McCarthy is proud of his former students. “They’ve created an important film for our times about a scourge that’s killing our young people. Documentary filmmaking at its best, this film will help addicts, their families and the public understand much more about addiction and how one family persevered. Keep your eye on these two filmmakers – they’re just getting started.”

According to Spooner, who is also the film’s editor and director of photography, it took a village – and help from a crew of Red

Hawks – to make the movie. In addition to Mee and McCarthy, classmates Ryan Miller and Alexis Grosso also worked on *Life with Layla* behind the scenes.

Funding for the film included support from the Morris County Prevention Is Key Coalition, the Pequannock Township Coalition, a GoFundMe campaign, ReelAbilities New Jersey and The Kessler Foundation.

While Spooner says they are currently exploring potential television and streaming platform interest in the movie, the filmmakers also plan to enter *Life with Layla* in additional film festivals, including prestigious national festivals such as DOC NYC and SXSW in Austin, Texas.

For the alumni filmmakers, the Montclair Film Festival premiere was an unforgettable homecoming.

“It’s always nice to get recognized for your work, but we don’t make films to get awards,” Spooner insists. “We make films because of the importance and urgency of the subject matter and stories we need to tell.”

“Premiering at the Montclair Film Festival was extremely important to all of us. This is a New Jersey film, made by New Jersey filmmakers,” says Spooner. “To be able to screen the film in front of our friends, family and colleagues was truly special.” ■



Ken Spooner films Layla with friends on a playground.

Montclair Heights N.J.  
 July 3rd. 1907.

This is to certify that this wall was built by two bricklayers from Newark N.J. by the names of William Hanly and James Lennon members of No. 3 of the B.M.I.U. of America.



# MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

By Marilyn Joyce Lehren

A hidden history in College Hall reveals the muscle and sweat that brought public education to life

The message and broken bottle were discovered during the renovation of College Hall.

July 3,  
1907

**O**n July 3, 1907, craftsmen slathering mortar for a massive supporting wall for the origins of Montclair State University, laid down their trowels and slipped a message into a bottle.

“This is to certify that this wall was built by two bricklayers from Newark, N.J., by the names of William Hanly and James Lennon, members of No. 3 of the B.M.I.U. of America.”

Their wall was the building block, effectively, for a new school training

teachers of students from all social classes and genders, their children and their children’s children.

Buried deep within College Hall, the message would take 112 years to be discovered.

“It’s wild to think of that,” says Sharon Mahoney, the University’s director of construction management. “The message has been sitting there dormant for 100 years just waiting for us to find it.”

# Discovery

## THE DISCOVERY

Fast forward to the renovation of College Hall, the centerpiece of campus. Standing in the spot where the wall once stood, Robert Kanaby, a demolition laborer, recreates the discovery.

Using a chipping hammer to break bricks six feet high and three layers thick, “I hit a void and I heard glass break,” he recalls. “And I’m like, ‘Something’s not right.’ So, we took away the debris and I found the glass and then I found the note.”

Dated July 3, 1907, the note ensured the bricklayers who laid the foundation for higher education in Montclair would be written into its history. “It gave me chills to realize what I had come across,” Kanaby says.

## INTRIGUE BUILDS

There’s long been a fascination with the recovery of messages. “These little bottled notes are powerful – every bit as intoxicating as the spirits they held before they became time capsules,” says Clint Buffington.

Buffington is a collector of messages and is featured in a new documentary film, *The Tides That Bind*, which looks at the history of bottles cast out to sea and the authors who sent them. When told about the discovery at Montclair State, Buffington says the story “ignites something in the romantic heart.

“You knock down a wall and a bottle falls out and a note falls out of a bottle? I dream about that kind of stuff.”

The message was placed inside a beer bottle, the pieces of the mystery coming together from clues in the broken glass and research from the Montclair Historical Center. The bottle was manufactured by the Consolidated Bottling Co. and was made for pale ale or porter.

You can imagine then a hot summer’s day more than a century ago, with flags flying in town in anticipation of the Independence Day fireworks, the bricklayers in Montclair Heights taking their lunch from a tin pail, perhaps bread with meat or cheese, and savoring a pale ale. Writing in blue pen in a cursive script, they composed the note on parchment, rolling it to fit into the now-emptied glass bottle.

They created a secret compartment between the first and third layers of brick. “They took the time and love to put this wall together,” to take ownership of a job done well by writing their names, what

they did and where they were from, Kanaby says. “And we took it down. That was an experience for me.”

Census records could point to their identities. Most likely, Hanly and Lennon were first-generation Irish laborers. Was William Hanly the writer of the note? The penmanship is the fanciful script learned in school and the 1920 Census notes that a William J. Hanly, age 33, living on Central Avenue, Newark, was able to write. A bricklayer born around 1875 named James Lennon is listed in the 1930 Census. He rented a Newark home on Summit Street with his wife, Tillie, and daughter Eileen, then age 16.

## A CAMPUS TRANSFORMATION

The family trees remain elusive. But we do know that countless hours of hard physical work by immigrants and laborers like Hanly



A soaring atrium connects the past and present.

and Lennon went into the construction of the original mission-styled building completed seven months ahead of schedule.

Over the decades, generations of students, many the first in their families to achieve a higher education, have passed through its doors, their strength and persistence mirroring the muscle and grit of the turn-of-the-century laborers.

“We have built this University with sweat equity, amazing ourselves and others with what we have been able to accomplish,” said President Susan A. Cole in her spring address to the University community. “Our students are also building their futures with sweat equity, quite literally, and they are amazing themselves and others with what they can accomplish.”

It’s the kind of work, she says, that is never finished.

This summer, the modernization of College Hall will bring together all student services. While maintaining the original look, including orange tiles and decorative tin ceilings, it’s been redesigned with a dynamic atrium and café.

With plans calling for an open floor plan, crews took on the monumental task of tearing down some of the original structural walls. It was during the final phase of demolition, on the first floor near Kasser Theater to make room for the restaurant, that Kanaby heard the sound of breaking glass.

“He brought the note to me,” Mahoney recalls, “in a paper sack and says, ‘I’m

sorry I broke the bottle.’ We could have renovated that building and never touched the wall. It’s pretty amazing.”

## ACT OF FAITH

Montclair State is hoping to connect the long-ago writers with their descendants if discovered. There are plans to exhibit the message, bottle and other artifacts found at the construction site, says Mike Zanko, the University’s associate vice president for Capital Planning and Project Management.

Vintage glass bottles were found discarded when digging an underground vault for information technology. Stone masons found a 1940s’ business card belonging to C.H. Little, a business representative for the craftworkers labor union, BMIU of Montclair, No. 11, with “offices at 617 ½ Bloomfield Ave., Montclair, NJ.” The message in the bottle notes that P. W. Lynch “was also working on the job.”

“Someone always wants to leave some kind of message, even if it is just initials, or a small artifact hidden in the work,” says Montclair historian Mike Farrelly. “They want it to be hidden so the owners or bosses don’t get angry, but there is always a glimmer of hope that someone will find it one day.”

Buffington says it was an “act of faith” that the note left by the bricklayers in 1907 would ever be recovered.

The wall was huge, at least 18 inches thick and meant to be there for a very long time. Hanly and Lennon had to know their note could only – and then only possibly – be found if and when the wall was torn down.

“If you found one message on campus, there could be others,” Buffington says. “Who knows what words are yet to be discovered.” ■





# going green

Interns with the PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies change culture, address climate change

By Marilyn Joyce Lehren

**T**he PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies' "Green Teams" took their message global this summer, advocating for communities and industries to adapt greener solutions – connecting to science at Princeton's Plasma Physics Lab, joining sustainability initiatives at the United Nations, and digging in at the grassroots level in a city park.

At the Green Teams' final presentations, Rick Thigpen, senior vice president at PSEG, praised the interns' work to create sustainable, livable and resilient communities and industries.

"You recognize this as a global problem and a profound problem," Thigpen told the students. "Preaching the gospel of sustainability is something to be proud of. It really is serious business."

The Green Teams program is based at Montclair State, where the PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies supports research and community projects, including climate change in New Jersey, and energy and water studies globally. It has been a key platform for launching students into internships, green jobs and graduate programs.

Community partners sponsor teams of undergraduates who provide research, analysis and marketing to shift corporate culture. This year, 40 undergraduates came from 18 different colleges and universities, bringing with them diverse interests and majors, from STEM to business and public health to anthropology.

“You have the opportunity to use these experiences to be the catalyst for change, the pusher, the leader because this [climate] crisis is real,” says Angela Ortiz, Energy and Sustainability policy manager at PSEG.

Justin Bates, a Montclair State senior Physics and Mathematics major, says the “culture of teamwork” was key to the projects’ success. “We could not have produced the work we presented without each other.” For example, a team with diverse talents in computer science, psychology, writing and environmental science managed to create voice technology to provide New Jersey Natural Gas customers with energy efficiency tips.

Encouraging the group at the kick-off event in early June, Timothy Carter, president of Second Nature, a nonprofit committed to accelerating climate action, told the interns: “We can make a difference if we have a vision.”

## GLOBAL IMPACT

Much of the environmental work by the interns benefited the Garden State, but the experience embraced global sustainability partnerships and strategies, with the group attending a United Nations forum, sitting alongside diplomats, UN

officials and education experts sharing experiences and strategies on achieving the sustainable development goals, known as SDGs. Those goals are a call for action by all countries, and address poverty, hunger, gender equity, clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, climate action, and peace and justice.

“There is nothing more important to the young people in the University than the awakening of the imagination,” said Provost Willard Gingerich. “As academics, the challenge we face is awakening it around the challenges that the SDG agenda present to us.”

Gingerich spoke during the UN’s Higher Education Sustainability Initiative event, which explored the ways higher education institutions are engaged in meeting the sustainable development goals’ specific focus on quality education, decent work and economic growth, and partnerships. The University and the PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies have supported this global initiative since 2016, with the Green Teams completing more than 100 projects focused on 13 of the 17 goals, according to Gingerich.

The paid internships are supported by the PSEG Foundation, academic and corporate partners and a grant from the National Science Foundation, and offered in partnership with New Jersey Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability.

In a separate project headed by a graduate assistant, the PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies “has mapped every one of the more than 325 academic programs at Montclair State University, including master’s and PhD programs, against all 17 of the SDGs,” Gingerich says.

The University is now engaged in a campaign to ensure that the University faculty members who deliver the programs understand and highlight the impact of the curriculum on the SDGs that relate to their curricula. “We expect the initiative will promote engagement of the core

values of all academic departments with those of the UN 2030 Global Agenda,” Gingerich says.

In meeting the needs throughout New Jersey, the Green Teams partnered for 10 weeks with New Jersey Natural Gas, Artificial Intelligence; New Jersey Natural Gas, Renewable Natural Resources; The City of Newark; Newark Science and Sustainability Inc.; Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority; FoamCycle; PGIM; PSEG; and Montclair State University.

“We are grateful to all involved who helped make real-world educational opportunities available to our diverse group of talented students leading to positive real-world change,” says Amy Tuininga, the Institute’s director. ■

**Bottom left to right:** Green Team members tend to a community garden in Newark. Partnering with the Newark Science and Sustainability Inc., the interns focused on connecting food initiatives across northern New Jersey. For the City of Newark, Green Team interns worked with the city’s Office of Sustainability to create a cleaner, greener, healthier city for its residents. Interns bring their “green” message to communities, working a music festival in Newark to share infographics and interactive games.





**Left:** At the New Jersey School of Conservation, Green Teams dig into hands-on lessons in environmental education. **Below:** For PSE&G, the interns analyzed data for setting energy and waste reduction targets, and created materials to demonstrate the company's commitment to the Paris Accord.



“There is nothing more important to the young people in the University than the awakening of the imagination. As academics, the challenge we face is awakening it around the challenges that the SDG agenda present to us.”

—Provost Willard Gingerich



# INTO THE

# Wild

Science and media students explore natural wonders in immersive summer programs out West

By Marilyn Joyce Lehren



**T**eams of Montclair State students were embedded in nature this summer, surrounded by the spectacular beauty of the mountain ranges and wonders of Yellowstone. The natural world opened them up to personal reflection and creativity, with projects as varied as mapping 3.3 billion-year-old metamorphic rocks to recording soundscapes unique to Yellowstone's ecology.

If you listen to the stories Allison Giordano '19 tells about her trip, you may want to leave the lights on. Haunted by Yellowstone's mysteries, she has produced a podcast for the School of Communication and Media of paranormal and supernatural stories she uncovered on the trip.

"I've always loved ghost stories and legends because even if you're a skeptic, there's

something about it that pulls you in," says Giordano, a May graduate with a degree in Television and Digital Media who joined a field class on reporting and thinking in the wild.

Montclair State partnered with Edge Hill University in England for the Yellowstone adventure, which included a fruitful program on developing students' creativity and collaboration across disciplines.

"I tried to use Yellowstone as a backdrop to introduce the students to the concept of creative thinking, to incorporate what we were seeing – whether bison or geysers or a man-made historic inn – with the ideas of land conservation and climate as a context to talk about creativity," said Phoebe Farber, a Montclair State adjunct faculty member who led the sessions.



Photo by Thomas E. Franklin

## Podcasting the wild

Reporting from the Wild West was a first for the School of Communication and Media, and the work builds on the award-winning portfolio Montclair State students have created from the field. (A recent project on Puerto Rico's hurricane recovery efforts won national awards, including a student Emmy. Another on orphaned, refugee and handicapped youth in Jordan was recognized in international film festivals.)

In Yellowstone, one focus was the return of wolves and their impact on the ecosystem.

Students collaborated on multimedia projects mentored by David Sanders, a Montclair State professor, and Thomas Franklin, assistant professor.

For the ghost stories, Sanders' deep audio experience guided Giordano as she collected sounds, like the bubbling and boiling of geysers, and interviewed the park's "haunting" historians. "A podcast has to sound how a Hollywood movie would look," Giordano says.

"While Yellowstone is a hub of beauty and history, something sinister lurks below the

surface," Giordano says. "There are tales of the horror-filled hauntings and fantastical legends in and around the park, tales of gruesome deaths and magic."

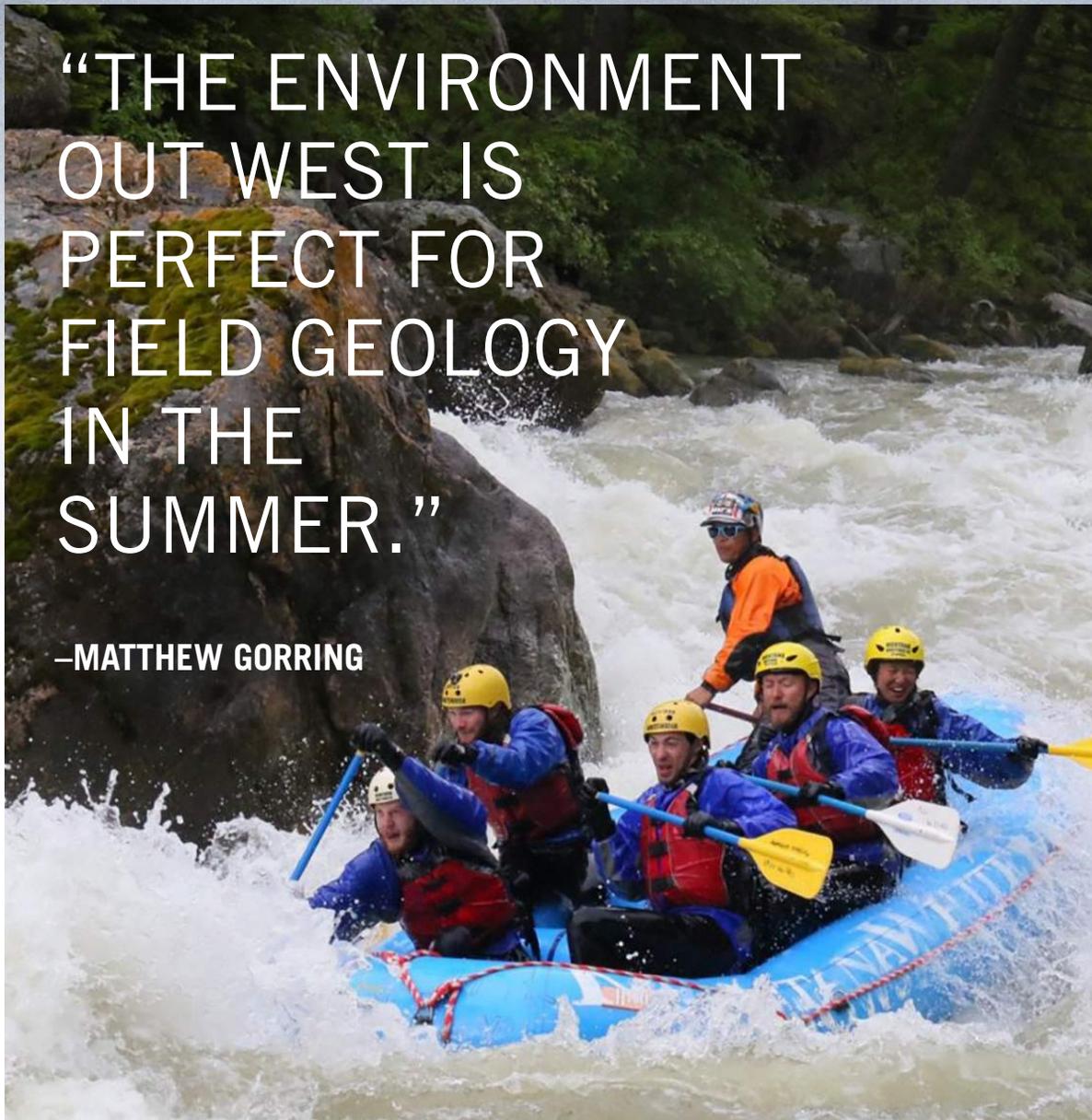
Since graduating, Giordano has been working in audio and visual production for the Federal Aviation Administration. She hopes to keep telling stories as she explores haunted places.

"Maybe it's curiosity or maybe it's that the possibility of something being out in the world that's a break from our mundane

Jets of steam surround Montclair State students as they record sounds and film the Grand Tetons and the geysers and mud pits of Yellowstone National Park. *Photos by Thomas E. Franklin*



Montclair State geology students at the summit of Red Butte, Montana, below, and whitewater rafting the rapids on the Gallatin River, near Bozeman, Montana. Photos by Matthew Gorring



“THE ENVIRONMENT  
OUT WEST IS  
PERFECT FOR  
FIELD GEOLOGY  
IN THE  
SUMMER.”

—MATTHEW GORRING

lives,” Giordano says. “But ask anyone and they love a good ghost story.”

### Science in the field

The Communication and Media students weren't the only ones out West this summer. In a separate Western expedition, a field geology camp in Montana and Wyoming, including Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons, provided intensive training and discovery from the natural geologic laboratory of the northern Rockies. Students focused

on both surficial and bedrock geologic mapping, with lessons in soil science, hydrology and environmental geophysics.

“The environment out West is perfect for field geology in the summer. We can lead students through field projects that start out simple and become more complex as we go along,” says Matthew Gorring, associate professor, Earth and Environmental Studies.

The backdrop has offered students important work in field science each

summer for several years. The scenery is also spectacular, and the trip provides opportunities to explore the wonders of being outdoors, including whitewater rafting, hiking and camping, Gorring says.

“It's definitely a life experience,” he adds. “The physical and mental aspects of this course can be difficult, but the students do an excellent job handling both.” ■



# THE *Water Protectors*

UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS STUDY CRITICAL  
ISSUES THAT AFFECT THE STATE'S WATER

BY LAURIE TARKAN





A jar full of clinging jellyfish

In a glass bowl of water in a lab in Science Hall, an animal kingdom fight for survival, in miniature, was underway between a sea nettle jellyfish and a clinging jellyfish, both smaller than a dime but toxic to humans. The milky-white sea nettle was winning, slowly devouring the translucent and toxic clinging jellyfish, whose orange tentacles were reaching desperately to get free.

“I spent a decade trying to wipe out sea nettles, but lo and behold, they have a value, in wiping out clinging jellyfish,” says Biology Professor Paul Bologna, director of the Marine Biology and Coastal Sciences Program.

Bologna’s team of students is studying both species of jellyfish, which are threatening the safety of swimmers in Barnegat Bay and elsewhere in New Jersey.

The team of University researchers is just one of several that are studying issues that affect New Jersey’s water, from Greenwood Lake to the shores of Cape May to the rivers that run through the state. Montclair State scientists are studying issues that affect drinking water, recreational water activities, fishing and crabbing (and eating the catch), as well as the multimillion-dollar issue of protecting housing and infrastructure that may be threatened by a rising sea and flooding rivers during storms.

“Our professors approach the issues with science to provide analysis – based on facts – so policymakers can make informed decisions about the water policy in New Jersey,” says College of Science and Mathematics Dean Lora Billings.

“In addition, we’re educating and training future scientists in these areas so they can continue to make important scientific contributions in New Jersey and beyond.”

“

We’re educating and training future scientists in these areas so they can continue to make important scientific contributions in New Jersey and beyond. – DEAN LORA BILLINGS

”



Paul Bologna (left) and Jack Gaynor (above) study sea nettles and clinging jellyfish.

## Battling Jellyfish and Saving Seagrass: PAUL BOLOGNA AND JACK GAYNOR

Sea nettles can grow to the size of a softball with tentacles that reach eight to 10 feet long, and are abundant – about 30 per cubic meter – wreaking havoc for swimmers. For more than a decade, Bologna's lab has studied their habitats to learn what promotes their growth. Development has spurred them on, because when young, they attach to hard surfaces like buildings and docks. They also thrive in low-oxygen water, so the stagnant canals along Barnegat Bay present the perfect conditions.

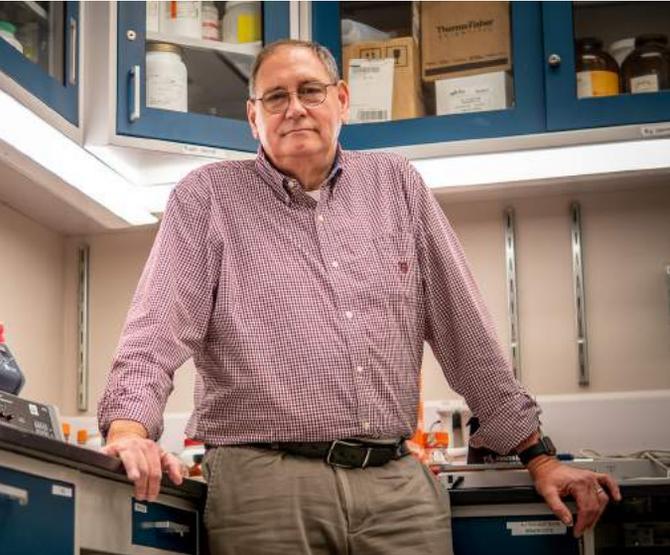
Bologna recently started studying the clinging jellyfish, an invasive species that emerged in the waters of New Jersey in the past 10 to 25 years. They only grow to about the size of a quarter, but have a venom so potent that it often sends its victims to the hospital in writhing pain. These prefer cooler water, and grass and algae, which tend to grow in shallow waters of lagoons. His lab is studying the temperature at which they die (so far they've pinpointed 82 degrees), a point when the waters are safe for swimming.

Biology Professor Jack Gaynor is coming at jellyfish from a molecular angle. His

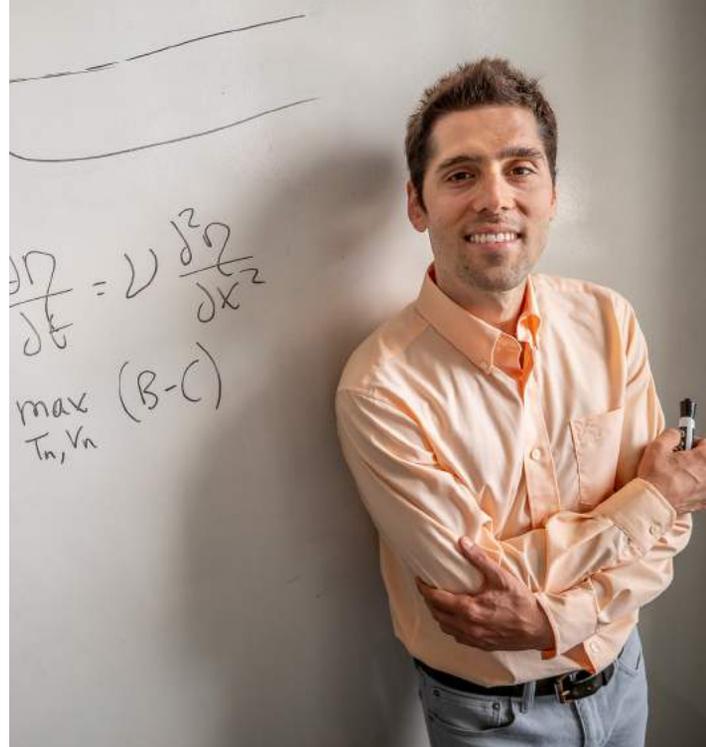
student team is sequencing the genomes of the clinging jellyfish to determine how they arrived on the East Coast.

"The DNA analysis has found subtle differences in DNA patterns within the same species, which suggests there were several episodes of invasion, not just one," he says. They likely arrived via tankers from the West Coast. His lab is also studying the clinging jellyfish's venom and why it's so toxic. "Understanding the genes that produce the venom might lead to treatments that could alleviate the pain it inflicts on people," he says.





Jorge Lorenzo-Trueba develops mathematical models that will help predict how the coastal environment will react to rising sea levels.



In Bologna's lab, student researchers are studying seagrass, which provides a critical habitat for juvenile crabs and fish. Seagrass also helps prevent erosion during storms, and absorbs and buries carbon, reducing carbon from the atmosphere. "Seagrass is critical to New Jersey because recreational and commercial fisheries are extremely important, as is storm surge and hurricane abatement," says Bologna. But the state's seagrass has been decimated. Bologna received a grant

to restore seagrass by identifying ideal areas for survival and then transplanting live seagrass into those areas.

### Keeping Water Safe for Swimming and Fishing: MEIYIN WU

In August, Biology Professor Meiyin Wu, director of the New Jersey Center for Water Science and Technology, presented final results to the Greenwood Lake Environment Commission about levels of nutrients, pathogens, cyanobacteria and toxins in the lake. The news wasn't good. Wu's tests confirmed the water still was not safe after the emergence of harmful algal blooms earlier in the summer. The lake would remain closed for swimming and other water-contact sports as well as for use as well water. Working to protect New Jersey's water system, Wu studies water safety for drinking, swimming and seafood consumption. Her lab works with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to monitor algae

growth and the toxins algae produces in drinking and swimming water throughout the state. "It's a great concern for human health, and can cause diarrhea, fever, allergic skin reactions and possibly neurodegeneration," says Wu. Her lab also identifies areas unfit for fishing and crabbing.

"In New Jersey, we have quite a few areas with high levels of metals or pollutants; some of which can accumulate in our fish and crabs," she says. Wu's lab, which receives federal, state and local grants, also works with county and city governments and nonprofits to reduce pollutants such as leaky septic tanks and farm runoff spilling into the waterways and water bodies.

### Predicting the Fate of the Barrier Islands: JORGE LORENZO-TRUEBA

The barrier islands along the New Jersey coastline have been able to keep pace with sea-level rise for thousands of years, but they face an uncertain future over the next century as rates of sea-level rise accelerate. Jorge Lorenzo-Trueba, assistant professor of Earth and Environmental Studies, studies the islands' long- and short-term evolution to develop "geo-economic" mathematical models that will help predict how the coastal environment will respond in the future.

Meiyin Wu's lab works with the NJ DEP to monitor algae and toxins in swimming and drinking water throughout the state.



Understanding long-term coastal hazards is particularly relevant to New Jersey, where coastal communities have followed several cycles of rapid development followed by storm-inflicted devastation over the last century. Lorenzo-Trueba's research, which is a combination of numerical tools and field observations, could lead to restoration and protective measures, such as building dunes in front of beachfront properties.

"These cycles of destruction from hurricanes and redevelopment may not be the most economically feasible way to proceed looking into the future, which is why we need to study this," he says.

### When Land and River Meet: JOSHUA GALSTER

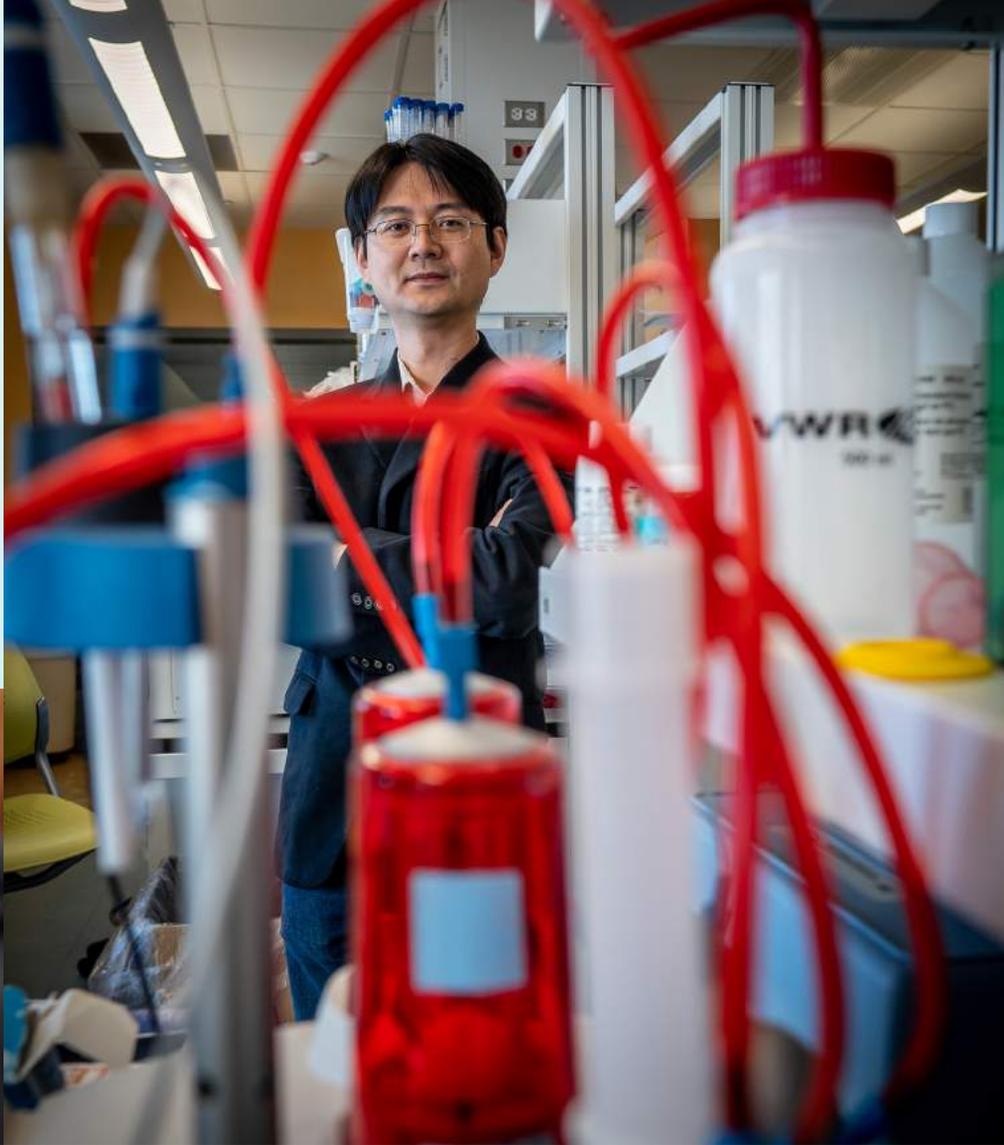
In geology, change usually happens over thousands of years. But at the Rockaway River in Boonton, New Jersey, Joshua Galster, associate professor of Earth and Environmental Studies, and his team are witnessing the river eroding the hillside in real time, with each rock the size of a melon that tumbles down. For the owners

Joshua Galster studies how land use and climate change affect rivers and streams.



of the houses perched at the top of the hill, it is an urgent issue. As a geologist who looks at how land use or climate change affect rivers and streams, Galster and his team monitor the damage, pound erosion pins (metal rods) into the hillside, and take daily photos using a camera they installed.

He and his student researchers are also working on a dam removal project. New Jersey has several thousand small dams, most of them obsolete, and removing them can improve water quality and wildlife



**Pankaj Lal (above) and Yang Deng (right) study ways to reduce stormwater runoff and treat wastewater to make it safe for drinking.**

habitats. But it can be an expensive endeavor. Typically, sediment that builds up behind the dam needs to be dug up and carted away. Galster's students are looking at what happens downstream if the sediment is not removed but allowed to disperse naturally. Does it flow down all at once and wreak havoc in its path, or slowly loosen and move downstream?

"My students have been monitoring how the channel changes downstream of the dam," he says. "If we had inexpensive and efficient dam removal, it would allow us to remove more dams for less money."

### **Keeping Drinking Water Safe: PANKAJ LAL AND YANG DENG**

A hard rain can overflow storm sewers and contaminate the water supply, an issue being tackled by Pankaj Lal and Yang Deng, both professors of Earth and Environmental Studies. It's a particular problem in the bigger towns in Northern New Jersey, like Paterson, Elizabeth, Newark and Orange, which have combined sewer overflows (CSOs), large pipes that collect rainwater and sewage and transport it to a sewage treatment plant. During a heavy rain, these pipes can overflow, making the water unsafe to drink. Lal, who is also the founding director of the Clean Energy and Sustainability Analytics Center, looks specifically at what communities can do to reduce the runoff, such as creating rain barrels and rain gardens, and whether residents are willing to pay for these

measures. He, along with the Center's researchers, are working in three cities to determine their willingness to invest.

Deng, whose work is supported by the University's PSEG Institute for Sustainability Studies and New Jersey Water Resources Research Institute, is studying various methods of treating wastewater to make it safe to drink, and whether communities would be willing to drink the treated water.

The work he and his student researchers are doing includes inventing technology to use a chemical compound for emergency water treatment in response to natural disasters, which are increasing in frequency and magnitude globally. "However," he says, "the invented technology is expected to be applied anywhere for production of safe and clean water." ■

FEATURES

# RENAISSANCE

ENGLISH PROFESSOR  
AND LITERARY SCHOLAR  
NAMED A MACARTHUR  
“GENIUS” FELLOW

# CEM MAN

BY MARY BARR MANN

Professor Jeffrey Alan Miller is excited about teaching even the most arcane texts in English literature. His interest, his passion is hard to contain. See it as he thoughtfully nods while speaking. See it as he paces the classroom in University Hall, punctuating the discussion as he exclaims his approbation to his students.

“Excellent!” ... “Beautiful!” ... “Exactly!” ... “Nicole is on to something really important here.”

It’s not hard for Miller to be effusive in his praise. The two-dozen-plus students in his English Literature I: Beginning to 1660 class who are digging their way through *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* are bright, attentive, prepared and engaged.

Although it is the first time this class has met since Miller was named a 2019 MacArthur Foundation Fellow – a “Genius Grant” awardee – on September 25, Miller downplays the

Photo © John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, used with permission

honor. He briefly acknowledges the award – without even naming it – by apologizing for the MacArthur grant video in which scenes from the class are featured. He deflects the spotlight: “You’re famous now!” he tells the students. “The class looked great ... although the video’s mortifying for me.”

## A BRILLIANT DISCOVERY

A Rhodes Scholar who attended Princeton University as an undergraduate and Oxford for his doctorate, Miller achieved international recognition in 2015 after discovering the earliest known draft of the King James Bible, which he identified while doing research in the archives of Cambridge University’s Sidney Sussex College. Published in 1611, the King James Bible is the most widely read work of English literature of all time and, it follows, one of the most influential. Experts characterized Miller’s discovery as being “perhaps the most significant archival find relating to the King James Bible in decades.”

The MacArthur grant (\$625,000 distributed over five years) is the latest development in what has been an eventful year for Miller. Recently, he accepted one of two prestigious fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, both of which support a full year of dedicated work to complete a book-length critical edition and study on the discovered draft of the King James Bible.

All these accolades could have gone to Miller’s head if it weren’t for the people who keep him grounded. Miller’s wife, Amy Bregar, is a gynecologic oncologist at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Her job “throws into relief one’s own sense of self-importance,” says Miller. “She’s now an attending level physician. It’s a long road. Longer than my doctoral training by many

years.” Miller and Bregar are parents to Abigail, age 1½. “She’s our pride and joy. Parenthood is truly the best thing.” Another girl is on the way.

## A PLACE TO SHINE

Miller is also painfully aware of the difficulties facing academics, particularly specialists like himself, in finding situations that work for them professionally and personally – something he has time to contemplate on his weekly commute from Boston.

“I vividly remember the day I saw the job advertisement for Montclair State. There must have been this enormous smile on my face.” He credits now Deputy English Department Chair Naomi Liebler and

Chair Jonathan Greenberg, among others, for championing the need for a Milton scholar. “Other universities have decided they can get by without someone who teaches Milton. You have to convince a dean, a provost, a president that they need someone who does Milton.”

In addition to his work on the King James Bible, Miller is also nearly finished with a book on John Milton, the 17th-century poet and author, most notably, of *Paradise Lost*. At Montclair State, Miller found a home where he could fly his Milton flag: “I could be myself. I didn’t have to pretend I was a different scholar.” It was Miller’s research on Milton that paved the way for his discovery of the King James Bible draft. While researching an essay in graduate school on Milton, Miller began exploring an archive of papers in



Students in Miller’s early English literature class say they enjoy Miller’s engaging teaching style.



*“To be an English major takes a willingness to follow one’s passions even in the face of such doubt that it is the best way to spend one’s time and money.”*

*—Jeffrey Alan Miller*

Cambridge once belonging to Samuel Ward, one of the approximately 50 men appointed as a translator of the King James Bible. It was one of Ward’s surviving notebooks in the archive that Miller would later identify as containing a draft of part of the King James translation, which he discovered after returning to Cambridge to conduct additional research on Ward in 2014.

## STUDENTS LOVE MILTON

Meanwhile, Miller’s work is hardly all dusty libraries and digital photographs of papers and manuscripts. Teaching is an equal calling to his research and writing, and the students feel it.

“From the moment he got here, people were signing up for Milton – which is unheard of,” says Liebler. “Within five minutes in his classroom, the students know they are in the presence of someone special.”

Students back that up. “He pushes us to analyze the text in ways we wouldn’t think. He made me a better reader,” says Zhane Daughtridge, a senior who first had Miller

as a sophomore. She adds, “He never tells you you’re wrong, but tells you ways you could be right.”

Lauren Lamantia, a junior English major, wants to be a journalist: “He’s very involved in student conversation. He wants to hear our thoughts rather than his own.”

Christopher Condon, a senior English major, concurs: “There’s never a dull moment. He pulls in the students.”

The feeling is mutual. “The best part of being at Montclair State are the students by a mile,” says Miller. “They are so thoughtful, so passionate, so interested. They don’t take their education for granted. Many come from backgrounds where they cannot simply assume they will go to college. There is a palpable sense that the students are eager to learn, they want the education.

“Particularly the English majors have taken a risk – or so they are told by society – in being an English major. Study after study shows that’s not true. Still, to be an English major takes a willingness to

follow one’s passions even in the face of such doubt that it is the best way to spend one’s time and money. As a teacher, it gives one a great sense of responsibility. The students expect to learn a lot. They deserve to learn a lot. I try to live up to my end of the bargain because they certainly live up to theirs.”

## AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, and raised in Dallas, Texas, Miller, 35, was brought to the study of literature through a confluence of religion and intellectual curiosity. Growing up with an Irish Catholic mother and a Southern Baptist father meant religion was always a part of the discussion – but in an open-minded, inclusive manner.

“I grew up in a house where religion and theology were taken very seriously,” he recalls. “It was regarded on an intellectual level, but also one did not have to think about it in a doctrinaire way.”

Miller notes that the Jesuits who taught at his high school were similarly open and interrogative and fostered his interest.

“From the moment he got here, people were signing up for Milton. ... the students know they are in the presence of someone special.”

—Saomi Liebler

It was also in high school that he discovered what would become his calling – when he found his father’s copy of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*: “That was a transformative moment for me.”

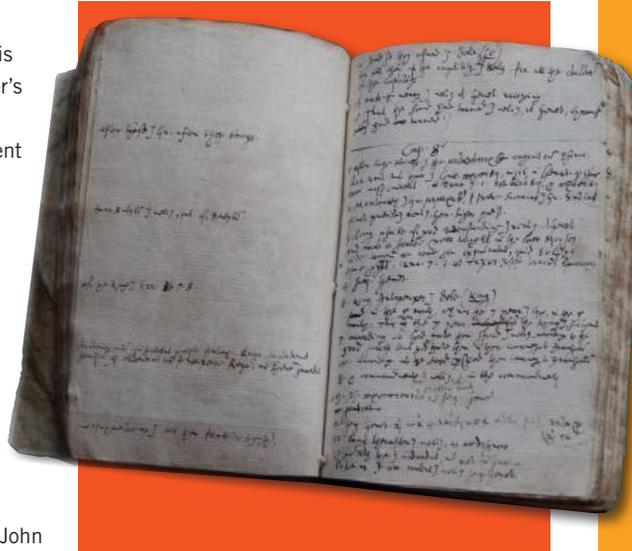
Miller’s expansiveness is one reason the MacArthur Foundation selected him. “This year’s 26 extraordinary MacArthur Fellows demonstrate the power of individual creativity to reframe old problems, spur reflection, create new knowledge, and better the world for everyone,” MacArthur Foundation President John Palfrey said in a statement.

The foundation notes that Miller’s research focuses on “the emergence of key ideas about the role of faith in daily life and government among Reformation and Renaissance scholars.” In addition, “Miller’s expansive view of the writing process and of what constitutes a draft manuscript are changing our understanding of seminal works at the foundation of modern Christianity, philosophy, and literature.”

## DEFENSE OF FREEDOM

Miller further explains why his approach to studying Milton is relevant now.

“Milton is one of the greatest authors who ever lived and wrote in any language. I personally think that *Paradise Lost* is the greatest work ever written. It never stops being relevant. Wrestling with



Miller discovered the earliest known draft of the King James Bible while doing research at Cambridge University. (Courtesy of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge)

reading, delighting in, thinking hard about, writing about, discussing one of the great achievements in human history justifies itself. It proves rewarding on its own terms. Beyond that, however, I do think that there is something really notable and pertinent to our present moment about Milton. Milton is explicitly invested in questions of freedom: social and individual freedom, freedom of thought, freedom of the press. He’s very much a free thinker about religion, government and society. He also asks, ‘Is personal freedom always a good unto itself? What does it mean to live in a society, country, nation? What rights should people have? Who should decide?’ These are questions that are very relevant today.”

## SOME NOTABLE MACARTHUR “GENIUS” FELLOWS

**Cormac McCarthy,**  
writer, 1981

**Henry Louis Gates Jr.,**  
literary critic, 1981

**John Sayles,**  
filmmaker, 1983

**Marian Wright Edelman,**  
children’s rights activist, 1985

**Harold Bloom,**  
literary critic, 1985

**James Adolph Westfall,**  
astronomer, inventor, 1991

**Twyla Tharp,**  
choreographer, dancer, 1992

**Tim Berners-Lee,**  
computer scientist, 1998

**Cecilia Munoz,**  
Civil Rights policy analyst,  
2000

**Colson Whitehead,**  
writer, 2002

**David Simon,**  
journalist, screenwriter,  
producer, *The Wire*, 2010

**Jad Abumrad,**  
Radiolab host, producer, 2011

**Junot Diaz,**  
novelist, 2012

**Ta-Nehisi Paul Coates,**  
author, journalist, 2014

Miller quotes Milton’s *Areopagitica*: “Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men” – by which, Miller believes, Milton meant all people, from the past to the present and into the future – “is but knowledge in the making.” ■

# Eyes ★ on the prize

Former Red Hawk and police officer hopes to bridge the gap between  
**LAW ENFORCEMENT**  
and **URBAN COMMUNITIES**

By Steve Politi

Shyqira Williams '09

**S**hyquira Williams sat in her unmarked police car at an intersection in Camden, surveyed the desolate and depressing scene around her in one of the country's most dangerous cities, and had an epiphany.

It was her second year as a detective in the city handling serious crimes such as sexual assaults and domestic violence in the special victims' unit. Since it took her just eight months to receive that coveted promotion, she knew she was on the fast track to an even bigger role inside the police department.

But, that night in her sedan, something didn't feel right.

"I remember that moment like it was yesterday," recalls Williams, who graduated in 2009. "I looked around and saw the forest and not the trees. I said, 'How? How do we have, in this urban community that is eight and a half square miles, such suffering? So much poverty? Such inadequate education and housing?'

"You have panhandlers begging for money, prostitutes trying to get their fix, people struggling with addictions. You have school kids stepping over needles, empty drug bags, kicking a beer can all the way to school. I just questioned how we have this in America. Why is this not on the top of the list for us to change? Why is this not a national problem that we're trying to address?"

Williams continued her climb up the law enforcement ladder, moving to the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office where she worked undercover on a team that handled narcotics- and gang-related crimes, but she couldn't shake the feeling she had that night in Camden. Then, in 2017, she made a decision that changed her life.

She wanted to be a bigger part of the solution. So she left her job, entered the doctoral program at Stockton University

and started her own foundation. She resolved to tackle one of the biggest problems in the country: finding a way to bridge the gap between urban communities and the police.

"I want to be a professor," says Williams, who is pursuing her doctorate in organizational studies. "I want to create a program that combines criminal justice and African American studies. I want to be part of that change, and I think I can do that."

No one who knew her during her days at Montclair State will doubt that statement. Williams, a Plainfield native, was an undersized guard on the women's basketball team who went from academic probation as a freshman to the Dean's List the next season. But the biggest lessons for "Shy," as she is known, came off the court and outside the classroom.

It was at Montclair State where Williams found a passion for community service. It didn't matter what it was – a team clinic with middle schoolers, a sorority event with sick kids – Williams loved making a difference in the University community. That passion made her one of her coach's favorite players.

"One of the best things about Shy's story is that she didn't come in as a freshman with everything figured out or put together yet," says that coach, Karin Harvey. "Like so many young women, she faced adversity and challenges. But she had great role models in her mother and grandmother, who were both strong women and empowered Shy to speak her mind and stand up for what she believed was right."

Williams decided to honor one of those role models soon after graduating from Montclair State in 2009. She launched the Annie Lee Jones Foundation in Plainfield in her great-grandmother's memory, an organization dedicated to making sure students have the tools they need to succeed academically and professionally.

That grassroots effort would have pleased Jones, who always had a plate of food ready for a hungry friend or stranger and whose favorite phrase was "pay it forward and it pays back." Williams was touched that her grandmother, Tessie Jones, volunteered the most to pass out fliers advertising fundraisers such as walk-a-thons at local businesses.





**(Above)** Alumna Shyquira Williams '09 works with students in Philadelphia. **(Below, right)** Williams played basketball for the Red Hawks during her years at Montclair State.



But Williams didn't stop there. She discovered, after taking a public speaking class her freshman year at Montclair State, that she had a knack for reaching young people. Williams now tries to speak to as many church and youth groups around the state as possible, spreading the word about empowerment.

"Look at reality TV today: You don't get a lot of Michele Obamas out there," Williams says. "I know when I go to these speaking engagements I get looked at up and down because they may not have seen a woman like me. All I want is to leave a lasting impression."

That isn't difficult, given her many hats. Beyond her past police work, Williams is also a lieutenant in the New Jersey National Guard and a published author whose children's books, *Proud Black Girl* and *Proud Black Boy*, extol the same positive message she delivers in her speaking gigs.

The books. The foundation. The public speaking. It is hard to believe that Williams has the time to tackle a dissertation, but her academic work focuses on the impact she wants to make in urban communities.

"I want to teach kids how to interact with the police," she says. "I go to different urban communities, schools, and I teach them, 'This is what you should do, and this is what you should not do.' I want to help bridge that gap between the African American communities and law enforcement.

"We have to evolve with the times. We can't sit here and rely heavily on what we've done in the past and think we're going to change. That's what my dissertation is now: how do we build awareness on both ends – not just the African American community, but how do we make changes on law enforcement as well? Because if one side changes and the other stays the same, that is not sustainable."

That epiphany from her idling detective's car all those years ago has led to a life's mission – and it's all part of a journey that started at Montclair State. If Shyquira Williams has it her way, she'll be able to return to that Camden intersection someday and see meaningful change in one of the country's toughest cities. ■

# SPORTS BRIEFS

## HIRED



**Justin Potts** was named men's basketball coach, taking over a Red Hawks team that went 17-10 in the 2018-19 season. Potts had the same position at Moravian College, where he led the team to its first two Landmark Conference championships and first NCAA Tournament victory in school history. In each of his final three seasons, the team set the school record for wins.

## CHOSEN



A pair of All-Americans, football's **Mauro Altamura** and women's lacrosse defender **Leanne McCloskey**, were named Male and Female Outstanding Athletes of the Year, respectively, for the 2018-19 academic year. Altamura is the first football player to earn the award since 2014, while McCloskey is the second lacrosse player in the last four years to receive the honor.

## INDUCTED



Two-time softball All-American **Carolyn McCrea**, baseball national champion **Dave Wurst**, women's soccer standout defender **Gabby White** and longtime Sports Information Director **Mike Scala** have been selected as the newest inductees into the Montclair State Athletic Hall of Fame. The quartet was enshrined as the 45th Class in October.

## HONORED



Several athletes were honored for their success in the classroom as the New Jersey Athletic Conference announced its All-Academic team for the 2018-19 year. Field hockey's **Nicole Andriani** and soccer's **Kevin Simek** were named to the First Team while swimmer **Christina Cusmano** and baseball's **Andrew Ollwerther** were selected to the second team.



# LONGTIME RED HAWK TAKES THE HELM IN ATHLETICS

By Steve Politi

**R**ob Chesney '90 is only the eighth athletic director in Montclair State history, and given that the University has fielded intercollegiate teams since 1935, that speaks to the stability and attractiveness of the job. People tend to stick around.

Chesney plans to do the same. He has already spent more than half of his life on campus, first as a star soccer player in the late '80s, then as a successful head coach of that team for 11 seasons, and finally as an administrator handling the day-to-day operations of the department.

Now, with his appointment as AD in June, he's providing the vision and leadership for the 18 teams at the University, which has become a destination for Division III athletes. Chesney spoke to *Montclair* magazine about his goals for the sports program:

**Q. What is your vision for athletics?**

**A.** We want to try to be one of the premier Division III athletic programs in the country. We want to compete at the highest

level, win conference championships and put ourselves in the NCAA Tournament, and give ourselves a chance to win national championships. We recognize that's really hard and only a few teams get to do that, but we want to put ourselves in that category where we're competing at the highest level across the board – and, while doing that, creating a great environment for student athletes.

**Q. Is there a priority for the short term?**

**A.** We're trying to support the programs that will enable us to compete on a higher level more often, and at the same time, externally, we want to get our brand out there a little bit. We want to make sure we're visible to the campus and the local community, and extend that regionally. That doesn't happen overnight.

**Q. You so often hear that athletics are the front porch of a university. Is that different in Division III?**

**A.** There are many things the University can and should be proud of, and I think athletics – rightly so – is one of those. We

can be that front porch for the University, as well as the arts, theater and music and all the great things we do. We're excited about that opportunity.

**Q. You've been a player, a coach and an administrator. What is your fondest memory?**

**A.** There are fond memories of some of the wins, whether it's the soccer program I was a part of or the other sports I've been around as an administrator. But I always fall back to some of the stories with the student athletes who have come through. It means a lot when they come back in 10 years and say, "Thanks a lot for what you did." That, to me, is still the most important thing – how you affect the student athletes.

**Q. How has Montclair State changed in your three-plus decades here?**

**A.** Wow. Just as when I walked on campus the first time, I still get that same feeling that makes you think, "Oh, I can fit here." Now, with the expansion and how it's grown ... It's pretty awesome to have been a part of that. ■



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# CONNECTIONS

ALUMNI & FRIENDS



## HOMECOMING 2019

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CONNECTIONS  
ALUMNI & FRIENDS



# HOME COMING 2019

Singing. Dancing. Tailgating. Pony rides.  
A petting zoo. Carnival games. Beer and  
barbecue. A beautiful October day. And  
a Red Hawk win. Check out more online.\*

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\*For more Homecoming fun, see [montclair.edu/homecoming2019](http://montclair.edu/homecoming2019).



# GIVING BACK

## Deloitte Alumni and Deloitte Foundation Sponsor Classroom



The classroom is supported by current partners, principals, managing directors and employees, along with retired partners, principals and managing directors of Deloitte LLP and its subsidiaries with a match from the Deloitte Foundation.

“We feel a strong connection to Montclair State as well as to Deloitte. Many of us speak in classrooms and encourage students to learn more about professional services opportunities at Deloitte. It’s a win/win relationship,” says accounting graduate Lucia Capozzoli ’83, principal, Deloitte & Touche LLP.

“We wanted to elevate the Deloitte brand while giving back to our alma mater,” says Frank Marcos ’80, retired partner, Deloitte Tax LLP. Naming a classroom provides visibility and demonstrates our commitment to the school. “Each of us received a high quality education from professors like Irene Douma, who supported us to succeed in the classroom and beyond.”

Many alumni who have graduated from Montclair State University and the Feliciano School of Business have enjoyed lifelong careers at Deloitte.

In 2013, several Deloitte alumni began reconnecting with Montclair State – speaking in classrooms, attending on-campus events and joining advisory boards. Conversations about how to support their alma mater by establishing a named classroom arose, and in 2018, 13 alumni and a friend of the firm agreed to provide financial support to name the Deloitte Alumni and Deloitte Foundation Classroom in the Feliciano School of Business.

“I’m very excited to be joining Deloitte,” says Jelani Bobcombe ’18, who joined Deloitte’s Tax/Private Equity Practice. “I will be securing my CPA and am looking forward to starting my career.”

Montclair State is grateful to the following alumni who are supporting the classroom: Lucia Capozzoli ’83, Louis A. Ramunno ’91, Michael Fucci ’80, Jonathan Rothman ’91, Sean Gogerty ’86, Dawn Schaefer ’86, Rick Heller ’84, Vincent Ventura (Friend), Thomas Hogan ’79, Paul Vitola ’87, Joseph Kwederis ’88, Joseph Welter ’77, Frank Marcos ’80 and Brian Wilcomes ’97. The University is also grateful to the Deloitte Foundation for its matching gifts.

*Reprinted from FelicianoBiz magazine, 2019.*

## THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

When giving to Montclair State, donors have the incredible power to directly transform students' lives through scholarship support.

Students like Jessica Schlimmer.

Being the first in her family to attend a four-year university is an opportunity Jessica does not take for granted.

"College is a privilege," the senior says. "I take my education very seriously and have put all my effort into what I study."

From her first days on campus, Schlimmer strategically mapped out her four years, tackling an aggressive course load, majoring in Filmmaking, minoring in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, and fitting in additional courses as part of the University Honors Program.

"Filmmaking has been my passion since middle school, so I wanted

to pursue a major that allowed me to explore it." Through her Audiology courses, she realized she has an ear for sound, which she incorporated into her filmmaking by exploring sound mixing and design.

Schlimmer began college with a scholarship from a local Rotary Club and received scholarship support through the College of the Arts and the Honors Program, as well as from Cento Amici, which assists full-time undergraduate students majoring in a program offered by the College of the Arts. Cento Amici is a community-based member organization dedicated to providing need-based scholarship assistance to qualified students in New Jersey.

"My parents instilled a strong value of education in me and wanted more for their children than what they had," she says. "All the hard work was worth it to shape me into who I am today. In the future, I want to give back, too, and create opportunities for students."



Now, with graduation in sight, her persistence is paying off with an on-time graduation.

"My college experience taught me to persevere. It also pushed me to pursue things I wouldn't have had the confidence to do years prior," she adds.

Schlimmer intentionally pushed past her comfort zone, taking on leadership roles in the Unified Asian American Student Organization and the Montclair Unified Filipino American Student Association.

Building on her technical interests, she works parttime as an IT lab

assistant in the campus computer labs and juggles an off-campus job to save money for the costs associated with her senior thesis film.

She is grateful for the resources and support she has had at Montclair State, including that of scholarships.

"Receiving a scholarship means a lot to me because I take pride in my education," she says. "I am grateful that people are willing to assist and invest in my education to help me get where I want to be both academically and personally."

—Laura Iandiorio

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# Your Connection Lasts a Lifetime

While you may have left campus, as a member of the alumni network, you're never far from the nest. Whether you graduated this year or more than 50 years ago, you're part of a vibrant community that welcomes and rewards participation. Invest in yourself and the University by getting involved with fellow alumni and current students, and attending events that build and strengthen your network.

## NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALUMNI

The Office of Alumni Engagement hosts numerous events each year to connect you with the University and fellow graduates. This past summer, for instance, alumni met at receptions in Red Bank and West Orange, and spent a family-friendly day at the Liberty Science Center.

"It is my honor to share the story of Montclair State today and how we are still true to our mission of providing access, opportunity and excellence to our students," says Colleen Coppla, vice president for Development. In July, alumni met up at the Red Rock Tap + Grill in Red Bank, where

they saw old friends, made new ones and enjoyed a view of the sunset over the Navesink River. They also heard from fellow alumnus Rob Chesney '90, who was recently appointed director of Athletics.

"I was happy to attend an alumni gathering so close to home. I enjoyed meeting alumni from a variety of class years and hearing their stories," says Gloria Mercurio '74, '79 MA. "I appreciated the new athletic director's enthusiasm and message."

Later in July, families explored the Liberty Science Center, where they did some stargazing in the biggest planetarium in the Western Hemisphere, experienced scientific exhibits and enjoyed lunch together.

At the end of August, alumni spent an evening at McLoone's Boathouse in West Orange. Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life Karen Pennington and Dean of Students Margaree Coleman-Carter '80 shared University news, including updates on the renovation of College Hall, which is set to open by fall 2020. "It was wonderful to have the opportunity to connect with alumni from recent years as well as from 30 years ago," says Pennington. "The Red Hawk connection remains strong for so many and that was wonderful to see and share."



Clockwise from top left: Alumni gathered at McLoone's Boathouse in West Orange, Liberty Science Center in Jersey City and Red Rock Tap + Grill in Red Bank.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

In the spirit of Red Hawks helping Red Hawks, we provide mentoring opportunities for our alumni, giving them a chance to share their professional experience and expertise with students. Mentoring also provides alumni an opportunity to give back in a meaningful way.

In addition to serving as a mentor, we encourage alumni to help organize events in their towns. This year, we are excited to announce that we'll be launching our first formal alumni chapters in Florida and South Jersey and are looking to you for help and feedback.

## MONTCLAIRconnect

Can't make it to campus? We are only a keystroke away with MONTCLAIRconnect, the exclusive online community for alumni. Here you can search for classmates in the alumni directory, access retail discounts, create an alumni email account and view our calendar of events.

The Office of Alumni Engagement offers online faculty talks about research, career workshops and webinars on "adulting" topics – from managing student loans to financial literacy and self-care. Most recently, the office launched a new series of campus programs showcasing the George Segal Gallery and the Food and Nutrition Labs at the College of Education and Human Services. The best part? If you can't make it to campus, all of our DigitalU programs are created by students in the School of Communication and Media and can be viewed anytime and anywhere through MONTCLAIRconnect. Visit [montclair.edu/alumni](http://montclair.edu/alumni) for more information.

## IMPACT Montclair State

You pay it forward by providing support for current students when they need it most – through the Red Hawk Pantry, Emergency Book Fund and Emergency Scholarship Fund. Together, our alumni and friends make great things happen. Our students appreciate all that you do to help them fulfill their dreams. All gifts, large and small, add up for a big impact. To give, visit [crowdfund.montclair.edu](http://crowdfund.montclair.edu).

## ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

### Discover the Reflections of Italy June 8-17, 2020

Get your boarding pass for the first trip of the Montclair State Alumni Travel Program. We have partnered with Collette travel to offer "Discover the Reflections of Italy" with tours of Rome, Florence, Siena, Venice, Assisi, Perugia and Milan.

In addition, discover the rolling hills of the scenic Tuscan and Umbrian countryside, explore medieval hillside towns, view the masterpieces of the Renaissance and watch hot glass transformed into art on Murano Island. We will also visit a historic winery in the Chianti region and enjoy a chef-led cooking class with lunch.

An online presentation is available. For more information, contact Jenna Villani, **Office of Alumni Engagement**, at [villanij@montclair.edu](mailto:villanij@montclair.edu) or 973-655-7872.



## SOAR WITH US!

Gather with friends and fellow alumni in the coming months to network and hear updates about the University. Events are being planned for the following:

- Montclair
- Morristown
- Hoboken
- New Brunswick
- Asbury Park
- New York City
- Florida (both coasts)
- Los Angeles

Visit [montclair.edu/alumni](http://montclair.edu/alumni) to access the alumni calendar for events, dates and activities near you.

## RED HAWK OPEN HELPS ATHLETICS

Alumni and friends of the University came out for a beautiful day on the golf course to benefit Montclair State athletic teams and programs, raising more than \$100,000 at the University's Seventh Annual Red Hawk Open.

The proceeds will support the more than 500 student athletes and 18 varsity athletic programs of the Montclair State University Athletic Department.

The day began with a BBQ lunch that let guests mingle before teeing off for scramble tournament play. The fun on the course continued throughout the day with activities such as "Beat the Coach," where golfers tested their skills against Red Hawk coaches.

Other highlights included a hole-in-one contest for a 2019 Chevrolet Camaro, courtesy of Schumacher Chevrolet, and competitions for the longest drive, closest to the pin and top three teams. In the evening, golfers and guests enjoyed cocktails, a silent auction and dinner.

"The Red Hawk Open is an exciting event for our department," says Robert Chesney '90, director of Intercollegiate Athletics. "All of the money raised goes directly to our programs and helps to improve the overall student athlete experience."



Altair M. Gobo '74, Gerard T. Papetti '82, John Trainor and Bob Gaccione enjoy the 7th Annual Red Hawk Open.

## REMINISCE. RECONNECT. REDISCOVER

### *Class of 1970 50th Reunion*



The Class of 1970 will return to campus to reunite with fellow classmates and friends in celebration of their anniversary year. The day will begin with the group leading the procession at the Undergraduate Commencement on May 22, 2020. Interested in serving on your reunion committee? Contact Karen Hackett, **Office of Annual Giving and Alumni Engagement**, at [hackettk@montclair.edu](mailto:hackettk@montclair.edu) or 973-655-4207.

### *Class of 1965 – Celebrate your 55th Reunion!*



The 55th reunion is particularly meaningful for the Class of 1965. When the class gathered for its 50th reunion, alumni donated to endow a student scholarship. In May, the class will celebrate awarding its first Class of 1965 Endowed Scholarship. For information about reunion activities for the Class of 1965, contact Karen Hackett, **Office of Annual Giving and Alumni Engagement**, at [hackettk@montclair.edu](mailto:hackettk@montclair.edu) or 973-655-4207.

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Rest assured that your account will be managed with the reliability of Google services.

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Go to [montclair.edu/alumni](http://montclair.edu/alumni), click on the "Alumni Perks" button and follow the simple instructions.

For more information, contact the Office of Alumni Engagement at 973-655-4141.



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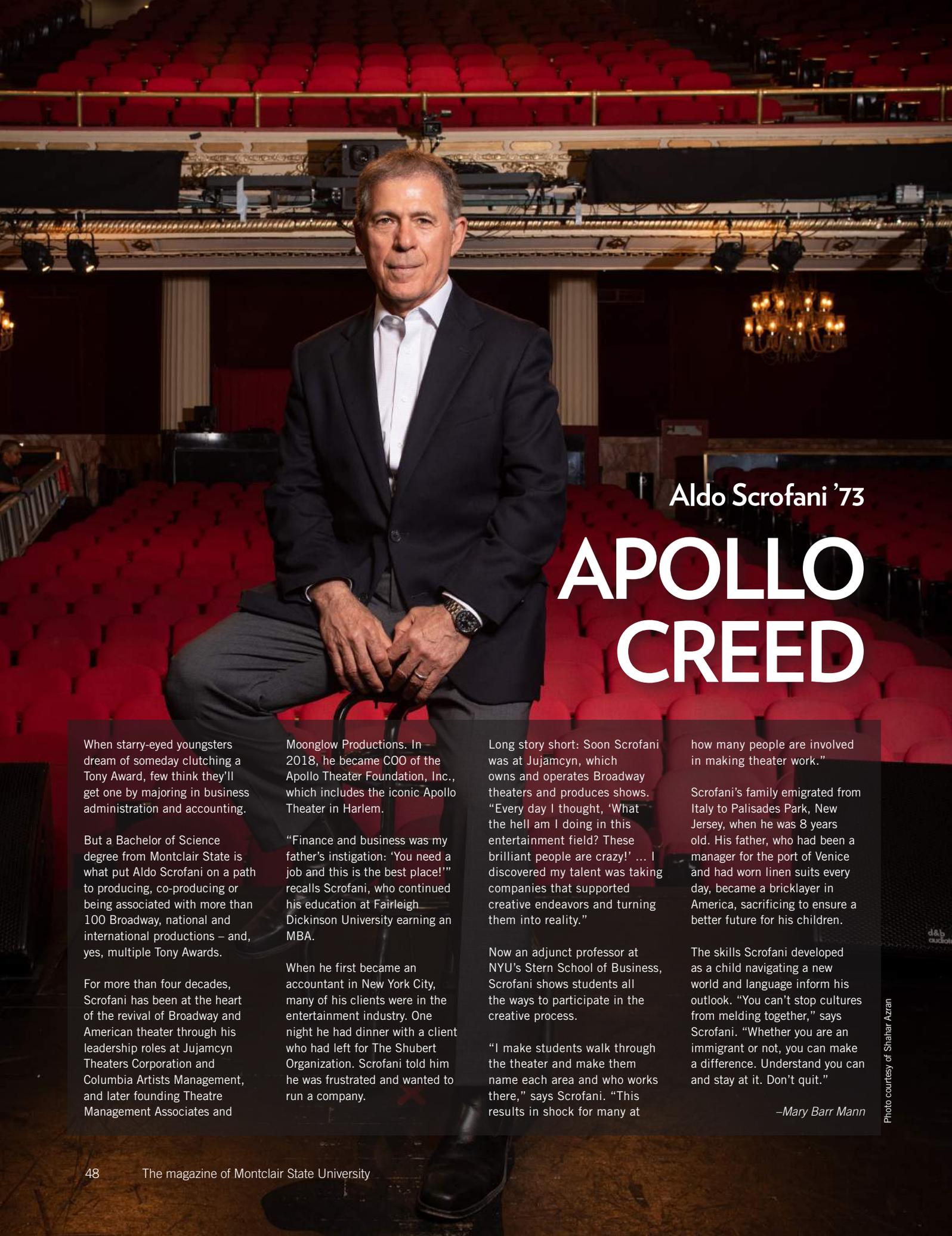


Montclair State University Alumni



Montclair State University Alumni

**Montclair State University**



Aldo Scrofani '73

# APOLLO CREED

When starry-eyed youngsters dream of someday clutching a Tony Award, few think they'll get one by majoring in business administration and accounting.

But a Bachelor of Science degree from Montclair State is what put Aldo Scrofani on a path to producing, co-producing or being associated with more than 100 Broadway, national and international productions – and, yes, multiple Tony Awards.

For more than four decades, Scrofani has been at the heart of the revival of Broadway and American theater through his leadership roles at Jujamcyn Theaters Corporation and Columbia Artists Management, and later founding Theatre Management Associates and

Moonglow Productions. In 2018, he became COO of the Apollo Theater Foundation, Inc., which includes the iconic Apollo Theater in Harlem.

"Finance and business was my father's instigation: 'You need a job and this is the best place!'" recalls Scrofani, who continued his education at Fairleigh Dickinson University earning an MBA.

When he first became an accountant in New York City, many of his clients were in the entertainment industry. One night he had dinner with a client who had left for The Shubert Organization. Scrofani told him he was frustrated and wanted to run a company.

Long story short: Soon Scrofani was at Jujamcyn, which owns and operates Broadway theaters and produces shows. "Every day I thought, 'What the hell am I doing in this entertainment field? These brilliant people are crazy!' ... I discovered my talent was taking companies that supported creative endeavors and turning them into reality."

Now an adjunct professor at NYU's Stern School of Business, Scrofani shows students all the ways to participate in the creative process.

"I make students walk through the theater and make them name each area and who works there," says Scrofani. "This results in shock for many at

how many people are involved in making theater work."

Scrofani's family emigrated from Italy to Palisades Park, New Jersey, when he was 8 years old. His father, who had been a manager for the port of Venice and had worn linen suits every day, became a bricklayer in America, sacrificing to ensure a better future for his children.

The skills Scrofani developed as a child navigating a new world and language inform his outlook. "You can't stop cultures from melding together," says Scrofani. "Whether you are an immigrant or not, you can make a difference. Understand you can and stay at it. Don't quit."

—Mary Barr Mann

Photo courtesy of Shahar Azrian

# CLASS NOTES

## 1950s

**Colleen A. Katz '57** published two travel guides titled *Paris Linked Up* and *New York Linked Up* on Amazon.

## 1960s

**James P. Santomier '68, '69 MA** is the founder of Deseret News Marathon, which is now in its 50th consecutive year.

**Vincent E. Timpanaro '68** retired from the Glen Ridge (N.J.) School District.

**Charles Troccoli '68** and members of Psi Chi fraternity and Delta Omicron Pi sorority gathered in May to celebrate 50 years of friendship. **1**

## 1970s

**Louis D'Amico '73**, coach, teacher and founder of Drums of Thunder, the drum corps at Hillside School in Montclair, is retiring after 35 years. Drums of Thunder has performed at NFL, NBA and college games, in parades, and on *The Today Show*. **2**

**Mary Lucas '75** traveled to Thailand and brought along Montclair State gear to proudly display throughout her journey. **3**

**Kenneth Malmud '76** retired in July after 27 years with Selective Insurance Company of America. For the last 10 years, he served as corporate claims coverage counsel.

## 1980s

**Michele D. Ansbacher '80** was honored at the 2019 Top 25 Leading Women Recognition event in October.

**Eileen Shafer '80**, the superintendent of Paterson (N.J.) Public Schools, was featured in *NJ Monthly* in February as a strong leader in education.

**Kevin P. Glenn '84** joined DLA Piper's global tax practice in New York as a partner.

**Rene T. Rovtar '84 MA** entered her fifth year as superintendent of the Montville (N.J.) Township Public Schools and competed in the Nathan's Famous Fourth of July International Hot Dog Eating Contest.

**Lisa A. Brennan '85** is the executive director of the Genesis Club in Worcester, Mass.

**Tracee E. Davis '88** became a partner for Seyfarth Shaw LLP in the Litigation Department and Global Privacy and Security team in New York.

**Eric Van De Wal '88** was named senior vice president of sales and marketing at Massimo Zanetti Beverage, USA.

**Maria P. Paradiso '89** was the recipient of the Robert F. Kennedy Urban Education Award for School Leaders. She is the Head of School at Link Community Charter School in Newark, N.J.

## 1990s

**Kevin P. Carolan '90** plays the Gander mayor, Claude Elliott, in the national touring production of *Come From Away*, a Tony Award-winning play.

**Timothy Fuhrer '93**, an associate professor of chemistry at Radford University in Virginia, spends summers working in the Air Force Research Lab in Colorado Springs. Fuhrer received an MS from Georgetown University in 2000 and a PhD from Virginia Tech in 2013. He recently hiked Quandary's Peak in Colorado. **4**

**Marisol Ramirez '93** was promoted to supplier diversity manager for PSEG Procurement Center of Excellence after five years as the supervisor of the Accounts Payable Group at PSEG. She brings over 25 years of leadership experience in the areas of customer service, accounts receivable and accounts payable. Ramirez is a board member of St. Michael's Medical Center in Newark and heads the Roselle Park Diversity Committee. **5**

**Jeffrey S. Ausfahl '94 MA** and wife Janet form the musical duo of Slateford Creek. They performed Celtic folk music at the Larchmont (N.Y.) Public Library in March.

**Claudine Baptiste '97** was the recipient of the Maplewood (N.J.) Chamber of Commerce 2019 Distinguished Service Award.

**Dania Ramos '98** and **Michael Aquino '99** relaunched "Timestorm," a fiction podcast about 12-year-old twins who travel through time to preserve Puerto Rico's true history. The show also features performances from alumnae Aurora Mendez '17 and Amanda Faison '14.

**Remo D'Alessandro II '99** received the 2018 Parsippany (N.J.) Good Scout Award for his community service.

**Cathy Madalone '99, '04 MA** was hired as chief of police in Pacific Grove, California.



## CONNECTIONS ALUMNI & FRIENDS

**Mark C. Millard '99** was appointed managing director and leader of the Insurance Risk Advisory group in BDO USA, LLP's Forensic Investigation and Litigation Services practice.

**Kathleen Walter '99 MA** received the Robert Ax Award for 2018-2019. This award is given annually to a high school and middle school educator in the Glen Rock (N.J.) School District.

### 2000s

**Metri Malki '00** expanded his restaurant company De Novo, a European-style pub, by opening a new location in Edgewater, N.J.

**Eugene J. Kutcher '01 MA** was named interim dean of the College of Business Administration at Rider University.

**Tanya C. Lopez '01, '18 MA** was appointed assistant director of education for the Summit (N.J.) School District.

**Marta Fernandez '02** was named president of MACRO TV Studios.

**Wardah Porter '02** earned the professional designation of Certified Employee Benefits Specialist from The International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans and The Wharton School of The University of Pennsylvania. In June, she was profiled in *Benefits Magazine*.

**Jessica L. Baxter '03, '06 Cert, '08 MA** was named principal of Princeton (N.J.) High School.

**Laura K. Dunn '04 MA** retired as guidance counselor from Watchung Hills (N.J.) Regional High School, after a 14-year career there.

**Melissa J. Haithcox-Dennis '04 MA** was appointed executive director of the Alliance of AIDS Services Carolina, Inc., in Raleigh, N.C.

**Jeffrey C. Martinelli '05** was named principal of Immaculate Conception School in Somerville, N.J.

**Stephanie F. Sabaliauskas '05, '11 MA** met with **Christin Cifelli '03, '09 MS; Lucrezia Scarabaggio Holmes '04; Stephanie Lynn Romanko '04; Lauren M. Signorella '05; Jessica O'Shea '06; Gabrielle White '06; Justine Barbato '07; Annette Bednarz '07; Kelly L. Dutko '07; Dara B. Nalven '08; Dominique M. Paladino '08, '13 MA;** and **Erin P. Trezza '08** for a Montclair State Women's Soccer alumnae gathering. **6**

**Amelia S. Teo '05**, a senior probation officer, won the customer service and team player awards during Probation Week at the Essex Probation Division.

**Anna M. Coarissimo '06 MA** received the Rotary Club of Westfield's Philhower Fellowship in recognition of outstanding teaching at the elementary school level.

**Tezeta G. Roro '06** published an article titled "Plotting Your Corporate Exit Strategy" on Forbes.com.

**Christopher G. Rodriguez '07** was promoted to director of Student Financial Aid at Middlesex County (N.J.) College.

**Stacy Albanese '08, '17 MA** married **Andrew Fagioli '11** surrounded by family, friends and fellow Red Hawks in Princeton, N.J., on October 12. With each employed by Montclair State, Fagioli proposed in 2018 in a Rocky costume. **7**

**Tamara D. Leveridge '08**, a sixth grade English teacher at Ivy Hill School, was named Newark's 2019 Teacher of the Year.

**Halley O'Brien '08**, host of *The Snow Report Show* presented by *SKI Magazine*, won an Emmy Award after being nominated five times for regional Emmys. See story, page 9.

**Alexander Sweetwood '08, '11 MBA** is the president of Unique Photo, New Jersey's largest retail camera store and center for photography education. He was distinguished as a "Next Gen" to watch by *Family Business Magazine*.

**Gilman Choudhury '09, '12 Cert** married **Samina Akther '14** in July 2017. **8**

**Johna Z. Mailolli '09**, a ShopRite retail dietitian for Inserra Supermarkets, received the Inserra Supermarkets Dietitian Recognition Award in 2018, the Progressive Grocer Retail Dietitian Outstanding Innovation Award in 2017, the United Fresh Frieda Caplan Family Business Scholarship in 2017 and the Produce for Better Health Foundation Supermarket Dietitian of the Year in 2017. **9**

**Christopher S. Rozewski '09** was named one of *Independent Banker's* 40 Under 40 Emerging Community Bank Leaders. He works for Peapack-Gladstone Bank as vice president of Data and Analytics.

### 2010s

**Kristen Olsen '10 ScD** was hired as audiologist of the Audiology Center at the University of Vermont Medical Center.



Tosan Boyo '11 MPH

# PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCATE NO. 1

When Tosan Boyo '11 MPH talks about the passion he has for his work, one term comes up repeatedly: vulnerable populations.

Montclair State University's first Master of Public Health graduate and the son of health care professionals, Boyo decided to make a career in hospitals while growing up in Lagos, Nigeria. At one point, riots broke out "and my family's hospital was considered the safest place for people to be," he recalls.

He chose the Master of Public Health graduate program because it accommodated his full-time job and because he felt the faculty would "truly invest in my development. [Professor and Chair of the Department of Public Health] Amanda Birnbaum changed my life not only by accepting me into the program," he recalls, "but also creating a learning environment that encouraged my ambitions and ability to thrive."

Since February 2017, Boyo has been chief operating officer



Photo courtesy of Tosan Boyo

at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital and Trauma Center, the city's largest primary care facility and the hub of the city's disaster response in an earthquake or major crisis, serving some 100,000 patients per year. (The hospital added Mark Zuckerberg's name after the Facebook founder and his

wife, Priscilla Chan, donated \$75 million to the hospital in 2015.)

Boyo oversees daily operations as well as large-scale efforts such as capital projects. He says his proudest accomplishments include developing a strategy to advance

equity in health outcomes and supporting the Epic Project implementing an electronic medical record consolidating 62 disparate applications into one patient-centered source across the San Francisco Department of Public Health. In two years under Boyo's leadership, Zuckerberg San Francisco General went from only 6% of hospital departments assessing disparities to 65%.

Boyo also serves as secretary of the board of the Fred Finch Youth Center, which helps vulnerable children and families at multiple locations in California, and has remained active with Montclair State's Department of Public Health as a guest speaker in the Health Policy graduate course, and by helping guide the department about trends and policies.

"I love being empowered to make a difference in the lives of our most vulnerable populations," he says.

—Tom Kertscher

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Expectations

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Respect

Victoria Ankrah '09 MA

# A HEAD START

Victoria Ankrah '09 MA remembers how, while attending Montclair State, early childhood education instructor Elizabeth Kendall made her want to devote herself to nurturing children.

"She was extremely inspiring," Ankrah says. "She made you just want to change the world of little people, little people we had to inspire and educate."

Now the accolades are about Ankrah, who is executive director of the Acelero Learning centers in Camden and

Philadelphia, which serve more than 1,000 children up to age 5 in eight facilities. Acelero was named by Bellwether Education Partners, a national nonprofit organization focused on reforming education to better meet the needs of underserved children, as having one of the most effective Head Start programs in the country, and praised for its professional development for teachers, engagement with families and specially designed instruction for dual-language learners (primarily English and Spanish).

"There are a lot of people who think that funding for Head Start should be cut and that it's not making a difference and it's not changing lives," Ankrah says, "but I'm an example that Head Start works."

Ankrah says she took lessons from her time early in her career as a Head Start teacher in Paterson, New Jersey.

"I was deeply concerned about the children who were in my class. A majority of them were not on a fifth-grade level. That was heartbreaking," Ankrah

recalls. "I knew if I wanted to make a change in this field, then I had to go back to the source of it. I knew that early childhood would have to be the source of it."

Ankrah might be emulating Kendall.

"I think what makes me an effective leader is I think I'm inspiring," she says. "When I'm passionate about something, I'm drawn to create that passion in others."

—Tom Kertscher



Taras Petryshyn '14 MEd

# DREAM FULFILLED

When Taras Petryshyn started as an assistant principal with Clifton Public Schools this past August, it was the culmination of years of hard work for the district that began with his first job as janitor there 18 years ago.

For the Ukrainian immigrant, who came to the United States as a teenager, it was his perseverance through continued education that helped him achieve the American Dream.

He graduated from Clifton High School in 2000, and a year later he was cleaning the

district's administration building by night and attending classes at Bergen Community College by day. After BCC, he went on to get a degree from William Paterson University in 2006 and then worked as a teacher while pursuing his Master of Education in Educational Leadership at Montclair State, attaining the degree in 2014.

Petryshyn's story attracted local and national media attention after his appointment to assistant principal. He was profiled on NJ.com, CBSN New York, ABC7 New York and CNN. While the attention was "not

my idea," he acknowledges that he is happy to inspire others. "I'm hoping it does real things for someone. Maybe it changes someone's mind, and if it does that for one person, that's great."

Petryshyn says that Montclair State's faculty – many who are education professionals – made the difference for him.

"My professors were all deeply knowledgeable, experienced educators. Many were superintendents, principals and top administrators, who shared their real-life situations for us to learn from," he says. "I think

the program is just phenomenal. Being able to learn from those who are working in the field was the cherry on top of the cake."

In his new job as assistant principal, Petryshyn says the days can be hard and long and that the students in School 14 face many challenges, but the effort is well worth it. "I enjoy my time with the kids," Petryshyn says. "You leave and you are happy. That's what matters to me."

—Mary Barr Mann

## CONNECTIONS ALUMNI & FRIENDS

**Martha N. Garcia '11** was selected as the 2019 Hudson County Teacher of the Year. She is a visual arts teacher at Academy 1 Middle School in Jersey City, N.J. **10**

**Carlos Gonzalez '11** was cast as a "Shark" in Steven Spielberg's revival of *West Side Story*. He made his Broadway debut in *On Your Feet!*, for which he was nominated for the Fred Astaire Award as Outstanding Male Dancer.

**Gregory Nasser '12, '15 MS, '18 MA** married his college sweetheart, **Francesca Moran '16**, in June 2019. **11**

**Thomas R. Seickendick '12** joined the Lyndhurst (N.J.) Police Department.

**Ana Briceno '13** was promoted to sourcing manager at Children's Place Corporate in Secaucus, N.J.

**Janet L. Cash '13 MEd, '16 MA** was appointed director of special services and counseling for the Franklin Lakes (N.J.) School District.

**Andrea Padelsky '13 MA, '16 Cert, '17 MA** was hired by Madison (N.J.) High School as assistant principal for athletics.

**Fatimah Turner '13** was appointed a board member to the Orange (N.J.) Housing Development Corporation.

**Nina M. Pearsall '14 MA** was named K-12 supervisor of special education for the West Milford (N.J.) School District.

**Sarah Vandermark '14 PhD** was appointed associate provost for Academic Success at Dixie State University in St. George, Utah.

**Thomas French '15** joined the Montville (N.J.) Police Department in May 2019.

**Taylor A. Summers '15 MA** married Richard Charles Summers in April 2019.

**Daniel J. Walsh '15** was promoted to sergeant for the Chatham (N.J.) Borough Police Department.

**Michael S. Clifford '16** joined the Lyndhurst (N.J.) Police Department.

**Antoine M. Joyner '16** married his college sweetheart **Mahalia K. Caise '15, '16 MA**. The couple met at freshman orientation in 2011. Antoine is a licensed and certified athletic trainer, while Mahalia is an elementary school teacher. **12**

**Darius J. Lee '16** joined the cast of August Wilson's *Fences* at the Delaware Resident Ensemble Players Theatre. Lee made his off-Broadway debut as Sean in *Clueless, The Musical!*

**Anna Locke '17 PhD** received the prestigious Education Award from the New York League of Puerto Rican Women, Inc. She is also the director of clinical internship and field placement for the Nyack, N.Y., academic community.

**Trevor J. Tironi '17** joined the Livingston (N.J.) Police Department.

**Anthony Giaquinto '18** joined the Lyndhurst (N.J.) Police Department.

**Serein Tamimi '18** joined the Paterson (N.J.) police force.

**Deliris Diaz '19** was selected to join the Knowles Teacher Initiative 2019 Cohort of Teaching Fellows.

**Adam Kutarnia '19** joined DMR Architects and will be supporting the construction administration staff.

### SHARE YOUR NEWS

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# IN MEMORIAM

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Thelma (Mae) Ballinger-Novelle '34

Ann B. Goot '35

Ruth Conklin Hummel '37

Irene E. Ehrmann '40, '41 MA

Helen Offinger Keegan '41

Robert M. Sterling '41

Anne R. Romano '43

Jane Reif '46

June Wallace '47

Robert B. Pickel '48, '54 MA

Dorman F. Craig '49, '63 MA

Joan Pellett '49

Katherine Zaretski '49, '54 MA

Robert M. Gray '51, '55 MA

Jean M. Lancaster '51

Edwin C. Neff '54

Doris Maxey '55

Margaret Helfrich '57

Patricia Larrabee '58

Charles Kenison '59, '66 MA

Margaret S. McNally '60

Fred Buehner '61

Barbara Guerriero '62

Victor L. Paddock '63

Frederick C. Soper Jr. '64

Joseph F. Craig Jr. '66

Brian E. Mather '66, '69 MA

Joanne E. Jasinski '67

Jean B. Karpowich '67

Robert C. Cottingham '69

Francis J. Kirsh '69 MA

Linda Shafer '69

Doris M. Hudson '70 MA

Bernadette Novak '71

Tyler C. Richards '71 MA

Pat J. Russoniello '71 MA

Keith A. Clifford '72

Betty O. Demko '72

Rose M. Kardashian '72

Estelle B. Needleman '72 MA

Nicholas A. Tulve Jr. '73 MA

Genia Berk '74 MA

Anthony J. Tabeek '74 MA

Sylvia Dobrowolski '75

Lawrence W. Jinks '75 MA

James O'Neill '76

Margaret A. Salisbury '76

Paul S. Siegel '76

Ronald W. Swede '77

Lynn A. Wroblewski '77

Nancy A. Chiafulio '78

Barbara L. Vill '78, '81 MA

Marilyn M. French '79

Edgel E. Crabtree '80

Thomas H. Hayes '81

Helen M. Purcell '81

Christine O. Zipper '82 MA

Karen Klein '84

John "Jack" W. Soper '84 MA

Gloria I. Clark '85

Barbara H. Roman '85

Justina V. Bruno '86 MA

Kathryn A. Elliott '91

Donna J. Turner '91 MA

Glenn E. Schnack '93

Margaret Y. Dixon '94 MA

John E. Wilkinson '94 MBA

Eric D. Heppel '95

Adriana A. Riano '09

Teressa L. Furr '13 MA

Steven F. Meck '14 MS

Joseph C. Hecht\*\*

Dorothy L. Steele\*

Timothy F. Sullivan\*\*

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\*Former Faculty

\*\*Faculty Emeriti

# LASTING LESSONS

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## LORI KATTERHENRY | Director of Dance

In the dance world, the word “grace” conjures ideals of elegant and refined movement. In describing Lori Katterhenry, who retired as director of the University’s Dance Division after 33 years this past spring, the term goes beyond artistic excellence. “She leads with grace,” says former student Eric Parra '17, who is now a professional dancer with the Limón Dance Company in Manhattan. “She will not stop until her students see in themselves what she sees in them. And for that I am infinitely grateful.” Maureen Glennon '91 started as Katterhenry’s student and ultimately became a colleague. “She was my professor, my mentor and now my very dear friend. ...I really felt like we were so tight as a family at Montclair State.” Marie Sparks '94, director of administration in the College of the Arts, was a mother of two who needed to earn her degree while raising her children when she met Katterhenry. “Lori created an environment where a nontraditional student could thrive. She gave students permission to live their dreams at whatever level they could. She found a place for us.”

—Mary Barr Mann

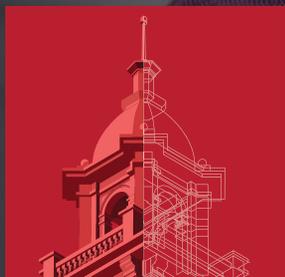
Read more about Katterhenry at [montclair.edu/lasting-lessons/Katterhenry](http://montclair.edu/lasting-lessons/Katterhenry). Let us know which faculty member made a difference during your time at Montclair State at [editor@montclair.edu](mailto:editor@montclair.edu).

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