The Cole Years
AN ERA OF TRANSFORMATION
PAGE 24
Caroline Gutierrez ’21 shoots confetti in celebration of her BA in Psychology. In 18 ceremonies on Sprague Field from June 7 - June 13, Montclair State awarded doctoral, master’s and bachelor’s degrees to a Class of 2021 remarkable for its resilience and perseverance. The multiple smaller ceremonies celebrated graduates in traditional style, with the tossing of caps, speakers and an honorary degree, this year awarded to Mimi Feliciano, co-founder and CEO of FEM Real Estate LLC, during the Feliciano School of Business Undergraduate Commencement ceremony. See coverage at montclair.edu/commencement-news. (Photo by Mike Peters)
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Dear Alumni and Friends,

I am writing to you for the last time for these pages as president of Montclair State University. After 23 years as the president of this growing University, it is time to hand the keys to the next generation.

As I look back on my time here, I am gratified by how much we, as a campus community, have built together. The past year has been a difficult one, but we have come through the year, and the University stands strong and ready to continue the realization of its important mission.

I am immensely grateful to have had an extraordinary community of colleagues, and I am grateful for the alumni and friends of the University who have so generously assisted us in giving our students the opportunity to prepare for lives of accomplishment. I have deeply valued the confidence this community has demonstrated in my leadership, and I have done my best to be deserving of that confidence.

I am certain that the University has a very bright future ahead of it, and I hope that all of you will continue to derive satisfaction from watching generations of students benefit from the education they receive here. I wish you all good days ahead and fulfillment in your lives.

Farewell,

Susan A. Cole
Jonathan G.S. Koppell was selected as Montclair State University’s next president, the Board of Trustees announced on June 8, 2021. A nationally regarded scholar of policy, organization and management who transformed the public affairs college at Arizona State University into one of the largest, best and most innovative in the nation, he will start on August 2.

Board of Trustees Chair Francis M. Cuss said Koppell was the “clear choice for all the Trustees, who were impressed with his energy, his passion, and his dedication to the ideals of public higher education.”

“He is an experienced and visionary leader with a very strong record of increasing service to students and communities, of supporting and advancing the work of the faculty, and engaging donors and alumni in the mission of this institution,” said Cuss. “He has created mutually beneficial partnerships with many external organizations and communities, and he is known on his campus as a fierce advocate for diversity, inclusion and equity. All of these qualities, coupled with his experience as a teacher, a scholar and an administrator, make him the ideal choice for Montclair State at this moment in our history.”

“I could not be more excited about joining Montclair State University,” Koppell said. “At a pivotal moment in higher education, this university – with its deep commitment to serving the public interest and advancing student success – has an opportunity to define the future. I am so impressed by what the faculty and staff have accomplished with President Cole, and I am confident we can build on this foundation in bold, imaginative ways that continue to secure a meaningful future for Montclair State and the students and the state it serves,” Cole said.

During his decade-long tenure as dean of ASU’s Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions and vice provost for public service and social impact, the College grew more than doubled its enrollment, becoming the nation’s largest comprehensive public affairs college, serving more than 9,000 students in bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral programs. He also led the College to significantly improve its student retention and graduation rates through new and innovative counseling and student support initiatives. Koppell quadrupled fundraising at the college, secured one of the largest gifts in the university’s 136-year history and targeted research funding to exceed $30 million annually.

He earned doctoral and master’s degrees in political science from the University of California – Berkeley and a baccalaureate degree in government from Harvard University. At ASU he holds the endowed Lattie and Elva Coor Presidential Chair as Professor of Public Policy, Organization and Management who transformed the public affairs college at Arizona State University into one of the largest, best and most innovative in the nation, he will start on August 2.

Koppell will succeed Susan A. Cole, who is retiring after 23 years of service. Under Cole’s leadership, the University nearly doubled its enrollment and rose from a well-respected regional master’s institution with an almost entirely commuter student population to become a doctoral research university with a sizable residential student population and a growing national reputation (see story, page 24).

“I am confident that Jonathan Koppell understands the university and will work with the campus community to continue to secure a meaningful future for Montclair State and the students and the state it serves,” Cole said.

The officers, who each earned a BA in Justice Studies, say it was all in a day’s work. “There are times and places where things go the right way,” Beczo says.

Even so, each was hailed a hero and responded to the ensuing media attention with grace and humility.

As a first responder to the burning home – where she could hear the woman inside yelling for help – Sayegh recalls thinking, “I’m going to do what I would want someone to do for me” before breaking down the door to save the homeowner and her pets.

Beczo, a classmate and friend of Sayegh, was able to save a teen when a gathering crowd caused a momentary distraction. Beczo saw an opening – “It was a now-or-never situation” – as he wrapped his arms around the boy and pulled him to safety.

Volpe was on patrol driving down a road where a car just moments before had hit a tree. He pulled the driver out a window before the car caught fire. Following the incident, Volpe drove the man home to his anxious family. “As I was leaving, I explained the story to his wife, and she thanked me for saving his life.”

Kristen Sayegh and Corey Beczo are on the payroll for the University’s new branding efforts.

The University’s institutional brand identity highlights the passion and grit of Montclair State students – and shows how a Montclair State education elevates them to new heights.

In a recent brand video, it also shows students proving naysayers wrong: “Definitely in my life, there has been someone who says, ‘Oh, you can’t do that. Or you’re not that good,’” says junior Brandon Vargas. “That always motivates me to do it and to do it better than I did before.”

Vargas, a Family Science and Human Development major, is one of nine students chosen to represent the University in a Communications and Marketing video that showcases Montclair State’s values: empowering, welcoming and committed to excellence.

Agency partner, The EFK Group, tested four different concepts for the brand, and students picked “Elevate” by a wide margin. “I think it really speaks to how tenacious and hard working they are,” says Joseph Brennan, vice president for University Communications and Marketing.

Rebecca Monsanto, a sophomore Molecular Biology major, says she identifies with the can-do spirit of the video’s final line: “We were too busy to listen.”

“My motto is always do what you’re afraid of,” she says.

Beyond the Call of Duty

Former Red Hawk Nick Volpe ’19 came up with many clutch moments while on the football field for Montclair State. However, none of them compare to the one he had this past November when the rookie police officer in Howell Township, New Jersey, rescued a man moments before his car burst into flames.

It was one of three saves in recent months by Montclair State alumni. New Jersey State Trooper Corey Beczo ’15 saved the life of a disoriented teen who was attempting to jump from a highway overpass in Camden. And Toms River Police Officer Rebecca Sayegh ’15 rescued a woman from a burning house.

The officers, who each earned a BA in Justice Studies, say it was all in a day’s work. “There are times and places where things go the right way,” Beczo says.

Even so, each was hailed a hero and responded to the ensuing media attention with grace and humility.

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The University honored Karen L. Pennington who – after more than two decades at Montclair State – retired as vice president for Student Development and Campus Life and on her last day was honored with a send-off parade across campus.

Marching behind decorated golf carts and police vehicles on March 31, students and colleagues bid a fond farewell to Pennington, who served and shaped the lives of countless Red Hawks.

The parade began and ended at the Student Center, where Pennington’s vision and concern for the health, safety and well-being of all students created one of the most inclusive campuses in the country. Since joining Montclair State in 1998, she has been an integral part of the University’s growth, including the expansion of student housing and recreational facilities.

Her legacy is also being honored with contributions to Rocky’s Closet, which provides professional attire to students in need so that they can be dressed appropriately for job interviews and professional networking events.

Dawn Miza Soufliets, formerly a vice president at La Salle University, joined Montclair State on April 5 as the new vice president for Student Development and Campus Life. The vice president oversees 22 departments with nearly 300 employees and some 700 student workers.

Peter Mercuro ’90 recently published his debut children’s book, Our Subway Baby, but it’s a story that he’s been living and writing for more than 20 years.

In August 2000, Mercurio’s partner Danny Stewart found and helped rescue an abandoned newborn infant in the Union Square subway station in New York City. The remarkable tale of their journey to adopting that baby, whom they named Kevin, is detailed in Our Subway Baby.

Published in 2020 by Penguin Random House, the book is a selection on the ALA Rainbow Book List for Young Readers and has gained the attention of major media, including the BBC, NBC’sNightly News and Today.

The University is leading AmeriCorps efforts to help the state recover from the pandemic, with a dozen Montclair State students accepted into the New Jersey COVID-19 Service Corps. They are working for nonprofits and local agencies, particularly in New Jersey’s low-income communities, where the impacts of the pandemic – job loss, hunger, homelessness and limited access to medical and mental health care – are endemic.

The Center for Community Engagement secured a $418,000, three-year grant from the New Jersey Commission for National and Community Service for the effort as well as a $100,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s New Jersey Health Initiatives.

Corps members are paired with agencies, including the Jewish Family and Children’s Services of Northern New Jersey and Wafa House, a nonprofit agency formed to provide social service outreach to Muslims in Passaic County. AmeriCorps provides a modest living stipend and an education award to use toward repaying students’ loans or for further education.

University Launches
New Pre Med Program

Montclair State University has launched a new Pre Medical Program for the fall 2021 semester, creating new opportunities for students by preparing them to pursue careers in medical fields, take the MCAT exam, and apply to medical school.

The Pre Med Program will be an interdisciplinary offering that students in any major can pursue. Students will receive focused preparation for the MCAT exam and advising for applying to medical school, with the goal of increasing the numbers of qualified medical school applicants, “The creation of our pre-medical support will fill a special need for our current students, have the potential for significant impact on the success of our graduates, and will help create diversified pools of qualified medical school applicants,” says Lora Billings, dean of the University’s College of Science and Mathematics, which will house the program.
CREATING SAFER ENVIRONMENTS

Programming implemented earlier has helped to prevent child sex abuse. It has also led to improved self-protective skills and knowledge of appropriate/inappropriate touching, increased parent-child communication and increased disclosure of abuse.

At higher grade levels, comprehensive sex education has also resulted in decreased intimate partner violence, as well as an increase in bystander interventions. Quality sex education can also improve the school environment. The research found that LGBTQ-supportive classes resulted in a more positive school climate, including increased feelings of safety and lower levels of homophobia and bullying for all students − specifically homophobic bullying.

NO DIFFERENT THAN MATH

Goldsbard and Lieberman analyzed 30 years of published research on school-based programs around the world, and their results show that sex education, like any other subject, is most effective when it builds − creating an early foundation and advancing with age-appropriate content and teaching.

Children as young as preschool age not only comprehend, but can openly discuss subjects as varied as gender diversity, gender nonconformity and gender-based oppression, making it the ideal time to begin creating a foundation for lifelong sexual health.

“Waiting until eighth grade algebra to first introduce the subject of math would be absurd. The same is true for sex education,” says Goldsbard.

MA in Ed Leadership Named Best in NJ

The University’s online Master of Arts in Educational Leadership program is ranked No. 1 in New Jersey and No. 15 in the nation − up 10 spots from 2020 – in the U.S. News & World Report 2021 Best Online Programs rankings. The program also ranked among the top 20 in the nation in the rankings’ specialty area results for Educational Administration and Supervision, moving up three spots to No. 19.

Two other online graduate programs offered by Montclair State also placed among the nation’s best in the annual rankings.

The University’s Master of Science in Information Technology with a concentration in Applied Information Technology (Professional Science Master’s) is now ranked No. 56 in the nation, while the online Master of Business Administration (MBA) program continued its climb up the rankings to No. 79 (up nine spots from 2020).

“These rankings once again highlight Montclair State University’s ability to deliver a nationally prominent, accessible education in any delivery mode,” says Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Willard Gingerich.

A Chain Reaction of Kindness

Ever since Gianna Graw ‘21 lost her father, William, a Jersey City police officer, to cancer, she has held onto the memory of how caring and compassionate he was.

“He was willing to do anything to help anyone, even a stranger,” says Graw, who earned an MA in Higher Education and will graduate in June.

“Sometimes when planning and doing the prep work for something, it’s hard to realize what is going on and the emotions behind it until it actually happens, and that’s definitely how it was for me,” Graw recalls.

“It wasn’t until my surgery was done and I was in the hospital recovering that it sunk in what just happened. It was touching and powerful, but words don’t do it justice.”

Gianna Graw’s kidney donation set off a donation “chain” across the country. Photo courtesy of Gianna Graw.
SNAPSHOTS

A Talk with Professor Stefan Robila

Computer Science Professor Stefan Robila, director of the Computational Sensing Laboratory, recently completed a three-year stint as program director at the National Science Foundation (NSF)’s Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure (OAC) that collaborates with other NSF divisions to develop innovative research infrastructures that open new frontiers for discovery.

The Foundation is the premier independent federal science agency and is tasked with identifying and funding projects that advance the country’s health, prosperity and welfare, and secure its defense. To do so it relies on experts like Robila to serve either as reviewers or as temporary or permanent program directors. Robila gives Montclair magazine a glimpse into the NSF and how his time there will serve to help Montclair State students.

Montclair: How would you compare your life as a researcher and professor to your time at the NSF?

Robila: As faculty I contribute to the creation of new degrees and develop new research directions; at NSF I participated in the design of programs that will shape future research and education. OAC’s mission is to enable the research, development and provisioning of cyberinfrastructure that enables all NSF-supported science. The connection between this cyberinfrastructure and the science it serves is growing stronger, generating discoveries that no longer fit within specific domain boundaries. One such discovery led to development of AI-driven computational processes that explore time-dependent changes in molecular systems that have been used to investigate the SARS-Cov-2 infection mechanisms.

Montclair: What work at the Foundation was the most rewarding?

Robila: I am proud that I was part of the team that formulated the first ever cyberinfrastructure research program at NSF. As a researcher at Montclair State, I served as a reviewer of proposals; at NSF I managed the full proposal pipeline, from ensuring compliance and synthesizing research results to making recommendations for funding. My research expertise and writing skills came in handy as every recommendation had to be well justified and placed in the context of value to the program and the NSF. My work covered a variety of programs such as the Major Research Instrumentation, core research, and software and data cyberinfrastructures.

Only two months after arriving at NSF, I joined the group managing the Cyberinfrastructure for Sustained Scientific Innovation (CSSI) program, an initiative with deep roots in OAC, and unique within the Foundation for its focus to support science-driven data and software cyberinfrastructure development. As program lead, I tracked and managed hundreds of proposals for projects that could someday potentially change the way we live.

Montclair: What insight did your time at the NSF OAC give you for your work at Montclair State?

Robila: As Montclair State faculty, I am inspired by our students every day, and I am amazed by their drive to succeed. NSF actively works to ensure that tomorrow’s scientific community will be inclusive and diverse, something that is important to Montclair State as well. Shortly after arriving at the NSF, a group of colleagues and I developed an opportunity that encourages submissions focused on expansion of inclusivity in computing research. We continued evolving this into a full funding program focused on fostering computer science research at Minority Serving Institutions with its first deadline in April 2021.

As a faculty advisor, I often engage students in discussions about how graduate degrees help them further their professional development and broaden the career landscape. Keeping graduate students in mind while at the NSF, I became more familiar with opportunities available to support them. For example, I served as director for panels reviewing applications for the Graduate Research Fellowship Program, one of NSF’s longest-running programs that provides stipends and tuition reimbursement for graduate students.

–Laura Griffin
Montclair magazine: Tell us about your technique, using photographs and giving them new life through the medium of quilting. Beyond the technical side, what does the tradition of quilt making mean for you and for your art?

Bisa Butler: Quilt making is one of the truly American art forms. When I quilt I feel like I am carrying the torch that was lit by my ancestors. There was a tradition of making fabric appliqué artworks in the ancient kingdom of Dahomey (present day Benin) where you will find brightly colored cloths with images of animals and people stitched onto them. Enslaved African Americans made quilts for their own families using the designs and patterns of African textiles and passed on this tradition to their children. Although my direct relatives were not quilters to my knowledge, I feel that I am carrying on this tradition from ancestors unknown.

Montclair: Your portraits include famous people but often feature the unnamed, the forgotten. The man in I Am Not Your Negro is as regal and deeply layered as Frederick Douglass in The Storm, the Whirlwind, and the Earthquake. Tell us about that.

Butler: The man pictured in I Am Not Your Negro was sourced from a photo by Dorothea Lange for the Farm Security Administration. I was drawn to his thoughtful gaze and pose and it made me curious about this contemplative man. It is the mystery and the soul of an image that draws me in – I want to know more. When you encounter Frederick Douglass’ images you can see his defiance, pride and fierce convictions. We are lucky to know his story – but what about those who weren’t so lucky? I am curious about the human condition in all forms and lifestyles. I believe we are all deeply layered – and beautiful in our own ways and that is what I want to portray. If I can make someone’s innate beauty stand out, I feel I have done my job.

Montclair: There seem to be hidden stories in the fabric patterns you choose for the clothing in your subject matter. The fabrics feature globes, airplanes, rings, snakes, electric fans. What does it all mean?

Butler: I use many African textiles that are designed by African and Dutch designers. This cloth is called “Dutch Wax” or “African Wax Print.” The images are often inspired by African folktales, sayings and allegories. For instance, the fabric printed with an electric fan indicates that the wearer is wealthy. If you have an electric fan in your shop in the marketplace it would mean that you have more money to pay for that convenience. The fan indicates economic prosperity. There is another fabric that is printed with stools all over it. This fabric is called “If you want to talk about me, you may as well pull up a stool” or in other words, “I don’t care about your gossip.” I use these fabrics to help communicate the story I am trying to tell about my subjects.

Montclair: The colors in your work are so vibrant, from the patterns of the clothing to the play of light and shadow across faces.

Mailissa “Bisa” Yamba Butler’s art career has soared in the past year, capped by a solo show at the prestigious Art Institute of Chicago, where 22 of her works were on exhibit through April. Butler’s unique technique involves reappropriating vintage photographs and giving them new life through a traditional folkloric medium – quilting. Her work engages with themes of family, community, migration, history, creativity and promise using a variety of material including velvet, cotton, wool, silk and West African kente cloth. Here, Butler, who graduated with a Master of Arts in Teaching in 2005, answers our questions about her “whirlwind” year and the many decades of work behind it.

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Butler: I use color as a way of expressing emotion. I use warm hues like red, orange and yellow to express passion and happiness, while I may use blues and purples to express more somber moods. I also use colors seen in African textiles – electric blue, lime green and rich scarlet reds all at the same time. I portray African Americans and I want to infuse and adorn them with the colors of the continent.

Montclair: You have had quite the year or so – with more major museums exhibiting and purchasing your work, and your portrait of 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai featured as one of 100 covers produced as part of *Time* magazine’s 100 Women of the Year – the most influential women of the past century. How does success feel?

Butler: I feel incredibly thankful and happy that I get to experience moments of success – it has been a long road. Although I must say that I felt very successful as a high school art teacher and was proud of what I was doing. I dreamed that one day I might be able to make a living making my artwork and I’m so glad it actually happened.

It’s easier for me to get work done now because I can work for hours on end in my studio – whereas before I would have to stop because I had to get up early in the morning!

Montclair: The Toledo Museum of Art purchased your portrait of Frederick Douglass. What does this mean for you?

Butler: I am always thrilled when an artwork I have made finds a new home. The Toledo Museum of Art is an incredible institution and to have my artwork join their historic collection is thrilling. I am so happy that people appreciate what I am doing, and I am doubly honored that my rendition of Frederick Douglass can represent such an important person.

Montclair: How did your studies at Montclair State shape you as an educator and an artist?

Butler: I made my first quilt while I was attending Montclair State. My Fibers professor, Kari Glinkowski, instructed us on the basics of quilt making and I decided to make a portrait of my grandparents for my final assignment. That was the moment when I realized I could use my love of sewing and textiles – and combine that with my drawing and painting skills in order to make art.

Montclair: Your father, A. Zachary Yamba, served as president of Essex County College for three decades, bringing enormous growth to the college. How did he influence your path?

Butler: My father always taught me and my siblings to do our best at whatever it was we put our minds to. He used to say, “If you are a street sweeper, be the best street sweeper!” To this date he still advises me and edits my essays. As a teacher, I knew that I had to try my best to make every student have a positive experience while they were in my class. As an artist I still feel that I have a responsibility to put my best effort forward with each piece.

Montclair: What advice would you give students today?

Butler: I would advise students to pursue what you love, and don’t be afraid of hard work. It is OK to struggle, it is OK to get tired – as long as you keep going. Set goals for yourself and don’t quit until you get them. Success may not come easy or quickly but that is OK – the struggle will make you stronger and better.
The COVID-19 pandemic, the economic and political volatility, and the mass response to racism have increased the urgency of our research.

—Mayida Zaal

Preliminary findings in the “Reclaiming: ME” pilot, says Amir Billups, a high school social studies chairperson in Newark, New Jersey, “found situations where young people opened up because they found someone on the staff who shared their experiences. There’s a connection that’s being made there that’s value added.”

Manar Hussein, a doctoral student in Teacher Education and Teacher Development, recalls having only a few teachers of color growing up. “I’ve never had a Muslim teacher in the United States until my current program at Montclair State,” she says. “I thought it was my exclusive experience. In reality, even though New Jersey has a diverse population, the New Jersey Policy Perspective reports that about 66% of the teacher workforce are white women, which does not match the demographics of the student population in our state. When I realized this was bigger than just one Muslim girl in New Jersey, that this was all over the nation, my interest in working with research rooted to help with recruitment and retention of racialized teachers was solidified.”

An important piece of the conversation is how Muslim-Americans are impacted by complicit racism, specifically Blackness. Zaal says, “The research says that this kind of issues that push teachers of color out of the profession are things like racial battle fatigue, and having to be the ones to advocate for marginalized students and to educate others about what it means to be different.”

As the study expands nationally, the researchers will be talking with teachers in cities with growing Muslim-American communities, ethnic enclaves and in places targeted by hate crime, including Dearborn, Michigan; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

The study’s pilot “uncovered that some Muslim-American educators have experienced microaggressions, have experienced bias, or they’ve had to censor themselves in terms of the content that they covered in their classroom,” Billups says.

The results were influenced by the school setting. “In the City of Newark or East Orange, areas with large Muslim populations, those teachers may not feel they need to censor or feel self-conscious about who they are,” Billups says. “But in a different setting, Muslim-American teachers are forced to be a lot more conscious of who they are, how they show up in certain spaces, because they may be the only person who represents a faith or a culture associated with it.”

“We need to flip the conversation,” Zaal says. “Anti-racist education needs to not only focus on racialized communities. It’s the reverse. We need to be thinking about anti-racist education that addresses predominantly white communities, where those conversations may not otherwise be had.”

Led by Montclair State Associate Professor Mayida Zaal, the work of the seven-member participatory action research collective, “Reclaiming: ME (Muslim Educators)” is supported by a $500,000 grant from the Spencer Foundation’s Large Research Grant on Education.

“The COVID-19 pandemic, the economic and political volatility, and the mass response to racism have increased the urgency of our research,” Zaal says.

Zaal has focused much of her scholarship on recruiting and preparing teachers of color. As she watches the gap continue to widen among marginalized groups, and schools operating in systemically unequal and racist ways, she says children from marginalized communities continue to be left behind.

“Representation matters now more than ever. To help address these disparities, our children and communities need diverse teachers committed to anti-racist pedagogies,” Zaal says.

The group will examine the intersectional experiences of Muslim-American teachers in K-12 schools. “Part of what makes our project unique is that we are participatory action researchers. This has allowed us to upend who constructs knowledge and who gets included in complex narratives about Muslim-American teachers,” Zaal says.

Nushrat Hoque, a sociology major, and Mahteen Ahmad ‘13, a sixth-grade English teacher in West Orange, New Jersey, never wanted to miss a day of school as a child. Her teachers, she recalls, “were the smartest, coolest people in the world. They knew everything.” But that changed as she grew older and started wearing a hijab. In school, she says, “I felt like I wasn’t always accepted. One of the motivators for me is to be a teacher who encourages students to love who they are and where they come from.”

Ahmad is using her experiences as a researcher and collaborator on the first national study of Muslim-American teachers, “Teacher Diversity, Retention, and Muslim-American Teachers,” conducting research rooted in dismantling racism, Islamophobia and anti-Blackness.

Chedda Ayari, a doctoral student in Teacher Education and Teacher Development, recalls having only a few teachers of color growing up. “I’ve never had a Muslim teacher in the United States until my current program at Montclair State,” she says. “I thought it was my exclusive experience. In reality, even though New Jersey has a diverse population, the New Jersey Policy Perspective reports that about 66% of the teacher workforce are white women, which does not match the demographics of the student population in our state. When I realized this was bigger than just one Muslim girl in New Jersey, that this was all over the nation, my interest in working with research rooted to help with recruitment and retention of racialized teachers was solidified.”

An important piece of the conversation is how Muslim-Americans are impacted by complicit racism, specifically Blackness. Zaal says, “The research says that this kind of issues that push teachers of color out of the profession are things like racial battle fatigue, and having to be the ones to advocate for marginalized students and to educate others about what it means to be different.”

As the study expands nationally, the researchers will be talking with teachers in cities with growing Muslim-American communities, ethnic enclaves and in places targeted by hate crime, including Dearborn, Michigan; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

The study’s pilot “uncovered that some Muslim-American educators have experienced microaggressions, have experienced bias, or they’ve had to censor themselves in terms of the content that they covered in their classroom,” Billups says.

The results were influenced by the school setting. “In the City of Newark or East Orange, areas with large Muslim populations, those teachers may not feel they need to censor or feel self-conscious about who they are,” Billups says. “But in a different setting, Muslim-American teachers are forced to be a lot more conscious of who they are, how they show up in certain spaces, because they may be the only person who represents a faith or a culture associated with it.”

“We need to flip the conversation,” Zaal says. “Anti-racist education needs to not only focus on racialized communities. It’s the reverse. We need to be thinking about anti-racist education that addresses predominantly white communities, where those conversations may not otherwise be had.”

Led by Montclair State Associate Professor Mayida Zaal, the work of the seven-member participatory action research collective, “Reclaiming: ME (Muslim Educators)” is supported by a $500,000 grant from the Spencer Foundation’s Large Research Grant on Education.

“The COVID-19 pandemic, the economic and political volatility, and the mass response to racism have increased the urgency of our research,” Zaal says.

Zaal has focused much of her scholarship on recruiting and preparing teachers of color. As she watches the gap continue to widen among marginalized groups, and schools operating in systemically unequal and racist ways, she says children from marginalized communities continue to be left behind.

“Representation matters now more than ever. To help address these disparities, our children and communities need diverse teachers committed to anti-racist pedagogies,” Zaal says.

The group will examine the intersectional experiences of Muslim-American teachers in K-12 schools. “Part of what makes our project unique is that we are participatory action researchers. This has allowed us to upend who constructs knowledge and who gets included in complex narratives about Muslim-American teachers,” Zaal says.

Nushrat Hoque, a sociology major, and Mahteen Ahmad ‘13, a sixth-grade English teacher in West Orange, New Jersey, never wanted to miss a day of school as a child. Her teachers, she recalls, “were the smartest, coolest people in the world. They knew everything.” But that changed as she grew older and started wearing a hijab. In school, she says, “I felt like I wasn’t always accepted. One of the motivators for me is to be a teacher who encourages students to love who they are and where they come from.”

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Preliminary findings in the “Reclaiming: ME” pilot, says Amir Billups, a high school social studies chairperson in Newark, New Jersey, “found situations where young people opened up because they found someone on the staff who shared their experiences. There’s a connection that’s being made there that’s value added.”

Manar Hussein, a doctoral student in Teacher Education and Teacher Development, recalls having only a few teachers of color growing up. "I’ve never had a Muslim teacher in the United States until my current program at Montclair State," she says. "I thought it was my exclusive experience. In reality, even though New Jersey has a diverse population, the New Jersey Policy Perspective reports that about 66% of the teacher workforce are white women, which does not match the demographics of the student population in our state. When I realized this was bigger than just one Muslim girl in New Jersey, that this was all over the nation, my interest in working with research rooted to help with recruitment and retention of racialized teachers was solidified."
When a global pandemic disrupted live performances and classroom schedules last fall, an interdepartmental collaboration between students in Theatre and Dance, and Television Production allowed the show to go on.

Together, they produced *Working*, the 1978 Broadway musical based on Studs Terkel’s book, *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do*, first published in 1974. With its vignettes of individual workers’ toils – from farming to waitressing to welding – the show is almost ideally suited for a hybrid production, one that could be rehearsed and recorded via Zoom or, for some musical numbers, in outdoor and/or socially distant or masked groups.

“We adopted protocols for the pandemic into the design and the blocking of our show,” says Peter Flynn, associate professor of Theatre and Dance. “So everybody, unless they’re shooting remotely, unless they’re on Zoom or everybody’s in a mask, everybody stays socially distant. There are even some characters, because of the jobs that they are representing onstage, who wear masks and gloves.”

Working’s tale of the trials and tribulations of everyday workers also made it the perfect theatrical vehicle for addressing the plight of essential laborers during the pandemic. Flynn worked with his associate director, Chanel Johnson ’20, to update the musical, with the blessing of the legendary Stephen Schwartz, who adapted the book for Broadway 43 years ago.

“We formulated questions and put out an email to our entire Musical Theatre student body and said, ‘Whether you’re involved in the show or not, we’d like to interview any family members that have been directly affected by quarantine or by the pandemic.’ And we got a flurry of emails back.”

As a result, Flynn explains, “We interviewed a teacher, three business owners, a pilot and a physician’s assistant.” Then Flynn and Johnson turned each of those interviews into a monologue using a fictional name for the character.

At the same time, Flynn began coordinating with School of Communication and Media Professor Stuart MacLelland on the project, which proved rewarding for students in both programs.

“It’s a huge success story,” says MacLelland, who enlisted students from his Advanced Television Production and Television Production Company classes.

“Most of the time, I give my students an assignment to find acts or talent. But we weren’t going to be able to put 20 people in our studio and control rooms, so I started looking around for content.”

The John J. Cali School of Music and the Department of Theatre and Dance presented great opportunities. Besides filming a Kasser main stage production of *A Chorus Line* using robotic cameras and the University Singers performing *Ain’t No Grave* in the Amphitheater, MacLelland and his students want to work on *Working*.

“It’s been a really good partnership,” says MacLelland. “Montclair State has always been great at broadcast journalism and...
FEATURES | Working Together

Kevin Wang ’21, played firefighter Tom Patrick using a green screen. Other scenes were shot outdoors last fall. Says Wang, “Some of us really needed this. We learned to appreciate every opportunity given and not take any of it for granted.”

“Working alongside director, Chetan Johnson ‘18. ‘We were able to create a show in the middle of a global pandemic, which I think is pretty spectacular.’”

“It was so much fun to be a part of the team that got to do something so incredible, I’m so grateful,” says Carter Winner ’22, Television and Digital Media major with a concentration in TV Production and a Political Science minor.

“Working with the Cali School and Musical Theatre, however, represents ‘a whole new world’ for Television Production students. “When they are watching the rehearsal process and see that side of show business, we’re providing the broadest foundation for any kind of media arts and performance, making them more dimensional and marketable.”

The University company for Working, which was routinely tested for COVID-19, had elsewhere. It’s an experience that they could not have had anywhere else.

“Working together, there are monologues about people who do their jobs during a pandemic.” Musical Theatre major Grace Rivera ’23, who plays the waitress, says she is excited that the “subject of this show is the working class, a group of people that have been immensely affected by the pandemic. It gives them the chance to be in the spotlight and gives them credit for their contribution to the world we know today.”

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For the past 23 years as Montclair State’s president, Cole has drawn on her vision, “ridiculous optimism” and the help of dedicated faculty, administrators and staff, to write a new narrative for the University, transforming it from a respectable regional school to an ambitious national research university with the state’s second largest enrollment.

The transformation is seen everywhere: in the growth of academic and research programs, the building of outstanding new facilities and the renovation of existing buildings, the nearly doubling of the student body, the hiring of hundreds of talented new faculty, the burnishing of Montclair State’s reputation and much more. “It’s a phenomenal narrative that she built year after year,” says University Trustee and Foundation Board member, Rose Cali ’80.

In reflecting on that narrative, Karen L. Pennington, who recently retired as vice president for Student Development and Campus Life after more than two decades, says Cole “has told a tale that people read and followed to be able to fulfill that dream that she was creating for all of us. She brought us all into the play and made us all part of that cast of characters to complete the show.”

“The work that we accomplished together, the things we have built and grown constitute a transformation of Montclair State that is nothing short of miraculous,” Cole said in her fall 2020 address to the University.

The efforts not only elevated Montclair State University’s reputation, they provided tens of thousands of students with an affordable quality education that gave many graduates opportunities they might not otherwise have had.

In an interview with Montclair magazine, Cole said Montclair State, a fledgling university when she arrived, was already “a good institution and had been for many years. But there’s no question, we have transformed the institution. It has been major, rapid for higher education, and profound.”

Notes Pennington: “Dr. Cole recognized early on that we had potential that was not being reached, whether it was because of the numbers of students we were serving, the faculty that could be here, the research that could be done.”

SEEING UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

Montclair State had been advanced from college to university status just a few years before Cole became the first woman to lead the University in 1998. In her inaugural address, she said, “The important question is never what we want for the moment, but what we, as individuals and as a collective community, want to have accomplished at the end of our working lives; where, for example, we want this university to stand in 50 years; the impact we wish to have made on the progress of society.”

The pace of growth over the past 23 years, including the creation of a number of important research centers and institutes and the addition of four new schools and colleges, was meaningful for those working alongside Cole to make it happen.

“To be there as it was happening was one of the most exciting times of my life,” says Bertha Diggs, who retired in 2018 as the associate director of the Educational Opportunity Fund program. “Even when we were going through growing pains … there was something about the atmosphere and the aura. The tone was set before becoming a builder of universities, Susan A. Cole, as a child of Brooklyn, dreamed of a life on the wild frontier. World-famous sharpshooter Annie Oakley was her hero, “and I inhabited her persona for dear life,” Cole says, “capturing the bad guys, bringing justice to the world, acting bravely, doing things.”

The Montclair State University president has been reflecting on her life story and career, from make-believe-cowgirl to playwright to academic, as the curtain draws to a close on a remarkable tenure. It’s a history marked by its boldness of vision for students and its principled response to the urgent issues of the time. Always a natural leader – as evidenced by her very first preschool report card that read: “Susan is the leader in her group. She is the driving force of everything that kids do.” – she grew up determined to make her place in the world and to make the world a better place.

By Marilyn Joyce Lehren and Mary Barr Mann
“She built the buildings but more importantly she transformed the student population.”

Leslie Wilson, associate dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences

As for her cowgirl dreams, to this day, “Annie Oakley is so much a part of her,” observes Pennington. “It’s the maverick, it’s the fearless, the going out there and not worrying about the obstacles that are in your way, and when you find those obstacles, taking them down.”

DIVERSITY: A MATTER OF PERSONAL MORALITY

One of Cole’s goals was for Montclair State’s student body to reflect the diversity of New Jersey. And it does. Representing virtually every demographic and socioeconomic group, from big cities and small towns, students arrive at a campus that seeks to make everyone feel included and welcomed.

“The soul of this university, the very sacred purpose of this university is to create itself as a place where all of our students have the opportunity to fulfill their potential,” Cole told students in a video address in June 2020.

Over several decades, Montclair State has worked to broaden the diversity of its student population so that it reflects the rich diversity of New Jersey. Cole built on these efforts and expanded them in several notable ways, including creating the President’s Commission on Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity as a vehicle for engaging faculty and staff more closely in the work of diversity and inclusion.

“Dr. Cole expanded the student body in ways that had not been considered,” says Associate Dean Leslie Wilson of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. “Our student body became more economically diverse. It became more racially diverse. It became more socially diverse. It became more culturally diverse. She built the buildings but more importantly she transformed the student population. People who would never have considered applying to Montclair State before do apply now because Montclair State makes them feel comfortable and welcome, and that’s important.”

The U.S. Education Trust describes Montclair State as a “Top Gap Closer” for increasing graduation rates for minority students, and the University, as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, enrolls more Latinx undergraduates than any other New Jersey higher education institution. It is recognized

by a president who had direction, who knew that the University could be great by moving in certain directions.”

Those directions include using public-private partnerships to help fund major construction and renovation projects that included more than 3 million square feet of technologically advanced labs and classrooms, two new theaters and an art gallery, the Red Hawk Diner, two parking decks, a train station and a smart energy system that – even with all the new facilities – has reduced the University’s carbon footprint by an estimated 40%.

“She is a force of nature,” says Ralph LaRossa, president and chief operating officer of PSE&G Power, and a member of the University’s Board of Trustees.

“I think the buildings are symbolic of everything else that happened,” LaRossa says. “Even in the changes that were made to the buildings, she kept the ties to the old by making sure it was that same vintage building, the same Mission Revival architecture that was put in place from the beginning.”

But the buildings are just a part of the story. Cole elevated the visibility of the University within the state, the region and the nation. She increased enrollment, enhancing diversity and quality, and increased the institution’s revenue streams from external sources, including non-state resources.

“She was the first college president I think who really understood the legislative process in New Jersey, the cast of characters, I say lovingly, and who they are in New Jersey,” says New Jersey Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg (D-37).

“She used every opportunity to move the University forward.”

In talking about her connections with Montclair State during her own remarkable 30-year career, Senator Weinberg, who is also retiring at the end of 2021, recalls how Cole provided a life highlight: dinner with Ruth Bader Ginsburg after a performance by the late Supreme Court Justice’s grandson in The Merchant of Venice at the Alexander Kasser Theater. “Susan, never one to let an event go by without adding to some positive reaction to it, arranged for a one-on-one,” Weinberg says. “She found ways to feature Montclair State University in whatever was happening.”

“DO RIGHT BY THE WORLD”

Susan Ablon Cole, the daughter of immigrant parents, her mother from Russia and her father from Ukraine, grew up in New York City’s Brooklyn Heights neighborhood.

“All my life, I have been driven by a sense of obligation to do right by the world, and I think that is because my parents and their friends talked about it all the time. They had endured enormous struggles, and they were engaged in making a life in a new country, making a life for their children,” Cole says during an interview. “They cared about issues, and I listened and I absorbed all of that. I absorbed it with the expectations and the hope that they had for building a life in which they could be free, in which they could live and contribute. It became part of who I was.”

During the 2001 spring semester, Heather Buchanan, professor in the John J. Cali School of Music, invited Cole to speak virtually with 130 students as part of the Call School Masterful Musings series. Cole talked about her early life, about Annie Oakley, and about her own musical beginnings as a member of a choir that met every Wednesday afternoon in Brooklyn Heights. A rehearsal of the choir is captured in the film, When We Grow Up, with the children directed by the blacklisted composer Earl Robinson. Susan Cole, a girl with braids in the back row between Boy Scouts, sings and dances.

“When she says her line about adults not being any fun, that’s when I realized the die was cast pretty early on,” says Buchanan. “I’m guessing she was no more than 12 and I just thought, even back then, she was pretty darn serious. She wasn’t mucking around.”

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Karen Pennington, retired vice president for Student Development and Campus Life

as one of the Top 100 Colleges for Hispanics each year for the past 18 years by Hispanic Outlook on Education magazine.

In her EOF work with students from some of the state’s most impoverished communities, Diggs says that under Cole there was emphasis on achievement and retention, encouraging tutoring and support services, engaging students in clubs and activities, inspiring leadership, and keeping students on track to graduate.

"From a holistic level, the goal was to have the student totally immersed in the culture of the University, because that was the way they were going to be successful," Diggs says.

Greg Collins, chair of the University Foundation Board, says his alma mater has changed for the better since he graduated in 1979. "Montclair has elevated itself on Dr. Cole’s personal morality. She saw what was best for the students and how it fit into our world, our society as a whole. And she went forward from there. She didn’t ask permission from anybody. She just did it.”

“She’s done a tremendous job making sure that we have a diverse community,” he says. "When I was a student, Montclair State was not a diverse place. And now it is.”

TOP PRIORITY: STUDENT SUCCESS

When pressed on what makes her most proud, Cole points to University Commencements and the student success they represent. “I see every year as the students walk across the stage there are more of them, from more programs, from more colleges. There are thousands and thousands and tens of thousands of souls that we have served.”

The other proud accomplishment is her longevity in the job. Among college presidents, 23 years is a long time at one institution, as many make their way to the next job after five or six years. But Cole says she wanted to make a real difference at Montclair State – for the sake of the students.

The recognition that students needed to be "front and center of everything that we did" began as soon as Cole arrived, recalls Pennington.

“For many years, a byword that she would always bring into every meeting we had was retention, not just enrollment, but more importantly, retention and graduation,” Pennington says. “That allowed those of us in support positions to place the emphasis where it needed to be, which on what it takes to help a student succeed and the things we need to ensure that they get to make that happen.”

Cindy Meneghin, director of Student Communications and chair of the President’s Commission on Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity, adds, “Everything Dr. Cole has done and everything she’s doing and everything she

n June 22, the Montclair State community gathered to celebrate retiring President Susan A. Cole at the rededication of College Hall in her name.

Now known as Susan A. Cole Hall, the University’s iconic 113-year-old Mission Revival building, which housed the entire school when it opened in 1908, recently reopened after being completely renovated and expanded.

“Rededicating the hall in Dr. Cole’s name is the most fitting honor the Board of Trustees could bestow,” says Francis M. Cuss, chair of the Board of Trustees. “Her approach to renovating this building, which honors its past, while preparing it to serve the needs of the students of today and tomorrow, exemplifies what she has done for the entire institution for the past 23 years.”

“As a result of her outstanding leadership, Montclair State has been remarkably transformed, and today we are poised to advance to the next chapter of our history, and to make an even bigger impact on our state and our nation,” Cuss says.
wants us to do is about the students. It’s about keeping the talent in New Jersey. It’s about making sure everybody who wants a seat in the classroom, gets a seat, helping them grow as people, as good citizens, as not just well-educated, but well-informed and involved. She wants the students to grow as people here.”

Under Cole’s leadership, research-scholars continually break records for securing external grant funding, with $22.4 million awarded for the fiscal-year 2020 alone. Thanks to their work, in 2017, the State of New Jersey designated Montclair State a New Jersey Public Research University, and in 2019, the University advanced in its Carnegie Classification to R2, Doctoral University.

“EVERYTHING DR. COLE HAS DONE AND EVERYTHING SHE’S DOING AND EVERYTHING SHE WANTS US TO DO IS ABOUT THE STUDENTS.”

-Cindy Meneghin, director of Student Communications

“Turning Straw into Gold”

Remaining affordable and accessible remain core values for the University. To support its commitment, Montclair State has consistently maintained tuition rates among the lowest of the four-year public colleges and universities in the state, and dramatically increased scholarship funding. Keeping tuition rates low has been challenging in a state that historically does not provide much funding for higher education. In a 100-year history of the institution, Montclair State University: A Century of Triumph Over Circumstance written by Professor Emeritus Joseph Thomas Moore, Cole said that in order to provide the buildings and the faculty needed, “we have taken matters into our own hands; we have been aggressive and entrepreneurial and clever about turning straw into gold.”

Cole has taken on educating New Jersey lawmakers. Trustee Rose Cali recalls accompanying Cole to Trenton for innumerable meetings with state university and political leaders. Cali says she sometimes questioned whether they had accomplished anything at a meeting, but Cole was stalwart.

“She has clarity in vision,” Cali says. “She saw the broader content and context in working with the state. With her fellow presidents throughout the state, she was the leader.”

Senator Weinberg explains that Cole “made her impact on the college funding formula, not necessarily on the dollars that came forth from that formula, but to make the formula more equitable. Susan gave me a much more passionate view. It’s not just lines on a paper because she made it come alive.”

Case in point, the public-private partnerships to build residence halls and outfit other facilities. “The best examples of that were the dorms and the way President Cole navigated her way through the political system to make sure that she was able to construct those and change the campus from one that was mostly commuters, to one where there’s actually a student environment on campus now,” LaRossa adds.

“THE UNIVERSITY WILL NEVER BE FINISHED. … I AM NOT FINISHED, I COULD NEVER BE FINISHED, SO, AT SOME POINT, I JUST HAVE TO STOP.”

-Susan A. Cole

In her fall address on September 9, 2020, her last to open an academic year, Cole said: “I will not tell you, as so many people do when they retire, that it is time to retire because I have accomplished what I came to do. It would not be true. The University is not finished, and I have not accomplished all that I came to do. The University will never be finished; it is organic and ever changing and meant for the ages, not just the decades. … I am not finished, I could never be finished, so, at some point, I just have to stop.”

In a recent interview, Cole said it’s time for someone with fresh eyes to look at the future. The University has hired Jonathan G.S. Koppell to succeed Cole as the University’s ninth president (see story, page 8).

The foundation that Cole laid will serve the University as it continues to grow. And, to ensure that her legacy serves students well into the future, donors recently contributed approximately $3.5 million in honor to benefit students and programs across the University, including a scholarship in her name. The President Susan A. Cole Scholarship will ensure that New Jersey students who strive to achieve educational success have the opportunity for an education at Montclair State despite any economic and social challenges they may face.

After nearly a quarter century dedicated to building and running the University, Cole says she plans to live in a completely different way in retirement – to take the time to walk, to see and to write.

“I’ve been working ever since I was a little girl helping my parents in their picture frame shop in Brooklyn. I’ve never not had a job, and my life has been consumed with family and working, and when I work, I work full out, it’s never halfway.”

That family includes her two children, Simon and Alexia. Simon Cole is a professor of Criminology, Law and Society, and director of the Newark Center for Science and Society at the University of California, Irvine. Alexia Cole is acting deputy assistant secretary for International Fisheries and director of the Office of International Affairs for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries. Cole also has two granddaughters, Sonia, a senior in business administration at Montclair State despite any economic and social challenges they may face.

As Cole shared recently with the Cali School choral music students, “When I retire this summer, that’s when I’ll try and get some balance back. I’ve been working for a very long time, and now it’s time to be Susan and find myself again, outside of the context of work.”
Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, Montclair State students and faculty have been working toward the greater good, administering vaccinations and health education, and providing commentary and leadership.

A sampling of the outreach includes clicking into video chats with isolated senior citizens, translating for Latino families at a COVID-19 information event in Montclair, and visiting with the homebound to inoculate them against the virus.

Among the students reflecting on the efforts, Karen Cook, a registered nurse pursuing her BSN in the School of Nursing, says the outreach “was cathartic in a way I didn’t expect.” Cook vaccinated seniors in their homes through a University partnership with the West Orange Health Department. “Each dose put in an arm, represented a face I wouldn’t see on my next shift at work. I was finally on the proactive side of this battle and that felt wonderful.”

In scenes of community outreach, students and faculty assist in pandemic recovery.

1. Aisha Shabbir, a sophomore BSN student, directs a resident to her inoculation. “I was just taking names and they thanked me over and over,” says Shabbir. “We started talking and I told them about my life and they told me about theirs.”

2. Layal Helwani ’16 found herself in the center of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A health educator, her work has evolved from contact tracing to testing people to coordinating the vaccination rollout for the Clifton Health Department. She is seen here at a drive-through vaccination clinic in Clifton, New Jersey, marking a windshield to note the vaccination time. “To see everything play out the way it did, I’m almost speechless to describe how far we’ve come and how much of our resources and time this has taken,” she says.

3. Karen Cook and Valentina Valencia, registered nurses in the School of Nursing’s BSN program, made house calls to give the Johnson & Johnson vaccine to the homebound. The visits were part of the School of Nursing’s ongoing partnership with the West Orange Health Department. “This second we step inside the residents’ homes we are taking everything in,” Valencia says. “We have to understand this is their most private space and it speaks for who they are.”

4. Theresa Migliaccio ’21 and Mark Rodrigues ’21, registered nurses who graduated this spring with the BSN degree, prepared necessary documentation for vaccine administration. “It’s exceptionally rewarding,” Rodrigues says, “knowing we are putting people on track for getting back some sort of normalcy.” Adisa Migliaccio, “They cry and they’re so thankful.”

5. Christina Chagaris ’21 and Gregory Carmona, Nutrition and Food Science majors, and their video pal John Zbozen Jr at Canterbury Village Assisted Living in West Orange, New Jersey. Throughout the semester, they connected beyond conversations about healthy eating to share life lessons and stories. “This experience taught me about the importance of having a community and support system,” Chagaris says.

6. “It was as if we were lifelong friends,” says junior Gregory Carmona of meeting, finally in person, his “video pal,” John Zbozen Jr., a retired U.S. Army mapmaker, with whom he spent Friday mornings throughout the spring on Zoom to talk about food and life.
ATHLETICS

WOMEN’S SOCCER WINS NJAC CHAMPIONSHIP
Sophomore midfielder Chisom Onyewuenyi picked the best possible time to record her first goal of the season.

“CHChi,” as she is known to her teammates, blasted a shot from 30 yards out in the 71st minute lifting second-seeded Montclair State to the NJAC Championship with a 1-0 victory over No. 1 seeded Rutgers-Camden on April 14.

Onyewuenyi’s goal capped off an unbeaten season for the Red Hawks (5-0-2), who claimed their fourth overall conference title and first since the 2014 campaign. It was also the first time Montclair State won the championship in regulation. The previous three – 2004, 2012 and 2014 – were all decided by penalty kicks.

IN RARE SPRING PLAY, FOOTBALL NABS NJAC NORTH TITLE
In a rare, condensed spring season, following a fall that saw only practice because of the pandemic, the Red Hawks football team captured the NJAC North Division title 28-0 over William Paterson University on April 2. Three players who were key to that victory, were named NJAC players of the week for the game that was also the season finale.

Senior safety Zack Zaccone was named the Defensive Player of the Week while sophomores running back Abellany Mendez was tabbed Offensive Player of the Week and senior kicker Ian Johnson was selected Special Teams Player of the Week.

Mendez rushed for 111 yards and scored three touchdowns total while averaging 5.8 yards per carry and pulling in two receptions for 15 yards. Zaccone had 11 tackles, 10 unassisted, and also had an interception and a forced fumble, both of which led to Red Hawks scores. Johnson, who also played soccer for Montclair State and was on the University’s diving team, connected on two extra points in his first and only football game for Montclair State.

WOMEN’S LACROSSE DEFEAT TCNJ FOR FIRST TIME EVER
Senior goalkeeper Allyn Lilien matched the school record with 25 saves as the Montclair State women’s lacrosse team knocked off No. 10 The College of New Jersey 10-9, the first win over the Lions in program history.

The Red Hawks snapped a 22-game skid against the Lions. Lilien’s 25 saves matched the 1981 save performance by Nilsa Ramirez against Rutgers.
In a festive celebration of philanthropy and achievements, more than 250 Montclair State University alumni, friends, benefactors and community members gathered on campus to raise money for student scholarships as well as to recognize the distinguished service of Montclair State President Susan A. Cole and honor four influential alumni on May 22, 2021.

The Montclair State University Foundation announced that more than $4 million was raised in scholarship and program funds for future generations of students, including nearly $750,000 as part of the Annual Scholarship Fundraiser. Some $3.5 million of that was pledged in Cole’s honor. Guests were also treated to a student performance in the University’s landmark Amphitheater.

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy and First Lady Tammy Snyder Murphy kicked off the evening by paying tribute to President Cole as she prepares to retire. “Susan has made an indelible mark on this institution, within our higher education community, and on our state,” said Murphy. “Your love of this institution has radiated throughout your efforts to better its future…. Because of you, the future of Montclair State has never been brighter.”

The evening’s program also celebrated the remarkable achievements of four alumni who have carried their Montclair State education forward to achieve great success in their professions and in their communities.

Community philanthropist and dedicated alumnus Rose L. Cali ’80 received the Mary Mochary and Michael Kasser Award for Philanthropic Leadership, presented to her by Mary Mochary, who along with her brother Michael Kasser, are the children of Alexander Kasser, for whom the University’s theater is named. Cali’s extensive service to the University includes leadership roles on multiple boards, and she and her late husband, John, created opportunities for generations of music students through an endowed gift for scholarships through the John J. Cali School of Music (see profile, page 42).

Cali presented the Rose and John J. Cali Award for Business Leadership and Community Engagement to Michael J. Fucci ’80, former chairman of the Deloitte US Board of Directors, in recognition of his work to develop leaders in the workplace and inspire students as future leaders.

Co-honorees Denise Rover ’84 and Al Prieto ’84 received the Margaret and Herman Sokol Award for Theatre and Dance students perform selections from Working, A Musical in the Amphitheater.

Alumni Achievement and Civic Leadership, bestowed on alumni who have made a significant contribution to industry, culture and/or society. Alumnus and University Foundation Board of Trustees Chair Greg Collins ’79 (see profile, page 41) presented the award to Rover, sales account manager at NBCUniversal, and to Prieto, vice president of NewsOne at ABC News. In addition to their decorated careers, both recipients have been integral members of the University’s College of the Arts, serving on its Advisory Board and Prieto also serving on the Advisory Board of its School of Communication and Media.

Since 1999, the Annual Scholarship Fundraiser has raised millions of dollars to support student scholarships that provide financial assistance to hundreds of students of limited financial means, enabling them to pursue and complete their studies at Montclair State.

For students like Ashon Lanada, a junior majoring in Business Administration, scholarship support is life changing. “What drives me is the fact that nobody in my family has done this before – I’m the first to have these opportunities. As a first generation college student, it’s vital for me to start the story.”

Make a Difference
Visit montclair.edu/make-a-gift to make a difference for students at Montclair State.
**Fundraiser Supports Rocky’s Closet**

Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life Karen L. Pennington’s retirement inspired a fundraising campaign this spring for one of her initiatives, Rocky’s Closet.

Driven by her deep passion for the development of students since arriving in 1998, Pennington launched both Rocky’s Closet and the Red Hawk Pantry during her tenure. Alumni and friends have generously supported both projects. The campaign for Rocky’s Closet in honor of Pennington raised more than $15,000 to help students acquire professional attire to help instill confidence for their first interview and to launch their careers.

“Dr. Pennington understood that being able to meet the basic needs of students was an integral step in creating an environment for students to succeed at the University,” says Dean of Students Margaree Coleman-Carter.

To support Rocky’s Closet, visit crowdfunding.montclair.edu/rockyscloset or contact the Office of Annual Giving at 973-655-4141 or giving@montclair.edu.

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**New Affinity Groups in MONTCLAIRconnect**

Looking to build your professional network and connect with fellow alumni? Join the Montclair State alumni online community – MONTCLAIRconnect. Connect with alumni from all class years or join a group from your specific college, region or affinity. You’re sure to find a group designed especially for you. The latest groups to launch include the Hispanic/Latinx Alumni Network and Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) Alumni Network.

“For the EOF Program, alumni engagement and outreach has always been an important aspect of our mission,” notes Carmen Reyes-Cuevas, assistant director for the Educational Opportunity Fund Program.

The groups offer diverse programming, including social and professional networking events, professional development workshops, and conversations between students and alumni. “The Hispanic/Latinx Alumni Network creates a space where we can support each other, network with each other, learn from each other, and listen to each other’s stories,” says Katia Paz Goldfarb, assistant vice president for Hispanic Serving Initiatives.

Want to create an alumni affinity group for your team, student organization or academic area? Or a regional chapter or industry-based group? Let us know! Contact us at montclairconnect@montclair.edu.

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**#MontclairStateGIVES**

**Virtual Trip to the Galápagos Islands**

Hosted by the Montclair State West Coast Florida chapter, alumni and friends enjoyed a presentation from Biology Professor Scott Kight, who is also the associate dean for the College of Science and Mathematics. Kight led attendees on a virtual tour through the Galápagos and shared stories about the scientific history of the islands, illustrated by stunning photographs. Kight and students and faculty from Montclair State traveled to the Galápagos in spring 2020 as part of a biology course, and Kight discussed their learning experiences during this unique opportunity.

Alumni Jane Bogossian Saks ‘70, ‘75 MA and Gene Saks ‘70 appreciated the armchair tour. “We want to thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to see the Galápagos and its animals! It was wonderful,” said Jane.

Although the focus was science, the event had broad appeal. “I was never a science person, but Dr. Kight’s presentation has us thinking about taking this trip! And thinking about taking our grandchildren!” says Joe Fiordaliso ’67, who attended virtually with his wife, Marilyn ’88.

To view this recording visit MONTCLAIRconnect at connect.montclair.edu. Interested in starting a regional chapter or hosting a virtual event? Contact Karen Hackett, Associate Director of Alumni Engagement, at 973-655-4207 or hackettk@montclair.edu.

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**Beginning Your Career: An Alumni Panel**

In March, the Class of 2021, along with fellow students and alumni, had the opportunity to hear from three alumni about what employers are looking for in job candidates. Hosted by the Office of Alumni Engagement, the panel featured talent management professionals Keesha Chavis ’97, ’03 MA, associate vice president and chief human resources officer at Widener University; Chris Fitzpatrick ’04, campus relations manager at Crestron Electronics; and Bisrat “Bis” Mekbeb ’01, vice president, lead HR business partner at Global Atlantic Financial Group.

View this recording by signing up at connect.montclair.edu. To learn more about this and other virtual events, visit montclair.edu/alumni or contact the Office of Alumni Engagement at 973-655-4141 or alumni@montclair.edu.

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**University Receives Gift of Hand Sanitizer from My Sales**

Montclair State University’s efforts to ensure the health and well-being of students, faculty and staff received a boost with a gift of 165,000 units of 3.38-ounce bottles of hand sanitizer from My Sales LLC, a wholesale distribution company based in Edison, New Jersey in February.

My Sales owner Kevin Zhang and Sales Manager Manny Mukhtarov donated 26 pallets of travel-sized hand sanitizers – at least a year’s supply – to the University. “Montclair State is part of our community, and we are here to help,” Mukhtarov says.

Mukhtarov’s donation was inspired by a presentation from Professor Scott Kight, who led Florida alumni on a virtual tour of that trip.

Larone Breston ’21, associate director of Postal and Warehouse Services, with cases of hand sanitizer from My Sales.
**CLASSNOTES**

**CONNECTIONS | Class Notes**

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**The magazine of Montclair State University**

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**Robert Taylor Brown ’70** published his first poem, “Tracking Colonel Gadaffi,” through Southeast Missouri State University Press for its Proud To Be Writings of American Writers series in November. His non-fiction piece, “If You Would Like To Make A Call,” was also accepted for publication in Mike Judah’s and the Arts, the literary magazine of the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo.

**Margaret Hyatt Bajadowski ’71** used her painting skills to respond to the pandemic’s toll by getting portraits of COVID-19 victims to their loved ones at no cost, though her work has led to donations to local foodbanks from appreciative families and friends. Her project garnered attention in her home state of Florida, where she also launched the group “Facing Not Numbers,” to recruit artists from across the country who share her intentions.

**Judith Medwin ’74** joined the real estate firm, Brown Harris Stevens. She has been a real estate broker in New York for many years.

**Peter Lieberman ’78** released his first single, “Like To Sing.”

**Anthony M. Caruone ’77** was elected vice chair of the Montclair State University Foundation Board of Trustees in October. He has served on the Board for 15 years and was Board secretary prior to this position.

**Joe Cosentino ’77** published the first two books in the Playa Piano Mysterian series, The Player and The Player’s Encore, surrounding a paranormal romantic mystery. He also published; Graving Christmas, the 11th book in the Nicky and Noah series, in December.

**Richard “Rick” M. Guffen ’77 MA** published: Stories of Slavery in New Jersey; Through The History Press. The book highlights the fact that New Jersey was the last northern state to abolish slavery.

**William R. Testa ’79** retired as executive director of The Art/Morris Chapter after 29 years in the position. He was honored in November by the Morris County Board of Freeholders for his nearly four decades as an advocate for people with developmental disabilities.

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**Greg Collins ’79**

An anyone who thinks that a career in accounting isn’t exciting or meaningful hasn’t met Greg Collins ’79.

For more than 30 years, Collins worked in the sports and entertainment industry, holding executive positions at Columbia Pictures and AETV and serving as chief financial officer for Swayne Morgan’s business organization. He also spent time as a director at the New York-based accounting firms Kangro & Parker, LLP and as a partner at Michael & Tim, LLP, the country’s largest minority-owned accounting firm. Collins raised this phase of his career managing his own boutique firm, G. Collins & Company, LLC.

Collins learned of the University while attending Newark’s Malcolm X. Shabazz High School, where his guidance counselor encouraged him to look at Montclair State University. Collins continued his studies at the University’s Co-op Education Advisory Board and then with the Foundation, where he served for 17 years, before becoming chair in 2015. “This is the first time that the Foundation had hired an African American man,” he says. “This is long overdue, which makes me especially excited to be stepping into this position.”

Collins is focused on growing the Foundation’s endowment and providing more resources to the University: “I also hope to strengthen what the EOF program can provide in terms of scholarships, support their books and other academic resources, room and board, and general assistance.”

Proud of the growth and changes at the University, Collins says it is a “different place from what it used to be, but not just because there are so many new buildings, majors and programs.”

“This diversity is such that the University is becoming a wonderful example of community, of all kinds of people working together,” he says. “I know how proud it is to see so many different people getting along and being educationally similar, and I know professors who are so devoted to helping students transition into becoming professionals.”

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**’60s**

Vincent R. Parrillo ’66 MA co-wrote Vincent A. Parrillo: A Collection of His Work with editor Martha U. published by Litwin Publishing. The work highlights his career as a sociology professor, Pulitzer scholar and expert an immigration and immigrant relations. His work has ranged from international speaking engagements and scholarly publications, to producing PBS documentaries and contributing to community theater in northern New Jersey. Terry Scott Boykie ’69 published a novel, The Fortshowing ARC through Adlake Books in New York City. It is a culture-collide, genuine post-prog memoir of Tim Bratkowski, America’s oldest and foremost baby boomer.
Elizabeth DiSavino ’90 wrote a biography, Kathleen Jackson-Francis’ Kentucky’s Forgotten Dallas Collector, and won the Kentucky History Award from the Kentucky Historical Society. The novel was also the subject of a five-minute, coast-to-coast feature in January on All Things Considered on National Public Radio.

Matthew B. Johnson ’60 MA published a book, Wrongful Conviction in Sexual Assault: Stronger Rape, Acquittal Rape, and intra-Affirmative Child Sexual Assault, through Oxford University in October. For the past 20 years, he has served on the faculty of John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY, and is widely published in psychology and law. He has also been influential as an expert witness and advocate for policy reform in legal matters such as immigration reform, the death penalty and parental rights in family court.

Thomas ‘Tom’ Davies ’81 became president of special projects at ENSCO Corporation, located at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., in January. This new role helps establish the company’s new defense and intelligence center.

Barbara Bell ’90 was inducted into the juried organization, National Association of Women Artists. Her work was exhibited at the WH Festival in Haugesund, Norway, and at the George Segal Gallery at Montclair State in the “50 Years of Innovation and Inspiration: The Photographic Legacy of Klaus Schütte and His Students” exhibit. Her primary focus is printmaking and work on paper.

Marylith M. Mercurello ’88, John DiSalvo and Donna Jemison ’92 both started working at The Lubetkin Engineering Agency this year in Medford, N.J. Jennifer T. Ranu ’02 MEd published a book, Children’s Book, Our Subway Baby, with Willow River Press in August. This book received the Individual Artist Grant Award from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. The book’s message is that art helps bring healing, particularly for children with disabilities. Ranu also wrote a five-minute, coast-to-coast feature in January on All Things Considered on National Public Radio.

Richard P. Gallagher Jr. ’01 celebrated 13 years at State Street Bank and Trust Company in Boston.

Gerald “Gary” McInroy ’64 was the choreographer for Godspell, the first musical sponsored musical in 2020 and one of the few during the pandemic. Nicholas Edwards ’14 was also cast in the show, as well as Najah Heltenberger ’21. The show was featured in The New York Times and on CBS and NBC.

Pete Mercurio ’79 published a children’s picture book, Our Subway Baby, with Willow River Press in September. The book tells the true story of how he handed, Danni, fixed a baby in the corner of a New York City subway station and became a family friendship. The New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education partnerships and the resulting research grant opportunities. Cali says such projects are part of the university’s larger mission to improve the local philanthropic community.

Tommy Mercurio ’73, ’82 MA published two books, A Memory of Me and A Memory of You. The two books have been widely published in psychology and law. He has also been influential as an expert witness and advocate for policy reform in legal matters such as immigration reform, the death penalty and parental rights in family court.

Stacy Albamonte Fagioli ’84, ’77 MA and Andrea Fagioli ’11 welcomed their son, Carson Andrew Fagioli, on November 1, 2020. They look forward to their son’s first year of life. They have been together since 2009, during which time they have raised two children together and built a successful business.

Jennifer T. Ranu ’02 MEd published a historical fiction book, Children’s Book, Our Subway Baby, with Willow River Press in August. This book received the Individual Artist Grant Award from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. The book’s message is that art helps bring healing, particularly for children with disabilities. Ranu also wrote a five-minute, coast-to-coast feature in January on All Things Considered on National Public Radio.
When Steve Way beheld the Muslim kiss in the grade who was being bullied, its vision of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, it was the start of a lifelong friendship that would lead him to make television history and save the seeds of his passion for social justice.

The moment he and Ramy Youseff became friends would also one day become a scene in the real-life show (and podcast) of a Muslim American 20-something living in New Jersey and dealing with conflicts between his faith and American culture. In the show, Ramy plays the character's best friend—a role he also plays in real life.

“We really bonded over shared feelings of pain of being an outcast, but we didn’t always get along,” Way recalls. “But it could be worse. There’s no need to dwell on what we have that we could do better. I feel very safe and very protected by the care they receive.”

Way has written two pieces in the book, Channel-Knows, that was released in September and features a collection of inspirational stories from fellow reporters who work with Lady Gaga’s Born This Way Foundation.

Way, who graduated from Montclair State in 2013, is no stranger to being in the public eye. Growing up with muscular dystrophy, he spoke at fund raisers beginning at age 8, and spoke at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences convocation the year he graduated—about resilience and rising to his life’s challenges.

In recent years, he has also become an advocate for the people with disabilities, using his platform to call for change. He currently leads the Rutherford Civil Rights Commission and works to change laws that discriminate against marginalized groups, including those with disabilities.

“I have this growing platform, and I feel I would be venal if I didn’t use it to raise awareness of everything that we go through,” Way says.

Prior to the pandemic, when he was not on set or advocating, Way worked as a stand-up comedian by day and as a stand-up comedian at night. Now that he is fully vaccinated and the world is opening up a bit, he is starting to get some gigs again, and Ramy has been renovated for another season. It was also Ramy Youseff who helped launch their comedy career in 2010, when his improv group did a show to raise money for Muscular Dystrophy.

“Ramy’s always been that talent in me and wanted to bring out the best of me,” Way says. “He’s a great friend and a great co-worker. I feel very safe and very protected by the care they receive.”

Way has added his colleagues to the list of those he helps get through tough times, saying the “miraculous support system” includes their parents, teachers, friends, doctors, girlfriend and, of course, Ramy. “I wouldn’t be here without them.”

“I take it one day at a time, understanding that tomorrow won’t be like today,” he says. “It could be better, it could be worse. There’s no need to dwell on what happened when I think. I never want to know what I can do right now.”

—Laura Kethin

Steve Way and his friend Ramy Youseff in a scene from the Hulu hit show, ‘Ramy.’
Gabrielle Magno Loureiro ’18 recently became a real estate broker manager at Huki Realty’s newest branch office in Binghamton, N.Y. She has received the NJ Realtors Circle of Excellence Sales Award, Bronze Level, for the last three years. She serves as both director and chair for the Young Professionals Network Committee of the Metro Centre Board of Realtors.

Iporja Opera ’19 PhD received a 2020 National Institutes of Health Early Independence Award. She is an assistant professor at the Stone Brook School of Social Welfare, the founding director of the SAIP Lab at Stone Brook University, and visiting faculty at the New School for Public Health through the Research Education Institute for Diverse Scholars program.

Shannon Donaghy ’20 was appointed publicity coordinator in November for Seith Publicity in Cherry Hill, N.J.

Mackenzie Robertson ’20 premiered her film, Life Without Parole: The Gueney-Quinn Story, at the Montclair Film Festival in October.

Nicole Romero-Hendren ’19 wrote, directed, and completed her latest short film, A Real Job, in August 2020. In 2018, her film Documented was first place for Independent Short Film as well as Best Social or Environmental Documentary at the Pasalic County Film Festival and was based on her experiences as an undocumented immigrant.

Kit Salceda-More ’20 became an assistant professor of early childhood education at Francis Marion University.

Jamie Schenbach ’20 MA was featured in hobokenGirl.com’s “First Good Stories From Our Readers Proving 2020 Wasn’t All Bad,” highlighting her accomplishment of receiving her master’s degree amid the pandemic. She is in her sixth year of teaching fourth grade in New Brunswick, N.J.

Rashheed Sijuy ’20 was sworn in as a law enforcement officer for the North Bergen (N.J.) Police Department in February.

Gioia “Joy” Marguerite Toy ’39
Ruth D. Alper Goldenberg ’46, ’48 MA
Margaret Louise Barnard Appleby ’47
Althra A. Vlahopoulos Martin ’47
Marjorie “Marge” Morgenstern Glassman ’48
Fred Pregger ’48, ’50 MA
Suzanne Schaffer ’48
Dr. Rose Marie Battaglia ’51, ’66 MA
Ann O’Connell Gebhard ’51
Maria Webdruff ’51, ’56 MA
Helen Foley Giargiolo ’54
Leonard “Len” Klein ’54 MA
Kathleen F. Breen ’55
James “Jim” R. Murray Jr. ’56
Brietta Curtis Owens ’58
Charles Yamars ’58
Henry D. “Hank” Ehrlich ’69
Merle Biderman ’60
Ronald C. Taylor ’60
James A. Crawford ’61
the Margarita Barney Binder ’62, ’65 MA
Barbara J. Nuss Glow ’63
Col. George Piegari ’63
Joanne Egan ’64
Charles S. Mainelli ’64, ’66 MA
Glenn A. Rider ’64
John A. Young ’64 MA
Frances L. Bona ’65
John A. “Jack” Buffen ’65 MA
Ruth A. Bond ’66 MA
Carole Lane ’66
Werner John Strube ’66 MA
Linda Lieb Tlieger ’66
Adolph H. Haug ’68 MA
LaVernia J. Black ’68
Gerardine C. Waggener ’68 MA
Susan N. Slotz ’69

Teresa Landini Taylor ’69
Catherine “Cathy” A. Duchsensky Abboudi ’70
Sheila Crotty ’70
Doris H. Harnacker Funk ’73 MA
Robert W. “Bob” Batz ’76 MA
George R. Henderson ’76
Levy Nkukuri Mayuku ’76
Bohdan A. “Bob” Mykulak ’76 MA
Dr. Mark Atlee ’77
Ann “Nancy” Cunningham Appert ’77 MA
Judy Weston ’77 MA
Karen C. Findolomi ’78
Russ Buchtof ’79
Ann T. Darke ’79
Marilyn E. Mitchell ’80
Janel Godby ’82 MA
Patricia J. Venterpoon ’84
Gloria Cabyo ’85
Thomas P. Hunt ’85 MA
Judith V. Enhornt Mitchell ’87
Helen Savina ’87
Joseph J. Dlago ’90
Jill M. Hornby ’90
Susan R. Garquero ’92
Shirley Endos ’95
John Ditel ’95
Daniel R. Laskart ’90
Antrea “Art” J. Mahner ’90 MA
Chad Davis ’92
Yaeleris Monegro De Flores ’92

*S Former Faculty
**Faculty Emeriti
***Former Presidents
HARBANS SINGH  PROFESSOR EMERITUS, EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

In 2019, Harbans Singh, then the University’s longest-serving professor, carried the ceremonial mace as Grand Marshal at Commencement. The mace, an ornamental symbol of authority that originated centuries ago as an instrument of war, took on a markedly benevolent quality with Singh’s kind and gently smiling face behind it. For decades before his retirement last fall, Singh’s students knew that smile as a reflection of his empathy. “Dr. Harbans Singh has been a friend, a mentor and an inspiration to me since I began my career here,” says Amy Ferdinand ‘14 PhD, Environmental Management, the director of Environmental Health and Safety for University Facilities. “His focus was not just on teaching, but ensuring that students understood the material,” says Siobhan McCarthy, reference librarian for Research and Reference Services at Sprague Library, and current student in the graduate Sustainability Science program. Rae Cade ‘20 MS, Sustainability Science, is now working toward a PhD at Montclair State. She recalls that Singh “started every class with just a little bit of information about himself, talking to students to make sure that we’re all okay, mentally and physically.” Mike Wilson ’09 MS, Environmental Management, says he was unsure of himself when he came to Montclair State as an older student. Singh “gave me the confidence to continue my education. He recognized the valuable experience that I had gained through my employment in public gardening and was always trying to get me to apply practical experience to my studies – but he exerted his influence in subtle ways.” Wilson now works as an adjunct professor of Environmental Studies for Ramapo College and as an agricultural extension agent for Cornell University Cooperative Extension Service. “Dr. Singh is one of the kindest and gentlest teachers I have ever had,” says Wilson. “He made me feel comfortable from the very beginning.” —Mary Barr Mann

Read more at montclair.edu/magazine. Let us know who made a difference during your time at Montclair State at editor@montclair.edu.

SUPPORT PRESIDENT COLE’S LEGACY AND START YOUR OWN

In her 23 years of distinguished service to Montclair State University, President Susan A. Cole led the University’s transformation into a celebrated public research university. You can honor her legacy by supporting the President Susan A. Cole Scholarship, which will help promising students for years to come.

Go to montclair.edu/make-a-gift or use the envelope in this magazine for this opportunity to make a difference.

To learn how to create your own legacy to benefit future students visit montclair.mylegacygift.org or contact Ely F. Santoni, senior director of Gift Planning at 973-655-3695 or santonituere@montclair.edu.
SAVE THE DATES

Homecoming

We look forward to seeing you back on campus!

October 9, 2021
montclair.edu/homecoming

9th Annual
Red Hawk Open

A golf outing to benefit our student athletes
Crestmont Country Club
West Orange, New Jersey

September 13, 2021
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