

FALL/WINTER 2019-20 | New Frontiers for Liquid Crystal Research | Rising Scholars | Wi-Fi Pioneer | KSU Bucket List

KENT STATE

M A G A Z I N E



History Lessons

As Kent State continues its yearlong 50th commemoration of May 4, 1970, President Todd Diacon wants you to reflect on the dangers of polarization and the power of reconciliation.

SEE PAGE 10

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On the cover: President Todd Diacon, PhD, was inaugurated as Kent State's 13th president on November 1, 2019. See page 10.

COVER PHOTO: RAMI DAUD

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Take Note

Kent State is a university on the rise, as is evidenced on almost every page of this issue. As former provost Todd Diacon has taken over his new role as Kent State's 13th president, he says he's been gaining an even greater appreciation for Kent State's potential to impact Ohio and the world.

Students are taking advantage of exciting research opportunities and study away/study abroad programs that expand their horizons, boost their growth and propel their career prospects.

Rising Scholars, a program first started at Kent State's Columbiana County campuses, is being rolled out to all regional campuses to help promising middle school students reach their full potential—and lift up their communities for generations to come.

The new FedEx Aeronautics Academic Center is accelerating the university's commitment to graduate increased numbers of aviation professionals who will soar to greater achievements.


And speaking of things on the rise, recent news reports have noted that Kent State's iconic black squirrels are increasing their range and becoming more common in the greater Cleveland area.

However, Greg Smith, PhD, an assistant professor of biological sciences at Kent State at Stark, says squirrels typically don't travel that far. It's more plausible that small pockets of black squirrels naturally arose in Cleveland due to a genetic mutation in the grey or fox squirrel and their numbers are slowly growing.

Smith also says the minimal research available suggests that the squirrels' dark color could make them more resistant to cold, increasing the population farther north.


In any event, they're still hanging out on the pages of this magazine!

Squirrel Search

In each issue, we hide an image of a black squirrel on three pages (not counting the Table of Contents). If you find all three, you qualify for a drawing to win a squirrel-themed prize. Each squirrel will appear like this:  (shown actual size and will not be distorted or rotated).

When you find them, send us an email at magazine@kent.edu, listing the three page numbers and places they appear, plus your name and mailing address. For rules and eligibility requirements see www.kent.edu/magazine/rules. Good luck!

And the **WINNER** is...

 Congratulations to **Gretchen Woods, MA '05**, Avon, Ohio, the winner of the random drawing from correct submissions to the Squirrel Search contest. She received a box of squirrel-themed swag from McKay Bricker Framing & Black Squirrel Gifts in downtown Kent.

The black squirrels can be found in the spring/summer 2019 issue on pages 9 (on top rail of bell stand, to right), 28 (at bottom right of pink neon sign) and 38 (on stool to right of seated girl's head).

Thanks to all who entered!



via **EMAIL**

Help for Healing Brain Injury

As a Kent State psychology department alum who worked in brain function research for my masters (but jumped to clinical psychology for my PhD), I was excited and proud to hear of the launch of the Brain Health Research Institute and Dr. Michael Lehman's vision for it ["Brainstorming," page 22, spring/summer 2019].

My husband incurred a traumatic brain injury in July 1999. Writing poetry has played a big part in his recovery that, given the extent of his injury, has been amazing. He is living proof of the benefits of a multidisciplinary approach that includes players like the Wick Poetry Center and [director] David Hassler.

JANEANE REAGAN, MS '70, PHD '81
Altoona, Fla.

Protect Your Passwords

Great article about security ["The Mean Streets of Cyberspace," page 24, spring/summer 2019] and the example of the couple with shared passwords. The only time I've ever shared a bank password was with my friend (ironically, also named Susy). Luckily, I don't think she memorized it, and I know she didn't write it down. She hasn't taken anything from me . . . yet.

JEFFREY ALI, DPM '98
Broadview Heights, Ohio

Another Pathway

On page 21 of the spring/summer 2019 issue there is an article about "KSU Pathways to Becoming a Registered Nurse." There is another "pathway" that was overlooked. The College of Applied and Technical Studies offers the ADN [Associate Degree in Nursing] program on four campuses: East Liverpool, Tuscarawas, Twinsburg and Ashtabula campuses. It also has an LPN to ADN bridge and a Paramedic to ADN bridge.

All ADN graduates are eligible to take a state license test to become an RN. It is a great option that costs less than a four-year degree and gets students working sooner. Many of our graduates go on to earn their BSN and higher degrees as well.

JANET PETERSON, RN, MSN, CNS
Nursing Skills Lab Coordinator
Kent State University at East Liverpool

As a tenured member of the nursing faculty and having served previously as the interim dean of the College of Nursing, I am well aware of the Institute of Medicine's report and recommendation regarding the need to increase the number of BSN prepared graduates. However, you ignored another KSU pathway to becoming a registered nurse. The Associate of Applied Science Degree is offered on the Ashtabula, East Liverpool, Twinsburg and Tuscarawas campuses of KSU. Students who complete these [ADN] programs sit for the same licensing exam as the BSN grads.

Students who graduate from these programs continue to be hired at the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals and community hospitals in our region. Between

the four regional campus sites offering the associate degree, we are supplying hundreds of qualified registered nurses to the workforce. One advantage to this path is that once hired, employers will often provide tuition reimbursement to these RNs to complete their BSN. We strongly encourage students to obtain their BSN from the day they walk in our doors, and we highly encourage them to make a seamless transition from our program to the online RN to BSN offered thru the KSU College of Nursing. Many of the courses in the RN to BSN are taught by faculty from the ADN program on the regional campuses.

SUSAN STOCKER, PHD
Dean and Chief Administrative Officer
Kent State University at Ashtabula

Portrait of a President

Great spring/summer [2019] edition. Excellent articles all, and a beautiful portraiture of President Warren. Her warmth, personality and energy leap off the pages. No doubt she has provided remarkable leadership and will be missed greatly.

MEL GROSSMAN, BS '55
Bellbrook, Ohio

Reason for Optimism

I enjoy reading this magazine each time it arrives. It's amazing what young students aspire to these days. I feel a little more optimistic about the future after reading some of the stories about these young men and women. Thank you!

DONNA DUNN, RN '94
Great Falls, Mont.

We want to hear from you!

Respond to magazine content or comment on topics related to Kent State by writing:
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Responses may be edited for style, length, clarity and civility.

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www.kent.edu/magazine

Making a Difference

One of the most enjoyable and invigorating parts of my job as president is to celebrate this great institution and its dedication to changing the world.

Kent State is a university with unmatched potential for meaningful impact in the state of Ohio and beyond. We graduate nearly 10,000 students annually who are determined to make a difference in our global society, and we have an incredible network of nearly 250,000 alumni worldwide.

Kent State is a motor for democracy, both for the fortunate few and the meritorious many. Our challenge, our mission and our commitment is: Every student we touch graduates.

In my first months as president, I've had the opportunity to meet some amazing alumni. Recently, I had a wonderful talk with a prominent graduate who retired as the senior vice president for one of the top ten corporations in the world. He was the first in his family to go to college, and he had a transformative experience here at Kent State. I hear that all the time.

Kent State is distinguished by the knowledge and creative work generated by our researchers, architects, engineers, artists, poets and historians. Their work makes all our lives better and richer.

Our university holds a unique place in our nation's history. A tragedy on our campus shook the nation and shaped our future. We thrive today because the lessons of that day are more relevant than ever: that we avoid poisoned discourse and polarization; that we listen first and act with empathy and compassion.

Shaped by the American dream, steeled by tragedy and singular among universities in the lessons we can teach a divided nation—WE are Kent State.



Todd A. Diacon, President
Email: president@kent.edu, Twitter: @PresTDiacon



“Kent State is a university with unmatched potential for meaningful impact in the state of Ohio and beyond.”



VICTORIA WOODBURN

Summer Discoveries

Sara Roman
Hometown: Wellington, Ohio
Class: Junior
College: College of Aeronautics and Engineering
Major: Mechatronics Engineering Technology
Internship: Space Communications and Navigation (SCaN) Intern Project, a paid internship hosted by NASA's Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, Ohio, for 10 weeks in the summer, with potential continuation during the school year. Students are introduced to space communications and navigation knowledge and practices, and they communicate their findings in a final presentation to NASA management. Each student is paired with an experienced, multidisciplinary mentor who counsels the student and helps with career planning.

Summer project: High Speed Delay-Tolerant Network Heat Sink and Packaging Plan, which will be sent up to the International Space Station. Roman worked on plotting where each component will fit into the final design and taking precision measurements of components that need to be thermally interfaced with the cold plate on the International Space Station.

Preparation: "Kent State provided me with classes that built my skills from an early start, as well as teachers who encouraged me to challenge myself in and out of the classroom. Without them, I wouldn't have had the confidence in myself and my skills to apply to this NASA internship."

Key insight: "My internship helped me discover a newfound passion for learning, as I can now see how the processes taught in class are applied to real-life problems. I have even been inspired by my mentor, Norm Prokop, to pick up a programming minor because after working with him, I have learned how applicable the skill is to every project I encounter. College always felt to me like the last steps of education, just one more to go, but now I realize it's my first step into a larger world."

Future plans: "Besides looking to pick up a minor in computer science, I am inspired to continue my education and pursue a masters and/or doctorate after college."

“College always felt to me like the last steps of education, but now I realize it’s my first step into a larger world.”

Goldwater Scholars

Two Kent State University undergraduate students have been awarded prestigious 2019 Goldwater Scholarships from the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation. The foundation awards the scholarships annually to students studying mathematics, natural science or engineering. This year they awarded 496 scholarships, each for as much as \$7,500 per year.



Hayley Shasteen, a junior from Berlin Center, Ohio, is pursuing a dual degree in molecular and cellular biology and psychology. She hopes to eventually obtain a doctoral degree in cognitive neuropsychology and conduct research regarding cognitive impairment in patients with autoimmune diseases, with emphasis on systemic lupus erythematosus.



Gracen Gerbig, a senior from Dover, Ohio, is studying cellular and molecular biology. She hopes to pursue a doctoral degree in microbiology, conduct research in infectious disease and eventually teach at the university level.

Meet the Kent State Class of 2023

More than 20,000 people applied to be part of Kent State's Class of 2023, and 4,270 now call themselves Golden Flashes. Three of every 10 students are the first in their families to attend college, while 20 percent come from 38 states outside of Ohio and from the District of Columbia. The class also includes 82 international students arriving from 29 countries.

Numbers aside, this incoming class arrives with a wide range of experiences and backgrounds, as exemplified by the following two students.

Michael Marhefka (Mansfield, Ohio) participated in the Young Entrepreneurs Academy, a national program offered for students in grades 6 to 12 who have a drive to launch their own businesses. A year ago, he created a clothing company that gave back to Destiny Rescue, a Christian organization dedicated to rescuing children trapped in exploitation and the sex trade.

His support of Destiny Rescue led him on a two-week adventure to the organization's headquarters in Cambodia and Thailand. There, he discovered a passion for photography.

"This was my first time in a third world country, and I was heartbroken by a way of life that I was previously oblivious



Michael Marhefka discovered a passion for photography through foreign travel and exposure to other ways of life.

to," Marhefka says. "I began taking photos, trying to remember every moment, journaling incessantly to preserve the sounds, the smells, the passion, the heartbreak."

He returned from the journey with a strong desire to study photography and is a recipient of the Wallace J. Hagedorn Scholarship in Photography in Kent State's College of Communication and Information.

"I want to use my abilities as a photographer to create new perspectives in people around me," says Marhefka, "and to help organizations such as Destiny Rescue convey their mission and create a need for change."

Megan Schinker (Stow, Ohio), got a jump on her peers by helping identify a tiny specimen of an extinct, 300-million-year-old, unknown crustacean. While still a junior at Stow-Munroe Falls High School, she participated in Kent State's College Credit Plus Science Experience Internship program by working in Kent State's geology lab with Rodney Feldmann, PhD, a Kent State professor emeritus of geology, who continues to teach graduate-level courses in paleontology and conduct grant-funded research.

Feldmann presented her with a tiny cyclid specimen to identify, and Schinker began comparing it to anything she could



While still in high school, Megan Schinker seized on a research opportunity in Kent State's geology lab.

CLASS OF 2023
BY THE NUMBERS

4,270
ENROLLED FRESHMEN

3,407 OHIO
RESIDENTS

82 International
Students

39 STATES
OUTSIDE OHIO
(38+ Washington, DC)

1,557 MEN **572**
Honors
College
NEW RECORD

961
Transfer Students

1,280 FIRST GENERATION

2,713 WOMEN

3.45 **23.23**
AVERAGE GPA AVERAGE ACT

29 COUNTRIES
OTHER THAN USA
REPRESENTED

find in literature and online sources. The two requested samples and pictures of lost samples from all over the world and examined them closely, cataloging their physical and structural attributes. They couldn't find a match—and began exploring the morphology of these cyclids.

Their research collaboration has led to articles in several scientific publications and presentations on their findings—and ignited Schinker's passion for geology. Now a freshman at KSU, she plans to double major in geology and chemistry and continue her work in Feldmann's lab.



Thomas Grace, BA '72



Sara Abou Rashed

50th Commemoration of May 4, 1970

The yearlong 50th commemoration of the May 4, 1970 shootings at Kent State is well underway. Here are just two of the fall semester's many highlights:

Voices for Change Educators Summit: The kickoff event of the 50th Commemoration year, the three-day 2019 Educators Summit at Kent State University, titled "May 4, 1970 Then & Now: Voices for Change," took place from July 31 to August 2. It was designed to prepare middle school and high school teachers to educate students about the history and legacy of May 4, 1970, and to inspire a new generation of student activism.

One of the two featured speeches, which were free and open to the public, was "Facts are Stubborn Things: Kent State—The Sixties at Fifty" by Thomas Grace, BA '72, a historian, scholar, researcher, author of *Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties* (2016, University of Massachusetts Press) and one of the nine Kent State students wounded during the May 4 shootings.

The other featured speech, "I Am a Student—I Am a Voice for Change" was given by Sara Abou Rashed, a poet, motivational speaker and Syrian refugee who moved to Columbus, Ohio, with her family in 2013. Rashed's work has appeared in more than 12 publications, and most recently, she wrote and stars in her debut one-woman show, "A Map of Myself," in which she discusses identity, belonging, immigration and finding home.

Other presenters and speakers at the summit included Alan Canfora, BA '72, MLS '80, who also was one of the nine injured on May 4; his sister, Roseann "Chic" Canfora, a longtime educator and activist in Northeast Ohio; and Laura Davis, BA '76, Kent State professor emerita of English and founding director of the May 4 Visitors Center. All three were Kent State students on May 4, 1970.



Howard Ruffner, BS '71

Moments of Truth Book Launch: Howard Ruffner, BS '71, was a college sophomore, working as a photographer for Kent State's student newspaper and yearbook, as well as a stringer for *Life* magazine on May 4, 1970. During the September 19 launch of his photographic memoir, *Moments of Truth: A Photographer's Experience of Kent State 1970* (2019, Kent State University Press), Ruffner highlighted several of the nearly 150 photos that appear in the book, including the one that appeared on the cover of *Life*. Purchase a copy at www.KentStateUniversityPress.com at a 20 percent discount through Nov. 30, 2019 (promo code: FALL19).

By the end of the spring semester, Kent State will have hosted more than 100 events, speakers, programs and exhibits providing insight into the history of May 4, 1970, its meaning today and its lessons for the future.

Visit the 50th Commemoration website www.kent.edu/may4kentstate50 to learn more about upcoming events. Check back often for updates as we continue to release new events and information.

Noteworthy

Rankings

LGBTQ friendly: KSU named one of the most LGBTQ-friendly campuses in the US by the Campus Pride Index.

One of best in fashion: KSU's School of Fashion Design and Merchandising was named one of the best fashion schools in the world for 2019 by world renowned fashion publication *The Business of Fashion*.

One of best in graduate schools: KSU's School of Information (iSchool) recognized as one of the nation's top 20 graduate schools for its library and information science program by a *US News and World Report* study that examined 51 campuses.

Awards

WKSU wins awards: The radio station received top honors for General Excellence-Radio for the fifth consecutive year from Ohio Associated Press Media Editors (OAPME), along with nine other awards for stand-out work created in 2018. WKSU also received 10 Ohio Excellence in Journalism Awards by the Press Club of Cleveland and 10 Ohio's Best Journalism Awards by the Society of Professional Journalists.

Podiatric device wins prize: The "Shear Force Mat" podiatric device took top prize at the Burton D. Morgan Foundation's Launchtown Soar Competition in April,

developed by an interdisciplinary team from KSU's College of Podiatric Medicine and the Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute.

Grants

Student mental wellness: With a \$375,000 three-year grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services, KSU's Center for Public Policy and Health will partner with Black River Local School District and the Medina County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board to improve student mental wellness. The project, called Medina County Aware, will be led by associate professor Deric Kenne, PhD, and research associate Kim Laurene, PhD.

Suicide prevention: KSU's Division of Mental Health and Substance Use received the Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grant for \$306,000 from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The project, More Aware, is a collaboration with Student Affairs, University Health Services, Student Support Services and other divisions across Kent State, and is intended to raise awareness and promote mental health for Kent State students.

flash FORWARD

Educating Nigerian children: An interdisciplinary team of KSU faculty will participate in a \$13.3 million grant from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to improve educational outcomes for Nigerian children. The grant has been awarded to the American University of Nigeria with partners Kent State University and Columbia University for a three-year project, "Addressing Education in Northeast Nigeria." KSU's portion of the grant is \$3.9 million.

Preserving the past: Kent State University Libraries' May 4, 1970 Collection was awarded \$30,561 through the Recordings at Risk grant program, funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to preserve audio and audiovisual recordings contained in Kent State University's May 4 Collection.

Teaching English to Palestinian students: Kent State researchers won a diplomatic grant from the US Department of State to help Al-Quds University develop English courses for Palestinian students in business and technology fields through a program developed by professor Sarah Rilling, PhD, and assistant professor Ryan Miller, PhD, in the Department of English's Teaching English as a Second Language program.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF GLASS

Kent State's Studio Glass Program, one of the first of its kind in the country, was started in 1969 by Henry Halem, professor emeritus and cofounder of the Glass Art Society.

To celebrate the program's 50th anniversary, KSU's School of Art Collection and Galleries presented three exhibitions featuring local and national artists (*Kent State Glass@50*, *Emerging Glass*, *Tim Stover (MFA '13): Linear Integration*) which were on view September through early October at galleries on and off campus.

In addition, the celebration included a lecture, "The History of Kent State's Glass Program," by founding director Henry Halem, a curator talk on *Kent State Glass@50* by current director and assistant professor Davin Ebanks and visiting artist lectures. See a video at www.kent.edu/magazine/glassprogram.



flash **FORWARD**

A Time to Give

Every fall since 2014, Kent State University celebrates philanthropy for the entire month of November during its Giving Tuesday campaign—the university’s spin on Giving Tuesday, the international day of philanthropy officially recognized on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, which falls on Dec. 3 this year.

From student scholarships to research opportunities, from athletics to poetry programs and everything in

between, there are more than 40 featured giving options across the Kent State system. In addition to making individual donations, Kent State supporters can create individual peer-to-peer fundraising pages for the featured fund of their choice to help encourage their friends and family to support the university, as well.

It’s the best time of year for KSU donors who want to maximize the impact of their gift, as each featured fund has matching dollars—which means a gift of \$50 becomes \$100, a gift of \$100 becomes \$200 and so on. The featured funds are also eligible for many incentives throughout the month that financially reward the funds for bringing in donors and gifts.



“We call the Giving Tuesday campaign our most generous annual tradition.”

—DANIELLE HUPP, senior associate director of Special Giving Initiatives

“We call the Giving Tuesday campaign our most generous annual tradition because there is an overwhelming influx of support from alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends,” says Danielle Hupp, senior associate director of Special Giving Initiatives. “It is inspiring to see the impact that can be made in such a short amount of time when people come together.”

Since its inception five years ago, the month-long Giving Tuesday campaign has raised funds in support of more than 50 areas throughout the university network. In 2018, Kent State witnessed its most successful Giving Tuesday to date with a grand total of \$1,030,000 in gifts that came from all around the world. Kent State Baseball raised the most funds with \$36,500, and Kent State Track and Field attracted nearly 170 unique supporters.

How will you make an impact? You decide! Visit www.Kent.edu/GivingTuesday to learn about all the featured funds and support the one that matters to you!

Accelerating Takeoff

Kent State University’s new FedEx Aeronautics Academic Center provides a world-class training ground to help aviation students and future pilots soar to even greater achievements.

The sleek, modern learning center, made possible with gifts totaling \$6.5 million from FedEx Corporation, was unveiled during a grand-opening event in September. The celebration showcased bold new technologies and innovative teaching tools essential for world-class pilots of the future. The event finale featured a dramatic flyover by Kent State alumni and student flight instructors.

The new 17,800-square-foot center is the second building for the College of Aeronautics and Engineering, but the first located at the Kent State University Airport in Stow, Ohio. The state-of-the-art learning facility—housing classrooms, collaborative spaces, briefing rooms, flight simulator rooms, and faculty and staff offices—will allow the college to accommodate more students to meet the growing demand for commercial pilots, predicted to be more than 804,000 new pilots worldwide by 2038.

Kent State President Todd Diacon says the FedEx Aeronautics Academic Center will accelerate the university’s commitment to graduate aviation professionals able to lead and excel in the complex, rapidly growing global transportation sector. “We are grateful that FedEx recognizes the value and impact our graduates have in the aeronautics industry and their reputation for industry preparedness and leadership.”



A student trains in one of the new flight simulators.



Above: The new FedEx Aeronautics Academic Center provides space for the growth of Kent State’s Aeronautics Program.
Below right: the Goodyear blimp pays a visit at the grand opening event.

Enrollment in Kent State’s Aeronautics Program has increased by 55 percent since 2010, and this new space will allow the university to continue to expand its enrollment. “FedEx has made a long-term investment in our students,” says Christina Bloebaum, PhD, dean of the College of Aeronautics and Engineering. “The FedEx Aeronautics Academic Center empowers us to broaden our educational reach, expanding student access to a nationally distinctive education and innovative spirit we inspire in our students.”

Partners in Flight

Kent State University’s nationally ranked Flight Technology program is one of only three nationwide that Delta Air Lines selected this year to become a Delta Propel Partner, a program creating career

opportunities for students studying to be commercial pilots.

Through Delta’s Collegiate Pilot Career Path Program, the airline will interview, help train and recruit high-quality pilot candidates among Kent State students who

meet the program’s eligibility requirements. Delta will employ successful candidates as pilots upon graduation from the Flight Technology program, located in Kent State’s College of Aeronautics and Engineering.





A DIALOGUE WITH *President Diacon*

Kent State's newest president answers questions about his past, his present and his vision for the university's future.

By Lisa Abraham

Photos by Rami Daud

Todd A. Diacon, PhD, became Kent State University's 13th president on July 1, 2019.

As the university's provost since 2012, Diacon (pronounced DIKE-en) has been a tireless advocate for student success. Committed to college affordability and access, he has earned national recognition for his efforts to boost student retention, graduation rates and academic achievement.

He brings more than 30 years of experience in higher education leadership to the president's office. Before coming to Kent State, he served as the deputy chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Amherst and spent 21 years at the University of Tennessee Knoxville, serving as a tenured professor, department head and vice provost.

We listened in on several of President Diacon's recent interviews to learn more about him and to garner his thoughts on a variety of university issues.

Why did you want to be president of Kent State University? From having been here seven years as provost, I know that Kent State is a great place. I wanted to continue contributing to the success of a great university.

What is it about Kent State that you find special? With multiple campuses and degree programs that span from associate to doctorate—plus, particularly on our regional campuses, a lot of certificate programs—Kent State is uniquely positioned to be all things to all people, in a good way.

You speak often about the transformative power of education. What role did education play in your family? When I was named president, I thought about the powerful impact that education has had on both sides of my family in very different circumstances.

My mother's side of the family are college educated individuals going back hundreds of years. Not only that, but my grandmother and my great-aunts all earned bachelor's degrees and in the case of my great-aunts, master's degrees right around World War I. So, on my mother's side, I never was around anyone who wasn't college educated; I grew up with that example.

At the same time, my father and his brother were the first in their family to go to college. My father's family lived in utter poverty in the panhandle of Oklahoma during the Great Depression. My grandfather, who died in 1929, was a gas station attendant. My grandmother took in people's washing. My father made ends meet as a shoe-shine boy when he was a kid, and we still have his shoe-shine kit. He taught me how to iron because his job was to iron when his mother washed other people's clothes.

Then at 17, my father joined the war in December 1941, after Pearl Harbor. He was in the Navy and saw action throughout the Pacific. After the war, he went through undergraduate school and medical school in six years and became a physician. His life was transformed by education and higher education.

Part of the reason I got into higher education is because of that demonstration effect.

“I wouldn't be sitting in this seat today if I hadn't engaged in study abroad as a student. It opened my eyes to the world.”

— Todd A. Diacon, PhD

You are a historian and were a longtime history professor before you entered academic administration.

What made you want to study history? I knew from the time I was about a sixth grader that I wanted to be a historian. I was always a reader. I grew up in a little town in Sumner County, Kansas—right on the Kansas-Oklahoma border—and I can remember clearly when we went to Wichita, and Wichita had a Macy's and Macy's had a book section.

There I bought a book on World War I that now, in retrospect, I realize was a college-level book. But I became fascinated by World War I. I read that book from cover to cover, mapped out and drew the plans of various battles—and from that point on, I knew I was going to be a historian.

I'm a historian of Brazil, my PhD is in Latin American history, and I've written two books on the history of Brazil. I used to joke that I became a historian of Brazil because I grew up on the Kansas-Oklahoma border. It actually has

President Diacon at home in the president's residence.

nothing to do with that, it has to do with the impact of study abroad on me as a freshman in college.

How so? I studied for three weeks in Copenhagen, Denmark, as a freshman, and we studied the Danish political system, Danish culture and Danish arts. That opened up this amazing world, so now I'm a committed proponent of study abroad. It changed my life. I wouldn't be sitting in this seat today if I hadn't engaged in study abroad as a student. It opened my eyes to the world.

I see that kind of impact here at Kent State. We have students who take international trips where that's the first time they've been on an airplane and the first time they've been out of the country. Those are life-changing experiences.

Kent State now has the second largest American university enrollment in Florence, Italy. We just surpassed Syracuse University to become the second largest; New York University is the largest. How great is that? We had 300 students going through Florence for the first time when I got here seven years ago; we're now up to 800.

As a historian, what are your thoughts on the upcoming 50th anniversary of May 4, 1970? You don't have to be a historian to understand the importance of May 4th in the history of the United States, but I am a historian and I do understand the seminal role that May 4, 1970 played in the nation's history. For that reason, especially, it is my honor to be president during a year when we commemorate those events, those shootings, that tragedy.

When you look back on the national conversation that was going on at the time, you see how polarized it was, how dangerous the public utterances were on each side. Fast forward to 2019, and you can see a similar level of poisoned discourse and dialogue.

As educators, we are committed to learning lessons, and we have a unique opportunity over these next months to teach the world about the dangers of polarization and poisoned



President Diacon at home with his wife, Moema Furtado (who previously taught in KSU's School of Art, curated the Uumbaji Gallery, and recently was senior international partnership coordinator for the Office of Global Education), and their son, Natan Diacon-Furtado, an architect in New Orleans, who came for a visit. The couple met in 1986 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where they both earned master's degrees and he earned his doctoral degree.

discourse. We'll do that through more than 100 events on and off campus that include a seminar in our architecture program on how physical space has shaped protest, the theater department's October production of the musical *Hair*, and programs sponsored by our School of Peace and Conflict Studies that will look at how nations, including our own, recover from civil war.

Our unique opportunity is to apply lessons of the past to a charged and dangerous situation in America today.

What is your vision for the university's future? I have three initial visions for Kent State.

One, I want Kent State to continue being a university that reaches new

heights of excellence, even while we honor our history of accessibility. One of the university's best successes over the decades has been educating students—not all of whom come from the upper reaches of society; many of whom are first generation college students—and then watching them do great things. On the Kent Campus about a third of our students are first generation and about a third are Pell Grant recipients; that jumps to around 60 percent in both categories for our regional campuses. My vision is to continue that.

Two, I want Kent State to continue being a university that explores the life of the mind—and we have this great Brain Health Research Institute that's exploring how the mind works, even

while we feed our soul with our great arts programing.

Three, I want Kent State to continue achieving world-class excellence in fields that you don't often see at universities. For example, we have the third-ranked fashion design and merchandising program in the United States. You don't find that program at most universities, and we are third in the country.

We also have a top ten flight program and roughly 300 of our graduates are flying for commercial airlines right now. We recently created two new degree programs in aeronautical engineering and in mechatronics (a combination of mechanical and electrical engineering). Enrollments in those programs are growing and funded research in those areas is increasing

We are regarded as the birthplace of liquid crystal displays and are continuing to do innovative research through the Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute.

We have one of the country's best translation programs, offering a bachelor's, master's and PhD in translation. It's world class, it attracts scholars from around the world. They all get jobs when they finish.

We have the state's only master's program in library and information science. We have an excellent music school. We have one of the best poetry programs in America. We have wonderful musical theater and art departments.

We do all these great things. We're leaders in brain health and in advanced materials and liquid crystals and, at the same time, we excel in the arts and in culture. I love that about Kent State.

So my vision is to continue with the things that Kent State does really well and to enhance them.

How do you keep college affordable for students? Since 2000, we've doubled the four-year graduation rate at Kent State and the fifth-year graduation rate is now the same as six years. Through messaging to students and rethinking our academic policies, we've had phenomenal success in ►

13 Fast Facts about PRESIDENT TODD DIACON

Kent State's 13th president is a noted Brazilian historian and—according to his Brazilian-born wife, Moema Furtado—speaks Portuguese better than most native Brazilians. We asked him to fill us in on a few more facts and favorite things.

- 1. WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB?**
Peeling potatoes at Kentucky Fried Chicken in Wellington, Kansas, my hometown.
- 2. WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE SINGER OR SINGING GROUP?**
The Grateful Dead
- 3. HOW DID YOU GET TO BE AN ELVIS IMPERSONATOR?**
I first dressed up like Elvis to celebrate Stephane Booth's retirement, because she is a big Elvis fan.
Booth was an assistant professor of history at Kent State (1986-2002) and a longtime Kent State administrator.
- 4. WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING?**
The Years of Youth by Phillip Shriver and *Why this World: A Biography of Clarice Lispector* by Benjamin Moser.
Shriver's book, a history of Kent State, was published in its semicentennial year 1960; Clarice Lispector was a Brazilian novelist and short story writer, considered to be among the greatest women writers of the 20th century.
- 5. WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE AUTHOR?**
Ha Jin
Ha Jin is the pen name of Xuefei Jin, a Chinese-American poet and novelist.
- 6. ANY PETS?**
Not currently. Our dog, Smiley, died two years ago, and we haven't had the heart to get another.
- 7. WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT RIDE?**
Tesla Model 3
- 8. FAVORITE SPOT ON THE KENT CAMPUS?**
The Brain
- 9. FAVORITE FOREIGN CITY?**
Rio de Janeiro
- 10. FAVORITE FLAVOR ICE CREAM?**
Coffee
- 11. FAVORITE COCKTAIL?**
Caipirinha
The national cocktail of Brazil is made from limes, sugar and cachaça (a Brazilian liquor distilled from fermented sugarcane juice) and served over ice.
- 12. WHAT HISTORICAL FIGURE, LIVING OR DECEASED, WOULD YOU LIKE TO ENJOY THAT COCKTAIL WITH?**
Marechal Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon (I wrote a book about him.)
A Brazilian military engineer, Marshal Rondon led what came to be known as the Rondon Commission in a massive undertaking: the building of telegraph lines and roads connecting Brazil's vast interior with its coast. Diacon's book, Stringing Together A Nation: Cândido Mariano da Silva Rondon and the Construction of a Modern Brazil, 1906-1930 (Duke University Press), received the Warren Dean Prize for the best book published in 2003-04 on the history of Brazil.
- 13. FAVORITE QUOTATION?**
The old Brazilian saying, "For my friends, everything. For my enemies, the rules."



President Diacon's first meeting as president was with the Kent Area Chamber of Commerce and city leaders. Here, he shares a table with Kent City Manager Dave Ruller, whom he meets with monthly to touch base and discuss opportunities that benefit both the university and the city of Kent.

“The single best thing you can do to control the cost of higher education is to graduate in four years.”

— Todd A. Diacon, PhD

improving our completion rates, so I am exceptionally proud of that.

The single best thing you can do to control the cost of higher education is to graduate in four years. One of the biggest problems we face as a nation is student debt. But the biggest tragedy we face are students who accumulate debt, but don't graduate.

If you borrow \$25,000 and graduate, we know that over the course of your working life, you'll make about a million or more because of that degree. That's a great investment.

But if you take out loans and then you don't graduate, now you've got debt and you don't have the certificate and the training and the knowledge to make the additional income to recoup that investment. That's a tragedy.

What is your favorite thing about being president so far? That's a hard question because there's just so much. Part of it is meeting great students, so that's enjoyable. And I've met some

amazing alumni who've done great things, so there's that, as well.

I'm gaining an even bigger appreciation for the impact that Kent State has on not just Northeast Ohio, but all of Ohio and even the country and the world. For example, you think about the fact that we graduate so many great nurses and we dominate nursing in Northeast Ohio—and Northeast Ohio dominates healthcare worldwide because of the Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals.

So I'd say the thing I've enjoyed the most, so far, is realizing what a powerhouse university we are. ⚡



Kent State first year students kick off the school year at the University Library's pizza party, where they had the opportunity to pose for a photo with Elvis, aka President Diacon, and pick up a t-shirt.



“So You Think You Know Kent State?”

New President Todd Diacon was the speaker for fall semester's Bowman Breakfast, an event sponsored by Kent State and the Kent Area Chamber of Commerce to bring together people from the university and the city of Kent. During his talk, President Diacon presented a trivia quiz that audience members could take by downloading an app on their phone. We've adapted it for readers of Kent State Magazine who may not have been able to attend the event. Let's see how well you know Kent State!

- 1** Kent State University enjoys good relations with the city of Kent. The university and the city are linked by Ohio Rt. 59, which begins just outside of Ravenna and ends in downtown Akron. This state route is just 22.99 miles long. How many of those miles are in the city of Kent?

A. 5.87 miles
B. 6.32 miles
C. 7.20 miles
D. 8.14 miles
- 2** When it comes to places to eat downtown, Ray's is a favorite hangout for Kent State students. When did Ray's begin feeding the Kent community?

A. 1935
B. 1936
C. 1937
D. 1939
- 3** Kent State has more than 11,500 parking spaces on campus. How many of those are reserved for students only?

A. 4,800
B. 7,000
C. 8,600
D. 10,000
- 4** The black squirrel is Kent State's unofficial mascot. We all have probably heard it was introduced to campus in the 1960s from Canada. What year was the black squirrel brought to campus and how many were brought here?

A. 12 squirrels in 1964
B. 10 squirrels in 1963
C. 12 squirrels in 1962
D. 10 squirrels in 1961
- 5** Our official mascot is Flash the Golden Eagle. But before we settled on Flash, we had several other mascots over the years, which included all but one of the following. Which one was NEVER a Kent State mascot?

A. A Dalmatian
B. A silver fox
C. A cave man
D. A horse
- 6** For years, first-year students were issued a blue and gold beanie to wear that marked them as freshmen on campus by upperclassmen. The beanies were known as 'dinks.' What year marked the first time a freshman class was not issued dinks?

A. 1966
B. 1967
C. 1968
D. 1969
- 7** What were Kent State's original colors?

A. Green and white
B. Orange and blue
C. Blue and white
D. Green and gold
- 8** Our support for diversity at Kent State is longstanding. Perhaps our most famous point of pride is Dr. Oscar Ritchie, who, when he was appointed a full-time faculty member here, became the first African American to serve on the faculty of any predominantly white university in Ohio. What year was Dr. Ritchie appointed to our staff?

A. 1946
B. 1947
C. 1950
D. 1951
- 9** Diversity at Kent State includes religious diversity, too. Our current faculty and teaching staff—including adjunct professors and graduate assistants—includes at least one Christian minister, one Jewish rabbi, one Muslim Imam, and how many Catholic nuns?

A. 1
B. 2
C. 3
D. None
- 10** This academic year we commemorate the 50th anniversary of May 4, 1970. Over the years, much has been written about May 4, from plays to poems, novels to investigative textbooks. Approximately how many books have been written about May 4?

A. 50
B. 70
C. 90
D. 100
- 11** President Todd Diacon took over as president of Kent State on July 1, 2019. Who was the longest serving president of Kent State?

A. John McGilvrey
B. George Bowman
C. Michael Schwartz
D. Carol Cartwright
- 12** Which Kent Campus building is the oldest?

A. Lowry Hall
B. Moulton Hall
C. Kent Hall
D. Merrill Hall
- 13** Pictured (below left) is a photo of original Kent farm buildings, with Kent State buildings in the background. Where is this?

A. What is now the entrance to Kent State
B. The newest Starbucks location
C. Kent City Manager Dave Ruller's new office
D. Both B and C
- 14** Kent State has worked diligently to increase its four- and six- year graduation rates and is proud to award record numbers of degrees. In the 2018-19 academic year, how many degrees did we award?

A. 8,512
B. 8,922
C. 9,042
D. 9,915

of Education, Health and Human Services. Sister Mary Theresa Sharp, of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Chardon, is an associate professor of mathematical science in the College of Arts & Sciences. (10) C. According to the May 4 Archive at University Libraries, approximately 90 books have been written on May 4, 1970, including poetry, novels, textbooks and historical nonfiction. As more books are expected to be published during the anniversary year, that number is expected to grow to 100 or more. (11) B. George Bowman, for whom the Bowman Breakfast is named, served for 19 years, from 1944 to 1963. Presidents McGilvrey and Cartwright each served 15 years, and President Schwartz, nine years. (12) D. Merrill Hall was built in 1912. Lowry Hall was built shortly after and was the first dormitory on campus. (13) A. (14) D. 9,915 degrees including associate, bachelor, master, education specialist, doctorate, professional and certificates. That's nearly 10,000 degrees!

1 B. Rt. 59 in Kent begins at the Stow line. From there to the border of Franklin Township in the east is just 6.32 miles. 2 C. 1937 3 B. 7,000 of our 11,500 parking spaces are reserved for students. 4 D. In 1961, 10 black squirrels were brought here, and they have done a good job of multiplying over the last 58 years. 5 A. Flash was a dog at one time, but he was a golden retriever, not a Dalmatian. 6 D. The dinks were designated as orange and blue. But when the basketball uniforms were sent to a local laundry the hot water turned them gold and blue. The team and student body liked the new colors, so they adopted them instead. 8 B. Oscar Ritchie Hall was named in his honor in 1977, 30 years after his appointment and 10 years after his death in 1967. 9 B. Sister Joann Camiglia, of the Dominican Sisters of Peace of Akron, is an associate professor of teaching, learning and curriculum studies in the College

A full-page photograph of Antwan Dixon, a Black male football player, smiling and holding a football. He is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt with the Kent State University logo. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a building and a blue sky.

COMEBACK CHAMP

Antwan Dixon beat a rare disease. Now he does the heavy lifting for others in need.

By April McClellan-Copeland

In summer 2016, when a rare and serious blood disorder struck Kent State football wide receiver Antwan Dixon, it could have ended his college football career.

Dixon had made his debut at Kent State in fall 2015 by scoring a 20-yard touchdown on his first catch against Delaware State, and during his rookie season he led the Flashes in receiving yards (355 on 26 catches).

Then a recurrence of aplastic anemia, a condition that occurs when the body stops producing enough new blood cells, forced him to leave school for treatment. Doctors had first diagnosed Dixon with the blood disorder—which can cause exhaustion, high risk of infections and uncontrolled bleeding—when he was 16, attending South Fort Myers High School in Florida.

During his second go-round with the disorder, his weight dropped to 125 pounds, he was hospitalized, and he underwent chemo treatments before receiving a life-saving bone marrow transplant from his father, Anthony, in April 2017. He returned to Kent State in January 2018 and doctors cleared him to play six months later.

With grit and determination, Dixon fought his way back to the gridiron for the fall 2018-19 season. He led the team with 52 catches, the most by a Kent State player since 2014, and finished second on the team with 532 receiving yards.

“I had a lot to prove to myself,” he says. “I felt like I had to come back and show people that I had not given up, that I was performing better than before.”

Dixon’s efforts did not go unnoticed. In addition to being one of three athletes to receive the 2018 Mayo Clinic Comeback Player of the Year Award, he was named 2018 Male Athlete of the Year by the Touchdown Club of Columbus and nominated for the 2018 Capital One Orange Bowl-FWAA Courage Award.

Dixon’s journey back to health and to Kent State’s football program

was a difficult endeavor. However, he says his illness has proven to be a catalyst that challenges him to push for excellence on and off the field.

“One out of every million teens get this disorder,” Dixon says. “All my awards are a blessing, but my blood disorder is a blessing, too. It is something that makes me push myself harder.”

“It is great to have [Antwan] Dixon back,” says Head Coach Sean Lewis. “He has a full year under his belt; more importantly, a full year of growth and training. He has worked tremendously hard this offseason. I am excited to see what he can do with his mental and physical development. His energy and the excitement he brings on a daily basis is contagious.”

“All my awards are a blessing, but my blood disorder is a blessing, too. It is something that makes me push myself harder.”

Dixon recently demonstrated that enthusiasm as he championed a cause in which he believes. In July 2019, as he trained for the upcoming football season, he served as a leader for the Kent State football chapter of Uplifting Athletes during his team’s inaugural Lift for Life fundraiser to support the rare disease community. (Uplifting Athletes’ mission is to be a catalyst for the medical community to find cures for rare diseases, which are described as affecting fewer than 200,000 Americans and typically lacking financial incentive to make and market new treatments, according to the organization’s website.)

The event was a competition between the Flashes offense and

defense to see who could average the most repetitions lifting 225-pound weights.

“This is a rare event,” Dixon noted on Instagram prior to the competition, “where we raise money for people who can’t afford their hospital bills and people who have rare diseases like mine.”

Dixon, who previously had been a finalist for the 11th Uplifting Athletes Rare Disease Champion Award, is president of the Kent State chapter, and teammate defensive back Jamal Parker is vice president. Both lifted during the event.

How did Dixon—who is majoring in organizational communication with a minor in psychology—make such a strong comeback to Kent State with enough vigor to attend classes, play college football and lead a charity event?

“I have been following the plans from my coaches and doing everything they ask me to do,” he says. “They want the best for us—the best training facilities, the best food plans and the best practice plans. I follow the process that the coach has mapped out for us.”

Dixon fell in love with football at the age of four, when at 6 a.m. on Saturday mornings he would wake his dad to play football. Now he continues to have tremendous support from his parents and extended family.

During the 2018 season, his grandmother surprised him by attending a game against Howard University, but he did not get to play because of a hip injury. His mother, Shemariah, and his aunt came to see him play in the Ole Miss game later in the month.

Now embracing his senior year as a Golden Flash, he is excited to show his folks and the Golden Flash family that he is back—all the way back.

“This year [2019-2020] will be a year to know who Antwan Dixon is and who the Kent State Flashes are,” he says with a smile. ⚡



Together

WE RISE

How the Rising Scholars Program at Kent State helps promising students from low socioeconomic backgrounds get on track for a productive future.

By Jan Senn and Julie Miller, BS '87

On a morning in July, a group of seventh graders, attending a weeklong summer workshop through Kent State's Rising Scholars Program, are taking a tour of Coldwell Tree Farm. The farm, which includes 620 acres of certified woodlands in southern Columbiana County, is owned and managed by Dave and Lisa Coldwell and their three grown sons.

The Coldwell family intensively manages their tree farm for a combination of timber production, wildlife habitat, forestry consulting services, salvaged lumber and live edge wood slab sales, education and community outreach.

Tour leader Jed Coldwell shows the students how to use a tree scale stick to measure the diameter and height of standing trees. Measuring tree girth is a common educational technique that enables students to learn about their local environment in a practical manner. Woodland owners and foresters take such measurements periodically to monitor tree growth and make management decisions.

Tree farming is not about a quick sale; it takes patience and planning. The Coldwell family currently plants more than 3,000 trees a year—but what they plant this year won't be ready to harvest for 80 years. It's a slow process, but they do it to protect the land, to watch something grow and to plan for future generations.

In that sense, the process of tree farming is an apt metaphor for Kent State's Rising Scholars Program, which supports underserved students in grades 7–12 who have been identified by their middle schools as having the potential to be the first in their families to complete a four-year degree—an outcome that would be life changing for future generations.

Putting a tree scale stick into students' hands and showing them how to use it passes a baton to the next generation. It's a tangible means of emphasizing the importance of basic math skills and encouraging students to care for their local environments.

And, just as woodland managers take measurements to monitor growth and make decisions, Rising Scholars managers

use an evidence-based approach to measure the program's growth, evaluate its effectiveness and make a case for its continued expansion (see chart on pg. 23).

The program, known as Rural Scholars when David Dees, PhD '00, dean and chief administrative officer of the Columbiana County campuses, created it at the Kent State Salem campus in 2011, was renamed Rising Scholars when rolling it out to the other Kent State regional campuses.

In the program, eligible middle school students are nominated by their teachers and guidance counselors at the end of the sixth grade to take part in the program, which combines mentoring with community and corporate assistance to create a support system that prepares the young adults for life after high school.

Beginning in the seventh grade and continuing through high school, students in the program receive a combination of individual mentoring, career and college-knowledge workshops and structured program guidance as they work toward specified program outcomes.

At a summer workshop, seventh grade Rising Scholars are taught how to use a tree scale stick to measure the diameter of a tree by Jed Coldwell of Coldwell Timber Consulting, LLC in Columbiana County.

The five core outcomes are listed as being: successful students, engaged learners, workforce ready, socially savvy and committed to community.

Program participants who attend Kent State University may receive scholarships and work in the program as mentors, receiving support on their college journey while also giving back by becoming role models to younger students in the program.

The program specifically addresses the workforce ready and brain drain issues that many Ohio communities face. Program activities are designed to teach young adults the skills necessary to succeed in life after high school, and the program promotes a commitment to community service.

The hope is that students who have gone through Rising Scholars will attend Kent State, but the program is designed to help each student find a suitable vocation or career. At the end of the program, the goal is for students to enroll in college or technical school, enlist in the military or enter the workforce.

Based on the program's success at the Columbiana County campuses, Kent State decided to implement Rising Scholars at all regional campuses, beginning in fall 2019. "When fully implemented, the collective impact of the Rising Scholars Program over Northeast Ohio will be significant," says Nathan Ritchey, PhD, vice president for Kent State System Integration. "Our regional campuses are small, but together our resources, talent and footprint are quite impressive."

Ritchey is convinced the timing is right for this program to expand across the Kent State system. "When we look at educational attainment in our region, we see that there are many gaps that affect economic development, personal stability and the overall health of the communities we serve," Ritchey says. "Through the success of the Rural Scholars Program at our Columbiana County campuses, we are confident that we can begin to address these important societal issues."

When it comes to finances, Dees says providing a free education for qualified Rising Scholars is not as expensive as it may sound.

"Many of these students, because of their background, qualify for a lot of financial aid—Pell Grants and things like that," says Dees. "When I first started the program, I thought the secret was to get the college paid for. But eight years later, looking back, I see the most important thing is the mentors. The mentors are the secret sauce; those are the individuals who keep the students on the right path all the way."

At the end of the program, the goal is for students to enroll in college or technical school, enlist in the military or enter the workforce.

In addition to mentors, support from community members is essential. "The importance of private support cannot be overstated," says Stephen Sokany, vice president of Institutional Advancement. "We have been successful raising initial funds for the Columbiana County program and are looking forward to this program being elevated to a cross-university priority."

"Thanks to the performance-based results from the existing Columbiana County program, we have a great narrative to show the communities surrounding our other regional campuses. It's easy to see how this program can change lives and lift up the community."

"I believe each campus is eager to roll this out—and we need philanthropic support to make that happen."

When the program is fully implemented, Kent State will have the capacity to assist nearly 1,000 underserved students from seventh grade through bachelor's degrees, Ritchey says. "We are reaching students long before they enter college with a program that ensures they are ready for college in terms of academic preparation, finances and confidence. This program is a game changer." ►



Morgan Briand (at right) with one of her mentees, Kaitlin S., an eighth grade student at Leetonia Middle School.

BOB CHRISTY, BS '95

“Wanting to be a mentor pushed me to be a better person and to do better in school. Now I’m setting an example for my mentees.”

—MORGAN BRIAND, 2018 Rising Scholar Program graduate, mentor and sophomore at Kent State University at Salem.

Scholar and Mentor

Morgan Briand was beginning seventh grade when she was called to the principal’s office at David Anderson Junior/Senior High School in Lisbon, Ohio. “I was a little scared because I didn’t know if I was in trouble or if there was a problem of some sort,” recalls Briand, who had just moved to Lisbon from Leetonia.

There wasn’t a problem—there was a promise. She had been selected by teachers at her school to be part of the Rural Scholars Program, whose purpose is to identify underserved students with potential and help them find a path toward higher education and careers.

After six years of participating in the program, Briand graduated high school in 2018 and enrolled at the Kent State University at Salem campus, where she is mentoring new scholars in the program and majoring in business management—a path she chose after talking with agents at an insurance agency she visited with other scholars during one of the program’s career exploration workshops. She will transfer to the Kent Campus to complete the last two years of her degree.

“Before I got into this program, I was really shy and didn’t know what I wanted to do,” says Briand. “Being part of Rising Scholars taught me about career paths that I never would have thought of on my own and helped me with my personal skills, like just talking to people.”

Through her years in the program, Briand realized how many people were helping her and others to find their places in the world. “I knew I wanted to give back in some way,” she says. “Wanting to be a mentor pushed me to be a better person and to do better in school. Now I’m setting an example for my mentees. When they see that I went through the program and am overcoming my challenges, it makes them realize they can do the same.”

While her eyes are on the future, Briand says she can’t forget how this journey began. “I didn’t know what to expect from Rising Scholars when I first started, but I’m so thankful that I had this opportunity. There is no way I could afford to go to college without this program and, knowing what I know now, I realize I had a lot to learn before I ever got here.

“Even my parents see a big change in me—I am goal-oriented and much stronger as a person. Rising Scholars has changed my life.”



Kent State’s Rising Scholars Program at Columbiana County campuses (East Liverpool and Salem) recognized its second graduating class in April 2019. After six years of comprehensive educational experiences, 15 area high school seniors who participated in the program graduated.

To mark this milestone, a celebration was held on the Kent State Salem campus to recognize students who have completed the program. David Dees, PhD ’00, dean and chief administrative officer of the Columbiana County campuses, presented each scholar with a stole that could be worn at his or her high school graduation ceremony.

ANDREW EICHER

“The mentors are the secret sauce; those are the individuals who keep the students on the right path all the way.”

—DAVID DEES, PhD ’00, dean and chief administrative officer, Columbiana County campuses

NATHAN TRANBARGER, BS ’17

Founder and Facilitator

Any story of a student who navigates successfully from high school to college is heartening for David Dees, PhD ’00, dean and chief administrative officer of the Columbiana County campuses, who created the Rural Scholars Program at the Kent State Salem campus in 2011. He had started thinking about the need for such a program in the early 2000s, partly as a reflection of his own journey as a college student.

A self-described “rural Appalachian hillbilly from Kentucky,” Dees was in college at the same time as his mom and brothers. He earned a bachelor’s degree in communications with a minor in biology and a master’s degree in theatre from the University of Kentucky. After short stints as a college football coach, disc jockey and theatre teacher, he went on to earn a PhD in cultural foundations of education from Kent State University.

Along his educational journey, he experienced many of the challenges that first-generation college students face: being unfamiliar with academic terms, feeling reluctant to ask for help or talk with professors, struggling with the time commitment and navigating the system and the culture change with family and friends who weren’t able to assist with the process.

“Although my family was supportive, when I went away to college, I was getting lost in the shuffle, and I was struggling,” says Dees. “Even then, I thought, ‘There’s got to be a better way to help students navigate from high school to a university or college.’”

That thought kept coming up as he became a professor and later an administrator. One of his graduate students was interested in college access and studied programs across the United States that focused on rural or urban students. The two

of them wrote a white paper in the early 2000s, taking the best ideas from those programs and creating a system to increase college access, retention and graduation rates. Although their concept—which included mentoring in middle school—was powerful, financing remained a stumbling block.

Then, while Dees was working at the Kent Campus directing the Center for Teaching and Learning, a colleague suggested he apply for an AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) grant to help implement the program. He received the grant, and Americorps VISTA volunteer Wendy Pfrenger came to help him create the community partnerships and program design necessary to support the program’s first cohort of admitted seventh graders in fall 2012.

“We went to the community and asked, ‘What are the issues in Columbiana County that we, as a university, can help serve?’” says Dees. “And they told us, ‘We are losing our best and brightest; we have high-paying jobs we can’t fill; we need more educational opportunities; we need kids who are ready for the workplace—not just ready for college, but ready for whatever is next in life.’”

“To build the program, we took the best practices and ideas from programs around the country we had identified through research and put them together with the community input we had obtained over yearlong conversations.

“I think that’s why we’ve had so much success. We did our research, we followed through, and we had a lot of community buy-in for what we were trying to accomplish.” ►



Proponent and Program Director

Donny Larabee, BA '18, could be a poster child for the Rising Scholars Program, even though he grew up prior to its founding.

He started out as a mentor in the program three years ago, while he was studying psychology at Kent State University at Salem, and his psychology professor, Rachael Blasiman, PhD, recommended him. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in psychology last May, he became a master mentor to coach new mentors and assist with programming. Recently, he was named interim program director for the Rising Scholars Program at the Columbiana County campuses.

From the first time Larabee heard about Rising Scholars, it resonated with him. "I immediately fell in love with it," he says. "I've always had a large part of my heart devoted to helping kids."

Perhaps that's because his own childhood had a rocky start. Both he and his older brother, A.J., were removed from their biological mother and stepfather when he was seven years old and his brother was eight. They were placed in a group home before going to live with foster parents Richard and Kathryn Larabee, of Muskegon, Michigan. The couple adopted them at ages 11 and 12, when their biological mother's rights were terminated. By then, the Larabees were retired, and both have since passed away.

But Donny Larabee keeps his adoptive parents' memory ever present, having tattooed reminders of them on each of his forearms. On his left forearm is the logo of the Detroit Tigers in memory of his dad, who was a Tigers fan, along with his initials, RAL; on his right forearm is a lilac blossom in memory of his mom, who loved lilacs, along with her initials, KLL. His parents gave him a loving, stable home, but both of them had worked in factories, so they weren't able to help him navigate the college admissions process.

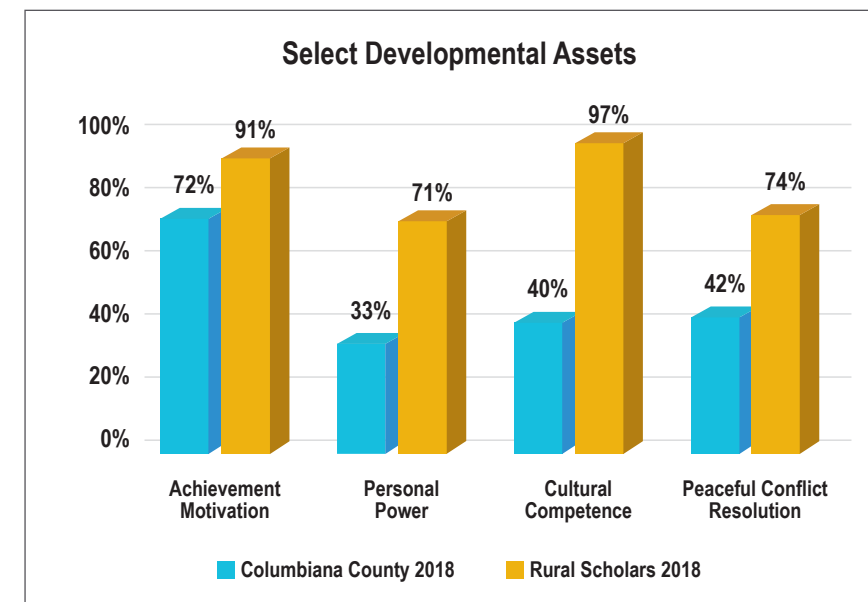
Larabee joined the military and was in active duty for eight years, stationed in Alaska and Kentucky, with three tours in Iraq during that time. After meeting his wife, Katie, who is from Ohio, the couple moved to Columbiana County six years ago when he left the military. Katie Larabee, who recently gave birth to their second son, is taking courses at Kent State Salem in business management and is also a mentor in the Rising Scholars Program. Larabee says he is making every effort to stay with the program indefinitely.

"I feel this is kind of a calling for me, because I've had all these life experiences," says Larabee of his new position. "I've come from living in extreme poverty with no one to guide me, to having the right people come into my life at the right time. I've worked at a variety of jobs, including pizza delivery, telemarketing, cook in a hospital kitchen, military and college student. So in this program, I want to share my experiences with the students and give them an idea of what's available out there."

"I don't think college is the answer for everybody; you can live an amazing life without it. But the experience of going to college is what got me to where I am today."

"In this program, I want to share my experiences with the students and give them an idea of what's available out there."

—DONNY LARABEE, BA '18, interim program director, Rising Scholars, Columbiana County campuses



The Rural Scholars Program assesses the developmental assets of program participants via an annual health and wellness survey. Results are extrapolated and compared with the participants' peers within Columbiana County. Rural Scholars students outperformed their Columbiana County peers on both internal and external developmental assets as indicated on the chart above, which gives just a sample of the findings. See the complete 2018-2019 Rural Scholars Impact Report at www.kent.edu/supportrisingscholars.



This summer, tenth grade Rising Scholars participated in a workshop titled "Locationology" and learned about regional enterprise and the economy, as well as geology, astronomy, geography, archaeology and history. Above, they are helping identify different species found in river water at a local park during a lesson on soil and water conservation.

HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILDREN GET ON TRACK FOR COLLEGE:

Read with them every day when they are younger; keep them in the habit of reading as they get older.

Encourage them to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities, allowing them to be involved in their community.

Talk to them about their interests; help them look into related careers.

Check in on their academic progress using online tools like ProgressBook, an integrated student information and learning management program.

Push them to take challenging classes rather than seek easy As; make sure they are meeting high school requirements for graduation and college readiness.

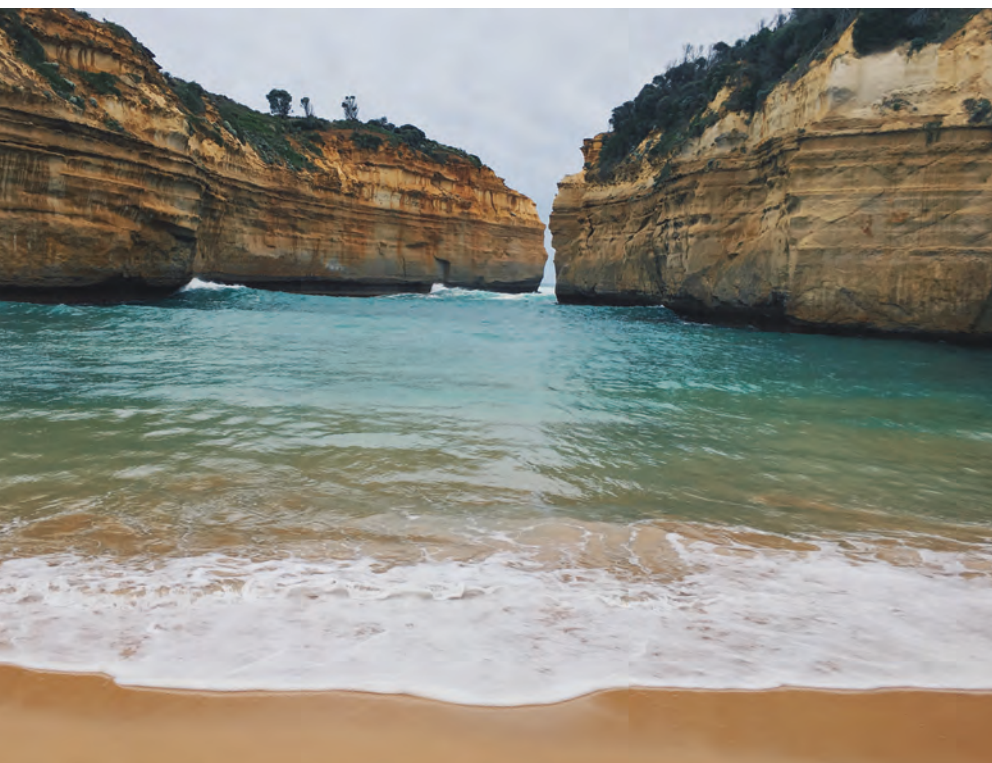
As they get older, accompany them on college visits and help them make the decision that is best for them.

See bigfuture.collegeboard.org for more checklists and advice.

Learn more about Rising Scholars at www.kent.edu/supportrisingscholars

Picture THIS

Each year, Kent State students participate in off-campus study away/study abroad programs and internships in locations across the country and around the world. And they take photos—lots and lots of photos. Here are just a few shots students shared with us from the past year.



◀ **Acacia Freeman** (Westerville, Ohio)
Senior (major, applied communication;
minor, advertising)
RA International Exchange Program
November 2018
Melbourne, Australia

Loch Ard Gorge

“Ten resident assistants (RAs) were the first group from Kent State chosen to go on an RA International Exchange trip for a week in November to learn about residence services at Deakin University in Melbourne, Australia—and their resident leaders (RLs) came to see us for a week in June. It was a great experience, and we still talk with each other on a regular basis. During our time in Australia, we got to go sightseeing. This photo [taken at Port Campbell National Park, Victoria, Australia] is of one of the prettiest beaches I have ever been to. The water was extremely blue, but ice cold.”



◀ **Pacifique Niyonzima, MA '19** (Rwanda, Central Africa)
(Major, higher education administration with certification in internationalization)
“Rwanda After Genocide” course
Spring semester 2019
Rwanda, Central Africa

Helping Hands

“In summer 2018, I received an internship at the University of Rwanda to establish a mutual partnership between KSU and the University of Rwanda. On my return, I connected with Dr. Leslie Heaphy, a professor of history at the Kent State Stark campus, who designed a study abroad course to focus on the events surrounding the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda, my native country, and how the country and people have searched for peace and reconciliation since.

I organized all of the activities to meet the learning outcomes of the class and led a group of 13 KSU students, who arrived in Rwanda on March 22, 2019, for 10 days. They participated in activities and lectures at the University of Rwanda, public institutions and private organizations. This photo shows the soil-stained hands of the KSU students and other volunteers who took part in a local community service known as “Umuganda,” a national cleanup day, which happens on the last Saturday of every month.”

▼ **Nathaniel Bailey** (Kent, Ohio)
Senior (major, journalism)
2019 Reinke Grant for Visual Storytelling
Summer 2019
Harrison County, Kentucky

High Startle Response

“As a 2019 Reinke Grant Recipient, my goal was to document the people and places of Harrison County, Ky. Here, Oden Oraelosi and Parker Harris of Lexington, Ky., react as airport chairman Bobby Craft sends his plane into a dive during the Young Eagles event at the Harrison County Airport. The two boys were making noises into the headset, and Craft put the plane into a dive to quiet them down.”

Show Us Your Best Study Away/Study Abroad Shot!

With study away/study abroad programs in place for majors from accounting to zoology and numerous places to go, we're sure you have taken some amazing photos over the years. Current students and alumni are invited to enter our Study Away/Study Abroad Photo Contest by July 1, 2020, for your chance to win a \$25 Amazon gift card. Entries will be judged by University Communications and Marketing staff photographers and by popular vote.

Selected photos will be published in the fall/winter 2020-21 issue of *Kent State Magazine*.

Submit your high resolution photo and fill out the requested form at www.kent.edu/ksuphotocontest.

▶ **Leah Cavanaugh** (Richmond, Ohio)
Senior (dual major, environmental conservation
biology and environmental studies)
Tropical Field Biology Research Program
Winter break, December 2017-January 2018
La Selva Biological Station, Costa Rica

Small But Dangerous

“On a tour our first day there, the La Selva Biological Station staff pointed out this baby eyelash viper, one of Costa Rica's many native venomous snake species. This one was so small we hadn't noticed it, even with its bright yellow coloring. In La Selva, my research group studied the effect of forest complexity on the diversity of herpetofauna [reptiles and amphibians of a particular region] in a secondary forest, which made this observation of an eyelash viper exciting!”



Future FORECAST



The new director of the Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute sees a broader, even brighter future for the institute.

By Lisa Abraham

BOB CHRISTY, BS '95

The flat screen television on your wall, the laptop on your desk and the smartphone in your pocket may be the first items that come to mind when you think about liquid crystal displays. Yet the future of liquid crystal science is heading in new directions, predicts Torsten Hegmann, PhD, who was named the new director of the Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute (AMLCI) in July, after a national search. “Liquid crystal research is moving more toward biology and materials that respond to their environment in unique and unexpected ways,” he says. “These are the new frontiers for the field.”

Hegmann, who has been associate director of the institute since 2018 and a faculty member at Kent State since 2011, says the future of liquid crystals will be its applications in biology and medical science as well as sensors and active, responsive systems—already part of his research.

“Dr. Hegmann is a highly accomplished researcher in the fields of liquid crystals as well as biomaterials and nanomaterials,” says Paul DiCorleto, PhD, vice president for Research and Sponsored Programs at Kent State. “He has not only made important contributions to our fundamental knowledge in these fields, but he has also shown entrepreneurial spirit and a passion for the societal impact of his research.”

“Liquid crystal research is moving more toward biology and materials that respond to their environment in unique and unexpected ways. These are the new frontiers for the field.”

— Torsten Hegmann, PhD

DiCorleto notes that Hegmann has cofounded a company [with his wife, Elda Hegmann, PhD, assistant professor of biological sciences], Torel LLC, that uses liquid crystal sensors to detect toxic gases and vapors, which can help save the lives of firefighters and other first responders.

“He has demonstrated a true commitment to multidisciplinary collaborative approaches to answering important questions, which is a major goal of this institute,” adds DiCorleto.

A native of Germany, Hegmann was working as an associate professor of chemistry at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada, when he came to a seminar at Kent State’s Liquid Crystal Institute in 2011. He learned of the state-sponsored Ohio Research Scholars program to attract young international research talent to the state, applied and was hired the same year.

Hegmann says coming to the Liquid Crystal Institute was an exciting opportunity: “This is where a lot of the research in this field started.”

Kent State’s Liquid Crystal Institute was founded in 1965 by Glenn H. Brown, a chemistry professor and pioneer in the field of liquid crystal research; later the institute was named in his honor. It is regarded globally as the birthplace of liquid crystal displays and the world’s first research center focused on the basic and applied science of liquid crystals.

In fall 2018, the Liquid Crystal Institute was renamed the Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute and its focus expanded to include a broad array of advanced materials research and science.

“Liquid crystal research is part of the backbone of Kent State,” says Kent State President Todd Diacon. “Dr. Hegmann understands its importance to the university’s history and shares my commitment that Kent State remain a world leader in the research of the newest phases of advanced materials science.”

The Hegmann Group research lab already has cross-collaboration expertise in medicine, pharmacology, nanochemistry and engineering; and Hegmann says a key goal will be encouraging the institute to work collaboratively with more nontraditional partners.

Those partners will include biologists, materials chemists, biophysicists, engineers, members of Kent State’s Design Innovation group and the university’s Brain Health Research Institute, of which Hegmann is a member.

“Some of my own research is in nanomaterials used for drug delivery to the brain,” he says. “There are, perhaps, many

more connections we can make between the brain and materials science, especially liquid crystals, which are regarded as a model system for cell membranes.”

Hegmann says he is looking forward to the “collaboratories” in the terrace level of the Integrated Sciences Building (to be completed in fall 2020)—spaces where scientists from various fields can work together and conduct joint research across multiple disciplines.

Demonstrating the benefits of multifaceted research that crosses varied domains will take the institute to a higher level, he says, and is key to increased funding.

“We need to build critical mass in other materials research domains to complement our existing liquid crystal, soft matter expertise.” ⚡

Learn more about Kent State’s Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute at www.kent.edu/amlici.

Dr. Hegmann’s main goals for the Advanced Materials and Liquid Crystal Institute:

INCREASING the institute’s distinctive role in the future of liquid crystal and materials science to inspire a higher level of competitiveness for research funding.

STREAMLINING and modernizing the look of the institute’s buildings and laboratories, so that they reflect modern materials science.

ELEVATING the level of symposiums held at Kent State to national and international prominence beginning in 2020.

RENEWING the research infrastructure so that all instruments and equipment are state-of-the-art. The purchase of such equipment will be tied to better fundraising.



Check it OFF!

We asked current students for a list of top things they think every Kent State student should do before graduation. How many items on the list can you check off? How many do you even recognize?

Illustrations by Jason Zehner

Explore the Kent Campus

- ☐ Add another layer of paint to the Rock
- ☐ Go sledding on campus
- ☐ Feed a black squirrel
- ☐ Visit the May 4 Visitors Center
- ☐ Visit the Fashion Museum
- ☐ Visit the Herrick Conservatory
- ☐ Hang out on the Student Green
- ☐ Dine at Rosie's after midnight
- ☐ See what's on every floor of the Kent State University Library
- ☐ Walk the Lefton Esplanade from Risman Plaza to downtown Kent



Sample and Stroll downtown Kent

- ☐ Order a late-night treat at Insomnia Cookies
- ☐ Have a drink at Ray's Place
- ☐ Get a grilled sandwich at Twisted Meltz
- ☐ Find your bliss at Peace, Love and Little Donuts
- ☐ Buy fresh produce at the Haymaker's Farmer's Market (Saturdays)
- ☐ Create a costume for Kent Halloween
- ☐ Dress in green for Fake Paddy's Day
- ☐ Celebrate our nation's independence at Kent Heritage Festival



Be your Best self

- ☐ Join a student organization or two
- ☐ Volunteer for Super Service Saturday
- ☐ Sign up for supplemental instruction or tutoring
- ☐ Go on an Alternative Spring Break
- ☐ Participate in a Peer Leader Training Course
- ☐ Find your niche with an Involvement Expert (Center for Student Involvement)
- ☐ Polish your prose at Writing Commons
- ☐ Take a Financial Literacy Workshop



Meet and greet

- ☐ Make a friend in each class
- ☐ Get to know your academic advisor
- ☐ Chat with your resident assistant
- ☐ Snap a selfie with President Diacon
- ☐ Drop in during your professors' office hours
- ☐ Give Flash the Golden Eagle a high-five
- ☐ Join a team at a Hackathon

Practice wellness

- ☐ Stroll by the Cuyahoga River downtown
- ☐ Walk the stairs of the Kent State University Library (tallest building in Portage County)
- ☐ Travel the Portage County Bike and Hike Trail
- ☐ Kayak the Cuyahoga River with Crooked River Adventures
- ☐ Play intramural or club sports
- ☐ Skate at the Ice Arena
- ☐ Climb the Rec Center's rock wall
- ☐ Run a 5K on campus: Bowman Cup, Black Squirrel or Run the World



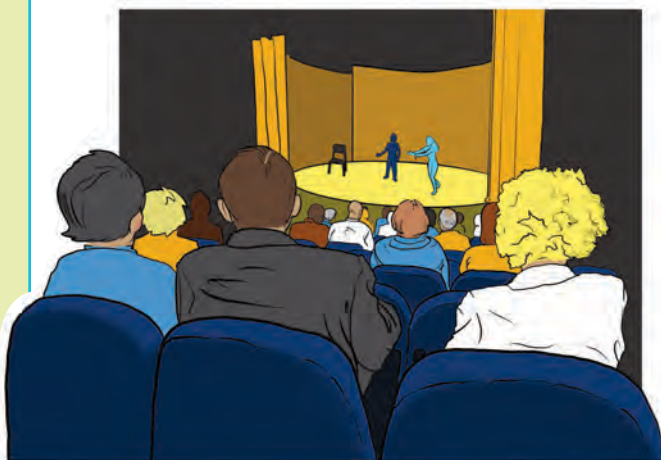
Attend Kent Campus Events

- ☐ Check out the Black Squirrel Festival
- ☐ Celebrate Homecoming
- ☐ Catch a movie at Real Late Reels
- ☐ Start off the new school year at Blastoff
- ☐ Cheer on the Golden Flashes at an athletic event
- ☐ Watch a Dive-In Movie
- ☐ See a show at the Center for the Performing Arts
- ☐ Give something back at a fraternity/sorority philanthropy event

Regional Campuses

Tuscarawas

- Enjoy a Broadway show, comedy act or musical entertainment at the Performing Arts Center
- Design and 3D print something fun in the Makerspace
- Record a video, song or a narrative in the Video2Go Studio



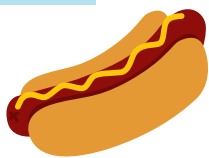
Salem

- Ignore the “No Fishing” signs at the pond
- Feed and/or dodge the geese
- Gather around the fireplace in Centofanti Hall
- Try to figure out the numbering sequence for the classrooms



East Liverpool

- Eat lunch at the Hot Dog Shoppe
- Talk to the ghosts in the Mary Pat Building
- Sit at the wharf and watch boats and barges on the Ohio River



Stark

- Join first-year students for the lightning bolt photo during Smart Start Orientation
- Chomp on homemade chips at the Emporium Grille
- Attend at least one Featured Speaker presentation
- Take in the campus wildlife at the Pond and Wetlands Research Area
- Volunteer at one of the longstanding community events, Boo U or Earth Day
- Study by the clock in the heart of campus



Ashtabula

- Grab your books, walk across the street to Lake Erie and study on the beach
- Take a selfie with friends—or with Flash—in front of the “Wave Wall”
- Meet your friends and classmates at Harbor Perk or another great spot on Bridge Street



Geauga

- Visit the Great Geauga County Fair (and the KSU Geauga Booth!) on Labor Day weekend
- Go to a pancake breakfast in Burton (Sundays in March), the heart of maple syrup country
- Play in the faculty/staff vs. students kickball game each fall semester



Regional Academic Center

- Attend Twins Days in Twinsburg (first full weekend of August)
- Eat lunch on the patio to enjoy fresh air between classes

What did we forget? Send us your list at magazine@kent.edu!

Score Yourself

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 50 - 73 | You’ve totally embraced the Kent State community. |
| 25 - 49 | Maybe you’ve spent a little too much time studying. |
| 15 - 24 | You really ought to get out more. |
| 1 - 14 | Are you sure we’re talking about the same place? |
| 0 | “I just picked this up in my doctor’s waiting room. Who are you people?” |

Wi-Fi WHIZ

Jerry Pohmurski, BS '88, was among the early pioneers of Wi-Fi—and he's not done tinkering with it yet.

By Deb McGuinness, BA '78

For many of today's college students, there has never not been Wi-Fi.

That amazing, ubiquitous wireless technology that makes our laptops portable and our movies streamable has only been in existence since 1998, thanks, in part, to Jerry Pohmurski, BS '88.

A self-proclaimed "radio geek," he was interested in ham radios and radio frequencies from an early age. His father, Joseph Pohmurski, was a professor of engineering at Kent State from 1969 to 1987, and Jerry Pohmurski grew up tinkering with equipment and components.

After graduating from Kent State with a degree in engineering, Pohmurski went to work at a small start-up company in Cleveland that was trying to integrate cell phone technology into a laptop.

When that company ran out of money, he ended up at a company called Telxon in Akron, Ohio, that made electronic handheld devices used for inventory control in warehouses. Telxon spun off another radio-based division called Aironet, also based out of Akron, that focused on wireless data communication.

"They wanted us to find a way to transfer the barcode data collected on the handhelds' backup to their mainframe computer without using a physical docking device, using radio waves instead," says Pohmurski.

"We wrote a little software program to do that and tested its limits by playing video games to see how much data it could handle without crashing. Video games chew up a lot of bandwidth. Basically, we broke it and then figured out how to fix it, time and time again, until we could send larger and larger amounts of data at faster and faster speeds."

In 1995, Pohmurski became the liaison between Telxon and Aironet, which was part of a consortium of companies working on the original spec for Wi-Fi—there are hundreds of names on the spec called 802.11B.

"We were conducting interoperability testing so that different devices could talk to each other," he says. "That's easy to do



A sample of early models of Aironet wireless devices.

within one company, but we have to be able to talk to many different systems in the world and interact with them. We ran tests to ensure that everything worked together to get the spec to finally go through."

Wi-Fi wasn't actually called "Wi-Fi" in the beginning; it was known by the acronym WECA (for Wireless Ethernet Compatibility Alliance - 802.11B direct sequence). By 2000, Pohmurski was working as an engineering manager for Cisco, which had acquired Aironet that March.

"Needless to say, my boss at Cisco wanted a name that was a bit more flashy," he says. "He hired a marketing firm, Interbrand, to come up a better name, and they came up with seven options, one of which was Wi-Fi."

When his boss went to Seattle to pitch Microsoft, he gave them the names. "I think Bill Gates was the one who picked Wi-Fi," Pohmurski says. "The thing is, it doesn't really stand for anything. It was just a take-off on hi-fi [high fidelity]. Just a catchy name."

Although he got to know many of the people working on Wi-Fi development and remains friends with several of them, Pohmurski, one of the top experts in 802.11 wireless test and quality, says none of them thought Wi-Fi would become the commodity that it is now.

"We never, ever thought that the technology would be in such wide use as it is today. It just never occurred to us," he says. "We didn't start out to do what it has become today, it just happened. In 2003, when people started using it in their homes, is when it really took off."

Pohmurski and his co-workers have formed lasting relationships that have spanned many years. They play in bands together and golf together.

"I met so many cool and smart people who could do all kinds of amazing things," he says. After several years with Cisco, then directing new product development at a communications company, Pohmurski worked as a consultant and is now officially "retired." But lately his friends have reached out to him to work on some new applications for Wi-Fi.

“Basically, we broke it and then figured out how to fix it, time and time again, until we could send larger and larger amounts of data at faster and faster speeds.”

"I have some ideas I'd like to explore," he says. "So many things have been created as an offshoot of Wi-Fi, especially in the medical field. We'll throw them against the wall and see what sticks. Should be fun."

Pohmurski is keeping those ideas under his hat for now, but stay tuned. The future is still being made in Wi-Fi, so don't be surprised if the name Jerry Pohmurski pops up again as part of the "next big thing." ⚡

Jerry Pohmurski stands in an anechoic chamber at the Cisco Richfield facility. Anechoic means "without echo." An anechoic chamber is a room designed to completely absorb reflections of either sound or electromagnetic waves.

RAMI DAUD

alumni LIFE

Kent State celebrated Homecoming on Saturday, Sept. 21, as Kent State alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff and the community took part in one of the university’s long-standing traditions.



Kent State President Todd Diacon, this year’s Homecoming Grand Marshal, and his wife, Moema Furtado, lead the Homecoming Parade as they ride down Main Street in a 1969 Oldsmobile.



The Kent State Golden Flashes ring the Starner Victory Bell after winning the 2019 Homecoming Game 62-20 over the Bowling Green State University Falcons.



Alumni, family and friends enjoy the festive Welcome Home Party hosted by Kent State Alumni at the Center for Philanthropy and Engagement. The carnival-style event included food, giveaways, games—and a lot of fun.



As the bell tolls 12:30 pm, couples who feel Kent State played an important role in their relationship kiss on the “K” at Risman Plaza, serenaded by the Kent Clarks a cappella group.



Kent State President Todd Diacon poses with 2019 Homecoming Royalty Robby Speaks and Haylee Hoyt. The Homecoming Court—more than 30 representatives from all Kent State campuses—were recognized at the game.

Flash Mob

When the Antonczak family gets together for a family reunion, the theme is always the same—blue and gold. This flock of Flashes includes seven members who are all Kent State alumni, including three who married other Flashes.

Parents **James Antonczak, BA ’80**, and **Michelle (Cligrow) Antonczak, BSN ’81**, Olmsted Twp., Ohio, met their first week at Kent State in 1976 at an ice cream social during freshman orientation. Michelle was playing the piano when James walked over and told her she was a lovely pianist. Thirty-five years later, they are still a happy “Kiss on the K” couple.

James and Michelle’s son, **Andrew Antonczak, BS ’08**, met his future wife, **Lisa (Thumm) Antonczak, BSN ’10**, at the Zephyr Pub on a blind date in 2007 set up by a mutual friend while they were both in school. They were married in 2012. Lisa is a nurse practitioner, and Andy is a pilot for Spirit Airlines, based in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

The Antonczak’s daughter, **Andrea (Antonczak) Tyrell, BSE ’15**, met her husband, **Matthew Tyrell, BBA ’15**, at Kent State, as well. They met online when Andrea noticed a picture of Matt sitting in a Kent State airplane (her brother, Andrew, was Matt’s flight instructor). Their first date was at Taco Tonto’s, topped off by a visit to the Victory Bell on the



Pictured left to right (in 2015): Andy Antonczak, Lisa (Thumm) Antonczak, Jim Antonczak, Chelley Antonczak, Andrea (Antonczak) Tyrell and Matt Tyrell

KSU Commons. Both graduated in 2015 and were married in 2016. Andrea is a children’s book author, and she and Matthew are also both employed at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas.

Finally, James’s brother, **John Antonczak, BS ’66**, was a proud KSU alumnus who worked for more than 40 years as an aeronautical engineer in General Electric’s Aircraft division, before passing away in 2018.

The Antonczak family still enjoys participating in activities at Kent State—walking the grounds of the Kent Campus, visiting facilities like the May 4 Center and joining in on university events like the Bowman Cup 5K. This family is the epitome of “Flashes Forever.” —Deb McGuinness, BA ’78

class NOTES

1950s

Harvey Dunn, BBA ’59, Encino, Calif., wrote:



“My book, *Attention Seniors: A Complete Guide to Wealth and Happiness in Your Retirement*, contains four manuscripts: 1) “How to become a millionaire at the age of 80” (I just need 45,000 more copies of my book sold to become one!); 2) “The 12 things to do in retirement to make you a happier person”; 3) “How to still be happy after 55 years of marriage” (fact or fiction?); 4) “How a sense of humor will add years to your life: My 35 years as an MC at the world-famous Laugh Factory comedy club in Hollywood.” Available on Amazon or on my home page, harveydunnbooks.com.”

Donovan Kline, BBA ’57, Hendersonville, NC, wrote, “As one of six diplomatic couriers during the Cold War years of the 1950s, I’m on a videotape of our experiences traveling behind the Iron Curtain, which will be available permanently for public viewing at the Diplomatic Center Museum at the State Department in Washington, DC.

Between 1957 and 1977, I traveled 1,813,357 official miles on 326 trips (from 1 to 59 days) to 140 countries, including 32 trips to Moscow by air and rail. Personal travel during 12 years of living overseas took my total mileage over two million miles.”

1960s

Lance Buhl, BA ’61, Rockville, Md., is a retired business and nonprofit executive and consultant. He earned a PhD in American history from Harvard in 1969, taught history at New Bedford Institute of Technology (now the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth), Harvard and Cleveland State University (where he served as assistant dean of Arts and Sciences and founding director of the Center for Learning).

From 1981 to 1993 he served as program officer, manager and then director of British Petroleum’s corporate contributions program in the United States, where he created and managed the company’s programs in urban revitalization. Since leaving British Petroleum, he has provided consulting services to some 60 foundations, corporations and nonprofits.

From 2002-11 his work was based at Duke University and included being deputy director of the United States–Southern Africa Center for Leadership and Public Values, a partnership between the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University and the Graduate School of Business at the University of Cape Town.

He has written extensively in each career. Currently he is a busy retiree, living in a retirement community just north of the District of Columbia.

David Parkinson, BBA ’67, Belvedere Tiburon, Calif., received a Silver Rose Award, given by the Legion of the Silver Rose to Vietnam War veterans exposed to Agent Orange dioxins while serving in the war. One of the missions of

the Legion of the Silver Rose is to inform Vietnam veterans of the importance of yearly medical exams to detect potential Agent Orange-related illnesses.

Barbara (Hille) Sposet, BA ’68, PhD ’97,



Strongsville, Ohio, marked 50 years in teaching in May 2019. She taught in Brooklyn City Schools (Ohio) for 32 years and currently is a tenured professor of education at Baldwin Wallace

University in Berea, Ohio.

David Duda, BS ’68, Cooper City, Fla., received the G. Harold Martin Award, presented by the International Swimming Hall of Fame, Inc. (a nonprofit educational organization in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.) for long and exceptional leadership, insight and dedication to the water safety of children and the cause of making Every Child A Swimmer.

Since 2010, he has been an adjunct college professor at Broward College, where he teaches sport, recreation and fitness curriculum. The founder and CEO of MDM Aquatics/Safety Training and Consulting, Duda’s focus is to teach aquatic skills to children and mentor instructors in diverse populations to help reduce child drownings. ►



Roberta De Pompei, BS '64, MA '69, Stow, Ohio, (dean emerita, College of Health Professions, and part-time instructor at The University of Akron), and **Jean (Prinzo) Blosser, MA '74,** South Pasadena, Fla., (president of educational consulting firm Creative Strategies for Special Education), coauthored *Pediatric Traumatic Brain Injury: Proactive Intervention (3rd Ed)*, released by Plural Publications, San Diego, Calif., in January 2019.

They both completed master's degrees in speech-language pathology at Kent State University, and became colleagues at The University of Akron, where they researched the effects of brain injury on children and adolescents and how they could be reintegrated into home, school and community.

The book, which provides practical recommendations for assessing and treating children and adolescents who have sustained a head injury, can be found at www.pluralpublishing.com, with a 15 percent discount to Kent State University students and alumni using promo code AP2013. Pictured (l to r): Jean (Prinzo) Blosser and Roberta De Pompei.

1970s

Anita Bixenstine, MA '70, PhD '89, and husband, **Edwin Bixenstine, PhD,** Kent, Ohio, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary at a family event in March 2019. She was an Honors College advisor at Kent State from 1969 to 1990, and he is a professor of psychology (emeritus) at Kent State, who retired in 1984. They have 14 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

John Carden, BS '70, MS '72, Liberty Lake, Wash., a licensed professional geologist in the state of Washington, has over 35 years of experience in exploration management, teaching and research. He has been a director of Paramount Gold Nevada Corp. since February 2015 and a director of Paramount Gold and Silver Corp. from September 2006 through completion of a merger with Coeur Mining Inc. in April 2015.

He received his doctorate in geology from the Geophysical Institute at the University of Alaska in 1978. Since 2001, he has been a geologic consultant and a director of a number of junior resource companies. From 2010 to the present, he has been a consultant to Otis Gold Corp.

Stanley Harrold, MA '70, PhD '75, Orangeburg, SC, professor of history at South Carolina State University, recently published *American Abolitionism: Its Direct Political Impact from Colonial Times into Reconstruction* (University of Virginia Press, April 2019). It provides the only systematic examination of the American abolition movement's direct impacts on antislavery politics from colonial times to the Civil War and after. He is also the author, recently, of *Lincoln and the Abolitionists* (Concise Lincoln Library, March 2018) and *Border War: Fighting over Slavery before the Civil War* (University of North Carolina Press, reprint edition, February 2013).

Donna Krause, BS '70, Wausau, Wis., wrote, "I ran for and was elected the Marathon County Board Supervisor for District 10. Marathon County, known as the ginseng capital of the world, is the largest county in Wisconsin and includes many small rural towns, manufacturing businesses and dairy farms. The Marathon County Board is the largest county board in the United States with 38 county board supervisors. We now have nine women on the board. In addition to attending the monthly full board meetings, I serve on the seven-member Health and Human Services Committee for Marathon County."

Bart Bixenstine, BA '71, Cleveland, a partner at Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP, and a former KSU board member, received the Distinguished Honors Alumni Award from the Honors College in April 2019. He periodically teaches a course at Kent State on the First Amendment.

Michael Chanak Jr., BS '71, Cincinnati, Ohio, appears in the P&G-commissioned documentary, *Out of the Shadows: Risking Their Careers in the Name of Equality*, which debuted at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity in June 2019.

The short film, created by P&G in partnership with Great Big Films, picks up where their award-winning 2018 documentary *The Words Matter: One Voice Can Make a Difference*, left off.

The Words Matter documents Chanak's role in getting P&G to add "sexual orientation" to its diversity policy in 1992. (See <http://bit.ly/thewordsmatterfilm>.) *Out of the Shadows* highlights the courageous employees who persevered for 10 more years to gain domestic partner benefits and turn the tide of prejudice in the company and community. (See <http://bit.ly/outoftheshadowsfilm>.)

Chanak's efforts were also listed in the *Cincinnati Enquirer's* coverage in June 2019 of "Stonewall Riot 50th anniversary: The moment that changed gay life in Cincinnati." (See <http://bit.ly/stonewallanniversary>.)

Norman Macklin, MA '72, Rensselaer, NY, received a doctorate degree in ministry from Evangelical International College and Seminary in Tacoma, Wash., in June 2014. Macklin was consecrated a bishop in the Baptist denomination in October 2017.

Richard (Rico) Hawkes, BS '73, Ellenton, Fla., wrote, "I am currently senior director of operations risk/safety for Field Entertainment, Inc., the world's largest producer of live entertainment, based in Palmetto, Fla. Since 1992, I have produced all aspects of Supercross (motocross racing in major stadiums) and Monster Jam (monster truck performances in stadiums, arenas, fairgrounds, both domestic and international). I have been working on the production and safety side of these live events for more than 50 years.

"My time in Kent (1969-1976) was turbulent, but rich and rewarding. May 4, 1970 (my 19th birthday) was an eye-opening experience, one that is indelibly etched onto my heart.

"The times following these events were exciting as I watched a country deal with inevitable changes. Being with the on-campus television station, I was introduced to Dick Gregory, Julian Bond, Buckminster Fuller, Andrew Young, John Froines, attorney William Kunstler, and also had the advantage of producing live coverage of the many on-/off-campus activities that seemed to happen almost daily.

"Whenever I'm in Ohio, I always find time to visit the Tree City. Wow . . . all of the changes!"

Carter Strang, BS '73, MED '79, Cleveland, a partner at Tucker Ellis, LLP, and president-elect of the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Foundation, was inducted into the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law (C|MJLAW) Hall of Fame on October 25, 2019, in recognition of his contributions to the success and reputation of C|MJLAW. He is a Cleveland-Marshall Leader-in-Residence and a member of its Visiting Committee.

Elizabeth (Sappenfield) Blakeslee, BA '74, Washington, DC, was appointed by the mayor to the District of Columbia Real Estate Commission. The Commission regulates the licenses of professional real estate agents and protects consumers by upholding the District of Columbia real estate license law.

Mark Landers, BBA '74, Dayton, Ohio, would like to connect with former friends and classmates. Please email mark.landlers.esq@gmail.com to get in touch.

Larry Lapidus, BS '74, Poland, Ohio, is celebrating his 42nd year of providing mental health counseling services. He was honored with a Distinguished Alumni Award through Youngstown State University Counseling Department's 50th Anniversary Commemoration in April 2019.

PAST TIMES (1970s)

Stamp of Approval?

"I went to Kent State starting in 1973 because my father was an assistant dean in the College of Arts and Sciences. The activities offered for one night during Freshman Week were a reception upstairs in the Student Union featuring the university president, Glenn A. Olds, and a welcome party downstairs at the Rathskeller pub.

"I attempted to enter the Rathskeller, but at the time I was 17 years old. The bouncer at the door, who was a Delta Tau Delta fraternity brother of my sophomore older brother, recognized me as he checked my ID and said I could not come in because I was underage. Instead of stamping the back of my hand, he playfully stamped my forehead and, forgetting this, I resigned myself to attending the upstairs reception.

"At the reception, I first met my father's boss, the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. I next shook hands and briefly talked with President Olds, who told me he knew my father. I then recognized one of my father's student office assistants. She was there with her parents, and I was introduced and sat down with them. After a short time, she leaned over toward me and whispered, 'Do you know that it says "F#@* You" on your forehead?'

"Immediately after I graduated from KSU, I ended up working directly for President Olds at his next position as president of what was then called Alaska Methodist University in Anchorage for most of 1978 before I went to graduate school in upstate New York. I never brought up this particular incident with him."

— Richard Breedon, BS '77, PhD '88, Davis, California



JASON ZEHNER

Paul Hedeon, BA '76, Monroe, Mich., published his second novel, *The Butterfly*, on February 21, 2019. Hedeon is an award-winning professor and writer and a Fulbright scholar. His other publications include a poetry collection, *Under a Night Sky* (Final Thursday, 2016); a novel, *The Knowledge Tree* (Wide Water, 2013), another poetry collection, *When I Think about Rain* (Final Thursday, 2009); and a coedited collection of essays, *Unrelenting Readers: The New Poet-critics* (Story Line, 2004).

Richard Breedon, BS '77, PhD '88, Davis, Calif., wrote, "I retired as a research professor emeritus from the University of California, Davis, in 2016. I then spent two years teaching high energy particle physics at Yale-NUS College in Singapore. From there, I took my students to visit the CERN laboratory in Geneva, Switzerland, where I remain a member of the Compact Muon Solenoid experiment on the Large Hadron Collider." [Check out a story from his freshman year at KSU above.]

Mark Flash, BBA '77, Bay Village, Ohio, was appointed executive director of the Lake Health Foundation, responsible for overseeing the fundraising and philanthropic activities of the foundation. Flash is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals, a trustee for the Bay Village Foundation and philanthropic advisor for the Bay Village Food Project.



Ivan "Tex" Gilmore, BA '76, Washington, NC, retired on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 2019. During his career he served on the North Carolina Board of Licensing of Geologists for six years, the North Carolina Mining and Energy Commission for four years and the Board of Directors of the Aurora Fossil Museum for 16 years. He was chief geologist and superintendent of mine planning at the world-famous Lee Creek Mine for over 30 years. During his 42-year career as a professional geologist, Gilmore was awarded the John T. Galey public service award in 2007 by the American Institute of Professional Geologists and the United States Congressional Achievement Award in 2006.

James Vittek, AA '75, BS '75, MED '76, EdS '78, Chagrin Falls, Ohio, enjoyed long careers as a writer and psychologist. During retirement, he earned a Doctor of Ministry from the Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, Ohio. Also during retirement, he renewed his love of animals; he has four Cavalier King Charles Spaniels.

Cheryl Lewis, MA '78, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, wrote, "I'm a proud and grateful graduate of Kent State University. I attended graduate school in the Department of History, where I was mentored by the best professors/scholars and fellow students. Best years of my life!"

Ruth Ava Lyons, BFA '78, Charlotte, NC, has been selected for a 2019 residency with The Arctic Circle, thearticcicle.org, along with scientists, researchers and other artists who will participate in an expedition to the North Pole. Her work can be seen at Hidell Brooks Gallery in Charlotte and at www.ruthaval Lyons.com.

Robert Steffen, BS '78, Spring Green, Wis., retired after a 40-year advertising career. Most recently, he was senior director-brand campaigns at Carter's, Inc. in Atlanta and was previously at Lands' End in Dodgeville, Wisconsin.

Virginia Schaefer Horvath, MA '79, PhD '84, Fredonia, NY, retired as president of SUNY Fredonia on July 1, 2019, after more than 40 years of service and leadership in public higher education. A first-generation student, she was the first female

president of Fredonia when she officially stepped into the role as the university's 13th president on July 1, 2012. Prior to coming to Fredonia as vice president of academic affairs, she taught in the English department at KSU for several years and served as dean of Academic and Student Services for Kent State's regional campuses and assistant to the president for strategic planning. ►



Dennis O’Connell, MA ’79, and **Janelle (Pohlman) O’Connell, MA ’79**, Abilene, Texas—both professors of physical therapy at Hardin-Simmons University (HSU) in Abilene, Texas—were selected to receive the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Humanitarian Award, which honors “individuals who exemplify the compassionate nature of the physical therapy profession by actively expressing a commitment to humanity and exhibiting admirable degrees of selflessness in addressing key health concerns.”

The O’Connells started the HSU Physical Therapy ministries in 1999 and have led students on annual mission trips to serve citizens locally, state-wide and abroad. The award was presented by APTA’s Board of Trustees during the APTA NEXT conference and exposition in Chicago in June 2019.

Michael Tewell, MA ’79, Palm Harbor, Fla., wrote: “I received my Juris Doctor degree from The George Washington University National Law Center [now known as The George Washington University Law School] in 1982, and I have been a member of the Florida Bar since 1983. I retired in 2016 after 25 years as an assistant public defender in Florida’s Pinellas and Pasco Counties.

“In my recent self-published book, *Immortality: The Science of Forbidden Fruit*, I present a compelling theory that our memory-encoded personalities are preserved after our bodies die. The book is available in paperback and ebook through most major distributors, including Amazon and IngramSpark. Contact michaelatewell@gmail.com to inquire about my availability for lectures and speaking engagements.”

1980s

David Malick, BA ’80, Birmingham, Ala., joined as partner in the Birmingham office of Weinberg Wheeler Hudgins Gunn & Dial, a national trial firm. He represents employers and companies in defense of various types of litigation. Prior to attending law school, Malick was a professional musician and played for Tony Bennett, Bob Hope, Dizzy Gillespie and President Ford, among others. He received a Master of Theology in Bible Exposition with honors from Dallas Theological Seminary and a law degree from Capital University Law.

Daniel Taliano, BS ’80, Sheffield Village, Ohio, retired in February 2018 from 25 years in the exhibit industry.

Steve DeBolt, BS ’81, Reynoldsburg, Ohio, was sworn in as the village administrator in Hebron, Ohio—known as the “historic crossroads” of Ohio—after serving similar roles in Shawnee Hills, Ohio, and Whispering Pines, NC, and as safety/service director in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. He received an MPA in 1988 from the University of Toledo, earned the designation of certified public manager at the Ohio Certified Public Management consortium and is a graduate of the Public Executive Leadership Academy at the University of North Carolina, School of Government in Chapel Hill.

Jeffrey Kurtz, BA ’81, MA ’89, Ravenna, Ohio, was inducted into the Northeast Ohio Athletic Director’s Associations Hall of Fame in April 2019.

Pamela Gent, MEd ’83, PhD ’96,



Youngstown, Ohio, was named provost and academic vice president of Clarion University, beginning in December 2018. Gent, who came to Clarion in 1988 as an assistant professor in the

Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, had served as interim provost since summer. Gent will continue to oversee \$42.9 million in budgets; academic planning and curriculum development; and recruitment, hiring and staffing.

Adele Green, PhD ’84, Washington, DC, was presented with the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award by Marquis Who’s Who as a leader in the fields of education and psychology. She specializes in assessing language, attention, executive functioning disorders, learning disabilities and emotional/social challenges in children (ages six and above), adolescents and adults.

Sherri Lewis, BS ’84, Columbus, Ohio, wrote: “After 32 years of teaching in Columbus City Schools, I retired in 2017. I am enjoying retirement and being a grammie to two little grandsons.”

Mark Stockman, BArc ’84, MArc ’86,



Lakewood, Ohio, a partner in the Construction Practice Group at Frantz Ward LLP in Cleveland, was recognized in the 2019 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America* in the practice area of Real Estate /

Construction. His article, “Building on Blockchain: Considering potential applications in design & construction” was published in the February 2019 issue of *Properties* magazine.

Brian Wilson, BA ’84, North Canton, Ohio, of Brian Wilson Law Offices, was recognized with the Esther S. Weissman Optimist Award from the Ohio Association for Justice. The award, presented in May 2019 during their annual convention in Columbus, Ohio, honors a trial lawyer who demonstrates relentless resolve and undying enthusiasm in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. Wilson, who has been named to the Ohio Super Lawyers list from 2008-2019, has litigated and tried personal injury cases throughout Ohio and has argued two cases before the Ohio Supreme Court.

Amy Butler, BS ’85, Elyria, Ohio, was named associate superintendent for secondary schools for the Diocese of Cleveland, Office of Catholic Education, where she will lead the system that encompasses 20 secondary schools in the diocese, including 15 that are independently owned or sponsored by religious orders.

Tim Fry, BS ’85, Summerton, SC, has published his first novel, *The Truth and Nothing but the Truth: A Fictional Adventure of Finding the Truth in a Dark World* (Christian Faith Publishing, June 2018). An engineering technology graduate, he currently works in manufacturing, developing products for original equipment and replacement tires.

Patrick Liverpool, DBA ’85, Henrico, Va., has been named interim provost and vice chancellor of academic affairs at North Carolina Central University. He began his tenure on June 1, 2019. Most recently, he served as provost and vice president for academic affairs at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Earl Miller, BA ’85, Somerville, Mass., professor of neuroscience at MIT, was awarded the 2019 George A. Miller Prize in Cognitive Neuroscience for his innovative research.

Sandra (Halman) Ranck, BSN ’85, Ashtabula, Ohio, was reappointed to the Ohio Board of Nursing for four years, term 2019-2022.

John Hale, AAB ’86, East Liverpool, Ohio, wrote: “I was named publisher of *Herald-Star* (Steubenville, Ohio) and *The Weirton Daily Times* (Weirton, W.Va.) on November 7, 2018. I am employed by Ogden Newspapers and have over 33 years’ experience in the newspaper industry.”

Bradley Pees, BBA ’86, Alexandria, Va., was named lead-federal and state tax controversy at Nestlé in October 2018. He was recently elected as 2019/2020 Region 8 VP by the Tax Executives Institute.

Peter Zeidner, BBA ’86, Kent, Ohio, received the Cathleen Lyle Murray Foundation Award at the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine annual meeting in October 2018—selected for his impact on society through humanitarian efforts to enhance the lives of persons with severe multiple disabilities. Zeidner, significantly

Cupid Hits the Bullseye

Shopping at Target has been a favorite pastime of **Tony DiPasqua, MEd ’12**, and current KSU student **Aaron Damron**, since the beginning of their relationship several years ago.

“When we first started dating, we quickly figured out that we shared the same interests—including shopping,” DiPasqua says. “We’d often grab lunch on Saturday and head to Target afterward. We love wandering the aisles looking for deals and spending time together.”

So when the couple discussed potential engagement photo locations, they decided to forgo more typical settings in favor of their local Target store in Erie, Pa. Their engagement photos, taken in mid-July, show them cruising the aisles, tracking down deals and stocking up on essentials.

Like many couples these days, they shared their photos on Facebook. Little did they know the post would go viral: it was shared almost 20,000 times and liked over 100,000 times. Within 24 hours, many major news organizations were covering their fun engagement shoot.

impacted by cerebral palsy, started the Pedal-with-Pete Foundation (PwP) in 1993 with the goal to raise \$1,000,000 for cerebral palsy (CP) research, which he reached in 2015. Pedal-with-Pete is now at \$1.2 million and counting for funding CP research projects nationally and internationally.

In 2016 Zeidner completed his autobiography, *It Sucks to be a Gimp: Pedaling to Freedom (Lulu.com, July 2016)*, and turned over the publishing and profits to Pedal-with-Pete. [We recently learned that Peter Zeidner died on March 15, 2019.]

Carolyn Robinson, BA ’87, MA ’14, Wooster, Ohio, has been awarded an eight-month institutional journalism fellowship at the Donald W. Reynolds Journalism Institute at the Missouri School of Journalism. Robinson, one of seven fellows chosen for the 2019-20 class, is the regional director of newsroom practice change for the Solutions Journalism Network, an organization that trains journalists to cover how and where people are effectively addressing important community problems.

Lori Saidleman-Yoh, BA ’87, Milford, Ohio, has joined The Kenwood by Senior Star, Cincinnati, as assistant executive director and director of health services. She has more than 29 years of experience in the healthcare industry.

Andre Burton, BA ’89, Cleveland, has been appointed vice president for human resources and diversity at Northeast Ohio Medical University. He previously served in the role as interim vice president. Burton earned a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice

“We never thought (or intended) for it to be shared so widely, but love that it brought a smile to so many people,” DiPasqua says. “We’ve received countless comments and messages from all over the world saying how much the photos have touched their hearts.”

A love for Target isn’t the only thing the couple has in common. Both of them love Kent State.

“The people at Kent State made me feel like a member of the family,” DiPasqua says. “I made so many friends that I’m still in contact with today. Aaron is currently enrolled in the LPN-RN bridge program at Kent State Ashtabula and says the same thing about his experience—the Kent State community truly cares about their students.”

DiPasqua and Damron’s wedding will take place on New Year’s Eve 2019. “Our first date was in December, and we became engaged in December,” DiPasqua says. “We wanted our ceremony to be one big celebration with family and friends and decided on New Year’s Eve.”

We wish them a Target-filled gift table and much happiness! —*Ashley Whaley, BS ’06, MEd ’12*



Aaron Damron and Tony DiPasqua (front), had a Target-themed engagement photo shoot.

from Kent State University and a JD from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law at Cleveland State University.

Mike Hermann, MA ’89, Salina, Kan., was honored by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics as one of 28 winners of the 2018-19 Under Armour AD [Athletics Directors] of the Year Award. As the vice president and director of athletics at Kansas Wesleyan University, he helped fundraise to build a football stadium, added sport programs and guided a department that has won 25 conference championships while maintaining a department GPA above 3.00. Hermann has served as athletic director for 18 years at Niagara, Towson and Kansas Wesleyan universities.

James Wrobel, DPM ’89, Grayslake, Ill., received the American Diabetes Association’s 2019 Roger Pecoraro Award in recognition and appreciation for outstanding contributions to the knowledge and treatment of the diabetic foot. He is the fifth podiatrist in 27 years to receive the award, which was presented at the ADA’s 79th Scientific Sessions, June 7-11, 2019, at the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco. Wrobel, a clinical associate professor in the Division of Metabolism, Endocrinology, and Diabetes at the University of Michigan, delivered the Roger Pecoraro Award Lecture, “Artificial Intelligence for Predicting Diabetes-Related Foot Ulcer Outcomes,” on June 8.

1990s

Kevin Cordi, BSE ’90, Columbus, Ohio, released *You Don’t Know Jack: A Storyteller Goes to School* (University Press of Mississippi,

February, 2019). The book examines storytelling and story making using Jack tales—“Jack and the Beanstalk,” “Little Jack Horner,” and “Jack the Giant Killer”—as a metaphor to talk about teaching and telling. With their roots traced back to England, Jack tales are an important oral tradition in Appalachian folklore; Cordi, a professional storyteller, was introduced to them through his Appalachian upbringing.

While working as a high school teacher, he began telling stories in the classroom, which enabled him to connect with students in new ways. In his book, he argues that engaging with the stories of others, valuing every person’s voice or identity, and listening (especially to stories of difference) are of utmost importance to education and growth.

Michael Lanstrum, BS ’91, Middleburg Heights,



Ohio, wrote: “I presented ‘Historical Women in Mathematics’ for the Westlake Active Seniors at the Westlake Center for Community Services in Westlake, Ohio, on May 17, 2019.”

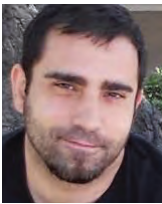
R. Charles Byers, PhD ’92, Dunbar, W.Va., was named interim provost and vice president for academic affairs at West Virginia State University (WVSU), effective July 1, 2019. Byers, a 1968 graduate of the university, had previously served at WVSU for nearly 41 years in professorial and administrative capacities, including professor of teacher education, vice ►

president for planning and advancement, Title III director and executive director for the WVSV Research and Development Corporation. He retired as university provost and vice president for academic affairs in 2014.

Michael Austin, BBA '93, Coral Springs, Fla., has been named director of strategic partnerships for ABB Optical Group, a leading provider of optical products and business services in the eyecare industry, based in Coral Springs, Fla. In his new position, Austin will be instrumental in identifying, developing and maximizing the relationships between ABB Optical and leading organizations in the optical industry.

Cheryle Snead-Greene, MEd '93, Houston, has been promoted to assistant provost in the Office for Academic Affairs at Prairie View A&M University, a member of the Texas A&M University System.

John Staats, BFA '93, Copley, Ohio, who was the World of Warcraft's first 3D level designer, wrote *The WoW Diary: A Journal of Computer Game Development* (whenitsready, June 1, 2019). Written from notes he took during WoW's creation, it offers a rare, unfiltered look inside the gaming industry—explaining why developers do things and debunking popular myths about the games industry. Available on Amazon.



Tony Alves, BA '95, Bridgeport, Conn., was named director of alumni relations and parent engagement of Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, Conn., as of December 2018.

Melissa (Berger) Hoch, BBA '95, Dover, Ohio, has been named the new chief financial officer at CommQuest Services, as of January 2019. She has more than 20 years of experience in financial leadership roles. Most recently she was director of oncology business operations for the Aultman Health Foundation.

Kathy Korcheck, MA '95, MA '97, Ottumwa, Iowa, was recently promoted to professor of Spanish at Central College in Pella, Iowa, where she also serves as honors and emerging scholars director.

Donald Sparks, BSE '95, Brunswick, Ohio, was hired as athletic director by the North Ridgeville City Schools Board, beginning August 1, 2019. Previously, Sparks served as Parma's Normandy High School athletic director for nine years.

Pam DeFino, MLS '96, Berea, Ohio, Berea Branch Library manager, retired from her hometown library on February 28, 2019. While a student at Berea High School in the 1970s, she volunteered as a page at the Berea Branch and years later became its branch manager in 2012.

Carrie (Newtz) Wible, BA '96, Wadsworth, Ohio, teaches ESL at Norton City Schools. She is a freelance writer and also serves the Wadsworth Community Band as secretary, soloist and music arranger.

Marsha Deem, BSE '97, Canton, Ohio, an art teacher at Northwest Primary School, was named Teacher of the Month for Northwest Local Schools in April 2019.

Paul Santell, BBA '97, Astoria, NY, received a CNN Hero award for his cat rescue efforts. He started out feeding neighborhood cats, but then realized that trapping, fixing and returning them could save generations of feral felines from danger and disease. After taking a course sponsored by the ASPCA, the New York City Feral Cat Initiative and Alley Cat Allies, Santell became a rescuer.

His nonprofit trap-neuter-return efforts have earned him the moniker "Paul the Cat Guy." Since 2014 he has helped trap, fix and, in some cases adopt out more than 2,000 cats in Queens, New York, and the surrounding areas. See a video at <http://bit.ly/PaulSantell>

Marianne Senvisky, AS '97, BA '08, Kent, Ohio, is the CEO/Chief Navigator of Pathfinder Career Consulting, which she founded this past year. She also earned her SHRM-CP and CESP credentials.

Jaime Bowman, BS '98, Spokane, Wash., recently joined Washington State University's first community-based medical school, the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine, as clerkship director of Longitudinal Integrated Clerkship. Bowman, MD, FAAFP, is designing the first-of-its-kind program, across a four-campus distributed model, that accounts for 25 percent of these future physicians' education.

Cheree Davis, BSE '98, Middle River, Md., began an adjunct faculty position at Johns Hopkins University School of Education in Baltimore, Md., in June 2019.

Aimee Hagerty Johnson, BA '98, Northfield, Minn., author and illustrator, has had her debut picture book, *The Fir and I*, purchased by publisher Page Street Kids, slated for production in 2020.



Scott Maidman, BA '98, Pittsburgh, was named to *Forbes* "Best in State Wealth Advisors" 2019 and *Forbes* "America's Top Next Generation Wealth Advisors" list in 2018.

Matthew Bryant, BSE '99, Bowling Green, Ky., a physics teacher at South Warren High School, is one of nine science, technology, engineering and math teachers from across the United States named a 2019-2020 Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellow by the US Department of Energy in June 2019. He will spend 11 months serving in a federal agency or US congressional office in Washington, DC.

Bryan Fowler, MBA '99, Peoria, Ill., is vice president and chief information officer at RLI Insurance Company, where he is responsible for leading RLI's IT strategy and initiatives to support company business goals. He previously served as VP and CIO of Oregon Mutual Insurance and in various IT leadership roles at Progressive Insurance.

Cynthia Wilkinson, BS '99, Tampa, Fla., has a 17-year medical career as a registered diagnostic medical sonographer (RDMS) and a registered vascular technologist (RVT).

2000s



Theresa Haskins, BA '01, Hartville, Ohio, received a 2019 Dissertation of Distinction award from USC Rossier School of Education for her research on autism employment.

David Basler, BS '00, Centennial, Colo., was recently named vice president of membership and marketing at ARVC, an association representing 3,000 private RV parks and campgrounds in the US and Canada.

Megan (Nellis) Burnside, BS '00, and **Chris Burnside, BA '01**, Dayton, Ohio, members of the Dayton Writers Movement (known for their first audio drama *Unwritten* with fans across 60+ countries), launched a new fiction podcast through all major podcast outlets across the globe on February 14, 2019. *The Hidden People* podcast—a 22-episode audio drama series with murder, mystery and madness—is brought to life with full audio design, original music scoring and compositions, and performances by trained actors.

Megan Oakleaf, MLS '00, Manlius, NY, associate professor and director of instructional quality at Syracuse University, is the winner of the 2019 Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Instruction Section's Miriam Dudley Instruction Librarian Award, which recognizes a librarian who has made a significant contribution to the advancement of instruction in a college or research library environment.

Golden Years

With the last name Golden, an illustrious collegiate career at Kent State University seemed almost destined to be for this student-athlete. In reality, it was through focused effort and determination that **Alexa Golden, BA '18, MA '19**, Kent, Ohio, made a name for herself at Kent State.

On the basketball court and in the classroom, Golden strove for excellence and achieved it. Her accomplishments in academics, athletics, service and leadership throughout her college career led to her nomination for this year's NCAA (National Collegiate Athletics Association) Woman of the Year Award—among a record high of 585 graduating female college athletes nominated by NCAA member schools to honor their top graduating student-athletes.

Golden, a three-time Academic All-MAC honoree, has the distinction of being the only player in Kent State women's basketball history



Alexa Golden dribbles down the court in a game against Youngstown State this past spring.

to total 500 points, 500 rebounds, 200 assists, 200 steals and 100 three-point field goals. This past season, Golden's senior year, she started

Craig Whitaker, BSE '00, Massillon, Ohio, a physical geology teacher at Perry High School, recently was awarded the 2019 Pipeline Award from the Ohio Oil and Gas Energy Education Program (OOGEEP), given each year to an individual who has made a positive educational impact in the state—in his case, a teacher workbook he helped create that has lessons focusing on geology. The sixth recipient to receive the industry's annual award, Whitaker was honored during the OOGEEP's presentation at the Ohio Oil and Gas Association's annual industry meeting.

Dana Jancik Eggers, MA '01, Bay Village, Ohio, was hired for the new role of coordinator of pupil personnel by the North Ridgeville City Schools Board, beginning August 1, 2019. Eggers most recently was the autism program director for the Geauga County Educational Service Center, a position she had held since 2010. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in hearing and speech sciences from Ohio University, a Master of Arts degree in speech language pathology from Kent State University, and a pupil services personnel licensure from Cleveland State University.

Lauren Worley, BA '01, Cincinnati, chief communications and engagement officer for Cincinnati Public Schools, was named a Woman of Influence by *LEAD Venue Magazine* and *Cincinnati Business Courier's* Forty Under 40.

Jason Dorfman, BGS '02, Aliso Viejo, Calif., is the cofounder and president of Krisp Nutrition/Keto Krisp and serves as the vice president of pet products for Medterra. He is also the senior vice president of sales for bDirect Companies, LLC.

Carolyn Carvalho, AAB '03, BTec '05, MTec '07, Ashtabula, Ohio, associate lecturer at Kent State University at Ashtabula, was named a finalist by the Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education (NOCHE) for The Expys 2019 Best College

Advisor. The annual awards program "recognizes the best-of-the-best in Northeast Ohio's internship and experiential learning ecosystem." Carvalho teaches in the information technology program at Kent State University at Ashtabula and coordinates internships and practicums for students in the IT majors.

Westleigh Harper, BS '03, BArc '04, and **Michael Horton, BS '05, BArc '06**, Cleveland, are principals of Horton Harper

all 33 games and averaged 7.6 points, 5.6 rebounds, 2.8 steals and 2.5 assists per game.

In April, she received the Judith K. Devine Excellence in Leadership Award, which recognizes a senior Kent State student-athlete who demonstrates leadership abilities within their team, department, collegial unit and community. "I hope to help other student-athletes with the [leadership] skills I learned along the way," Golden says.

This unrelenting drive is nothing new to Golden, who maintained a 3.7 GPA while competing and completing two degrees in four years. She took college-level classes during high school, which allowed her to earn her bachelor's degree in criminal justice/safety studies in two and a half years. Earlier this year, she completed her master's degree in sport and fitness administration/management, adding that academic accomplishment to her mounting list of achievements. —*Bethany Sava, BS '12*

Architects, an award-winning contemporary studio specializing in urban residential design, with an eclectic portfolio of custom residential, multifamily and mixed-use ventures. Headquartered in the Caxton Building downtown, the practice has six employees and a 30 percent year-over-year growth rate since its 2011 launch.

Claudia Kovach, BS '03, MA '09, Canfield, Ohio, vice president of City Machine Technologies, Inc., in June received the 2019 Small Business Champion award from NFIB, Ohio's leading small business association. Each year, NFIB awards an individual, among its membership of 22,000 Ohio small businesses, who gives of his/her time and resources to promote small-business causes through involvement in NFIB activities and demonstrates a spirit of service toward the ►



Eric Meek, MFA '03, Painted Post, NY, senior manager of the Hot Glass Programs at The Corning Museum of Glass, was featured in the Netflix series *Blown Away*, the first-ever glass-blowing competition, which launched on

July 12, 2019. He served as the guest judge for the finale and helped select the winner of the show. Pictured: Eric Meek, at far right, with contestants on the show.

community and a commitment to advancing the concept of free enterprise. Her parents are former recipients of the award, and she has been with her family’s business since 2006.



Samuel “Blitz” Bazawule, BBA ’04, New York, NY, hip-hop artist, filmmaker and visual artist, is known by the stage name Blitz the Ambassador. He wrote, directed and scored the independent movie, *The Burial of Koko*, which was acquired by Ava DuVernay’s film distribution collective, ARRAY Releasing. The dramatic feature, streaming on Netflix as of March 31, 2019, played in select movie theaters in cities nationwide in spring 2019. Set in Bazawule’s native country of Ghana, the film (which has elements of magical realism, but is rooted in truth) is about feuding brothers and the journey of one of their daughters to save more than their relationship. It caught the eye of DuVernay when it played at the 2018 Urbanworld Film Festival in New York, where it became the “Best Narrative Feature Winner (World Cinema)” at the festival. The film recently won the Luxor African Film Festival grand prize for “Best Narrative Feature” in Egypt, and it was screened at the 2019 Whitney Biennial, an invitational exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

Todd McLaughlin, BSE ’03, Salem, Ohio, was named the new principal of Salem High School, effective August 1, 2019, with the three-year contract expiring July 31, 2022. The 1997 Salem High School graduate joined the district as junior high dean of students and districtwide clerk of the works in August 2014 and most recently has been serving as assistant junior high principal.

Heather Trepal, PhD ’03, San Antonio, professor and clinical mental health counseling program coordinator at the University of Texas at San Antonio, was named the 68th president of the American Counseling Association,

beginning July 1, 2019. A member of the American Counseling Association Professional Standards Committee, she has been an ACA member for more than 17 years. Her research and publications focus on professional advocacy, self-injurious behavior, body image, bilingual counselor supervision and training, integrated behavioral health care and relational-cultural theory.

Haraz Ghanbari, BS ’04, Perrysburg, Ohio, was sworn into the Ohio House on March 27, 2019, to fill the Wood County seat vacated by now Senator Theresa Gavarone. Fresh from Perrysburg City Council, he was selected by now fellow House Republicans to complete the 21 months left in Gavarone’s unexpired term. He is expected to run in 2020 for a two-year term of his own.

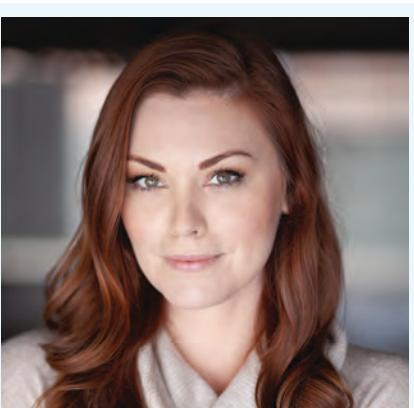
Elizabeth Mowers, BS ’04, Mogadore, Ohio, wrote, “In March, I celebrated the release of my first novel, *A Promise Remembered* (Harlequin Heartwarming, 2019). Years ago, when my first child wouldn’t nap without being held, I rocked her to sleep while typing a book idea on my smartphone. After three years (and another baby), I had written the entire novel on my phone. While that book was rejected, it connected me to the woman who is now my editor and kicked off my full-time writing career. Follow me on Facebook or check out my website at www.elizabethmowers.com.”

David Strukel, MED ’04, Massillon, Ohio, an assistant professor in communication at Hiram College, was named an Apple Distinguished Educator for 2019.

Susan Chylik, BBA ’05, Litchfield, Ohio, has been selected to participate in the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity’s 2019 Fellows program, which aims to identify, train and advance the next generation of leaders in the legal profession. Chylik is a member in McGlinchey Stafford’s Cleveland office,



Elizabeth Treiber, MSN ’05, Cleveland, **Sara Dorris, AAS ’06, BSN ’11**, Youngstown, Ohio, **Austin Jeffers, AS ’17, BSN ’17**, East Palestine, Ohio, and **Michele Radovanic, AAA ’15**, Madison, Ohio, were among 10 finalists for the “Nurse Hero” award honored on the court during a pregame ceremony



Kaitlyn Black, BA ’05, Sherman Oaks, Calif., starred in the Off-Broadway premiere of Robyn Lynne Norris’ musical comedy improv show *#DateMe: An OKCupid Experiment* at the Westside Theatre from June 20 to Sept. 15. The show follows a down-on-her-luck dater as she goes online and creates 38 fake dating profiles in hopes of better understanding the random nature of love and dating.

Earlier this year, the short film, *Relationship Deli*, written by and starring Black, was featured in the 2019 Cleveland International Film Festival and on the popular Funny or Die site in October 2018. The film depicts a desperate woman and a deli worker attempting to build the perfect relationship, sandwich-style.

Black appeared on the CW series *Hart of Dixie*, playing fan-favorite character Annabeth Nass from 2011-2015.

providing regulatory compliance and risk management advice to consumer financial services companies, with a focus on data privacy and credit reporting issues. She was named a 2019 “Rising Star” in Banking by Ohio Super Lawyers and is active in local and national bar associations.

when the Cleveland Cavaliers hosted Nurse Night 2019 on March 2, 2019. Learn about their achievements at <http://bit.ly/nursefinalists>. Pictured (l to r): Jessica Robinson, Dawn MacKay, Kristina Smith, Austin Jeffers, Antanette Gott, Elizabeth Treiber, Michele Radovanic, Sara Dorris

Speaking Up for Infants

Katie Campbell, BS ’18, Brighton, England, is putting her Kent State education in public health to work at the global level. This May, Campbell presented at the 72nd World Health Assembly annual meeting in Geneva, Switzerland. The assembly is the decision-making body of the World Health Organization (WHO) and provides a forum to discuss, debate and decide global health policies.

Campbell testified on behalf of the International Baby Food Action Network, a global network of organizations dedicated to reducing infant mortality by promoting optimal infant feeding practices. She was presented this opportunity as a result of her internship with UK-based Baby Milk Action, part of the network.

In her first statement, Campbell called on the WHO to support efforts “to ensure publicly funded universal health coverage, with primary health care and prevention” and to make breastfeeding promotion available to all. She warned delegates of the risks associated with relying on privatized health services

that prioritize commercial interests. In her second statement, she called on the WHO to avoid conflicts of interest that arise when noncommunicable disease prevention efforts are created via corporate partnerships.

After graduating from Kent State’s College of Public Health, Campbell enrolled in a master’s program at the University of Brighton in England, where she studied health promotion. With her coursework completed, she is focused on writing her master’s thesis, which consists of an analysis of interview data from fathers in 12 different countries regarding the role of fathers in breastfeeding.

Her future aspirations are to work in the health policy arena. “My experience with Baby Milk Action and my involvement in the World Health Assembly have convinced me that major changes in health can be accomplished through health policy,” Campbell says. “That’s why I want to pursue a career either at the federal level back home in the States or with a UN organization.”

When asked for any advice to students, she says, “Take any opportunities that come to you;



Katie Campbell, BS ’18, speaking at the 72nd World Health Assembly in Geneva, Switzerland.

don’t be afraid. I was terrified to speak, but it was a once-in-a-lifetime chance that I knew I had to take.” —Julie Miller, BS ’87



Patrick Snyder, BS ’08, Westerville, Ohio, member of the Kent State Bowling Club from 2003 to 2008, in May was designated Men’s Singles Champion (among 199 bowlers) at the 2019 Columbus [Ohio] City 10-Pin Bowling Championship (\$640 prize) and earned a B(etter) than A(verage) D(awg) trophy and \$120 at the TOP DAWG Tournament (among 60+ bowlers), where he was 161 pins over his league-based average. In July, his high 6-game handicap series at the Tony Black Doubles competition added \$500 to this year’s earnings, which so far total \$1,260. Pictured: left, Patrick Snyder with his trophy.

Russell Galeti Jr. BA ’05, Washington, DC, has a new position as a strategic planner in the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs within the US Department of State in Washington, DC. He is also a major and serves as operations officer for the 2nd Squadron, 107th Cavalry, Ohio Army

National Guard. In addition, he serves on the Kent State University Alumni Association National Board of Directors.

Justin Williams, BBA ’05, MBA ’07, Orlando, Fla., is the new chief operating officer for Orlando Health Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children, a 158-bed pediatric hospital in Orlando, Fla. He has had more than 14 years of experience in finance, strategic planning and hospital operations. Prior to this, he was director of operations at University Hospitals Rainbow Babies and Children’s Hospital

Jeremy Martin, BGS ’07, Venice, Fla., was recently promoted to head coach of the girls’ varsity basketball team at Venice High School in Florida. He had previously coached the junior varsity boys’ basketball team at Venice High for seven years.

Erica (Hudkins) Cofojohn, BBA ’08, Stow, Ohio, was appointed senior vice president of human resources at Associated Materials in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.

Caitlin Faas, BA ’08, Gettysburg, Pa., wrote, “I earned tenure and promotion to associate professor of psychology and department chair at Mount St. Mary’s University in Emmitsburg, Md.”

William Yoder, DPM ’08, Oak Creek, Wis., was named a 2019 “Patient Preferred Foot & Ankle Surgeon” for the state of Wisconsin in June, in recognition of his dedication and excellence in patient care.



Josef Kotermanski, BSN ’10, Chesterfield, Mich., obtained a Master of Science in Nursing after working in a Detroit emergency room for six years. He currently works in trauma surgery in the Detroit area.

2010s

Carolyn Conway Novak, BA ’10, Cleveland, received a “25 under 35” award from her high school, Saint Joseph Academy, in recognition for compassionate leadership, service in a global society, overall achievements and spirituality. Novak, who majored in political science at KSU, is a social activist who fosters relationships with community leaders, citizens and those working for positive change.

alumni **LIFE**

Meghan Hennessey Shimmin, BSE ’10, Cleveland, received a “25 under 35” award from her high school, Saint Joseph Academy, in recognition for compassionate leadership, service in a global society, overall achievements and spirituality. Shimmin, who majored in early childhood education at KSU, has spent her career working in low-income school districts and works to create and implement enjoyable, school-wide activities that foster learning.

Stephanie (St. Jacques) Walker, MED ’10, Whitmore Lake, Mich., is now associate director of the Science Learning Center at the University of Michigan. Prior to joining the SLC, she served as director of the Kent State University Academic Success Center.

Carolyn Drummond, BS ’11, Durham, NC, has been promoted to program marketing manager, NA field marketing at Red Hat (which acquired Ansible Automation), focusing on event management, content marketing and project management.

Lauren Kotmel, BA ’11, Cleveland, was named to *Crain’s Cleveland Business’s* “Twenty in Their 20s” list (in their June issue) of upcoming community leaders to watch in Cleveland’s future.

Parva Markiw, BS ’12, MArc ’14, Greentree, Pa., joined the professional staff at WTW Architects of Pittsburgh, where she is currently assisting the WTW team designing a new residence hall at SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Utica, New York.



Sara Courie, BA ’13, MAT ’14, Tallmadge, Ohio, a 2nd grade teacher at Dunbar Elementary School in Tallmadge, and **Matthew Claney, BS ’13**, Greensburg, Pa., a graphic designer, became friends their first weeks on campus through the KSU Marching Golden Flashes—and collaborated after graduation. Courie’s 2nd grade class at Dunbar noticed a lot of trash on the school playground, so she challenged the students to do something to help keep it clean.

Jessica Stuck, BA ’12, BS ’12, MArc ’13, Washington, DC, has joined Quinn Evans Architects as a project architect in their Washington, DC office.

Rachel Walter, MED ’12, Cleveland, currently the main academic advisor to students majoring in special education and ASL/English interpreting at KSU’s College of Education, Health and Human Services, recently began a new position as an independent career coach at CareerArc, assisting outplaced employees searching for their next career move.

Amelia (Chamberlain) Plunkett, BA ’13, Dayton, Ohio, who moved up the ranks from intern to sales development manager since joining LexisNexis in 2014, was named one of the 2018 Top 25 Women to Watch in Dayton by Women in Business Networking, a program of the Better Business Bureau of Dayton and Miami Valley. The women were honored at the 25 Women to Watch gala in February 2019. She and her husband, **Max Plunkett II, BA ’13**, family wealth advisor/financial advisor at The Plunkett Group at Morgan Stanley, are both involved in their community and met when they were freshmen at Kent State University.

Kathryn Clarkin, BA ’14, Los Angeles, started a new position as special assistant to the governor at Office of the Governor, State of California, in May 2019.

Corey Conners, BS ’14, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., who played golf for Kent State from 2010-2014, won the Valero Texas Open at the TPC San Antonio Oaks Course in San Antonio, Texas, in April 2019. He finished 20-under-par with a final round score of 66 to secure his first PGA Tour win, banking a winning purse of \$1.35 million and earning a trip to the Masters.

When Claney heard that the students had decided to create signs, he volunteered to assist and met with the class through video conferencing. Students came up with sign ideas and voted on the best designs to send him. To raise funds for the signs, the students recycled plastic water bottles into glitter jars that they sold at school. Claney created a video for the students to illustrate the design process and reveal their final product (see <http://bit.ly/CourieClass>).



Angela Jameson, BSE ’14, MLIS ’18, Kent, Ohio, library media specialist at Chagrin Falls Schools, was honored by Kent State University School of Information (iSchool) with its Dan MacLachlan Award in Library and Information Science on April 25, 2019. The award is given to a library media specialist who exhibits creativity, leadership and dedication in his/her school.

Alexander Evans, BS ’14, BBA ’14, BSPH ’14, MBA ’15, MGISC ’19, Columbus, Ohio, joined Franklin County Public Health as an epidemiologist. His work will focus on understanding the public health impacts of climate change and implementing a GIS to enhance environmental health programs.

Meghan Marano, BA ’14, Willoughby, Ohio, associate banking advisor at PNC Bank, was nominated for the inaugural Young Nonprofit Professional of the Year Award in 2019 by the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network of Cleveland. Previously, she was awarded Volunteer of the Year from Youth Opportunities Unlimited in 2017 for her service to youth in communities across NE Ohio.

Sarah Roman, BA ’14, Lakewood, Ohio, received a “25 under 35” award from her high school, Saint Joseph Academy, in recognition for compassionate leadership, service in a global society, overall achievements and spirituality. Roman, who majored in art history at KSU, uses art to help others work through painful experiences and difficult times.

Hattie Tracy, MPA ’14, Medina, Ohio, was named senior vice president of clinical services for Coleman Professional Services. Most recently, Tracy was senior director of clinical strategy, community outreach and healthcare integration at Child Guidance and Family Solutions of Summit County. She is both a licensed independent social work supervisor and a licensed chemical dependency counselor III.

Fellowship in Fashion

Jasmine Summers, BA ’16, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, KSU Fashion School graduate, wrote, “I’ve spent the last year living in the capital city of Cambodia, running a fashion vocational training program for Nomi Network, a nonprofit economic development agency that seeks to eliminate human trafficking in India and Cambodia through education and economic empowerment.

“I’m returning to Cambodia in September for a second year to continue giving back my skills and education by supporting the education, up-skilling, capacity building and market growth of rising designers, social enterprises and producers who employ and empower impoverished women in Cambodia, so that they have more options than just factory work, sex work or migrant work.



Jasmine Summers (in center, wearing black floral top) with students in her Basic Patternmaking class in Cambodia.

“In my role as Nomi Network’s international fashion fellow, I oversee curriculum development, volunteer trainer recruitment and teach within my own areas of expertise. I also manage design and product development

for Nomi’s fashion brand, mostly accessories and apparel, made in Cambodia and sold in the United States. My first collection will launch later this year.”

Laura Roch, BS ’16, Youngstown, Ohio, accepted a position with Notre Dame Mission Volunteers AmeriCorps as the site director for Northeast Ohio (Cleveland/Youngstown). Among other duties, she will be recruiting potential AmeriCorps members and nonprofit educational sites in the Northeast Ohio area, doing member training, and assisting with leadership skills and professional development.”

Torey Frame, BA ’17, Atwater, Ohio, is the first full-time female police officer in Streetsboro in over 20 years. She graduated with a degree in criminology and psychology and decided to pursue law enforcement as a career.



Madison Vierung, BS ’16, Carmel, Ind., received a master’s degree in school counseling from Butler University’s College of Education. Upon graduation, she accepted a position as school counselor at Suncrest Elementary School in Frankfort, Ind. Pictured (l to r): Holly Vierung (mother), Maddie Vierung, **Chip Vierung, BS ’86** (father), Patrick Vierung (brother)



Brandon Bounds, BS ’19, Columbus, Ohio, associate producer at 10TV.com, was part of a team of top journalism students from 19 universities who earned the 2019 Student Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Digital Reporting for their project “Hate in America.” Their package of multimedia stories focused on acts of intolerance, racism and hate crimes across the country, as part of the Carnegie-Knight News21 program, an in-depth journalism collaborative based at Arizona

State University’s Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Kent State’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication recognized Bounds earlier this year with the Robert G. McGruder Student Award for Diversity, for his work on the project, which also received a 2019 Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award in the college category. The 2019 winners were recognized at the Edward R. Murrow Awards black tie event hosted by the Radio Television Digital News Association on Oct. 24 in New York City.

Jasmine Hoff, BSN ’17, MSN ’19, Cleveland, was appointed by Ohio Governor Mike DeWine to a two-year term as a graduate student trustee of the Kent State University Board of Trustees. Hoff’s term began June 11 and ends

May 16, 2021. She is pursuing a doctorate in nursing practice and an adult gerontology acute care nurse practitioner graduate certificate. A registered nurse who has achieved board certification, she currently serves as assistant nurse manager at Cleveland Clinic’s Heart and Lung Transplant Unit in Cleveland and as adjunct faculty in Kent State’s College of Nursing.



Julian Edelman, BIS ’19, Boston, former Golden Flash quarterback, current Patriots wide receiver, three-time Super Bowl champion, 2018 Super Bowl MVP, 2015 Homecoming Parade Grand Marshal and Varsity “K” Hall of Fame Inductee, finished the degree he started working toward in 2006. Prior to attending the Commencement ceremony in May 2019 to receive his diploma, he said he had completed a Bachelor of Integrative Studies degree to keep a promise he made to his parents more than 10 years ago and set an example for his daughter.

Chad Kozan, BA ’17, CER1 ’18, Madison, Ohio, is a natural resources officer for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, specializing in marine and operating-while-under-the influence enforcement. He gives back to the community as a boating instructor on a volunteer basis and is attending Bowling Green State University for a master’s degree in criminal justice.



Diane Smith, MA ’17, Phoenix, public relations and communications manager at Pima Medical Institute, was awarded “Best Public Relations Pro (Female)” by *Arizona Foothills Magazine*.

Emma Buss, BBA ’19, New Philadelphia, Ohio, was hired as marketing services coordinator by Whitemeyer Advertising, where she interned in summer 2018. Her responsibilities include assisting account executives in digital and social media marketing strategies and media research and implementation, along with operations and client service responsibilities.

TRIBUTE

“Voice of Mission Control”

This year’s 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing on July 20, 1969, brought to mind a KSU alumnus who served as NASA’s first news director during early missions to the moon.

“We have liftoff.”
Three iconic words interwoven with mankind’s journey into space; three iconic words that will forever live in history.
While growing up in Tallmadge, Ohio, **Paul Haney, BA ’51**, probably never dreamed he would be the one to make this profound announcement to the world after a dramatic countdown to a mission in space. But as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s (NASA) “Voice of Mission Control,” he delivered that line and more in his famous, measured tones.

Building a Foundation of Journalistic Excellence Haney put himself through Kent State University by working nights for the Associated Press. While at Kent State, he majored in journalism and worked at the *Daily Kent Stater*, as well as the *Chestnut Burr*.

Role of a Lifetime Haney worked for several newspapers after graduation, but three months after NASA was formed in 1958, he joined as an information officer. Then, from 1960-62, he served as NASA’s first news director. In this role, he managed the Cape Canaveral and Project Mercury information



Paul Haney monitors the flight of the Gemini VII spacecraft from his console in the Mission Control Center.

programs, where his work in the Mercury program set the standard for all subsequent NASA information efforts.
From 1962-63, Haney served as public affairs officer for the Office of Manned Space Flight (now the Johnson Space Center), and directed the information coming out of the Gemini and Apollo manned spaceflight programs. It was in this position that he became known as the “Voice of NASA’s Mission Control” and the “Voice of Apollo.”
Haney served NASA with distinction throughout the Gemini program and the early

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Limit your notes to 100 words or less, and include your degree(s), class year(s), and city/state of residence. Notes may be edited for length or clarity and published as space allows.

Deadline for submissions:
Spring/Summer December 31
Fall/Winter June 30

in MEMORY

1940s

Fern (Boltz) Greenamyre, BS ’41, May 26, 2019
Mildred Dixon, DPM ’44, November 2, 2018
Mildred Roberts, BS ’46, MED ’51, February 19, 2019
Theodore Taubert, BBA ’47, February 27, 2019
James Brainerd, BS ’48, MA ’49, February 1, 2019
Alvin Howdysshell, BBA ’49, April 21, 2019

1950s

Phyllis Gamble, BA ’50, September 16, 2018
Louis Kaczur, DPM ’50, December 1, 2017
Donald Kagey, BBA ’50, January 24, 2019
Martin Pfinsgraff, BS ’50, October 17, 2018
Thomas Anderson, BA ’53, MA ’55, January 21, 2019
Richard Knuth, BS ’54, MED ’73, June 20, 2019
George Paris, BA ’54, August 16, 2018
Robert Shafer, DPM ’54, September 20, 2018
Clyde Woods, BBA ’54, February 21, 2019
Lillian Eck, BSE ’55, January 27, 2019
Edward Seely, BA ’55, December 22, 2018
Erven “Skip” Robinson, BS ’56, MED ’59, April 25, 2019
Robert Hutchison, BS ’57, February 13, 2018
Shirley Shifferly, BS ’57, MA ’66, February 21, 2019
George Grieves, BS ’58, May 5, 2019
Marcia Smith, BS ’58, February 5, 2015
Sarah Smith, BS ’58, March 12, 2019

1960s

Barbara Crumlish, BS ’60, November 20, 2018
Daniel Emmett, MED ’60, August 25, 2017
Elizabeth (Schneider) Hair, BS ’60, November 20, 2018
Marcia Cohen, BS ’61, July 8, 2017
John Hively, BBA ’61, MBA ’61, June 3, 2018
Paul Hulka, BS ’61, September 14, 2017
Phillip Smith, MED ’62, May 23, 2019
Judith (Simpson) Welk, BS ’62, July 7, 2019
Ray Gibson, BFA ’63, December 5, 2018
Gerald Stephan, BS ’63, MED ’97, January 3, 2019
Ronald Williams, BA ’63, September 3, 2018
William Susco, BS ’64, January 22, 2018
Robert Tieman, BBA ’64, April 5, 2019
Christine Whitacre, BS ’64, February 15, 2018
Albert Lackney, MED ’65, February 3, 2019
Raymond Land, DPM ’65, May 21, 2019
Margaret Miller, BS ’65, MED ’65, May 3, 2019
William Blair, BA ’66, October 26, 2018
James Gray, BS ’66, MED ’73, March 18, 2019
Jean Keough-Taffs, BS ’66, MED ’68, PhD ’74, January 22, 2019
Sara Ledford, BS ’66, MED ’90, May 20, 2018
Charles Rasper, MED ’66, March 21, 2019
Sharon Simkaitis, BS ’66, January 28, 2019
Robert Eichel, BA ’67, June 1, 2019
James Ondrako, BBA ’67, June 21, 2018
Grace (Baters) Schmiedel, BS ’67, May 10, 2019
Anthony DeVincentis, DPM ’68, March 11, 2019
E. Hughes, BBA ’68, July 18, 2018
Eugene Nowakowski, MBA ’68, June 30, 2016
Mary Peterson, MED ’68, September 10, 2017
Thomas Stellers, MED ’68, PhD ’73, November 2, 2018
Saundra Baird, BA ’69, March 23, 2019
Michele Gromelski, BS ’69, December 23, 2018
Calvin Stein, BA ’69, September 30, 2018
Filomena Ziegman, BS ’69, October 25, 2018

1970s

Louis Endress, DPM ’70, October 1, 2018
Barry Koblentz, DPM ’70, December 18, 2018
Geraldine Radcliff, MED ’70, April 20, 2019
Art Gohs, BA ’71, April 11, 2018
James Heasley, MED ’71, December 4, 2018
John Rowe, BFA ’72, January 12, 2018
Darryl Stewart, BA ’72, MPA ’72, April 14, 2018
Marcia White, BSE ’72, MED ’90, March 17, 2019
Robert Bell, BBA ’73, September 19, 2017
George El-Hajj, DPM ’73, October 2, 2018
Patrick McGivern, MED ’73, October 25, 2018
Doris Jane Regas, BS ’73, February 19, 2019
Gail Featheringham, BS ’74, MLS ’93, October 17, 2018
Lillian Goldberg, MLS ’74, June 20, 2018
Joel O’Sickey, BS ’74, May 12, 2018
Donna Welch, BS ’74, October 20, 2018
Gerry Kuhel, BS ’75, May 3, 2019
Gale Ellis Taliano, BA ’75, February 23, 2018
Mark Camperchioli, BS ’76, March 5, 2018
Thomas Herr, MSA ’76, December 30, 2018
Jay Lifshen, DPM ’76, September 11, 2018
Craig Mitchell, BBA ’76, January 17, 2019
Keith Sinzinger, BA ’76, November 23, 2018
Edward Floyd, DPM ’77, February 6, 2019
Charles Zurbola, AAS ’77, October 21, 2018
Cincere Fazekas, BM ’78, September 11, 2018
Larry Hawthorne, AA ’78, September 6, 2018

1980s

Frank Kushner Jr., BSN ’81, September 15, 2018
Judith Mally, MED ’81, February 26, 2018
Ronald Spangler, MA ’81, January 10, 2019
Beverly MacPherson, BS ’82, January 13, 2019
Jean Wood, MED ’82, January 13, 2019
Donald Carroll, PhD ’83, June 14, 2019
Nelson McCann, MED ’83, May 10, 2019
Milan Chovan, BA ’84, June 24, 2019
Lonnie Schwartz, DPM ’84, November 27, 2018
Amanda Calhoun, BS ’85, June 29, 2018
Sunil Jha, MBA ’86, December 1, 2018
Robert Kaminski, BGS ’86, March 30, 2018
Peter Zeidner, BBA ’86, March 15, 2019
Jacqueline Phillips, DPM ’87, February 2, 2019
Barbra Maguire, BS ’88, May 26, 2018
Donna Marks, BS ’88, January 23, 2019

1990s

Sandra Hawkins, BA ’92, March 26, 2019
Craig Thompson, BS ’98, BArc ’01, March 4, 2019
Melanie Lockard, BSN ’99, October 28, 2018

2000s

Jessica Spears, BA ’00, January 20, 2019
L’atasha Sipp, BS ’07, June 6, 2019

2010s

Amber Evans, MLIS ’14, March 23, 2019 (body found); missing since January 28, 2019

FACULTY/STAFF

John Garrett, worked in various administrative functions at Kent Campus and KSU at Stark, retired (emeritus) as director of Administrative and Business Services, 1966-1985, assistant to manager (golf course) 1987, February 5, 2019



The Drapes of Wrath

I was proud to be a senior English major at Kent State University in 1971 and that my photograph would appear in the 1972 *Chestnut Burr*. But when I read the “instructions” for having my picture taken for the yearbook, I was incensed. I had spent four years at KSU, experiencing May 4, the rise of Black United Students and the rumble of women’s liberation. I learned not only academic lessons at Kent State, but gained a better understanding of the changing world and my own individuality.

And then I, like every other senior woman, was required to wear an ugly black drape for my photo, a uniform with no regard to one’s comfort level, personal tastes or consent. My father, a professional photographer, and my mother, an oil portrait painter, would never expect someone to wear something he or she disapproved of for a sitting.

So I wrote a letter to *The Daily Kent Stater*, which appeared in the Oct. 14, 1971 edition, under the headline “Coed objects to yearbook ‘drape.’”

While I must congratulate the *Chestnut Burr* for its originality and liberal content of KSU’s yearbooks in the past few years, I find it unbelievable that its editors have slighted women’s liberation.

Although a male senior is restricted to a suit and tie, he has a myriad of styles

from which to choose in order to enhance his individuality.

But the poor female senior who wishes her picture in the *Burr* must bare her shoulders and appear in a low cut Zorro cape.

I, for one, would rather not have my picture taken than don such an unnatural, ridiculous costume. —Jill Veleba

I admit to having a few qualms after I saw the letter in print, just a few days before my photo appointment. Would the company and photographers who contracted with the school be upset? Would they vandalize my senior photo with a Groucho Marx moustache and glasses drawn with a black marker?

To the company’s credit, they rescinded the dress restriction for female students. I was elated.

I decided to play it cool, just show up on time for my photo session and not say a word about who I was. A smiling photographer greeted me and pointed to a dressing screen where I could change into the drape. Not on your life.

The photographer glared at me, looked at the name on my appointment card and snarled, “Oh, you are the one who wrote the letter.” To his credit, after that comment, he treated me like everyone else, and my senior picture came out just fine.

Not every woman chose to forgo the drape that year. Many preferred the

traditional drape look, and that was fine. It was their choice, and that was the important thing—to have a voice in the matter.

Almost five decades later, remembering the incident makes me smile. A number of women students had contacted me after the letter was published and thanked me for my one-woman campaign.

Was that the most important victory for women at KSU that year? Of course not. Not even close. And I like to think I left a small mark on KSU in more significant ways. If nothing else, than by being an unofficial ambassador for my college all this time.

I cherish my *Chestnut Burr*, dust it off once in a while, look at the senior picture of a younger, thinner, no-gray-hair me and recall with humor the Great Drape Escapade. And here’s the other thing: like many liberated women on campus in the early 70s, I wasn’t wearing a bra under the dress I wore for my senior portrait. Simply scandalous. —Jill Veleba Sell, BS ’72, Sagamore Hills, Ohio ⚡

Check out the Digital Daily Kent Stater Archive at <https://dks.library.kent.edu>.

Send us YOUR Flashback:

Share your memories from Kent State and they may appear in a future issue of *Kent State Magazine*. Email your stories and photos to magazine@kent.edu.

TESTIMONIAL

Back when the earth was new
and heaven just a whisper,
back when the names of things
hadn’t had time to stick;

back when the smallest breezes
melted summer into autumn;
when all the poplars quivered
sweetly in rank and file...

the world called, and I answered.
Each glance ignited to a gaze.
I caught my breath and called that life,
swooned between spoonfuls of lemon sorbet.

I was pirouette and flourish,
I was filigree and flame.
How could I count my blessings
when i didn’t know their names?

Back when everything was still to come,
luck leaked out of everywhere.
I gave my promise to the world,
and the world followed me here.

– Rita Dove

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KENT STATE
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Poem by
Rita Dove. From: *On the Bus with
Rosa Parks*. ©1999

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Special “K”

Members of Kent State University’s Class of 2023 form a “K” on the Kent Campus for a photo with President Todd Diacon, Kent State cheerleaders and the university’s mascot, Flash. Learn more about the Class of 2023 on page 5.

