INTEGRATIVE HEALTH AT DUQUESNE
THINKING ACROSS DISCIPLINES TO CONFRONT TODAY’S HEALTH CHALLENGES

Also in this issue:
The Newest Dean for the Newest College
Face Time: Alumnus Shares Experience with Immigration
Duquesne’s identity exists in the stories of its people. For this issue, and future issues, of Duquesne magazine, the stories of our people will take greater prominence.

This issue includes some of the most popular of our #BluffStories series that has existed, until now, solely on the University’s social media channels. The people featured have in common that their stories had at least one chapter written on the Bluff.

The origin of the “Bluff” as a nickname for the neighborhood dates to at least the 1890s, according to Tom White, University archivist and curator. After appearing in some of the earliest student publications, it was quickly adopted.

It’s not clear if students called it that because of the cliff itself, because of Bluff Street which dates to the mid-1800s or because that’s what the locals in the neighborhood called it—back when Duquesne only held a small portion of the property.

The Bluff moniker lives on today and is often spoken with nearly as much pride as the iconic Duquesne ring engenders. Only fitting then, that we share the rich, unique stories of the some of the people who make up our community—and that we call them the Bluff Stories. While Duquesne graduates and ideas span the globe, the Bluff is our shared place.

Throughout this magazine, the #BluffStories will introduced you to students, faculty and staff who help make Duquesne such a special community and whose contributions will be included in our ongoing recording of Duquesne’s history.

Hear them in their own voices, and learn more about them in the excerpts printed here. Visit our website to read more, follow us on social media for new story postings and be sure to take in our new #BluffStories video.

Visit duq.edu/bluff-stories

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Duquesne University’s Spiritan founders were missionaries. They were also visionaries, recognizing an unmet need for accessible, quality education for Pittsburgh’s working-class immigrants. They responded by establishing a university that would change lives for generations to come.

Today, we further that bold Spiritan legacy as we address a critical issue impacting individuals across our nation. There are far too few primary care doctors—particularly in rural and urban areas. It’s a dire situation, and one that’s predicted to worsen in the coming years.

Duquesne University is determined to address this need head-on as we launch the Duquesne University College of Osteopathic Medicine. Our focus on integrative health education in the new college of medicine will feature a progressive curriculum that addresses the whole person in treating disease and injury. It fits perfectly with Duquesne’s Spiritan mission to care for the mind, the heart and the Spirit.

Duquesne’s also will be one of the few osteopathic medical colleges in the U.S. that is attached to a comprehensive university. Our exceptionally strong schools in nursing, pharmacy, health sciences and the natural sciences will complement the new college, as will health-related programs in liberal arts, music, business and law. The combination will unleash the full potential of Duquesne’s interprofessional strengths for students and for the total health needs of people in our region and the world.

In the pages of this magazine, you’ll meet the founding dean of our new College of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. John Kauffman, D.O., who has a wealth of experience in this area—and who is a Western Pennsylvania native. You’ll also gain insight into important work already taking place here at Duquesne that ties directly to this new initiative. Our faculty, students and alumni are working across disciplines to tackle challenges from asthma to obesity, from the opioid crisis to end-of-life care.

There are many inspirational stories in this edition of Duquesne University Magazine. You’ll learn more about the impact our alumni have around the world—like Vince Tocci, a double-Duker and three-time war veteran. You’ll also read about important work being done right here on campus and in our local community, like that of Start-PLAY Hackers, an innovative student organization which brings together knowledge in the fields of education, health sciences and engineering to help solve problems for individuals with disabilities. You’ll also find excerpts from our popular new #BluffStories series, which regularly profiles members of our extended Duquesne University community. Be sure to check out new #BluffStories on our website—these men and women are truly inspiring.

As you read, I hope you’ll agree that today, 142 years after our founding, our Spiritan mission remains front and center as we prepare our students to have a meaningful impact upon the lives of others. ♦

Sincerely,

Ken Gormley
Duquesne University President
In a packed room in the Power Center in November, Dr. John Kauffman, the just-revealed founding dean of Duquesne’s College of Osteopathic Medicine, went through his western Pennsylvania bona fides:

Childhood in New Castle, Pa., where he was a paperboy for the *New Castle News*. Worked as an orderly at a hospital in Meadville, Pa. Earned his D.O. at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. And, to the journalists from all of Pittsburgh’s major media in the room, he also noted that he lived in Altoona until age 8 because his father was on the staff of the *Altoona Mirror*.

“My connections to this city and this region are longstanding and part of my foundation,” Kauffman said. “I am very honored to be able to add to the medical community in yet another way.”

The University identified Kauffman after a very competitive national search for a position that carries great responsibility and represents great hope. The new dean will launch the largest and most ambitious new college at Duquesne in nearly 100 years, since the surge of offerings that started in the 1910s and ran for two decades under then-Presidents Rev. Hehir and Rev. Callahan.

Kauffman is up to the job. He served as founding dean and chief academic officer of the Campbell University Jerry M. Wallace School of Osteopathic Medicine in Buies Creek, N.C., from 2011 until he was named dean emeritus in October 2019. The Wallace School was the first medical school to open in North Carolina in 35 years and presently is the state’s only osteopathic medical school.

Prior to his role at Campbell University, Kauffman served in several capacities at the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM). Under Kauffman’s leadership, the number of residency positions at VCOM increased from 40 to 280 in family medicine, internal medicine, dermatology and neurosurgery. At University Hospitals of Cleveland, Kauffman established university-based osteopathic residencies in dermatology and pediatrics as well as community-based residencies in family medicine, internal medicine and sports medicine.

A physician and experienced leader, Kauffman understands well his field and what it will take to build a medical school worthy of the Duquesne name.

Kauffman and his wife, Sharon, have four daughters. He shared his thoughts with Duquesne magazine about the profession itself, the
opportunity ahead and how he likes to spend his time when not starting medical schools.

**On the connection between osteopathic medicine and Laura Ingalls**

Andrew Taylor Still, M.D., started the first osteopathic medical school in Kirksville, Mo., in 1892. Still originally had no intention of starting his own school or even founding a different arm of medicine, having been raised by a father who was both a pastor and an M.D. As a child he saw medicine practiced in the context of the whole person—mind, body and spirit—and as a part of the whole family.

In Still’s time, medicine was practiced in the home. Just like Ingalls’ *Little House on the Prairie*, when someone became gravely ill, you sent for the doctor, who often didn’t have much more to offer than holding your hand and saying a prayer. People also believed illness was caused by “evil humors” that needed to be purged from the body by bloodletting or substances that made you vomit or gave you diarrhea. A favorite was Calomel, which contained mercury that burned the lining of your intestines and made you evacuate.

Because of his faith-based upbringing, Still believed the body had the ability to heal itself and that the role of the physician was to help the body heal itself. He understood also that an individual’s health is not just physical but often shaped by circumstances—the home, family, work and other conditions.

As a result, Still hoped to improve and reform the practice of medicine to take into consideration the whole person.

Today, we understand much more about how living conditions, family and friend networks, workplaces, and other elements can shape health. Doctors know to consider them, and osteopathic medicine was first to do so, and thus very much ahead of its time.

**Why did you decide to go into academe?**

As a medical student, I had no intention of pursuing a career in academic medicine. My intention was to become a family physician and either go to Africa as a medical missionary or join our family practice in Lewisburg, Pa. As a student, I found I really enjoyed hospital medicine and shifted my focus to internal medicine. While a resident at Lehigh Valley Hospital in Allentown, I met my wife, got
married and started a family. I joined my family practice for a year in Lewisburg but missed teaching, so went back to Lehigh Valley and joined the teaching service. I then was offered the director of medical education position at a local community hospital and found I enjoyed lecturing and overseeing residency programs.

What makes you excited about starting a medical college at Duquesne?

The opportunity to do something I enjoy tremendously, in the area where I grew up, with a nationally ranked university, is truly the opportunity of a lifetime. Being able to develop the school in a major metropolitan area provides tremendous opportunities and resources both to teach and to serve communities in the region.

What is your favorite part of starting a medical college?

My favorite part of the job of starting a new medical school is that every day provides new and exciting challenges and opportunities. No two days are the same. This maintains a high level of excitement and keeps things fresh and new.

Who do you admire most and why?

I would have to start with my parents. My mother instilled in me a lifelong love of reading and learning. My father, who worked very hard to put himself through the University of Pittsburgh at night and worked as a teacher and then administrator, has been a lifelong example of what it means to work hard and set a good example for his family. Additionally, Dr. Jerry Wallace, the president at Campbell, has been a tremendous mentor and allowed me to build a quality medical school in North Carolina.

Do you have a favorite book?

I don’t really have just one favorite book. I love reading about history and thoroughly enjoyed Michael Shaara’s *Killer Angels*, which won a Pulitzer Prize and was made into the movie *Gettysburg*. My favorite historical medical book is *The Emperor of all Maladies*, written by Siddhartha Mukherjee and which also won a Pulitzer Prize. I recently finished the book *Just Mercy*, which is a powerful narrative about the unequal application of justice, especially concerning death row inmates in the south.

Hobbies?

I enjoy playing the piano and listening to jazz.

I feel inspired when...

I read a good book, see a good movie, or have a large and challenging project—like starting a new medical school.
Having a film crew in your home and at work for four days would test even the most patient person. But the crew that came to film Alexis Spina Wahl (PharmD’14) in 2018 was there precisely because she was patient.

In fall 2018, Wahl was one of just four of CVS’s 300,000 employees nationwide to be recognized with the company’s National Paragon Award, presented to her by the CEO of CVS in Dallas in February 2019. The award recognizes the “best of the best among CVS Health colleagues in customer- and patient-facing colleagues.”

CVS Health describes the honor as one of the most prestigious a person can receive with the company. Creating a brief documentary about Wahl suggested the award’s importance.

“I was followed around like it was a reality TV show,” she says. “I had never done anything like that, and I am a pretty confident person, but I was nervous in front of the whole camera crew and lights.”

Off-camera and away from lights, in the less glamorous position of working the phones, Wahl made a mark.

Her career started as a clinical pharmacist with CVS Caremark’s Medicare Part D Clinical Operations Department. Medicare Part D is more commonly known as the prescription drug coverage offered by the federal program. In her role, Wahl coordinated with physicians’ offices to ensure patients with specific drug needs, and who generally were 65 and older, were covered.

A sample scenario: A patient arrives at a pharmacy to pick up a new prescription and is told the medication is not covered by the insurance plan. The physician deems it necessary. Wahl is one of the people who steps in to help resolve the situation.

If a drug or treatment was not covered by the Medicare plan, Wahl’s role was to create an authorization. To do so, she had to judge whether it was appropriate, evaluating as a pharmacist the patient’s clinical background or health record.

Wahl usually accomplished such work by talking with doctors’ offices. But in 2017, the company wanted to try something a little different. It wanted to see what would happen if Medicare Part D clinical pharmacists worked directly with patients—in particular a group of people with diabetes who could potentially benefit from being educated about lower-cost formulary insulins.

“It was a limited time assignment, a special project,” Wahl says. “It gave me the chance to have conversations with our members.”

It turned out she had a knack for it.

“I thought about the way I would want to talk to a patient and the way I would want to be spoken to,” Wahl says. “They left it up to us to tailor our conversations and I made it my own.”

Her calls with patients were recorded. Anyone who has called a customer service line knows the familiar phrase: this call may be recorded for quality assurance purposes. And that is what happened. The program supervisors used Wahl’s tape as the example for other clinical pharmacists to have those conversations.

And not long afterward, they put her in charge. By January 2019, she was promoted to clinical supervisor, assuring the program she helped perpetuate would be well managed.

Wahl comes from a Duquesne family—her father Chris (B’78, L’81), sister Brianna (B’16, L’19) and her uncle, two cousins and many friends are Dukes.

Still, she initially had wanted to go away for college. Having grown up visiting the campus and attending basketball games, she knew Duquesne well. When she decided to become a pharmacist, and really looked into the School of Pharmacy—the Bluff felt best.

Now a grad, she knows she was right. “Pharmacy is such a small world, especially in Pittsburgh,” Wahl says. “I wanted connections. Everyone knows the Duquesne ring, and a friend from Duquesne is the one who made me aware of the CVS position. I would not have known about my job without a little help from my Duquesne network.”

Visit duq.edu/magazine to see the CVS video of Duquesne pharmacy grad Alexis Spina Wahl, a clear choice for one of the 2018 CVS National Paragon Awards.
Healing the Whole
INTEGRATIVE APPROACHES TO TACKLING GLOBAL HEALTH ISSUES

By Ken Walters
It’s a story that Dr. Jennifer Elliott tells often.

The Duquesne University professor hosts asthma clinics and screenings in schools across western Pennsylvania, where she and her research team have seen thousands of children.

“Whenever a child enters the clinic, I ask them what their goal is,” Elliott said. “One day a boy comes in and tells me that his goal is to play football. I write that at the top of his chart.”

She then begins asking questions about his asthma treatments. Yes, he does have two asthma inhalers—one blue inhaler, for when his asthma is bad. And one orange inhaler, for when his asthma is really bad, the boy tells her.

Then Elliott, an associate professor in Duquesne’s School of Pharmacy, reviews the boy’s chart.

“He had three hospital visits in the last year, with two of them in the ICU,” she said. “And, he had missed 42 days of school.”

A few questions later, Elliott finds the root of the problem. The boy had two other siblings with asthma and they were all sharing the inhalers. When she checked to see if the medication had been refilled, she found that the prescription had not been filled in a year.

“So probably for the last 10 months before we saw him, he and his siblings were getting nothing but a puff of air from the inhalers,” she said.

It was stories like this one that led Elliott and her team to build a model to break down the barriers children and their families faced in treating asthma. She formed partnerships with six school districts and designed a program that annually screens more than 8,000 students for asthma. Working with various medical professionals and pharmacies, the community-based model helps ensure access to needed medication and that the treatment regimen is followed by the child.

“Children in our group are getting to their preventative care visits, with 92 percent of kids attending more than 80 percent of scheduled visits,” Elliott said. “By the child’s third visit to the clinic, we have achieved well-controlled asthma in 88 percent of the children and improved their knowledge of the disease significantly. And finally, we have seen an 84 percent reduction in emergency room visits over the past year and no hospitalizations.”

And the boy who wanted to play football? “He scored his first touchdown last week,” Elliott said with a smile.
Duquesne’s Team Approach

Such success stories are nothing new for Duquesne’s faculty and alumni, who have been scoring touchdowns in hospitals, clinics, research labs and health care institutions for decades. The University’s top faculty and impressive alumni are taking on major global health challenges with unique integrative approaches that focus on the whole person.

Community and personal health take a team approach. At Duquesne, interdisciplinary efforts in integrative health abound. The University’s Chronic Pain Research Consortium pulls faculty from several schools to explore effective pain relief alternatives to opioids. In the labs at Mellon Hall, faculty and students explore new methods to attack cancer cells and ways to identify autism and other neurodegenerative disorders before brain damage occurs.

Preventative community care has always been a staple at Duquesne. Since 2011, the University’s Center for Pharmacy Care has conducted more than 10,000 cholesterol screenings, 12,000 blood pressure screenings and 8,000 body composition screenings. They have also provided more than 8,000 flu shots, along with screenings and immunizations for a variety of other diseases.

University approaches aren’t limited to the health sciences. Duquesne’s liberal arts college nurtures the humanities as its core, and the arts have been known to raise both physical and spiritual well-being in communities. Duquesne’s strengths in law, business, science, education and music have an important role to play in the health of our region, country and world.
In the Doctor’s Office: You Can’t Quantify Misery

Dr. Julie Futrell, A’14, was frustrated. While earning her master’s degree in health education at the University of Texas at Austin, she disagreed with her professor’s approach that a fear-based campaign would make people stop smoking.

“There are complex reasons for why people smoke,” she argued. “If all it took was showing people a picture of a black lung, then why are people still smoking? Maybe it’s the only joy they have in the day. Or it’s the only way they know how to relax.”

The professor’s response was that they couldn’t quantify such factors for a research study.

“You can’t quantify misery. You can’t reduce people to numbers and reduce their pain,” she said. “We aren’t Pavlov’s dogs—humans are much more complex than that.”

That experience solidified Futrell’s beliefs in integrative medicine, and she soon headed to Duquesne to earn her master’s and doctoral degree in clinical psychology.

“Duquesne excels at the human science approach to addressing the whole person—physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually,” said Futrell, a Los Angeles-based clinical psychologist. “The psychology program actively endorses incorporating other disciplines, such as philosophy and health sciences, to provide a holistic approach.”

OSTEOPATHIC SOLUTIONS COME TO THE FOREFRONT

Futrell, whose work includes behavioral health services for geriatric patients, notes the University’s decision to launch an osteopathic college comes at a particularly interesting time.

“Osteopathy is the future, especially as the nation grows older,” she said. “We are seeing a shift where Medicare is realizing that they can’t just pay for physical treatments anymore because if the patient is too depressed to be treated, physical outcomes are negatively impacted. They now are emphasizing both physical and mental health treatments because an integrated approach is the best approach.”

At a time when the country is seeing increases in depression, anxiety and obsessive-compulsive disorders, Futrell focuses her efforts on validation and work with the unconscious.

“People need to experience their feelings as real,” she explained. “If someone is in a bad situation and they feel depressed, they want to know it’s OK to feel that way, that it isn’t just faulty ‘brain chemistry.’”

Treating the whole person allows Futrell to not only consider biological factors, but to also explore how societal factors, such as school and family, may contribute to a person’s mental state.

“Duquesne excels at the human health approach of addressing the whole person—physically, mentally and emotionally."
In the Lab: Making its (Bio)mark on the Future of Health Care

Dr. Mary Walter, S’95, had no lab experience when she came to the U.S. from India for the first time in the late 1980s. So, Duquesne Chemistry and Biochemistry Professor Dr. Dave Seybert put her to work in the lab immediately, developing biomarkers to measure oxidative stress to determine if foods loaded with antioxidants could reduce the biomarkers associated with conditions like diabetes and heart disease.

From those beginnings, Walter now oversees the use of several dozen biomarkers that may help reduce the obesity problem in the U.S. As a clinical laboratory core director of the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK), she works with doctors, biomedical engineers, endocrinologists, mathematicians and a variety of researchers to measure how hormones affect eating habits and diet.

The core laboratory, located in Bethesda, Md., was created to provide doctors with biomarkers that aren’t available in a typical diagnostic lab, said Walter, whose father is also a Duquesne alumnus. One current study is measuring metabolism in different ethnicities to determine if certain people are more prone to diabetes. Another study is looking at the role of environmental factors on good fat and bad fat.

The use of biomarkers has enhanced health care diagnosis significantly. Walter notes that from just two tablespoons of blood, she can quantitate 40 biomarkers simultaneously, measuring everything from glucose and cholesterol to lesser known elements. There is the potential to use 100 biomarkers from one tablespoon of blood, although her team has not needed to do so.

POWER COUPLE

Walter is not alone in her fight to lower obesity. Her husband, Duquesne alumnus Dr. Peter Walter, S’96, also works in a separate division at the NIDDK as a director of the Clinical Mass Spectrometry Core. The couple has jointly co-authored seven research papers at NIH.

Peter’s lab focuses on how the body uses sugar and fat to burn energy. “It’s a great example of personalized medicine,” he said. “We can measure the total energy expenditure a person burns daily and understand how the body processes that energy.”

He referenced a study his group did a few years ago of contestants who appeared on the weight loss show The Biggest Loser, noting six years after their weight loss, exercise and overall energy burn contributed more successfully to keeping the weight off than eating habits.

TAKING ON THE OBESITY EPIDEMIC

“There are 93 million people in the U.S. suffering from obesity, which of course can lead to other health problems,” she noted. “We are studying hormones that send signals from our stomach to our brains, and vice versa. If we can measure these hormones, it could help address obesity issues.”

The obesity epidemic

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Obesity may be linked to the hormones that transmit signals from the stomach to the brain.

A study has shown that 30-45 minutes of exercise a day helped keep weight off as opposed to those who didn’t exercise and relied on diet alone.
The Future of Medicine

The use of mass spectrometry continues to play an important role in Duquesne’s health care expertise. Up on the Bluff, Dr. Howard “Skip” Kingston, who mentored Peter Walter, is now creating his own biomarker measurements that may help identify children who are developing autism.

Kingston’s research team created accurate biomarker readings which relate chemical toxin exposure to behavior in children with autism. These biomarker readings allow doctors to medically assess the trending of a child and enable early intervention in the child’s care to improve the patient’s health in many cases.

“One of the issues was that doctors couldn’t treat autism without a diagnosis, but by that time brain damage had already occurred,” said Kingston, professor of chemistry and biochemistry at Duquesne. “We may be able to intervene and treat patients before brain pathology worsens.”

The Duquesne research team is in the process of validating 21 biomarkers that help identify neurodevelopmental, neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases.

The team is developing biomarker testing methods in which a mother can draw blood from a finger prick and place it on an absorbent paper in a blood card, which is then measured by a mass spectrometry detector to determine levels of glutathione and other biomarkers, Kingston said. From the instrument’s readings, researchers may be able to identify children at risk of developing autism.

“This is the future of medicine,” said Kingston, noting that several universities and medical schools are following Duquesne’s lead by acquiring extraction and mass spectrometry instruments to conduct biomarker testing following the scientific papers published by his research team.
In Hospice: An Art to Dying

It’s said that there is sometimes an art to healing. For Noah Potvin, there is also an art to dying.

A board-certified music therapist, the Duquesne professor specializes in facility- and home-based hospice care, engaging patients and caregivers in music experiences that address symptom management, emotional comfort and spiritual resolution.

“Music therapy has no set playlist,” Potvin said. “I can’t take ‘Amazing Grace,’ reduce it down to a 20-milligram pill and say ‘you’re good to go.’ Music therapy requires a personal approach that respects the individuality of every patient.”

Nearly 80 percent of people surveyed say they want to have control over how they are taken care of, their quality of life and where they will die when the time comes, Potvin said.

“End-of-life care prioritizes quality of life and comfort measures, so it looks to minimize physical discomfort and optimize emotional and spiritual resources,” he said. “Music and spirituality often amplify one another, so music therapy plays an important role.”

A GOOD DEATH

Music therapists must have an understanding of what the patient wants and be aware of the stakeholders involved with the patient’s care, including family, friends and caregivers.

“You have to have an intuitive feel in those moments,” he said. “For patients whose spirituality is important to them, it’s my job to conduct a musical and spiritual assessment of health that understands the patient in terms of their relationship with the Divine.”

The power of music, however, isn’t only for the patient’s benefit. Music therapy can help those through the grief at the time of death as well.

“The music functions on multiple levels at all times—attending to the caregiver, attending to the patient—and holding everyone in a singular, shared experience,” he said. “Then depending on the person, they will derive from the music what they need to move through the death.”
New Award Recognizes Volunteer Service to Duquesne

Volunteers play a vital role in extending Duquesne’s mission. Each year, hundreds of alumni, parents and friends share their time and talents in roles such as recruiting prospective students, hosting alumni events in cities across the country, serving as guest lecturers and much more.

The Alumni Board of Governors is establishing a new award to recognize graduates for outstanding volunteer contributions. The inaugural Alumni Award for Service will be presented at Homecoming 2020; nominations are being accepted through May 15.

Criteria for consideration include:

- Recipient must have earned a degree from Duquesne University
- Recipient must have volunteered for Duquesne as an alumnus for a minimum of two years
- Recipient’s volunteer service to Duquesne must have taken place within the past five years
- At least one letter of support must accompany the nomination
- The award will not be presented posthumously, and honoree must be present to accept the award on the Sunday of Homecoming Weekend

For more details and online application form, visit http://www.myduquesne.duq.edu/volunteeraward.

Basketball Continues to Thrive

The men’s and women’s basketball programs continued to thrive in 2019-2020, despite the challenge of playing home games at multiple venues due to the season-long renovation of the on-campus UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse.

The DU men, in their third-season under head coach Keith Dambrot, gained national attention by opening the season 10-0—the school’s best start since 1952-54. The Dukes, who were one of the last four undefeated Division I teams in the nation, received votes in The Associated Press Top 25 for the first time since 2011 with their eye-opening start.

Duquesne continued its strong play in the Atlantic 10 Conference, posting a new school record for conference road wins while producing back-to-back seasons with nine or more league wins for the first time in school history.

In the process, the men’s team produced 19 or more wins in back-to-back seasons for the first time in 48 years (since 1971 and 1972).

The women’s team, which played “home” games at La Roche University, PPG Paints Arena, Oakland Catholic High School and Robert Morris University, posted a 10-3 record in those games, reaching the 10-win milestone at home for the ninth time in the past 10 seasons.

The Dukes, who graduated 5,000-plus points a season ago, including three of the top 20 scorers in program history, did not miss a beat offensively under the guidance of seventh-year head coach Dan Burt, leading the Atlantic 10 in scoring, field goal percentage, 3-point field goal percentage and assists.
SCHMITT BECOMES DUQUESNE ALL-TIME
FOOTBALL’S WINNINGEST COACH
With a 30-21 victory over Saint Francis U on Nov. 2 at Arthur J. Rooney Field, head coach Jerry Schmitt became the winningest coach in Duquesne football history.

Schmitt, who recently completed his 15th season at the helm of the Dukes program, notched his 98th career win with the triumph over the Red Flash, passing Greg Gattuso for the most coaching victories in the 93-season history of Duquesne football.

Schmitt credited head coaches who came before him with laying the groundwork for a successful program on the Bluff.

“I’d like to be the spokesperson for the last four head coaches in Dan McCann, Terry Russell, Greg Gattuso and myself in thanking all of the players and coaches who have dedicated all of their time and effort to building this program to where it is,” Schmitt said.

“That’s why I am where I am today, because of all of those coaches and players over the years.”

Gattuso previously held the mark for most career wins with 97 followed by McCann with 91 victories. Elmer Layden, who coached Duquesne from 1927-33 and later went on to coach at Notre Dame, is fourth among the all-time winningest coaches in program history.

“I’d like to be the spokesperson for the last four head coaches...in thanking all of the players and coaches who have dedicated all of their time and effort to building this program...”
While Schmitt took over as head coach in 2005 after five seasons at his alma mater Westminster (Pa.), he previously played an important role in the development of the program with two stints as an assistant coach, the first coming in 1985-87 under Russell and again from 1992-97.

In 1992, he worked under McCann and then as the offensive coordinator for Gattuso from 1993-99, when the Dukes transitioned from the NCAA Division III level to a Division I-AA program.

Schmitt was part of Gattuso’s first two conference championship teams in back-to-back seasons in 1995-96. While on Gattuso’s staff, Schmitt and the Dukes registered 53 victories in seven seasons. He referenced the winning culture set in place which has helped him sustain success today.

“I worked under all three of those guys and felt their support, which is awesome,” Schmitt noted. “There is no doubt that you want to continue the tradition and winning ways that those guys put into place. So there is certainly some pressure, but I learned a great deal from those guys.”

Despite the achievements of those who coached before him, Schmitt has undoubtedly led the program to new heights.

Under his tutelage, the Dukes made the seamless transition from need-based financial aid to an athletics-based model with a move to the Northeast Conference (NEC) in 2008. In just their fourth season in the conference in 2011, Schmitt and the Dukes captured the NEC championship with a 9-2 overall record and 7-1 ledger in league play.

Since the beginning of that 2011 campaign, Duquesne has claimed five conference titles with a pair of appearances in the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) playoffs. Schmitt and the Dukes have won 65 games and 39 conference contests, more than any other team in the NEC.

In 2018, Schmitt guided Duquesne to a historic finish with its fifth NEC championship and second FCS playoff appearance.

In addition, Schmitt and the Dukes won the first-ever FCS playoff game in program history, upsetting 16th-ranked Towson on the road by a score of 31-10. Duquesne closed the year ranked in both the STATS FCS Top 25 and American Football Coaches Association Poll for the first time ever.

He was named NEC Coach of the Year and a finalist for the STATS FCS Eddie Robinson Coach of the Year Award.

Despite all of his success at the helm, Schmitt credits his assistant coaches, support staff and players for the Dukes’ achievements.

“I’ve had a great staff,” Schmitt said. “Some carry over from those prior staffs. The players are a big part of it, too. It was great at Homecoming earlier this season to see all the former players come back. I feel fortunate to have had a lot of good players over the years. It’s really a collective effort.”
ADVENTUROUS SPIRITS
Duquesne Students Integrate Global Nursing Experiences

By Holly McCalmon

Anchorage, Alaska’s blue skies are returning as the dusk of winter slowly gives way to spring. Peak season for salmon fishing has started, and locals will soon see as many as 19 hours of daylight in the northernmost U.S. state.

Meanwhile, across the globe, Stuttgart, Germany’s Spring Festival is in full swing with patrons meandering cobblestone roads and enjoying biergartens.

Although Alaska and Germany are half a world apart, two Duquesne Nursing School graduates who call each place home are closer than the 4,700 miles between them, connected by their love of nursing and sense of adventure.
THE DUQUESNE DAYS

When reminiscing about their School of Nursing days, 2011 graduates Amber Setlock and Brittney Poole Gurski reflect fondly—and with a few giggles—on experiences in Pittsburgh’s communities and abroad in Nicaragua that allowed them to hone clinical nursing skills while gaining an appreciation for other cultures.

“The faculty would encourage us to do community screenings throughout Pittsburgh. Taking blood pressures on the streets we were thinking, ‘Why are we doing this?’ But looking back now it wasn’t so much the clinical experience as it was being comfortable speaking to people in different communities or of different cultures,” Setlock happily recounted. “That’s important, because as a nurse you never know who or what you’re going to encounter and you learn to adapt to whatever comes your way.”

While studying at Duquesne, both Setlock and Gurski traveled with the School of Nursing’s faculty and alumni to Nicaragua over spring break—a trip that has been enriching Duquesne’s nursing students for more than two decades. The 10-day field experience teams nursing students with peers from Universidad Politecnica de Nicaragua in Managua. The trip provides invaluable learning opportunities in transcultural nursing, exposing students to procedures and health care settings ranging from vaccinating infants in an urgent care facility to conducting health screenings in community clinics.

“Nicaragua was a very profound trip for me and really clarified the important things that I wanted to focus on in my life and throughout my career,” Setlock recalled. “I definitely think that it opened my eyes to the world around us and that there are so many people in need. That’s what makes Duquesne unique. You get a wide variety of experiences that not everyone gets.”

AMBER SETLOCK’S ALASKAN ADVENTURE

Setlock always knew she wanted to be a nurse but never imagined where it would take her. Originally from Indiana, Pa., located 45 miles northeast of Pittsburgh, she would eventually find herself on a road to the top of the world—Alaska.

“I just knew that I wanted to be a nurse,” said Setlock, BSN’11. “Duquesne’s campus felt like a good fit. Everybody was super welcoming from the beginning. All of the School of Nursing professors and instructors seemed very involved, which I was really excited about. I still hear from some of them even now.”

Setlock also found a “good fit” in oncology nursing during her clinical rotations and again after graduation at UPMC Montefiore Hospital’s surgical oncology unit—on the same floor where she’d completed her preceptorship.

HITTING THE ROAD

After working at Montefiore, Setlock continued to travel, making service trips to Honduras to teach women how to provide for themselves and to a remote Kenyan medical clinic.

In 2012, looking to expand her life and career, Setlock became a travel nurse and set out to see the rest of the country. Working mostly in oncology and

1. Amber Setlock and Brittney Poole Gurski on graduation day, Duquesne School of Nursing ‘11 and ready to start their adventure.

2. Amber and her boyfriend Benjamin admire the 49th U.S. state's majestic beauty and blue skies, especially during the long days of summer.

3. Fishing, fishing and more fishing, along with some hunting, are just some of the outdoor Alaskan adventures that Setlock and Benjamin do together.

4. Setlock and Benjamin at the official start of the famous Iditarod trail sled dog Race that covers a distance from Anchorage to Nome, Alaska over 8 to 15 or more days.

5. Gurski, along with her son Jaxson and husband Jeffrey, dressed in traditional German regalia enjoying the 2019 Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany.

6. Before moving to Germany, Gurski and her family enjoyed visiting Setlock in Alaska where they took time to explore the scenic hiking trails.
Bowman recently celebrated her third anniversary as a staff member at Duquesne. As an alumna of the Duquesne University School of Education, she studied elementary education and taught in Virginia before moving to Pennsylvania to teach and earn her Master of Education in reading and language arts. “I’m a (Duquesne) lifer!” she says. As part of the School of Nursing’s Academic Affairs Office, Bowman helps provide technical and logistical support for the Health Education Systems Incorporated (HESI) exams, ExamSoft and other exams for nursing students. A self-described organizational person at heart, she enjoys handling this type of work. “I love the challenge of organizing something that could be messy.”

“I always loved Duquesne, so I just kept looking for jobs here. Honestly, I prayed about it and I felt like I was supposed to go more toward this track in life, more the business end, and this position opened up and it just felt, it felt like a God thing. I applied and it seemed like the perfect fit. I just love the family feel here.”

medical units, Setlock’s jobs took her from Connecticut to Texas with stops at many states in between.

“Travel nursing is a great experience that I would recommend to any nurses looking for adventure. I liked that it was my time to learn about me, to grow as a well-rounded nurse, able to adjust to different environments with some pretty challenging assignments.”

While on contract in Florida, she met her best friend and fellow traveling nurse who convinced her that they should venture north to Alaska.

**ALASKA—NORTH TO THE FUTURE**

Alaska’s state motto “North to the Future,” a representation of optimism and promise, proved prophetic for Setlock and her friend: within six months of starting their 2016 adventure, both landed full-time nursing positions at Alaska Regional Hospital in Anchorage.

At Alaska Regional, Setlock progressed from bedside nurse with the medical oncology inpatient unit to her current position as adult oncology nurse navigator. This role has been challenging but also rewarding as she helps patients traverse the confusing and frightening landscape of cancer treatment. Approaches that work in the lower 48 states don’t often work in Alaska, so Setlock has customized the navigation program for her patients to reduce barriers and improve access to care.

“One of my biggest roles is being an advocate for my patients. I’ve built strong relationships with my patients because I see them through their whole treatment. I get to meet their families and their best friends and their husbands or wives. Without my patient interactions I would not be successful. It keeps me going.”
BRITTNEY POOLE GURSKI’S GERMAN ADVENTURE

Gurski grew up in Flemington, N.J., a small town in the northern part of the state, and found her way to nursing after a conversation with a high school friend. She discovered Duquesne University in the early stages of her college search, and once Gurski attended a School of Nursing Preview Day on campus during her senior year in high school, she fell in love with the school and program.

“I’m super grateful that my friend and I had that conversation. Nursing is endless. There are so many opportunities and I’ve loved each one that I’ve had: from nursing policy to research to bedside nursing and then as a nurse practitioner. My hardest part has been narrowing that down, but then I had the realization that I don’t really have to and that it can change several times throughout my life—and I’m sure it will.”

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

After graduation Gurski worked in a general and bariatric medical surgical unit at UPMC St. Margaret Hospital—the same hospital where she interned the prior summer. A year later she decided to take her career on the road as a travel nurse and moved across the country to Wyoming Medical Center in Casper, where she worked with a surgical trauma team in a step-down unit.

A few months later she moved to Tampa, Fla., and settled into the southern lifestyle with her husband, a Point Park University graduate and former Marine. There, she earned her master’s degree in nursing—graduating magna cum laude—and built a career as a clinical nurse at Tampa General Hospital’s surgical trauma intensive care unit (ICU).

“I loved working in the trauma ICU. I was at a point in my career where I needed more of a challenge. The trauma ICU was very fast paced, very on your toes. I have worked with phenomenal nurses and intelligent people wherever I’ve gone, but that was one of my favorites.”

Gurski changed paths again after having a baby and putting her master’s degree to work as a family nurse practitioner at a few local urgent care facilities before moving abroad in the summer of 2019 to Stuttgart, Germany, for her husband’s work with the Department of Defense.

DIVERGING CULTURES

For this Jersey girl turned Florida transplant, the move to the countryside of Stuttgart, has brought challenges and a different kind of learning curve—one Gurski is embracing.

“I do love the culture here. Nursing in Germany is extremely different than back in the States with limited opportunities. So for right now I’ve transitioned from a full-time nurse practitioner to a stay-at-home mom, which has also been very challenging work,” Gurski admitted.

The wait for a new full-time nursing opportunity shouldn’t take long. She recently submitted her application to become a Red Cross volunteer at the nearby U.S. military base. She is also a board member for the Stuttgart Nurses Journal Club sponsored by the Red Cross, a club that she helped establish. In the meantime, she is still using the community-based clinical experience that she learned in Pittsburgh and Nicaragua wherever she can.

“Someone recently asked on a Stuttgart Facebook page if anyone had community clinical ideas. I was able to pull from the ones I participated in at Duquesne—blood pressures, flu shot clinics and others—and from my Nicaragua experiences. In a Third World country where people don’t even have access to medicine to Germany where they have plenty of access to medicine but where nursing is just very different, I’m still able to help as a nurse.”

ADVENTUROUS SPIRITS

Setlock’s and Gurski’s nursing careers and adventurous spirits have taken them across countries and oceans, thanks to a spark that was lit during their time at Duquesne. Grateful for the faculty support as well as the integrated community and global nursing experiences they’ve shared, they continue to plot their next moves.

Gurski is looking to further her nursing education—possibly with Duquesne’s online DNP program—so she can continue practicing as a nurse in a way that keeps her skills relevant.

“We are very, very blessed to have the opportunities that we do,” she said. “You have to remind yourself that your career can be on hold for a little while you sink into what life has to offer and soak in every little bit you can.”

Setlock continues to look for every “good fit” opportunity in her professional life and sees promise in all the future holds.

“I’m very lucky with the opportunities that I’ve had so far and I’m very happy with the position that I’m in now. I really enjoy it and the relationships I’ve built with my patients and on our hospital campus and others in town,” she said.

“After that is ‘to be determined,’ and truthfully I’m OK with that—it’s another adventure.”
Todd Fine, L’14, values personal interaction. It motivates him in his work. It also motivated him as he prepared for the career he has now. Fine earned his Duquesne law degree taking night classes while working for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office in Monroeville.

“I took a break from studying one day and ran into my daughter going up the stairs. I looked at her and asked, ‘When was the last time I talked to you?’” he recalled. “It had been more than a week since I’d seen my kids. With their school and swimming schedules and my school and work, we just never saw each other.”

His daughter was in high school at the time and his son would be soon. Knowing he had limited time, he altered his schedule to study in the early mornings and spend more time with his family.

It would not be the first time his personal ethics drove a change.
Fine is a private practice attorney helping immigrants gain residence in the United States. He arrived at the work after more than two decades with the U.S. government, first as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Air Force and then for nine years with USCIS, during which time he earned his law degree at Duquesne. He launched his practice in 2019.

His career has taken him from checking for problems to finding answers for immigrants seeking opportunity in the United States. He works at a time when the subject of immigration is more fraught than it has been in years.

**THEN AND NOW**

The story of Pittsburgh and the story of Duquesne both connect to the immigrants who created and built the city and region. More than 150 years ago the individuals arriving to the bustling industries at the intersection of the three rivers were German, Polish, Irish and Italian. Today, immigrants still come here, this time creating new communities of Indian, Somali, Bosnian, Nepalese and Uzbek residents, among others.

National attention to immigration has intensified. Duquesne graduates work in related professions, conduct research or perform services connected to immigration. From USCIS and U.S. Customs and Border Protection to private security firms, law firms and activist nonprofits, Dukes work with immigrants and refugees all over the nation and the world.

Just as the American public had varying opinions on immigration at the time of the University’s founding, the issue is as polarizing today. Many Dukes in the field declined to share their stories for this article. For the few who did talk, tones were measured—but also reflective, focused on the human experiences of people moving across and through borders.

Having seen both sides, and drawing on what he says is the better appreciation for gray areas thanks to his education at Duquesne, Fine’s long perspective on immigration, borders and citizenship shows the relevance of an ethics-centered education.

**GRAYER SHADES OF GRAY**

“I look at all cases the same, when I was at USCIS and in my work now,” Fine says. “Is there a way to help this person?”

In the Air Force, Fine understood judgment calls as “right, wrong or dead.” As an immigration services officer, with personal and family stories abutting the interpretation of policy, Fine often saw cases with gray areas.

When supervising officers in the USCIS office—people evaluating all types of immigration cases—Fine was sought for guidance on complex cases.

“Duquesne developed my heart and spirit, as my mind was already in that helping mode,” he says. “One of my professors said that law school makes you look at the world differently. It shaped not only how I look at legal information—it made me look at everything differently.”
After law school, Fine appreciated the abundance of gray in helping people find the way to work in the United States and perhaps to becoming citizens. His experience as a gatekeeper makes him keenly aware of what clients will face and ways to help them navigate the immigration process.

Immigration logistics go beyond the individual’s quest for a visa or green card. An enormous amount of information is in place right from the start.

“The U.S. government knows more about most immigrants than they know about their own citizens,” Fine says. For people entering the country legally, the U.S. maintains information in a central database that holds the point of entry, their fingerprints, their intentions and their general movements.

For those present illegally, such information obviously is not so well collected, though the Department of Homeland Security maintains estimates.

HANDLING THE SURGE

Fine sees complicated workplace issues arising from the state of the immigration system. In 1986, President Ronald Reagan issued an order granting amnesty to any immigrant in the U.S. who had entered the country prior to 1982, meaning that if they identified themselves they could apply for the requisite documents to work and pursue citizenship. Wait times for green cards exploded. Fine says the present wait time for Mexican nationals is roughly 23 years. For people from India, the wait is between 13 and 17 years.

Increased demand created logistical challenges. When Fine started his career, he and his colleagues had more time to review applicants and, when they encountered issues, resolve them—generally giving people the benefit of the doubt. As the workload increased, time with people declined, and Fine thought the demand precipitated a drift in focus.

“It felt we had moved to finding reasons to say no,” Fine says, “rather than giving the benefit of the doubt anymore.”

Fine wanted to serve others and sensed he was not. So, he changed direction. He does not think it was necessarily a fault of USCIS. The workload increased. USCIS had fewer agents. The pressures increased.

SURPRISE ROYALTY AND CULTURAL CRIMES

Fine reviewed a citizenship application from an individual who seemed an easy pass: clean record, in-demand field, papers in order. Interviewing the applicant, Fine got to the questions included in every application but that are almost never answered affirmatively. He asked if the person held a title of royalty in another nation. To his surprise, he learned he was interviewing someone with just such a title.

The same section of the U.S. Constitution that houses the emoluments clause also prevents those with titles of nobility from becoming citizens. Fine says, “Often it just means we haven’t resolved the issues yet.”

Resolving issues motivates him. He wants to help, as did all of the people who talked about immigration for this story, regardless of their role being in advocacy, enforcement, processing or other areas. Fine values working with people, face to face, to help.

“It is frustrating to put in too much effort to go in the wrong direction,” Fine says. “Every case is different, and now I can choose which cases I take. I can help people achieve their dream.”

AJAPO helps refugees and immigrants living in the greater Pittsburgh area become self-sufficient and better integrated into their communities. The organization also has partnered with Duquesne for summer camps to help children in refugee families learn to make connections.

Fine also consults on cases for AJAPO. When the director has a complex case, she’ll contact Fine for his opinion. Sometimes those opinions turn into work for him.

THE CLIENTS

Both organizations have called Fine, and he also has helped clients referred by both. The specifics of their cases can’t be described due to privacy issues.

Most clients come to him with arrests or issues they think make them ineligible for either a green card or naturalization. But just because a person has a DUI or a minor conviction doesn’t mean they can’t move on in the process.

Some arrests are cultural misunderstandings. Trespassing, for instance, is sometimes not well understood. For many in the large refugee population in the Pittsburgh region, some things common in their home country are illegal here.

“Even if someone is convicted of a crime that is more of a cultural misunderstanding than a severe crime, depending on the circumstances, they are good if there are no other arrests over the next few years,” Fine says. “The big ones, though—murder, rape, theft—those are still big.”

Fine says it’s safest to say that with the current state of immigration, if a person has any doubt about immigration status or the way forward, it’s best to contact an attorney who specializes in immigration. The constantly changing rules and focus of enforcement make immigration one of the most complex of legal issues. Fine compares it to tax law in its intricacies.

FACE TO FACE

The immigration conversation just before press time had settled behind other political issues. The headlines were not so prominent. But the work continued.

Fine notes that some of the rhetoric makes helpful discussion a challenge—for instance, the exaggeration of some arguments.

“People say that President Obama deported more people than President Trump,” Fine says. “That’s not true. Obama did order more people deported, but the Trump administration actually deported more people. There is a big difference in ordering a deportation and actually carrying it out.”

Out of the 9,000 cases Fine reviewed while at USCIC, he denied 5 to 10 percent who applied, and of those, only a single person was deported.

“Denied does not necessarily mean deportation,” Fine says. “Often it just means we haven’t resolved the issues yet.”

Resolving issues motivates him. He wants to help, as did all of the people who talked about immigration for this story, regardless of their role being in advocacy, enforcement, processing or other areas. Fine values working with people, face to face, to help.

“It is frustrating to put in too much effort to go in the wrong direction,” Fine says. “Every case is different, and now I can choose which cases I take. I can help people achieve their dream.”
Duquesne psychology professors and doctoral candidates are going the extra mile for their undergraduate students—literally.

Each year, a team from the Department of Psychology runs the Pittsburgh Marathon and Marathon Relay to raise money for a scholarship to send an undergraduate student abroad on a Spring Breakaway trip. The scholarship is geared toward enriching learning opportunities for minority students.

Associate Psychology Professor Dr. Derek Hook was inspired by a former colleague in London who used marathon running as a fundraiser. An avid runner, Hook decided to start fundraising for student study abroad opportunities when he started leading students on Spring Breakaway course trips to London in 2017.

“Running is difficult—it’s mentally and physically demanding. But running for a cause makes it all worthwhile. In this case, we are running to support our students,” said Hook. “It’s really an opportunity for our department to come together and work toward a common goal.”

The team started with five people—Hook and four doctoral students. Each runner fundraised and the team collected more than $3,000 to fund a student’s Spring Breakaway experience.

The 2018 team grew to 10 relay runners, including doctoral students, Hook and Dr. Will Adams. Again, the team raised over $3,000 through t-shirt sales, bake sales and other fundraising efforts.

“Running itself is therapeutic, and psychologists have identified several mental and emotional benefits to running, including lowered stress levels,” says Hook. “It’s appropriate we’re doing something that benefits both our students and the runners.”

The relay team name “Team Human Science” was inspired by Duquesne’s approach and contribution to psychology scholarship and education. While many psychology departments at universities focus...
primarily on qualitative, experimental research methods to achieve their goal of prediction and control, Duquesne’s Department of Psychology seeks also to foreground the dimension of human experience.

Realizing that human beings are complex organisms, human science psychology emphasizes qualitative research that explores questions regarding meaning, values, experience and culture. Similarly, in the field of clinical psychology, human science psychologists incorporate this perspective and its research findings into the practice of psychotherapy.

Diana McGlory, a senior psychology student and a scholarship recipient, said that without Team Human Science’s fundraising efforts, she most likely would have not gone on a Spring Breakaway trip. For McGlory, her trip to London in March 2018 was one of the highlights of her undergraduate experience.

“Being abroad and seeing places so deeply connected to your learning is so impactful,” said McGlory. “We visited Sigmund Freud’s house and kept a journal of our experiences. Whether you agree with Freud’s theories or not, he is still a central figure in modern psychology. Being there really made learning about him come to life.”

Julie Heintzel, a senior psychology student and a scholarship recipient, had previously never traveled outside of the U.S. She traveled with Psychology Department Chair Dr. Leswin Laubscher to Vienna, Austria and Krakow, Poland in March 2019. While she was thrilled to expand her knowledge of psychology and history, traveling abroad helped her to become more self-reflective.

“I still cannot believe I got to go to Auschwitz. It’s hard to describe the emotions that flow through your mind and body while visiting,” says Heintzel. “I don’t know if I was prepared or could have ever been prepared for the experience.”

Heintzel says she is grateful that Team Human Science prioritizes study abroad opportunities.

“The team’s fundraising efforts mean a lot to students like me who want to study abroad, but may not have opportunities due to cost.”

As Team Human Science trains for the 2020 Pittsburgh Marathon, Hook hopes the Psychology Department can continue its efforts for years to come.

“Taking students abroad has been my favorite part of teaching at Duquesne,” says Hook. “There’s something transformative about being in a new place and I hope we can continue to share that experience with future students.”
The 5th annual Duquesne Day of Giving raised more than $400,000 for the first time in the history of this digital fundraising event. Thank you to all of our loyal alumni and friends who helped us reach this new milestone!

To learn more and see our list of generous donors, visit duq.edu/dayofgiving.

By the Numbers

1,690 total gifts made by our generous alumni and friends

$405,554 raised to support Duquesne students

200+ schools, organizations, athletics teams supported

$150,690 in Challenge Gifts unlocked

8,660 miles from Pittsburgh to Wellington, New Zealand, where our farthest donation came from

321 #DUQDayofGiving posts on Instagram and Twitter

43 different states represented during the Day of Giving, including Alaska and Hawaii

Since 2016, the year Duquesne Day of Giving began, the effort has raised $1,307,112 through 7,278 donations from alumni and friends.

THANK YOU!
Renovations Complete on Rockwell Hall’s Sixth Floor

Rockwell Hall renovations made possible in part by the generous support of the Mallet family: funding for the Business School’s Center of Excellence in Entrepreneurship, with the Louis D. Mallet Entrepreneurship Zone and “Bob’s Launch Pad ‘maker space.’” Forty-one people in all provided gifts in support of the renovation.

Honoring Bob Mallet

Seen here with Dr. Dean McFarlin, dean of the Palumbo-Donahue School of Business (far right) and Jack R. McGinley, Duquesne University Board Chair, Bob Mallet receives his Doctor of Business Leadership, honoris causa, from President Ken Gormley at the December 2019 School of Business commencement.
Joshua Furlong
Digital Media Arts
major with a concentration in Multimedia
McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Working in flight operations for attack helicopters and air ambulances in the military in 2005-06, Furlong was deployed to Afghanistan and also served on a task force that responded to a devastating earthquake in Pakistan’s Kashmir region. During his service, “One of the helicopters crashed and killed five of my buddies,” he said. After that experience, Furlong first noticed the effects of PTSD.

“It started creeping into my life,” he said.

PTSD really took over after he arrived back in the U.S. and he struggled to get his life back on track. He was reintroduced to Duquesne through the Veterans Clinic, through the Duquesne University School of Law’s Tribone Center for Clinical Legal Education.

Furlong enrolled at Duquesne after he earned his associate degree from Community College of Allegheny County. At Duquesne, he has become the University’s Student Veterans of America president and attended the national student veterans conference, where he learned about how to improve the study spaces for veterans in the Duquesne Office for Veteran and Military Students. “I want guys to come hang out. It can be tough being on campus sometimes ... so it’s like, where can I go to be around people like me.”

Through all of his challenges, Furlong remains an optimistic person and wants to continue to help, inspire and be there for current and future veterans. “Some people think it’s a bad thing that Afghanistan ended my (military) career and I think it just opened a lot of doors.”

Dr. Fatiha Benmokhtar
Assistant Professor of Physics
Bayer School of Natural and Environmental Sciences

Benmokhtar’s excitement for her research and her students is evident the minute you meet her. “When I see students, I see myself when I was young,” she said with a big smile. “I put myself in their shoes. I want them to learn and enjoy what they are learning. When I teach, I try to make it useful and make it applicable for their life.”

“I love it here at Duquesne. I feel like I am myself here, especially working with the students. It’s a happy responsibility.” Her role as a mentor also carries over to her work as member of Women in STEM at Duquesne University, which aims to promote and support women in basic and applied sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics career paths.

Benmokhtar is a nuclear physicist and teaches courses in particle physics, thermal physics, advanced electromagnetism and mathematical methods for physicists and engineers. She and her husband have a 5-year-old son, Andy, who is “very full of energy and very curious,” she said. “He’s just the joy of my life.”

Her love of physics came at an early age and from an unexpected place. “When I was 12 years old I decided to do nuclear physics, not just physics, but nuclear physics. I was precise!” One of her neighbors worked in the field and she thought, “if he can do it, I can do it.”

Njaimeh Njie, Fall 2019 August Wilson House Fellow

A Pittsburgh-based photographer, filmmaker and multimedia producer, Njaimeh Njie centers her work on everyday people, narratives and landscapes with a focus on how black people perceive themselves and their experiences in the cities they call home. A Pittsburgh native, she was named a Creator of the Year by Pittsburgh’s Creative Industries Network in 2018. Njie’s recent public art project, “Homecoming: Hill District, USA,” which has received wide acclaim, documents everyday experiences of the residents over the years. August Wilson House is proud to have featured one of Njie’s installations for the past year.

The Duquesne University | August Wilson House Fellowship Program

The Duquesne University | August Wilson House Fellows serve as artists and scholars in residence while developing their own creative work, engaging in research, teaching, and participating in educational events in the community and on campus. Designed to bring national and regional artists and scholars of color into a collaboration between the Hill District community and educational and artistic institutions, the fellowships are the first to be located in August Wilson’s hometown.

The Duquesne University | August Wilson House Fellowship is made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Nancy Jones Beard Foundation.
In November, 2019, I had the opportunity to spend one week on Duquesne’s campus as the August Wilson House Fellow. The fellowship presented an opportunity to meet with students, faculty and staff, ranging from the Honors College, to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, to an English course doing a unit on documentary poetics. My conversations with students were invigorating. Engaging with their questions, learning what they’re studying, and hearing about how they’re approaching their fields and their future careers was incredibly refreshing.

Another component of the fellowship was an opportunity to create new work, and I found myself thinking about my practice with a refreshed perspective thanks to my interactions on campus. My documentary work focuses on contemporary black experiences, through the lens of how the past shapes the present. Leading into the fellowship I found myself meditating a lot on memory and preservation—particularly in the context of everyday life. Given the name of the fellowship, I also found myself thinking quite a bit about August Wilson. His love and appreciation for black people, his radical imagination, the way he centered everyday people and characters, and how he reflected neighborhood character with so much depth and meaning are themes that consistently inspire my work.

In thinking about the collaboration with the August Wilson House and Duquesne, I began to think through what I could create that could put people in both the Hill District and the Duquesne campus in conversation with each other. I also wanted to make something that spoke to the issues I’m concerned with—the physical landscape, race, class, progress, and change. It occurred to me that there was a place close by that could achieve both of these goals.

I ended up coming to a literal and figurative middle ground. Uptown is a neighborhood that’s flanked by both Duquesne University and the Hill District, but it’s also adjacent to Downtown. That places it between a campus, a historic cultural hub and the city’s commercial center. It’s not the Pittsburgh neighborhood that’s spoken about the most, but to me, it is the place where the past and present collide most presciently. So many cultures, histories and futures co-exist here, which made it feel like a fitting place to document the present.

To shoot this series, I decided one afternoon to take a walk down one Uptown street. I took this specific approach to see what I would find that would convey clues about the past, and what visuals might provide a peek into the future. In addition to the images I captured, I created narrative captions to add context, as well as to provide the audience with an alternate way to engage with the project. During my lecture on campus I read the captions aloud, but here, you’ll see them in print along with an abridged version of the original photo essay.

In my work I try to preserve what I see as a way of posing big questions, and pursuing the answers. This project continues in that vein. I hope as you engage with this piece, you find yourself interrogating your surroundings and asking some big questions of your own. By doing this and sharing what we find, we can all provide evidence for future generations who may find themselves up against similar circumstances.

Photo essay reads from top to bottom on each page and is numbered in order.

To see more of Njaimeh’s work visit: www.hillhomecoming.com
THIS IS UPTOWN.

IT CAN FEEL LIKE EVERYTHING, ALL THE TIME.
THERE ARE STOPS AND STARTS.

AND IT CAN BE HARD TO FIND THE RIGHT WAY TO GO.

BUT THERE’S A SOUL HERE.
HISTORY, AND TRADITION, TOO.

REMNANTS OF WHAT WAS,

SIGNS OF WHAT IS...
OF WHO GETS WATCHED,

AND WHO GETS TO JUST BE.

THERE’S A CERTAIN BEAUTY IN THE OLD,

THERE’S DETAIL IN THE NOW,
AND POIGNANCE IN WHAT CAN BE.

IF YOU CAN FIND THE BIGGER PICTURE.
A 93 years old, Vince Tocci has quite the resume. He’s tried almost everything. He has been a nuclear officer, a public relations professional, a teacher, a musical director, an equestrian, a high school sports official and a philanthropist. He is also a husband and father of eight.

Tocci, a native of Carnegie and son of an Italian immigrant father, first enrolled at Duquesne at 16 years old—before he graduated from high school—for the 1940s version of advanced placement classes. As an 18-year-old college freshman, he joined the Psi chapter of the Alpha Phi Delta (APD) fraternity on campus, which at the time was an Italian fraternity.

As a freshman, he was drafted into the Army infantry and eventually served in the Pacific Theater in the Philippines during World War II. After the war ended and he was discharged, he returned to Duquesne to finish his degree. He joined the first U.S. Air Force ROTC class at Duquesne and was assigned to the Air Force Reserve. He graduated from Duquesne with a Bachelor of Science in biology in 1949 and began a high school teaching career in Missouri soon after.

Midway through the school year, he was recalled for the Korean War. He later returned to Duquesne as a member of the Air Force and earned a master’s degree in secondary education in 1954. Subsequent assignments included a tour with the 8th Fighter-Bomber Squadron (“Black Sheep”) in Korea and as assistant professor of military science at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Tocci worked in the public relations field for several years, including a tour as a media briefer assigned to the Military Assistance Command Vietnam in Saigon. This was followed by an assignment as the chief of combat news for the 7th Air Force in Saigon. He was later reassigned to work at the Pentagon.

In 1972 he was assigned to NATO (Allied Forces Southern Europe in Naples, Italy) and spent four years there before being reassigned to NORAD (North American Air Defense Command) in Colorado Springs, Colo. as the public affairs director. In 1979, Tocci retired at the rank of lieutenant colonel after 30 years of military service.

He then worked in public relations at the American Chemical Society, where he earned several public relations awards, including two national Silver Anvil awards—the highest award bestowed by the Public Relations Society of America. He later became adjunct professor of communication at American University in Washington, D.C., where he worked for 14 years before finally retiring. After retirement, he volunteer-taught immigrants and high school drop-outs for 21 years.

An avid Duquesne sports fan, Tocci is known as the “Little Duke” for wearing a top hat and tails while leading cheers for both home and away Dukes football and basketball games. A photo in an October 1949 edition of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette shows him leading a pep rally and 2,000-student snake dance through downtown Pittsburgh after the Dukes football team defeated College of the Holy Cross.

Although his snake-dance-leading days are over, even at 93, Little Duke still cheers on Duquesne and attends games when the Dukes play in the Washington, D.C. area. He also travels to attend APD conventions and reminisce with his Psi chapter brothers, who he says will always hold a special place in his heart.

President Ken Gormley presented Tocci a Presidential Medal for Exemplary Service to his Country, his Profession and his Alma Mater during the winter 2019 commencement ceremony.

See more of this one-of-a-kind guy, Vince Tocci, through a short video photo story at duq.edu/magazine
HAVE YOU EVER HEARD A PLANT PLAY MUSIC?

MUSIC PROFESSOR’S RESEARCH COMBINES MUSIC TECHNOLOGY AND THE HUMANITIES

By Emily E. Stock, A’17
Yes, you read that correctly. No, you are not in a live production of *Little Shop of Horrors*.

A Duquesne professor is making music with unlikely collaborators—houseplants.

Dr. Paul Miller, assistant professor of musicianship in the Mary Pappert School of Music, says he has been aware of the positive effects of interacting with plant life at a young age. As a teenager, Miller worked on a fruit and vegetable farm in New York. “I was always keenly aware of the mental and emotional benefits I felt from working with and caring for plants,” says Miller. “For this project, I was interested in how I could interact with plants in a musical way.”

**ART & SCIENCE IN RESEARCH**

The project involves attaching electrodes to a plant’s leaves. The electrodes collect the plant’s electrical output and send it to a special interface. The interface boosts the voltage of biologically generated electrical signals to a level that can be used in a musical synthesizer. A composer or performer can then use the voltage to make sounds, or modify the rhythm, timbre or dynamics of a sound. This can either be done in real time, or the voltage can be recorded and played back later. Miller can analyze voltage patterns by using computer software designed specifically for this project.

Brian Riordan, Miller’s co-researcher and a doctoral candidate at the University of Pittsburgh, designed software to record the voltage produced by the plant/synthesizer interface. Riordan’s code produces a visual representation of the raw data while creating a simple text file that can be analyzed using software.

“One way of producing music with plants is to use their voltage to drive a modular synthesizer,” explains Miller. “Each synthesizer module has a specific function: one may generate a sound; another may modify that sound in a particular way. By patching modules together using cables, we can bring a great deal of nuance and expression to the final sonic result.”

**GRANT ENABLES STUDY**

Thanks to a grant that Miller received from Duquesne University’s Faculty Development Fund, he was able to purchase several modules that form the core of Duquesne’s synthesizer. The synthesizer can take primitive wave forms and mix them together, or it can take a complex sound (white noise) and filter it in specific ways. Synthesizers can mimic familiar instruments, or create sounds that aren’t like anything yet experienced.

So far, Miller and Riordan have worked with a jade plant and other common houseplants to make music. The pair has experimented with various manipulations to elicit electronic responses from the plant—some of which include burning the plant’s leaves, simulating a solar eclipse or simply touching the plant’s leaves gently.

“Burning the plant’s leaves created the most dramatic electrical signals,” explains Miller. “Our main objective is to provide guidance for performers and improvisers, so they better know what they might expect under typical conditions at a concert or studio.”

While this research is grounded in technology, Miller says that there is a strong link to the humanities.
HOUSEPLANTS AS RESEARCH SUBJECTS

“Although plants do not have brains, feelings or consciousness, they have evolved sophisticated ways of perceiving the environment, and use electricity to communicate their sensations to their various organs,” explains Miller. “Collaborating with plants musically helps us to appreciate our place within the cosmos and creation. It is becoming more common to plow whole ecosystems over for commercial exploitation, so part of this project has to do with environmental advocacy.”

Miller mentions that plants have been othered in Western culture for over 2,000 years. Aristotle put plants and animals in different top-level taxonomic kingdoms. However, many ancient Greek philosophers including Plato believed that plants had a kind of soul.

Miller recognizes that some plants and other organisms have been on Earth long before he was and will continue to thrive once he is gone. “One of the great things about our project is seeing our own temporal world as expanded by interacting with plants. It helps us to place who we are and our position within this green planet.”

Miller and Riordan recently presented their research at the 2019 Society for Music Theory annual conference in Columbus, Ohio. Learn more about their work at www.theoryofpaul.net/plants.

Visit duq.edu/magazine to learn about how a plant makes music. Then enjoy a duet performance!
Despite deep political divisions in recent years, policymakers on both sides of the aisle have been advocating for criminal justice reform. According to the federal Bureau of Justice Statistics, while the United States still has the largest known incarcerated population in the world, the number of people incarcerated in the U.S. has recently declined, but only slightly.

Across the University, Duquesne faculty and students are working in various capacities to help advocate for individuals who are incarcerated and improve the criminal justice system.

**DISRUPTING THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE**

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) recently described the state of American education as such: “schools are under-resourced and students are over criminalized.”

A team of researchers from Duquesne University, including Dr. Tammy Hughes, professor of counseling, psychology and special education in the School of Education, is trying to change that dynamic in Pittsburgh.

Hughes and her doctoral education students work in education environments in both Shuman Juvenile Detention Center and the Allegheny County Jail’s (ACJ) Academic Institute high school program. Students at Shuman are typically held on juvenile delinquency charges, while students at ACJ are being considered for charges as adults.

“Our goal is simply to keep kids in school and out of jail,” says Hughes. “We want to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline by understanding why some educators choose to involve the juvenile justice system in instances where the schools themselves should handle disciplinary actions. For students who are already justice-involved, most are going back to school—we are trying to support a successful transition.” Hughes and her team provide education and support to help educators better understand how experiencing trauma at home can

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**Percentages reflect how much more likely black students are sent to the juvenile justice system than his/her white counterparts in Pittsburgh Public Schools**

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impact a child’s development and behavior.

In some cases, what may be considered normal adolescent misbehavior is criminalized. A school matter becomes a legal matter. In many cities across the U.S., school districts themselves are the primary referral source to juvenile court.

There are 28 states that do not have a lower limit on charging a child with a crime—the term delinquency is used to indicate that a child has committed a crime. In Pennsylvania, children between the ages of 10 and 18 can be charged with delinquency. She also highlights that while implicit bias is not a direct cause of racial disparities in education, it reinforces many discriminatory behaviors that occur in schools.

Hughes says the research shows that black boys in Pittsburgh Public Schools are 95 percent more likely to be sent to the juvenile justice system than white boys, while black girls are 98 percent more likely than their white counterparts.

“Some educators believe that the justice system is helpful for young people. They think the system will ‘fix’ those children,” says Hughes. “In reality, once you’re in the justice system, it’s hard to get out.”

Hughes says reentry into the public-school system after incarceration comes with its own set of unique challenges. “Some of these kids don’t have a place to live or are without a driver’s license,” explains Hughes.

“Being in the justice system itself is a traumatic experience,” adds Hughes. “It’s really about doing whatever we can to equip teachers to disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline, while assisting and advocating for at-risk youth.”

EXPERIENCING PREGNANCY
WHILE INCARCERATED

Sometimes, women are incarcerated while pregnant or find out they’re pregnant after being arrested and booked.

Individuals held at the ACJ are often there for non-violent charges, or are awaiting trial and haven’t been charged at all. Because the jail frequently holds individuals for short periods of time, some women may be incarcerated for part of their pregnancy, while others may be there for the duration.

To help address the situations these women face, the ACJ holds weekly prenatal education and support classes, led by Duquesne Associate Nursing Professor Dr. Alison Colbert and doulas from the community-based doula program Oli’s Angels. A doula is a trained non-medical companion who in these cases accompanies the woman to the hospital to advocate, explain and support them throughout the birth, if they deliver while incarcerated.

Colbert is a clinical nurse specialist in community/public health with more than 20 years of experience in settings including jails, drug and alcohol treatment facilities, and community clinics. Her work focuses on improving health care for underserved populations, including women involved with the criminal justice system.

“We work to amplify the voices of the women we serve, helping to advocate and educate healthcare providers on their unique needs. They are the experts on their bodies.”

The jail employs an obstetrician/gynecologist, and the classes offer complementary education and support on pregnancy and parenting.

“The class also offers a space for peer-based support for managing the stress and anxiety that comes with being pregnant and in jail,” explains Colbert. “During sessions, the women participate in activities and discussions, but also journal and connect with one another.”

Colbert and her colleagues hope the program can help address unique risks and inequities for women of color, specifically those involved in the criminal justice system.

In the spirit of Duquesne’s mission to serve vulnerable populations, Colbert says, “We work to amplify the voices of the women we serve, helping to advocate and educate healthcare providers on their unique needs. They are the experts on their bodies.”

IN THE SPIRIT OF SERVING,
OTHER DUQUESNE INITIATIVES

Hughes and School of Law Professor Tiffany Sizemore are working with a University of Pittsburgh researcher on a project to see whether holistic legal representation can improve juvenile indigent defense representation and, in turn, young people’s life outcomes.

Associate Sociology Professor Dr. Norm Conti’s Inside-Out program holds classes inside jails and prisons, with class members including typical Duquesne students (outside) and incarcerated individuals (inside). As an outgrowth of this work, Conti has established a think tank with several men serving life sentences who hope to impact the safety of their home communities.

School of Law and Department of Psychology students are working with the Pennsylvania Innocence Project, which works to exonerate those who have been wrongfully convicted of crimes and prevent the innocent from being convicted. Students assist the legal staff to investigate innocence claims and pursue judicial appeals.

The School of Law’s Juvenile Defender Clinic provides a variety of free legal services to juveniles in the delinquency system. The clinic represents children who are charged with delinquency offenses, adults and children who are seeking to have their juvenile records expunged, and children who are defendants in Protection from Abuse (PFA) allegations.
UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse Moving Along

On Jan. 9, cranes hoisted the final major structural beam into place at what will be the renovated UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse. While far from the end of the work, the beam installed that day tops the highest point of the new structure. On hand to sign the steel was Chuck Cooper, III, son of the legendary NBA player and former Duke hoops standout whose name will grace the home of Duquesne athletics. President and CEO of the Chuck Cooper Foundation, Cooper joined Duquesne President Ken Gormley to sign the piece before its ascent.

The building remains less picturesque than it will be, now clad in plastic sheeting and sitting behind concrete barriers, as one of the teams it will house has shot and dribbled through its most dramatic season in decades. While the men’s basketball team’s numbers have been impressive, so too are those of the construction itself.

The University plans for a celebratory opening later in 2020.

Over 135,000 new brick to be used for the exterior walls

335 tons of structural steel

91 tons of reinforcing steel for the concrete

Over 1,700 cubic yards of concrete
For the 50 years between 1964 and 2014, Duquesne was fortunate to have a professor who was deeply admired by his colleagues and students for his intellect, well-composed lectures, dynamic presentations and empathy. Steven Béla Várdy led a life that exemplified Duquesne’s Spiritan values, embraced going beyond and embodied academic excellence.

STORIED BEGINNINGS
Born in Hungary in 1935, he was a 10-year-old child when World War II ended. With the Soviet takeover of Hungary looming, Várdy’s family struggled to escape their town of Bercel, where a German army officer was housed in their home during the war. The family escaped on foot toward Austria, where the Várdys were transported to a sanctuary camp for displaced persons in West Germany set up by the Allies in abandoned German military installations. There they resided from 1948 to 1950, where Várdy attended school taught in the Hungarian language, while the proper visas and sponsors were assembled. Since no refugees were admitted to the United States without American sponsors, families from across the country as well as churches, synagogues and organizations stepped in to offer sponsorships. They received passage to the United States on a military transport, the General J.W. McCrae. The Várdy family settled in Cleveland, where a vibrant Hungarian community existed. In 1954 he met Agnes Huszár, the daughter of a Hungarian family of nobility, at a Ford Motor Company picnic in Cleveland. It was love at first sight. They married in 1962.
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Steven Várdy set about pursuing his academic love, the history of Hungary and that of Eastern Europe. Driven to succeed and possessed of a strong work ethic, he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from John Carroll University in 1959. From there he pursued his Ph.D. in East European studies at Indiana University, Bloomington, graduating in 1967. Várdy was already a professor at Duquesne when he completed his terminal degree. Frequently, he was developing lectures for three new courses each semester even as he was researching and writing his dissertation. His career at Duquesne spanned a remarkable half a century, from 1964 to 2014, being named Professor Emeritus of the History Department when he retired.

PROLIFICALLY PUBLISHED

It was over these hectic years that Várdy became one of Duquesne’s most prolifically published faculty members. He wrote or edited more than 22 books and 175 scholarly articles in addition to an untold number of book reviews, encyclopedia entries, essays and newspaper articles. Várdy’s wife, Dr. Agnes Huszár Várdy, an author in her own right, enjoyed contributing to, co-writing and co-editing some of his scholarly work. Várdy was considered one of the world’s leading experts in Hungarian history and presented more than 100 conference papers in Europe and the United States. He received numerous awards for his scholarly achievements, including Hungary’s Berzsenyi Prize, Hungary’s Officers’ Cross of the Order of Merit and Árpád Academy’s Gold Medal, along with Duquesne University’s Excellence in Scholarship Award. Várdy was elected to the Hungarian Writers’ Federation and the Hungarian Academy of Science, received two honorary doctorates from Hungarian universities and had two Festschriften of scholarly articles by former students and colleagues written in his honor. Várdy served on a number of editorial boards and held administrative positions on numerous external academic associations and committees, some of which he founded.

Várdy was a pioneer in studying the Soviet Gulag in Hungary. Along with his wife, he researched its history and interviewed survivors of the forced labor camps. The Soviets stripped Hungary of its intellectuals and able-bodied men by imprisoning them in the Gulag for no apparent crime.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Along with his teaching and writing, Várdy often hosted people from his native Hungary in his gracious Squirrel Hill home, including dignitaries, scientists, writers, historians and educators. He was deeply involved in humanitarian concerns, raising money for relief in catastrophic situations.

In 2015, Drs. Agnes and Steven Várdy endowed the Várdy International Research and Study Grant at Duquesne University to support overseas research by graduate history students or study abroad by undergraduate history majors. In his honor, the American Hungarian Educators Association, sponsors of the Hungarian Room at the University of Pittsburgh, began a research scholarship in his name.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Várdy passed away in his native Hungary on July 23, 2018. He is survived by his wife, his three children, Nicholas, Zoltan and Laura, and three grandchildren. His ashes are interred in St. Stephen Basilica. ✦
Imagine seeking medical care in an emergency room where you do not fluently speak the language of the doctors and nurses. It’s difficult to communicate your symptoms and concerns. You’re not offered your home country’s traditional remedies. Instead, you receive an unfamiliar medication and a complex treatment plan. At the end of the visit, dosage instructions and follow-up care are not explained in your native tongue.

How can you comply with medical advice that you do not understand? How can you modify habits or behaviors that led to your condition when you do not understand the correlation?

INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

A new cultural competency curriculum at Duquesne aims to address these questions by equipping future health care providers with the skills necessary to collaborate and communicate with individuals who may not look, act, speak or think like them. The result? Reduced health care disparities and increased quality of care.

In collaboration with the Office of Online Learning and Strategy, the Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research partnered with the School of Pharmacy and the pre-medical and health professions program to develop the curriculum.

Some patients delay seeking care due to perceived cultural insensitivity, concerns about receiving lower-quality care or perceptions that they have been treated unfairly in the past. In other situations, unaddressed cultural differences between patient and provider have contributed to poor health outcomes.

“There is evidence in medical literature to suggest that training providers to be more culturally competent and respectful improves health care literacy in patients while also reducing medical errors and improving patient adherence, patient-provider-family communication and outcomes of care,” says Dr. Paula Sammarone Turocy, director of Duquesne’s pre-medical and health professions program.
21ST CENTURY LEARNING

The online training module breaks down complex concepts into their component parts, and content can be selected à la carte so faculty can customize their coursework. Additionally, students and faculty have access to activities, assessments and multiple forms of media to support learning.

“We want to use all of the tools at our disposal to provide students with the best education possible so that they can make a real difference in a world that is increasingly diverse and complex,” says Dr. Mary Parish, associate director of online learning and strategy.

Students work at their own pace to gain insight that later informs engagement and conversations in the classroom, while instructors monitor students’ interaction with the online material and respond to questions as they arise.

“What makes our approach unique is that it is offered online with the ability to supplement the material with in-person lectures. And it’s tailored specifically to the content of the course in which it’s implemented. This makes the content highly digestible and relevant,” says Dr. Jessica Mann, director of the Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research.

POSITIVE IMPACT

The curriculum already has inspired a conscious shift in thought for School of Pharmacy student Carlee Shifko. “When I started the course, I felt so guilty uncovering my own biases. Now I’ve learned that I didn’t deliberately do anything wrong to form them, but the best me is constantly working to accurately identify and overcome them,” she says.

And Shifko is confident that the training will guide her future work. “This profession awards me the chance to meet so many people and address so many problems. I will be a better pharmacist if I am more emotionally intelligent and culturally competent,” Shifko says.

In addition to preparing students for their careers, cultural competency skills and concepts are included in entrance examinations like the MCAT for medical school and the DAT for dental school, and they often are addressed during professional schools’ interview processes.

“Having the ability to work effectively with diverse groups is a nonnegotiable 21st century skill. Health care is shifting to a value-based format that is focused on improving quality and outcomes for patients. In short, clinicians are getting paid to know about their clients and their lives,” says Mann.

Plans are underway to expand the content across campus to improve cultural competency for students entering all fields, not just health care.

“Not only are we making our students more marketable in an ever-changing global economy, we’re also ensuring that our next generations of alumni will continue living the mission as thoughtful, culturally competent individuals who accept and celebrate diversity,” says Mann.

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Cultural Competency in Health Care

Cultural competency in health care describes the ability of systems to provide care to patients with diverse values, beliefs and behaviors, including the tailoring of health care delivery to meet patients’ social, cultural and linguistic needs. A culturally competent health care system is one that acknowledges the importance of culture, incorporates the assessment of cross-cultural relations, recognizes the potential impact of cultural differences, expands cultural knowledge, and adapts services to meet culturally unique needs.

Source: American Hospital Association
Menk, can I hang out here until my next class?”

I must have heard that question four or five times during my interview with Associate Accounting Professor Dr. Bryan Menk, who is simply known as “Menk” to his students.

While the topic of taxes typically elicits eye rolls, groans and sometimes terrified screams, Menk’s approach to teaching taxes takes a more humanistic twist. Highlighting the personal side of accounting, he takes students through each of life’s stages, teaching them how taxes change throughout a person’s lifetime—think a real-life version of the Game of Life.

“My students often come in with a preconceived notion that filing taxes is a boring and tedious process. Honestly, that’s typically how society views filing taxes and accounting in general,” says Menk. “In my class, I hope that students can see that filing taxes is actually a highly personal experience that often involves dealing with people in vulnerable positions, such as with divorce or the death of a loved one.”

To his knowledge, he is the only person in the country to teach taxes in this way. He has presented at the American Accounting Association Annual Meeting and the American Taxation Association Mid-Year Meeting. He has also won Duquesne’s Innovative Teaching Award for his approach.

Menk says tax classes are usually taught topically, with students only working on tax returns towards the middle/end of the semester. For example, in the textbook Menk uses in his class, the calculation for Social Security appears in the first few chapters. “Social Security is a complex calculation. To teach it before the students know simpler calculations more relevant to their current lives doesn’t make sense.”

In his class, students complete their first tax returns on the third day. They start with something simple and relatable—a tax form for a 22-year-old.

“The students are almost always intimidated by tax returns, but by starting with a tax return for someone around their age, we are doing relatively simple taxes with very few variables,” says Menk. “It’s like riding a bike—they have to learn to ride with training wheels before we make them ride a mountain bike.”

His class involves students completing a series of tax returns based on a fictitious version of their own lives. At the
beginning of the semester, each student selects a unique sequence of 10 numbers that is assigned to him/her for the duration of the semester. At that point, the students don’t know what the numbers mean.

Menk uses this number sequence to guide the students’ assignments throughout the semester, with each student having unique assignments each week.

As the semester progresses, Menk explains, ‘One week I might say, ‘people with even numbers, now you’re divorced’ or ‘if your number this week is a six, you just had twins.’ It helps students understand how realistic life changes determine the complexity of their taxes.”

He explains that it’s much more personal for the students to see how their family or community members’ current seasons of life impact their tax lives. “Students care more when there’s a face attached to the tax form. It’s one thing to learn about Social Security equations, but another to understand how those equations will impact their grandmother, for instance.”

Menk’s humanistic, person-centered approach to teaching taxes is also reflected in his relationships with his students. In his office, he has candy, snacks and frozen meals for students in need of nourishment between classes. He also provides his cell phone number for students who may need someone to talk to outside of class.

He has offered words of encouragement to students going through breakups and has supported students who have lost loved ones.

“I see my role as teacher, but often as a parent or mentor,” says Menk. “My class involves asking students about their futures. Depending on his or her answers, I can tell if a student is struggling, and I try to offer support.”

While some of the factors impacting students’ fictitious tax returns are controlled by Menk’s number system, others involve students visualizing their own futures in terms of careers, spouses and family goals.

“It’s an opportunity for students to open up about themselves and their ambitions,” says Menk. “I get to know my students better and understand what’s going on in their lives.”

And that relationship with his students goes far beyond their four or so years on the Bluff.

“Former students sometimes call and ask for help on their tax returns,” says Menk. “Of course, I help them. Tax laws change, life happens. Learning doesn’t stop simply because you graduate.”

“The Orientation program isn’t for me. It’s not for my chairpersons. It’s not for anyone else at the University. It’s for the new students and their families. We want to make the events about them and ensure that they want to come to them and not feel obligated.”

Born and raised in Southern California and a triplet, Smolsky’s first trip to Pittsburgh was the night before his Move-In Day three years ago. “I didn’t know much about Duquesne but three years later I’m here full time, I work for Orientation, I never leave and I love everyone here.”

“I didn’t know much about Duquesne but three years later I’m here full time, I work for Orientation, I never leave and I love everyone here.”

He took on a second major, marketing, because he already had some of the credits and he wanted to “stay busy and get some more knowledge under my belt.”

In addition to the second major, Smolsky is involved with the business fraternity Pi Sigma Epsilon and the Duquesne University Sales Team (DUST). “I think sales is an important skill everyone should have because a lot of people think of sales as the traditional knocking on doors, but it’s about selling yourself. I wanted to learn how to articulate myself better. I am a firm believer that getting a job after college is not about your degree. It’s not about your GPA. It’s about how well you can sell yourself.”

“Students care more when there’s a face attached to the tax form. It’s one thing to learn about Social Security equations, but another to understand how those equations will impact their grandmother, for instance.”

www.duq.edu/bluff-stories
When fifth-year physical therapy student Nicole Lucente traveled home for summer break last year, she made sure to pack a special pair of gloves among her things. At first glance, the gloves appear unremarkable: child-sized, stretchy, the kind parents might spend a few dollars on and replace every year. A closer look would reveal something unexpected—carefully stitched conductive thread winding around each palm and along the fingers—though the gloves’ purpose is what makes them extraordinary. Like dozens of similar pairs stored in the START-Play Hackers club’s campus workspace, these gloves were designed to work with a toy and give children with disabilities the opportunity to play in a whole new way. START-Play Hackers is an interdisciplinary student club that embraces Duquesne’s mission of serving God by serving others. Originally a small team of physical therapy, occupational therapy and biomedical engineering majors, the club now brings students from all University programs together to modify toys for children with disabilities. Lucente is the club’s president. Every other week, 20 or so students gather in Libermann Hall’s basement workshop to pull apart, re-wire and adapt ride-on cars and baby toys that react when squished or tugged. Some toys will work with the special gloves—students disrupt a toy’s internal circuit and then connect it to the glove’s conductive thread, making it possible for a child wearing the gloves to activate the toy by clapping or touching two fingers together—while others, like the cars, need safety and support modifications, too. Dr. Regina Harbourne, assistant professor of physical therapy and the club’s founding faculty member, encourages students to think through adaptations that prompt specific responses. This is valuable for children who are working on fine motor or other occupational therapy skills. “Some of the gloves have different tracks on them, so the thumb is connected to one and then the index finger is connected to another,” Lucente explains. “Then you can connect both of the wires to each track, and the toy activates when you pinch.” “It’s a good way for the students to think through how to prompt a specific movement by making the environment react,” Harbourne adds. It also puts students in a situation that requires teamwork, creativity and an openness to other perspectives in order to find viable solutions. Lucente experienced this first-hand...
when she helped adapt a ride-on car that wasn’t suitable for a child with limited mobility.

“The car had a little button on the steering wheel—that’s what you had to press to make it go. It wasn’t very steady and it went too fast,” Lucente says, describing the car’s initial problems. “So the biomedical engineers took it apart and added a big power button to the steering wheel, making it easier to see and use. When the occupational therapy and physical therapy students added different concerns—‘when the car moves forward, the kid’s going to go this way, so we need something to stop it from this direction, and then if he doesn’t have abdominal muscles, this is what’s going to happen’—we added a frame, some padding and a harness to make it safer. And like that—together—we would design things as we went. It’s different ways of thinking, coming together to find the right answers for this specific scenario.”

Eventually all of the toys are donated to families and organizations that need them most. Adaptive toys typically cost hundreds of dollars, while the club members fundraise for supplies, volunteer their time and give away finished toys for free. Thanks to community partnerships with the Western PA School for the Blind and Easter Seals, expensive adaptive toys that have broken are now routed to START-Play Hackers for free repairs, too.

That pair of gloves Lucente took home for the summer was headed to a pediatric nursing home in Boston, where she worked as an aide. There she gave them to a 4-year-old boy who was nonverbal, hoping he would clap his hands and make the attached toy dance and sing.

When that didn’t go as planned—he tried eating the gloves—she found an even more creative solution.

“It got me thinking—what if we put conductive thread through socks?” Lucente recalls.

Lucente returned to campus and, along with other club members, started sewing socks and creating conductive cardboard and aluminum foil pads. The goal was to activate the toy through foot movements.

“I took it all back home to the same boy, put the sock on, and when he rubbed his foot on the cardboard the toy started to dance. He stopped, looked at me and then reached for the pad again—he was making the toy start and stop with clear intention,” she says with a smile. “This boy was always moving, so to see him stop and focus on this, to take it all in, was pretty amazing.”

Lucente’s determination and ingenuity is indicative of the club’s approach to critical thinking and problem solving. As students learn wiring and building skills, consider projects from interdisciplinary perspectives and take designs through multiple iterations, they let go of worrying if they can do something and focus instead on finding the best solutions.

“Now we know anything is possible, and we have the skills to actually do it,” Lucente says of her time with START-Play Hackers. “So the only question left is...what should we try next?”

START-Play Hackers faculty founder, Dr. Regina Harbourne, and current club president Nicole Lucente each led advancing, prize-winning teams in the 2019-2020 John G. Rangos Sr. Prizes competition.

Lucente and classmate Delaney Batik proposed a new Collaborative Innovation workshop class that puts students on interdisciplinary teams to develop solutions for contemporary health care problems.

Harbourne collaborated with Dr. Richard Simpson, associate professor of occupational therapy, and Dr. Patrick Cooper, assistant professor of physics, to propose a mobile clinic and makerspace that supports community-based activities for students and faculty across multiple departments, bridging the gap between campus workshops and underserved populations who most need assistance.

Both projects were inspired by Lucente and Harbourne’s work with START-Play Hackers.
You might expect to hear Tony Stark instructing Jarvis or see the likes of Bumblebee, Optimus Prime or Jazz, but this isn’t a movie set in Pittsburgh—surrounded by the high-tech devices that create robotic arms—this is RE2 Robotics. What looks like the robotic arm of M3-B9 G.U.N.T.E.R., the fictional character in the television series *Lost in Space* (1965-1968), can be found in this Pittsburgh company’s museum among their other creations from the past 15 years.

And then there’s the underwater tank. With the help of Dr. Amanda Sgroi, A’10, RE2 creates robotic technologies that allow humans to safely and efficiently interact with their environments—whether it be on the ground, in the air or underwater.

**EMPHASIS ON ETHICS AND SAFETY**

“We’re really focused on improving people’s lives,” said Sgroi, who earned her bachelor’s degree in math and computer science at Duquesne. “The goal is to keep people out of harm’s way by using robotic technologies.”

The underwater robotic arms can be used to search for IEDs hidden at the bottom of various waterways, allowing divers to identify the explosives from a safe distance. The company’s robotic arms can also be used for bomb disposal and
logistically to move materials from one point to another in uncontrolled environments.

As the principal research scientist for RE2, Sgroi takes on responsibilities from managing employees to writing software code for new technologies and helping develop autonomous hardware that will eventually execute the code.

“We can take a generalized task—say moving an object from Point A to Point B—and do so autonomously in a variety of uncontrolled settings, such as on a busy street, a construction site or a manufacturing facility,” she explained. “One of the challenging and fun parts of my work is adapting the technology for such locations.”

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

An expert in machine learning and computer vision, Sgroi sees robotics automation taking big strides in the future, but not necessarily at the expense of human workers.

“In five years, we will see more collaborative robots, with people working alongside the robot,” she said. “Even in the next 50 years, I think we will still have human interaction with technology. We build robots that can be used in the world by and for humans, and that focus isn’t likely to change.”

As for concerns that automation will replace human workers, Sgroi believes that there are both ethical and safety considerations that must come into play before developing and employing technologies.

“We have to be respectful of the ethical considerations behind any technology to ensure it takes society in the right direction,” she said. “One of our biggest concerns is safety and developing technologies that humans can be around and safely deploy. For us, safety is most important.”

FROM LEARNER TO LEADER

A native of Johnstown, Pa., Sgroi became interested in math at an early age and also enjoyed playing video games, which increased her curiosity about computers. She furthered that interest once she arrived on the Bluff and met Duquesne mathematics professor Dr. Stacey Levine.

“Stacey invited me to become involved in research during my freshman year,” Sgroi said. “We did work on image processing with MRIs, which I loved. Then, she encouraged me to attend a summer program at MIT, where I studied biometrics and face recognition technology. It was a great experience because I took what I learned and applied it to help solve real-world problems. It was really rewarding.”

“It’s unusual to have a freshman as a research assistant, as most students don’t take that step until sometime in their sophomore year,” Levine said. “But Amanda was so good at taking what she learned and integrating that knowledge into the next project, and the project after that. She is bright, insightful and a quick learner.”

After leaving Duquesne, Sgroi earned her master’s and doctoral degrees at Notre Dame. She still stays in touch with Levine, and looks back at her time at Duquesne as pivotal.

“Stacey really creates a positive environment for students, especially female students,” she said. “She really built me up that first year and encouraged me to take on other opportunities both inside and outside of Duquesne. That exposure was essential to helping me develop my skills and get into graduate school.”

While the robotics field is primarily male-dominated, Sgroi advises women in the sector to look for female mentors, and then eventually become one themselves.

“Stacey is a fantastic mentor. She gave me the right materials and challenges to develop my skills,” she said. “I look forward to sharing what I’ve learned with women who enter the field.”
A fun Duquesne tradition: President Gormley helped kick off the spring semester by hosting Donuts with the President at Hogan Dining Center and the Union. A lot of donuts and coffee were consumed!

Anthony Lucas, B’10, Bella Guzzi, E’20, and Lisa Harris, E’89 pause for a photo while enjoying a fall Networking event at the Red Ring. The event is held twice a year and is a collaborative effort between the Office of Alumni Engagement and Career Development.

Bill Generett, Jr., Vice President of Community Engagement, and Mary Ellen Solomon, Chief of Staff to the President, along with a team from the Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research (CETR) including Dr. Jessica Mann and Luci-Jo DiMaggio, met with Uptown residents to discuss how the University can continue to be a positive anchor institution in the community and how residents can continue to be involved with the University’s community work.

I’m so proud of the program and proud of the people who come through it and participate. To get to meet all those people is really an amazing experience.

Lalah Ali, PharmD on her involvement in the Pre-orientation Program for new Duquesne students

Brian Caporale (BA’98) and family recently visited Rocky Mountain National Park and made sure to take the Duquesne University Magazine along with them.
A group of seven TAU DELTA TAU SORORITY SISTERS joined together in September 2019 at Lake Latonka in Mercer, Pa. Shown are: front, Vicki Stefanov Gordon, N’75, and MaryAnn Evans McGuirk, BA’74; back, Phyllis Smith, N until ’74, Joanne Naso, P’75, Debbie Kranik Smith, BA’75, Rose Cafardi Stitt, BS’74, and Kathy Kirk Scott, BA’75.

As a service for veterans, Duquesne offers its Veterans Book Club where student veterans and the campus community can gather to discuss books related to military and veteran life. Members recently hosted therapy horses from the Armed Forces Equestrian Center and discussed the book "Vets and Pets."

The Duquesne spirit for service was evident on Dec. 14 at the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies. Alumni and friends volunteered to lay wreaths on the graves of veterans as part of the national Wreaths Across America program. Pictured is Rhonda Taliaferro, E’78.

For much of the summer, a sacred spot on Duquesne’s campus was accessible only to those carrying tools. The Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto received an overdue renovation thanks to a gift from Dennis Brenckle ’67, a brother in the storied Alpha Epsilon fraternity and retired president of PNC Bank’s Central Pennsylvania Region. The gift honors Brenckle’s mother, Helen, who attended Duquesne for two summers in the 1960s to earn a teaching certificate. While Dennis attended Duquesne, his father passed away. Helen became a teacher at St. Malachy’s Catholic School in Kennedy Township, near Pittsburgh.

Times grew more difficult. But when Denny was in Vietnam in 1968, he was able to reach her by phone—a miracle in those conditions—on December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, to tell her he would serve his tour in a relatively safe place.

Helen’s devotion to the blessed mother—daily attending Mass and praying the Rosary—sustained her during a difficult time. Dennis’s gift now honors his mother’s courage and faith.

Her example stayed with him. Dennis has supported his alma mater in many ways, with the Grotto project being but the latest example. In addition, his son, niece, nephew, and nephew’s wife all attended Duquesne.

On the Sunday of Homecoming weekend, what would have been Helen’s 104th birthday, family and friends gathered to cut the ribbon on the renovation. A plaque now installed near the Grotto reads, “Dedicated to the memory of Helen Dorothy Spock Brenckle 1915-1998. ‘And Mary said, my soul glorifies the Lord.’ Luke 146:55.”
The Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Duquesne University hosted its annual MLK Day Luncheon with keynote speaker Dr. Alvin B. Tillery, Jr. of Northwestern University.

The Alumni Association and Chapters host family-friendly events, social activities and networking receptions throughout the year. Join us next time! Learn what is coming up by checking out the Alumni Calendar on pages 64 and 65 or by visiting www.myduquesne.duq.edu.

Want to be more involved? Join us at our next event or follow us on social media! Share your Duquesne alumni photos with #duqalumni.

Duquesne started as a school for poor, immigrant families. Our mission is rooted in serving the underserved.

Dr. Darius Prier, associate dean in the School of Education, speaking on the core mission of both the University and Project Hope, a new initiative in Duquesne University’s School of Education that will advocate for equity and justice in education for homeless youth and young adults

Many Alumni in the Washington, D.C. area gathered at the residence of Irish ambassador for a reception in October. Pictured are J. Ronald Wolfe, A’54, Pat Doherty, A’61, His Excellency Daniel Mulhall, and University President Ken Gormley.

Winter Commencement took place in December, providing a time to both reflect on the past and look forward to the opportunities ahead.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Duquesne University hosted its annual MLK Day Luncheon with keynote speaker Dr. Alvin B. Tillery, Jr. of Northwestern University.

Bella Guzzi, early childhood education, PreK-4 major on what it was like teaching reading skills to young children at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh’s Hill District branch

It wasn’t something that you’re just popping in and then leaving. It was a real authentic relationship.

Laura Boni, PharmD'13, left, and friend Brittany Pfoutz, visited the top of Mount Rigi located in the Swiss Alps (Switzerland).
Congratulations to our newest class of 2019 graduates! We are so very proud. Welcome to the DU Alumni family!

Celebrating 32 years of service! Duquesne Dining held a retirement party on Monday for Debbie Byerly to celebrate her last day. Congratulations and thank you Miss Debbie, we will miss you!

#LivingtheDuqMission

The Mary Pappert School of Music Presents Best of the Bluff

Tuesday, April 7, 2020

Duquesne University presents “Best of the Bluff,” a two-year chamber music series resulting from a recent audience poll. Since 2002, Artistic Director David Allen Wehr, holder of the Jack W. Geltz Distinguished Piano Chair at Duquesne’s Mary Pappert School of Music, has built each season around a specific composer or national style. Last September, Bluff audiences were presented with a list of the hundreds of musical works performed on the series. The results will inform the next two seasons of Best of the Bluff, bringing back many of the audience’s favorite pieces and performers, along with some surprises.

For more information on this, and other School of Music events, visit duq.edu/music/events.
FROM NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR A PROFESSOR TO RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS AIMED AT IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS, THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING HAPPENING ON THE BLUFF.

SISTER ROSEMARY DONNELLY HONORED BY STATE

Sister Rosemary Donley, S.C., is one of eight women honored by Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf and first lady Frances Wolf as the 2019 Distinguished Daughters of Pennsylvania. Donley and the other honorees were recognized by the Wolfs at a special luncheon on Sept. 25 at the governor's residence.

"I am humbled and honored to be named a Distinguished Daughter of Pennsylvania," Donley said. "I thank Governor and Mrs. Wolf, my sponsors Duquesne President Ken Gormley, Nursing Dean Mary Ellen Glasgow and UPMC for You President John Lovelace, my family and the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill who support me in seeking justice for vulnerable people."

Since 1949, the Distinguished Daughters of Pennsylvania has recognized women who have demonstrated notable service through a professional career and/or volunteering. The organization's mission is to recommend outstanding women to the governor to be honored for their extraordinary contributions to Pennsylvania.

HOLISTIC LEGAL REPRESENTATION

A national leadership program from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has given a team of Duquesne and University of Pittsburgh professors the chance to see if their innovative approach to holistic legal representation can improve the juvenile indigent defense representation and, in turn, young people's life outcomes.

The Duquesne University School of Law's Tiffany Sizemore and the School of Education's Dr. Tammy Hughes, along with Dr. Jeffrey Shook at Pitt, are members of "Team Pittsburgh" in the newest cohort of the Interdisciplinary Research Leaders (IRL) program. Their research project is titled "Improving Juvenile Indigent Defense and Health through Holistic Representation."

WORLD PEACE THROUGH AGING

The world is experiencing an era of unprecedented demographic change. Due to major reductions in fertility levels and significant increases in life expectancies over the course of the last century—and especially since the end of the Second World War—almost all countries are growing older. By 2073, the United Nations predicts that there will be more people ages 65 and older in the world than under 15, which will be a historical first.

Analysts and policymakers frequently criticize population aging's domestic costs, especially likely slowing economic growth and massive new public expenditures for elderly welfare. But aging has a major yet largely unrecognized international benefit: It significantly increases the likelihood of international peace, according to a new study published in International Security co-authored by Dr. Mark Haas at Duquesne University.
In the fall, the Center for Career Development added a new dimension to its Career Discovery series. Termed Career Road Trips, the new programming seeks to introduce Duquesne students to competitive opportunities in neighboring cities while also leveraging our incredible alumni networks in those cities. For more information, visit: https://www.myduquesne.duq.edu/roadtrips.

Sports marketing students had a daylong visit with the NHL Columbus Blue Jackets, Columbus, Ohio, hosted by Greg Kirstein, L’82. The day included tours of Nationwide Arena and visits with alums Joe Giovannelli, B’15, and Devon Wood, B’15.


Plans for upcoming trips include company visits in Cleveland, Ohio, Buffalo, N.Y., and Harrisburg, Pa. We would be delighted to speak to alumni interested in hosting site visits in those cities or locations within a 250-mile distance of the ‘Burgh. Please contact us at CareerRoadTrip@duq.edu.
Alumni Updates

1950s
Rose Ferraro, GE’56, celebrated her 100th birthday in January 2020. As a widow and mother who worked full time, she attended classes in the School of Education on evenings and weekends. She was thankful for Duquesne’s academic excellence and welcoming atmosphere for her as a registered nurse and recalls having lunch at JJ’s, a luncheonette on campus, that often operated on a “trust system” when patrons did not have enough to pay for their bill.

Ann (Biase) Abbruzzese, E’59, is newly affiliated with Berkshire Hathaway Drysdale Real Estate in the Sonoma County/San Francisco Bay Area.

1960s
Robert S. Barker, A’63, L’66, GA’74, is the author of El Precedente y su significado en el Derecho Constitucional de los Estados Unidos. The book has been published in Buenos Aires by Ediciones Olejnik.

Dr. Bert Ghezzi, A’63, is the author of Saints at Heart, How Fault-Filled, Problem-Prone, Imperfect People Like Us Can Be Holy (Paraclete Press). He outlines the lives of Saints and “presents the core message of the person’s life and highlights an important spiritual path that people like you and me can follow today.”

Carol (Mamula) Morgan, A’63, retired writer for the federal government and sculptor and painter, is the author of the article, “Windows of Hope,” published in Artists’ Magazine. It is her memoir about working with the African American artist, Columbus Pearl Knox, 40 years ago in the Mine Safety and Health Administration. She also recently displayed three sculptures in the annual Glen Echo Labor Day show and sale, displayed seven photographs at the National Press Club, and showed her subway drawings at the annual ART All Night held in the Tenleytown area of Washington, D.C.

Mark McConville, A’68, GA’74, is the author of Failure to Launch, Why Your Twentysomething Hasn’t Grown Up...and What to Do About It (G. P. Putnam’s Sons). He is a clinical psychologist in private practice specializing in adult, adolescent, emerging adult and family psychology and a senior faculty member at the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland.

1970s
Jonathan Klemens, S’70, P’76, GB’07, is currently an author, historical writer, and lecturer.

Jim Anderson, M’73, has been nominated for a Grammy for his latest recording, Symphonic Dances.

David S. Pollock, L’74, founding partner of Pollock Begg Komar Glasser & Vertz LLC, was recognized in The Best Lawyers in America 2020 in the area of family law.

Chaplain Rodican Rose (McNally) Bonn, M’78, has accepted the position of director of pastoral care for St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care in Milwaukee, Wis.

Rosemary Martinelli, A’79, GA’88, has joined the full-time faculty of The Pennsylvania State University, at the Greater Allegheny campus. She teaches in the communications and business programs and serves as the faculty advisor to the campus newspaper.

1980s
Carol A. Behers, A’80, L’83, of Raphael, Ramsden & Behers was reappointed as chair of the Allegheny County Bar Foundation’s Lawyers Fund. She was also recognized as a 2019 Super Lawyer in the practice of family law, named one of the top 50 attorneys in Pittsburgh and named by The Best Lawyers in America in the practice area of family law.

Jane (Rothman) Ronis, A’80, has created a successful catering company in Long Island, N.Y., following a lengthy career in theatrical stage management and raising three children.

Deirdre (Coram) Younger, P’81, retired from the University of Maryland College Park Health Center in 2018 after 25 years of service in pharmacy and administration.

Lawrence J. Casey, L’83, of the Boston law firm David Malm, was selected for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America 2020 for litigation-labor and employment.

Dr. Harriet L. Schwartz, A’87, is the author of Connected Teaching: Relationship, Power, and Mattering in Higher Education (Stylus Publishing). She was editor of The DUQUESNE DUKE from 1985-87 and is now a professor of psychology and counseling at Carlow University.

Keith Richardson, B’88, deputy chief financial officer at the District of Columbia’s Office of Tax and Revenue, was elected the Multistate Tax Commission’s new chair. He is the first African American male executive elected to this position and will serve a two-year term.

1990s
William Caye, A’90, L’93, was appointed to the Board of Trustees at Brookline Teen Outreach and has also been elected as president of the Diocese of Pittsburgh Serra Club.

Olga (Diaz) Hugelmeyer, A’90, is currently the superintendent of schools for Elizabeth Public Schools, N.J.

Gary Kelly, L’90, has joined Cozen O’Connor’s Labor & Employment Department as of counsel. His corporate experience ranges “from product-related litigation to multi-state franchising disputes” and he has worked for General Nutrition Corp. and U.S. Steel.

Craig Stevenson, B’90, GB’96, GB’96, has co-authored The Power of Existing Buildings: Save Money,

In MEMORIAM
William F. Smith, Jr., B’60, passed away Oct. 27, 2019 at age 84.
A Marine Corps veteran, Smith began his career in the beverage industry with Pittsburgh Brewing Company in 1957 while still a student at Duquesne. After holding management positions with National Brewing and Miller Brewing, he returned to Pittsburgh in 1975, appearing in the company’s billboards and commercials as he resurrected the iconic Iron City brand, in part by building partnerships with the city’s highly successful sports teams. He later served as president and CEO of Pabst Brewing Company and co-founded MTX Inc. before retiring in 1989. Smith was inducted into the Century Club of Distinguished Duquesne Alumni in 1981.
Francis Feld, N’93, recently (Wise King Media). The Drama for his orchestra score, Best Musical Score for an Audio Relations.

Jared DePasquale, M’93, recently won the ATC Seneca Award for Best Musical Score for an Audio Drama for his orchestra score, The Adventum, Volume 1 (produced by Wise King Media).

Francis Feld, N’93, recently completed a medical mission trip to Antigua, Guatemala with Operation Walk Pittsburgh. The surgical teams performed 57 hip and knee replacement surgeries in four days. He is a certified registered nurse anesthetist at UPMC Passavant Hospital and this is his second trip with Operation Walk.

Dr. Philip A. Fabrizio, GHS’94, recently received the Innovative Teacher of the Year award from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine Georgia. He is an associate professor and currently teaches physical therapy students clinical anatomy, clinical exercise science and wellness and clinical neuroscience.

Daniel Pepper, L’94, has joined the law firm of Baker & Hostetler, LLP as a partner in the Privacy and Data Protection group.

Dean DeFilippo, B’95, acquired a successful accounting practice in 2018 and the Principal of Accounting & Tax Group in Rootstown, Ohio. He is also a certified financial planner and an enrolled agent, licensed with the IRS.

Chip Dominick, B’96, is the vocalist and guitarist of the Pittsburgh-based band, Chip & The Charge Ups. He recently released the final version of its Pittsburgh-themed Christmas song, “Black and Gold Christmas.” The video received 20,000 views on Facebook in its first week and the group performed the song in the WPXI Holiday Parade in downtown Pittsburgh.

Ryan Gavatorta, A’97, GB’07, was promoted to assistant director of Athletic Communications at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) in March 2019.

Laura L. Reinhart, L’97, has joined Cozen O’Connor’s Commercial Litigation Department as counsel. Her litigation background includes overseeing product liability lawsuits, labor and employment disputes, healthcare litigation and regulatory compliance matters, and “serving the heavily regulated rail industry.”

Kara O’Connor, A’98, A’99, serves on the Board of Directors for Community Living and Support Services (CLASS).

Michael Grandinetti, B’99, master illusionist, performed shows recently with the Acadiana Symphony Orchestra and at the Skagit Casino Resort, which earned standing ovations and amazing reviews.

2000s

A.J. Rick Vaccarelli, GE’00, is the author of They Never Had a Chance to Spit (www.neverhadachancetospit.com), which focuses on what happened to losing vice presidential candidates in American history.

Michael Steiner, GA’02, has been appointed executive director of BEST Robotics, a STEM education nonprofit. He has more than 20 years of experience “as an executive promoting inclusion and access to education within multiple industries across several continents.”

Matthew Hrutkay, HS’05, GE’05, accepted a new position as assistant athletic director at Park View High School in Sterling, Va. after teaching health and physical education and coaching football and girls’ basketball for 14 years.

Fergus Laughland, GA’05, GA’17, is seeking a new career path after teaching philosophy and ethics for 15 years.


Ryan Koleno, GP’07, was promoted to Eastern Regional Medical Science Liaison Team Director for GSK Oncology.

Jon Eldridge, GB’08, was recently promoted to senior manager of sales and marketing for American Honda Finance Corporation.

Paris Long, A’09, GE’11, is currently a school counselor in the Franklin Regional School District.

Dani Holzmann Mickelson, HS’09, GHS’10, was promoted to Area Rehab Director for Infinity Rehab.

Joseph R. Williams, L’09, partner at Pollock Begg Komar Glasser & Vertz LLC, was recognized in The Best Lawyers in America 2020 in the area of family law.
2010s

David Libby, GA’10, was recently promoted to executive vice president and chief financial officer at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Boston. He has been with the organization since 2011, holding past roles of controller, director of finance, and associate vice president of finance.

Juan Mata, GE’10, was appointed as the new headmaster at Shelton Academy in Miami, Fla.

Robert Stott, A’10, was recently hired by Nationwide Marketing Group as its corporate communications manager.

Anthony Babusci, GE’11, is currently the principal of Ryan Gloyer Middle School, in the Seneca Valley School District, Butler County, Pa.

Jona DeChellis, A’13, has been working for the Pittsburgh Pirates since 2013.

Caitlin Young, A’15, Marsha Mayhak, A’15, and Amy Dick, GA’18, started Cross-Stitch Theater Company in Pittsburgh “to provide more leadership opportunities for women in theater and to celebrate women’s voices through the plays we produce.”

Jesse Martin, ST’17, passed the U.S. Army Ranger School and now leads paratroopers on a day-to-day basis.

Joseph D. Baublitz, GB’18, L’18, has joined the Business, Real Estate, and School Law Practice Groups at Stock and Leader, Attorneys at Law.

Anthony Bottino, B’18, has opened an independent insurance agency called Cedarwood Insurance Options (CIO). The company recently celebrated one year in business.

Kerry Green, GA’19, is beginning her Ph.D. program in history at Brandeis University.

In MEMORIAM

The Hon. Donald E. Ziegler, A’58, died Sept. 21, 2019 at his home in Upper St. Clair, Pa. at age 82. After earning his undergraduate degree, Ziegler studied law at Georgetown University, where he observed Supreme Court arguments after classes. Ziegler served five years as a judge of the Allegheny County Common Pleas Court before being nominated to the U.S. District Court for Western Pennsylvania by President Jimmy Carter in 1978. While on the federal bench, he presided over numerous high-profile cases, including the 1995 corporate fraud case involving the drugstore chain Phar-Mor. He was a mentor to many young attorneys who clerked for him, including Duquesne University President Ken Gormley. Ziegler became a charter member of the Century Club of Distinguished Duquesne Alumni in 1978.

Hadley Kathryn, daughter of Frank R. Kozleuchar, Jr., B’99, GB’11, and Megan Kozleuchar.

Lillian Mary, daughter of Katie (Harberman) Koleno, E’06, and Ryan Koleno, GP’07.

Mia Lynne, daughter of Meghan (Knopp) Budzyn, HS’07, GHS’08, and Matthew Budzyn, GP’09.

Noah Liam Edwards, son of Kevin Thomas Edwards, B’07, B’07, and Rocio Lucia Gonzales Silva.

Maria Margaret, daughter of Roxanne Avila Packer, GM’07, and Andrew Packer.

Callie Leigh, daughter of Karla Caruso, GP’09, and Christopher Caruso, HS’07, N’09.

Keaton Joshua, son of Sarah (Kulik) Wrona, GP’10, and Joshua Wrona, GP’10.

Adelyn Rose, daughter of Matthew Pfeuffer, M’13, and Erika Pfeuffer.

In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we list the following alumni and friends who recently passed away. This list is provided through Duquesne’s Advancement Services office and includes deaths reported to us between June 10, 2019 and November 10, 2019. If you have information about an alumnus or friend who is not listed, please contact the Office of Alumni Engagement at 412.396.6209 or alumnionline@duq.edu.

George Lalikos, B’47
Joseph C. Doherty, A’48
Eileen J. Fogarty, A’48
Dominick Corea, B’69, GB’60
Lucille P. Muscante-Karaffa, P’49
Stanley J. Bietz, B’50
Paul J. Dougherty, E’50
Gennaro P. Maglione, S’50
Helen G. Puccetti, M’50
Michael G. Socash, E’50
Edward J. Waddell, B’50
Booker T. Williams, E’50
Dorothy A. Miller, A’51
Sr. M. Gregory Schessler, OSF, E’51
Annabell Wrbican, M’51, GM’71
John J. Burik, B’52
Richard F. Calligan, P’52
Anita Conte Eble, A’52
Patrick J. Fleming, B’52
Thomas S. Joseph, B’52
Joanne F. Linzey, E’52
William P. Ashton, P’53
Edward P. Dacko, M’53, GM’60
James R. Duffy, A’53, L’62
Donald G. Steele, B’53
Paul F. Smerkanich, P’54
Richard J. Wagner, B’54
Michael Wengryn, B’54
Rita (Knoll) Barnhart, M’55
Frances M. Brucker, A’55
Mary Jane Gemmell, E’55, GE’76
Dr. George A. Jocums, A’55, GA’62
Beverly G. O’Connor, N’55
Herbert Rohall, A’56
Herbert R. Callahan, B’56
Dr. John Ruggiero passed away Nov. 25, 2019 in Glen Allen, Va. He was 88. Ruggiero became dean of Duquesne's School of Pharmacy in 1961 and served in the position until 1970. Under Ruggiero’s leadership, the School transitioned to the five-year Bachelor of Pharmacy curriculum required for national accreditation, introduced continuing education programs for alumni, and launched a doctoral offering in pharmaceutical research. Faculty and staff count more than doubled during his tenure, and the school moved from scattered facilities across campus to a new centralized home in Mellon Hall.

In MEMORIAM

Dr. John Ruggiero passed away Nov. 25, 2019 in Glen Allen, Va. He was 88. Ruggiero became dean of Duquesne's School of Pharmacy in 1961 and served in the position until 1970. Under Ruggiero's leadership, the School transitioned to the five-year Bachelor of Pharmacy curriculum required for national accreditation, introduced continuing education programs for alumni, and launched a doctoral offering in pharmaceutical research. Faculty and staff count more than doubled during his tenure, and the school moved from scattered facilities across campus to a new centralized home in Mellon Hall.
Event Calendar

March 25, 2020
Pittsburgh Law Alumni
Spring Reception/PILA Live
Auction
5:00 p.m.
Union Ballroom
Don't miss the 2020 Duquesne Law Alumni Pittsburgh Spring Reception, featuring a live and silent auction supporting the Public Interest Law Association (PILA). Network with law alumni and faculty while supporting PILA fellowships! Free for law alumni. Email lawalumni@duq.edu to register.

March 25, 2020
Alumni and Friends
Reception in Dallas, TX
Join Vice President of University Advancement John Plante, alumni and friends for an evening of great food and company in Dallas. More information: www.myduquesne.duq.edu

March 29, 2020
Children’s Liturgy and Easter
Egg Hunt
1:00 p.m.
Union Ballroom
Enjoy kid-friendly fare, delight in children’s entertainment and hunt for Easter eggs!
Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu

April 2020
Charlotte Alumni and
Friends Reception
John Plante, Vice President for University Advancement, cordially invites you to join him for a cocktails and hors d’oeuvres alumni reception.
Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu

April 2020
Atlanta Alumni and Friends
Reception
John Plante, Vice President for University Advancement, cordially invites you to join him for a cocktails and hors d’oeuvres alumni reception.
Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu

April 7, 2020
Baltimore Alumni and
Friends Reception
John Plante, Vice President for University Advancement, cordially invites you to join him for a cocktails and hors d’oeuvres alumni reception.
Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu

April 15, 2020
Alumni and Friends
Reception in Denver, CO
Learn about what is happening at Duquesne with a University update from Vice President of University Advancement, John Plante, while enjoying appetizers and drinks with alumni and friends in the Denver area. Please RSVP by April 8, 2020 to www.myduquesne.duq.edu.

April 18, 2020
Community Garden
Clean-Up in the Hill District
Alumni, friends, and family are invited to live the University Mission as we help to beautify one of the many community gardens in the City of Pittsburgh. Alumni will work to clean up and prepare the garden located on the corner of Centre and Herron Avenues in the Hill District.
For more information and to register go to: www.myduquesne.duq.edu.

April 22, 2020
Duquesne Law Alumni
Association Annual Young Alumni Event
The Rivers Club, Pittsburgh, PA
5:00 p.m.
Here’s an opportunity for class years 2010-2019 to meet accomplished alumni face to face! Join us for a speed networking event with distinguished alumni.
This event offers a great way to make connections and expand your network.
RSVP: lawalumni@duq.edu

April 24, 2020
Alumni Wine School with
Fr. Sawicki
Union Ballroom
Tickets are limited to six per purchaser. Registration will open March 18 at noon.
Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu or 412.396.6209

April 28, 2020
Ethics in Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions
Africa Room
8:30 a.m. -11:00 a.m.
As part of The Cyril H. Wecht Institute's Ethics for Breakfast CLE series, this seminar will feature an interdisciplinary panel of criminal justice experts exploring ethical issues in various case studies. To register, contact Trudi Mariani at wechtinstitute@duq.edu.

Sept. 25-27
Looking forward to seeing your fellow classmates back on the Bluff? We are too – but you need YOUR HELP! We’re looking for alumni volunteers who are willing to call or email their peers to encourage participation, or who are interested in serving as a Social Media Ambassador. Register at www.myduquesne.duq.edu to get involved.
A great Duke is always learning or teaching, and President Gormley is no exception as Sophia M. Graf gives him a quick lesson on the harp during a San Diego alumni event hosted by Cheryl Lee L’85. A busy year for gatherings, the president met with Dukes at the Irish Embassy in Washington, D.C. and in New York, Indianapolis, Chicago, Philadelphia, and throughout the Pittsburgh region.

To find an event near you, visit https://www.duq.edu/alumni/events.

May 12, 2020
Pittsburgh Alumni Happy Hour
5:00-7:00 p.m.
The Biergarden at Hotel Monaco Join your fellow Duquesne alumni for a fun night! We’ll bring the great company and conversations—drinks and food are on you! Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu Contact: 412.396.6209 or alumnionline@duq.edu

June 2-3, 2020
When HATE Hits HOME: Investigating, Prosecuting and Preventing Domestic Terrorism
Power Center Ballroom
The Institute’s 19th Annual Forensic Science and Law Symposium, this two-day program will address a number of prominent cases of domestic terror in the U.S. over the past few decades, including the investigative methodologies and prosecutorial strategies used to bring the perpetrators to justice. For more information or to register, contact Trudi Mariani at wechtinstitute@duq.edu.

June 12, 2020
Alumni Ancestry Exploration
Join us on the Bluff to discover how you can explore your own ancestry. This will be a working session for intermediate levels on how to continue your search online. Limited space is available. More details available soon at www.myduquesne.duq.edu or 412.396.6209.

June 20, 2020
Dukes From the Last Decade Celebration
8:00 p.m.
Energy Innovation Center
An evening to celebrate the accomplishments of young alumni, this event will feature our inaugural Dukes from the last decade class. All alumni are invited to join us for hors d’oeuvres, drinks and dancing. Register at www.myduquesne.duq.edu/lastdecade

June 26, 2020
Alumni Mixology Class
Raise a glass to summer! Join us on campus for a fun evening learning the art and science of mixing your own drinks. Limited space is available. More details available soon at www.myduquesne.duq.edu or 412.396.6209.

July 2020
Alumni Day at Pittsburgh Topgolf
Bring your family and friends for a fun afternoon of golf and an all-American buffet at Topgolf in Bridgeville.
Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu
Contact: 412.396.6209 or alumnionline@duq.edu

Summer 2020
Washington, DC Chapter Event
Nationals Baseball Game
Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu

Summer/Fall 2020
Alumni Paint Night
Tap into your creative side at a Paint Night on the Bluff by Art by Lena. Alumni will paint an image of campus. Limited space is available. More details available soon at www.myduquesne.duq.edu or 412.396.6209.

Sept. 11, 2020
Duquesne Night at the Pirates
6-7:30 p.m., Reception at the Rooftop (inside PNC Park)
7:05 p.m., Game Time
Join alumni, families, and friends for the Duquesne University Night at the Pittsburgh Pirates. Tickets available while supplies last at www.myduquesne.duq.edu.

September 27, 2020
Alumni support the University in numerous ways as volunteers serving on career panels and school boards, as mentors, and in many other capacities. Alumni who have volunteered during 2020 will be recognized during our Homecoming Weekend Brunch. We hope our volunteers will hold the date and plan to join us.

New—Alumni Webinars and Online Events
Just because you’ve graduated doesn’t mean you’ve stopped learning. We’re excited to announce the launch of a new webinar program for alumni to learn from thought leaders on career, professional development, and lifelong learning topics. Visit duq.edu/alumnianwebinars for more information and to register for upcoming online events.

Alumni Book Club
We’ve created a virtual book club for Duquesne alumni covering professional development and personal growth topics related to careers and leadership. The book club connects through a private forum where alumni can discuss the current book and network with each other. Joining the book club is completely free; you just have to get a copy of the book to enjoy. The group reads a book every two months so you’ll have plenty of time for each book. To join, visit www.pbc.guru/duquesne.

Legacy Scholarships
Online applications for the 2020–2021 academic year are available Jan. 1, 2020 – June 1, 2020. To help alumni pass on the legacy of a Duquesne education to their children and grandchildren, the Alumni Association and many generous donors have established two endowed scholarship programs—one is need-based and the other merit-based.
Details: www.myduquesne.duq.edu
Stay connected with your alma mater!

If you aren’t receiving news and event invites from the Alumni Association in your inbox, we may not have a valid email address on file for you.

By updating your address, you’ll receive:

- The monthly alumni e-newsletter, Bulletin from the Bluff
- Invitations to participate in events in your area
- Access to online programming available to all alumni regardless of location

Stay connected with the University and your classmates by updating your email address at duq.edu/alumniupdate or by emailing the Office of Alumni Engagement at alumnionline@duq.edu.

You can also add a Class Note or updated employment information. We look forward to connecting with you!