A few days ago, when I casually asked a colleague at Duquesne how things were going, he joked: “I’m living the dream!” It’s a familiar response. But when I heard it this time, I thought, some dreams are being lived. Our founders had big dreams about how they could change the lives of recent immigrants and ordinary people who had settled in this city, using education as the key to that transformative work. Today, more than 143 years later, their dreams continue to be lived out each day, and we’re extraordinarily proud of that legacy.

Generations of Duquesne students have been nurtured here and have ventured forth to make a meaningful difference in the world. You’ll find their stories woven throughout this magazine—starting with incoming Spirit of Community Scholars like student Nicholas Tarabokia. Before he enrolled at Duquesne, Tarabokia beat childhood leukemia. He then founded his own nonprofit, Cancer Stinks, which distributes care packages to sick children. Nicholas says that he’s “learned that life is short,” that he was given a second chance—and that he needed to give back.

Speaking of second chances, you’ll also read about Victoria Deardorff, a young entrepreneur who earned her neuroscience degree and then shifted gears. She went on to launch a highly successful online event-planning business—thanks to a master’s degree in integrated marketing and communications from Duquesne.

We’re helping people like Nicholas and Victoria pursue their passions as we launch our Bridges Common Learning Experience, also described in these pages. It’s an innovative general education curriculum that allows students to learn by doing—whether in the lab, through study abroad or by working in the community.

When I think about pursuing passions and living dreams, I can’t help but think of my mom, Elena Furia Gormley, who would have celebrated her 100th birthday this year. I’ve written a little piece about her in this issue that I hope you’ll enjoy. Mom was devoted to her students—she was a beloved teacher for more than 20 years at St. Anselm’s, the Catholic grade school in Swissvale that my brothers, sisters and I attended. Mom left a legacy at St. A’s that endures to this day—and the same is true of numerous other gifted teachers, many of whom were trained at Duquesne, who have left a lasting imprint on our lives.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Duquesne University Magazine, and that you’ll be inspired by the stories of men and women who continue to advance our historic Spiritan mission. They’re living our founders’ dream, each day. I can’t wait to see the lasting impact that new generations of talented Duquesne graduates will have upon the world.

Sincerely,

Ken Gormley
Duquesne University President
John Roebling, one of the world’s best-known civil engineers, understood the importance of making connections. A visionary, he saw Pittsburgh’s many rivers as a challenge to progress and built some of the city’s most essential bridges, including the Smithfield Street Bridge in 1845. It was an incredible technical accomplishment. Building bridges requires a mix of design, engineering, planning and manufacturing that was unusual at that time. The ingenuity and especially teamwork between so many disciplines required Roebling to coordinate pieces that helped make Pittsburgh the “City of Bridges” it is today.

Like Roebling, Dr. Darlene Weaver also relies on mixing and matching disciplines and bringing disparate teams together. Her Smithfield Street Bridge? Revitalizing Duquesne’s general education curriculum to re-imagine the student experience and ensure 21st-century success, a pillar of the University’s 2018 strategic plan.

BRIDGES FOR BIGGER GOALS

Like building bridges, making changes to any university’s general education curriculum is not an easy task. It requires a bold vision that offers students the knowledge and skills they need, while balancing the disciplines required to reach those goals. Determining this balance is often a contentious process among faculty at many universities. Weaver, Duquesne’s associate provost for academic affairs, took a different approach, eschewing the executive committees used by many institutions and well, leaving it up to the village.

“We wanted to create a greater sense of ownership in the curriculum among the entire campus community…”

“General education redesigns often become battlegrounds as faculty argue for their classes to be included,” Weaver explained. “We wanted to create a greater sense of ownership in the curriculum among the entire campus community, and that couldn’t be accomplished by relying on a single committee.”
Duquesne students returning to campus for the fall semester celebrate the launch of the Bridges Common Learning Experience.

“IT TOOK ME BEYOND THE CLASSROOM TO FIND EXPERIENCES THAT MET MY INTERESTS AND FURTHERED MY CAREER GOALS.”

So the University created Design Day, a creative design competition where faculty, staff and students could draft course ideas, plan activities and determine learning outcomes. More than 200 members of the University community participated in the revision process. Once completed, Weaver and her team had dozens of ideas to consider as part of the redesign.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MINDSET
“I was so pleased at how our University community banded together to be part of this effort. The process was remarkably collegial,” said Duquesne University President Ken Gormley. “Design Day provided a lot of opportunity for new ideas. It also included everybody in the discussion. Now, we have integrated many of these great ideas into the new curriculum. It was a wonderful University-wide collaboration.”

What came out of the design competition was the Bridges Common Learning Experience, which launched this fall. The name refers to Pittsburgh’s more than 400 bridges—appropriate, as the curriculum encourages students to think across disciplinary perspectives, connect ideas and reach beyond what’s familiar to them. The ultimate goal of Bridges is to offer a foundation for post-graduation success by providing students with skills that are in demand among employers.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTION AND IMPACT
Bridges includes an emphasis on a flexible curriculum that also allows more opportunities for experiential learning. The collaborative nature of the process also brought students into the discussion, allowing the University to address some of their concerns.

“Some students said that previous general education requirements were arbitrary,” Weaver said. “So we emphasized creating a clear rationale for courses so students would better understand how these classes expand their horizons while meeting their goals.”

Students taking a social science or history class, for example, may gain a better understanding of the culture where they may be teaching, starting a business or designing a product by taking that course, Weaver said.

NEW AND CLEARER VANTAGE POINT
“We placed an emphasis on highlighting the skills and competencies these courses can bring to help students as they pursue their careers,” Weaver said. Bridges also focuses on creating more practical learning opportunities, which can move a student to a new and clearer vantage point, both in terms of what they are studying and the larger world.

“We are taking a more entrepreneurial approach when it comes to experiential learning,” said Duquesne University Provost David Dausey, who redesigned a general education curriculum at a previous institution before joining Duquesne. “Students want to learn by doing, whether that’s in a lab, through an internship, a study abroad program or working in the community. We want to make that happen for them.”

Recent Duquesne graduate Alex Wolfe, who received a prestigious U.S. Fulbright Award this year, exemplifies this approach. While studying economics, Wolfe worked as a tutor for Duquesne’s Spirtan Division where he helped students on the verge of their college careers improve their English. Interested in China’s economy, he then initiated an opportunity where he could study and teach English in Shanghai as part of his 2019 internship.

“Duquesne gave me the confidence and knowledge to take the initiative and chart my own course,” Wolfe said. “It took me beyond the classroom to find experiences that met my interests and furthered my career goals.”

Many Duquesne alumni have been helpful in providing these hands-on experiences to students. Weaver said, and the University hopes to create more opportunities working with alumni in the future.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
In addition to experiential learning, Bridges is designed to challenge students in thought-provoking ways that nurture critical thinking, analysis and writing skills. Two signature features of Bridges are its Essential Questions seminars and Introduction to Ethical Reasoning course.

Essential Question seminars are smaller scale courses that are organized around an animating question, such as Are Dogs Our Best Friends?, which looks at the unique relationship between humans and dogs. (See sidebar for more examples of essential questions.) Introduction to Ethical Reasoning introduces students to the practice, offering a common framework which provides students a shared vocabulary and common foundation for ethics education.

Essential Questions seminars are designed to stimulate intellectual curiosity while acclimating students to learning habits, such as persistence, flexibility and openness, that will be critical to college and career success,” Weaver said. “We want our students to be prepared for anything, and these types of programs lay the foundation for that to happen.”

#What'sYourEQ?
Unmatched passion. A commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. The drive to lead and never stop looking forward. Six Duquesne students were honored for these reasons and more at the virtual Spirit of Diversity event in April 2021. 

Attended by more than 100 guests, the awards ceremony honored outstanding student leaders who exemplify the belief that equity and opportunity begin at home. Hill Harper, humanitarian, best-selling author and award-winning actor currently starring on ABC’s TV drama, *The Good Doctor*, served as keynote speaker.

Selecting these award winners? It was no easy task. “Each brings a level of passion that is unmatched,” said Dr. Anthony Kane, director of the Center for Excellence in Diversity and Student Inclusion (formerly the Office of Diversity and Inclusion), which sponsors the awards.

Sixth-year pharmacy student and award winner Joseph Chen of Westfield, N.J., has been a director for the pre-orientation program and served on the executive boards of Asian Students Association and Duquesne’s NAACP chapter. “I’ve always wanted to start a bigger outreach program with Duquesne students who may not be aware of internalized racism, misogyny or homophobia,” he said. “I wanted to teach people about these subjects in a way that is more from a place of understanding than a place of lecturing.”

In addition to creating a safe, comfortable space for students on campus, Chen has stepped up to the front lines during the pandemic, volunteering in local neighborhoods to administer COVID-19 vaccines.

A CULTURE OF CARE

The award winners have lived the University’s mission: They’ve become trusted partners and invested the time and energy that authentic collaboration demands—all in an effort to create a more diverse and inclusive campus community.

“Each of these students has contributed something to the office that has helped us move forward towards becoming a center—whether it’s their outreach to peers and colleagues, advocating for social justice and equity in their classrooms, or just having sit-down conversations with administrators and University partners to describe and outline how DU could become a more inclusive campus environment,” says Kane.

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TACKLING HEALTH CARE DISPARITIES

Award winner Maya Ford, of Forest Hill, Md., graduated with a B.S. in nursing in May 2021. At Duquesne, she served as president of the University’s chapter of the NAACP, was crowned Miss Black Duquesne 2019 and was involved with numerous organizations with a strong outreach in the local community such as Strong Women, Strong Girls Pittsburgh.

Six Paths with Purpose

DUQUESNE HONORS SPIRIT OF DIVERSITY AWARD WINNERS

Kayla Harris

Mya Ford

Taylor Johnson

Kayla White

Joe Chen

Adele Bradley

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“I’m a huge advocate for minority students and making sure they feel OK and comfortable and in creating a safe space for them,” said Ford.

Off campus, she received training as a patient care technician at the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Medical Center’s intensive care unit (ICU) and intermediate care unit and worked in the ICU with COVID-19 patients. Ford has returned to Maryland to work at the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Medical Center, where she hopes to deliver exceptional care and focus on decreasing health care disparities with minority pregnant women in urban areas.

Like Ford, award winner and fifth-year physician assistant studies major Kayla E. White of Bear, Del., aspires to work in obstetrics and gynecology as an advocate for women of color.

White served as president of the Theta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and was chair of the Duquesne Panhellocnic Council. She was a resident assistant for three years and was crowned the first Miss Black Duquesne in 2018.

“Diversity, equity and inclusion to me mean being able to enter into any space, being open to the ideas and opinions of others and respecting the backgrounds that everyone comes from,” said White.

Award winner Taylor Johnson of Pennsauken, N.J., graduated with a B.S. in nursing in May 2021 and plans to pursue a career as a labor and delivery or cardiothoracic nurse.

On campus, she served as the president of Ebony Women for Social Change and was on the board of the NAACP chapter. As a member of Strong Women, Strong Girls Pittsburgh, she mentored local elementary school girls and was inspired by their optimism and energy.

“They show me there’s always a light at the end of the tunnel. I just hope they keep that joyful happiness,” said Johnson.

CREATING A FUTURE FOR EVERYONE
Award winner Adele Bradley of Columbia, S.C., graduated in May 2021 with a degree in international relations and is pursuing a master’s in public affairs at Cornell University. She served as the senior vice president of programming for the Black Student Union, secretary for the NAACP chapter and treasurer for the Theta Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Bradley also was a resident assistant and part of the Community Engagement Scholars Program, where she volunteered with the Hill District Consensus Group to advocate for racial and economic justice.

“I want to be compassionate and useful in order to make a difference. So, I am pursuing a master’s in public affairs because I have a devotion to serving my community,” said Bradley.

Award winner Kayla Harris also has spent much of her time and energy at Duquesne advocating for local communities. A Beaver County, Pa., native, she graduated in May 2021 with a double major in psychology and women’s and gender studies after arriving at Duquesne as an undeclared transfer student. She’s now pursuing a master’s in counseling psychology at Duquesne.

Harris was accepted into the Center for Community-Engaged Teaching and Research Scholars’ program, where she worked at the Macedonia Family and Community Enrichment Center, an organization that supports families in need of food, housing and educational resources.

“I really wanted to get involved and find different ways to help people,” said Harris. “It’s a really good connection to reality off campus—graduating and realizing you can make these connections. This type of impact can be meaningful and grander.”

On campus, Harris served as a resident assistant in St. Martin Hall and received the 2021 Student Life Leadership Award. Additionally, she was executive vice president of the Black Student Union, social media chair for Duquesne Cultural Ambassadors, internal audit chair for Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and cohort coordinator of Strong Women, Strong Girls Pittsburgh.

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DR. ANTHONY KANE, E'19
DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY AND STUDENT INCLUSION
If there is one thing that’s abundantly clear about Dr. Anthony Kane, it’s his dedication to the mission of—and to the students served by—the newly renamed Center for Excellence in Diversity and Student Inclusion.

“You have to think about what we’re called to do in our mission, which is to serve God by serving students, and that’s unconditional. There’s no jargon that says ‘unless’,” he said.

“We come to work every day to serve them. They bring a fire and passion to our center that makes us really want to keep going,” said Kane, who was named the center’s director in August 2020.

That fire in the belly is apparently in everything Kane says when talking about the center, the students it serves, and a person’s passion to our center that makes us really want to keep going,” said Kane, who was named the center’s director in August 2020.

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“We are building relationships out of kindness. I truly believe those who feel they have a right place in a community are the ones most likely to succeed. Any time you walk into a room and you know your people are there, you’re more inclined to stay in that space. As we create a more inclusive campus environment, our students will perform better. We contribute to that perfect fit idea by making students feel they belong.”

Born and raised in Upland just a few blocks from campus, Kane earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in social work from California University of Pennsylvania in 2011 and 2012, respectively. He started working at Duquesne in 2013 as a minority development associate before he was hired as assistant resident director and then resident director of Towers. He was assistant director of residence life for two years while earning his doctor of education in educational leadership at Duquesne.

Kane was instrumental in renaming the center from its former name as the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. His reasons were simple but profound.

“I realize that when I saw the word ‘excellence’ used on campus, it typically was used in spaces that represented white students. What we have done was excellent; we provided excellent support to students, and I wanted that excellence to represent us.”

That commitment to inclusive excellence encompasses every aspect of personalhood—including age, citizenship, disability, ethnicity, gender, religious, sexual orientation and veteran status.

“The diversity is who we are. The student inclusion is what we do. And excellence is what we represent,” he said. “We didn’t change anything. We simply broadened the definition of excellence.”

For Kane, it’s an honor to work closely with student leaders and to see them realize their potential.

“They’ve stood the test of time and have been consistent. They’ve stood the test of time and have been consistent. You have to think about what we’re called to do in our mission, which is to serve God by serving students, and that’s unconditional. There’s no jargon that says ‘unless,’ he said.

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While Kane acknowledges the center serves Black students more than any other population, he wants to make sure all diverse student populations feel at home at Duquesne.

“When people think about diversity and inclusion, they think about these ideas and initiatives that are centered on one particular population of people or one particular type of person. In reality, inclusion is about the idea of providing everyone the opportunity to achieve at the same level,” he said.)
When Dr. Kristen Coopie, director of pre-law, came to Duquesne in the fall of 2017, she learned she would be co-teaching a class with President Ken Gormley. The class, American Presidents and the Constitution, is based on the book he wrote, and edited, *The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History*. Not knowing what to expect, Coopie soon discovered the class was a favorite of hers—and of students in the pre-law program.

The original intention for the undergrad class was for Gormley to teach it, in the Law School, being in the classroom as much as possible. “I was there to help and be a day-to-day point person for the students. He loves to lecture, and students love hearing him speak. He is a wealth of knowledge,” Coopie said.

Intimidated briefly at the prospect of co-teaching material with the person who wrote the book, Coopie quickly found her footing. “I knew the students would be interested in hearing from him, but he did such a good job of making it a co-taught course,” she said.

The duo quickly realized they offered unique perspectives. “He’s the lawyer, I’m the political scientist. He explains the legal concepts and makes sure students understand due process and substantive processes. I can say that ‘during an election this was happening in the country.’ It is a more well-rounded approach to the material,” said Coopie. Gormley’s spirit as an educator is evident in the class and in his continued mentorship. Coopie said of learning together, “I learned so much from seeing him lecture. He is comfortable with students and desires to give them the chance to participate. It is a very Socratic class, and he is constantly engaging the students.”

Both embrace the responsibility and joy of helping students dig into the material. And it’s not just helpful for students’ larger ambitions. The class offers more than they can imagine and some eagerly anticipated mementos. A favorite part of the class for students, Coopie and Gormley alike is the day students receive presidential Pez dispensers from the “Prez.” Coopie said, “He brings them [Pez dispensers] in and every student gets to select their own as a keepsake. There are presidents like Herbert Hoover represented and more popular ones like President Kennedy and President Nixon, who the students try to get. It is a fun way to end class and a great reminder of what they learned and who they learned it from.”

“Horizon—Expanding: Pez, Prez and PolySci Revealed”

By Amanda Drumm

Students consuming presidential Pez candies waited until they removed their masks—at a safe distance.
By Ian P. Hurley

Dedicated to Building a Better Pittsburgh
Honors College students work alongside the August Wilson House

The Hill District was known as the “Crossroads of the World” and a hub of Black culture and commerce in the early- to mid-1900s. The neighborhood is the backdrop for nine of August Wilson’s 10 “The Pittsburgh Cycle” plays, also known as the “American Century Cycle.” They chronicle the African-American experience through the 20th century.

“He’s America’s greatest playwright. I know people like to say he’s the greatest African-American playwright, but the truth is he has more major awards than ANYONE else. When students’ eyes are opened to August Wilson’s life and works, they gain new perspectives on race and history in Pittsburgh and beyond,” noted Dr. Kathleen Glenister Roberts, director of Duquesne’s Honors College since 2011.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND THE SPIRITAN MISSION
For the last 30 years just across the neighborhood from Wilson’s childhood home at 1727 Bedford Ave., the Honors College has been working to expose Duquesne students to horizon-expanding opportunities, develop their leadership potential, and prepare them for lives and careers of purpose. Importantly, engaging students around the Catholic Spiritan tradition and a holistic exposure to service has been part of the college’s mission.

“It seemed the Honors College—as a large and multifaceted asset at Duquesne with administration or faculty—it’s students who pass that kind of orientation in the world can’t only be shaped by administration or faculty—it’s students who pass that commitment on to each other.”

“A REIMAGINED CELEBRATION
As the COVID-19 pandemic changed so many aspects of our lives, it also called for a new approach to the annual Birthday Celebration Block Party. During a normal year the block party is a true community event and a fitting tribute to the Pittsburgh legend.

“Our block party started out really small. It’s morphed to, I think, 5,000 people or so,” Turner noted.

Ten Honors College students worked to further this signature partnership through their course, Honors Seminar in Social Justice: Community and University. An idea was born to highlight the playwright’s enduring inspiration to other artists including a birthday celebration event, video interview series and traveling art exhibit. Ten talented artists were selected to take part in the “Art for August” project and create their own unique approach to depicting August Wilson. It features illustrators, a photographer, painters, a poet, a sculptor, quilter and several mixed media artists. Their works initially were displayed as part of the birthday celebration at the Energy Innovation Center. Students helped develop a video interview series with the artists, formulating the questions and editing video interviews conducted by seminar instructor, Associate Professor Dr. Erik Garrett.

Garrett remarked that “we also took the responsibility for planning the traveling exhibit throughout the city over the next year” including locations at Duquesne in 2022, the Center of Life in Hazelwood (another of Duquesne’s community partners), the University of Pittsburgh and the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh.

“Getting the art to as many viewers as possible was important to me because there is such a special way art is able to speak to people. It allows more people to understand the special nature of the Hill District and August Wilson’s work,” said Bucher.

A FELLOWSHIP TO SUPPORT ARTISTS AND SCHOLARS
Launched in 2018 and supported by a $100,000 grant from the Nancy Jonos Board Foundation, the Duquesne University-August Wilson House Fellowship provides opportunities for artists and scholars of color.

“This gift helps bring August Wilson’s legacy full circle by honoring his extraordinary career while encouraging the work of great artists and scholars of the future. It also allows the University to strengthen its engagement with the Hill District and its commitment to advancing the arts and culture in western Pennsylvania,” President Ken Gormley noted during the fellowship’s launch.

“The heart of the partnership with the August Wilson House has always been education in the humanities. This fellowship program will expand that exponentially,” Roberts remarked at the launch of the fellowship.

THE VALUE OF PARTNERSHIP
Roberts offers a fitting personal reflection on work with AWH and the Duquesne and Honors College mission, “Service is in our DNA! It’s the default position of our students rather than a nice ‘add-on.’ And this kind of orientation in the world can’t only be shaped by administration or faculty—it’s students who pass that commitment on to each other.”
Duquesne's new College of Medicine (COM), scheduled to launch in fall 2024, is already making important partnerships where health care services are needed most—rural areas.

The college recently signed agreements with Meadville Medical Center and its partner Titusville Area Hospital. Both health care providers will offer clinical placements for 22 third-year and fourth-year medical students. Butler Memorial Hospital has also agreed to place up to 50 third-year and fourth-year medical students. Memorial Hospital has also agreed to place up to 50 third-year and fourth-year medical students. Butler Memorial Hospital has also agreed to place up to 50 third-year and fourth-year medical students. Butler Memorial Hospital has also agreed to place up to 50 third-year and fourth-year medical students.

Always striving for bigger goals, the college continues to develop partnerships with health centers in the state, and already has established relationships with several health enterprises throughout western Pennsylvania. “These agreements help us set the stage to train and educate medical students where they will be working as doctors in the future,” said William Generett Jr., vice president of civic engagement and external relations at Duquesne. “There is a critical shortage of doctors nationwide, which is felt most profoundly in rural areas. The working relationships with these health centers provide us with the inroads needed to address this shortage.”

“We will be training doctors who have a demonstrated commitment to practice in rural, underserved communities and who understand the social determinants of health that affect those communities.”

While nearly 1 million people live in the 10 counties that comprise northwestern Pennsylvania, there is limited access to health care in the region. Residents in these counties also tend to be older and have higher rates of chronic health conditions, Generett said. “One of the goals of the College of Medicine is to address the health inequities faced in both urban and rural areas,” he said. “We will be training doctors who have a demonstrated commitment to practice in rural, underserved communities and who understand the social determinants of health that affect those communities. We anticipate that thousands of individuals and families in the region will reap the benefits of these partnerships.”

A new gift from the Dr. and Mrs. Arthur William Phillips Charitable Trust in Oil City continues the COM’s momentum in northwestern Pennsylvania. The donation will support a cutting-edge examination room, named after the trust, with advanced simulation technology where students will practice the skills needed to work effectively with diverse patients from underserved communities.

“I’d like to thank the Phillips Charitable Trust for its generous funding of this important initiative,” Generett said. “Duquesne’s College of Medicine is one of the most forward-looking medical schools in the country and we are excited to begin educating the next generation of physicians to serve northwestern Pennsylvania.”

The 80,000-square-foot medical school will feature experiential and immersive learning with advanced simulation technologies, augmented reality anatomy labs, maker space and examination suites. The University will also renovate 20,000 square feet of existing space on campus to house a complementary health sciences library and a new Center for Student Wellbeing.

The COM exemplifies Duquesne’s long-standing commitment to promoting equity and opportunity in the region. The University’s Center for Integrative Health (CIH) has made a major impact in providing health services for the region’s vulnerable populations, as its services have led to a significant reduction in the number of children with uncontrolled asthma. Most recently, the CIH provided COVID-19 vaccinations to more than 5,500 people in Pittsburgh’s Hill District. 

“Makes Inroads to Rural Areas

New College of Medicine

As you surely remember, the enthusiasm and joy our faculty show when working with students makes Duquesne an exciting place to learn. In spite of the challenges we all have faced students have the campus buzzing again.

Your generosity, combined with the resilience and kindness of our community, helped keep our students connected to one another and the world, even at the most difficult times. The Duquesne family’s gifts to our Student Success Fund provided vital financial aid and enhanced services—all to ensure students could continue to expand their horizons, and that we could prepare them for anything.

It’s time for bigger goals—educationally, professionally, spiritually and more. Your help fuels the pursuit. That’s why we ask today: please support The Duquesne Fund. Such gifts support Duquesne’s top priority: student success in all schools, all departments, all areas where they grow and find ways to use their talents to serve others.

Last year, donors helped our students survive in the face of unprecedented challenges. This year, you can help them thrive with a gift to The Duquesne Fund.

Make your gift in the enclosed envelope, or give online at duq.edu/MagazineGift.

Thank you for paying forward the trust you gained and the sense of possibility you felt to today’s Duquesne students.

– Ken Gormley, President
NEW SCHOLARSHIPS ALLOW STUDENTS TO GO BEYOND WHAT'S EXPECTED

By Gina O'Malley

Ambition Never Narrows

High school student Jacob Mazurkiewicz founded a media and marketing agency without reliable internet access.

In the remote woods bordering Somerset, Pa., the teen booked his first client with a handshake and exchange of a $500 check, promising his church council president he was up to the task. Mazurkiewicz got to work on the church's website, spending hours selecting fonts and editing text. He hit the green "update" button to publish his work—then sat in disbelief as the screen froze. Everything was lost, and he had to hit the green button to create a new data signal into sluggish Wi-Fi sat lost.

Unwilling to disappoint his client, Mazurkiewicz walked more than a mile to the closest neighbor with Wi-Fi and finished the job. "These obstacles refine our strengths and guide our passions," said Mazurkiewicz. "I credit a portion of my resilience and drive to the never-ending Wi-Fi issues of my childhood."

In recognition of his entrepreneurial spirit, Mazurkiewicz was selected as one of four inaugural Spirit of Excellence Scholarship recipients. This scholarship, selected for the four-year program. They’ll complete 100-plus service hours per semester, attend social justice seminars, plan events and complete capstone projects.

The Spirit of Excellence Scholarship is a natural fit for Duquesne and aligns with the University’s longstanding commitment to community engagement. "Students act as ambassadors in the community and represent the heart of our mission," said Dr. Luci-Jo DiMaggio, director of mission animation. Participation means that 100% of demonstrated need toward total cost of attendance for four years (or graduation, whichever comes first) will be met.

By offering this support, we create a sustained cohort of students committed to equity and our mission," said 657

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The Spirit of Excellence Scholarship is a natural fit for Duquesne and aligns with the University’s longstanding commitment to community engagement. "Students act as ambassadors in the community and represent the heart of our mission," said Dr. Luci-Jo DiMaggio, director of mission animation. Participation means that 100% of demonstrated need toward total cost of attendance for four years (or graduation, whichever comes first) will be met.

By offering this support, we create a sustained cohort of students committed to equity and our mission," said 657

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It’s a profession where one is expected to start out perfect, then improve. Where every move is scrutinized, then replayed and scrutinized again. In it Paulani Spurlock-Welsh has thrived.

Creating a Professional Path

An NCAA Division I women’s college basketball official for over 13 years, Spurlock-Welsh reached the pinnacle of her profession when she was one of 11 selected to work the Final Four at San Antonio’s Alamodome in April 2021. The Duquesne alum, A’97, who was part of the Dukes’ basketball program as a student-athlete, reached her biggest goal when she took the floor for the Arizona vs. Connecticut game on April 2.

“It’s the mountaintop—the peak,” said Spurlock-Welsh from her home near Atlanta. “Once you get there, you want to be able to stay there.”

For Spurlock-Welsh, the road to the Final Four began in Pittsburgh, with many Steel City touchpoints along the way. A 1,000-point scorer at Greenville, Pa. High School, Spurlock-Welsh was a member of head coach Dan Durkin’s first recruiting class at Duquesne.

She played in 99 games for the Dukes from 1993-1994 through 1996-1997 and was part of the first Duquesne team to put together three straight double-digit-win seasons. After playing professionally in Germany, Spurlock-Welsh returned to western Pennsylvania to earn her master’s degree in exercise science.

She eventually found herself working in the recreation department at Bucknell University when the officiating bug bit.

“As soon as I put that shirt on and got that whistle in my mouth and started running up and down the court, it was like ‘game over, this is what I’m going to do.’”

Supportive Connections

It was at Bucknell where Spurlock-Welsh met current DU women’s head coach Dan Burt, who was an assistant for the Bucknell women’s team.

Burt, who worked as a college basketball official in the mid-1990s, was part of a group of young professionals that included men’s assistants Mark Prosser (currently the head coach at Winthrop) and Jamion Christian (currently head coach at George Washington) along with women’s assistant Jackie Carson-Smith (currently head coach at Furman) among others. The group often met for informal dinners.

“As soon as I put that shirt on and got that whistle in my mouth and started running up and down the court, it was like ‘game over, this is what I’m going to do.’”

The Chase, the Challenge. A Bigger Goal.
Burt encouraged Spurlock-Welsh to pursue officiating which he saw as a potential “great career.” “She has the look, she has the mechanics, she has the knowledge and most importantly she has the temperament for it,” said Burt. “We knew she was going to be very, very successful.” “It was a natural progression for me,” said Spurlock-Welsh of her move from player to overseer, who was prepared to move forward with focus, without narrowing her ambitions. “There are some similarities, like thinking three or four passes ahead,” she said. “It’s very hard to see the entire floor and be able to think ahead. I still rely on my gut instincts with a lot of things.”

**DUQUESNE GRADS MAKE ANY TEAM STRONGER**

Spurlock-Welsh reached out to Durkin, who was happy to support and enrich her journey, putting her in touch with the former Atlantic 10 coordinator of officials, Marie Koch. Durkin, who spent nearly 30 years coaching at the collegiate level, followed Spurlock-Welsh’s career progression from a distance. “I’d always ask how Pualani was doing and every step of the way I’d always get the same response; Man, she’s smart, she’s hustling, she’s very professional and she studies the game;” Durkin said. “The same things I saw as a player have translated to how she performs as a referee,” he continued. “I’m not surprised she has gotten this far—to the Final Four, because she’s a goal-oriented person.” Spurlock-Welsh’s bigger goals exemplified her aspirations. Spurlock-Welsh began her D-I officiating career on the same floor where she played—Duquesne’s Palumbo Center—for a pair of games in November 2008. In fact in her second game, Duquesne vs. Cornell on Nov. 16, fellow DU women’s basketball alum, Kathy Ridilla, was part of the three-person officiating crew. She soon made the move to Atlanta, recognized as a “hottie” for all levels of referees, in 2009. It was there that her first mentor, Nan Sisk, took her under her wing. Sisk, the 2009 Naismith Women’s College Official of the Year, and her husband, Dock, run a highly successful referee training camp in northeast Georgia. As the officiating opportunities multiplied, Spurlock-Welsh was forced to decide between her job as a fitness/clinic coordinator at Georgia State and her burgeoning career on the court. “I lasted two years there,” said Spurlock-Welsh of her stint at LSU. “By the second, it was like, ‘you need to make a decision’ because I was gone quite a bit. So, it was like, ‘I’m going to referee, here’s my two weeks.’” “That’s the chase. That’s the challenge, you know, try to be perfect and beat the film.”

**EXPERIENCES THAT RESONATE**

The call from Davis, who hails from Rimesburg, Pa. and graduated from Carnegie Mellon University, completed the circle for Spurlock-Welsh. “We’re both western Pa. girls,” said Spurlock-Welsh. “She’s a diehard Pittsburgh Steelers fan and it was her first experience as a referee.” “It’s challenging and [this job is] not for everybody,” said Spurlock-Welsh, who pretty much lives out of a suitcase from November through—the in case of 2021—Final Four weekend in April. The 2020-2021 season offered additional challenges. Used to working between 80 and 110 games in a normal season, this year’s schedule was reduced to “maybe 60 or 70 games” due to abbreviated schedules caused by the pandemic. PCR tests nearly every day for four months, Spurlock-Welsh did what we all did. Adjust. “Obviously you have a little more mental and emotional wear and tear than in years past,” she said. “We were very isolated. There was no sharing of rides to the hotel or arena. No dinners or breakfasts together. “Every at the NCAA Tournament, the only time we could come out of the hotel was to walk to the testing center, so most of us would slow walk it because it was a couple of blocks away and the weather was nice. It was challenging.” With the 2021 tournament in a San Antonio bubble, officials were hoping not to get a call. “This year, you were getting calls after each round if you were going home,” said Spurlock-Welsh. Penny Davis, the NCAA’s national coordinator of women’s basketball officiating, would be the one notifying officials if they were staying or going home. “The way she started the call was, ‘Hey, you had a really good run and you did a really good job and we’re very proud of you and you should be proud of yourself,’ so I’m thinking, ‘time to call the travel agent,’ said Spurlock-Welsh. “And she said, ‘I’d really appreciate it and like it if you could stay.’ At that point, I was just crying.”

The 1996-1997 Duquesne Women’s Basketball Team. Spurlock-Welsh is seated second from left.
Reflections on the Pandemic

By Caroline Kucko, A’22

When I initially wrote this story, I thought we had surpassed COVID-19 for good. I interviewed various students asking for their closing reflections on the pandemic and how it changed them. I was writing about COVID-19 in the past tense because for a moment, it truly seemed as though the worst was behind us.

And I sit here now in mid-September rewriting this story, it has become clear that the pandemic is far from over and is changing by the day.

When the pandemic first began, I was a wide-eyed freshman halfway through my second semester here at Duquesne. Duquesne was the school of my dreams for as long as I can remember. My dad and I made an annual trip to Pittsburgh each spring to visit campus and each time, my dream of being a Duquesne student only grew stronger.

By the fall of 2019, all of the years I had spent dreaming of becoming a Duquesne student were finally coming to fruition. I was living the college experience I had envisioned for so long, exploring the city, making new friends, going to sports games and learning independence. However, it wasn’t long before COVID-19 became a reality. By March of 2020, the world was shutting down and so too were universities across the country. Just as college had really begun, I found myself packing up my belongings, leaving my friends and moving back home to learn remotely.

When I finished my freshman year from home, I breathed a heavy sigh of relief. Although it was far more difficult to connect with professors and classmates online, we did the best with what we had in order to adapt to the circumstances. I surely felt some disappointment about missing part of my first year, but I was able to stay down and enjoy extra time with my family, cherishing the small moments we once took for granted. When I got the news that we were returning to campus in the fall of 2020, I was overjoyed. Although there would be new rules in place, I was so happy to return to a semi-normal college experience on campus. Within the first month, this new dynamic became habit for all of us.

We got tested every few weeks, practiced social distancing in public places, wore masks and adjusted to hybrid learning. As a community, everyone rose to the occasion and worked together to keep each other safe so that we could stay on campus.

And miraculously, it worked.

Together we completed an entire school year on campus in the midst of a global pandemic and we did it safely and responsibly. While this was not at all what I pictured my college experience to look like, the past year and a half has turned into something I am sure will be one of the most formative experiences of my life.

As college students, we are now undoubtedly faced with a new normal. While mask-wearing is here to stay, it is the small price we have to pay in order to learn in a full classroom. After having no choice but to go back home and learn remotely at the beginning of the pandemic, it is a privilege to be able to return to campus and learn in person. We have come so far and I will never take that for granted again.

It is true that we are still very much facing COVID-19 today. New information is being released by the minute and there is still so much uncertainty about what is to come. However, after overcoming what we have thus far, it is safe to say that the Duquesne community is truly prepared for anything.

New Awards Program Recognizes Dukes from the Last Decade

The Duquesne University Alumni Association and its Young Alumni Council have inaugurated the Dukes from the Last Decade Awards, recognizing graduates from the last 10 years who have demonstrated professional excellence, service to their communities and commitment to the mission of Duquesne University in their daily lives. Originally scheduled to begin in 2020, the live awards ceremony was canceled last year and again in 2021, but the 12 initial recipients were honored with a video tribute event posted online in June.

Read who has inspired them most in life, what aspects of their current roles are most rewarding, what they liked best about attending Duquesne, what they hope to achieve next and what they do in their spare time.

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT ATTENDING DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY?
I liked the feeling of being somewhat “away” from the world when on campus—unless you walk to the edge of campus, you can sometimes forget you’re in a city. At the same time, I liked being in the heart of Pittsburgh and able to get to different parts of the city quickly.

Cameron Barnett, Class of 2011
Liberal Arts, Falk Laboratory School

WHAT ASPECT(S) OF YOUR JOB DO YOU FIND MOST REWARDING?

The most rewarding part of my job is the opportunity to work with all types of students who have different motivations, different things that drive their happiness, yet I’m the fortunate one who gets to channel those driving factors for one common “sound” in music…by empowering students for their differences, yet still reaching a common goal, which is love, appreciation and acceptance of all people!

Michael Warren, Class of 2017 and 2019
Education and Music, Avalonworth School District

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT ATTENDING DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY?

Attending Duquesne was one of the best decisions I have made in my life. The close-knit campus community means that I was able to make lifelong friends and interact with faculty who truly cared about the student’s success. Besides the great education that I received, my favorite part of attending Duquesne was the number of great friendships that I made.

Ann Johnson, Class of 2012
Pharmacy, Pharmacy Healthcare Solutions LLC
IN YOUR OWN WORDS, WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO BE A GRADUATE OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY?

Duquesne University represents the finest traditions and values of a postsecondary, Catholic education. My time, both as a student and as faculty, at Duquesne has molded me into the up-and-coming successful man that I am today.


Being a Duquesne University graduate comes with a lot of responsibility. Our University was founded on the idea of helping others, and these beginnings were instilled in us throughout our time on the Bluff. Duquesne University alumni are caring, driven individuals who strive to make a positive impact in their communities and in their professional lives.

Kayla Fratini, Class of 2010, Business, Eat’n Park Hospitality Group

WHAT DOES BEING SELECTED AS A MEMBER OF THE INAUGURAL CLASS OF DUKES FROM THE LAST DECADE MEAN TO YOU?

It’s an incredible honor to have been chosen, and I will continue to strive to represent the University and its mission and values well in my own life.

Alex Brennsteiner, Class of 2012, Health Sciences, HM Home and Community Services

WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU MOST IN LIFE?

There is no way I can pick just one person. Perhaps earliest, though, I was inspired by my mother, who also has pursued a career helping others and is one of the few people I know that loves her job decades later.

Alyssa Pietropaolo, Class of 2013 and 2016, Liberal Arts and Law, Community College of Allegheny County

IN YOUR OWN WORDS, WHAT DO YOU THINK IT MEANS TO BE A GRADUATE OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY?

You represent something bigger than yourself. You represent the faculty and all the students, current and former. It is on all the graduates to uphold that reputation of excellence that Duquesne is known for so the investments we made in ourselves to get our education at Duquesne continue to pay off in the future.

Carter Henderson, Class of 2018, Business, Fort Pitt Capital Group

WHAT DOES BEING SELECTED AS A MEMBER OF THE DUKES FROM THE LAST DECADE MEAN TO YOU?

On a daily basis I look back at my years at Duquesne and I am grateful for not only the knowledge I obtained, but the supportive group of mentors who lifted me to pursue excellence as a person and a nurse. I am thankful to be a part of this community.

Marybeth Wargo, Class of 2010, Nursing, MSF Academy for Healthcare, Brussels, Belgium

WHAT DOES BEING SELECTED AS A MEMBER OF THE DUKES FROM THE LAST DECADE MEAN TO YOU?

“Leader” is the first word that comes to mind when I think about this award. Leadership is not about yourself or recognition, but it is about how we can make the lives of others even just a little bit better.

Eric Sinagra, Class of 2011, Natural & Environmental Sciences, PathVu

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE NEXT, PROFESSIONALLY OR PERSONALLY?

Professionally, I wish to continue to serve the military and veteran communities in the health care industry ... to continue being a health care advocate and advance my role in health care policy in order to help our nation’s heroes and their families within our complex health care systems.

Joseph Viti, Class of 2011, Liberal Arts, Visiting Nurse Service of New York

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT ATTENDING DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY?

The people. The people. The people. Seriously, I cannot express the caliber of faculty, staff and students at Duquesne University. Every day whether in or out of the classroom was a beautiful challenge to strive to be the best version of myself and become a lifetime learner.

John Foster, Class of 2016, Liberal Arts, U.S. Department of the State

Submit a nomination for a Duke of the Last Decade at duq.edu/decade-awards-nomination.
Celebrating the Life of a Mom and Teacher

By Ken Gormley

This year, in March of 2021, my mom would have turned 100. My brothers, sisters and I marked the day by sharing memories about her enduring influence. I placed wildflowers on Mom’s grave and whispered words of gratitude. Mom passed away in 2001, shortly after we celebrated her 90th birthday. But her impact is still far-reaching. She was more than just a mother; she was a teacher.

Elena Furia Gormley—“Mrs. Gormley”—to generations of third-grade students—taught at St. Anselm, a grade school in Swissvale for over 20 years. St. A’s no longer exists, but I still run into people everywhere who were inspired by this woman who was barely 5 feet tall and weighed 90 pounds on a good day.

Mom cared about all of her students as if they were her own. She walked at an Olympian’s pace from our house to school—nearly a mile each way—to prepare her classroom each morning.

Just as she patiently taught my siblings and me at the kitchen table, Mom relished projects that opened the eyes of her students to the miracles of God’s work. She invented math games, did poetry readings and purchased postcards of famous paintings from Carnegie Museum of Art to pass out to her students.

Her favorite project was the annual “egg drop” contest, in which babies of students worked with Mrs. Gormley at the second-story window of the school as she allowed them to devise ingenious ways to drop an egg—using couch pillows, bubble wrap or even bricks to prevent the eggs from breaking. That’s how she taught them the laws of physics.

Many times, I’ve walked into the Duquesne Club or gatherings of business leaders only to have people in their 90s walk up and say: “I recognize you…you’re Mrs. Gormley’s son!” They go on to recount that she was their best teacher ever, who literally changed their lives. Being recognized as “Mrs. Gormley’s son” is the best compliment anyone could give me.

In my youth, Duquesne students were among Mom’s students. My biology teacher, Sr. Mary Lou Palas, took courses in pharmacy and later in educational administration at Duquesne as she pursued her calling with the Sisters of Charity. One of my brother’s favorite teachers, Sr. Melanie DiPietro (with whom I later practiced law) held a JD degree from Duquesne.

I’ll never be able to repay these teachers for the lessons they taught me and my siblings—not just in terms of subject—matter, but in shaping our ethical and moral compasses. They delivered the greatest gift imaginable.

A UNIVERISTY PRESIDENT NOW, A WRITER AND SCHOLAR ALWAYS

By Rose Ravasio, A’90

After 27 years at Duquesne, Ken Gormley has served in many roles, from lawyer and teacher to the current post as the University’s 12th president. One constant that has continued throughout his tenure is his work as a writer and scholar.

An acclaimed national expert on the U.S. Constitution and the American presidency, Gormley’s prowess led to his work as an award-winning author with a New York Times bestseller as well as a book that serves as a valuable resource in many Pennsylvania courtrooms. His newest work is a new writing category—novelist.

Gormley’s first work of fiction, The Heroes of Pittsburgh, was released in October by Sunbury Press. More than 30 years in the making and the symphonies —not just in terms of expertise always has a waiting list. A passionate teacher-scholar, Gormley doesn’t disappoint. He models skills that serve his students and ensures his classroom is an exciting and educational learning environment.

For students interested in pursuing their talents in creative writing, books can be ordered from the campus bookstore, Bookshop in Sewickley; and other bookstores near Pittsburgh.


All royalties from the sale of the novel are being given to a special initiative in the McNulty College of Science for students interested in pursuing their talents in creative writing. Books can be ordered from the campus bookstore, Bookshop in Sewickley, and other bookstores near Pittsburgh.

At Duquesne, undergraduates can enroll in “The Presidents and the Constitution: A Living History,” which is taught by Gormley in the McNulty College. It’s no surprise that a course taught by a university president in his area of expertise always has a waiting list. A passionate teacher-scholar, Gormley doesn’t disappoint. He models skills that serve his students and ensures his classroom is an exciting and educational learning environment.

Read more about Gormley’s class in this issue in the article, Horizon-Expanding: Piz, Perez and Polysty (p.10).
I t’s a Duquesne love story, featuring Anne Mullarkey Sawa, A’89, E’90, director of student conduct. Girl earns two degrees and begins career in higher ed as a student desk attendant and resident assistant (RA). Girl meets boy, a fellow RA, in graduate school and they later marry at the campus chapel, where their daughter is baptized years later. Meanwhile, she dedicates her life’s work to serving students in Duquesne’s Student Life department, guiding them to reach their potential and discover even greater possibilities.

Sawa’s passion to help students began when she was a student herself. She earned her B.A. and MS.Ed. in 1989 and 1990, respectively, and worked various roles in Residence Life at Duquesne and elsewhere, before she joined the Office of Student Conduct. “It was my heart and my passion,” she recalled about working in Student Life, “working with students and parents, mentoring great leaders, realizing success stories and tackling challenges.”

Little did she know, the role would touch her heart in another way—during graduate school, she met James, a fellow RA who would become her husband. Five years later, they were married in Duquesne’s Chapel of the Holy Spirit by Fr. Sean Hogan, C.S.Sp., who also happened to be Sawa’s boss. Their now 18-year-old daughter was also baptized by Hogan in the chapel, and became a Duke this fall.

“As Anne’s colleague, mentor and priest over the years, it’s been a joy getting to know her and Jamie—as students, as leaders on campus, and as I officiated their wedding and baptized their daughter,” Fr. Hogan shared. “Throughout, one thing has never changed—Anne’s dedication to helping people and guiding them along a better path. It’s an honor to know Anne for the past 30 years, and we are lucky to have her here at Duquesne.”

As her personal life reached greater heights, so did her career. When she was asked to take on the role of interim director of the student conduct office, as recommended by her colleagues, she was hesitant. “Who would want that job, dealing with negativity all the time?” she thought. At the same time, her church pastor emailed a piece from Pope Francis about the upcoming Year of Mercy and what it meant to treat people with love and kindness, even if we didn’t like what they were doing or how they treated us. That very message changed Sawa’s perspective on the position. She leaned on her faith, followed the sign and accepted the temporary three-month position. That was six years ago.

Today, Sawa excitedly and compassionately leads the Office of Student Conduct with a heartfelt perspective and empathetic approach. “I want to pay forward the trust, patience and sense of possibility I experienced here as a student,” she shared. Focused on student learning, as opposed to discipline and punishment, she works closely with each student to help them interrupt and pivot their behavior. Most importantly, she supports and challenges students to move forward and reach bigger goals.

“To me, that’s the payoff of doing this job—working with students and seeing them navigate difficult decisions, learn from missteps and turn things around,” she said. “I am blessed to do work that I love and play a small role in supporting students as they face challenges. It is a privilege to see them grow and move forward successfully.”

Sometimes, she glances back at the pope’s message (it hangs on her office wall) and remembers to always come from a place of love and mercy. To model skills that will serve students throughout their life. And to walk alongside students to ensure their greatest, safest, healthiest, happiest experiences on campus and beyond.

Learn, Love, Lead Duquesne: Guiding Students Toward Success

By Stephanie Sullivan
The Century Club and McAnulty Service Award

Honors Alumni Achievements

T
two new members were inducted into the Century Club of Distinguished Duquesne University Alumni at the President’s Dinner during Homecoming and Reunion Weekend on Sept. 24. The Century Club was established during Duquesne’s 100th anniversary in 1978 to recognize graduates with exemplary records of professional achievement and service to the University and their communities. Only 344 alumni have been inducted to its ranks.

A past Century Club honoree was also presented with the McAnulty Service Award, recognizing outstanding continued support of Duquesne since his induction. Named for the University’s 10th president, Fr. Henry McAnulty, the award was presented for the first time this fall. The 2021 new Century Club inductees are:

DENNIS P. BRENCKLE, B’67
Retired President, Central Pennsylvania Region, PNC Bank

After military service in Vietnam, Brenckle returned home to join PNC Bank in 1969. In more than 40 years with the company, he rose through management positions including executive vice president of PNC Bank Ohio (1993-1998) and regional president for central Pennsylvania from 1998 until his retirement in 2011. In that position, he doubled the bank’s local business, including the integration of Sterling Financial in 2008, and established innovative banking products serving students at Penn State University. At the time of his retirement, PNC operated 94 banks in 22 counties in central Pennsylvania.

Brenckle remains a leader in the Harrisburg and central Pennsylvania communities, serving as chairman of the board for Penn State’s Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and as a director of Highmark Health; the Harrisburg Area YMCA; the Whitaker Center for Science and Arts; Pennsylvania Partnership for Culture, Health and Education; Harrisburg Regional Chamber; and Capital Region Economic Development Corporation. He has also been active in leadership with Four Diamonds, an organization assisting children battling childhood cancer and the beneficiary of Penn State’s famous THON fundraiser.

Influenced by his fraternity’s advisor, Fr. Joseph Duchense, C.S.Sp., Brenckle has been active in Alpha Epsilon’s efforts to raise funds for scholarships and campus beautification. In 2019, he and his family partnered with Highmark Health to underwrite renovation of the historic Lourdes Grotto, which was dedicated in memory of Brenckle’s mother. Helen Dorothy Spock Brenckle attended Duquesne as a student nurse.

The McAnulty Service Award was presented to:

ROBERT Z. GUSSIN, PH.D., P’59, GP’61, H’95
Retired Corporate Vice President for Science and Technology, Johnson & Johnson

Gussin, a 1966 Century Club inductee, retired in 2006 after 34 years as a vice president with Johnson & Johnson and its McNeil Laboratories division. He previously directed cardiovascular renal disease therapy research for Lederle Laboratories and served as a member of NASA’s Space Flight Advisory Committee and an adjunct professor in the medical schools at Michigan State University and the University of Utah. Since 2006, he has been the founder and CEO of Oceanview Publishing, an independent book publisher based in Florida, including his own award-winning novel, Trash Toli.

Gussin was an emeritus member of Duquesne’s Board of Directors and one of the University’s most generous benefactors. With his wife, Gussin has endowed the Drs. Robert and Patricia Gussin Endowed Minority Pharmacy Scholarships, the Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs, and the Robert and Patricia Gussin Boys and Girls Club of Sarasota County Endowed Scholarships. They have also supported athletic programs and return to campus frequently for University events and interaction with students.

Gussin serves on the boards of the Boys and Girls Club and the Library Foundation in Sarasota County; and is a past director of Holy Ghost Preparatory School, the Alliance for Aging Research and Catholic Health Services of Long Island. He has served on advisory boards at Duquesne, the University of Michigan, University of Florida, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia and Harvard University.

THOMAS J. HERWARD, A’67
Retired Managing Shareholder, City Beauty, Inc.

The son of Irish immigrant parents, Herward personifies Duquesne’s first-generation college student success stories. Beginning his career as a teacher and coach in the Pittsburgh diocesan schools, Herward turned his efforts toward business management in 1972, becoming an executive with the Busy Beaver Building Centers chain, where he worked until 1988. He subsequently was a managing shareholder with Ultimate Restaurants Group (Pizzeria Uno restaurants in the Pittsburgh area), LIQ (Rent-A-Center stores in greater New York City) and City Beauty, a Pittsburgh-based specialty retail and beauty salon operator.

He brought a similar entrepreneurial spirit to his community service efforts, most notably volunteer leadership with Bethlehem Haven, a shelter for homeless women located near Duquesne’s University campus. During a leadership transition in 2015, he served as its interim chief executive, guiding a merger with Pittsburgh Mercy Health System that bolstered the shelter’s behavioral health service offerings.

Herward has also served as a trustee and board chair of the Edgewood Club, C.C. Mellor Memorial Library and the Allegheny County Library Association. He has received the Library Associates’ Trustee of the Year award and the Edgewood Foundation’s William D. Limpert Award for Volunteer Service.

An active alumnus of Duquesne’s Gamma Phi fraternity, Herward co-chaired its 100th anniversary reunion in 2016 and led fundraising efforts which yielded $100,000 for a student scholarship fund.

THE MCANULTY SERVICE AWARD WAS PRESENTED TO:

ROBERT Z. GUSSIN, PH.D., P’59, GP’61, H’95
Retired Corporate Vice President for Science and Technology, Johnson & Johnson

Gussin is an emeritus member of Duquesne’s Board of Directors and one of the University’s most generous benefactors. With his wife, Gussin has endowed the Drs. Robert and Patricia Gussin Endowed Minority Pharmacy Scholarships, the Gussin Spiritan Division of Academic Programs, and the Robert and Patricia Gussin Boys and Girls Club of Sarasota County Endowed Scholarships. They have also supported athletic programs and return to campus frequently for University events and interaction with students.

Gussin serves on the boards of the Boys and Girls Club and the Library Foundation in Sarasota County; and is a past director of Holy Ghost Preparatory School, the Alliance for Aging Research and Catholic Health Services of Long Island. He has served on advisory boards at Duquesne, the University of Michigan, University of Florida, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia and Harvard University. ●
From Festive Campus Events To Newsworthy Happenings, The Duquesne Spirit Brings People Together.

We have been working toward this accreditation as it provides our students and alumni with a significant advantage as they pursue their career goals.

Dr. John Viator, department chair and professor of the Bayer School’s Department of Engineering on the biomedical engineering program’s ABET accreditation.

Poverty is a root cause of many of the social problems we see, whether it’s hunger, mental illness, addiction or some physical disability that a person might have where they can’t get or keep a job because of their illness.

In just the few months he has spent leading the advancement division on an interim basis, Jim has injected new energy and urgency into their work, forged strong relationships with his peers on the Cabinet and demonstrated a very compelling sense of what is possible.

President Ken Gormley on the appointment of Jim Miller as the new Vice President for University Advancement.

This experience not only gave me a feeling of what a college life is like, but also gave me an opportunity to learn about a career I may major in.

High school student Marina Grado talking about her experience being paired with a Bayer School of Environmental and Natural Sciences student at a STEM camp held this past summer.

This year’s honorees for the Faculty Awards for Excellence were:

Excellence in Service to the Mission: Dr. Stephen Benham, professor of music education and chair of performance, Mary Pappert School of Music

Excellence in Service to the Mission: Dr. Norman Conti, professor of sociology, McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Excellence in Scholarship: Dr. Alison Colbert, associate professor, School of Nursing

Excellence in Teaching: Dr. Rebecca Maatta, teaching assistant professor of English, McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts.

We are committed to empowering and inspiring entrepreneurs to pursue bigger goals and help create a better world.

Dr. Michele Migliuolo, executive director of the Center for Excellence in Entrepreneurship, talking about the goal of the School of Business’ annual New Venture Challenge.

Everyone needs a break sometimes, and the therapy pets to the rescue! Gumberg Library hosted Chewie and Charlie to give students a break from midterms.

The Puerto Rican Student Association and Center for Excellence in Diversity and Student Inclusion hosted a Zumba session as part of Latinx & Hispanic Heritage Month.

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A mong the sunbaked hills west of Rome lies the Acquafreda Nature Reserve and beautiful property owned by the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. This oasis is home to the Duquesne in Rome program. Among the lovely gardens and walkways a breeze often blows, a subtle reminder of all the places and possibilities that await study abroad students in Italy. Amidst the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, Duquesne in Rome marked its 20th anniversary Feb. 3, 2021. Despite this momentous celebration having to be delayed until 2022, there is much to reflect on and be thankful for these last 20 years. “We are confident that the Duquesne in Rome program has not only broadened the minds of over 2,000 of our own students, but has also shifted their career trajectories and personal goals in countless ways,” said Dr. Joe DeCrosta, executive director of the Center for Global Engagement. DeCrosta, Michael Wright, director of European Programs, and Alana Sacriponte, assistant director of the Duquesne in Rome program, find a responsibility and joy in helping students discover what they’re good at and discover why that’s good for the world. They, along with a dedicated support staff in Rome and on the home campus in Pittsburgh, are dedicated to ensuring students maximize this life-changing opportunity.

DeCrosta also noted that “Duquesne in Rome, as well as our other international opportunities, are perfect examples of how we can encourage our students to achieve bigger goals while at Duquesne, to think ‘otherwise,’ and to focus on a life of service.”

You’re Invited!


Visit duq.edu/rome-20-years for event and travel opportunities.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 20 YEARS OF DUQUESNE IN ROME

Spring 2004: Transition to new campus with the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth (Boccea neighborhood).


Summer 2005: The first “Alumni and Friends Trip,” offering a summer travel “Italian Campus” experience to alumni and friends of Duquesne University.

February 2006: Students visit the Turin Winter Olympics, the 20th winter games.

Fall 2006: First semester working with the Istituto Vittorio Bachelet High School (cultural exchange program).

Fall 2005: The inaugural semester of Duquesne in Rome based in the Vitinia neighborhood, at the Villa Santa Cecilia campus.

Spring 2007: The inaugural semester of Duquesne in Rome based in the Vitinia neighborhood, at the Villa Santa Cecilia campus.

October 2010: 10th anniversary celebrations mark the first 1,000 alumni of the program. The Institution of the Cento/Duecento giving program is created to build the Italian Campus Endowment for scholarship and financial assistance.

Summer 2013: The first “Maymester” Rome Summer Program, a mini-Italian campus summer experience with six credits.

Winter 2021: Anniversary marks 20 years of the Duquesne in Rome program.

2017-2018: The Italian Campus Endowment generates $40,000 in scholarships/financial assistance for Duquesne students to study in Rome.

Fall 2016: The collaboration of CLPR 350 (a cross-cultural preparation course) and the celebration of the 10-year-old cultural exchange with the Vittorio Bachelet High School and the “Be the Difference—Never Again” program.

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Homecoming 2021

Alumni, faculty, staff, students, parents and friends enjoyed a series of special events during Homecoming Weekend 2021, held Sept. 24-26. The festivities included An Evening with the Stars, featuring Debbie Allen and Norm Nixon; celebrations of the 1970 and 1971 classes; a Diversity Happy Hour; the Crucifix Garden dedication; and Duquesne’s football victory over Virginia University of Lynchburg. Homecoming concluded with the Class of 2020 graduation celebration and reception at the UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse. Events such as Homecoming 2021 highlight the University’s efforts in preparing students who make a difference in their communities and the world.

For more scenes from Homecoming Weekend, check out duq.edu/homecoming.
It wasn’t a job for the faint of heart. Fresh out of a neuroscience undergraduate program, Victoria Deardorff, A’11, was hired for her first job working with a university research lab at the Allegheny County Medical Examiner’s Office. While the medical examiner and technicians performed an autopsy on the rest of the body, Deardorff removed brains from cadavers so they could be taken to the lab that was studying schizophrenia. “I lasted seven whole days,” said Deardorff. “It takes a very specific type of person to maintain that composure needed during an autopsy, and I didn’t handle it very well.” Besides, she had a passion that she was itching to explore.

FROM PH.D. TO PLANNER

Throughout college, Deardorff intended to earn a Ph.D. in behavioral psychology and study drug addiction with a goal of working for the National Institutes of Health. In April of her senior year—just six weeks before graduation—she turned down her Ph.D. program offer and shared her dream of becoming an event planner with her parents. “Their jaws hit the floor because it was the complete opposite of what I studied,” she said. “They spent all this money on my neuroscience degree, and now I didn’t want to do anything with it.”

With no professional experience and graduation looming, Deardorff applied for every entry-level event planning job she could find—from Pittsburgh to Chicago to New York City—with no success. Reluctantly, she put her dream on hold and accepted the job offer from the research lab. She tried to settle in and convince herself that she’d fall back in love with science, but it wasn’t meant to be.

After Deardorff left that role, she continued applying for her dream job. A few months later, her big break came. She was hired as an events assistant at another Pittsburgh university, helping the team plan events that ran the gamut from big to small, simple to complex.

“After looking at all of these other major cities and applying all over the country, I ended up finding a job right here at home,” she said.

A STEP TOWARD THE FUTURE

A few years later, Deardorff started to consider going back to school for a master’s degree. “I realized that I wanted to grow in my career, and I wanted to have that seat at the big table,” she says. “In my mind, one of the ways to prove myself was to have the education to back it up since I didn’t have the undergraduate background.”

At Duquesne, Todd Eicker, executive director, graduate enrollment services, encourages potential graduate students to explore the many program offerings that can lead to second-chance careers, or simply career growth within their current profession.

“Having a master’s degree can enhance your earning potential versus just having a bachelor’s degree,” he said. “It...
talented event vendors in the city, and I was seeing all of these years before its inception. "At that time, I was meeting really and it helped when I went to launch my own business."

"I called in a lot of favors to design a logo and build a website," she said. "During this time, I created a buzz on social media about this big thing that's launching in a few months."

Burgh Brides (burghbrides.com) formally launched Dec. 1, 2014. Featuring joyful polka dots and a Pittsburgh-appropriate black and gold color scheme (punctuated by pink), the website features a blog, planning resources, real Pittsburgh wedding photos and a vendor guide that's become one of the most trusted planning resources in the region. Deardorff anticipated that it would be a total flop, but, the platform received rave reviews from vendors and engaged couples. Burgh Brides has become more advanced over time as Deardorff adds functionality, keeps up with technology trends and finds new ways to engage with readers. Visitors can even search for inspiration photos by wedding style, color scheme or individual details like bouquets, cakes and favors. More than just a website, Burgh Brides' social media accounts allow engaged couples to connect with one another, ask questions, tap into Deardorff's expertise and share photos of their own Pittsburgh weddings.

LIVING A DREAM...FULL-TIME

Burgh Brides has become so successful that it's now Deardorff's full-time job. She left her university job in 2017 to focus on managing the growing platform and its almost 40,000 social media followers and 18,000 unique monthly readers. She notes that this success would not have been possible without the knowledge and confidence gained during her master's program, and she encourages others to pursue their dreams—even if it means taking a risk and making a drastic transition. After all, if she can pivot from autopilot to sending couples down the aisle, anything is possible with determination, grit and the right education. "I learned that my professional joy was coming from creating something on my own, building something from scratch and helping people," she said. "To be able to do that full-time? That's just incredible."

A DEGREE THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

Deardorff considered other universities, but the integrated marketing communications graduate program at Duquesne seemed like the best fit. She had no idea what to expect in a graduate program, especially in a field that she hadn't studied before. But she did know what she wanted to achieve and the impact she wanted to make on the industry.

Deardorff worked full-time during the day; assisted a wedding planner part-time on weekends and attended classes at night, finding the program challenging but manageable as she expanded her horizons and learned the nuts and bolts of communications.

In addition to the marketing and public relations courses that benefited her professionally, Deardorff found conflict and crisis management courses invaluable for everyday life and effectively communicating in her personal and professional relationships. Her previous interest in neuroscience reemerged a bit as she studied the psychology behind why people make buying decisions and how an effective marketer can influence that.

"Going back to get that master's degree was one of the best decisions I've ever made," she said. "It helped me in my job, and it helped when I went to launch my own business."

CREATING A COMMUNITY

Deardorff first had the idea for Burgh Brides four or five years before its inception. "At that time, I was meeting really talented event vendors in the city, and I was seeing all of these stylish weddings and events," she explained. "But when you go on national wedding planning websites, all they talked about were New York events, Philadelphia weddings, Chicago and Los Angeles. Never any mention of Pittsburgh."

Many of her friends were getting engaged and planning weddings around this time. She'd hear how overwhelming the process had become—how they didn't know where to begin and how stress and anxiety had taken over. Local planning resources were few and far between, so her wheels started turning.

"I wanted to build a platform where vendors could be showcased and events could be shown off," says Deardorff. "Engaged couples could find the planning help they were searching for."

With a seed investment of $600, she called in reinforcements to make her dream a reality. She put her graduate studies in marketing and public relations into action and used her industry connections to hire friends to support her.

"I called in a lot of favors to design a logo and build a website," she said. "During this time, I created a buzz on social media about this big thing that's launching in a few months."

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Duquesne Salutes a Hero

Those who remember Duquesne’s victory garden, ROTC drill sessions before the sunrise, and the flag proudly displayed in Father (and Brigadier General) Henry McMahon’s presidential office, as well as those who today pause to offer a silent prayer before the statue of Our Lady of Victory, understand Duquesne’s tradition of respect for our country’s armed forces and military veterans.

Through sharing stories of sacrifice, we help to preserve the legacy of veterans who played important roles in our nation’s history. Whether these narratives are passed down around the dinner table, archived in a library or shared in a publication, they connect us to a past we did not experience, reminding us of veterans who demonstrated commitment and courage while enduring the ultimate sacrifice.

Lt. Robert C. Styslinger, Duquesne alumnus, decorated veteran of World War II, and decorated field artillery officer in the Korean War, was killed in action at the Battle of Chosin Reservoir—a defining moment of the Korean War—in November 1950.

Styslinger grew up in Pittsburgh and began his studies at Duquesne in August of 1942, but then, like so many young men at that time, he was drafted into the Army. As an infantryman in World War II, he saw action in the Pacific, where he was awarded the Bronze Star for unwavering courage in the Battle of Leyte in 1944.

After the war, here turned to the United States and resumed his studies at Duquesne. As a student in the College of Arts and Sciences, he was an active member of the Newman Club and a charter member of Alpha Epsilon fraternity. Upon graduation in 1949, he was awarded certificates of distinction as an ROTC cadet and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Artillery.

In 1950, he was dispatched to Korea where he participated in the Inchon Landing—a battle of the Korean War that resulted in a decisive victory and strategic reversal in favor of the United Nations Command. On Sept. 27, 1950, he was awarded the Bronze Star with a “V” device, denoting valor and heroism as a front-line artillery officer.

As forces from the United States and United Nations moved north to liberate the Korean peninsula, they were met by a massive invasion of Chinese Communist troops. Lieutenant (by this time First Lieutenant) Styslinger’s unit was surrounded by Chinese troops at the Chosin Reservoir. In his final moments, as recounted by a fellow officer, “Bob had gone up a hill to observe targets for the guns and was shot. He came down the hill, told his fellow soldiers he thought he had been shot.” Styslinger died from the gunshot wound Nov. 29, 1950, and was awarded, posthumously, a Purple Heart. His body was returned to United States’ authorities by the North Korean government in 2018, and he was buried with military honors in Arlington National Cemetery in June of 2021.

The next time you pass the statue of Our Lady of Victory on our campus, please offer a silent prayer of thanks for Styslinger’s service to our country and to our Duquesne tradition. May he rest in peace.

Photos provided from the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service. The appearance of U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) visual information does not imply or constitute DoD endorsement.
Pennsylvania larks singing in the rustling trees melodically compliment the hurried traffic passing by Lourdes Grotto.

Fans cheering their favorite Duquesne teams at the Arthur J. Rooney Field, while announcers and coaches call out plays.

Faint musical notes floating in the campus air as music students cultivate their artistry and master their technique.

And, of course, the beautiful hourly chiming of the chapel bells, serve as functional reminders of the University’s Spiritan mission.

If you close your eyes, you are here. The sounds of Duquesne’s campus are unlike any other; each may evoke a different memory or emotion.

The inaugural Mary Pappert School of Music’s SoundWalk is a self-guided listening tour of the sounds of students walking, vehicular traffic, birds singing. Participants are encouraged to interpret Duquesne’s environment, culture and history through sound. This project is the brainchild of Assistant Musicianship Professor Dr. Nicole Vilkner and is the first sound-based SoundWalk in the Pittsburgh area created by music school students.

“Our SoundWalk brings attention to the sounds that people encounter every day on campus,” said Vilkner, whose research focuses on how the urban, built environment affects music making.

STUDENT SOUND SITES

The SoundWalk currently features 15 exhibits, or SoundSites, artfully created by insightful upper-level undergraduate and graduate music students all learning together in Vilkner’s Music and Soundscape advanced musicianship topics course.

“It was a very collaborative project where students met to talk about their ideas and to give each other feedback,” continued Vilkner about the horizon-expanding experience with her students.

The SoundSite of Andrew Taylor, a masters in music performance student, is a juxtaposition between the changing road sounds of Bluff Street and the visual serenity of the campus chapel.

“‘At first, what I was looking at—the chapel—did not match what I was hearing,’” said Taylor as he shared his discontent. “‘But as I continued listening, I noticed that the constant rumble and rhythm of the road actually had a rather pleasant and calming effect. It was soothing like an ocean: always moving, never ceasing and yet never quite the same.‘”

Javiera Pinto Neira’s SoundSite is from a tent erected on College Hall’s lawn due to COVID-19 protocol restrictions that became a refuge for many students for meals and social connection, even if at a safe distance. A recent masters in clarinet performance 2021 graduate, Neira related the conversational sounds captured in the tent to the Latin sobre-mesa, conversation time that usually occurs just after a family meal.

PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE

Vilkner’s SoundWalk project stretched her students’ ideas of sound and music, but it also did much more. With this project they have discovered new possibilities in their studies and the impact on the larger world, gaining a variety of skills from creative storytelling and sound editing to project management that are applicable for a range of future career options.

“We all should not only be musicians, but also sound engineers to better understand the importance of sound, how it works, etc.,” said Joe Phillippi, a music and digital media junior who gathered and created a Rooney Field Soundsite on the symphony of sport sounds that can be an important part of the human experience, and unique to the Duquesne campus experience.

“These experiences also massively open up my options,” said Phillippi, “and have helped me tremendously in understanding not only the world around me, but the world I can create.”

The SoundWalk adds another layer of beauty to Duquesne’s park-like, urban campus and will continue to expand. As these students now realize, there is beauty in everyday, if you only listen; sounds can be reminders of memories of good times and camaraderie at Duquesne.

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DUQUESNE EARNS STARS SILVER RATING

Contributions from dozens of departments helped Duquesne earn a STARS silver rating for its sustainability achievements from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

With more than 900 participants in 40 countries, AASHE’s STARS program is the most widely recognized framework for publicly reporting information about a university’s sustainability performance. Duquesne participated in the program not only to see how it compared to other institutions but also to learn how it could improve sustainability efforts, according to Mary Kate Rank, graduate program coordinator for the University’s Center for Environmental Research and Education (CERE).

The STARS report reviews a university’s sustainability achievements in academics, engagement, operations, planning and administration, and innovation and leadership. Duquesne’s curriculum and research, such as its top-ranked Sustainable MBA program and advanced environmental science programs, received high scores. The report also highlighted the University’s efforts in engaging the entire campus, such as the community garden near Laval House, and the public through its annual Integrity of Creation Conference.

“Duquesne’s social justice mission is so interwoven with the goals behind sustainability,” said CERE Director and Environmental Microbiology Professor Dr. John Stolz. The focus on sustainability reflects Duquesne’s commitment to equity and opportunity in the region, while broadening students’ perspectives about environmental issues.

PICTURED IN THE PHOTO ABOVE: Graduate assistants Gabriella Zuccolotto, left, and Carmissa Lange pose in front of the campus raised bed garden.

NEW SENIOR VP FOR LEGAL AFFAIRS AND GENERAL COUNSEL

Pamela W. Connelly joined the University as senior vice president for legal affairs and general counsel in the spring of 2021.

The search committee, led by VP Matt Frist, presented an incredibly talented group of candidates for the final selection. “As the process moved along, it became clear that Pam Connelly’s vast experience in higher education law and her stellar reputation nationally and in the Pittsburgh community would make her a perfect choice to lead Duquesne’s legal affairs team,” said President Ken Gormley.

“I have long admired Duquesne and its profound impact on its students, the community and the world beyond,” Connelly said. “Duquesne’s remarkable leadership team, led by President Gormley, has artfully captured a compelling vision for the future. I am honored to be named to this role and look forward to contributing to Duquesne’s continued momentum.”

She has practiced in the area of higher education law since 2003, serving most recently as a shareholder at the law firm Strassburger McKenna Gutnick & Gefsky in Pittsburgh, where she specialized in higher education and employment litigation. Previously, Connelly served as an executive administrator and in-house counsel at the University of Pittsburgh, where she served as the first vice chancellor for diversity and inclusion.

Connelly is a member of the Allegheny County Bar Association and the National Association of College and University Attorneys. Connelly holds a bachelor’s degree in economics from Pennsylvania State University and earned her juris doctor from the University of Pittsburgh.

Read more about Connelly’s background and expertise here: duq.edu/Connelly.

DESPITE TOUGH COMPETITION, TWO DUQUESNE STUDENTS NAMED FULLBRIGHT SCHOLARS

Two Duquesne University students have received prestigious U.S. Fulbright Awards in the program’s most competitive year ever.

Alex Wolfe, who recently graduated with a bachelor’s degree in economics, and Michael Kramer, a doctoral candidate in philosophy, were named U.S. Fulbright Scholars and are now teaching and studying at international locations.

Wolfe will be teaching English in Taiwan while Kramer will work on completing his philosophy dissertation at Heidelberg University in Germany. They received the awards during the Fulbright U.S. Student Program’s most competitive year—more than 17,700 students applied for the award, a record high for the program and an 11% increase from the previous year.

“It’s a great reflection on our faculty and students to earn these incredible honors,” said Christine Pollock, senior director of sponsored programs at Duquesne. “We work closely with our students to help them achieve their goals and pursue bigger goals.”

“When I give talks, I always start by saying I’m honored to be Duquesne’s president to serve our amazing students,” said Gormley. “I’m doubly honored now that the board has given me more time to keep moving Duquesne forward. They have shown unwavering support for me, my leadership team and for all of us at Duquesne for what we’ve done and for the bold aspirations we have for our students.”

The Duquesne University Board of Directors recently voted to extend President Ken Gormley’s contract for an additional five years, through academic year 2026-2027.

Board chair John C. McGinley made the announcement of the contract extension in video remarks during Duquesne’s annual President’s Dinner.

“It is hard to enumerate how much Ken Gormley has accomplished,” McGinley said. “He embraces our Spiritan tradition and fosters its presence. He is an advocate of academic excellence and, as a president, he serves God by serving students, and it is concerned for their physical, emotional and academic well-being. With Ken at the helm, we can look forward to another five years during which Duquesne will seize new opportunities and pursue bigger goals.”

The University’s Office of Research and Innovation encourages students to expand their horizons by beginning their research efforts early in their college careers. The office provides a review committee of faculty, some who are Fulbright recipients themselves, to provide insight and edits to application drafts.

Learn more at duq.edu/Fulbrights.

BOARD EXTENDS PRESIDENT GORMLEY’S CONTRACT

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THE CENTER FOR AFRICAN STUDIES

held its Global Public Health Speaker Series in early October to discuss mental well-being during the pandemic.

The University is among the TOP FIVE Pennsylvania schools for Online Bachelor’s Programs

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT
Pharmacy Alumna Receives Highest Honor in Field

Dr. Babette S. Edgar graduated from Duquesne University with a Pharm.D. degree in 1991 prepared for anything, ready to challenge herself, to go beyond the surface and bring her new knowledge to the world.

Since then, she has successfully held a variety of roles including professor—training and educating the next generation of pharmacists; executive—leading management companies and pharmaceutical companies on career, Edgar has advised health plans, pharmacy benefit for their goals.

Not one to shy away from bigger goals, Edgar, area leader for their sustained, exemplary and distinguished thought leader on managed care pharmacy, having thought leader on managed care pharmacy, having operated her own consulting firm. She is a national insurance and benefits organizations; and owner—leading the next generation of pharmacists; executive—leading the practice of pharmacy. During her 25-year service to the practice of pharmacy.

Edgar said during her acceptance speech. “I would like to thank the colleagues and friends that nominated me for the 2021 AMCP annual meeting.

Dr. Ellen Gawalt has been named interim dean of the Bayer School of Natural and Environmental Sciences. An accomplished and influential researcher, Gawalt has authored or co-authored more than 100 scientific papers and presentations. Her research has generated more than $3.5 million in funding, with a focus on scientific discovery and student education. A professor at Duquesne since 2003, Gawalt is a mentor for the Bayer Scholars Program, which provides full-tuition scholarships and research opportunities for underrepresented groups in chemistry.

“Science plays such an important role in our society, so it’s an honor to help educate the next generation of scientists,” Gawalt said. “As interim dean, I look forward to working alongside our excellent faculty and staff to help students explore new discoveries and reach their goals.”

New Institute to Shape the Future of Journalism

Over the last year, discussions of social justice, the COVID-19 pandemic and the presidential election have emphasized the importance for encouraging the highest standards in journalism ethics and restoring the public’s trust in mainstream media. To fuel progress, Duquesne launched a new institute dedicated to educating and empowering the next generation of journalists to serve as catalyst in rebuilding the public’s confidence in the media.

Understanding that public trust in a media ecosystem is critical to helping democracy thrive, the Duquesne University Institute for Ethics and Integrity in Journalism, made possible by a generous gift from alumna Patricia Doherty Yoder, serves as a valuable resource to build on the success of the journalism and media program.

A highly respected public relations professional who held positions in government and the corporate sector, Ms. Yoder says that now, more than ever, it’s important to train graduates on how to be ethical producers and consumers of news and to carry on such responsibilities with vigor.

Beyond fostering the best in ethical journalistic practices, the Institute will invest in students’ success by providing internships, creating mentorship opportunities and connecting scholars with professionals who exemplify the best journalistic values of civil discourse, truthfulness, balanced reporting and respectful interviewing. By creating programs that bridge from classrooms to careers, the Institute aims to help students secure jobs and gain real-world skills in applied ethics.

“This Institute expands the horizon of our already strong commitment to civil discourse and ethics, and it builds upon our new Center for Emerging and Innovative Media as well as our impressive media department,” Duquesne President Ken Gormley said.

To support the Institute’s goals, three notable media professionals will provide guidance to students and faculty. As Fellows, Tara Bradley-Steeck, Cindy Skrzycki and Paula Reed Ward will collaborate with the journalism and media program to continually engage with aspiring and active journalists to provide new opportunities devoted to journalism ethics.

“In my professional life, I understand just how crucial it is to have people of integrity shaping how we understand the world,” Yoder said. “I know Duquesne has the talented people and the institutional will to pursue this important work.”

For more information, visit www.duq.edu/journalism-institute.
In Memoriam

The Hon. Terence McVerry, A’65, L’68, died March 8 in Mt. Lebanon, Pa., at age 77. McVerry worked his way through undergraduate and law school studies while working in a strip mine and his family’s tavern in Washington County. McVerry began his legal career in the Allegheny County District Attorney’s office, later moving into private practice and becoming active in politics, serving as a state representative. He was a member of the commission that drafted Allegheny County’s home rule charter and served as the first county solicitor under the new form of government. Nominated to the U.S. District Court by President George W. Bush in 2002, he earned unanimous Senate confirmation. McVerry moved into private practice and became active in politics, serving as a state representative. He was a member of the commission that drafted Allegheny County’s home rule charter and served as the first county solicitor under the new form of government. Nominated to the U.S. District Court by President George W. Bush in 2002, he earned unanimous Senate confirmation.

In 1970

In 2021

In New Arrivals

Andrea McCullom Mejia, GP’09, recently graduated from Temple Medical School with her M.D. McCardi is training in emergency medicine at the University of Pennsylvania General Hospital in Pittsburgh.

Tiffany Wiedeman, B’73, earned her Master of Science in Health Administration and Master of Business Administration at Saint Joseph’s University in Philadelphia. She is working as an associate specialist at Merck.

Alyssa Golfieri, L’12, has recently passed a rigorous examination in November 2020. Announced November 2020 professionals around the world who hold the CFRE designation.

Allan Kotun, G’07, G’13, has been an entertaining Lourdes Catholic Church in Venice, Florida.

Max Baer, L’75, was elected Grand Knight of the Supreme Court on April 1, 2021.


Vanessa Venicci, A’08, is the VP of Operations at Venezie Sporting Goods & Apparel and Izzy Embroidery. The businesses employ 212 individuals with retail locations in Elwood City and Beachwood, Pa.

Robert Bartle, L’90, was promoted to partner with focus on real estate, corporate and real estate transactions from the firm’s newest location in downtown Pittsburgh.

Jonathan Ogurchak, GP’09, has been appointed as a shareholder of the firm.

Heather L. Fisher

Alyssa Golfieri, L’12, has recently been selected as one of 90 participants for corporate responsibility at the firm’s legal function, providing legal advice to key stakeholders, executives and staff.


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Replacing Your Paycheck (2016).

Bob Urish, B’72, retired from Pitt-Ohio in January 2021.

Nancy Allen, GA’82, published a novel.

Suzanne Norton, L’83, was selected as one of the Top 50 lawyers in Northwest Ohio by the Toledo Bar Association in the field of women’s compensation (defense).

Yvonne Brown, A’88, launched a career in multimedia production for a business, YB Productions, and a new product 4 URE Skin, a plant-based moisturizer.

Annette Hostoffer, A’85, co-authored her second book, Financial Therapy: Co-chairs the Transitional Academy Award for Distinguished Teachers.

Amanda Dequinte, L’10, has been elevated to partner with focus on real estate, corporate and real estate financial transactions from the firm’s newest location in downtown Pittsburgh.

Evelyn Ayer, A’71, received a Technical Achievement Award at the Academy Awards.

Garveno Marcia, L’02, co-authored his second book, Financial Therapy: Co-Chairs the Transitional Academy Award for Distinguished Teachers.

Christopher Cullen, A’91, is currently a partner with focus on real estate, corporate and real estate financial transactions from the firm’s newest location in downtown Pittsburgh.

Steven Regan, L’88, has been appointed as a shareholder of the firm.


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Offer Your Prayers at Duquesne’s Lourdes Historic Grotto

Outside of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto is one of the most sacred prayer spaces on Duquesne’s campus. At all times of the day and night, students, faculty, staff, alumni and visitors make their way to the Grotto for quiet reflection and prayer. It is holy ground dedicated to Mary, our Mother of the Lord. While secluded from campus traffic, the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto overlooks the City and the Liberty Bridge as an outward sign of the Duquesne University community’s deep faith.

Hand-crafted by Spartans and fraternity members in 1956, the iconic Grotto was restored and rededicated in 2019. Dennis Breencle, B’71 (an alumni brother of the Alpha Epsilon Fraternity), and his wife Patricia were principal benefactors of the effort, with additional support from Highmark Health.

The Grotto honors the memory of Brother Francis’s mother, Helen Dorothy Spock Brencle, who as a young widow, attended classes at Duquesne that prepared her for a 35-year career as a Catholic school teacher. Her Duquesne legacy has since extended to her son, son-in-law, a nephew, and his wife.

Candles have been added to the Grotto as part of the recent renovation. For those who cannot be on campus, Spartan Campus Ministries will host prayer requests and light a candle for your intentions.

To submit a prayer request, please visit www.MyDuquesne.duq.edu/grottocandles.

In MEMORIAM

The Hon. Stephen A. Zappala Sr., A’54 died May 21 at Pittsburgh at age 88. Zappala attended Georgetown Law School after graduating from Duquesne, and served as Allegheny County planning director, county solicitor and a Common Pleas Court judge before being elected to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court in 1951. He was elevated to Chief Justice in 2001 and retired from the court in December 2002.

He is credited with spearheading the adoption of legal information technology into Pennsylvania appellate courts. Zappala was inducted into Duquesne’s Century Club of Distinguished Alumni in 1988.

In MEMORIAM

Mr. Joseph Oddis, P’30, H’99 died Feb. 24 at age 92, in Bethesda, Md. Oddis visited Duquesne as a high school student intending to study music, but was inspired by Pharmacy Dean Hugh Muldoon to change his field of study. He served as a pharmacist at Mercy Hospital before and after being drafted into the Army and became involved in regional hospital association leadership in the late 1950s. He was named chief executive officer of the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists (ASHP) in 1960 and held the position for 37 years. During his tenure, the organization’s membership grew nearly tenfold and ASHP became the accrediting body for pharmacy residency and pharmacy technician training programs. Oddis was a charter inductee into the Century Club of Distinguished Duquesne Alumni in 1978.

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Deceased Friends from 12/9/20 to 6/18/21
Edward J. Bitter, Ed.D.
C. Melvin Eiben
Francis X. Fleming
Lynn A. Knecht
Edward J. Bitler, Ed.D.
George E. Colcombe
C. Melvin Eiben
Dominic Errico
Francis X. Fleming
Lynn A. Knecht
Gerald E. Kolavic, D.M.D.
Guido Lepore
Gregory B. Lutz
Carol A. Matthews
Mary E. McMarr
Charles McQuillan
Anthony J. Mowod
Joanne B. Rogers
Patricia R. Rooney
Jerome F. Schmitt
Abraham Twerski
Georgia Zeedick
Charles E. Kempf, B’81
Cynthia B. Kiratzis, GA’81
James P. Madden, B’82
Curt M. Weber, Esq., L’82
Laurette S. Cribbins, GE’83
Barry A. Steckel, A’84
Elka M. Von Eckartesberg, GE’84
Russel F. Bromer, Esq., L’85
James F. Davis, GB’87
Jeffrey A. Hutton, Esq., L’87
Thomas P. Montet, B’88
Robert E. Chesman, GA’90
Craig M. Hoffman, A’90, GA’91
Thelma M. Jones, GE’90
Donald L. McKee, Esq., L’90
Catherine A. Zakouca, Esq., A’90
Donald Brent LaTeller, GA’91
Michael B. Diven, A’93
Melissa A. Deardoff, A’94
Jacalyn N. Flynn, N’94
Robert C. Hickman, GB’94
Anne J. Marchessault, A’94
Linda A. Dickerson, GA’97
Danae M. Dinevide, A’98
Mary C. Lottrert, E’91, P’98
Bret D. Davidson, M’00
Scott R. Drai, PharmD-CDE, GP’00
Kevin Kupcsak, GE’00
Kelly D. Tuli, PharmD, GP’01
Katherine E. Denike, HS’01, GH’02
Mary Jo Lenart, A’05
Nathan L. Ward, A’05, GE’08
Joy Chestnut, GA’12
Matthew Bauman, GA’16

Submit Alumni Updates or a Photo
Class Notes, online and in print, are an opportunity for alumni to share personal and professional news and accomplishments. Members of our alumni community are invited log into www.myduquesne.duq.edu/alumninews to tell us and others about a recent job change, promotion, award, publication, marriage, new family member, reunion or anniversaries.

Submissions are subject to editing for clarity and length. All submissions will be available online; however, space limitations prohibit us from including all alumni updates in our magazine.

In Memory of
John G. Rangos, Sr.

John G. Rangos Sr., H’00, passed away on July 21 at age 91. A pioneering entrepreneur in the waste management industry and renowned regional philanthropist, Rangos was an unparalleled benefactor to Duquesne University, beginning with funding the establishment of the Rangos School of Health Sciences in 1990. His legacy on the Bluff also includes the Anna Rangos Rizakus Endowed Chair in Health Sciences and Ethics, endowed and term scholarships supporting students in the Rangos School, and the Rangos Prizes for curricular innovation. Earlier this year, Rangos made a commitment to underwrite the Rangos Family Virtual Anatomy Lab, which will be installed in Duquesne’s new College of Osteopathic Medicine.

An energetic and visionary leader, John Rangos was devoted to the mission of Duquesne University. He has been an inspiration to the whole campus community and will be deeply missed.
Do you know a high-school sophomore, junior or senior who is ready for BIGGER GOALS?

At Duquesne it’s our joy to help students dig into what they’re good at and discover why it’s good for the world.

As an alum, are you ready to pay forward the trust, patience and sense of possibility that you gained at Duquesne?

REFER A STUDENT.

We promise our students a horizon-expanding education that’s exactly what they need and more than they could have ever imagined.

Contact us at admissions@duq.edu to get your student started. Be sure to include Student Referral in the subject line. Or, call us at 412-396-6222 to speak to an admissions rep or schedule a visit to campus.