

TU

MAGAZINE SPRING 2020

Last Dance With Calypso

EMILY ANDERSON KELLY '10, '17 FORGED A CLOSE BOND WITH THE NATIONAL AQUARIUM'S LATE, BELOVED SEA TURTLE



SAY OUR
NAME

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SOCIALIZING ON
THE SPECTRUM

12

TIGER OF
THE SENATE

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Cleveland Doesn't Only Rock

Erik Mann '96 and the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society introduce public school students to the beauty of classical music.

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Come As You Are

The Hussman Center for Adults with Autism welcomes all.



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Tiger of the Senate

Sarah Elfreth '10 is taking Annapolis by storm.

ON THE COVER



The Feb. 2 death of Calypso, the beloved 500-pound green sea turtle who charmed visitors at her National Aquarium home for nearly 20 years, was big news in Baltimore. But it was personal for aquarist Emily Anderson Kelly '10, '17, who hand-fed Calypso carrots and Brussels sprouts.

"We're all at a loss and utterly devastated," she said. "She was my favorite animal to take care of."

Staff photographer Lauren Castellana '13 captured the cover image of Kelly and Calypso just three weeks before Calypso died. The University Photographers' Association of America awarded the photo third place in February's General Features and Illustrations category.

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President's Letter

I'm writing this letter on St. Patrick's Day. You're likely reading it in late April or early May.

Those two dates are mere weeks apart, yet the space between them is significant. The coronavirus pandemic will be one of those "where were you" moments of our generation.

For all of us, Towson University will be part of the "where."

Whether you're a student or alum, faculty or staff, neighbor or partner, TU is a part of your "where." And in the midst of such upheaval in our everyday lives, we are fortunate to have such dedicated faculty and staff, all of whom remain steadfast in supporting our academic mission and our students' success.

We all can agree these are exceptional times for our university, our state, our nation and our global community. While this moment requires some physical distance between us, we are all going through this together—as TU and as a global community. We are all bound together by this moment and forever will be. I'm bolstered by how the TU community is lifting each other in this most important time, the resolve of our faculty and staff and their dedication to inclusively serving our student population, hearing their concerns and working to support them beyond the classroom.

Towson University has been here for 154 years, and through that time, it has faced countless challenges. While this one has been unprecedented, our community will do what it has always done: unite and persevere.



So, as I sit here at an unusually sparse campus on March 17, looking to the future like many of you—unsure of where it will lead us by summer—I'm drawn to an Irish proverb: "Learning is the desire of the wise."

In the pursuit of learning and education, I hope that in late spring we are all free to reflect. What can we learn from social distancing, telework, distance learning and the interruption of our societal norms?

For me, it was that even in trying times, TU is a place that truly encourages the dynamic growth and inclusive success of each individual. And it was in watching the Class of 2020, challenged to the very end of their journey at TU. The "where" in your story now includes TU. As you pursue your "why," there's a whole community behind you.

Go Tigers!

KIM SCHATZEL,
TOWSON UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT



TREASURES

A Rockin' Good Time

Say you're walking through campus, and a pop of color catches your eye. Closer inspection reveals a rock painted bright yellow with the words "You are my sunshine."

How could you not feel just a bit more cheerful?

That's the goal of Towson Rocks, a student club whose members paint inspirational designs on rocks they then hide around campus and the local community. People who find the rocks can keep them or redistribute them. Each rock is labeled with the club's name and the finder can send a picture to @towsonrocks on Instagram.

Brooke Foundas, her sister Nichole and their

best friend Victoria Nicholson founded the club after picking up the hobby during their days at Tuscarora High School in Frederick, Maryland.

"Our goal is to spread kindness and positivity throughout campus and the community," says Brooke, the club's vice president.

That message is resonating with students. Towson Rocks was named TU's Best Student Group by *The Towerlight* in January.

Every other week 15 to 30 TU students paint rocks while listening to music and chatting. Fall 2019 was Towson Rocks' first semester as a club, and it turned out the jovial atmosphere and

eco-friendly paint created more than ornate rocks.

"I think one of our most heartwarming stories is when Brooke painted a rainbow rock," Nicholson says. "A girl on campus found it and shared her story through Instagram about how her sister was part of the LGBTQ+ community and that she wanted to give the rock to her sister to support her."

We asked the Foundases and Nicholson to paint several rocks specifically for this issue, and much to our delight, they agreed. Photos of the magazine-themed rocks can be found on some of the following pages.

Campus News



Mr. Secretary

Greg Slater '97 might just hate traffic more than you. Governor Larry Hogan named Slater secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation in late 2019. Previously, Slater served as administrator of the State Highway Administration.



Literary Gold

The Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA) awarded TU literary and arts magazine *Grub Street's* volume 68 a Gold Circle Award, the 17th year in a row the publication has been recognized. Six students and alumni were honored for their contributions to the magazine in categories ranging from essays and poetry to illustration.



Welcome to TU

Patrick T. McQuown will lead TU in entrepreneurship and innovation. McQuown provides a strategic vision and direction for entrepreneurship activities at the university and oversees the StarTU at the Army as well as the TU Incubator. The role is part of the Division of Strategic Partnerships & Applied Research.

Capital Pride

Students, faculty, staff and alumni joined President Kim Schatzel and other university officials on Feb. 25 in Annapolis for the 21st annual Tiger Pride Day. The event connects students to key lawmaking committees from the Senate and House to make concerns known on a state level. It also gives students and other members of the TU community a chance to network with legislators and their staffers at a luncheon. Tiger Pride Day is open to the entire TU community.



Launching Leaders

Twenty-five young women—one from each Baltimore County public high school—comprise the first, year-long cohort of the Outstanding Young Women Leaders program spearheaded by TU Presidential Scholar Nancy Grasmick '61 and the Women's Leadership Collective. The Outstanding Young Women Leaders program will provide leadership activities and events on campus and in the community. Each participant will meet and interact with TU administrators,



A Caring Delegation

Today's College of Health Professions (CHP) students are tomorrow's healthcare professionals. They got a little extra practice when they provided free health tips and screenings to Maryland delegates in Annapolis in February. The students offered grip strength testing, CPR demonstrations, gait speed timing, hearing protection techniques and tourniquet use activities for lawmakers and their staff. CHP Dean Lisa Plowfield and faculty also met with lawmakers to demonstrate the quality of TU students' work as well as CHP graduates' importance to the state—85% stay in Maryland to fill the 23,000-person employment gap in the field.



faculty and students and connect with a female corporate mentor. To be eligible for the program, the young women had to meet academic, leadership and community service requirements and be nominated by their principal. Members of the TU Women's Leadership Collective selected a finalist from each high school after reviewing applications and school transcripts and conducting interviews.

1

classroom in the new Science Complex that will lead directly into the Glen for outdoor learning.

80+

laboratories—research and teaching—will be in the Science Complex.

10,000

The number of students who will take classes in the Science Complex.

320,000

The square footage of the Science Complex, which is expected to be completed fall 2020.

1.7 billion

dollars being invested within a one-quarter mile radius from the intersection of York Road and Burke Avenue.



An Innovative, Strategic and Collaborative Professional

Vernon Hurte is the new vice president of student affairs.

Hurte—who will report to Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Melanie Perreault—serves as the university's chief student affairs officer, a member of the president's cabinet and an officer of the university. He provides university-wide leadership on all-inclusive services and programs that promote student engagement and success.

Hurte brings more than 18 years of experience in higher education to this leadership role. He joins TU from Iowa State University, where he served as the associate vice president for student affairs and dean of students from 2017 to 2020. At Iowa State, some of his efforts included leadership of 16 departments/functional areas and campus-wide initiatives.

He also served for five years as the assistant to the vice president and senior associate dean of students at The College of William & Mary.

Hurte received a B.S. in psychology from Bowie State University, a Master of Divinity from Virginia Union University and a doctorate in education from the University of Tennessee.

"Our goal was to bring an innovative, strategic and collaborative professional to TU to lead the Division of Student Affairs, a person who would bring unwavering commitment and extensive expertise aimed at promoting a culture of inclusion and diversity, outstanding student retention and degree completion," President Kim Schatzel and Perreault stated in a message to campus. "We also needed someone who would lead the academic and personal development of students and further TU's leadership in community engagement for our region. The search committee and process confirmed that Dr. Hurte fulfills all of those capabilities and qualities."



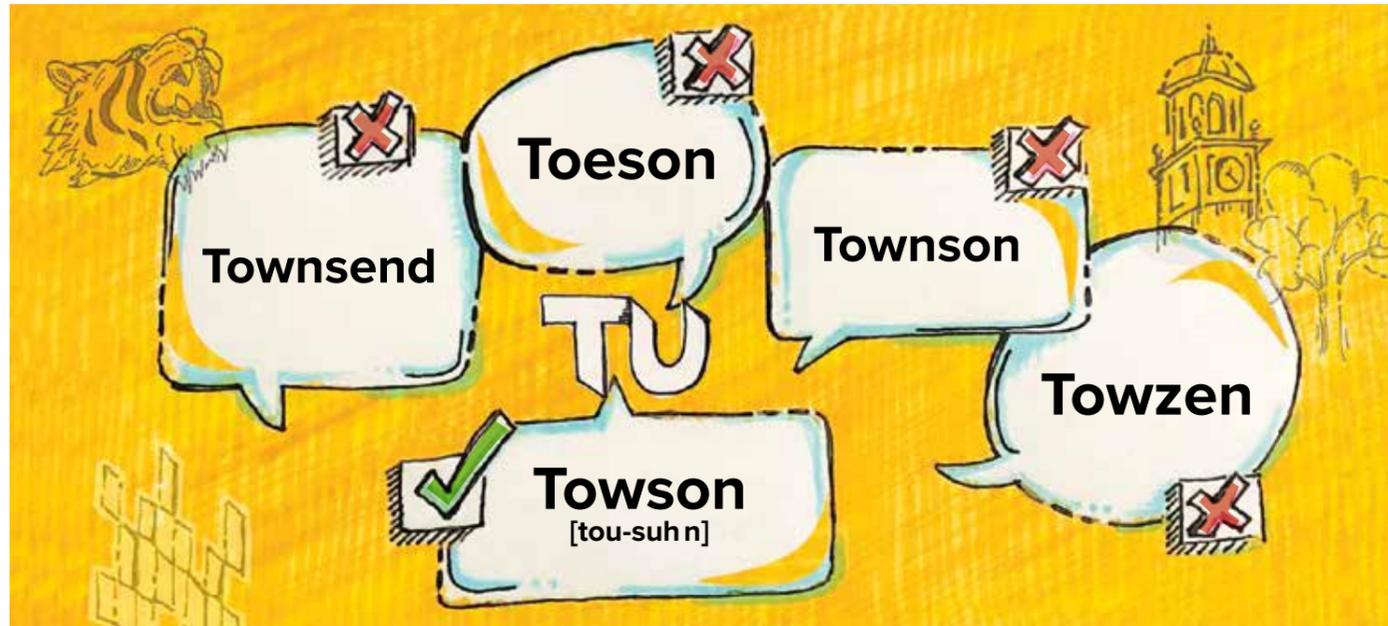
Sweet Dreams

Cleaving her career track has led to a taste of success for Allison Igwe '12.

The former English major appeared on *Chopped Sweets* in February. Aside from chefs with Michelin stars and decades of experience, she faced an array of unusual ingredients: spicy fish spread,

mini chocolate champagne bottles, red currants and avocado chocolate bars.

While Igwe's mini churros with spicy fish spread and red currant sauce and hot chocolate earned praise from the judges, she didn't advance past round one.



OFFICE HOURS

Mispronouncing “Towson”

Professor Karen Fallon, graduate program director, speech-language pathology, explains why our seemingly simple name is a tongue twister to so many.

This is my 15th year at TU, and I’ve heard people bungle the word “Towson” too many times to count.

Usually if they’re from the mid-Atlantic region or Baltimore, they’re fine. But for anybody who has never heard the name before, there’s a high likelihood that they’re going to mispronounce it.

Basically, what happens when people hear a word is that their brains are looking for a match to something that they already know. Because “Towson” is such an unusual word, their brain is essentially trying to figure out, “What is this? I’ve never heard this before.” When a person tries to say a new or unfamiliar word, they also need to make sense of the word in order to correctly pronounce it.

When we talk, we use what’s called coarticulation. As we are pronouncing one sound in a word, we are immediately getting ready to say the sounds that will follow. Our articulators are always in motion, so sounds always do sound a little bit different depending on what’s around them.

For example, when producing the sound /t/, if you begin to say the word “tea,” you will notice that your mouth is positioned differently than when you produce the /t/ in “tool.” It’s the same first sound, but already your

mouth is in a different position because it’s getting ready to say the next sound, which is different.

That influence of what’s coming up is called assimilation, which means that a sound becomes more similar to those around it; kind of like when you assimilate into a society. You make changes based on what is around you.

When people hear the word “Towson” and then try to pronounce it, they will often say “TOWN-sin,”

looking for a match to something that it knows. When we read an unknown word, we often do what’s called analogizing. We try to find a match to a word we already know.

For example, if a person came across the word “murse” when reading and they have never seen it before, they might think of a similar word they do know such as “purse” and use it to help them read the new word by swapping the first letters.

“The brain is looking for a match to something that it knows. When we read an unknown word, we often do what’s called analogizing. We try to find a match to a word we already know.”

inserting an “n” because they’re assimilating and predicting what’s coming up at the end. They’re getting ready to say that final “n,” and they just bring it forward to pronounce a word they know: “town.” “Tow” doesn’t make any sense to them. It’s an assimilation error—they’re predicting ahead to that last sound.

Pronouncing Towson as “Toe-sin” is a more common error if a person is reading it. Again, the brain is

When reading the word “Towson,” the most common pronunciation of “Tow” is “toe” not “t-OW.” It’s generally more difficult for people to read unfamiliar words such as foreign words or unfamiliar names.

My last name is pronounced “FAL-in,” like the late-night host Jimmy. People pronounced my name “fall-in” much more before Jimmy Fallon became famous. I had to spell my name all the time; now I don’t have to spell it as much. Thanks Jimmy.

The One **TEACHER** Who Changed My Life



A person, place or thing can make all the difference

GREG KNOLLMAN

Assistant professor, College of Education

When I was about nine years old, my parents said, “We’re thinking of adopting a child.” My brother Patrick came into our lives when he was about nine months old. He is one of the greatest teachers that I’ve had.

He also happens to have Down syndrome.

This winter break I was home for a while. Patrick is very outgoing and holds a few jobs in the community. The number of folks in the community—who I don’t know—who came up and talked to him about his day was tremendous.

He knows everybody’s name. He engages so much with folks that they naturally want to engage with him. He’s so open in that particular way.

One of the attributes of a great teacher is the ability to build quality relationships with students and recognize each for their uniqueness and talent. I think in that respect, Patrick has taught me better than anybody else why it’s so important to build a network and see the members as real people you care about.

He’s also taught me about developing self-advocacy and persistence. If you don’t get it right the first time, you don’t give up. You have to dig in and try again or you seek out help where you need it. You have to be very humble as a teacher.

If you’ve built professional relationships, you know who to pursue to help you to get better. You also know how to step back

when working with a student and say, “Well, that didn’t work well. Let’s try it another way.”

But teaching isn’t just about experience; it’s also about using evidence-based practices. I really value that I can combine my personal experience and passion with my strong pedagogical foundation to work with students at the undergraduate level, inspire them and help them pursue what they want to do in life.

When I was looking at colleges, I picked Indiana University for its business program. My dad has worked in all aspects of business, and I was excited to go to a university with a great business school. Sophomore year I decided to take Intro to Special Education to fill an open slot in my schedule. It was through that class I met Susan Klein, an education professor who became my undergraduate adviser

when I switched my major to secondary special education.

Susan encouraged me and was flexible in helping me take the passion I have for advocacy and education and channel that to help students with disabilities and their families prepare for the transition from high school in a meaningful way.

It’s not just me who has benefitted by learning from Patrick. Each of my siblings has pursued some avenue that links to working with individuals with disabilities. My sister works for an agency that provides support to families who have children with disabilities. My other brother is a pediatric ear, nose and throat specialist providing service and support to individuals with Down syndrome and other developmental disabilities.

Patrick leads by example, and we have learned a great deal from him.



Coffee With...

Andrew Young '06

We visited with the economics major who co-owns Vent Coffee Roasters.

📍 LOCATION:

Vent Coffee Roasters, Union Collective in Baltimore's Hampden neighborhood

☕ IN HIS CUP:

Pour over of single-origin Gasharu, from Nyamasheke, Rwanda

🔥 ADDICTION LEVEL:

"Between one to three cups a day, sometimes more if we're doing cuppings or espresso training."

Q: When did you first start drinking coffee?

A: With my parents in the '80s. It was mainly Folgers and Maxwell House, which did not taste like anything that I wanted to drink.

Q: So when did your love affair with coffee start?

A: It really wasn't until I was an adult that

I started realizing that, just like wine or craft beer, there are a lot of varieties and differences in coffee. I started working as a CPA downtown in 2012, and I became fascinated with the idea of small-batch, craft product. I met my business partner Sarah Walker, who had been roasting coffee on a small scale. We opened in August 2018.

Q: Where did the name come from?

A: The name Vent is the idea of having a time and place to let the s*** out of the day and take in something better. We want this space to encourage people to have a conversation with a friend or take a pause for some self-care.

Q: Where do you source your beans?

A: Colombia and Rwanda are two of my personal favorites. As much as possible we establish direct relationships with the growers. We're looking for high-quality coffees that are sustainably grown and where fair wages are paid to all people involved in the supply chain.

Q: What makes an actual bean or seed high quality?

A: Well, it's complicated. A lot has to do with the altitude needed to maintain mild temperature for slow growth and a denser seed. With temperatures changing worldwide we're seeing more varieties susceptible to pests and disease, so finding that right balance without using

chemicals is the key. Even at the best farms it's impossible to have a perfect harvest, so the beans have to be sorted after picking to remove defects. We only buy coffee rated as specialty grade as opposed to commodity grade.

Q: What percentage of your business is supplying other businesses with coffee?

A: Our wholesale is about 20% of our business. That's the area we're looking to grow. Right now, we're roasting about 500 pounds a month for ourselves and others. With our current equipment and floor plan, we have the room to grow to 4,000 pounds a month.

Q: The Guinness Open Gate Brewery near BWI Airport is one of your customers?

A: A friend who works for Guinness recommended us to their head brewer. She came, tried our coffee, loved it and wanted to work with us, so for a year and a half now they've been ordering for collaboration beers, like coffee stouts, and for serving coffee in their taproom and restaurant.

Q: Have you tried any of the beers?

A: Yeah, all of them. My personal favorite was a double coffee stout because it was nice and strong with extra coffee and 8.8% ABV. It was so smooth and chocolaty. It's really an honor that of all the coffee companies they could pick from, they chose to work with us.





Sweet Victory

★ FOOTBALL
Think you like football more than Darius Victor '17? Consider this.

"Watching it, playing it—I love everything about it," he says. "I love the fact that I'm good at it. The physicality of it. It's the best thing on this earth."
 Victor, who describes himself as a "smashmouth kind of guy," is making the most of his opportunity to play it for a living. A 5-foot-6-inch, 226-pound firecracker of a running back, Victor spent the winter and early spring bulldozing New York Guardians' opponents in the first season of the revived XFL.
 That he's even in the United States, let alone playing professional football, is somewhat of a miracle. He was born in a refugee camp in Ivory Coast, where his parents

had fled to escape war in their native Liberia. The family came to the U.S. when Victor was 5, and he spent his teenage years in Hyattsville, Maryland. In 2011, his older brother, Kevin, was shot and killed during an attempted robbery not far from the family's home.
 "He was my role model," Victor says. "My biggest critic, my biggest fan. I try to live my life to please him. He was tough on me but he made me the person I am today and I am forever grateful for him."
 Ten months later, a fire destroyed the Victors' apartment. Thankfully, no one was hurt, but it was another blow in an exceedingly difficult time.
 Victor chose to play at TU because of the program's family atmosphere. He rushed for 3,309

yards and 41 touchdowns while earning his degree in electronic media and film.
 After stints in the NFL with the New Orleans Saints and Arizona Cardinals without playing in a regular season game, he signed with the Guardians. Whatever his future holds, Victor knows it can't be any tougher than his past.
 "I'm living my dream again," he says. "I always wanted to be a professional football player and the XFL has given me an opportunity to do that. You can only control what you can control. Put your best foot forward, and be the best person that you can be at that moment. Everything that you have is a blessing."



"I'm living my dream again."

DARIUS VICTOR



EMERSON HURST '22 was an NCAA regional qualifier last year on balance beam and was one of TU's best gymnasts during the 2020 season.



WILL CANNY '21 was the 2019 CAA Diver of the Year and qualified for NCAA regionals for the second straight year in 2020. He took silver in this year's CAA championships in the 1-meter and 3-meter diving events.



LAUREN COLEMAN '20 won the shot put five times at meets during the winter indoor track and field season.



DENNIS TUNSTALL '20 is eighth all-time in men's basketball history in blocked shots. A shooter's worst nightmare, Tunstall recorded multiple blocks in more than 20 games this season.



Nukiya Mayo

Welcome to the Club

There are no jackets involved—Members Only, green or otherwise—but four basketball players joined an exclusive club this season. Nukiya Mayo posted 22 points in a loss to Iowa in November, while Kionna Jeter hit a third-quarter jumper in a win over the College of Charleston on Feb. 16 to secure their spots. Q. Murray became the third Tiger to do so when she tallied 13 points in a win at Hofstra. On the men's side, Brian Fobbs' layup in a loss to William & Mary made him the 27th men's basketball player to score 1,000 points in two years or fewer.



VOLLEYBALL

Going National

Outside hitter Olivia Finckel and setter Marrison Wonders went from Tiger Nation to the national stage. They were two of 214 athletes from 94 colleges selected to try out for the U.S. Women's National Volleyball Team. Also at stake at the tryouts in February were 56 spots in the U.S. Collegiate National Team programs.

DEPARTMENT OF ATHLETICS

Dual Threats

Tiger student-athletes continued their strong showing in the classroom, placing 246 student-athletes on the Colonial Athletic Association (CAA) Commissioner's Honor Roll for the fall 2019 term. Members must have participated in a CAA-sponsored sport and attained a minimum grade point average of 3.0 as a full-time student.

TRACK AND FIELD

Outdoing Herself

Sophomore Crystal Johnson doesn't know when to stop. She set two records in the same event—beating her own mark—at the Penn State Nationals meet at the end of January. She won the second heat of the 60-meter preliminaries with a time of 7.45 seconds and re-set the record in the semifinals of the same event with a time of 7.42 seconds.

SOFTBALL

Showing Her Class

Pitcher Julia Smith-Harrington was among the 30 softball student-athletes selected as candidates for the 2020 Senior CLASS Award. To be eligible, a student-athlete must be an NCAA Division I senior and have notable achievements in four areas of excellence: community, classroom, character and competition. Smith-Harrington has a career 3.9 GPA.



COME AS YOU ARE

ALL ARE WELCOME AT THE HUSSMAN
CENTER FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISM.

WORDS BY ADRIENNE FRANK
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
LAUREN CASTELLANA

They start arriving two hours early, flocking from up to 50 miles away—a testament to the magic of this place and the dearth of others like it. A few people want to be the first to play Mario Kart or Jenga after the doors open at 6 p.m., but most are just excited to be there—after all, it’s the first time they’ve seen each other in two months. Those without a \$35 laminated membership card line up to buy a ticket before they sell out, and familiar faces greet new ones by asking politely but pointedly, “Who are you?” Some people carry bags of chips and pretzels or six-packs of soda (booze is prohibited, but thank goodness, *Star Wars* gear is not). Others clutch drawing supplies and chessboards that they’ll set up in a quiet corner.

Which isn’t going to be easy to find on this late February evening. The steady stream of people who step off the elevator on the second floor of Towson University’s Institute of Well-Being—the place to be on Friday nights, judging by the gaggle of mostly young men packed into the waiting room—are met with chatter and chuckles.

And a camaraderie that envelops them like a cozy weighted blanket.

“We’re all just here to enjoy the atmosphere and the company,” says Chris Hicks, 37, a neatly trimmed mustache framing his 100-watt smile.

Like the 50 other people who’ve gathered at the Hussman Center for Adults with Autism, Hicks is on the autism spectrum. Diagnosed in 1995, the Pikesville man has been coming to the social group since it began meeting twice a month in 2012.

“The hardest part of having autism is, sometimes it’s hard to meet people,” he says.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: GAIL GRASSO, 32; DANIEL ROPKA, 25; AMPEO CARPENTER, 37; MOLLY BAER, 18



I'm funny, serious, calm, flexible and I don't suffer fools lightly."

CHRIS HICKS, 37

It's ironic that while more people are being diagnosed with autism than ever before—7.8 million people, or 1% of the global population—they often feel completely alone.

One of the most commonly diagnosed developmental disorders in the United States, autism is characterized by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication and repetitive behaviors. Even as the number of people diagnosed is increasing—1 in 59 kids is now on the spectrum, up from 1 in 150 just 20 years ago, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—autis-

tic people are four times more likely to experience loneliness than the general public. Of the 900 autistic young people surveyed in 2018 by the United Kingdom-based National Autistic Society, 79% said they felt socially isolated, the deleterious mental and physical effects of which are akin to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, researchers said.

During a 12-month period, almost 40% of young adults on the spectrum never got together with friends, according to another study published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, and half of them never received a phone call or were invited out to socialize.

That the Hussman Center, which opened its doors in 2008, offers such a simple antidote for alienation and exclusion—providing a safe, welcoming space for autistic people of all abilities and their neurotypical peers to engage—is nothing short of extraordinary.

"A lot of people don't understand autism; my dad didn't understand for a long time," says Ryan Sammons, a soft-spoken 25-year-old who is partially deaf. "They think because I'm not really social and don't always understand them I don't want to interact.

"But when I'm here, I'm not alone," says the Baltimorean, "and that makes me feel happy."

Everyone has a desire to belong, but connectedness and community—long defined through a narrow neurotypical lens—take many forms. Sometimes it's a touch, a smile, a silent game of tic-tac-toe, a conversation or just the comfort that proximity provides. It's being seen, which is just as powerful as being heard.

"When they're at the Hussman Center," says Sharon Glennen, director of the Institute for Well-Being, "everyone belongs."

There are two ideologies when it comes to autism, both of which stem from a desire to improve the lives of people on the spectrum—but in very different ways. Some see autism as a set of symptoms to be fixed, cured, erased from the gene pool. Others argue that neurological variations, like

racial, ethnic and gender diversity, add to the richness of the human tapestry. They view perceived weaknesses as strengths in disguise and believe that the unique wiring in autism can inspire scientific discoveries, works of art and innovative solutions to some of our world's most pressing problems.

"Neurodiversity," a term that emerged in the late 1980s but is only now beginning to seep into discussions of diversity and inclusion, is at the heart of the Hussman Center's mission: to build a more equitable, empathetic society that embraces people who think, learn and communicate differently.

"We are looking at autism through a social justice lens. We aren't denying the difficulties that people on the spectrum face, but we [contend] that many of those barriers stem from attitudes that we still need to change," says Zosia Zaks, manager of programs and education at the center, who's also on the spectrum. "It isn't about 'fixing' the person, it's about changing the social architecture."

At TU, that starts with students.

This term, 70 students representing myriad majors, from deaf studies to business to anthropology, are enrolled in Zaks' Individuals on the Autism Spectrum course. The class fulfills the university's diversity requirement and is mandated for some programs, like the disability studies minor. The most promising students are also recruited for the College Autism Peer Support program, which pairs TU students on the spectrum with an undergraduate mentor.

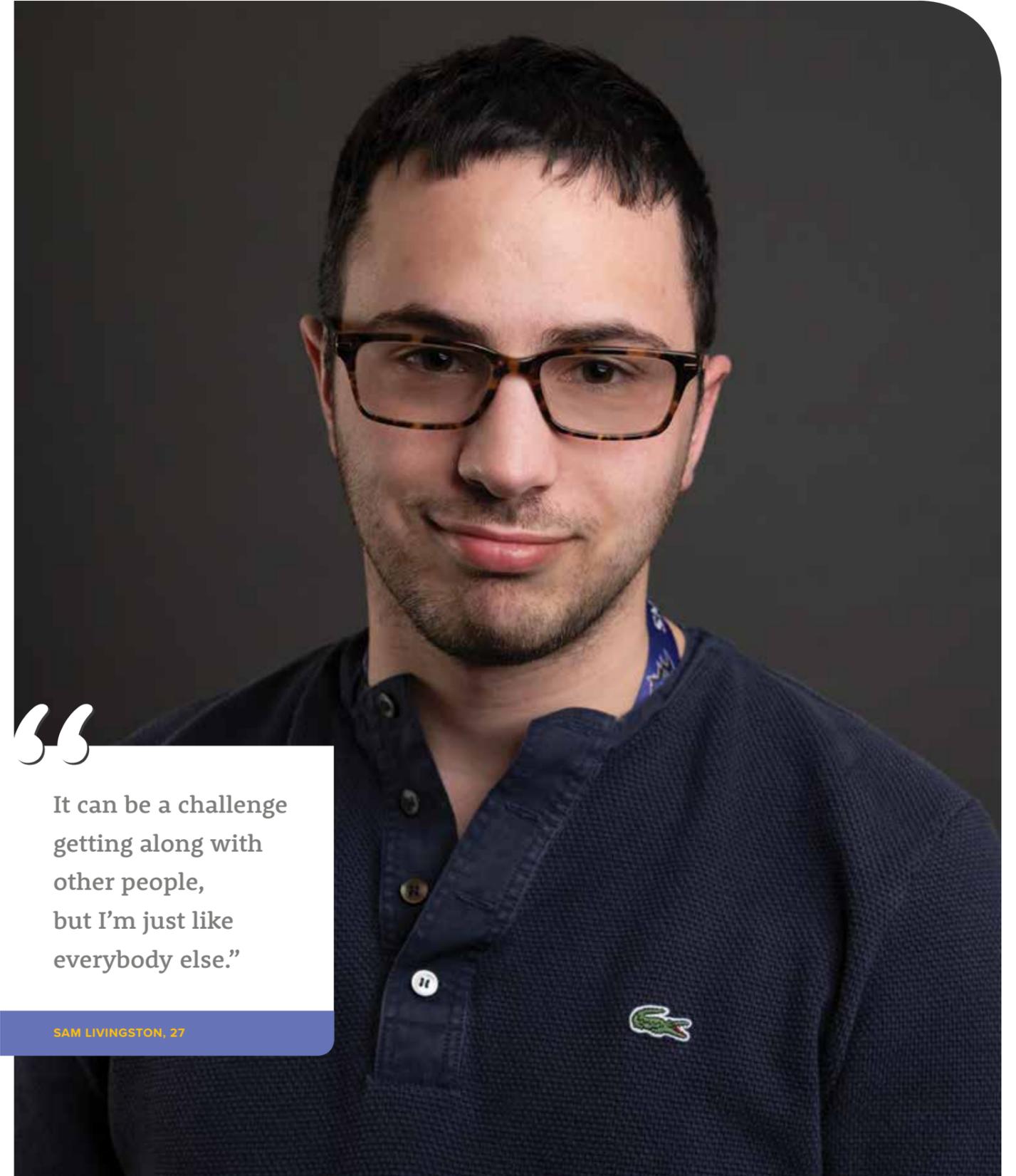
Students must complete 20 hours of service learning. They help out at the center's weekly classes for autistic adults, including art, cooking, fitness, robotics and stress management, which have drawn nearly 1,200 participants since 2016. Students are also required to attend at least two Friday night social groups.

Their charge—listening, learning, engaging, empowering—starts with becoming comfortable with people on the spectrum. Some, like freshman Corey Sparks, whose younger brother is autistic, jump right in, while others dip one toe at a time into what



It can be a challenge getting along with other people, but I'm just like everybody else."

SAM LIVINGSTON, 27





IRAGI NKERE, 25

Iragi Nkere started creating hand-drawn greeting cards when he was 9. He is inspired by cartoon characters and superheroes like Buzz Lightyear, the Power Rangers and the Ghostbusters.

(Opposite page) Ryan Sammons loves Civil War history, country music and Legos.

Glenn admits can be foreign waters. "This is one of the first times where [as neurotypicals] they're in the minority. Usually, they're the ones we have to tell to mingle, not the participants," she says, laughing.

During the first social group of the spring term on February 21, about 15 students fanned out, ducking into the apartment—complete with a kitchen and living room—to watch *Rango* or playing Apples to Apples and ice-breaker games in the classroom down the hall. All of them wore a smile, but for a few, it was a nervous one.

"Students come into the class with biases," Zaks says frankly. "Some think people with autism will be antisocial or unable to interact, or that they're going to need lots of help. Or they think they'll feel sorry for them.

"Part of this [for students] is seeing that even if people don't connect or socialize in typical ways, they're still participating and enjoying themselves on their own terms," Zaks continues.

"That's where the real destigmatizing work begins for students. It's the first step to becoming an ally."

Emily Friesner's first experience with people on the spectrum came in high school, when she worked with a nonverbal classmate. "I was hesitant at first," says the occupational therapy major. "I wanted to help him navigate his challenges, but—I know this sounds funny—I also wanted to make sure I was treating him like a person."

Now a junior, Friesner took Zaks' class during her freshman year and so enjoyed her time at the center that she volunteered before landing a part-time job there in 2018. Inspired by the people she's met at the Hussman Center, she hopes to work with children and young adults with intellectual disabilities after graduating from TU's combined bachelor's/master's OT program.

"You can't fully understand [autism] until you hang out with people on the spectrum," says

Friesner as she works the snack table at the social group, doling out cookies and cupcakes. "I think I've learned more from them than they've learned from me."

There's a saying among those on the spectrum: "If you've met one person with autism...you've met one person with autism." Everyone has different strengths and difficulties. And if the only autistic people you're familiar with are pop culture characters—the card-counting savant in *Rain Man* or the socially awkward scientist on *Big Bang Theory*—you have a one-dimensional view of an otherwise dynamic, diverse and complex community wrestling with challenges both universal to all young people and unique to life on the spectrum.

That the Hussman Center's philosophy is shedding light on the latter helps autistic people develop agency and defy society's assumptions about what's considered "normal." As Rosemary Davis of Bel Air, Maryland, says of her sons Eric, 28, and Nick, 25: "They're accepted for who they are and don't have to worry about being seen as 'off.'" On the spectrum, different is the norm.

Autistic people can be literal, obsessive, clever and witty—often in the span of a single conversation. Their knowledge of *Star Trek*, trains or physics can run a mile deep. Some don't make eye contact, others perseverate, repeating the same thing as if stuck in a loop. And up to one-quarter don't say anything at all—but they still listen.

About 40% have average to above-average intelligence, though only one-third go to college. They experience anxiety, depression, unemployment and bullying at rates exponentially higher than their neurotypical peers. Some can't read emotion in others—but they still feel.

Some use their entire bodies to express their joy or displeasure, and many struggle with self-regulation, eliciting stares or snickers from passersby. A few are sensitive to light, noise or certain fabrics. They can get



RYAN SAMMONS, 25

too close or abruptly walk away—but they still long to engage.

"There's more to us than meets the eye," says Sammons. "We're capable of doing more than you think. You just have to get to know us."

The Hussman Center's safe, supportive environment—devoid of judgement and self-consciousness—makes that easy to do. On March 6, the center hosted one of its most popular theme nights: the spring talent show, which kicked off with renditions of Beatles and Beach Boys tunes. Paul McCartney and Brian Wilson they were not, but the performers were treated like rock 'n' roll royalty nonetheless, the standing-room-only crowd showering them with applause and heartfelt encouragement.

Up next was 18-year-old Molly Baer. A relative newbie, having joined the social group last fall, she was unusual in two ways: her gender (males are four times more likely to be diagnosed with autism than females, according to the CDC) and her talent. An accomplished trumpet player, Baer was agitated before her performance, snapping at her mom—as teenage girls are prone to do—and fidgeting in her chair.

But when she put her lips to the mouthpiece and began playing "Trumpet Voluntary," her anxiety washed away, replaced by the celebratory confidence of the piece. When she finished, the audience waited a beat, then erupted with applause as Baer, beaming, wrinkled her nose with satisfaction, pride and joy.

Molly Baer was among friends. **TU**

Adrienne Frank is a writer and editor who lives in Bethesda, Maryland.

Different, Not Deficient

BY ADRIENNE FRANK

"I have something important to tell you," my 7-year-old son, Owen, said one evening last fall as we drove home from school. "There are two kinds of people in the world: R's and F's. I'm an R, but I want to be an F."

His choice of letters was significant. F is Owen's favorite letter—a nod to the love of firetrucks he's nurtured since toddlerhood. Like any one of us, he's keenly aware of what he's not. But instead of longing to be thinner or richer, Owen simply wants not to be different.

My beautiful boy has a complicated cocktail of diagnoses: autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyscalculia and executive function disorder. He can be particular, rigid, anxious and singularly focused on penguins or subways, of which he possesses an encyclopedic knowledge. He can explode with anger or flap with joy. Inquisitive and creative, Owen boasts a triple letter score vocabulary and asks thoughtful, often unanswerable questions—"Why don't chickens have eyebrows?"—yet he has little sense of time or personal space. Owen is sensitive to loud noises and chaotic environments, and often prefers to draw by himself in blissful silence.

My husband, Sam, and I had been debating when we should tell Owen that he's on the spectrum, but it never seemed the right time. Until it was.

After a January reporting trip to the Hussman Center, I was talking to Sam about the story when Owen—listening stealthily while tapping furiously on his iPad—chimed in: "Mama, do I have autism?"

The question that I've been bracing myself for since my only child was diagnosed in 2015 lingered for what felt like an eternity. My eyes met Sam's and he gave me a gentle nod.

"Yes," I said. "You have autism."

I did my best to explain what that meant, but it was impossible to avoid the word that he'd already begun to associate with being deficient, odd, less than. "Your brain is just wired differently."

Owen didn't say a peep about it for a month, until I told him that, due to a childcare snafu, he had to go with me back to the

Hussman Center for the Friday evening social group. "It's an autism club?" he asked cautiously but curiously as we sat in traffic.

"Yep," I replied. "Isn't that cool?"

And it was.

I've long suspected that autistic people have a sixth sense when it comes to spotting others on the spectrum. So it was no surprise when one friendly young man after another—Sam, Chris, Daniel, Robert—approached us during the social group to chat with my son.

How old are you, little man? What's your favorite Lego movie? Do you play Minecraft? Do you like SpongeBob?

Seven; the first one; yes; and oh, yes, he said, smiling. Soon, Owen was telling them about school and his cats, Finn and Cinnamon. "It was nice talking to you," he chirped, giving them five as we moved from one room to the next. I could see the wheels spinning in his head: *If this is what autism—what being different—looks like, it might be OK.*

Two hours later, we were preparing to leave when we bumped into 25-year-old Christopher Garrett. After entertaining my questions, he shifted his focus to Owen, who revealed that some of his classmates pick on him.

"Buddy, being different is your superpower," said Christopher, as Owen lit up and I teared up.

Too often, we focus on the challenges associated with autism: social isolation, bullying, anxiety and depression, unemployment, learning disabilities and comorbid conditions. And make no mistake, those struggles are very real for people on the spectrum and those who love them.

But we mustn't forget autism's silver lining: how, through shared experience and a shared love of *SpongeBob SquarePants*, those on the spectrum can form an affirming, inclusive community where being different isn't the thing that sets people apart—it's the very thing that brings them together.

On the drive home, I asked Owen if he thought Christopher and the others were R's or F's.

"Oh, Mama, at the autism club, we're all F's."

TIGER

of the

SENATE

Sarah Elfreth '10, the youngest woman ever elected to the Maryland Senate, has plenty of time to make her mark in Annapolis. But she's not the patient type.

WORDS BY REBECCA KIRKMAN | PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAUREN CASTELLANA



A PEEK AT SARAH ELFRETH'S CALENDAR reveals a cacophony of colors. Blocks of color-coded events dominate each day, often overlapping.

From her desk in Annapolis' Miller Senate Office Building, the Maryland state senator's chief of staff, Johntel Greene, rattles off the calendar system with practiced efficiency. Elfreth '10 will definitely be attending events in green. Purple indicates community-focused events. Yellow, a hold on her time. Days from January to April, when the Maryland General Assembly is in session, are the most packed. Typically, Elfreth starts her day around 8 a.m. with 15-minute meetings and stays busy with session and committee meetings until well into the evening. She often eats dinner with her fellow legislators. But scrolling back in the calendar shows there is rarely any relief.

Take one Monday last July. Elfreth kicked off the day drinking coffee with Anne Arundel County's new fire chief, Trisha Wolford, then toured Anne Arundel Medical Center to discuss alleviating overcrowding in the emergency department, attended a farewell lunch with her summer interns, then hopped on a conference call on how to better support small businesses in Maryland. There's no offseason in Maryland politics.

Just 30 years old when she was sworn into office in 2019, Elfreth is the youngest woman to serve in the Maryland Senate and currently the

youngest member at age 31. Senate President Bill Ferguson, who joined in 2011 at age 27, passed on a ceremonial "Baby Senator" trophy to Elfreth on her first day. A Democrat representing Anne Arundel County, Elfreth is one of 31 women in her class of 60 freshmen lawmakers, bringing the total number of women in the 188-member Maryland General Assembly to 72. That puts her among the largest group of women ever to serve in the State House—part of a nationwide wave of women elected in 2018.

"HOW DID I GET HERE?"

The question echoed through Elfreth's mind as she took her place in the Senate chamber for the first time on Jan. 9, 2019. But it was just a moment of temporary incredulity. Elfreth's journey to public office was marked by years of dedication, from her time as an Honors student at Towson University to her campaign for state Senate, during which she knocked on more than 12,000 doors to talk with District 30 residents.

"I didn't have an ounce of imposter syndrome when I got here, because I worked so hard to get here," she says. "But I also felt like, now that I'm here, I've got to prove myself. I only have four years to make an impact. What am I going to do with those four years?"

She's off to an ambitious start. Her first year in office, eight of the nine bills Elfreth introduced



“I didn’t have an ounce of imposter syndrome when I got here, because I worked so hard to get here.”

SARAH ELFRETH '10



passed with bipartisan support, earning her “Freshman of the Year” accolades from *The Baltimore Sun*.

Such success out of the gate isn’t typical. “Sometimes they take a little bit of time to get their feet wet and figure out what’s going on, and there’s nothing wrong with that,” says Pamela Wood, a political reporter for *The Sun*. “But Sen. Elfreth jumped right in. Someone coming in from the outside might not have guessed she wasn’t a more experienced lawmaker. She didn’t shy away from important topics and introducing legislation.”

Elfreth shared a ticket with late House of Delegates Speaker Mike Busch, who died of pneumonia in April 2019. Campaigning with Busch, and later working with him on legislation, provided Elfreth with valuable experience running a successful campaign and working across the aisle. “She really benefited from having that mentorship,” Wood says, noting that it likely aided the success of Elfreth’s first legislative session.

While some during her campaign pointed to her age as a risk, Elfreth brings gender and generational diversity to the legislature. “When you’re her age, coming in less than a decade out of college, you think about things like student loans, the challenges of homeownership,” Wood says, “whereas lawmakers in their 60s might not think of those things. It’s different for young adults now than it was for them.”

IN HER ANNAPOLIS OFFICE, Elfreth reflects on what brought her to this moment. It’s just over a week into the 2020 session, and a vase of fresh flowers and a stack of budget books rest on the table beside her. Elfreth serves on the Senate’s Budget & Taxation Committee.

“It was just utterly encompassing,” she says of her Senate campaign. “To do it well you need to give up every other aspect of your life.”

Her status as a first-time candidate who began campaigning at just 28 years old was seen as both an advantage and a risk. “I had a lot of people wondering if I could do it,” she explains. “Which was in itself a gift, because I got to prove them wrong. There’s nothing quite like getting to prove people wrong.”

The prints, framed photographs, diplomas and news clippings that cover Elfreth’s walls hint at her story. A “Votes for Women” poster and a 2004 campaign sign for Sen. Barbara Mikulski, the Baltimore-born Democrat and first woman elected to the U.S. Senate from Maryland, honor those who paved the way for her entrance into politics. Her diplomas and a vintage poster from the National Aquarium show her path to office.

Elfreth graduated magna cum laude from TU with a bachelor’s degree in political science, then earned her master’s in public policy from the Johns Hopkins University in 2012. A year later, she graduated from the inaugural class of Emerge Maryland, a local chapter of a nationwide

Elfreth puts a lot of emphasis on communicating with her constituents. Opposite page, clockwise: The summer before her senior year at TU, she was nominated to the University System of Maryland Board of Regents by then-Governor Martin O’Malley. Elfreth, her partner Evann and their two dogs. Elfreth as a child.

Photos courtesy of Sarah Elfreth

organization that recruits and trains Democratic women interested in running for office. For four years, she served as the government affairs director at the National Aquarium in Baltimore, where she was responsible for shaping organizational strategy-related public affairs and advocating on behalf of the aquarium at the local, state and federal levels.

The New Jersey native says politics didn’t play a big role in her childhood.

“I come from possibly the least political family ever,” Elfreth says with a laugh, noting that the most political thing her mom, a probation officer, and stepdad, a locomotive engineer, did was join labor unions. That afforded their family a middle-class lifestyle in Barrington, a borough of Camden County just outside of Philadelphia.

As a child, she often played in a forested area across the street from her home, catching tadpoles in the stream and learning to appreciate and respect nature. Her proximity to the Jersey Shore inspired an interest in the water, and she considered becoming a marine biologist.

“I didn’t really ever think about politics,” she says. “I liked history and reading about history, but I didn’t really know where I was going to land.”

Elfreth entered TU on an academic scholarship at age 17. She lived at Richmond Hall and developed a close mentorship with political science professor Alison McCartney, who also served as her academic adviser.

“Teaching Sarah was a dream,” McCartney says. “I can go down the usual list of things—always prepared, well organized—but she was just really ahead of her time in terms of her personal maturity and the quality of work she produced.”

McCartney says it was clear from the start that Elfreth was a go-getter. When asked some of her favorite memories as a Tiger, Elfreth, a residential adviser in Prettyman Hall and self-described nerd, recounts utilizing a 24/7 study room for political science students in Linthicum Hall. She and her classmates would pull all-nighters, sometimes working until 3 or 4 a.m.

Elfreth traveled to Annapolis for the first time to testify on bills during her freshman year,



and was involved in the annual Tiger Pride Day, when dozens of TU students, faculty, staff and alumni convene in the state capital.

Spending time in Annapolis as a student made her want to put roots down in Maryland. “I remember pulling into downtown Annapolis and seeing this historic district and architecture and knowing when I was 18 that I eventually wanted to raise a family here,” she says.

Two undergraduate experiences sealed Elfreth’s interest in public office. The summer before her senior year, she was nominated to the University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents by then-Governor Martin O’Malley. The 21-member board, which includes two students, oversees the system’s operations, formulates policy and appoints the USM chancellor and the presidents of the system’s 12 institutions.

Then, during her senior year, a visit to TU by Madeleine Kunin, the first and only female governor of Vermont, prompted Elfreth to seriously consider a career in politics. “She was talking about the lack of women in office at the time, and the difference that women can make from a policy perspective, but also just a general approach to a more balanced and collaborative style of leadership,” Elfreth recalls. “She said if you’re passionate and you’re capable, it’s your obligation as a woman to run for office. That really hit home.”

Thankfully, I’ve had the opportunity to see that through.”

Elfreth wrote her undergraduate thesis on how the student role in governing boards can be more effective. In 2011, her research was published by the University of Alaska as a field guide for student board members.

“Her thesis was absolutely amazing—I still have a copy in both of my offices to this day,” McCartney says. “When a student asks me, ‘What does a truly excellent undergraduate thesis consist of?’ I pull hers out and say, ‘Take a look.’”

After graduation, McCartney and Elfreth stayed in touch. “Her path, watching her blossom, reminds me of the value of being a teacher,” McCartney says. “It reminds me that when I invest my time, my energy, my efforts into teaching, it’s going to bear fruit with Towson students. And she would be at the pinnacle of that. Watching her career develop, it’s just been very professionally rewarding.”

ELFRETH HAS BROUGHT the same focus and maturity she displayed as a student to her role as a state senator.

“To any degree I’m successful, I’ve been successful because of the focus that my staff and I have on the community, and on serving in the Senate,” Elfreth says.



As a District 30 senator, she has the benefit of walking to work each day from her home in downtown Annapolis. But that also means she's always in her district, unlike many of the lawmakers who travel into Annapolis for the week to attend session, then return to their homes on the weekends.

"It's part of the job, but it can be difficult at times because it makes me accessible to my constituents in a way that I think few other legislators are, because I'm here all the time," she says. Over the past year, Elfreth says she's adjusted to being "on the job" not just when she's at the State House or official events, but also when she's shopping or grabbing dinner out.

"It's something you get used to, having to always wear makeup to the grocery store because I might run into somebody there," she says. "It can be funny, you know, when someone honks at me from across the street and waves. Or asks to take a selfie with me in a bar. We have to kind of step back and laugh at ourselves."

To handle the constant—and admittedly, sometimes self-inflicted—pressure, Elfreth has a standing appointment with her therapist. "There's a kind of weight that this position requires," she says. "To do it well is to feel and empathize with a lot of different people, and want to make everybody happy. In a place where everything is almost zero sum, it's very difficult to achieve that." Sitting down regularly with an impartial party has allowed her to talk through the pressures and competing interests inherent in the job.

She also makes a point to block out time with her partner, Evann, and her two dogs. "He is a calming, chiller presence—very different than I am," Elfreth says. "For the most part, I try to take Saturdays and Sundays during the session to rest and recharge, which is difficult because there are always really great community events going on."

When she's working on writing testimony or an op-ed for the *Capital Gazette*, you can find Elfreth hanging out Galway Bay, an Irish bar and restaurant on Maryland Avenue. "Instead of sitting in my quiet office, I actually



Elfreth's success is a product of hard work and key mentorships.

will take my laptop and have a Guinness and write at the bar," she says.

Elfreth's success is a product of hard work and key mentorships. With that in mind, she makes a point to give back to young people. Several times each week, she meets with groups visiting the State House, from elementary schools to political interns. She's also teaching political science courses for the TU Honors College as an adjunct professor.

Nina Bundy, a sophomore political science major who interned at the Comptroller's Office in summer 2019, had the opportunity to have lunch with Elfreth. She then enrolled in Elfreth's Honors Public Policy and Advocacy class in the fall.

"The experiences I gained from her class were invaluable," says Bundy, who plans to become an attorney in criminal or civil law. "It was exciting to discuss my political ambitions with her."

With Elfreth as a professor, Bundy says she learned how to effectively communicate and work with delegates. "Almost every class she would bring guest speakers, and she taught us how to advocate for issues I'm passionate about."

Bundy presented a legislative bill at the Maryland Honors Council Conference in February that she wrote in Elfreth's class on how to use restorative measures in schools to help dismantle the school-to-prison pipelines. It was just one of the

many opportunities gained through Elfreth's mentorship of which Bundy took advantage. "Her class challenged me to think outside of the box and enhanced my critical thinking, writing and analysis skills. I'll continue to challenge myself to become the best version of myself through what I learned."

When a group of Boy Scouts visited the State House in January, one asked how legislators get bill ideas, and when they know if an idea is good. "I tried to explain that there's really no such thing as a silly idea, as long as you can convince your colleagues that it's the right thing to do," Elfreth says. "A parent came up to me a couple of days later at an event and said that their son was talking about that idea on the car ride home."

These are the types of small but meaningful interactions that inspire Elfreth. "Whether they're 8 years old or 80, I'm only as valuable to my community as I am at listening to them," she says. "So I try my best to meet with as many young people as possible and get ideas from them about what they think I should be working on, and get them inspired to try to solve problems in their community. I talk about how I started as a young person, too, and how everybody has a role to play in democracy." **TU**

Rebecca Kirkman is a communications strategist in University Marketing and Communications and a Baltimore magazine contributing writer.



CLEVELAND

DOESN'T ONLY
ROCK



The Cleveland Classical Guitar Society introduces public school students to music.

WORDS BY MIKE UNGER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT SHIFFLER

The lesson begins with a review of proper posture.

"Think of yourself as a puppet on a string, and the thread continues through your neck, the top of your head and goes all the way to the ceiling," says the teacher, Erik Mann '96.

The student, 14-year-old Marcello Cirilo, is clutching a guitar, his eyes trained intently on Mann. He arches his back and puffs his chest forward.

Next, Mann asks Cirilo to play a scale, which he executes flawlessly.

"Wow, that's fantastic," says Mann, who's genuinely impressed.

The two are sitting in a room in the Salvation Army in East Cleveland, Ohio. The building, a shiny jewel nestled in a neighborhood that's seen better times,

sits seven miles east of the Rock 'N Roll Hall of Fame, whose members include legendary guitarists Duane Allman, George Harrison and Jimi Hendrix.

They played classic rock. This is classical guitar.

Cirilo sports a patchy mustache he began to grow two years ago, right around the time he started taking free lessons through the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society's (CCGS) education program. His calm demeanor matches the style of music with which he's become enamored. Next, he plays a hauntingly beautiful—but not mistake-free—version of "Spanish Romance," a staple of the genre.

"How were you able to memorize it so well?" asks Mann, the executive director of the CCGS since 2009.



Marcello Cirilo, 14,
and his teacher,
Erik Mann '96

“Every basic tenet of human existence lives within classical music.”

—Erik Mann '96

“I think it was because we broke it into smaller pieces so I could work on it at different times,” replies Cirilo, who shows Mann a fingering switch that continues to trip him up.

Like most successful teachers, Mann is patient as Cirilo tries the section repeatedly, and like many successful students, Cirilo doesn't lose his cool when he bungles it, nor does he believe that he's mastered it when he hasn't.

“It's kind of like watching little kids play soccer,” Mann explains to his pupil. “They all run to wherever the ball is. This [the left hand fingering] is the same kind of thing. Pay attention not just to the finger that you're using at the time, which is like where the soccer ball is, but to where all your other fingers are supposed to be.”

Guitar, Mann says, saved his life when he was an angst-ridden teenager. Now, he's working to turn others' lives around as well.

“The arts in general are a way to create beauty in the world—a way to create greater meaning,” he says. “I just don't know what I would have done without it.”

Growing up in Burtonsville, Maryland, Mann struggled to form friendships.

“I didn't have many social skills,” he says. “I was a strong student but definitely ended up slipping by because I really didn't have any way to connect with other people. I was starting to follow the wrong crowd a little bit. When I started taking guitar lessons, the ability to play with other people, or play by myself and kind of close myself off from the world, saved me.”

He was drawn to the classical style of guitar because of the variety of moods and emotions in the music.

“Every basic tenet of human existence lives within classical music,” he says.

After earning his music degree from TU, he taught at some music stores and performed at restaurants and weddings. In 2000, he enrolled in the Cleveland Institute of Music, from which he earned a master's degree.

“Cleveland has one of the greatest art scenes in the country,” says Mann, who fell in love with the city in which he later fell in love with his wife Ellen. “We've got one of the world's



Andy Poxon '15 is a teacher for the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society.

Photo courtesy of Andy Poxon

best orchestras, one of the country's best art museums. The parks system here is amazing. It's pretty comparable to Baltimore in a lot of ways.”

In 2009, he started running the CCGS as a volunteer. Under his stewardship, it has grown such that now he's one of three full-time employees at the nonprofit, which also has full- and part-time teachers. One of them is Andy Poxon '15, who taught Cirilo and Katie Stubblefield, the youngest face transplant recipient in the United States.

“A lot of our students have unique family situations,” Poxon says. “The guitar gives them an escape, a way of expressing themselves and something to focus on.”

The education program was born in 2012 after Mann and others noticed an alarming

lack of opportunities for kids in Cleveland to make music.

“We've got the second-highest child poverty rate of cities that are 250,000 residents or larger,” he says. “The schools mostly don't present opportunities for kids to learn instruments. The kids have a whole lot of barriers. There's the cost of lessons, the cost of transportation. Basically, we exist to remove all those barriers.”

The guitar society provides free lessons and equipment to over 600 middle school students at 18 sites around the city. Cirilo, who listens to Spanish music with a dash of Metallica thrown in, is one of them.

“Mr. Erik invited me one day and I started seeing other people play,” the eighth-grader says. “I started liking the guitar more and more.

I started getting better. Then he took interest in me and started giving me lessons. I was confused at first, but then he was showing me the notes and keys, so I started liking it. I started hearing different sounds.”

The impact on students often goes far beyond music. Andrea Moss is assistant principal at Luis Munoz Main Dual Language Academy, where there's a CCGS residency.

“We've seen grades improve, we've seen behaviors improve,” she says in a video produced by Cleveland Metropolitan School District. “We've seen social and emotional development just from participating in this program. They're learning to work together more. You see relationship building. Kids are talking more, sharing more. Discussing music in a different way. We've seen great strides

in attendance. We've seen academic growth, because there is a correlation between learning to play a musical instrument and growing in mathematics and science."

Shirley Dillard has noticed that growth in her grandson, Marcello. She credits his classical guitar lessons for an improvement in his attitude.

"He was headed down the wrong path," she says. "When he took interest in the guitar, his focus changed. He was much happier. It's played a big part in him becoming the young man that he's becoming. He even practices on his own. I'll tell him only to practice for about an hour because he'll get a headache if he practices too much. Sometimes I have to tell him to put it down. I've even seen an improvement in his grades since he's been so involved."

The CCGS, which also sponsors a renowned concert series in Cleveland, receives money for its education program through grants and private donations. Its top funder is the Cleveland Foundation, the first organization of its kind in the world. Founded in 1914, its arts mastery initiative aims to fund organizations, like the CCGS, that provide training for the city's kids in music, dance, theater and other arts.

"I like to say some organizations have magic, and the Cleveland Classical Guitar Society

has magic," says Courtenay Barton, program manager for arts and culture at the Cleveland Foundation. "They've figured out how to reach youth, how to instruct them in a way that they demonstrate rapid progress. They become engaged. Youth are, perhaps somewhat contrary to what people may think, good judges of character. I think the reason youth respond to Erik Mann is because he has that sincerity naturally, as well as knowing his craft. Putting those two things together is what I think makes the magic."

Cirilo is soft spoken, which mirrors the way he plays. But don't mistake that for a lack of confidence. He's measured in the way he approaches the guitar, letting out a slight chuckle when he makes a mistake rather than becoming discouraged.

Mann asks Cirilo to play "Spanish Romance" once more, this time with rubato, a form of slowing down the tempo to impart more emotion into the piece.

"To the listener this sounds very expressive," Mann tells him. "It may take a while to work out, but if you try it for a bit you'll be able to do it."

Cirilo says okay, meticulously places eight of his fingers on the guitar in the correct positions, then proceeds to play it perfectly. **TU**

Cirilo is soft spoken, which mirrors the way he plays. But don't mistake that for a lack of confidence.



Guitar, Mann says, saved his life when he was a teenager. Now he's working to turn others' lives around as well.

A New Reality

Like institutions of higher learning around the United States, TU put in-person classes and meetings on hiatus to try to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus. Life in all facets of American society started to change just before Alexander Wright, assistant director of photographic services, snapped this photo in Lecture Hall and this issue of *TU Magazine* went to print.

#TU proud



MY TOWN

Bill Glauber '79 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

- BEST GOLF COURSE**
Brown Deer Park
- THEATER**
Pabst Theater
- MUSEUM**
Discovery World
- MUSIC FESTIVAL**
Summerfest
- SWANKY BAR**
The Outsider

When Bill Glauber moved to Milwaukee in 2005, he had a feeling of déjà vu. "I thought, 'I've seen this before. Isn't this Baltimore?'" he recalls. "It's the same kind of town. The people are great, it's easy to get around. Winter only lasts from April through March." That slight exaggeration is definitely more Wisconsin than Maryland, and, in fact, Glauber, a former *Baltimore Sun* reporter who now writes for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, says the Cream City actually offers many great outdoor activities. "If you're coming to Milwaukee in the late spring or summer, bring your bathing suit and your golf clubs," he says. "Bradford Beach is right on Lake Michigan. There's volleyball, a tiki bar, a custard stand. If you like cold water you can swim." The Milwaukee Art Museum is recognized as much for its building as for its collection. The architect of the Quadracci Pavilion was Santiago Calatrava, who also designed the transit station at Ground Zero in New York City. "The Harley-Davidson Museum is all things motorcycles," Glauber says. "Harley is still symbolic of Milwaukee's industrial heritage. You

see a lot of them around town, and every five years, tens of thousands of Harley riders come into town from all over the world." If any city can brew enough suds to satisfy hordes of bikers, it's Milwaukee, birthplace of the Miller Brewing Company and home to countless beer lovers. "The expert on all things beer is Kathy Flanagan of our paper," Glauber says. "Her recommendation is Lakefront Brewery. She calls it the most Milwaukee experience you can have. Tours run all day, they're hilarious and the beer pours are generous." You'll need some food to balance that buzz. The term "Milwaukee cuisine" no longer means just brats, though you'll find hundreds of tailgaters grilling the sausages in the parking lots outside Miller Park before Brewers baseball games. Bartolotta's Lake Park Bistro, part of the family's restaurant empire, is one of Glauber's favorites. "Joe Bartolotta died in April 2019," he says. "I covered his funeral. It was held at the Riverside Theater, and they had an open bar. That tells you a lot about them." And the city in which he lived.



"If you're around Milwaukee and there's a Packers game on, that's a good time to do pretty much anything else. Everything's empty. About half the state watches the games."

Alumni News

Tiger Mentor Network

Connecting for career development just got easier. Now that Tiger Mentor Network has launched, alumni can serve as mentors to current students and seek professional advice from fellow graduates. Participants can choose their level of commitment and select preferred areas of engagement. If you are interested in sharing your own professional experience or looking for guidance from someone in a similar field, visit mentor.towson.edu to get started.



Become a Social Tiger

Are you one of Towson University's biggest fans? Do you use social media—whether Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or LinkedIn? Become a Social Tiger and you could be rewarded for sharing the latest TU news and information with friends and family. Joining this passionate circle of alumni and TU community advocates is quick and simple. As a member you will hear firsthand about university and alumni news and upcoming events. By sharing information on your social media channels, you'll earn points for a chance to win fun TU prizes. It's an easy way to volunteer and a great opportunity to share your love for TU.

TO GET STARTED
Visit towson.socialtoaster.com and follow these easy steps:

-  Sign up with your preferred social networks
-  Receive news and other information in your email
-  Share the content with your friends on social media
-  Earn points every time you share



Save the Date

Be sure to mark your calendar for Homecoming 2020, which will take place Saturday, Oct. 17.

The Alumni Association canceled several events during the coronavirus pandemic.

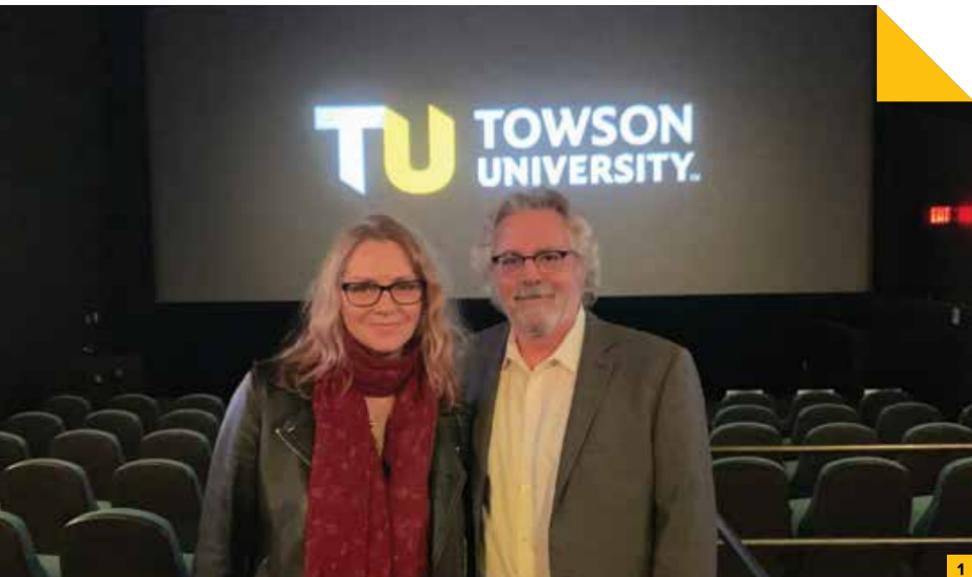
For a current list of upcoming events, visit alumni.towson.edu/events.

Spotlight on the SoCal Alumni Alliance

The SoCal Alumni Alliance creates opportunities for Tigers to connect on the West Coast. The longest-running regional alliance, SoCal alumni have enjoyed happy hours, networking events and a Dodgers game. Most recently, they held a delicious crab feast hosted by Discovery Channel's "Undercover Billionaire" Glen Stearns '87, which was planned by Stearns and fellow volunteer committee members Brett Glatman '05 and Pat Maxon '87. Over 60 people—whose grad years spanned five decades—attended the event in Newport Coast, savoring authentic Maryland crabs flown in from Baltimore.

If you'd like to join the SoCal Alumni Alliance or are interested in other regional alliances in New York City or Washington, D.C./Northern Virginia, visit alumni.towson.edu and click the Groups tab.





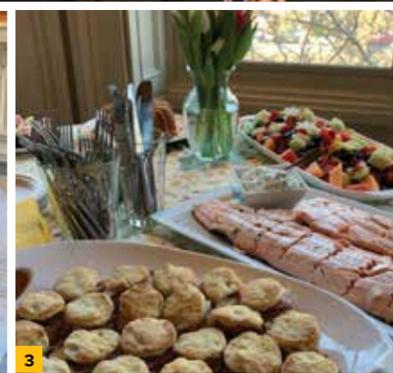
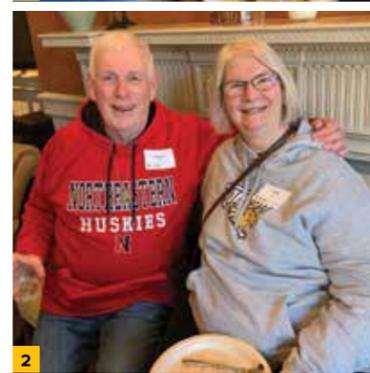
CALIFORNIA WEEKEND: Through the generosity of Shelly Strong '90, EVP and head of physical production at Amblin Partners, TU alumni were treated to a private screening of *1917* on Jan. 17. The fun continued at brunch in Santa Monica on Saturday and culminated with a Sunday brunch in San Diego.

1. Shelly Strong '90 and Michael Angelella
2. Guests enjoy a reception before the film screening.
3. Alumni catch up at The Rose Venice.
4. Everyone enjoys beautiful beach views at Wonderland Ocean Pub.



ALUMNI ALLIANCE EVENTS: Both well-established and brand-new alliances began the year with fantastic events. The TU Marching Band Alumni Alliance played with the pep band during a men's basketball game before enjoying a catered reception, while the Business & Leadership Alumni Alliance hosted their kickoff event on campus.

1. Former and current band members play alongside each other during the game.
2. Marching band alumni catch up at a postgame reception.
3. The Business & Leadership Alumni Alliance had a great turnout at their inaugural event.
4. Keynote speaker Mike Gill '74 and President Schatzel



BOSTON BRUNCH & BASKETBALL GAME: Alumni met in Boston for a brunch generously hosted by Kathleen McQuiggan '90 at her home. Afterward, the group headed to the Cabot Physical Education Center to watch the TU women's basketball team take on Northeastern University.

1. Staci Weber, Sara Samson '04 and Alyssa Holzman '99
2. Howard Titus and S. Gail Titus '75
3. Guests were treated to a delicious spread.
4. President Schatzel, Paul-Sean Gray '88, Pamela Gray '87 and Kathleen McQuiggan '90



PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW: Alumni living in Baltimore and Philadelphia experienced the beauty of a Mediterranean garden during their visit to the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show on its opening day. Beforehand, they attended a special lunch at Maggiano's Little Italy.

1. The group enjoyed time together at lunch.
2. Elizabeth Herman and Terry Cooney, dean of the College of Liberal Arts
3. Dennis Ferrell '74 and Diane Samuel
4. The show was packed with flowering arches in vivid colors.

Class Notes

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

We'd like to hear about your personal and professional life.

SEND MAIL TO:

Alumni Relations, Towson University,
8000 York Rd. Towson, MD 21252-0001

EMAIL:

alumni@towson.edu

WEB:

alumni.towson.edu/classnotes

 **Tiger Connect:**
alumni.towson.edu

 **Facebook:**
Towson University Alumni Association

 **Twitter:**
@towsonualumni

 **Instagram:**
@towsonalum

 **Tag your posts:**
#TowsonUAlum

1940s

YVONNE JANE BELT '40 celebrated her 100th birthday on Oct. 21. Belt continues to live independently, plays bridge and mahjong and participates in civic and educational outings at the retirement village in which she resides.

1950s

EILEEN BRODERICK WALKER '59 attended her 60th class reunion in September and appreciated seeing old friends and reliving the college days.

1960s

BILL SHARKEY '67 was a music teacher for 40 years in public and private schools locally and abroad. Sharkey is an active performer and teacher and

has published a children's book titled *Can You Put Diapers on a Goose?*

1970s

MARGARET PFAFF '71 is the new coordinator of McDaniel College's master's degree program in curriculum and instruction. Pfaff has 48 years of public education experience and has been an adjunct professor at McDaniel for nearly two decades.



GEMMA STAUB HOSKINS '74, '77 was one of the grassroots investigators in the 2017 Netflix series *The Keepers*. Hoskins' book about the experience, *Keeping On*, will be released in May.

1980s

LISA (ALLEN) FLANNERY '81 is the community outreach coordinator for Carroll Hospice, covering Baltimore City and Carroll, Frederick and Baltimore counties as well as York and Adams counties in Pennsylvania.

BOB CAMERON '82 has been a social worker with Nine Mile Falls School District for the past 27 years. Cameron also is an adjunct field instructor for Eastern Washington University School of Social Work. Cameron was the Washington Association of School Social Workers' 2013 School Social Worker of the Year.

ED MELICK '82 has published *Healing Pledge* and *Monumental Hug*.

SANDY (BARTLEBAUGH) ZIMMERMAN '83 is part of LYNX (Linking Youth to New Experiences),

In 2008, I wrote a song entitled “Dream,” which reminded persons to pursue their passions. We were coordinating a concert to introduce the song and my producer suggested we give out some educational scholarships. That year we gave out three scholarships totaling \$750. Within a few years we were a registered nonprofit with a commitment to support the educational dreams of young people.

ANTHONY BROWN '85, '95

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TU Magazine
online.

Check back with us here throughout the spring and summer to read new stories about the people and places we love.

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an innovative education initiative at Frederick High School. Zimmerman began teaching in the Frederick County Public School system in 1998.

ANTHONY BROWN '85, '95 is a local minister and recording artist. Brown started the Dream 4 It Foundation, which raises scholarship funds for college freshmen and recently celebrated its 12th anniversary. The program will begin offering scholarships for TU students soon.

WILLIAM C. O'MEALLY '85 is a family physician and assistant professor of family and community medicine at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. O'Meally has earned the Degree of Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians.

HOPE TARR '86 published a Victorian-era novel called *Tempting*. Tarr recently resold six of 25 previously published romance novels to content subscription service Scribd and is working on a new novel, *Irish Eyes*.

LYNN WEBER '86 coauthored *A Playful Spirit: Exploring the Theology, Philosophy, and Psychology of Play* with Mark W. Teismann. The work was published in February by Lexington Books.

JENNY COLLINS '87 is co-owner of Widmer Sign Co. with husband, Todd. The Scranton, Pennsylvania-based company received first- and second-place recognition in the Best

Original Design and Fabrication, Illuminated category among medium sign shops from *Signs of the Times* magazine.

SETH JEFF CHANOWITZ '89 has had his novels, *Russia Rising* and *Return to Little Russia*, featured in magazines and websites. Chanowitz bases his novels on his prior experience as an international journalist, intelligence analyst and asylum/refugee officer.

MITCHELL PLATT '89 was installed as secretary-treasurer of the Club Management Association of America (CMAA) board of directors at its 2020 World Conference and Club Business Expo in Grapevine, Texas. Platt was first elected to the board in 2016.

STEPHANIE STRAPPELLI '89 was named chief marketing and experience coordinator at Maller Wealth Advisors, a financial planning and investment company. Strappelli also volunteers with Associated Catholic Charities and the John Carroll School.

1990s

GREG BARBERA '91 has a collection of photos in the Southern Folklife Collection in Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill. Barbera also worked as a music journalist for many years and has photographed musicians such as Willie Nelson.

ANDREW FUNK '96 published a memoir titled *The Monsters Family*. A portion of proceeds

“I love being a business owner...our employees are part of our family. We know their spouses and children. Our company benefits from each of their individual talents creating award-winning products that will represent small businesses for many years to come. We have personally benefited with a fuller life having worked with these individuals every day.”

JENNY COLLINS '87

will go to Penn State's dance marathon in memory of Funk's brother, a Penn State student who died of leukemia at 19. Funk also created a dance organization called Monsters of HipHop, which has produced auditions and casting for Disney, Universal, Sony and Janet Jackson.

KATHERINE DANLEY '97 was elected to the board of directors of the Dramatists Guild to represent the western United States. Danley sits on the council with luminaries Christopher Durang, Tina Howe, Tony Kushner, Alan Menken, Lin-Manuel Miranda and Marsha Norman. Danley will help guide and implement national policy and initiatives affecting

playwrights from the smallest basement theaters to Broadway.



ALYCE HEATHER KIRK '98 is writing a play called *Les Chansons de Les Guerres* (Songs of the Wars). Kirk will produce and direct the play, which focuses on the juxtaposition of war's public relations and recruitment campaigns and the documented atrocities of the Civil War, World War I and World War II.

LOU GARCIA '99 is the newest shareholder of Timmons Group. Garcia has over three decades of experience in consulting and project management.

2000s

MANDY ARNOLD '01, '10 is the founder of Gavin, a digitally minded public relations and marketing agency that recently acquired brand strategy and integrated design services company Holberg Design. Arnold also is the co-owner of The Left Bank Restaurant and Bar in York, Pennsylvania.

CAL BOWMAN '03 joined Think!Stack, an organization that designs and delivers technology and security, as vice president for strategy and innovation.

FLORENCE FALATKO '03 recently taught STReAM education in Al Ain in the United Arab Emirates.

MARCUS LEE '09

Catching on to Yoga

In the most pivotal moments of his life, Marcus Lee, founder of PureFire Yoga in Bethesda, often felt like he could succeed if one person believed in him. At TU, it was assistant football coach Don Zimmerman who gave the wide receiver an opportunity. Lee seized it, becoming the program's all-time leader in receptions with 225.

While training his senior year, a few teammates suggested they try a hot yoga class. Lee went along, assuming it would come easily to him. The last thing he expected was to feel like he “was literally going to die in a down dog” within the first five minutes. “I fumbled around for 90 minutes and laid on the ground in Savasana—the final pose—and I remember thinking, “Thank God I made it,”” Lee says.

He was hooked. Lee connected instantly with his instructor, Sid, not only because he was a former college football coach but also because of his approachable teaching style. Sid's continued encouragement kindled Lee's desire to try teacher training. After a few years of teaching part time, he took a leap of faith and immersed himself in yoga as a full-time teacher working at Down Dog in Bethesda, Maryland. In September 2018, he and a business partner opened PureFire Yoga.

Just a year and a half in, he has plans to expand the studio, where the thermostat is set to 95 degrees for hot power yoga classes. What began as the belief of a few has developed into the support of an entire community.



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TU Magazine

online.

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So much history is buried right under our feet. The smallest artifact can reveal the history of the people that lived there or reveal trade from a foreign country that we didn't know existed. Archaeology is like one huge jigsaw puzzle that if you have patience and dedication you can put the pieces together.

ILKA KNÜPPEL '17



Photo: Joan Marcus

SHEREEN AHMED '15

Breaking Boundaries on Broadway

Musical theater has been part of Shereen Ahmed's life for as long as she can remember.

"There was always a song or a scene or a dance move that I could do that felt like it was incorporating the emotions I was feeling in the moment," says the Perry Hall, Maryland, native.

Studying criminal justice in addition to voice performance at TU offered Ahmed a unique perspective. "[It] was so helpful in script analysis and understanding another person's choices based on their story," she says.

After graduating, she spent a year and a half performing on a cruise line. An audition at an open casting call in late 2017 landed her a spot in the Broadway ensemble of *My Fair Lady* at the Lincoln Center Theater. A year into the show's run, Ahmed became an understudy for the character of Eliza Doolittle. She made her performance debut in spring 2019.

Ahmed is considered the first minority cast in this role in a major American production. "My identity—being Egyptian or Arab or Muslim—doesn't inform my character at all. It breaks that stereotype that I can only play Middle Eastern roles," she says.

In December, she resumed the role in the first national tour of the musical. It kicked off at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

"That I am able to carry that torch around the nation, it's massive," she says. "I hope this sheds some light for people who, like me before I had this opportunity, didn't think it was possible."

DENNIS JUTRAS '06 won the 2019 National Association for Gifted Children's District Coordinator of the Year award for his work in Baltimore City Public Schools.

JOSEPH RECTOR '06 is the CEO and cofounder of Pelican Property Management in Towson. Rector was elected to the board of directors at Cromwell Valley Park, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to the stewardship of Cromwell Valley as a public space for passive recreation and school programs.

2010s

DANIEL RENZ '10 was named program manager with the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Insider

Threat Program at Fort Meade, Maryland. In this new role, Renz is responsible for oversight of all program operations, which involves protecting of all physical and logical agency resources from internal threats.

LISÉ SANCHEZ '12 and **ALEX CHOLET '13** met as political science majors and recently married. The couple resides in Dallas, where Sanchez works in healthcare event planning and Cholet works in commercial real estate.

ILKA (GRAY) KNÜPPEL '17 became president of the Natural History Society of Maryland's Archaeology Club, which is partnering with the Baltimore City Environmental Police on archaeological excavations in Loch Raven Reservoir.

In Memoriam

Alumni

Eleanor B. Requard '33
September 2, 2019

Eleanor L. Rappold '35
January 21, 2020

Dorothea S. Stubbs '39
September 6, 2019

Bernice R. Sakols '40
September 30, 2019

Katherine L. Harman '42
December 11, 2019

Alice M. Nugent '45
September 9, 2019

Sylvia R. Beser '48
January 5, 2020

Sylvia S. Butler '49, '68
August 24, 2019

Mary Lou Wessels '49
November 28, 2019

Virginia W. Dusman '50
September 29, 2019

Joan J. Garrett '50
December 13, 2019

Josephine C. Gilbert '50
January 4, 2020

Alice P. Lehnert '50
July 15, 2019

Mary E. Dill MacWilliams '51
January 1, 2020

Hazel D. Stultz '51
February 5, 2020

Eugene Amberman '52
December 8, 2019

Iris J. Glassgold '52
November 18, 2019

James V. Hottes Jr. '52
September 2019

Doris C. Lotz '52
July 11, 2019

Robert J. Krabbe '53
October 22, 2019

Margaret L. Milleker '54
February 28, 2020

Anne T. Stricker '54
November 5, 2019

Irene P. McLaughlin '55
February 28, 2020

Mary Lou Siegel '56
August 2, 2019

Joan E. Keller '58
September 10, 2019

David E. Eden '59
September 28, 2019

H. Lee Hughes '59
September 2, 2019

Francis Lee Noel '59
December 23, 2019

Laura Carter Winter '59
September 15, 2019

Sandra Garrett Wishart '59
October 24, 2019

Rose A. White '60
December 13, 2019

Rose Marie Glenn '61
February 1, 2020

Ellen L. Spak '61
October 30, 2019

Laura M. Kestle '62
January 12, 2020

Carol S. Noble '62
January 24, 2020

Frances G. Zalesky '62
October 4, 2019

Irene M. David '63
August 15, 2019

Geraldine F. Groncki '64
January 10, 2020

Christine M. Krausz '64
August 20, 2019

Betty B. Levine '64, '72
January 17, 2020

Kathleen Q. Mahoney '64, '94
December 2, 2019

Allan E. Starkey '64
November 6, 2019

Suzanne M. Downs '65
September 28, 2019

Carolyn M. Weinberger '65
March 25, 2019

Judith White '65
December 19, 2019

Marjorie Lee Burkley '66
August 28, 2019

Helen E. Chenoweth '66
September 17, 2019

Cecilia L. Metzger '66
January 24, 2020

Barbara A. Sarlin '66
September 18, 2019

Paul M. Stout '67
January 23, 2020

David R. Smith '68
December 31, 2019

Sandra Kay Winkler '68
September 12, 2019

John W. Bickley '69
April 14, 2019

Kathryn A. Brooks '69
December 22, 2019

Barbara A. Martin '69
January 21, 2020

Clyde R. Musick '69
December 18, 2019

Joseph F. Shopulski III '69
November 22, 2019

Sharon H. Wootton '69
September 27, 2019

Thelma V. Driver '70
February 20, 2019

Anne J. Malone '70, '78
November 22, 2019

Emmett Burbage '71
October 13, 2019

Iris P. Cooper '71
February 2, 2020

Madeline C. Ennis '71
October 2, 2019

Faith C. Hermann '71
September 19, 2019

Benita J. Kaplan '71
September 14, 2019

Mabel F. Mellott '71
August 1, 2019

Jon H. Wilson '71
February 3, 2020

Susan M. Hansen '72
December 30, 2019

Rachael R. Reid '72, '75
January 13, 2020

John V. Russo '72
January 4, 2020

Edwin Bernard Leimkuhler '73
September 19, 2019

Janet S. O'Rourke '73
November 11, 2019

Stephen S. Schweitzer '73
February 10, 2020

Tivis R. Buckingham '74
November 30, 2019

Joyce B. Hannaby '74
December 31, 2019

Elizabeth B. Smith '74
November 17, 2019

Richard G. Crouse '75
November 2, 2019

Dorothy M. Dougherty '75
December 3, 2019

Linda A. Hamman '75
October 18, 2019

Phyllis A. Neuman '75, '79
November 6, 2019

Dennis R. Steele '75
September 7, 2019

Perry A. Stutman '75
November 23, 2019

Kathy Jo Fielder '76
January 3, 2020

John Ford '76
February 4, 2020

Gail T. Groenheim '76
February 8, 2020

Mitchell Lekas '76
October 1, 2019

Karen L. Sisler '76
July 21, 2019

Art R. Taguding '76
January 6, 2020

Donald C. Merritt Jr. '77
September 11, 2019

Ruthann B. Willis '77
November 7, 2019

Gary Thomas Sandusky '78
June 8, 2019

Lucinda B. Troxell '78
November 13, 2019

William Colbert '79
June 25, 2019

Edward R. Jeunette Jr. '79
January 1, 2020

Janet M. Moe '79
August 3, 2019

Charles J. Whittaker '79
September 30, 2019

Cecile Y. Buker '81
October 20, 2019

Claudia H. Stewart '81
October 14, 2019

Philinda R. Perl '82
August 29, 2019

Paul A. Lovelace '83
October 25, 2019

Elizabeth A. Barrett '84
November 20, 2019

Deborah E. Leck '84
February 21, 2020

Lawrence Schaffer '84
December 27, 2019

Tamar Wartofsky '84
February 29, 2020

Patricia A. Ferraris-O'Neill '85
December 27, 2019

Robert H. Landefeld Jr. '85
August 30, 2019

Michael B. Stanka '85
December 23, 2019

Patricia H. Kettle '86
November 6, 2019

Carolyn M. Koloup '86
December 20, 2019

Thomas W. Tiehel '86
January 9, 2020

Keith E. Greene '87
January 26, 2020

Judith Traynum Kantt '88
July 22, 2019

Leah R. Schofield '88
June 23, 2019

Jack Edward Barber '89
November 9, 2019

Joan Ostrowski '89
September 14, 2019

Damon Quigley '90
February 11, 2020

John Joseph Kleiderlein Jr. '94
September 13, 2019

Andrew A. McBee '94
November 20, 2019

Christopher Michael Smith '94
October 24, 2019

Mark T. Cresap '95
October 21, 2019

Constance W. Kihm '95
February 8, 2020

Virginia R. Newburg '95
September 5, 2019

Maureen Pendergast '95
November 23, 2019

Stacey Nicole Erich '98
December 16, 2019

Diane M. Warch '99
December 23, 2019

Gloria Lavern Keaton '02
August 2, 2019

Christopher J. Connolly '03
September 26, 2019

Sam Fine '03
September 22, 2019

Peter Issel '04
July 31, 2019

Gregory T. Zawadzki '04
November 19, 2019

John N. Centolella '05
September 9, 2019

Denise J. Barker '06
November 9, 2019

Tyler Moore Peterson '07
December 12, 2019

Jonathan Brison Hurley '11
August 16, 2019

Raymond L. Haber Jr. '12
December 18, 2019

Peter Alexander Kroupa '12
October 19, 2019

Faculty & Staff

David H. Decker
January 15, 2020

Alice M. Feeney
May 2019

George S. Friedman
February 1, 2020

Roger B. Hayden
October 24, 2019

Robert W. Johnson
October 12, 2019

Yung Keun Lee
September 29, 2019

Paulette S. Quickley-Kendrix
September 1, 2019

Elizabeth R. Rector
October 20, 2019

Rearview Mirror

FROM THE DESK OF FELICITY KNOX '94, Library Associate to Special Collections and University Archives



ASK AN ARCHIVIST

Hey Felicity...

Q: Did Towson University start as a women's college?

A: TU has always enrolled men and women. However, because it started as a school for teachers and teaching was historically a female-majority profession, we have always had a higher number of female students. During World War I and World War II, the number of male students dropped very low: In June 1945, not a single man graduated.

However, after World War II and particularly after the school transitioned to a liberal arts college in 1963, the population of male students climbed steadily upwards.

Have a question for Felicity? Email her at fknox@towson.edu.

WHAT'S NEW

Levy Collection

On Nov. 7, 2019, Stewart Levy, nephew of jazz composer and teacher, Hank Levy, made the first donation of charts from his uncle's collection to our department. Hank Levy is remembered as a great innovator in the jazz world, exploring a variety of time signatures.

In 1968, Hank founded the jazz program at Towson State College, and, in his 21 years as director, he created an incomparable jazz orchestra, winning so many awards that it was barred from some competitions. Today, the jazz orchestra and the Hank Levy Legacy Band continue to play in his honor, and we are grateful to his family for allowing us to preserve his work.

PAST



1886

Our first campus photographer was George L. Smith, who taught science from 1875 until 1892. He is the namesake for Smith Hall. One of the items in our collections is a photograph album he created for the school's first principal, M. A. Newell. It includes pictures of the original Baltimore school building, the faculty and many of the class years posed outside.



1980

About 100 years later, university photography hired students to take photos for campus publications. Students would check into the department, pick up a work ticket and a camera and go off to their assignments.



1996

Kanji Takeno joined TU as director of photographic services. For 23 years, he shaped how prospective families; community members; and students, faculty, staff and alumni see TU.

PRESENT



On My Playlist

PATRICK MCAVINUE, CLASS OF '11

Patrick McAvinue picked up the fiddle at seven years old. A Baltimore County native, he studied with pianist Tim Murphy, trumpeter David Ballou and violinist Jeffrey Howard at TU. After college, McAvinue formed the acoustic roots quartet Charm City Junction and taught group and private music lessons. In 2017, he moved to Nashville to join the multi-Grammy-nominated bluegrass group Dailey & Vincent and was named the International Bluegrass Music Association's Fiddler of the Year. He is featured on the album *Bluegrass 2020*, which was released in March.

In 2011...

During his senior year at TU, McAvinue played the fiddle and mandolin in more than 100 shows with bluegrass group Audie Blaylock and Redline. Here's what he was listening to back then.



Revelator | Tedeschi Trucks Band (2011)

My No. 1 record for sure. They formed in 2010, and I saw them in Detroit in 2011. It was one of the best concerts I've ever been to. It felt personal, like sitting in their living room.



OK Computer | Radiohead (1997)

I really love Jonny Greenwood's guitar playing. He's an interesting player who has a totally different take on the instrument. I think he's a brilliant arranger too.



Eternal Interlude | John Hollenbeck Large Ensemble (2009)

John Hollenbeck is a composer and improviser who came to Towson when I was a student and taught as part of the Bill and Helen Murray Jazz Residency. His use of big band, large ensemble, is unlike any other I've ever heard.



Real Time | Tim O'Brien & Darrell Scott (2000)

What I love about this album is it sounds like they just put a couple of mics up in their living room and went to town. They are two of my favorite Americana/acoustic country/bluegrass artists I listened to in college.



Aero-Plain | John Hartford (1971)

A friend of mine gave me this album the year I graduated. It's kind of plainspoken and almost like alternative country; he was swimming upstream from the conventions of classic country music.

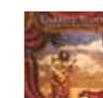
In 2020...

In Nashville, McAvinue is a regular onstage at the Grand Ole Opry when he's not touring the country with Dailey & Vincent. This is some of what he's into these days.



Live at the Apollo | James Brown (1963)

This highlights his showmanship and how he was able to grasp the crowd and hold them firmly in their seats. You can hear the crowd in the background; they are going nuts.



Theatre of the Unheard | Darrell Scott (2003)

He was basically living out of his car and singing on Broadway in downtown Nashville—the quintessential starving artist—when he wrote all the songs on this album. He got a couple of hits in the late '90s, and he recorded this in 2003. The songs are unbelievably deep.



24K Magic | Bruno Mars (2016)

My wife really loves Bruno Mars and got me into him. He's like a modern-day James Brown. The hits sound like old funk but totally updated. I also love the fact that he's a self-made man. It's not like a record label got behind him.



9 | Cashmere Cat (2017)

Cashmere Cat is an EDM artist from Norway. I heard him for the first time by accident. He's got Ariana Grande guesting on this album. The track "Europa Pools" features Kacy Hill. The way he puts together these sounds he's like a classical composer. I'm not into EDM or dubstep, but there's a lot going on here.



Short Trip Home | Edgar Meyer & Joshua Bell (1999)

This has been one I've listened to since college and still listen to today. It's a really amazing album, and the tones are just beautiful. The melodies tend to be nice and simple, but when you take a closer look, it's a lot more complicated than it appears.

From Towson, With Love

At TU, thousands of romances have blossomed in dorm rooms, dining halls and at dance parties—no swiping right necessary. Tell us about yours by emailing munger@towson.edu or tweeting using the hashtag #JUSTTHETUOFUS.



♥ GLORY'S STORY

Glory Kim '15

I remember seeing Matt in my classes and around campus. He was so mysterious, suave and cool. I always wondered who he was. I met him at Bill Bateman's in 2013. It was a social night for LKT, a coed media production fraternity. He was sitting next to one of my good friends, so we just naturally started talking.

Since we were in the same club, we would see each other all the time. The first time I remember really falling for him, he came over to cook with me for a club potluck. We were having so much fun singing at the top of our lungs. When he left, I literally fell on my couch and put my hands on my heart. I felt like a Disney character, and I wrote a tweet along the lines of, "I'm smiling so hard right now."

We bonded over YouTube. When we started dating, we thought it's only right to have a channel together. In the beginning it



was just for fun. When we reached 1,000 subscribers, we were starting to treat it more seriously, and it felt more like a business. I don't mind having our relationship online; I have fun with him in the videos.

Matt proposed when we were having our 100,000-subscriber party in July 2018. He had received my parents' blessing a month before. I was so shocked, I just couldn't believe it.

There were a lot of TU friends at our wedding. The bottom tier of our cake had Stephens Hall and the Tiger statue on it. We also had a paebaek, a Korean wedding ceremony. Usually it's a private thing with your parents, but we did it in public in front of everyone. It's a way of showing that the parents on both sides are welcoming of us.

When we got married the titles of our videos changed from referencing "My boyfriend" to "My fiancé" and "My husband." Now that we're husband and wife, I feel that I'm a reflection of him and vice versa. We're still goofy. I love our dynamic.

♥ MATT'S STORY

Matt Brooks '15

I was in the group that Glory was interested in joining, LKT. I remember seeing her in the Media Center. I told the recruiter, "Yo, who is that?" She didn't know, so I nudged her to go over and recruit Glory. The Bateman's event was the first opportunity for us to talk.

We were friends for a year. I knew she was the one early on, even before we got together. It was mainly because I felt like I could be myself around her. It was a different energy than I've ever felt before. What I love most about Glory is that she laughs at all of my jokes, even if they're corny. She's really loving and caring and loyal.

I went to Towson specifically for the electronic, media and film major, to network and meet people to make YouTube videos. When I found out Glory had her own channel after we got together,



it just made sense for us to combine forces. Slice n Rice wasn't initially supposed to be our main priority. But after the first video, we realized this is really fun and we have something special.

The proposal was very nerve-racking. I knew I wanted all of our closest family and friends to witness it. I couldn't have asked for a better proposal; it was perfect. Except for my Korean—I tried to propose in Korean. That was probably the worst idea ever.

We knew our wedding video was going up on YouTube. Our audience was a huge factor in us getting married—without them we wouldn't have been able to afford a wedding. We had indoor fireworks, smoke, crazy intricate things. I loved seeing all the reactions, in person and online. The whole thing was just perfect.

We didn't live with each other until marriage, so our relationship is still growing. When great things happen, we get to share that excitement together. Like watching our subscribers tick from 999,999 to 1 million in real time. You have a partner to celebrate those moments with. I wouldn't change that for anything.

Philanthropy



Chapman Bust Unveiling

Homecoming morning marked a celebration of Julius Chapman, who served as TU's first dean of minority affairs from 1969 to 1981. Alumni from Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., Iota Epsilon Chapter funded the bronze bust of Chapman and surprised him with the unveiling. Omega Psi Phi brothers Paul-Sean Gray Sr. '88, Terris Andre King '84, '18, Zanes Cypress Jr. '79 and Bishop Kevia Elliott '84—all of whom were integral to the event's planning—spoke during the program. The event coincided with the 50th anniversaries of the Black Student Union, the Black Faculty and Staff Association and the Center for Student Diversity, which were established during Chapman's tenure.

His guidance helped a group of 12 TU students pledge and receive a charter to create the Iota Epsilon chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. His interest in advancing and improving the African American student experience led to the creation of every Greek-lettered African American fraternity and sorority chartered at TU. With Chapman's leadership, the TU chapters of the Pan-Hellenic Council, a collaborative council of nine historically African American international Greek-lettered fraternities and sororities, were chartered. Countless students have benefitted from his dedication.

Dean Chapman Honorarium

The Dean Chapman Honorarium was created to honor and celebrate Chapman's legacy while supporting funds that advance education for diverse students and encourage an inclusive campus environment. These include the Barnes-Harris Scholarship Endowment, the Towson Promise Scholarship and the Institutional Equity and Excellence Fund. Over \$5,000 has been raised through the honorarium.



KIRSTEN HOLMES '23
Recipient, Barnes-Harris
Scholarship Endowment

"You have given me a chance at a higher education, and words cannot express how much this means to me. I will use this scholarship to make change, inspire younger generations and advocate for those who can't do it for themselves."



LEAH COX
Vice President of Inclusion
and Institutional Equity

"While TU is moving in a direction that creates a more inclusive environment, we have Dr. Chapman to thank for laying the groundwork. He is an inspiration to me and to so many at TU who continue the work he began."

CELISA CARVER '21
Recipient, Towson Promise Scholarship

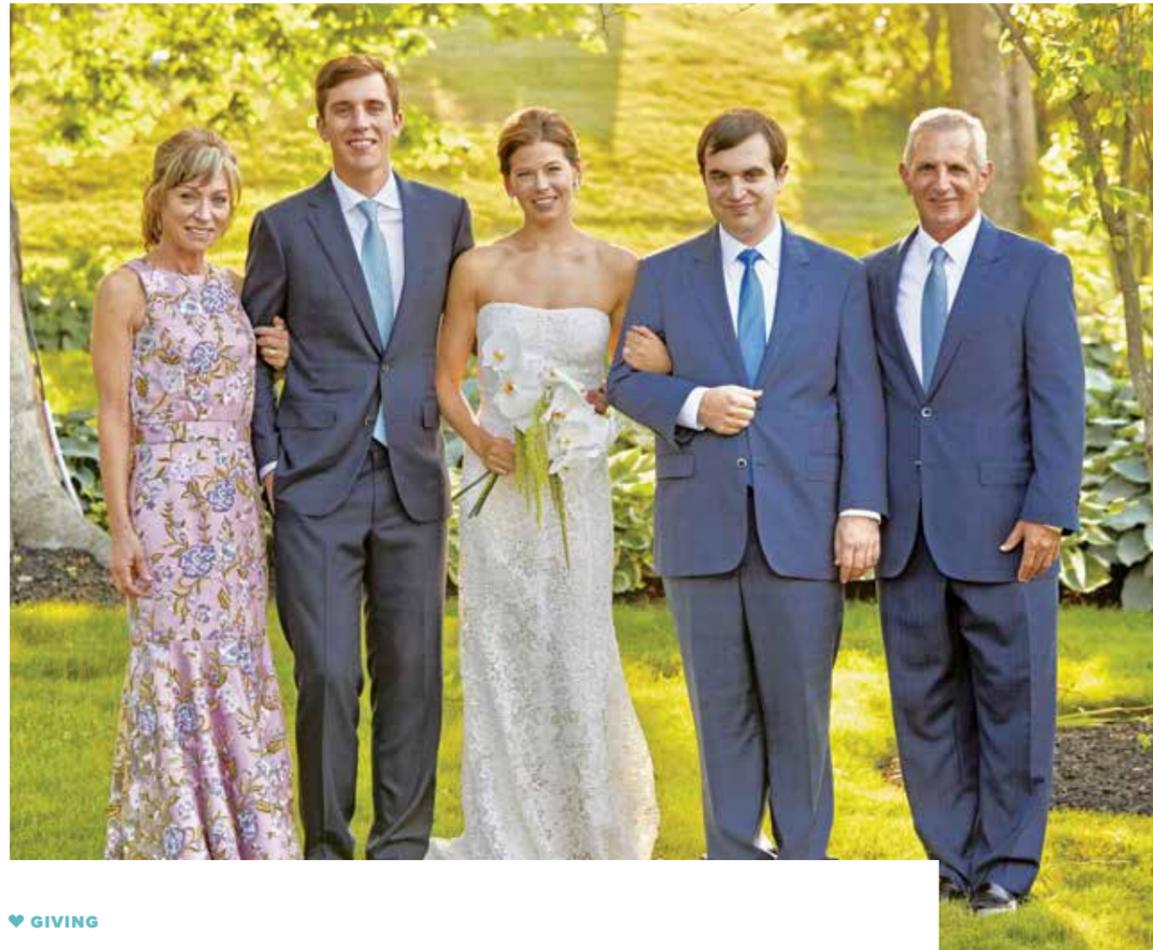
"Thank you. I am very appreciative of your scholarship support. I am a college student, working two part-time jobs and going to school full-time. This scholarship is a great, unexpected help. Thank you again."

To support the Dean Chapman Honorarium, visit www.towson.edu/HonoringDeanChapman.

3 Ways To Make a Gift



However you choose to donate, the entire TU community thanks you for your generosity.



♥ GIVING

Wedding Gifts for a Cause

Douglas Erdman '80 and his wife, Therese, were especially humbled and proud when their son, Travis, married his wife Lisa in June 2018. The couple used the occasion to raise support and awareness for autism. Travis' younger brother, Ross, is on the autism spectrum. Not only did Ross act as a co-officiant of their ceremony, but the bride and groom also asked guests to make gifts in their honor to the TU Douglas and Therese Erdman Work Skills Program Fund at the Hussman Center for Adults with Autism (or another charity) in lieu of traditional wedding gifts. The couple educated their guests about the Hussman Center through their wedding website.

The Erdmans established the Work Skills Program Fund through the Hussman Center in 2012.

"My parents saw the need for Ross and other young adults on the spectrum to have structured opportunities for continued engagement with their communities after matriculating from high school," Travis says. "The Erdman Work Skills Program Fund teaches social and professional skills and gives confidence to Ross and others on the spectrum."

Wedding guests were receptive to the gift request. The newlyweds were ecstatic to learn \$25,000 was raised for the fund.

"We are so thankful to our family and friends for their generosity," Travis says.

The Erdmans were thrilled and honored to learn their son and daughter-in-law decided to support a cause so meaningful to their family. Douglas says, "Travis and Lisa's thoughtfulness will make a wonderful contribution to the future of so many young adults in the autism community."

To support the TU Douglas and Therese Erdman Work Skills Fund at the Hussman Center, visit www.towson.edu/ErdmanFund.

♥ DONOR PROFILE

Jacqueline and Eric Gratz

Philanthropic leaders Jacqueline and Eric Gratz have made the first planned gift to the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Towson University. In recognition of their more than 20-year commitment to the Osher Institute and dedication to the pursuit of lifelong learning, the Jacqueline L. and Eric K. Gratz Endowment ensures that Osher at Towson University will continue its programmatic excellence for future adult learners through instructor honoraria. To make a planned gift, contact Kathleen Hider at khider@towson.edu or 410-704-6287.

WHY WE CREATED A BEQUEST

We value the Osher Institute very much. It has been an enriching experience for us, both in terms of what we could give and what we received. Osher at Towson University offered us an opportunity to use our interests and our skills and share what we know with others. The program has grown and matured during our time, and we want to be sure it continues to do well.

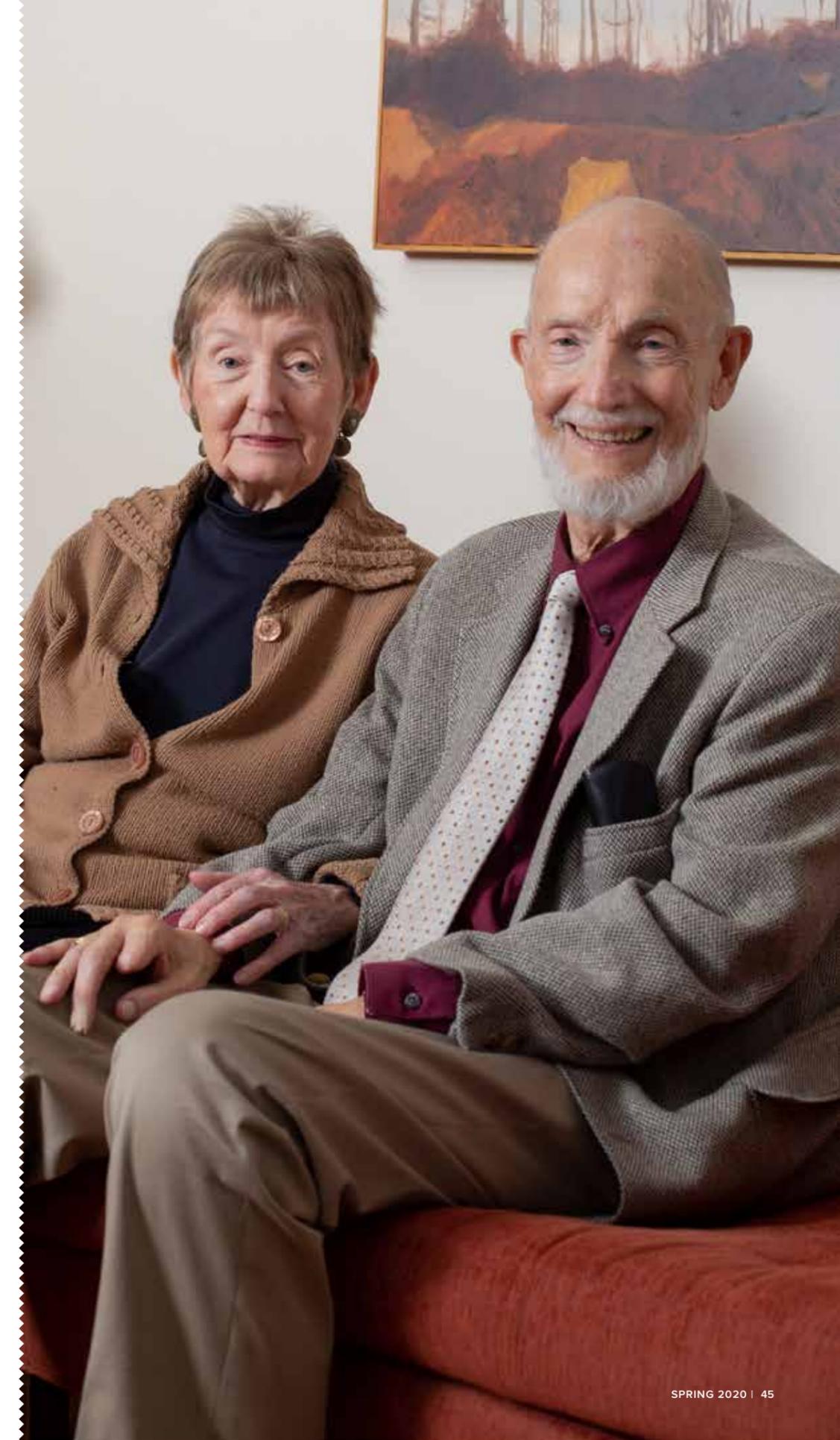
WHY WE THINK LIFELONG LEARNING IS IMPORTANT

Lifelong learning has become a new industry in our society. People are living longer. Although our bodies may wear out, we can still learn. We can never learn enough. The more you know, the more you realize you don't know.

WHAT WE HOPE THE TU COMMUNITY GAINS FROM OUR BEQUEST GIFT

We hope Osher at Towson University continues to grow, and we want to see its excellent attributes continue—the high academic excellence of Osher programming, the superb quality of teaching and instructors and the close community feel.

Learn more about Osher at Towson University at towson.edu/osher.





OUR TOWN

National Aquarium

Emily Anderson Kelly '10, '17 isn't scared of her work environment. That wouldn't be remarkable except that to do her job, the senior aquarist dives with sharks, stingrays and hundreds of colorful fish in the Black Tip Reef exhibit. Kelly feeds krill, flakes and pellets to the fish, but the sharks eat mostly squid—dropped into the water from dry land (see page 1).

Gifts to the TU Fund fuel our momentum.

Your unrestricted gift to the TU Fund makes the biggest impact for our campus community. In addition to supporting every area of our growing university, the TU Fund now awards grants to proposed initiatives that enhance student learning and expand campus programs. Projects receiving grant support advance TU's eight Presidential Priorities and raise the profile of our institution.





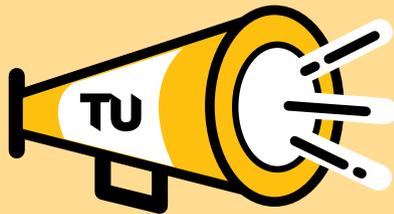
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TU ALUMNI**

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

To improve the alumni experience, Towson University is conducting a survey open to all who have completed an undergraduate degree, graduate certificate or graduate degree at the university. After taking the survey, you will have the option to enter a drawing for one of several Amazon gift cards. Go to towson.edu/alumnisurvey