

Faces of the Frontline

HEALTH CARE WORKERS HAVE ALWAYS FACED DIFFICULT CHALLENGES. NOTHING COULD HAVE PREPARED THEM FOR COVID-19.

MAGAZINE SPRING 2021

Dr. Pascal Crosley

AN EPIC
CHANGE

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LEADING
WOMAN

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A TIGER
GATHERING PLACE

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A Tiger Gathering Place

Towson's Charles Village Pub perseveres.

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An Epic Change

What will the post-pandemic future hold?



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Faces of the Frontline

Staring down COVID-19.



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Leading Woman

The new Dr. Nancy Grasmick Leadership Institute comes to TU.

ON THE COVER



The photo of Dr. Pascal Crosley that graces our cover was taken by TU's Director of Photographic Services, Lauren Castellana '13. "I decided to shoot these images of the health care workers on black and white film with a medium-format camera. I have wanted to shoot portraits on film for a while, and as soon as

I heard about the concept of this story, I knew this would be the perfect opportunity. There's a beautiful quality to film that cannot be replicated with digital cameras. The people I photographed have been working so hard for us every day; I think this is a wonderful way to commemorate them."

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President's Letter

As 2021 unfolds, I know all of us look forward to continuing efforts to bring our entire nation closer to normalcy. Over the past few weeks, K-12 schools have worked toward more in-person classes, retail stores and restaurants are slowly increasing their capacity, people are starting to plan summer outings with their families and the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines is increasing in Maryland and nationwide.

In that same spirit, we recently announced that TU is planning a full return to on-campus instruction, residential life and work this fall for our students, faculty and staff. TU's plan aligns with other universities within the University System of Maryland and across the nation. Not only do we plan to have our students, faculty and staff back on campus, we are also planning to welcome back our alumni.

I cannot emphasize enough that TU's forward momentum has not slowed one bit in the last year. The progress is simply amazing and all our returning Tigers will be welcomed back to a campus that has been transformed by almost \$300 million of investment in new buildings, outdoor facilities and major renovation projects.

At the start of the spring term, we opened TU's new Science Complex. This 320,000-square-foot building is the largest academic space on campus and provides world-class instructional and research resources to support our STEM faculty and students.

We have plans to break ground on TU's new College of Health Professions building this summer. This \$170 million facility is the first to be solely designed and dedicated to support the instruction and research of the college and further its mission as the largest provider of health care professionals to Maryland.

In the fall, TU will open the first and largest phase of the University Union expansion and renewal. This new construction and renovation will modernize the central space for student life,



which was initially built for a student body of 7,000 in the 1970s. This fall, TU's 23,000 students will have new, contemporary meeting and dining spaces as part of this \$90 million expansion, which completes the student district alongside Burdick Hall and Burdick Field.

This spring, Towson University will launch a \$100 million major fundraising campaign in support of our new 10-year strategic plan that will be unveiled this May. Together this plan and the fundraising that supports it will add to TU's momentum as a top 100 public university and an anchor institution to greater Baltimore and Maryland.

I invite you to reconnect with TU—in-person or virtually—as our community returns to campus. And I look forward to seeing our Tigers this fall.

There is much to be proud of at Towson University, and working together, there are even greater things ahead!

KIM SCHATZEL, PH.D.
TOWSON UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT



TREASURES

First Line of Defense

On Oct. 22, 1918, San Francisco Mayor James Rolph signed the "Mask Ordinance," making his city the first in the United States to require face coverings—four layers thick—during the flu pandemic that killed 50 million people worldwide.

More than a century later, a different pandemic rages, but masks are still considered one of the public's first lines of defense. Then as now, many face coverings were homemade.

Adjunct psychology professor Daniela Syed is one of many people across the country who has volunteered their time—and fabric stashes—to make face coverings for family, friends and even perfect strangers over the last year.

Syed estimates she's made at least 100, most given away to local hospitals, doctors' offices, nursing homes and Native American reservations. Along the way, she's collaborated with others to learn how to be more efficient and creative, especially when faced with elastic and metal nose strip shortages.

That creativity came in handy when sewing masks for her niece in New York City. Syed swapped ribbon for the ear elastic to make something the little girl thought was pretty.

"I tried to make ones that she would want to wear because it's really hard to explain to a 2-year-old that you need to wear a mask," she says.

Syed's 93-year-old grandfather still speaks

about how hard it was when his aunt died during the 1918 flu pandemic. She says having these family connections as well as the ones she has with area sewists make sewing masks even more meaningful to her.

"I think sewing them was more of a solemn process than other kinds of sewing," Syed says. "People's lives might depend on it, and we knew it wasn't the best protection for them, but we hoped that it was something that could help."

"I really love all of those T-shirts and signs that say, 'Sewing masks is my superpower,' because I really feel empowered to contribute in that way. I hope we can stay protected with masks as much as possible."

Campus News



Safety Monitor

Chris Edwards '21 was honored by the University System of Maryland for its Public Health Challenge, which encourages Marylanders to stay safe while waiting for a vaccine. Edwards' animated video outlines the state's vaccine distribution plan and basic health and safety measures.



Proud Tigers

Each year, TU students descend on Annapolis to lobby Maryland lawmakers on important legislation. But the 2021 Tiger Pride Day went virtual, with students watching General Assembly and committee hearings on Zoom.



Tomorrow's Leaders

TU has launched a 12-credit certification in entrepreneurship for undergraduates—the first of its kind at TU. It is open to all students, except business administration majors. Students who complete the certificate can also earn a minor in entrepreneurship.

Transforming TU

TU's new Science Complex is 55 years in the making. Fisher College of Science & Mathematics' (FCSM) enrollment has surged 130% since 1998, and TU's investment in science education and research made the new construction a necessity. At 320,000 square feet, the building is the largest academic structure on campus, offering students 50 teaching labs, 30 research labs, eight lecture halls and an outdoor classroom leading to the Glen Arboretum. FCSM Dean David Vanko calls the Science Commons the heart of the complex. It is a multistory atrium with ample work space, theater-style seating and access to a Student Success Center. See more photos on page 31.



Beyond Books

Baltimore has long prided itself on being "The city that reads," and three TU students have been helping produce the next generation of bookworms. In the fall 2020 term, Brooke Dorbit (pictured right), Logan Turner Mannix and Lauren Pahutski volunteered with Reading Partners Baltimore, a children's literacy nonprofit providing one-on-one tutoring to elementary school students. The organization called



Witnessing History

A small part of TU witnessed the inauguration of Joseph Biden as the nation's 46th president and Kamala Harris as the first female Black and Indian vice president. U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin of Maryland tweeted this photo from his seat, saying "Today's #Inauguration represents a peaceful transition of power, the cornerstone of our democracy. I'm proud to watch as @JoeBiden & @KamalaHarris are sworn in as President and Vice President of the US today. I brought a piece of @TowsonU with me to this historic celebration!"

them instrumental in developing and delivering the organization's online tutoring program. "Building that relationship with my student has been great," says Dorbit. "One thing I found out early is that my student loves Spider-Man. I bought a posterboard, fake spiders and spider web. Every time he does well, we celebrate by putting a spider on his web."



SPRING 2021 TERM

5

days available for students to move in (from Jan. 20–24)

85

percent of instruction being conducted remotely

100

COVID-19 tests per hour administered at the new West Village test center

1,700

students moved back on campus

4,600

total COVID-19 tests conducted per week



Centering New Voices

"Personalia 1" by Lek Vercauteren Borja (See more of the exhibition at towson.edu/magazine)

Towson University's Asian Arts & Culture Center (AA&CC) celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2021 with a variety of programming highlighting Asian American and Pacific Islander voices, with a special focus on local artists.

The virtual programming is centered on the theme of "ElevAsian: Honoring AAPI Experiences."

"Looking at everything that we have done for the last 50 years and everywhere that we want to go in the next 50, we came up with this theme," explains Joanna Pecore, director of the AA&CC. "We really wanted to showcase diversity in the community."

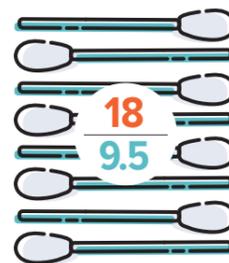
The College of Fine Arts & Communication established a collection of Asian art in 1971, created the Asian arts gallery and began to offer related educational programs, including festivals, performances, artist residencies and lectures.

The center was located on the fifth floor of the Albert S. Cook Library until the opening of the new fine arts building in November 1973. It moved to its current 1,500-square-foot gallery in 2005 after the renovation of the Center for the Arts. The center continues to serve the university and greater Baltimore–Washington community through a range of experiences with Asian arts and culture.

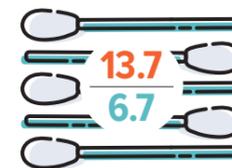
"Everything we do is about creating a family and bringing people together," says Pecore of the center's work with local artists. Bringing them back to exhibit and connecting artists with 36 local partners help to "expand and deepen the connections."

This, she says, is at the heart of the center's vision for the future. "We've been talking about how we're going to celebrate 50 years, and lots of people always want to look back, which is awesome to see where we came from," Pecore says. "But we want to highlight where we're going."

TOTAL TESTS [IN THOUSANDS]



STUDENTS [IN THOUSANDS]



FACULTY & STAFF [IN THOUSANDS]



Testing, 1-2-3

In June 2020, TU's University Health Center set up a COVID-19 testing site for the campus community. The testing policy has adapted as public health guidance has changed, with tests now only required at the start of the term for those routinely on campus as well as random sentinel testing.



OFFICE HOURS

Politics in the Judiciary

Jonathan Hensley, lecturer in the Department of Political Science, on the long and messy history of the Supreme Court.

The Constitution does not prescribe a particular number of judges for the Supreme Court; Congress has the authority to set the size. The court's membership has been set as small as five in 1801 and as large as 10 in 1863, before settling on nine justices in 1869.

When the Supreme Court was established, the first Congress created a six-member court, and it didn't take long for the membership to turn into a partisan issue. The Supreme Court's size changed six times over the last several hundred years.

When we speak of court packing—or court unpacking when you talk about decreasing the size—we think of it as something that's unusual and perhaps even illegitimate, but it has happened before. Court packing is usually defined as adding seats to a court in order to create a particular ideological majority on that court.

It started when John Adams lost the election of 1800 to Thomas Jefferson. After losing that election, the lame duck Federalist Congress passed a judiciary act that created new federal judgeships in the district courts. Adams also appointed John Marshall as the chief justice before his term was out.

Marshall was a loyal Federalist, and Adams certainly knew that. And here you had for the first time a change in party control in American government—the Federalist party of Washington and Adams giving way to the Democratic-Republican party of Jefferson. The Federalist Congress was attempting to lock in some Federalists in the judiciary, partly by appointing Marshall but also by creating these new federal court judge positions and appointing Federalist judges to those. Political conflict over the judiciary is almost as old as the republic itself.

One of the most famous examples of court packing—that never actually happened—was in February 1937 when Franklin Roosevelt was in his second term as president. He proposed adding one new member for each justice

over 70 years old or who had served for more than 10 years. He was worried the court was going to keep overturning his New Deal legislation. The plan never happened because a couple members of the Supreme Court started changing their minds and upholding some of the legislation.

It's worth pointing out that court packing doesn't just happen with the Supreme Court. There have

The Supreme Court's size changed six times over the last several hundred years.

been lots of attempts in the last 15 years or so in the state courts, which existed before the Supreme Court, as well.

Among the concerns about the concept of court packing is that it can really affect the ability of congressional majorities to make policy. This is a well-known issue among scholars of the court, sometimes referred to as “the countermajoritarian difficulty,” where you have an unelected court potentially overturning legislation passed by elected majorities or interpreting it in certain ways that

the majority did not want. And that's a problem that could persist a long time if you have justices appointed when they are 50 years old. They could easily be on the court for 30 years.

Most of us who study the judicial branch believe that judges do have ideological leanings that play a role in their decision-making, though they do not necessarily play the most important role in every case.

But if you observe what the Supreme Court has done over the years, it's hard not to conclude that justices have ideological views that affect the way they rule on certain cases. I think part of that should be attributed to the fact that the Supreme Court hears complex cases, which lend themselves to good-faith differences in interpretation. The Constitution is full of vague phrases, like “due process of law” and “equal protection of the laws.” It is understandable that people will have different views that affect how they understand what those words mean. But that could be a concern if the public started to view the

Supreme Court as being illegitimate and purely a partisan institution.

Current Chief Justice John Roberts has explicitly mentioned in some of his opinions that the court should not be just a partisan institution. I think that's something that concerns some of the justices. I don't know if it concerns all of them. It's fair to point out that there are always politics involved in the selection of Supreme Court justices, and it's not like court packing adds those politics where they aren't there. It's just a more extreme political move, but the politics are always there.

The One **VOLUNTEER PROJECT** That Changed My Life



A person, place or thing can make all the difference

ARUNDHATI RAO

Associate professor, College of Business & Economics

Commissioner, Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism

Growing up in India, the sights and sounds of poverty were all around us. It was common to see people in need looking for help. It is very overwhelming, and I never felt I could do anything to make a difference in anyone's life. I remember when I was 15 years old, someone knocked on our door and asked if we would donate our old newspapers and magazines. I discovered that they were from the

Rotary Club of Mumbai and were looking to raise funds for the blind community they supported. I felt a connection with their cause and wanted to contribute by helping people instead of feeling sorry for them. The following month when they came back to ask for our newspapers, I convinced my parents to start donating to this cause instead of selling our recyclable products. I sent a letter along with the donation to find out more about the Rotary Club. I was excited when they responded and wanted to meet me.

At this meeting, I learned a lot about their organization and the great work they did for the community we lived in. I learned that there were almost no resources available for disadvantaged children. I was invited to their next activity for disadvantaged children, which allowed me to get

involved. I found that I could make small contributions that made a big difference in someone's life. I started helping blind students who needed a writer for exams. That was my first exposure to doing volunteer work.

After completing my master's program, I came to the U.S. for my doctorate at the University of Cincinnati. I was surprised to find there was a great need for volunteers in the U.S. too. I volunteered in the University of Cincinnati Children's Hospital emergency room, helping as a liaison between families and their children who police suspected had suffered abuse. I also volunteered with children in the hospital who did not have any visitors, just playing with them for a couple of hours a week.

Recently, I volunteered with LASOS, Inc., for three years, running the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

(VITA) program in Harford County. It is an IRS-sponsored, free tax preparation program for low-income residents. I got several of my students involved too. All of us had to go through certification with the IRS to become qualified tax preparers. This was an amazing experience for all of us.

For the past four years, I have been volunteering with U.S. Navy Sea Cadet Corps, a youth leadership development organization sponsored by the U.S. Navy. I serve as the Fort McHenry Division's training officer. The kids come from all walks of life, and it is really gratifying to see their growth at the monthly drills.

I continue to look for new and different opportunities to give back to society whenever I can. If someone gets any comfort from my volunteer work, I just feel happy about it.



Moving On Up



TU has sparked countless innovators. These are their stories.

Bill Leonard '87

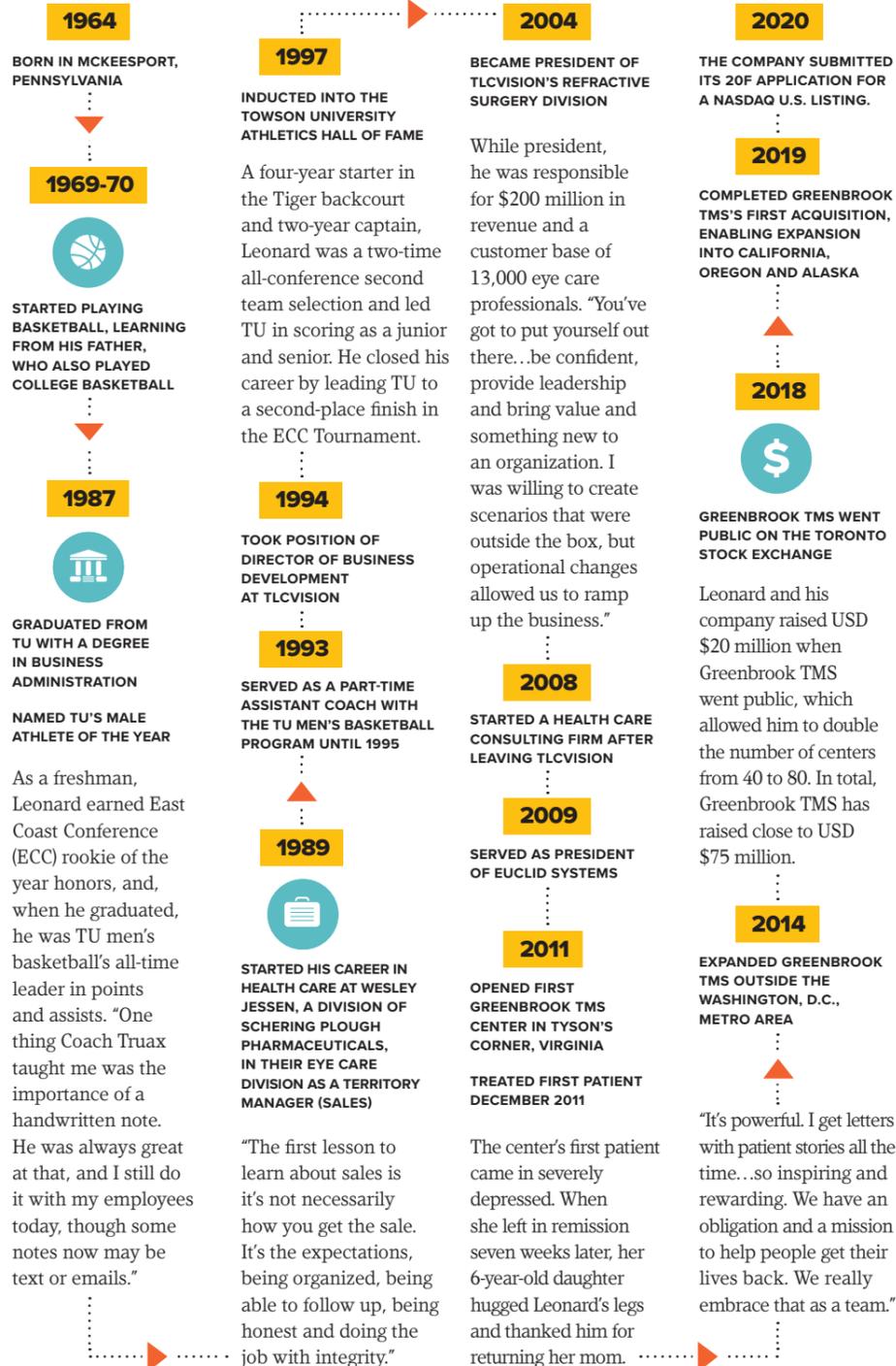
Founder of Greenbrook TMS

Bill Leonard '87 spent four years on the then-Towson State University men's basketball team and took away a career's worth of wisdom.

"A lot of what I did as an athlete at Towson really played a part in how I manage a team, take more risk and build the key parts of that team," he says.

The lessons in overcoming adversity and bonding with teammates supported Leonard throughout his career, first in pharmaceutical sales and management and then as the founder of Greenbrook TMS, a behavioral health company offering transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) to people with depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder and smoking cessation needs.

TMS therapy provides local electromagnetic stimulation to specific brain regions known to be directly associated with mood regulation. The company has provided more than half a million treatments to more than 14,000 patients.



Coffee With... Linda Singh

We spoke with TU's inaugural leader-in-residence, a retired adjutant general of the Maryland National Guard.

LOCATION:
Her home in Bowie, Maryland

IN HER CUP:
Coffee with MCT oil, ghee, monk fruit sugar and sugar-free creamer

ADDICTION LEVEL:
"I have one coffee a day every day of the week. I will treat myself periodically to a caramel macchiato."

Q: What were you doing workwise during this time?

A: Oh God, anything I could. I worked at McDonald's, I did some summer work at an office, I worked at department stores.

Q: What was the turning point for you?

A: I was working a temp job and then I got a full-time job with a defense contractor. I was doing office support but quickly moved up to be their office manager and then started doing some contracts management. Each time I moved on, the jobs got better. Then one of my bosses recommended that I get a business degree. I started working on my degree, which took 10 years. In the process, I had a first sergeant who convinced me to go to officer candidate school, so I left the reserves and became an officer.

Q: You were the first female and the first African American to be adjutant general in Maryland. What does that mean to you?

A: I didn't really think about it in that sense. You know people are going to look at it and say, "Did she get the job because she is a female?" Why can't you just give me credit for being good at what I do? I got the opportunity to put more women and minorities in positions of leadership. But if they weren't the right leader, they didn't get selected.

Q: Where did this opportunity from TU come from and what excited you about it?

A: In 2019, I got my Ph.D. in industrial organizational psychology. I knew I wanted to affiliate with an institution, and I knew I wanted my affiliation to be local. I had already been doing some partnership work with Towson University with the Guard, and President Schatzel has always been a good friend and mentor.

Q: What is your role?

A: The focus is looking at the leadership programs across the university and trying to determine if we are synchronizing our programs. Do we have gaps? And if we have gaps, what can we bring to bear to fill those gaps? How do we leverage the programs that we have and take them from good to great?

Q: What makes a great leader?

A: In my opinion, being humble. Being yourself. You need to know your strengths, and you need to know where you fit in the scheme of things. If you have to build a team around you, then how do you build that? If you're given a team, how do you start mobilizing that team in a manner that we can start acting as one?



Down But Not Out

★ BASKETBALL

When Diane Richardson's fever reached 104 degrees, her husband, Larry, helped drag her into the shower. There, he turned on all the jets and soaked her with cold water. It lowered her temperature but only temporarily. Soon the fever, having weakened but not left her body entirely, returned to its frightful peak.

This scenario repeated multiple times during Richardson's debilitating battle with COVID-19. The TU women's basketball coach eventually recovered from the disease and returned to the sideline to coach her team but not before some of the scariest moments of her life.

"The night before the [presidential] inauguration we were really, really bad," says Richardson, 62. "We were watching the lights on the Mall representing all the people that died from COVID. I said, 'Larry,

we cannot die.' I sent out a text and I said, 'I don't want to be a light,' meaning those lights on the Mall. I want to be here in the present for my children."

Her ordeal began on Jan. 4. The team had just returned from a game against James Madison in Virginia when her stomach began to hurt. The next morning, she got a call from a team athletic trainer. She had tested positive for COVID-19.

How she became infected remains a mystery. Since the very earliest days of the pandemic, no one took the novel coronavirus more seriously than Richardson. Her daughter, Dana, suffers from cerebral palsy and other pre-existing conditions. Richardson, her husband and their two sons knew that they could not risk exposing Dana to the disease. When Richardson left the house,

she always wore a mask (sometimes two), usually donned gloves and was militant about washing her hands and physically distancing.

None of that mattered. Twenty minutes after her stomach started feeling off, she had a temperature of 102. Quickly her husband and their two sons became sick as well. Miraculously, Dana and her live-in caretaker, Rosa, did not.

The Richardsons immediately began isolating in their bedroom while their sons did the same downstairs. The next three weeks were as harrowing a time as Richardson has gone through in her life.

Neither she nor her husband could keep a morsel of food down for the first five days. When her 84-year-old mother called, she and Larry, 63, would put on their best "CNN voices" to try to assure her that they were OK,

even though they weren't. Their daughter would bang on their bedroom door, but they couldn't open it.

"We could hear Dana and Rosa laughing and giggling and singing," she says. "It just made us feel good. But it also reminded me that we had to stay alive to be able to take care of her."

They were so weak just picking their heads up from their pillows was a challenge. They would set an alarm for every two hours to force themselves to get up and walk around the bedroom. One night, Richardson didn't hear Larry's normal snoring.

"All along people kept telling me, 'Don't lay on your back.' Throughout the whole time we would tell each other, 'Turn over, turn over,'" she says. "I woke up and I looked over, and he was on his back. I told him, 'Turn

over, get off your back.' Nothing. Nothing. Then I touched his belly, and it wasn't going up and down. I started crying, 'No! No! No!' and hitting him."

Thankfully, Larry came to and started breathing. It was one of several times Richardson, usually a relentlessly positive person, thought they might not make it.

Always a coach, Richardson didn't want to distract her players by letting them know the direness of her condition. Instead, she would send inspirational messages to them on a group text.

Finally, on Jan. 26, Richardson felt well enough to contemplate returning to work. She emerged from the bedroom and walked up and down the stairs to test her stamina.

"I was so out of breath," she recalls. "I probably took a nap after that."

The next day she showed up at SECU Arena to surprise her team during a film session. When she walked into the room, her players reacted as if they had just won the national championship.

"The night before the [presidential] inauguration we were really, really bad. We were watching the lights on the Mall representing all the people that died from COVID. I said, 'Larry, we cannot die.'"

"She brings a sense of family to the program," junior guard Shavonne Smith says. "She doesn't feel like a coach. She feels like, if anything, a grandmother. She always had us thinking that everything was positive. It never seemed like it was really a battle."

Gradually, they began to show signs of improvement.

"When we finally could get up and walk, we would take a few steps," Richardson says. "There's a couch in my bedroom, so we would say, 'Let's make it to the couch.' We'd collapse on the couch and lay there for a while. And then there were days when we could get past the couch. We just kept pushing each other."

Eventually they were able to start eating bananas before moving on to toast and oatmeal. She lost 15 pounds as a result of her illness.

"It was those 15 pounds I gained during the pandemic sitting in the house eating," she says, laughing.

"It was an emotional moment," Smith says. "Seeing that she made the effort to come back meant a lot. It showed us that whatever we're going through, it's not an excuse to give up. If Coach Rich can push through COVID, then we can push through the season and play hard for her."

In the ensuing weeks, Richardson suffered from fatigue and occasional headaches, but she was elated to be on the bench again. In her first game back, TU beat the College of Charleston 90-81.

Richardson made the decision to go public with her plight because she wants everyone to understand the seriousness of COVID-19.

"From a psychological standpoint, it's really hard if you don't have something to push for," she says. "It affects people so differently. I wanted people to understand that COVID is very, very real."



CHARLES THOMPSON '23
recorded his third double-double of the men's basketball season with 11 points and 11 rebounds in a Feb. 14 victory over then-CAA leader Northeastern.



CAMILLE VITOFF '23
was named Co-Gymnast of the Week by the East Atlantic Gymnastics League after she posted a career-best score to win the all-around competition on Feb. 12 at a dual meet with George Washington.



KIONNA JETER '21
notched her third-straight 30-plus point game in women's basketball's Feb. 13 win at Northeastern. She was named a semifinalist for the 2021 Becky Hammon Mid-Major Player of the Year Award.



BRIAN BENZING '24
set a school record in winning the 100-yard breaststroke in a Feb. 6 meet at the U.S. Naval Academy.



WORDS BY MEGAN BRADSHAW

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
DAVID CALKINS '93

THE NOVEL
CORONAVIRUS
PANDEMIC
SPARKED
PROFOUND
SHIFTS IN THE
WAY WE LIVE
OUR LIVES.
HOW MANY
WILL STICK?

California Gov. Gavin Newsom's stay-at-home order on March 19, 2020, was the first. By April 2, nearly 91% of the U.S. population—298,589,422 people—faced such directives. The COVID-19 pandemic forced sudden changes in peoples' lives, throwing many into the chaos of job loss, economic insecurity and fears about their health.

When the dust started to settle, though, some positive effects became visible. The world faced a puzzle shortage, as families hunkered down between remote learning and Zoom meetings to spend more time together. The pressure to be constantly busy relented, allowing people more time for intentional thought and decision-making regarding what the "new normal" should look like.

Perhaps the most obvious signs of change were in nature: the jellyfish seen cruising the more-transparent Venice canals, the goats that wandered unimpeded through the Welsh town of Llandudno and the meteoric improvement in air quality in Delhi, India, that exposed blue skies over the city for the first time in decades.

There's a saying that change is the only constant, and in many ways, the pandemic has proven that to be true. And, in some cases, it's been a catalyst.

PRIOR TO 2020, REMOTE LEARNING

was a very small part of the U.S. education model, occurring mostly in charter schools and nontraditional educational settings. Only 20% of traditional K-12 public schools offered any courses entirely online.

For the most part, educational technology remained in the classroom. Teachers focused on student-centered technology, using a one-device-to-one-student strategy when possible and including online learning platforms like Kahoot! that gamified learning. Content management systems like Blackboard or Class Dojo were employed for assigning homework and distributing school notices.

"Technology integration is about using technologies to improve instruction and learning," says Liyan Song, professor in the College of Education.



LIYAN SONG

Professor,
College of Education

"Instead of teachers using PowerPoint and internet resources during a classroom session, students have been given opportunities to use technology to create products, communicate and interact."

Preservice teacher education around the country, including at TU, leaned heavily on in-classroom technology.

"We were preparing for the possible scenarios in the real-world classrooms and how technology can be used to enhance teaching and learning—giving them the tools, the pedagogical ideas and the theories behind the use of technology," Song says. "In fact, we were also preparing them for e-learning. We knew it was coming."

But perhaps not as quickly as it did.

By April 2020, more than 1.2 billion students around the world were learning remotely, including tens of millions in the U.S. Inequities and deeply rooted societal issues immediately became apparent.

Schools that had adopted the one-to-one device strategy were in a better position than most, even as they struggled to deliver the hardware to students.

"The pandemic made such initiatives almost a mandate; in order for a student to succeed during the pandemic where the learning takes place virtually, they have to have access to computers," Song says.

But network security was a problem. By late November 2020, the *Wall Street Journal* had documented nearly three dozen ransomware attacks on schools, most prominently in Baltimore, Miami and Toledo, that affected 700,000 total students.

In such attacks, hackers enter a school system's network and control personal information they then threaten to release to the public unless their demands are met. Ransoms ranged from \$35,000 to \$1.14 million last year.

The Baltimore County ransomware attack on Nov. 20 caused a two-day school closure for the district's 115,000 public school students. Hackers targeted the school system's websites and remote learning programs as well as grading and email systems, locking out the district administrators. The county lost an estimated \$18 million in lost revenue and data retrieval costs, according to *The Baltimore Sun*.

"There always needs to be a backup. With the ransomware attack, it's more infrastructure, networks, security—a much bigger issue," Song says. "You can't just focus on the devices. You must secure your networks and information."

Even when technology works, it can still be a distraction.

"Imagine you're a teacher. Every student has a laptop in front of them. You're teaching, and the students are looking at a screen. It's hard for teachers to see whether the students are focused on their activities," Song says. "How do the teachers manage the classroom so students stay on task? That can be a challenge."

But it seems one that teachers have embraced.

In spring 2020, the *Education Week* Research Center surveyed U.S. K-12 educators on how the novel coronavirus school closures had influenced the role and use of technology in education. More than eight in 10 teachers believed their ability to use the technology improved and that this made them better, more innovative educators. They reported becoming more tech savvy, and some planned to continue using the new tools when their buildings reopened.

That's something Song and the rest of the TU faculty are already preparing for.

"We are constantly looking at what's going on in schools and making adaptations to our curriculum to prepare the teachers to teach in school," she says. "Given the students' exposure to technology on such a scale, it's not really hard to convince [teachers] that technology is a must."

Song also sees the definition of what makes a device suitable for the classroom expanding. Throughout 2020, stories abounded of teachers going the extra mile to reach their students. Whether that was strapping a Go-Pro to their forehead to get a close-up of insects or transforming their living rooms into an undersea world and wearing scuba gear to teach about marine life over Zoom, teachers now have more than a year's experience thinking outside the box.

"People have to explore different ways, alternative ways to teach the instruction, to make it meaningful to students," Song stresses. "I think that that's one positive aspect of this pandemic instruction. I'm sure there will be all new sorts of technologies to strengthen classroom instruction."

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IN 2019, THE BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS (BLS) reported more than 26 million Americans—about 16% of the total workforce—worked remotely at least part-time. And between 2005 and 2015, the number of U.S. employees who telecommuted increased by 115%. But just 7% of American companies offered the option to most or all of their employees, according to late 2010s BLS data.

Like remote learning, the March 2020 pivot to remote work was sudden and spectacular, and the effects were both positive and negative.

MIT's Erik Brynjolfsson and five other economists conducted two major surveys in April and May 2020 and found that about half of the entire American workforce was now remote. But while the proportion of workers offsite changed dramatically, the culture of telecommuting hadn't changed much since a 2015 research review by psychologist Timothy Golden and his colleagues.

They found, overall, telecommuting increased job satisfaction, performance and feelings of commitment to an organization among employees. Drawbacks included social and professional isolation, fewer opportunities for information sharing and a blurring of boundaries between work and personal life.

"When you have flexibility embedded in any job or any organization, we have seen in the research that employee satisfaction increases because they feel ownership of the job that they're doing," says Filiz Tabak, chair of TU's Department of Management. "They are more engaged in the work that they're doing, and they make the best of that time when they're at the office.

"You don't have what we call presenteeism: when people come to work but there are times they are not at work at all. They're shopping on the internet or daydreaming."

Tabak also raised the idea of remote work being more budget friendly for employees. In 2018, the average U.S. commute was 27 minutes one way—a record high—and the average money spent on personal grooming in 2017 was \$313 per

month for women and \$244 per month for men.

"When you're not driving or in the office, you have lower costs for gas, parking and wear on your car, and you're paying less for personal grooming and clothes," she notes.



FILIZ TABAK

Professor,
College of Business
& Economics

But while those budget line items may shrink, remote employees may also see their salaries contract as well. *Forbes'* contributor Jack Kelly has speculated that employees who move to less-expensive cities while teleworking may see salary reductions commensurate with their lower costs of living.

Another lesser-known repercussion for employees is an increase in competition for open positions. Applicants may now contend not only against others in their zip code but against talent from across the country or world.

Jack Dorsey, chief executive of Twitter and Square, has spoken already about how expanded teleworking opens the potential to hire employees outside of commuting distance.

"We can get talent anywhere," he said at the May 2020 JPMorgan Global Technology, Media and Communications conference. "There's a lot of folks out there that do not want to move to San Francisco."

Some issues that plague online learning can also be present in remote work: lack of close, face-to-face supervision as well as immediate employee access to managers, a loss of office communication like impromptu hallway meetings or water-cooler chat and facing distractions like kids, pets, deliveries and health concerns.

Two areas Tabak believes will change significantly are management styles and office design.

"Management styles need to become more open, transparent and participative," she says. "The managers' focus needs to be more on building trust between employees and leadership

such that, as a manager, you will be focusing more on the outcome, rather than on what people are doing on a day-to-day basis."

Tabak sees managers needing to acquire new skills post-pandemic, like becoming more tech savvy and making thoughtful decisions based on employees' personalities.

"Now you have to ask probing questions and listen carefully, so people open up and share their concerns and stresses with you," Tabak says. "I see managers doing this more often and very deliberately. Now you have to build workplace social connections remotely."

Having fewer employees in the workplace could translate to cost savings for many businesses.

Salesforce's Brent Hyder told the *Wall Street Journal* changes there would include revamping office layouts to increase collaboration space instead of having a "sea of desks."

"With the increase in job sharing and teleworking, businesses will not carry so many overhead costs," Tabak says. "It'll be a good reason for them to reduce their physical space use."

IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER,

Americans are still, by and large, working from home, and their short evening commute frequently takes them from their desk to the couch.

Public health advice to remain at home keeps them there, doomscrolling Twitter or endlessly scanning the internet for the newest hit show and checking to see if it's on one of their streaming services.

TV and video streaming services from companies like Amazon Prime Video, Netflix and Hulu popped up between 2006 and 2008 and dominated the market. But now there are dozens.

In 2019, streaming video on demand (SVoD) revenue almost hit \$16 billion, and the U.S. market accounted for more than 40% of global SVoD revenue.

"Netflix was ahead of the game," says Ryan Murray, associate professor in the College of Fine Arts & Communication (COFAC). "Now everybody seems to have their own streaming service and are trying to convince people to subscribe. They're using the same strategy as video game console companies: exclusivity. If you want to watch *Stranger Things*, you have got to subscribe to Netflix."



RYAN MURRAY

Associate Professor,
College of Fine Arts
& Communication

The stay-at-home orders gave SVoD marketers a helping hand. In the first three weeks of March 2020, Americans streamed an estimated 400 billion minutes—an 85% year-over-year increase.

According to a Nielsen report, internet streamers totaled 23% of all viewing done on televisions last March, compared to 16% during the same period one year ago. The number is likely much higher since Nielsen doesn't track streaming through mobile devices or computers.

Americans' rapid dependence on streaming services for shows like *Tiger King*, *Schitt's Creek* and *Cobra Kai* took their minds off the



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pandemic and hastened the slow but steady decline of cable TV.

By November 2020, *Forbes* projected cable would lose around six million subscribers in 2020 alone.

"People are at home and looking for entertainment," Murray says. "But some people are not making as much money as they used to. Even if you're not losing your home, you may be cutting your cable bill."

Expensive cable packages may not be the only media dinosaurs fading



away. Streaming services have set their sights on movie theaters as well.

Major movie studios pivoted their release plans in 2020 away from theaters closed by pandemic restrictions. Films like *Trolls World Tour*, *Emma* and *Mulan* all released directly to streaming services. Following suit, Warner Bros. announced in late December 2020 that it plans to release all 17 of its 2021 films on HBO Max and in theaters simultaneously, including major would-be blockbusters like *Matrix 4*, *In the Heights* and *The Suicide Squad*.

"I think we're at an inflection point there, where we may see the culture of theaters and premieres largely become a thing of the past," Murray predicts. "For folks worried about the future of film theater experience, I think they

are right to worry. Ultimately, what will decide it is viewership and money. And how soon will you want to be in a dark room next to somebody you don't know for three hours after this quarantine?"

The pandemic has also shifted the balance of power between traditional and new media. When TV and movie studios shut down, networks struggled to produce and distribute content.

The internet didn't.

A viral video of an out-of-work sports commentator narrating his two

Labrador retrievers racing to finish their breakfast garnered him a book deal and massive social media following.

In August, a teacher made up a love song to Remy from Disney Pixar's *Ratatouille* while cleaning her apartment and sparked a Broadway-style production of the 2007 animated film after her TikTok post inspired thousands of other users to post their own tributes. The production premiered on the social media channel on Jan. 1, and raised \$1 million for The Actors Fund.

"The larger, more traditional industry will probably be stealing production methods from the homemade crowd for years to come," Murray says. "At the beginning of quarantine, it was like, 'We can't get a crew together. We can't hit the level of production that we were

used to.' Before long, you had *SNL* and the *Today Show* self-recording on iPads at home.

Murray sees the new generation of media consumers in his classes daily.

"There are folks who watch more YouTube than they do traditional media. A lot of them are aspiring filmmakers in my classes. I'll ask a group of undergrads what they've been watching, and the answer usually is 'I've been watching this thing on Twitch' or 'I'm into these videos where people tear down electronics and build them into something else on YouTube.'"

Murray's colleague David Reiss, associate professor in COFAC, teaches post-production courses and says the pandemic has offered content producers new avenues, and advances in technology have leveled the playing field further.

"They are looking at whatever they can use on social media, on any other software and take over the management of their brand, their music, art or film," Reiss says. "I'm not waiting on a paycheck. I'm going to make this first. Then I'm going to see if there's any interest."

"If you have a better, nicer camera, great. If you're into audio and you have fancy audio stuff, great. But all you need is your phone."

Murray concurred regarding the benefits to opening the industry to newcomers.

"There are a lot of people whose voices we didn't used to hear. And there are a lot of reasons for that," he says. "Sometimes it's racism. Sometimes it's you didn't come from money. Sometimes it's you've never gotten in the right room with the right person at the right time."

"Young people of color are seeing other young people of color speaking their truth and their experience in a way that maybe would have been gated before or was more gated," Murray says. "Now it's, 'I don't have to go through the old white power structure to have my own show. I can just make it up.' Suddenly there's a lot of people having a conversation and being affected by one another's cultural output. That can be really positive and happen irrespective of industry."

WHILE JUST AS TRAILBLAZING as new media production, the move toward a cashless society has its roots in the mid-20th century.

The idea that electronic messages might replace paper checks emerged as early as 1954.

"The continuous move to a 'cashless society' is a result of innovations in the retail financial service sector, such as credit cards in the 1950s, ATMs in the '60s, internet banking in the '90s and now financial tech (fintech) since the early 21st century," says Yingying Shao, assistant professor in the Department of Finance. "Unlike the previous innovations that occurred to enhance banking, the new fintech services aimed to replace banking services."

Digital payment such as Apple Pay and PayPal provide Americans without bank accounts—approximately 7.1 million households—a measure of security.



YINGYING SHAO

Assistant Professor,
College of Business
& Economics

"They enable those unbanked populations to safely store their cash and purchase merchandise without worries about storing and carrying cash around," Shao says. "In addition, the fintech apps provide convenient and secure payment methods and sometimes are faster and cheaper than using the direct banking services."

According to the FDIC, cash represented just 30% of all payments in 2017. In the past four years, the use of cash for transactions less than \$20 has dropped from 46% to 37%.

A study by the fintech company Square found that between March 1



and April 23, 2020, the number of cashless businesses in the U.S. increased 23%. Globally, that's on the low end. Great Britain saw an increase of 50% in cashless businesses, and Canada saw a 39% increase.

A lack of open storefronts at which to shop was not the only factor that has decreased the use of cash over the last year. People developed fears of touching bills and coins early in the pandemic.

"In retail stores, customers are now more likely to choose touchless payment technologies, not only because of the convenience of the digital apps but also the concerns that cash can potentially transmit coronavirus from changing hands," Shao says.

The national coin shortage the U.S. suffered after coin manufacturers shut down and banks closed their lobbies didn't help.

"The lockdown created a severe interruption to the supply chain of coins in the economy, because the places where the coins circulated have been closed," Shao notes. "The Federal Reserve had to reduce the supply to commercial banks' coin inventory, which constrained banks' services to their clients."

The impact of the shortage, however, is believed to be temporary because the

Federal Reserve has been increasing the coin production while limiting the coin allocation. Once the economy fully reopens, the coins will begin to circulate again, and the coin supply chain will restore to normal patterns."

What will those normal patterns be? Shao sees pros and cons to the march toward a cashless society.

"Going cashless could benefit consumers by allowing them to directly bypass the traditional banking services such as checking and depositing while enjoying the convenience and digital security provided by those fintech apps," she says. "Asian countries and the United States are moving very fast in embracing fintech, much quicker than in Europe. Concerns have been raised in terms of data privacy and security, especially cybersecurity. It is a key risk for fintech firms; regulators are paying great attention to the potential misuse of fintech in criminal activities such as money laundering and terrorist financing."

With out-of-home activity on the rise and the vaccine rollout ramping up, the world may finally start to see its new normal. How long before it changes again remains to be seen. **TU**

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FACES

OF THE

FRONTLINE

WORDS BY MEGAN BRADSHAW | FILM PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAUREN CASTELLANA '13

We asked alumni and faculty in a variety of health care disciplines to share the challenges they've faced during the pandemic. What they told us was both heartbreaking and hopeful.

Evidence-based treatments. Compassion. Anatomy and physiology. Flexibility. Health assessment and diagnosis. Empathy.

College of Health Professions students start working in health care facilities before graduation, learning all the skills—hard and soft—they'll need to provide high-quality care for the rest of their careers. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, those skills were urgently needed. Nearly 75 nursing students graduated early throughout 2020 to aid Maryland's fight against the novel coronavirus, joining thousands of TU alumni already in the trenches.

These are their stories.



Pascal Crosley, M.D.

Owner
Quality First Urgent Care

CLASS OF 1993

When I opened my urgent care in Howard County in December 2019, I hired advanced providers, physicians' assistants and nurse practitioners to work with me. We provided a good level of care and were building links with the Burtonsville community.

Then the pandemic hit. There were a lot of unknowns, a lot of fear. Because I was an emergency doctor, I was comfortable with PPE and isolation rooms and able to stay open.

I developed a drive-through testing center in the back of my urgent care. A lot of frontline workers were becoming very sick, and they were showing up pretty regularly with symptoms of COVID.

The testing grew from 50 a day, 60 a day, 70 a day, and on and on, until I developed more efficient processes and then opened two more testing centers at the Savage and Elkridge volunteer fire departments. The most tests I've done in a day is 2,000.

Once we got to Thanksgiving, at the peak of the fall surge, I'd have 115 cars in line at each of my testing sites.

The resulting traffic meant we needed to develop a walk-up process. In the back of our urgent care, I have a respiratory center with a 65-foot tent and fresh air pumping in. I take care of respiratory and COVID patients and COVID testing in that particular part of the urgent care.

It was evident to me early that testing was going to help us get out of this. Keeping people safe, delivering medical care—especially in an area that I grew up and lived in—is what I'm most proud of.

Tim Ames

Physical therapy assistant,
GBMC, Acute Rehab Unit

CLASS OF 2016, 2020

Before the pandemic, you didn't have to worry about getting your temperature checked or wearing a mask when you came to work. Now, you get a little sticker—a different color every day—to let the patients know you're symptom free. I work with patients to get them up and moving. You don't want them to stay in bed all day; otherwise, they develop things like pneumonia, bed sores or blood pressure imbalance.

If the patient is positive, you have to treat whatever brought them into the hospital—stroke, abdominal surgery—and COVID. With COVID patients, you really need to get them out of bed to increase their breathing as much as possible.

When you go into the room, you wear a gown, N95 mask and face shield. Two or three months into the pandemic, it became normal. "OK, I got my walker, the face mask and the N95. Now I've got the equipment I need to treat patients."

A good thing we have done is having iPads to talk to family members and bring a little bit of joy to patients while they are sitting in the hospital. One of the hardest parts is the patients can't have their family visit. It's hard to explain to them. Some understand. Others don't.

Another hard thing is hearing about a patient you've been working with, that's been close to you, who has suddenly passed away... That's the toughest day at the hospital. You work with a person. You're doing your best. The person is getting up every day, walking the halls. The virus just takes a toll on people differently.

But one of the best things is seeing a patient who has progressed from being in an intensive care unit to going home and back to an independent lifestyle. That's the best feeling ever.



Kathleen Resnick

Administrative coordinator,
GBMC, volunteer firefighter
and EMT

CLASS OF 1994, 2000

My background is adult ICU and ER. When the pandemic started, not being at the bedside was hard for me because I want to be there to help people.

When you see multiple members of the same family dying within the hospital, it's difficult. When you have a husband and a wife who both die. Their children have COVID, and they can't do a funeral. It's difficult. It's not a hoax. That's why we need masks and to wash our hands and social distance. People don't realize how quick it can spread.

As a firefighter with and president of the Pikesville Volunteer Fire Company, I'm proud that we take the same precautions as we do at GBMC. Everyone has to have full PPE and N95 if they're within 6 feet of a patient. If they're not, they have to have a mask on at all times inside the building.

Service is truly my life. My neighbor's house caught on fire a few months ago, and my husband and I were able to run down and help them before our equipment with our gear could arrive.

All the members of my fire company are strong people. I think we were prepared for something like this. Even though we didn't think it would happen, I think we knew, in an emergency, we can do it, whether at the hospital or at the firehouse. Being a Towson grad, I feel like the nursing program and the professors we had gave us what we needed for success.



Rodnita King Davis

Nursing educator and registered nurse, Notre Dame of Maryland University / York Hospital

CLASS OF 2012

For the past five years, until mid-summer of last year, I was working at York Hospital in the post-anesthesia caregiving room. We recognize there are potential hazards to the job. But you almost feel like you can control those to a certain extent. Then, when the pandemic hit, it felt like this extreme loss of control. There were so many unknowns and quite a bit of fear.

I had a spray bottle of Clorox in my car. I was spraying down the soles of my shoes before I put my foot in the car. I had a trash bag draped over my seat. When I got in the garage, I was stripping down, flipping my clothes inside out and carrying them straight to the washing machine and turning it on as hot as the water will go, pouring whatever sanitizing solution I had available.

Now at Notre Dame, we've reduced room capacities and mandated that students wear masks and face shields. In my health assessment class, I keep them at a distance as much as possible, but when you're doing assessment, typically, you may not put on gloves to just look at someone's fingernails. But now I tell them, "Please put on gloves for everything."

When we started classes on Zoom, it wasn't so much of a problem for me, because strategies I used in the classroom lent themselves to using a breakout room. I always try to see the silver lining and think about things that really work well and some things that we can improve upon.

I'm proud that I've been able to connect with some of my peers and show them some of the technologies, some of the things that I've had success with doing and really share in that way. I'm also proud that I've been able to still connect with my students even though we are physically distant.

“

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Briana Snyder

Registered nurse, Sheppard Pratt Hospital, Inpatient Trauma Disorders Unit

TU FACULTY

I teach full-time at Towson, and I'm per diem at Sheppard Pratt. So I pick up four or five eight-hour shifts per month at the hospital.

I work on the inpatient trauma disorders unit. We treat adults who have experienced very severe maltreatment, usually abuse and neglect, sexual, physical, emotional, verbal—often starting at a very young age and lasting into adulthood. They have diagnoses like dissociative disorders, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, PTSD—related to their trauma.

Things were pretty routine in the psych world, pre-pandemic. Now, it's difficult to think what's the same.

The unit is designed to promote interaction, and we have had to totally shut that down. There's a lot more isolation and loneliness. It's a shame, because part of the benefit of being in a psych facility is being in that therapeutic milieu where you can interact with other people with similar life experiences and diagnoses and get support from them. That's a big part of their treatment, and that's been cut off.

During the pandemic, the rates of substance use, domestic violence, child abuse and suicide have gone up. That's just for the general population. For people with pre-existing mental health issues, it's gotten much worse.

We in the psych world expect to see the effects of this for months or years. We already have waiting lists for our units.

But, with this pandemic affecting everybody in the general population, I think it's come to more attention how important mental health is and how quickly it can be affected. People who formerly considered themselves mentally healthy have maybe experienced things that they've never experienced in their lives. And I think it's given folks a new appreciation for mental health care and folks who work in mental health care and the work that we do.



Luukia Morin

Registered nurse, University of Maryland Medical Center, OB Care Unit

CLASS OF 2017

Before the pandemic, UMMC had a high-acuity, pretty busy labor and delivery unit. We have a lot of complex cases. People come in and things happen quickly, and we're right by their side.

The pandemic really changed the way that we triage patients. They come in, and we don't know their COVID status. We all have our N95s with us all the time; we don our PPE every time we go into the room.

I think the biggest change was how many unknowns there were, because we didn't know how this virus was going to impact pregnant women and their babies. At the beginning we kept asking, "How are we going to do this so that they're safe, especially for our COVID-positive moms?"

We got really, really sick patients who were intubated and in the ICU, but they were still pregnant and they still needed the fetal monitoring. We had to change the flow of our unit entirely—where a nurse is going to be assigned, off and on our unit.

Even if the mom's COVID positive, the baby's not necessarily, so we're doing a lot of education for moms on wearing their masks even while they're holding their baby. Which is really sad, not kissing your baby without your mask on if you're COVID positive. You can breastfeed, but you're washing your hands and keeping your mask on, and if you have your mask off, keeping your baby 6 feet away from you.

But what I am most proud of is the quality, evidence-based care that we still provide our patients. Nurses are exhausted, doctors are exhausted, but we show up every day and keep giving the compassionate care people need and deserve, even though it feels impossible sometimes.

Leading Woman



“
Sometimes people in leadership positions fail because they only select the people who mirror their own strengths. What you need to do is to fill in all the missing pieces. Without a knowledge of yourself, you really can't do that.”

A giant in Maryland education is lending her vision and philanthropic support to an innovative new institute.

BY MIKE UNGER

Nancy Grasmick is one of the most accomplished leaders in the world of education. As superintendent of Maryland Public Schools from 1991 to 2011, she got results: For five years in a row, the state was ranked first in the country by *Education Week*. In the last decade, she's become the first female president of the Board of Directors at the Kennedy-Krieger Institute and the first presidential scholar at Towson University.

But Grasmick '61, '92 has never forgotten her foundation. She'll always be a teacher, and she knows that leadership—like anything else—is a skill that can be taught and learned. That's one of the core principles of the new Dr. Nancy Grasmick Leadership Institute at TU.

"I was always struck with the idea that people frequently said 'Leaders are born,' as if they don't have to be prepared or cultivated," she says. "It became evident to me that one has such an advantage if you have very strong opportunities to advance your leadership skills. I thought there really needed to be a place that's highly organized, that speaks to people who aspire to leadership, to people who need specific

coaching to improve their specific skill sets."

So Grasmick put her money where her heart is. She donated \$1.5 million toward the establishment of the institute, which will be an outward-facing entity designed to attract professionals from diverse industries and backgrounds who want to establish, expand and hone expertise as highly effective leaders, team builders and culture creators.

"This is being realized because of Nancy Grasmick. She was absolutely the catalyst," President Kim Schatzel says. "This comprehensive institute will serve leaders across all industry sectors and throughout their professional journey. Dr. Grasmick's dedication to seeing the institute realized and her influence as a leadership visionary have truly had a profound impact."

Grasmick donated \$250,000 to fund a planning phase that under the leadership of Daraius Irani, vice president of strategic partnerships and applied research, and Bobbie Laur, associate vice president of outreach, included in-depth review and interviews with dozens of leaders and institutes both in Maryland and across the nation over two

years. It will culminate in the hiring of an executive director to lead the institute.

Grasmick's own leadership experience and achievements have inspired the blueprint for the institute, which will begin programming in July. Lately, that's been from her house near Towson, where she's been since the pandemic started. Like the rest of us, she's been using some of her down time to go through her closets and take old clothes to Goodwill or the Salvation Army. Not that there's much downtime. She sits on the boards of about a dozen organizations, and her days are filled with more Zoom meetings than she can count. Even at an age when most people are content to kick back and relax, Grasmick is taking on one of the biggest projects of her life.

"I would like to see this institute flourish in my lifetime. That matters to me," she says. "A lot of people wait until they're dead and give something, but I wanted it to meet the standards that I set."

When Grasmick was 16 years old, she was stricken with a severe case of strep throat. An allergic reaction to the penicillin doctors gave her left her virtually deaf.

"It was very traumatic for me because I was a very extroverted person, and I couldn't understand any speech," she says. "I remember my parents taking me to a movie thinking that would make me feel better, but it was horrible because I could only see the pictures. I could not interpret any of the sound."

Over the course of the next year, her hearing gradually returned, but the experience left her acutely aware of how the world was not designed for deaf people. She vowed to follow in the footsteps of Anne Sullivan, the renowned teacher of author and disability rights advocate Helen Keller. (When she was 21, Grasmick met Keller at a hospital in Boston. She was able to converse with Keller by placing her hands in Keller's and using sign language.)

As an undergraduate at TU, Grasmick worked at the William S. Baer School for the Deaf in Baltimore City and went on to receive a master's degree from Gallaudet University, where she learned sign language, and her doctorate from Johns Hopkins.

Grasmick's administrative career took her to the Chatsworth School in Reisterstown, Maryland, where

she was the first principal. There, she learned some of her earliest lessons about leadership.

"Sometimes people in leadership positions fail because they only select the people who mirror their own strengths," she says. "What you need to do is to fill in all the missing pieces. Without a knowledge of yourself, you really can't do that. That school had both a medical component and an educational component. It was an amazing design. You won't find any public schools that have a dentist, a psychologist, pediatricians, a speech-language pathologist, all looking at children who have the potential of disabilities in such a coordinated manner."

After working in various leadership roles in Baltimore County Public Schools, then-Gov. William Donald Schaefer tapped her to run the state's Office for Children, Youth and Families. She later also served as the acting secretary of the Department of Juvenile Services. The legendary Willy Don, as he was lovingly known to his supporters, was another of Grasmick's leadership role models.

"Gov. Schaefer was so dedicated to the good of the people and so impatient about any failure on behalf of the citizens," she says. "We had cabinet meetings at 7:30 in the morning. If you got there at 7:31, the door was locked. He was there before anyone else."

Regardless of their discipline, great leaders all display similar attributes, Grasmick believes.

"Ethics are extremely important," she says. "When we look at some of the giant industries of this country, people haven't failed because they didn't have the skill sets. They were eliminated because they violated ethics. I think we take it for granted, but it shouldn't be taken for granted."

"You need a certain amount of resilience, because success is not a straight line. We all experience setbacks; how do you overcome those setbacks? You also need the ability to build relationships with employees. People are not homogenous. Strong leadership reflects a belief in understanding yourself. What are your strengths and weaknesses? How do you choose people on a team that surrounds you? No single person has every attribute."

Those are the types of lessons working professionals will receive at the institute, which, through interdisciplinary research and scholarship, will aim to provide all levels of leaders with demonstrated and dynamic skills and strategies to grow businesses and organizations. The hope is that this work will fuel a healthier economy, positively impact the region and serve as a hub for leadership development research and programming. It's obviously a passion project for Grasmick, who has a long record of philanthropy and is the co-chair of TU's RISE campaign (see page 46).

"I hope that we can see, at a time when I think people are absolutely hungry for leadership, that we can develop the talent that does exist in people to be the kind of leader that's going to make every dimension of our world better." **TU**

A Tiger Gathering Place

Through a three-alarm fire and a pandemic, Towson's Charles Village Pub perseveres.

WORDS BY
REBECCA KIRKMAN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ALEXANDER WRIGHT '18

Back in her undergraduate days, Shelby Sirkis '06 and her friends would meet at Charles Village Pub & Patio in uptown Towson most weekends. Known to locals simply as CVP, the pub on West Pennsylvania Avenue has been a favorite for generations of TU students, faculty and staff since it opened in 1985.

For Sirkis, though, the place holds more than collegiate nostalgia. One night in 2004, she and her friends were hanging out by the pool table on the second floor when she got up the courage to introduce herself to Jason Dorich '05, an upperclassman who had caught her eye around campus. They started talking and hit it off.

Seven years later, Sirkis and Dorich married. In the decade since, the Timonium couple has returned to CVP for occasions big and small. They hosted private parties at the pub to celebrate Dorich's 30th birthday in 2012, as well as the first birthdays of their three children—Colby, 7, Madison, 4, and Jordy, 2.

It's a story familiar to many: The Tiger watering hole has a way of bringing people together.

In fact, CVP's current co-owners Eric Wagner '94, Melony Wagner '97

and Rick Bielski '84 met working at the pub in the 1990s.

A Pennsylvania native, Eric transferred to then-Towson State University from Allegheny Community College in 1992 to play shortstop on the baseball team. CVP, he says, was a



favorite post-game gathering spot for the players and their families.

After graduating with a sports management degree, Eric worked behind the bar. That's where he met Melony, a TU accounting student, in 1995. They married two years later.

"He wore me down," Melony says of their courtship. "I'm sure Eric remembers it differently, though," she adds with a laugh. Their wedding in Jamaica was planned by CVP DJ Dino Luzzi '87, who also owns Towson-based travel agency Town & Country. Many of their friends and family at the wedding were TU alumni, pub employees or both.

In 1999, the couple paired up with Bielski to purchase the pub that brought them together. Bielski had founded the original Charles Village Pub on St. Paul Street in Baltimore in 1981 with his brother, Randy, and a few other former Tiger student-athletes, and spinoffs in Towson and Catonsville followed. (The Catonsville location has since closed, and the Baltimore location was sold in the early '90s.)

"We saw it as a great opportunity to buy into something we loved and we were interested in," Eric says. While the couple embarked on their professional careers—Eric in building material sales and Melony as a CPA—they continued working a few shifts a week at the restaurant.

In an industry with razor-thin margins, the Wagners have navigated

countless challenges, from increased competition to a three-alarm fire in 2011 and the novel coronavirus pandemic in 2020.

Through it all, though, the pub has persevered.

From a seat at CVP's back bar, Eric reflects on the past two decades. "It's been a rocky road," he says. "A lot has happened in these 22 years."

It's mid-day on a Monday in February, nearly a year into the pandemic, and restaurants in Baltimore County remain restricted to 50% of their normal occupancy levels in an effort to curb the virus' spread. In reality, the percentage they can accommodate is much lower, Wagner says, due to the spacing of tables to comply with physical distancing regulations. The spot's typical lunchtime crowd has given way to a few in-person diners and a trickling stream of nearby office workers picking up carryout. Next to a sign advertising the daily specials—half-price burgers on Mondays, bottomless brunch on the weekends—another reminds patrons to observe distancing and face covering regulations.

"We have a very big building with a big mortgage that we're not allowed to fill up to pay the bills," Eric says. "So that's really been the most stressful part of all this."

Normally, CVP can accommodate 600 guests across four bars spread over two floors, a back patio and rooftop deck. While in-person dining continues to make up about 60% of business, the Wagners quickly pivoted to increase their carryout, curbside pickup and delivery options to stay afloat. More than 30 private parties, which normally would have carried the restaurant through the slower winter months, had to be canceled. Deposits were refunded.

"The biggest hit to us was over the holidays with private events," Eric says. "A lot of our customers are so loyal they are already booking smaller events six months down the road, in hopes that this is over with by that point."

It's just one example of the devoted following CVP has earned over its more than three decades in Towson.



CVP co-owners
Eric Wagner '94 and
Melony Wagner '97

When shutdowns forced the Wagners to lay off dozens of employees last March, Melony leaned on a group of moms from her son's soccer club for support. "We live up in Hunt Valley, and it's more secluded; there's not as many local businesses, so they weren't seeing the impact of the shutdowns firsthand," she says. "But when I opened up to them about it, they really stepped up to help."

One of the moms asked if she could buy 25 meals for the pharmacy at University of Maryland St. Joseph's

kitchen fire on Jan. 29, 2011, destroyed the original building. After 18 months of rebuilding, the space reopened to much fanfare from the community. A tip bell, now mounted on the rooftop bar, was one of the only pieces from the original building to survive the fire.

When TU football head coach Rob Ambrose '93 heard about the fire, it was "extremely depressing," he says.

"We all kind of held our breath for a while, hoping and praying that it would get rebuilt," he says. "When it reopened, it felt like a weight was

Baltimore native Dick Bielski, played football at Patterson Park High School and the University of Maryland before ending a nine-year NFL career with the Baltimore Colts. He went on to serve as an assistant coach on the team for 14 years. His sons Rick and Randy played football at TU in the early '80s before getting into the restaurant business. A framed green No. 36 jersey, from Dick's time as a running back for the Philadelphia Eagles, hangs next to a Tigers jersey in the hallway to CVP's back bar.

"It might be the most frequented restaurant in the entirety of my life," Ambrose says of CVP. "Some things end up being memorable and pillars of the community, and they can't help but be one."

Dan Crowley '01, senior associate director of TU Athletics, can relate. The former Tiger quarterback has treasured his time at CVP.

"My best memory is probably after our last home football game in 1994," he says. The Tigers beat Morgan State 42-7 that day. "There were about a dozen players, families, several coaches, and we sat on what was then the back patio. My family loved to come up and go there after games."

It's also part of the TU experience he shares with prospective student-athletes and their families when he gives tours on campus. "I always mention CVP as the longest-lasting restaurant owned by not just TU graduates but former athletes," he says. "It's a local staple but also a stomping ground for all TU alumni."

CVP continues to be embraced by the newest generation of Tigers. In fact, Ambrose's daughter, Grace Ambrose '22, who plays soccer at TU, picked up shifts at CVP over the summer. "It's a bit odd for me to have my daughter working at a bar we went to in college," Ambrose says with a laugh. "There are a lot of bars that come and go, but there aren't too many that have been here forever, and I hope it stays that way." **TU**

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

New Digs

When students returned to TU for spring term, they found that campus had grown by 320,000 square feet. The Science Complex, which opened in February, is now TU's largest academic structure. It includes 50 teaching laboratories, 30 research laboratories, 50 classrooms, eight lecture halls, 10 collaborative student spaces, an outdoor classroom leading to the Glen Arboretum, a rooftop greenhouse complex, a new planetarium and an observatory.

To get an inside look at the new Science Complex, visit towson.edu/magazine.



Above: CVP's décor includes TU memorabilia, like this Tigers jersey. A tip bell mounted on the rooftop bar is one of the only pieces to survive the fire in 2011.

Medical Center in Towson, where her husband worked. "She's like, 'Can you guys deliver?'" Melony says. "We had never done that before, but I was like, 'Sure!'"

After fielding a few similar requests, the group of parents launched "One Team, One Goal," an initiative through which the public could purchase lunches and dinners from CVP to be delivered to Baltimore County police and firefighters as well as staff at St. Joseph, Sheppard Pratt Hospital, University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Medical Center and GBMC (Greater Baltimore Medical Center). By the summer, they had delivered nearly 4,000 meals.

"That really helped keep us afloat for the first six to eight weeks," she says. "It was wonderful. The Towson community really rallied around us."

The feeling recalled memories of a decade prior, when a three-alarm

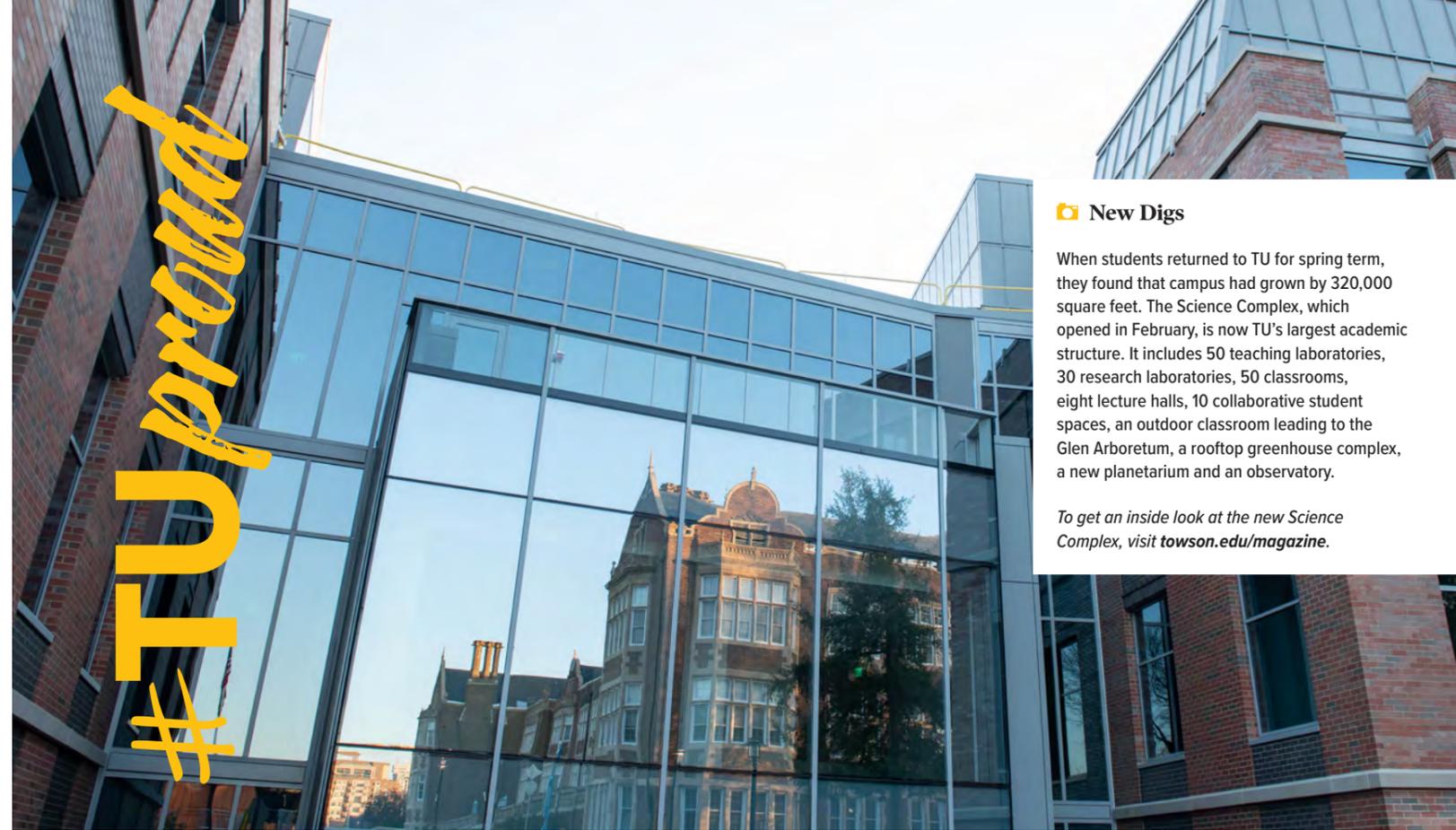
lifted off. You didn't lose what was a big part of your past and so many memories."

Ambrose equates the relationship between CVP and TU to that of family.

"There's been a tie there for as long as I can remember, specifically athletically, because of the people who were involved in the restaurant," says Ambrose, who played quarterback and then wide receiver for the Tigers before returning as a coach in 2009. Ambrose and Eric Wagner met as student-athletes and became closer over their connections to CVP.

"We take care of each other," he says, referencing an annual golf tournament CVP hosts to benefit TU Athletics. "They are invested in the athletic prominence of our university, and we're invested in that place as part of our past and our future."

CVP's tie to local sports goes back even further—Rick Bielski's father,





MY TOWN

Aliette Fenton-Sharp '95 London

FAVORITE LANDMARK
Kings Cross-St. Pancras Tube Station

PLACE FOR A SUNDAY ROAST
St. John's Tavern

HIDDEN GEM
Waterlow Park

COFFEE SHOP
The Bread and Bean

LOCKDOWN ACTIVITY
Walking

Aliette Fenton-Sharp grew up in Spain, moved to Miami and graduated from TU before settling in London. Her career in fine art and cargo insurance kept her on the move, but when the United Kingdom went into lockdown on March 26, 2020, Fenton-Sharp and her family had to stay put.

It turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Once restrictions eased, the family of four took to thoroughly exploring their own city.

By foot.

"One day we went to **Camden** and found a Buffalo chicken wing burger that we ate beside the canal before stopping at an ice cream shop we like called **Ruby Violet**," she says. "We walked 10K the other day to find a coffee shop near the **British Museum**."

Aliette and her husband, Nick, take full advantage of the restrictions' exercise exception, rambling with their children on **Hampstead Heath** and at **Waterlow Park**. Nick also enjoys cycling through **Regent's Park**, and, once a month, he rises at 5 a.m. to ride to **Smithfield Market** to stock up on fresh, high-end meat: mince, T-bone steak, chicken, sausage, even a Thanksgiving turkey last November.



"There's a phrase, 'Once you're tired of London, you're tired of life.' It's true."

The family lives in North London, an area largely spared from World War II bombing raids, which means much of their neighborhood's Victorian architecture remains intact. Nearby **Highgate Hill** boasts a panoramic view of downtown London and Fenton-Sharp's favorite gin distillery, **Sacred**.

Before the pandemic, Fenton-Sharp visited the **British Museum** and the **Tate Modern** on her lunch breaks.

"I used to be able to come downstairs and walk to the Tate. It's nice because they always have things going on. And museums here are free—except for special exhibitions.

"There's a phrase, 'Once you're tired of London, you're tired of life,'" she says. "It's true. My kids love **Chinatown**, and we go there to get their favorite cakes. If we want Turkish food, we go to **Green Lanes**, an area full of Turkish restaurants and shops. You're surrounded by neighborhoods that give you a bit of everything from the world."

Alumni News



Global Reunion 2022

The first Global Alumni Reunion will take place in 2022. If you were an international, exchange or study-abroad student and would like to serve on the global committee, email alumni@towson.edu.



Thank You, Volunteers!

A big thank you goes to the nearly 400 alumni who volunteered to write congratulatory postcards to newly accepted students. Your incredible efforts allowed us to reach more students than ever.



Grants Application Deadline

Community and Professional Development Grants applications are due May 3. Find applications on Tiger Connect in the Scholarships & Grants section under the Resource tab. Email applications to mpaulson@towson.edu.

2021-22 Alumni Association Board of Directors



President
Edward McDonald '78

Vice Presidents
Courtney Cox '12, '14
Jonas Jacobson '90
Tiana Wells-Lawson '98

At-Large Members
Amanda Allen '14
Kara Ball '08
Van Brooks '12
Mary Sharon Curran '79, '06
John Dragunas '97
Susan Hall '96
Anthony Hamlett '76
Migara Jayawardena '93
Stephanie Johnson '95
John Kenneally '79
Brittany Larkins '10
William Stetka '77
Manny Welsh '13
Brandon Wharton '17
Patrick Young Jr. '10
Bob Zhang '07

WHAT ARE YOUR LIFE PRIORITIES?

76.2%
TRAVEL FOR LEISURE

68.9%
RAISING/CARING FOR FAMILY

64.7%
LEARNING ABOUT OTHER CULTURES

63.3%
VOLUNTEERING FOR IMPORTANT CAUSES

Results Are In

Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2020 TU Alumni Survey administered last spring. We received 2,778 responses, representing about 2% of all living alumni. The gender of participants closely mirrored that of TU's total alumni population (63% female/37% male), and most respondents were between 24 and 74 years old.

Survey findings show alumni interact with TU many ways, but email is the most-preferred method of communication. Results indicate certain life priorities are more valued among respondents, with family and travel topping the list. Preferences also suggest an interest in current alumni benefits and discounts, as well as volunteering. The two most significant barriers to alumni involvement are being too busy with other commitments and living too far away.

Because of the high number of alumni prioritizing travel and family life, we are currently exploring potential offerings, including travel discounts, group tours and faculty-led travel programs, in addition to more family friendly events and quarterly volunteer opportunities.

During the past year, we have also greatly expanded our virtual programming, hosting an array of webinars attended by alumni living in nearly every state. Although we look forward to resuming in-person activities when it is safe to do so, we still plan to offer virtual event options in the future for alumni who are unable to attend events in person.

Based on survey results, we will continue to fine-tune our communication methods to ensure they are tailored to each alum's personal preferences. If you would like to read more about the results of the survey, please visit alumni.towson.edu/surveyresults.



WINE TASTING AT BASIGNANI WINERY: Bert Basignani '74, and his wife, Lynne, led a fun and interactive virtual wine tasting at their winery in Sparks, Maryland, on Nov. 18. During the 60-minute session, Bert walked participants through the history of the winery and potential food pairings with five delicious wines.

1. Sherry DeFrancisci '87 and Gina DeFrancisci '20
2. Charcuterie by Jennifer Walsh '92
3. Jolyn Tarwater '92's wine tasting setup
4. Lynne and Bert '74 Basignani



TBAA VALENTINE'S DAY PAINT & SIP: Members of the Towson Black Alumni Alliance were feeling the love during a Valentine's Day painting event presented by Whimsical Art Celebrations, owned by Romaine Stover '92.

1. Paul-Sean Gray '88 and Pamela Gray '87
2. Participants share their artwork.
3. Kimberly Edrington '92 and Calvin Watkins
4. Monique Nelson '94



ZOO LIGHTS AT THE MARYLAND ZOO IN BALTIMORE: There were more Tigers than usual at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore Dec. 5, as alumni spent the evening walking through a beautiful festival of lights shaped like wildlife. Alumni enjoyed each other's company and hot chocolate while safely distanced at this in-person holiday event.

1. Kara Ball '08, Krystle Ondish '08 and Alicia Wyler '08, '15, '17
2. Heather DeFilippis '00, Brian DeFilippis and family
3. TU Alumni Association board member Mary Sharon Curran '79, '06 and new TUAA president Ed McDonald '78
4. (Top) Steve Rosenfeld, Kate Rosenfeld '03, Margaret Paulson '11, Lori Armstrong, Colt Hanlin '23 and Julia Donatien '21



HOLIDAY COOKING CLASS: Just in time for the holidays, alumni learned to prepare the perfect seasonal meal. TU's catering chef Kevin Ryan demonstrated how to make red wine-braised short ribs, potatoes au gratin, skillet apple crisp and holiday sangria during an informative virtual cooking class Dec. 8.

1. Plated meal by Margaret Paulson '11
2. The meal is artfully displayed.
3. Chef Ryan shows how to sear short ribs.
4. Finished product by Raquel Ordonez '18

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

1970s

ANNA VITALE LYBROOK '79 and her partner, G. Richard Scholl, are celebrating their first anniversary in business together at Scholl & Lybrook, CPAS, LLC. They have worked together for more than 30 years.

1980s

SCOTT J. RUSSELL JR. '82 a public high school teacher of business electives for Loudoun County Public Schools in Virginia, earned a master's in education administration from Shenandoah University.

HOPE TARR '86 launched a three-part podcast trilogy, *The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911: An Emigrant's Experience* on Jan. 11. The series, a collaboration with Kilkenny-based historian/podcaster Fin Dwyer looks at the fire, New York's deadliest workplace disaster until

9/11, through the eyes of two immigrant workers who lived it: Celia Walker from Poland and Annie Doherty from Ireland.

MARY CHRIS JAMMET '89 was elected as an independent director of the Adams Diversified Equity Fund and the Adams Natural Resources Fund, two of the nation's oldest closed-end funds. Currently a principal with Bristol Partners, Jammet served as senior vice president and portfolio manager at global asset management firm Legg Mason (now Franklin Templeton), where she was responsible for \$20 billion in client assets.

1990s

DAVID LEVY '92, '00 has written several new books, including *The Art of the Book Review: The Companionship of Cherishing and Revering Books as Prelude to Interpreting, Cherishing,*

Revering, and Respecting Others, Part 2. Levy currently serves as chief librarian of Lander College for Women, where he



has constructed a set of 55 library guides, which include his own published essays in French and German.

KEITH L. EWANCIO '94, '07 was named the Community College of Baltimore County's (CCBC) 2020 Volunteer of the Year. The annual award recognizes outstanding service and commitment to the CCBC Alumni Association. It is the college's highest volunteer honor and is bestowed on one alumnus annually who demonstrates outstanding volunteer service and community outreach on behalf of CCBC through contribution of a significant amount of time over the course of the preceding 12-month period.

“Many of the workplace safety reforms we take for granted today resulted from public outrage in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911’s wake; still, sweatshops continue to exist in the U.S. and elsewhere, with immigrant workers especially vulnerable to exploitation.”

HOPE TARR '86

GUILLERMO PERALTA '95 and his wife, **ERIN '95**, will celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary on May 5. They are both marketers and they have two children, Rourke, 17, and Liam, 14.



KELLY DEROSE '99 was named a partner at GRB&A, a full-service public accounting firm. DeRose has 21 years of professional industry experience. Prior to joining GRB&A in 2012, she advised clients at Morgan Stanley Smith Barney for nine years, focusing on executive compensation planning as well as income and estate tax planning.

2000s

NICOLE A. EDMONDS '00 a corporate governance and federal securities attorney with both in-house and regulatory experience, has rejoined Troutman Pepper's Corporate Practice Group as a partner. She is based in the firm's Washington, D.C., office. Edmonds initially joined legacy firm



Troutman Sanders in 2004, serving many years as a corporate associate and counsel with the firm prior to transitioning to her roles as attorney adviser with the SEC's Office of Investor Education and Advocacy and as sole clearance counsel for the White House's Office of Presidential Personnel.



 **LAUREN SNYDER '13**

Building a Better Future

As part of Habitat for Humanity's operating procedure, the family for whom a house is being built typically participates in its construction. By Lauren Snyder's third day in Ha Koali, a small village in the African nation of Lesotho, even the elderly women in the community wanted to pitch in. They began carrying buckets a mile to a well, filling them with water and then carrying them back on their heads for so Snyder and her fellow volunteers could mix mortar for bricks.

"They walked with smiles on their faces," Snyder says.

It's memories like those that caused Snyder to fall in love with Habitat, the Atlanta-based nonprofit housing organization that works in all 50 U.S. states and in more than 70 countries around the world. Snyder, 29, took her first Habitat trip as a high school student to New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

"Building homes next to families that lost their homes was a huge lesson for someone like me who grew up in Annapolis, super fortunate in a well-off community that's really safe," she says. "It made me want to stay involved."

At TU, she cofounded the campus chapter of Habitat and helped organize alternative spring break trips to places like Miami and Laredo, Texas. There, volunteers worked eight-hour days doing everything from digging

a foundation to building a roof to putting up siding. They stayed in churches or camped at state parks. It was hardly glamorous, but immeasurably fulfilling.

By the time she graduated, the chapter had more than 250 members.

Snyder wanted to continue her work for Habitat after she graduated, so in 2019 she went to Lesotho, a small, landlocked country within South Africa. There, she spent a week helping to build a safe shelter for a group of siblings who lost their parents to AIDS. That trip was such a positive experience that she decided to lead one back there this September.

On a whim, Snyder entered a contest earlier this year sponsored by Jetset Magazine. Her application was accepted, and she was in the running to be Miss Jetset, a title that comes with a cover shoot for the magazine and a \$50,000 prize that Snyder vowed to use to pay for all the volunteers' expenses on their upcoming trip. (Snyder estimates it will cost each volunteer \$2,500 to go.)

She didn't win, but she remains committed to returning to Lesotho in the fall.

"People are all so incredibly appreciative that there are strangers helping them recover from a horrific experience they have had," Snyder says. "It's shaped the person I am today."

“My wife, Erin '95, and I are celebrating our 20th wedding anniversary this year, and I would like to surprise her with a note in *TU Magazine*. Is it too late to submit for the spring edition?”

[*Editor's Note: No!*]

GUILLERMO PERALTA '95

She most recently served as assistant vice president and corporate secretary with Washington Gas.

YI SHRESTHA '02 has been promoted to principal at UHY LLP, a national CPA firm. Shrestha focuses on tax planning for individuals, small business owners, high net worth individuals and international companies. She assists clients with estate and trust planning; often working directly with estate attorneys and trustees to maintain project

deadlines. Fluent in both Mandarin and Cantonese, Shrestha works with international clients as part of UHY's China Group.

ERINN DEGNAN '08 has been promoted to senior manager at UHY LLP, a national CPA firm. Degnan works with various businesses to provide comprehensive accounting and tax services to business owners and their families. Her work includes planning and performing compilation and review

services; preparation and review of financial statements; preparation and review of tax returns for high net worth individuals, partnerships and corporations, including multi-state returns; and tax planning and consulting.

TONY W. TORAIN II '08 a shareholder in the Polsinelli firm's Washington D.C. office, was named a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation. The prestigious recognition is reserved for a select group of lawyers

CARL KIRTS '90, LESLEY KIRTS '91, BOB ANDRUS '95

Ready for Anything

Carl and Lesley Kirts and Bob Andrus have been prepared for a pandemic for 12 years.

The H1N1 outbreak in 2009 inspired Carl—who started working in pharmaceutical sales in the 1990s—to reconnect with Andrus, an apparel representative, and form Pandemic, Inc.

“Carl called me and said, ‘Hey, I think there’s an opportunity here. A pandemic is going to happen eventually,’” Andrus recalls. “We started with ear-loop face masks then developed a solution for customers explaining why they needed to prepare for something like this, that eventually their reliance on foreign supply chains is going to be jeopardized. In the event of a pandemic, they were going to need readily accessible product in the U.S.”

As the company grew, and the name changed to Kiranex, Andrus and Carl expanded their product lines to include goods like gowns, gloves, hand sanitizer, surface disinfectants, shoe covers, hair caps and services such as warehouse stockpiling and fulfillment. Lesley has been there since the beginning, providing administrative and management support.

Andrus and Kirts are TU men’s soccer alumni, and that tightknit community has played a key role in Kiranex’s operations for the last year. The relationships Carl, Lesley and Andrus built with customers have also stood the test of time.

“Around 2009, we were selling PPE kits to family and friends,” Lesley recalls. “In spring 2020, we received an email from a friend who had bought a kit 10 years ago and saved it, saying how grateful he was to still have it when everyone else was going crazy trying to find hand sanitizer.”

In the end, it’s the friendship between the three that has kept Kiranex on an even keel in a year that threw everyone for a loop.

“I’ve known Bob and Lesley for decades. There’s never a question that they’re going to do what’s in the best interests of all of us,” Carl says. “I think the key to being successful is working with people that you love and trust.”



TRE ALEXANDER '98

A Model Career

Tre Alexander may be the only woman in America who looks forward to the commercials when she’s streaming Hulu or YouTube TV.

That’s because sometimes she’s in them.

The department coordinator of neuroscience and biology at Brandeis University has an exciting side gig: She’s a commercial actress and model. Alexander, whose actual first name is Tracey, hit a growth spurt during middle school in Columbia, Maryland. She was 5 feet, 8 inches, so in addition to playing the “tall sports,” as she calls basketball and volleyball, she got into modeling at 12.

She’s never given it up. Alexander has appeared in national print campaigns for retail giants such as CVS and walked the runway at Boston Fashion Week. When she was in her 20s, she added acting to her repertoire. In recent years she starred in a national ad for HelloFresh with a very special co-star—her husband, Richard Parrella.

“It was the best experience I have ever had because the chemistry was already there,” she says. “People will let me know, ‘Your commercial is airing on Lifetime or the Food Network.’ It’s fun to see yourself on TV. I always just laugh.”

Photo: Nikki Gomez



“I saw firsthand how many volunteer initiatives instituted at CCBC were the direct result of the hard work of my fellow volunteers, and I share this award with all of them. I must also reflect on the past recipients and the many volunteer initiatives accomplished by each of those recipients. I’m honored to be regarded as one of them and to now be called a CCBC Volunteer of the Year.”

KEITH L. EWANCIO '94, '07

who have demonstrated outstanding dedication to the highest principles of the legal profession.

2010s

Professional organist **KEVIN CALLAHAN '17**, headlined the 6th-annual Sacred Heart Parish Christmas Concert in Glyndon, Maryland, on Dec. 11. In 2015, Callahan won the TU talent competition and scholarship for the keyboard division. During his college career, he performed with several ensembles, including the

symphonic band, orchestra, chorale, men’s chorus and early music ensemble.



Callahan was also awarded the prestigious E. Power Biggs Fellowship from the Organ Historical Society and attended their 2017 convention in Minneapolis-St. Paul on scholarship.

TOM HOWSER '17 has been promoted to senior staff accountant at UHY LLP, a national CPA firm.

In Memoriam

Alumni

Downing J. (Jett) Kay '31
May 15, 2020

Dorothy B. (Buckingham) Lowman '32
March 18, 2020

Isadore Seeman '38
March 21, 2020

Muriel A. Coster Drake '39, '73
May 28, 2020

Edith Stark '45
June 14, 2020

Elsie L. W. Kaste '48
Oct. 26, 2020

Mary C. Keefer '48
Nov. 27, 2020

Virginia S. Gibson '49
Feb. 3, 2021

Peggy R. Kennedy '49
May 17, 2020

E. Keith Rembold '50
March 24, 2020

Norman Grossman '51
July 8, 2020

Barbara D. Hudgins '51
Feb. 20, 2020

Marjorie K. Lippy '51

Annette Saxton '51
Dec. 17, 2020

Barbara A. (Ochstein) Loreck '52
Apr. 21, 2020

Ralph E. Piersanti '52
Sept. 24, 2020

Patricia C. (Crunkleton) Parks '53
Aug. 16, 2020

Gloria A. (Myers) Angleberger '54
July 10, 2020

Fay Elena (Van Ripper) Brooks '54
March 4, 2020

Roma W. Cohen '54
Feb. 3, 2020

Sarah Y. (Yates) Miller '54
Feb. 26, 2020

Hermína E. (Eltermann) Baumann '55
May 3, 2020

Donna (Rinehart) Rice '55
July 8, 2020

Sally Jane B. (Boldtman) Boone '56
May 25, 2020

Elsie V. (Veigel) Feder '56
June 24, 2020

Alice S. (Shecter) Levin '56
March 7, 2020

Orlan Cowan '57
Dec. 25, 2020

Michael A. Franko '57
May 13, 2020

Frank P. Galeone '57
Aug. 25, 2020

Sally A. Mack '57
Apr. 12, 2020

Richard L. Clem '58
May 18, 2020

Beth F. Davis '58
Apr. 8, 2020

William S. Talbott '58
March 15, 2020

Charles L. Allen '59
July 11, 2020

Grace Georgandis '59
Apr. 2, 2020

Marilyn Hales '59
Aug. 14, 2020

Eugene W. Langbehn '59
Aug. 26, 2020

Richard L. Shortt '59
Oct. 19, 2020

Deanna J. Brown '60
Jan. 1, 2020

Raymond A. D'Amario '60
Aug. 10, 2020

George T. DeVaughn '60
March 3, 2020

Marian H. Trout '60, '68
June 3, 2020

Patricia A. Harman '61
Jan. 27, 2021

Samuel P. Phillips '61
July 16, 2020

Donna M. Sweet '61
Aug. 3, 2020

Paula A. Beliveau '62
Oct. 30, 2020

Barbara Schmidt '62
Nov. 26, 2020

John B. Tallman III '62
Oct. 29, 2020

Wayne L. Schwabeland '63
Apr. 19, 2020

Anne B. (Black) Evans '64
Feb. 7, 2020

Carroll E. Parker '64
June 18, 2020

John C. Rogers Jr. '64
Aug. 14, 2020

Elizabeth A. (Martin) Amos '65
March 2, 2020

Richard W. Cole '65
Oct. 5, 2020

Virgie H. (Huffa) Pippen '65
Aug. 18, 2020

Sondra J. Williams '65
Oct. 9, 2020

Linda M. Waldmann '66
Aug. 21, 2020

Donna C. Hole '67
Nov. 13, 2020

Sara M. Porter '67, '74
Apr. 29, 2020

Joseph M. Rankin Sr. '67
June 10, 2020

Patricia C. (Peterman) Tregoe '67
Sept. 6, 2020

Judith A. (Gregliot) Dixon '68
June 21, 2020

Richard I. Hill '68
Jan. 23, 2021

Philip Levenson '68
Jan. 19, 2020

Bravett B. Lynch '68
July 20, 2020

Shirlee D. Marks '68
Nov. 5, 2020

Myrtle T. Myers '68, '76
Nov. 24, 2020

Richard J. Steinke '68

Fred W. Baier '69
May 6, 2020

Mary H. (Matulionis) Donarum '69
July 29, 2020

Edward L. Griffin '69, '76
Jan. 20, 2020

Bonnie L. Inkman '69
Dec. 13, 2020

Allen K. Kelley '69
May 27, 2020

Doris C. (Caldwell) Newell '69

Sharon L. (Lewis) Alspaugh '70
Oct. 22, 2019

Bobby W. Autry '70
Dec. 9, 2020

Dale D. Benschhoff '70
June 7, 2020

John E. Boone '70
Dec. 3, 2020

George H. Diacont '70
Oct. 1, 2020

Esther P. (Pines) Miller '70
Apr. 16, 2020

Edward P. Neuberger '70
Oct. 10, 2020

David Schlenoff '70
Apr. 16, 2020

Wilma L. Short '70
Feb. 4, 2020

Grace E. Stumpfel '70
Nov. 13, 2020

Sharyn L. (France) Bolinger '71
Feb. 15, 2020

Jo C. (Berger) Buell '71
March 13, 2020

Michael G. Cady '71
March 29, 2020

Robert C. Darr '71
July 12, 2020

Mary L. Ferreri '71
Jan. 28, 2020

Rosalie G. (Glick) Kane '71
Jan. 19, 2020

Myra K. McCarty-Paniculam '71
March 16, 2020

Amy W. Mosley '71
Sept. 28, 2020

Alan C. Powers Sr. '71
June 16, 2020

Anita Bunce '72
Oct. 9, 2020

Thomas J. Donahue '72
Jan. 17, 2021

John F. Izzo '72
Jan. 29, 2021

Susan H. Marx '72
June 30, 2020

Jay R. Olsen '72
Dec. 2, 2020

Donna (Schaeffer) Reynolds '72
Apr. 24, 2020

Susan P. Riordan '72
Sept. 10, 2020

Louis C. Sieck Jr. '72
March 11, 2020

Arthur P. Staymates '72
March 1, 2020

Della M. Wachter '72
Dec. 3, 2020

Helen E. (Hahn) Armacost '73
Sept. 14, 2020

Ann N. Austin '73
Aug. 27, 2020

Carey Greenberg '73
Apr. 3, 2020

Ruby M. Harding '73
Apr. 12, 2020

Joseph T. Slavin III '73
May 13, 2020

Charles A. Sturm Jr. '73
Dec. 1, 2019

Denise A. Walsh '73
Dec. 3, 2020

Joanne Z. Balderson '74
Dec. 30, 2020

Carolyn A. Chapman '74
March 9, 2020

Ronald L. Frush '74
Nov. 4, 2020

Betsy L. (Lebrun) Merrick '74
July 26, 2020

Joan K. (Kneavel) Shettle '74
Apr. 25, 2020

John Thomas Codd '75
Oct. 28, 2020

James M. Darcangelo '75
March 28, 2020

Mark Julius Andrew Degen '75
Sept. 9, 2020

Carmela Mirabile '75
Nov. 17, 2020

Debra K. (Kolb) Mullineaux '75, '89
March 12, 2020

Fred I. Nagel '75
July 11, 2020

Thomas A. Ploch '75
May 23, 2020

Norma K. Procell '75
Dec. 12, 2020

Wayne L. Rill '75
Apr. 25, 2020

David A. Wilhide '75
July 24, 2020

Dennis E. Bolen Sr. '76
Apr. 12, 2020

Eileen M. Gilmartin '76
July 25, 2020

Jocelyn A. Kavanagh '76
Jan. 23, 2021

Carol A. Martin '76
Jan. 13, 2021

Edwin H. Rosenberg '76, '84
May 18, 2020

Nancy T. Weimer '76
Oct. 19, 2020

Leonard G. Chapel '77
Sept. 9, 2020

Matthew E. Elky '77
July 18, 2020

Terry S. Green IV '77
June 22, 2020

Barbara K. (Kenney) Greenspun '77
July 30, 2020

Donna L. (Nelson) Jacobs '77
July 18, 2020

Mary J. (Welch) Monte '77
Aug. 9, 2020

Linda M. (Hudyma) Poteet '77
July 7, 2020

Barbara (Coster) Valle '77
Feb. 15, 2021

Toby Essrog '78
July 30, 2020

Jeanna Helkowski '78
Dec. 12, 2020

Beatrice B. Kendall '78
March 2020

Brian L. Lee '78
Aug. 13, 2020

Thomas E. Mazz '78
Dec. 11, 2020

Randy J. Townsley '78
June 17, 2020

Richard Edgar White '78
May 13, 2020

Donna L. (Daffin) Abbott '79
Apr. 1, 2020

Dorothy P. Franz '79
Aug. 7, 2020

Judith C. Mitchell '79
Oct. 20, 2020

David J. Price '79
July 2, 2020

Elizabeth Anne Gill '80
July 27, 2020

Albert R. Wilkerson Jr. '80
Jan. 6, 2021

Sheila K. Zimmer '80
March 19, 2020

Gloria C. Hairston '81
Oct. 22, 2020

Douglas S. McFarland '81
July 11, 2020

Mary A. Melia '81
July 26, 2020

Julie P. (Murphy) Cawley '82
June 5, 2020

Catherine A. Maranto '82
Sept. 22, 2020

Louis S. Parsons III '82
Oct. 5, 2020

Charles Gustave '83
Nov. 27, 2020

P.A.M. (Meidel) Schaller '83
July 18, 2020

James H. Meister '84
March 23, 2020

John B. Ruxton '84
Jan. 29, 2020

Mildred F. Tracey '84
Dec. 15, 2020

Maureen C. Clifton '85
June 29, 2020

Edward James Tyler II '86
May 29, 2020

Anne M. Fayer '87
July 31, 2020

Keith E. Greene '87
Jan. 26, 2020

Thomas G. Dockery '88
Feb. 24, 2020

Joan Merrill '88
Jan. 1, 2021

Carol A. Gray '89
Jan. 2, 2020

Christine L. Radebaugh '89
Apr. 12, 2020

Virginia M. Vitello '89
Oct. 5, 2020

Barbara C. Render '90
Nov. 7, 2020

Creig Paul Jacobson '91, '01
July 28, 2020

Ernest D. Robinson '91
May 14, 2020

Stephen B. Waite '91
Apr. 30, 2020

Kathleen Marie Governale '93, '98
Aug. 16, 2020

Chianti Y. (Jackson) Harpool '93
Apr. 8, 2020

Aynn Chary Barlotta '94
Nov. 4, 2020

Brian K. Bettick '94
March 26, 2020

Alice L. Carpenter '94
Sept. 27, 2020

Richard T. Hyson '94
Aug. 28, 2020

Kurt D. Beck '96
July 2, 2020

Rearview Mirror

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



ASK AN ARCHIVIST

Hey Felicity...

Q: When was TU integrated?

A: On May 17, 1954, the Supreme Court of the United States handed down the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* decision, ruling that segregation in schools was unconstitutional. For the State Teachers College at Towson (STC), this meant that almost 100 years of whites-only education had come to an end.

Jeanette Cornilia Smith, Vivian Kernes, Delores Elaine Snipes and Cornelia Juanita Martin were the first Black students to enroll, in fall 1955. They already held bachelor's degrees from liberal arts schools and took one year of post-baccalaureate work at STC to qualify as teachers. The same year those students began their post-baccalaureate work, Marvis Evon Barnes and Myra Ann Harris enrolled as freshmen. They graduated in 1959.

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

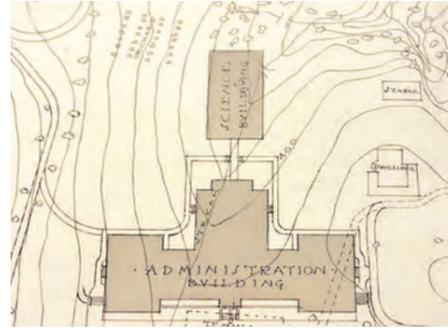
WHAT'S NEW

The Shodekeh Collection

Shodekeh is a beatboxer, with a deep interest in vocal arts and expression. In 2006, he began accompanying TU dance classes taught by Vincent Thomas. He has performed across the globe, creating events to highlight the range and impact such music can make. In 2010, he began the EMBODY vocal arts series. The next year, he met the Tuvan throat-singing band, Alash, and has since visited, performed and toured with them numerous times. In 2014, to mark the 200th anniversary of "The Star-Spangled Banner," he helped the Reginald F. Lewis Museum reimagine the song. He also has collaborated with Johns Hopkins University to create a math and music course called Beatbox Algebra.

In 2020, he was named the College of Fine Arts & Communication's innovator-in-residence. Special Collections and University Archives has begun working with Shodekeh to not just house the material he's collected in his work but also collaborate with him as his craft continues to evolve.

PAST



1915

When the school moved to the campus at Towson, all classes were held in the Administration Building, which we now know as Stephens Hall. When plans were drawn up for the new campus construction, a separate science building was supposed to sit just behind the Administration Building. But a lack of funding meant that did not come to fruition.



1965

Fifty years later, the first science building on campus was completed and dedicated the following year to George L. Smith. The enrollment boom in the 1960s and 1970s meant that the science building needed an expansion almost immediately. By 1973, crews were back on campus, constructing more classroom and lab space and installing air conditioning throughout the building.



2018

TU broke ground for the construction of a new Science Complex. Three years later, that building is complete, ready to meet the needs of 21st-century science students.

PRESENT



In My Queue

MICHAEL MAIATICO, CLASS OF 2012

We caught up with Michael Maiatico late one night in January when he had just returned to his home in Brooklyn, New York, after a 16-hour day on the set of *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*. Maiatico, a self-described "nerd in the camera department," is a digital imaging technician. It's his job to monitor the signals from the cameras shooting the scenes to ensure that the color and exposure of the iris are correct. He's also a rabid TV fan, and he agreed to share some of his favorite shows with us—and you.

In 2012...

Maiatico fell in love with TV and movies after watching *The Lord of the Rings*. He originally wanted to be an actor, but as he grew up, he found himself more attracted to the technical side of the industry. These are a few of the shows he was into while majoring in electronic media and film at TU.



Breaking Bad

Breaking Bad is pretty much textbook perfect in terms of set design and its use of colors. Every time you see Walt and Jesse in the lab, it's always red and green, complementary hues. They keep these color patterns in the environments, in their costumes. It's one of the most engaging and intense shows I've ever seen.



Game of Thrones

Being such a fantasy nerd, it was incredible to see fantasy taken into this seemingly new adult territory, though I was deeply disappointed in the way it turned out.



Doctor Who

If you can get down with campy, heartfelt sci-fi, it's amazing. It does get a little less campy as the seasons go on. It kind of finds its own tone. You have a protagonist who is nonviolent and has altruistic intentions. That just did it for me.



Arrested Development

I watched it at least 20 times in my time at TU alone. It was the subtle, recurring jokes that would happen mostly in the background. Every time you watch that show, you catch a gag or reference to a previous show that you hadn't caught before. It kept me coming back. It hadn't yet been tarnished by the unsuccessful reboots they did on Netflix.

In 2021...

Prior to working on the latest season of the acclaimed Amazon Prime Video series *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, Maiatico was on the set of the forthcoming HBO show *Community Service*. He also was a part of the crew of Netflix's *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*.



Mr. Robot

In a similar way to *Breaking Bad*, it's a master class of what you can do with a TV series and a narrative but by breaking the rules instead of following them. I think what both shows had going for them was their showrunner was incredibly involved in the creative process.



Wild Wild Country

It's about a cult in the '70s in Oregon. They move into this podunk town and conflict develops between the cult and the locals. The show is a masterpiece in unfolding a complex, multi-perspective situation where no one is left the good guy.



Man Seeking Woman

This is the most normal role you will ever see Eric Andre in. Basically, the show is a guy who has broken up with his girlfriend and goes back into the world to start dating. But all of the plot lines and all of the circumstances are hyperbolic expressions of what dating life looks like.



The Mandalorian

I grew up loving *Star Wars*. Obviously, the movies have been a collection of hits and misses for a while now. *The Mandalorian* doesn't hold your hand the way the *Star Wars* content tends to. It's not childish. It's really a western. In my personal opinion, I think it outshines even the original *Star Wars* trilogy.

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.



♥ DORIE'S STORY

Dorie Masemore '60

I met Jerry on the first day of geography class freshman year. There were only two seats left. After class, he invited me to the first dance of the year, a square dance.

But we weren't exclusive right away. It didn't get serious until our sophomore year. Jerry had to go home and work on the farm a lot. But we did go to some dances and to the movies and up the hill to a couple places that probably are no longer there for pizza or a slice of deli cheese, of all things.

The Class Sweetheart Couple was a contest. Jerry was student teaching at the time. He was very tired. In the picture in the yearbook, he wasn't smiling. And I told him, "Now, when we get married, and they do pictures, you better smile."

We had a church wedding. The ladies of the church prepared the food and the cake. My sister was my maid of honor. And my

brother's wife was an attendant. His brother was his best man. We paid a fee to the pastor that he gave back to us in an envelope before we left for our honeymoon.

I taught at Hampton Elementary for two years, and then it was going around that you could go to a foreign country or another place in America and teach. They offered Colorado, Alaska and Germany. Jerry and I chose Germany.

We lived in Maxhütte near Munich in Bavaria from 1962-64. I had little ones, first grade. Jerry had to teach all the subjects to a combination class of seventh and eighth graders.

One of the things I think were the best for me as a Towson University student was that I met my spouse there. We've been married a long time, so he was a keeper. And that I got a good education. And I have lifetime friends. It gave me a good start in life.

♥ JERRY'S STORY

Jerry Masemore '60

I was going to go to Western Maryland College to play basketball. But I broke my nose halfway through senior year of high school, so that was the end of that. My guidance counselor suggested going to Towson.

When I sat down in that geography class, I thought she was very pretty. I don't think we said anything much until after class, when we started talking. The summer after sophomore year, I worked at a camp in New York State. We wrote regularly. I think that really cemented our relationship.

We went to a Sweetheart Dance as freshmen. Senior year we were nominated to be the Class Sweetheart Couple. The faculty picked us out of five couples. The year before, the Kings—Dave and Shirley King—were the Sweetheart Couple. Dave is one of those friends that I have had forever. A year after us was Bob and



Wanda Anastasi. All of us are still married.

The proposal was at our senior prom. We actually had a senior prom in those days. During a break I gave Dorie the ring in a stairwell, which wasn't too romantic.

The wedding was small. It was at Lodge Forest Church in Edgemere. We had quite a good crowd, 150 people or so.

It was Aug. 21, so it was hot as could be, and there was no air conditioning. We had our honeymoon in Ocean City, New Jersey.

Our secret? We continued to talk and communicate. Sometimes you have ups and downs in marriage, but for the most part, ours has been up. We still hold hands for our walks and still kiss good night. Traveling together has really been an adventure.

For more of Jerry and Dorie's story, visit towson.edu/magazine.

Philanthropy



If it's April, it's once again time for the TU Big Give.

Last year, the university community responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by supporting Tigers in need through the Student Emergency and Food Insecurity Fund and the Faculty and Staff Emergency Fund. In what was previously a weeklong giving event, the reimagined one-day challenge broke the daily giving record, raising more than \$180,000 from about 1,300 donors.

Nky McGinnis, director of the annual campaign, credits the university community for stepping up during an unprecedented time of need. "I was inspired and grateful to everyone in our TU community who listened to the needs of our students, faculty and staff," McGinnis says. "This campaign truly allows everyone in our community to make a difference in the lives of people at TU and beyond."

Looking to build momentum from the previous two efforts, each of which generated more than \$100,000, the focus of this year's campaign is to raise funds for a variety of needs on campus, including scholarships, colleges, community groups, athletics and the library. The event remains a 24-hour campaign, with special challenges and matching gift opportunities playing a larger role to spur the community to support the causes that matter to them.

"Each year, we've seen TU Big Give outpace our expectations in participation and funds raised," McGinnis says. "Our university's culture of philanthropy is only growing stronger."

Missed the Big Give? You can still contribute to TU using one of the three easy methods listed below.

3 Ways To Make a Gift

1
ONLINE
WWW.TOWSON.EDU/GIVING

2
BY MAIL
USING PRE-PAID ENVELOPE ON PAGE 33

3
PHONE
TOLL FREE 1-866-301-3375

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



♥ GIVING

Time to RISE

On Apr. 29, Towson University will publicly launch RISE, The Campaign for Towson University, with a virtual event. This \$100 million fundraising effort positions TU for success as we RISE to celebrate our past, present and future. Check out the back cover of the magazine for all you need to know about the campaign launch.

Here we highlight six very generous gifts to TU, all of which will create significant momentum in 2021 and beyond.



Gerhard VonHauenschild '74

made a \$1 million bequest to support biology scholarships. "I know the financial struggles that students face, especially today," VonHauenschild says. "I have been extremely fortunate in life. I recognize the need of TU students and felt called to share my good fortune with them."



Tom Beyard '77

established a \$1 million bequest to create the CSM (Ret) Thomas B. Beyard '77 Endowed Athletics Scholarship and support the Women's Basketball Enhancement and the Athletics Capital Projects funds. "I just turned 65 and started thinking more about the future," Beyard says. "I decided I was going to make my commitment now to be a good example to others."



The Kahlert Foundation awarded a \$3 million grant, the largest gift from a foundation with ties to a TU alum in university history. The grant will prepare Maryland's teachers and health care professionals for bright futures. Roberta Kahlert '69 and her husband, Greg, serve on The Kahlert Foundation board. "The Kahlert Foundation looks for visionary leadership and innovative programs that align with the foundation's priorities. Towson University checks these boxes," Greg says.



Eddie Loh made a \$1 million bequest to fund scholarships for physics students, the largest gift from a faculty member in TU's history. Loh retired from TU in 2010 after more than 40 years of teaching. "Most students who come to TU have to work hard to afford it," Loh says. "I've seen some students who had to drop out because of finances. I thought, 'I am going to help them.'"



Fran Soistman Jr. '79, '15 pledged \$5.4 million, the largest gift from an alum in TU history, to benefit Tiger athletics, the College of Health Professions, the College of Business & Economics and programs that advance equity, diversity and inclusion. "Given the university's strong momentum and significant opportunities to advance its ambitious vision, I thought that it was the right time to make a substantial commitment to TU's future," Soistman says.



Nancy Grasmick '61, '92 pledged almost \$1.5 million to create and sustain The Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick Leadership Institute, which will work across the campus and region as an interdisciplinary hub for leadership development research, programs and events. "Seeing TU flourish matters to me," Grasmick says. "It's time for Towson to be seen as a major institution in this state."

♥ DONOR PROFILE

David Diaz '99

The Rita Lynn Diaz Business and Economics Memorial Scholarship, which covers the full tuition and fees for an incoming freshman enrolled in the College of Business & Economics who participates in student groups or serves the community, was created by David Diaz '99. The scholarship is renewable for up to four years.

WHY DID YOU CREATE THIS SCHOLARSHIP?

This scholarship acknowledges my parents. My father, Angel Diaz, is the best person I've ever known. I watched him work really hard at multiple jobs at the same time when I was growing up, but he was always there for me. For his birthday the year he finally retired after 57 years, I created this scholarship to help others like me when I was heading into college and to honor my late mother, Rita Lynn Diaz. My mother always challenged and pushed me, and she saw more potential in me than I ever saw in myself.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE STUDENTS GAIN FROM THIS SCHOLARSHIP?

My hope is to lift a burden, allowing students to focus on their education while also enjoying the full college experience. Each recipient will hopefully be successful in their career and someday recognize the help they received and look to help others.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO GIVE BACK?

There are many in our community who don't recognize their own potential. Helping others see that potential can completely change their life trajectory and ripple outward to impact generations to come. I firmly believe that if you can help one person, you end up helping many.





OUR TOWN

The Baltimore Museum of Art

Art museums aren't usually hands-on places, but when visitors are allowed to return to The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA), they'll be able to stand inside Katharina Grosse's 50,000-square-foot canvas installation, "Is It You?" The ability to immerse yourself in the art—literally or figuratively—is one of the things **Jessica Novak '03, '06** loves so much about the BMA, where she's director of content strategy and publications. She oversees the museum's magazine, exhibition catalogs and websites. "The depth and breadth of our exhibition schedule means there's always something new on view and new stories to learn and tell through my work."

Until we can safely gather together in person, be sure to visit Tiger Connect to take advantage of virtual events, resources and benefits available to all TU alumni.

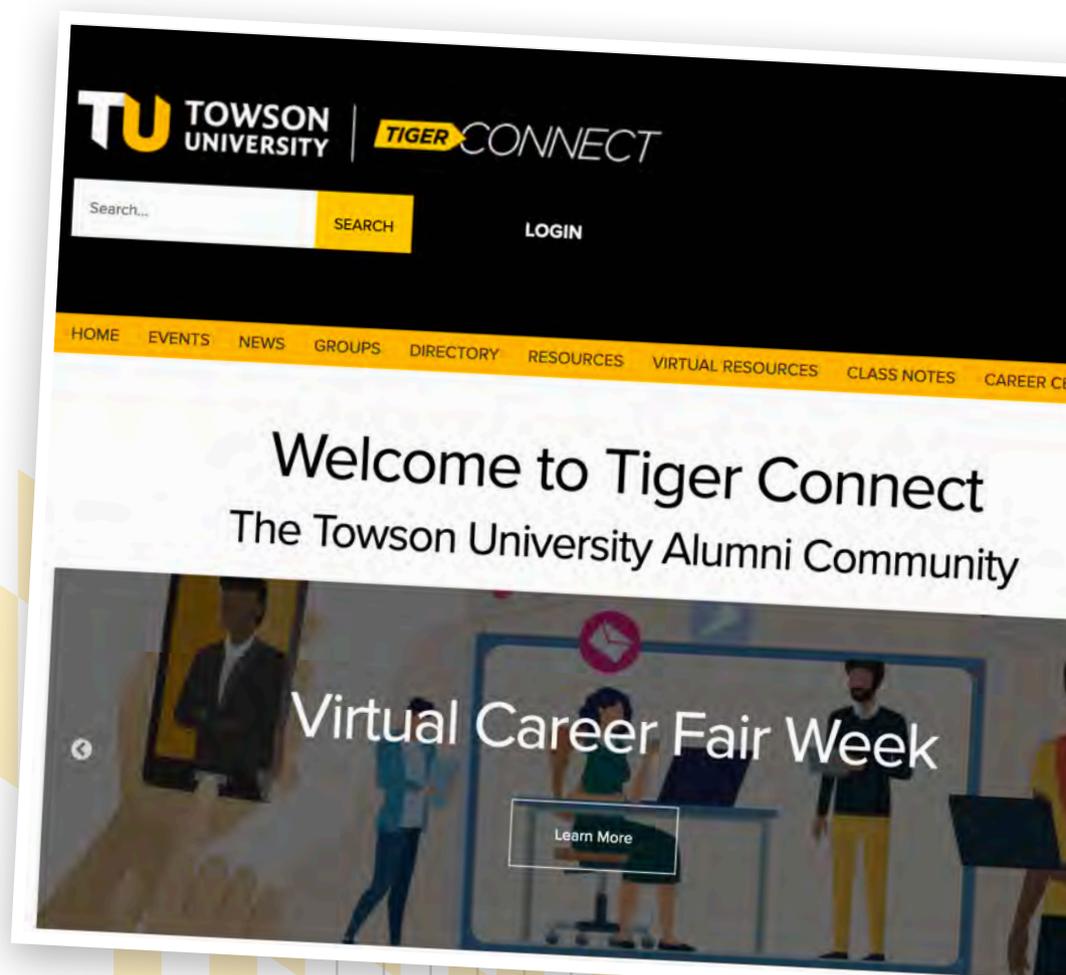
Register for entertaining and informative webinars.

Join the **Tiger Mentor Network** to mentor a TU student or find an alumni mentor in your industry or prospective field.

Bond over books through our **Virtual Book Club**.

Win prizes by sharing TU news as a **Social Tiger**.

Receive discounts to local businesses and attractions.





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