

Bringing Lena Back to Life

PIANO PROFESSOR EVA MENDELKOVICH HELPED UNRAVEL AN INTERNATIONAL MYSTERY INVOLVING 90-YEAR-OLD MUSIC, A COMPOSER WITH A VERY FAMOUS NAME AND HIS MUSE.

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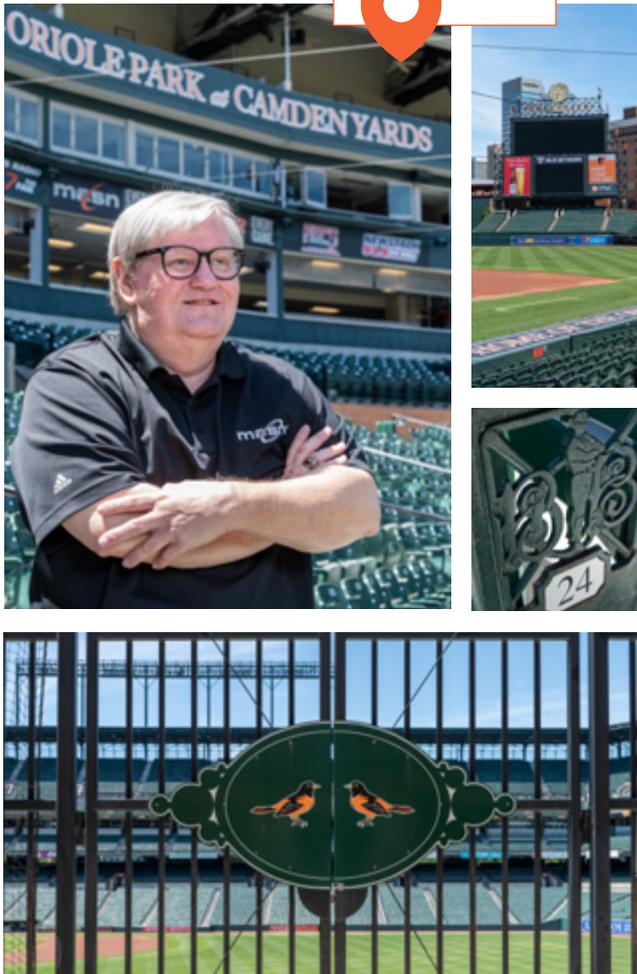
Caring for the Community

Army Brig. Gen. Adam Flasch '95 leads the Maryland National Guard's response to COVID-19.

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Bringing Lena Back to Life

Piano professor Eva Mengelkoch helps solve a mystery.



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A Responsibility to Help Others

Todd '87 and Melanie Feuerman support the RISE campaign.



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What's Old is New Again

Commencement at Unitas Stadium.

ON THE COVER



The photo—taken by Lauren Castellana '13, director of photographic services—captures the mystery and drama inherent in the discovery of 90-year-old music (composed by Felix Mendelssohn's grandson) that crossed an ocean to escape the Nazis and—through a chance meeting—resulted in

a new CD. In the photo, taken in Kaplan Hall, piano professor Eva Mengelkoch sits at the Bösendorfer piano on which she recorded the piano accompaniment to the CD, "Songs for Lena." In front of Mengelkoch are photos of Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy, the music's composer; Lena Schoch, Mendelssohn Bartholdy's muse; and a copy of a poem written by Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

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President's Letter

I so often gratefully say: I have one of the best jobs in the world.

There are times throughout the academic year—move-in, Convocation, Family Weekend, Homecoming—that bring the university community together and remind us all that Towson University is so very special. And so often during Commencement, that feeling of gratitude is the strongest.

This year's Commencement week, when we celebrated our graduates of 2020 and 2021 at Unitas Stadium, was one of the most special times I have experienced in my 5 1/2 years as TU's president. It was a week full of pride and gratitude. And we were so happy to make good on our promise—first made over a year ago—to hold an on-campus, in-person Commencement for the Class of 2020.

Watching our staff, faculty and alumni working together to give the graduates and their families a joyous celebration over the course of 10 ceremonies at Unitas Stadium was incredible. This year's Commencement week was truly special. The weather was glorious and even the cicadas held off their arrival!

For so many families, this Commencement was something they looked forward to for more than a year. For some, they were unable to make it.

When the family car broke down, Kendra Sargeant and her family missed the 2020 ceremony. We arranged to get Kendra into another ceremony later in the week so she could indeed cross the stage and graduate. Her parents were unable to get an additional day off work to share the moment, but to Kendra's family: We are all proud with you.

There was the graduate who shared that he was carrying his grandmother's ashes in his pocket, because she wanted so badly to see him graduate. I know his grandmother was watching him get his TU diploma and was filled with pride.

As I reflect on those 10 Commencements over five days—some 35,000 family members and friends were able to celebrate more than 9,150



graduates—I truly witnessed Tigers taking care of each other. Everyone was sharing in the joy and pride of our graduates and their families.

Commencement was a bookend to a whirlwind month for our university community—as May often is around here. Just a few weeks prior, we announced the launch of RISE, The Campaign for Towson University, that will capitalize on TU's momentum with an historic fundraising goal of \$100 million. We are already more than halfway to that goal following a record year of philanthropy.

As Commencement puts our graduates first, RISE puts our students first. Events like these illustrate TU's capacity to make life-changing differences in people. I'm so grateful to all who make it possible for so many to be TU proud!

The momentum of this university is so very strong, and as we head toward a full campus experience—working, learning and living—together this fall, it is indeed a great time to be a Tiger!

KIM SCHATZEL, PH.D.
TOWSON UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT



TREASURES

Pandemic Pets

If you were looking to adopt a dog in March or April 2020, you were not alone.

You were also frequently out of luck.

Initially, animal welfare organizations feared an inundation of pet surrenders, but they soon ran out of animals. The U.S. saw a spike in adoptions in the second half of March 2020, with an estimated national adoption rate of 58% at the beginning of the month, jumping to 85% by the end. Washington, D.C., pet welfare officials told the *Washington Post* the last time they saw such a spike was just after Sept. 11.

TU communications strategist Cody Boteler '17 and graphic designer Lori Marchetti took different routes when welcoming their new fur babies.

Knowing the Marchettis' 18-year-old cat Candy died in December 2019, Lori's husband's cousin texted a photo in May 2020 to alert her about a litter he found under his deck. After seeing the picture, Lori caved. And when Marchetti's 10-year-old daughter Gigi met the kitten—whom she named Mila—that sealed it.

"Once Gigi loved on her and wanted to give her a name, we were like, 'OK, I guess we're doing this,'" Marchetti says.

Boteler and his girlfriend Sam had held off on adopting until an October 2020 move to Baltimore's Hampden neighborhood provided space and a yard.

"We figured, 'I'm working from home, so now's

the time to do it,'" he says. "In November, it was still really hard to find a dog."

After a false start with another dog at the Baltimore Animal Rescue and Care Shelter (BARCS), the couple met Haze, a pit mix puppy.

"He's done a great job of making sure I'm getting outside every day, even when it was cold in the dead of winter," Boteler says. "Those days are always better than the ones where I'm stuck at my desk or curled on the couch all day."

Marchetti concurs.

"After losing our other cat—even though you can't replace your old pet—I think there was still that void," she says. "Mila brought a much-needed smile to our faces during a global pandemic."

Campus News



Contextualizing History

In the Snapchat lens “The Open Hand is Blessed,” art education lecturer Ada Pinkston created an augmented reality (AR) monument to Biddy Mason, a formerly enslaved Black woman who became a real estate entrepreneur and philanthropist in Los Angeles.



Producing Prepared Grads

Fisher College faculty Peggy Neal and Joel Moore have received a \$150,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to train and retain a diverse hydrogeology workforce by developing students’ 3D spatial reasoning skills.



A Tree-peat

TU was recognized for a third consecutive year by the Arbor Day Foundation as a “Tree Campus USA” for meeting five core standards for effective campus forest management.

Launching the New Campaign

TU kicked off the largest fundraising campaign in the institution’s history on April 29. RISE—a \$100 million, comprehensive campaign—includes six priorities: students, faculty, academic programs, community, campus and annual giving and endowment. Within each priority are broad-based giving opportunities chosen by deans and vice presidents across campus.

“An historic and ambitious campaign like this truly separates universities that are good from those that choose to be great,” TU President Kim Schatzel says. “I firmly believe that the Towson University of today chooses the path toward greatness.”

For more on the campaign, visit rise.towson.edu, and see page 26.

Honoring Outstanding Faculty

Clinical associate professors Karen Day and Elizabeth Crusse and associate professors Katherine Holman, Joel Moore and Natalie Scala were honored in all four categories of the prestigious USM Board of Regents’ Faculty Awards. They represent the College of Health Professions,



Circle of Excellence

President Kim Schatzel has been named to *The Daily Record’s* 2021 Top 100 Women in Maryland list. Schatzel was previously named to the list in 2019 and 2017. She is one of 12 women joining the Circle of Excellence this year, which is the list’s highest honor. Nearly 1,600 women having been honored during the list’s 26 years in existence.

The 2021 list also features five alumnae: Brooke Harlander ’13 (St. John Properties), Catalina Rodriguez-Lima ’06 (Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs), Tonia Niedzialkowski ’91 (Point Breeze Credit Union), Kim Paradise ’92 (Mindgrub Technologies) and Divya Potdar ’09 (Diva Law, LLC).

“I am humbled by this recognition. I believe this is truly an affirmation of Towson University and its role as an institution providing leadership for the public good,” Schatzel says. “I was honored to be included with such an accomplished group of women in 2017 and 2019, and I look forward to getting to know this year’s group of outstanding leaders.”



College of Education, College of Business & Economics and the Fisher College of Science & Mathematics. TU featured the most honorees among all system institutions. Only Salisbury had more than a single faculty member recognized.

COMMENCEMENT SPRING 2021

1 university Commencement speaker, leading health executive Nancy M. Schlichting

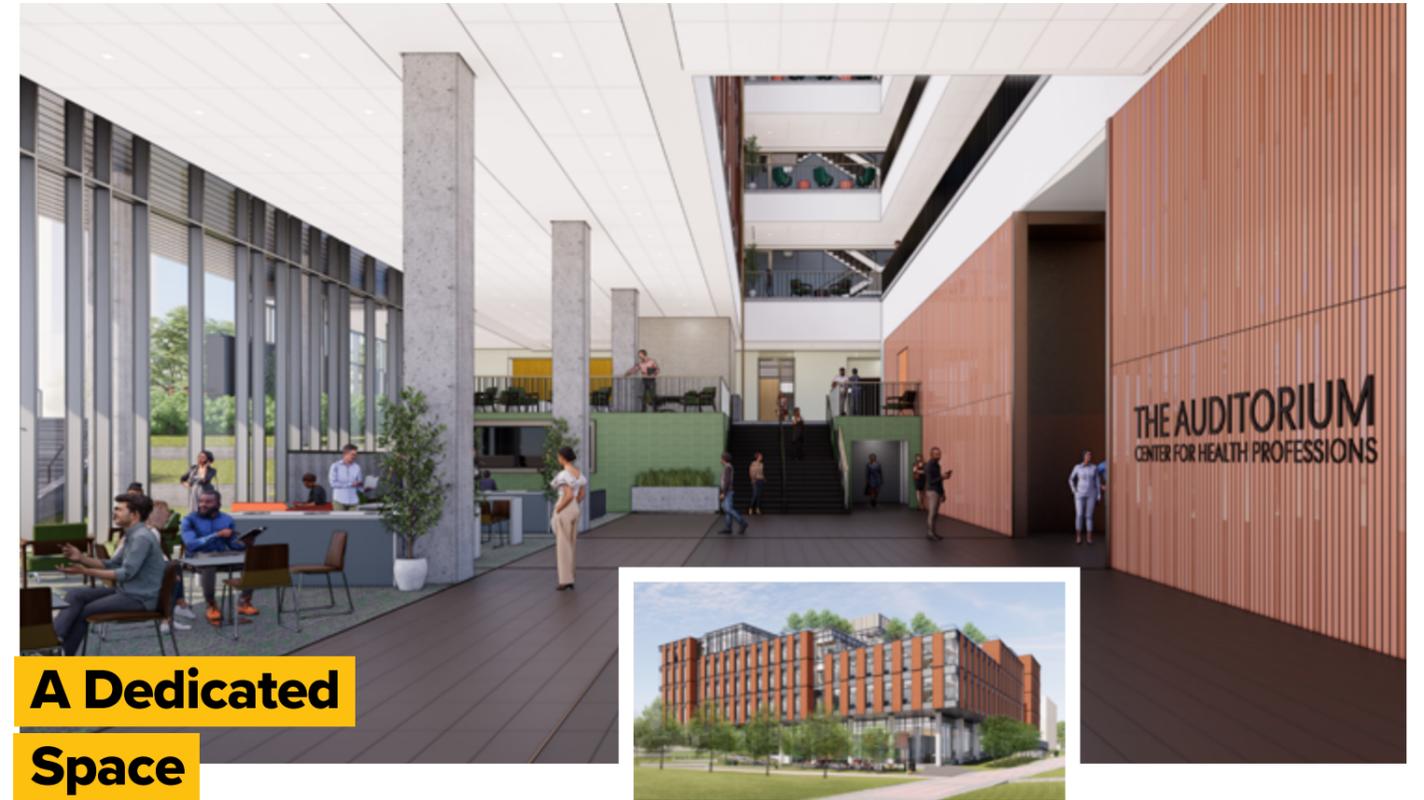
2 class years of graduates celebrated, 2020 and 2021

5 days of ceremonies, with two held per day

9,150 graduates walked across the stage on Minnegan Field

35,000 estimated guests attended the ceremonies

Read more about Commencement on page 28.



A Dedicated Space

For the first time in the history of the university, the College of Health Professions will be housed entirely in one building. TU will break ground this summer on a six-story College of Health Professions (CHP) building in the heart of campus, thanks to funding approved and pre-authorized by the Maryland General Assembly. The 240,000-square-foot building is estimated to cost \$175 million and will consolidate CHP’s programs, including audiology, nursing, speech-language pathology, occupational therapy and health sciences, under one roof. The building is planned to open in summer 2024.

“The support for this capital project and our College of Health Professions’ programming will directly benefit the people of our state,” TU President Kim Schatzel says. “As the largest provider of health professionals in

Maryland, TU’s impact is significant. Now, our faculty and staff, with this first-ever dedicated building, will have world-class resources to support their teaching and research. This will be transformational for the college and its future.”

The building will contain a 300-seat auditorium and multiple cutting-edge simulation and skill labs to replicate professional health care environments. Additionally, it will include 10 patient exam rooms, two lecture halls, a makerspace shop and lab, multiple research labs, a small cafe and more. The new building will support CHP’s 184% increase in undergraduate enrollment since 1998 and alleviate space restrictions that limit the college to enrolling just 18% of applicants in high-demand programs.



Together We RISE

The RISE campaign will provide the resources necessary to achieve a bold and ambitious institutional vision. We’re grateful to our donors for all the ways they’ve chosen to support TU on its path to excellence. Through May, TU has raised \$67 million toward its \$100 million goal.



OFFICE HOURS

Wellness and Wanderlust

Professor Leonie Brooks shares how travel can be a form of self-care and why that's beneficial.

Self-care was very popular even before the pandemic, and travel is a big part of that. Just being in a different space from your normal routine, you physically relax your body more. In our everyday lives, we don't pay attention to the sunrise because we're so busy, but traveling causes us to slow down and really see it.

I know a number of people, including myself, had travel plans that we had to scrap, postpone or cancel last year. And that's certainly disappointing because part of the benefit of traveling is the anticipation, the planning ahead.

If you are the type of person who is not flexible, then that can be pretty devastating. I think what helps in those situations is to put things in perspective and remember that this is a temporary disappointment versus something more permanent. There are people who lost loved ones [to COVID-19].

If we can keep that in perspective and say, "OK, this is disappointing, but it doesn't have to be devastating," then you can build a little bit of resilience.

Now that vaccines are more available and places are opening again, people are starting to plan trips. But situations here and abroad can change easily; look how quickly that happened in India in April.

So do your research on reputable websites. Listen to real scientists because the conspiracy stuff will drive you crazy and make you afraid to leave your house ever.

Here's the thing: There are risks all the time. You can slip in the bathtub. You can fall down your stairs. You can trip over your dog every single doggone day. But if you take good, calculated risks, arm yourself with facts and realize the rewards will be worth it, then you can travel safely. And bring your sanitizer.

What I'm hoping is that when it is safe to travel again, people will reduce their inhibitions and will take the risk to go to some of the

“If you arm yourself with facts and realize the rewards will be worth it, then you can travel safely. And bring your sanitizer.”

places that they read about because there is nothing like traveling to a new place. I'm from Jamaica, so I know travel. And there is nothing like being in a new place, hearing different languages, experiencing a different culture, trying new foods, seeing new architecture.

But that doesn't mean you must leave the U.S. When people think of travel, they [sometimes] think of international travel where you

have to spend lots of money and go far away and have this once-in-a-lifetime experience. That's not necessarily the case.

As an immigrant, I certainly can appreciate the different landscapes, from New England all the way over to Yosemite. I mean, the geography, the climate, the people. People talk about, "Oh, you have to travel to a different country to hear a different accent." No, go to Boston. And then go to Mississippi and then go to California. There are all these different variations within American culture that you get to experience.

If you're able to just go 45 minutes away, the benefit is "I'm doing something different, I'm getting away from what my typical stressors are and I am choosing to gift myself this different experience."

I can't wait to start traveling again. On my bucket list are South Africa and Egypt. My sister lives in Singapore, so I have to make it over there. Cuba is definitely on my list. We could see parts of Cuba from where I grew up, and I never made it there.

My advice for traveling—pre- and post-pandemic—is the same. Try to engage with the local culture and the local people. Stay safe, but break out of your comfort zone because the beauty of travel is not only

experiencing something different, but experiencing the people in the new environment.

You might be surprised at some of the lifelong connections that you might make. Really engaging with the locals deepens the quality of your travel experience. And that is true whether you're in California,

or Hawaii, or Chicago, or New York, or Scotland, or Ireland, or Egypt, or Lebanon or wherever.

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



A person, place or thing can make all the difference

JUSTIN NEPOMUCENO

Designer of the mural outside DoodleHATCH in Columbia, Maryland

At times when I was growing up, art felt like the only thing that I was really good at. I'm someone who's in their own head a lot, and sometimes it gets hard to communicate exactly what I'm thinking. Art is a really good way of conveying what I'm feeling at the moment. It really helps me display my own ideas and views.

When I went to Towson, I had undiagnosed ADHD. My last two semesters, before I was medicated, I had this issue that I called my "frozen lake." I would be excited

about a project, but I just couldn't get anything done.

I got this job as a graphic designer and illustrator for a fashion designer in Columbia, and I had the same kind of problem. I began to think that maybe I'm just not cut out for this. But when ManneqART, the nonprofit that I'm on the board of, had this idea to do a mural outside DoodleHATCH, our new public arts space, I leapt at the opportunity.

The theme of our installation is a supermarket for mythological creatures, time travelers and intergalactic tourists. I thought it would be cool for the side of our building to have a giant parade of all of our "customers" walking toward the entrance.

Once we decided on that theme, I really wanted to prioritize detail and interaction. I didn't want it to feel like a bunch of characters

copied and pasted next to each other. I wanted it to feel alive. We have some goblins that have stolen a cyclops' eye. If you walk down a couple of feet, you'll see two cyclops and one of them is missing an eye.

I hand drew each creature. Once I had the sketch, I used a projector to project each image onto a 4-by-8-foot board. I'm not a skilled painter, so I reached out to some of my painter friends who are also TU alums. They filled in the gaps and helped bring my vision to life. I couldn't have done this project without all the volunteers. I lovingly call them the art goblins.

I worked on this project pretty much every day. After I clocked out of work at five, I would stay for a couple of hours. It felt like it was my life for three or four months.

The mural is 140 feet long and 8 feet high. It's 35 panels that we

screwed into furring strips on the brick. I started drawing when we opened in September. We finished it on April 1, which was the reveal date. I loved collaborating with other artists. I proved to myself that I can be an artist, I can create and it showed me that I like the role of art director.

Our team wants to keep creating together. We're applying for lots of public arts projects. It's super rewarding to see the community reaction. Hearing how excited all the local children are when they spot their favorite characters makes all the hard work worth it.

Art like this is a break from the ordinary. Putting art in places where it isn't expected captures people's eyes. It revitalizes a space and makes it feel more alive while sparking the creativity in everyone who sees it.



Moving On Up

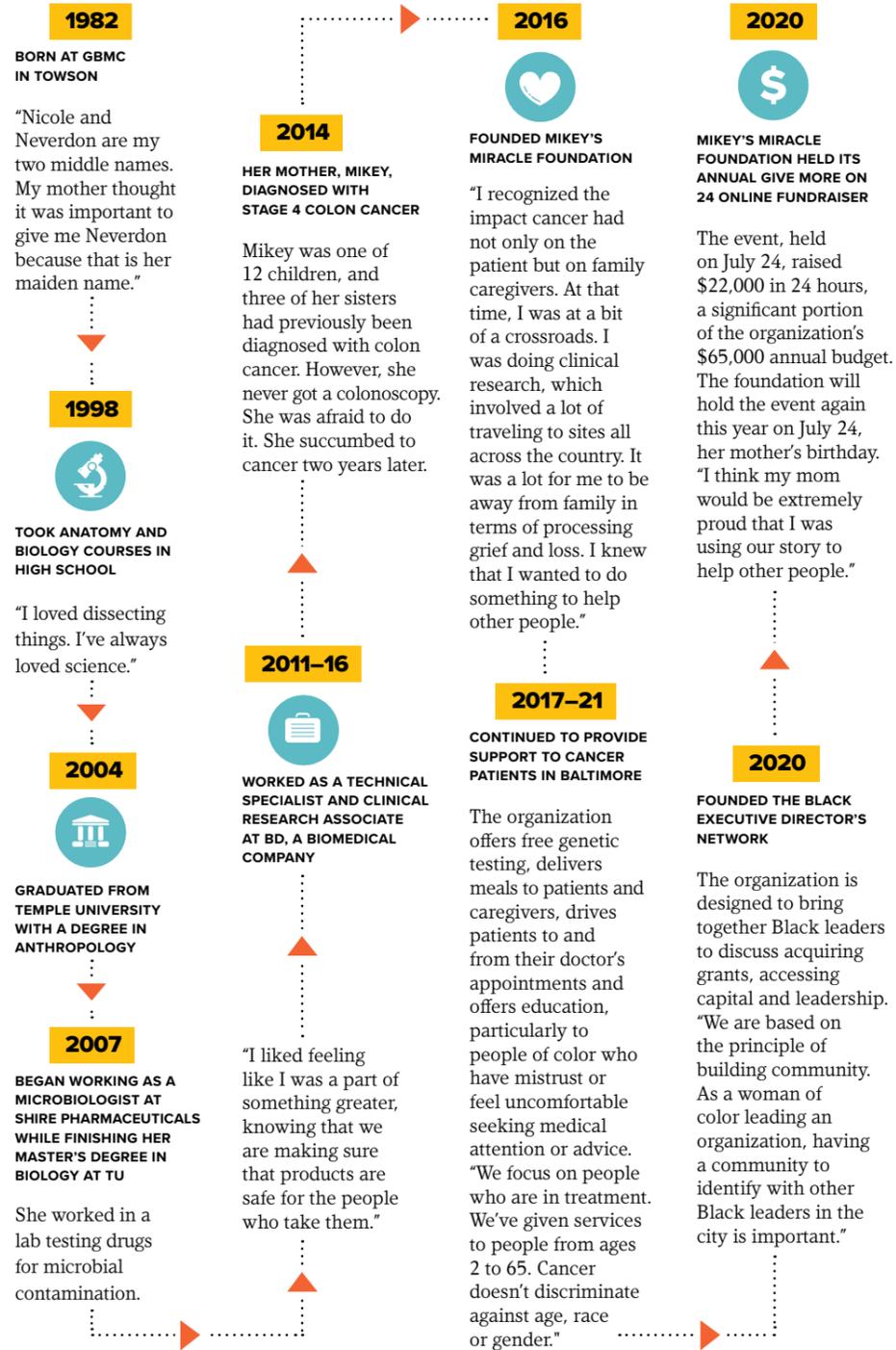


TU has sparked countless innovators. These are their stories.

Jade Nicole Neverdon Merritt '07

Founder and executive director of Mikey's Miracle Foundation

An only child, Jade Nicole Neverdon Merritt was "best friends" with her mom, Mikey. When colorectal cancer took her at the age of 66, Merritt was devastated. She hit reset on her life, leaving her job at a biomedical company to found a nonprofit to help those battling cancer. Mikey's Miracle Foundation serves patients and caregivers in Baltimore by providing them with food, transportation to appointments, education and other services. The organization is small but impactful; last year it helped about 75 people. "My mom had a generous heart, and I always say the best cure to your grief is helping someone else. I'm transforming pain into a purpose."



Coffee With... Anthony Skevakis

We sat down with TU's associate vice president for student affairs and dean of students in April as he prepared for a full-bore return to campus in the fall.

LOCATION:
Glen Dining Hall

IN HIS CUP:
Nicaraguan fair trade coffee, black with a dollop of heavy cream

ADDICTION LEVEL:
He fills his custom-made, 16-ounce TU Yeti mug (a Father's Day gift) twice a day

Q: What was your job like prior to COVID-19?

A: I worked with several different student support service areas across the Division of Student Affairs including emergency response, case management, CARE Team, Health Center, Counseling Center, Military & Veterans Center, civic engagement, student success program, Towson University in Northeastern Maryland (TUNE) and student

conduct. I was the first person hired at TU as dean of students. I facilitate, help, guide and coach students through their experience. You have to be able to directly connect with the students and the teams that support students on a daily basis.

Q: What's the CARE Team, of which you are the chair?

A: We are a group of multidisciplinary professionals from across campus who come together to help support students experiencing distress or other challenges. There might be a student who comes on our radar that hasn't attended class for two weeks. Then we might discover from a faculty member that a student has also missed an exam. We reach out to that student, and we help them work through their challenges and get back on track.

Q: What is the Towson University Medical Advisory Committee?

A: We have a member from the Baltimore County Department of Health, several highly trained doctors, administrators and practitioners skilled in epidemiology and nursing. We've been meeting weekly throughout the year. We discuss health data and trends that we're seeing locally and nationally then work to make recommendations to our leadership team. We recommend guidance and protocols to provide our community with the best opportunity to learn and thrive in this kind of rapidly changing environment.

Q: When did the university start thinking about a full-bore return to campus in the fall?

A: I think that a full fall return was always the goal. As the spring term progressed, the University System of Maryland came together and made the determination that we are at the culminating point where we can probably return, considering what we've learned from following medical protocols. The huge increase in the availability of the vaccines provided us the opportunity to make this an option.

Q: What will life on campus look like in the fall?

A: With the vaccination requirement, I think students, faculty and staff will feel more comfortable returning to campus and engaging in in-person experiences. I anticipate that with higher percentages of vaccinated persons, that the safety protocols for masking and distancing will be progressively withdrawn. But I also want us to be cognizant that there are different types of seasonal viruses out there. We've forgotten about the flu, so we still need to be cognizant of hand washing and other protocols.

Q: What's one thing you've learned from this tumultuous time?

A: You have to be able to be flexible and shape shift to the needs of the situation at the drop of a dime. If you're able to couple that with the ability to emanate empathy and understanding, you can meet the needs of that person, whether it's a student, parent or colleague.



Springing Forward

Camille Vitoff '23

★ GYMNASTICS

For much of the 2020–21 academic year, TU athletic schedules had to be written in pencil. When January 2021 rolled around and the gymnastics team opened on time, head coach Jay Ramirez breathed a sigh of relief.

“We took it day by day,” he says. “We had the mindset of ‘Let’s practice every day like we’re not going to be able to practice tomorrow.’ We’re lucky we got a full season; a lot of our teams didn’t.”

What a season it was. At the opening tri-meet, the Tigers notched the program’s highest season-opening score (193.925). That set the tone for the rest of the year. Even though the team finished the season with a nearly .500 record, seemingly each meet individual gymnasts or the team as a whole set personal

bests or program records.

“That was something super special that we had this year,” sophomore Camille Vitoff says. “One of our freshmen, Alli Zuhlke, was breaking records left and right. We were just really proud to do that as a team.”

The freshman debuted the Zuhlke 2 vault against Pittsburgh on Feb. 6. It has a start value of 10.0 and requires the gymnast to sprint toward the vault, do a handspring before landing feet-first onto the springboard, flip forward with a half-twist, land in a handstand on top of the vault and use her momentum to flip backward with a full twist before landing. It is listed in the Junior

Olympic Code of Points for USA Gymnastics.

TU gymnastics’ social media blew up after a video of her performing the vault was posted on Twitter. The program’s Instagram (@towsongymnastics) now has 14.9 thousand followers.

“It looks so crazy when she does it,” Ramirez says. “Doing something no one has done before is so impressive, especially for a freshman. The social media buzz really helped publicize the program as well.”

At the EAGL Championship, the Tigers placed third with the program’s highest conference meet score. TU then went to NCAA Regionals for the first time in 21 years and finished with the

program’s highest postseason score (195.025). Two Tigers placed in the top 10 in their events: Lauren Bolen (tied for eighth in the vault) and Emerson Hurst (tied for seventh on the beam). Ramirez and assistant coach Ashley Sauer were named Women’s Collegiate Gymnastics Association (WCGA) Southeast Regional Coaches of the Year.

TU has jumped 30 spots in the WCGA rankings over the past two seasons, going to 28th.

“We’re very proud of that and want to keep it going,” Ramirez says. “Our incoming athletes are some of the most talented gymnasts as a class that I’ve seen. I’d like to see us reach the top 20. I absolutely think it can happen.”



CRYSTAL JOHNSON '22
won back-to-back CAA Women’s Track Athlete of the Week honors in late April after sprinting her way to a program record in the 100m dash (11.50) at the 2021 Aggie Invitational.



KOBY SMITH '21
was named Preseason CAA Defensive Player of the Year and Inside Lacrosse Preseason All-America First Team.



AMY STEWART '23
earned first team All-EAGL on floor and second team All-EAGL on bars at the league championship meet.



NICHOLAS TIMBERLAKE '23
led all scorers with 14 points in men’s basketball’s opening round CAA tournament loss to Elon.



Jeff Castle

Almost Fame-ous

On Friday, Oct. 15, seven individuals will enter the Towson University Athletics Hall of Fame as the Class of 2020. They include Jermon Bushrod (football), Jeff Castle (golf), Dan Cocchi (lacrosse), Dan O’Connell (administration), Tina Shriver (track & field) and Sean Schaefer (football). Nance Reed, former senior associate director of athletics, will be honored posthumously. The 1987–88 men’s tennis team will be recognized as a Team of Distinction.



BASKETBALL

Aces Wild

Redshirt junior Kionna Jeter became the first player in women’s basketball history to be selected in the WNBA Draft, when the Las Vegas Aces chose her with the 36th pick in the third round. Jeter leaves TU as the fastest player to reach the 1,000-point mark. She made the game-winning jump shot to seal the first CAA championship in program history. The Aces played their first contest, against the Seattle Storm, on May 15.

VOLLEYBALL

Pandemic Postseason

Women’s volleyball defeated Northeastern 3-0 (26-24, 25-17, 25-22) to win its second consecutive CAA volleyball title and third overall. The Tigers went into the NCAA Tournament match with a perfect 6-0 record in a pandemic-shortened spring season. Although Dayton beat TU (25-15, 25-16, 25-16), Emily Jarome led the Tigers with seven kills.

FOOTBALL

Back in Action

After a one-season hiatus, the football program returns to competition on Saturday, Sept. 4, at Morgan State. The Tigers’ home-opener pits them against eight-time FCS champion North Dakota State on Sept. 18. The University of New Hampshire and San Diego State round out the non-conference games. The fall schedule includes five home games and a full CAA slate.

SWIMMING & DIVING

We’re #1

Men’s swimming and diving racked up 842.50 points—more than 200 more than second-place UNCW—to win its first CAA championship and first league title since the 1981–82 season. TU student-athletes won two individual medals (100-free, 200-fly), and the Tigers collected four relay titles, including the 400-free, where TU finished four seconds ahead of William & Mary.

Bringing Lena Back To Life

A box of forgotten music spanned three countries and connected four people over nine decades. TU piano professor Eva Mengelkoch helped share the treasures with the world.

BY MEGAN BRADSHAW

Nach meinem Tod zu verbrennen. Bitte.

[*Burn after my death. Please.*]

Could you follow those instructions without peeking in the box on which they were written?

The resurrection of the decades-old music manuscripts begins, appropriately enough, in the past.

In 2008, jazz musician Leonhard "Lennie" Cuje walked into 1752 Swann Street in Northwest Washington, D.C., and felt the years drop away.

From the 1930s to the 1960s, the rowhome doubled as Lindsay's, an after-hours jazz club unlicensed to sell liquor after midnight. Patrons entered through a discreet staircase in the backyard, through the basement's kitchen and into the lounge, where they heard the likes of Nat King Cole, Cab Calloway, Ella Fitzgerald—and Cuje himself.

Cuje, a vibraphonist, was there that night in 2008 at the invitation of the home's new owner, who, after discovering his address's place in jazz lore, threw a party feting the living musicians who had the club jumping from 2 to 7 a.m. nightly. It was there Cuje met TU piano professor Eva Mengelkoch.



The previous year, Cuje had descended the stairs to the basement of his aunt Lena Schoch's home in Arlington, Virginia. The room is surrounded by wood paneling; covered in framed photos; lined with shelves of VHS tapes, audio equipment and stacks of CDs; and holds desks laden with documents. Cuje sifted through decades of possessions, unearthing a box containing dozens of poems and classical music manuscripts signed "Mendelssohn."

Despite that famous name, Cuje couldn't find anyone interested in his discovery. Until that night at the home formerly known as Lindsay's.

"At this jazz club reunion, Lennie said, 'You know what? You are a classical pianist. You accompany a lot. You know about German literature. You know how to read this old script. Would you be interested in looking into this music and make it alive again?'" says Mengelkoch, a native of western Germany.

That chance meeting began a more than decade-long journey to transcribe, translate and, in some cases, correct or finish manuscripts composed and dedicated 80 years before. It ended with an album released by Naxos in May called "Songs for Lena." Mengelkoch, baritone Ryan de Ryke and soprano Julianne Baird recorded the songs in Kaplan Hall, with Mengelkoch playing on the university's Bösendorfer piano. She met de Ryke when he was an adjunct professor at TU in the early 2000s and Baird through Pro Musica Rara, then an artist-in-residence program hosted by the College of Fine Arts & Communication. They began performing the songs in 2012 but kept fine-tuning them over the next seven years.

"You have to live with a piece for a long time just to find an interpretation that makes sense. And that's what we did over the last 10, 12 years," Mengelkoch says. "It's very exciting. At the same time, introducing newly discovered music to audiences comes with a great responsibility."

Cuje, now 88, first heard the songs performed at a lecture recital at Rutgers University, where he provided commentary to the pieces.

"It was such a wonderful feeling," he recalls. "I asked Lena, my aunt, to please forgive me. I heard that music and Eva playing and the singing, and it was a wonderful feeling of accomplishing a good deed. It was a feeling of a completion of a project of love."



Photo: Lauren Castellana '13

Professor Eva Mengelkoch with the Bösendorfer piano in Kaplan Hall.



Felix Mendelssohn born (Albrecht's grandfather)

1809



Albrecht Mendelssohn born

1874



Maria Magdalene "Lena" Schoch born

1897



Lena and Albrecht meet while Lena attends the University of Würzburg

1917



Leonhard "Lennie" Cuje born

1933



Albrecht forced to leave Germany, settles in Oxford, England, as a senior fellow at Balliol College

1934

Albrecht dies of stomach cancer; Lena attends his funeral in England

1936



Lena leaves Germany for Virginia and keeps a portrait of AMB on her desk

1937



Maria Magdalene "Lena" Schoch was an extraordinary woman. Her intelligence and curiosity pushed her to the heights of her profession. Her strong sense of right and wrong shoved her into the footnotes of history for decades.

Born Feb. 15, 1897 in Würzburg, she grew up comfortably middle class, enjoying a rich experience in literature, theater, music, visual arts and architecture. She enrolled in the University of Würzburg in 1917 to study law, pursuing an educational track that had only opened to women a few years before. In an echo of her childhood steeped in the arts, Schoch took seven to eight courses a semester, including at least one on German, English or U.S. literature; philosophy; and/or art history, in addition to her law courses.

Her polymathic abilities and evident potential attracted law professor Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy's attention. And admiration.

Known as AMB to friends, he was the grandson of renowned composer Felix Mendelssohn and grew up amidst a glittering crowd of arts luminaries like Johannes Brahms, Clara Schumann and Ethel Smyth, a composer and suffragist with whom he shared a strong belief in women's rights.

During his youth, he produced drawings, poetry, theater pieces, libretti, piano transcriptions and songs; appeared in piano duets with his cousin Nini Volz; and sang folksongs accompanied by his aunt on piano. Along with a friend, AMB published *Schmetterlinge (Butterflies)*, nearly 200 pages of poetry about unrequited love and musings on nature. The volume horrified his relatives, who felt he had disrespected the Mendelssohn reputation by not using a pen name.

His uncle Adolph Wach, a top jurist in Germany at the turn of the century, encouraged AMB to take up a law career. Despite wanting to follow in his famous grandfather's footsteps, AMB heeded his uncle's advice: "If you become a musician, you will always be compared with your famous grandfather and never judged on your own merits." AMB eventually became a law professor, first at the University of Leipzig and then at the University of Würzburg.

After just eight semesters, Schoch earned a doctorate in 1920 with her thesis on English war legislation and joined AMB at the University of Hamburg. Colleague Fritz Morstein Marx later described their relationship as having an intuitive sense for one another. Schoch was involved in nearly all AMB's professional plans and projects, including the Institut für Auswärtige Politik (Institute of Foreign Politics), the first institute dedicated to international peace studies worldwide.

Schoch's work there was largely done in her free time since she was not an official employee. She had her own career achievements to keep her busy.

In 1927, Schoch was designated an official observer to the proceedings dealing with Germany's World War I reparations at the International Court in De Hague—where AMB served as a judge—in what later became known as the Dawes Plan. Her four-volume, annotated translation of the court's decisions soon followed, a document of which she once said, "I can only warn non-lawyers against reading [it]."

Schoch was also a member of the editorial team of the journal *Europäische Dialog*, in which she published and supervised many essays, reviews and bibliographies; a board member of the Society of Friends of the United States and editor of the *Hamburg-Amerika-Post* (after 1931, the *Amerika-Post*); and head of the new America-Bibliothek (American Library).

In 1931, Schoch founded and presided over Hamburg's first 10 Zonta clubs—a women's leadership organization much like the Rotary Club. A year later, she made history as the first German woman to complete a postdoctoral thesis and qualify to teach university-level law, after a unanimous vote of the faculty.



Lena Schoch with Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy in the 1920s.

Despite the looming shadow of Nazi rule, his burgeoning law career and the fact his feelings for Schoch were unrequited, AMB continued to produce poetry and love songs that he dedicated to his protegee. Roughly one-third of his surviving, completed songs were created—and gifted to Schoch—from 1930–34.

AMB began lecturing across the United States in 1927, and, on his last tour in 1933, surprised his audiences by urging them not to jump to conclusions about Adolph Hitler and the Nazis, saying Germany didn't want another war so soon. But just months after returning to Hamburg, he lost his position and his pension under the "Law for the Restoration of Professional Civil Service," which stripped anyone with Jewish ancestry of jobs, money and status.

That same year Schoch's nephew and godson Lennie Cuje was born. She attended his birth in Giessen on Jan. 1, and insisted he be baptized immediately, "before," as she said, "the Browns catch me," he remembers. The Brown Shirts was the colloquial name of the Sturmabteilung, the National Socialist German Workers' party's paramilitary arm that played a large role in Adolph Hitler's rise to power.

Cuje remembers Schoch visiting several more times, including once after the family had moved to Frankfurt.

"I still have a very clear memory of that visit. We arranged chairs to make a 'steamer.' She was the stoker, and I was the captain on our way to America."

About 3 or 4 years old at the time, he had no idea how prescient the make-believe was.

A year after Cuje's birth, AMB, his wife and their two adopted daughters emigrated to England, where he took a senior fellowship at Oxford University's Balliol College.

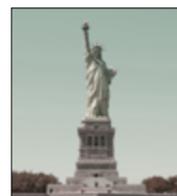
Schoch remained in contact with her mentor, even as other friends and colleagues disavowed him to ingratiate themselves with the increasingly powerful Nazi party. She even dedicated a series of publications

to AMB in 1934, when many others were erasing Jewish colleagues from their articles.

But Schoch quickly realized her position at the university was tenuous.

She faced a direct threat from the university administration because of her steadfast refusal to abandon AMB even after he died of stomach cancer in 1936, devastating her.

In an undated family history, Schoch reflected, "One Friday morning in 1936, I received a wire notifying me that Professor Mendelssohn had suddenly died in Oxford. I'm not going to dwell on my feelings at this blow. I called the head of the faculty, told him the fact and that I could not attend the faculty meeting the next



Lena brings nephew Lennie to the U.S.

1950



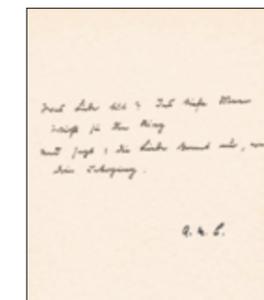
Beginning of Eva Mengelkoch's professional concert career

1990



Eva receives a Doctor of Music degree from Indiana University, as a piano student of Leonard Hokanson

1997



Lennie discovers a box of poetry and music manuscripts in the basement of Lena's home

2007



day because I was going to England for the funeral. He was practically speechless. 'Do you think this is wise? I'll have to notify the university.' Which he did and was told that this trip might have serious consequences for me. I told him I was not interested and asked him to cancel my lectures for the following week.

"I rushed to England by the night boat and caught a train in time to attend the funeral and spend a day with AMB's family. I found out that not one of his German colleagues nor his former university had sent even a token of sympathy."

Although Schoch received no direct punishment upon her return, her professional life became increasingly isolated.

In the same family history, Schoch wrote, "I cut off my connection with the Institut für Auswärtige Politik and restricted myself to teaching 'non-political' subjects. My office was a small annex to the university, where I could avoid contact with the Nazi administration. But one day we received a notice from the administration 'permitting' every teacher and employee to apply for membership in the party.

"The professor who was my superior at that time called me into his office in great agitation. He was not a Nazi but a remnant of the conservative party, and he was quite upset. 'My God, what shall I do? What are you doing, Dr. Schoch?' 'Me,' I said, 'I've thrown the notice in my waste basket.' 'But what about our future? I cannot live if I'm not permitted to teach!' 'Well, professor, that's your problem.' So he signed on the dotted line. I, of course, did not, and strange to say, nothing happened to me."

Her refusal to join the party was, as she noted, "professional suicide," and on June 28, 1937, Schoch submitted her resignation and began thinking of emigrating at the age of 40. She sold her household goods and had her life insurance paid out, giving the proceeds to her mother, who had lived with her since 1930, and set sail for America.

After five years at Harvard, Schoch moved to Washington, D.C., in 1943 to work as an expert on German law for the Office of Economic Warfare, where she contributed to the legal preparation of the U.S.

post-war occupation policy. When that office disbanded in 1946, she began a 20-year career as an expert on international and foreign law in the U.S. Department of Justice. Numerous large cases are associated with her name, and in 1952, she was admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court bar.

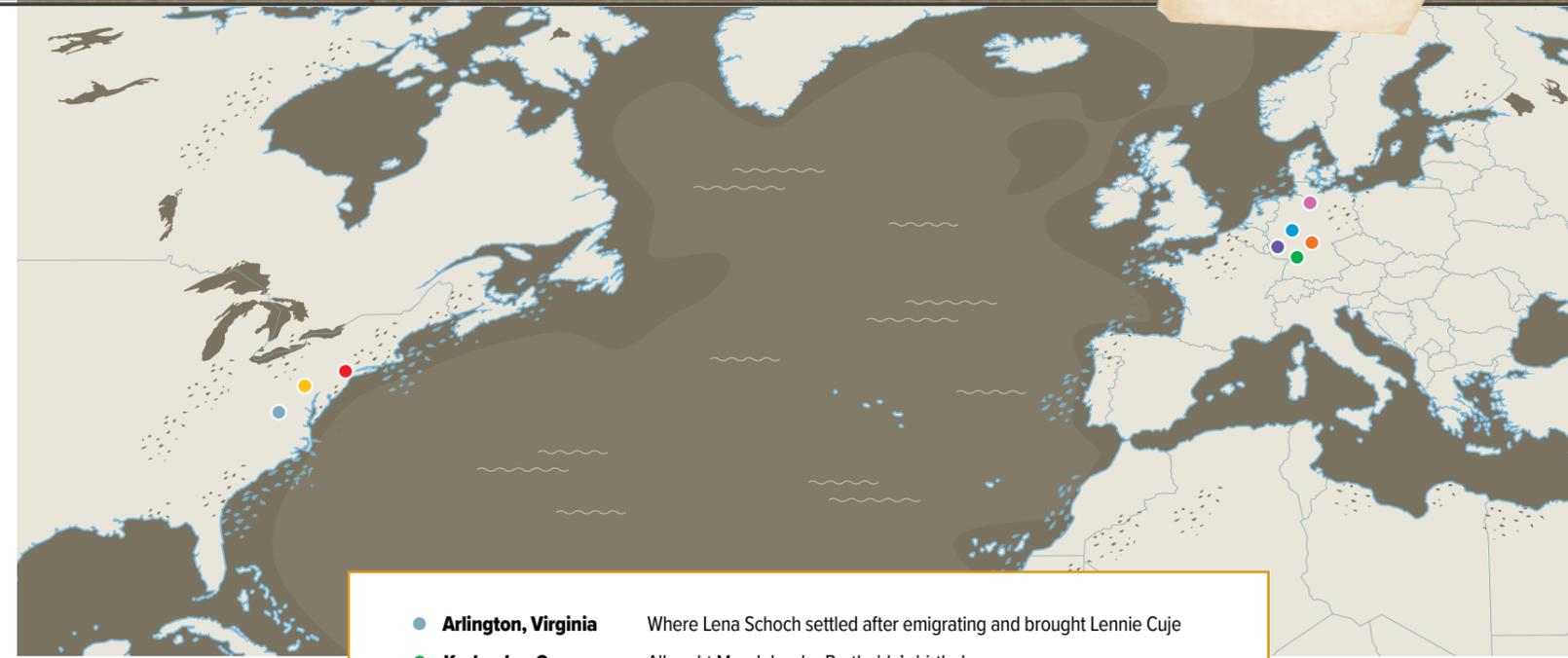
In 1950, she brought her then-teenage nephew Cuje to the U.S. In the later part of that decade, he began a 60-year career as a jazz musician.



Lennie Cuje (left) with bandmates at Smalls jazz club in New York City in 2002.

Nicknamed Snowflake, he was one of the few white musicians who played U Street in Washington, D.C., and on the "Chitlin Circuit" throughout the South. He also played in clubs like the Blue Note and the One Step Down Lounge as well as at the Kennedy Center and inaugurations and campaign concerts for George H.W. Bush, Bill and Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama. He recorded an album with the U.S. Navy Commodores, played with his inspiration Lionel Hampton and lived next door to Miles Davis in New York.

"His backyard touched into my backyard," Cuje says. "And I would go over to Miles' place and play over there.



- **Arlington, Virginia** Where Lena Schoch settled after emigrating and brought Lennie Cuje
- **Karlsruhe, Germany** Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy's birthplace
- **Giessen, Germany** Lennie Cuje's birthplace
- **Hamburg, Germany** Felix Mendelssohn's birthplace
- **New York, New York** Lennie moved there to become a professional jazz musician
- **Greater Trier area** Eva Mengelkoch's birthplace
- **Towson, Maryland** Where Eva, Ryan de Ryke and Julianne Baird recorded "Songs for Lena," where Eva met Ryan who was on the voice faculty; and where Eva met Julianne who performed with Pro Musica Rara, then the artist-ensemble-in-residence at Department of Music/COFAC
- **Würzburg, Germany** Lena's birthplace, where Albrecht and Lena later met

And he would show me how he liked to make gumbo and what stuff he liked to cook."

After Schoch's death in 1987, Cuje had no idea that what he calls "the treasures in the basement" were there. Schoch never said a word to her relatives about her connection to one of music's greatest families.

Cuje, thankfully, spoke at length to Mengelkoch as she worked her way through the manuscripts.

"I spent a lot of time in the Mendelssohn archives in Berlin and saw that the majority of those manuscripts that were found by Lennie in his basement were unique," Mengelkoch says. "So this was actually quite a treasure, then, that you have completed compositions in fair copy that are unique and that nobody has ever heard about.

"[Lena] packed up all this, all the manuscripts [when

she emigrated]. There are other things that she brought along: photos of their professional life together, their personal life together, sketches and lithographs of the Mendelssohns, then also some poetry collections that Albrecht Mendelssohn had hand copied, and that he had meant to put to music.

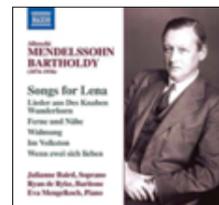
"I think it is exciting to have found these pieces of music that nobody has heard before and that even relatives of Albrecht Mendelssohn didn't know existed," she says. "And performing Albrecht's songs in spaces connected to the Mendelssohn family's history, such as the Berlin Mendelssohn Remise, really inspired me. I feel so honored that Lennie asked me to do this."

Cuje is elated at how the album turned out.

Mengelkoch, he says, "brought Lena back to life." **TU**

Eva Mengelkoch meets Lennie Cuje at a house party in D.C.

CD entitled "Songs for Lena," 28 of Albrecht's 31 completed songs, is released by Naxos

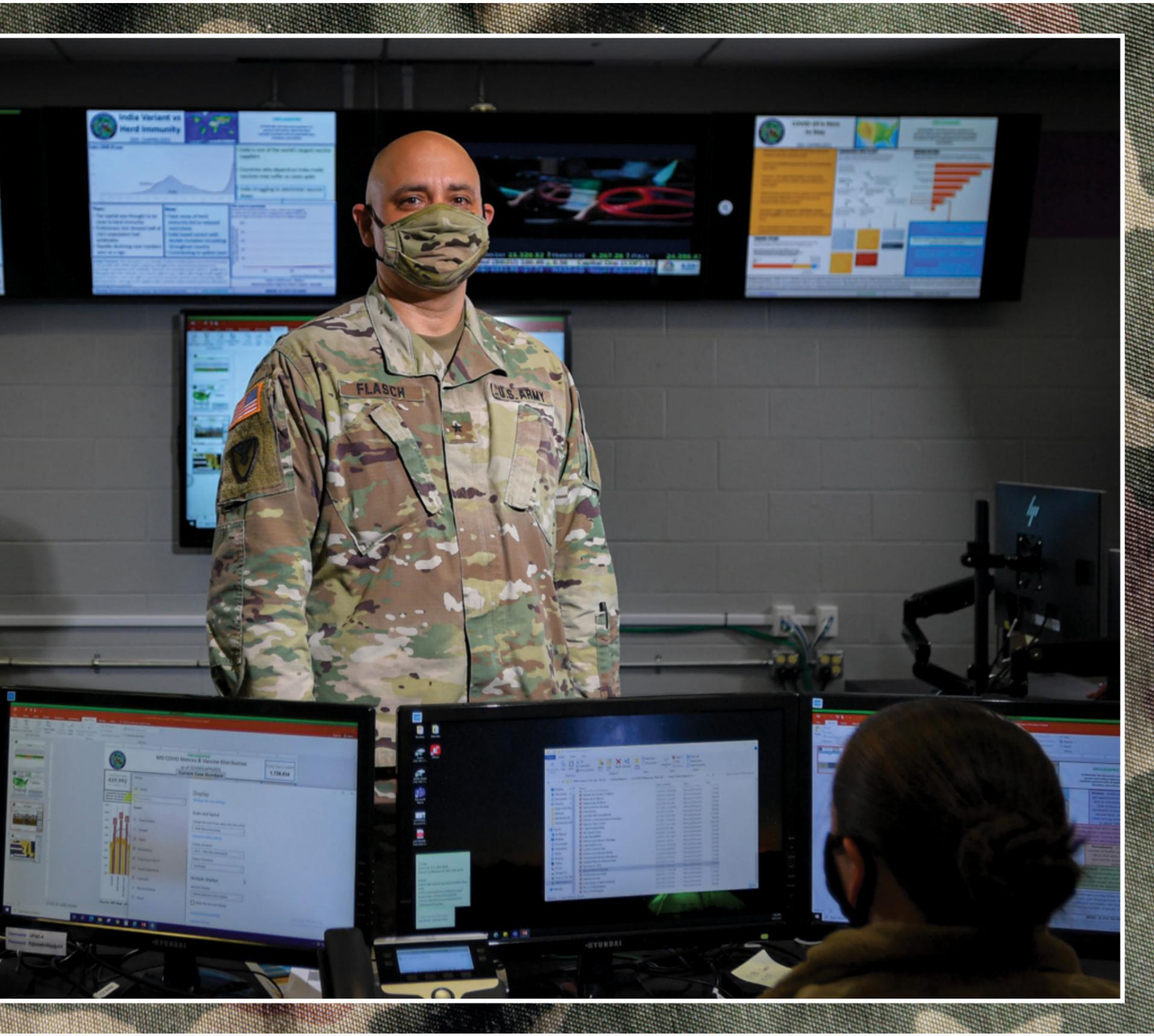


Performances of "Songs for Lena" are scheduled at Mendelssohn-Haus Leipzig, Berlin Mendelssohn Remise and Jüdischer Salon Hamburg

2008

2021

2022



Caring for the Community

Army Brig. Gen. Adam Flasch '95 supports the Maryland National Guard's response to the COVID-19 crisis as the state's first dual-status commander.

BY REBECCA KIRKMAN • PHOTOS BY ALEXANDER WRIGHT '18

Heading to the office means something different each day for Army Brig. Gen. Adam Flasch '95.

On a rainy Wednesday in April, Flasch's office is the Greenbelt Community Vaccination Center—a collection of sprawling white tents that appeared in the parking lot of the Greenbelt Metro station in suburban Washington, D.C., over a period of three days earlier in the month.

The first and only federally run mass vaccination site in Maryland, the Greenbelt location is part of the White House's nationwide effort to target vulnerable populations with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-run community vaccination centers.

Here, Flasch coordinates efforts between the federal government and the state as Maryland's first dual-status commander.

Typically appointed in large, complex efforts like major hurricanes or wildfires involving state Guard members and other active-duty federal service members, dual-status commanders are subject to the orders of the governor and adjutant general (who

heads the state National Guard) as well as the federal chain of command.

During the pandemic, dual-status commanders have been appointed in at least 18 states as the National Guard continues to support COVID-19 response efforts throughout the country.

In this role, Flasch works with federal interests at the site—FEMA leadership and about 140 active-duty Air Force members from across the U.S.—and state resources like Guard troops and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).

"We are using Guard and active-duty forces at the same time, but with different missions," Flasch says from a seat at a plastic folding table in a walled-off section of the main tent. The area serves as a de facto break room where soldiers and airmen can get off their feet or eat a quick meal before heading back to work. "It's my job to make sure that we're using all our capabilities to do the best we can at this site."

Today the operation is running like a well-oiled machine. In a series of meetings with leadership from FEMA and the Guard in a smaller tent serving as a command center, Flasch runs through measures of performance for

the Greenbelt site and comparisons from other vaccination centers around the state and country.

"That's the board of happiness," he says, smiling and pointing to a monitor. The dashboard displays how many vaccines have been given out so far for the day (nearly 700), in the past hour (more than 330), the number of missed appointments (58) and how many people are waiting in line to be vaccinated (14). It also shows the total number vaccinated since the center opened a week prior—20,463.

On average, the location vaccinates 350 people per hour—more than 3,000 per day.

"I'm proud of the site; we're one of the best-performing sites in the eastern region," Flasch says, noting a daily execution rate consistently above 95%. While such a high percentage signals success, Flasch continues to push for more. "I'm like, 'Let's close the gap to 100%. How do we do that, guys?' And the team came up with a really good solution."

Welcoming walk-ups, which helped the center recoup much of the 200 average missed appointments each day, was one of the ways the team

optimized operations. Adjusting the process for intake, which is staffed by a combination of Air Force, Coast Guard and AmeriCorps members, streamlined the entire experience to an average of 22 minutes—including the mandatory 15-minute waiting period after receiving the vaccine.

While he relates streamlining the vaccination process to the product



“I think there’s an awakening that this has got to be a nation for everybody, not just people who do well or figure it out on their own. We’ve got to send the elevator back down and get as many people up as we can.”



management skills he learned as a business major at TU, these days Flasch spends more time advocating for his team members to come up with innovative solutions than he does in the middle of the action.

“For me, it’s hard because I’d rather be the guy sitting at the table punching out the vaccines,” he says as he walks through a tent lined with folding tables where Air Force medics in camouflage administer the vaccine. “The staff that I work with, they really do the heavy lifting. A this state of play, my job is just to ask the hard questions.”

Pushing for that 100% rate is more than just an impressive statistic at the Greenbelt site, which was designed to reach Marylanders from zip codes identified by the CDC’s

Social Vulnerability Index. While it’s open to anyone, the site aims for at least half of its total patients to live in those targeted areas. So far, that population has consistently made up 60–70% of the patients it serves.

“The governor and president are committed to getting after these disparities in a meaningful way. And it’s not for politics, it’s just so we can help people who very often get left out of a lot of solutions for our state,” Flasch says. “I think there’s an awakening that this has got to be a nation for everybody, not just people who do well or figure it out on their own. We’ve got to send the elevator back down and get as many people up as we can.”

Some of the most important work the staff at the center does is the most basic: helping community members feel comfortable with the vaccine.

“A lot of this is just being able to get folks to understand, ‘Hey, we can trust the vaccine,’” he says. “Throughout the day I’ll walk the line and interact with the community coming through. A lot of our young airmen are helping someone just feel comfortable with the decision.”

April Cummings, a division director at FEMA Region 3, worked closely with Flasch in her role as the site director of the Greenbelt Community Vaccination Center.

“I was in charge of the daily operations and the coordination, and he played a big, critical role as the dual-status commander,” says Cummings, who is typically stationed in Philadelphia at FEMA’s Region 3 office, which oversees seven tribal nations, the District of Columbia and five states including Maryland. “Because he’s from the state and is very well engaged with the local organizations, his experience and contacts really helped open doors for us.”

She admires his ability to stay positive under pressure, too. “It was a great mission that we were on, but there can be high stress associated with it. You’re working very long hours, often seven days a week,” says Cummings, who left the site in early May. “So just his general nature and sense of humor

made him a really valuable partner for us on the ground.

“He interacted with the most junior staff that we had all the way to the highest levels of leadership,” Cummings adds. “He always found common ground and ways to connect with everyone. I would work with him again in a heartbeat.”

When he’s not at the Greenbelt vaccination site—and he’s there Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and most weekends—Flasch is at Camp Fretterd in rural Reisterstown, where he has served as director of the joint staff for the Maryland National Guard since October 2018.

Similar to his active-duty appointment as dual-status commander, directing the joint staff involves coordinating among the agencies within the Maryland Military Department, including the Maryland Army and Air National Guards, MEMA and the Maryland Defense Force.

“My staff’s job is to take the requirements that the state has and put them into specific assignments that the Army and the Air can carry out,” Flasch says. “Every day, we work with our state partners to develop those mission profiles and then hand them off to the Army and the Air, and they go out and do the work.”

As Maryland responded to COVID-19, Guard members supported every effort, from directing traffic at drive-through testing centers to operating mobile vaccination clinics and staffing mass vaccination sites. By April 8, the Maryland National Guard had helped get 170,000 shots in arms around the state, with about 1,200 members on active duty supporting the state’s pandemic response.

Jumping into action during a crisis has become second nature to Flasch over three decades with the Guard. He coordinated deployment to protect the U.S. Capitol when it was stormed by rioters on Jan. 6, when floods swept through Ellicott City in 2018 and during the 2015 unrest in Baltimore over the death of Freddie Gray. He also works closely with the Maryland National Guard partner countries of



Pictured: Brig. Gen. Adam Flasch, left, checks in with Maryland Air National Guard members analyzing COVID-19 metrics; the general's belt Flasch received upon his promotion to brigadier general sits at his desk at Camp Fretterd in Reisterstown, Maryland.



Estonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the ongoing United States European Command State Partnership Program following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

"There hasn't been a snowstorm or hurricane since 1989 that I've missed," says Flasch, who enlisted at 18 years old when he gave a high school classmate a ride to the Fifth Regiment Armory in Baltimore City. He rose up in the Maryland Army National Guard's 229th Support Battalion before moving into supply management, operations and logistics roles. In 2011, as deputy commander he worked as part of a team supporting combat aviation brigades in Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. While working at the Maryland National Guard Joint Force Headquarters, he was promoted to brigadier general and assumed his current role in October 2018.

Army National Guard Col. Jeffrey Knepshield, an adviser to Maryland National Guard leadership, first served with Flasch when the two were young second lieutenants. They have been close colleagues and friends ever since.

"When I was in command of the Maryland Army National Guard recruiting effort, I used to challenge

my recruiting teams to 'find me the next Adam Flasch,' and they knew exactly what that meant," Knepshield recalls. "When it comes to the Maryland National Guard responding to a state emergency or federal mission for the past three decades—and now as his primary duty every day—Brig. Gen. Flasch has always been out front in any effort. Simply put, he's our sharp end of the spear."

As COVID-19 rates decrease and vaccination rates increase in the state, Flasch hopes he'll have the chance to catch his breath and spend more time with his family this summer.

"In a perfect year, I've got the most boring job in the organization," he says. "That hasn't been the case for the last year. There's not a lot of time at home. And, luckily, I've got a wife who clearly understands and supports that."

He credits Stephanie, his wife of 26 years and a former National Guard officer, for pushing him and their two sons to aim higher.

"My wife creates high-performing males, there's no question," he says with a smile. "I'm one of them. I would not be here today if it weren't for her."

Despite the challenges, Flasch wakes up each morning knowing that he's making a difference in the lives

"Every day, we work with our state partners to develop those mission profiles and then hand them off to the Army and the Air, and they go out and do the work."

of his fellow Marylanders. That knowledge is what keeps him going.

"Nowhere else are you going to have such a global impact. Showing up matters every day. I've got 135 airmen here that are helping vaccinate 3,000 people a day," says Flasch, gesturing to the men and women in uniform around him in the tent in Greenbelt. "Are we saving lives? I don't know. We're certainly helping, and that's what matters most to me." **TU**

Above: Brig. Gen. Flasch, left, meets with Greenbelt Community Vaccination Center Site Director April Cummings.

Opposite page, from top: Flasch in a hallway leading to the main vaccination tent in Greenbelt; Military challenge coins displayed on Flasch's desk commemorate achievements and missions throughout his career.

A Responsibility to Help Others

BY MEGAN BRADSHAW

Todd '87 and Melanie Feuerman share why they support the RISE campaign.

Todd '87 and Melanie Feuerman are intentional when looking for opportunities to put others first.

Their giving philosophy is based on how fortunate their family has been, with personal resources as well as their health.

"I try to live every day thinking, 'How would I want someone to help me?'" Melanie says. "Part of the reason we support St. Jude (Children's Research Hospital), for example, is because we don't have to. We are so thankful as a family that we don't have a child that has cancer. It's something that we wanted to do because it hasn't, thank goodness, touched our family."

Those values are behind the Feuermans' generous gift to Towson University's RISE campaign, a \$100 million comprehensive campaign launched on April 29. It is driven by one of the university's main values—putting students first—and supports TU's mission to foster intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, preparing

graduates who will serve as effective, ethical leaders and engaged citizens.

Todd is one of those engaged alumni. As he has risen in his 35-year career with Ellin & Tucker to a senior director in the firm's auditing and consulting practice, he and his wife still remember their humble backgrounds.

Growing up in Maryland—Melanie is from Montgomery County and Todd is from Baltimore County—neither family had the financial means to make big charitable gifts.

"My father died at 38. I was 9 years old, and I have an identical twin brother, Reese, and an older brother, Jason, who was 11 at the time," Todd says. "Even my summer camps were paid for by the generosity of various not-for-profit organizations in the Baltimore area."

Melanie's father served in the military, inspiring her to engage with the community through the United Synagogue Youth as a teenager. After she had her first child, she continued to volunteer through the family's synagogue.

Todd and his brothers started working very early, taking on odd jobs like construction work, mowing lawns and washing cars.

"I think what we learned from those experiences was how important it was to do really good work, work hard and make money for ourselves and to also help our family's limited resources since our family needed help," he says.

The Feuermans know money

can be tight for some among the TU community. That's why their gift serves two of the RISE campaign's six foci: opportunity and leadership for students and innovative, real-world academic programs.

The campaign aims to extend and expand TU's rich legacy of student-centered educational excellence and enhance the campus experience for all students.

Todd attended TU on scholarships and loans and knows the financial burdens today's undergraduates face: 57% demonstrate financial need, and the average unmet need is \$12,000.

So the couple has established the Todd and Melanie Feuerman Scholarship for full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Business & Economics, majoring in accounting or finance with a 3.0 GPA or higher and demonstrated financial need.

"Towson has made me feel great about my contributions," Todd says. "Towson played a pretty big role in where I'm at. It's where I earned my accounting firm internship and where I met my current employer. Anything that I've been able to achieve professionally, it all comes back to Towson. And I think it's important for people to understand that if it all works out, and you can, you should give back to the school."

The RISE campaign supports TU's already strong efforts to encourage and empower students to participate in



Melanie and Todd Feuerman, pictured in the Student Launch Pad in Cook Library. Part of the Feuermans' gift supported innovation and entrepreneurship at TU.

research and real-world learning, like internships.

More than 88% of students engage in experiential learning opportunities, like Todd did. He interned for a year and a half at the organization that is now RSM McGladrey, an audit, tax and consulting firm.

"The internship was definitely a valuable component to the early stage of my career because it did teach me about the professional world," he says. "It gave me exposure to the accounting field, to the type of work, to people, to interactions, to the professionalism that was taking place within the accounting world."

Funding from the RISE campaign will ensure that opportunities are available to students inside and outside the

classroom—opportunities that activate student curiosity, creativity and engagement. By offering a wide array of programs that promote academic excellence and career readiness, TU ensures students graduate with the tools to achieve lifelong career success as alumni.

Academic innovation and new program development are the result of a constant commitment to enhancing, expanding and modernizing curriculum and student experiences. TU provides graduates with a strong technical foundation and bolsters their desires to contribute to organizations and communities and serve as leaders within their chosen career fields.

As part of their gift, Todd and Melanie are supporting the Student Launch

Pad, TU's resource for students in all majors who have an interest in entrepreneurship and want mentorship and networking opportunities to develop or grow business ideas. The launch pad is just one of the many ways TU serves the greater Baltimore area as an anchor institution and entrepreneurship hub.

Funding programs that develop undergraduate entrepreneurs and those, like TU's Career Center, that guide students into more traditional career paths are essential to the region's economic development.

TU provides 25% of Maryland's education workforce and is the state's leading provider of health care professionals. TU is home to more than 18,000 undergraduate and 3,000 grad-

RISE

uate students. And in an environment where competition is fierce for talented students, incoming classes are more diverse and academically prepared than at any time in TU history.

When Todd graduated, he had already accepted one of the employment offers he received from a national accounting firm. However, as a senior, he attended a university-run career event at the student union that changed his career trajectory.

"I was playing in a flag football game at Towson and got hurt pretty bad. And then I went to an accounting open house that night at the student union," Todd remembers. "And I tripped leaving the event, and I literally fell into Ed Brake—the Ellin & Tucker managing director and CEO—and the rest is history."

In Ellin & Tucker, Todd found a company aligned with his philanthropic beliefs.

"The managing director really instilled in our firm, and specifically within the shareholders, how important it is to give back to the community," says Todd.

The staff there offers time and services to the community and nonprofit organizations. The firm also encourages donations to entities that are important to staff, their communities and their families. Todd sits on three university boards, and the former TU tennis player has also donated to TU athletics through the United Way and directly to the Tiger Athletic Fund.

"Just because you do well doesn't mean you get to keep it all," Todd concludes. "You have to give some of it back to this world to help others. You have a responsibility." **TU**

For more on the campaign, visit rise.towson.edu.

What's Old is New Again

A look back on the last—and first—time TU held Commencement at Unitas Stadium

 WORDS BY
MEGAN BRADSHAW

 NEW PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ALEXANDER WRIGHT '18

On the face of it, spring 2021 Commencement looked very similar to the one held 16 years ago: waving graduates processing onto Minnegan Field wearing beaming smiles and black and gold regalia.

But it differed in pretty much every other way. This year's Commencement ceremonies, 10 held over five days to accommodate physical distancing and low-density protocols, celebrated two classes of graduates due to the novel coronavirus pandemic cancelling both ceremonies scheduled for 2020.

Emily Wose '21, a music education major, spent the spring 2021 term student teaching, so she was glad for the opportunity to see her classmates in person one last time.

"It meant a lot to me, as the youngest of my siblings, for my parents to see me walk across the stage," she says. "[Commencement] was normal after a year of learning to be a teacher in a not-normal setting. It felt like a little ray of hope."

The 2020/2021 university Commencement speaker was leading health care executive Nancy Schlichting, who spoke to the College of Health Professions on May 17. She told grads, "Change is desirable and

an inherent part of health care, as we always strive to do things better. The dynamic nature of health care will keep you challenged and engaged throughout your life."

The 9,150 graduates sat in physically distanced seats spread across Minnegan Field. Family and friends attended in reduced capacity, sitting on both sides of the field. Still, roughly 35,000 guests attended the university's first in-person ceremonies since December 2019.

"Since freshman year, I've played my trumpet with the faculty brass ensemble during all of the Commencement ceremonies," Wose says. "For my own ceremony, I played the processional and then slipped on my cap and gown and went to sit on the field. Seeing my family in the

stands really felt like a celebration of the last four years, and getting to play for my own ceremony and for my friends was really special."

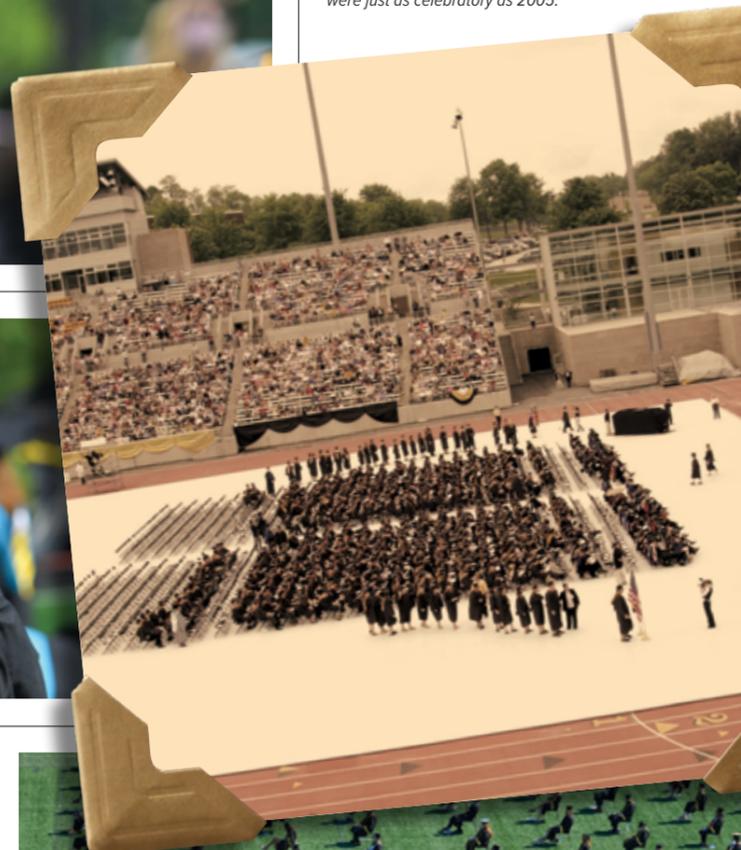
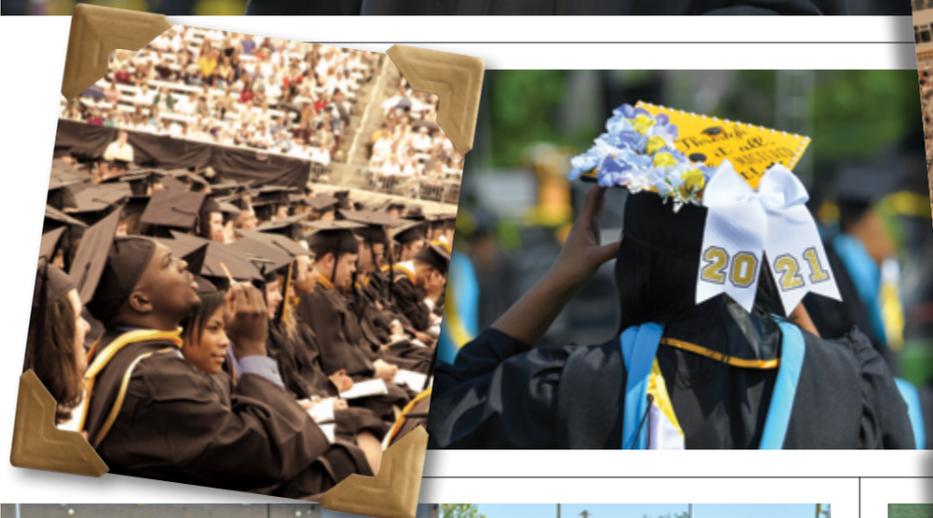
The ceremony on May 22, 2005—the university's 140th Commencement—marked the first time TU held Commencement at Unitas Stadium. Prior to that year, Commencement had been held in a variety of locations, including the Towson Center, main campus and what is now Royal Farms

Arena in downtown Baltimore. Around 11,000 friends and family attended—nearly reaching the stadium's 11,198 capacity.

"A few of us had met in my apartment in Kenilworth with their families and had an impromptu pre-party before caravanning over to campus," remembers Ryan Behnken '05. "There were droves of people



Sixteen years separated TU's first Commencement (photos in sepia) and 2021. This year's physically distanced ceremonies were just as celebratory as 2005.





#TUProud

Backyard Drama

Like most of Maryland, Glen Arboretum was invaded by Brood X cicadas in June. Nearly 3,400 species of cicadas exist, and there can be up to 1.5 million per acre. Biology professor John Lapolla calls their constant drone a “love song” and reminds us “nowhere else in the world [will] you get this phenomenon.”

walking up Cross Campus Drive and finding where to go [in the stadium].”

The 2,276 graduates awaited the start of the ceremony under enormous tents on the east side of the track before processing onto the AstroTurf into blinding sunlight.

“I wasn’t ready for it to be over,” Behnken says. “I remember taking the time to connect with friends and hang out until we were corralled to go sit. I think the excitement of graduation had taken over. It was a bit of tunnel vision walking in, chatting with friends. I was focused on people immediately around me versus the grander scale of the people in the stadium.”

Classmate Leslie (Cox) Troy ‘05 remembers something similar.

“It was surreal to have so many people there,” she says. “But no matter where I looked, I could always find a familiar face. As many people as there were, it still felt small and intimate.”

Behnken, Troy, Mike Collins ‘05 and Terri Iacarino ‘05, ‘12 recall how hot and sunny it was that day. And all were grateful to graduate with classmates who weren’t in their colleges.

“I remember thinking how lucky we were that it was going to be outdoors,

which meant we could graduate with friends who weren’t part of our majors,” Troy says. “I cherish the photos we took of all of us who were part of different groups and activities on campus.”

The stage party of faculty, USM regents and invited guests entered Minnegan Field down the short flight of metal stairs next to the field house and climbed the steps to the enormous stage, ringed by yellow potted flowers and situated in front of the giant video scoreboard.

“Being on the field at the stadium was a unique experience,” says Sean Welsh ‘05, TU’s interim vice president for marketing and communications. “I’d covered the football team as a reporter for *The Towerlight*, so I’d been on the field before. But being part of such a large celebration in that venue really felt big and special.”

Music education major Iacarino remembers receiving her scroll with satisfaction.

“To walk across the stage and have that sense of pride within and to have people cheering for you was awesome,” she says. “It was nice to have friends from other majors cheering me on. That sense of pride of

just being a Towson Tiger, that we did it.”

The enormity of the moment struck a chord with Collins.

“It was the culmination of so much. Your friends are there, your family is there and it was a big deal,” he remembers. “I was looking forward to seeing everyone and our families. For [my friends], it was the first time our families had ever met, so we got to host each other. Because we were all graduating on the same day, we were able to come together.”

Just like Collins, Wose reflected on the importance of family and friends on a day that marked a major milestone in her life.

“My sister graduated from TU in 2013, and I remember going to her ceremony and thinking it was the biggest event I’d ever seen, so my own TU graduation was surreal,” she says. “My time at TU has prepared me so well for my career.”

“I’ll be the band director at Patterson Mill High School in Harford County this fall, but I’m already looking forward to coming back to TU as an alum to support my fellow TU Marching Band members and keeping in touch with the professors I was blessed to learn from.” **TU**





MY TOWN

Alena Auyoung '12 Honolulu

FAVORITE NEIGHBORHOOD
Manoa

POKE SPOT
Off the Hook Poke

BEACH
Ala Moana Beach Park

BEST PLACE FOR SUNSET
Pu'u 'Ualaka'a State Wayside

BEST BOOK SET IN HAWAII
Ka'a'awa by O. A. Bushnell

“For shave ice, there’s a place that Obama likes to go to. But I think Waiola is the best. It always has a huge line, but it goes very quickly.”

After graduating from TU with a degree in accounting, Alena Auyoung '12 took a job with Booz Allen in management consulting. When the Germantown, Maryland, native transferred to the company's Honolulu office in September 2016, she only intended to stay a year or two.

Within three months, she met her husband Darin, and four and a half years later, she is a new mom and firmly rooted on the island of Oahu, with a tight extended family and a variety of interests.

“A month after I moved to Hawai'i, I started volunteering for the **Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra**,” she says. “I help plan events for the donors or special guests, especially around concert times. I'm also a volunteer for **Hawai'i Public Radio**, part of their younger generation volunteer group. Our mission is to make sure that our age group stays with HPR as we grow older.”

Auyoung and her husband spend a lot of time outside. The 50th state had and still has among the strictest COVID-19 restrictions in the U.S., but the island chain has recently reopened its outdoor activities.

“We're big walkers,” she says. “[During lockdown] my husband and I resorted to walking around our favorite neighborhoods that have these gorgeous homes.

“The nice thing about living in Hawai'i is that a lot of your natural attractions are free. My favorite is **Kuliouou Ridge** because the scenery changes all the time with the different flora, different elevation, even different climate. At the top, it's the most breathtaking view of that side of the east side of the island. You're so high up you can't believe you made it.”

Many people prefer to go off the beaten path for vacation, but Auyoung admits some of the more touristy locations are worth checking out.

“I love taking [visitors] to the **North Shore**. When you come in the winter, the waves are 40-plus feet. Otherwise, we just do a lot of eating,” Auyoung says, laughing.

“The best place to get a taste of a more local cuisine is a place called **Liliha Bakery**. They have things like loco mocos [hamburgers with white rice, a fried egg and gravy], kimchi fried

rice, galbi [short ribs] and their bakery section is amazing,” she says.

“Then for shave ice, there's a place that Obama likes to go to. But I think **Waiola** is the best. It always has a huge line, but it goes very quickly.”

Many people dream of moving to Hawai'i and becoming a local. For Auyoung, that feeling truly hit at her wedding.

“It was a testament of all these people welcoming me into their family and their island,” she says.

“As a wedding gift, my husband got me a Hawai'ian heirloom bracelet that had my name engraved on it. That was such a special moment because no one typically wears that kind of jewelry unless they're from here.

“Having that signifies that you're from Hawai'i. The fact that my husband bestowed that to me was like, ‘Wow. Now I'm really transitioning from that D.C. life to Hawai'i.’”

Alumni News



Save the Date
Homecoming is set to take place Oct. 16, when the Tigers face the University of Rhode Island.



Regional Get-Togethers

SEPTEMBER
Southern Pennsylvania
Southern California
Denver, Colorado

OCTOBER
New York City

NOVEMBER
Atlanta, Georgia



Local Events

Crab feast, **Aug. 22**
Orioles game and reception, **Sept. 30**
DADR Awards, **Oct. 14**

Be sure to visit alumni.towson.edu/events for the full schedule of upcoming events and to register.

Global Alumni Reunion



The Global Alumni Reunion committee is planning virtual and in-person components for its inaugural reunion in 2022. If you were an international, exchange or study-abroad student, please visit alumni.towson.edu/globalreunion to take a brief survey to help determine activities for the reunion and see updates as we get closer to the event.

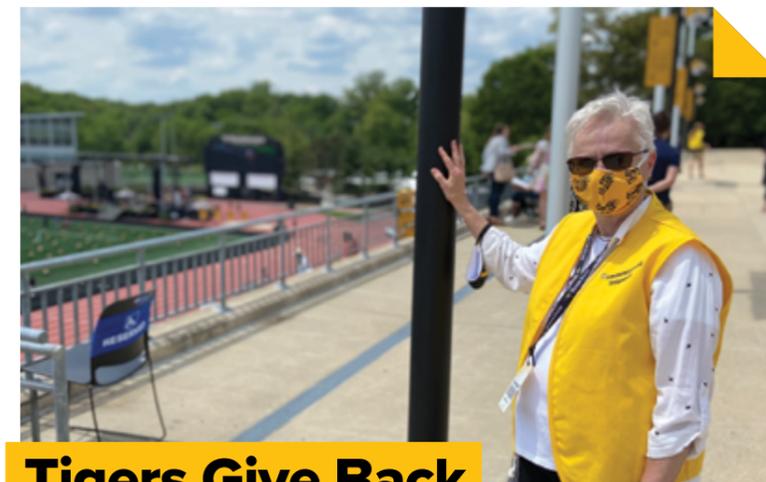
Alpha Omega Lambda Brothers Raise Nearly \$15,000 in 72 Hours

The Alpha Omega Lambda (AOL) brothers are no strangers to fundraising, having established two endowed scholarships at TU—in addition to other funds—in memory or support of fellow members.

In April the AOL brothers raised \$14,855 in 72 hours thanks to a generous, double-matching gift challenge initiated via email. It began when John Gilliss '74 proposed to match gifts up to \$5,000, and Mark Maloney '80 agreed to do the same.

On May 1, the AOL brothers presented men's lacrosse player Garrett Zungailia with this year's Joseph Ferrante Memorial Scholarship, awarding the junior defenseman \$6,300 for the spring term. The scholarship honors the late Joseph Ferrante, the unsung hero of the 1974 championship men's lacrosse team.

In 2020, the AOL brothers celebrated their 50th anniversary. Although they were unable to reunite in person, they have plans to celebrate the milestone together next spring.



Tigers Give Back

We can always count on our alumni to give back to the TU community, and that was especially true this spring. When the Tiger L.E.A.P. job shadowing program was put on hold last year, the Career Center invited alumni to share a virtual day in the life at their jobs through Instagram takeovers. What began as a weekly series in April quickly grew into an 11-week program spanning April, May and part of June. Participants, who graduated between 2011 and 2020, shared meaningful industry experiences and answered viewer questions across wide-ranging fields. The stories were not only informative but also fun. In one takeover, Los Angeles Rams account executive Stephen Logsdon '12 playfully introduced Rampage, the team's mascot, as his roommate.

Tigers also generously volunteered their time in May at Commencement. Alumni served as enthusiastic greeters, ushers and robing and processional assistants at all 10 ceremonies, making guests feel truly welcome.

Keep an eye out for more alumni volunteer opportunities as we resume quarterly service projects this fall.





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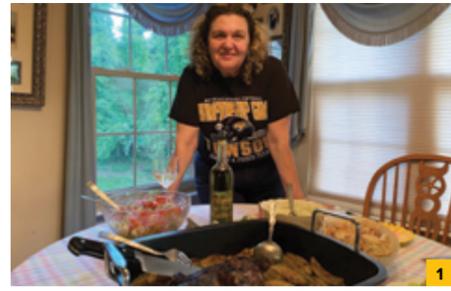
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4

SENIOR WEEK GRADUATE PORTRAITS: As part of Senior and Recent Graduate Week May 3–8, the Office of Alumni Relations and University Marketing & Communications sponsored several free, professional photo sessions for members of the classes of 2020 and 2021.

1. Folahanmi Ojo '21
2. Steffi Wilson '21
3. Kenneth Nolasco '21
4. Cherelle Matthews '21



1



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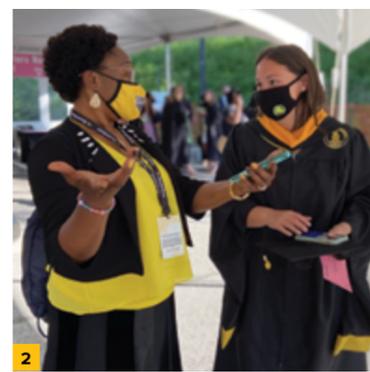
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OLIVE OIL HISTORY AND TASTING: More than 50 alumni and friends took part in a special online tasting and history lesson led by Konstantinos "Gus" Kosmakos '07, his mother Kalliopi (owner of Stefania Extra Virgin Olive Oil) and TU professor Jennifer Ballengee on May 26.

1. Kalliopi Kosmakos shares authentic Greek dishes she made using Stefania olive oil.
2. Rebecca Pfeifer '07 is ready to taste.
3. Ed '00 and Jacki Molen
4. Stefania Extra Virgin Olive Oil was shipped to participants ahead of the event.



1



2



3



4

2020 AND 2021 COMMENCEMENT VOLUNTEERS: Alumni stepped up in a big way May 17–21, volunteering at Commencement as greeters, ushers and robing assistants at 10 ceremonies over five days. The excitement was palpable, and we loved seeing so many enthusiastic Tigers on campus welcoming new alumni and their families.

1. Heather Kavanagh '97 and Michelle Damareck '97
2. Grace Alo '08, '21 assists a fellow College of Health Professions graduate in the robing area.
3. Matthew Neal '19
4. Samantha Lee '18



1



2



3



4

ALUMNI NIGHT AT BASIGNANI WINERY: More than 100 alumni and guests traveled to Sparks Glencoe, Maryland, on June 12 for a relaxing night filled with good food, great wine and even better company. Local band Ebb & Nova serenaded the crowd with a blend of indie rock and Americana as everyone enjoyed delicious artisan pizzas.

1. Stephanie Brain '15; Christopher Young '15, '17; and Matthew '15 and Danielle Hyde '15, '17
2. Standing: Bill and Linda Slempp, Tom Slempp '14 and Courtney Smith '12
Sitting: Laura Slempp '15; Ben Crull '17, '20; and Jessica Wolfe '20
3. Chelsea Wheeler '13 and Abasi Clinton
4. Kelly Freeman-Garrett '88 and Blair Freeman

Class Notes

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

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

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

1960s

RON BOONE '68

published the science fiction novel, *Planet XXY*. Boone worked for 40 years in the Baltimore County Public Schools, rising to executive director of federal and state programs before retiring in 2007. He lives in Timonium, Maryland, with his wife Jackie.

1970s

WILLIAM OWINGS '73

and his wife Leslie Kaplan published the third edition of their textbook, *American Public School Finance*. They also wrote a chapter entitled "Privatizing American public schools: Student and taxpayer impact" in the Oxford Encyclopedia of Educational Administration and presented a paper at the Oxford Education and Women's Leadership conference.

1980s

SCOTT RUSSELL '82

received a Master of Science, Educational Leadership, from Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia.

SAM POLAKOFF '86

will publish his latest novel, *Escaping Mercy*, on July 17. He specializes in writing thrillers with a hint of science fiction.



PAUL RYAN '87

recently published the eBook *Repair or Raise & Retain a Great Credit Score*. It provides coaching on how to improve and maintain good-to-great credit histories and scores. Ryan also has been a proud volunteer with alumni relations for several years.

MITCHELL S. PLATT '89

was elected the vice chairman of the Club Management Association of America Board of Directors at its 2021 World Conference and Club Business Expo, held virtually in March. He was first elected to the board in 2016. Platt has been serving as the general manager of Cosmos Club since 2013.

PHILIP POKORNY '89

retired in April after a 28-year career with the Baltimore County government. Pokorny had been employed since 2017 by the circuit court as the manager for criminal cases. Pokorny spent 24 years with the corrections department, most recently as the manager of the Community Corrections Unit.

1990s

CHUCK GATTON '91 was named GC8 Conference Swimming Coach of



the Year for the second consecutive year. This year the girls team he coaches at Crystal River High School in Florida was the district champions, while the boys were runners-up. (Last year the boys were district champions and the girls were runners-up.)

JENNIFER ROBERTS '92

was named JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s new chief executive of consumer banking. Roberts joined the bank in 1996 and most recently led the business banking group, where she oversaw the bank's role in distributing more than \$32 billion in small business loans through the federal Paycheck Protection Program.



RICHARD HOLLEY '96

completed the requirement for an Adult Basic Education (ABE) Post-Baccalaureate Certificate offered in partnership with Penn State's College of Education.

MELANIE UPRIGHT '96, '98

published *More Time to Lead: The Principal's Guide to Empowered Teachers, Successful Students and Satisfied Parents*. It addresses foundational skills educators need to effectively support

“A children’s book becomes magical when it expands the limits of a child’s reality... A magical story makes the absurd seem reasonable, and makes the impossible seem very possible.”

AMANDA COSTLEY '02



 Photo: Clyde Munroe

ASHLEY KUTCHER '20

Healing Harmonies

As the pandemic took hold across the U.S., many of Ashley Kutcher's nursing classmates graduated early to help on the frontlines. Kutcher, however, found another way to mend hearts and minds: writing and performing the aptly titled, "Love You From a Distance," one of the biggest music streaming hits of the last year.

By the time she graduated, Kutcher had attracted the attention of major record labels, walking away from TU with a Bachelor of Science in nursing and a contract with Darkroom/Interscope Records.

"When I was able to feel like I was helping more people with music than I was with nursing, I was like, 'This just seems like the career path I'm supposed to go toward,'" Kutcher says.

As a senior, she was taking remote classes, working as a

student nurse and wrapping up her nursing practicum. Yet the Baltimore native still made time to record and share her original music on social media. When a video she recorded sitting on her bathroom floor took off on TikTok, Kutcher released the official version on multiple streaming platforms.

"The next day, I woke up, and I was charting on iTunes," Kutcher recalls.

This spring she recorded her first single of 2021—"If I Could," which was inspired by the desire to take away the pain of someone suffering from cancer.

Kutcher is looking forward to sharing her music with more people soon, through a tour and her EP, which will be released later this year.

"I think my best songs are yet to come."



JAYNE ASHER ASTLE '62, PHYLLIS BALZER BEARDMORE '62 AND JOANN ASHER SCOTT '62

Three of a Kind

There are friends and then there are friends. Phyllis Balzer Beardmore and identical twins Jayne Asher Astle and JoAnn Asher Scott became buddies during high school. They were roommates at TU. They were in each other's weddings.

Today, more than six decades after they met, they're as close as ever.

In March, Jayne, who lives in Annapolis, and Phyllis, who resides in Severna Park, visited JoAnn at her home in Daytona Beach Shores, Florida.

"When we were walking on the beach, we said, 'What if we didn't have that great Towson experience?'" Beardmore says. "We felt that the school did a super job preparing us for our teaching careers and to be an integral part of our communities."

After long careers as teachers, the three women, octogenarians all, continue to work in education. The sisters tutor students, and Beardmore is a substitute teacher.

"Being in the classroom, I feel like I'm 21," she says. "I love the kids and the kids love me because I say, 'I'm here because I love learning and I love being with children.'"

Each fall, the three dress in costumes and compete in a Halloween 5K in Ocean City (pictured). Last year, their finishing spots were impressive.

"We came in first, second and third," Beardmore says. "There was no one else in our age group!"

struggling students in a complex educational landscape.



JACK S. MONELL '97 won the MLK Building the Dream Award. An associate professor and program coordinator of justice studies at Winston-Salem State University, Monell has been a spokesperson for social justice in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

2000s

DAMON MARRA'S '01 company Retirement Plan Consulting Group was named a NAPA Top D.C. Advisor Team.

AMANDA COSTLEY '02 is an attorney for the Department of Defense. On March 1, she and co-author Shante Willis released *Oakley and Ivan and the All-Nighter*, the first book in a new series. The book is an "innovative bedtime experience" that contains a song, dance and an overall lesson that reminds children that they need sleep.

STEFFANI HARRIS '02 released *Life Dosages*, a book of poetry, in May.



JULIE (NOVAK) KOSTIC'S '06 graphic design and marketing company JK Creative received a \$75,000 Innovation Award from the Avalon Park Group in Orlando, Florida.

JENA BURCHICK '11

Visual Activist

Jena Burchick recalls volunteering at the Maryland Film Festival in 2009 as an undergraduate in the electronic media and film program.

"I was carrying tickets for directors and guests, without any thought in my mind that I would ever be one of them," she says.

Now she is.

Her first feature-length documentary, *Mom & M*, was in the 2021 festival lineup. In the film, the Richard family explores the complexity of marriage—what happens when one partner comes out as transgender while caring for an ill child.

"I've always been interested in being an activist and ally for the LGBTQIA+ community, and I wanted to create something that helped me dive deeper into becoming a better ally through visual activism," says Burchick, an assistant professor of electronic media and film.

By embracing what she calls "collaborative filmmaking," Burchick empowered the Richards to tell their own story by incorporating short videos shot with their iPhones as well as childhood home videos they provided.

"It was very important to me to keep asking myself, 'How do I share the lens so it's not just my inherent bias as a cisgender person telling a transgender story?'" she says.

Burchick hopes viewers appreciate being invited into the Richards' living room. "Think about how much we could learn about the world if we were able to sit in each other's living rooms—understanding gender roles, family structure and what it means to choose your family."



Photo: Mark Burchick

In Memoriam

Alumni

Edna May Merson '45
March 16, 2021

Clara M. Shelley '45
Oct. 6, 2020

Ardelle P. (Phillips) Giordano '55
Dec. 28, 2020

Jerome Randolph Garitee '56
Sept. 19, 2020

Joan S. Janofsky '56
Dec. 6, 2020

Theresa Neas Margolis '57
Dec. 12, 2020

Vada A. (Sorflaten) Marks '57
March 3, 2021

Barbara D. Burnside '61
Nov. 18, 2020

Alan D. Williams '61
Sept. 9, 2020

Edna A. (Beck) Uttenreither '63
Oct. 6, 2020

Douglas C. Martin '65
Feb. 19, 2021

William G. Wise '65
Feb. 13, 2021

Myra F. (Dailey) Lunsford '66
April 9, 2021

Susan P. (Lynch) Laning '67
Dec. 2, 2020

Richard H. Arnold Jr. '68
Feb. 13, 2021

Joyce A. Brown '68
March 21, 2021

Dorothy B. (Baverman) Donner '69
March 24, 2021

Sandra E. (Steinke) Gamber '69
May 5, 2021

Ralph H. Jordan '70
Nov. 5, 2020

Lee S. Rose '70
Dec. 11, 2020

Jacque E. Bear '71
Feb. 24, 2021

Richard J. McPartland '71
Feb. 24, 2021

Joseph Anthony Pazourek Jr. '71
Oct. 8, 2020

Robert W. Praskievicz '71
March 26, 2020

Jack R. Sturgill Jr. '71
Oct. 29, 2020

Thomas E. Garrigan '72
Aug. 9, 2020

Patricia C. (Greene) Jenkins '72
Feb. 25, 2021

Fran Ober '72
April 28, 2021

Thaddeus M. Tadkowski '72
Aug. 6, 2020

Art Richard Walker '72
Oct. 7, 2020

Terry A. Whited '72
Dec. 21, 2020

Eva M. (Fogle) Gustafson '73
Feb. 17, 2021

John F. Haase '73
Feb. 12, 2021

James D. Koogle '73
Feb. 10, 2021

John Aloysius Rose '73
Oct. 24, 2020

Rosalyn S. Steinhorn '74
Oct. 15, 2020

Barbara K. (Kelly) Kline '76
Aug. 14, 2020

Rodger R. Mills '76
March 10, 2021

Nicholas A. Wesner '76
Jan. 29, 2021

Mary Lou Amerena '77
Dec. 5, 2020

Judith Bender '77
Feb. 7, 2021

Franklin C. Regan Jr. '77
Aug. 19, 2020

Gloria C. Savadow '77
Aug. 24, 2020

Jo Ann (Brocato) Wright '78
April 9, 2021

Susan R. Burns '79
Oct. 15, 2020

M. Kim Ward '79, '91
Aug. 7, 2020

David Rasmussen '81
April 4, 2021

Mary K. Rigby '81
Feb. 5, 2021

Gwendolyn Y. Artis '82
July 9, 2020

Jack Calvin Sigmon '82
Nov. 2, 2020

Barbara E. (Thornhill) Ellingson '84
Feb. 22, 2021

Dorothea J. (Jacober) McDonnell '84
March 25, 2021

Susan Proper '89
Oct. 20, 2020

Sally Davidson '92
March 2, 2021

Anne M. Seaton '93
April 23, 2021

Paul L. Hopp '94
April 8, 2021

Bradley Meredith Stewart '00
Sept. 9, 2020

Amy L. Hricik '03
April 22, 2021

Sarah A. Maraldo '13
Jan. 31, 2021

Aubrey Nicole Mitsch '14
Oct. 18, 2020

Jonathan M. Santora '14
May 4, 2021

Michael Patrick Zito '19
April 8, 2021

Sarah Elizabeth Fitzgerald '20
April 3, 2021

Faculty & Staff

Carolyn E. Foster
March 8, 2021

Mary L. Leeper
Jan. 24, 2021

Ray Riordan
April 24, 2021

“I learned a long time ago, that if one doesn’t speak out against social injustices, how can we expect to be a part of the solution? Growing up in public housing in Brooklyn, New York, during the 1980s sadly showed me about poverty, violence, drug abuse and institutional and systemic racism. I vowed that if I ever was in a position to help marginalized communities, I would use every bit of energy to ensure injustices are addressed.”

JACK MONELL '97

BRENDAN MCELROY '06 was named to *Northern Virginia* magazine’s 40 Under 40 List. In April, Franklin IQ, the company McElroy founded, was named a “Veteran Owned Business of the Year” by the American Business Awards.

2010s

STACY SCOTT '10 started a feng shui business aimed at helping women reconnect to themselves, using home as a tool for transformation.

AMANDA WELLS '10 was named Delaware School Psychologist of the Year for 2020–21.

EDWARD L. SLEDGE JR. '13 and his wife co-founded Sledge House Media, a publishing and media company. They also self-published a memoir, *The Story of Christina and I*, which was released in March. They live in Howard County, Maryland, with their two daughters.



ALEJANDRA LEIVA '15 AND NICOLE LEIVA

Sweet Success

On a rainy March day, the clear ring of a brass bell signals new customers, and an electronic ring of a cash register indicates another online sale for sisters Alejandra '15 and Nicole Leiva at their bakery, Dulceology.

Started primarily online when the sisters were undergraduates, the bakery has bloomed despite the COVID-19 pandemic, finding a home on South Charles Street in Baltimore’s Federal Hill neighborhood.

Opening during a pandemic meant less foot traffic than the sisters were hoping for, but online orders for the Leivas’ El Salvadoran, family-inspired treats played a big role over the last year.

Known for their lavishly decorated cakes, topped with homemade meringues, fresh fruit and edible gold,

Dulceology began with alfajores—a sandwich cookie traditionally filled with dulce de leche. The menu expanded to include gluten-free versions of the cookie and of a quesadilla—a rich, buttery quick bread—after Nicole discovered she had a gluten intolerance and was determined to keep making her favorite recipes.

Despite the global health crisis, the Leivas have found a community in their neighborhood and their customers.

“We’ve done so many gender reveals; we know the gender of some of our customers’ children before they know,” Alejandra says. “Especially during this pandemic, one of the things we have done is ship cookies nationwide, frequently with gift notes saying, ‘I hope you get better.’ We had that honor to spread joy through sweets.”

Rearview Mirror

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



ASK AN ARCHIVIST

Hey Felicity...

Q: What's one of your favorite pieces in the collection?

A: A few years ago, I asked two of our student staff members to do an inventory of oversized items. They found a watercolor that looked somewhat, but not exactly like, campus. After some research, we realized that it was part of a set of plans submitted by Douglas H. Thomas in his bid to become the architect for the campus when it moved to Towson from Baltimore. The watercolor dates to 1913, and it shows what was envisioned for a campus but did not come to fruition. After walking the land, it was determined by the state that it would be better to move the main classroom building, now known as Stephens Hall, to the top of the hill and build dormitories in line, rather than as a quad.

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

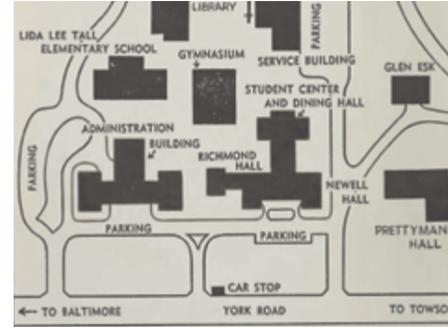
WHAT'S NEW

Small donations make a big impact

Watching students connect with historical items donated by our alumni is one of the most satisfying parts of our work. This year, Rosita Jackson Smith '75 sent us a couple items, one of which was this pin she had as a member of the Black Student Association. We are grateful for her contribution and are looking forward to sharing it with our students. If you have something that you think might be of interest, please email us at scua@towson.edu.



PAST



1959

TU's campus was originally 70 acres that stretched from York Road west toward what is now Osler Drive. This proved to be enough space for campus growth for almost the first 50 years that the school was at Towson. But the Baby Boom generation and the expansion in campus programming meant more space was needed. By 1959, the State Teachers College at Towson had acquired a few more acres of land, bringing its total campus footprint to just about 100 acres.



1960

Throughout the 1960s the campus would acquire parcels of land a score of acres at a time from Sheppard-Pratt Hospital. TU acquired enough acreage to more than triple our original footprint by 1973. This led to a building boom on campus.



1977

Five new buildings opened on campus in 1977. Today, TU's campus occupies 329 acres.

PRESENT

On My Playlist

HENRY MICHAELS, CLASS OF 2014

As director of audience experience and engagement at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California, Henry Michaels pretty much eats, breathes and sleeps music. The academy is one of the country's premier summer schools and festivals for classical musicians ages 18 to 35. Every year since 1947, it's put on an eight-week summer school and festival during which musicians live on site, take lessons and perform. His job is "making sure every audience member has a great experience from the moment they buy a ticket through the event until they're gone." We're quite sure that you'll enjoy his musical picks.



In 2014...

Michaels grew up in North Carolina, where he developed his love for music in high school. He earned his master's degree in music and trombone performance. Here are the albums—and one song—he was listening to during his days at TU.



"Summer, Highland Falls" by Billy Joel

When I was at Towson, I drove home one weekend to see Billy Joel live. This song was new to me. I'm drawn to catchy songs with sad lyrics, and I was really struck by it. A lot of time on the way back I was listening to it on repeat.



Antifogmatic by Punch Brothers

Like everything the Punch Brothers do, it's really eclectic. They are genre-bending musicians in a lot of ways. There's some jazz influence, some classical, some pop, but they're technically a bluegrass band.



The Goat Rodeo Sessions by Yo-Yo Ma, Stuart Duncan, Edgar Meyer and Chris Thile

It's so interesting to hear something that can sound so much like bluegrass or folk but with the classical cello chops of a Yo-Yo Ma thrown in.



Live in London by Regina Spektor

There's something so pure about a live album. Her voice is so beautiful, and there's the off-the-cuff stuff that happens in a live album, the pauses and changes you don't expect.

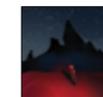
In 2021...

The 32-year-old Michaels writes the academy's Project Resonance blog, and though he only plays his trombone for personal pleasure now, music is still very important to him. "Working at a music institution, listening to music, writing about music, talking about music are all big parts of my daily life."



I and Love and You by the Avett Brothers

It's a little bit funny that as a native North Carolinian who grew up not that far from where the Avett Brothers are from, they weren't really on my radar until I moved to California. Their music deals a lot with poignant topics but with catchy rock, pop and folk music.



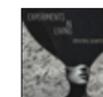
Punisher by Phoebe Bridgers

There's something about these deep, very personal lyrics that are associated with such infectious tunes.



The Phosphorescent Blues by Punch Brothers

The music is sad but kind of hopeful. The technical playing with them is just always so good.



Experiments in Living by Spektral Quartet

The album includes string quartet music from as early as the 19th century and as recently as now. There's a twist to it, though: They intend the album be listened to in a random order. If you buy a physical copy, they include a set of specially made tarot cards that you can shuffle to create the order. You can also do that online through their website.

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.



♥ MEGAN'S STORY

Megan Eller '05

I don't know how I met him. We even had a conversation trying to figure it out. But I think I met him through my two friends Tia and Fabiana when I transferred to Towson in spring 2001. He had a girlfriend, and I started dating his friend, Steve. I graduated in 2005, and we stayed friends through mutual friends.

I hate saying it, but Facebook is an integral part of our relationship. He joined the Navy in 2009. In 2010, I went to southern California for vacation, and he saw on Facebook I was there, so he came up from San Diego for brunch. And then we just kept talking. Then we did the long-distance relationship thing, and he proposed on Veterans Day 2011. We were married the following December.

It was a big wedding. I think the guest list was like 200 and almost everyone RSVP'd yes. The church we got married in in Baltimore was very *Sound of Music*. The reception was the 1840s Ballroom

in Baltimore, which was beautiful. It was completely over the top. The cocktail hour was on the first floor and then the third floor was the reception.

We've moved eight times since we got married. Neil was at his training school in Rhode Island, so [our daughter] Lauren was born there the day before Thanksgiving 2013. Max was born in Italy. Two months after we received orders to South Korea

last year, we found out we were pregnant with Emma. All three of our kids were born on different continents. Oddly enough, so were all three of our dogs: We got Spartacus in California, Laila in Italy and Sunny showed up a few days after Emma.

The moves don't bother me because it's fun to experience everything. And we do get wanderlust. Lauren has been to nine countries. Poor Max has only been to two. The scariest thing for me is like, "When he retires, where are we going to go forever? Am I going to be able to live somewhere forever?"

♥ NEIL'S STORY

Neil Eller

After Towson, I was living in Bel Air and looking for a job. I met up with a Navy recruiter, took the ASVAB test and scored really high. When I was in San Diego, I installed and maintained the [communications] equipment. I'd been chasing Megan for years at that point. I'd, in my opinion, asked her out on a couple of dates. She thought we were just hanging out. I guess I wasn't clear in my wooing methods.

She was visiting about an hour north of San Diego. I drove up, and I almost left because I couldn't find a parking spot. So she came outside of the restaurant and met me and then we found a parking spot right away.

When I proposed, I won tickets to the Carrier Classic, an NCAA men's basketball tournament on top of the aircraft carrier the U.S.S. Carl Vinson. [President] Obama was going to be there. We were in our fancy uniforms, so I'd be all dressed up, and she wouldn't be suspicious.



I was supposed to move to Korea in March 2020. Because of COVID, the military shut down all travel.

But it came out two days before I was supposed to leave. Our house was sold, our household belongings were all packed up, all on the way to the boat to Korea. Couldn't stop it, couldn't turn it around. We had

to make it work with suitcases for three months. We packed for what could be three weeks and had to turn it into three months. You realize, "We don't have pots and pans anymore. We don't have silverware anymore." I had five shirts. Couches and TVs are one thing, but it's really the little stuff.

We grow every time we move. Is it a pain? Yeah, but once I'm somewhere for two years, I start itching like, "OK, let's go somewhere else." And I've lucked out. I've had all good duty stations. There's no place I've been to I haven't liked.

Philanthropy



TU Foundation Awards Grants

Toward More-Effective Vaccines, with an Emphasis Against SARS-CoV-2

The grant-funded project seeks to develop a vaccine—through original faculty research supported by undergraduate and graduate students—that provides effective and lasting immunity. "Student researchers will gain first-hand experience in research methodology and authentic research that will encourage them to seek advanced degrees in the biomedical sciences," biology professor Barry Margulies says.

Black Theatre Troupe

The grant will offer culturally relevant theatre and production opportunities to Black students and the larger TU community through workshops with guest artists with a lens on the Black world. "This project seeks to create unity in diversity through arts education," assistant professor Mukwae Wabei Siyolwe says.

Evidence Against Intolerance: A Virtual Symposium on Teaching the Holocaust in the Digital Disinformation Era

The virtual symposium will feature global Holocaust education and information literacy education experts and will provide funding to select symposium participants for lesson plan development. "The symposium will strengthen Towson University's position as a local, regional and global leader in the field of Holocaust education," says Joyce Garczynski, assistant university librarian for development and communication.

Advancing Underrepresented Groups in Authentic STEM Research

Funding will expand STEM internships and stipends for research on ultrasonic echolocation, biomechanics of gliding and night color vision exhibited by sugar gliders. "If we are able to foster learning through paid research, we can recruit,

retain and train students in authentic research," says Harald Beck, a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences.

TU Physics & Astronomy Teaching Community

The grant supports underrepresented students earning physics degrees and creates a student–faculty teaching community that builds success in bachelor's and master's physics degree programs. "Our physics program has grown and thrived in recent years, but there is an urgent need to increase the number of underrepresented minority students among our successful graduates," physics professor Jennifer E. Scott says.

TU Big Give Equals Big Results

Giving records were broken once again this year during the third-annual TU Big Give on April 21. With 1,619 gifts totaling \$144,000, support for 148 key projects—in all seven colleges, Albert S. Cook Library, athletics, the TU Student Emergency Fund, BTU-Partnerships for Greater Baltimore, student affairs and the Office of Inclusion & Institutional Equity—was made possible.

"Without a doubt, this shows us that when we come together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish," says Nky McGinnis, director of the annual campaign. "I am so proud to be a Tiger."

Philanthropic giving has been gaining momentum at TU over the past year. A series of large gifts helped the university raise more than \$14.5 million in fiscal year 2021.

"I am truly inspired by the results of the TU Big Give and the enthusiasm it creates around philanthropy," says Brian DeFilippis, vice president of university advancement. "This year, TU Big Give created significant momentum for the public launch of our historic RISE campaign, which will profoundly transform our university."

3 Ways To Make a Gift



WWW.TOWSON.EDU/
GIVING



USING PRE-PAID
ENVELOPE ON PAGE 33



TOLL FREE
1-866-301-3375

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



♥ GIVING

Record Gift to College of Health Professions

A \$1.32 million gift to the College of Health Professions (CHP) will create scholarships for 10 nursing students each year. It is the largest gift to the CHP in Towson University's history.

Alena and David Schwaber, who have no prior relationship with TU, say the way nurses have been working during the COVID-19 pandemic inspired them to give. "Nursing is a very noble field," David says. The annual scholarships will be awarded to students who demonstrate compelling need, based on personal or financial hardship. They are intended to cover the cost of in-state tuition.

"The Schwabers' gift is a clear demonstration of faith in Towson University as an anchor institution for greater Baltimore and as a leading provider of bedside nurses in Maryland," President Kim Schatzel says.

TU is the largest provider of health care workers in Maryland, and the recently announced plans for a new 240,000-square-foot, \$175 million CHP building represent a significant investment in TU's leadership in the health professions.

CHP Dean Lisa Plowfield says the gift is "a mark of confidence and trust in nurses and our need for more well-educated and well-prepared nurses."

The first awards will be made available for the fall 2021 term.

♥ DONOR PROFILE

Lauren Cahalan '18

A class on international relations and civic engagement piqued Lauren Cahalan's interest about the way the world works, and a project on the International Monetary Fund prompted her to pursue concurrent degrees in economics and political science. Ultimately, it was the research experiences and the faculty mentors who helped Cahalan that moved her to support the TU-Baltimore County Public Schools Model UN Program.

HOW DID FACULTY MENTORS SHAPE YOUR EXPERIENCE AT TU?

Mentors played a huge part in my success at TU. My work with Dr. Seth Gitter in economics and the pep talks from Dr. Alison McCartney in political science and the Honors College made a significant difference in my life. They helped me think about my future.

WHY WAS IT IMPORTANT TO GIVE BACK TO TU JUST TWO YEARS AFTER GRADUATING?

My mentors moved me to give back. I decided to give to Dr. McCartney's TU-BCPS Model UN Program so it would be completely free for 200-plus students. The program offers students a way to learn about the world around them with TU students as teachers and coaches.

WHAT WOULD YOU TELL FELLOW YOUNG ALUMNI ABOUT GIVING BACK?

The first thing many recent TU graduates talk about is the professors who helped them. Giving back to the community that helped us in tangible ways is important, and it is a privilege. Being civically engaged in the community makes you think about how to help those who come after you.





OUR TOWN

Oriole Park at Camden Yards

Steve Melewski '83 was a teenager when he realized he wasn't going to play for his beloved Baltimore Orioles. So he decided that reporting about the team was the next best thing. Melewski has covered the club since the late 1990s, the last 13 as a beat writer for the Mid-Atlantic Sports Network (MASN). Before the pandemic, that meant his office was the press box at the ballpark. "It's a labor of love," he says. "Even on a bad day I look out and go, 'Wow, Camden Yards.' It doesn't get old looking at that."

Towson University is on the **RISE**

We are defining what it means to be a university with impact in the 21st century. In this historic \$100 million campaign, providing opportunity for our students is at the heart of our vision for TU's future.

Gifts to the TU RISE Campaign:

- Support students and expand TU's rich legacy of student-centered education
- Support faculty and attract and empower scholar-leaders in their fields
- Support academic innovation and new program development, which expands and modernizes curriculum
- Support community-based programming and engagement and reinforce TU's position as an anchor institution and an economic driver for the region and beyond
- Support building a world-class campus for excellence in teaching, research and collaborative learning

We ask every member of the TU community to help us fulfill our promise for the future.

**Join us. RISE with us.
For TU and for our future.**

"As one of the crown jewels of the University System of Maryland, this campaign is crucial to ensuring the continued rise of Towson University."

**— JOHN SCHUERHOLZ,
HONORARY CO-CHAIR,
RISE CAMPAIGN**



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HOMECOMING

2021

SAVE THE DATE

Towson Tigers **vs.** University of Rhode Island Rams

We are still finalizing plans for Homecoming 2021, but we cannot wait to celebrate with you in person on **Saturday, Oct. 16.**

Mark your calendar now, and we will share more information as it becomes available at alumni.towson.edu/homecoming.

