“Ohio has been good to me,” says Felix Kumah-Abiwiu, PhD, assistant professor of Pan-African studies, who grew up in Ghana and found a home at Kent State. “My story has been a roller coaster, but you have opportunity here.” SEE PAGE 12
On the cover: Pan-African studies professor Felix Kumah-Abiwu, PhD, wears a Ghanaian smock from his native country—its edges swirl in a circle when performing the traditional damba dance. For more on his story and those of other members of our international community, see page 12.

Cover photo: Melissa Olson

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08 Distinctive Design
We celebrated the grand opening of the Center for Architecture and Environmental Design this fall. See this iconic new addition to the Kent Campus.

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22 Plugged In
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By Laura Billings Coleman

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STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS
Bob Christy ’95
Jeff Gildersleeve ’97
Melissa Olson

STAFF CONTRIBUTORS
David Carducci
Emily Morris
Ashley Whaley ’06, MEd ’12
Jason Zehner ’10

Take Note

At her State of the University address in October, President Beverly Warren expressed her vision for a reimagined public research university, where “the priorities for academic excellence, access and affordability not only coexist but merge as critical elements of a high-quality, distinctive learning environment.” She named this vision The Kent State Promise.

This redesigned issue of the university magazine demonstrates some of the tangible ways Kent State is delivering on that promise, guided by the university’s six-year plan, A Strategic Roadmap to a Distinctive Kent State (strategicroadmap.kent.edu).

In her new column, President Warren points to Kent State’s legacy of cultivating civil discourse and meaningful voice, more important today than ever.

The feature highlighting educational technology professor Richard Ferdig offers valuable insights into how digital tools can help us understand the world while also advancing the university’s commitment to community-engaged research.

A series of photographic portraits and brief stories introduces us to a dozen individuals who represent Kent State’s increasingly diverse community and its global competitiveness priority.

The profile of Anita Bradley ’95 and her fight to transform lives in the face of addiction illustrates how Kent State alumni are bettering our society.

These stories, among others, exemplify the promise of Kent State University. Thank you for the role you play in ensuring this is a promise kept.

Read Kent State Magazine online at www.kent.edu/magazine. To comment or change an address, please email magazine@kent.edu or call 330-672-2727.

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One of the most memorable moments of Homecoming 2016 wasn’t the heartbreaking last-minute loss to The University of Akron, but the heartwarming love story that shared a “Kiss on the K.” Since the Homecoming tradition began in 2001, Kent State couples from across the country have come together on a painted “K” at Risman Plaza for a smooth when the library bells ring at 12:30 p.m.

Charles and Nora Kegley (Classes of 1956 and 1960) first met at a Florida beach during spring break and discovered they both attended Kent State. The couple, pictured above, recently celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary. They have participated in the “Kiss on the K” since it began; this year as an honorary couple. “It’s fun,” says Nora Kegley. “We love being a part of it and seeing the other couples.”

See more Homecoming highlights at www.ksualumni.org/homecoming.

On Meaningful Voice

As I engage with the university community, some of the most hopeful comments have come from undergraduate students—many of whom are not yet 20 years old. Here’s what I’ve learned from them: Don’t let the earbuds fool you. Students are not checking out. They are checking in—selectively—with the influences and content that fuel their imagination. The students who engage freely with me are environmentally and socially conscious and also politically astute. They are quick to lead a hand or to lead an initiative. Today’s college students care about the future and know they must be its architects.

They seek meaning. In the past four years, the numbers of our students choosing a minor course of study in addition to the primary academic major has nearly doubled. While some argue that students are doing this to improve their marketability, I think it also reflects their ingenuity and awareness that the problems of the future will require investigation and collaboration across disciplines.

The future is in compassionate hands. Meaningful voice elevates discourse and calls the world to conversations that raise both solutions and hope. I have come across that kind of voice in the words of our students, as I did when then freshman Elizabeth Schmidt closed an investigation and collaboration across disciplines.

I believe this generation of college students is turning a mirror on the world and calling it to action. They continue to demonstrate the commitment and capacity to engage with a meaningful voice, to collaborate across traditional boundaries and to bring about transformational, difference-making change.

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**Cool Course**

**Course number:** GEOG 41195–001  
**Title:** Horror Films and Environmental Geography  
**Instructor:** Esramiana Wither, PhD, associate professor of geography  
**Description:** This three-credit-hour course examines environmental philosophies and social awareness of environmental issues through the sci-fi and horror film genres. Starting with 1954 cult classic Them! and concluding with 2009 sci-fi film The Road, we trace how these films reflect the concerns of the society in which they emerged. 1950s–80s environmental horror films centered around a single issue (nuclear radiation, pollution, consumerism), but modern films tend to be more apocalyptic. In addition to mainstream films and scientific articles, we watch and discuss short, independent films from the futurestates.tv interactive web series.  
**Films:** Some combination of The Guares, Guares, There!, Wall E, Frogs, Prophecy, Monic, Children of Men, The Road  
**Readings:** Have included Rachel Carson, William Baxter, Theo Colburn et al. and Jared Diamond  
**Purpose:** Connect pop culture to our understanding of the environment. The films prosce a reaction that facilitates group interaction and seminar-style discussion.  
**Outcome:** Understanding and discussing various points of view allows students to assess their own values and better understand the complexities of environmental issues.

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**KENT STATE MAGAZINE**

**NUMBERS**

**Kent Campus record-setting freshman class**

“"We are delighted that the remarkable Class of 2020 is not only the largest and most academically talented in the history of the university, but is also more diverse,” says President Beverly Warren.

4,335 New freshmen  
3.39 Average GPA  
23.1 Average ACT  
737 Underrepresented  
96 international

---

**NUMBERS**

**2017 Top-Tier Ranking**

Kent State is the only public university in Northeast Ohio ranked in the first tier of the Best National Universities list by U.S. News & World Report, who released their 2017 edition of Best Colleges on September 13, 2016.

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**Flash FORWARD**

**Going Places**

The first semester at college is a big adjustment for most students—living independently, balancing studies and social life, missing family and friends.

Fifteen first-year students in Kent State’s Honors College are also finding their way around a foreign country, learning a new language and dealing with cultural differences. As the first incoming freshmen group to study in Florence, Italy, the “Florence 15” welcome the challenge.

“‘I still am figuring out how to balance the many factors of my life,’ writes Emma Windham (Hartville, Ohio). ‘But I can’t imagine being in a better place as I learn and grow in this new stage.’”

The students take three required classes in Italian language, art, culture and identity, as well as two others based on their interests and academic goals.

Although Kent State has been educating students in Florence for more than 40 years, “few universities send freshman abroad,” says Aaron Hanlin, PhD ‘95, coordinator of admissions and scholarship for Kent State’s Honors College. “This program adds to the distinctiveness of Kent State University and demonstrates the boldness of our students.”

Even having travel plans go awry—like missing their connecting train back to Florence after a weekend away—are teachable moments. “It forced our group to figure things out when everything goes wrong,” Windham writes. “We had to be independent and go with the flow!”

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On Their Way

Before fall semester began, 275 students attended Kupita/Transiciones, a four-day orientation that has been hosted by the Student Multicultural Center since 1988. The program helps African-American, Latino-American and Native-American first-year and transfer students transition to Kent State, with activities that introduce educational, cultural and social aspects of the university.

Michael Daniels, the center’s program coordinator, says this experience helps students develop a greater sense of their cultural identity and that of others. “I felt a sense of belonging once I went through Kupita,” says Emanuak Jackson, a junior public relations major who now volunteers as a student mentor. “It was a deciding factor for me to stay at Kent State.”

After participating in Kupita (which translates to “passing” in Swahili), Natalia Roman, a senior applied communication major, got involved with diversity initiatives on campus. That led to an internship with the Student Multicultural Center—fulfilling a graduation requirement. “I tell students to stay open, meet a lot of people and get involved as much as possible.”

—Lauren Rathmell’17

During Kupita/Transiciones, students can participate in a talent show, attend a cultural festival, discover student organizations, learn about advising appointments and get to know people from other cultures on campus.

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**News Flashes**

From research to real world: Kent State experts noted in the media

**KICK OFF YOUR HEELS TO AVOID PAIN.**

“Telling women to stop wearing heels is akin to telling smokers to quit,” says Duane J. Ehredt, Jr., DPM, assistant professor at Kent State’s College of Podiatric Medicine. Instead, he advises moderation and suggests wearing heels every other day. He also stresses the importance of stretching your calf muscles frequently and avoiding heels over two inches.”

—“Killer heels, more pain than they’re worth?” WNYC.com, February 4, 2016

**LOSE WEIGHT TO GAIN BRAIN FUNCTION.**

“Losing weight, even through surgery, might improve your memory and cognitive functioning,” Researchers at Kent State University tested the memories of 150 overweight people before they underwent gastric bypass surgery. Twelve weeks after surgery, those who had the operation showed improvements in memory.”

—“‘Weight is bad for the brain.’” Daily News, May 11, 2016

**MEDITATE TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE.**

“Researchers from Kent State found that people who did 2 ½ hours of mindfulness meditation every week (or about 20 minutes a day) for two months lowered their systolic blood pressure by 4.8 mmHg and their diastolic blood pressure by 1.9 mmHg. You don’t have to sit cross-legged on the floor mumuring ‘omoh. Instead, pay attention to your body and immediate surroundings, and your mind will declutter on its own.”

—“How too much adrenaline wreaks havoc on your body.” Men’s Health.com, July 7, 2016

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**Campus Quote**

Who you decide to fight for and how you make your degree matter, that’s going to be your legacy. . . . The truth is, you will be remembered and defined by how you fought for others.”

WES MOORE, youth advocate and author of The Work: My Search for a Life That Matters, the Kent State University 2016 common reading book, and keynote speaker, Class of 2020 Convocation, August 28, 2016.

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Comfort Food

Many college students miss their family’s home-cooked meals. So for nearly nine years, through Kent State’s innovative “Taste of Home” program, Dining Services has invited students and family members to submit favorite recipes that Kent State’s executive chefs may feature in one of the dining halls on campus to make the menus more like home.

This year for Parents and Families Weekend, Dining Services facilitated a Taste of Home contest, and Kent State parent Debbie McKinney won for her turkey chili recipe—a favorite of her daughter Dana, a first-year photo illustration major.

“The crockpot recipe makes a large batch, so we keep it in smaller containers in the freezer, ready to thaw, heat and enjoy anytime,” wrote McKinney in her submission. “Since it’s not spicy and because I use black beans instead of red beans, it doesn’t create indigestion, as some chili recipes do.”

McKinney won two tickets to the Student Affairs logo for the weekend’s football game, and her chili was served there and at the Eastway Café.

Coffee with a Conscience

Now the Kent State community can enjoy gourmet coffee while helping small-scale farmers in East Africa. As the first university in America to partner with Sweet Unity Farms—a Tanzanian-based sustainable coffee company—Kent State supports supplier diversity and assures consumers that cash spent on this coffee goes to a good cause.

“All the product comes from small, family-owned farms organized as cooperatives,” says David Robinson, who moved to Tanzania in 1984, established a coffee farm and cooperative, and then founded Up-Country International Products to market the coffee. His company pays higher than fair trade prices through direct trade agreements and shares profits with cooperative members. It also provides educational programs, health assistance and help with other development projects.

Bags of 100 percent Arabica coffee beans are sold at three locations on the Kent Campus, and the coffee is brewed and sold at Mugo Café in Oscar Ritchie Hall. Robinson, son of baseball legend Jackie Robinson, hopes to expand to other colleges: “Students are the consumers who are going to embrace our brand.”

Going Gluten-Free

This fall, Kent State became the first university in the country to establish an entirely gluten-free dining hall.

An estimated 3 million Americans suffer from celiac disease, an inherited autoimmune disorder that damages the small intestine when gluten is ingested.

(Turns out McKinney is no stranger to serving a crowd—she owns Time to Spare, a corporate and nonprofit event planning company—SUSAN HAZEL RICH)

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(‘Taste of Home’ contestant breaks ground with gluten-free menu)

High-Flyer

William Auld helps people soar—usually several feet above a stage. When performers are hoisted into the air in front of a live audience, Auld is often working the wire to ensure the production runs safely and smoothly.

An associate professor of theatre at Kent State University at Tuscarawas, where he also helps run the 110-seat Performing Arts Center, Auld is formally trained in “performer rigging”—how to engineer, rig, and choreograph flying people on wires for live events.

One of only a few dozen people in the world certified in rigging theatres and arenas and in training others, he’s worked all over the world flying performers in Europe, Asia, Central America and the Middle East.

Auld splits his time between teaching and traveling internationally as a flying director for Vertigo Flying Effects, a Chicago-based company that specializes in “wire work” for live entertainment, movies and videos. He’s also on national committees developing safety standards for flying and rigging in North America and Europe.

On local jobs and when touring productions come to the area, he often arranges for Kent State students to assist him or to shadow industry professionals. His hands-on mentoring is helping the next generation of theatre technicians learn the highest safety standards. We asked this live wire to tell us more about his career behind the scenes.

I was drawn to wire work after I saw a Jackie Chan movie on TV in 1989. I thought, I want to do that for a living. Knowing nothing about Hong Kong, speaking Chinese, or wire work, it was a bit of a process to get there, but eventually I secured a job with ABA Productions in Hong Kong and toured Asia for a few years with a production of Peter Pan.

Between undergrad and grad school, I jumped out of airplanes. To help pay for my education I joined the military as a paratrooper with Special Operations (Airborne). As an instructor and squad leader, I realized I enjoyed mentoring people.

About half the characters I fly are Jesus and angels. They ascend and descend in droves around Christmas and Easter in religious dramas at churches. This year, the bulk of my work was in high schools or community theaters with “stock shows” like Peter Pan, Mary Poppins and The Wizard of Oz.

You can make a living in the theatre industry. I’m not just training students for what’s happening now, though. I’m trying to prepare them for five years into the future.

Teaching is the best of both worlds. We can give students real-world experience and at the same time, I can pass on some of what I do to the next generation. It’s a cool way to earn a living.

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View a video of Auld at kent.edu/magazine/Auld.
Pass by the Kent Campus, especially at night, and you can’t help but be drawn to its newest addition, the Center for Architecture and Environmental Design. Seen as a gateway to campus, its glass walls glow from within, inviting viewers to glimpse the activity going on inside.

The building, part of the Foundations of Excellence initiative, opened this fall with a celebration that culminated years of planning under the leadership of Douglas Steidl, who recently retired as dean of the College of Architecture and Environmental Design.


The four-story, 110,191 square-foot building brings together programs that were once scattered across campus, including architecture, urban design, architecture and environmental design, interior design, architectural studies, landscape architecture and health care facilities design. An expansive, three-level studio loft encourages collaboration across disciplines.

The $47.8 million building also includes a multipurpose lecture hall, materials library, café, gallery, studio critique spaces, classrooms, offices, maker spaces and labs for digital fabrication, lighting and specialized research.
Far left: The building’s north facade faces the Lefton Esplanade, which links the campus with the city of Kent. For visitors approaching from downtown Kent, the building sits at the entrance to the campus and gives a strong first impression of the university.

Left: Students study in a light-filled space on the first floor. Glass walls optimize daylight and overlook the immediate neighborhood.

Far left: A cascading stair along the north facade connects three levels of studio space, allows a light-filled view of student work and encourages interaction among students from different disciplines.

Left: Glass-enclosed critique spaces give everyone an opportunity to observe student presentations.

“We designed this building to be a place of continuous connection between design, research and invention,” says architect Marion Weiss, who attended the opening with Michael Manfredi, cofounder of Weiss/Manfredi. In addition to their practice, both teach architecture. “We have observed that students learn better in collaborative environments,” Weiss says.

“Studying in this building for four years will provide students with a slow infusion, a saturation of senses that will become a part of each student’s design sensibility and standard of reference,” says new dean Mark Mistur, who notes the building is being acknowledged for design excellence internationally.

It recently was featured with other noteworthy arts-related projects in an article in the Art & Design section of The New York Times on Sunday, September 18th.

“Our Board of Trustees saw the vision for 21st century learning facilities and the fact that our students deserve to have a learning environment equal to the talent they bring to our campus,” says President Beverly Warren. “We have students studying in this building who will be the iconic leaders of tomorrow.”

Going Platinum

On track to be a USGBC LEED Platinum Building, the new Center for Architecture and Environmental Design will be one of the largest buildings in the state of Ohio with the highest LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating.

The facility’s energy-saving elements include:

- **Low-E coatings** (three types of glazing) applied to the 26,000 square feet of exterior glass to improve solar and thermal performance
- **Glass curtain walls** to optimize daylight and reduce the need for interior artificial light sources
- **Low-VOC paints and minimal off-gassing** interior materials to keep indoor air clean
- **High energy-efficient LED lighting** with energy saving controls
- **25,000 square feet of radiant flooring**
- **Partial green roof** (18,000 sq. ft. planted with sedum) to capture rainwater
- **15,000-gallon gray tank** that recycles rainwater for irrigation and flushing bathroom fixtures
- **Geothermal heating and cooling** that is 300 percent more efficient than standard systems

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Halim El-Dabh, PhD
University Professor Emeritus, Composer
Born & raised: Cairo, Egypt

gn story: I was the youngest of nine children, and my father had a lot of farms. I used to get scrap metal from the farm and set it up in the wind so it would make noise to keep beetles from damaging the crops. That’s where my interest in sound and noise came from. At age 11, my older brother Bushra took me to King Fouad’s National Conference on Arabic Music in 1932, and I was introduced to lead musicians and composers of the world. They inspired me to become a musician.

Transformative experience: I graduated with a degree in agricultural science and traveled across Egypt helping with development in the villages. I was exposed to traditional music and dance. I also joined a conservatory of music. In 1949, I was invited by All Saints Cathedral in Cairo to perform some of my piano compositions, including “It is Dark and Damp on the Front.” During the war between Palestine and Israel, I wrote the piece because I felt the real war was inside us. I was shy and didn’t want to perform, because they only played European classics in that cathedral. But my friends dragged me there, and I played. The audience gave me an ovation, and I was so shocked and pleased my heart felt like it was flying above me. Egyptian, French and British newspapers proclaimed me an international composer. I couldn’t believe it! Overnight my life changed—and I received invitations to study and perform in the United States and elsewhere.

El-Dabh is a pioneer of electronic music, and he came to Kent State in 1969 to teach ethnomusicology. This October, the Martha Graham Dance Company performed a special revival of Act II of “Clytemnestra” at Kent State to honor El-Dabh and his celebrated 1958 musical collaboration with legendary dancer Martha Graham. See a video on the making of the dance at www.kent.edu/magazine/InternationalVoices.
Abdullah Samarin
Sophomore, College of Architecture and Environmental Design; Calligraphy Artist

Born & raised: Medina, Saudi Arabia

Origin story: Growing up in a city where everyone places value on how you treat others and how you can benefit your community taught me to always have a positive outlook on life and look for ways to make it better. Creating buildings that will benefit others is a way I can do this.

Transformative experience: In Medina, there are many magnificent buildings that I experienced in my everyday life. Two years later, the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act, making it finally legal to marry my partner, Jessica. I know there has been a long and hard struggle for equal rights in America, but I am so proud of my adopted home for recognizing my love and my family.

Yu (Leo) Lei, MFA ’16
Assistant Technical Director / Design Tech Faculty, Santa Fe University of Art and Design, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Born & raised: Born in Hunan Province, China. Raised in Henan Province, China, and Singapore.

Origin Story: Growing up in central China, I learned to speak Mandarin without any accent. I spent almost every summer back in south central China, and that trained my ear to understand and speak another dialect. This prepared me to be an actor and helped me perform well at the audition to get in a performing arts school (Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts) in Singapore.

Transformative experience: I love the arts, and I also love science and technology. When I was in college, I explored every aspect of theatre, not just acting, and I worked with many theatre companies in Singapore in different roles: actor, stage manager, technician and designer. After a few years, I fell in love with lighting design—it’s the perfect combination of arts and science. I came to Kent State University to pursue my MFA in lighting design, and I enjoyed every moment!

Lei recently designed the lighting for the fall student musical, Company, at the Santa Fe University of Art and Design. (Photo by Xu Wei Vision Studio)
Nahuel Alfredo Gorostiza

Sophomore, School of Digital Sciences; Youth Ambassador of Argentina to the United Nations


Origin story: I grew up in a middle-class family in the outskirts of a big city. I attended a private school five minutes from my house and played rugby. But I felt it wasn’t enough for me, and I wanted to meet new people. When I was 15, I decided to commute 90 minutes to a public technical high school to study computer science. I believe that big changes bring big opportunities.

Transformative experience: In 2012 the government had some issues with public high schools, and 15 students from the student union of my new high school blocked the entrance and stopped classes for 95 days. Every day of class we lost, we would have to make up. So I went with a group of students to the secretary of education for the city and told him we wanted to have classes again. They gave us a lawyer and some resources; classes resumed the next day. I was elected president of the student union and kept in touch with the secretary of education. He donated paint and new computers for the school, and we did the painting and set up the computer labs. The school looks brand new. That experience got me involved in politics as a means of making positive change.

Gorostiza worked in the presidential campaign of the current president of Argentina, Mauricio Macri. As youth ambassador of Argentina to the United Nations, he is involved in a UN project setting world goals for sustainability to be achieved before 2030.

Kunwar Ujjwal Mehra

Graduate Student, College of Business Administration; Graduate Assistant, Department of Management and Information Systems

Born & raised: Amritsar, India

Origin Story: Since age six, I grew up basically all over India, as I used to travel frequently for roller-skating and chess tournaments. There are a lot of different cultures in India, so I learned to communicate with different types of people. When I came to the United States, it wasn’t a huge culture shock, it was just one more culture to learn.

Transformative experience: When I was 15 years old, the world economy melted down in a number of days. The markets plummeted in India, too—not as much as in the United States, but it did affect things. I’m from a business family, and we were talking about it every day. It intrigued me how the failure of one system of one economy could affect the world in such a huge way. So I came to the United States to study finance and economics in the biggest world economy.

Mehra is helping develop a Master in Business Analytics course for the Department of Management and Information Systems. He keeps on top of his chess game by going to Akron for tournaments; Mehra played a U.S. national champion there and beat him two games out of three.

Lolagul Raimbekova, MEd ’15

Doctoral Student and Teaching and Research Assistant, School of Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Studies

Born & raised: Khorog, Tajikistan

Origin story: Growing up in a traditional society, I had little chance to learn about other cultures, but I was fond of languages. Tajikistan joined the Soviet Union in 1994. After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Tajikistan became independent but fell into a brutal civil war. When the war was over in 1997, I studied linguistics at Khorog State University, and after I graduated I was hired as a faculty member there to teach English. During Soviet rule, men and women were equal, but with the collapse things changed rapidly. I married, and my husband’s family is very conservative. In their home, I was treated like a slave and had to please everyone.

Transformative experience: A United States Embassy opened in Tajikistan, and I heard from a colleague that they were giving scholarships for students to come to the United States. I thought it was my only chance to change my life. I had never left my small town or even seen a computer. I applied and was selected to attend one semester at Iowa State University. By then, I had a daughter (who is now 12), and I wanted her to have a better life. My family was against me going, but I decided to go even if no one else was happy. That short semester in 2008 changed my life. Living in a modern democratic society, I realized that I have value and a voice. I can shape my life in a way that works best for me.

Raimbekova first came to Kent State in 2011 as an Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellow, a program of the U.S. Department of State that selects emerging leaders from countries in the former Soviet Union to foster mutual understanding and encourage economic and democratic growth in Eurasia.

“Dancing is a big part of Tajik culture,” says Raimbekova. “You learn it from childhood.” At right, she demonstrates the slow, graceful movements of a traditional Pamiri dance. See a video of the dance at www.kent.edu/magazine/InternationalVoices.
Transformative experience: During my adolescence I traveled to many countries as part of the French national track team. I was faced with different cultures, which helped me open my mind in life as well as in my design work.

Qiaoqi Liu, MM ‘16
Part-time Piano Teaching Faculty at Kent State’s Hugh A. Glauser School of Music
Born & raised: Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China
Origin story: I love my hometown. Chengdu is a beautiful city in the southwest of China. Famous as the city of giant pandas, it also attracts tourists who are interested in spicy food. When I was age four, my parents decided I should learn piano. I was shy, so they thought playing music might help me become more outgoing and express my feelings. Academics in China are really competitive, especially in high school. I’m not a competitive person, so I entered a professional music school and started my professional piano study when I was 12 years old.

Transformative experience: In 2007, I was invited by the Canada National Arts Center to participate in the “Young Artists Program” in Ottawa. I joined other young artists from around the world and rehearsed with them every day. It was my first time participating in chamber music, and I enjoyed it. In chamber music, you need to communicate and cooperate with each other. I was able to share my thoughts and musical ideas, and it helped me feel more confident and able to express myself.

Hear Liu play “Scherzo in E Major, Opus 54, No. 4” by Frederic Chopin at www.kent.edu/magazine/InternationalVoices.
If you want to find out where to land a lunar module, which households in southwestern Finland were dependent on fishing in 1945, or what types of soil are in Portage County, you could search the Internet—but it might be easier (and more fun) to explore Kent State’s Map Library.

It’s the center for cartographic and geospatial resources that students, faculty and community members use for research, education and recreation. Housing more than 270,000 maps, 2,000 atlases, 350 gazetteers, 500 reference books, and various CD-ROMs, the Map Library has international reference materials in paper and electronic formats. (See a sampling of its resources at right.)

Located on the fourth floor of McGilvrey Hall, the collection is close to the geology and geography departments that often use it—and is so heavy the floor had to be reinforced to hold its weight. The library includes GIS (geographic information system) data and a workstation with ArcGIS software, plus scanning and printing services.

Part of the Federal Depository Library program, it receives recently published maps of the United States Geological Survey and other United States government agencies.

The library traces its official beginning to 1945, when it was approved as a depository for more than 25,000 publications, maps, pamphlets and other property of the Army Map Service.

To expand the collection, Ed Hall (who came to Kent State in 1973 and retired as map librarian in 1995) traded duplicate maps with other cities and libraries. When the Library of Congress needed to find space, Hall obtained their original duplicates of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Ohio, 1884 to 1954.

The historic maps give a unique glimpse into how cities develop and are used by architects, planners and historians, among others, says current map librarian, Michael Hawkins. “We have the largest and most complete set of Ohio maps outside the Library of Congress.”

Learn more at www.library.kent.edu/map-library. To ask questions or make an appointment, call 330-672-2017 or email map librarian Michael Hawkins at mhawki11@kent.edu.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1884
Street plan and buildings in the vicinity of Water and Main streets, Kent, Ohio

Chicago Sectional Aeronautic Chart, 1982
Urban areas, radio towers and classifications of air space for pilot navigation

Senzaki Geological Survey of Japan, 2005

Atlas of the Archipelago of Southwestern Finland, 1960
Information on the area’s fishing, mineral resources, industry and handicraft

Ohio Department of Highways Map, 1966
Tourist spots, historical sites, wildlife and recreation areas accessible by car

County Map of Ohio, 1838
Counties in Ohio during the early 1800s

General Soil Map of Portage County Ohio, 1972
Different kinds of soil in Portage County

Lunar Plastic Relief Map, 1961
Topography of the lunar surface of Mare Nectaris and vicinity

U.S. Department of Agriculture Weather Bureau Map, 1913
National wind and barometer indications for Thursday, January 2, 1913, forecast for Cleveland
To celebrate the 100th anniversary of America’s National Parks—and to start imagining their future—professor Richard Ferdig helped provide digital, personalized tours of Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the 33,000-acre wonderland in Kent State’s backyard.

Every year, park rangers there field more than 110,000 visitor questions and requests, but this summer Ferdig found a way to connect with an even larger audience (more than 2.5 million yearly park visitors) through the piece of outdoor gear on nearly every biker, hiker and backpacker’s packing list—a smartphone.

“There is a conversation going on about whether being out in nature and in the National Parks is the right place to be interacting with technology, but the reality is that most visitors are already doing it,” says Ferdig, PhD, Kent State University’s Summit Professor of Learning Technologies.

So with the help of a $952,000 grant from the National Science Foundation’s Advancing Informal STEM Learning initiative, Ferdig and his team at the Research Center for Educational Technology in the School of Lifespan Development and Educational Sciences collaborated with the park and Cleveland MetroParks to create ParkApps.

Introduced in June, the free iPhone app allows visitors to choose their own adventure in Cuyahoga Valley National Park and Cleveland MetroParks with trail maps and conservation content designed to call attention to the parks’ natural assets. Using the phone’s GPS settings, the app buzzes to life as visitors move through the parks, pointing out historic sites, geologic formations and even explaining the eerie drone of the cicadas that emerged in northeast Ohio this summer after a 17-year slumber.

“At a zoo, you can use placards to point out what visitors should notice, but when you’re out in creation, that’s not practical,” Ferdig says. “This is a way to engage people with their surroundings, without putting a sign on every shrub or animal.”

With an Android version on the way, upcoming iterations of ParkApps can be used as a tool for citizen science, allowing nature lovers to take part in data collection—for instance, to help keep tabs on the coyote population in Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

Part of a three-year research project that will explore whether mobile devices make a promising platform for informal science learning, ParkApps earned Ferdig faculty recognition as one of the winners of Kent State University’s 2016 Outstanding Research and Scholarship Award.

But it’s just one of the many innovations that keep him fired up about what new technology can teach us about the world, from the iPads that are now standard issue in many public schools, to the Pokémon GO craze that inspired millions of users to swarm public spaces on the hunt for Pikachu this past summer.

“Coverage of educational technology often falls into opposing camps,” says Ferdig, the founding editor of the International Journal of Gaming and Computer-Mediated Simulations. “On one side, proponents say ‘video gaming is amazing and it helps you learn and understand other cultures’ and on the other side detractors say ‘video games are terrible and they teach violence against women.’ It can become an argument for or against, but the question we should be asking is what are we trying to do with this technology?”
Tech Tips for Lifelong Learners

With the proliferation of mobile devices, many of us have a great platform for lifelong learning right at our fingertips. We asked Richard Ferdig for advice on making the most of what’s possible, from curating your Twitter feed to taking classes online.

**iPhone or Android? iPad or Surface Pro?**

“Think it’s a mistake to buy into specific technology or have an emotional loyalty to a particular brand,” says Ferdig. Instead, consider what you need your devices and software to do well, and reverse engineer your buying decision from there.

For instance, the haptic, touch-screen technology behind the iPad is engaging for younger learners, but the keyboard in a more budget-friendly Chromebook may be a better fit for a high school writer.

**Revisit the library**

Being able to download reading material right to your device is only the start—many local libraries now have 3D printers, cloud-based classes, and other cutting-edge resources for keeping your job skills up to date.

**Libraries have fundamentally changed.** Ferdig says. “Internet access and a library card are all you need to get started.”

**Feed your interests**

If you’re only using social media to see what your friends are cooking or to follow celebrities in 140 characters, you’re missing out on its best potential—creating a simple pipeline between your personal interests and experts in the field.

“There are a lot of crazy things happening on social media, but it’s also an incredible source of content,” says Ferdig, who recommends curating your Twitter feed to follow experts who can teach you more about your profession or help you explore lifelong passions.

Overwhelmed by the flood of information? Sign up for an aggregated email from a few favorite websites and news sources that will deliver the week’s best content to your inbox.

**MOOCs may be for you**

When first introduced in 2008, Massive Open Online Classes were hailed as the next big thing in higher education, but a few years later they fell out of favor with some institutions due to low rates of engagement. However, Ferdig’s research suggests that MOOCs can still be a great model for adult learners, “especially for Baby Boomers who are interested in acquiring new job skills or a foreign language,” he says. “They’re a phenomenal way to learn new things and connect with people.”

His research also found that in spite of their online format, MOOCs may lower some of the traditional barriers between professors and students and classmates. With MOOCs’ collaborative format and ongoing discussion threads, Ferdig says faculty are often more engaged and knowledgeable about the students in their class online than they are face to face.

**Beware the Baby Einstein effect**

“There’s this whole myth of ‘the digital native,’ but it’s important to remember that just because kids today are using ‘Pokémon GO’ it doesn’t mean they already know how to use technology to learn,” says Ferdig. “Research about the Baby Einstein videos are a good reminder.”

When they were first introduced in 1996, kids who watched Baby Einstein videos had bigger vocabularies than kids who didn’t—a finding that reversed years later as the interactive videos for babies and toddlers became bestsellers.

“The first cohort of parents used these videos to enrich their kids’ experience,” he says, but studies showed that latercomers used them “as a substitute for engagement.” In other words, technology can’t take the place of traditional teaching methods, “but they can often work together effectively.” –LBC
It’s the night the Cleveland Indians clinch their first entry into the World Series in 20 years, and an auditorium on the city’s East Side is packed. People high-five each other. There’s swaggering banter all around.

“We’ve got this,” one man says to another, a grin across his face. “We’re going all the way.”

But the victory officially being celebrated tonight isn’t the Indians’. It’s that of the latest graduating class of the Greater Cleveland Drug Court—a program that allows people convicted of a drug charge to complete a rehabilitation program in exchange for having the charge removed from their criminal record.

It’s difficult not to feel the parallels between the two triumphs: Successes no one anticipated, long shots overcoming troubled pasts to gain a shot at reinvention.

Here to address the 20 graduates—and the crowd of family members and friends gathered to support them—is Anita Bradley ’95, the keynote speaker, who strides to the podium carrying a white canvas bag.

Bradley begins her speech not with platitudes but her own story of addiction and recovery—a story that starts more than 30 years before, when she was a student at Kent State, and continues through her founding and leadership of the Northern Ohio Recovery Association (NORA). The nonprofit program operates residential recovery houses for women and provides outpatient support and treatment programs for people in recovery.

Today, as the organization’s executive director, she oversees a staff of 60 serving an estimated 5,000 people in recovery across northern Ohio, either through direct services or online support programs. A growing number—including some of tonight’s graduates—are struggling with addiction to opioids, including prescription painkillers, heroin and fentanyl.

In April, Bradley traveled to the White House to be honored as one of 10 national “Champions of Change” for her work in drug and alcohol abuse treatment and recovery, chosen from more than 900 nominees.

She reaches into her canvas bag. The crowd hoots with appreciation as she reveals the contents—an official Cleveland Cavaliers basketball and a jersey emblazoned with her name. They’re souvenirs of the time last spring when the team recognized her work by inviting her to their second playoff game.

“I love the White House,” she says, to laughter and applause. “But I’m telling you, there’s nothing like being honored by your hometown.”

For Bradley, the jersey also has a deeper significance. Back in the 1980s, in the depths of her addiction, she shoplifted expensive sports jerseys from malls so she could resell them for money to buy cocaine.

To be given a personalized one, in the year her hometown team won a championship, symbolizes the sea change she’s made in her life since that dark period. “I was so messed up,” she recalls, sitting in her office at NORA’s headquarters in downtown Cleveland and dressed in a neatly tailored suit. “I mean, I was stealing and getting caught on a regular basis. But I didn’t care. I needed my drugs.”

She’d gotten hooked as a way of coping with the sudden death of her father in a boating accident in 1986. It was her junior year at Kent State, and Bradley, a self-described “daddy’s girl,” was devastated. A friend introduced her to cocaine, which offered a quick and easy escape from her grief, one that Bradley says fit her go-go personality.

“When I dive into something, I dive in 110 percent,” she says, shaking her head. “I got started and didn’t look back.”

She went from snorting cocaine to smoking it—which makes the drug even more potent and addictive. By the end of that year, she was far enough gone that she dropped out of college and moved back in with her mother in Cleveland Heights. For five years, mostly jobless, she drifted between there and seedy apartments shared with friends who were also addicted. Her days were a haze of drugs and alcohol.
Anita Bradley talks with women gathered in the living room of a NORA residential treatment center in Cleveland Heights. During the 90-day program, they meet daily to discuss the challenges they face in recovery.

Her first real wakeup call came about four years into her addiction, when—still using—she suffered the miscarriage of an unplanned pregnancy. Around the same time, she was arrested during a shopping expedition and spent a few days in jail.

“I was never sentenced to an actual jail term, but those few days made me see how close I was to it,” she says. “That, combined with the miscarriage, was like the lightbulb went off. I was responsible for my own life. I couldn’t blame anyone else.”

She asked a friend to take her to a rehabilitation clinic, then followed that up with a stay at a sober house. She continued to clear, she realized that even the earlier, achievement-oriented version of herself had been a mask it through being excellent in other areas. It was my way of overcompensating.”

She wouldn’t only have to give up drugs, she realized. She’d have to discover a new, more compassionate way of treating herself. The process took years—of counseling and therapy, of living with and learning from other women in recovery who’d turned their lives around.

“Becoming confident in yourself is what you need to deal with the stuff that happens every day,” she says. “It’s what helps you absorb the challenges, helps you cope when you’ve got big things to deal with, instead of going back to drugs.”

Most addicts have a hole they’re trying to fill, and mine was low self-esteem,” she says. “I’d been trying to mask it through being excellent in other areas. It was my way of overcompensating.”

When Bradley returned to Kent State in 1991, her studies gave her a newfound sense of purpose. She graduated in 1995 with a degree in criminal justice and corrections, a field that had fascinated her since childhood. Law school seemed the logical next step, but a friend talked her out of it.

“People are in these programs and then you send them home and say, ‘Don’t drink, go to meetings and pray,’” she says. “My big idea was, why don’t we let people who are in recovery help each other more? For me, that was what made all the difference—having people who helped me get more than just treatment but got me back into church, back into school, back into a job.”

Today, NORA manages a network of 200 active volunteers who visit NORAs treatment centers and residential houses to talk to women about their own recovery experiences, just as Bradley herself did for the Drug Court.

“To come back from addiction and get your degrees and start an organization—that is rare,” says Daryl Jackson, program coordinator and director of the Greater Cleveland Drug Court, who invited Bradley to give the keynote speech. “I wanted her to speak to the graduates to say, ‘If I can do it, you can do it.’ They needed to see that to believe it can happen.”

The keys to her success, says Jackson, are her dedication and warmth.

“She has a love for this field,” Jackson says. “She genuinely wants to help people, and you need that, because otherwise she wouldn’t be in it. Everyone knows it’s not a way to get rich.”

For Bradley, recovery from addiction included years of therapy to deal with the low self-esteem she had tried to mask with drugs. Now she’s developed a program that supports other recovering addicts, even after they leave treatment.

Today, Bradley’s biggest battles are more external than internal. Much of NORA’s funding comes from federal grants whose regulations were written years ago. Some don’t allow funds to be spent on food or minor construction costs, which are often among the greatest needs in residential recovery houses.

Even more critically, many programs don’t reflect the troubling and well-documented shift toward opioids as the substance of choice for many users. An estimated 2 million people nationwide now abuse opioids. Many start with legal painkillers, prescriptions for which are written at a rate of about 250 million a year.

The epidemic has hit Ohio particularly hard. The state was second in the nation for drug overdose deaths in 2014, with opioids the main killer. (KSU recently organized a forum on opioids’ impact; see sidebar, p. 31.)

“I’ve never seen anything like it,” Bradley says. “I saw so many of these stories. I heard about young kids going in their parents’ medicine cabinets, people who get prescribed pills to help them sleep or to relieve back pain, and then they’re out on the streets.” (Street heroin is cheaper and more potent than prescription painkillers.)

Back when Bradley was using and cocaine was the drug of choice, accidental deaths were rare. Today, on average, one Ohioan dies of an opioid overdose every two-and-half hours. Part of the reason is that heroin is many times more addictive than cocaine, and street varieties are often strengthened with substances such as fentanyl, which can be lethal even in tiny doses.

During her White House visit last spring, Bradley called for new initiatives to educate children in
In recent years, the area around Kent State has become a hotbed for opioid addiction. The number of heroin deaths in Portage County increased in each of the last three years, and it now ranks 18th in heroin deaths out of 88 counties in Ohio. In a real-time poll at a public forum on the effects of heroin addiction organized by Kent State’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication (JMC) in October, about one in five attendees reported having a family member or close friend who abused opioids.

The forum was moderated by JMC assistant professor Stephanie Smith and designed to highlight the opioid crisis nationally and on campus.

Here are some of the panelists’ key points for responding to this crisis:

**BE AWARE**

Anyone can get addicted: “This is an equal opportunity destroyer, it cuts across all demographics,” says panel moderator and assistant professor Stephanie Smith.

Young adults are at increased risk: People between 18 and 25 at are particular risk of becoming hooked on opioids, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—in part because of stresses in making the transition to college. Pills such as Vicodin, Percocet and Codeine are often their introduction.

Pain is the ultimate cause: Underlying any addiction is deep pain—physical, emotional or both, says panelist Maureen Keating, a chemical dependency counselor for University Health Services. “Sometimes the pain hides in the smiling face, the student who appears to be doing so well.”

**Area Resources**

**Flashes for Recovery**

Ongoing support group for KSU students, www.kent.edu/js/student-organization/flashes-recovery

**University Psychological Services**

Licensed psychologists provide personalized care to KSU students, www.kent.edu/psyclus, 330.672.2487

**Mental Health & Recovery Board of Portage County**

Counseling, support and education for those struggling with mental health and addiction, www.mental-health-recovery.org, 330.673.1756

**Prescription pain relievers are a common gateway to opioid abuse:**

Many addictions can be prevented by first trying alternative treatments such as low-impact aerobic exercise and non-opioid medications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention publishes a full guide at www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose.

**LOOK FOR WARNING SIGNS**

**Appearance:** Physical signs of a person on opioids include tiny pupils, sleepy eyes, flushed skin, dry mouth, funny nose, sudden nodding off and slowed breathing (which is how an overdose kills).

**Actions:** Behavioral signs of opioid use include loss of memory, rapid mood swings, poor decision-making and irrational anger.

“As soon as I picked up the drug, I became a jerk,” says panelist Jarrod Pyle, a heroin addict in recovery who is now a counselor for a treatment house in Akron.

Other signs of heroin use are itching, nausea and vomiting. Opioid abusers often suffer from constipation and may look for laxatives. They may not eat properly, be careless about personal grooming and try to cover needle marks by wearing long-sleeved clothing.

**Paraphernalia:** Heroin is usually smoked, snorted or injected, so depending on the method of administration, you could find remnants of the drug or drug paraphernalia left behind such as syringes, small glass or metal pipes, dirty spoons and lighters, belts or rubber tubing.

**Reach Out**

Start a conversation: “When someone’s using . . . they’re doing things they wouldn’t otherwise do to support their habit, and they’re ashamed,” says panelist Greg McNeil, whose son died of an overdose in 2015.

“BE AWARE”

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**Reach Out**

Start a conversation: “When someone’s using . . . they’re doing things they wouldn’t otherwise do to support their habit, and they’re ashamed,” says panelist Greg McNeil, whose son died of an overdose in 2015. “So even if they don’t want to talk about it, talk to them. They need support.”

Respond quickly to calls for help: Friends and family should respond right away when users ask for help—by taking them to a rehab center or clinic, for example, before they change their minds. “Time is of the essence,” says McNeil, who founded Covera Resources, a foundation that provides support to parents of addicts (www.covera.org).

Notify experts: For those who are truly unapproachable, Kent State students should notify Student Affairs or Health Services so trained university staff can reach out and try to help, says panelist Jennifer Kulics, dean of student affairs.

**Support Recovery**

Understand what they’re up against: Recovery from opioid abuse is particularly difficult, because opioids change the chemistry and structure of users’ brains. “Once you’re addicted, your brain’s been hijacked,” says Keating. “It may take several attempts at recovery before users can finally kick the habit.

Be an advocate, not an enabler: When you want to help, “it’s easy to try to make sure they are not suffering the consequences of their actions,” McNeil says. “But [enabling] isn’t the way to support them.”

Explore options: Pyle points to the many options to recovery that now exist for addicts, including rehabilitation programs, therapy, anonymous groups and replacement drugs such as Vivitrol. Don’t judge: Friends and family should avoid any hint of disparagement when talking to a user about their addiction. Opioid users “want to be connected to something or someone, so they’re going to pick up on judgment quickly,” says Keating. “We have to approach people with compassion.”

Watch the entire forum at www.kent.edu/JMC/heroin.
Jordan Tozzi ’14 and his brother are experts in fantasy football leagues—and they’re happy to help you win yours.

By Allen Moff

Fall and I go to my parents’ house early every Sunday so we can sit beside each other and go through the player rankings,” says Tozzi, who graduated in 2014 with a bachelor’s degree in organizational communication and a minor in flight technology. He is a pilot for Castle Aviation.

“We have the same games, we eat dinner in the kitchen and there are computers out everywhere. Then we go back downstairs, and we’ll have three games on at once. We’ve got a big screen TV, and my brother and I both have iPads. It’s almost like a big surround system.”

During games we’re constantly answering lineup questions from fans and followers on Twitter for the evening NFL games. We’re both in multiple fantasy football leagues, so we keep refreshing the live scoring to check our matchups. I wouldn’t say we’re in there crazy, but we’re not super quiet either.”

Fantasy football experts Jordan Tozzi ’14 (left) and his brother, Michael, assemble lineups and player rankings for followers of their fantasy sports website, LegionReport.com. During NFL games, they answer questions from followers on Twitter (@LegionReport), and check their matchups for the multiple fantasy football leagues they also compete in.

Fantasy football competitions from all over the globe, however, have staged raucous touchscreen celebrations thanks to advice provided by the Tozzis, whose expertise in this burgeoning fantasy field is widely respected.

With NFL football, the most popular element of the fantasy sports scene, contestants create their own team by drafting players from a league and earning points based on the performance of their picks. In conventional fantasy football leagues—typically played for fun or for low dollar amounts just to make things interesting—contestants play different opponents each week. The top entries at the end of the regular season qualify for the playoffs, and a champion is eventually crowned, usually during the final weeks of the actual NFL regular season.

According to the Fantasy Sports Trade Association, 57.4 million people will play fantasy sports in 2016, creating a $3 to $4 billion annual economic impact across the sports industry. Wagering on fantasy sports is legal, since it’s considered a game of skill and not gambling.

Fantasy football started to gain popularity in the 1990s, continued to grow through the next couple decades, then exploded in recent years when companies began to offer daily fantasy sports opportunities. Instead of drafting a team once before each season, contestants on the FanDuel and Draftkings websites can draft a different team each week. For as little as $20, competitors get a shot at monetary prizes that reach as high as $1 million.

Before they were teenagers, fantasy sports had already piqued the interest of the Tozzis. My brother got me into it pretty early,” says Jordan Tozzi. (His brother, Michael, graduated from Malone University and works in pharmaceutical sales for Eli Lilly and Company. Both reside in Magnolia, Ohio.) “We have a bunch of older cousins, and we would always play them in fantasy football leagues. We loved it—and by fifth or sixth grade, I was beating all of them.”

Right about the time the daily fantasy contests began to take off, the Tozzis officially officially entered the fantasy sports profession. “During my freshman and sophomore years in college we were doing all this research for our fantasy football leagues, and we thought, why not publish it online and try to make some money off of it? So we did that,” says Tozzi. “Friends were always asking us for advice, and we would tell them to just check out our website.

“The first year we had the website, in 2013, we entered an NFL fantasy football contest where they grade all your rankings, and we were ranked the most accurate fantasy experts in the world. We beat guys from ESPN, CBS Sports, Yahoo. It kind of blew up from there.”

Just like that, LegionReport.com became a destination site for fantasy football enthusiasts all over the world. “Since then we’ve built a large following online and on Twitter,” says Tozzi. “People are coming to our website from Europe and all over the United States. You initially do something to help your friends, and it explodes. That’s the awesome part about it.”

While the Tozzis concentrate their energies on NFL football, friend and fellow Kent State graduate Danny Stokes ’13 contributes to LegionReport as an NBA basketball writer. They may eventually expand the website into other sports, but at this time its focus is pro football and basketball.

Guidance from LegionReport.com is not only beneficial, but free as well. “People don’t have to pay us for a service,” Tozzi says. “The only way we make money is from Google, the ads on our page and link advertisements within the articles. We just want to help people win their fantasy leagues.”

The Tozzis’ main goal in the future is simply to continue adding followers. They provide advice each week on who to play and which free agents to pick up, and they suggest a lineup to enter in the daily NFL fantasy contests. “We communicate with our followers via Twitter (@LegionReport), if they have specific questions,” says Tozzi. “We also draft fantasy football teams for owners.”

Delving through mounds of constantly changing information each week to give the best fantasy football advice possible has become a labor of love for the Tozzis.

“It takes a lot of hard work to produce consistent results, which is the key to long-term success in fantasy sports,” says Tozzi. “Michael is up early in the morning, and I’m up late at night, so we’re always up to date on the news. Throughout the week we text each other and communicate during the Thursday and Monday night games. The system seems to be working.”

As children, the brothers learned that hard work and preparation are keys to success, no matter the occupation. “Our family restaurant is in its 103rd year and has always been a huge part of our lives,” says Tozzi. “When I was young, my parents had me do little jobs, like putting dishes away. As I grew older, my responsibilities increased. My brother and I have worked every position at one time or another—doug dishes, prepping, cooking, serving, bartending, cleaning. I learned the value of hard work, determination and dedication from my parents.”

The Tozzis’ brother apply those family lessons to winning at fantasy sports—and the results speak for themselves.

“I never imagined we’d take it this far,” says Tozzi. “It just keeps growing.”
New York, Grace appeared at recent May including a chapter on the shootings that Foley retired from Weston High Associations’ Swimming and Diving Rules National Federation of State High School was selected to serve a third term on the 1967 Lakeland Community College, Lake Erie College, 1966 Scholarship Award for excellence in theatre in Ohio, received Youngstown State University’s 2007, Travelers Rest, SC, retired in 2017. He went on to earn a master’s degree in 1979 Best Places to Live. Kansas.}

\[ \text{We asked him to share some lessons he learned while at Kent State.} \]

\[ \text{To make the most of life:} \]

\[ \text{Be diligent. Don’t take life for granted. My coach at Kent State, Mike Drake, passed away this year. He had a passion for the game of football, and his coaching inspired me to do better and want to do better.} \]

\[ \text{Take advantage of opportunities.} \]

\[ \text{(Civil rights activist) Whitney M. Young said, “It is better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one, than to have an opportunity and not be prepared.” I trained all the time like I was getting drafted—I wasn’t drafted, but I was able to be selected as a free agent in the Browns minicamp, and I took full advantage of that opportunity.”} \]

\[ \text{Finish what you start.} \]

\[ \text{I went back to Kent, took the classes I had left and graduated. Now I am proud of the community about being a student athlete and finishing what they start.} \]
“To find true peace, you must come to terms with people and situations as they are, not as you wish them to be,” says Coken. “I learned how to laugh and love myself no matter how dark things seem.”

She writes about coping with her mother’s diagnosis and death in her first book, When I Die, Take My Pants: Turning Your Darkest Moments Into Your Greatest Gifts (2016), fulfilling a promise she’d made to her mother that her death would make as big a difference as her life. Besides educating women about the early signs of ovarian cancer, Coken hopes her message helps people keep their sense of humor and sense of self, no matter what.

For the past 20 years—while she also worked as a political activist—her coaching seminars have helped thousands of people break through their self-made limitations. With the launch of her book and her new company, Embrace the Ridiculousness of Life!, Coken continues to help others navigate challenging times through workshops, coaching and other events.

We asked her how to keep moving forward despite life’s roadblocks.

To transform tragedy:

Face the hard stuff. Experience your emotions instead of numbing yourself with eating, dancing, drugs, isolating, burying yourself in work, etc. If you don’t deal with what is happening now, you will have to deal with it at some point.

Create community. We usually don’t want to burden anyone, but it’s okay to ask a friend to tell you a silly joke or remind you of how much you are loved and appreciated.

Take back your power. Don’t be a victim. Blaming yourself, someone else or your circumstances will leave you powerless. Instead, ask yourself “What am I holding on to that I am willing to let go of?”

Move past “why me?” Have it over for a drink or dinner, but don’t let “why me?” prevent you or your partner from thinking it in the morning. A better question is: “What can I learn from what is happening around me?”

Jennifer Coken, BA ’83, MA ’87

Rockville, Md.

Author, life coach, speaker, voice-over talent; CEO of Embrace the Ridiculousness of Life!

Jen Coken spent six years on the stand-up comedy circuit in Denver, but even her sense of humor was challenged when her mother, Jan Storli, PhD ’99, was dying from ovarian cancer in 2011. That same year Coken’s marriage ended, and she lost 11 other people in her life. Death forced her to face a harsh reality. So often you want to control life, and the truth is you can’t.

CLASS NOTES

1996 Kevin Smith, MLS, Lawrence, Kan.; accepted appointment for KU Libraries at the University of Kansas, effective May 1, 2016.

1997 Tracy van der Kull, BA; Ravenna, Ohio; has joined Cleveland-based design firm Richardson Design as a senior designer.

2000 Paul Taylor, BS, Bärch; Chapin Falls, Ohio; has been promoted to principal at Bialosky Cleveland and continues to be one of the architect’s firm-key design loads. His workplace design for Marblehead Sea Park demonstrated with an AIA Award for Best Small Corporate Office at the 2015 AIA/OKA Cleveland Design Awards.

2001 Joseph Salem Jr., MLS, MA ’05, PhD ’14; Akron, Ohio; associate dean for Learning, Undergraduate Services and Commonwealth Campus Libraries, Pennsylvania State University, was one of 28 people selected to participate in the 2015-2017 Leadership Fellows program by the Association of Research Libraries. The program facilitates the development of senior-level leaders in large research libraries and archives.

2004 Brian Ballinger, MBA; North Ridgeville, Ohio; provost and vice president for minor services at Lorain County Community College, has been named president of the two-year school.

2005 David Dees, PhD; Youngstown, Ohio; has been appointed interim dean and chief administrative officer of the Kent State University Columbiana County campuses, effective July 1. Dees joined Kent State in 1998 and has served as director of Kent State’s Center for Teaching and Learning since 2011.

2006 Brian McGregor, B2, Barch ’01; Lakeview, Ohio; has been promoted to senior associate at Battelle. David Crystal, BBA; Twinsburg, Ohio; was hired as the new Cleveland-based policy director for the nonprofit Alliance for the Great Lakes, based in Chicago. She will lead the alliance’s policy and advocacy efforts related to Lake Erie and will manage the Ohio office. Davis spent eight years in government relations with Kent State University, currently serving as the federal relations director for the university’s Office of Governmental Relations.

2007 Kelly (Sweeney) Stephens, BBA, AA ’01; North Olmsted, Ohio; has been named to the Board of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens and is the 2016 Goosey United Way chairperson.

2008 Ashley Attilera, B2, Columbus, Ohio; graduation advisor and professor of public relations at Columbus State Community College, has been named director of student success and as an adjunct faculty member for the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies. She also serves as the new Cleveland-based policy director for Battelle.

2009 Alan Hipps, B5, March ’09; Northfield, Ohio; has been promoted to associate at Bialosky Cleveland. Hipps was named to the Top 25 Under 35 by the Cleveland Professional 20/30 Club, the longest-running business, social, philanthropic and civic organization for young professionals.

2010 Anthony Lange, BS; Cleveland, Ohio; sports editor for the Chagrin Valley Times, won first place for sports coverage in the 2010 Hooper Awards contest announced during the annual Ohio Newspaper Association convention in Columbus. He previously took first place for both sports coverage and feature writing in 2014. His father, David Lange, BA ’79, Malvern, Ohio; editor emeritus for the Chagrin Valley Times, won first place for editorial writing in the 2011 Hooper contest—the fifth time that his editorials were judged best among Ohio’s weekly publishers.

2011 Kristen Swope, BBS, MLS ’15; Louisville, Ohio; accepted a position in the adult and teen services department at the Louisville Public Library in October 2015.

2012 Amy Alexy, MBA; Akron, Ohio; was promoted to vice president of national talent at the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., where she has worked since 2011. She also serves on the board of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens and is the 2016 Goosey United Way chairperson.

2013 Simonne Ronk, MLS, Dorchester Center, Mass.; “I am employed as an archivist and professor of African American genealogy at the John D. and Catherine Blackwell American Institute at Northeastern University and as librarian at the Boston Public Library.”

2014 Meggan Gaynord, MEd; Hudson, Ohio; is the new assistant principal at Saint Joseph Academy, Cleveland, effective July 1, 2016.

2015 Brittany Kinney, BBA, MSA ’13; Kent, Ohio; was promoted to supervisor by Walhall OHIO, a leading regional certified public accounting and business advisory firm.

2016 Timothy Novotny, MA; Cos Cob, Ore.; spent 15 years on the journalism side, in broadcast and print, but began his new public relations master’s degree to work as communications coordinator at Bay Area Hospital (Coss Bay, Ore.) in September 2015.

2017 Carissa Klein, BBA; Canton, Ohio; is the new coordinating router for Norris McLaughlin & Marcus.

Stephanie Rex, MA; Pittsburgh, Pa., was hired as vice president of marketing, public relations and social media for Z Brand Group, an award-winning advertising and marketing agency located in downtown Pittsburgh.


2019 Kally Unger, BBA; Lakewood, Ohio; joined as an associate at the Cleveland office of Walhall OHIO, a leading regional certified public accounting and business advisory firm.

Cassanda (Beck) Holloway, BBS ’82; Willoughby, Ohio; married Adrian (“AJ”) Holloway, BA ’83, on August 13, 2015. Several Kent State graduates were in the bridal party. [photographed (front row): Melissa Ludwig, BS ’13; Emily Horwatt, Cassanda (Beck) Holloway, Gia Mauer, Rachael Lyme, BS ’12; Nicole Slat (back row): Michael Richardsen, BBA ’13; John Wheeler, Bob Peternel, AJ Holloway; Vince Hug, Zach Schlierer, Brian Zeoelick, BS ’12]
inaugurate, generous, tenacious, committed—these are just a few words that describe the 2016 Kent State Alumni Award recipients, who were commended for their dedication to their professions, communities and Kent State at a special ceremony on September 30.

Sponsored by the Kent State Alumni Association, the alumni awards are the university’s most prestigious honor. The following seven recipients epitomize the characteristics of Kent State graduates—and all share a love for Kent State.

**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI**

George Newkome, BS ’71, PhD ’66

Medinah, Ill.; Professor, Departments of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering.

My training as an organist taught me to see the tree in the forest. I believe being an entrepreneurial can do spirit, a hallmark of Northeast Ohio.

Educational experience: My training as an organist taught me to see the tree in the forest. I believe being an entrepreneur can do spirit, a hallmark of Northeast Ohio.

Staying connected: Serving on the Kent State University Arts and Sciences Advisory Board has allowed me to be a part of a dynamic and growing college. I’m especially proud of forming the Northeast Ohio Student Wrestler Fund to help Kent State students participate in new start-up companies.

Why I love Kent State: It laid the foundation for my academic career and my State University College of Arts and Sciences can-do spirit, a hallmark of Northeast Ohio.

**PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT**

H. John Visser, DPM ’78

St. Louis, Mo.; Reconstructive foot and ankle surgeon.

Memorable moment at KSU: Attaining #1 status in calculus and inorganic chemistry

Point of pride: Being inducted into the Kent State University College of Physicians’ Medical Honor Society

Why I love Kent State: The warm, supportive atmosphere at the regional campuses. Coming out of high school, I lacked confidence in my academic abilities. Kent State University at Geauga allowed me to take core courses for pre-med. With the smaller class sizes and encouraging teachers, my confidence level increased astronomically.

After two years at Kent State, I transferred to Heram and graduated magna cum laude.

**DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN**

Brooks Sumberg, BA ’72

Westport, Conn.; Peace Corps volunteer, founder of Harvest Tomorrow

Point of pride: My charity, Harvest Tomorrow, feeds 35,000 people, including prisoners who grow the food and patrons who volunteer.

Inspiration for giving back to community: The satisfaction I get from helping prisoners by giving them a project to work on that provides food for poor people.

Why I love Kent State: I transferred from Northern Michigan University because I wanted to be at a more cosmopolitan place. Kent State was accepting, and they welcomed me.

**OUTSTANDING NEW PROFESSIONAL**

Damas Beachamp, BS ’12

Durham, N.C.; Chief of Staff and Principal Chemist, d’Vernon Capital LLC

Kent State strengths: It provides exceptional classroom education while allowing one-on-one, hands-on research experiences with faculty who care deeply for their students. Today’s world demands multifaceted skills for success. Kent State allows students to become diverse and effective problem solvers.

Career inspiration: When I was 18 years old, I lost a dear friend in a tragic accident. From then on I wanted to make a positive impact on the world. In an organic chemistry course, Professor Alex Salsied encouraged me to consider pursuing chemistry. Chemistry touches almost every aspect of life, so it seemed a good field of study.

Why I love Kent State: The campus, the atmosphere downtown and especially the recent renovations that have transformed the entire feel of the city and campus.

John Visser, DPM ’78

St. Louis, Mo.; Professor, Departments of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering.

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**PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT**

Karen Jones Bankston, BSN ’84, MSN ’90

Mansfield, Ohio; PhD, University of Cincinnati; Associate Dean, Clinical Practice, Partnership and Community Engagement, University of Cincinnati College of Nursing

Memorable moments at KSU: Spending time with my classmates in the School of Nursing lounge, going to Ray’s Place on the last day of clinicals.

Points of pride: Being assigned CEO of the Drake Center for Post-Acute Care, a beloved hospital in Cincinnati. And all the individuals I’ve mentioned, watch grow and now is in leadership roles—knowing I was a part of their success is my success.

Why I love Kent State: I was a nontraditional student, and Constantine Stropkos was very supportive. She and the other faculty made sure I saw the importance of understanding the nurse practitioner role. I’m proud to be a Kent State nurse.

**KENT STATE ADVOCACY**

Gary Brather, BS ’69, MS ’84

Bay Village, Ohio; First Vice President-Investments at Petter, Brather, Hills, Adrian Wealth Management Group of Wells Fargo Advisors; chair of the renovation committee of the Kent State University Foundation and chair of the Kent State University Foundation Board

Memorable moment at KSU: As a student ambassador, I had the opportunity to greet Elie Wiesel [nobel laureate and Holocaust survivor], walk him around campus, take him to the president’s office and walk him to his speech. It was a thrilling event.

Reason for supporting Kent State: Because of the changes happening here and the rewarding programs we have. Kent State gives students the opportunity to transform their lives.

Why I love Kent State: I met my wife here, I had a great time, I was a fabulous professor, and we spent a lot of time (believe it or not) at the library.

**GOLDEN FLASH**

Jordan Provost, BME ’17

Northolas, Ohio; Student assistant in the Kent State University Breeks Office and operations coordinator for the Kentron Youth Symphony

Career aspiration: To pursue a master’s degree in music education and become a teacher.

Biggest accomplishment: So far, it’s been conducting the award-winning Kenton Youth Symphony Advanced Orchestra at the final concert of the season in May.

Why I love Kent State: The sense of community is ever-present. When I was in 8th grades, I applied for my 2016 recital at Kent State and was enthralled with the cool things happening here. I came in 2016 for the summer institute, and fell in love with the piano faculty. And the campus is just beautiful—it’s a great combination of a suburban community and a college town.
Cinderella Season

Memories of glory have been rekindled for Golden Flashes basketball fans. Two halls of fame are honoring the 2001–02 Kent State men’s basketball team and their historic run to the Elite Eight of the NCAA Tournament.

As part of the 15th anniversary of the Elite Eight run, Kent State’s Varsity “K” Hall of Fame recognized them as a team of distinction during the September 17 induction ceremony.

The National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame in Kansas City, Missouri, is inducting the team on November 18 and including the Flashes’ 2002 postseason in an exhibit of the top ten most memorable runs in NCAA tournament history. (The exhibit opens in November and will be on display one year.)

The Varsity “K” Hall of Fame celebration was the largest reunion of the 2001–02 team since it clinched a spot in the Elite Eight with a 78–73 overtime win against Pittsburgh in Lexington, Kentucky. All but four people connected to the team made it back to the Kent Campus, including a group of 17 players, coaches and support staff.

“It means a great deal to us for that season to still stick out in people’s memories,” says Golden Flashes assistant men’s basketball coach Eric Haut, who played on the 2001–02 team. “I’ll be in airports and people will see the Kent State logo on my chest and say ‘hey, I remember that year when you made the run.’

“Now to hear that we will be included in an exhibit at the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame is kind of shocking. A lot of schools have made Cinderella runs in the last 15 years, but when we did it, it was pretty rare.”

Though the team didn’t make it to the Final Four, Haut is convinced “if we would have beaten Indiana in the Elite Eight, we would have won our next game and played for the national championship.”

—David Carducci

Learn more about the Hall of Fame exhibit at www.collegebasketballexperience.com.

SHARE YOUR VOICE: In partnership with Traveling Stanzas, Kent State Magazine features a poem by one of our readers in each issue. To submit your poem, visit travelingstanzas.com, click “Submit,” and label it “Magazine Entry.” For more information, call Wick Poetry Center at 330-672-2067.

Clouds low on the horizon float just above the land, sink down from the dark and shadowed heavens, the tropospheric Rockies, Alps, and Mount Olympus for Zeus and his children. A silver of a fingernail reminds us he watches. From deep lavender steel south to muddy golden mustard, the canvas glows with thick acrylic. The old man stretches his arm out the car window, unfolds a finger, swirls the pad of his pointer atop the wet paint. His final mark on the day is important and indestructible for the next sixteen minutes, when his sun god sets and his proof of “I exist” shimmers and fades into a twilit night.

The babies sleep deep, breathe in that old magic, and we live on.

POET: Jaclyn Y. Garver, BS ’05
Fort Wayne, Indiana

“I wrote ‘Sunset’ on the drive home from a wake. My husband’s grandfather, who died on July 4, was buried on what would have been his 75th wedding anniversary. The evening before his burial was a beautiful one, and the layered clouds struck me as a particularly poignant send-off.”

by Jaclyn Y. Garver

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Located along the Esplanade between South Lincoln and Willow streets, the Center for Architecture and Environmental Design opened in early October and already is an area landmark. Its large glass windows reflect the sky and overlook both the Kent Campus and Kent’s revitalized downtown. SEE PAGE 8