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Coastal Kent State?

On Nov. 3, 2022, a drone captured this image of early morning fog on the Kent Campus.



FALL/WINTER 2022-23

KENT STATE

MAGAZINE



Growing Global

**KENT STATE IS EXPANDING ITS GLOBAL EDUCATION INITIATIVES
AND PREPARING STUDENTS TO BE CITIZENS OF THE WORLD.**

See global education coverage beginning on page 8.



Above: Kristin Stasiowski, PhD, assistant dean of international programs and education abroad for Kent State's College of Arts and Sciences, leads students on a tour of the Basilica di Santa Croce in Florence during summer 2022. She has taught in the Kent State University Florence Summer Institute since 2014 and is also an assistant professor of Italian language and literature in the Department of Modern and Classical Language Studies.

ON THE COVER

On an excursion to Lazzaretto Nuovo, one of two quarantine islands established in the Venetian lagoon in the 15th century, Kent State students learn how the Republic of Venice attempted to control the spread of contagious disease during plague outbreaks. In this large warehouse, incoming merchants and passengers were quarantined with their cargo for 40 days and some left graffiti (seen on the back wall) to mark their presence. *Photo by Bob Christy, BS '95, MA '22*

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Each story in this issue focuses on some aspect of Kent State's global education initiatives.

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Squirrel Search: In each issue, we hide an image of a black squirrel on three pages (not including the Contents page). If you find all three, you qualify for a drawing to win a squirrel-themed prize. Each squirrel will appear like this  (shown actual size; it will not be distorted or rotated).

When you find them, send an email to magazine@kent.edu, listing the three page numbers and places they appear, plus your name and mailing address. For rules and eligibility requirements see www.kent.edu/magazine/rules.



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Kent State Magazine is published by Kent State University Communications and Marketing. It is available to faculty, staff, alumni, donors and friends of the university two times a year (fall/winter, spring/summer).

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READERS RESPOND

KUDOS ON CLIMATE CHANGE COVERAGE

As an active climate scientist, the coordinator of the minor in climate change at the university and the professor for the course Global Climate Change, I wanted to contact you regarding the spotlight on climate change in *Kent State Magazine* [spring/summer 2022]. Climate change is one of the most important issues of our time and will continue to be throughout our students' lives. Well done! I hope there are ways to keep this issue at the forefront of the magazine in years to come.

CAMERON C. LEE, PHD

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography
College of Arts & Sciences

Thanks for the exceptionally well-written article ["A Global Challenge," spring/summer 2022] on climate change and the engagement in these issues by Kent State faculty. My hope is that it is widely shared and read. Congrats on some great work!

DAVID DUBOIS, PHD

Adjunct Faculty, Management and Information
Systems, Ambassador Crawford College
of Business and Entrepreneurship

CRIME SOLVER

Thank you for the wonderful article ["Shining a Light on Unsolved Crimes, spring/summer 2022"]. It's being read and recognized by many and will no doubt serve to help the Porchlight Project get bigger and better this year. It's just great!

JAMES RENNER, BA '00 | Akron, OH

IN PRAISE OF PRINT

For the benefit of dinosaurs like me who still love print media, does this mean that you will no longer be sending out a printed magazine? Say it ain't so!

I must confess that the likelihood of me reading a publication increases by at least a factor of three or four when it is in print (versus on a computer screen). At age 71, I'm sure that my brain is somewhat conditioned to focusing

more keenly on the printed page than a flickering screen!

In the fall/winter 2021-22 issue, I was encouraged to read about Mahoning Matters and the staff's effort to continue to provide local coverage to the Youngstown area ["Reinventing Local News"]. Having grown up in nearby Austintown (a suburb of Youngstown), I was among those dismayed/distraught by the news back in 2019 that *The Vindicator* would no longer print.

JIM SCHRUM, BA '74 | Greensboro, NC

Editor's Note: We still hope that Kent State Magazine can return to print in the future, at least for those who prefer to read it on paper instead of on screens.

AND THE WINNER IS . . .

Congratulations to David Morrow, BS '84, MEd '92, Vero Beach, FL, the winner of the random-generated drawing from correct submissions to the magazine's Squirrel Search contest. He received a box of black-squirrel-themed swag from Black Squirrel Gifts in downtown Kent.

The black squirrels can be found in the spring/summer 2022 PDF on page 10 (in the lower right corner of the Crawford Hall groundbreaking photo), on page 22 (on top of the soil monitoring station in photo at left), and on page 29 (on top of the illustration about roof greening).

We want to hear from you!

Respond to magazine content or comment on topics related to Kent State by writing:

Kent State Magazine

P.O. Box 5190

Kent, Ohio 44242-0001

or magazine@kent.edu.

Responses may be edited for style, length, clarity and civility.

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE



"Kent State is living up to its mission to foster world peace and understanding through international engagement and integration of global perspectives in our curriculums."

Global Opportunities

When I look back on 2022, it feels as though I am watching a time-lapse video of a seed sprouting quickly into a green shoot and then a stunning flower within the span of a minute.

While it may seem like the year blossomed at record speed, I know that every day and every success was built on the hard work, dedication and long hours put in by our students, faculty and staff.

Early in the year, we received the prestigious R1 designation for research from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. This is the highest recognition doctoral universities can receive and affirms Kent State's place as a top-tier research university in the United States. It also underscores the breadth and excellence of research and scholarship at Kent State.

The honors continued when Kent State was awarded the distinguished 2022 Senator Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization from NAFSA: Association of International Educators, recognizing Kent State's overall excellence in integrating international education throughout all facets of the university.

This issue of *Kent State Magazine* highlights our many successes in global education, including the 50th anniversary of the Kent State University Florence Center, our growing partnership with the American Academy in Brazil and our recent relationship with the University of Rwanda.

Our partnership in Rwanda already has resulted in a contingent of 12 new students, sponsored by the Rwandan government, who arrived on our Kent Campus to begin their studies in the fall.

And three Brazilian students from the first cohort of the American Academy graduated with four-year degrees this December on the Kent Campus.

These students are among the more than 1,600 international students attending Kent State in fall 2022, as we celebrated an increase of nearly 18% in international student enrollment, due in large part to increases in international graduate student admissions.

Together with our worldwide alumni community, I am confident that Kent State is living up to its mission to foster world peace and understanding through international engagement and integration of global perspectives in our curriculums.

As this stunning blossom of a year fades into 2023, I want to say how inspired I am by the dedication and commitment of our entire university family. Your efforts and support translate into our successes, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to serve as Kent State's president.

With all best wishes for a healthy and prosperous 2023,



Todd Diacon | President

Email: president@kent.edu
Instagram: @ksupresdiacon



D'Antae Butler, BFA '22
Celebration Award
10.14



Mase Makuch, BFA '22
Niche Market Award
Embracing Chaos



Nora Riffle, BFA '22
Innovation Award
Gami



Jayda Breiding, BFA '22
Market Ready Award
Best in Show Award
The Connector

Global-Inspired Fashion Show

For the first time, Kent State School of Fashion students debuted their work at New York Fashion Week on Sept. 9, 2022. Students shared the runway with International Fashion Academy Paris students and No Nation Fashion, a brand supported by the International Organization for Migration.

Kicked off by remarks from President Todd Diacon, the inaugural show was co-hosted by Ann Walter, BA '96, MEd '19, director of New York City Fashion, a study away destination of Kent State University School of Fashion, and Jean-Baptiste Andreani, CEO of IFA Paris. Their shared purpose for the creative partnership was to increase alumni engagement and elevate recognition for two leading fashion schools and the impact of global cultures. Both schools understand the global nature of the modern fashion industry.

IFA Paris aims to join French fashion heritage with the world and is committed to sustainability as a corporate social responsibility-certified institution. With campuses in Paris, Shanghai and Istanbul, each year it welcomes students of 50 different nationalities, 95% of whom attend courses taught in English.

Kent State University School of Fashion ranks among the top 25 in the world and the top 10 in the United States. It offers several study away programs, including New York City, Florence, Paris and Hong Kong. Its New York location is in the heart of Manhattan's garment district, allowing students to participate in internships, work with industry leaders and explore the marketplace.

To underscore the event's spirit of global citizenship, the final three outfits in the show were by No Nation Fashion, a brand born in Bosnia and Herzegovina combining the skills of Bosnian designers and migrants who developed their sewing skills while staying at temporary reception centers during the COVID-19 pandemic. NNF celebrates the

meeting of cultures and promotes the inclusion of migrants in host communities through fashion. The brand is powered by the UN's International Organization for Migration with the support of its donors.

"The School of Fashion is committed to the values of authenticity, creativity, equity and community," says Walter, who worked in the New York City fashion industry for many years prior to becoming a faculty member. "Collaborating with IFA Paris and NNF further helped us to amplify the voices of people in the fashion industry who have been historically marginalized and underserved. It allowed us to live these values as well as our mission to transform lives through creative fashion education in pursuit of a sustainable world by connecting with others and pursuing positive change."

More than 150 Kent State alumni and friends, IFA Paris guests and UN guests gathered on the top floor of NeueHouse Madison Square to see the work of top designers from both schools and Bosnian designers and migrants.

"Fashion is probably one of the most prestigious programs at Kent State," says Diane Helfers Petrella, dean of Kent State's College of the Arts. She spoke at the show, as did Mourad Krifa, interim director of the School of Fashion. "We are committed to investing in this program and letting it grow. I can't think of any better way to show that investment than holding a show like this during fashion week in New York City."

—Lindsey Vlasic, BA '22

Learn more about Kent State's School of Fashion at www.kent.edu/fashion and New York City Fashion at www.kent.edu/fashion/NYCFashion.



Above: A gallery view showing a range of wedding garments. *Front, left to right:* Grey silk taffeta wedding ensemble (American, 1886) *Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Jamison in memory of Francis Jeannetta Jamison* | Halston brown velvet cape and sleeveless wedding dress (American, 1976) *Gift of Joanna Bradbury* | Embroidered wedding ensemble (sari and choli) (Indian, 1982) *Gift of Mrs. Rohini Arter*. *Back, left:* Men's embroidered silk gauze summer wedding robe (Chinese 19th century) *Silverman/Rodgers Collection*. *Back, right:* Embroidered red satin bridal ensemble (*long feng gua*) (Chinese, late 20th century), *Stavropoulos Collection*. *Rear wall:* Silk brocade bridal curtains (Chinese, 19th century)



Above: In Ghana, for special occasions, including weddings, men and women have their clothes custom made by tailors or dressmakers. At left, a man's three-piece wedding ensemble, worn again for special occasions with or without the outer garment. At right, a woman's skirt and top (*kaba* and *slit*), carefully crafted by a dressmaker for a perfect fit. Both outfits are of handwoven cloth with brocade. (Ghanaian, 2003) *Loan from a Ghanaian couple*

Global Wedding Traditions

Although wedding traditions vary around the world, many of them focus on clothing and textiles. Kent State University Museum's current exhibit, *As the World Weds: Global Wedding Traditions*, draws from its rich holdings of wedding dresses and associated materials, as well as treasured pieces on loan from personal collections.

The exhibition looks beyond the prevalence of wearing a white bridal gown—which has its origins in Europe in the 19th century—and highlights the rich and deeply symbolic clothing and textiles linked to wedding ceremonies around the world. From bright red robes for the Chinese bride and groom to handwoven kente cloth for the happy couple in Ghana, colorful, handcrafted textiles represent wealth and material well-being.

"Wedding dresses are one of the things most frequently offered to the Kent State University Museum," says Sara Hume, PhD, professor and museum curator. "People treasure them and keep them for the rest of their lives. I felt it very important to showcase some of the amazing wedding dresses we have, but also to challenge the assumptions people have about wedding traditions. Traditions have actually changed significantly over time and differ across cultures, which this exhibition aims to show."

Though the bride's dress is often one of the central components of the ceremonies, there are many other participants in the festivities who have their own distinctive dress, including grooms, flower girls, mothers of the bride, members of the wedding party and invited guests.

After the wedding, many couples carefully store away the garments and other mementos from the celebration. The valuable memories linked to the festivities imbue these pieces with sentimental value and encourage their preservation and even donation to museums.

As the *World Weds* is on view Sept. 15, 2022, through Aug. 27, 2023, at the Kent State University Museum's Broadbent Gallery. The exhibition is made possible with the generous support of Mr. Robert A. and Dr. Susan H. Conrad, celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary; Regina and Gregg Eisenberg in honor of their 20th anniversary; and with additional funding from Leslie Royce Resnik and the Ohio Arts Council.

Visit the Kent State University Museum website at www.kent.edu/museum/event/world-weds-global-wedding-traditions. Discover different sections of the exhibition at astheworldweds.wordpress.com/.



Kent State University at Stark Celebrates 75 Years

Kent State University at Stark celebrated its 75th anniversary with a gala dinner on March 10, 2022. Speakers included Kent State President Todd Diacon; Denise A. Seachrist, PhD, dean and chief administrative officer at Kent State Stark; and Peggy Shadduck, PhD, vice president of Regional Campuses and dean of the College of Applied and Technical Studies. More than 200 people attended, including current and retired employees, alumni, and local and state community leaders.

The yearlong celebration (during the 2021-2022 academic year) kicked off in November 2021 with the 30th season of the popular Featured Speakers Series, which Seachrist calls “our gift to the community.” The series has attracted thousands of Stark County residents to the Kent State Stark Campus to hear from public figures and national and international experts on a wide range of topics. Speakers for the 2021-22 season included Fred Rogers’ biographer Maxwell King, child protection advocate Elizabeth Smart and environmental activist Erin Brockovich.

Anniversary activities will culminate with the repair and rededication of the Mullen Memorial, an area with a pergola and benches on the Kent State Stark Campus that was dedicated in 1990 in memory of longtime Kent State Stark faculty member Inga Mullen.

Kent State established a branch in Canton in 1946, prompted by the postwar surge of WWII veterans taking advantage of benefits provided by the GI Bill. Although the Canton branch lost its state funding in 1950, Kent State continued to offer extension programs in Stark County as enrollment grew. In 1966, Ohio lawmakers authorized an

official Stark County branch of Kent State, as well as providing some funding to help construct a permanent home.

Over the years, even with funding challenges, the campus has continued to expand its buildings, course offerings, degrees and enrollment. Today, with 400 faculty and staff and 3,300 students, Kent State Stark offers the beginning coursework for more than 340 bachelor’s degrees and all of the courses required for 25 degrees.

Seachrist, who became interim dean in 2014 and was appointed dean and chief administrative officer in February 2016, has also helped expand global education opportunities, enabling students to study abroad and welcoming students from foreign countries.

In 2015, Kent State Stark became the first of Kent State’s Regional Campuses to partner with an international university when it welcomed students from China’s Shenzhen Polytechnic University. In November 2021, Kent State Stark hosted leaders from the University of Rwanda to finalize details on a partnership that has already begun to provide joint classes, international exchanges and research opportunities.

As for the future, Seachrist sees the enrollment challenges facing higher education as an opportunity for Kent State Stark to become more engaged with lifelong learning. She envisions building more relationships with community businesses and schools, and expanding opportunities for K-12 students, as well as adults interested in learning specific skills.

Learn more at www.kent.edu/stark.

Above: As Kent State University at Stark celebrates its 75th anniversary, it continues to expand its buildings, course offerings, degrees and enrollment. Pictured, left to right, construction on the campus in 1966 and the Kent State Stark Campus today.

LaunchNET Turns 10 and Moves to DI Hub

LaunchNET celebrated its 10th anniversary on Oct. 20, 2022, and officially opened its offices in the Burton D. Morgan Foundation Entrepreneurship Suite, on the second floor of Kent State’s Design Innovation Hub.

Kent State President Todd Diacon and LaunchNET Director Zach Mikrut, BBA ’10, MED ’19, were among those who spoke. The event included a showcase of current and former student entrepreneurs, a gallery exhibit displaying LaunchNET’s impact over the past decade and a reception for guests.

The suite of offices serves as the new home for the business startup advising program (formerly housed at the University Library), which provides advice, guidance and workspace for fledgling entrepreneurs as they develop and determine the viability of their ideas.

The new suite includes the Marty Erbaugh (I3) Lab, a workspace where student teams can ideate, innovate and incubate to build their businesses. This product accelerator program launched in 2022 Spring Semester and is led by LaunchNET and Design Innovation programs.

LaunchNET began as Blackstone LaunchPad and, after partnering with the Burton D. Morgan Foundation about six years ago, rebranded into LaunchNET. Kent State became part of NEOLaunchNET, which includes four other collegiate partners: Case Western Reserve University, Baldwin Wallace University, John Carroll University and Lorain County Community College.

In its first decade, Kent State’s LaunchNET has served more than 2,200 clients, most of whom are Kent State students, and it boasts success stories across Northeast Ohio. For its next decade, Mikrut says, “We will continue to focus on the needs, gaps, questions and problems that our KSU entrepreneur community is facing and will support with responsive programming.”

Learn more at www.kent.edu/launchnet.



Above: Guests celebrate the 10th anniversary of LaunchNET at the opening of its new Burton D. Morgan Foundation Entrepreneurship Suite.



Above: LaunchNET Director Zach Mikrut holds a team meeting at the program’s new offices in the Design Innovation Hub on the Kent Campus.



Above: Angela Spalsbury, PhD, dean and chief administrative officer for the Kent State University Twinsburg Academic Center, kicked off the celebration of the center’s 10th anniversary at its current location. She highlighted the center’s vibrant presence in Twinsburg and noted, “We remain committed to preparing the workforce for the future.”

Twinsburg Academic Center Celebrates 10 Years

The Twinsburg Academic Center celebrated the 10th anniversary at its current location by hosting a public open house on Sept. 13, 2022. Alumni, donors, faculty, staff, students, business leaders and community members were invited for a commemoration, tour and refreshments.

Speakers at the event highlighted Kent State University’s commitment to making higher education accessible, affordable and relevant to the local community and its workforce, thanks to vibrant community engagement.

While the academic center building has been a landmark on Creekside Drive for a decade, the Geauga Campus has offered workforce development classes in Twinsburg since 1990. As demand for courses grew, a LEED-certified facility, then known as the Regional Academic Center, was built in 2012 as a satellite of the Geauga Regional Campus. The 44,000-square-foot, two-story building is located within a 30-minute drive for students in a four-county area.

In late 2019, its name was officially changed to the Twinsburg Academic Center to better reflect the community it serves. Through Kent State Geauga, the Twinsburg Academic Center now offers a range of courses, including business, accounting and computer science, as well as professional development and educational opportunities for employees. Educational offerings range from non-credit continuing education, workforce development, job training and executive development courses to two- and four-year degrees and even online master’s degrees.

The center also helps address ongoing staffing shortages in healthcare, offering the Associate of Applied Science degree in Nursing (ADN). This program prepares students for the registered nursing profession in community hospitals, clinics and home healthcare settings.

Noting the partnerships the center has nurtured with the city of Twinsburg and its business and service leaders, Angela Spalsbury, PhD, the center’s dean and chief administrative officer, says, “We keep our finger on the pulse of emerging workplace trends and offer the training to meet those needs.”

Learn more at www.kent.edu/geauga/twinsburg-academic-center.

Scan QR code to view a video recording of the event.





The life-changing experience of global education

Kent State students, both domestic and international, are exploring cultural diversity at home and abroad—and becoming citizens of the world.

BY BETHANY SAVA, BS '12, AND JAN SENN

With eight campuses in seven counties throughout Northeast Ohio, Kent State University radiates a welcoming hometown atmosphere. Each campus feels integral to the communities it serves, providing exemplary education and unique experiences for all students.

Kent State also has been a purveyor of global education for more than half a century. Its history of international collaboration includes an educational exchange with the Soviet Union during the Cold War and student exchanges with Iran prior to its revolution in 1978-1979.

Today, Kent State's global reach has expanded to six continents, with full education abroad programming in Brazil, the Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Italy, Jordan and Switzerland; study abroad partnerships with countries such as Australia, Bolivia, Japan, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Singapore and Uganda; and outreach centers in China and India. The university currently hosts international students from 99 countries and provides 200+ programs in 60+ countries for both domestic and international students to immerse themselves in global education experiences.

Students who study abroad are better prepared for a world that is increasingly interconnected and multicultural. As they engage with different cultures, people, languages and ideas, students become comfortable with the unfamiliar, increase their global awareness and develop an appreciation for other ways of living.

At the end of their study abroad program—whether it be a few weeks, a semester or a full academic year—students have gained not only a global perspective and memories to last a lifetime, but a new confidence and sense of self. And as they embark on their careers, their ability to communicate and collaborate with colleagues from different backgrounds is an essential 21st-century skill.

WORLD-RENOUNDED KENT STATE HONORED FOR ITS COMMITMENT TO INTERNATIONALIZATION

Kent State has integrated international education throughout all facets of the university and its campuses—through competitive research,

comprehensive education abroad programs, international curriculum development and robust international student and scholar programs.

Unlike many universities, Kent State boasts a centralized system for internationalization with both education abroad and international student programs housed under the Office of Global Education, which can trace its roots to the Center for International and Comparative Programs in the College of Arts and Sciences.

“Kent State has always had a global presence in one way or another, but what we’ve been able to do over the past 50-plus years is to build that intentionally,” says Melody Tankersley, PhD, senior vice president and provost. “Every day, we’re looking to have more opportunities for our students to study abroad and see the world, as well as to bring the world to Kent State’s campuses and our global partners.”

Earlier this year, Kent State was the only university in the United States to receive the prestigious 2022 Senator Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization from NAIES: Association of International Educators. The award recognizes outstanding innovation and accomplishment in campus internationalization efforts as evidenced in mission, strategies, programs and results.

“The Senator Paul Simon Award is our nation’s top prize for excellence in global education,” Kent State President Todd Diacon says. “It is a richly deserved award that highlights our excellent education abroad programs and our ongoing success in enrolling and graduating international students.”

The award is made even more meaningful by the timing of its presentation. Despite challenges posed by the pandemic and an emerging sense of xenophobia following months of isolation and fear of the coronavirus’s spread, Kent State remained a stalwart supporter of global education.

“Having received the Simon award at this very moment validates the hard work of the people in the Office of Global Education, but also the vision and the motivation of Kent State to guarantee all of its students be immersed in an international environment,” says Marcello Fantoni, PhD, vice president for global education. ➤





THE WORLD IS OUR CLASSROOM
EDUCATION ABROAD

Kent State University oversees its own study abroad programs, which allows the university to ensure the academic integrity of its offerings no matter where its students are studying. The academic rigor in each of Kent State’s study abroad experiences is parallel to the curriculum taught at its Ohio campuses.

“We select institutions that have similar rankings or accreditations as us so our students can stay on

track for graduation by taking credits that will be applicable,” says Amber Cruxton, director of education abroad in the Office of Global Education. “Then we work with the academic units here to develop meaningful partnerships that meet the needs of their missions as well.”

Students can select the length of their study abroad experiences, including a full academic year, a semester or a four-week institute. They also can participate in faculty-led trips and alternative spring or winter breaks, which are often shorter and less cost-prohibitive than a traditional semester abroad.

Kent State students from every Regional Campus participate in study abroad. Kent State University at Stark has an Office of Global Education Initiatives, which has a similar function as the Office of Global Education on the Kent Campus. The Stark office has some of its own international partnerships and programming, including Kent State Stark courses in Florence, Italy, that students can take at the regional rate.

“The fact that this is a strategic priority of the university indicates its commitment to cultivating all of the good things that global education fosters, such as cultural awareness and broadening perspectives,” says Sarah Schmidt, assistant director of global education initiatives, who oversees the Kent State Stark Office of Global Education Initiatives, is an instructor of peace and conflict studies and is pursuing a doctorate in cultural foundations of education at Kent State. “As a university-wide priority, global education should be accessible to every student at Kent State.”

International students also have the opportunity to complete a study abroad experience during their time at the university. By coming to Kent State, they gain access to the culture and academic offerings of not only the United States but the rest of the world. From 2018 to now, more than 200 international students at Kent State have studied abroad.

The Office of Global Education and several colleges throughout the university offer funds to help domestic and international students overcome the financial barriers that can be associated with studying abroad. And Kent State’s Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement recently established an endowment fund with the aim of providing a global education scholarship for all incoming students who wish to study abroad (see page 14).

From help obtaining a passport to covering travel expenses, tuition and more, the university is endeavoring to bring the world to its students.

Learn more about education abroad programs and scholarships at www.kent.edu/EducationAbroad. Read stories about study abroad programs on pages 16 to 39.



THE WORLD
AT OUR DOOR
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT
PROGRAMS

The world has taken notice of the outstanding educational opportunities Kent State has to offer,” says Sean Broghammer, PhD, Kent State’s vice president for enrollment management.

“Our Office of Global Education has successfully shared the good news around the globe that we have much to offer for students seeking a degree in the United States.”

This Fall Semester 2022, Kent State University is host to 1,648 international students from 99 countries, a nearly 18% percent increase from the previous fall. Of that total number of international students, 967 are graduate students, a 37% increase from the previous fall. (See page 11 for more statistics.)

That robust international student population brings a wealth of perspectives, experiences and cultures to share with domestic faculty, staff and students, as well as with fellow international students from other countries.

“International students enhance the learning environment of a university,” Marcello Fantoni says. “The diversity they bring enriches culture and opens individuals’ minds.”

For Maham Khan, a Fulbright scholar from Pakistan studying literature, coming to Kent State was an opportunity to access a better-quality education and to push herself beyond her comfort zone. Because of Kent State’s support services, she connected with other Fulbright scholars before arriving in the United States, which eased her transition. She has since made even more friends, including other international and domestic students.

Though she came to Kent State with the understanding that being an international student would benefit her, Khan has since realized that the surrounding community benefits as well. The presence of international students offers an opportunity for people to confront their own prejudices and empowers personal growth that will impact themselves and the communities in which they live and work.

“We really need to work on finding each other, connecting with each other and reminding one another of our shared humanity,” Khan says. “So many of the prejudices that people have can be unlearned just by having a conversation with another person.”

See list of international student programs and resources on pages 12-13.



WORLDWIDE WELCOME
INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Kent State University has a long history of collaborating internationally. Its many partners include universities, institutions of higher education, governmental agencies, non-governmental agencies and private sector companies.

The most successful and active partnerships typically are a result of one or two committed faculty members from each institution who coordinate and promote the collaboration among their peers and students.

“International partnerships are one of the key components of international education,” says Sarah J. Malcolm, BS ’98, MA ’05, executive director of Kent State’s Office of Global Education and director of international partnerships, marketing and communications. “They help build a foundation for faculty and students to meet their international goals through research, faculty and student exchange, and international program development.”

The International Partnerships division in the Office of Global Education assists with developing formal documentation of the relationship, such as a Memorandum of Agreement or contract.

“The work of international partnership development is often the behind-the-scenes work of relationship building, program design and contract management,” Malcolm says. “This work helps lay the foundation for sustainable and long-term international education efforts that ensure faculty and students have opportunities to meet their international goals.”

Learn more about international partnerships at www.kent.edu/globaleducation/international-partnerships.

International Students
at Kent State

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FACTS AND
FIGURES FOR FALL 2022

Total Students: 1,648 | Total Countries: 99

“We are proud to say that our international students are present in every Kent State University college,” says Salma Benhaida, director of International Recruitment and Admissions and Sponsored Student Services in the Office of Global Education. “We also have 21 students at the Regional Campuses and students in the College of Podiatric Medicine. We do notice a large number of our international students gravitate toward STEM and STEM-related fields.”



TOP TEN
SENDING
COUNTRIES:

1. **INDIA**
470 students
(28.5%)
2. **BRAZIL**
211 students
(13%)
3. **SAUDI ARABIA**
148 students (9%)
4. **CHINA**
127 students
(8%)
5. **NIGERIA**
58 students
(3.5%)
6. **NEPAL**
48 students
(3%)
7. **BANGLADESH**
45 students (3%)
8. **SOUTH KOREA**
44 students (3%)
9. **CANADA**
41 students
(2.5%)
10. **OMAN**
34 students
(2%)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

To recruit and support the success of its international students, Kent State provides many programs and resources throughout the university, including the following:

INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS Based in the Office of Global Education, International Admissions supports Kent State University's goal to engage the world beyond its campuses. It recruits academically talented and culturally diverse international students, evaluates credentials received from institutions abroad, advocates on behalf of international applicants, facilitates international credit transfer and enhances administrative systems to smooth the process for international students to come to Kent State.

"Having been an international student myself, I have developed a passion for helping international students and their families find their home away from home at Kent State University," says Salma Benhaida, director of International Recruitment and Admissions and Sponsored Student Services. Fluent in English, Arabic and French, she came to Ohio as a student from Morocco. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees from The University of Akron and is pursuing a doctorate in education at Kent State.

"Moving to the United States has enabled me to understand some of the challenges international students face on their study abroad journey," Benhaida says. "My goal is to make the application and admission process as stress free and welcoming as possible."

Learn more at www.kent.edu/admissions?au=international.

SPONSORED STUDENT SERVICES More than 30% of international students enrolled at Kent State are partially or entirely supported by governments (U.S. or foreign), international organizations, public or private companies and other third-party entities. Countries represented by sponsored students include Brazil, Ecuador, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Namibia, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam.

"Kent State University benefits from having sponsored students on campus as much as the students do," says Stacie Ansley, senior international admissions coordinator. "My sponsored students have exposed me to parts of the world I have only seen in my dreams."

Based in the Office of Global Education, Sponsored Student Services serves as a central point of contact for (and liaison among) sponsoring agencies, sponsored students and several offices across the university.

Learn more at www.kent.edu/admissions/sponsored-students.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND SCHOLAR SERVICES Based in the Office of Global Education, International Student and Scholar Services is a resource for maintaining students' immigration status, acclimating them to the United States and dealing with other issues international students face.

It strives to provide personalized support and make all international students feel connected to the university community well before they arrive in the United States—and for years after they return to their home country. International Student Orientation begins 10 weeks before students arrive at Kent State and includes a virtual course with short modules introducing students to everything they'll need while at Kent State, along with a GroupMe chat monitored by orientation leaders who answer students' questions in real time.

The International Student and Scholar Services team assists students through the entire process, from obtaining their visas to securing transportation from the airport. Once students arrive on campus, advisors meet personally with every international student to ensure they are adjusting, learning and connecting while at Kent State.

"The international character of Kent State University is in large part made possible by our more than 1,600 students from nearly 100 different countries," says Jef Davis, associate director of International Student and Scholar Services. "The International Student and Scholar Services team is here to help our international students and scholars navigate the university and U.S. culture. Our goal is to help them feel that Kent State University is not just a place they are visiting but is truly their 'home away from home.'"

International students can make new friends through programs and events hosted by International Student and Scholar Services, including the monthly Cultural Café (where international students present information about their home countries to other students, faculty and staff, often including traditional songs or dances) and the International Cook-Off (a competition each semester in which teams cook and serve food from their home countries). The cook-off is hosted by the Office of Global Education and supported by Kent State Dining Services.

Learn more at www.kent.edu/iss.

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AFFAIRS Kent State's Division of Student Affairs includes the Office of International Student Affairs, which aims to aid in the retention and academic success of international students by providing services related to cultural adjustment and a sense of belonging. Additionally, it implements strategies to help domestic students develop a global mindset and desire to study abroad.

The office facilitates two signature events each year: Homecoming International Celebration (an opportunity for international students to showcase their home countries and cultures during Homecoming Weekend) and International Talent and Fashion Show (an opportunity for international students to model traditional attire and participate in cultural performances each spring).

"The Office of International Student Affairs is devoted to being a support on campus for international students and domestic students alike," says Ash Mierau, interim director. "We help international students adjust to life in America and feel at home at Kent State, integrate global perspectives and build intercultural relationships that accurately reflect the wonderfully diverse community we have at Kent State."

"We do this through programs like the Global Village, a living-learning community for international and domestic students to intentionally live together; Conversation Partners, a program that pairs international and domestic students to meet once a week; and Res Airways, a biweekly program that lets international students teach students, staff and faculty about their home country—as well as many others."

Learn more at www.kent.edu/international.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS To support services, events and activities that benefit Kent State international students, the Office of Global Education collects a fee from international students each semester. A portion of those funds is available to international student organizations with a membership majority of international students. They can apply to use the International Student Event Fund for conducting activities and events that promote international understanding, facilitate interaction between cultures and enhance participation in university-wide events.

Kent State's Division of Student Affairs includes a Center for Student Involvement where international students can discover a number of student organizations to join, including those focused on specific cultures and countries.

Learn more at www.kent.edu/globaleducation/international-student-organizations.

THE GERALD H. READ CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION The Gerald H. Read Center for International and Intercultural Education in the College of Education, Health and Human Services was created in 1987 through an endowment established by Professor Emeritus Gerald H. Read. Consistent with Kent State's strategic commitment to global cooperation, the center was designed to examine curricular issues related to international and intercultural education, to facilitate international student and scholar programming, to support exchange and research projects with an international and/or intercultural focus, and to support faculty-led education abroad in the college.

The Read Center has been the recipient of several federally supported grants and international scholar programs over the years. Sponsored through the U.S. Department of State, more than 350 international grantees from all over the globe have come to Kent State University through the International Leaders in Education Program as well as the Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement in Media Literacy program.

Moreover, the Read Center, in its commitment to international exchange and scholarship, has hosted more than 200 visiting scholars from around the world, through the Aggarwal-Blackburn Visiting Scholars program. This program provides support for scholar acculturation and research via seminars and faculty mentorship while also introducing the Kent State community to new and culturally diverse scholarship. Finally, the center establishes linkages with stakeholders across Kent State and abroad in order to promote university internationalization and extend its impact.

"The Read Center is a peerless entity on the Kent Campus in that it acts as a catalyst for the advancement of international and intercultural education in diverse, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary ways," says Amanda Johnson, PhD, who became director of the center in 2020. "From leading and developing important relationships with international universities to supporting international education principles and practices with our local community educators, the center is in an incomparable position to lead the way for internationalization of the college and subsequently, the university as a whole." ⚡

Learn more at www.kent.edu/ehhs/ciie.

➤350
international
grantees
from
all over
the globe
have come
to KSU.

➤200
visiting
scholars
from
around
the world
have been
hosted by
KSU.

Expanding Access to Education Abroad

While one in four students currently studies abroad during their time at Kent State, many students are unable to access an international experience due to the cost. What if every student was able to receive scholarship funding toward global education? That question was the inspiration behind the Kent State Global Education Endowment.

Established with a lead gift from Valoree Vargo, vice president for Kent State University's Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement and CEO of the Kent State Foundation, the endowment aims to provide every incoming undergraduate student with financial support for a study abroad experience.

"An opportunity to study abroad is an experience like nothing else," Vargo says. "Students are learning 24/7 when they're immersed in a new culture—both in and out of the classroom. The global education that Kent State offers our students is the best in the country, and I believe that access to that experience should be open to as many students as possible. To be able to support the Global Education Endowment personally and professionally is deeply meaningful to me."

Reaching an initial goal of \$20 million would provide a scholarship of approximately \$1,000 per student for the number of Kent State students who are currently studying abroad (about 25%).

The scholarships will be administered by the Office of Global Education, Division of Enrollment Management and Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement.

The collective impact of \$20 million in one endowment is the fastest way to make more scholarships available to more Kent State students. This will be a differentiating factor for Kent State among public higher education institutions and will support enrollment and retention rates. Most importantly, it will enrich the student experience.

Kent State's greatest global education advocates who give a new gift to support the endowment will be welcomed into the Renaissance Scholars Society (see page 15). With their collective support, undergraduate students from every major and every college at any Kent State campus will be eligible to receive a scholarship from this fund once during their undergraduate career. The university will continue to grow the endowment to fulfill its ultimate goal of providing a global education scholarship to every undergraduate student who desires a study abroad experience.

Additionally, the Office of Global Education has a donor-supported fund specifically designed to assist students in obtaining their first passport or renewing an expired one. The cost of a passport can be a

stumbling block or stopping point for some students, preventing them from pursuing one of the many important global learning opportunities available to them at Kent State. The Project Passport Fund provides a portal to a future that includes global learning for students who have never left the country.

"At Kent State, we believe that exploring new places is vital to a greater understanding of the world around us," says Marcello Fantoni, PhD, vice president for global education. "We know that an international experience is one of the most direct and effective ways to change the life of a student for the better."

A global experience expands academic, professional and personal horizons and leads to greater employment opportunities. Kent State's Global Education Endowment will provide unprecedented access to global education, allowing students to dream bigger and gain a new world view. Studying abroad is the chance of a lifetime and, with this endowment, one that no Kent State student will have to miss. ⚡

Scan this QR code to give to the Global Education Endowment. Or go to <https://flashes.givetokent.org/campaign/global-education-endowment-fund/c440600>.



JOIN THE RENAISSANCE

The Italian Renaissance was a cultural phenomenon that transformed our world forever—and the city of Florence was at its heart. As Kent State celebrates 50 years of its flagship program in Florence, Italy, the university has set its sights on the future. It has recently established the Kent State Global Education Endowment that, once fully funded, will provide access to a global education scholarship for all incoming undergraduate students who aspire to study abroad during their time at Kent State.

Such an ambitious goal would be the largest endowment in university history—and is only possible with philanthropic support. To help meet that goal, the university has created the Renaissance Scholars Society, a group of major gift donors who share the university's enthusiasm for a boundless education and an expanded worldview. The program aims to raise an initial \$20 million in five years or less to support the endowment fund and immediately help as many students as possible.

To become a member of the Renaissance Scholars Society, donors make a new gift (outright or five-year pledge) to the Kent State Global Education Endowment at one of five levels (\$50,000 to \$10 million). The society will offer exclusive opportunities to its supporters for travel and education abroad with renowned scholars, artists, lecturers, historians and faculty from Kent State and its international partners. It's a unique format that combines two of the university's core competencies: study abroad and lifelong learning.

Renaissance Scholars Society members will journey to Florence in October 2023 for the Kent State Florence program's 50th anniversary celebration, which includes a donor gala and access to experiences only available through Kent State. They also will receive advance invitations to attend future alumni and donor global education experiences at other locations beginning in 2024, as well as updates about global education.

Learn more about the Renaissance Scholar Society at www.kent.edu/renaissance.

50 YEARS OF FLORENCE

Above: A view of Florence at sunset, with the dome of the Florence Cathedral (Santa Maria del Fiore) at right and the tower (Torre di Arnolfo) of the Palazzo Vecchio at left. Photo by Bob Christy, BA '95, MA '22

Kent State University reflects on its study abroad history in Florence, Italy, and looks toward the future as it celebrates the 50th anniversary of its flagship education abroad program.

BY BETHANY SAVA, BS '12

In 1972, 10 Kent State architecture students accompanied by faculty members traveled to Florence, Italy, to study for a few weeks. They didn't have a building for classes or a formal academic program to guide them. No Kent State University faculty or staff members lived in the city. Yet, the impact of learning in the birthplace of the Renaissance was undeniable. Perhaps without realizing it, these students and their professors set in motion an illustrious Kent State tradition of studying abroad in Florence that would endure and flourish in the decades to come.

"Kent State's Florence study abroad offerings of today stem from its architecture study abroad program launched in 1972," says Mark Mistur, AIA, dean of Kent State's College of Architecture and Environmental Design. "One of the first of its kind, it featured a partnership with Superstudio, an Italian architecture firm known as a major leader of the Radical Design movement of the late 1960s."

For many years, the programming available in Italy was solely geared toward architecture students. An article from the March 11, 1976, *Daily Kent Stater* notes that a group of about 44 fourth-year architecture students and faculty members would spend the spring quarter in Florence—a more than 300% jump in participation in four years. At the time, round-trip travel for an entire quarter in Florence was \$700 per person, which included airfare, a two-month student Eurail Pass, accommodations in Rome and a one-week trip to Greece, among other transportation costs.

Growth continued as the program began to welcome more disciplines, including interior design, fashion and art history. By the early 2000s, it was evident that Kent State needed a dedicated space of its own in Florence. The university acquired the ancient Palazzo dei Cerchi in 2003 and oversaw the renovation of the building, which was built around the end of the 13th century and beginning of the 14th. While the interior was updated to serve the needs of Kent State students studying abroad, the exterior facade was maintained in its original state, ▶

Studying in Florence with a small group of classmates is a transformative experience that creates special memories and lasting friendships.

offering visitors and passersby a glimpse of Florence from the 1200s. Located in the heart of the city, steps away from the Piazza della Signoria, Palazzo dei Cerchi was Kent State's headquarters in Florence from 2004 through 2015.

The programs available in Florence continued to expand to other majors and increase in popularity. In 2012, the university purchased an additional building, the Palazzo Bartolini Baldelli, to accommodate the growing number of students.

In 2016, the university relocated to its current home, Palazzo Vettori. The 15th century building and its courtyard provide more space for classrooms and social activities. It is located across from Santa Maria del Fiore, the iconic Florentine cathedral situated in the city center.

"Now in Florence we offer over 90 courses every year," says Marcello Fantoni, PhD, vice president for global education and former director of the Kent State University Florence Center (2005-2012). "We have four different terms: a fall and spring semester and two summer terms. It has become a home for not only Kent State in its entirety, but it also serves as a big umbrella under which other international universities are starting to join us."

Fifty years after those first 10 architecture students studied in the city, the Kent State University Florence Center is the university's flagship study abroad and international center. Before the pandemic began in 2020, it was home to 800 students a year, and interest in the program continues to rebound. During the 2022-23 academic year, the Florence program is set to host approximately 600 students who come from all colleges and campuses within the university system, as well as faculty members who come to Florence to teach.

"Florence continues to give Kent State students the opportunity to study in an international environment, grow as individuals and professionals, explore alternatives and collect memories they will cherish forever," says Fabrizio Ricciardelli, PhD, who directs the Kent State University Florence Center and also teaches history courses, mostly on the Renaissance.

"Being here in Florence means touching history. I always teach on-site when possible. So wherever we go with the students we have the chance to discuss works of art, masterpieces and history sources."

Most recently, students majoring in public health, nursing, fashion, education and several other disciplines participated in the Kent State Florence Summer Institute and the Kent State University Florence Health Institute, each for a term of four weeks. While there, they engaged with the community through planned academic opportunities

Right: Clockwise from top: An interior view of the Siena Cathedral (Duomo di Siena), which Kent State students in the Florence program visited on a field trip in summer 2022. In the foreground is a marble mosaic floor panel, *Massacre of the Innocents*, by Matteo di Giovanni circa 1481. | A Kent State student sits in the lobby of Palazzo Vettori, the home base of the Kent State University Florence Center. | Palazzo Vettori is a 15th century building located across from the Florence Cathedral in the city center. | Fabrizio Ricciardelli, PhD, director of the Kent State University Florence Center, talks with Kent State students taking his course *Florence: The Myth of a City*. They are gathered on the Piazza del Duomo in the center of Florence; behind him is Santa Maria del Fiore, the cathedral of Florence. Photos by Bob Christy, BA '95, MA '22

related to their majors, such as student teaching experiences in elementary, middle and high schools; tours of local hospitals; and visits to museums.

For junior Andrew Priest, who is majoring in integrated language arts and plans to teach English in Japan someday, getting to work in a classroom setting with elementary students has been a rewarding experience. It's given him the opportunity to practice navigating language barriers, including some rather unexpected ones.

"In that elementary class, there are Ukrainian students who are obviously a bit separated from the rest of the classmates," says Priest. "They're refugees, and they don't speak Italian, they don't speak English. There's a double language barrier between us. I was paired with them a lot, and I made it my mission to Google translate Ukrainian phrases and, to the best of my ability, communicate with them."

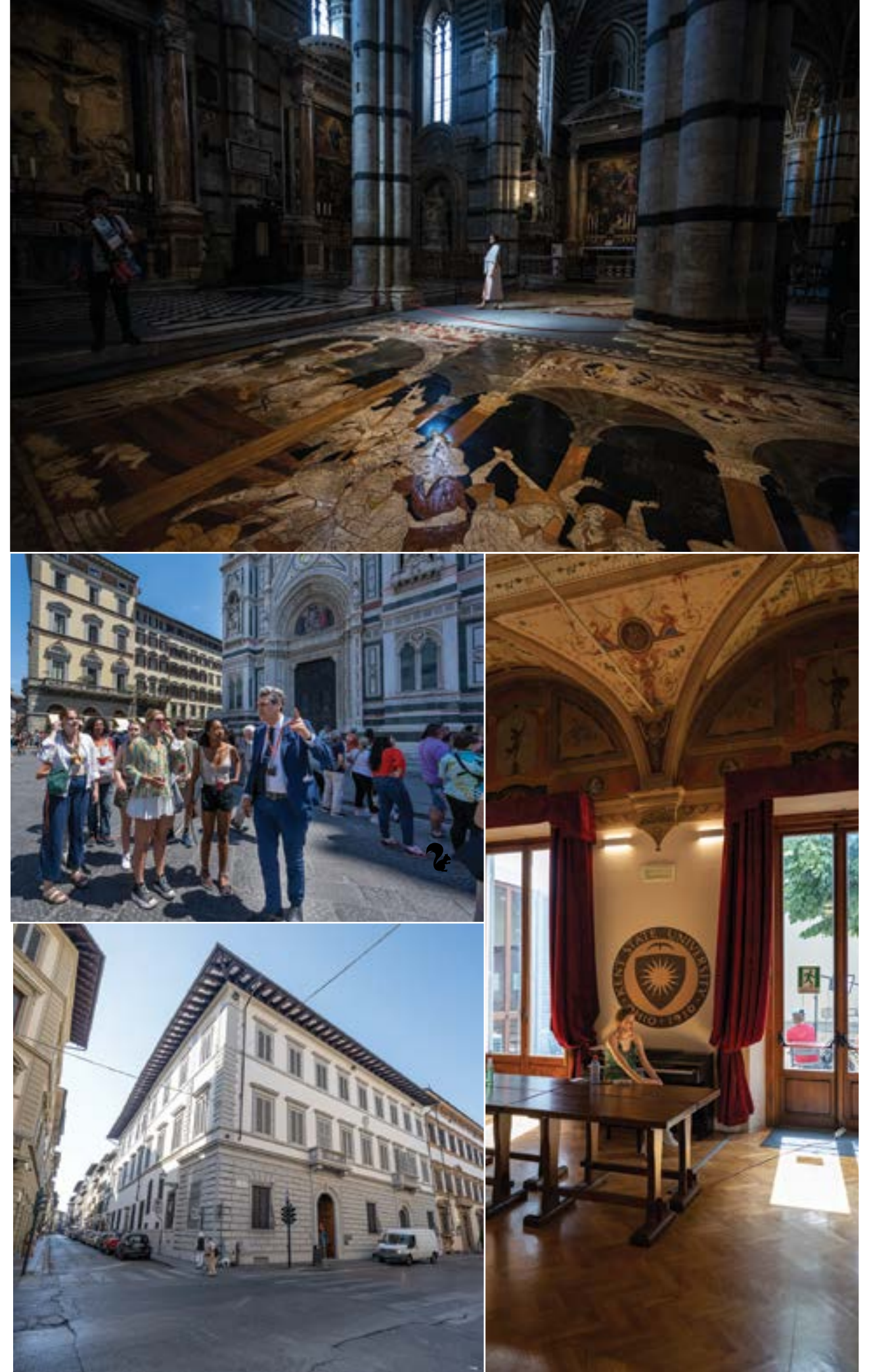
It was a challenge, and the Ukrainian students were hesitant to engage. He could tell they understood him based on their behavior, but they didn't verbally respond. But Priest continued to work with them and, finally, he was rewarded with a single word uttered by a little girl as she was drawing a picture.

"I told her I thought she was talented at art," he says. "And she responded, 'Yes' in Ukrainian."

While professors may lecture about the challenges of communicating across cultures, Priest and other students studying abroad face those challenges firsthand and find solutions to overcome them in real time with real people. And, while studying in Florence, Kent State students are able to travel to other European countries easily and relatively cheaply. Such exposure to many different cultures increases the value of their international experience.

But Florence serves as their base, their home away from home. The city, rich in culture, history and art, provides a captivating backdrop for their studies. And the dedicated Kent State faculty and staff who live in Florence provide comprehensive support for the students during their time there.

Studying in Florence with a small group of classmates is a transformative experience that leaves a strong impression and creates special memories and lasting friendships. ➤





Above: Linda Spurlock, MA '92, PhD '01, associate professor of anthropology at Kent State, introduces students to skulls while teaching her course Faces: Human Head Anatomy with a Forensic Art Focus at the Palazzo Vettori in summer 2022. **Right:** Fabio Corsini, PhD, talks with Kent State students at Florence's Central Market for his course Food Cultures: Biodiversity and Cultural Diversity, From Slow Food to Eataly. | KSU students enrolled in a Teaching English as a Foreign Language course taught by Nicoletta Peluffo, PhD, [kneeling] respond as children sing a song at Primaria Cairoli, an elementary school in Florence.

"In my opinion, it creates a sense of belonging," says Nicoletta Peluffo, Italian language and education program coordinator at Kent State University Florence. "They all belong to Florence because they all conducted their experience here together, even though they come from many different colleges."

In 2022, Kent State celebrated half a century of studying abroad in Florence. Over the five decades, countless individuals have benefited from an immersive educational experience in the cradle of the Renaissance, an experience that not only enriches the lives of the students who go but also can benefit their friends, families and co-workers when they return.

As the university looks to the future, its focus is on making global education accessible to every student regardless of their financial circumstances through the recently established Kent State Global Education Endowment (see page 14). Often, students are unable to participate because of the cost associated with studying abroad. By removing or reducing that hurdle, more students can benefit from these life-changing experiences. ⚡

Learn more about the Kent State University Florence Center at www.kent.edu/Florence.



Stepping Out of Her Comfort Zone

The path to finding her purpose led one nontraditional student to Kent State, where a study abroad opportunity provided new perspectives and bolstered her confidence.

BY LINDSEY VLASIC, BA '22



Above: Emily Radebaugh poses outside the Florence Cathedral (Santa Maria del Fiore) in the Piazza del Duomo.

College provides the opportunity to explore interests and find your purpose, but not everyone follows the same path to get there. Emily Radebaugh, from Sylvania, Ohio, had dropped out of other colleges twice and was working 60-hour weeks at a warehouse when she decided to go back to school at age 22. "I knew deep in my heart that I couldn't continue to work in a place where I was so unhappy," she says. "After I decided to go back to school, I flitted around the warehouse informing anyone who would listen about my plans to become a history professor."

Most people at the warehouse were happy for her, but one man she had never spoken to before reacted in a way she will never forget. "He laughed in my face," Radebaugh says. "He said, 'No one would take you seriously as a professor. You talk with your hands so much you should do sign language.'"

"Florence offered me the richest educational experiences I could have ever dreamed of."

"I was taken aback by how boldly he made fun of me, but I took what he said to heart. I started researching American Sign Language and took to it immediately. I was deeply drawn to ASL, Deaf culture and eventually Deaf education, rights, community and history."

At Kent State, she tried programs in interpreting and Deaf education before deciding to major in ASL through the modern and classical languages department in the College of Arts and Sciences. "It was kind of a journey to get where I am now," says Radebaugh, who plans to graduate in May 2023. "But I enjoy what I do and have never thought of leaving the ASL umbrella." Active on the Kent Campus, she is president of the Deaf Access and Allyship Organization.

In summer 2022, she traveled to Florence, Italy, for a study abroad experience. As an ASL major with a minor in Italian studies, Radebaugh focused on those topics, discussing them with her professors in each course she took. She gave a presentation on Italian Sign Language and Italian Deaf culture for an intercultural communications course, studied how emotions and culture impact facial expressions (a core linguistic part of sign language) for a psychology course and explored the LGBTQ community in Florence and its intersectionality with the Italian Deaf community for a course combining LGBTQ studies and peace and conflict studies.

Radebaugh used her breaks between classes to immerse herself in the culture and explore sign language programs she had researched prior to her trip. On a class trip to Florence's sister city Siena, during a two-hour lunch break she visited the Siena School for Liberal Arts, which has a Deaf studies program with courses in Italian Sign Language and Italian Deaf Culture & History.

The opportunities and experiences Radebaugh had while studying in Florence were made possible by several scholarships, including the Gary L. and Katy Dix-Brahler Endowed Study Abroad Scholarship and the Fern E. Welling Scholarship Fund.

"Florence offered me the richest educational opportunities I could have ever dreamed of, and I'm extremely grateful," she says. "I loved experiencing a new culture and language. I felt the more I stepped out of my comfort zone, the more I grew as a person. I've grown in living with other people, and I've grown in confidence." ⚡

Learn about the ASL program at Kent State at www.kent.edu/mcls/ba-american-sign-language.

Perfect Time for a Course on Pandemics

This summer's course, Pandemics That Shaped the World—taught in Florence during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic—enabled students to develop their own playbook for a public health response.

BY LINDSEY VLASIC, BA '22

Before COVID-19 made the term “pandemic” a daily presence in conversations and world news, it was already part of life for Christopher Woolverton, PhD.

A founding member of the College of Public Health in 2009, Woolverton has been at Kent State since 1995. A professor of epidemiology, he teaches graduate and undergraduate courses. He also conducts research on the detection and control of bacterial pathogens, and biological safety and security issues. Since 2016, Woolverton has traveled to Florence, Italy, to teach a special topics course, Pandemics That Shaped the World, which he developed for the Kent State University Florence Health Institute. The institute allows students pursuing a career in public health, nursing or related fields to study the impacts of their field through an international lens.

For the summer 2022 course, Woolverton made some timely additions to the course content, including historical and current data on COVID-19 and monkeypox. “The course is designed to teach students about pandemics, so we start with the bubonic plague—and we’ve added in COVID-19 because it’s in real time,” he says. “We also talk about the great influenza pandemic of 1918 and monkeypox, which is in the news right now. To be able to tell the students historically what happened and then bring them to the present day has allowed me to share not only my passions in the fields of infectious disease and public health, but also to help students really see that public health is bigger than just the local health department.”

However, his students in Florence aren’t the only ones learning as they study abroad. Being in Florence has provided Woolverton with opportunities to speak with experts on COVID-19 vaccine development and the city’s history of public health crises, and to dive deeper into his research and gain a greater understanding of his own course materials.

“It’s an amazing opportunity not only to study the history, but also to see things evolving currently in

the pandemic we’re experiencing,” says Woolverton, who has been an important health advisor in shaping COVID-19 safety measures for Kent State University and the city of Kent. “To be able to share with students why Italy is so important in the history of the bubonic plague and to the ongoing history of COVID-19 is quite fortuitous.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered many aspects of society, including the way Woolverton teaches Pandemics That Shaped the World. He created an assignment for students to develop a playbook for how they would respond to a pandemic. In class, they go through a zombie pandemic scenario with typical response tactics implemented by public health professionals during a pandemic. This helps them determine what they would do differently and repackage the information for their own playbook. At the end of the semester, they share their ideas with Woolverton and their peers.

“To be able to share with students why Italy is so important in the history of the bubonic plague and to the ongoing history of COVID-19 is quite fortuitous.”

Christopher Woolverton, PhD

“Part of the responses students have made to the pandemic have been local,” Woolverton says. “They ask why people aren’t wearing masks and why we had to when other countries didn’t. We talk about how sometimes science has to be looked at through political eyes so that it can be palatable to most of the people who have to implement it. It’s an opportunity for students to go beyond just books and paper.”

Woolverton’s students have experienced the pandemic in two countries, with two different approaches to handling the crisis. It’s made them question policies from both countries and gain new perspectives on how to confront a public health crisis like COVID-19.



Above: Christopher Woolverton, PhD, (front row, right) and the 25 students (3 graduate and 22 undergraduate) in the Pandemics That Shaped the World course gather outside Siena's cathedral (Duomo di Siena).

“Studying abroad allows students to reframe questions they would ask back in the States because they’re seeing things from a different economic and political point of view,” he says. “They are able to form their own opinions because they have firsthand data that’s not filtered through others’ eyes.”

The study abroad course was built around the idea of classroom activity, didactic interaction between students and professors, and excursions throughout Italy, including a lecture at the VisMederi Vaccine Institute in Siena and a tour of Siena’s cathedral.

One of Italy’s finest Gothic churches, the cathedral was begun in its present form in 1229 and the city of Siena planned and began work on a gigantic expansion in the early 1300s. However, the Black Plague swept through the city in 1348, leaving

two-thirds of the population dead. With them died the plans for the expanded cathedral.

Woolverton intends the excursions to show students how public health has influenced art, history and architecture and expand their understanding of course material from the classroom.

“Study abroad experiences do more than just open students’ eyes to what’s going on in the world,” Woolverton says. “They gain a level of maturity by being able to see the world differently. Study abroad is one of those critical pieces of education that allows a person to be a better student, citizen and employee when they go off to their career.” ⚡

Learn more about the College of Public Health at www.kent.edu/publichealth and the Florence Health Institute at www.kent.edu/globaleducation/florencehealth.



Left: Kent State University public health students visit Careggi University Hospital canteen, in Florence, to learn how food safety is practiced in Italy.

“The Coolest Experience That I’ll Never Forget”

This spring, Kent State students traveled to Italy to discover the art of documentary storytelling—and returned with stories of their own to tell for years to come.

BY ALEX ZITO AND J KEIRN-SWANSON

Peabody and Emmy award-winning journalist and documentary filmmaker Tom Jennings, BS ’85, had been thinking of ways to give back to his alma mater for some time. He’d offered internships with his California-based film and content production company, 1895 Films, to students from the College of Communication and Information (CCI) for several years—and recently hired a Kent State graduate in digital media production who had interned with his company. However, the pandemic had turned those internships into virtual ones, and it just wasn’t the same.

So when travel restrictions began to loosen and CCI Dean Amy Reynolds asked Jennings to teach a three-week intersession course on documentary storytelling, he was all for it. He would teach the course, CCI 40095 From Ideas to Stories: Storytelling in Tuscany, at Kent State’s campus in Florence, Italy. Based in the beautiful Palazzo Vettori, the Kent State University Florence Center is just a short walk from the city’s most famous attractions. And he would be co-teaching with Fabio Corsini, PhD, CCI Florence program coordinator, who has taught at the Florence campus since 2010.

Departing for Italy in mid-May and returning to the United States in early June, 19 students in the CCI course were some of the first from Kent State to study abroad since pre-pandemic days. They learned to be open to new ideas and evaluate them as potential projects for film, photography, design, writing, advertising or public relations. Jennings shared his expertise—many of his documentaries

are based on rare footage and focused on a historical figure or event—and helped students develop an idea into a “pitch” for their own use.

“I found it fascinating to learn about Tom’s journey as a Kent State graduate to where he is currently in his career,” says Josh Bailey, a senior from Parma, Ohio. “Studying journalism as he did, I felt a connection to him and was able to understand where my future could take me. The class challenged me, and I now have so many new skills that I can apply in my journalism career.”

During the 3-credit-hour course, students attended classes, screened and discussed films, and learned techniques to transfer their ideas into real projects. They also went on guided trips to various sites in Florence and Siena and explored Italy on their own.

“The trains were a little confusing at first, but once you get the hang of things, it was an extremely easy way to travel,” says Lainey Smith, a senior from Marion, Ohio, majoring in digital media production, film/video and photographic arts. “My personal favorite place was Venice. It felt smaller and quainter than some of the other places I visited. [In Venice] we would often stumble upon beautiful alleyways without another tourist in sight.”

The intersession course proved to be a perfect way for students to get a great experience. “Prior to this trip, I never thought studying abroad would be possible for me,” says Alex Miller, a sophomore from Wadsworth, Ohio, majoring in visual communication design and photography. “I gained insight into documentary filmmaking from Tom Jennings. We learned what goes on behind the scenes. Tom brought in (over Zoom) several experts he works with, including a music producer, copyright clearance manager, director of photography, accountant, location manager and more. I am so thankful for this experience and will carry it with me for the rest of my life.”

Celia Martin, a senior from North Canton, Ohio, majoring in visual communication design with a minor in user experience design, echoes those sentiments. “Everywhere we went was life changing,” she says. “And I was able to connect a lot back to an art history course I had taken a couple years ago. When we went to the Uffizi Gallery, I recognized many of the artworks we were shown. And I got to see my favorite painting that I’d learned about in that course—*Judith Slaying Holofernes* by Artemisia Gentileschi—so it was cool that I got to see it in person.”

Perhaps the most “cinematic” story of all was a moment described by Sophie Young, a junior from Sidney, Ohio, majoring in journalism. “I went to Mass in Il Duomo, which was incredible,” she says. “I walked right in as the choir started, and it felt like



Above: CCI Intersession 2022 students gather outside the Palazzo Pubblico during a field trip to Siena. Front row, kneeling, left to right: Tom Jennings, tour guide Alessandra Mazzanti, Fabio Corsini. Courtesy Tom Jennings

“Prior to this trip, I never thought studying abroad would be possible for me. I am so thankful for this experience and will carry it with me for the rest of my life.” Alex Miller, sophomore

[I was hearing] angels in heaven. It was the coolest experience that I’ll never forget.”

As for Tom Jennings, he says “magical doesn’t come close” to describing his experience. “Florence is, of course, one of the most captivating places in the world. However, most enchanting was the Kent State/Florence faculty and staff. They breathe life into the programs with incredible focus and passion for the content of the classes and the beauty of the city and environs. My co-instructor, Fabio Corsini, was the perfect person to pair me with, since I had no previous experience teaching a course. Together, we worked with the students on how to look behind the surface-level beauty of Florence to find stories that no one had ever thought to tell.

“On the final day of class, the students pitched their ideas for documentaries. Fabio and I were both amazed. Every idea was new, fresh and something that could be made into a documentary film. Everything about the Florence program reignited my sense of wonder. The proof of our success was how our students discovered the art of storytelling, which I can promise you is alive and well and living in the City of Lilies.” ⚡

By Alex Zito, a sophomore from Hudson, Ohio, majoring in public relations (one of the CCI students who went on the trip), and J Keirn-Swanson, director of strategic communications and external affairs at CCI.

Scan the QR code to view a minute-and-a-half video of Tom Jennings as he talks about finding stories in Florence and the value of study abroad.



Scan the QR code to view a four-minute reel of the students’ field trip to Siena, which one of Tom Jennings’ video editors in LA created using footage that Jennings and Corsini shot during the trip. Shown as a surprise after the students’ presentations on the last day of class, “It was the perfect way to end my experience in Florence,” Jennings says. “It was such a joy to watch these students laugh at seeing some of the things they did in Siena.”



Grand Tour: A contemporary take on a traditional custom

Kent State students employ emerging technologies to share the history of Florence and Kent State's presence in the city for the past 50 years.

BY MELANIE SECRE

Florence, Italy, has a long, rich history since its founding as a Roman military colony in the first century BCE. Kent State University has its own history with the city, although much briefer at 50 years. However, today's Kent State students have a unique opportunity to learn and engage with both histories through a course in emerging media at the Kent State University Florence Center.

Educational Technology is co-taught by Rick Ferdig, PhD, the Summit Professor of Learning Technologies within Kent State's Research Center for Educational Technology and professor of educational technology in the School of Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Studies. He and co-instructor Enrico Gandolfi, PhD, assistant professor of educational technology in TLCS, are helping undergraduate and graduate students explore innovative ways to use technologies like games, simulations, social media and extended

realities to facilitate learning and teaching. Although they teach the same course at the Kent Campus, their students studying in Florence apply the course's concepts from a global perspective.

AN AUGMENTED AND VIRTUAL TOUR OF FLORENCE

"To allow students in Florence to put in practice what they are learning, we are working with them to build a map-based tour of the city that can be seen virtually (from afar) or through augmented reality (if you are in Florence)," Ferdig says. "We're having our students explore the city and collect 360 and standard 2D images, along with audio descriptions from faculty, staff, other students and native Florentines. They have to learn about the city, the history, the art, the passion that Florentines have—and then embed that into the project."

Above: Two students in the Educational Technology course take a 360 photo of a building in Florence, while co-instructors Rick Ferdig, PhD, (in the black top) and Enrico Gandolfi, PhD, look on. Photo by Bob Christy, BA '95, MA '22

So in addition to learning about technology, students in the Florence course visit what Ferdig refers to as "hotspots" within the city. They learn the history of the locations, as well as that of the people who have lived, worked and made memories there.

"Part of this project is to give current and future students an opportunity to see Florence before they get there," Ferdig says. "Kent State has been in Florence for 50 years, so when we visit Palazzo Vecchio, Palazzo Vettori or Ponte Vecchio, and you hear people talk about each location, it's not just why that location is important to the history of the city—it's why that location is important to Kent State, as well."

"Part of this project is to give current and future students an opportunity to see Florence before they get there."

Rick Ferdig, PhD

Wonderful stories emerge throughout the project. Students discover aspects of Florence that remind them of home and others that contrast with their lives in the United States. They also gain experiences and memories of their own that stick with them for years to come.

"The tour was created using software we developed at Kent State called GLARE, through a grant funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities," Gandolfi says. "While the Florence tour is still a work in progress, anyone can freely access the students' work. We plan on going back in 2023 with students and to continue building the tour. We will add new tours like student life, religion in Florence and museum information."

PREPARATION FOR GLOBAL CAREERS

While the coursework is designed to prepare students for their professions, the connections made during their study abroad experience prepare them for careers in a global marketplace. "Our educational technology students, whether they're undergraduate, graduate or doctorate level, are going into fields where technology is a global industry," Ferdig says. "They will be expected not only to understand what happens in other countries, but also to work with people from other countries. We can simulate some of that experience in Kent, but it's not the same as actually bringing students to Florence and saying, 'Come explore this.'"



As a professor of educational technology with a doctorate in educational psychology, Ferdig has spent much of his career studying and understanding how people learn, grow and develop. According to educational psychology, people grow through experiences that challenge them. Education abroad challenges students in many aspects: acclimating to a new city and country, overcoming language barriers, navigating cultural differences and more. While the students face challenges and grow, Ferdig says Kent State Florence's faculty and staff are there when they need support.

By taking the Educational Technology class in Florence, Kent State students earn much more than course credits. They help preserve the stories of the city and its people, they build important relationships and they help advance the half-century partnership between Kent State University and the city of Florence. And they become globally minded citizens who will push boundaries to create a brighter future for all. ⚡

Learn more about the educational technology program at www.kent.edu/ehhs/tlcs/etec.

Learn more about the Research Center for Educational Technology at www.kent.edu/rdet.

Above: A student in the course shows off the map-based tour app on a street in Florence. Courtesy Rick Ferdig

Scan the QR code to view the Kent State Florence Augmented and Virtual Reality Tour. Or go to <https://florence.cs.kent.edu>



Out of Africa

Kent State finds a new market and a new mission in Rwanda.

BY LISA ABRAHAM

In May 2022, Kent State University's Board of Trustees approved forming a nonprofit corporation to be housed at the University of Rwanda in Kigali (Rwanda's capital and largest city) to serve as Kent State's base of operations for all of Africa.

Why Rwanda?

The real question, says Marcello Fantoni, PhD, Kent State's vice president for global education, is not "Why Rwanda?" but rather, "Why Africa?"

REASONS FOR A KENT STATE PRESENCE IN AFRICA

There are two main reasons for Kent State to establish a presence in Africa, Fantoni explains—one practical, the second more idealistic.

First, Kent State needs to find new markets for students both at home and internationally, he says. The population of traditional college-age students is declining in Northeast Ohio and throughout the United States. The university is always scanning the globe for emerging markets and these days that means looking to Africa. The educational systems of the developing continent cannot keep up with

the growing demand for higher education from its burgeoning populations, whether in Nigeria, Ghana or other African nations.

"It's almost the perfect star alignment," Fantoni says.

The new base of operations in Kigali will give the university its first permanent presence on the African continent, and already has opened the door for a multitude of programs and exchanges between Kent State University and the University of Rwanda (UR).

Most notable is a group of 12 students, sponsored by the Rwandan government, who arrived on the Kent Campus for Fall Semester 2022 to begin their undergraduate studies, mostly in computer science or engineering.

The second reason for a presence in Africa, Fantoni says, lies at the heart of Kent State's global mission. Kent State has an extensive global presence, from its campus in Florence, Italy, which this year celebrates its 50th anniversary, to educational programs and exchanges in Brazil, France, South Korea and dozens of other countries.

"Yet the vast majority of our students going abroad still choose Western Europe," Fantoni says. Kent State



Above: Sponsored students from Rwanda pose with Stacie Ansley, senior international admissions counselor for Sponsored Student Services in the Office of Global Education (center), and Pacifique Niyonzima, MED '19 (far right), in fall 2022.

needs to provide its students and faculty with the opportunity for a robust and complete global exchange, he says, which necessitates the move into Africa.

"It's a matter of us providing students with more opportunities, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa," Fantoni says. Those include opportunities for Kent State students to understand the importance of Africa in world politics and opportunities for African students to gain a U.S. education.

According to the most recent data from Open Doors, a U.S. survey of international exchange activity, 42,518 students (undergraduate, graduate, non-degree and optional practical training) from sub-Saharan African countries studied in the United States in academic year 2021-2022. The United Nations predicts that Africa will be the fastest-growing continent by 2050, doubling in population and accounting for more than half the world's population growth.

But of all the African nations, what made Rwanda—a Central African nation about a quarter the size of Ohio—such a favorable location for Kent State?

Perhaps this is where the stars truly align.

A RWANDAN STUDENT COMES TO KENT STATE

Rwanda is known in recent history for the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi that wiped out nearly 1 million citizens. The bloody massacre, provoked by members of the Hutu majority government, pitted neighbors against each other and left the country in a humanitarian crisis. Since that time, Rwanda has made tremendous progress and now boasts social indicators (educational attainment, life expectancy, gross domestic product, etc.) that exceed those of other nations in the region.

"Nobody could believe Rwanda [after the genocide] would be a country again but see where Rwanda is today!"

Pacifique Niyonzima, MED '19

In 2011, Pacifique Niyonzima, a young Rwandan student and a genocide survivor, came to Hudson, Ohio, to live with a sponsor family, Mike and Jill Burke, who had volunteered to pay for his education. Niyonzima, whose first name means "peacemaker" in French, earned a bachelor's degree from Walsh University, in Canton, before enrolling at Kent State to pursue a master's degree in higher education administration with a focus on internationalization.

As part of his master's program, Niyonzima returned to Rwanda in summer 2018 to intern in the office of the vice chancellor at the University of Rwanda. He saw how his nation had been transformed in the years he was away and how the government had committed to using education to promote peace and gender equality.

"Nobody could believe Rwanda [after the genocide] would be a country again but see where Rwanda is today!" he says. "It's the safest country in Africa, the No. 1 country in the world for gender equity. Rwanda has the highest number of women in employment and women representation in government. It's one of the top countries that sends peacekeepers to other countries. That happens because of peace and leadership, and the young people are wanting to be part of this ongoing movement."

Niyonzima, who earned a master's degree in higher education administration from Kent State in 2019, is now a graduate assistant in the College of Education, Health and Human Services (EHHS) working toward a doctorate degree in interprofessional leadership. And he has used his connections at Kent State to promote Rwanda, specifically the University of Rwanda. ➤



Left: Kent State professors Joanne Caniglia, PhD, and Davison Mupinga, PhD (center), and Pacifique Niyonzima, MEd '19 (second from right), meet with delegates from the Rwandan Office of Vocational Training during their May 2022 visit to Rwanda.

In every conversation regarding Kent State and Rwanda, Niyonzima's name is certain to come up, and his enthusiasm is infectious as he serves as head cheerleader for his native land.

Joanne Caniglia, PhD, a professor in EHHS, refers to Niyonzima as "the future president of Rwanda," recognizing the extensive diplomatic effort and promotion he has devoted to developing the partnership between Kent State and UR.

She first met Niyonzima at a wedding, and before the event was over had learned of a collaboration between the Rwandan Ministry of Education and Kent State, which he had initiated.

Niyonzima told Caniglia, who specializes in training future math teachers, of the Ministry of Education's desire to improve math education across Rwanda.

In spring 2022, Caniglia and Davison Mupinga, PhD, also a professor in EHHS, who specializes in training career and technical education teachers, made a 10-day visit to Rwanda. They met with officials from UR and the Ministry of Education and began plans for collaboration on math education.

A recent World Bank study, Caniglia says, notes that teaching mathematics to the world, and especially to Africa, is the most important thing you can do. "With math, everything opens up—technology, science," she says.

Both Caniglia and Mupinga had been involved in Kent State's previous efforts to promote collaboration in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and its most notable democracy. Those efforts, however, have stalled due to safety concerns from conflicts that threaten the stability of the nation.

Fantoni was open to considering other African countries and was willing to listen when Niyonzima suggested Kent State explore a relationship with the University of Rwanda.

Niyonzima is proud of the matchmaker role he played between the two universities. He says he was struck from the beginning about the parallels between the two schools: "They're both research universities, both public, and the structure is very similar."

SHARED PERSPECTIVE

Kent State's history with the May 4, 1970, shootings and Rwanda's history of genocide give each university a unique perspective on the effects of violence, albeit on different scales. And both have developed programs in response: Kent State has its School for Peace and Conflict Studies and the University of Rwanda has its Centre for Conflict Management.

Despite the pandemic, Fantoni was able to visit UR in 2021 with a small delegation that included R. Neil Cooper, PhD, director of the School of Peace and Conflict Studies, and Niyonzima.

Rwanda, Fantoni says, was the right fit for many reasons: its geographical position in Central Africa, the safety of the country and the ability for Kent State to operate there without complicated rules and governmental red tape. But the universities' mutual dedication to peace and conflict studies ultimately made Rwanda the right choice for Kent State's base in Africa.

The trustees' action calls for Kent State to establish a nonprofit Community Benefit Company

"Rwanda is an interesting model and an example of a country that has really tried to mainstream and adopt peace education."

R. Neil Cooper, PhD,
director of Kent State's
School of Peace and
Conflict Studies

in Rwanda, which will enable a staff presence to recruit students from across the African continent and to look for other African partnerships.

Fantoni credits the University of Rwanda and the Rwandan government for embracing the opportunity for a mutually beneficial relationship. "They really want this," he says, "Not only were we at the right place at the right time, but we also got support that was practically relevant and politically meaningful. And Kent State's projects in Rwanda have been supported and facilitated by the Rwandan embassy in Washington, D.C."

OTHER PROGRAMS AND PLANS

In addition to the 12 undergraduate students sponsored by the Rwandan government, Fantoni is working on a similar arrangement with the National Police Academy of Rwanda, which may send its officers to Kent State for graduate degrees. Most of the students seeking degrees and advanced degrees at Kent State will be studying computer science, engineering and aeronautics, he says.

As part of an effort to turn Kigali into an aviation hub, the Rwandan government is building an international airport. The University of Rwanda, through its College of Science and Technology, is aiming to build a program to train pilots and others involved in aeronautics and aerospace engineering to meet the needs of Rwanda's growing aviation industry. So, an exchange program with the College of Aeronautics and Engineering is also being discussed.

Fantoni hopes the collaboration eventually will produce a formal partnership or an American Academy, like the dual-enrollment program now offered jointly by Kent State and the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná (PUCPR), in Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil. The academy allows students to take Kent State courses for two years in Brazil, and then finish a bachelor's degree at either PUCPR or at Kent State (see page 34).

Niyonzima and Sarah Schmidt, assistant director of global education initiatives in the Office of Global Education Initiatives at Kent State's Stark Campus and an instructor of peace and conflict studies, took a contingent of students to Rwanda over summer 2022 for a study-abroad program, and are planning another trip for summer 2023 (see page 32). Efforts to get more Kent State students into Africa already are bearing fruit.

PARTNERS IN PEACE EDUCATION

Academically, the first joint effort between the two schools—a dual master's degree in Peace and Conflict Studies—also is nearing completion.

R. Neil Cooper has been working to develop the program with Aggée Shyaka Mugabe, director of UR's Centre for Conflict Management. The master's program, Cooper says, is going through the approval process and will include an exchange of students who wish to pursue the degree.

Mugabe spent summer 2022 at Kent State as a visiting scholar, and his visit sparked involvement in another large effort scheduled for summer 2023. The two universities are jointly hosting an international academic conference, "Peace Education in an Era of Crisis," in Kigali from July 11 to 14. Kent State's Gerald H. Read Center for International and Intercultural Education, within the college of EHHS, also is a partner in the conference.

Through its determination to recover from its genocide, Rwanda has embedded peace education in every course at every grade level in its educational system, Cooper says, which made Rwanda the perfect location for the conference. "It's an interesting model and an example of a country that has really tried to mainstream and adopt peace education."

Amanda Johnson, PhD, director of the Read Center, says one of her roles is to encourage engagement in international initiatives within EHHS in order to graduate educators with a broad worldview. Johnson says she was eager to collaborate on the conference and involve the Read Center in a broader scope of issues, including peace studies, colonialism and race relations.

Recently the Aegis Trust, an international organization based in Rwanda that works to prevent genocide and mass atrocities worldwide, signed on to co-sponsor the conference, which is currently accepting submissions for proposals for presenters.

Johnson is searching for funding and hopes to be able to take 10 or 12 teachers from Northeast Ohio to the conference. "We need the practice of peace education within our school systems and communities," she says.

When Pacifique Niyonzima considers all the collaboration that has taken place between Kent State and the University of Rwanda in just a few short years, he thinks back on his studies for his own master's program.

"I was focusing on the United States and Africa and especially Rwanda, with it being my country," he says. "I wanted to see how Rwanda and the United States could work together to enhance the education system to benefit both. So that was my big vision—and now I can see that happening." ⚡

Scan the QR code to read more about the trip that professors Joanne Caniglia, PhD, and Davison Mupinga, PhD, took to Rwanda in spring 2022 to exchange ideas and develop partnerships.



Scan the QR code to read more about the upcoming academic conference on peace education—to be held in Kigali, Rwanda, in July 2023—sponsored by Kent State University and the University of Rwanda.



Shared Learning in Rwanda

A relationship with the University of Rwanda adds richness and diversity to Kent State's study abroad programs.

BY LISA ABRAHAM

Kent State's entry into Rwanda, Africa, not only opens a new market for international students at the university, but also contributes to the university's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.

Sarah Schmidt, assistant director of global education initiatives at Kent State University at Stark and an instructor in the School of Peace and Conflict Studies, will take a third group of students to Rwanda for a summer study abroad program in 2023.

One of the things that has most impressed her about the trips so far is the diversity among the students who go. More than 55% of her 2022 cohort were students of color—a percentage she says is unheard of for most study abroad trips. "It's something our students care about; they want diversity."

Schmidt's 2022 study abroad course, Rwanda After the Genocide Against the Tutsi, focused on the genocide in which nearly 1 million members of the Tutsi were killed by members of the government-backed Hutu militias from April to July 1994.

Following the tragedy, the country faced the monumental task of reconciliation and rebuilding. The result is a country focused on peace education, beginning at the earliest levels of primary school and continuing through university and beyond.

As with most Kent State collaborations in Rwanda, the driving force behind the summer study abroad program, Schmidt says, was Pacifique Niyonzima, MEd '19, now a doctoral candidate in interprofessional leadership at the College of Education, Health and Human Services.

Niyonzima, a genocide survivor, came to the United States for schooling in 2011. In 2018, he was looking for a capstone project to complete his master's degree in higher education administration. Someone suggested he contact Schmidt, whose research specialty is international peace and conflict resolution.

Taking Kent State students to Rwanda to learn about the genocide and the country's subsequent determination to become a model for peace and conflict resolution was Niyonzima's vision after he returned to his homeland in 2018 for an internship at the University of Rwanda. "Rwanda is a good place to be now," he says, "and I am excited about how this partnership will progress."

Schmidt says it was easy to get enthusiastic about the project, and she and Niyonzima mapped out a plan with Kent State Stark history professor Leslie Heaphy, PhD. Heaphy designed a study abroad course on the history of genocide that provided structure for the 10-day trip. They took 13 students to Rwanda over spring break 2019. After two years' hiatus due to the pandemic, 11 students went on the trip in 2022. Schmidt is accepting applications for 2023.

After the 2019 trip, Schmidt and Niyonzima began brainstorming on how to expand the program into a full-fledged study abroad class that also would involve students from the University of Rwanda. "It has laid the groundwork for what will become a summer institute in Kigali and an annual program," she says.

Teaming up with University of Rwanda students for shared learning experiences and social

Above: Claude Mugabe, Kigali Genocide Memorial facilitator, speaks to students from Kent State and the University of Rwanda during their visit to the memorial.

Teaming up with University of Rwanda students for shared learning experiences and social gatherings added an important dimension to the 2022 study abroad program.

gatherings added an important dimension to the 2022 study abroad program. Near the end of the trip, Schmidt and two Kent State students took part in a virtual panel discussion to share what they had learned in the 3-credit-hour course.

"It's been an amazing experience," said Mariah Fannin, a Kent State senior from Massillon, Ohio, studying secondary social studies education. "From a historical perspective, I really enjoyed hearing the perspectives of the Rwandan people. We visited all these ministries and government offices as well as a small reconciliation village where we got to hear the perceptions and stories of people who actually lived through the genocide of the Tutsi in 1994. That was really impactful."

Kellie Rose Kordinak, a Kent State junior from Mogadore, Ohio, studying Arabic translation and

history, described interacting with the University of Rwanda students. "In our initial meeting with them, we talked about all our interdisciplinary fields, and these are some of the most intelligent colleagues I've ever had. And being able to go out on the town with them and experience Kigali and Rwanda in general with them was amazing."

Studying the genocide and post-genocide reconstruction with people who lived through it is powerful academic content that students can't get in a traditional classroom, Schmidt says. And what stuck with the students, she says, were the relationships they formed and the bonds they made with their classmates. ⚡

To apply for the 2023 summer institute, which will be a 6-credit-hour course, contact Sarah Schmidt at sschmi16@kent.edu.

Left: PeacEdu community members—genocide survivors and former perpetrators who confessed their role in the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and were forgiven—share testimonies about their journey of reconciliation with students from Kent State and the University of Rwanda. Courtesy PeacEdu



Scan the QR code to read more about the 2019 Kent State University at Stark student trip to Rwanda.

Left: In a classroom in Kigali, Pacifique Niyonzima, MEd '19, takes a selfie with Kent State and University of Rwanda students and co-instructor Sarah Schmidt, assistant director of global education initiatives at Kent State University at Stark and instructor of peace and conflict studies.

Partners in Liberal Arts Education



“It’s as if Kent State and PUCPR got together and had a baby. And that’s the American Academy.”

Marcello Fantoni, PhD,
vice president for
global education

Left: American Academy graduates throw their caps in the air at the culmination of the commencement ceremony at the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná in December 2022. Photo by Gustavo Queiroz

Through the American Academy, Kent State University and the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná collaborate to connect Brazilian students to an American liberal arts education.

BY JILLIAN KRAMER, BA '06

For three weeks at the end of the Spring Semester 2022, Stefanie Moore, BS '97, MS '07, a professor in Kent State's School of Media and Journalism, began each morning with a cup of Brazilian coffee. She sipped it in the furnished apartment she was staying at in Curitiba, the capital and largest city in the state of Paraná in southern Brazil.

After getting ready for the day, Moore shared an Uber with a colleague, riding past historical churches and colorful murals during their 15-minute commute to Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná. There, she walked under a replica of Kent State University's brick arch and along well-manicured gardens to meet 59

Brazilian students eager to learn about social media strategies—and about the United States.

Each semester, as many as 20 Kent State professors travel to Curitiba to teach in the American Academy, a collaboration between the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná (PUCPR, pronounced Poo-key) and Kent State University. Some teach their classes online from Kent State, which was the only way to collaborate during pandemic travel restrictions.

The American Academy, which launched in July 2018, offers a one-of-a-kind, dual-enrollment program for Brazilian students. For two years, they can study Kent State's liberal arts curriculum and earn an associate degree without leaving their native Brazil. Kent State professors teach classes in English at the PUCPR campus, and students earn academic credits toward a bachelor's degree from both universities simultaneously.

As Kent State's vice president for global education, Marcello Fantoni, PhD, describes the partnership, “It is as if Kent State and PUCPR got together and had a baby. And that’s the American Academy.”

After two years, having earned an Associate of Science degree from Kent State, students have the

option to complete a bachelor's degree at PUCPR or at the Kent Campus, says Valerie Reed, MEd '15, associate director of international partnerships at Kent State's Office of Global Education and the American Academy's interim program coordinator. (She's also a doctoral student in higher education administration at Kent State.)

So far, 301 students have enrolled in the program, growing from an initial cohort of 15 young men and women. (Currently, 151 students are participating.)

More than 160 students have graduated with an associate degree, Reed says, and one—Alvacir Wesley Kalatai Alberti, AS '20, BS '22—earned a bachelor's degree at Kent State in May 2022 (see page 38). Three more earned four-year degrees this December, Reed says, including Mariana Freitas de Macedo, AS '20, BBA '22 (see page 39).

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY'S ORIGIN STORY

The idea for the American Academy grew from an existing relationship with PUCPR that began in 2012 when the two universities partnered on several programs and student and faculty exchanges. That led to hope for an even deeper relationship, Fantoni says. “We thought, what about exploring the concept of a liberal arts education outside of the United States?”

In America, students may explore diverse classes before settling into coursework centered on a chosen major. But in many other countries, students are asked to select a major before they enter college with no option to change programs after admission.

“We were well aware that for many students, that was a limitation,” says Fantoni. So, he and PUCPR staff members envisioned a solution. Kent State professors would teach a liberal arts curriculum in Curitiba, which Fantoni says is an “absolutely innovative program in Brazil,” one that offers students the “American educational experience at its fullest.”

On March 31, 2016, Kent State and PUCPR formally recognized their elevated relationship as strategic partners with a signing ceremony on the Kent Campus. And two years later, on May 3, 2018, the presidents of the universities formally agreed to form the American Academy in a special ceremony on the Kent Campus. The American Academy began educating students in Curitiba in July 2018.

Although modern liberal arts curriculums allow students to study a much larger range of subjects, they still retain the core goals of traditional liberal arts curricula: to develop well-rounded individuals with general knowledge of a wide range of subjects and with mastery of a range of transferable skills.

Paulo Otávio Mussi Augusto, DBA, the American Academy's director in Brazil, says he has watched the program transform students who enter it, helping them build confidence and mature as they carve

their own educational paths. Through the academy, “they find their own purpose and they know how to pursue that,” Mussi Augusto explains. “And that’s the main reason we do it.”

INTENSE EDUCATION

The American Academy's semesters look a little different than Kent State's. The first and second semester, students take six classes, including mandatory College Writing that is spread through 14 weeks, Mussi Augusto says. But most of the classes are taught in three-to-five-week blocks, with students taking only one class at a time.

With that kind of deep dive, assignments also look a little different, Fantoni says. Students don't write long-form research papers, for example, but otherwise adjustments are “minimal.”

While it's an intense pace, Mussi Augusto says, it also has many benefits. Not only do the shorter class schedules allow more Kent State professors to teach in Brazil, but students are fully immersed in a single subject at a time—and their grades tend to be higher because of it.

“Some of the professors who came to Brazil said, ‘This is the best class I ever taught,’” Mussi Augusto says. “And that’s not because the Brazilian students we selected are better students.” Instead, he thinks the American Academy's model promotes better learning.

EAGER TO TEACH

For the first year or so, Fantoni says he had to scramble to get professors to join the American Academy's ranks, because they were unsure about participating. That's no longer the case. According to Reed, 78 Kent State professors have taught in the program, including online courses.

Stefanie Moore joined the program in spring 2022, teaching a social media strategies course from April 22 to May 11. “I was a little nervous about leaving my family for that long,” she says, “but they were supportive of me going.” And it was a decision she didn't regret.

She found the students to be “respectful and kind,” and “eager to learn not only about the topic, but about Kent State and America.” They also were happy to share their culture.

Each day, her students would take her to experience a new kind of Brazilian food. “My students would write down things I should ask for,” she says. “They took us to the outdoor farmers' market and artisan fair in the old city center. It was such a fun experience.”

Mussi Augusto says the unique engagement, even off campus, between Kent State professors and Brazilian students enriches the experience for both groups. “The interaction we see between the faculty members who are teaching [in Brazil] and ➤



Above: The atrium of the library at Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná is crowned by a glass pyramid. During the day, light passes through a set of artistic stained-glass windows distributed over three floors. *Courtesy Stefanie Moore*

Left: A view of the chapel and library (red building) on the PUCPR campus with the city of Curitiba beyond. *Photo by Noall Reid*



Top left: One of the sculpture gardens near the front gate of Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná. *Photo by Noall Reid*

Top right: Stefanie Moore, BS '97, MS '07, professor in Kent State's School of Media and Journalism, poses with some of the American Academy students on the last day of classes. *Courtesy Stefanie Moore*



Bottom left: Stefanie Moore, BS '97, MS '07, professor in Kent State's School of Media and Journalism, and Jeff Child, PhD, associate professor in the School of Communication Studies, join American Academy students to explore different foods at Curitiba's old city center. *Courtesy Stefanie Moore*

Bottom right: Paulo Otávio Mussi Augusto, DBA, director of the American Academy, and Marcello Fantoni, PhD, vice president of global education, stand at the entrance to the Japanese garden on the campus of Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná. *Photo by Gustavo Queiroz*

our students is different from the one that happens at Kent State," he says. "They are more connected. They exchange more impressions. They go out to lunch together. So, they form different bonds that help the students to see different perspectives and to mature during the process."

PATHWAY TO THE UNITED STATES

Once students successfully complete an associate degree at the American Academy, "they have two big choices to make," Mussi Augusto says. They must choose their major and where they will earn it. Students have the option to finish a bachelor's degree in Curitiba or in Kent. "They are already enrolled at both institutions so it's a smooth process," he says.

Of the more than 300 students who have enrolled in the program, 92 have chosen to complete a bachelor's degree at the Kent Campus, including those who just graduated with an associate degree at PUCPR on Dec. 12, 2022. That's more than Fantoni says he'd ever imagined would come to the United States. But, in retrospect, he says it makes sense.

"Students may be interested in going abroad, but at the age of 18, they don't feel confident," Fantoni says. "They are still young; their English is not good enough. But after two years, studying in English and developing more experience, they are a lot more ready to come to the United States."

PANDEMIC PAUSE

The pandemic scrambled some of the American Academy's best-laid plans. Students scheduled to come to the Kent Campus to pursue a bachelor's degree in 2020 were asked to pause their travel for a year, although they could continue taking classes online.

Moving the American Academy classes online was the easy part, Fantoni says. "What was not as easy is that doing so was defeating the purpose a bit." In-person education can be richer and more interactive, he says. "We also saw the American Academy as an opportunity to internationalize our faculty by having them teach all over the world. Instead, they had to teach classes from their living room for a long time."

After a year and a half, the American Academy resumed sending Kent State professors to PUCPR and

welcoming Brazilian students to Kent State. "It's better with the faculty teaching in person," Fantoni says. "And dozens of Kent State faculty now know how to teach abroad and want to go again."

Every June, American Academy students have the option to take their regular courses in Curitiba or to study abroad in Florence, Italy, at Kent State's Florence Center. "Because of the pandemic, this summer was the first time our Brazilian students came to Florence," Mussi Augusto says. "It's a great opportunity for them to live this educational experience in more depth."

FUTURE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY

Just as the American Academy has helped its students grow, its creators want the program to grow. "I think the American Academy is a good idea, period," says Fantoni as he ticks off the program's advantages for students: It offers them the opportunity to study in English. It gives them a chance to experience American culture before coming to the United States. Its tuition is more affordable than many other study abroad options available to them.

The program transforms students who enter it, helping them build confidence and mature as they carve their own educational paths.

"And it opens their minds," Fantoni says. So, when it comes to growing the program, "The first thing we need to understand is not only how we replicate it quantitatively, but how we expand it qualitatively. And I think if we can do that, then we can create stronger bridges between international universities."

He and Mussi Augusto are exploring new university partnerships in Jordan and South Korea. And Fantoni envisions creating a network of American Academies throughout the world: "I think we are outgrowing just one location." ⚡

Learn more about the American Academy at www.kent.edu/KSU/AA.

Scan the QR code to watch a TikTok of Stefanie Moore sharing a day in her life while teaching at the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná in Brazil.



A Change of Plans

A computer science major is the first Brazilian student to graduate with a bachelor's degree from Kent State's American Academy.

BY APRIL MCCLELLAN-COPELAND

As a student in mechatronics at a Brazilian university, Alvacir Wesley Kalatai Alberti, AS '20, BS '22, had never considered studying abroad until he read a roadside billboard in 2018 advertising Kent State's new American Academy program. However, the prospect of studying in the United States intrigued him enough to call the Brazilian office and find out more.

Until then, studying abroad had “felt so out of reach and so difficult that I really never had given it any thought,” says 25-year-old Kalatai Alberti, who is from Imbituva, a municipality in the state of Paraná in southern Brazil. But the American Academy's pathway to Kent State made a study abroad program seem possible—and, although he was a good student, he wasn't sure he wanted to continue in engineering.

As long as he felt he could improve himself through the program, his parents supported him fully, seeing it as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. He became one of the first 15 students to enroll in the American Academy, which launched in July 2018.

SUCCESS DESPITE THE PANDEMIC

But the road to Kalatai Alberti's study abroad program didn't go exactly as planned. By 2020, when he was able to attend Kent State in person, the pandemic had shuttered college campuses across the United States. He decided to major in computer science and took all his courses online for a year before arriving at the Kent Campus in August 2021.

Once there, Kalatai Alberti fell in love with the campus. He made friends with students from countries around the world, including Nigeria, China, Italy, Lebanon and India. An avid rock climber, he scaled the Warren Student Recreation and Wellness Center's rock-climbing wall, connected with other outdoor enthusiasts and explored the hiking trails of Northeast Ohio.



He saw snow for the first time, and he and his friends had snowball fights on campus. And speaking Portuguese with his two Brazilian roommates in their off-campus apartment kept him feeling connected to his home country.

Kalatai Alberti had planned to graduate at the end of 2022 until he learned of an opportunity to do a master's degree program in computer software engineering at the Polytechnic University of Madrid, beginning in fall 2022. His advisors at Kent State supported his plans, explaining that if he focused his concentration he could graduate earlier.

So, in May 2022, Kalatai Alberti became the first student to graduate from the American Academy with a four-year degree, earning a bachelor's in computer science, with a concentration in robotics and embedded systems.

“I did a lot of the program remotely,” Kalatai Alberti says, “but being at Kent State and talking to people—and being able to interact and do stuff together—that's a whole different thing. I've met such amazing people.” ⚡

“I did a lot of the program remotely, but being at Kent State is a whole different thing. I've met such amazing people.”

A Dream Come True

An opportunity to explore the liberal arts through the American Academy helped an uncertain Brazilian student commit to a career path and study in the United States.

BY JILLIAN KRAMER, BA '06



As a child in Brazil, Mariana Freitas de Macedo, AS '20, BBA '22, dreamed of studying in the United States. Attending Kent State University's American Academy at the Pontifical Catholic University of Paraná in Curitiba, Brazil, did more than help that dream come true—it helped her decide on a career.

When she entered the program three years ago, de Macedo, now 21, had no idea what she wanted to do for a living. The American Academy offered her an opportunity unique to an American education—the chance to explore the liberal arts for two years before committing to a career path.

In Brazil and around the world, many students must select their majors before they enroll at a university. Then they exclusively study that subject until they earn a four-year degree.

“Having to decide my major only the semester before I came to Kent State was very helpful,” says de Macedo. She ultimately chose to major in business management and graduated in December 2022. Back in Brazil now, she is applying for jobs in her field.

A WARM WELCOME

When de Macedo came to the Kent Campus in August 2021, she found it charming. “It reminds me of those cute little cities in movies,” she says, adding, “everything is so well organized.”

She noticed differences from universities in her native Brazil. There, she says, most students choose to live at home, rendering dormitories largely unnecessary. At Kent State, she enjoyed the chance to meet and mingle with students who are studying different majors.

“What I most love about the program are the many possibilities open to me,” de Macedo says. “Getting to know new people from different places and cultures is amazing.”

Coming to a new country without her family, de Macedo admits, is “very hard.” But when she arrived at Kent State, she says staff members and her professors welcomed her warmly and “gave me a lot of support and opportunities to meet new people.”

“What I most love about the program are the many possibilities open to me. Getting to know new people from different places and cultures is amazing.”

Having three American roommates helped her make friends quickly, too. And in her student job, she calculated GPAs for international students for a senior international admissions counselor in the Office of Global Education, where she also made connections with other students through events and programs.

Her favorite professor, Nichole Egbert, PhD, who teaches courses in health and relational communication in the School of Communication Studies, even gave students “tips about what to do in Kent and places to visit,” de Macedo says. “[Egbert] was an amazing, responsible, caring and dedicated professor. I wish I had another class with her!” ⚡

“Just go for it!”



During orientation in Quito, the capital of Ecuador, Mallory Woods rode a cable car (*teleférico*) to a lookout spot in the mountains at 13,000 feet. Here, she poses on a 3D mural platform called *Puente en las Nubes* (Bridge in the Clouds), which overlooks the city. Courtesy Mallory Woods

Mallory Woods, BS '22, a Fulbright English teaching assistant posted to Ecuador, encourages others to participate in transformative education abroad experiences.

EDITED BY JAN SENN

Honors College graduate and translation major Mallory Woods, BS '22, a native of Fairview, Pennsylvania, is living in Ecuador for nine months as the recipient of a prestigious Fulbright English Teaching Assistant award.

Woods, who studied in Florence, Italy, for the 2021-2022 academic year, says her education abroad experiences in Israel, Palestine, the Czech Republic, Costa Rica, Spain and Italy have been fundamental in improving her language skills and multicultural competence.

She moved to Ecuador in September 2022, and we recently caught up with her via email to find out more about her experience so far.

Where are you living and working?

I am currently living in Riobamba, a city of around 150,000 people in Chimborazo, a province in the central Andes of Ecuador. Riobamba is in the mountains with an elevation of 9,000 feet, and the altitude has taken some getting used to. On a clear day, four volcanoes are visible towering over the city.

I am working as an English teaching assistant at the Universidad Nacional de Chimborazo (UNACH) through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Through June 2023, I will be assisting professors there in teaching intermediate English and other elective courses, organizing English conversation hours, auditing Kichwa classes (Kichwa

is an Indigenous language prevalent in Riobamba with different dialects spoken throughout the country) and volunteering at an intercultural bilingual Kichwa-Spanish primary school in Columbe Grande, a nearby Indigenous community.

How does the higher education system differ from the United States?

In Ecuador, public universities, like UNACH, do not charge tuition and are generally more difficult to enter compared to private universities, which can be costly. High demand and limited university spaces have affected access to higher education in recent years. At the end of high school, students' scores on standardized exams determine which fields of study they can pursue.

Why do your Ecuadorian students want to learn English?

At UNACH I am working in the foreign language pedagogy department, so almost all of the students are aspiring language teachers. During the first week of classes, I asked students to tell me why they chose to study English. A major motivator for almost all of them was being able to communicate while traveling internationally.

Once a week, my roommate and I visit an intercultural bilingual Kichwa-Spanish primary school in the Columbe Grande community to

supplement its English curriculum. The students would like to learn English, and I can't wait for them to share more about their Kichwa language and culture!

What do the students want to know about you and the United States?

Lots of Ecuadorians have been curious about how universities are structured in the United States. I have had a lot of questions about my experience of earning an undergraduate degree and how this compares to Ecuadorian norms. In conversations with local friends, I have spent a lot of time discussing topics like food, friendship and family dynamics, and Ecuadorian and U.S. politics.

How do you spend your free time?

I enjoy traveling to new Ecuadorian cities, practicing yoga at a local studio, attending soccer games and enjoying new foods.

What Ecuadorian foods have you sampled?

I am vegetarian, so while I can't speak about many of the traditional dishes—which contain chicken, pork or guinea pig—I can say that there is no shortage of delicious produce, flavorful cheese empanadas, and amazing vegetable soups here. Also, to my pleasant surprise, Riobamba is full of crepe and waffle shops. Another surprise is that ice cream topped with shredded cheese is a popular snack!

Can you tell us a bit more about your host country?

Ecuador has four distinct regions: the mountainous Andean highlands (where I am), the coastal lowlands, the Amazon and the Galápagos.

Even though the country is roughly the size of Colorado, I am intrigued by how diverse it is and how much variety there is in accents, food, lifestyles and more across the regions and even from city to city. There are more than 1.1 million Indigenous people in Ecuador from 14 different nationalities and, from what I have learned so far, Indigenous customs and traditions are anything but homogenous!

Have you been challenged by any of the cultural differences?

Yes, adapting and learning is an ongoing process. For example, Ecuador has a polychronic culture, which means that multiple events happen simultaneously and time is viewed as flexible and flowing. Interruptions or last-minute changes are viewed as natural or inevitable, and last-minute planning is normal (with some exceptions). That's different from what I'm used to in the United States, which has a monochronic culture that

highly prioritizes adhering to preset schedules and undertaking one task at a time.

However, I'm learning to adapt, and I think this polychronic style allows people to remain present in the moment and to be flexible in approaching a challenge. Cultural differences also allow me to better reflect on my own preconceptions—what cultural belief or practice is informing my opinion, and how could this seem strange to others?

Can you describe a recent cultural experience?

One new tradition I experienced was with my friend Janeth, whom I met while studying abroad in Costa Rica in 2019 and whose family is from Riobamba. Janeth and her family included me in their visits to their deceased family members' graves to clean them and add flowers for *Día de los Fieles Difuntos*, or the Day of the Dead/All Souls' Day on Nov. 2. I was honored to be included in this beautiful and personal tradition. Ecuadorian families are often close knit and tend to prioritize loyalty, and I admire their closeness and supportive familial relationships.

Anything else you'd like to say?

I would encourage anyone interested in participating in Fulbright or a similar program to just go for it! Already this experience has been transformative, and I have learned so much (only two months into the nine-month grant). I would like to thank my family and my professors from Kent State and study abroad programs for helping prepare me for this experience and for their continued support! ⚡

Read more about Mallory Woods' Fulbright experience in Ecuador on her blog, The Riobamba Times.

Strategies Mallory Woods uses to adjust to a different culture

I try to remind myself that different doesn't necessarily mean worse or better—it just offers me a learning opportunity to discover more about a new (to me) approach.

If I find a situation particularly challenging, I try not to judge myself for the emotions I experience and instead give myself time to process.

Finally, if I know I am about to encounter a new situation (such as an Ecuadorian holiday, new type of academic meeting, etc.), I try to read something about it in advance so I can understand the context and conduct myself appropriately.



Teachers and students (ages 4-15) at the intercultural bilingual Kichwa-Spanish primary school in Columbe Grande pose with Mallory Woods. As a volunteer, she supplements the school's English curriculum and says, "It's been fun to work with a variety of age ranges." Courtesy Mallory Woods

A Walk Down Memory Lane

BY JAN SENN

Two refugees from the 1956 Hungarian Revolution found their way to Kent State years ago. Their recent visit to the Kent Campus brought back old memories—and made some new ones.

On the first day of Spring Quarter 1959, Brigitta Strammer arrived on the Kent Campus with one small suitcase. She had taken a bus from Cleveland, where her family had lived since they fled Hungary in late 1956, when Soviet forces had invaded to crush a countrywide protest against domestic policies imposed by the USSR. (About 200,000 Hungarians sought political refuge abroad, with about 30,000 settling in the United States.)

Strammer had a \$700 scholarship from Forest City Realty Trust. One of her cousins attended Kent State, so she was looking forward to a residential college experience, too. A student she met on the bus took her to what was then known as the Center for International Students, on the ground floor of Lowry Hall.

And that's when she met the young man who would become her husband.

Stephen Hanzély had arrived on the Kent Campus in Fall Quarter 1958 with one large suitcase. He had taken a train from Colorado, where he and his mother and brother had settled after escaping Hungary in late 1956. (His father died in a Soviet POW camp toward the end of WWII). The family had reunited with his older half-brother, a teacher in Fort Morgan, Colorado.

After he graduated from high school in Colorado, Hanzély received a \$500 grant from the World University Service (especially intended for Hungarian refugees who came to the United States) and his brother somehow secured in-state tuition and a scholarship that covered all his first-year expenses at Kent State.

On that spring day in 1959, Hanzély returned from spring break and stopped by the Center for International Students hoping to see some familiar faces and visit with W. Leslie Garnett, PhD, who taught English, coordinated international student programs, and was an advisor and mentor to international students.

As he came through the door, he noticed a blonde girl sitting with her back to him, but didn't pay much attention. "I walked into Dr. Garnett's office and said hi to her as I usually did," Hanzély recalls. "Then she came out of the office with me

and said to a mutual friend, 'Well, aren't you going to introduce them? They're both from Hungary.' So I said in Hungarian, 'Oh, really?' Brigitta replied in Hungarian, 'Yes!' And that's how it all started."

Although Hanzély felt awkward around girls, "Brigitta got my heart thumping, so I resolved to come out of my shell and compete with the other guys for her attention," he says. He showed her around campus, took her to movies and for pizza in downtown Kent and soon they were an "item."

At the time, about 100 international students from about 30 countries were studying at the Kent Campus. They formed an organization that later became known as The Kent Internationals, with Garnett as their advisor.

"We can't think of a better investment than one in the next generation."

Brigitta and Stephen Hanzély

As the quarter neared its end, the group partnered with the auxiliary board of Akron's International Institute to co-sponsor the inaugural Charter Embassy Ball at Kent State, featuring flags, native costumes and music from many nations. The highlight of the evening was the crowning of the king and queen, who just happened to be two students from Hungary—Hanzély and Strammer.

"Ours was a budding romance, although I was too chicken to kiss her until well into our sophomore year!" Hanzély says. They hung out whenever they could and studied together in the library. One year, Strammer lived in Prentice Hall and Hanzély lived across the street in Dunbar, a dorm for women that was pressed into use to accommodate an overflow of male students.

After the couple graduated with bachelor's degrees in 1962—his in physics and hers in German—they married on August 25, 1962, in Cleveland. They moved to Toledo, Ohio, where he earned a master's degree from the University of Toledo in 1964. She worked as a secretary at the



university before taking time off to raise their first daughter, Melinda. Next, they moved to New Mexico, where he earned a PhD from New Mexico State University in 1969 and their second daughter, Erika, was born.

Returning to Ohio, Hanzély joined the faculty at Youngstown State University as an assistant professor in the Department of Physics and Astronomy in 1968. He was promoted to associate professor in 1973 and full professor in 1980. He served as department chair from 1974 to 1979 and became the first director of Faculty Relations in 1993. Returning to Hungary in 1994 as a Fulbright scholar, he taught one semester at the University of Pannonia in Veszprém.

After raising their children, Brigitta Hanzély re-entered the job market as a substitute teacher in Boardman, Ohio. She then worked full time at the YSU library, where she was responsible for ordering foreign language books and materials and also earned a master's degree in education.

Both Hanzély's retired from Youngstown State in 2002, with Stephen Hanzély receiving the title Professor Emeritus. In 2016, YSU honored him with its prestigious Heritage Award.

In 2013, the Hanzély's established the Dr. W. Leslie Garnett International Student Scholarship to support international students attending Kent State University.

"She was a tiny, soft-spoken but tough-as-nails English professor who taught and mentored international students and looked out for our interests," Hanzély says of Garnett. "She made

Left top: Brigitta Strammer and Stephen Hanzély stand on the sidewalk between Prentice and Dunbar halls in spring 1961. **Left bottom:** Brigitta and Stephen Hanzély re-create the photo taken of them in spring 1961, between Prentice and Dunbar halls in fall 2022.

the International Student Center our 'home away from home'—a place where we could congregate and learn about other cultures."

Brigitta Hanzély adds, "She really was influential and helped the international students solve any problems that occurred."

Having both received scholarships as international students, the Hanzély's are happy to pay it forward. They have also established scholarships at Youngstown State and New Mexico State. "It's an investment in the future," Brigitta Hanzély says. "And we can't think of a better investment than one in the next generation."

Speaking of the next generation, this September the Hanzély's returned to the Kent Campus for Parents and Families Weekend with their daughter Melinda Winsen, MA '94, who has a master's degree in speech pathology from Kent State, and her family. Winsen's daughter, Jessica, a first-year student in the College of Education, Health and Human Services, is living in Fletcher Hall, majoring in speech pathology and planning to enter the same field as her mother.

Although the campus has grown in the 63 years since Stephen and Brigitta Hanzély first walked its paths, they were able to show their granddaughter the spot between Prentice and Dunbar halls where they posed for a photo in spring 1961—and to re-create that pose for this magazine story (see above).

When asked what it was like to be on the Kent Campus again, this time with their granddaughter, the Hanzély's smile. "The third generation," marvels Stephen Hanzély. "Who would have thought when we were here, that one day our granddaughter would be a student at Kent State!" ⚡

**Wilma Leslie Garnett, PhD, was a professor at Kent State from 1937 through 1962. (In 1955, she took a two-year leave of absence to serve as an education consultant in Cambodia, under the auspices of the United States Foreign Operations Administration.) She later taught at other universities before retiring. She died in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1992 at the age of 98.*



Above: The Hanzély's visit the Kent Campus with family on Parents and Families Weekend 2022. **Left to right:** George Winsen; Jessica Winsen (first-year student at Kent State University); Stephen Hanzély, BS '62; Brigitta Hanzély, BE '62; Nicholas Winsen (sophomore at Youngstown State University); and Melinda (Hanzély) Winsen, MA '94



Homecoming Weekend 2022

This year’s homecoming theme was “Milestones and Memories.” Milestones included 25 years of women’s golf and women’s soccer, 50 years of Title IX in the United States, 50 years of the Kent Student Center, and 100 years of Greek life and football.

From Friday, Sept. 30 to Sunday, Oct. 2, Kent State alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff and community members donned blue and gold and took part in long-standing traditions.

Here are some highlights from Homecoming Weekend 2022.

- 9/30
5-7 P.M.

↓

9/30
7:30 P.M.

↓

10/1
8 A.M.

↓

10/1
10:30 A.M.

↓

10/1
NOON-12:30 P.M.

↓

10/1
12:45 P.M.

↓

10/1
1:30 P.M.

↓

10/1
3:30 P.M.
- HOMECOMING INTERNATIONAL CELEBRATION**
The Homecoming International Celebration is one of two signature events the Office of International Student Affairs facilitates each year. The celebration gives international students an opportunity to showcase their home countries and their culture. Attendees visit different countries via a “passport,” taste food from around the world and watch cultural performances. *See photo 1*

HOMECOMING KICKOFF AND FIREWORKS
The celebration began at Hometown Bank Plaza in downtown Kent with music, food and fireworks. Attendees met the 2022 Kent Campus Homecoming Court. *See photos 2 and 3*

BOWMAN CUP 5K RACE AND 1-MILE FUN RUN
The annual race began at the university’s Warren Student Recreation and Wellness Center. The race, named after former Kent State President George Bowman, is a chip-timed race that allows participants to enjoy the scenic route through the Kent Campus and its surrounding community. *See photo 4*

HOMECOMING PARADE
The parade began at the corner of Midway Drive and Main Street and traveled west on Main into downtown Kent. It featured floats, Kent State and local high school marching bands, the homecoming court, university colleges and departments, Kent State cheerleaders and athletes, student organizations, local officials and more. For those who couldn’t make it back to campus, a livestream of the parade was available.

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Title IX in the United States, 37 former women student-athletes served as this year’s Homecoming Parade grand marshals. *See photos 5 and 6*

KISS ON THE K
Kent State couples celebrated the place that brought them together by gathering on the K at Risman Plaza (in front of the Kent Student Center) and kissing when the bell rang at 12:30 p.m. *See photo 7*

DEDICATION OF THE E. TIMOTHY MOORE STUDENT MULTICULTURAL CENTER
Kent State dedicated the E. Timothy Moore Student Multicultural Center on the second floor of the Kent Student Center during homecoming weekend. The renaming of the center was made possible through a donation from a former student, D’Andra Mull, BA ’02, PhD, to honor the memory and legacy of E. Timothy Moore, BFA ’73, MA ’77, MFA ’83. *See photo 8*

Moore was Associate Dean Emeritus for Advising and Undergraduate Student Affairs in the College of Arts and Sciences (1998–2010) and Associate Professor Emeritus in the Department of Pan-African Studies (1974–2010). During his time at Kent State, Moore served as president (1971) and minister of art for Black United Students. He died Feb. 1, 2021, and Kent State has established a scholarship in his honor.

FLASH NATION AND ALUMNI CHAPTERS TAILGATES
Before the football game, fans met in the west parking lot outside Dix Stadium for the Flash Nation and Alumni Chapters Tailgates. They enjoyed food, fun and festivities for the whole family—and the first 1,000 fans to visit received a Kent State stadium bag. *See photos 9 and 10*

HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME
Kent State Golden Flashes took on the Ohio University Bobcats for their first Mid-American Conference East Division game of the season and came out with a 31-24 victory. The Homecoming Court was recognized at the game and Kent State’s 2022 Homecoming Royalty was announced at halftime. *See photos 11 and 12*
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1. An attendee learns about Costa Rica during the Homecoming International Celebration on the Student Green, which extends from Risman Plaza to Summit Street.

2. The Marching Golden Flashes head through downtown to begin the homecoming celebration.

3. Attendees watch a downtown fireworks display after the Homecoming Kickoff.

4. Racers compete in the annual Bowman Cup 5K Race and 1-Mile Fun Run during Kent State’s homecoming weekend.

5. The parade begins with a banner announcing Homecoming 2022.

6. A homecoming float carrying Kent State President Todd Diacon and this year’s grand marshals, former Kent State women student-athletes, makes its way down Main Street.

7. A Kent State couple embrace in gold and blue during Kiss on the K.

8. Timothy Moore’s family stands by the sign for the newly renamed E. Timothy Moore Student Multicultural Center. Pictured left to right: wife, Debra “DeLacy” Moore; son, Elliot Moore, BBA ’04; daughter, Candace Garton-Mullen, BA ’02

9. President Todd Diacon and Randale Richmond, MS ’06, director of athletics, visit with fans at a homecoming tailgate hosted by the Lake County, Greater Cleveland and Stark County alumni, which included members of the Golden Flashes Club (passionate annual fund donors to Kent State Athletics). Pictured left to right: Glenn Peterson, BS ’84; Ryan Coy, BBA ’02; Ashley McBride, Diacon, Richmond, Jessie Ely, BA ’19 (athletics chief of staff), and Nate Condos

10. A Golden Flashes fan has his face painted prior to the game.

11. Gavin Aitken, communication and media studies major (second from left), and Quintin Cooks, communication studies major with minors in public relations and marketing (fourth from left), are announced as the 2022 Homecoming Royalty during halftime of Kent State’s homecoming football game at Dix Stadium. Also pictured: 2021 Homecoming Royalty Andrew Pitko, BS ’22 (far left), and Jatia Caples, BSE ’22 (fifth from left), with President Todd Diacon and Flash.

12. Kent State football players are all smiles as they celebrate their 31-24 overtime victory against the Ohio University Bobcats during Homecoming 2022.
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Left: The 2022 grand marshals mingle with friends prior to the parade. **Left to right:** Cindy (Fitzsimmons) Fesemyer, BS '82 (track and field), Judy Devine, MA '70 (Emeritus Senior Associate Athletics Director), Darlene Wolfe, BA '82, MA '84 (softball and women's basketball), Linda Kochan, BS '73 (field hockey), Christine (Uveges) Loya, BFA '83 (track and field)

Right: Grand marshals representing track and field from several decades gather for a photo before the parade begins. **Left to right:** Kristin Weymer, BS '03 (track and field), Sheila McGee, BBA '00 (track and field), Denise Zehner, BS '91 (track and field), Erin Anderson, BA '05 (cross country and track and field), Adrienne (Dinapoli) Saunder, BS '04 (track and field), Bekkah Berryhill, BSE '04 (track and field)

The Way It Was and A Ways to Go

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the passage of Title IX, Kent State invited former women student-athletes to be grand marshals of the 2022 Homecoming Parade. Here's what some had to say about the effect of the law on their college careers.

BY BETHANY SAVA, BS '12

For Linda (Myers) Tilton, BS '69, MEd '78, the only memento she has from her time on Kent State's women's swim team is one T-shirt that reads "Put a Tiger in Your Tank Suit," which the team members bought for themselves. Despite her memories of the team's success, there were no trophies, medals or even a team swimsuit to hold onto after her final season.

The women's swim team competed in the fall, and the men's team competed in the spring. Yet, notes Tilton, the women practiced in the old pool, while the men used the new pool even during their off-season. When traveling to conference swim meets, she recalls sharing a hotel room with three other girls, while the men sports teams stayed two to a room. The varsity women were allowed to borrow warm-up jackets from the junior varsity men's swim team as they didn't have any of their own gear.

"My experiences as a student-athlete were awesome," Tilton says. "I relish the memories, but the times were not fair for women's sports."

Such was the norm for women athletes in the United States until the U.S. Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 on June 23 that year. The law states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." (That includes public institutions of higher learning like Kent State University.)

Title IX brought benefits for women in the classroom as well as in competition. By formally recognizing women's sports, it allowed more women to qualify for athletic scholarships and gain access to higher education.

In recognition of Title IX's 50th anniversary, Kent State is hosting a yearlong series of events honoring both current and former women student-athletes and highlighting the success and impact of women's athletic programs.

To kick off the celebration, President Todd Diacon invited all former women student-athletes to serve as grand marshals in the 2022 Homecoming Parade. Thirty-seven women representing 13 sports returned to the Kent Campus in October. They had played at Kent State from the late 1960s through the early 2000s, and each brought her own perspective regarding the impact of Title IX on her career as a collegiate athlete. Many noted that the positive changes from the law have taken time to implement.

"At KSU, I competed with teammates who played for the love of the sport since only a few players had funding and many of us worked part-time," says Kris Ewing, BS '83 (field hockey). "Our uniforms were old and sometimes shared between us. We bought our own shoes and sticks, and it was common to play three to four games in one weekend."

Women athletes have faced tremendous challenges over the years, and many still struggle for equity in sports. From lacking the basic necessities of an athletic program, such as uniforms, access to facilities and transportation, to having their efforts and successes as athletes completely overlooked, women in sports have had to fight adversity from opponents on and off the field.

But Title IX brought benefits for women in the classroom as well as in competition. By formally recognizing women's sports, it allowed more women to qualify for athletic scholarships and gain access to higher education.

"Title IX created not only athletic opportunities for women to compete but also the means to earn athletic scholarships," says Denise (Bobby) Zehner, BS '91 (cross country and track). "I was fortunate to



have earned an athletic scholarship all four years while attending Kent State University. This was the main reason I was able to attend college, as my parents did not have the financial means to fund a college education."

Judy Devine, MA '70, Emeritus Senior Associate Athletic Director, is often referred to as the matriarch of Kent State University women's athletics. She first came to Kent as a graduate student in 1969, but she soon took on head coaching roles for women's basketball and field hockey. When Title IX was passed, she led the charge for bringing the university into compliance with the new law.

While the changes made possible by Title IX have transformed the competitive landscape for women student-athletes, Devine says it is equally critical that those women who came before Title IX are remembered and honored for their contributions. "Women have played [sports] since the beginning of time," she says. "It's just that we haven't recognized their need or their desire or their success in doing it."

In 2010, Kent State took a step to honor those trailblazers by inviting former women student-athletes to a Celebrating a Century of Kent State Women's Athletics luncheon, where they received their hard-earned varsity 'K' letters. Those who could not attend the luncheon received them in the mail. More than 100 pre-Title IX women received a letter—including members of the women's swim team. (Both men's and women's swim teams were disbanded in 1988).

"Amazing that some 40 years later, KSU women were honored with a 'K' sports letter sent to our homes," says Shirley Wachner Pickton, BA '74, BS '75 (swimming). "An official Flash at last!"

Kent State currently sponsors 10 varsity women's athletic programs and, in October, launched a campaign called FlaSHEs WILL in partnership with Devine, who established the Judith K. Devine Equity Endowment. Funds raised will provide scholarship funds and other programmatic resources for Kent State women student-athletes.

"We have set a target of receiving at least 50 gifts to celebrate 50 years of Title IX," Devine says. "And I believe we resilient pioneers of Title IX will rise to the call!" ⚡

Scan the QR code for ways to support the FlaSHEs WILL campaign. Or go to kentstatesports.com/flasheswill.



View a video of Judy Devine reading the Title IX law at <https://youtu.be/y1dVrDdKeBU>.



Front row: Brenna Parker, BS '17; Hannah Balash, AA '21; Raj Aggarwal, MBA '70, DBA '75; Kathryn M. Tschiegg, BBA '92; Robert C. Lape, BS '55; Howard Ruffner, BS '71. Not present: Gary P. Jacobson, PhD '78 Back row: President Todd Diacon, PhD; Barbara Smith, BS '84



2022 Alumni Awards

With more than 268,000 Kent State alumni worldwide, there are a lot of Golden Flashes worth celebrating. Graduates leave the university with professional aspirations, personal dreams and the tenacity and talent to make our communities and the world a better place.

The university recognizes alumni who, through leadership, character and hard work, have made exceptional contributions in their chosen professions, in their communities and at Kent State. Sponsored by the Kent State Alumni Association, the Alumni Awards are the university's highest alumni honors.

"For nearly 65 years, the Kent State Alumni Association has recognized the university's most distinguished alumni in this way,"

says Barbara Smith, BS '84, president of the association's national board of directors and an executive vice president and chief banking and strategy officer at The Cooperative Bank of Cape Cod. "The Alumni Award nominations we receive tell compelling stories of incredible accomplishments and astounding generosity. This class of award recipients truly encompasses what it means to be a Golden Flash, and each one is so deserving of this honor."

On Sept. 30, the 2022 award recipients were honored in a ceremony at the Kent State University Hotel and Conference Center as homecoming weekend kicked off. Six alumni and one student received awards.



Scan the QR code to read more about the 2022 Alumni Award recipients. Or go to www.kent.edu/alumniawards.

"The university and the townspeople were hospitable and understanding as I went through my sometimes difficult cultural adjustment. One of my fondest Kent State memories is the day I showed my parents visiting from India around KSU."



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Raj Aggarwal, MBA '70, DBA '75, of Chesterland, Ohio, is an acclaimed scholar and business leader who has been a consultant to the United Nations, World Bank and several Fortune 100 companies and nonprofits. He holds a chartered financial analyst (CFA) designation and has taught finance at several universities in northern Ohio, including Kent State. Aggarwal currently sits on the boards of Kent State University Foundation, ERC Inc. and Ideastream Public Media and is on the professional advisory board of Kent State's Read Center for International and Intercultural Education.

"I served in the Peace Corps as a registered nurse then came back to the States. In 1989, I returned to Honduras to find conditions worsened, and shortly thereafter, I decided to really make an impact."



DISTINGUISHED CITIZEN AWARD

Kathryn M. Tschiegg, BBA '92, of Orrville, Ohio, is a registered nurse and the founder and executive director of Central American Medical Outreach (CAMO), a nondenominational, Christian-based, humanitarian organization that brings medical services, education and community development to Central America. Under her leadership, CAMO's 22 medical services have saved approximately 2.9 million lives directly and indirectly. CAMO offers services to impoverished people who otherwise would have no access to aid.

"It was a combination of superb academic training at Kent State and a fearlessness to try new technologies that has enabled me to be successful as a clinician and as a researcher."



PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Gary P. Jacobson, PhD '78, of Brentwood, Tennessee, is a professor in the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. He is an accomplished audiologist who, through his work, research and teaching in the medical field, has spent more than 40 years making a difference for people facing issues with their hearing and balance.

"My Kent State education did far more than help in my career. It made not only my career, it made my life."



PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Robert C. Lape, BS '55, of Olmsted Township, Ohio, is a broadcast journalist, writer, restaurant reviewer and food critic with a career spanning 70 years, including 41 years covering the food beat in New York. At Kent State, Lape worked for WKSU radio and earned an undergraduate degree in radio speech and journalism. Throughout his career, his excellence in performance and leadership has earned him well-deserved recognition in both radio and television.

"I saw their faces and I could feel their pain, and I took their pictures so that no one would ever forget what happened at Kent State and the trauma that it caused for our nation."



KENT STATE ADVOCACY AWARD

Howard Ruffner, BS '71, of Pasadena, California, was a sophomore broadcast journalism major when he photographed a watershed moment in American history, the Kent State shootings on May 4, 1970. One of his photos appeared on the cover of *Life* magazine on May 15, 1970. He has dedicated much of his life to educating others about the shootings through his photography and presentations. His 2017 photographic memoir, *Moments of Truth: A Photographer's Experience of Kent State 1970*, is a historical resource for those seeking information about the shootings.

"Kent State provided me with a world-class education that prepared me to be in the spaces I'm lucky to serve in now. The professors I had at Kent State saw something in me that I didn't see in myself, and I'm grateful they continue to be a part of my life."



OUTSTANDING NEW PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Brenna Parker, BS '17, of Washington, D.C., managed President Joe Biden's Facebook account and website, two of his most critical online platforms, during the 2020 election. She now oversees all digital strategy, content and partnerships for Vice President Kamala Harris. Parker has also executed campaigns for organizations such as Civic Nation, ACRONYM, When We All Vote, Reach Higher, Apple and YouTube.

"I want to encourage others to believe in themselves just like I have. Your potential is endless!"



GOLDEN FLASH (STUDENT) AWARD

Hannah Balash, AA '21, BBA '22, of Boardman, Ohio, participates in several student and professional organizations at Kent State, including many leadership and mentoring positions. Last summer, she worked in Washington, D.C., as a legislative intern for the office of U.S. Rep. Bill Johnson, who serves eastern and southeastern Ohio. Balash earned a Bachelor of Business Administration in economics in December, and she's dually enrolled in a Kent State graduate program to receive a master's degree in economics.

1940s

Bea McPherson, BA ’43, Hartville, OH, was featured in a new temporary traveling exhibit, *Military Mapping Maidens*, on display at the MAPS Air Museum in Green, Ohio, from May 7 through Oct. 5, 2022. The exhibit, created by the Arizona-based firm Museum Pros, tells the story of 224 young college women recruited by the Army Map Service in 1943 to research and draw maps by hand for the Allied effort in World War II.

McPherson, who celebrated her 100th birthday on Dec. 14, 2021, was the subject of a profile about her military mapping efforts in the winter 2018 issue of *Kent State Magazine*.

1950s

Maj. Gen. Robert Haas, MEd ’56, Massillon, OH, received a Strasburg Tiger Foundation Distinguished Alumni award during the May 2022 graduation ceremony at Strasburg-Franklin High School. He served as an educator in Massillon City Schools for 28 years, working as a teacher, coach, principal and then assistant superintendent. His 50-year military career spanned World War II, the Korean War (where he earned six medals, including the Bronze Star) and the Persian Gulf War. Haas joined the Army Reserves and the Ohio Military Reserves and was promoted to the rank of major general.

Lois Youngen, BS ’55, Eugene, OR, who played in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League in the early 1950s and taught at the University of Oregon, was honored by Kent State’s Varsity “K” Athletic Hall of Fame as the 2022 Distinguished Athletic Alumna on Sept. 16, 2022. She also was inducted into the Tuscarawas County Sports Hall of Fame on June 18, 2022.

Youngen taught for 36 years in the physical education department at the University of Oregon, where she coached or taught 26 sports and recreational activities. In 1988, Youngen and other women of the league were included in the permanent display at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

1960s

Robert Archer, MBA ’61, Ashland, OH, and his wife, Janet, were commencement speakers at Ashland University on May 7, 2022, and university President Carlos Campo presented each with an honorary degree (Doctor of Humane Letters). Robert Archer also received an Alumnus Achievement Award from the Claymont Foundation (Claymont City School District) on May 14, 2022. He is a 1953 graduate of Uhrichsville High School, which consolidated with other area schools to form the Claymont District in 1965. Archer and five partners purchased Kent Watersports in 1980 and grew the business,

which sells its products worldwide, via 35 acquisitions. He serves on several boards, including the Business College Advisory Board of Kent State University.

Fred Packard, MA ’61, Lafayette, LA, artist and retired professor of visual arts at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, has a retrospective show of his career as an artist at the university’s Hilliard Art Museum. The exhibit, *Little Things: Drawings and Photographs by Fred Packard*, features artwork created by Packard from each decade since the ’50s. The show runs from July 2022 to April 2023.

Donald Lowe, BS ’64, MA ’69, Eatonton, GA, was inducted into the Mid-Ohio Valley Sports Hall of Fame on June 11, 2022. He was coordinator of sports medicine at Syracuse University, in New York, for 25 years. The athletic training area in the university’s Carmelo K. Anthony Basketball Center is named the Donald and Mary Lowe Sports Medicine Center.

Donald Stafford, BBA ’65, BS ’84, Minerva, OH, was inducted into Minerva High School’s Alumni Hall of Fame on June 11, 2022. Stafford graduated from the US Army officer training program in 1965, the US Army aviation training program in 1966. As a pilot of a Huey helicopter, he was assigned to Vietnam, where he survived crashes and was shot down by the Viet Cong. After returning to the States, he became a flight instructor at Fort Rucker, Alabama. He retired from the military in 1990. In 2008, he received the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award from the Federal Aviation Administration for 50 years of civilian flying without an accident.

1970s

Timothy App, BFA ’70, Baltimore, MD, professor of art at the Maryland Institute College of Art, has a 2005 painting, “Bacchanal,” on exhibit in the Akron Art Museum’s centennial celebration *Share the Past, Create the Future: Selections from the Akron Art Museum Collection*, on view through April 2023.

Michael Chanak Jr., BS ’71, Cincinnati, OH, wrote, “It’s been 30 years since the change I advocated for [to include sexual orientation] was made to P&G’s non-discrimination policy. P&G is hosting a 30th anniversary celebration on Oct. 13 for the North American GABLE (Gay Ally Bisexual Lesbian & Transgender Employees) affinity group during LGBT History Month. On June 23, I spoke on queer history at the Pride Multifaith service at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. On Dec. 1, I will be speaking at the regional World AIDs remembrance at First Christian Church in Covington, Kentucky.”

John de Lancie, BA ’71, South Pasadena, CA, appeared at Cleveland’s Huntington Convention Center for Fan Expo, a pop culture

convention, on April 30 and May 1, 2022. He has once again appeared as Q, a god-like, malevolent being, in the second season of *Star Trek: Picard*, which streamed on Paramount+ in spring 2022. He has appeared as Q over seven seasons of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, made one appearance on *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* and several appearances on *Star Trek: Voyager*.

Clare Murray Adams, BS ’72, MEd ’76, BFA ’93, Southington, OH, had a solo exhibition, *A Common Thread*, presented by ART26201 at M.I.B. Gallery in the Colonial Arts Center, Buckhannon, West Virginia, from July 29–Aug. 20, 2022. A professor emeritus of art and former chair of the visual art department at Malone University in Canton, Ohio, she maintains a studio practice in rural Southington.

Raymond Fete, AA ’73, BA ’75, Navarre, OH, has served for five years as executive director of Hammer & Nails Inc., an ecumenical Christian nonprofit outreach organization based in Canton, Ohio, that helps struggling Stark County homeowners with maintenance and repairs. He was director of alumni relations for Kent State University from 1985–1987.

Ruth E. Ludwick, BSN ’73, MSN ’81, PhD ’93, Kent, OH, and **Rebecca M. Patton, BSN ’80**, Lakewood, OH, are two of three co-editors of the textbook *Nurses Making Policy, Third Edition: From Bedside to Boardroom* (Springer Publishing Company, February 2022). The editors are donating all book royalties of this updated edition to help endow the \$2 million Washington Fellows program, administered by the American Nurses Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the American Nurses Association.

Ludwick is Professor Emerita of Kent State University’s College of Nursing and an adjunct graduate faculty at Northeast Ohio Medical University. Patton is the past two-term president of the association (ANA; 2006–2010) and holds the inaugural Endowed Perioperative Nursing Chair, Lucy Jo Atkinson Professorship in Perioperative Nursing at Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing, Case Western Reserve University.

Nick Saban, BS ’73, MEd ’75, Tuscaloosa, AL, began his 16th season as head football coach at the University of Alabama in September. Alabama Crimson Tide teams have played in the national title game in six of the last seven seasons. Saban started his coaching career at Kent State in 1973 as a graduate assistant with the Golden Flashes.

Carter Strang, BS ’73, MEd ’79, Shaker Heights, OH, was named president of the Shaker Schools Foundation, Ohio’s first public school foundation, effective July 1, 2022. A recently retired founding partner of the Tucker Ellis law firm, he previously was an award-winning Shaker Heights High School teacher and coach. He is board chair of the Cleveland

Council on World Affairs and a Cleveland-Marshall College of Law Leader in Residence.

Ron Young, BA ’73, Mentor, OH, was selected as 2022 Lake County Fair Parade Grand Marshal. The fair ran July 26–July 31. Young recently retired as a Lake County commissioner, having served since 2019.

Lawrence Terkel, MA ’74, Hudson, OH, a member of the Ohio Masters Swim Club, won two gold medals, one silver and one bronze in the age 75 to 79 category at the 2022 National Senior Games, held May 13–16 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The two gold medals—in the 50-yard freestyle and the 100-yard freestyle—both came with record times.

Dom Capers, MEd ’75, Green Bay, WI, and his wife, Karen, donated \$2 million to the University of Mount Union (his alma mater) in Alliance, Ohio, for a new football facility, which opened in 2020. The university dedicated the Dom and Karen Capers Football Coaching Center on June 11, 2022. The press box at Kehres Stadium is also named in Capers’ honor. Capers, who was a graduate assistant for Kent State football coach Don James, is known for his work as an NFL coach for the Carolina Panthers, Houston Texans and Green Bay Packers. He currently works as a senior defensive assistant for the Denver Broncos.

Matt Likens, BBA ’75, Mesa, AZ, is president and CEO of GT Medical Technologies, which was named Company of the Year for Health Products & Services in the 2022 American Business Awards. This honor acknowledges GT Medical Technologies’ pioneering technology GammaTile® Therapy, FDA-cleared for treating newly diagnosed malignant and recurrent brain tumors. Over 60 US hospitals now offer the therapy as a radiation option for patients with operable brain tumors. Tiles are implanted during the last five minutes of brain tumor resection procedures to eliminate residual tumor cells. This therapy allows patients to resume normal activities rapidly after surgery.

Gary Pinkel, BS ’75, Columbia, MO, will be inducted into the National Football Foundation College Hall of Fame in the Class of 2022. Named Jan. 10, 2022, the class will be inducted Dec. 6 during the 64th NFF Annual Awards Dinner in Las Vegas.

Pinkel is the winningest head football coach at the University of Missouri (2001–2015) and at the University of Toledo (1991–2000). He retired from Mizzou following the 2015 season after announcing he has non-Hodgkin lymphoma. Among his previous honors are inductions into several halls of fame, including Kent State Athletics. Active in the community, he created the GP Made Foundation to help youth facing difficult challenges, and he has raised more than \$10 million for charitable causes. Pinkel played football at Kent State for Don James, who made Pinkel a graduate assistant

and then hired him as position coach when James became head coach at the University of Washington (1975–1992). Pinkel was a coordinator for James’ Huskies before leaving for his own head-coaching roles.

Joseph Valencic, BA ’76, BFA ’76, Cleveland, OH, was inducted into the Cleveland International Hall of Fame on June 7, 2022. He is a founder and past president of the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame, where he currently is vice president and director of the museum and archives. When Slovenia declared independence in 1991, he led the communications campaigns of United Americans for Slovenia to lobby for US recognition and to have Slovenia accepted into NATO. Valencic is the longtime president of the Cleveland Federation of Lodges of the Slovene National Benefit Society, America’s largest Slovenian organization. His Saturday radio broadcast (on WINT 1330 AM and 101.5 FM) features music and news from Slovenia. He writes, lectures and produces television documentaries on Slovenian American history and culture in the United States and Europe.

Gary F. Bengier, BBA ’77, San Francisco, CA, received a 2022 Independent Press Award for his book *Unfettered Journey* (Chiliagon Press, Sept. 5, 2020) in the category of Visionary Fiction. The international competition is judged by experts in the book industry, and awards are based on overall excellence. A No. 1 bestseller on Amazon, the book has won seven awards and is available in American English, plus seven other languages. After a career in Silicon Valley, where he worked in a variety of tech companies, Bengier pursued passion projects, studying astrophysics and philosophy. He has an MBA from Harvard Business School and an MA in philosophy from San Francisco State University.

Terry Calaway, BS ’77, Lenexa, KS, has been elected to serve a three-year term on the Board of Trustees of Park University, a private university in Parkville, Missouri. Calaway, who has had a 36-year career in higher education, was named president emeritus of Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas, after serving JCCC as its president from 2007-13. He currently serves as a professor of practice in the Community College Leadership Program within Kansas State University’s College of Education.

Barbara Easlick, BS ’77, Wildwood, FL, was this year’s honoree at the annual Zoar Memorial Amateur Championship, for her contributions to the game of golf. She was a three-sport star at Kent State University. Upon graduation, she began her quest to join the LPGA Tour, coming close several times. A native of Dover, Ohio, she was the golf instructor at Zoar Golf Club for more than 25 years.

She also served as the women’s basketball coach and started the softball program at Malone University in Canton, Ohio, before becoming a professor in the School of Business. Easlick was inducted into the Malone Hall of Fame in 2002 and retired from the university in 2015 after 30 years of service.

Judge Annalisa Stubbs Williams, BA ’77, Akron, OH, a judge at the Akron Municipal Court, received the Ritter Award by the Ohio State Bar Foundation in August 2022. The foundation’s highest honor, the award recognizes the accomplishments of the honoree in attaining and promoting the highest level of professionalism, integrity and ethics in the practice of law. In 2022, she also received the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Change Maker Award, the Centennial 2022 Akron Law Outstanding Alumni Award and the Girl Scouts of North East Ohio Woman of Distinction Award. In July 2021, she joined the Kent State Alumni Association National Board of Directors. In 2020, she received the Kent State Distinguished Alumni Award.

Wendy Patton, BA ’78, Columbus, OH, is the new director of the Columbus Program in State Issues. Patton has a 35-year career in state and local government—including 15 years with Policy Matters Ohio—and she has worked in and around the Ohio Statehouse since 1987.

Wayne Dawson, BA ’79, Cleveland, OH, celebrated 40 years with Fox 8 Cleveland on July 15, 2022. Kent State’s 2018 Homecoming parade grand marshal, Dawson also has received the university’s William D. Taylor Journalism Alumnus of the Year Award (2014), the Diversity in Media Distinguished Leadership Award (2006) and the Cultural Diversity Award (1994).

Douglas Hanzel, BS ’79, and **Andrew Hanzel, BS ’10**, Savannah, GA, won their seventh championship on July 24, 2022, in the 53rd edition of the National Father-Son Invitational at the Country Club of North Carolina. The elder Hanzel is the 2013 US Senior Amateur champion and was the low amateur at the 2012 and 2013 US Senior Open. Both Hanzels played college golf at Kent State University, where Doug, a physician, endowed a golf scholarship.

Nan Jenks-Jay, BA ’79, Sudbury, VT, received an honorary degree from Middlebury College at the commencement ceremony on May 29, 2022. She served as dean of environmental affairs and taught in the Environmental Studies program at the college for 23 years before retiring in 2019. Jenks-Jay fostered an integrated institutional vision for sustainability, launching numerous successful initiatives. She also helped create the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher

Education (AASHE), which presented her with its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020. She received an MES from the Yale University School of the Environment, which honored her with its Distinguished Alumna Award during Reunion Weekend 2021.

Connie Schultz, BA ’79, Cleveland, OH, delivered the keynote address at Denison University’s 181st commencement ceremony on May 14, 2022. She also was awarded an honorary degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*. She joined Denison in Fall 2023 as Professor of Practice.

Schultz is a Pulitzer Prize–winning columnist for *USA Today* and author of the *New York Times* bestselling novel *The Daughters of Erietown* (2020). She previously was a professional-in-residence at Kent State University’s School of Media and Journalism, where she taught opinion writing, feature writing and ethics.

1980s

Lucinda “Cindy” Einhouse, BA ’80, Lakewood, OH, president and CEO of Beck Center for the Arts in Lakewood, Ohio, has completed and published *Celebrating Our Past – Creating Our Future: 90 Years of Creating Arts Experiences at Beck Center for the Arts*, the first comprehensive history of the center, covering the organization’s nearly 90 years as a professional theatre and arts education nonprofit. The book is available on Amazon and all proceeds go to Beck Center’s endowment.

Ed Donatell, MA ’81, Minneapolis, MN, joined the Minnesota Vikings as defensive coordinator, effective February 2022. He brings 31 years of NFL coaching experience to Minnesota, where he’s trying to lead a defensive turnaround.

Donatell got his first coaching job as a graduate assistant at Kent State University in 1979 and broke into the NFL as the New York Jets’ defensive backs coach in 1990. Most recently, he has been a defensive backs coach for the Denver Broncos (2019–2021).

Jeffrey Kurtz, BA ’81, MA ’89, Ravenna, OH, is a lecturer in leadership training programs for the National Interscholastic Association of Athletic Administrators.

President of the board of directors for Summit County Sports Hall of Fame, Kurtz also serves as a member of the national board of directors and instructor in the National Association of Sports Public Address Announcers training/certification program. He has been an announcer for Kent State University football and basketball games.

Rita Perea, BS ’81, MED ’90, Des Moines, IA, president and CEO of Rita Perea Leadership Coaching and Consulting, was named one of the 2022 Women of Influence by the *Business Record* on Aug. 4, 2022. The awards

celebrate the work of Central Iowa women who have made a difference. Previously, Perea had served as superintendent of two Iowa school districts, helping them recover from financial difficulty, and she developed school improvement software while working for Heartland Area Education Agency.

Denise McEnroe-Petitte, AS ’82, BSN ’83, CER8 ’08, New Philadelphia, OH, associate professor of nursing at Kent State University at Tuscarawas, was inducted into the Academy for Associate Degree Nursing by the Organization for Associate Degree Nursing in 2020. She has been teaching undergraduate nursing programs since 1996 at Kent State Tuscarawas, where she was awarded the exceptional Service-Learning Faculty Award in 2013.

Lisa Brindley, MED ’83, New Philadelphia, OH, received a Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Claymont Foundation (Claymont City School District) on May 14, 2022. She is a 1976 graduate of Claymont High School. She worked at numerous hospitals in Ohio, Arkansas and Tennessee as a cardiac nurse and nursing educator. She also worked in education at Head Start, Early Intervention and as an associate lecturer in early childhood education technology at Kent State University at Tuscarawas, retiring in May 2022.

Gary Harwood, BS ’83, Kent, OH, had photos on display at the *Tiger Legacy: The Story Continues* exhibition in the Paul Brown Museum, within the Massillon Museum, which ran from Feb. 28 through July 10, 2022. It featured 69 photographs of players, traditions and special moments from the Massillon Tigers’ 2021 Washington High School football season. Harwood, a member of the Teach Arts Roster for the Ohio Arts Council, taught visual storytelling at Kent State University.

John Wagner, BS ’84, MA ’87, Forest Lake, MN, was promoted to managing editor of the *County News Review* by Adams Publishing Group. The weekly newspaper is based in Cambridge, Minnesota. Wagner has served as sports editor of the paper since February 2019, and in February 2020 he added the responsibility of sports editor of the *Forest Lake Times*.

Wagner also worked for seven years in the Kent State University athletics department, including as sports information director from 1987–1992.

Thomas Botzman, MA ’85, PhD ’91, Alliance, OH, retired as president of the University of Mount Union, effective June 30, 2022. He was president since July 2020.

Keith B. Wilson, BA ’85, Lexington, KY, received a 2022 ACA Fellows Award by the American Counseling Association in April 2022. The award recognizes ACA members who have advanced the counseling profession throughout their career. Wilson is

a professor of rehabilitation and counselor education in the Department of Early Childhood, Special Education and Counselor Education at the University of Kentucky College of Education.

Matthew Fantin, BBA ’86, MA ’88, New Philadelphia, OH, was elected to the board of the Tuscarawas Clinic for the Working Uninsured. The mission of the nonprofit organization, which celebrated its 13th year in 2022, is to improve access to health care for working, uninsured residents of Tuscarawas County who are 18–64 and at or below 199% of the federal poverty level.

Charles Esque Fleming, BBA ’86, Bedford, OH, was sworn in as a judge in the US District Court for the Northern District of Ohio on March 11, 2022. He was nominated to serve a life term on the bench by President Joe Biden. Recently, Fleming was appointed as a judge in the court’s STAR (Successful Transitions-Accelerated Reentry) Program, which helps citizens returning from incarceration get the tools they need to find and maintain employment, avoid recidivism and live productive lives.

Frank Janik, BA ’87, Amherst, OH, Lorain County Domestic Relations/Juvenile Court judge, was elected vice president of the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges for 2022 by his peers in January. As vice president, he serves on the executive committee of the Ohio Judicial Conference serving all judges in the state. Janik was elected judge in 2012.

Sara Lee, MA ’87, Granville, OH, was promoted to senior associate director of athletics, deputy Title IX coordinator for athletics and senior woman administrator for the athletics department at Denison University, as of April 2022. Lee stepped down as Denison’s head women’s basketball coach after 33 years leading the program.

Dana Addis, BA ’88, BSE ’92, Seville, OH, was named superintendent of the Hudson City School District in Hudson, Ohio, as of March 2022.

Thomas Chiappini, BS ’88, Canton, OH, was inducted into Stark State College’s 2022 Alumni Hall of Fame. He joined the college in 2004 and serves as vice president of business, finance and information technology. He also served as the college’s interim president in 2011.

Rebecca Corbin, BA ’88, Raleigh, NC, was awarded the *Triangle Business Journal* Women in Business Award in March 2022. She is president and CEO for the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship, a leading nonprofit membership organization dedicated to advancing entrepreneurship education in community colleges across the US and abroad.

Vipal Patel, BS ’88, Dayton, OH, joined the global litigation practice at Squire Patton Boggs LLP as a partner. He was named acting US attorney in March 2021. He represented the United States in the investigation of the August 2019 mass shooting in Dayton and in the prosecution of weapons-related charges against a friend of the shooter. He is being recognized for that work with the Attorney General’s Award, the top honor of the Department of Justice.

Philip Wagner, BA ’88, MED ’90, EDS ’92, PhD ’06, Lewis Center, OH, was named the superintendent of Johnstown-Monroe School District, in Johnstown, Ohio, as of May 9, 2022. Wagner was a recipient of Kent State’s Hall of Fame Alumni Leadership Award and the Bowman Fellow Award in Educational Administration.

Deidra Mitchell, BS ’89, Grand Rapids, MI, was named among the 50 Most Influential Women in West Michigan and the Top 200 Most Powerful Business Leaders in West Michigan in 2022 by the *Grand Rapids Business Journal*. She was also named Investor Dealmaker of the Year by MIBiz. Mitchell is president and CEO of Waséyabek Development Co., LLC, a 100% tribally owned economic development entity of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi. Since joining WDC in April 2016 and opening the Grand Rapids office, she has expanded the federal division to over \$170 million in contracts.

1990s

Daniel Borgia, PhD ’91, Dudley, MA, was named provost at Nichols College in Dudley, effective April 1, 2022.

Timothy Carnahan, BSE ’91, Pawleys Island, SC, was named principal of Midway Elementary School in Lexington, South Carolina, in June 2022.

Lynn Shimko, BFA ’91, North Canton, OH, graphic designer at ShimkoDesign, co-founded 720 Market with her husband, David, to showcase artists and local businesses at North Canton city lots that were empty on weekends. (The name came from North Canton’s ZIP code, 44720.) Vendors at the traveling markets include local brewers, food trucks and live music. She and her husband also were recruited by ArtsInStark to plan, organize and rebrand First Fridays in Downtown Canton for 2022.

Craig Heath, BSE ’92, Dublin, OH, was selected as superintendent of Mentor Public Schools, effective Aug. 1, 2022.

Laurie McClellan, AS ’92, AS ’93, Minerva, OH, was inducted into the Minerva High School Hall of Fame on June 11, 2022. In 1998, she was appointed chairman of the board of Consumers

National Bank, and under her leadership the bank increased its assets from \$131 million to \$500 million. She is active in community service, supporting many Minerva area charities, as well as Kent State University at Salem.

Teresa Simons, BBA ’92, Willoughby, OH, was named executive director of the Alliance for Working Together Foundation, as of January 2022. The foundation, based in Mentor, promotes the development of rewarding careers in manufacturing to support the long-term success and growth of the manufacturing community in Northeast Ohio.

Paul Haynes, BA ’93, St. Paul, MN, was promoted to co-defensive coordinator in the football program at the University of Minnesota. He helped Minnesota’s defense finish third nationally in total defense in 2021. Haynes was Kent State’s head football coach from 2013–17.

Gregory Beals, BS ’95, MA ’99, Columbus, OH, was recently chosen as head baseball coach at The University of Akron. Most recently he was head coach at The Ohio State University from 2011–2022.

Beals was a star catcher for the Golden Flashes from 1989–91 and had a three-year run in the New York Mets’ minor league system. He then started his coaching career at Kent State, working as an assistant coach from 1994–2002.

LaDonna Dulemba, MSN ’95, New Paris, OH, received tenure and was promoted to associate professor of nursing in the School of Nursing and Health Sciences at Indiana University East in Richmond, Indiana, effective July 1, 2022. She was selected to the Class of 2020 by the Faculty Academy on Excellence in Teaching.

Vicki (Bonner) Williams, BA ’95, MED ’98, Chesapeake, VA, was appointed dean of students and associate vice president of engagement at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, effective July 2022.

Shayne (Blum) Borenstein, BA ’96, Tucker, GA, earned two industry awards for editing and producing original content for HBO Max while working for WarnerMedia. Both awards were connected to her work on the series *Raised by Wolves* from executive producer Ridley Scott.

Shane Mizicko, BM ’96, Cape Girardeau, MO, spoke at Southeast Missouri State University’s commencement ceremony on May 14, 2022. Mizicko is professor, director of percussion and equipment manager for the university’s music department.

Michelle L. Patrick, PhD ’96, Sewickley, PA, has been named the first woman president of Robert Morris University, effective July 2022.

John Patterson Jr., PhD ’96, Jefferson, OH, was appointed as USDA state executive director, Farm Service Agency, Ohio, by President Joe Biden on April 14, 2022.

Kevin L. Smith, MLIS ’96, Waterville, ME, an authority on intellectual property, was appointed director of the Colby College Libraries, effective Aug. 1, 2022.

Anjuman Ali-Bogaert, PhD ’97, Washington, DC, was promoted to deputy wellness editor with *The Washington Post*, effective July 11, 2022. She supervises a staff of writers and freelancers who create science-based service journalism focused on personal health topics. Prior to joining *The Post* in 2010, she worked as an editor at the *Wall Street Journal Europe* and as an interactive editor, foreign editor and editorial writer for the *Wisconsin State Journal*, where she was part of an editorial writing team named a finalist for the 2008 Pulitzer Prize.

Christine Bowman, AA ’97, BA ’99, MA ’04, Canton, OH, local history and genealogy specialist at Massillon Public Library, presented “Why Ohio? The Move West Following the Revolutionary War” at Massillon Museum’s Brown Bag Lunch in Gessner Hall on July 25, 2022. She teaches history and humanities at Kent State Stark and maintains the Massillon Heritage Foundation archives.

Timothy B. Clepper, BBA ’97, Hudson, OH, president and CEO of Kaulig Companies, and Matt Kaulig, executive chairman, announced that Kaulig Companies will replace Bridgestone as the title sponsor of the PGA Tour Champions’ Senior Players Championship at Firestone Country Club, with a four-year agreement starting in 2023. Clepper also accepted a position on the Foundation Board of Akron Children’s Hospital, as of April 29, 2022. The founder of Santa PICsU (an organization dedicated to helping children and families in traumatic situations), Clepper was one of three recipients of the 2020 Champion for Children award from the hospital.

Bryan Farson, BSE ’97, Wadsworth, OH, was selected as superintendent of Norton City Schools, effective Aug. 1, 2022.

Todd Herman, BS ’97, Dover, OH, was named the 13th superintendent of the Noble Local School District in Noble County, Ohio, on April 19, 2022.

Justin Hilton, BArc ’97, BS ’97, MArc ’97, Ravenna, OH, was named president of Leadership Akron, which was founded in 1984 to help develop and connect community leaders. Hilton, a former Kent State University administrator, has been on the Leadership Akron board of directors since 2020 and is a graduate of the organization’s Signature Program.

Lorenzo Jones, BGS ’97, Bedford, OH, was named principal of Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, effective Aug. 1, 2022.

Leslie Vano, MLS ’97, Kewanee, IL, was hired as director of the Kewanee Public Library in Kewanee, effective July 5, 2022.

John Baker, BSN ’98, MN ’07, MBA ’11, Ravenna, OH, was named chief nursing officer at Cleveland Clinic Union Hospital in Dover, Ohio, effective June 1, 2022.

Kelly Manthey, BBA ’98, Mokena, IL, was appointed CEO of Kin + Carta, effective Aug. 1, 2022. She is based in the digital transformation consultancy’s US headquarters in Chicago.

Kenneth Speegle, BA ’98, Lake Worth, FL, was named chief operating officer for Storage Rentals of America by SROA Capital LLC, as of June 2022.

Shampa Banerjee, PhD ’99, San Carlos, CA, was named chief product and technology officer at Hispanic-focused Canela Media, which operates a portfolio of websites as well as free, ad-supported streaming services Canela TV and Canela Music.

Tameka Ellington, BA ’99, PhD ’11, Akron, OH, spoke on the art and history of Black hair at the Massillon Museum Brown Bag Lunch program on Feb. 22, 2022. Her largest project to date, *TEXTURES: The History and Art of Black Hair*, was exhibited at the Kent State University Museum from Sept. 10, 2021, to Aug. 14, 2022. She recently started the Ellington Foundation with the mission of supporting first-generation students studying the arts.

Joseph A. Salem Jr., MLS ’99, MA ’05, PhD ’14, Apex, NC, was named the Rita DiGiallonardo Holloway University Librarian and vice provost for library affairs for Duke University Libraries in Durham, North Carolina, effective Aug. 15, 2022.

In 2017, he was recognized as the Kent State School of Library and Information Science Alumnus of the Year.

2000s

Mike Beder, BGS ’00, Kent, OH, and **Evan Bailey BS ’03, MA ’09**, Shaker Heights, OH, are part owners of the Cleveland Bagel Café, now housed in the historic building on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and East Main Street in Kent. The café opened for business in its new location on Sept. 6, 2022.

The Tudor-style building (designed by Kent architect Charles G. Kistler) has long been a hangout for Kent State students and faculty, as well as Kent residents. It once housed the Robin Hood Tea Room (1920s–30s), the Capt. Brady Restaurant (1940s–90s), Brady’s Café (1990s–2003) and most recently Starbucks (which closed in 2020).

Beder operates several other businesses in the city, including Water Street Tavern, Venice Café and Kent Sportswear. Bailey is a professor at Kent State’s School of Media and Journalism.

Kenneth Cooper, DPM ’00, Woodsfield, OH, owner of the Swiss Valley Foot and Ankle Center, celebrated 20 years in practice in July 2022 at the Barnesville and Woodsfield locations. A third location in St. Clairsville opened in 2015.

Brian Meng, BS ’00, BArc ’01, Lakewood, OH, has been appointed as a board member for Lakewood Alive, a community-centered nonprofit that aims to foster and sustain vibrant neighborhoods in Lakewood, Ohio. As a licensed architect and associate principal at Bialosky Cleveland, Meng has managed nationally acclaimed mixed-use developments, including Crocker Park in Westlake and the Van Aken District in Shaker Heights. He is working on Belle Oaks in Richmond Heights and the \$300 million development of Circle Square in the University Circle neighborhood of Cleveland.

Tiffany Capeles, AS ’02, BS ’04, Salt Lake City, UT, graduate of Kent State University at Stark, was named first chief equity officer at Intermountain Healthcare, a Utah-based, not-for-profit system of 33 hospitals and the largest health care provider in the Intermountain West of the United States.

Julianna Medina-Politsky, BA ’02, BBA ’02, Los Angeles, CA, was a guest speaker at a “Women in Film” evening hosted by Kent State’s Female Filmmakers’ Initiative on May 2, 2022.

She spent nearly 10 years with Legendary Entertainment and now is a co-owner of Redbird Entertainment. The film and television production company’s first film, *The Killing of Kenneth Chamberlain* (2019), won a Gotham Award, an NAACP Image Award and Independent Spirit Award nominations.

Jon Mills, BS ’02, Kent, OH, Kent State’s head golf coach, was inducted into the Ontario Golf Hall of Fame on July 24, 2022. A native of Belleville, Ontario, Mills was honored for his outstanding amateur and professional career, including winning the 2001 Ontario Men’s Amateur Championships as the No. 1 ranked amateur golfer.

Mills was appointed head coach of the men’s golf program at Kent State in July 2019, after serving as assistant coach since 2016. He helped lead the team to five collegiate championships and the Mid-American Conference title in 2016–2017. In 2019, the team advanced to the NCAA Championship.

As a student at Kent State, Mills earned many honors, and he was inducted into the Kent State Varsity “K” Hall of Fame in 2007, the same year he was named Score’s Canadian Male Golfer of the Year.

Kacie V. Armstrong, MLIS ’03, North Olmsted, OH, director of the Euclid Public Library, has been named the 2022 Librarian of the Year by the Ohio Library Council. She was recognized for her efforts to identify and address socioeconomic disparities, bridge the digital divide and increase access to social services in her community.

Dante Capers, BSE ’03, MED ’06, Warren, OH, delivered the commencement speech during Kent State University at Trumbull’s ceremony on May 13, 2022. Capers, in his 15th year as an administrator in the Warren City School District, last year was named associate superintendent of student service, student wellness and success.

Damon Hays, DPM ’03, formerly of Gresham, OR, was named assistant vice president of the Iredell Physician Network in Statesville, North Carolina, in June 2022.

Merrill Rainey, BA ’03, Whitehouse, OH, is the author and illustrator for a new interactive board book series with HarperCollins. The first book, *Roar! I’m a Dinosaur* (HarperFestival, July 2022), uses simple rhymes and unique eyeholes that invite young dinosaur fans (baby to 4 years) to stomp, chomp and soar like dinosaurs. The second book, *Oink! I’m a Pig*, launched in September and invites readers to transform into friendly farm animals. Visit littlerainey.com or follow him on Instagram @littlerainey.

Jill Christoff, BA ’04, Shaker Heights, OH, has been promoted to senior designer at Bialosky Cleveland. Trained in architecture and interior design, she joined Bialosky in 2011. Her experience in complex renovations led her to notable projects, including the historic Shaker Heights Public Library renovation, the relocation of Kent State University’s School of Visual Communication Design and the award-winning Lorain County Community College project. Christoff earned a Master of Architecture from the University of Notre Dame in 2009. She is certified through the National Council for Interior Design Qualification and is a member of the International Interior Design Association and an associate of the American Institute of Architects.

Sabah Drabu, MTEC ’04, Hudson, OH, is co-founder of CookinGenie, a Hudson-based company with a web platform that connects diners and personal chefs. CookinGenie gives clients the option to hire a personal chef (or “Genie”) for a special occasion at their homes—such as a two-person date night dinner, family gathering, brunch or elaborate dinner party. In June 2022, the company received a \$2 million investment from Houston-based Allison Wood Ventures that will enable it to expand to new markets nationwide.

Brad Gable, BS ’04, MS ’05, Dublin, OH, was selected by Columbus Business First for its 2022 40 under 40 award as one of Central Ohio’s most talented young professionals. He was also recognized by the Emergency Medicine Residents’ Association in 2021 as one of the 25 most influential emergency physicians under the age of 45. He is an attending physician with Mid-Ohio Emergency Services and medical director of simulation for the OhioHealth System.

Kimberly Rohr, BS ’04, MBA ’07, and **Christopher Rohr, AAS ’17**, Canton, OH, held a grand opening for Lost Trail Winery and Vineyard in May 2022. The winery is on 13 acres in Marlboro Township, on the outskirts of Canton. For information on private tastings or events, visit <https://losttrailwinery.com>.

Garrison Wollam, BSE ’04, MED ’10, Kent, OH, a third grade teacher at Holden Elementary School in Kent, has created an anti-cancer brand called Cancer is Dumb to provide humorous merchandise options for supporting loved ones who have cancer. The trademarked slogan and others appear on a line of apparel and other items Wollam designed after he was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (the No. 1 form of cancer in children) in October 2019. He sells the products on a website he created while undergoing treatment and donates 20% of all proceeds to St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital.

Ryan Burley, MLIS ’05, Columbus, OH, was promoted to manager of the New Albany branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library as of February 2022.

Grace Dobush, BS ’05, Berlin, Germany, was awarded the 2022 Ohio Writer’s Scholarship, sponsored by the Sandra Carpenter Memorial Fund (SCMF)/Stockholm Writers Festival. The award supports an Ohio woman writer (defined as anyone who is native, a long-time resident and/or Ohio educated) who is pursuing the publication of a book. The SCMF selected Dobush on the merits of her comic novel, *Dayton Beach*, which she describes as a “love letter to the Midwest and to queer friendship.” She was awarded a \$1,500 prize and entry and travel allowance to the Stockholm Writers Festival, which took place August 12–14, 2022. The award included a meeting with a literary agent.

Ben Johnson, BFA ’05, Chesterland, OH, received the Labino Award for Excellence in Glass for his artwork titled *Wheat Field*, in the Best of 2022 Exhibition at the Ohio Craft Museum, May 8–June 26, 2022. His work has received numerous best-in-show awards, and he has been recognized as a Rising Star in contemporary glass at the Museum of American Glass in Millville, NJ. He is currently chair of Craft + Design

and academic coordinator of glass at the Cleveland Institute of Art.

Jarrod Mulheman, BSE ’05, Chagrin Falls, OH, was hired as Chagrin Falls Schools director of student advancement, a newly created position. He received a two-year contract, effective Aug. 1, 2022.

John Paul, BS ’05, South Bend, IN, an Emmy-nominated journalist, joined WSBT-TV 22 (covering the South Bend area) as evening co-anchor, as of July 25, 2022.

Maria Sheakley, PhD ’05, Richland, MI, was named associate dean for student affairs for the Homer Stryker School of Medicine at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan, as of April 2022.

Stephanie Sweany, BS ’05, Canton, OH, was appointed executive director of the Stark County Hunger Task Force in March 2022. She has been with the organization since 2017, most recently as assistant director. Sweaney was the 2020 recipient of the Kent State Alumni Association’s Advocacy Award.

Toby Keeton, BS ’06, BArc ’07, Wilmington, NC, has been elevated to partner-principal at Kersting Architecture in Wilmington. He joined the firm in 2008 and has been involved in the design and construction of several award-winning projects. He has won several competitions, including Architecture for Humanity’s 2008 international design competition and *Dwell* magazine’s 2009 Innovate It! industrial design challenge.

Chad Lensman, BBA ’06, St. Paris, OH, has been named superintendent of Graham Local Schools in Champaign County, Ohio, effective Aug. 1, 2022.

Sarah Shendy, BA ’06, Cuyahoga Falls, OH, was selected as one of the International Association of Chiefs of Police 40 Under 40 award winners for 2022. The annual awards program honors 40 law enforcement leaders under the age of 40 from around the world who demonstrate leadership and exemplify a deep commitment to the profession. The winners will be recognized on the IACP’s website and featured in the November 2022 issue of *Police Chief* magazine.

Danielle Renee Smeach, BA ’06, Cleveland, OH, graduated in April 2022 from Ohio University with a master’s degree in business administration.

Mark Treen, BSE ’06, Akron, OH, was selected as principal of Tallmadge High School, effective Aug. 1, 2022.

Kristin Walls, BA ’06, Crestwood, KY, is an American Meteorological Society Certified Broadcast Meteorologist and the morning meteorologist for Spectrum News 1 in Kentucky. Most recently, she and the Spectrum News 1 team had continuous live coverage of the December 2021 Mayfield tornado outbreak in Kentucky.

Arianna (Neading) DeGeorge, BSE ’07, Cleveland, OH, has been named principal at Bryden Elementary School in Beachwood, Ohio, as of June 2022.

Harley King, BS ’07, Memphis, TN, was hired as associate athletic director for compliance at the University of Memphis.

Wendy Tietz, PhD ’07, Kent, OH, professor of accounting in Kent State’s Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship, received a 2022 Bea Sanders/AICPA Teaching Innovation Award from the American Institute of CPAs in July. She was a previous winner in 2017 and 2014. She also received the prestigious 2020 American Accounting Association’s J. Michael and Mary Anne Cook/Deloitte Foundation Prize for superior undergraduate teaching in accounting.

Derek Varansky, AS ’07, BSE ’09, Bolivar, OH, was approved as superintendent of Tuscarawas Valley Local Schools, as of July 1, 2022.

Hallie Crouch, BS ’08, MArc ’09, Akron, OH, has been chosen for the Cleveland Bridge Builders Class of 2023, a selective leadership program hosted by the Cleveland Leadership Center. She is an associate principal at Bialosky Cleveland, the first nontraditional practitioner to hold the title. She contributes and advises on many dimensions of the practice, including business development, marketing and strategic planning. She has presented on the topics of equity and alternative careers at design schools and architecture conferences, including the 2019 National Women’s Leadership Summit. She is a frequent juror of student work at Kent State University.

Meagan Shaheen, BS ’08, Canton, OH, was named the new chief executive officer of the Tuscarawas YMCA, effective Oct. 31. Previously, she was the district executive director of the YMCA of Central Stark County’s Meyers Lake and Eric Snow Family branches. In that role, she was named a “Twenty under 40!” honoree for 2022 by the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce and *The Repository*. The award recognizes Stark County leaders under age 40 who have demonstrated dynamic leadership and social responsibility.

Cathryn Siegal-Berman, MA ’08, Cleveland, OH, is founder of Clevo Books, which opened a brick-and-mortar bookstore in downtown Cleveland’s 5th Street Arcades on March 31, 2022. The shop focuses on texts from around the world translated into English, along with a small selection of local literature, puzzles and accessories. The brand’s publishing arm, which she began in 2015, is set to release several new translated titles, including cookbooks about Jewish and Korean cuisine.

Sara J. Wilson, BA ’08, Canal Fulton, OH, was sworn in as chief of the Canal Fulton Police Department in July 2022. She is the city’s first woman police chief. She worked as a police officer for the Canal Fulton Police for nine years before her promotion.

Ashley Johnson, BA ’09, Cleveland, OH, was named a “Twenty under 40!” honoree for 2022 by the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce and *The Repository*. Johnson is senior project manager at Innis Maggiore, an ad agency in Canton, and has been a board member with the Domestic Violence Project since 2019. The award recognizes Stark County leaders under age 40 who have demonstrated dynamic leadership and social responsibility.

Anna Kowalksa, BA ’09, MA ’14, Smyrna, GA, was announced as the 13th head women’s basketball coach of Wheeling University in West Virginia on May 23, 2022.

Jason Mogus, BA ’09, Waynesburg, OH, was named a “Twenty under 40!” honoree for 2022 by the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce and *The Repository* in Canton. Mogus is owner and clinical director of the Center for Renewed Minds LLC. The award recognizes Stark County leaders under age 40 who have demonstrated dynamic leadership and social responsibility.

Christian Palich, BA ’09, Plain City, OH, was appointed by Gov. Mike DeWine to the Kent State University Board of Trustees in June 2022. He will serve through May 16, 2031. Palich is vice president of public affairs for Taft, Stettinus & Hollister, where he advocates on behalf of clients in multiple sectors in Washington, DC; Columbus, Ohio; and states across the nation.

Ikeshia Smith, BS ’09, Canton, OH, a clinical psychologist, hosted the first Stark County Minority Mental Health Gala: Bridging the Gap Between Mental Health Agencies and Minority Churches, at First Christian Church’s Heritage Hall on July 8, 2022. Smith is chief strategist for Mind Your Business, a religious nonprofit organization dedicated to the psychological well-being of communities and churches.

2010s

Kent Hamilton, BS ’10, Canton, OH, was named a “Twenty under 40!” honoree for 2022 by the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce and *The Repository*. Hamilton is a physical education teacher for Plain Local Schools. The award recognizes Stark County leaders under age 40 who have demonstrated dynamic leadership and social responsibility.

Stephanie Hand-Cannane, BA ’10, Massillon, OH, has been selected to participate in the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity’s Pathfinder Program, which offers resources to early-career attorneys for developing foundational leadership skills. She is an associate in the Cleveland office of McGlinchey Stafford. She was named to *Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch* list in 2021 and recognized as a Rising Star by *Ohio Super Lawyers* in 2021–2022. She is active with the Ohio State Bar Association and the Ohio Women’s Bar Association.

Nitie Sroa, DPM ’10, Bryan, Ohio, a board-certified surgical podiatrist, is seeing patients at the Midwest Foot and Ankle Clinic at Paulding County Hospital in Paulding, as of May 2022. Sroa is a Fellow of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons.

Travis Clarke, BS ’11, Marc ’12, Cleveland, OH, has been promoted to associate at Bialosky Cleveland after five years with the firm. He has served as an architectural designer for high-profile projects, including the NASA Glenn Research Center Research Support Building in Cleveland and the US Ashley Courthouse modernization and annex in Toledo.

Chris Mobley, BSE ’11, Dayton, OH, was named head football coach at West Carrollton High School near Dayton, effective Feb. 28, 2022.

Sandy (Weigel) Tilberg, BA ’11, Lakewood, OH, has been promoted to senior interior designer at Bialosky Cleveland. Over her 10 years at the firm, she’s brought a sophisticated and detailed design approach to projects ranging from interior renovations to new construction. Notable works include John Carroll University’s Student Success Center in University Heights and the 375-unit mixed-use development, Belle Oaks, in Richmond Heights.

Brittany House Conrad, MEd ’12, CER6 ’12, Marengo, OH, was named the COMPASS team’s executive director of career engagement and professional development at Wittenberg University on March 20, 2022.

Jessica Leveto, PhD ’12, CER6 ’21, Conneaut, OH, associate professor of sociology at Kent State University at Ashtabula, is examining the impact of COVID-19 on mothers in academia and policies that will make higher education more accessible for caregiving faculty and

students. A mother of three, she is the founder and administrator of PhD Mamas, an online support community of more than 14,000 mothers in academia worldwide.

Coty Giannelli, BS ’13, and **Hayley Bennett, BFA ’08, MA ’14**, Kent, OH, are renovating the unique brick building at the corner of Depeyster and Summit streets to house their new business, Board and Bevy, to open in October or November 2022. Its family-friendly focus is on playing board games geared toward all ages and skill levels, in addition to food and unique local beverages.

Erik Mathis, MA ’13, Strongsville, OH, joined Cleveland State University as senior associate athletics director for compliance in June 2022.

Rich Pierce, BS ’13, Aliquippa, PA, joined WPXI-TV (Pittsburgh, PA) as a general assignment reporter, effective June 27, 2022.

Codi Pilkington, BA ’13, BA ’13, MLIS ’22, Geneva OH, was promoted to public services manager at Geneva Public Library in July 2022.

Jeffrey Rothweiler, MLIS ’13, Newark, OH, is the director and fiscal officer for the Pataskala Public Library as well as president of the Pataskala Area Chamber of Commerce and the fiscal officer for Alexandria Public Library.

Corey Conners, BS ’14, Jupiter, FL, PGA Tour golfer, joined DemandScience as brand ambassador for the global B2B data company in June 2022. The company now partners with 15 elite professional golfers from North America and Europe who use its branded yardage books during play as they determine their best competitive moves.

Conners, who majored in actuarial mathematics at Kent State and turned pro in 2015, says, “Using data and analysis as part of my decision-making on the golf course has been a key to success.” As of Sept. 1, Connors ranks 26th in the FedExCup standings.

Chelsea (McIntire) Gayre, AAS ’14, BSN ’19, Juliette, GA, a graduate student in the College of Nursing at Auburn University, was named to the 2022-23 class of Albert Schweitzer Fellows, the largest cohort to date for the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship of Alabama. The class of 20 students will spend 13 months immersed in community public health projects. Gayre’s fellowship project involves implementing telehealth services within primary care offices.

Laura Catherine McIntosh, BA ’14, Astoria, NY, was hired as impact marketing manager of Harvard Medical School in June 2022. Most recently, she was global strategic marketing manager, medical device and pathology, at Charles River Laboratories since January 2021. She earned a master’s degree in global marketing management from Boston University in 2022.

Louis Myers, BA ’14, MLIS ’20, Washington, DC, legal reference librarian at the Law Library of Congress, presented a webinar, “An Overview of Treaty Research,” in August 2022. The webinar introduced resources and strategies to effectively research three areas of treaty practice: US bilateral treaties, foreign bilateral treaties and multilateral treaties.

Taylor Pendrith, BS ’14, Richmond Hill, ON, made a successful return to the PGA Tour in July 2022, after recovering from a rib injury he suffered while golfing in March. He tied for 2nd at the Rocket Mortgage Classic held July 28–31 at the Detroit Golf Club in Michigan and tied for 8th at the BMW Championship held Aug. 16–21 at the Wilmington Country Club in Delaware. As of Sept. 1, Pendrith ranks 47th in the FedExCup standings.

Dylan Ratell, BFA ’14, MFA ’22, Bay City, MI, was director and choreographer for a hit production of *Godspell* at Porthouse Theatre in July 2022. The rendition was the Broadway revival version, which ran in 2011-2012. (The original Stephen Schwartz musical premiered on Broadway in 1976.) Most of the cast were current Kent State students or graduates.

Krandall Brantley, BS ’15, Zanesville, OH, is diversity outreach coordinator at Zane State College in Zanesville. His role is to recruit and retain students of color and to work with Zanesville community leaders.

Alyssa Haberman, BS ’15, San Diego, CA, returned to Audacy Alternative radio “Alt 94.9” KBZT San Diego, as the station’s midday host, effective March 14, 2022.

Patricia Hartley, MA ’15, Florence, AL, is now content director for Ad4! Group. She has been part of the full-service agency for the last five years as their blogger.

Trevor Householder, XAS ’15, BSE ’15, Canton, OH, is education programmer for Stark Parks. He develops, coordinates and presents interpretive and educational programming and events in the areas of nature, history and recreation.

Kayla Ivey, BS ’15, Akron, OH, is a product development chemist at Gojo Industries in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, where she is lead formulator for the Purell brand of hand sanitizer. In response to COVID-19, Ivey launched multiple hand sanitizer products, including a moisturizing two-in-one product. In August 2021, she introduced herself on Twitter using #BlackInChemRollCall—a hashtag for Black scientists to talk about their expertise and their journey in chemistry—and shared photos of two products she had developed. The tweet generated thousands of likes and invitations to speak at high school and college chemistry classes.

Marc Majers, MS ’15, Broadview Heights, OH, Kent State iSchool UXD adjunct professor, released his second book, *Make Your Customers Dance: The Key to User Experience is Knowing Your Audience* (independently published, December 2020). The book outlines a step-by-step process to design persuasive and effective user interfaces.

Ashley Moore, BBA ’15, XXA ’15, Mount Vernon, OH, was named a “Twenty under 40!” honoree for 2022 by the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce and *The Repository*. Moore is the Cleveland Clinic Mercy Hospital coordinator of community outreach. The award recognizes Stark County leaders under age 40 who have demonstrated dynamic leadership and social responsibility.

Zach Nowak, BSE ’15, MA ’17, Concord, OH, joined USA Hockey as coordinator of coaching education and player development assistant, effective April 11, 2022. Most recently, he served as head coach of the Kent State University D1 club ice hockey team in 2021–22 and previously was head coach of the inaugural D3 club team for Kent State.

Christopher Persons, BS ’15, Marc ’16, Cleveland, OH, has become a licensed architect in Ohio. He is an associate at Bialosky Cleveland, where he has designed and managed projects since 2015. His graduate project, Drydock No. 2, earned a Merit Award from AIA Cleveland in 2016. His current projects include Library Lofts in the University Circle neighborhood of Cleveland and MAGNET, an innovation hub for manufacturing and workforce development in Cleveland’s Midtown neighborhood.

Ethan Rothermel, BS ’15, Marc ’16, Cleveland, OH, has become a licensed architect in Ohio. He joined Bialosky Cleveland last year with a design portfolio that spanned architecture and furniture design. Rothermel earned a master’s degree in architecture from Kent State, which included a semester abroad in Florence, Italy. He is currently a project architect on two significant projects—Library Lofts in Cleveland’s University Circle neighborhood and the Walz Library Branch/Karam Senior Housing development in the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood in Cleveland.

Alexander Wigoda, BS ’15, Sedro-Woolley, WA, is the principal of schedule optimization for Alaska Airlines. The airline launched its first nonstop flight from Cleveland to Seattle on June 16, 2022. Wigoda was on the inaugural eastbound flight from Seattle, which was greeted with a water-cannon salute upon landing. The Pittsburgh native chose the numbers for the new Cleveland flights, playing off the region’s area codes: The eastbound flight is AS 216, westbound is AS 330.

Greta (Cukrov) Babakhanova, MS ’16, PhD ’19, North Potomac, MD, is a physicist in the Biomaterials Group of the Biosystems and Biomaterials Division at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

In her article “How Henrietta Lacks Changed My View of Human Cells as a Physicist” (YubaNet.com, June 2022), Babakhanova wrote about how reading *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot gave her a new appreciation for the donors of the human biological cells she studies in the lab.

Brandon Lazenko, BS ’16, Kent, OH, is co-producing and directing an adaptation of Stephen King’s short story “Nona,” published in King’s 1978 *Shadows* anthology. In the story, a young professor is hitchhiking back to his hometown after being fired and gets involved with a woman who is seeking vengeance.

The project is part of King’s Dollar Baby program, which allows students and independent filmmakers to apply for the rights to adapt a lesser-known King story for \$1. Lazenko and others involved in the project—including co-writer and producer **Shelby Wyant, BSE ’18**, Bexley, OH, and executive producers Robert Kurtzman and his wife, Marcy King, (who have worked on other King adaptations)—secured funding for the film and began production mid-August. Most of the crew met in college at Kent State. So far, Lazenko has made two miniseries and four short films, including 2021’s award-winning *A Serpent by the Nest*.

Danniel Thomas-Dodd, BS ’16, MA ’17, Kent, OH, former Kent State national shot put champion, placed 10th in the World Athletics Championships at the University of Oregon’s Hayward Field. She recorded a top throw of 18.29 meters (just over 60 feet). Thomas-Dodd placed sixth at the World Athletics Indoor Championships held in March 2022 in Belgrade, Serbia.

Katelyn Walker, BA ’16, Cleveland, OH, an interior designer with Bialosky Cleveland, was named to the “20 in Their Twenties” list by *Crain’s Cleveland Business* in June 2022. She joined Bialosky Cleveland in 2016 and has established her reputation as an accomplished interior designer, a selfless volunteer and an advocate for wellness in the built environment.

Alexis Walters, BA ’16, BS ’16, Cleveland, OH, joined Fox 8 News as a meteorologist on March 30, 2022.

Nicholas Holley, BBA ’17, Ottawa Lake, MI, was signed to the Calgary Stampeders as a receiver in February 2022. At Kent State, Holley was a member of the Football Academic All-MAC (Mid-American Conference) Team in 2014 and 2016.

Sarah Matthews, BS ’17, Washington, DC, who served as deputy press secretary for President Donald Trump, appeared on July 21, 2022, before the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack. She had resigned from her position shortly after a mob stormed and vandalized the Capitol. She now works as the communications director for Republicans on the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis, a position she has held since February 2021.

Devvon Dettra, CER8 ’18, Pleasant City, OH, was named superintendent of Rolling Hills School District in Cambridge, Ohio, as of July 31, 2022.

Von E. Jones Jr., BS ’18, Stow, OH, was inducted into Marquis Who’s Who in March 2022. He has worked as a building mechanic contractor for FirstEnergy since 2018. In addition, he has owned and operated Mobile Foamzone & Detailing since 2019. His successful Black-owned business has been featured in the *Akron Beacon Journal*, *Cleveland Magazine* and *The Stow Sentry*.

Talia Hodge, BS ’18, Coventry Township, OH, was awarded a fellowship grant for a project sponsored by the Akron Black Artist Guild, with funding from the Ohio Arts Council. The Reimagine Fellowship pairs three artists with community organizations in three neighborhoods. Hodge, a photographer, plans to create a portrait series of people who are symbolic of the Kenmore community’s character.

Paige Bennett, XAS ’19, BS ’20, Olmsted Township, OH, began working for *The Repository* in Canton in November 2020 as a reporter who covers Alliance and western Mahoning County. She previously worked as an intern for the Collaborative NewsLab at Kent State.

Loubens Delice, BSN ’19, Falling Waters, WV, is the administrator for The Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute-East and Orthopaedic Service Line at West Virginia University Medicine Berkeley Medical Center and Jefferson Medical Center.

Lacy Talley, BA ’19, Cleveland, OH, and **Jason Garrett, BA ’12**, Cleveland Heights, OH, were two of three Clevelanders who helped design the NBA’s Kareem Abdul-Jabbar Trophy, which was unveiled on April 3, 2022. The trophy, which depicts the NBA legend holding a basketball, will be awarded each year to the league’s Social Justice Champion.

Lily Grace Schaffer, AS ’19, BS ’20, Mount Vernon, OH, joined *The Business Journal* reporting team in Youngstown, Ohio, to cover technology-related business news, as of June 2022.

Kyle Stotzer, AAS ’19, BSE ’21, Mineral City, OH, was named head varsity baseball coach at Malvern High School in Malvern, Ohio. Stotzer earned five varsity letters as a player at Kent State University at Tuscarawas, where he played middle infield, earned 2020 USCAA All-American honors and was named team captain for three seasons.

2020s

Nick Anello, BS ’20, North Olmsted, OH, joined Bialosky Cleveland as an architectural designer in 2022, after earning a Master of Architecture from the University of Michigan. As a student he was a CNC coordinator and brings that interest in fabrication and making to his work. [CNC, or computer numerical control, is the automated control of machining tools by means of a computer.] Before joining Bialosky, he worked on the Spatial Laminated Timber (SPLAM) Pavilion for the Chicago Biennial, which received a national award from the American Institute of Architects. He is currently working on Belle Oaks, a 375-unit mixed-use development in Richmond Heights, Ohio.

Jamal Parker Jr., BS ’20, Pennsauken, NJ, former Kent State football defensive back, signed with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers in May 2022. During his junior season as a Golden Flash, Parker was named a team captain and started each game. Athlon Sports named him to the All-MAC First Team Defense and All-MAC Third Team Specialists in 2019.

Keshunn Abram, BBA ’21, Southaven, MS, wide receiver, signed a free agent contract with the New York Jets following the 2022 NFL Draft on April 30, 2022. Abram finished last season with 47 catches for 699 yards and three touchdowns, and he caught at least one pass in all 14 games.

Dustin Crum, BS ’21, Kent, OH, quarterback, signed a free agent contract with the Kansas City Chiefs following the 2022 NFL Draft on April 30, 2022. Crum was the 2021 Mid-American Conference Player of the Year. He became the first KSU quarterback to throw for over 3,000 yards in a season in 2021, while leading his team to the MAC East Division Championship. He joined Joshua Cribbs as the only Golden Flashes to top 9,000 career total yards (7,420 passing, 2,071 rushing), and finished his collegiate career with 55 touchdown passes.

Azure Fernsler, BA ’21, Reading, PA, former Kent State field hockey standout goalkeeper, was nominated for the 2022 NCAA Woman of the Year award. She was named MAC Defensive Player of the Year after leading the Golden Flashes to a share of the 2021 regular season conference championship and a top-25 spot in the National Coaches Poll for eight consecutive weeks.

Michael Turner, BS ’21, Warren, OH, was drafted by the Chicago White Sox with the 281st overall pick in the ninth round of the 2022 MLB Draft on July 18, 2022.

Antonio Williams, BIS ’21, Chicago, IL, signed a contract extension with the Plymouth City Patriots (Plymouth, England) for the 2022–23 season of the British Basketball League.

Kalp Champaneri, BA ’22, BS ’22, Cleveland, OH, joined Bialosky Cleveland as a construction administrator after graduating from Kent State in 2022 with bachelor’s degrees in construction management and architectural studies. Originally from Mumbai, India, Champaneri served as a Global Ambassador at Kent State to be a cultural liaison for international students. He currently supports construction management on Laurel School projects in Northeast Ohio.

Zaria Johnson, BS ’22, Richmond Heights, OH, landed a job as a metro desk intern with *The Columbus Dispatch* in summer 2022. At Kent State, Johnson worked as writer and editor-in-chief for *UHURU Magazine*, the magazine for Kent State’s communities of color, and worked with *The Kent Stater* and *KentWired* as a reporter, editor and editor-in-chief.

Jenna Mar, BA ’22, Dublin, OH, was named head coach of girls tennis for the St. Francis DeSales Stallions on June 8, 2022. She had been teaching at Wickertree Tennis Club since age 15 and played for Kent State’s club team.

Jyae McWilson, BS ’22, Cleveland, OH, joined Bialosky Cleveland in 2022 as an architectural designer after graduating with a bachelor’s degree in architecture from Kent State. She contributes to the firm’s projects, including Hawthorne School in Lorain, The Lincoln Tremont in Cleveland and the restoration and adaptive re-use of Park Synagogue in Cleveland Heights. She plans to pursue a master’s degree in architecture.

Micah Young, BS ’22, Chardon, OH, was named the varsity boys basketball coach for the West Geauga Wolverines (his high school alma mater), on May 30, 2022.

SEND US YOUR CLASS NOTE!

Fill out the form at **www.kent.edu/classnotes** or write: *Kent State University Alumni, Center for Philanthropy & Engagement, P.O. Box 5190, Kent, OH 44242*

- Try to limit your notes to 150 words or less, and include your degree(s), class year(s), and city/state of residence.
- High resolution photos may be included.
- Notes may be edited for length or clarity and published as space allows.

Deadline for submissions:
Spring –February 28 | Fall –June 30

1940s

Ardath Franck, BSE ’46, December 9, 2021
Raymond DeMattia, BS ’49, April 13, 2022

1950s

Martha Carrick, BBA ’50, BA ’50, December 22, 2021
Guenveur (Harper) Burnell, BA ’51, March 27, 2022
Patricia Najeway, BA ’52, February 20, 2022
Charles F. Ulrich, BBA ’53, February 10, 2022
Derien Fitzpatrick, BS ’55, April 28, 2022
James Snyder, BS ’55, March 25, 2021
Gerald “Gerry” Laakso, BA ’56, August 2, 2022
Richard Hrdlicka, BBA ’57, September 27, 2021
William “Bill” Fleming, MA ’58, April 20, 2021
Donald M. Henderson, BA ’58, MA ’59, June 8, 2022

1960s

***Ruth A. Carlson, BE ’60, MLS ’66**, July 23, 2022
Arnold L. Jack, BBA ’60, April 27, 2022
Lovette Janeen (Krueger) Teichert, BA ’60, April 13, 2022
Robert Allison, BS ’61, December 27, 2020
***Geraldine Dailey, Med ’65**, April 21, 2022
N. Miller, BArc ’65, January 15, 2022
Gerald A. Figurski, BA ’66, MA ’69, April 2, 2022
Jeffery P. Keefe, BA ’68, December 28, 2020

1970s

Arnold Herskovitz, BS ’71, August 15, 2020
Carolyn (Steverson) Johnson, BA ’71, MA ’73, September 26, 2020]
Linda (Schultz) Rateno, Med ’71, August 15, 2021
Yvonne Tate, BA ’71, March 27, 2022
Shirley Ann (Brobst) Young, BS ’71, September 22, 2021
Kathleen Farwell, BS ’72, March 5, 2021
Umang P. Gupta, MBA ’72, April 19,
William “Bill” Randall Jr., BS ’72, August 20, 2021
Margaret Skalsky, BS ’73, Med ’73, August 12, 2021
Edward E. “Eddie” Monaco, BS ’74, March 25, 2022
Gary Stefaniak, BFA ’74, MA ’74, January 14, 2022
Daniel D. Tylicki, BM ’74, January 11, 2022
Gloria Brown, BS ’75, Med ’87, June 25, 2021
Richard A. Raabe, DPM ’75, November 18, 2021
Anthony S. Lalli Sr., AAS ’76, June 5, 2021
***Jack McWhorter, BFA ’76, MFA ’83**, May 1, 2022
Frank Aiello, Med ’77, July 26, 2020

1980s

Celestine Pringle, PhD ’80, March 11, 2022
Lou Ann (Thomas) Smith, BA ’80, April 8, 2022
Donna Kowalenko, AA ’82, March 30, 2022
Patrick McAlear, AS ’82, February 22, 2021
Steven Schiopota, BBA ’82, February 25, 2022
Donald T. Wheeler, BM ’84, November 1, 2020
Kathleen “Kathy” Sostaric, BSE ’89, February 15, 2022
Deborah Vilsack, BS ’89, February 8, 2022

1990s

Robert G. Sharkey Jr., MA ’90, NDGD ’93, June 10, 2022
***Anne Katherine Alfano, BA ’93, BSE ’96, Med ’00**, March 1, 2022
Rae Conti, BA ’96, May 11, 2021

*Note: An * before a name means the alumnus was a faculty or staff member, too. So they are also listed under Faculty/Staff.*

2010s

Tammy J. Carver, Med ’11, November 11, 2021
***Paula C. Konz, Med ’11**, May 22, 2022
Susanne Marie Kacsandi, BSN ’15, February 9, 2022
Marlaena “Mar” (Michl) Koren, BFA ’17, January 17, 2022
Rhys D. Winter, BA ’18, December 10, 2021

2020s

Colin Vinh Pho, AA ’22, August 23, 2022

FACULTY/STAFF

Ruth A. Carlson, BE ’60, MLS ’66 | supervisor of films selection at Kent State University (1967–1970), July 23, 2022
In addition to her individual pursuits, she traveled in the Middle East, Far East, Europe, United States and Canada with her husband, Ernest H. Carlson, PhD, in his role as geologist at Kent State University. (He died November 13, 2010.)

Geraldine “Geri” Dailey, Med ’65 | assistant professor of physical education, recreation and dance at Kent State University at Ashtabula (1965–1990), April 21, 2022
At Kent State Ashtabula, she expanded the physical education programs to offer more opportunities for women. She coached multiple sports teams throughout her tenure and led tennis and basketball teams to championships.

Jack McWhorter, BFA ’76, MFA ’83 | professor of art at Kent State University at Stark (1990–2022), May 1, 2022
Since 2000, he served as the art department coordinator, was the curator for the Fine Art Gallery, and was the regional contact and coordinator for the National Scholastic Art Competition. He loved encouraging and mentoring students, involving them in numerous community arts projects and leading several student trips to New York City and China. A permanent installation of his work, “Stele Forest: A Typographical Fairy Tale” (inspired by the alphabets and writing systems of several ancient cultures), adorns a wall near the south entrance to the Fine Arts Building at Kent State at Stark.

James W. Heddens, PhD | Professor Emeritus of Education at Kent State University (1964–1985), June 3, 2022
He taught math education at Kent State University for 25 years. He was the author of the textbook *Today’s Mathematics*, used by aspiring teachers throughout the world, and founder of the Research Council on Mathematics Learning. After retiring, he accepted a Fulbright award to develop and implement a mathematics education program at the University of Malawi, Africa.

Anne Katherine Alfano, BA ’93, BSE ’96, Med ’00 | outreach program officer in the Office of Professional Development and Outreach in the College of Education, Health and Human Services at Kent State University (since 7/17/2019), March 1, 2022
An advocate of education, she taught language arts at Green High School for eight years, was assistant principal at Brunswick High School (2004–2009) and was principal of Cuyahoga Falls High School (2009–2014). She was pursuing a doctorate in higher education from Kent State.

Paula C. Konz, Med ’11 | assistant director of academic advising for the College of Arts and Sciences at Kent State University (since 9/16/2017), May 22, 2022
Passionate about helping students succeed, she taught a course, Destination Kent State: First Year Experience, for the College of Arts and Sciences in spring 2019.



Above: 1977 self-portrait by John Kaufman, BS '81
Right: Kent State architecture students in Florence in 1979



A Portrait Prompts Philanthropy

In 1977, Kent State architecture students in a second-year studio design class were assigned a challenging project: Draw a self-portrait while looking in a mirror without looking down at the paper.

John Kaufman, BS '81, was probably the only one who followed the instructions to the letter. And his simple drawing sparked what became known among his classmates as the “Kaufmania mystique”—which included, it was said, that he often scrimped on food to buy books and record albums.

Although many members of his class had the opportunity to study at Kent State Florence in Italy during their college years, Kaufman was unable to join them due to the cost of the program. However, his self-portrait became synonymous with the Class of 1980, and many of his classmates adopted his iconic image for the rest of their days at Kent State.

At the class’s 25th reunion, several alumni—including Larry Armstrong, BS '79, BArc '80; Rick Hawksley, BS '79, MArc '86; and Geoff Lester, BS '79, BArc '80—talked about creating a scholarship for architecture students with financial need to help them study in Florence. Kaufman and his self-portrait inspired the title of this new endowment, “Kaufmania Goes to Europe.” The scholarship is given annually to a third-year architecture student who hopes to enroll in the Florence program. In addition to writing an essay, students applying for the scholarship have to draw a self-portrait under the same conditions as Kaufman’s original.

“Larry and I had an amazing experience together in Italy and thought that a scholarship directed toward students considering the Florence program abroad was

appropriate,” Lester says. “We immediately thought of our legendary buddy John Kaufman and decided to name the scholarship in his honor.”

For the past 15 years, the scholarship has awarded study abroad opportunities to more than 20 students. Members of the Class of 1980 are still active in this philanthropic effort and have maintained strong ties to each other, the College of Architecture and Environmental Design and its students.

“We continue to be inspired by the Class of 1980’s generosity,” Armstrong says. “We share student testimonials with our group to inspire future philanthropy and enable us to continue enhancing student experiences.”

Hawksley highlights the benefits the scholarships offer. “I think it is great that our scholarship has helped enrich the lives of young architects,” he says. “Study abroad benefits students and opens their eyes to other cultures.”

John Kaufman has had a successful architectural career in Southern California and is still in contact with his former classmates. “John is impressed with this whole thing and enjoys seeing all the scholarship applicants’ self-portraits each year,” Lester says. “His 15 seconds of self-portrait fame have lived on for decades.”

And the scholarship program continues to be meaningful for those who have contributed. “It’s so great to see the impact of our scholarship on students who may have never been out of the country before,” Armstrong says. “The opportunity to study in a different country—especially Italy and especially in Florence—changes your life. The scholarship has continued to inspire camaraderie in our class, and we are proud of the impact we collectively are able to make on so many students.”

—Julie Miller, BS '87

A new endowed scholarship has been created as part of the university’s Forever Brighter comprehensive fundraising campaign to celebrate 50 years of study abroad in Florence, Italy. The Kent State Global Education Endowment will open doors for more Kent State students to study abroad than ever before. Once fully funded, every incoming undergraduate student will have access to a study abroad scholarship.

Scan this QR code to give to the Global Education Endowment. Or go to <https://flashes.givetokent.org/campaign/global-education-endowment-fund/c440600>.



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for decades
without knowing,
the way I didn’t know
what countries touch
the tender neck,
the belly or the shell
except Iraq
because my cousins
hoped not to die
on that front.

—Farnaz Fatemi
From *Sister Tongue*
The Kent State University Press, 2022

Design by Hannah Saadey ©2022

