For nearly 15 years, alumni and friends have come together to uplift their local communities and those in our Golden Flash family during a day of service. Kent State has since transformed that one-day tradition into a weeklong initiative called Flashes Give Back Week. From April 17-22, 2023, Golden Flashes volunteered where it mattered most—in their communities around the globe and at home with Kent State University. Through partnerships with campus organizations and local nonprofits, the university offered 36 in-person volunteer opportunities and 12 virtual options throughout the week. Also, volunteers could create their own service project or show how they are already volunteering in their communities through Share Your Project.

More than 800 Golden Flashes in 37 states across the nation volunteered for 3,000+ hours. They helped combat food insecurity, Kent State students, community organizations, clean up outdoor spaces and support their communities through Share Your Project.

1. Akron Zoo
Kent State University alumni and friends helped the Akron Zoo horticulture team with plant bed maintenance to prepare and beautify the zoo for spring.

2. Backpacks for Kids
Volunteers packed bags full of accessible and nutritious meals for children across Stark County. The Stark County Hunger Task Force’s Backpack for Kids program is the largest backpack program in Stark County, serving more than 1,400 children each week.

3. Cleveland Kids’ Book Bank
The Cleveland Kids’ Book Bank fosters literacy and a love of reading by distributing free books to children in need through collaboration with community partners. Kent State volunteers helped sort and prepare used books for distribution.

4. International Students Care Packages
With the help of Kent State alumni and friends, the Office of Global Education collected notes of encouragement and donations of healthy snacks to create care packages for international students preparing for finals.

5. Mat Making
Volunteers created mats out of plastic grocery bags that will be donated by Streetsboro United Methodist Church to the homeless in Cleveland, providing them a dry and more comfortable surface to sleep on.

6. Read With a Student-Athlete
From April 17-21, Kent State alumni and current student-athletes took turns reading to a classroom of second grade students at Davve Elementary School in Kent.

7. LGBTQ+ Encouragement Notes
Together, the Kent State LGBTQ+ Center and LGBTQ+ Alumni Chapter collected notes of encouragement to help LGBTQ- students feel appreciated and supported. Check out all the images from Flashes Give Back Week to see more of the many ways our university community made an impact at www.kent.edu/FlashesGiveBackWeek.

---Melanie Seque

Anthony J. Marsella, MA ’64, Alpharetta, GA, earned a PhD at Penn State in 1968 and is currently Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of Hawaii, where he served as vice president for academic affairs from 1981-1990 and retired in 2003. He is also the past director of the World Health Organization Psychiatric Research Center in Honolulu and past president of Psychologists for Social Responsibility, among other roles.

Marsella is known nationally and internationally as a pioneer figure in the study of culture, psychology and psychopathology, he challenged ethnocentric and racial biases in the assumptions, theories, methods and practices in psychology and psychiatry. Among many honors and awards, he received an honorary doctorate degree from the University of Copenhagen in 1999 at a ceremony presided over by Denmark’s Queen Margrethe II.

He has served as consultant to numerous national and international agencies and organizations, and he has published 21 books and more than 600 chapters, reports, reviews and articles. Much of his present writing is on peace, social justice and nonviolence. He currently serves on journal editorial boards and scientific and professional advisory committees. He is also senior editor for the International and Cultural Psychology book series for Springer-Nature Publications (New York), a 47-volume series.

Thomas J. Jordan, BA ’72, Sturgeson Bay, WI, wrote: “After retiring from advertising, I continued my love for photography that began at Kent State. Since then, I have created nearly a dozen coffee-table books. Last year, I won silver and bronze for Amateur, Fine Art/Photography, at the 2022 International Photography Awards. There were over 40,000 entries from 50 countries.”

Mark Levine, MED ’73, Alpharetta, GA, wrote: “I proudly cheered for Kent State from the Georgia Bulldogs game to honor Kent State Homecoming 2022 in Atlanta. My son-in-law (a Bulldog fan, his family has had 50-yard line seats for the past 30 years) kindly took me to tailgate and cheer on my Kent State Flashes this month. I met some great Kent State fans but sat with my son-in-law. The Bulldogs fans next to me jokingly asked if I (a Kent State fan) got a valuable Bulldog seat on the 50, then laughed. Although the Bulldogs were expected to win, many Bulldog fans, as well as the Atlanta TV sports show said, ‘The Flashers played a very respectable game.’”

Monk Levine earned a PhD in leadership and education with a specialty in human resource development from Barry University in Miami Shores, Florida, in 2006. He was inducted into the EHU80 Hall of Fame in 2010. He received the Centennial Alumni Award, which recognizes an alumnus who has made significant contributions to society, whose accomplishments and careers have brought honor and distinction to Kent State University, and who has advanced the field of education, health and human services.

Linda Fifer, BS ’74, MA ’75, Hamilton, MT, wrote: “I have published my debut novel, The Road Between Two Skies (Atmosphere Press, November 2020). Brenniss Trifham is at the apex of her career when a bizarre kidnapping results in her loss of memory. She accepts who she is, now as Maggie, but as her memory recovers, she realizes who she was. Saying goodbye is the only way for her to reconcile her two lives until she knows who she belongs.”

Fred Jermyn, BS ’74, San Diego, CA, wrote: “The Kent State Men’s Soccer Alumni Reunion on Saturday, October 1, 2022, was the first time that the five Kent State men’s soccer goalkeepers who are now listed in the NCAA Men’s Soccer Division I Record Book for their feats were able to gather for a group photo (see above right). The achievements of these five men to now be recognized by the NCAA as Kent State student-athletes is a phenomenal boost to the already prominent athletics programs of Kent State.”

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 — January 31 | Fall — June 30

Karen S. Ballew, BBA ’80, Wooster, OH, attended as staff radiologist technician from Wooster Community Hospital in September 2002 after nearly 25 years of service. She spent 12 years in management before making a career change to radiologist technology. She graduated from Timken Mercy Medical Center School of Radiologic Technology in 1995. He worked in healthcare for 27 years.

Hans Kwee, BBA ’80, Wooster, OH, retired as staff radiologist technician from Wooster Community Hospital in September 2002 after nearly 25 years of service. She spent 12 years in management before making a career change to radiologist technology. She graduated from Timken Mercy Medical Center School of Radiologic Technology in 1995. He worked in healthcare for 27 years.
Ray Novotny, BS ’80
Youngstown, OH, devoted 30+ years to Trans Union, Mill Creek Metroparks, Ohio’s first park district. Upon his retirement in 2016, the Board of Park Commissioners honored him with the title National Emeritus.

Short-headed garter snakes (Thamnophis sirtalis) were known only from northern Ohio until Novotny discovered the species as new to the Buckeye State in 1989-1990. A decade after finding them in Mahoning County, he found more in Trumbull County. He authored a chapter on them in the 100-page book Reptiles of Ohio, recently published by Ohio Biological Survey.

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History celebrated its centennial in 2021 and chose Novotny as Conservation Educator of the Year. The National Association for Interpretation held its conference in Cleveland in 2022 and honored Novotny as both regional and national Outstanding Senior/Retired Interpreter. NAI is dedicated to advancing the profession of natural resource interpretation. Its membership includes staff at parks, museums, nature centers, zoos, botanical gardens, aquariums and historical sites (more than 6,000 members in more than 30 countries).

Angélique Walker-Smith, BA ’80, MA ’99, PhD ’01, Washington, DC, was elected World Council of Churches President from North America at the World Council of Churches 11th Assembly, held in Karlshruhe, Germany, in September 2009. She was one of eight presidents elected at the assembly. WCC presidents promote ecumenism and interpret the work of the WCC (including member churches and partners), especially in their respective regions.

Walker-Smith is the national senior associate for strategic and African and Orthodox Faith Engagement at Bread for the World, based in Washington, DC. She has been ecumenic legislative representative for National Baptist Convention USA Inc., a member of the WCC central committee and works for the National Council of Churches in the US. She is also president of the Historic Black Church Family of Christian Churches Together. She works with many US national churches, and serves as instator of the Pan African Women of Faith Networks. She earned a Doctor of Ministry from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1995.

Kathy Schultz, MLS ’93, Santa Fe, NM, wrote, “My book, The Underground Railroad in Ohio, was released January 9, 2023, by History Press. The cover blurb reads: During a dark time in our history, the Freedom Riders, a group of freedom seekers traveled the Underground Railroad through Ohio. The Buckeye State hosted about half of all fugitive slave traffic of the antebellum era. A mix of Northern and Southern settlers in the state added drama to a struggle that led to major benefits for the state and the country. Unfortunately, this epic past was obscured by silence and secrecy and then distorted with misinformation and folklore—until now. And author and native Ohioan Kathy Schultz accurately details the development and workings of Ohio’s Underground Railroad with true stories of Addison White, John Parker and others. The author drew upon her library degree and background to research and write this book.”

Beverley Laubert, BA ’84, Lewis Center, OH, revised and cataloging for older adults and people with disabilities in Ohio, including 26 years as Ohio’s state long-term care ombudsman.

She is serving as national tuberculosis program coordinator at the Administration on Aging/Administration for Community Living in the US Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, DC.

With gratitude for her excellent education at Kent State, she and her husband, Mike, initiated an endowed fund, the Grossle-Laubert Family Fund for Aging Study in the College of Education, Health and Human Services.

Steve Case, BA ’86, Morrisville, NC, has launched a new book, Through a Pocket Briefly (Apopryphic Press, February, 2023). A humorist and youth pastor, Case has re-imagined all 150 psalms with pictures and messages that will take the psalms off the pulpit and put them back in the hands of those who need to hear these words for the first time. The book is available wherever books are sold. He is available for workshops/ seminars/poetry events and other appearances through email to Steve Case speaks@gmail.com.

1990s

Amy Doyle, BS ’90, Madison, WI, has been promoted to business operations manager and has become a shareholder at Aro Eberle. She was a Bridges technician in Madison, Wisconsin. Through her decade of working at Aro Eberle, she has taken on increasingly demanding tasks while stewarding the operations of the company financially, human resources and regulatory compliance. Current Aro president and founder, Matt Aro, says, “We are pleased that Amy has joined the ownership team. She is an important part of the structure that supports our company, a recognized leader among staff and peers, and is an essential interface for our clients, vendors and consultants.”

Marie F. Jones, MLS ’90, Brevard, NC, has published To Be the Best by Amy Mesure: Creating and Sustaining a High Performance Organization (Torchiame Books, 90 copies). Written in partnership with Pat Magee, the book provides a model for high performance organizations based on the interconnected triad of leadership, organizational culture and strategic planning dubbed the “Magee Stool.” Drawn from Magee’s decades of experience reviving struggling companies, the book is written for aspirants in leadership and nonprofit sectors.

Jill Christoff, BA ’04, Shaker Heights, OH, has been promoted to assistant principal at Balsioky Cleveland. Trained in interior architecture and design, she joined Balsioky Cleveland in 2011 with the unique ability to approach projects from a fully integrated design perspective. Her experience in complex renovations led her to be an asset on notable projects, including the renovation of Shaker Heights Public Library, Kent State University’s School of Visual Communication and the $86 million expansion of the Ashley United States Courthouse in Toledo, Ohio. She 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.

Jessica Hudson, BA ’04, MLS ’07, MBA ’11, Canton, OH, was named president and chief development officer of the Summit Foundation in August 2022. The foundation supports patient care, medical education and research at Summa Health through philanthropy.

2010s

Stephanie Hand-Cannane, BA ’10, Massillon, OH, an associate in the Cleveland office of McNichols Stafford, has been listed in the 2023 edition of Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch, in the practice area of commercial litigation. Her honors recognition law firm has been practicing for 10 or fewer years.

Eric Mansfield, MA ’12, Akron, OH, was awarded second place in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival’s Jean Kennedy Smith Playwright Award for his play Brown of Street. The full-length drama, which premieres in September with Rubber City Theatre in Akron, Ohio, was inspired by the true story of a homeless man who became an overnight celebrity following media reports that he had given the pursuers who intentionally set him on fire. The national award is offered for an outstanding student-written script that explores the experience of living with a disability. Mansfield is pursuing a NEOMFA (in Creative Writing: Playwriting) at Kent State.

Mansfield was honored with the Emerging Artist Award at the Kennedy Center Artspace in June 2022, and he recently signed with Next Stage Press, a national play publisher. See www.emansfieldwrites.com.

Ronda McCaskey, BSN ’12, Chardon, OH, was named 2022 NICU Nurse of the Year, a national award co-sponsored by NICU nonprofits Cares and Project Sweet Peas. She rose to the top from among more than 600 NICU nurses nominated from across the United States. She was endorsed by many of her patients, co-workers and family members for the exceptional care she provides to babies and families at UH Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital.

In addition to caring for her patients and families, she manages the unit’s schedule of about 150 nurses.

Corey Moore, BS ’16, Columbus, OH, earned certification as a web accessibility specialist from the International Association of Accessibility Professionals in July 2022. Only about 1,000 people hold this certification worldwide.

George Evey, BA ’86, Clevelend, OH, a research biologist with the National Park Service, was named 2022 NICU Nurse of the Year, a national award co-sponsored by NICU nonprofits Cares and Project Sweet Peas. She rose to the top from among more than 600 NICU nurses nominated from across the United States. She was endorsed by many of her patients, co-workers and family members for the exceptional care she provides to babies and families at UH Rainbow Babies & Children’s Hospital.