

# UML

UMASS LOWELL MAGAZINE

UML MAGAZINE / SUMMER 2021



**STUDENTS**  
WHO MAKE  
THE WORLD A  
BRIGHTER  
PLACE

**GOOD  
VIBES**

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## WHAT A YEAR

In a mix of seven hybrid and in-person ceremonies held from May 12 to May 14, UMass Lowell conferred nearly 4,600 degrees. Our new graduates joined a community of over 104,000 living alumni. Thank you to mom and dad—and all the other champions—who got them there.

The UMass Lowell Magazine is published by:  
Office of University Relations  
University of Massachusetts Lowell  
One University Avenue  
Lowell, MA 01854  
978-934-3224  
magazine@uml.edu

**Chancellor**  
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**Editor-in-Chief**  
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**Senior Editor**  
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**Staff Writers**  
Edwin Aguirre  
Ed Brennen  
David Perry  
Katharine Webster

**Creative Director**  
Victoria Weinreb

**Designers**  
Keith Finch  
Karen Hoots

**Contributing Photographers**  
Edwin Aguirre, Ed Brennen, Adrien Bisson, Jim Higgins, Joson Images, Bob Ellis, Katharine Webster, Tory Wesnofske

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University of Massachusetts Lowell  
Office of University Advancement  
Charles J. Hoff Alumni  
Scholarship Center  
1 Perkins St.  
Lowell, MA 01854-2882  
alumni\_office@uml.edu  
978-934-2223

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## A Message from the Chancellor

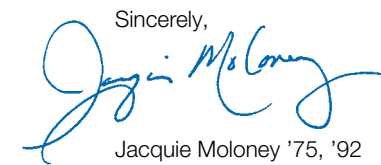
The past year has been one of the most challenging in the university's history—and I know most of you can say the same about your own lives. But during these hard times, so much good has shone through.

I am in awe of the strength and adaptability of our students. Meanwhile, the determination and ingenuity shown by our faculty and staff have been utterly remarkable. And we couldn't do any of what we do without you: the world's best alumni and friends. I am so grateful for your support.

Just in time for summer, it feels as if we are emerging from the dark, and this issue highlights the many ways in which the UML community is bringing light into the world. Our students make me optimistic for the days and years ahead. Many of them are already making a difference in the world—and if the alumni profiled in these pages are any indication, that will continue for many years.

I'm proud to be part of this very special River Hawk family, and I hope you feel the same when you turn the page and start reading.

I hope your summer is filled with renewed connections, plenty of light and loads of good vibes. You've earned it.

Sincerely,  
  
Jacquie Moloney '75, '92



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#### Good Vibes

Students like chemistry major Benedicta Agyemang-Brantuo '22 give us hope.



### THANK YOU

The university (and its editorial team!) is grateful to the following supporters, who helped make possible a small run of the 125th anniversary issue of this magazine, which was printed in December. You can see the digital version at [uml.edu/magazine](http://uml.edu/magazine).

Jerry '78, '19 (H) and Joyce '77, '19 (H) Colella  
Linda '68 and Peter FitzPatrick  
Independent University Alumni Association at Lowell  
Michael '69 and Gayle Johnston  
Lawrence Lin '90 and Jang-Li Chang '80  
Robert '84, '11 (H) and Donna '85, '91, '11 (H) Manning  
Joan '00 and Claude Marchessault  
Brian '77 and Kim Rist  
Mark '81, '13 (H) and Elisia '13 (H) Saab  
David '90, '93 and Jeanne '91 Stordy

UML Magazine has been honored with multiple awards, including nods from APEX Awards for Publication Excellence, Bell Ringer Awards, CASE Excellence Awards, Collegiate Advertising Awards, Hermes Creative Awards, Higher Ed Marketing Awards, PR Daily Awards and PR Daily Nonprofit PR Awards.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Please send comments to Editor Sarah McAdams Corbett at [Sarah\\_Corbett@uml.edu](mailto:Sarah_Corbett@uml.edu). Submit class notes at [uml.edu/updateyourinfo](http://uml.edu/updateyourinfo)



## TRENDING @UML



### A "GRAND" WISH

The last time Saran You opened his eyes, he saw his granddaughter, nursing major Darany Long, wearing a graduation cap and gown. It was a vision You had been striving toward his entire life, the fulfillment of all his hard work to provide more education and a better future for his family. Long was the first member of her family to graduate from high school and will be the first to graduate from college in December. Knowing her grandfather's time was short, Long was determined to fulfill his lifelong wish. With help from the nursing faculty, she borrowed a cap and gown and woke her grandfather for family photos, first helping him put on a shirt, tie and jacket. A short time later, he went to sleep. With Long by his side and caring for him, he died the next night of gall bladder cancer. He was 68 years old. "He passed after I was able to take the photos with him," says Long. "I think he was holding on for that." —KW



### BECAUSE SHE'S WORTH IT.

"I love you," gushed Kelly Clarkson to criminal justice alumna Noelle Lambert '19, who appeared on the singer's talk show in December after being named the 2020 Woman of Worth by L'Oréal Paris. Since losing her leg in a 2016 moped accident, Lambert has gone on to compete on the U.S. Paralympics Track & Field team. As part of the L'Oréal honor, the former UML lacrosse player received \$25,000 for The Born to Run Foundation, the nonprofit she founded to provide prosthetics to young people.



### GIVING US A VOICE

Andrew Marshall '21 was 16 seconds into a cover of his idol John Mayer's "Gravity" when Nick Jonas slapped a red buzzer and secured the 21-year-old River Hawk's place as a contestant on NBC's hit show "The Voice." The music business major ended up advancing to the "battle rounds" and the "knockouts," until losing in the live rounds on May 10. (The silver lining: He was able to make it home for his graduation on May 13, where he also sang the national anthem.) "It's so crazy to think I've gone from being on national television to getting my degree, all in just a few days," says the Boxford, Massachusetts, native. Marshall participated in musical theater as a child and by middle school was landing the leads. He went on to learn guitar and began songwriting. Marshall was diagnosed with leukemia at the age of 16 and received treatment for the next three years. Make-A-Wish made it possible for him to meet Mayer, who gave him the confidence to write about his most difficult experiences, including his battle with cancer, which is currently in remission.

Read more about Nancy Pin '22 in our cover story on P. 39!



### WORLD HEALTH, IN THEIR HANDS.

In a partnership with Lowell General Hospital, a volunteer corps of more than 130 UMass Lowell students, faculty, staff and alumni—most from the Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences—helped to inoculate people against COVID-19. "For some people, it was their first dose of the vaccine, and it was a very emotional moment for them," says junior nursing student Nancy Pin. "Some patients were dancing, some patients were crying—they were amazing."



### THIS ICON GAVE OUR GRADS ADVICE.

Deepak Chopra has written 90 books and taught millions of people to meditate. Co-founder of the Chopra Center for Wellbeing and a pioneer in integrative medicine, Chopra was called "one of the top 100 heroes and icons of the century" by Time magazine. And in May, he shared his secrets to health and happiness with the Class of 2021. "The fastest way to be happy is to make someone else happy, by giving them attention, affection, appreciation and acceptance," said Chopra, in a Commencement address for the ages (and ageless).

### OUR OWN POET LAUREATE

First-year nursing major Amina Mohammed describes herself as "very, very shy; very quiet." Poetry gave her a voice. In January 2020, during her senior year of high school, Mohammed was honored as the first Youth Poet Laureate of Worcester, Massachusetts—and the first youth poet laureate in the state. Check out a new poem she wrote about living through a pandemic at [uml.edu/magazine](http://uml.edu/magazine).



➔ CHECK OUT MORE TRENDING UMass Lowell news at [uml.edu/news](http://uml.edu/news).



## HONORS DEAN RETIRES

When Jim Canning retired as dean of the Honors College last year, he left a large legacy. During his nine years at the helm, the Honors Program was elevated to college status, and quadrupled its number of students. The college also launched the Honors Student Fellowship program, created the Honors Living-learning Communities, and built a robust curriculum with a variety of interdisciplinary and study abroad classes. Canning, who joined UMass Lowell's Computer Science Department in the 1980s, will be missed.



The student team of, from left, Brennan Fournier, Gloria Donkor and Richard DeBenedetto practice flying a drone as part of their Hacking for Defense project.

## NEW COURSE ASKS STUDENTS TO ADDRESS EMERGING NATIONAL THREATS

There aren't many courses in which an undergraduate student in mechanical engineering, a graduate student in entrepreneurship and a Ph.D. candidate in global studies get to spend the semester working together on a project for the U.S. Department of Defense.

But then again, there aren't many courses like Hacking for Defense, a DOD-sponsored program that pairs interdisciplinary student teams with defense and intelligence organizations to rapidly address emerging national security challenges, using entrepreneurial methods.

The curriculum, originally developed 10 years ago at Stanford University, is now taught at close to 50 schools across the country, including Columbia, the University of California at Berkeley, Ohio State and the University of Chicago.

This spring, UMass Lowell became the first university in New England to offer the class, with six students from engineering, business and global studies taking the pilot course led by Manning School of Business Assoc. Teaching Prof. Ashwin Mehta and adjunct Bill Yelle.



## SANDRA LIM WINS GUGGENHEIM FELLOWSHIP

Sandra Lim had mostly put aside her curiosity about the award.

Then, on the morning of April 8, came an email telling the UMass Lowell associate professor of English and award-winning poet that she was one of 184 artists, writers, scholars and scientists to receive a 2021 Guggenheim Fellowship, the prestigious grant designed to allow recipients—"exceptional individuals"—a period to toil in creative freedom.

No stranger to awards, Lim says she "didn't fully take in the news until I started to get texts and phone calls from friends who saw the published list of fellows online. And when I saw the names of the other fellows, I was so honored and grateful to be a part of this distinguished cohort."

Lim, who has been putting the finishing touches on a new book of poems, "The Curious Thing," due in September, hopes to use the fellowship's support for her next project: to do archival research on her family history and on the history of South Korea, where she was born.

This year's fellows were selected from among nearly 3,000 applicants. Lim's grant lasts 12 months.

Born in Seoul and raised in Northern California, Lim earned a bachelor's degree from Stanford University, a Master of Fine Arts from the Iowa Writers' Workshop and a doctorate in English from the University of California Berkeley. She joined the UMass Lowell faculty in 2010.

A year ago, Lim was one of eight writers to win a \$10,000 Arts and Letters Award in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Her 2006 poetry collection, "Loveliest Grotesque," won a Kore First Book Award for Poetry, and she earned a Barnard Women Poets Prize for "The Wilderness" in 2014. —DP



# OfficeHours

A peek into some of the most interesting faculty and staff offices on campus



**WHO:** Environmental, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Prof. Mathew Barlow, who researches climate change and variability. He was recently awarded a three-year, \$478,000 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to study the cause of heat waves and droughts in the Northeast region of the U.S.

**WHERE:** Olney Hall, Room 301a (but at home for the past year because of the COVID-19 pandemic)

**WHAT MAKES IT COOL:** Studies show that having a plant in your workspace can reduce stress, boost creativity and increase productivity.

If that's true, then Barlow must be one of the most relaxed and productive faculty members on campus. His third-floor office looks more like an indoor greenhouse, with an impressive collection of almost a dozen houseplants and fruit trees basking in the purple glow of LED grow lights.

Most of them are "strays and rescues," he says, including a fern from his undergraduate days three decades ago at Swarthmore College. "I like to mention the plant that I've kept alive that long, not the very many that have died in the interim," he says with a bearded grin.

Barlow's botanic garden also includes a mango tree that he and his family started from seed, and a Meyer lemon tree that he bought at the supermarket "because it was on sale and looked sad."

When the pandemic sent everyone home last March, Barlow's plants came with him. "I kept them outdoors in the summer and in our dank, unfinished basement for the winter," he says. "The mango has been pretty skeptical of the process, but my lemon has maintained an air of positivity throughout everything and has several lemons on it."

**EXTRA CREDIT:** Barlow also has a chunk of coal on his office desk from his childhood farm in Virginia. "We heated with coal when I was a kid, and we used to misbehave right before Christmas to get some extra coal in our stocking so we could be warm," he says.

Across from his desk is a wing chair situated under a suspended cumulus cloud that, with the flip of a switch, appears to have a lightning bolt brewing inside. "For my next office toy when I get back on campus, I'm working on 3D printing my own small floating globes with climate maps on them," he says. —EB

# 5 QUESTIONS

## on domestic terrorism with Arie Perliger, author of "American Zealots"

Prof. Arie Perliger's latest book arrived last August, as if a playbill synchronized with current events. The Jan. 6 assault on the U.S. Capitol was still months away, but "American Zealots" all but foretold the plot and cast that would descend upon the seat of democracy. No one, he says, should have been surprised. Perliger, director of security studies in the School of Criminology and Justice Studies, oversees the largest database of right-wing extremist violent incidents in the U.S., a mountain of facts and figures chronicling more than 5,000 attacks since 1990.

### AS SOMEONE WHO HAS DEDICATED SIGNIFICANT TIME AND ENERGY TO STUDYING TERROR, HOW SURPRISED WERE YOU BY THE JAN. 6 INSURRECTION?

The storming of the Capitol was a colossal failure of our law enforcement. Nothing that happened on Jan. 6 should have been a surprise. Warning signs were all around. Militia leaders declared in their own voice, again and again, their violent intentions. In addition, the FBI and local agencies reported intensification in the militancy, frustration and anger in the media platforms utilized by far-right groups. Similar events in the past had escalated to violent clashes. And the increasing toxic rhetoric from the mainstream political ranks also had clear potential to spark a violent reaction.

### WAS THIS THE OPENING SALVO IN SOMETHING MUCH BIGGER?

While I don't expect to see in the near future similar events to what we witnessed on Jan. 6, I have significant concerns that local militia cells or local chapters of other far-right movements may engage in plotting and perpetrating violent operations. Especially since they experience increased feelings of anger, frustration, marginalization and see themselves under siege.

### WHY IS THIS HAPPENING AND WHAT IS DRIVING IT?

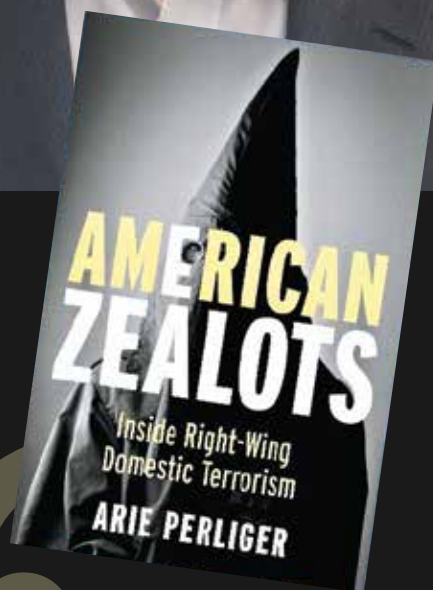
They truly believe that the U.S. government is further developing tyrannical practices, and engaging in undermining their constitutional rights and civil liberties. Many of them also believe that the U.S. government is controlled by foreign elements or a cabal of elites, thus they feel empowered to delegitimize the U.S. government as a source of authority.

### WHAT IS THE MOST DISTURBING ASPECT OF THIS?

The prominence of law enforcement and military veterans within the new militia groups—which helps the militias construct a more legitimate image and branding and facilitates their efforts to mobilize support, especially as they emphasize the fact that their members are individuals who risked their lives to protect the nation or their communities. Thus, it is more difficult for authorities to address these groups as potential domestic security threats and gain public support to promote countermeasures. Second, the popularity of the militias among a population with significant military and security experience may indicate their potential ability to execute sophisticated and impactful operations.

### WHAT CAN BE DONE TO STOP IT?

There are several long-term policies that may be effective in curbing the rise in far-right violence. Here are three: 1) Studies have identified that veterans are one of the main reservoirs of recruits for militias. Authorities need to identify how to better integrate former military into the civilian environment and thus make them less vulnerable to recruitment. 2) In the past, the use of civil lawsuits for damages by victims of far-right violence proved to be a highly effective tool in the fight against the far-right. Such lawsuits led to the collapse of the "Aryan Nations" and Robert Shelton's "United Klans of America" and others. And 3) Since many of the militias seem to shift their focus to state and local targets, it is imperative to further invest in local law enforcement training and education in the ideological pillars, operational characteristics and organizational structure of militias and related groups. —DP



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### SUPPORTING ASIAN AMERICAN TEACHERS

Assoc. Prof. Phitsamay Uy was the first refugee from Laos to receive tenure as a professor of education in the United States. And for years, she was the only one.

Determined to change that, Uy has started a mentoring network for Asian American and Pacific Islander teachers and education students under a National Education Association grant, with help from other Asian American educators in Massachusetts.

The Asian American Educator Mentor Program has gotten off to a strong start, with the number of participants increasing from 15 to 40 this year and expanding to include several veteran teachers in California and Minnesota, since they are now meeting on Zoom.

Sahaj Rijal, a junior chemistry major who is in UTeach, an education minor for students majoring in science, engineering or math, has found guidance and support from the mentoring group.

"They've created a safe space for Asian American educators to come together and talk ... and not be judged," he says.



Interpretation Ranger Allison Horrocks plays a mill girl live on camera during a virtual field trip, filmed by Education Specialist Ranger Michelle Pizzillo.

## K-12 Students Meet Mill Girls in Live, Virtual Field Trips

When school field trips to the Tsongas Industrial History Center—a partnership between Lowell National Historical Park and UML's College of Education—were canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, center staff seized the opportunity to create live, interactive virtual field trips for K-12 students.

In a normal year, around 45,000 elementary, middle school and high school students and teachers visit the Tsongas Industrial History Center to learn about history, engineering, immigration, the environment and civics through guided tours of park exhibits and hands-on activities in special classrooms.

When visits were halted in March 2020, staff at the center decided to upgrade their technical skills and figure out how to offer virtual experiences that would be engaging while meeting the same, curriculum-based learning objectives.

The TIHC team spent most of the spring learning as much as they could about remote education, and then devoted the summer to creating and testing demonstration projects. By late September, the center was piloting its first virtual field trip—combining short videos and images with live presentations of park exhibits, reproduction objects and hands-on equipment.

Now all eight field trips are online, and the center is expanding its reach and audience. So far, schools in New York, New Jersey and North Carolina have participated. All of the field trips can be adapted for different age groups, to meet different curriculum needs.

### LOOKING FOR SIGNS OF ANCIENT LIFE ON MARS

When the Mars rover Perseverance touched down in February, Nouredine Melikechi, dean of the Kennedy College of Sciences and a professor in the Department of Physics and Applied Physics, was paying close attention.

Melikechi is a member of the science team for SuperCam, one of the main instruments onboard Perseverance that will be conducting experiments on the surface of Mars, looking for signs of ancient life and clues to the planet's geology and climate.

SuperCam will use a remote-sensing technique called laser-induced breakdown spectroscopy, or LIBS, to study the chemical and mineral composition of Martian rocks and soils by zapping them with a powerful infrared laser.

The data collected will be transmitted back to Earth for analysis by Melikechi, who is an expert on optics and laser spectroscopy, and other members of the science team.

UMass President Marty Meehan and Chancellor Jacquie Moloney unveil a plaque at the dedication of the William T. Hogan Engineering Dean's Suite in honor of the university's former chancellor.



## A TRIBUTE TO FORMER CHANCELLOR HOGAN

The university paid tribute to former chancellor William T. Hogan, with the unveiling of space on campus that will serve as a testament to his visionary leadership for future generations of River Hawks.

The William T. Hogan Engineering Dean's Suite in the Francis College of Engineering was formally unveiled and dedicated by Chancellor Jacquie Moloney and UMass President Marty Meehan in an April 23 ceremony, streamed over Zoom, with members of Hogan's family.

Hogan, who began his career at the university as a professor of mechanical engineering, served as UMass Lowell's first chancellor from 1991 to 2006 and was president of the University of Lowell for 10 years prior to that. Known as "the father of UMass Lowell," Hogan helped lead the university through a merger, engineered its entry into the UMass system and helped launch several economic revitalization initiatives with the City of Lowell. He died in 2017 at age 84.

Moloney says naming the dean's suite in his honor brought Hogan's career full circle.

"His talents carried him into the ranks of leadership, but he never lost the problem-solving mind of an engineer and he always kept the heart of a teacher," she says. "How fitting, then, that we would honor a lifetime inventor and reinventor by naming the dean's suite in our College of Engineering for him, here where it all began."

> BY ED BRENNEN

# THE STANDS WERE EMPTY; THE VICTORIES WERE NOT

Everything about the year was different for UMass Lowell athletics. Games were played in empty arenas with cardboard cutouts of fans in the stands. Fall sports soccer, field hockey and cross country played abbreviated schedules in the spring. Student-athletes and coaching staffs were subjected to tri-weekly surveillance testing, and practices followed strict safety protocols.

But the seasons ultimately went on—a triumph in itself—and the thrill of victory was just as sweet for the River Hawks.



## ON THE ICE

The hockey team skated to a 7-8-1 regular season before catching fire in the Hockey East Tournament. After rallying to beat Vermont and Boston University in the first two rounds, the seventh-seeded River Hawks trailed top-seeded Boston College, 4-1, midway through the third period in the semifinals. But UML scored three goals in a six-minute span to tie it, only to see BC take back the lead, 5-4. The River Hawks got a late equalizer from senior Anthony Baxter to force overtime, though, and finally won in double overtime on a goal from sophomore Matt Brown.

"These guys are resilient," said Coach Norm Bazin, whose team's tournament run ended against UMass Amherst in the Hockey East championship game, 1-0.

## ON THE COURT

The men's basketball team enjoyed a magical postseason run of its own, coming one win away from advancing to the Big Dance—the NCAA Division I tournament—for the first time in school history. Seeded sixth in the America East tournament, UML notched its first-ever Division I postseason win by rallying from 16 points down to beat No. 7 Stony Brook, 64-62.

In the semifinals against top-seeded University of Maryland, Baltimore County, UML rallied from another 16-point deficit in the second half to pull off a stunning 79-77 upset win. Their magic ran out in the conference final, however, as the River Hawks fell to host Hartford, 64-50.

"We knew at the beginning of the season what we were getting into. We knew it was going to be a tough year, and we just stuck with it," said team captain Obadiah Noel, who finished 11th in the nation in scoring at 21.4 points per game.



## ON THE TRACKS AND TRAILS

Distance runner Kaley Richards earned All-American honors in not one, but two sports in a three-day span. At the NCAA Division I Women's Indoor Track and Field Championships in Fayetteville, Arkansas, Richards finished fourth in the mile with a personal-best time of 4 minutes, 36.26 seconds to become the program's first Division I All-American.

Two days later, Richards became the first All-American in the history of the UML women's cross country program, as well. The public health graduate student from Lowell finished 30th in a field of over 200 runners in the 6 kilometer final at the NCAA Div. I Cross Country Championships in Stillwater, Oklahoma, with a time of 20 minutes, 46.9 seconds.

"This sealed up probably the best weekend in school history. I can't imagine anything better than this," said Coach Gary Gardner.

For an encore, Richards advanced to June's NCAA Div. I Outdoor Track and Field Championships in the 1,500 meters with a personal-best time of 4 minutes, 19.18 seconds. Graduate student Christopher Alford also qualified in the 10,000.



## IN THE CLASSROOM

The River Hawks continued to excel academically, with a combined 3.33 GPA for the fall semester. Individually, 330 student-athletes earned above a 3.0, while 34 registered a perfect 4.0. Ice hockey paced all teams with a 3.77 GPA, while the field hockey squad combined for a 3.61 GPA.

Two UML seniors—women's soccer player Abigail Drezek and field hockey player Jenna Chrabolowski—were named Presidential Scholar-Athletes by America East. The award recognizes graduating student-athletes who compiled a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or higher as an undergraduate student.

Walking across the bridge to University Crossing, and hearing the Merrimack River rush by underneath. That one dining hall staffer who always gives you extra French fries. A certain professor who gets so excited about environmental geochemistry, she practically skips around the room while lecturing. Some things can't be replicated on Zoom. Here's what we miss most about our campus...

# Love Letters to Campus

"I miss the feeling that you're not alone. When you're surrounded by people who are trying to reach the same goal, it keeps you motivated."

—PABLO RUIZ '21  
Mechanical and Computer Engineering

"I miss cheering with our loyal fans at games!"

—PETER CASEY  
Director of Athletics

"I miss the connection with people. We've had so many people retire over the last year and we're not able to see them and wish them well.... To have these folks leave the university and us not have that closure is very difficult."

—NICHOLAS PISCITELLO '04, '07  
Director of Administrative Services

"I MISS PLAYING INTRAMURAL SPORTS LIKE BASKETBALL AND FOOTBALL. MY FRIENDS AND I WOULD PLAY PICKUP BASKETBALL FOR LIKE SIX HOURS AT A TIME AT THE CAMPUS REC CENTER."

JOSIAH GENNEL '22  
—Business Administration Major

"I miss just being in the atrium of the Pulichino Tong Business Center. I would go sit in the atrium before my class and everyone's there, saying hi."

—KANYA DERISME '21,  
UML's 2019-20 Student Leader of the Year

"My cubicle neighbors, who became some of my best friends, and the spontaneous riffs on personal and professional topics made me think, laugh and cry. Hearing someone chime in from far down on the cubicle line would just absolutely make my day."

—SARAH EISENKLAM,  
Web Communications Manager

"I miss Zumba classes at the Rec Center and just having the opportunities to be active and involved with others on campus."

—ANGELA MESSINA '22  
Education Major

"The thing I miss the most is the random encounters with creative genius I used to have walking through the halls of Durgin. Sounds permeated the air, blending together in a fascinating tapestry of musicians in the act of discovery. It was inspiration on a daily basis."

—ALAN WILLIAMS, Professor of Music

"I miss the trees in bloom on North Campus in the spring—and the energy and excitement in the air at Convocation in the fall."

—KAREN HOOTS,  
Senior Graphic Designer

"I miss having the opportunities we had to constantly be making music with my peers."

—KAMRYN RICHARD '22,  
Music Business Major

"THE NORTH CAMPUS STARBUCKS—I'D GO IN BETWEEN CLASSES TO MEET UP WITH FRIENDS OR DO HOMEWORK. THE MUSIC, THE COFFEE, THE FIREPLACE, THE BUSTLING OF STUDENTS AND STAFF ROTATING IN AND OUT — I WISH I COULD EXPERIENCE THAT AGAIN."

—BEN McEVOY '21,  
Finance and Management Info Systems Major

"Working side by side with students on their projects."

—FRED MARTIN,  
Computer Science Professor

"I miss the hallway conversations and accidental run-ins with colleagues."

—KARINA CRUZ '13,  
Transportation and Parking Services Manager

"I really miss sitting in the study booth on the fourth floor of Leitch Hall, doing my homework and watching the sun set over the river."

—VALERIA SALDANA '22  
Public Health Major



## POP-UP PANINIS

In March 2020, 16 Manning School of Business students in the Internship in Entrepreneurship course were preparing to open "After Hours," a student-run venture that would offer late-night fare on weekends at University Suites' Hawk's Nest Cafe. After months of planning, everything was coming together for the grand opening. Until COVID-19 shut down the campus.

"We were expecting to come back from spring break and open the restaurant. Then we had to stop," says Alec Itzaina, a finance student from São Paulo, Brazil.

Thirteen months later, a revamped "pop-up" version of After Hours started serving up food to hungry River Hawks. On a Friday evening this spring, at tables set up outside of University Suites on East Campus, business students offered five varieties of pre-made panini sandwiches to students, faculty and staff.

The price? Free. In lieu of payment, customers were asked to make a donation to the Navigators Food Pantry, a student organization that supplies free food items for anyone in the university community who may be experiencing food insecurity.

"The food pantry is a great resource on campus, and we thought this would be a good way to help people learn about it while also serving them a bite to eat," says Silvana Davaiga, a business major from New Bedford, Massachusetts, with an international business concentration.

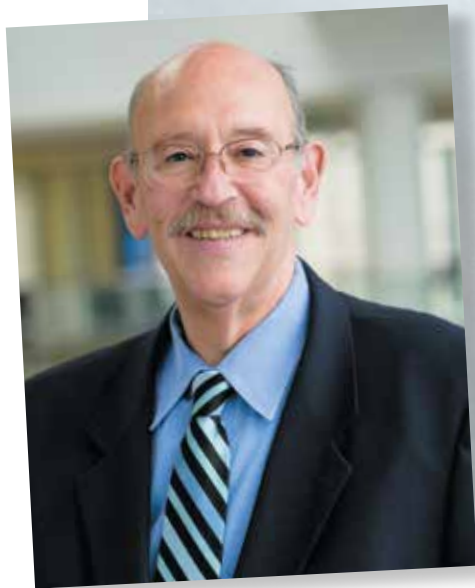
Financial support from the Manning School covers After Hours business costs, which include the panini ingredients (like fresh ciabatta bread) and the use of commercial kitchen space at UTEC, a community organization in Lowell where students make the sandwiches in accordance with food safety standards.

The team hopes to open a sit-down version of the restaurant on weekends, as planned, given the lifting of COVID protocols—EB.



Whether you've been working from home for several months, or graduated 30 years ago—what do you miss most about campus? Tell us at [magazine@uml.edu](mailto:magazine@uml.edu).





### LARRY SIEGEL, LONGTIME UML STUDENT AFFAIRS LEADER, RETIRES

When Larry Siegel joined UMass Lowell in 1986, he was the university's first director of residence life. He went on to hold the positions of director of campus life, director of student development, dean of student life and dean of student affairs.

Earlier this year, he retired as vice chancellor for student affairs.

"For over three decades, Larry showed tireless dedication and unyielding commitment to generations of students," says Chancellor Jacquie Moloney. "He will be greatly missed."

A fierce advocate for students and social justice, Siegel was the driving force behind the doubling of student housing and expanding the Office of Career Services and its highly regarded co-op program. Working with the Student Affairs team, he redesigned UML's Wellness Center and Counseling Services, founded its first Office of Multicultural Affairs and the LGBTQ+ Resource Center—and created an infrastructure to support an explosion of student clubs and recreation groups.

Siegel was also central in the acquisition, construction and major renovations of 12 residential and student life facilities.



### GARDEN OF HAMMOCKS

When students return to campus this fall, they'll be able to study in swaying hammocks outside the Campus Recreation Center and Sheehy Hall. Or catch up with friends while relaxing in Adirondack chairs under the trees on North Campus. Or start a game of volleyball in the Donahue Hall quad. These are just a few of the outdoor amenities coming to campus this summer—part of the university's continued efforts to improve living and learning spaces for students. Also planned: Outdoor pingpong tables, patio heaters, decorative lighting—and solar-powered umbrellas, which students can use to charge their phones and laptops at existing outdoor tables across campus.



### UML'S CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY DESIGNATED 'UNDERGROUND RAILROAD RESEARCH FACILITY'

**B**orn a slave on a Virginia plantation in 1826, Nathaniel Booth escaped at age 17 and sought freedom in the North. He arrived in Lowell around 1844 and opened a barbershop on Dutton Street.

When Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850, making it a crime to aid "Freedom Seekers," Booth briefly fled to Canada. But in 1851, Booth Cotton Mills Agent (CEO) Linus Child raised \$750 from the Lowell community to purchase Booth's freedom.

That's just one example of the anti-slavery and abolitionist movements that existed in Lowell two centuries ago—movements that are chronicled in "Untold Lowell Stories: Black History," an online research guide recently published by the UMass Lowell Library's Center for Lowell History.

The collection of 32 stories, which includes Martin Luther King Jr.'s visit to Lowell's First United Baptist Church in 1953 and biographies of those who supported freedom seekers like Booth, are the work of Martha Mayo '92, who retired as the Center for Lowell History's director in 2015.

"I'd gathered a lot of the resources over the years," says Mayo, who in February began posting one story a day on her personal Facebook page in honor of Black History Month.

As the "likes" and "shares" started piling up, several readers suggested that Mayo curate the stories into one collection. So she asked Tony Sampas, the university's archivist and special projects manager, if he could turn her posts into an online research guide, or LibGuide. Sampas gladly accepted the task.

"Nobody knows the material like she does. This is mostly Martha and her 30 years of experience, with the library giving it a voice and a place to be seen," says Sampas, who dug up high-resolution images to accompany Mayo's stories.

The collection builds on the Center for Lowell History's designation in March 2020 as an Underground Railroad Research Facility by the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program.—EB



U.S. Rep. Lori Trahan, second from left, met with, from left, Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation Julie Chen, Chancellor Jacquie Moloney, Assoc. Prof. Hunter Mack, and Prof. Ramaswamy Nagarajan in the renovated fourth floor of Perry Hall, where HEROES is based.

## UMASS LOWELL SECURES \$11.7 MILLION TO PROTECT MILITARY

UMass Lowell defense-related research projects—ranging from developing new protective gear and sensors that ensure food and water are safe to advanced wireless communications—were awarded nearly \$12 million in federal funding through the defense appropriations bill.

The funding will support two dozen projects that are being conducted through UMass Lowell's HEROES (Harnessing Emerging Research Opportunities to Empower Soldiers) collaborative, which works with the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Soldier Center, formerly known as Natick Labs. Faculty from engineering, sciences and health sciences will be leading the projects.

The funding will create opportunities for Army scientists and engineers to work closely with both UMass Lowell faculty and students, says Prof. Ramaswamy Nagarajan, co-director of HEROES and a member of the Plastics Engineering faculty.



## He Rows 'Merrily' Along...

A decade ago, Education Prof. James Nehring cycled across the U.S. to raise money for a scholarship to benefit first-generation education students at UMass Lowell. Now, he's rowing down the East Coast in a boat that he built himself, in order to double the scholarship.

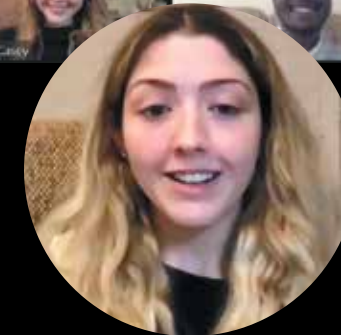
Nehring's three-year bicycle odyssey—4,000 miles, from Boston to Seattle—raised \$30,000 for a scholarship that supports students studying to be teachers who are the first in their family to attend college. Since then, the Mary, Joan and Nancy Scholarship for Courage and Compassion fund (named for his mother, sister-in-law and a close family friend) has grown to \$40,000, enough to award \$1,500 to one senior education student each year.

Nehring wants to double the amount of the annual scholarship to \$3,000 by raising an additional \$40,000 for the fund. And he saw a way to do that by rowing, if he could just get an expedition wherry: a light, open boat that is similar to a rowing scull, but wider and more stable, able to handle waves of 3 to 4 feet.

He quickly learned that the boats cost upwards of \$8,000, so his wife suggested that he build his own. He ordered a kit online and spent the winter of 2017 assembling the boat from wood and fiberglass in his garage. He christened the craft Merrily, for the nursery rhyme "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" and the Merrimack River.

In summer 2018, he and Merrily started on a 500-mile fundraising journey from New York City to Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, rowed in stages. Last summer, Nehring rowed for two days from Virginia Beach, Virginia, to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. He plans to finish up this summer with a four-day, 70-mile sprint from Kitty Hawk to Cape Hatteras Light, one of the nation's most iconic lighthouses. **To donate, visit [uml.edu/education-scholarship](http://uml.edu/education-scholarship).** —KW

BY KATHARINE WEBSTER



## When Students Talk, the Chancellor Listens

For years, the leaders of the Student Government Association (SGA) have had a working lunch every month with Chancellor Jacquie Moloney and her executive team in the chancellor's suite.

More recently, the "lunches" have been virtual—and no one actually eats while on Zoom—but the meetings still provide students with access to university leaders, and vice versa.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, that access has been even more crucial, giving students a forum to advocate for more mental health resources and improvements in online teaching, says outgoing SGA President Hannah Casey.

"We get a really unique inside look at the administration and how they and the university system make decisions, and that has been incredibly helpful this year," Casey says.

Moloney says that the lunches also give university leaders a direct window into student concerns, which is enhanced by the SGA's practice of surveying students about a range of issues. Then, they can work together on practical solutions. For example, once the Counseling Center's therapists got trained in teletherapy and the university was able to fill some positions that had been temporarily cut, the SGA used social media to get the word out. —KW



## UML-STATE PARTNERSHIP HELPS INNOVATORS STAY IN LOWELL

The university has helped attract a growing number of start-up companies to Lowell, thanks to \$500,000 in economic impact funds from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Sponsored by State Rep. Thomas Golden '94, '02, the initiative has helped fund a dozen companies over the past couple of years—many of which have headquarters in UMass Lowell's Innovation Hub on 110 Canal St.—with several more due to receive funding this year.

"This support has had significant impact on these early-stage companies—allowing them to focus their resources on advancing product development and research, instead of worrying about things like how to pay rent," says Julie Chen, vice chancellor for research and innovation. "Meanwhile, we've been able to create a real innovation economy on campus and in the city."

> BY DAVID PERRY

# The BRIGHT SIDE of the 'DARK SIDE'

**A**lan Williams marvels at the orbit of the viral video: His students performing Pink Floyd's 1973 album, "Dark Side of the Moon." "For a group of 20-year-olds to have a performance reach 90,000 sets of eyeballs and ears is pretty amazing," he says. The video drew global praise from viewers, landed Williams and two students on the syndicated radio show "Floydian Slip" and resulted in a slew of news stories. With spring came a fresh Zoom performance: Floyd's 1975 album, "Wish You Were Here."

A sonic and artistic triumph, the 1973 album "Dark Side" was a hit for Pink Floyd, too, selling more than 45 million copies.

This isn't UML's first dance with that album. Two years ago, the man who engineered the album, Alan Parsons, spoke to Sound Recording Technology (SRT) students in Durgin Hall. And the résumé of Grammy-winning recording engineer Joel Plante '97, a grad of the SRT and Music Performance programs, includes the 2016 remaster of "Dark Side of the Moon" and other Floyd albums.

"It was really refreshing to see young people cover such an iconic album," says Plante. "The students and Alan Williams did a great job making it their own."

Williams says he spoke to an employee of Roger Waters, Floyd's bassist/vocalist and the album's lyricist, who praised the performance.

Williams knew the project required intense work and coordination. He also knew the irony of students performing the song "Breathe" in face masks.

YouTube commenters were especially effusive about seniors Kamryn Richard, Mia Farwell and Kaitlin Whiteman, who together turned in a stunning rendition of "The Great Gig in the Sky," a cornerstone of "Dark Side."

"We were so inspired by collective music making that everyone not only brought their A game, but also delivered performances they didn't know they had in them," says Williams.

Recorded Nov. 13-15 in a small space Williams rented in North Chelmsford, Massachusetts, the 43:45 video features the work of 15 students. Classes were conducted over Zoom, with painstaking listening and plotting of parts. Recording was staggered in slots of six or seven players to adhere to social distancing standards.

"Pulling the whole thing together was an interesting process, to say the least," says fifth-year Electrical Engineering and SRT major Connor Capozzi, who played keyboards and Ableton (a digital workstation/instrument) on the recording.

"This is very much a product of COVID," says Williams. "Some of how good this turned out was the pure joy the students felt playing something together, with other humans, other students. They were so overwhelmed to make music with musicians, it elevated everything."

FOR A LISTEN, VISIT [uml.edu/darkside](http://uml.edu/darkside)

# COOL SCHOOL



**GOOD SPORTS**



Whether it's on the field, court or track, UMass Lowell is usually competing against the nine other Division I schools from the America East Conference. But when it comes to sustainability, everyone is on the same team.

America East created a sustainability network that will give its 10 member institutions an opportunity to share best practices, build on existing partnerships and collaborate on new green initiatives. And UMass Lowell is taking the lead. Director of Sustainability Ruairi O'Mahony is serving as the network's chair and will represent UML at monthly meetings along with Ruben Sanca '09, '10, assistant athletic director for administration.

O'Mahony pitched the idea to conference leaders last summer, sharing how UML's Office of Sustainability and Athletic Department have worked together to make athletic facilities across campus more energy efficient and environmentally friendly.

At the Tsongas Center, for instance, UML installed a Grind2Energy food waste recycling system in 2018, becoming the first college campus in the Northeast to do so. The university has also installed high-efficiency LED lighting and trash and recycling bins made from recycled milk jugs throughout the arena. Last year, two electric vehicle charging stations were added in the arena's parking lot.

Plans are also in the works for an in-person sustainability conference at UMass Lowell in June 2022 that will bring together students, faculty and staff from across America East, as well as national and international experts from the industry.

**READ ALL ABOUT UML'S RIST INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY AT [UML.EDU/SUSTAINABILITY](http://UML.EDU/SUSTAINABILITY).**



## A GREENER COMMUNITY

Thanks to a partnership with local nonprofit agency Community Teamwork, UMass Lowell students will soon learn how to conduct home energy audits and help low-income families apply for rebates and money-saving incentive programs.

The Lowell Energy Efficiency Acceleration Program was one of five projects that recently received a share of \$50,000 in grants from the Lowell Green Community Partnership, an alliance between the university and the city to provide leadership, resources and expertise for sustainability initiatives throughout greater Lowell.

Other grant recipients included a composting pilot program, a project to install new solar-powered streetlights on campus, and enhanced sustainability education programs in the Lowell Public Schools.

Launched in 2020, the Lowell Green Community Partnership is led by Chancellor Jacquie Moloney and Lowell City Manager Eileen Donoghue. The partnership's Green Community Commission includes more than two dozen leaders from business, community and environmental organizations and is co-chaired by philanthropist Nancy Donahue '13 (H), whose \$25,000 donation to the university helped fund the grant program.

## UML NAMED 'INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR'

UML has been named "Innovator of the Year" by Casella Waste Systems, its regional solid waste contractor which provides waste and recycling services to 150,000 clients in more than 40 states. The award recognizes the university for the new and creative ways that it sustains and conserves resources and diverts waste destined for landfills.

UML composts food scraps at every dining hall on campus, as well as from its cafés, food courts, the Tsongas Center and the UMass Lowell Inn & Conference Center. The nutrient-rich compost is used in gardens and green spaces across campus.

This is one of many efforts that have helped the university become a national leader in sustainability in higher education. Last year, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education rated it No. 1 among all Massachusetts colleges and universities.



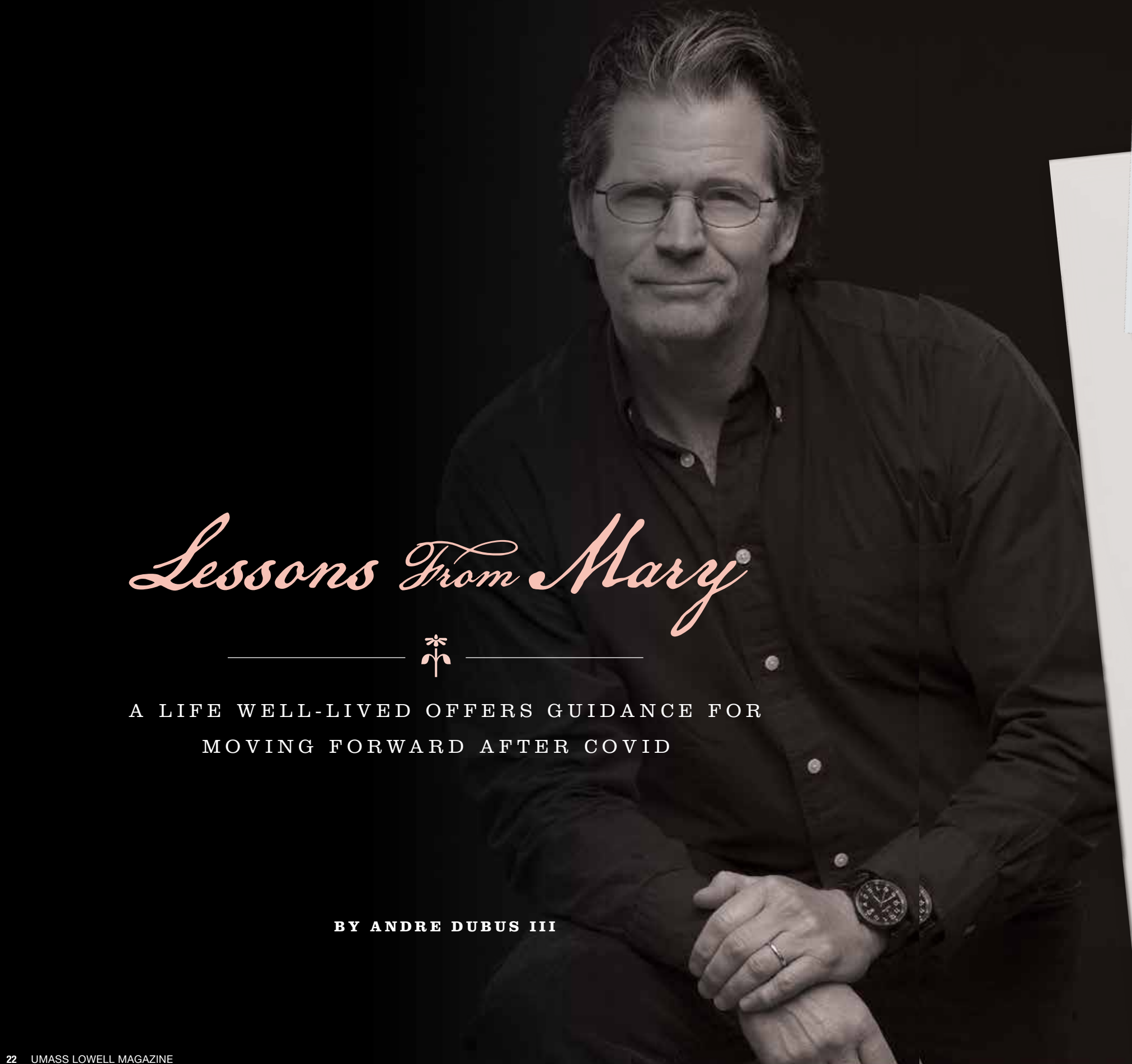
## 16th

**UML is the 16th "Coolest School" in the country, according to the Sierra Club's latest annual ranking of North America's greenest colleges and universities. A record 300-plus schools participated in this year's survey, which tracks everything from how they get their electricity and dining hall food to what they teach students in the classroom.**

# FEATURES

## GOOD VIBES ONLY

12 students who make the world a brighter place.  
**Page 30**

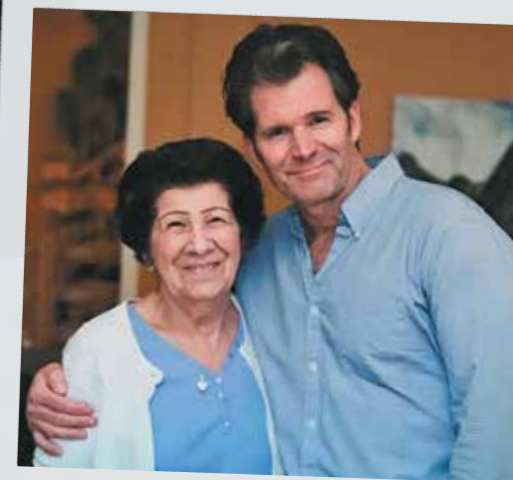


# Lessons From Mary



A LIFE WELL-LIVED OFFERS GUIDANCE FOR  
MOVING FORWARD AFTER COVID

BY ANDRE DUBUS III



One night not long after dinner, my mother-in-law's voice came over the intercom, and she sounded weak. "Can you guys come down? I fell. Twice." My wife and I and our son, Austin, pulled on our masks and hurried down to Mary's apartment, where we found her slumped in her kitchen chair in her robe, her head resting on her arms. Her face was pale and in a slightly wavering voice she told us how she fell off her step stool trying to pull her window shade down, that she hit her dining room table and then the floor only to get back up and climb that stool and fall the same way again.

While my son and I helped Mary to the living room, Fontaine told her mother that she should have called us to help with the shade, though she said this in a warmly teasing voice for we all knew that Mary, even at 98, preferred to do things on her own. Then Mary said: "But you people don't come down here anymore."

She was right. We were two months into the pandemic, and except for when I brought her groceries while wearing a mask and sanitized gloves, we rarely went down there at all.

But it wasn't always this way.

In her first years living with us, I'd start my day by standing on the exterior steps leading to my front door and wait for Mary to come to her kitchen window. She lived on the first floor of our house, my wife and I and our three kids living in the floors above, and after I'd driven them to school, after I'd parked my truck in the gravel driveway of our home in the woods, I'd pause on those steps.

Mary would usually see or hear me pull in, but if she was finishing washing her breakfast dishes at the sink, then I would wait for her. Even if it was raining or snowing. Even if I needed to get inside and get to work. Because when Mary appeared at that window, it was like starting my day with some sort of blessing.

She was a small woman, and when she smiled her hazel eyes became two upside down crescent moons, her lovely face suffused with warmth, this life-loving, first generation Greek American from Boston who had not only given me my wife but had also become one of my dearest friends on this earth. She'd wave and blow me a kiss, and I'd do the same. If I were wearing a hat, I'd take it off and give her a deep bow, which always made her laugh.

At the bank where she'd worked part-time as a teller until she was 80 years old, they called her Sunshine Mary. She appreciated this nickname but seemed genuinely confused about why she was given it. For those of us who knew her, however, there was no confusion. Because no matter whom Mary was talking to, whether it was a wealthy customer or someone just getting by, whether it was the bank president or the young janitor emptying the trash can near Mary's window, she turned that radiant smile on everyone, and the thing is, she meant that smile.

In the 15 years she lived with us she would say to me many times, in that strong Boston accent she'd had since the 1920s, "Oh Andre, I don't think it costs anyone to be nice. I take people as they are."

**W**hen my wife Fontaine and I decided to build an in-law apartment into our home for her aging parents, I did not foresee how much daily joy they would bring to our lives, especially Mary. She was 84 years old when she and her husband George moved downstairs, but you would never know it. She did her own grocery shopping and cooking and cleaning. On Monday mornings she volunteered at the soup kitchen at her church, feeding men and women who quickly grew to love Mary as much as her bank customers had. On Monday nights she went to choir practice, for she'd been singing in her church choir since she was a teenager, and on Wednesdays she



**“**She was a small woman, and when she smiled her hazel eyes became two upside down crescent moons, her lovely face suffused with warmth, this life-loving, first generation Greek American from Boston who had not only given me my wife but had also become one of my dearest friends on this earth. She'd wave and blow me a kiss, and I'd do the same. If I were wearing a hat, I'd take it off and give her a deep bow, which always made her laugh.”

volunteered at a domestic violence prevention agency where she answered the telephone and stuffed envelopes and shredded documents and always walked in there with that smile and often her homemade baklava. On Fridays she'd drive to my wife's dance studio and sign in the ladies who took Zumba class, many of whom said they came to class mainly to see Mary.

Every holiday, Sunday dinner, or house party—of which my wife and I hosted many—Mary would walk up the interior stairs from her apartment, knock once on the glass-paneled door, then enter with that smile. She'd be in a perfect outfit for whatever occasion it was, mainly dresses and blouses and sweaters of all colors, her jewelry matching, her hair just right, and even if our kids didn't see her right away, they seemed to sense that their grandmother was in the house and they'd all go to her, hugging and kissing her and saying, "Hi, Yia Yia!"

For the dinners Mary would help Fontaine set the table, and she'd help me with appetizers or anything else that needed doing. My wife's a modern dancer and so many of those house parties were cast parties after performances, and while Fontaine would be finishing up at the theater, Mary and I would get the house ready, both of us in aprons, jazz playing, the tinkling of ice and glasses as I set up the bar, Mary cutting up carrots and celery and blocks of cheddar, and all the while she and I would talk about whatever came up—how I bought too many meatballs again, though she'd point this out with that smile. We'd talk about how wonderful Fontaine's show was, and Mary would say how she loved to brag about her "multitalented daughter." We'd talk about anyone in our families who might be suffering in some way, a subject that always made Mary reflective and momentarily quiet, for above all else she hated to see or hear of the suffering of her fellow human beings.

When her husband, George, had a hip replacement, it was Mary who tended the wound, and it was Mary who got him out of the rehab facility she was convinced was killing him. Then, after five years of living with us and after nearly 68 years of marriage, Mary's husband George died in his sleep at age 90, and now for the first time in her life she lived alone.

Fontaine and our kids would go down to her apartment and visit her, usually after dinner when Mary was watching her game shows. Grieving or not, she'd turn that lovely smile on them and talk over whatever show she was watching, her favorite being "Jeopardy." If I wasn't out of town or busy with schoolwork, I would go down there, too, though every Friday night I'd visit her without fail and the two of us would scratch lottery tickets, winning very little over the years but not losing much either. Mary would turn the TV to one of the music channels, one that played Big Band music from the '40s, and she and I would finish our gambling and sit back and talk about our weeks, about my three kids and her four grown kids, about her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. About her late husband, George.

**W**hen the pandemic came, we'd keep the news on mute and as the numbers of the infected grew, as the numbers of the dead grew, Mary would often be close to tears. "Oh, those poor people, Andre. Their poor families."

She was now 98 years old, but she still cooked her own meals and cleaned her apartment and did her laundry. She still drove herself to buy her groceries, though in the last few years she'd been asking the teenage baggers to put less in each bag so that she could carry them, a request I'm sure she made with that smile.

I don't remember the moment we asked Mary to stop going to public places like grocery stores, but I do remember her quiet resignation about it. "But Andre, I worry about you doing the shopping. Are you careful?"

I was careful, though Mary was not. When I walked into her kitchen carrying her grocery bags, my mask on, gloves on my hands, Mary would walk right up to me to take a bag and I'd have to tell her to please stay back.

"But I need to pay you. Do you have the receipt?"

I'd thank her and ask her to stand in the hallway while I put the receipt on her table where she could leave the money, which I then told her I'd come get after she left the



“

After over a year of so much loss, we're beginning to sense a break in the trees of this dark forest we've been wandering through, our faces covered, our bodies far from the touch of another. And so once it's truly safe, let's take off those masks and turn to one another, and let's smile.”

room. She did all this, though she seemed to think I was being too cautious, or maybe it wasn't that. Maybe it was something else. Many times over the years she'd say to me, "Oh Andre, I've lived my life. I worry about you people."

We were in full lockdown now: all of our town's restaurants were shuttered; Fontaine's dance studio was closed; and I was now teaching all my UML classes online. As the numbers of the sick and dying kept rising and rising from coast to coast, we stopped going down to Mary's apartment altogether. One Friday night in early spring when I would normally be downstairs with her, sitting under the lamplight together scratching our tickets and talking and laughing, I called down on the intercom and said I didn't think we should do that for a while.

"You think so?"

"Yes."

"But why?"

"We don't want you to get sick, Mary. We love you."

"I love you, too." Though she sounded far away when she said it.

Summer came, and we could visit with Mary on her front porch, though we would sit many feet apart and not linger for too long, and except for when I delivered her groceries, we hardly went inside her home at all. Now tens of thousands of people had died, and Mary, who no longer volunteered at her church's soup kitchen because it was closed, who no longer sang in the choir either, who now had no office to go to or the dance studio, who couldn't even get out of the house to shop and run errands, she became quiet and withdrawn.

I'd stand at that kitchen window and talk to her through the glass, but even though she still gave me that smile it seemed to rise up from a well of sadness.

Late at night, Fontaine and I would talk about how important it was to keep Mary from getting the virus, yes, but wasn't it also important to keep her from dying of loneliness? Because that's what seemed to be happening right there in our house.

**T**he morning after she fell trying to lower that shade, her doctor paid her a visit at her living room window, and later that day one of our nieces, a newly licensed physical therapist, examined her, too. It was clear that Mary had fractured her ankle and now she could no longer do her own cooking or cleaning or laundry, and so instead of staying upstairs and away from Mary, for weeks we took turns going down there at least four times a day: at seven in the morning to help her roll her

walker to the kitchen for breakfast, then back to her living room and her husband's old recliner, where Mary would elevate her ankles and we'd ice and wrap her foot; at lunch and then dinner; and then later, one of us would help her to bed, and all the while we'd be masked but talking to her and listening to her, and despite her pain and discomfort, despite her constant apologies to us for needing help, apologies we would always tell her were not necessary because we enjoyed helping her, Mary's life-loving smile returned, as did her warm presence.

In this time of such fear and isolation, of such hardship and daily loss, Mary falling off that stool seemed like the best thing that could have happened to her.

In June, Mary no longer needed her walker or even a cane and she turned 99 years old. Fontaine invited friends and family to drive up to our house to celebrate Mary from their cars, and I rented a tent for shade and set out chairs under it for close family. Mary wore a gold crown and had big helium balloons tied to the arms of her chair, and even though she wasn't a drinker, I mixed her a Pina Colada with fresh pineapple while Austin played Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, and Big Band music on the sound system.

Over the course of that afternoon, the sun high over us all, 35 carloads of friends and family drove down our long driveway then into the yard in a wide arc that brought them within feet of Mary, their horns honking, many of the cars decorated with glitter and balloons and hand-held signs wishing her a happy 99th birthday as they shouted out their open windows, "We love you, Mary!"

And Mary's legendary smile had never been brighter. She kept dabbing at her eyes and saying, "I can't believe it. All these people. I just can't believe it."

The next morning, I called down to Mary's apartment, which was filled with bouquets and floating balloons and over fifty birthday cards. I asked her how she was feeling.

"Oh Andre, last night I cried myself to sleep."

"Why, Mary?"

"I just feel so happy."

Twelve days after that party, I woke with a bad feeling I couldn't shake. Instead of going straight to my writing room, I carried my coffee out to my porch, something I rarely did, and looked down at Mary's kitchen window. Every morning she would pull that window's shade up at just before seven, but now, close to nine, it was still covering the glass, and now I was running down the back stairs to her apartment, jerking my mask on as I hurried down the hall to her bedroom. All her shades were drawn there too and she was still under her covers from the night before. I called her name, but she could not answer.

We would lose her a few days later, though it was not the virus that took her; it was just her body giving out after nearly a century of life, a rich, people-loving life. And if Mary has taught me nothing over the years, especially after watching her endure what we've all been enduring, this lovely woman born just three years after the Spanish Flu, she has taught me this: We need one another. We need to spend time in each other's company. And we need to treat each other with respect and with kindness.

After over a year of so much loss, we're beginning to sense a break in the trees of this dark forest we've been wandering through, our faces covered, our bodies far from the touch of another. And so once it's truly safe, let's take off those masks and turn to one another, and let's smile. And let us, like Mary, mean that smile.

For everyone. Whomever they are.

*A full-time professor in the English Department at UMass Lowell, Andre Dubus III's seven books include The New York Times' bestsellers "House of Sand and Fog," "The Garden of Last Days," and his memoir, "Townie." His most recent novel, "Gone So Long," has been named on many "best books" lists, including The Boston Globe's "Twenty Best Books of 2018." Dubus has been a finalist for the National Book Award, and has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, The National Magazine Award for Fiction, two Pushcart Prizes and is a recipient of an American Academy of Arts and Letters Award in Literature. His books are published in over 25 languages.*

> BY DAVID PERRY

## ‘If They Can See It, They Can Be It’: For Janis ’92 and John Raguin, Learning Starts at Home

To Groton, Massachusetts, native Janis (Erickson) Raguin ’92, the word “home” means comfort, familiarity and connection.

She found all of that under her parents’ roof, as well as in the campus community as a River Hawk grad student in the College of Education.

Her time at UML “prepared and encouraged me to make a difference in the world by helping children learn, but it also grounded me in the spirit of connection and community,” she told the crowd gathered to celebrate her University Alumni Award in 2019.

Raguin and her husband of 23 years, John, have been busy making sure others can share that sense of community, then pass it on, through a series of gifts. Most recently, they contributed to the renovation of the university’s physical ground zero, Coburn Hall, home to the College of Education. The building’s Raguin Design and Discovery Center, a resource lab for student teachers, is named for them.

They have also supported UTeach UMass Lowell, which addresses a nationwide shortage of math, science, technology and engineering teachers. UTeach Network was founded at the University of Texas Austin in 1997 and adopted at UML (the first university in New England to offer it) in 2012.

Janis—who taught in Massachusetts public schools in Turners Falls and in Lincoln—also serves on the College of Education’s Advisory Board.

But it’s the couple’s endowment of the Grow Our Own Scholarship that promises to have the deepest and most long-lasting impact. The scholarship is designed to encourage a diverse group of high school students to become teachers and settle into jobs at local schools to inspire others to do the same.

“We were really inspired to give back to UMass Lowell and the idea was something that came about through talking to Prof. (and former College of Education Dean) Eleanor Abrams,” says Janis. “It makes so much sense. It offers an impetus for students who live in Lowell, Lawrence and other towns to attend college, get a good education and stay in the community to work.”

The goal of the scholarship is to bridge the education and diversity gap between educators and their students. About 40% of Massachusetts students are of color, but among teachers, that number is less than 10%. Yet, according to a 2016 study by the Brookings Institution and National Council on Teacher Quality, students were more successful if their teachers were of the same race.

Janis says she hopes the scholarship will help breed a spirit of “If I can see it, I can be it,” allowing minority elementary school students to look to the front of the classroom and see not just a teacher but an inspiration to teach.

Freshman art major Arie Dowe can attest to the power of representation. During his high school years in Dorchester,

Massachusetts, Dowe says he benefited from having only had teachers who were Black like him—and how he wants to offer that same sense of connection to the next generation of students.

“I want to work with kids that look like me,” says Dowe, who as one of three recipients of the GROW scholarship, plans to become an art teacher. “I want to be an example.”

Where does he want to teach? “Dorchester.”

Dowe says the scholarship allows him to focus on his priorities.

“I have been able to relax when it comes to worrying about how I’m going to get through school, and I can focus more on my grades and being present in class,” he says.

That’s what the university wants for all its students, says Chancellor Jacquie Moloney.

“Janis and John really get it, and we’re grateful they’re such great friends to the university,” she says. “They understand the importance of giving both teachers and students what they need to make dreams and careers come to fruition. They’re addressing needs that will create and inspire educators for generations.”

### A SHARED VISION

The Raguins met at an event for Cornell alumni. Janis earned a degree in hotel administration in 1988, and John was a 1991 graduate with a degree in electrical engineering. He later earned an MBA in management from New York University’s Stern School of Business.

“She was funny, down to earth,” says John, “and she spoke her mind. She was up-front and honest and I’m the same way, though sometimes to a fault.”

“He has more of an engineering mind and I have the more social mind,” says Janis. “In that way we’re different from one another. But we have similar visions and hopes.”

John co-founded Guidewire, a California-based software company. He also served as chief marketing officer at Seismic, and now advises early- to mid-stage software companies.

But, like Janis, he’s never forgotten his roots.

“Helping these students resonates with me, too,” he says. “I grew up in Medford, where a huge percentage of the kids were not going to college.”

Janis, whose mother was a schoolteacher and father was a social worker, was inspired by her parents to work with young people. After taking a break from teaching to raise her children—Chantal and Eric, now 21 and 20, respectively—she earned a master’s degree in mental health counseling from Lesley University in 2018.

“I’ve always loved kids and the idea of working with them, and was attracted to psychology and education since I was young,” she says.

As it turns out, she’d doing plenty for both fields. [UML](#)



“WE WERE REALLY INSPIRED TO GIVE BACK TO UMASS LOWELL. IT MAKES SO MUCH SENSE. IT OFFERS AN IMPETUS FOR STUDENTS WHO LIVE IN LOWELL, LAWRENCE AND OTHER TOWNS TO ATTEND COLLEGE, GET A GOOD EDUCATION AND STAY IN THE COMMUNITY TO WORK.”



# GOOD VIBES

**E**very generation comes of age with challenges to face, but not like this. The world is awash in urgent difficulties in need of real solutions—from eroding mental health to entrenched social inequality to the planet itself in peril.

When we look to our students, we see a generation rising. We see their vision, coming into focus, of the world they believe is worth fighting for. We see how their actions are changing lives.

These 12 students are at the forefront. We have 18,480 more right behind them.

**12  
STUDENTS  
WHO MAKE  
THE WORLD  
A BRIGHTER  
PLACE**





## THE TEACHER: SYDNEY FAGUNDES '21

**B**y her second year in the undergraduate education program, Sydney Fagundes was teaching science and math literacy five afternoons a week as an outreach program specialist for Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell. She visited a different elementary school every day, and also ran programs at the organization's downtown headquarters. "The exposure I got to lesson-planning was so beneficial in all my courses, because I planned a new lesson every single week," she says. "Every lesson is different, and you need to try things and adapt. Working for Girls Inc. has taught me that." Fagundes—who earned a bachelor's degree with dual certifications in elementary education and moderate disabilities in May and is working toward her English as a Second Language license—says she jumped at every opportunity the College of Education has to offer. She helped other education students as a tutor at the Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services, and she was a College of Education ambassador to alumni, new students and prospective students. She also started a campus chapter of SEAM—the Student Education Association of Massachusetts—which provides professional and leadership development opportunities to her and other members. "I've found my calling, I've found my home and I've found my people—people who get excited over the same things I do, like a new children's book," she says. "I know that by being a teacher, I will never feel like I am working a day in my life." —KW

## THE SCHOLAR IN THE STREETS: KEVIN AKERS '23

Growing up in Southeast Washington, D.C., Kevin Akers watched as one of his closest friends got caught up in gangs. That inspired him to start STEM for the Streets while he was in high school, a nonprofit that exposes historically disenfranchised and underserved children to hands-on learning alongside scientists, doctors and engineers of color. "It's sort of like how a plant follows the sun, a child follows its community. We just provide that community," says Akers, whose organization was chosen to represent the United States at Concausa 2030, a United Nations supported international convention in Santiago, Chile, in 2019. He remains co-CEO of STEM for the Streets, which has partnerships with five schools in D.C.—balancing that work with his mechanical engineering coursework and a research assistant position on campus. "I want to fit as much as I can into these four years, because these are my foundational years and the opportunities here are limitless," says Akers, who wants to graduate with "more than just a degree" in mechanical engineering. "I want to graduate knowing that I made a difference, that I left a legacy and changed somebody's life." Much like being one of the university's DC-CAP Scholars has changed his life, he says. Akers was in the first group of 20 students from Washington, D.C., to attend UML with help from a full merit scholarship offered through a partnership between the District of Columbia-College Access Program (DC-CAP), the Leonsis Foundation and UMass Lowell. "Every day when I wake up, the first thing I say is, 'Thank you that I'm alive right now,' and the second is, 'Thank you for that scholarship,' because that scholarship is life-changing," he says. "It's an awesome program that's allowed me to focus more on my work and more on my future." —EB



## MAKER OF MONEY MOVES: KRISTEN REARDON '22

**A** few weeks into her co-op job at MFS Investment Management, Kristen Reardon asked if she could meet with the company president, Carol Geremia. Reardon, a business administration major from Medfield, Massachusetts, had recently helped launch a Women in Finance student group in the Manning School of Business, and she wanted to get Geremia's thoughts about succeeding in the male-dominated industry. Their meeting turned into a long-term mentorship. "She has helped me develop so much personally and professionally," says Reardon, who says that working at MFS "debunked" her assumptions about the financial industry. "I've learned that women really do have a seat at the table in the industry, but not having the correct company culture can really affect how you use that seat," she says. "It's a quick-paced industry, and it's hard to stay afloat and stay confident in yourself if you don't have people backing you up." Reardon is now committed to helping other women succeed. When her Women in Finance group surveyed students on how companies like MFS could better recruit women, she

shared the results with Geremia. Geremia was so impressed that she asked Reardon and fellow group leader Melanie Sunnerberg, also a co-op at MFS, to present the data to her management team. "Presenting to them was such an amazing feeling. It was so big for both of us," says Reardon, who also met one-on-one during her co-op with the namesake of her business school, MFS Executive Chairman Rob Manning '84, '11 (H), who is chairman of the UMass Board of Trustees. "I had all these questions prepared, but the second we started talking he said, 'Tell me about you and how we can help you.'" Reardon says. "It shows his character and leadership style." Reardon has invited Geremia and Manning School alumna Kelsie Nadeau '14, an internal wholesaler at MFS, to speak with students about money management and investing. "I still have so much to learn," says Reardon. "But I have a platform and connection to MFS, so why not use it in a way to get more students interested in finance?" —EB





## DOCTOR IN TRAINING: BENEDICTA AGYEMANG-BRANTUO '22

**B**enedicta Agyemang-Brantuo's family moved from Ghana to Worcester, Massachusetts, when she was in high school. She could see that the U.S. health care system, with all of its flaws, was still much better than Ghana's.

She decided to become a doctor—after first earning a master's degree in public health. An honors chemistry major on the pre-med track, Agyemang-Brantuo is minoring in public health so that she can better understand how to deliver care more effectively.

"In Ghana, there are no personal physicians. You have to go to the hospital to see whatever doctor is there. You have to go there and show them, 'This is where I'm suffering,'" she says. "That's why I want to look at what public health brings to the table."

At UMass Lowell, she also enrolled in a brand-new program during her sophomore year: the Medical Profession Admission Gap Initiative and Collaboration, or MAGIC, directed by Chemistry Assoc. Teaching Prof. Khalilah Reddie. It helps students from underrepresented groups prepare for health care careers.

Reddie encouraged Agyemang-Brantuo and two other students in that first MAGIC cohort to apply to the UMass Baccalaureate MD Pathway Program (Bacc-MD), which aims to diversify the medical field by preparing UMass undergraduates from underrepresented groups for medical school. If they complete the program successfully, they are admitted to UMass Medical School in Worcester.

Agyemang-Brantuo says that Reddie wrote letters of support for all three of them—and when they all got in, she celebrated their success, bringing a cake to their next meeting.

The Bacc-MD program has also been wonderful, Agyemang-Brantuo says, especially hearing different physicians talk about their specialties and how they make a difference in their communities.

"They teach you how to tackle imposter syndrome, find a mentor and learn about the different disciplines," she says. "It was cool to listen to the physicians and think about, 'This is how I'm going to give back to my community when I'm in her shoes.'"

Agyemang-Brantuo isn't waiting to make a difference. Inspired by a Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. quote—"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane"—she decided to start a club dedicated to supporting students of color as they work to enter the health professions. Advocates of Health Equity for Minorities, which she launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, will perform community service, too.

Agyemang-Brantuo, a recipient of the Charles J. Hoff and Kennedy Merit Scholarships, also serves as a senator in student government and a student ambassador for the Kennedy College of Sciences. Even as a first-year student, she was looking for ways to help people, working with a DifferenceMaker team to address the stigma facing pregnant women who are addicted to opioids and remove some of the obstacles they face in accessing prenatal care.

For all of her work in the university and Lowell communities, she won the university's 2021 Martin Luther King Jr. Service Award. No one who knows her was surprised—except her.

"I just was shocked," she says. "I did not expect that."—KW



## WONDER KIN: ABBY '21 AND BEN '21 DREZEK

**W**hen the UMass Lowell women's soccer team was en route to Stony Brook, New York, for the semifinals of the America East conference tournament a couple years ago, defender Abby Drezek opened her laptop to watch her brother Ben compete for the River Hawks in that day's America East Cross Country Championships in Nashua, New Hampshire.

"I would always try to go to his big meets, but with both of us playing in the fall, sometimes our schedules overlapped," says Abby, who is older than Ben by one minute—and two minutes older than the youngest of the Drezek triplets, Jake, who is pursuing a pharmacy degree at the University of Rhode Island.

Their last couple of years may not have played out as planned, but Abby and Ben Drezek didn't just sit around relaxing.

Ben, who advanced to the 2019 NCAA Cross Country Championships his junior year, earned UML's David Boutin Award, given to the top male student-athlete who encompasses academic and athletic excellence, as well as leadership and community service. His 3.967 grade point average last year also earned him accolades as America East's best scholar-athlete for the cross country and outdoor track and field seasons.

"Academics have always come first for me. No matter where we travel for meets, I always have my homework and textbooks with me," says Ben, who, like his sister, was an exercise physiology major and will soon start in UML's Doctor of Physical therapy program. "Unfortunately, we're not going to be athletes forever, so we need strong academic success so we can have a future career and make a living for ourselves outside of sport."

Abby, meanwhile, was named a Presidential Scholar-Athlete by America East on the strength of her cumulative 3.968 GPA. She was also a finalist last spring for UML's Laurie A. Mann Award, the women's equivalent of the Boutin Award.

The schedule of a committed scholar-athlete can be dizzying, but the Drezeks added to theirs. In addition to each completing 12-week practicums over the past year (Abby at Unified Health and Performance in Lancaster, Massachusetts, and Ben at Athletic Evolution in Woburn, Massachusetts), they both made it a priority to give back to their communities.

As co-presidents of UML's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, they worked to leverage the voices of River Hawk student-athletes, spearheading such efforts as a get-out-the-vote campaign last fall, and Spread Respect and End Racism campaigns.

And as part of the conference's #BetterTo9ether initiative, Ben shared some of his own mental health struggles as a high school and college athlete in a piece for "America East Voices," a website featuring op-eds and columns written by conference athletes.

"It's a subject that's close to my heart, and now that I'm willing to speak up about it, I know I can help other athletes and other students," says Ben, who also serves as a big brother with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Massachusetts. "Being able to bring that awareness to campus is going to create a better student environment."

Paying it forward is a priority for both the Drezeks.

"UMass Lowell has really built me up and made me a better person," says Abby, whose goal is to work with special education students at the middle school level. "Being able to play Division I sports, to be part of such a good major, and to be involved with community service around campus has been awesome."—EB

## PRESERVER OF THE PAST: CHUMMENG SOUN '21

Chummeng Soun loves to dance, especially the traditional dances of his native Cambodia. But those dances are disappearing, along with the Apsara dance masters who once performed them. Soun is documenting their knowledge and movements on film before that link to Cambodian history and culture is lost.

"It's a race against time," says Soun, a junior who is pursuing a bachelor of liberal arts degree in Asian studies and digital media. "The master dancers were deliberately targeted by the Khmer Rouge in the 1970s. Only one in 10 survived."

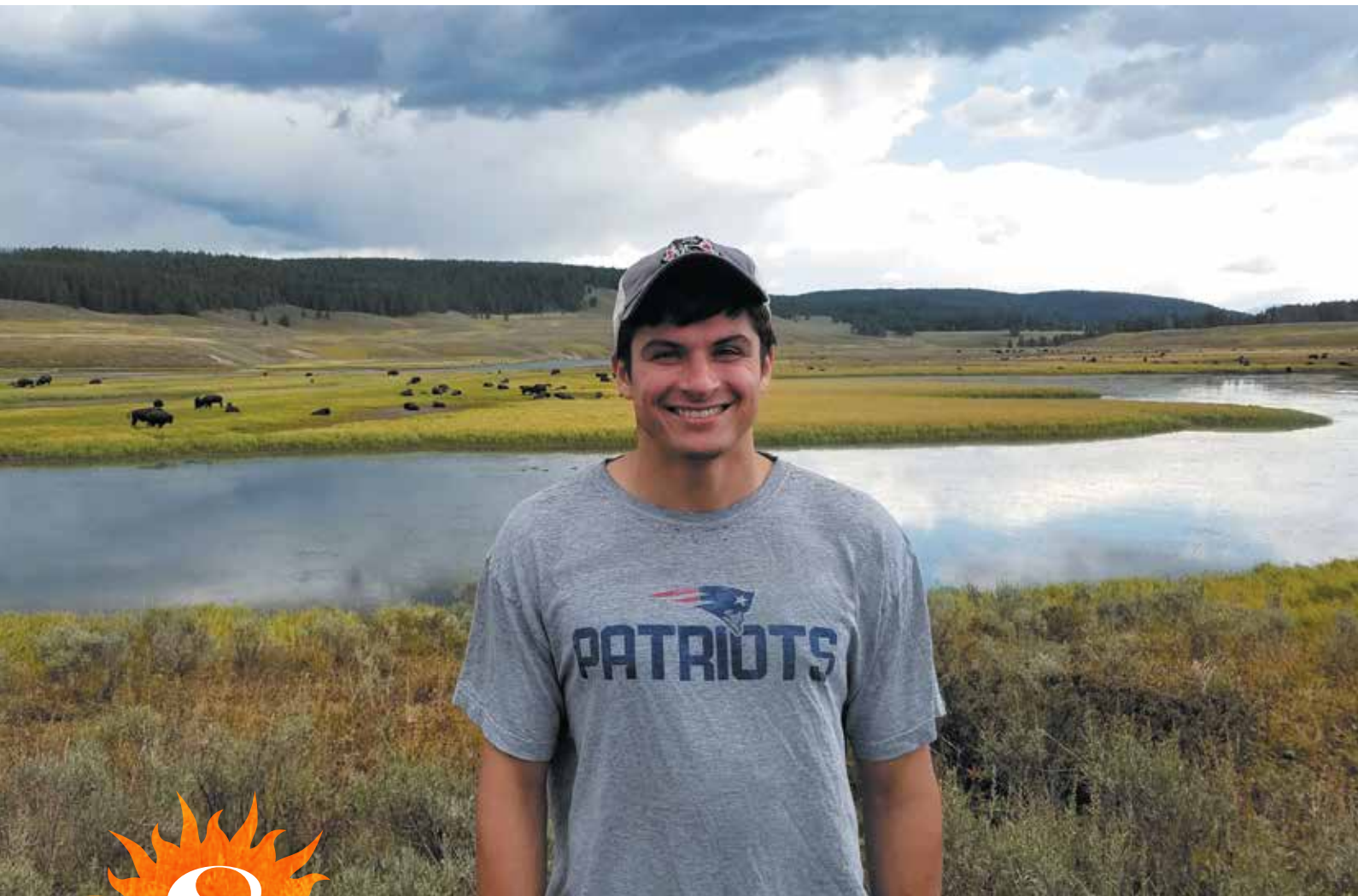
In 2017, Soun returned to Cambodia to film three master dancers who had performed in the royal palace. Two have since died.

"Those works are no longer performed in Cambodia, so it's important to me to capture them and re-create them," says Soun, who is a member of two local Cambodian dance groups, Flying Orb and Angkor Dance Troupe.

Soun, who was 9 years old when his family emigrated from Cambodia, also works with Cambodian-American teenagers at Teen Block, an afterschool program at the Lowell Community Health Center.

Through his documentary films—which have been supported by grants from several local foundations—Soun is striving to bridge the culture gap between older immigrants and younger Cambodian-Americans. The films will become part of UML's Southeast Asian Digital Archive, a National Endowment for the Humanities-funded project.—KW





**SOLAR SPECIALIST:  
BRENDON AYLAIAN '21**

**A**fter serving as an infantryman in the elite Army Rangers for four-and-a-half years, deploying to Afghanistan as a specialist in the process, Brendon Aylaian applied to UMass Lowell, which is ranked among U.S. News & World Report's "Best Colleges for Veterans."

A business management major, he's starting in the university's MBA program this summer—after a quick trip to Haiti, if all goes according to plan.

Aylaian was first introduced to the small country in an honors seminar taught by Physics Prof. Robert Giles: The Science of Energy—which led to a job as a research assistant with the Haiti Development Studies Center, which Giles founded and directs. Aylaian is doing market research, working with a nonprofit that wants to bring a small solar grid to Simone, a tiny village in southern Haiti.

"I'm looking at how much energy they're going to need, how big the households are, how much demand each household is going to have, and how they are going to be able to afford the maintenance," he says.

He's also researching everything from affordable smart meters for each household to demographic information about the village itself, which is so small that it doesn't appear on Google maps.

He hopes to learn more when he visits Haiti with Giles and other team members, who plan to help install some donated solar panels. In the meantime, he's happy to be working on a meaningful project that's also great experience for a possible career in the renewable energy industry.

"There are a lot of people in the world who don't have access to even the most basic levels of electricity, or if they do, it's extremely erratic," he says. "Being part of a team that is focused on delivering energy to people who don't have it just seems like a really good thing to do."—KW



**A VOICE FOR HER  
COMMUNITY:  
MAYARA REIS '22**

**M**ayara Reis used to scorch the curls of her hair to fit in.

The Black Latina, who was born in Brazil, wanted hair like the other kids around her. And growing up in North Andover, Massachusetts, she says, straight hair was the norm. "It was really hard growing up where I did and finding who I am as a person," Reis says. "I didn't see me."

These days, Reis, a junior criminal justice major and co-founder of Merrimack Valley Black and Brown Voices, is making sure the Black, Brown and Indigenous people in the region can connect, find support and celebrate being part of a community.

Reis and co-founders Bria Gadsden and Elizabeth Walther-Grant established the nonprofit last year in the wake of George Floyd's death. The women met in a North Andover town chatroom and discovered they shared a feeling of invisibility. They moved their discussion to Facebook, established a web site (<https://www.mvbbvoices.org/>) and started organizing while engaging the community.

In just a short time, the group made an impact in the Merrimack Valley. Last June, they helped organize a Black Lives Matter vigil and held a Juneteenth celebration. In August, they held a market in Andover dedicated to Black- and brown-owned businesses.

The group has raised tens of thousands of dollars and has given computers to school kids, Thanksgiving meals to families and holiday gifts to those in need. More advocacy and outreach are planned.

Reis attended Salem State University before transferring to UML. When she got here, she remembers thinking, "This is so diverse. So many people look like me. It let me start being who I am supposed to be. I haven't put heat in my hair in three years," she says.

Her long-term goal is to become a lawyer to ease the road to citizenship for immigrant families like her own, who moved to the United States 20 years ago.—DP

## THE PLASTICS POLICE: GREG REIMONN '23

Greg Reimonn applied to the plastics engineering program because he wanted to find solutions to one of the world's thorniest environmental challenges: throwaway plastics. "There are a lot of benefits to plastics, but they also do a lot of environmental damage, and this is an opportunity to do something about that," he says.

Shortly after arriving on campus, he read a study by Danish researchers on microplastic particles in the world's oceans, caused by the breakdown of consumer plastics into tiny pieces. He read more about their effects on marine life and how they end up in the human food chain.

Microplastics have been well-studied in oceans, but they originate on land, so Reimonn figured he would test river water for microplastics from common sources, like single-use water bottles, to learn more about where and how they start to break down.

"The research is moving inland, because you can't filter the whole ocean for plastic—and we want to know where it comes from," he says. "The closer to the ocean the plastic is, the more expensive it is to get it out of the ecosystem."

He wrote up a proposal for a research project, and found an advisor, Asst. Prof. of Plastics Engineering Wan-Ting Chen. Then he applied for, and was awarded, a \$1,200 Honors College fellowship.

Reimonn and Chen collected and analyzed water samples along the Parker River in Newburyport, Massachusetts, as it transitions from freshwater to a coastal estuary—piggybacking on mercury pollution research being carried out by Prof. Daniel Obrist, chair of the Department of Environmental, Earth and Atmospheric Sciences.

Their work was published in the *Journal of Renewable Materials*, and the project was chosen as the recipient of an Independent University Alumni Association of Lowell grant to research the surface properties of microplastics in the environment.

"It's rare for a freshman to get opportunities like this," says Reimonn, who is continuing his work this summer. "The faculty here are very open to working with undergraduates." —KW



## THE FAMILY NURSE: NANCY PIN '22

Nancy Pin's mother, who survived the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia and went on to become a midwife there, inspired her daughter to go into nursing. "After living through that genocide as a child, with so much death around her, she wanted to help people," says Pin, who now wants to do the same.

Pin says she chose UML's nursing program after a tour that included the nursing simulation labs. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, those labs became a vital resource for her and the other junior nursing majors earning their clinical hours. Most in-person sites were closed to the students—until Lowell General Hospital opened a mass vaccination clinic.

Pin, who was one of more than 100 Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences students who signed up to volunteer at the site, became part of a team running a vaccination station. She says she went as often as her schedule allowed, thrilled to work with real patients.

"We had given intramuscular deltoid shots in simulation, but this was the first time we'd given it to a real person," she says. "What made it less nerve-wracking was the patients. They were so nice, so friendly, and just really excited to get their shots."

Outside of academics, Pin is an avid volleyball player, and part of UML's women's intramural team. She also plays and coaches younger children with the Boston Hurricanes, a nonprofit that offers volleyball and basketball programs for Asian Americans in the Boston area. The Hurricanes are part of a loose network of Pan-Asian American volleyball organizations based in Chinatowns across the U.S. and Canada. Once a year, they all come together for a tournament.

"Its purpose is to provide people of Asian ethnicity with a community where they can have common ground and share life-long connections," she says. "I especially find that this community is good to fall back on now, when there are so many hate crimes against Asian Americans."

Ultimately, Pin—who was accepted into UML's family nurse practitioner master's degree program, New England's oldest—hopes to work in a community like Lowell with a large Southeast Asian population. While she doesn't speak Khmer fluently, she understands it.

"I would love to be able to help with people like Cambodians, because I understand their struggles. I'd like to help them with navigating through life, to give them the resources to help them reach their potential through prevention, patient education and early intervention," she says. "If I can help prevent hospitalizations and catch things early in life, that can help the community." —KW

## BREAKER OF BARRIERS: KELSEY GONZALEZ '21

Honors College student Kelsey Gonzalez struggled to find the right major as a first-year, first-generation college student. She started out in biology, and then tried a business class. After her freshman year, an advisor suggested she switch to public health.

But Gonzalez was unsure whether she'd made the right choice. So she decided she had to find something she was passionate about—and do it. That something was study abroad. She spent fall semester 2019 studying at Universidad Católica de Valencia in Spain. While there, she found two internships: one in a hospital maternity ward and the other as a volunteer health educator for an organization that helps refugees.

She came back to the U.S. with a new career goal: help prevent disease before it happens.

"I watched mothers give birth, assisted surgeons during procedures, administered shots and IVs, and educated patients," says Gonzalez, who just before graduation accepted a job at Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital as a project manager for infection control and clinical compliance. "I got to see the differences between the American health care system and the Spanish health care system. I 100% fell in love with the major."

She returned to UMass Lowell fired up to make a difference on campus, especially for first-generation students like herself. She found that the university already had a support organization, the River Hawk Scholars Academy—but it was only for first-year students.

So Gonzalez started a chapter of the national, first-generation honors society Alpha Alpha Alpha (Tri-Alpha), which would be open to upper-class students. More than 180 students applied to join, and in November 2020, Tri-Alpha inducted its first 129 members during First-Generation Student Week.

Gonzalez, the honor society's inaugural president, and the other students on the executive board immediately began planning a spring semester full of workshops for the society's members on résumé writing, graduate school and mental health.

During the pandemic, Gonzalez developed a mental health campaign aimed at students from immigrant families and their parents.

"A lot of immigrants don't believe that mental health is actually a thing, and students struggle with this because their parents don't understand," says Gonzalez, whose parents are from Guatemala. "This is something that I've struggled with myself." —KW





# RED HAT. AN OPEN SOURCE OF CAREER POSSIBILITIES

> BY ED BRENNEN

In August 2019, computer science major Michael Santana '20 was wrapping up his software engineering co-op position at Red Hat, a global open source enterprise software company with offices in nearby Westford, Massachusetts. Santana wasn't graduating until December of the following year, but his supervisor at Red Hat, electrical engineering alumnus Rashid Khan '96, wanted to make sure he had a job waiting for him at the company when he did.

"I went to our human resources and finance departments and said, 'We need to get our best offer in his hands before he finishes his co-op with us. I need to give him a contract for January 2021,'" Khan recalls.

Asked if he meant January 2020, Khan confirmed that he meant 2021.

"They said their systems don't go that far," says Khan, who nevertheless was able to make the offer—which Santana accepted. The Lowell native began working (remotely because of the pandemic) as a software engineer at Red Hat in January.

Khan, who has been with the company since 2012 and is currently director of networking platform, shares the anecdote to make a point: "That's the quality of students we are finding from UMass Lowell."

Founded in 1993 and based in Raleigh, North Carolina, Red Hat is a global leader in Linux, the free, open-source operating system that is used in everything from Teslas and Google Nest devices to smartphones and cloud computing infrastructure. The company has more than 13,000 employees in over 40 countries and was acquired by IBM in 2019 for \$34 billion.

So it's no surprise that Red Hat has long been a popular destination for job-seeking UML grads and experience-seeking students. But the university's relationship with the company has blossomed over the past four years—by way of the Czech Republic. Red Hat, which has a large R&D facility in the city of Brno, had been partnering with Prof. Martin Margala, chair of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE), on a student exchange program that provided UML students with internship and co-op opportunities while abroad.

"I realized we can replicate that here with UMass Lowell, as well," Khan says.

Denise Dumas, Red Hat's recently retired vice president of engineering diversity, began collaborating with Margala and Computer Science Prof. Fred Martin, associate dean for teaching, learning and undergraduate studies in the Kennedy College of Sciences. "Red Hatters," as the company's employees are called, started working with students on research projects and senior capstones. The company also formalized its co-op and internship programs with UML and became a "select" corporate partner.

"It was really important to have our relationship become much more intentional," says Dumas, who, along with Khan, is a member of the ECE Industry Advisory Board. "It was just silly that we were not taking advantage of all the talent we could find so close to home."

More important than geography is the rich racial, ethnic and

socio-economic diversity of UML students, not to mention the university's commitment to increasing the number of women in STEM fields.

"UMass Lowell is a great place for many kinds of diversity," Khan says. "We saw a real synergy there."

In 2018, Dumas worked with ECE Assoc. Dean Kavitha Chandra to sponsor the Research, Academics and Mentoring Pathways (RAMP) summer program, which is designed to boost enrollment and retention of those underrepresented in the engineering field. The following summer, Red Hat began sponsoring SoarCS, a summer program for incoming first-year computer science students that focuses on student success.

"I have always found the responsiveness, excitement and thoughtfulness that Red Hat professionals, particularly women leaders, have brought to the RAMP program to be highly motivating for our students," Chandra says.

Dumas says UMass Lowell students come in ready to roll up their sleeves and work hard.

"They're working their way through school and living at home if they have to," Dumas says. "It's such a great demographic because they're smart, they're motivated and they have a strong work ethic. And that's huge."

Computer science alumnus Fabrizio D'Angelo '20, a native of Lima, Peru, landed a remote software engineering internship with Red Hat last summer. Now a master's candidate in security studies (with a cybersecurity concentration), D'Angelo was hired as a software engineer at Red Hat last fall.

"I'm definitely very fortunate," says D'Angelo, who is working with UML students on Red Hat-sponsored projects at the university's Cyber Range, a center for cybersecurity education, research and workforce development. "It genuinely doesn't feel like work a lot of the time because I'm solving the kinds of problems that I would have been doing on my own."

Shortly after completing a master's degree in computer science, Surbhi Kanthed '19 began a software engineering internship at Red Hat last March that turned into a full-time position in December. Kanthed, who is originally from the town of Nagda in Madhya Pradesh, India, says working at Red Hat is her "dream job."

"When you work with an open-source software company, you're not just thinking about the company's profit. The goal is also technological innovation," she says. "The source code is out there for the benefit of the world. That is very rewarding to me."

Khan, who recently shared interview strategies with students in a virtual event hosted by the UML Career & Co-op Center, is impressed by how the university is preparing students for life after their degree. He wants Red Hat to keep building on its relationship with UML, with recent hires like D'Angelo, Kanthed and Santana championing the company to the next generation of River Hawks.

"It doesn't feel like a typical business hierarchy at Red Hat. You can approach anyone regardless of who they are," Santana says. "And you are learning new things about the technology every day, which I love."

UML

**"UMASS LOWELL IS A GREAT PLACE FOR MANY KINDS OF DIVERSITY, WE SAW A REAL SYNERGY THERE."**  
RASHID KHAN '96



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# ALUMNI LIFE



## GO, BARRY, GO!

After overcoming health obstacles, former UMass Lowell hockey player Barry Goers '10 fulfilled a longtime dream of taking on the "American Ninja Warrior" obstacle course. He recently made it through seven of the NBC-TV show's 10 obstacles in the semifinal round before his run was over. But he has no regrets.

"It's something I always wanted to do, and I had a great time," says Goers, a native of Ivyland, Penn., who earned a bachelor's degree in finance from the Manning School of Business. "As an athlete you think, 'I can do that.' But it's way harder than it looks."

Goers—who lives in the Denver area with his wife, Emily, and their young sons, Ryker and Orion—last year became a principal with a Colorado-based crypto group called Merkle Mountain. —EB

**BARBARA FLANAGAN**, who graduated with an education degree in 1960, could teach all of us a thing or two. When not spending time with her five sons, 13 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren, she loves to travel and volunteers for her church and the town of Tewksbury, Massachusetts. A member of two choruses, she's sung with The Silvertones, a 19-piece big swing band, for 20 years.

**'58 Patricia O'Brien** was honored at the Teacher Appreciation Event during a River Hawks hockey game in 2020.



**'59 Walter Dawson** joined the law firm of Maine Cernota & Rardin as a patent attorney, of counsel.

**'60 Jane Bartlett White** taught music for grades K-12 in a gifted and talented program. She is a retired assistant elementary principal. [1]

**'61 Paul Bolduc** wrote memoirs about growing up in Lowell's Franco-American ghetto during 1939 to 1961, with a special focus on his undergraduate years at Lowell Technological Institute, where he became fascinated with physics and math. His time at LTI was followed by a Ph.D. program at Penn State. After a career as a research physicist working at several national laboratories and the Max Planck Institute near Munich, he is a fan of all sciences. [2]

**'63 Roger Paradis** published the book "Creating Your Personal Journey" as a guide for young adults and those still searching for their life purpose.



**'71 Edward Maher** retired in 2020 from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health as an adjunct faculty member.

**Robert Moran** retired in 2009, after over 30 years at GE Plastics and two years at SABIC Innovative Plastics. He now works at a golf course and enjoys golf, skiing, travel, gardening and craft beer.



**'73 Anthony Caputo** says he is refusing to retire, but attempting to slow down his workload by spending more time with his grandchildren, fishing, boating and driving his Classic MG.



**Richard Hibbard** returned to ABB Inc. in 2012 after a 10-year semi-retirement. He was able to travel around the world many times and visited 32 countries.



**'74 Florence Calore '74, '78** retired in fall 2017 after more than 40 years in nursing as an RN and as a gerontological NP. She was employed as a GNP at the former Urban Medical Group in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts; East Boston Neighborhood Health Center PACE program; and most recently at UnitedHealthcare Senior Care Options as health services director. She now spends most time with her husband, family and friends enjoying the White Mountains, hiking, kayaking and volunteering as Council on Aging member in Wakefield, at the Wakefield Food Pantry, and as a nursing home ombudsman at two area nursing facilities.

Continued



1. JANE BARTLETT WHITE
2. PAUL BOLDUC
3. ROBERT BOEHM



**Paul Bolduc Accepts Fellowship**

LOWELL — Paul E. Bolduc, son of Mrs. Clara Bolduc, and the late Alexander J. Bolduc, 778 Lowell street, has accepted an assistant fellowship to study for his master's degree in physics and math, at Penn State college. He is a graduate of St. Joseph's high school and Lowell Technological Institute. From which he communicated with Boston. At Penn State, he is secretary of the Physics and Math society, and a member of the Newman and German clubs.



> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2006

**Kenneth Tucceri** is a Massachusetts National Guardsman and Army veteran. Currently deployed overseas in the Middle East with the military, Tucceri in his spare time is fundraising to help construct a kindergarten building at the school he taught at from 2017- 2019 while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Kingdom of Lesotho (shown in photo). Tucceri taught English and a health-based curriculum at the small rural school in the Maloti Mountains of southern Africa called Makoko Primary School. He plans to return later this year to help build the school. To contribute, visit <https://givebutter.com/1DJPe>.



**'75** Brian Phillips was a research chemist at Merck and Co. for over 30 years and is now also retired from Ursinus College, where he was a chemistry lab manager. He and his wife, Joanne, are traveling, attending local events and enjoying their free time in southeast Pennsylvania.

**'76** After earning an M.S. at UMass Lowell, Edward Yang worked for Wang Lab for 14 years, at EDS Dallas for 10 years and received an executive MBA from Pepperdine University in California. He worked for ING Baring Private Equity as operating partner, and was president of U.S. operations of the Beijing-based iSoftStone Inc. He wrote a book focused on teaching westerners Asian culture called "Confucius Says There Are No Fortune Cookies in China." He is vice chairman of the Yunnan Project Hope, which builds elementary schools for minority tribal children near the border of China and Tibet.



Joanne Yestramski traveled to São Paulo and Argentina in February 2020 for a UMass Lowell reunion. She saw amazing landmarks in Argentina with husband Charles B. Yestramski '76, Darlene K. Steffen '76 and Kenneth Steffen. She and Charles had dinner with Jan R. Jarne '67, Felix P. Kam '06, Renato A. Martins Mondino '16 at the famous Figueira Rubayat located in Jardim Paulista, São Paulo, while they reminisced about their time at Lowell Tech and UMass Lowell.



Continued



> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 1978

## Embracing the Legacy

U Mass President Marty Meehan '78 received the Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Corps' Embracing the Legacy award during the agency's annual Embracing the Legacy celebration in May.

Meehan, who was honored for his commitment to young people and education and for the many contributions he has made throughout his public career, says receiving this award was a poignant moment.

"I remember watching President Kennedy's press conferences as a kid, which instilled in me a passion for public policy and politics," he says. "I just became very engaged with his great message of hope."

Meehan, who named his eldest son Robert Francis Meehan, says he was honored to serve in Congress with the late Sen. Edward M. Kennedy and with Robert F. Kennedy's eldest son, the former U.S. Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy II. Creating better futures for young people are themes that flow through Meehan's career.

"Like Bobby Kennedy, I believe individuals should be able to rise as high as their ambitions will take them," says Meehan. "We share a belief that where you come from should not dictate where you will go and a belief that we have a responsibility to create pathways of opportunities for students of all backgrounds." [UML](https://www.uml.edu/homecoming)

CLASS REUNION

In 2021, we will be celebrating alumni with class years ending in 6 and 1—from 5th year reunions to 45! [www.alumni.uml.edu/homecoming](https://www.alumni.uml.edu/homecoming).

CLASSES 2016-1976  
SAVE THE DATE:  
OCT. 16

# SlimFast

BY ED BRENNEN

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 1983

## 'It's important to give back to how I got here'

SLIMFAST PRESIDENT DOUG READER '83 IS FEELING THANKFUL

Each morning at 4 a.m., as some classmates were probably just drifting off to sleep, Doug Reader '83 was beginning his four-hour shift stocking grocery store shelves at Purity Supreme. A commuter student from Bedford, Massachusetts, Reader then drove to Lowell for a full day of classes and homework.

But after two years of this routine, Reader was ready to call it quits—on school.

"I told my mom I was dropping out of college to become a grocery store manager. I didn't think school was for me," recalls Reader, whose mom begged him to finish his business degree.

"Thank God I did," says Reader, who went on to a successful career in corporate finance, including nearly 17 years at

Coca-Cola. Today, he's president of SlimFast, the \$400 million weight management brand based in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

"I'm extremely thankful. Sometimes I pinch myself and say, 'How did all this happen?'" Reader says on video chat from his home

office in Florida, where he's been working throughout the pandemic.

He and his wife, Michelle, who got married two weeks after his UML Commencement and have three children, started the Reader Family Endowed Scholarship for Manning School of Business students in 2016. After an initial \$25,000 gift, they made an additional \$75,000 commitment last year. The UMass system then matched 50% of that donation through its Endowment Match Program

"One of the reasons I wanted to add to the endowment was hearing how the pandemic was affecting

the school," says Reader, a member of the Manning School Advisory Board.

Another reason was his own good fortune. In 2018, Reader was "generously compensated" when SlimFast was acquired by global nutrition group Glanbia for \$350 million. After contributing \$325,000 to his church's building fund, Reader called up his alma mater.

"I feel it's important to give back to how I got here, and I would never have that money if I didn't go to Lowell," he says.

Reader gives back in other ways, too. He has spoken to several business classes ("My utopia would be to work for five more years and then become a professor"). He's also leading an effort to create a formal mentoring program in the Manning School.

"I've never had a mentor my whole life. Boy, do I think that's important, no matter how old you are," he says.

Reader gets back to campus twice a year for advisory board meetings. He marvels at the leadership of Chancellor Jacquie Moloney ("It's great that the school has someone like her at the helm") and Manning School Dean Sandra Richtermeyer.

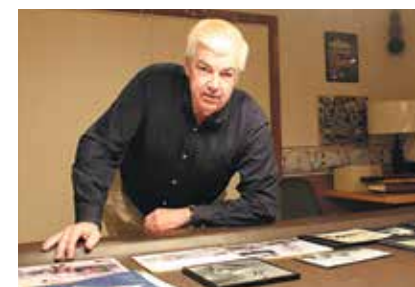
"The school feels so much more energized than it did when I was there," he says.

As for his work at SlimFast, Reader says the company enjoyed two years of "explosive growth" following the acquisition deal—although business has gotten "a little soft" during the pandemic.

With many gaining the "COVID 15" during the pandemic, Reader expects a bump in business as people head back to the office. "We'll go put on dress pants, and everyone is going to need to lose weight," he says.



**'77** Kevin Driscoll is an accomplished musical ventriloquist, performing for both children and adult audiences. He is also a jazz musician, playing at events around Boston. His company is [DriscollProductions.com](https://www.driscollproductions.com).



John Manning has been named commodore of the Lowell Motor Boat Club. John joined the boat club during his student days studying civil engineering. As commodore, John will oversee finances, maintaining the boat house and recruiting members to the club.

Brian Rist, founder and executive chairman of Storm Smart, was at the Lee County Honors, an annual donor appreciation event for Lee County's leading philanthropist and humanitarians for his significant contribution to improving the lives of residents who live and work in Lee County, Florida. As one of the county's most generous philanthropists, he supports Good Wheels, Uncommon Friends Foundation, Horizon Council Foundation, Collier-Lee Honor Flight—just to name a few.



**'78** Karen Devereaux Melillo, UMass Lowell professor emerita of nursing, received the 2020 Living Legends in Massachusetts Nursing Award from the American Nurses Association Massachusetts.



Continued



> CLOSE-UP ACROSS THE DECADES

## UML'S COVID HEROES WEAR LAB COATS, NOT CAPES

When life as we know it slammed to a halt last March because of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, UMass Lowell alumni swung into action. Here's a look at some of their efforts over the past year, from developing vaccines to creating reliable testing



As president and CEO of the medical device company ExThera Medical Corp., **Bob Ward '71, '12 (H)**, shown at right with his wife, Gail, invented the Seraph Microbind Affinity Blood Filter, or Seraph 100, to remove pathogens, toxins and other disease-causing contaminants from blood—similar to dialysis.

When the pandemic hit, ExThera was granted emergency use authorization by the FDA to treat critically ill COVID-19 patients with Seraph 100. Last fall, a U.S. Department of Defense-funded trial of 150 patients showed that Seraph 100 increased chances of survival by stabilizing blood pressure and decreasing inflammatory biomarkers that correlate with poor patient outcomes, in part by reducing coronavirus concentration in the bloodstream.

"There is currently no other blood-purification therapy known to bind and remove the SARS-CoV-2 virus/RNA while also improving the patient's vital signs," says Ward, a chemical engineering alum. —EA

>>>

### FROM TESTING TO TREATMENT: ALUMNI ARE SAVING LIVES

<<<

**Gregory Chiklis '92**, CEO and chief scientific officer of biotech company MRN Diagnostics in Franklin, Massachusetts, has focused all of his efforts on COVID-related work for the past year. "We pivoted the whole company," says Chiklis, who earned a Ph.D. in biochemistry from UML.

Just weeks into the pandemic, MRN joined forces with Texas-based Chembio Diagnostics on a rapid antibody test that received emergency FDA approval last April.

In addition to working with nearly 20 different companies to develop other COVID diagnostics, MRN operates one of the country's busiest collection sites for convalescent plasma (the plasma of people who have recovered from COVID-19), which has antibodies that may help critically ill COVID patients fight the virus. MRN also monitors COVID-19 testing in commercial labs to ensure the accuracy of results.

"I have never seen the scientific community so collaborative," Chiklis says. "From the CDC on down the line, everyone has been amazing." —DP



>>>

Best friends **Richard Giadone '15** (above, right) and **Taylor Matte '15, '17** (above, left) went from high school classmates in Dracut, Massachusetts, to undergraduate biology majors in the Kennedy College of Sciences, to coworkers on a research team at Boston University's Center for Regenerative Medicine, where they helped develop a fast and accurate COVID-19 test.

Working around the clock for a week last March, their team won emergency approval from the FDA for a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test that can produce results within 24 hours.

"The state of testing was a nightmare," recalls Matte, who joined the BU research team in 2017 after Giadone told him about an opening. Matte is now a Ph.D. student at BU's School of Medicine. Giadone completed his Ph.D. in molecular and translational medicine at BU in 2020 and is now a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard. —DP



Christina Michel



Brian Madigan



Monique Yoakim-Turk



Peter Trearchis

### ALUMNI AT MODERNA AND PFIZER FEEL A 'REAL SENSE OF PURPOSE'



Nicholas Langberg

Among the UML alumni and student co-ops working at Moderna Therapeutics are **Christina Michel '17** (biology) and **Brian Madigan '19** (chemical engineering)—who were both hired last summer as manufacturing associates to work on the company's groundbreaking COVID-19 vaccine at its facility in Norwood, Massachusetts.

"Seeing all the people who have lost their lives to COVID, it gives me a real sense of purpose," says Michel, who makes lipid nanoparticles for the vaccine. "It's very fast paced and the hours are long, but then I turn on the TV and see all the vaccines being distributed and families being reunited, and it really brings so much joy to my day. It keeps me going."

Madigan, who helps formulate the active ingredients to make the final product, says it's exciting to apply his education to such a critical effort. "You kind of feel like you're saving the world," he says.

**Monique Yoakim-Turk '88, '90**, director of program and alliance management at Moderna, was recently honored by the Labenese government for her role in developing the vaccine. Yoakim-Turk, who hails from Beirut, earned bachelor's and master's degrees in biology at UML.

At Pfizer in Andover, Massachusetts, chemical engineering alumnus **Nicholas Langberg '20** is one of several former River Hawks who have played a role in the company's vaccine development. Hired last June as a validation engineering technician, Langberg verifies the cleanliness of processing equipment used in the COVID project.

"Because we have standard operating procedures that we need to follow, there isn't really room for an emotional connection to the work. But it's really neat," says Langberg, who worked part-time at Pfizer ever since his co-op there in fall 2017.

Chemical engineering alum **Peter Trearchis '13**, a senior process engineer at Pfizer, posted a selfie on LinkedIn after receiving the vaccine with a caption that read, "It is so surreal to have received the COVID-19 vaccine after having worked to help the manufacture of it for over eight months. Science will win and we will defeat this pandemic." —EB

BY EDWIN AGUIRRE

> CLOSE-UP CLASSES OF 1987 AND 2019

## Father-Son Alumni Beat the Sound of Silence

In the U.S., about 34 million people suffer from varying degrees of hearing loss, and about 10 million of them have to use hearing aids, according to Ketan Muni '87.

"Hearing loss is more common as we age, and it is accelerated by exposure to excessively loud sounds," says Muni, senior director of research and development at Earlens Corp., a privately held medical technology company based in Menlo Park, California.

He and his son, Ronak Muni '19, who works for Earlens as an R&D engineer and strategic marketing specialist, are part of the team that developed an innovative hearing device, which was recently recognized by Time magazine as one of the "Best Inventions of 2020."

"The Earlens device is the world's first and only custom implanted hearing solution designed to directly vibrate the eardrum," says Ketan.

Unlike most hearing aids that use an amplifier and speaker to boost sound, Earlens uses a tiny lens that sits on the eardrum. A microphone inside the device's over-the-ear processor picks up sounds, which are converted into vibrations that are transmitted to the eardrum.

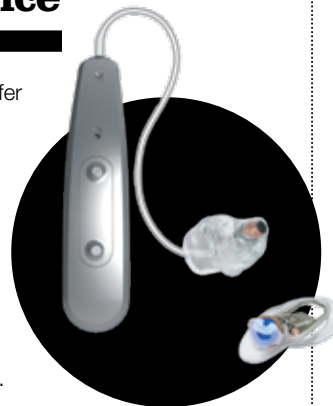
"This replicates natural hearing and allows for full frequency bandwidth with no distortion in quality," says Ketan. "Implanting the device doesn't require surgery or anesthesia—it can be done in a physician's office or hearing clinic."

Ketan earned a Ph.D. in polymer science/plastics engineering from UMass Lowell in 1987. He has more than 30 years of experience in the field of medical devices and has more than 100 patents.

Ronak, who earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from UML in 2019, followed his father's career in medical devices. He has been with Earlens for almost a year, helping to develop ear lenses from concept to commercialization and managing survey data of patients for investors.

Both father and son credit UMass Lowell for providing them with the self-confidence, practical knowledge and problem-solving skills needed to compete with peers.

"It also has a great alumni network that allows students to get internships and jobs at both startups and big companies," says Ronak. "The university provides a great head start and a quick transition to industry." [UML](http://UML)



**'79 Glen Tainter and Sandy Tainter** celebrated the 40th anniversaries of their graduation, marriage and move to Virginia. They met on the first day of freshman orientation, while waiting for photo IDs in Cumnock Hall. They are active volunteers in the community as they enjoy retirement. Glenn retired from Norfolk Naval Shipyard as a project superintendent. Sandy retired as accounting department manager.

**'84 Maureen Clayton** received a master's degree in social work from Salem State in 1991. She is employed at the Charlestowne Counseling Associates in Charleston, South Carolina.



**Constance (Atherson) Marcotte '84 and William Marcotte '85** celebrated 35 years of marriage on Sept. 7, 2020. They relocated to Dracut, Massachusetts, from Scituate, Massachusetts.

**'85 James Stenberg,** principal broadcast radio-frequency engineer for American Tower Corp., received the 2020 National Association of Broadcaster Television Engineering Award.



**Elena Yee** was part of a National Public Radio story about how people are coping during COVID-19 and social distancing.



**'86 Thomas Sousa** teaches business at Chelmsford High School and coaches football at Groton-Dunstable High School. For the fourth year in a row, he partnered with UMass Lowell to bring 1,000 high school students and teachers to campus for the regional DECA competition. DECA is an international organization that prepares high school and college students for business careers through conferences and case-study competitions.

**'87 Anthony Frasco** was named vice president of corporate sales & marketing for Quality Beverage's three divisions in Auburn, Chicopee and Taunton, Massachusetts. He will oversee the company's statewide sales force and all marketing activities while remaining as general manager of the Chicopee Division, where he will continue to manage day-to-day activities.

**'88 Burt Tilley** was promoted to professor in the Department of Mathematical Sciences at Worcester Polytechnic Institute.



**Kimberly Yap** published two children's books under the pen name Kim Ann: "Ruby the Rainbow Witch: A Picture-Perfect Rainbow Day" and "Ruby the Rainbow Witch: The Lost Swirly-Whirly Wand."



**'89 Morgan Molloy** joined Akouos, a precision genetic medicine company developing potential gene therapies to restore and preserve hearing, as the company's chief corporate development officer. He has more than 25 years of commercial and operational leadership experience in the biopharmaceutical industry.

### CLASS REUNION

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**'92 Noel Donnelly** joined EIP Pharma as CFO. He was formerly with Shire, acquired by Takeda Pharmaceuticals, where he held positions in finance and research and development.

**Brenda Bond-Fortier '92, '95** published her book "Organizational Change in an Urban Police Department" based on a research conducted over a four-year period. It details how the mid-sized city police agency in Lowell, Massachusetts, helped to change public safety and community relationships.

**John Hardy** launched a mentoring service for virtual assistants called John Hardy Business Services. He was awarded the Best of Taunton business award for the business services category.



**Charles "Gus" Potter '92, '00** is a certified health physicist at Sandia National Labs. He was elected president of the American Academy of Health Physics, an organization that supports certified health physicists and the profession's certification process. Gus previously served as the organization's parliamentarian for three years, and as president, he plans to update and streamline the profession's recertification process.



**'93 Chris Messina** joined Transamerica as director of client engagement. He has worked in financial services for over 25 years.

**Susan Mullaney '93, '15** was elected to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing as a practice representative on the Board of Directors.



**Terri Pastori**, co-managing partner at New Hampshire law firm Pastori | Krans, was named Best Lawyers' Concord Employment Law—Individuals "Lawyer of the Year" for 2021 and Employment Law—Management "Lawyer of the Year" in 2020. She was also selected for inclusion in the 27th edition of "The Best Lawyers in America" for her work in three areas: employment law—management; employment law—individuals; and labor & employment litigation. She was selected to the 2020 New England Super Lawyers list, to which only 5% of New England lawyers are named. She was also reappointed to the adjunct faculty at the University of New Hampshire School of Law, where she taught employment law during the spring 2021 semester with attorney Lauren Irwin of Upton & Hatfield.

Continued



BY ED BRENNEN

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 1985

## Making Small Businesses Strong



**Rene Haley**, the new president and CEO of the Greater Haverhill (Massachusetts) Chamber of Commerce, has spent nearly her entire career as an executive at two of the world's biggest and most recognizable companies: Exxon Mobil and Starbucks.

Not bad for someone who struggled as a business major at UMass Lowell, only to regroup and earn a degree in English literature.

"I wasn't one who always knew exactly what I wanted to be when I grew up," the Salem, New Hampshire, native admits. "I had general interests in business, but academically my first couple of years ... I think I was really enjoying the campus and having a lot of fun."

In 2019, Haley left her role as interim regional vice president of Starbucks. Last year, she began volunteering with a group called Small Business Strong, a private-public effort to help minority-owned and women-owned small businesses navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Through that volunteer work, she learned of the opportunity at the Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce.

"I really enjoy helping these small businesses, so I thought this would be another opportunity to support them," says Haley, whose new job also reconnects her with her alma mater: The chamber's office is in the Harbor Place building, which is also home to UML's Haverhill satellite campus and Haverhill Innovation Hub. [UML](http://UML)



**'94 Meikle Paschal** published his memoir "The Black Buddhist, a Spiritual Journey," which details his formative life in inner city of Boston. The story covers development from a struggling young person with dreams for a life of physical and inner peace to one of high achievement and a spiritual coming of age. His second book, "Kidnapped: The Saga of Juan Sebastian DeCruz," a creative non-fiction work, features years of genealogical research into his sixth-generation grandfather's kidnapping, at 8 years old, from a Portuguese wharf in the 1800s by a New England sea captain.



**'95 Norma Murphy '94, '95** published her first novel titled "A Better Life." The basis of the story, centered around a troubled woman and the little girl she abducted on a hot summer day, came to her in a dream.



**David Paterson** recently built and opened a professional recording studio, KickFlip Studios in Nashua, New Hampshire



**'96 Lory Grenier '96, '98** celebrated her 15-year work anniversary in February 2020 as a clinic manager for Northeast Rehab.



**'98 Richard Juknavorian** was appointed chief product officer for HealthcareSource, a leading provider of talent management solutions for the health care industry.

**'99 Lino Covarrubias** was named CEO of Jewish Family Services of Metrowest. A former officer in the U.S. Navy, he began working as the COO for JFS in 2008, after completing over 20 years of active service in the Navy. He took the helm of the organization in January 2020.



BY ED BRENNEN

> CLOSE-UP CLASSES 1985 AND 1990

## When a Deadly Insurrection Happens at the Workplace

For mechanical engineering alumni Mark Reed '90 and William O'Donnell '85, the deadly insurrection at the U.S. Capitol building on Jan. 6 hit close to home.

They both work for the Architect of the Capitol (AOC), the federal agency that preserves landmarks and grounds in Washington, D.C. Reed is superintendent of the U.S. Capitol, while O'Donnell is chief administrative officer for the AOC. (Neither were allowed to talk about the events of Jan. 6.)

Reed, who is from Lunenburg, Massachusetts, joined the AOC in 2004 as a fire protection engineer. He became superintendent of the Capitol in 2016, managing a staff of around 225 that maintains the iconic domed building and adjacent Capitol Visitor Center.

O'Donnell joined the AOC in 2019, the same year he returned to campus to be inducted into the UMass Lowell

Military Alumni Veterans Hall of Fame. A native of Barre, Massachusetts, O'Donnell met his wife (and fellow mechanical engineering alum) Darlene O'Donnell '85 at UML.

"The university gave me the ability to think critically, to really analyze a problem, create solutions and do it as a member of a team," says O'Donnell, who spent nine years in uniform with the Navy, applying his mechanical engineering know-how to construction projects before branching out into business management. He served briefly as a director at the U.S. Department of Defense's Defense Threat Reduction Agency before returning to the Navy as assistant for administration.

O'Donnell, who was working remotely from home on Jan. 6, bore witness to another dark day in U.S. history: He was in the Pentagon on 9/11, working as director of facilities and support services for the Navy. [UML](#)



Mark Reed '90



William O'Donnell '85

"The university gave me the ability to think critically, to really analyze a problem, create solutions and do it as a member of a team."

— WILLIAM O'DONNELL '85, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER FOR THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

**Juanita Fischer** retired from Ventana Medical Systems (a Roche company) as an engineering project manager in software development in 2018. She currently resides in Oro Valley, Arizona, where she spends quality time with her husband and enjoys golfing.

**John Rousseau** was the head engineer for MasksOn.org, in addition to being vice president of technical operations at PTC/Onshape. MasksOn repurposed full-face snorkel masks to be used as PPE for clinicians. They use volunteer design, engineering and testing teams to develop adapters from the masks to hospital airway filters. All masks were donated to hospitals and other institutions that need help.

**Tanya Rule** continued her education and received a master's of science degree in physician assistant studies at Northeastern University. She has worked as a physician assistant at a family practice in Derry, New Hampshire, for the past 15+ years. She has also been selected and appointed by the New Hampshire governor to sit on the New Hampshire Board of Medicine's Medical Review Subcommittee.



**Mark Messina** is the chief operating officer for Beijing-based GeekPlus Robotics. He is bringing AI-powered robotic solutions to the North American market and currently has offices in Hong Kong and San Diego, California.

**'01 Tara Hamilton-Fay** received the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning award from the University of Scranton, where she is a full-time faculty member. The award is given to faculty who strive for excellence in teaching, make extraordinary efforts to enhance student learning, and who practice teaching as a form of scholarship.



**'02 Nicole Sauk '02, '07** was promoted to chief financial officer at Ametros. She most recently served as the senior vice president of finance and operations.



**'04 Michael Boudreau** published a memoir entitled "The Last Ride in to Readville." Set in Boston, it tells the story of a dysfunctional family and the long lingering effects on eight children.



**'05 Irene Weeks** joined Nashoba Valley Medical Center's senior leadership team as the hospital's new vice president of nursing. She will oversee all areas of inpatient and outpatient nursing as well as various hospital clinics. A resident of Leominster, Irene has worked at Nashoba Valley Medical Center for the past 10 years.



**'06 John Brown** was promoted to clinical associate professor of education at the College of Education at UML in 2017.



**Heather Makrez Allen '06, '08, '21** received a doctor of philosophy from the College of Education (Leadership in Education). She works at the university as executive director of alumni and donor relations.



**'07 Birendra K. Gurung '07, '09** is a new shareholder at Nitsch Engineering. He is a member of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and has over 14 years of experience in the transportation engineering field, with an emphasis on performing traffic and parking studies, design, cost estimates, design scheduling, construction administration and construction document plans for a wide range of projects.



> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2006

## All Signs Point Home

Among the blizzard of maps, documents, three-ring binders and historic photos in the office of Lowell's Department of Public Works commissioner Christine (Curley) Clancy '06 is a UMass Lowell street sign, the kind with an arrow pointing visitors toward campus.

Clancy doesn't need directions, of course. The Georgetown, Mass., native spent two years at UML completing her bachelor's degree in civil and environmental engineering after transferring from the University of Illinois, where she found the program's focus too narrow and the class sizes too big.

After graduating from UML, Clancy joined Kleinfelder/SEA Consultants and began working toward her professional engineer certification. Meanwhile, she earned a master's degree in civil engineering (with a construction management focus) from Northeastern University. She worked at Kleinfelder in Boston for nearly nine years before switching to the municipal side of the profession and becoming Lowell's city engineer.

In that role, and then as interim DPW Commissioner, Clancy worked on several important city infrastructure projects. She is responsible for projects on streets, bridges and sidewalks throughout the city—including those on the campus of her alma mater.

"I love what I do because it's cool to see how you can help upgrade infrastructure and really transform areas of the city," she says. "There's a very tangible element to it." [UML](#)



BY ED BRENNEN

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2012

## 'Making the Planet a Better Place'

**B**orn and raised in West Virginia coal country, Katherine Moses '12 witnessed the fossil fuel industry's impact not just on the environmental landscape, but also on the people who worked in the mines.

"The coal companies were not always necessarily good stewards. They'd file for bankruptcy and workers would lose pensions," Moses says. "West Virginia is a beautiful place with hard-working people. So I've always had this drive to make a difference in the natural environment—to find ways that people can have good lives and good jobs while making the planet a better place."

She's doing so through her work as energy manager for the City of Lowell, a position she landed in 2014—shortly after earning a master's degree in energy engineering (with a solar concentration) from UML's Francis College of Engineering.

In her role, Moses oversees the city's energy budgets and renewable energy portfolio. She's also responsible for energy-efficiency projects like the installation of LED street lights and gas boiler monitoring systems in public buildings, as well as an incentive program with National Grid.

She is also part of the Lowell Green Community Partnership, a collaboration between UML and the city that funds sustainability projects, and she recently spoke to students in a climate change class about their projects to reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

"One of the things I've always appreciated about UMass Lowell is how it applies what you learn in a real-world project," she says. "It makes me proud to be an alum."

She's also proud to call herself a resident of Lowell.

"One of the first things I saw downtown was someone riding a unicycle to an organic cafe. I just thought, 'This is an interesting place to be,'" she says. "As I got to know Lowell better through various festivals and the different arts scenes, and through all the interesting things going on at the university, I realized I have a heart for this city."

**'08 Pawan Pingle '08, '11** worked as a faculty member at UMass Lowell for many years and now is an independent consultant for Noise & Vibrations in his home country of India.

**Jeovanny Rodriguez** is a Lawrence, Massachusetts, District D city councilor, and vice president of the council.



**'09 Matthew Beaudoin '09, '16** was promoted to assistant vice president—regional branch manager at Jeanne D'Arc Credit Union. In his new position he will oversee the Chelmsford, Westford and Tyngsboro Massachusetts, branch locations, as well as the one in Nashua, New Hampshire.



**Arthur Schofield '09, '12** was promoted by the Hopkinton Police Department to the rank of sergeant.



**Natalie Sokhom** always wanted to stay close to Lowell and help the people of the community. She opened Talenique Staffing, and 99% of the people she helps staff in the workforce are from Lowell.

**'10 Craig Heatherly** was named director of basketball operations for the University of Cincinnati Bearcats, who play in the American Athletic Conference. He was a former assistant coach for University of North Dakota.

**John Martin '10, '13** was awarded Teacher of the Year in 2019-2020 for his school's district and a semi-finalist and member of the Connecticut State Teacher of the Year cohort. He is currently an English Teacher at Wethersfield High School.

**Michael B. Neagle**, a history and civics teacher at Pyne Arts Magnet School in Lowell, was named the 2019 Massachusetts History Teacher of the Year. He is working toward a graduate certificate in Holocaust and genocide studies at Salem State University. He has been teaching for 12 years, and previously served in the Marine Corps.

Continued

> CLOSE-UP CLASSES OF 2008 AND 2011



**Craig J. Daigle '08 and Samuel J. Dyas '11** skied the Indian Peaks Wilderness about an hour from Denver, Colorado, in August 2020.



> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2002

**A**fter graduating with a degree in fine arts, **Pat Piasecki '02** launched a commercial photography business. "I've been fortunate to tell stories photographically of the New England way of life, like being on a fishing boat in the middle of the Atlantic last winter," he says. "I even got to photograph UMass President Marty Meehan a couple years back, which was a full circle moment for me. Lowell sure taught me a lot about seeing the world." Piasecki and his wife, Sara, have a 10-year-old daughter, Lyla, and live in Woburn.

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2006

## At the Intersection of School and Work

**I**t's a challenge that has befuddled campus planners for years: How to make the half-mile stretch of Pawtucket Street that connects South Campus to the rest of the university more inviting for pedestrians and bicyclists.

A UMass Lowell grad is hard at work on a solution.

**Jenna Howard '19**, now a part-time transportation engineering graduate student, also works full time as a transportation infrastructure designer for a local civil engineering firm called The Engineering Corp. Last year, the university hired the firm to design the "Pawtucket Greenway," thanks to a \$57,000 MassTrails grant from the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Howard, who joined the company after completing her bachelor's degree in civil engineering, is leading the project design.

"It's so exciting to be a part of this," the Newton, Massachusetts, native says. "UMass Lowell has empowered me with this education, and it's such an honor to be able to give back to the university in this way."





**'11 Michael Ferrari** is the AWS technical lead for Leidos. He got married in September 2018 and had his first child in October 2020.



**Kristen M. Tabacco** has been teaching in Lynn Public Schools for eight years and received the 2019 Teacher Award for Massachusetts History Day. She was nominated for the 2020 National Award for National History Day.



**'12 Diannely A. Antigua** is a recipient of the 2020 Whiting Award. The Whiting Foundation annually awards 10 emerging writers of nonfiction, fiction, poetry and drama with \$50,000 each. Diannely is a Dominican American poet. Her debut collection, "Ugly Music" was the winner of the Pamet River Prize. She is the recipient of fellowships from CantoMundo, Community of Writers and the Fine Arts Work Center Summer Program. Her work has been nominated for both the Pushcart Prize and Best of the Net. [1]

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2015

## Pitching up

**G**eoff DeGroot '15 was named director of minor league operations for the Miami Marlins, which he joined in 2018. He was previously manager of player development and scouting. As a River Hawk baseball player from 2012 to 2015, DeGroot cycled through three positions as the team went from Division II to Division I. He had arrived at Lowell a shortstop, transitioned to a center fielder and graduated a pitcher. After graduating, he signed a minor league deal with the Yankees, pitching his way up from rookie ball to the Double-A Trenton Thunder. While his pro career was off to a nice start, DeGroot didn't kid himself about making it to the majors. "Once I started playing professional baseball and saw what kind of talent there is, I quickly realized that I could have more of an impact on an organization in the front office, knowing my own personal skill set," says DeGroot, who earned a degree in business administration from the Manning School of Business.



> CLOSE-UP CLASSES OF 2016 AND 2017

## A BIG DEAL

**I**nvisaWear, maker of smart safety accessories that emerged from the DifferenceMaker program, finished 2020 with a new partnership that is expanding the young company's reach. In December, invisaWear and ADT, the nationally known home security company, announced they are collaborating to bring advanced mobile safety and monitoring features to invisaWear's wearable personal safety accessories.



InvisaWear began its journey in 2016, when CEO **Rajia Abdelaziz '16** and CTO **Ray Hamilton '17** pitched the concept at a DifferenceMaker Idea Challenge and won \$4,500 as Innovative Technology Solution. The idea was a unique take on personal safety: Buy the jewelry, download the free app, add five emergency contacts and pair it to Bluetooth. Danger? Fear? Just tap twice on the back of the jewelry to alert contacts of one's location. Now, under the new partnership, ADT will power invisaWear's companion app, allowing users who feel unsafe to discreetly connect by voice or text with ADT. ADT will notify the customer's emergency contacts, alert authorities and share their location, as well as other information to help emergency responders find them. InvisaWear has been on a roll. The Lowell-based company also took home the Smart Living category honors at November's New England Innovation Awards. [UML](#)

Continued

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2016

## #GOALS



Former UMass Lowell ice hockey goaltender and current backstop for the Winnipeg Jets **Connor Hellebuyck** was named 2020's Vezina Trophy winner, awarded annually to the best goaltender in the league, as selected by the NHL's 31 general managers. Hellebuyck is the first goalie in the history of the Jets' organization to earn the honor. "Seems like just yesterday that he was lifting the Hockey East Championship trophies during his years at UMass Lowell," says UML Head Coach Norm Bazin. "What he has accomplished since that time is remarkable. We are very proud of him."

**'14 Michelle E. Coppi** has been recognized as Resident Services Professional of the Year by the New England Affordable Housing Management Association. Michelle is the resident services coordinator at Mazur Park Apartments and Rogers Hall in Lowell, where she works with area provider agencies to coordinate wellness, educational, cultural and other enrichment programs to enhance the overall quality of life for residents.



**Joseph D. Hickey** has been with the Massachusetts State Police for 15 years as a trooper. He is a member of Special Emergency Response Team and Troop A Incident Management Assistance Team. Joseph is married with four young children.

**Davis Nguyen** and his fiancée opened up a new Vietnamese noodle restaurant in the Merrimack Valley.

**John T. Keough** was named Firefighter of the Year in Reading, Massachusetts. John has been a firefighter for a decade, and a Reading firefighter for eight years. He was recently promoted to a lieutenant role.



**'15 Ethan T. Brown '15, '16** was promoted to partner at Cox Capital. A member of the Cox Capital team since 2015, Ethan assists in equity research, portfolio management and trading.

**Kevin M. Desjardins '15 and Ally L. Hill-Whilton '16**, both engineering alumni, married in June 2019 at the Eastern Point Yacht Club in Gloucester, Massachusetts, with many fellow UML alumni joining in the festivities. [2]

**Erik M. Grau '15, '16** is a visual art teacher and president of Piano Craft Gallery. He is the youngest teacher to receive Educator of the Year by the City of Boston, Boston Public Schools.

**Erinn M. McLaughlin** teaches math and science to fifth graders at the Stoklosa Middle School in Lowell. She was awarded a Project Lead the Way Rookie of the Year award by Mass STEM Hub, a program of the One8 Foundation. [3]



1. DIANNELLY A. ANTIGUA '12
2. KEVIN M. DESJARDINS '15 AND ALLY L. HILL-WHILTON '16
3. ERINN M. MCLAUGHLIN '15

> CLOSE-UP CLASSES OF 2016 AND 2018

# GO GIRLS

TRIO OF ALUMNAE WORK TO PROVIDE—AND BE—THE ROLE MODELS THEY LACKED

When Nana Younge '18, Sashoy Bailey '16 and Matilda Matovu '16 began studying at UMass Lowell, they started to notice that few people in their chosen fields—engineering and medicine—looked like them.

That lack of role models and mentors hit Younge hard when she did a professional co-op in plastics engineering at a partner company, midway through her sophomore year. “Mostly it was OK, but I was the only woman, the only Black person in a lot of the rooms and meetings I was in, and that bothered me,” she says.

Back in school the following fall, she questioned whether she wanted to go into a field that lacked diversity. When an advisor suggested that Younge take more business classes—she was already pursuing a business minor—she signed up for Introduction to Entrepreneurship. The course was a revelation.

“We got to build a fake business and present it to the class,” she says. “In the process of doing that, I realized I was learning so many other skills that were not just business skills, but life skills.”

It also gave her an idea: to teach some of those life and leadership skills to Black teenage girls before they start college, using the principles of social entrepreneurship. Younge switched her major to business, with a concentration in entrepreneurship, and applied to the EforAll Lowell business accelerator for summer 2015. During the 12-week program, she began developing her plan for a nonprofit, Get Girls Going.

That fall, she enlisted five friends, including Matovu and Bailey, to continue developing Get Girls Going through UML's DifferenceMaker entrepreneurship program. They won the DifferenceMaker Creative Venture Competition and an award of \$5,000. The award and a Chancellor's 2020 Grant for \$1,000 helped them launch Get Girls Going as a Saturday morning program for at-risk students from Lowell High School and Greater Lowell Technical High School in fall 2016. They taught the girls how to overcome barriers to their goals through education—and they enlisted their college friends to act as mentors, giving the college students leadership experience.

“We identified a need for a program that we would want when we were in high school, that we would want when we were in college, and we're giving that back, hopefully, to this next generation of young Black women,” says Matovu, who majored in biology and political science.

After two years, with Younge about to graduate and the other two in graduate school, the trio took a year off to figure out how to carry the program forward. They decided to focus on partnerships with schools and universities in and around Boston.



BY KATHARINE WEBSTER

“There was just all-around support for Get Girls Going on campus at UMass Lowell. . . . It showed us that this partnership model works.”

—Nana Younge '18

Get Girls Going now runs an after-school program for sixth grade girls in the Boston public schools, and has held workshops at MIT and other schools. They based their partnership model on their experiences at UMass Lowell.

“There was just all-around support for Get Girls Going on campus at UMass Lowell. We had access to mentors there all the time, which is really great. We also had access to space in University Crossing and other resources,” Younge says. “That showed us that this partnership model works.”

### SCALING UP

This summer, Younge's dream of running a full entrepreneurship program for young women will become a reality. Get Girls Going will select 10 female high school juniors and seniors to attend a four-week, virtual entrepreneurship camp that will help them develop their ideas for businesses or nonprofits. Thanks to a partnership with the City of Boston's SuccessLink program, the high school students will be paid. Get Girls Going will also pay college students to serve as mentors.

“We want girls to connect the things that they care about with social issues that they see,” Younge says. “They can focus on the program and not have to worry about money.”

As the three alumnae have evolved Get Girls Going, their own goals have evolved, too. Younge

graduated from Merrimack University with a master's degree in education in May and is now running Get Girls Going full time. The other two hope to join her eventually.

In the meantime, Matovu, who had originally planned on earning a master's degree in public health and then going to medical school, changed course. She's working full time at Harvard University and earning a master's degree in international relations through Harvard's extension school.

Bailey, who changed her major at UML from chemical engineering to chemistry and then earned a master's degree in education at Boston University, is now a middle school science teacher and the instructional coach for other science teachers at Chestnut Talented and Gifted Middle School in Springfield, Massachusetts. She hopes to introduce Get Girls Going there, too.

“I work with these kinds of young girls every day, and it's very evident that there's a need, and it's clear where we're lacking as a society,” she says.

Now, all three have great role models—starting with each other.

“For me, it's Nana and Sashoy,” Matovu says. “They really motivate me to be the role model that I want my little sister to see, that I want other young women to see in our community spaces.”

UML

Nana Younge '18, Sashoy Bailey '16 and Matilda Matovu '16



'15 Fang Zhang '15, '20 earned a doctor of philosophy in biochemistry in 2020 from the Kennedy College of Sciences and is now a postdoctoral fellow in continuous bioprocess development at UML.

Gabriel Laguerre '15, '18 is the founder and CEO of Opogy, which he launched after obtaining a master of entrepreneurship degree from the Manning School of Business.



Kimberly A. Robertson married Neil Robertson in March 2019.



'16 Alethea C. Dys passed the July 2019 Uniform Bar Exam and was sworn in as a newly admitted member of the Massachusetts Bar in November 2019.



'17 Celin A. Carlo-Gonzalez graduated from Stanford Law School in 2020 and is a clerk for a federal district court judge.



Thomas A. Roy is “world ready” in the MBA Program in the Manning School of Business and has gained many leadership experiences while working at BAE Systems.

'18 Maya Cheriyan was named an associate at the firm of Eckert Seamans, in the Philadelphia office. She will focus her practice on intellectual property matters, including preparation and prosecution of patent applications in the electrical and electromechanical arts.

'19 Johnathan R. Berdos competed at the World Icosathlon in Helsinki, Finland, and won a silver medal as the only representative for the United States. He was cheered on by many including wife, Amy A. Berdos '09 and Andrew R. Berdos '86. He works at National Grid in the gas engineering department.



Rafaela Gonzalez created her own line of beauty products, Gloryscent, a skincare brand catering to women of color. Composed of natural and organic ingredients, Gloryscent's cruelty-free products are designed to combat the effects of the sun and air pollution, and manufactured in small batches to keep them fresh.



Victoria A. Paradis moved to Hamden, Connecticut, to start her nursing career at Yale New Haven Hospital as a registered nurse.

Continued

CLASS REUNION

In 2021, we will be celebrating alumni with class years ending in 6 and 1—from 5th year reunions to 45!

[www.alumni.uml.edu/homecoming](http://www.alumni.uml.edu/homecoming)

CLASSES 2016-1976  
SAVE THE DATE:  
**OCT. 16**

**'19 Joseph C. Proia** was sworn in as a Framingham, Massachusetts police officer. Prior to joining the Framingham Police Department, he worked for G4S Secure Solutions as security officer at the MetroWest Medical Center.



**Amy Rivers** is the author of three novels, as well as numerous short stories and personal essays. She is the director of Northern Colorado Writers. Her novel "All the Broken People" was selected as the Colorado Author Project winner in the adult fiction category.



**'20 Nicholas T. Pelletier** is a full-time firefighter/AEMT and licensed Massachusetts Real Estate Agent and investor. He proposed to his fiancée in December 2020 and is planning a wedding for June 2021.



**Michael S. Venetti** started a job as a foreign affairs officer with State Department in the Office of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement for Africa and the Middle East.



BY KATHARINE WEBSTER

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2017

## Degree Leads to Dream Job as Conduit Between Indonesia and UNICEF

In late summer 2015, Suparlan Lingga '17 got on an airplane and left Indonesia to study public health in the United States, leaving behind his wife and two young daughters, then ages 1 and 6.

As a PRESTASI Scholar (USAID's Program to Extend Scholarships and Training to Achieve Sustainable Impacts), he already had considerable experience working for three nongovernmental organizations that help marginalized children and families by improving access to health care, education and sustainable employment.

Within three years of earning his master's degree in public health at UMass Lowell, he was named program manager for the partnership between the Indonesian government and UNICEF. He loves his job and his mission of working to improve child and maternal health, education and safety.

"The goal is to ensure that the young generation, our children, will grow up in good health and have a quality education," he says.

And UMass Lowell taught him, in ways both practical and policy-oriented, how to do that, he says.

Before applying for the PRESTASI from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Lingga did extensive online research and learned that people all over the world came to Massachusetts to study because of its reputation as a center for excellence in both health care and education. When USAID suggested four schools for him to apply to, he was excited to see UMass Lowell on the list.

"The place I most wanted to be was Massachusetts," he says. "And I got a letter of acceptance from UMass Lowell, and I was so happy!"

Although his undergraduate degree was in public health with a focus on epidemiology, he chose health care management as his graduate concentration. His

coursework introduced him to principles of management, budgeting and health care economics, along with public health practices and policy considerations.

His second-year practicum at Lowell Community Health Center immersed him in how to provide quality health care to a diverse population by emphasizing prevention and holistic care.

"I could see, practically, how U.S. health care for children and mothers works, and I could bring some of that back to Indonesia, like electronic medical records," he says. "Lowell Community Health Center provides good quality health services even for people with low income, and I think this is very useful in my country."

His first job after graduation was as a lecturer at the University of North Sumatra, where he'd gone to college himself. Next, he worked for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as a health manager for a year.

Then, he landed his dream job: coordinating with government agencies to implement Indonesia's five-year plan with UNICEF. The goals for the 2020 to 2024 plan include improving primary health care and education for low-income children and families in rural and urban areas, as well as protecting children from mental, physical and sexual abuse in conflict zones, schools and juvenile detention centers.

Lingga hopes that someday he can return to UMass Lowell, this time with his wife and daughters, to show them the place on the opposite side of the globe where he studied during the cold winters—and found such a warm welcome.

"I had a great experience at UMass Lowell with the knowledge and experience of the students, teachers and staff," he says. "I miss UMass Lowell."

UML

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 2020

## Ed.D. Grad Wins Award for Doctoral Research

When Massachusetts updated its science curriculum in 2016, middle school science teacher **Karin Loach '11, '20** began hearing that elementary school teachers felt unprepared to teach it. She wondered why, and how that affected their students.



"Elementary school teachers would say they weren't comfortable teaching science, and then students would come to the middle school, and I wondered if they were prepared, because there are so many different science education models at the elementary school level," says Loach, who teaches 8th grade in Auburn, Massachusetts. "I wanted to know what was going on and if the teachers' confidence and effectiveness in science education could be improved."

So last year, as a third-year student in the Doctor of Education program's STEM concentration, she decided to turn those questions into her thesis research. She presented her preliminary conclusions—that teachers generally lacked confidence in their ability to teach science effectively—at the 2020 conference of the Eastern Educational Research Association last February, in Florida.

After graduating last May, Loach—who also earned a master of education in curriculum and instruction degree at UML—learned that she had won the 2020 EERA Best Graduate Paper award. —KW



> CLOSE-UP CLASSES OF 2019 AND 2020

## SUNNY WITH A CHANCE

Three months after graduating, **Lena Dziechowski '19, '20** landed a television job as a freelance meteorologist at Western Mass News in Springfield, Massachusetts. That quickly turned into a full-time position. She is now the station's weekend meteorologist and is a multimedia journalist during the week. Life in the television studio is a perfect fit for her. "From the second I stepped into the newsroom, the energy was undeniable," she says. "I loved it. I knew that this is where I want to be."



From the second I stepped into the newsroom, the energy was undeniable. I loved it. I knew that this is where I want to be.

—Lena Dziechowski '19, '20



**Alumni Events**

**Nine Graduates Honored With University Alumni Awards**

In December, UMass Lowell recognized nine distinguished graduates with this year's University Alumni Awards in a virtual ceremony. The honorees represent each of UMass Lowell's schools and colleges, plus a recent graduate who is already having a positive impact on their profession and community. Since the awards were established in 1998, more than 150 people have been recognized for noteworthy contributions to the arts, business, education, engineering, health care, science, the university and the community.

The 2020 honorees are:

**Joseph Blonski '78 and Debbie Hauser '79, '80 (Francis College of Engineering):** Blonski, who earned a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering, is a senior principal engineer in design for manufacturing with L-3 Communications, Linkabit. Hauser, who is married to Blonski, earned bachelor's and master's degrees in plastics engineering at UML and is now the principal of Best Impressions. [1]

**Fadwah '91 and Gregory Chiklis '92 (Kennedy College of Sciences):** Gregory Chiklis earned a doctoral degree in biochemistry at UMass Lowell and is the CEO of MRN Diagnostics, and serves on the Kennedy College of Sciences Advisory Board. Fadwah Chiklis earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry at UML and operates Comforts of Home Design. [2]



**David Laurello '81, '88 (Manning School of Business):** Laurello earned a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering at UMass Lowell before later returning to earn an MBA. He is the president, CEO and chairman of Stratus Technologies and serves on the Manning School of Business Advisory Board. [3]

**John Mello '97 (College of Fine Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences):** Mello earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy at the university and is now an attorney with a practice in Lowell. He serves on the advisory board of UMass Lowell's Saab Center for Portuguese Studies. [4]



**Patrese Pierson '05 (College of Education):** Pierson earned a master of education degree in educational administration at UMass Lowell and taught in the Lincoln Public Schools system. She serves on the advisory board of the College of Education. [5]

**Maura Walsh '80 (Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences):** Walsh earned a bachelor of science degree in human services administration at the university. She retired as president of HCA's Gulf Coast Division in Houston, Texas. She is co-chair of the advisory board of the Zuckerberg College of Health Sciences. [6]

**Kerry Weldon '15 (Young Alumni Award):** Weldon earned a bachelor of business administration degree at UMass Lowell's Manning School of Business. He is an assistant superintendent with Suffolk Construction and serves on the Athletics Advisory Board. He lives in Randolph. [7]



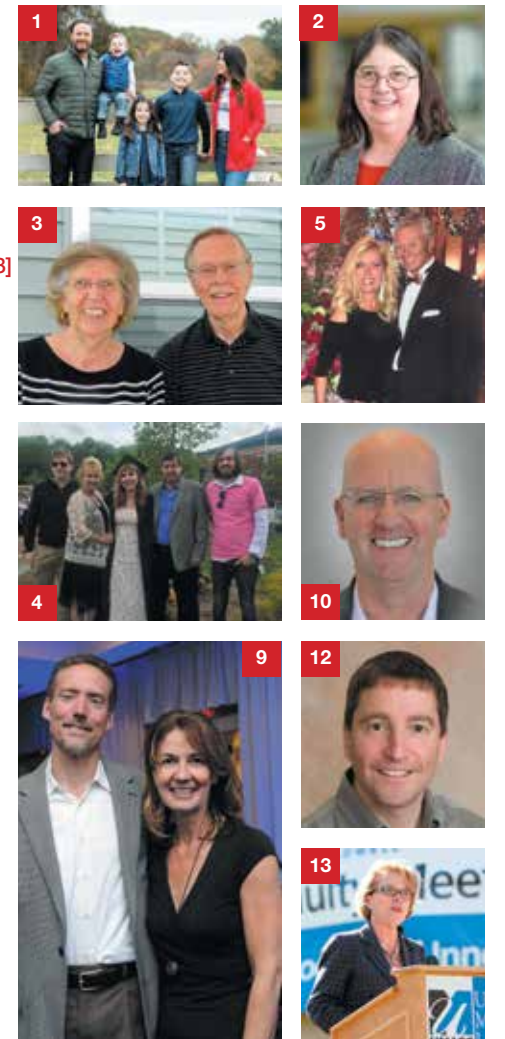
CELEBRATION of PHILANTHROPY

HONORING OUR MOST GENEROUS DONORS

**Lifetime Giving Societies Welcome New Members**

Throughout the years, UMass Lowell has been supported by generous individuals who created a legacy of accessible, high-quality education for our students. The university continues to rise in distinction and stature because of the gracious support of so many dedicated alumni and friends. In November 2020, the university recognized its newest lifetime benefactors during a virtual celebration:

- Bryce '04 and Mary Jo Anderson [1]
- Carol Barry '96 [2]
- Kenneth '71 and Louise Classon [3]
- Joe '77 and Ann Donahue [4]
- Michael '69 and Gayle Johnston [5]
- Ted Leonsis '01 (H) [6]
- Jack and Thérèse O'Connor [7]
- Christopher '88 and Natalie Olson '88 [8]
- Janis '92 and John Raquin [9]
- Doug '83 and Michelle Reader [10]
- Bhupen '92 and Ramika Shah [11]
- David Shulman '85, '87 [12]
- Niki Tsongas '98 (H) [13]



IN MEMORIAM

YEAR NAME

1934 Mary S. (Sullivan) Teague  
 1941 Yolanda E. (Zani) Collins  
 1941 Frank J. Symosek  
 1943 Marie F. (Pouliot) Dumont  
 1943 Richard H. Garnett  
 1943 Herbert A. Goldberg  
 1943 William W. Taylor  
 1943 Henry J. Zenorini  
 1944 Shirley E. (Brown) Bennett  
 1944 Helen M. O'Loughlin  
 1945 Mary F. Burke  
 1945 M. Louise (Roth) Randall  
 1946 Lucy L. (Valente) Davis  
 1946 Rose (Clemente) Demasi  
 1946 Eleanor M. (Duncan) Lloyd  
 1947 Florence L. Holton  
 1947 Leonard S. Lauten  
 1948 Alvin Rothman  
 1948 Gertrude Bailey  
 1949 Dorothy M. (Scalora) Albanese  
 1949 Mary S. (Corby) Bassett  
 1949 Mary A. (Slattery) Boland  
 1949 Patricia C. (Paquin) Drumme  
 1949 Sumner Shapiro  
 1949 Valerie M. (Maus) Sloan  
 1949 Charles R. Trommer  
 1950 Manuel D. Feldman  
 1950 June E. (Douglas) Nickless  
 1950 Edgar Rose  
 1950 Allan R. Wirth  
 1951 Nancy N. (Noble) Cook  
 1951 Leonard I. Gilman  
 1951 Jean M. Groves  
 1951 Arnold M. Horwitch  
 1951 Arthur P. Miller  
 1951 Mary L. (Lyons) Rock  
 1951 James A. Smith  
 1952 Joan N. (Kelley) Beumel  
 1952 Eleanor B. (Zoglio) Fulgione  
 1952 Mary M. (Beakey) Guziejka  
 1952 Virginia W. Jackson  
 1952 Parker W. Longbottom  
 1952 Thomas H. Teng  
 1953 Margaret J. (Knox) Carroll  
 1953 Joseph P. Flannery  
 1953 Joan M. Lacasse  
 1954 Leo Barish  
 1954 Edward L. Bonacci  
 1954 Howard C. Cobin  
 1954 Betty Z. (Zubick) Danis  
 1954 Robert M. Ellison  
 1954 Joan M. (Tassinari) Francis  
 1954 Thomas F. Garvey  
 1954 Armand L. Greenhall  
 1954 Rosemary F. (Liston) Janas  
 1954 Claire (Donahue) Lavalle  
 1954 Christine E. (Derby)

Marocco  
 1954 Evangeline (Karas) Relias  
 1954 Robert E. Swift  
 1955 Joan L. Cinq-Mars  
 1955 Dorothy C. (Cavoures) Downing  
 1955 Arlene F. (Creeden) Eldridge  
 1955 Maureen T. Mangiaglia  
 1955 Elizabeth A. (Barrett) Tully  
 1956 Richard B. Aldrich  
 1956 Normand B. Dufour  
 1956 Francis L. McKone  
 1956 Priscilla A. (Cheetham) Pare  
 1956 Eugene F. Welch  
 1957 Gail V. (Annan) Allaire  
 1957 Bertha A. (Sheehan) Casey  
 1957 Chris Chingros  
 1957 H. Kenneth Cohen  
 1957 Ernest E. Deveres  
 1957 Grace S. (Ataide) Hatem  
 1957 Beverly J. (Barsorian) Hedison  
 1957 Joseph W. Lahood  
 1957 Grace B. (Harrington) Landry  
 1958 Jo Ann M. (Moore) Elder  
 1958 David J. Fitzgerald  
 1958 Thomas E. Greene  
 1958 Anne M. (Miskell) Laforge  
 1958 Paula M. (Molloy) Petrone  
 1958 Philip J. Schlueter  
 1959 Elaine S. (Thompson) Jeleschiff  
 1959 Robert H. Leclair  
 1959 Loretta A. Platt  
 1959 Stanley E. Siedziewski  
 1959 Roseann E. (Donnelly) Stephens  
 1959 Deanna P. (Dias) Twarog  
 1960 Frances (Donahue) Brennan  
 1960 Robert F. Davis  
 1960 Constance C. Dublin  
 1960 June F. (Riley) Holleran  
 1960 Aram A. Jeknavorian  
 1960 Constance (Reynolds) McManmon  
 1960 Marie G. Seminatore  
 1960 Harold B. Tomkins  
 1961 Hubert F. Bonfilii  
 1961 Francis P. Delaney  
 1961 Robert A. Kiley  
 1961 Warren F. Manning  
 1961 Edward A. Russo  
 1961 Walter R. Sousa  
 1961 Edward J. Williamson  
 1962 Peter E. Dubey  
 1962 Francis Georges  
 1962 Marie A. Izz  
 1962 John P. Leonard  
 1962 Joel L. Newberg  
 1962 Virginia Ann (Carnevale) Sheehan  
 1962 Ann L. (Medelinskas) Sunderland  
 1963 Jacqueline Frost-Young  
 1963 Edward R. Kelley  
 1963 Ronald H. Lafond  
 1963 Margaret M. (Hennessey) Martin

1963 Marilyn J. Sheehy  
 1963 Joseph F. Zmuda  
 1964 John J. Blouin  
 1964 Richard E. DeFreitas  
 1964 Walter J. McHenry  
 1964 Judith A. (Zabierek) Sawicki  
 1964 A. Michael Schindler  
 1964 Edward P. Smith  
 1965 Carl M. Mendoza  
 1965 Robert F. Sacchetti  
 1965 Patrick J. Vail  
 1966 Bernard K. Ford  
 1966 Richard R. Lessard  
 1966 Peter J. Quirk  
 1967 Susan P. (Doyle) Ober  
 1967 Thomas H. Vanderspurt  
 1968 Daniel J. Bowes  
 1968 Charles C. Kourkoulakos  
 1968 Corrine T. Lapan McKenzie  
 1968 Donald J. LaValley  
 1968 Dianne G. (Foster) Sitro  
 1968 Donna R. Tennant  
 1969 Mary J. Creegan  
 1969 Richard A. Kenney  
 1969 Anne M. Ritchothe  
 1969 Adrith P. (Provencher) Sisson  
 1970 William J. Buckley  
 1970 Preston H. Butler  
 1970 Maureen E. Cobleigh  
 1970 John J. Fallon  
 1970 Michelle M. (Massicotte) Fitzpatrick  
 1970 William T. McWilliams  
 1970 Michael J. Nirsberger  
 1970 Dennis J. Sheehan  
 1971 Bruce W. Blaschke  
 1971 James A. Deignan  
 1971 Edwin J. Green  
 1971 Paul H. LaCroix  
 1971 Donald J. Laliberte  
 1971 Kathleen M. (Donovan) O'Connell  
 1971 Philip P. Pokladok  
 1971 Susan A. Reynolds-Phaneuf  
 1971 Corinne R. (Lafrenier) Spence  
 1971 Earscelle C. Wilkerson  
 1972 William Ewers  
 1973 Jeremi L. Chylinski  
 1973 Patrick M. Meyer  
 1973 Drusilla M. Reid  
 1973 Patricia A. Skane  
 1973 Terry Tgavalekos  
 1974 Gail K. (Keirstead) Ahearn  
 1974 Martin H. Beck  
 1974 Craig C. Groom  
 1974 William E. Lekas  
 1974 Kathleen B. (Gilday) Murphy  
 1974 Thomas J. O'Dou  
 1974 Michael T. Ryan  
 1974 Armand E. Swajian  
 1974 Gene D. Talford

1974 Donald A. Thibault  
 1974 Raymond G. Wallace  
 1974 Eileen M. Williamson  
 1975 Douglas Bliss  
 1975 Ronald W. Close  
 1975 Anne J. Clough  
 1975 Andrew E. Cornellier  
 1975 Steven B. Elman  
 1975 John W. Ford  
 1975 Stephen E. Girard  
 1975 Jack A. Glenn  
 1975 John J. Iannini  
 1975 Karen A. Kycia  
 1975 Rita M. (Wilson) Macomber  
 1975 Karla M. (Williamson) Rose  
 1975 James E. Roubian  
 1976 Margaret S. Botelho  
 1976 Henry J. Ditommaso  
 1976 John J. Squeglia  
 1976 Emile F. Steele  
 1977 Francis S. Farinoso  
 1977 Joel Gordon  
 1977 Ernest A. Leblanc  
 1977 Pauline (Toula) Sparages  
 1978 Calvin C. Chase  
 1978 George H. Gentie  
 1978 Kevin F. McCarthy  
 1978 Francis J. Mee  
 1978 Anthony C. Penta  
 1978 James P. Robitaille  
 1978 George D. Sutton  
 1978 Paul W. Tuminowski  
 1978 Harry S. Vassilakos  
 1978 Mark E. Wall  
 1978 Joyce M. Windhol  
 1979 George L. Jussaume  
 1979 Spencer Kostoulakos  
 1979 Lewis H. Long  
 1979 Mark E. Madden  
 1979 Arthur N. Olive  
 1980 Roland J. Blanchette  
 1980 Andrew R. Donahue  
 1980 Jay R. Forrest  
 1980 Kathleen A. (Counihan) Gram  
 1980 Gerard F. Lemire  
 1981 Paul J. Feeley  
 1981 Joyce R. Jekanoski  
 1981 James F. Michaud  
 1981 Catherine H. Morency  
 1982 R. Joan Dunlavy  
 1982 Richard A. Guilmette  
 1982 John W. Hodgkins  
 1982 John R. Naugler  
 1983 Christopher A. Ciarcia  
 1983 Timothy P. Fitzgerald  
 1984 Marie A. Catalano  
 1985 Scott L. Cowburn  
 1985 Jeffrey T. Haight  
 1985 Joyce A. (Kempton) Loughran  
 1985 Nicholas B. McCamy

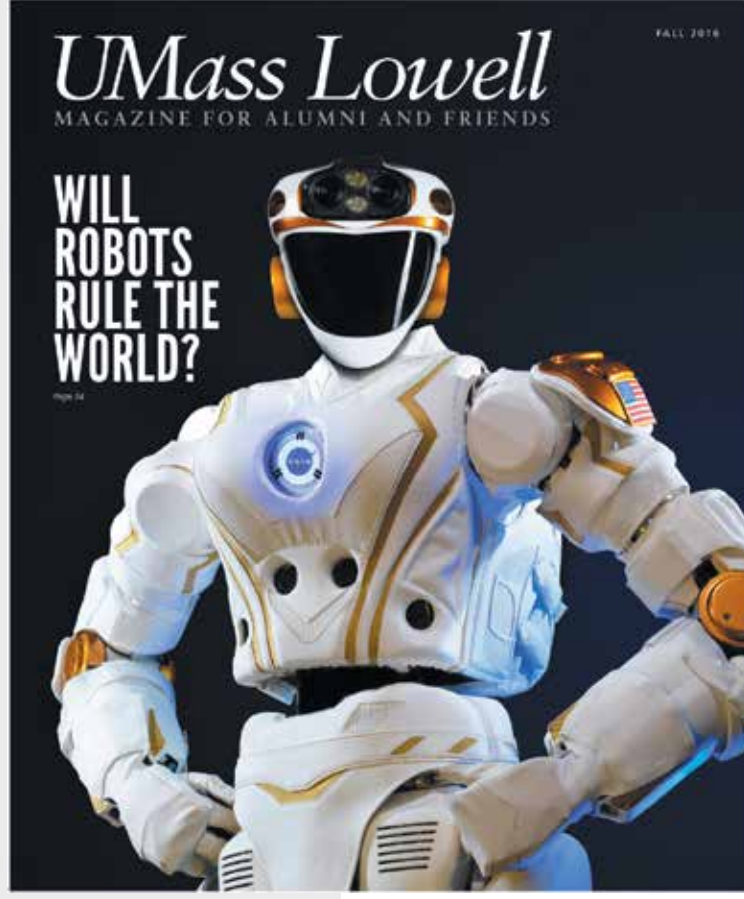
1986 Daniel J. Barrett  
 1986 Clare E. McNamara  
 1987 Penelope M. Arey  
 1987 Saeed Ataii  
 1987 Paul A. Davis  
 1987 Susan M. (Dunn) Raymond  
 1988 Phillip M. Delmolino  
 1988 John C. Higgins  
 1988 Sean P. Nagle  
 1988 Kathleen A. Tighe  
 1989 Aurelie T. (Blanchard) Connors  
 1989 Robert I. Lawson  
 1989 Sandra A. (Hebert) Majeski  
 1991 Diane F. Martin  
 1991 Charles F. Ravagni  
 1991 Roy A. Silman  
 1992 Donna M. (Jepson) Gates  
 1993 Judith Bergeson Buma  
 1994 Michael C. Kelly  
 1994 William R. Rousseau  
 1995 Brendan M. LeGros  
 1995 Gregory Wright  
 1996 Genevieve E. Brosnan  
 1997 Kanella A. Denoncourt  
 1997 Kathleen A. Nelson  
 1998 Stephen M. Botto  
 1998 Ruthann Demers  
 1998 Ryan D. Fortini  
 1999 David B. Cahill  
 2000 Michael Patrick Fitzmaurice  
 2000 Dhanuraj Shetty  
 2006 Jerramie M. Domish  
 2006 Jeffrey G. Palermo  
 2007 John Thiongo Thuo  
 2007 Victoria Deborah Zabierek  
 2008 Rosemary L. Vasquez  
 2009 John Wang  
 2012 Katelyn M. Biedron  
 2012 Janet Johnson  
 2012 Jordan Thomas Haberi  
 2013 Adam J. Beauvais  
 2013 Tanya Cameron  
 2013 Andrew Michael Casey  
 2014 Michael Paul Keefe  
 2017 Kevin Patrick McManimon  
 2017 Paul Gerry Sharpe

Leo A. Javits  
 Alan Kaplan  
 Jerome Lavine  
 Roman J. Leblanc  
 Joan Lewis  
 Patricia Martin  
 Francis Martin  
 Annette J. McDonough  
 Arlene A. McGroary  
 Linda McHale  
 Francine Miller  
 Theodore Namm  
 Eugene E. Niemi  
 Ronald W. Olive  
 Sandra F. Richardson  
 Charle Rupp  
 Joseph C. Salamone  
 Robert Schultz  
 Eric Sheldon  
 Ronald J. Stidsen  
 Paul Tracy  
 Martin Trust  
 Francis R. Walsh



REMEMBERING OUR DESIGNER

This issue is dedicated to our beloved colleague Paul Shilale, who designed this magazine from its earliest days (including all the covers shown below). He died in April after a long battle with cancer. In addition to collecting dozens of awards for his innovative work in these pages, Paul was an accomplished painter and member of the Pastel Society of America. A true Renaissance man, he was also skilled at photography, archery, competition shooting, fishing and distilling every episode of "The Bachelor" with his officemates. He leaves behind his wife of 38 years, Debra; his daughters, Courtney and Stephanie; son-in-law Brandon; two granddaughters, Grace and Abigail; a large extended family; and dozens of co-workers who sure do miss him. —SC



## Events Calendar

For more information, go to [alumni.uml.edu](http://alumni.uml.edu). We will be monitoring and adhering to all CDC and state guidelines regarding Covid-19 regulations.

### SEPTEMBER

#### 11TH ANNUAL PLASTICS ENGINEERING GOLF TOURNAMENT

Friday, Sept. 17, Noon

#### DISCUSSION WITH AWARD-WINNING POET SANDRA LIM

Thursday, Sept. 23, 4 p.m.  
Virtual Event

### OCTOBER

#### RIVER HAWK HOMECOMING "REUNITED IN BLUE"

Oct. 15-17

### FEBRUARY

#### NATIONAL SOCIETY OF BLACK ENGINEERS 40TH ANNIVERSARY AND ALUMNI REUNION

February 2022

### APRIL

#### UNIVERSITY ALUMNI AWARDS

Thursday, April 14, 2022

#### GEORGE DAVIS INVITATIONAL TRACK & FIELD MEET

Saturday, April 16, 2022, 10 a.m.

### MAY

#### CIVIL & ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Saturday, May 14, 2022

#### 50TH, 60TH AND GOLDEN ALUMNI REUNION

May 13 & 14, 2022

# WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

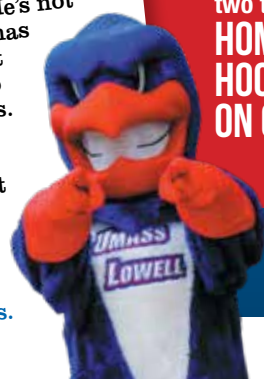
New job? Married? Published? Promoted? New accomplishments?

Alumni, send us your class notes and we will include your news and photos in an upcoming issue of the alumni magazine. [www.uml.edu/updateyourinfo](http://www.uml.edu/updateyourinfo)

### CLASS NOTES

> CLOSE-UP CLASS OF 1994

**ROWDY T. RIVER HAWK '94** continues to lead thousands of River Hawks—official and honorary—in cheering on teams and celebrating events. He's not a big talker, but Rowdy has let slip that he's happiest when bringing smiles to UML alumni and friends. He holds the record for most selfies with River Hawk fans. And he can't wait to see you this fall... check out all the events he'll be attending: [alumni.uml.edu/events](http://alumni.uml.edu/events).



Submit a class note by **SEPT. 1** for a chance to win two tickets to the **HOMECOMING HOCKEY GAME ON OCT. 16.**



## SEE YOU AT REUNION!

### 5th to 45th Reunions

CLASSES OF 2016, 2011, 2006, 2001, 1996, 1991, 1986, 1981, 1976

**SATURDAY OCT. 16, 2021**

Join us at Homecoming 2021, when we are all together again! Don't miss out on an opportunity to celebrate all you have accomplished since graduation.

[www.alumni.uml.edu/homecoming](http://www.alumni.uml.edu/homecoming)



### 50th, 60th and Golden Alumni Reunions

CLASSES OF 1972, 1962 AND GOLDEN ALUMNI (graduates of 1971 and prior)

**FRI./SAT. MAY 13 & 14, 2022**

Reunite with classmates, relive memories and see all the changes on campus.

[www.alumni.uml.edu/reunion2022](http://www.alumni.uml.edu/reunion2022)



In the decade that followed 2008, the university's graduating class more than doubled in size—and 2018 marked the last year that all students attended the same Commencement ceremony. On May 19 of that year, the Tsongas Center at UMass Lowell was as packed as it's ever been. Students, faculty, staff and guests filled the arena to capacity to watch as the university conferred degrees on a record 4,358 graduates from 36 states and 97 countries. The next year, UMass Lowell held three Commencement ceremonies for the first time in its history: one on Friday morning for Ph.D. and master's students and two on Saturday for undergraduate students.

# NOW...



**CLASS OF 2020!**  
We haven't forgotten about you. We're deep in the planning stages for a belated Commencement celebration to be held this fall. Stay tuned.

In 2021, the university wanted to give its 4,582 graduates the pomp and circumstance they deserved—while adhering to the safety measures required due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The answer? Seven small ceremonies held over three days. On Wednesday, May 12, recipients of doctoral degrees from all colleges (shown here)—few enough in number that they could remain physically distanced—attended an in-person ceremony. On Thursday and Friday, undergraduate and master's students took turns processing by college through the Tsongas Center to receive their diplomas and have photos taken with two invited guests. Online virtual components featured a range of notable participants, including honorary degree recipients Deepak Chopra, M.D., founder of The Chopra Foundation, and Ron Insana, CNBC senior analyst. Market Basket received the Chancellor's Medal for Public Service and Civic Engagement, and recently retired Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Larry Siegel received the Chancellor's Medal for Outstanding University Service.



*Learning with Purpose*

Office of Alumni Relations  
Charles J. Hoff Alumni Scholarship Center  
1 Perkins St.  
Lowell, MA 01854-2882

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## SLIP SLIDING AWAY...

As we look forward to **River Hawk Homecoming Oct. 15-17** (we can't wait to be together, in person!), we ask you to look back: What was your favorite campus festival or concert when you were a student? Share your memories at [magazine@uml.edu](mailto:magazine@uml.edu) by **Sept. 1**. You may just win a sweet bundle of UML swag.



*Reunited in Blue*