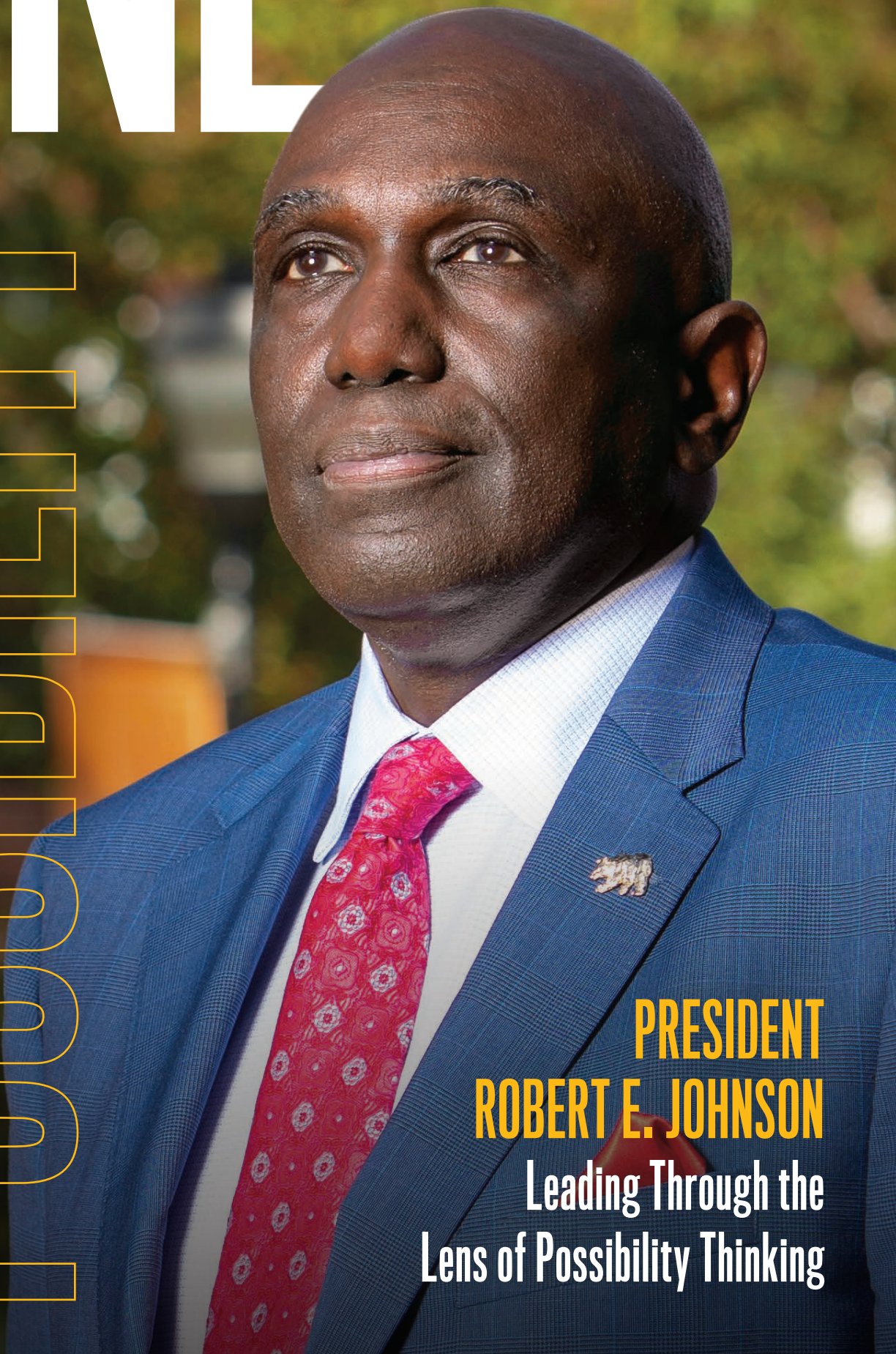


WNE

Magazine

SPRING 2021

POSSIBLY



**PRESIDENT
ROBERT E. JOHNSON**

Leading Through the
Lens of Possibility Thinking

IN A FALL UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Golden Bear Country

Was Buzzing with Activity

Of the roughly 3,000 colleges and universities tracked by the College Crisis Initiative, Western New England University was among just 27% of schools nationwide that resumed primarily 'in-person' teaching last fall. Thanks to careful planning and community cooperation, WNE avoided having to cancel or suspend the on-campus portion of the term; and avoided any major campus outbreaks of COVID-19.

Keeping our Golden Bears active and engaged was critical to helping them manage stress, connect with one another, and serve their communities. The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership, along with organizations in the School of Law and College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, got creative in offering a wide range of socially distanced and online programming.

"Don't Make Kathy Reid Mad" was one of scores of "insider" messages that used humor to remind students to follow COVID-19 safety protocols. Reid, a nurse practitioner who served as director of WNE Health Services for 32 years, retired in January after helping to lead the University's response to the challenges of COVID-19.

DON'T MAKE KATHY REID MAD!



Golden Bears mask up for the annual "Paint The Rock" tradition for new students.



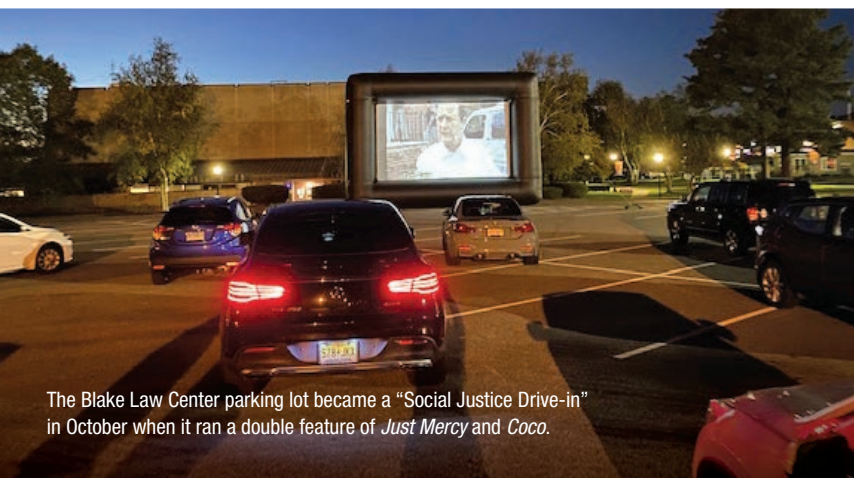
Pharmacy students and faculty took their volunteerism on the road with the Wellness on Wheels "WOW" inter-professional bus serving the medical needs of greater Springfield.



Students were given a surprise "No Snow, Snow Day" in October to relax and recharge along with Golden Bear mascot Spirit.



WARP, the gaming club, was among the 70+ clubs and organizations that recruited members at the Student Involvement Expo.



The Blake Law Center parking lot became a "Social Justice Drive-in" in October when it ran a double feature of *Just Mercy* and *Coco*.

IN THIS ISSUE

Spring 2021

4 PRESIDENT ROBERT E. JOHNSON TAPS THE POWER OF POSSIBILITY

With a new president, new decade, and new century, WNE unites to craft a shared ambition

10 CAMPAIGN FOR OUR SECOND CENTURY SETS THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS

Thanks to Alumni and Stakeholder Generosity, the \$35,000,000 Campaign Exceeds Goal

14 A TOP 2% SCIENTIST IN THE WORLD DR. JOHN PEZZUTO

Takes on Deanship of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

16 IN SUPPORT OF SMALL BUSINESSES

WNE Alumni Entrepreneurs Find Their Markets

20 STUDENTS STEP UP FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES

To Provide Hope During Pandemic

30 CLASS NOTES

What have your classmates been up to? Find out in Class Notes.

WNE

Magazine

WNE Magazine is published for alumni, parents, and friends of Western New England University.

PRESIDENT

Robert E. Johnson

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT

Beverly J. Dwight

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Bryan J. Gross

DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Katie DeBeer

EDITOR

Mary McLean Orszulak G'10

CONTRIBUTORS

Kate Burke

Judith Curran

Katie DeBeer

Alex Lyman '12/G'16

Mary McLean Orszulak G'10

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Spark451® Marketing Communications

Matthew Reilly

DIGITAL DESIGN

Shaun McGrady '02/G'09

Becky Turner '16/G'18

Matthew Reilly

Ed O'Connell

PRINTER

AM Lithography

PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHER

Matthew Reilly

EDITORIAL OFFICES

Magazine of Western New England University

Office of Alumni Relations

Western New England University

1215 Wilbraham Road

Springfield, MA 01119-2684

(413) 796-2240

alumwne@wne.edu

Address and email changes should be sent to the Office of Alumni Relations at alumwne@wne.edu.

Every effort has been made to contact copyright holders of any material reprinted in this magazine. Any omissions will be corrected in subsequent issues if notice is given to the Office of Alumni Relations, Western New England University. The University reserves the right to make editorial changes prior to publication.

Western New England University is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in education and employment. The University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, genetics or disability in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Assistant Vice President and Director of Human Resources, Western New England University, 1215 Wilbraham Road, Springfield, MA 01119-2684. Inquiries concerning the application of nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the Regional Director, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, J.W. McCormack.

BE MORE Inspired



College of Engineering Expands Your Graduate Program Offerings with New Master's and Doctoral Programs

WNE, a nationally ranked university in *U.S. News and World Report*, now offers you more opportunities to earn the credential you need to take your career to the next level in academia, research, or industry.

New programs for 2021

- PhD in Industrial Engineering
- PhD in Mechanical Engineering
- MS in Construction Management
- Acoustic Processing for Cell and Gene Therapy Concentration for the MS in Mechanical Engineering

Take the next step to BE MORE.

Contact Graduate Admissions at **800-325-1122 ext. 1517**, **413-782-1517**, or study@wne.edu; or visit wne.edu/grad.

WESTERN NEW ENGLAND | **WNE**
UNIVERSITY

Doctoral, Master's, and Certificate Programs

FORWARD!



I am honored to lead this storied institution at the dawn of its second century as the sixth president of Western New England University. Despite the trials and tribulations of this past year, we have emerged stronger, united in purpose and our concern for one another, and ready to become a model for what a 21st century new traditional university can and must become.

Since joining the Golden Bear community in August 2020, it has been full speed ahead on many fronts. In the midst of the pandemic, through diligent planning and collaboration, we successfully welcomed students back to campus last fall for in-person learning and to enjoy a full range of activities. With testing and adherence to stringent safety protocols, we had no major outbreaks and remained together for the entire semester, and we are back together again this spring.

As you will read in our feature article, now is the time for us to move forward on initiatives essential to our future—both short- and long-term. While others may choose to hunker down in the midst of the many crises facing higher education, our society, and our world, WNE is uniquely positioned to be agile, innovative, and forward thinking. Our moment is here, and we are ready to meet it.


Since arriving, I outlined broadly a trio of priorities for the next three years: Stabilization, as we take bold steps amid a changing and highly competitive landscape in a post-pandemic world; Revitalization, as we align programs and processes with our goals; and Innovation, as we explore the possibilities of how best to prepare graduates to navigate the future of work in career paths both known and yet to be imagined. In November, I completed my campus listening tour, *The Future Is Now: Vision 2025 Campus Conversations*, engaging more than 400 people in small group sessions, open forums, and an online survey, which will be used to inform the University's strategic direction for the next five years.

Indeed, there is much to be done and it will take a community effort. From my leadership team to our faculty and staff, recruitment must be everyone's business, shining a light on what WNE does best: produce graduates who are work ready and world ready.

Our alumni are central to sharing the WNE story. Through your success in your careers and in service to others, you are lifelong ambassadors for the Golden Bear experience. When you engage with current students as mentors, proudly wear your blue and gold out in your community, share your successes with a WNE hashtag on social media, and speak about us with families you know, you help ensure the future of your alma mater.

Together, we must be ready to define a WNE education for the next generation: innovative, yet supportive; a national university with a global perspective; and a degree of real value that instills lifelong values. Through this shared vision for our future, our possibilities are unlimited.

With gratitude,



Robert E. Johnson, Ph.D.



DR. ROBERT E. JOHNSON
Sixth President of
Western New England University

W
E
S
T
E
R
N
N
E
U
N
I
V
E
R
S
I
T
Y

PRESIDENT ROBERT E. JOHNSON

Leading Through the Lens of Possibility Thinking

BY MARY MCLEAN ORSZULAK G'10

If there is one thing that Dr. Robert E. Johnson is certain of, it is the power of possibility.

As the sixth president of Western New England University, Dr. Johnson is leading the WNE community to design a road-map to its future—one of unlimited possibility. This shared ambition will hold fast to WNE's core culture as it rises to become a model for what a 21st century traditional university can and must become.

"I take inspiration from the book *The Alchemist* in which the protagonist, young Santiago, learns that when you pursue your dream and believe in it, the entire universe will conspire to make it happen," explains Dr. Johnson. "For me, possibility thinking is not allowing oneself to be limited in what we can do and what we can make happen in our lives. It doesn't focus on the 'how,' if you instead focus on the 'what,' the 'how' will happen naturally."

For Dr. Johnson, Western New England's immediate "what" for the next three years is a laser focus on a trio of priorities: stabilization, revitalization, and innovation as a broader strategic vision is imagined.



**“WHEN YOU WANT
SOMETHING,
ALL THE UNIVERSE
CONSPIRES IN
HELPING YOU TO
ACHIEVE IT.”**

PAULO COELHO
The Alchemist

MADE FOR THIS MOMENT

While many might see an age of historic disruption as a time to hunker down and wait for the proverbial storm to pass, Dr. Johnson views it as “an exceptional opportunity.”

It’s no understatement to say that Robert Johnson stepped into his latest role on August 17, 2020 during a confluence of crises. The world was in the midst of a pandemic, American society was divided as never before, competition for a declining college-age population was fierce, the economy was in freefall, and there was no guarantee that the 3,700 students enrolled for the fall semester would even show up. But Johnson, an eternal optimist was unfazed.

Why?

“I arrived on campus one week before classes started; it was the great unknown,” he recalls. “On the first day of class and every day and week thereafter, the people—everyone on this campus—worked

really, really hard to ensure that our students had the best and safest experience that we could possibly offer them.

“That diligence of people giving up their summer was reflected in what happened last fall. I am so appreciative and grateful for each and every faculty, staff, and administrator who worked so tirelessly to make sure that the campus was ready. They are the reason that we were able to safely remain learning, living, and working on campus.”

President Johnson believes WNE, born in a pandemic, was made to meet such moments.

“We rose to these challenges because we’ve done this before—tenacity and resiliency are part of who we are—it’s in our DNA,” he proudly asserts. “Western New England was given birth in the midst of a pandemic in 1919. Back then it was just law and business, and here we are, 100 years later, and it’s not just our 90 plus programs that define us, but our *people*.”



DR. ROBERT E. JOHNSON SIXTH PRESIDENT OF WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY

Dr. Robert E. Johnson was appointed as the 6th president of Western New England University in August 2020.

Dr. Johnson's leadership career spans nonprofit colleges and universities in the Northeast and Midwest, including public, private, urban, rural, small, and large institutions, with enrollments from 2,000 to more than 25,000 students. This experience includes public research universities, one of the nation's largest single-campus community colleges, a large Catholic university, a historically Black university, and a turn-around and transformation of a small private college. His career reflects several firsts—as not only an African American leader, but also the youngest person holding major senior administrative roles.

A proponent of innovation and entrepreneurship, hallmarks of Dr. Johnson's leadership include elevating institutional stature and competitive market position; national recognition; enrollment growth and resource development success; fast-tracked facilities and infrastructure improvements; and innovating for social impact when leading one of the first higher education institutions in the nation to achieve a 100% social impact goal for its endowment.

A Detroit native, Dr. Johnson was inspired to attend Morehouse College by his late uncle Robert E. Johnson Jr., associate publisher and executive editor of *JET Magazine* and Morehouse classmate of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He encouraged Dr. Johnson's commitment to service and transforming the next generation of leaders, influencing his fundamental conviction that humanity and civility must be central to all we do. Dr. Johnson believes that as educated and engaged citizens on a planet with more than seven billion people, we are privileged and thus have a social responsibility not only to leave the world better than we found it but to inspire others to do the same.

Dr. Johnson is a member of the **Council on Competitiveness** and serves on its National Commission on Innovation and Competitiveness Frontiers. He also serves on the executive committee and is vice chair of the **Massachusetts Business Roundtable**, the board of **MGH Institute of Health Professions**, and the **Intentional Endowments Network** steering committee. He has also served on the **Massachusetts Board of Higher Education**, as vice chair of the **Massachusetts Technology Collaborative**, and as chair of the **Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce**. He is also cofounder of the **Massachusetts Digital Games Institute**.

He has convened transformational conversations with industry, government, and academe that stimulated growth and regional economic opportunity, such as the 2010 Mass Impact Summit that led to the creation of MassDiGI in 2011, and the annual Marine Science and Technology symposium series at UMass Dartmouth that helped launch the MERIT Center to support regional job growth and economic development for the "Blue Economy."

Dr. Johnson holds a doctorate in higher education administration from Touro University International, formerly a division of Touro College, New York; a master's degree in education administration from the University of Cincinnati; a bachelor's degree in economics from Morehouse College; and a certificate in applied neuroscience from MIT Sloan School of Management. He is married to Michelle Jones-Johnson, and they have two children, Jasmine and Alex.

Like our students, Robert Johnson was drawn to WNE by its unwavering culture of support. "I've worked at six other colleges and universities; I would venture to say that there are very few institutions that have the 'can do, let's get it done, succeed against the odds' mentality like we do here. And we do it with the sense of purpose of everybody caring for one another, everybody believing in one another, everybody understanding that if we work together, we can truly make a difference."

THE FUTURE IS NOW: VISION 2025 CAMPUS CONVERSATIONS

During October and early November 2020, President Johnson conducted campus conversations with internal and external groups to solicit ideas and perspectives to shape a shared ambition for Western New England University's future. More than 400 people participated in 14 small group conversations, four open forums, and an online survey. On November 19, 2020, Dr. Johnson led a virtual University Town Hall to share the preliminary results from that research, which will be used to inform the strategic priorities that will position us for the next five years.

"We want Western New England to be known for graduating students who are both work ready and world ready, people who understand that they are part of something bigger than themselves as global citizens, and whose entrepreneurial perspective can bring value to the work they do for their employers."

ALIGNING A WNE EDUCATION WITH THE FUTURE OF WORK

In Dr. Johnson, Western New England University has found a future-focused thought leader and commentator on issues centering around the future of work, agile mind, education, the agile university, and the sense of humanity imperative.

From that lens, he views this period of profound disruption as a catalyst for innovation and an opportunity to make institutions more responsive to the needs of the future.

So how do you prepare students to navigate career paths yet to be imagined?

(continued)

"WE WERE ABLE TO REMAIN ON CAMPUS LAST FALL BECAUSE IT IS INHERENT TO OUR NATURAL CULTURE THAT WE REALLY CARE ABOUT ONE ANOTHER. THE IDEA OF WEARING A MASK RESONATES NOT BECAUSE IT'S SOMETHING NEW OR DIFFERENT TO DO, BUT BECAUSE IT IS WHO WE ARE."

PRESIDENT ROBERT E. JOHNSON

"In an age where the average Gen Z student may hold 17 jobs in the span of their careers, we must equip them with the soft skills prized by employers—divergent thinking skills, social and emotional intelligence, empathy, and a sense of humanity," says Dr. Johnson. "These uniquely human capacities cannot be replicated by technology and, when paired with an entrepreneurial outlook and a value-creation orientation, are the hallmarks of success in a complex and hyper-connected world."

New technologies come and go, but Johnson believes that what WNE imparts to its students should be evergreen. "That's why we must ready our students—across all disciplines—to view the world through the lens of an entrepreneurial mindset," says Dr. Johnson. "All these essential human skills are mindsets, and how do you learn those things? You learn them at their core with the liberal arts."

Johnson contends that no matter what major a student pursues, each must have the liberal arts at its foundation because as he explains, "That's what teaches you how to think, how to solve problems...*that do not yet exist*, and to utilize technologies yet to be envisioned."

"Then no matter what line of work you go in to, no matter how many times your job changes or is reinvented you will have the skillset and the mindset, you will have knowledge—the content—and the power of learning. You will have the essential human skills, which is the context."

That perspective is also fundamental to graduating students with a global worldview, one drawn from a portfolio of

their academic and cocurricular, internship, leadership, service, and study abroad experiences fostered in the uniquely welcoming and supportive environment that is and will remain WNE.

Making WNE more accessible and attractive to a wider population of students will be an important part of the vision for its future, and survey participants were asked to envision how diversity, equity, and inclusion would be represented in 2025. Actionable strategies will be a key part of the 2021 shared ambition.

When imagining learning modalities of the future, the world's grand, albeit unplanned, experiment with remote

learning may seem like an ideal way to level the higher ed playing field to make a college education both affordable and accessible to more students, but Dr. Johnson says research and data show that socialization gained through in-person learning is fundamental to personal development and cultural awareness of college-aged students, typically 17 to 22.

"Studies have shown that online learning is not the path for everyone," states Dr. Johnson. "It doesn't matter if you come from an extremely wealthy or an extremely poor family or anywhere in between, I think the greatest part of college is socialization—meeting people and interacting with people who are different from you gives us all a holistic worldview. You can't get those experiences virtually or learning online. I think anyone who doubted that before the pandemic has figured that out now."

Says the Morehouse College graduate, "I grew up in the city of Detroit and the best thing that happened to me was to leave my neighborhood and go to Atlanta and meet people from all over the country."

That experience helped him to not only find a career, but one of meaning and purpose.



Michelle Jones-Johnson and Dr. Johnson

GEN Z WILL HOLD
17 JOBS
IN THE SPAN
OF THEIR CAREERS



“WHILE SOME INSTITUTIONS MAY TAKE A BUNKER MENTALITY, THERE WILL BE THOSE OF US WHO WILL SEIZE THIS MOMENT AND SAY, ‘HOW DO WE CREATE THE NEW TRADITIONAL UNIVERSITY, THE ‘CLICK AND MORTAR,’ ON GROUND AND ONLINE MODEL THAT IS GROUNDED IN THE LIBERAL ARTS AND HUMANITIES, YET ALSO GIVES ALL STUDENTS THE ESSENTIAL HUMAN SKILLS TO BE PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK AS WE KNOW IT—AND AS WE DON’T KNOW IT?’”

**PRESIDENT
ROBERT E. JOHNSON**

“We want every graduate to ask themselves, ‘How do I push forward and advance my career to leave the world a little bit better than the way I found it?’ That is embedded in all that what we do.”

It was that culture, the current and potential for cross-disciplinary learning and research, the breadth and depth of programming, and WNE’s strong reputation as a national university with top accreditations that drew Robert Johnson to “Golden Bear Country,” a nickname for the WNE community he has wholeheartedly embraced.

As President Johnson and other University leaders analyze the surveys and conversations of the fall, a strategic vision

for a shared ambition is emerging. That plan will be delivered this summer as a guide to reimagining the future of WNE over the next five years.

For a man who believes that agility is key to adapting, evolving, and innovating, Dr. Johnson is confident WNE is uniquely and strongly positioned to arise from today’s challenges with a new vision for a future of unlimited possibility.

Says President Johnson: “Western New England University has the programs, size, capacity—and above all the dedicated people—to pivot to meet our challenges both internal and external and to emerge stronger as a model of 21st century teaching and learning.” 🐾

FOR THE LATEST NEWS AND VIDEOS FROM
PRESIDENT JOHNSON, BOOKMARK [WNE.EDU/PRESIDENT](https://wne.edu/president).

VIEW PRESIDENT JOHNSON’S PRESENTATIONS,
SPEECHES, AND WRITING AT [THEAGILEFUTURE.COM](https://theagilefuture.com).

CONNECT WITH DR. JOHNSON

 @wnepresident

 @wne_president

 @RobertEJohnsonPhD

 @wne_president

WNE MAKES HISTORY, ENDING CAMPAIGN WITH \$36.7 MILLION IN GIFTS

Success of University's Largest Comprehensive Campaign Heralds a Bright Future for WNE

BY KATIE DEBEER

Western New England University concluded the largest and most successful comprehensive fundraising campaign in its history, exceeding its goal and ending a year ahead of schedule. The *Campaign for Our Second Century* closed on June 30, 2020 with \$36,742,692 raised, exceeding its \$35 million goal by five percent.

More than one-third of the funds raised were dedicated to increasing scholarship assistance for current and future students. Other campaign priorities included building and enhancing campus facilities, creating impactful opportunities in student life, boosting academic initiatives and experiences, and strengthening the President's Fund for Excellence, which funds a number of strategic priorities.

Campaign
FOR OUR
Second Century



"Raising \$36.7 million is a remarkable milestone for WNE. The support we

received from alumni, trustees, faculty, staff, parents, students, and friends demonstrates the strong sense of pride of those affiliated with the University. We are truly thankful for each and every donor who helped us cross the finish line of this historic Campaign."

BEVERLY J. DWIGHT

Vice President for Advancement

WHERE YOUR GIFTS MADE AN IMPACT



Growing Scholarship Aid

\$13,974,578

- ➔ \$13,293,957 endowed
- ➔ \$680,621 annual



*Building and Enhancing
Campus Facilities*

\$12,514,014



*Creating Impactful
Opportunities for Student Life*

\$2,583,088



*Boosting Academic
Initiatives and Experiences*

\$5,816,023



*Strengthening the President's
Fund for Excellence*

\$1,854,989

TOTAL

\$36,742,692

“



I give back for the simple reason that I received a great education from WNE, both academically and in life. I honestly believe every young person starting out at the University deserves the same opportunities I had, and a degree from Western New England University gives them that chance.

TRUSTEE RICHARD M. CASSATA '80

”

Richard Cassata '80 Invests in Student Life, Athletics, and Scholarship Aid

Alumni support WNE for many reasons. Some are grateful for the leadership experiences that shaped them as students, some feel their education enabled their professional success, and others want to pay it forward to the next generation of Golden Bears. Trustee Richard Cassata '80 (Finance) checks 'all of the above.'

Cassata, of Park Ridge, NJ, is Managing Director of Public Finance at Assured Guaranty Corporation, a leading provider of financial guaranty insurance. As a student, Cassata played on the Golden Bear Baseball team. One of his proudest moments was starting a game during his junior year that the Golden Bears won, keeping a 10-game winning streak alive.

In addition to supporting Golden Bear Athletics and the Baseball Team, Cassata and his wife established the Richard M. and Catherine Cassata Scholarship for students in the College of Business. Cassata's Campaign gift also included support for Student Affairs, the President's Fund for Excellence, and Bear Necessities Food Pantry, the initiative to address food insecurity on campus. Cassata has served on the University's Board of Trustees since 2016.

"I wish everyone had the chance to interact with our students like I do as a trustee. They never fail to impress me."

\$14 Million Raised for Scholarship Aid Helps WNE Attract the Best and Brightest Students

Our top priority was increasing available financial aid through donor-funded scholarships. Students who attend full-time and live on campus see a sticker price that at face value can seem like a daunting amount for nearly any family. The good news is that more than 98% of our full-time undergraduate students and 75% of law students receive aid every year—through scholarships, grants, and loans. Campaign gifts to scholarship aid totaled nearly \$14 million, a significant boost which will help ensure that a WNE education remains accessible to every qualified and deserving student.



"Receiving an endowed scholarship has truly inspired me and given me both a much needed financial and mental boost. I had the honor of meeting my scholarship donor and his words and wisdom have been imprinted on me. He gave me the confidence that I need to succeed and try new things, not just in my career but also in my life. I am proud to now be stepping out of my comfort zone where I can embrace change, and most of all, embrace opportunity."

HUNTER BALAK '20

Recipient of the Steven and Elaine Kitrosser Industrial Engineering Endowed Scholarship

A Pivotal Moment in WNE History

Beginning in 2016, the first years of the Campaign were focused on securing the lead gifts which would set the stage for success.

Publicly launched in January 2019, the Campaign kick-off coincided with the University's Centennial celebrations, drawing connections between the rich history and bright future of Western New England, and providing opportunities for alumni and friends to share their favorite WNE memories.

President Anthony S. Caprio retired in 2020, having led the University for 24 years. A generous group of alumni and benefactors hosted the Caprio Challenge, inspiring \$1.4 million in gifts honoring President Caprio and recognizing his tremendous contributions to the University during his tenure.

Gifts to the President's Fund for Excellence—comprised of unrestricted gifts received on an annual basis—enable the University to meet the most pressing needs as they arise. Thanks in part to these unrestricted gifts, the University was able to quickly adapt when the COVID-19 pandemic began, from investments in instructional technology to enhance remote teaching capabilities to purchasing PPE for on-campus faculty, staff, and students.

With a broad base of philanthropic support among alumni and friends, WNE is poised to meet the challenges of the future.



**33 NEW
SCHOLARSHIPS
CREATED**

\$14,285,168
FUNDS RAISED
THROUGH BEQUESTS
AND OTHER
PLANNED GIFTS

\$1,363,162
RAISED FROM 186
CORPORATIONS,
FOUNDATIONS, AND
ORGANIZATIONS



4,010 GIFTS TOTALING
\$1,009,088
TOWARD ATHLETICS



NEARLY 6,000
CAMPAIGN
DONORS TOTAL

MORE THAN
1,000
ALUMNI MADE
THEIR FIRST EVER
GIFT TO WNE

Key Milestones

HIGHEST LIFETIME GIVING
AMOUNT FROM AN
INDIVIDUAL

\$9,927,483

LARGEST SINGLE GIFT
FROM AN INDIVIDUAL

\$4,559,075

FIRST ENDOWED CHAIR
(FINANCE)

\$3,000,000

WHAT'S NEXT?

The *Campaign for Our Second Century* set new records for Western New England University—in the scale and scope of some extraordinary gifts, in the breadth of support from alumni and friends, and in the cumulative results.

As we look to the future, our work to foster a culture of philanthropy throughout campus and the University community must continue. Our commitment to providing a transformational education to every student remains steadfast, and our ability to deliver on that promise depends upon the continued generosity of thousands of donors who help the University to flourish through their gifts each year.

Philanthropy is crucial to Western New England University—both in the growth we experienced in our first century, and for our continued success in the future. The Campaign has strengthened our University, and we are well-prepared for what lies ahead.

To learn more, visit alumni.wne.edu/giving or contact the Office of Advancement at 413.782.1335. 🐾

Campaign Leadership

HONORARY CHAIRS

Janet Johnson Bullard '69
Kevin S. Delbridge '77

COCHAIRS

Laura Sturgis Boule '01/G'02
John J. Brennan '71
Denis Gagnon G'76

CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Rheo Brouillard '76
Richard Cassata '80
Michael Flynn '82/G'83
Marshall Hart '65
Steven Kitrosser '66/G'70
Stephen Rourke G'81
Robert Salad L'83
Robert Stein '79
Peter Steingraber L'84
Kathleen White '78

TOP 2% SCIENTIST IN THE WORLD DR. JOHN PEZZUTO

TAKES ON THE DEANSHIP OF THE COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES

By Mary McLean Orszulak G'10

Research on Resveratrol and Red Grapes Leads Dean John Pezzuto to Be Listed Among World's Top 2% Scientists

A 2020 Stanford University study named Dean Pezzuto among the top 2% of the world's most-cited scholars, ranking him #21 among 80,622 researchers in the medicinal and biomolecular chemistry field.

A Fellow for the American Association for the Advancement of Science, he is the author of over 600 publications, including the first report describing the preventive or cancer-delaying properties of resveratrol, a common constituent found in red grapes and grape products such as red wine. This single report led to a seminal article in *Science* (1/10/1997) that has been cited nearly 6,000 times. Resveratrol has potential as a preventative or therapeutic agent for colon cancer (similar to Tamoxifen's use for breast cancer), and is the topic of over 20,000 manuscripts.

Dr. Pezzuto is the author of *Natural Products for Cancer Chemoprevention* (Springer, 2020), editor of *Grapes & Health* (Springer, 2016), and the 2014 recipient of the Volwiler Research Award, the top research award from the American Association of Colleges and Sciences.

Despite the far-reaching influence of this research (its connection to wine led to an article in the *New York Times* and it was used in a storyline in *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*), Dean Pezzuto explains that "grapes aren't in competition for being drugs," so the branch of scientific inquiry into natural chemopreventatives by its nature (not novel or chemically produced) lacks R&D interest from Big Pharma, and FDA approval is cumbersome.

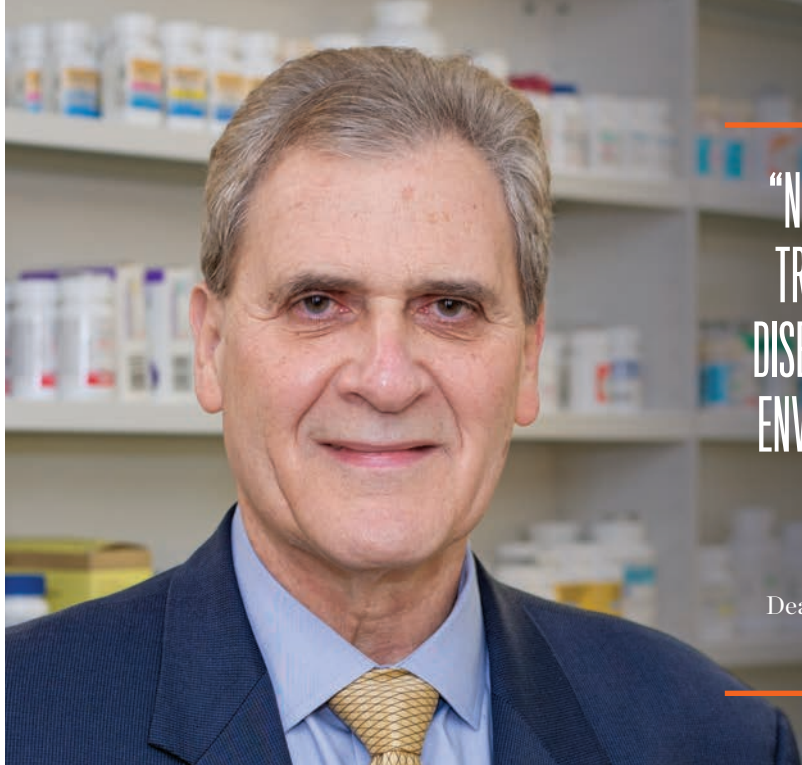
His research looks at the compound's efficacy for ameliorating colon cancer, heart disease, or Alzheimer's over the lifespan—looking at such things as whether or not there are benefits if grape consumption starts later in life. Colleagues are now conducting the first-ever human clinical trials in the UK.



Dean Pezzuto is appreciative that his work has been funded by a significant grant from the California Table Grape Commission, support that will continue his research at Western New England University.

In the short-term, he sees the greatest opportunity for his research in developing dietary or pharmaceutical agents that can play the same role in improving cancer prevention and longevity for dogs. And while grapes themselves can be toxic to canines, medications derived from resveratrol could provide a pathway to demonstrating to the 77 million U.S. dog owners and the pharmaceutical industry their potential for improving human health.

"We hope to get down to a molecular level, looking at how resveratrol affects gene expression," says Dean Pezzuto. "We just published another paper where we looked at gene expression in animal models—if they have grapes in their diet their gene expression changes," he explains. "It's pretty shocking I think, but we kind of expected it when you think of the saying 'you are what you eat.' You don't think of diet as affecting genetic expression, but it does."



“NATURE PROVIDES MANY CLUES FOR THE
TREATMENT AND PREVENTION OF HUMAN
DISEASE. ACADEMIA PROVIDES THE PERFECT
ENVIRONMENT FOR SCHOLARSHIP, AND THIS
IS IMBUED BY THE SPIRIT OF WNE.”

Dr. John M. Pezzuto

Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
and Professor of Pharmaceutics

“I was excited to come to the College because of its reputation—high pass rates on licensure examinations, strong residency placement rates, regional involvement with interprofessional education, a robust technology program that includes simulations, and high levels of student engagement in service, scholarship, and research,” explains Dean Pezzuto. “As a testament to these claims, our faculty have been recognized by national teaching and service awards. It is also notable that our research programs have continued to grow, year after year.”

Beyond its academic acclaim, Dean Pezzuto was drawn to the

“It is a great honor for us to have such a distinguished scientist among our ranks as Dr. Pezzuto. As WNE enters its second century, research, scholarship, and discovery as exemplified by the work of Dean Pezzuto will take on greater prominence.”

President Robert E. Johnson

College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences by the community’s nurturing environment that equips students for success. “That’s the difference that students find here—small classes, opportunities to get to know their professors, and the ability to create a program tailored for the individual,” he says. “That’s not something that happens if there is a class of 200 or 300 students and a much larger student-to-faculty ratio—to me, that’s huge.”

Dean Pezzuto speaks from the heart and a depth of experience. He most recently served as Dean and Professor of Pharmacy of the Arnold and Marie Schwartz College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at Long Island University in Brooklyn, NY. Previously,

he served as Distinguished Professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and held deanships at the College of Pharmacy, Nursing, and Health Sciences at Purdue University; and the Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, as founding dean.

Like President Robert Johnson, Dean Pezzuto sees the University’s size and unique complement of academic offerings as enabling it to pivot in a highly-competitive environment. He points to expanded opportunities for his learners such as the PharmD/MBA, MS in Pharmaceutical Sciences, and 3+3 Health Sciences/OTD as examples of cross-disciplinary programming and research on the horizon.

“There are points of interaction between the Colleges, particularly Arts and Sciences and Engineering, where we can create some synergism and be more competitive when it comes to complementary degree or certificate programs, and in basic or applied research,” he says.

Collaboration and community were center stage as the new dean was tasked with leading the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences in the midst of a pandemic. He is grateful to the faculty and staff for their unwavering commitment to their learners, and to its alumni who have selflessly served their communities, stating: “Our alumni aren’t just on the front lines of vaccine distribution—they are 20 feet in front of it.”

Looking to brighter days ahead, he is inspired by the University’s statue of its Golden Bear mascot, one he feels is aptly named ‘Spirit.’ “As we continue to grow, we also will maintain our core values—that spirit of community that I have found here at Western New England University.” 🐻

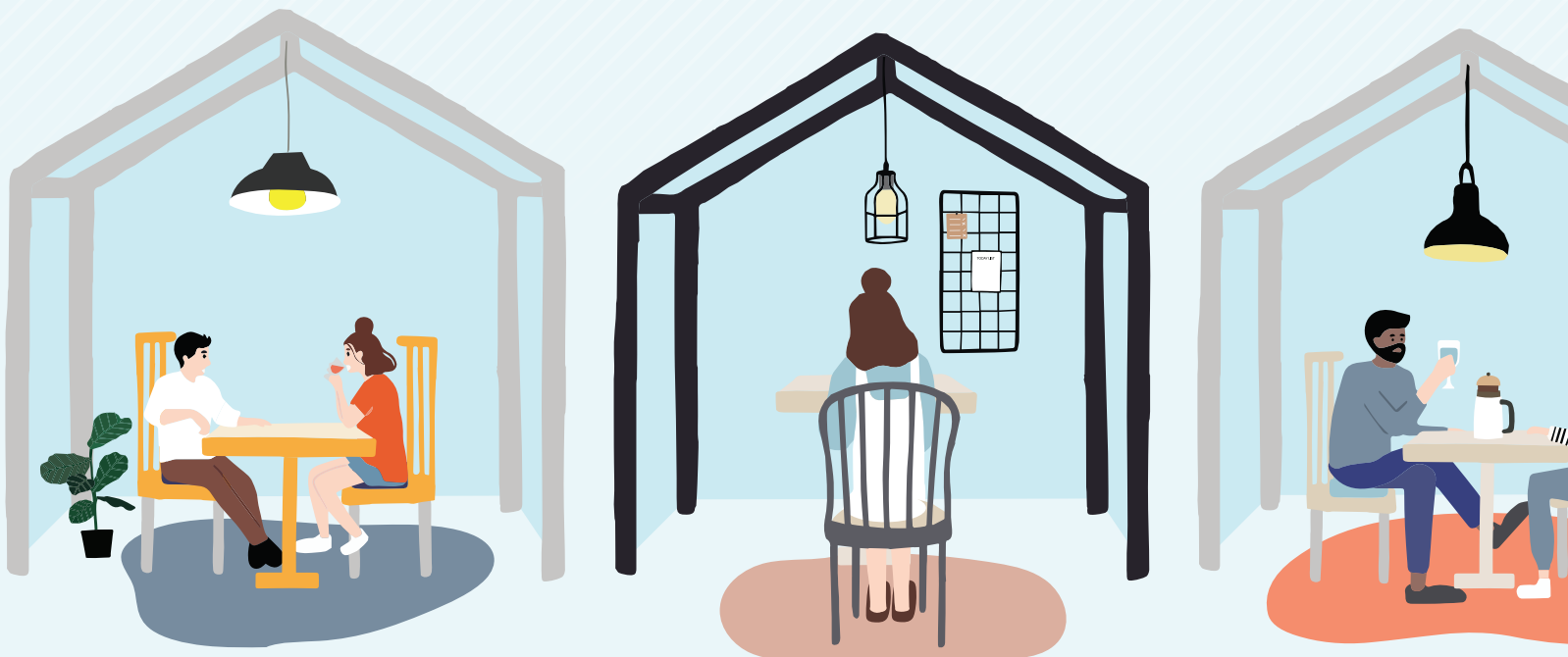
Read More about Dean Pezzuto’s
background in our digital edition

MAGAZINE.WNE.EDU

Support SMALL BUSINESSES

Alumni Entrepreneurs Find Their Markets

By Alex Lyman '12/G'16



Our Golden Bear network of alumni are both resourceful and entrepreneurial in the face of challenges. So much so, that many of them were more than prepared to pivot when the COVID-19 pandemic began. Whether they started new small businesses hoping to spread positivity during this global crisis, or adapted their already existing businesses to meet safety protocols, their enterprises are thriving. These resourceful alumni are proof positive that WNE's philosophy of helping graduates to develop an entrepreneurial mindset is hard at work.

Here are just a few of their entrepreneurial endeavors. >>



MARLEY KNYSH '16

PITTSFIELD, MA

Clay + Oak

For Marley Knysh '16, the COVID-19 pandemic was a way for her to get back to what she loved doing—making jewelry. As a child, she spent hours creating her own beaded jewelry, a hobby that fell by the wayside as she got older. While at home during the pandemic, Marley began to search for something new to occupy her time.

It was her mother who suggested that Marley get back into making jewelry, and she decided to try her hand at making earrings with polymer clay. At first, Marley didn't think her craft project would go anywhere, but before long, she wound up with more earrings than she knew what to do with!

It seemed only natural to Marley to open a small business at that point. For its name, she combined her artistic medium with the name of her sidekick and newly adopted miniature golden doodle puppy, Oakley, and launched Clay + Oak on Instagram.

Marley has loved having a small business, particularly when it comes to personal interaction with her customers. While Marley hopes to one day expand beyond creating earrings, she isn't in a rush, because she loves where her business is at the moment.

"It has been great having something in common with others during these difficult times our world is facing," she says. "Every time I create earrings, not one of them are the same. It just makes my product that much more special to my customers."



You can follow Marley on her journey (and snag some earrings of your own) on Instagram @clay_and_oak.



MARISSA MASSA '11
CROTON ON HUDSON, NY

Vintage & Vine

Marissa Massa '11 has always been on the hunt for unique finds at garage sales and thrift stores, and has amassed quite the collection of antique heirlooms. She also got into gardening after purchasing her first home; her favorite plants are succulents because of how low-maintenance they are. While these two hobbies might not appear to go together, Marissa found a way to make it work. A desire to repurpose her antiques and an inspiring social media floral arrangement gave her the idea to arrange her succulents inside different heirlooms for a unique decorative piece.

With the name Vintage & Vine, Marissa began selling curated arrangements from found pieces, as well as custom arrangements with her customers' personal heirlooms. Of course, starting a small business isn't easy in the middle of a pandemic, but Marissa did everything she could to make customers feel comfortable, from offering contactless payment options as well as curbside pickup and delivery, to having hand sanitizer at the ready. Vintage & Vine has only been present at open-air, outdoor markets so far, but Marissa hopes to explore brick and mortar options when it is safe to do so.

"I have big plans for Vintage & Vine and the experiences I had at WNE helped shape the person I am today," Marissa says.

"A person who is willing to take a risk and start a business during a pandemic, with the confidence to keep pushing forward. If you believe in yourself, then the world will believe in you too!"

Currently Vintage & Vine is limited to local markets, but Marissa hopes to find a sustainable shipping solution to bring her creations all over the country.

You can check out her work at vintageandvine.wixsite.com/home.



TAYLOR DUBOSE '16
MALDEN, MA

SUS (Sustainable Utilization Systems LLC)

Taylor Dubose '16 was resourceful, even as a child, and was always wondering what could be done with the materials dumped in landfills and junkyards in order to better preserve the environment. He went on to tackle these problems as an adult, launching Sustainable Utilization Systems (SUS), a company that makes products out of recycled, reusable, biodegradable, or compostable materials in order to reduce waste.

SUS currently carries bags, backpacks, and hats that are made out of recycled plastic bottles, which prevents the bottles from going into landfills or ending up in the ocean.

For a business that was started during a difficult economy, Taylor says the reward is greater than the risk.

"SUS has grown during this pandemic, which is a telltale sign that there is a need for this type of sustainable product," he says. "In my opinion, working through challenging times gives us an opportunity to really test our worth in the market."

"Western New England has helped me to be a business owner. My experiences there taught me to be a critical thinker, to not give up on goals you set out to achieve, and to always be willing to learn something new."

To get your own sustainable products and read the SUS blog about climate change, visit susmade.com.



JOE GWOREK '03
TERRYVILLE, CT

The CLUB Health & Fitness

As a former athlete, Joe Gworek '03 knew exactly what he had to do when he took over a failing gym in Naugatuck, CT, in order to make it a thriving fitness destination. He rebranded the original gym and called it THE CLUB, with the goal of gaining the trust of its members and the community. Joe put his clients first to give them the best possible experience and guide them to exceed their personal health and fitness goals. As business picked up, THE CLUB relocated to a larger facility in order to offer more amenities such as personal and group training services, CrossFit, and Sports Performance.

“Customer service is extremely important to me,” he says. “It doesn’t cost a thing to be caring, nice, and courteous. Smiling is contagious and creates an atmosphere where people want and need to be for physical and mental health.”

During the pandemic, THE CLUB was shut down for three months, which was difficult for Joe and his team. However, it made them all the more determined to do what they could to reopen safely. Equipment was rearranged to be six feet apart or more, sanitizing stations were added, signage was put up to direct members, and a company was hired to electrostatic spray the facility periodically. Every measure met or exceeded state guidelines to ensure that coming to THE CLUB would be as safe as possible.

When THE CLUB was allowed to reopen in June, the sense of joy was so permeable that membership surged and hasn’t slowed down since.

Joe says that his education at WNE gave him the ability to adapt on the fly, and generate ideas to keep THE CLUB ahead of the curve.

To learn more about THE CLUB, visit theclubct.com.



ROB CARMICHAEL '19
SPRINGFIELD, MA

Loweway

Rob Carmichael’s dream was always to have his own product line out in the world, but he also wanted it to be meaningful and positive. In early 2019, while he was still finishing his senior year here at the University, he actively took steps to make those goals happen. The result was Loweway, a clothing brand that promotes “the message of positivity and love to others and oneself.”

“Spreading love and positivity will always be important,” he says. “Being yourself in a world that constantly tells you to be someone you aren’t is critical to being happy. I think that during this pandemic and with all the problems in this world, maintaining happiness starts with yourself.”

Rob wasn’t aware of many clothing brands that encouraged people to be themselves and step out of their shells to share the love, and felt he could stand out by designing something new and creative. Loweway currently has T-shirts, long sleeve shirts, and hoodies in stock, and plans to create new hats and other accessories. Rob would also love to continue expanding his brand and discovering more about fashion and higher-end clothing.

Rob credits his accounting education from WNE for giving him the tools and strategies needed to maintain a business both during normal times as well as times of great challenge.

To check out Loweway apparel, visit loweway.com. 🐾

Help strengthen the Golden Bear network by doing business with WNE alumni-owned businesses. View our directory at alumni.wne.edu/smallbiz, or search #WNEsmallbiz on social media.

By Alex Lyman '12/G'16

We so often say that Western New England University attracts a certain kind of person—those with community spirit and a desire to give back. Golden Bears simply have big hearts. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, that rings true more than ever. Despite the challenges of remote learning, and the stress and uncertainty that our students felt, the pandemic moved many of them into action. Whether they worked on the front lines in healthcare, supported medical professionals, or unified our campus community against racism, we are proud of each and every one of our students who directed their time and energy to giving back.



STUDENTS STEP UP FOR COMMUNITIES

to Provide Hope During Pandemic

PHARMACY STUDENTS PUT SKILLS TO THE TEST

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be an important training ground for our Pharmacy students. PY2 learner Kevin Izzio and PY4 learner Cara O'Toole were no exception. As COVID-19 testing became more widely available and was increasingly critical to managing the pandemic, local pharmacies were tasked with administering such tests. While Kevin and Cara work at separate CVS Pharmacy locations in Massachusetts, when their leadership asked for employees to work at COVID-19 testing sites, they both were among the first to volunteer.

Kevin was sent to a CVS rapid testing site in Lowell, MA, where he rotated between critical jobs such as obtaining patient information, administering and running the test, and giving the paperwork to the patient.

Working on the front lines of a pandemic is no easy task, but Kevin did not shy away from the challenge, even when he could have left the job to licensed pharmacists in the field.

"The College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences prepared my mindset to be a healthcare professional first and to give back to the community," he says. "Despite being a student pharmacist, I still have that obligation to help."

Cara began work at the first public testing site in the state, located in Shrewsbury, catering to first responders and healthcare workers. Cara was responsible for

gathering patient information, preparing test kits, and collecting the samples and later sending them for lab collection, while ensuring full compliance with infectious disease protocol.

She says that it was an exciting experience to be on the front lines of monitoring the virus and advancing the role of the modern pharmacist, and that WNE prepared her to take on the challenge.

"Western New England University instilled in me the importance of taking initiative and doing your part, whatever that may be. I felt this was the most vital work I could be doing as it was an opportunity to help others during these unprecedented times."

SUPPORTING OUR FRONTLINE HEROES

As the COVID-19 pandemic impacted our world, the College of Engineering was committed to supporting those who work on the front lines. Current Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering student and Lab Supervisor Dannielle Croft, and JP Kirkitelos '17/G'19, who is a Materials Technician at Baystate Medical Center, teamed up to create face mask straps for medical professionals using the College's 3D printers in order to make wearing PPE for long hours a bit more comfortable.

"I feel that since we have the resources and support of the WNE administration, that we should do everything we can to support the frontline medical workers

who continue to make great personal sacrifices to keep us safe and healthy,” said Dannielle.

Dannielle, along with WNE machinist Pete Bennett, has also worked with the Western Mass 3D Printing Collaborative to print face masks and face shield frames.

KEEPING OUR GOLDEN BEAR COMMUNITY STRONG

Senior Adetayo Olatinwo was elected Student Senate President last March and hasn’t wasted a moment of time in uniting our campus community. When the pandemic began, Adetayo worked hard to encourage high school seniors to commit to coming to WNE in the fall by joining in the first-ever Virtual Accepted Students Day and moderating a student panel via Zoom. Over the summer, she again used her influence by participating

in videos produced by the University to welcome her classmates back for the fall semester and encourage them to take the new COVID-19 protocols seriously.

Amidst all of the changes to our day-to-day lives in 2020, when George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police at the end of May, Adetayo was again called to action. As Student Senate President, she moderated a campus community forum titled “Rising Up Against Racism: Where Do We Go from Here?” Adetayo helped to steer the discussion around racism, and the tangible steps that the campus community could take to foster inclusion, equity, and civility.

Adetayo’s proudest initiative, however, was putting together the first on-campus Black Lives Matter rally this past fall. Despite COVID-19, the rally successfully



Kevin Izzio

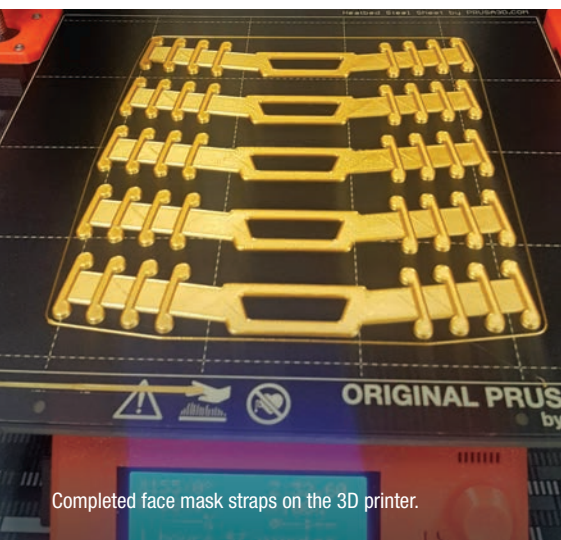


Adetayo Olatinwo

“Western New England University instilled in me the importance of taking initiative and doing your part, whatever that may be. I felt this was the most vital work I could be doing as it was an opportunity to help others during these unprecedented times.”

”

CARA O'TOOLE



Completed face mask straps on the 3D printer.



Face mask straps make wearing masks more comfortable.

brought students from all over campus to march together in solidarity, while still following safety protocols.

“My peers and I could not just sit around and make noise through our phones with the hashtag Black Lives Matter; we had to see concrete action,” says Adetayo. “Action begins in one’s home, and we call Western New England University home. People of all colors showed up to support the Black community. We were one community, one voice, and one heart that day. I had never been so proud of the University. At the end of the night I cried literal tears of joy. It made me so happy to know I am valued as a Black member of my community.”

Senior Pilar Betts and sophomore Adell Gadzey also provided a valuable contribution to anti-racism efforts when they moderated a racial justice conversation for United and Mutually Equal (U&ME) this past June for members of the group, as well as other community members, to come together, express their feelings, and brainstorm further actions to stem racism on campus.

WNE students have faced challenges they never anticipated to be a part of their learning experience. We look forward to seeing what they will accomplish as they join the ranks of our WNE alumni. 🐾

Proven University Leaders Step into New Roles to Serve Students

Western New England University welcomes leaders to new posts in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. All are hard-working, future-focused, and committed professionals, whose depth and breadth of experience will serve the University well as it advances to its next century.



KERRI JARZABSKI '98 is the Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students. Her professional experiences include a number of significant and increasingly responsible roles at Western New England—all of which focus on student engagement and success, and improving student outcomes and retention. Dean Jarzabski is a WNE alumna having earned her Bachelor of Arts in English and Communication with a Secondary Education Certificate.



DR. JOSIE BROWN is the Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dean Brown joined Western New England University in fall 2003 as assistant professor of English before earning promotions to associate professor in 2009 and full professor in 2015. She has served as assistant dean for the past seven years while continuing to teach and serve in various other capacities. Dr. Brown is a proud parent of a current WNE undergrad.



CURT HAMAKAWA L'84 served as the Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs for the 2020-2021 academic year. A WNE law alumnus, Provost Hamakawa is a tenured professor of Sport Management in the College of Business and director of the Center for International Sport Business (CISB). The University is currently conducting a search for a new provost, who will be announced in our next issue.

Dr. Steven Li Wins IEEE Engineer of the Year Award

College of Engineering Associate Professor Zhaojun 'Steven' Li has been awarded the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Reliability Society's 2020 "Engineer of the Year" Award. The award acknowledges his dedication to the Reliability profession and his outstanding volunteer efforts to the IEEE Reliability Society. The Society honored Dr. Li for his contributions to Bayesian Reliability methods.



Center for Social Justice Awarded Grants for Programming



The Western New England University School of Law's Center for Social Justice has received a total of \$771,039 in grants, including \$170,000 from the MassMutual Law Department last March, and an additional \$43,500 donation from the MassMutual Foundation related to COVID-19 in April.

Center Director Ariel Clemmer has spearheaded the effort to bring the Consumer Debt Initiative (CDI), the Center's first in-house *pro bono* program, to the School of Law and received a program-specific grant of \$117,721. The CDI serves self-represented litigants who are defending credit card collection actions filed by debt buyers in the

Springfield District Court Small Claims session. Students, faculty, and other volunteers provide counsel and legal advice, negotiate with opposing counsel, draft settlement agreements, and may appear on behalf of consumers for hearings and trials. In fall 2020, Clemmer secured a renewal grant for the CDI for an additional \$439,818 from the MassMutual Foundation for a two-year term.

The Center maintains an active calendar of public webinars on social justice topics. Visit wne.edu/socialjustice to learn more.

Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$2.5 Million for New Advanced Manufacturing Center and WNE Engineering Lab

The Baker-Polito Administration recently announced a new grant from the Massachusetts Manufacturing Innovation Initiative supporting the development of a new advanced manufacturing center at Convergent Photonics in Chicopee, which is partnering with Western New England University on the new facility. Called LEAP, a Lab for Education and Application Prototyping, the lab will focus on product development, training, and research in the field of integrated photonics. As part of the partnership, a \$1.1 million training facility will be located on the Western New England University campus in the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department and will be the fourth lab of its kind in the state.



President Robert E. Johnson attends the announcement event with Dr. Neeraj Magotra, chair of the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, along with Convergent Photonics representatives and legislators.



Computer Science and IT Faculty Receive NSF Grant for Open Source Software Project with a Charitable Vision

WNE Professors of Computer Science and Information Technology Dr. Heidi Ellis and Dr. Stoney Jackson are the recipients of the National Science Foundation Award. The award builds on over a decade of work in education with Humanitarian Free and Open Source Software (HFOSS). HFOSS is software that addresses societal needs in areas such as healthcare, disaster management, education, and economic development, and can improve computing education by providing experience with authentic computing problems. The NSF-funded project is a collaboration between five institutions: Western New England University, Dickinson College, Drexel University, Nassau Community College, and Worcester State University.

WNE CELEBRATES THE 2020 DOWNES ATHLETIC

Hall of Fame

CLASS

Jared Pabis '09 (Men's Lacrosse), Amy (Lorinovich) Denault '07 (Volleyball), Alex Dos Santos '11 (Men's Soccer), and Mike Rubino '13 (Baseball) were honored for their contributions to Western New England athletics.

“

This year's Downes Hall of Fame inductees are a special group of student-athletes from a special era of Golden Bear Athletics. During a time when all of our programs were rising to regional and national acclaim, these four stood out for their athletic excellence as well as their impact as leaders.”

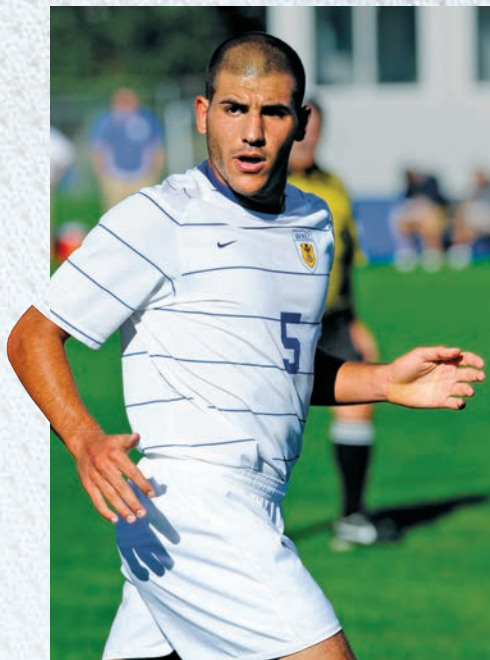
MATT LABRANCHE
DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS,
RECREATIONAL SPORT,
AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION



JARED PABIS was a lockdown defender for the men's lacrosse program from 2006-2009. Pabis is regarded as the greatest defender to ever wear the blue and gold. He was a three-time All-American selection, including being named second-team All-American during his senior year, which is the highest in program history. In addition, Pabis is also a three-time All-NEILA first-team nominee. He appeared in 67 games over the course of his career and scored 11 goals, dished out five assists, and grabbed 218 ground balls.



AMY LORINOVICH was a standout performer for the volleyball program from 2003-06. During her career, Lorinovich was a two-time All-GNAC selection. She concluded her career by ranking in the top 10 for numerous conference and WNE records. Lorinovich finished her career with 1,218 kills and 3,014 total attacks. She currently ranks second in program history in total kills, second in kills per game, third in points, and fourth in points per set. In GNAC history, Lorinovich ranks eighth in total kills, seventh in kills per game, ninth in total attacks, and sixth in attacks per game.



ALEX DOS SANTOS was a dominant midfielder for the men's soccer program from 2008-10. During his three years at Western New England, Dos Santos played in 65 games while scoring 10 goals and providing 10 assists. He was a two-time All-American selection, including a second-team All-American honor during his junior season. During his senior year, Dos Santos was a third-team All-American as well as a first-team All-CCC member and the 2010 CCC Offensive Player of the Year.



MIKE RUBINO was a standout performer for the baseball program from 2010-13. During his career, he collected a number of accolades while also placing in the top ten for numerous program records. Rubino was a three-time All-Conference selection, a three-time All-Region selection, and an All-American in 2012. He is currently in the top-10 in program history for hits, doubles, runs batted in, games played and started, runs, slugging percentage, on-base percentage, and batting average. At the time of his graduation in 2013, Rubino's 281 career hits placed him seventh all time in NCAA Division III.

“

It is particularly gratifying to welcome a group that I had the pleasure to watch compete, know as people, and even coach! We look forward to the day we can once again gather as a Golden Bear family and honor this most deserving group.”

MATT LABRANCHE



Western New England's Downes Athletic Hall of Fame recognizes and honors student-athletes, coaches, teams, administrators and other individuals that have made significant contributions to Western New England University in the form of athletic achievement, service, or support of the department. It is named in honor of Coach William A. (Bill) Downes who was among the inaugural class inducted in 1999. The annual Recognition Ceremony traditionally takes place each fall during Homecoming; however, the 2020 event was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A new date will be announced once it is safe to gather again.

Learn more at wnegoldenbears.com.

Golden Bear Spirit Was On Display, Online During

ALUMNI MONTH

When COVID-19 prevented the WNE community from celebrating Homecoming, Golden Bears near and far rallied in a series of virtual events and programs dubbed Alumni Month. Nine different events and programs were offered, including reunions, speaker events, affinity programs, a virtual 5K, a photo contest, a virtual Town Hall to meet President Johnson, and more.

ALUMNI MONTH HIGHLIGHTS

Golden Bear Spirit Photo Contest

Alumni, friends, families, and fans showed up to represent the Blue & Gold during our Spirit Photo Contest. Tied for first place were Jon '11 and Christina '11 Polaski, whose son, Jack, is a future G-Bear, Class of 2042; and Randall Rivest G'03, whose son, Zachary, Class of 2032, had his Blue & Gold on full display for his first day of Pre-K. Receiving honorable mentions, congratulations are offered to Kevin Jandreau '79/G'81 for most alumni included in his submissions, and Rachel '11 & Dave '11 Griffin for most WNE(C) swag on display.

Recognizing Racism in Everyday Life, presented by Amanda Wagner '12

Alumni gathered virtually to explore the history of racism and gain a better understanding of racial injustice in an interactive workshop facilitated by diversity and inclusion consultant Amanda Wagner '12.



Paint Sip & Snack

Participants of all ages let their creativity shine during a guided paint session as they learned how to create a beautiful autumn scene. If you missed this event live, the recording is available on demand at wne.edu/alumnimonth.





Paws to the Pavement

Alumni and friends hit the road in a virtual 5K fun run to benefit student scholarship. Each registered participant received a printable race bib and branded neck gaiter.

Town Hall Events with President Johnson

Nearly 150 alumni gathered virtually for a discussion with Dr. Robert E. Johnson, the sixth President of Western New England University. President Johnson shared his vision for the University as we embark on our second century through two events—one for University volunteers, and one for alumni and friends.



Celebration of Law Alumni & Students of Color

A 21-year tradition, the School of Law gathers annually to celebrate and honor alumni and students of color. This year's virtual event featured Student Speaker Sheila Ramirez 3L, Young Alumna Speaker Tasha Marshall L'16, and Keynote Speaker The Honorable Michael Wu L'83.

25th Annual Supreme Court Review Conference

Alumni near and far gathered online for the annual conference, hosted by the Institute for Legislative and Governmental Affairs. The event was moderated by Professor Emerita Leora Harpaz, and featured panelists Professor Bridgette Baldwin, Associate Dean Erin Buzuvis, Professor Jennifer Levi, and Professor Emeritus Bruce Miller. Dean Emeritus Howard Kalodner facilitated the Q&A.



RELIVE THE FUN, ACCESS EVENT RECORDINGS, AND SEE WHAT YOU MISSED AT [WNE.EDU/ALUMNIMONTH](https://wne.edu/alumnimonth).

ALUMNI NEWS

Alumni Association Honors Exceptional Students with Skookum Award for Excellence

The Alumni Association honored 15 members of the Class of 2021 during the Skookum Awards Ceremony on November 8. In order to ensure the safety of all involved, the event was limited to student honorees and select members of the campus community, and it took place outdoors with masks and social distancing required. The Skookum Award of Excellence was established in 1989 by the Alumni Association to recognize student achievement through demonstrated leadership, community service and volunteerism, and participation in athletics and cocurricular programs.

Read about the honorees at alumni.wne.edu.



▲ **GHERIG BURNETT**
(Mathematical Sciences) was
presented with the Grand Skookum
Award, the highest honor.



(L-R) BOTTOM ROW: Chloe Wood, Mia Cariglia, Adetayo Olatinwo, Emma Laughlin, Johnna Farnham, Jordan Brown;
MIDDLE ROW: Hayley Gilmore, Kyra Palumbo, Julia Sudol, Sienna Wurl, Autumn Kelly;
TOP ROW: Danielle Conlon, Kyle Hooper, Brendan O'Brien, Gherig Burnett

Law Alumni Awards & Special Celebration Honoring Bruce Miller Goes Virtual

One hundred fifty-five members of the School of Law community, including alumni, students, faculty, and retirees came together on November 13 for a virtual event celebrating alumni achievement and honoring revered Professor Emeritus Bruce Miller. While the hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, handshakes, and hugs that typify the annual Alumni Recognition Reception were missing, a strong sense of pride and festive spirit of celebration were on full display during the Zoom event.

The Awards Ceremony was emceed by Nicole Murray L'05 (then President of the Law Alumni Association), and honored three distinguished alumnae for their professional accomplishments:



Dean's Alumni Excellence Award
ELENA GERVINO L'88

Vice President, Claim Legal Strategies,
Operations & Subrogation, Travelers



Ascending Alumni Award
TALIA GEE L'10/G'10

Chief Diversity and Inclusion Office,
City of Springfield



Distinguished Alumni Award
HON. BARBARA HYLAND L'83

Hampden County Family & Probate Court

A touching tribute video honoring Bruce Miller played, after which Hon. Charles Groce III L'97 emceed the remainder of the program, featuring former students and colleagues sharing memories of Bruce from throughout his 40-year tenure at WNE University School of Law. The Bruce Miller Social Justice Fellowship achieved endowment during the event, topping \$44,000 following a live auction-style fundraising challenge issued by Robert L'85 and Ellen Meeropol. The event was sponsored in part by The Law Offices of Sasson Turnbull Ryan & Hoose, and Bill Newman & Dale Melcher.

Learn more at alumni.wne.edu.



▲ Professor Emeritus
BRUCE MILLER

New Online Alumni Communities Foster Connection Amid Pandemic

The year 2020 heralded the arrival of an all new engagement platform for Golden Bear alumni. New functionality includes the ability to update contact information and communication preferences, quickly register for events with information pre-populated based on your profile, learn about volunteer opportunities that match your interests and schedule, and opt-in to mentoring areas of support including informational interviews, résumé reviews, and networking. Additional features will launch throughout 2021.

Visit alumni.wne.edu to get started today. For assistance, please contact us at alumwne@wne.edu or **(413) 796-2240**.

The Alumni Association also launched several new Facebook groups to help foster connection among alumni in shared geographies and industries. Regional alumni groups include Boston, NYC, Providence, and Springfield/Hartford. The Law Alumni Association also launched a group for Law Alumni or those working in the legal profession.

Engineering Alumni Mentoring Program Zooms to Success

Each fall, the College of Engineering partners with the Office of Alumni Relations to host the Engineering Mentoring Dinner—an annual event to connect first-year engineering students with alumni mentors. In October 2020, the program was hosted on Zoom for the first time ever... with incredible results! Forty-one alumni mentors participated, offering support and encouragement to more than 170 freshmen engineers. We were excited to welcome mentors from all across the country, and breakout rooms delivered small-group interaction to help students create meaningful connections with their mentors.

LET'S CONNECT!

For the latest alumni news, events in your area, nostalgic #tbt pics, and more, follow [@wnealumni](https://www.facebook.com/wnealumni) on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.





Class Notes

STAY CONNECTED

Your classmates want to know about the milestones in your life. Send your news including weddings, career changes, accomplishments, and publications to the Office of Alumni Relations at alumwne@wne.edu or visit alumni.wne.edu to submit your note online.

1960s

DAVID ERICKSON '63 (Mechanical Engineering) has retired from practicing law in Denver, CO. An extensive collection of his published articles, stories, essays, historical studies, and books are now housed with the Western History and Genealogical Section of the Denver Public Library.

1970s

JAN BROWN L'77 (JD) played an integral part in a groundbreaking decision made by the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in limiting the ability of the Department of State to revoke a citizen's passport.

NICK RHODES G'77 (MBA) has been appointed to the New Hanover Airport Authority by the New Hanover County Commissioners and will serve a four-year term.

ELLIS M. DUMONT '79 (Government) was named 2020 "Innovator of the Year" by the National Parking Association for his COVID-19 grocery delivery assistance program. Ellis is CEO and Founder of Advanced Parking Concepts.

1980s

BRIAN ADE L'80 (JD) has been recognized as one of Bergen's Top Lawyers for 2020 by Bergen Magazine and was included in the prestigious list of Best Lawyers in America. Brian is a partner in the Commercial Litigation, Complex Torts & product Liability and Insurance Coverage practice groups at Rivkin Radler LLP.

RICHARD WILLIS '80 (Quantitative Methods) was named the 2019 Connecticut High School Coach of the Year for tennis. Richard, a 4-year starter for the Golden Bears ('77-'80) completed his 11th year coaching the Ellington High School Men and Women's Tennis team. In addition to high school coaching, he coaches in the USTA league and high-performance teams in the summer. After many years in industry, Richard has joined the WNE University College of Business faculty as a professional educator in the BIS department.

MAY STACK G'81 (MBA), former director of Western New England's D'Amour Library, has recently been recognized by Marquis Who's Who Top Educators for her dedication, achievements, and leadership in library science.

BRIAN HAYNES L'83 (JD) was recognized as an Upstate New York 2020 Super Lawyer for his work in Employee Benefits. Brian has also been named to the *2021 Best Lawyers in America*, as "Lawyer of the Year" for his work in Tax Law. Brian works at Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC in Syracuse, NY.

SAM PEPPER '83 (Finance) has been appointed to Chief Operating Officer at EagleBank in Maryland. Sam will now be responsible for managing all of the bank's operations, providing leadership, administrative and reporting procedures to help grow and maintain an effective operating and profitable outcome.

JOSEPH ROBERTS '83 (Electrical Engineering) recently retired from the Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC) division Newport Sensors and Sonar Systems Department. Upon retirement, Joseph was also awarded the Department of the Navy Meritorious Civilian Service award, the third highest Navy civilian award, for his achievements and outstanding service.

RICHARD SYPEK L'83 (JD) and his wife, Catherine Sypek, have recently established the firm Sypek Law & Insurance in Westfield, MA. Richard also serves as the police commissioner in the City of Westfield.

EUGENE CASSIDY '84 (Accounting) was recently elected chairman of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions. Eugene is currently the president and CEO of Eastern States Exposition and the Big E.

JONATHAN SHAFNER L'85 (JD) was recently named vice president and general counsel at GEICO.

ROBERT TROTTER G'85 (MBA) retired after 45 years of working as a fuel injector engineer for American Bosch, Ford, Stanadyne and Tenneco. He has relocated to Asheville, NC.

RAYMOND MCCARTHY '86/G'98 (Accounting/MBA) has been promoted to senior vice president, chief financial officer (CFO), and treasurer for Baystate Health, Springfield, MA. Raymond had previously served as vice president of finance and CFO of Baycare Health Partners as well as other roles at Baystate beginning in 1993.

LYNNE WILSON L'86 (JD) has been named to The Best Lawyers in America 2021 by peers. Lynne is a partner at Shuffield, Lowman & Wilson PA, where she practices real estate law.

ANDREW HOCHBERG L'87 (JD) was recently recognized as one of 2020's Massachusetts Super Lawyers.

ALAN WHITNEY '87 (Management) has joined Cornerstone Bank in the role of vice president, marketing.

DANIEL J. HORGAN L'89 (JD) was named vice president of the Connecticut Bar Association; president-elect 2021-2022.

1990s

WILLIAM DOHERTY L'90 (JD) recently retired from practicing law. Prior to retirement William practiced primarily in workers compensation. He plans to travel and play golf during retirement.

BRENDA MARSIAN '91 (English) is now chief development officer for the Wakeman Boys & Girls Club in Fairfield, CT.

ANDREW HIRSHFELD L'93 (JD) is the commissioner for patents at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and is currently performing the functions and duties of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director.

AMY LABELLE '93 (English) and her husband Cesar Arboleda, co-owners of LaBelle Winery in New Hampshire, have purchased Brookstone Events & Golf in Derry, NH. This will be their second location. Renovations started in December 2020.

MICHAEL JELSON '96 (Management - Entrepreneurship) has been named director of corporate sales at The Cromer Company, an apparel screen printing and embroidering company based in Miami, FL.

GREGORY MADRID '96 (General Business) has been promoted to director of residential life at Sacred Heart University.

LAURA RICCIO L'96 (JD) has just finished serving as the president of the Norfolk and Plymouth County Estate and Business Planning Council. Laura was recently designated as an accredited estate planner by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils.

RITA AQUILIO L'97 (JD) has been elected treasurer of the Somerset (NJ) County Bar Association. Her two year term began in September 2020.

MARY ANN CARLSON '97 (Acquisition & Contracts) received the prestigious "AFCEA International Medal of Merit" award.

JEREMIAH O'CALLAGHAN '97 (Mechanical Engineering) has been appointed manager of engineering at Conval, Inc., a manufacturer of service valves in Enfield, CT.

SCOTT ROGOFF L'97 (JD) was recognized as one of 2021's Best Lawyers in the Rochester, NY office of Barclay Damon Attorneys.

CELIA NORCROSS '98 (Management Studies) has accepted a position as dean of students at Berkshire Community College in Pittsfield, MA.

THERESA JASMIN G'99 (MBA) has been appointed to chief financial officer of Big Y Foods. She is responsible for the company's strategic planning, finance, accounting, treasury, and tax functions. Theresa is the first woman to be appointed to the c-suite for the company.

2000s

ADRIENNE PETRINO '00 (Sport Management) founder of You Make the World Better Coaching, set out to achieve a goal to stay active during quarantine while exploring her home town. By August, Adrienne had walked over 300 streets and 250 miles, all within five months. Adrienne was recognized by her community and she shared her journey through social media.

WILLIAM TRAVAUN BAILEY L'01 (JD) was nominated by Governor Charlie Baker as Associate Justice of the Cambridge District Court.

DIANE KELLY G'01 (MBA) has been appointed president of Greenwich Hospital, where she has served as COO since 2018.

MICHAEL MCGILL '02/L'05 (Criminal Justice/JD) has been appointed to the Yavapai County Superior Court by Arizona Governor Doug Ducey.

DANIELLE WILLIAMS L'02 (JD) was sworn in as District Court Judge in Springfield, MA. Danielle was nominated by Governor Charlie Baker.

HEIDI (WOESSNER) REMICK L'03 (JD) retired as the special investigations unit prosecutor in Windsor County, VT. She recently moved her family cross country to take a job as deputy general counsel with the Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau in Carson City, NV. Heidi left behind teaching criminal law, but began teaching a narrative writing course in the fall at Vermont Law School.

RYAN KLEIN '04 (Criminal Justice) was recently named principal at St. Michael's School in Fall River, MA. Prior to his education career, he served the community in law enforcement.

MEREDITH ODELL '04 (Chemistry) was named global marketing director for COVID-19 at AstraZeneca, where she has worked since 2015.

ANNIE RENNIX '04 (Government) has been named executive director of the Central and Western Massachusetts American Red Cross chapter.

BRYAN CASSIDY '05 (Computer Information Systems) joined Torrington Savings Bank as chief information officer and senior vice president.

SARA (CLOTHIER) CHARPENTIER L'05 (JD) was named chief assistant district attorney and drug task force prosecutor for the St. Lawrence County District Attorney's office in Canton, NY.

STEVE PARASTATIDIS '05 (Finance) was promoted to first vice president, commercial banking at PeoplesBank.

CHRIS PURCELL '05 (Government) was named assistant dean of students at Chatham University, in Pittsburgh, PA.

ERIN THRON L'06 (JD) was promoted to partner at Morrison Mahoney LLP, in Boston, MA.

JOSHUA BROOKMAN '07 (Accounting) was named finance officer of the Greater New York Division of The Salvation Army.

BRIAN MEGLIOLA '07 (General Business) purchased Coldwell Banker Community Realtors, becoming CEO and chief financial officer. He previously served as operations director and has been with the company for 11 years.

MEGHAN SMITH L'07 (JD) was named to the *Hartford Business Journal's* "40 Under Forty" Class of 2020. She also recently founded the Smith Law Group, LLC, where she practices business law, commercial real estate, residential real estate, and estate planning.

KENDRA BERARDI L'08 (JD) was elected president-elect of the Real Estate Bar Association for Massachusetts.

RONELSON LOVAINCY '08 (Marketing Communications/Advertising) is now project manager for running and training footwear at PUMA.

ALEXANDER MAZZAFERRO '09 (English Literature) recently began the position of tenure-track professor of early American literature in the English Department at the University of California, Los Angeles. He earned his Ph.D. from Rutgers University in 2017 after graduating from WNE, and he has previously held postdoctoral fellowships at the University of Chicago and the American Philosophical Society.

2010s

KYLE BAK '10 (Sport Management) has been named the women's head soccer coach at Holy Cross. Kyle has spent the last six seasons as the associate head coach at Providence College.

RACHEL FAIN L'10 (JD) was named to the *Hartford Business Journal's* "40 Under Forty" class of 2020. Fain is a partner at the Connecticut-based law firm, Halloran Sage. She is cochair of Halloran Sage's insurance coverage litigation practice group and works with the Connecticut Veterans Legal Center on a *pro bono* basis, managing eviction defense cases for veterans facing homelessness.

RABBI DANIEL GOODMAN L'10 (JD) has published his first novel, *A Single Life*. It is available on Amazon and Ktav.com.

KATHARINE (GROGAN) STARON '10 (Psychology) accepted a new position as client success manager at TeamSnap.

SCOTT JORGE GANHAO '11 (Finance) has been appointed to manager of the new PeoplesBank located in Ludlow, MA. Scott has more than 13 years of financial services experience.

JUAN F. LATORRE III G'11 (Engineering) was recently promoted to Principal Engineer at Verizon.

ALYSSA (OBIN) GITTLEMAN '12 (Integrated Liberal Studies) was recently promoted to vice president within Insurance Research at Conning. She also recently completed her MBA from UCONN.

ERIC SORENSON '14 (Sport Management) has accepted the men's hockey head coach position at Rivier University in Nashua, NH. He will be responsible for building a brand-new program. He was previously an assistant coach at Williams College.

MALIK GARVIN '15 (Accounting & Finance) recently started as program director for Ice Hockey in Harlem, a nonprofit organization based in New York City that works to improve social and academic well-being of children in the community. Malik was a member of Ice Hockey in Harlem and then went on to be a member of the WNE men's ice hockey team.

MARISSA HUBER L'15 (JD) was promoted to partner within Chartwell Law. Marissa practices workers compensation defense, with a focus on representing New York state indemnity and medical exposure cases.

ANETA LOMBARDI G'15 (Accounting) has been promoted to finance officer within the Holyoke, MA branch of PeoplesBank. Aneta has more than 15 years of financial services and banking experience.

JOSEPH SERRANTINO L'15 (JD) was recognized as one of Marquis Who's Who for 2020. Joseph has also been named among the Top 10 Lawyers Under 40 for the State of Connecticut.

MARK SIMMONS '15 (Sport Management) has been hired as director of parks and recreation for the town of Plainfield, CT.

NATHANIEL MUNSON '17 (Business Administration) has been promoted to assistant vice president/portfolio manager at BankESB.

PASCALE JEAN-GILLES L'18 (JD) has accepted the position of outreach director with Senator Reichlin-Melnick's team to serve the 38th District in New York. Pascale began her career as a clerk for a New Jersey Superior Court Judge, and most recently served as communications director for former state assembly woman Ellen Jaffee.

STEFAN SJOBERG L'18/G'18 (JD/MBA) has joined the law firm of Reid & Riege as a corporate attorney.

JOSHUA WOODS L'18 (JD) has joined the law firm of Bacon Wilson as an associate and member of the firm's business and commercial law team, and is licensed in both Massachusetts and Connecticut.

ALEXANDER FLETCHER '19/G'20 (Pharmacy Studies/MBA) has accepted a post-doctoral fellowship with Bristol Myers Squibb through the Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship (RPIF) Program as the US Cardiovascular: Medical Strategy and Field Medicine Sciences fellow. Fletcher expects to receive his PharmD from the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences in May 2021.

BENJAMIN GREENBERG '19 (Civil Engineering) recently started a new position with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, as a transportation engineer trainee for the Office of Rail in Newington, CT.

ROBERT MALSON G'19 (Sport Leadership and Coaching) has recently been hired by Norwich University in Vermont as the defensive line coach for their football team. Robert has also taken on the role of assistant director of COVID-19 Response. Previously he spent two years as the defensive line coach, and one year as the special teams coordinator and defensive line coach for WNE.

KRISTEN MCCLINTOCK G'19 (English for Teachers) recently joined The Gray House, a nonprofit in Springfield, MA, as the executive director.

CLARIBEL MORALES L'19 (JD) has been awarded the Bart Gordon Fellowship by the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corp. (MLAC). This fellowship will support Claribel's housing work in Western Massachusetts, where she assists tenants facing homelessness or are denied housing of their choice for discriminatory reasons.

JAMES SULLIVAN '19 (History) is the customer support specialist at ClickUp, a productivity platform startup based in San Diego.

2020s

AIMEE KISTNER '20 (Criminal Justice) has been named to the Boston Herald, EMASS Softball All-Decade team as a pitcher. Aimee was named CCC Rookie of the Year, and recognized as an All CCC team selection several times throughout her WNE softball career.

SEE MORE ONLINE

For more Class Notes and our In Memoriam listing of alumni and community members who have recently passed away, visit magazine.wne.edu.



ELIZABETH CUMMINS '11 and Jacob Snyder, July 12, 2020 in Salem, CT



ABIGAIL HELFRICH '17 and **MATTHEW ROY '15**, November 8, 2019 in Gettysburg, PA



AMANDA KOZLIK '15/PHARMD'17 and Corey Chartier, November 11, 2020 in Sturbridge, MA



SARA TAYLOR L'02 and Kirsten Tate, July 24, 2020 in Glastonbury, CT



KAYLA BROWN '15 and **DANIEL FRYE '15**, October 18, 2019 in Southwick, MA



ASHLEY JONES '13 and **ALEX MILLER '13**, January 31, 2020 in Warwick, RI

Marriages



COURTNEY MILLER '17/G'20 and Sean Donovan,
October 2, 2020 in Lakewood, NJ



TERYN ROBERTS '16 and Shane Maihot, May 23, 2020 in Malone, NY



EMILY EDDY '14/PharmD'16 and **RYAN SHULTZ '14**, October 3, 2020 in New York



BRIANA ANELLA '17/G'18 and **CARLOS NATARENO '18**, September 11, 2020 in Plymouth, NH



MARTY MARTIN L'77 and Sharon Johnston, August 1,
2020 in Alexandria, VA



SEAN QUIGLEY L'00 and Mandy Weatherby,
May 16, 2020 in Canton, GA



MOLLY MCKENNA '14 and **NICHOLAS SCHREIBER '14**
June 27, 2020 in Deep River, CT



Caralena Gautreau, October 10, 2020 to **CARMEL (SOTTO) GAUTREAU '11** and Ronald Gautreau



Nathaniel Paul, February 19, 2020 to **AMY (SAMSON) GENDREAU '09** and Bob Gendreau



Evelyn, June 2019 to **KATHARINE (GROGAN) STARON '10** and **SEAN STARON '10**



Kennedy Grace, February 8, 2020 to **JENNIFER (MEARS) KRAVIC '13** and **JAMES KRAVIC '13**



Jack Michael, April 30, 2020 to **CHRISTINA (PIZZELLA) POLASKI '11** and **JON POLASKI '11**



Canio Michael, March 2, 2020 to **SARA (SULLIVAN) CARLUCCI '11** and **CANIO CARLUCCI '11**

PREPARING OUR STUDENTS

YESTERDAY. TODAY. TOMORROW.



Whether we were WNEC or WNE during your time as a student, we will always be your home. A place that prepared you for life, created lasting friendships, and gave you the tools to lead and succeed.

Your student experience was made possible through the generosity of those who came before you, funding scholarship aid, enhancing campus facilities, and supporting academic programs.

Current students are counting on your generosity now. Your gift to The Fund for WNE will help us continue to deliver the transformative educational experience that has been our hallmark for more than 100 years.

Gifts of any size to any area of campus help strengthen the University and make a tangible difference in the lives of current and future students.

The
FUND
WESTERN NEW ENGLAND
UNIVERSITY



Help shape our bright
future at wne.edu/thefund.

413.782.1335 • thefund@wne.edu

Celebrating the Impact of Pres Blake, WNE Philanthropist and Friend

Noted philanthropist and friend to Western New England University, S. Prestley Blake has passed away at the age of 106.



“The entire Western New England University community is so grateful for Mr. Blake’s vision and generosity, and admire all that he accomplished in his long and storied career as a savvy business person and wonderful philanthropist. We are proud that our law facility bears his name, and that the Blake Law Center

affords our students the opportunity to learn in an exceptional educational setting,” said WNE President Robert E. Johnson.

Blake and his brother, Curtis, opened the first Friendly ice cream shop in Springfield, MA in 1935. From meager beginnings, the business grew into the restaurant chain Friendly’s, which had more than 500 locations across the eastern United States at its peak in the 1970s.

Spanning more than four decades, in addition to their community engagement through Friendly’s, the Blake brothers made significant philanthropic impacts in greater Springfield, with emphasis on education, healthcare, and culture. The brothers were inducted into the Western Massachusetts Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame at the Springfield Enterprise Center in 2000.

Prestley Blake and his wife, Helen, continued the Blake’s focus on philanthropy with their gifts to WNE, now collectively surpassing one million dollars. Their significant philanthropic impact at the University began with Blake’s gift to the School of Law in 1978. The S. Presley Blake Law Center, named in his honor, opened later that year and continues to be the foundation for the WNE University School of Law.

In continued recognition of their commitment to philanthropy, Prestley and Helen were named “Philanthropist of the Year” by the Western Massachusetts Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.

Beyond their philanthropic support at WNE, Prestley and Helen were active in many communities throughout New England and in Florida.

“Pres’s legacy goes well beyond the School of Law and is characterized by philanthropy that has helped to build and sustain the greater Springfield community. Our law school, University, and region have lost a friend,” said Sudha Setty, dean and professor of law at the School of Law.





1215 Wilbraham Rd. • Springfield, MA 01119-2684

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Springfield, MA
PERMIT NO. 896

STAY HEALTHY. STAY CONNECTED. STAY GOLDEN.

With a profound belief in the endless possibilities ahead, we look forward to brighter days and a brilliant future for Western New England University.

Join our new Alumni Online Community at **alumni.wne.edu** for the latest news, alumni events, and resources.



View the expanded digital version at **magazine.wne.edu** to access exclusive content and share your favorite stories on social media.

An aerial photograph of the Western New England University campus during sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the entire scene. The campus is filled with green trees, some of which have turned yellow and orange. Several large, multi-story brick buildings are visible, along with a modern glass-walled building on the right. Roads and parking lots with cars are interspersed among the buildings and trees.

WNE.EDU