

WNE

Magazine

SUMMER 2022

The Business of Sustainability

Sheila Barcohana Hollender L'80





In This Issue

Summer '22

4

COVID-19 DISRUPTS THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

Agile alumni find the solutions to keep us in stock.

10

SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Campus innovation and success hits a crescendo in the 2021-22 academic year.

14

THE BUSINESS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Sheila Barcohana Hollender L'80 finds her purpose in environmentally-friendly products and women's empowerment.

18

STILL SWINGING FOR THE FENCES

Rich Arrich '73 leaves his legacy on the field and in the classroom.



WNE

Magazine

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

PRESIDENT

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Mercedes Maskalik

DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

Katie DeBeer

EDITOR

Alex Lyman '12/G'16

CONTRIBUTORS

Nicole Acevedo '22

Joseph Bednar

Kate Burke

Judith Curran

Katie DeBeer

Briana Kubik '17

Alex Lyman '12/G'16

Collin Quinn

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Matthew Reilly

Mercedes Maskalik

DIGITAL DESIGN

Shaun McGrady '02/G'09

Becky Turner '16/G'18

Matthew Reilly

Ed O'Connell

PRINTER

AM Lithography

PHOTOGRAPHY

Kate Burke

Luke Haughwout

Mercedes Maskalik

Matthew Reilly

Meka Tome

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.

20

2022 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR AWARD RECOGNIZES DISTINGUISHED GOLDEN BEARS

Ken Rickson '75 receives the 2022 Michael A. Serafino Alumnus of the Year Award.

34

CLASS NOTES

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

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President's Message

Golden Bear Nation is thriving—not only are we continuing to reap the benefits of Powerful Preparation for the Future of Work, but we are carrying that momentum forward.

WNE has a vast history and time-honored traditions—while we honor those core elements of our collective identity, we continue to forge ahead into the world of the unknown to seek out change and advancement.

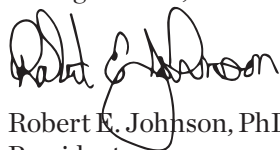
In this issue, you will see evidence of just how innovative and entrepreneurial our WNE community is, from students and alumni to faculty and staff.

From illustrious alumni tackling supply chain challenges stemming from the pandemic and being recognized for their achievements in athletics and service, to students in the College of Business developing their own products and presenting them at conferences, WNE is truly at its best creatively, professionally, and academically.

As we ride the waves of our successes, we were fortunate to gather for our first in-person Commencement since 2019 to celebrate the Class of 2022. We were pleased to welcome back alumni Nick Newell '08 and Sheila Barcohana Hollender L'80 to deliver the Commencement Address at each ceremony. On page 14, you'll learn more about Sheila's journey from the School of Law to successful sustainability entrepreneur and women's reproductive health advocate. This joyful occasion reminded us of why we ply our trade in the Academy; to stand proud as our newly minted graduates go forth and make their mark on society.

In my blog, *The Academy, Leadership, and the Future is Now*, I noted that we must construct our model as a New Traditional University in a way that honors the best of traditional education and that is responsive to and invigorated by the future. Now, more than ever, it is imperative for WNE to remain agile, open minded, and adaptable to change, while staying true to our Golden Bear heritage into our second century.

With gratitude,



Robert E. Johnson, PhD
President

To read President Johnson's blog *The Academy, Leadership, and the Future is Now*, visit wne.edu/president/blog





COVID-19

the Global Supply

WNE Alumni Find the Solutions to Keep Us in Stock

BY ALEX LYMAN '12/G'16

You've seen it everywhere: empty shelves at the grocery store, higher gas prices and shipping costs, and bottlenecks in the production of computer chips, consumer goods, and raw materials. The breakdown in the supply chain of these products is easily explained by the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with past and ongoing world events.

However, WNE alumni are prevalent among the leaders stepping in to save the day and keep society running. Our alumni are not only committed to being resilient in their roles in critical infrastructure to navigate these issues but also creative, responsive, and agile.

ANALYZING THE DOMINO EFFECT

COVID-19 disrupted the global supply chain at a time when it was perhaps already nearing a tipping point, with increased consumer demands, political strife, natural disasters, and other world

events rippling across the international community. When COVID-19 entered the global scene, it complicated an already complex system.

As many in the workforce were exposed to or infected with COVID-19, operations were crippled due to long quarantine and isolation periods. The safety precautions and social distancing used to prevent the spread of the virus cut into efficiency, and there simply were not enough people to get the job done.

Couple that with today's challenges, such as the Great Resignation movement that has burnt-out employees shifting workplaces and industries, and geopolitical unrest with Russia's invasion in Ukraine (which has resulted in drastic fuel hikes and exorbitant shipping charges), and it becomes clear why supply, demand, and costs are suddenly not in sync.

Associate Professor of Industrial Engineering and Engineering

Management Seyed Niknam notes that the ultimate goal of any business should be to maximize the total supply chain surplus, which is the difference between customer values, revenue, and supply chain production costs. However, the ways in which companies choose to create that surplus often can be detrimental to their customers.

"With any disruption in the supply chain, most companies in the U.S. choose the easy approach of keeping their desirable surplus by manipulating customer values," says Professor Niknam. "They merely increase the prices and force consumers to foot the bill."

He adds that creative solutions to supply chain disruptions do exist. Academic texts often focus on long-term solutions, but Professor Niknam says that there must also always be short-term options in the discussion in order to create flexible solutions.

Disrupts Chain



TAKING CARE OF HEALTHCARE

Healthcare has undoubtedly been among the hardest-hit industries throughout the entire pandemic, with often limited resources and the added challenge of managing pandemic conditions through protocol and caring for very ill COVID patients, along with a regular roster of healthcare clients.

President of Greenwich Hospital Diane Kelly G'01 says that COVID-19 completely changed the face of healthcare. In particular, she points to how reactions to constantly-changing scenarios had to be both immediate and thoughtful, without the typical administrative processes that take place over time, such as assessment of needs, budgetary forecasting, and other planning mechanisms. COVID-19 shifted the mindset of medical professionals to get patients the care

they needed however they could, with an eye toward flexibility.

“Before COVID, our Intensive Care Unit (ICU) capacity was ten beds,” says Diane. “Given the complexity and needs of patients, we had to expand our ICU to 24 beds at one point. This was a temporary situation while our healthcare system planned to care for our patients using a strong team approach across the entire system. What has changed permanently is that we have expanded the ICU to now include additional beds that can be easily opened up as a COVID Unit.”

Diane says that being part of a large healthcare system such as Yale New Haven Health helped keep most supply chain issues at a reasonable threshold. With affiliated hospitals spread out across Connecticut in areas with differing numbers of COVID-19 cases, not every hospital in the system had

“

I witnessed firsthand how scarce resources can become and how a larger healthcare system has the ability to be highly agile, working together to ensure supplies and staff are directed where they are needed the most.”

critical needs for supplies and staff at the same time. This meant that both people and equipment could be shifted and transferred to hospitals, often at a moment's notice.

“As I talk about adjusting our hospital operations to manage our COVID patients, each phase of that is dependent on the availability of the right equipment for both our patients and our staff,”



Diane Kelly G'01
President, Greenwich Hospital

notes Diane. “This falls squarely in the supply chain environment. This is when having the strength of a supply chain that supports the entire system was critical to our ability to protect both our patients and staff.

“I witnessed firsthand how scarce resources can become and how a larger healthcare system has the ability to be highly agile, working together to ensure supplies and staff are directed where they are needed the most.”

While the Yale New Haven Health system was able to rely on all of its members to ensure that resources were all in place, they did not forget the smaller, independent hospitals that were struggling to provide the same level of care without the advantages of support. In the same spirit of goodwill and community, both Greenwich Hospital and Yale New Haven Health gladly provided any help they could to these individual facilities so that they, too, could care for their patients.

However, with so much being unknown about COVID-19, especially early

on, Diane’s team often still had to find creative solutions not just to supply chain difficulties, but also to provide critical care that kept providers safe from exposure, as well as other patients.

Greenwich Hospital had to look at its physical resources and determine how to turn any room into one with ICU-capable beds. Glass windows were installed beside room doors so that nurses could always have visual contact with patients. Remote telemonitoring technology was also used to allow staff to communicate with and assess patients frequently. Of course, doctors and nurses still had to enter rooms for treatments that involved physical contact, but by reducing the need for these face-to-face interactions, they maintained a lower risk of exposure.

Another creative, though unorthodox, way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 was to bring medical devices into the hallway.

“Our COVID patients were very ill and were on many different IV medications at once,” Diane explains. “Each of those medications requires a programmed

pump to manage the dose, and a nurse needs to be monitoring those doses periodically. The nurses came up with a strategy of using extra-long tubing so that the computers could come outside the door. This meant that the medication was flowing into the patient seamlessly, but the nurse could have control without ever going in and being exposed.”

In that same vein, the Yale New Haven Health system made a point of recognizing and trying to meet their own needs when help was unavailable. For example, when the entire country was struggling to find hand sanitizer, their pharmacy department partnered with system supply chain staff to begin making and dispensing enough hand sanitizer to meet the need of all affiliated hospitals.

Equally important for success was total transparency from leadership. There was no playbook for dealing with COVID, and with information changing so frequently, it was difficult for hospital administration to advise their staff.

Diane says that she did not hide the uncertainty and empowered everyone to make decisions and work through challenges as best they could.

“I don’t recall facing a situation when I had so few answers for our staff,” she admits. “Honesty proved to be the right strategy. It brought us all together as a team. We learned together, had many sad days together, and saw great progress together.”

PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE

In this post-pandemic climate, as we head to the grocery stores in search of our favorite pasta and proteins, we are finding that if there isn’t a shortage in a particular food category, there is at least a lack of choices.

George Semanie ’99 is seeing firsthand how the supply chain affects food markets, and he says the scaling of commodities is one of those consequences.

As a National Buyer for C&S Wholesale Grocers, George and his team mainly work with produce suppliers such as Fresh Express, Dole, and Driscoll’s

Berries to negotiate costs and availability of products for customers.

Labor shortages during the pandemic have been the most obvious problem that George has observed in his work and is one that has created a snowball effect. The ability and willingness of employees to work in person during COVID-19 was and is crucial in both the production and distribution of all food products.

“Our processes take place in warehouses—you cannot be remote,” says George. “Selectors and receivers have to be in the facility to select the product, palletize it, and load it onto the truck. Drivers need to be available to get the product from the farms to the warehouse, and then from the warehouse to the stores. Without those workers, some service levels and timeframes have been delayed.”

To stay on top of delays, George has learned to shift his buying habits to accommodate these difficulties. Most produce items have a limited shelf life, and in the winter, when most produce is out of season, it must be transported from farther away to George’s New England clients.

“Our on-time and on-hand freshness really shrunk,” he notes. “We had to shorten how much time we would allow for a product to be in the facilities. Plus, the farmers and the suppliers have had their operations challenged, so they might not have enough products for us to purchase. So, our buying habits have had to change.”

With fewer products being shipped daily, it also means that warehouses have to focus on key popular items, rather than variety.

“

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“Pre-COVID, you may normally have seen a variety of products available,” he says. “Where now, we are scaling some of them back to make sure we’re getting the key items out to the consumers.”

George says that working in an industry that provides necessities to people and families does add a bit of pressure to his



George Semanie '99
National Buyer, C&S Wholesale Grocers



“

SpaceX's superpower is that we will always be redesigning applications to optimize a little bit further. That is the culture of SpaceX. People do try to steal our technology, so the way we combat that is to keep innovating so fast and so often that they cannot keep up with us.”

Nick Massa '13
Global Supply Chain Manager, SpaceX

shoulders. The stakes are high, and he is a key component in feeding the country.

“The role is challenging,” he muses. “We have to make sure that plates are full and refrigerators are stocked. Being part of that has been really fulfilling, knowing that consumers can still go to the grocery store and find whatever they need.”

KEEPING OUR EYES ON THE SATELLITES

You might be surprised to know that the supply chain issues being experienced by aerospace juggernaut SpaceX are increasingly relevant to the average person.

According to Global Supply Manager Nick Massa '13, SpaceX actually has exceedingly important functions outside of space travel, albeit ones perhaps less known to the public.

For example, Nick works on private satellites that serve a critical need: to provide secure communication for the government and military. While much of his work is proprietary, and therefore classified, these satellites are essential to protect homeland security.

Another SpaceX satellite program, StarLink, is working to provide broadband internet globally to underserved communities in order to offer consumers a choice in where they get their internet. Aiming to be a more affordable option, StarLink has the potential to make a dent in closing the digital divide.

With classified work in government communication and contributions to the greater good via satellites, a break in the supply chain could very well have significant impacts beyond SpaceX's ability to operate normally as a visionary. With such relevance, it is clear that SpaceX cannot ignore these obstacles.

With all of this in mind, Nick's work comes with its own high stakes. He manages teams of sourcing managers responsible for taking the satellite components, from machine parts to electronics, and getting them scheduled and sourced to different suppliers, ensuring contracts are negotiated and parts are delivered on time to proper

specifications. If Nick and his team cannot get the job done, the entire process—and project—falls apart.

The challenges Nick has faced include the lack of available precious metals that make up crucial satellite parts, significant price fluctuation of such goods, and constantly changing lead time needs. Because of this, he has had to shake up the way his supply chain operates. Now, Nick and his team do most of that legwork themselves to ensure they always have needed materials at the ready.

“Because the lead times of raw materials have been so prone to fluctuation and increases in price, what we do now is determine the amount and types of raw metal we need, procure the material directly in advance, and put it on the shelf for future use,” Nick says. “We will then provide that material directly to the vendor for machining.

“We control the cost so we do not have to suffer through so much price fluctuation over time. However, there is an increase in overhead in the amount of work it is for my team to go through that process for many hundreds of parts.”

However, when purchasing supplies in bulk long before they were needed, it became apparent that SpaceX did not have the space to house so much product. So, an agreement was made with material vendors to hold on to the materials in their warehouses until SpaceX was ready for it. Overall, this reduced the risk of a lack of materials to move projects forward.

As Nick notes, SpaceX has its reputation behind it and plenty of cash to change the game, but that is not a common experience among most companies.

“It is more of a challenge for smaller companies,” he says. “We can really use our weight as a company to negotiate more favorable terms. A small company has absolutely no recourse and is at the mercy of the fluctuating market conditions for electronic components.”

That's not to say that SpaceX has it easy. With a big name comes more pressure to be competitive, regardless of the supply chain landscape. Other companies are hot on their heels, and SpaceX is unwilling to give up any ground. The result is constant reinvention.

“SpaceX's superpower is that we will always be redesigning applications to optimize a little bit further,” Nick says. “That is the culture of SpaceX. People do try to steal our technology, so the way we combat that is to keep innovating so fast and so often that they cannot keep up with us.”

THRIVING IN VOLATILE TIMES: GOLDEN BEAR-STYLE

Larger global events will always have effects on a micro level—and when it comes to the supply chain, everyone from the largest corporations and family-owned stores right down to base-level consumers will feel those ripples and need to respond.

The solutions are always out there, and Western New England alumni have been primed and prepared to find them. As we honor tradition and embrace innovation today, we realize that this is something we have always done and is a core part of who we are.

Our second pillar in our value proposition is **An Agile Mind Education**, which:

“Prepares students to adapt and thrive; equips them to learn, unlearn, and relearn; and defines success in the Future of Work.”

That pillar rings true, especially in this climate, and we are shifting our own curriculum to meet the moment. This includes offering an extra graduate-level course in supply chain due to the heightened interest, as well as adding a new, required Supply Chain Engineering course to the Industrial Engineering curriculum, which can be taken as an elective by other engineering students.

Whatever is next in healthcare, produced in consumer goods, and found amongst the stars, our alumni are the problem solvers of the future who will constantly innovate our systems in the supply chain in a way that is responsive and focused on keeping things running.

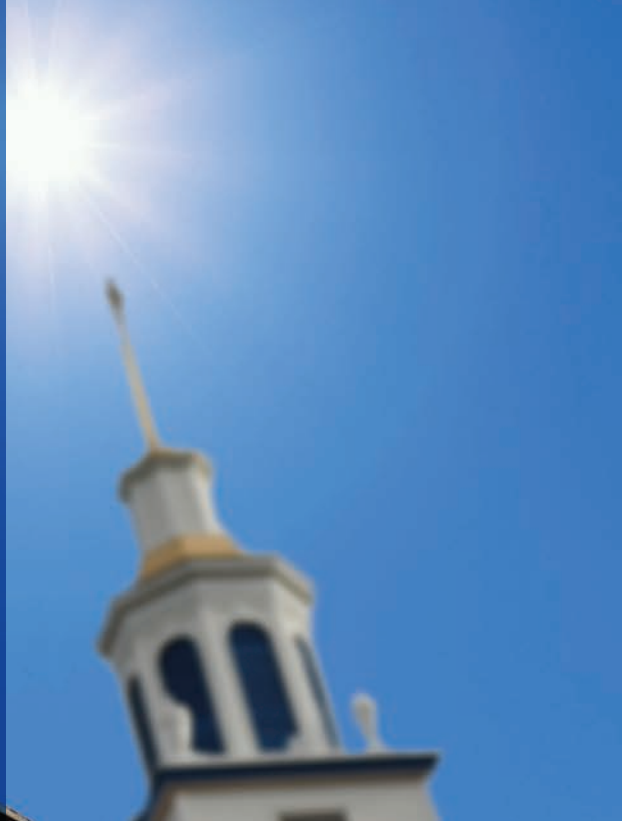
SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Campus Innovation and Success Hits a Crescendo

By Alex Lyman '12/G'16

Golden Bears are on the rise and putting their heads together to generate value and innovation. The outcomes are impressive, and it is evident that our campus is more creative than ever and ready to make things happen.

Here is just a small sampling of the ways our campus community is making a name for itself and making us all proud.



EXPLORING BIOETHICS THROUGH A PHILOSOPHIC LENS

WNE received a \$1,000 grant from the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) as an extension of Assistant Professor of Philosophy Valerie Racine's participation in CIC's 2021 New Currents in Teaching Philosophy Institute.

Dr. Racine used the grant to host on-campus and virtual events on current

topics in bioethics, featuring a variety of guest speakers, including a special presentation relating to the Ethics of Medical Devices. These interdisciplinary events were a collaboration between the Department of History, Philosophy, Politics, and Economics and the Department of Biomedical Engineering.

A RISING STAR IN AEROSPACE

Junior Carly Schneider (Industrial Engineering) was awarded a Brooke Owens Fellowship, a paid internship and executive mentorship program for exceptional undergraduate women and gender-minority students in Aerospace. Selected for her talent, experience, commitment to service, and creativity, Carly will work at Relativity Space in Long Beach, CA, while also benefitting from industry workshops, professional mentorship, and a vast network provided by the fellowship.



WNE SHINES IN *U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT* 2022 RANKINGS

The numbers are in, and WNE yet again improved upon its standings in *U.S. News and World Report*.

The rankings place Western New England University in the top 10 in Massachusetts for accredited online MBA and Graduate Business programs and in the top three in Massachusetts for accredited Master's in Engineering programs.

2022 Best Online Programs

#153 (up from #224)

Online Graduate Business Program (Non-MBA)

#110 (up from #129)

Online Master's in Engineering Program 79–104



WNE TAKES ON THE FED

WNE Finance majors Michaela McCormick, John D'Aniello, and Michela Kelley participated in the College Fed Challenge, a competition that encourages students to learn about the United States economy and the role of the Federal Reserve System. They created a presentation of their recommendations for the current economic and financial conditions and defended them in front of a judging panel of economists at the Federal

Reserve Bank of Boston.



Searching for a Cure for Cancer in an Anti-Cancer Drug Study

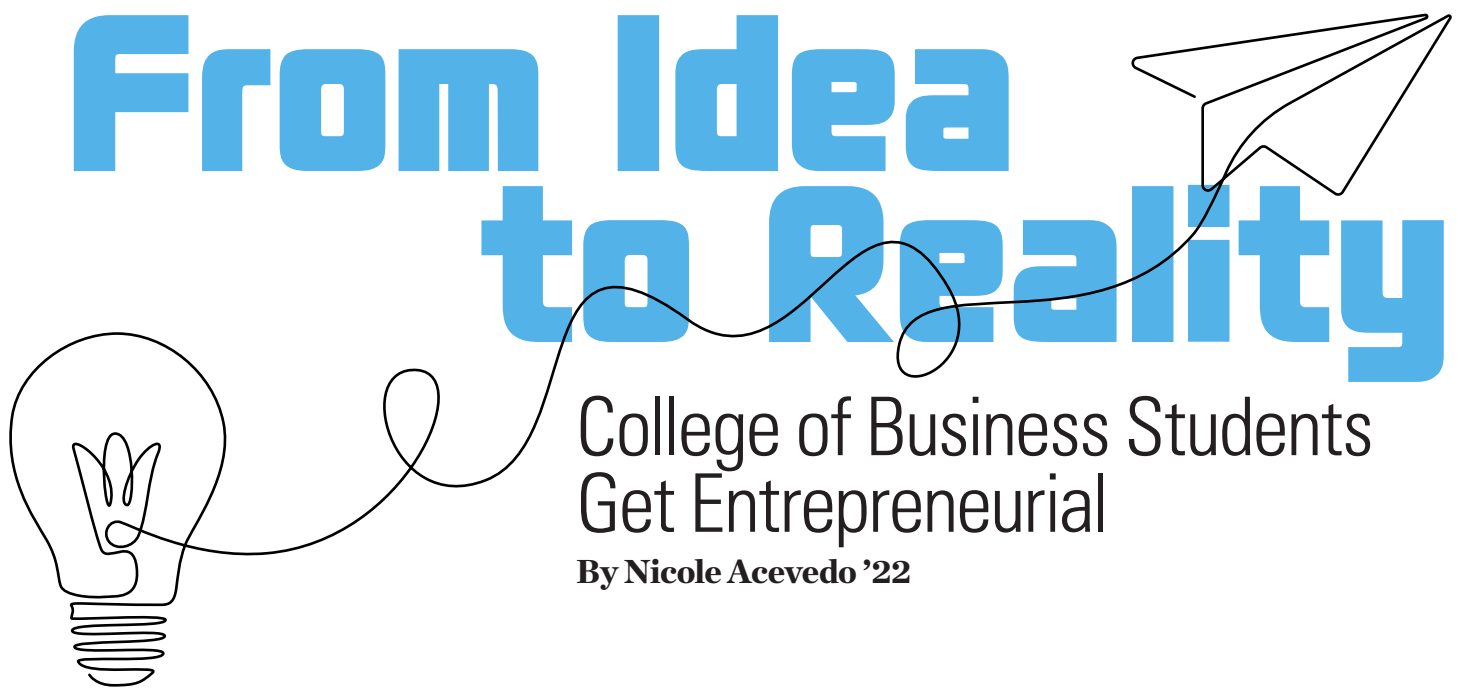
Western New England University's College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences was recently awarded a \$300,000 research grant from Quercis Pharma to study the effects of the drugs Isoquercetin and Zafirlukast to determine whether or not they inhibit or treat cancer and other diseases.



LEARN MORE!

To keep up with the latest campus innovations and news, visit wne.edu/news.

From Idea to Reality



College of Business Students Get Entrepreneurial

By Nicole Acevedo '22

Entrepreneurship rules the business world, and Western New England University's College of Business is committed to offering students the opportunities they need to turn their innovative ideas into realities.

To facilitate and prepare students for these opportunities, faculty offer continual support to students through mentoring and networking events. Two of the biggest entrepreneurial incubators students have the chance to participate in take place during the fall semester.

Annual Golden Bear Innovation Jam Centers on Healthcare Solutions

The Golden Bear Innovation Jam (GBIJ) is designed to encourage students to unlock their creative potential and develop skills to foster their entrepreneurial aspirations. The 2021 theme was centered around healthcare, reflecting the current pandemic-related demand for industry solutions.

Senior Entrepreneurship major Ethan Valdes, cofounder of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Club, proposed the idea for the GBIJ alongside senior Entrepreneurship and Marketing major Grace Buttrick, following their attendance at Smith College's Western Massachusetts Innovation Jam (WMIJ).

Western New England students accompanied students from Mount Holyoke College, UMass Amherst, Hampshire College, and Smith at the

WMIJ in September 2019. After seeing how beneficial the résumé-building opportunity was, Grace and Ethan worked together to bring a similar event to the WNE campus.

"We have not had a full event yet, due to COVID-19; however, the idea is that a bunch of different colleges come together to create their business ideas, join a team, come up with a pitch, and then act as if they are actually running the business," said Ethan.

This year's Golden Bear Innovation Jam was sponsored by PeoplesBank, which awarded six student teams the 2021 PeoplesBank Award to further advance innovation and entrepreneurship across the University, and the entire Pioneer Valley.

WNE Students Launch Functioning Prototypes at Product Innovation Showcase

The Product Innovation Showcase is a unique and crowd-pleasing event to spotlight entrepreneurial growth and teamwork. Each year, College of Business and College of Engineering students team up to collaborate in a cross-disciplinary course and develop marketable products. Over the course of a semester, engineering students are instructed to invent and develop a functioning prototype, while

2021 PeoplesBank Award Winners

Undergraduate Students

Jeremy Bowler

Electronically controlled, continuously variable transmission

Tytanie Brown

Funding for beauty services equipment

Caleb Miller

Cofounded an RV startup

Dante Talamini

Frost Alert

Ethan Valdes

Bus Boiz

Graduate Students

Shemika White

Notes of Beauty (chemical-free beauty products)

their business teammates focus on constructing a marketing strategy and business plan.

U.S. Tsubaki Automotive, a leading manufacturer and supplier of power transmission and motion control products, granted Western New England University \$12,500 to support the Product Development and Innovation course over the next five years.

The 7th Annual Product Innovation Showcase took place in December 2021 in Rivers Memorial Hall and featured 18 innovations. Each team was given the chance to pitch their product to investors and sell them on their commercial viability. Some of the successful innovations included Eyedar, a glove for the blind that converts distance measurements into vibrations for the user; Reel Deal, a fishing pole that allows users with a loss of strength or arm mobility to fish; and Gear Electric, which provides low-resource countries and individuals who live off the grid with sustainable, reliable power.

VIP investors were each given one million Golden Bear Dollars to invest in the product and team that they felt had a quality prototype, was the most useful and beneficial, and upheld professionalism in their presentation of financial questions and revenue projections.

By pulling inspiration from previous internship experiences and personal

passions, Grace Buttrick brainstormed the product idea for her team's development of Praequa.

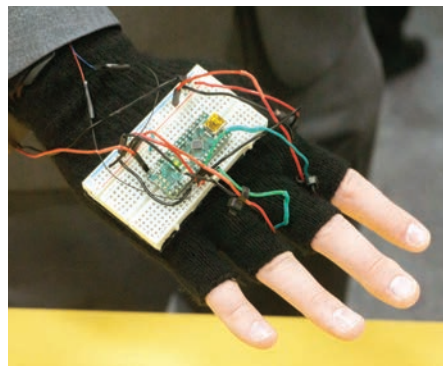
"After working as an intern for Hanover Insurance and helping out their innovation team with the analysis of Internet of Things (IoT) devices, I knew I wanted to do something that I was familiar with," said Grace. "From that came my suggestion to create a smart flood detector."

Every group received funds that significantly surpassed their investment "ask." The top four products that obtained substantial investments were Eyedar as the Accessibility winner, raising \$5.1 million; Praequa as the Safety Cluster winner, raising \$4.2 million; Mailsense, a mailbox sensor, as the Household and Industrial winner, raising \$3.6 million; and the Reel Deal as the Outdoors and Recreational winner, raising \$1.8 million.

During this year's Showcase, College of Business Dean Sharianne Walker created the Dean's Award for Societal



Impact, which spotlights innovative ideas that could potentially lead to sustainable, long-term societal impact. With the input from several University trustees and Hossein Cheraghi, Dean of the College of Engineering, the first-time award was presented to the Reel Deal, with honorable mentions going to Eyedar and Versa Chair, a modified wheelchair that helps the user get in and out of bed easily.



To learn more about what's happening in the College of Business, visit wne.edu/business.





BY KATIE DEBEER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT REILLY

Lawyer turned environmental health advocate Sheila Barcohana Hollender L'80 finds her purpose in sustainability and women's empowerment

The Business of Sustainability

When Sheila Barcohana Hollender L'80 applied to law school, non-toxic feminine care products were the furthest thing from her mind. As a law student, she envisioned—and would go on to achieve—making partner at a New York City law firm and working from an office on Park Avenue.

But that was just the beginning of Sheila's journey. She would become a leader in sustainability and women's health issues, finding her purpose in businesses that enabled consumers to make healthier choices for themselves, their families, and the planet.

Growing up in Providence, Rhode Island, Sheila was a hard-working student who loved to read. The eldest of four children, Sheila was born in the United States to immigrant parents from Iran. Her father was a practicing physician, and her mother was a stay-at-home mom, running the household. Education was an important value for both of her parents, and Sheila and her siblings were all strongly encouraged to pursue graduate degrees.

As an undergrad studying English Literature at Hampshire College, Sheila also developed her love for photography, a passion she would cultivate throughout her life. At that time in the 1970s, sustainability wasn't the hot topic it is today, but it was embedded in the culture at Hampshire and Sheila found a natural connection to our individual and collective responsibility as stewards of our planet. Additionally, she had the opportunity to take some undergraduate courses in law, which planted the seed for the next step in her journey.

After earning her bachelor's degree, Sheila and a friend spent nine months traveling the world—visiting India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Greece, Nepal, and more. It was during these travels that she decided to apply to law school—from India—thanks in part to some strong encouragement from her parents.

Upon beginning her studies at Western New England University School of Law, Sheila found friendly classmates, and knowledgeable and supportive faculty. While some students struggled with the new way of learning and thinking required in law school, Sheila's love of reading made it an easy transition for her. Only one quarter of her classmates were female—they were among a small group of women pursuing careers in law at the time. Even so, Sheila found the School of Law to be a warm and welcoming environment. She especially enjoyed contracts, labor law, and tax law, and she began to envision herself as a lawyer.

Following her 1980 graduation from the School of Law, Sheila began to work toward making her dream a reality. Over the course of 12 years, she was able to achieve the exact career she had envisioned for herself—Park Avenue office and all.

Times were very different back then for women practicing law. For example, female attorneys were not allowed to wear pants in court; skirts and heels were required.

But Sheila, who was practicing real estate litigation, was fortunate in that she did not experience any gender discrimination as she built her career.

"I am a very confident person, so it is possible gender discrimination was going on and I didn't notice," she said. Sheila also worked in a smaller firm at the time, which may have contributed to the supportive, encouraging environment. Speaking to her positive mindset, Sheila said, "I try not to let any negative things in, because I have no use for them." Throughout her life, Sheila always tended to shut out distractions and naysayers, focusing instead on what she knew she could achieve. But in her journey to achieving her professional goals, there was no big break moment for her—her success in law was the result of a lot of hard work combined with a little bit of luck, including landing one of Manhattan's bigger landlords as her client, thanks to a family connection through one of her partners.

Sheila's confidence and positive attitude guided her through those years as she advanced professionally. It was during this time that she met and married her husband Jeffrey, and they welcomed the first two of their three children—Meika and Alex—into their family. As Sheila's legal career was thriving, Jeffrey had launched Seventh Generation, which at the time was primarily a mail-order catalogue selling sustainable products. As the business started to grow, and the strain of Jeffrey's commute between NYC and Vermont grew, Jeffrey asked Sheila to move the family to Vermont to help launch the company.

Sheila took a sharp detour from the path she was on when she reluctantly agreed to take a leave from her law practice and move their family to the freezing mountains of Vermont. The experience of stepping away from her legal career and starting over from scratch was difficult. Sheila's whole professional identity was wrapped up in her corporate attorney life, and she did not immediately know where her path would take her in this new place and new organization.

Sheila initially joined Seventh Generation as part of their catalogue team, sourcing products and putting the catalogue together. At the time, nothing was online—everything was mail order. After three years, they sold the catalogue portion of the company to focus on wholesale, and Sheila stepped away to have her third child—Chiara—and cultivate her interest in photography. In short order, she began to miss the work, so she returned to Seventh Generation in a new role, overseeing corporate giving with a focus on environmental causes that were aligned with the company's priorities. They also acquired a small company that

manufactured organic tampons, and through that acquisition, Sheila's role shifted to developing and marketing a complete line of feminine care products.

"Ultimately, being involved in a mission-driven company surrounded by loving and passionate people gave me a sense of purpose I never fully had in my prior career," Sheila said. Her personal mission was to focus on fighting climate change by developing environmentally-friendly feminine care products for women and girls. Initially, Sheila saw a less lofty mission for herself—creating products that did not harm our children or our health. She thought holistically about the planet and the factors within our control, such as what we expose ourselves and our loved ones to.

While Seventh Generation is a household name today, it wasn't always that way. "It was a long trajectory; it was 30 years in the making," Sheila said of the company's growth. "It wasn't a popular topic. There was a very small community of people that cared about what was in their laundry detergent."

In the early days, it was hard to get traction—until Sheila had

an idea that would revolutionize the way they marketed their products. "I realized at one point the talking points shouldn't be 'we are trying to create a better planet,'" she said. "We changed to 'we are trying to create healthy people and healthy families and these products are better for you.' We linked it to the personal, and it began to grow."

Over time, consumer interest in natural, non-toxic, and sustainable products increased, and consumer demand has helped to move the needle for companies that seek to have a positive impact on environmental issues. It now makes smart business sense for big name brands to invest in product lines that appeal

to consumers who are interested in natural, healthy products that are better for them and better for the planet.

But there are also business reasons driving much of the change that has taken place in the past three decades. For example, when Walmart wanted more shelf space, they identified laundry detergent as a big problem with an obvious solution. By reducing or eliminating the water in detergent and instead selling it in concentrated form, containers would take up less space, so they could have more product on shelves. When Walmart started requiring manufacturers to provide detergent in concentrated form, the impact was immense. It wasn't just the mission-driven companies like Seventh Generation that were making these shifts; it was happening across the sector. Changes such as this continue to this day. The new wave of detergent products will be strips, the size of a small bandage, packed in recyclable cardboard containers. These new products are better for the planet, with no water and





no plastic involved, and they're better for retailers' bottom lines, with reduced shipping costs and minimal shelf space requirements.

Major shifts weren't just happening in product; technology was changing too. Sheila credits the many young people who worked at the company at the time for helping Seventh Generation to navigate, adapt, and thrive as technology rapidly changed the way business and commerce happened.

Sheila and Jeffrey continued to lead Seventh Generation until 2010, when they separated from the company. It was

“When an opportunity knocks at your door, even if it is far beyond the plan you have for yourselves today, don’t miss it. Don’t be afraid of new roads and opportunities that come your way.”

eventually acquired by Unilever in 2016.

After some thoughtful exploration, Sheila and Jeffrey decided to launch a new company, Sustain Natural, this time with their daughter Meika as cofounder and CEO. They worked together to grow the company, which specializes in non-toxic condoms and organic feminine care products. Discussing the challenges of getting new products on retailer shelves, Sheila said, “The buyers for Walgreens or CVS or

Duane Reade are largely groups of older men who think the pink box is the be-all, end-all. Meika did a great job explaining to them why women wouldn't want toxic things in their bodies.” As the retail distribution grew, Sustain also launched a direct-to-consumer line, offering additional feminine hygiene and sexual health products. Always with a mind to giving back, Sustain also donated 10 percent of its profits to women's healthcare organizations.

In 2017, Sheila retired— to enjoy life, play more tennis, and advance her personal mission in other ways. She currently serves on the Boards of the Stephen Petronio Dance Company and a family foundation. Sheila has once again returned to photography, and she is enjoying being a grandmother for the first time—a role she began in 2020.

Reflecting on her personal mission and the impact of her work in women's health and sustainability over the decades, Sheila said, “You have to be present in what you're doing, and you have to think about how it affects everyone. You have to think globally about your everyday life.”

Beyond the global reach of Sheila's work, her story also demonstrates the possibilities that can be unlocked if one remains open to unexpected opportunities that may arise. Very few people have a completely linear path from campus to career, and part of Sheila's success story is the way in which she was able to adapt and thrive at the various pivot points of her life.

During her keynote address at Western New England University's Graduate Commencement Ceremony on May 22, Sheila encouraged the Class of 2022 to stay open to the unexpected. “When an opportunity knocks at your door, even if it is far beyond the plan you have for yourselves today, don't miss it. Don't be afraid of new roads and opportunities that come your way.” She continued, “Be ready to take on the challenges of the future. You can do it because you already have the tools in hand. The unexpected will happen, and when it does, greet it with open arms.”

Still Swinging for the Fences

Rich Arrich '73, WNE Baseball and Soccer alumnus, is leaving his legacy on the field and in the classroom.

By Kate Burke

Nearly 50 years after concluding his athletic career at Western New England University, Rich Arrich '73, one of the first two-sport student-athletes in school history, continues to score big for the Golden Bears.

A true advocate for the student-athlete experience, Rich is now giving back to the WNE community and impacting future generations of Golden Bears, both on the field and in the classroom. Through his generous gift, a \$400,000 bequest intention, he has developed the Richard G. Arrich Memorial Athletics Technology Fund and the Richard G. Arrich Endowed Memorial Engineering Competition Fund.

"You have to give back to your roots, to your community," said Rich. "I believe we all owe our good fortune to the people who molded us."

Thanks to Rich's support, WNE Athletics will continue to make great strides in technological advancement, impacting both the student-athlete and coaching experience. "The technology that is available to soccer coaches has increased significantly in recent years," said Head Men's Soccer Coach Devin O'Neill. "Securing funds to help us access this technology will help us maintain our competitive balance in our league and in the region."

Though the student-athlete experience and the campus landscape have greatly grown and evolved since Rich's time on campus in the late 1960s and early 1970s, he fondly reflects on his experience and attributes many





1972 WNE Varsity Soccer Team pictured with Coach Downes



Richard '73 and Kathleen Arrich

of his life successes to the educational experience he earned on campus. He credits his achievements to the mentors, coaches, and professors who guided him along the way including his dad, his hero; Men's Soccer Head Coach Bill Downes, whom Rich calls the "legend of all legends;" Archie Moore, who was an interim baseball coach for the Golden Bears and center fielder for the Yankees; Men's Soccer Head Coach Eric Geldart; and College of Engineering Professor and Associate Dean Richard Grabiec.

"I am a firm believer in getting the educational experience as close to the real world as possible," said Rich. "That's one of the best things the University has going for it, in yesteryear and today. I am totally indebted to the preparation that the college gave me with special projects and hands-on experience."

Rich encourages Golden Bear student-athletes to enjoy the experience both on and off the field, especially the friendships and relationships formed. "College athletics are some of the best times you'll have in your life," he said. "Athletics is a bond. The experience that playing on a team, or being involved in a club, offers is not nuts and bolts—personalities get involved; it's a great dynamic."

Shortly after graduation from WNE, Rich, a native of Garden City, Long Island, NY, relocated to Ormond Beach, FL, and has continued to swing for the fences ever since. Taking advantage of the warm weather and attractions of the Sunshine State, he learned the ropes of manufacturing and operations in the

lucrative sun tanning business in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. Through work with companies such as Hawaiian Tropic and Native Tan, Rich developed a robust career in the sun tanning and aloe vera sector. Drawing from his vast professional experiences and applying his

engineering background from WNE, he started A&A Aloe in 1995, a successful company he owned and operated in southern California until he retired in 2016.

Now enjoying retirement with his wife Kathleen, Rich has maintained the competitive edge he developed as a Golden Bear student-athlete by contributing not only to the continued success of WNE, but also to the development and growth of adult sports programs in central Florida. He has been widely recognized for his efforts, including being inducted into the Ormond Beach Men's Adult Softball Hall of Fame.

"The college experience keeps going on," said Rich, who stays in regular contact with fellow Golden Bear alumni including Danny Boskey '76, Billy Lindsay '77, and Ed Lindsay '78. In addition to returning to campus for events over the years, including Homecoming, athletic events, and golf tournaments, Rich notes that he also gets together with Billy Lindsay every year to go to the Daytona 500.

"It's nice to stay in touch with the University, with the coaches, and with fellow alumni," said Rich. "It's pretty cool to have the connection."

The Richard G. Arrich Endowed Memorial Engineering Competition Fund

This design-competition endowment provides support toward the necessary equipment, supplies, components, and consumables needed for our students to compete at state and national levels. Such competitions could include, but are not limited to, robotics, BajaSAE, innovation and entrepreneurship, green energy, ASME, or other professional organization presentations. The fund cannot be used for travel expenses.

Richard G. Arrich Endowed Memorial Athletics Technology Fund

This endowment provides support toward the purchase and maintenance of safety, learning, and athletic training technology equipment and/or software that would benefit Golden Bear athletes across all sports.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can establish your legacy with the University through an endowed fund, please visit legacy.wne.edu or contact Elizabeth Simpson, Associate Director of Planned Giving, at elizabeth.simpson@wne.edu.



THE 2022 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR AWARD RECOGNIZES DISTINGUISHED GOLDEN BEARS

*Named in memory of Michael A. Serafino '77,
the 2022 award honors the dedication and
service of Kenneth Rickson '75*

By Kate Burke

For over 50 years, the Western New England University Alumni Association has presented the Alumnus of the Year Award in celebration of members of the Golden Bear alumni community who display an extraordinary commitment to professional achievement, to civic responsibility, to high personal standards, and to WNE with a spirit of knowledge, integrity, and service.

In 2022, the award continues to honor this proud tradition, now named in tribute to and in fond remembrance of Michael (Mike) A. Serafino '77, who passed away in November 2021. The Michael A. Serafino Alumnus of the Year Award celebrates Mike's legacy and the impact dedicated Golden Bears like him continue to make on campus and the community at large. Initially setting foot on campus as a student, Mike became a devoted alumnus, a caring trustee, a

generous donor, and a cherished friend to many at WNE and beyond.

This past June, the Alumni Association presented the inaugural Michael A. Serafino Alumnus of the Year Award to Ken Rickson '75. Ken has been actively involved with WNE for nearly 50 years—as a student, alumni volunteer, trustee, and donor.

"It's so meaningful to be the first recipient of the Michael A. Serafino Alumnus of the Year Award," Ken said. "Mike was a good friend, was always very helpful and supportive, was a great listener, and had great advice."

Ken was elected as a one-year alumni trustee in 1975 and rejoined the board in 1996 after being elected to serve as a two-year alumni trustee. He became a full trustee in 1998 and has been on the board ever since, serving in a number of capacities, including Board Chair in 2018 and leader of the University

Presidential Search Committee following the retirement of President Emeritus Anthony S. Caprio.

"Ken's contributions to the University are truly exemplary," said WNE Vice President of Advancement Beverly Dwight. "He is a shining example of alumni achievement and service to WNE, and it is an honor to be able to recognize him with the Michael A. Serafino Alumnus of the Year Award."

Crediting his academic career at WNE with giving him the confidence to succeed in his professional career, Ken retired from MassMutual in 2017, after nearly 40 years of service. He began his career at Price Waterhouse & Co. in Hartford, CT, where he spent three years. He joined MassMutual as an auditor in 1978, and continued to rise in the ranks to become Director of Financial Services in 1981, Assistant Controller of Individual Product Lines in 1984, and Senior

Vice President of Finance Operations and President from 1990-2002 with MML Investor Services (a subsidiary of Mass Mutual Financial Group). He retired as Vice President for Sales Risk Management for MassMutual Financial Group, a position he held since 2002.

"I was known as the fixer," said Ken. "I love the challenge when there's a problem and I know I can fix it or figure out a way to fix it. Throughout my life I've kind of earned this reputation."

A native of Indian Orchard in Springfield, MA, Ken was the first in his family to attend college and graduate. He was actively involved on campus during his time as a student as a member, treasurer, and president of Alpha Kappa Psi and member at large in the Student Accounting Association. He fondly reflects on his undergraduate career on campus, especially the guidance and encouragement he received from a number of faculty and staff in the College of Business, most notably the late Dr. E. Louis Raverta '43/'54, who was Chair of the Department of Accounting.

"Think about what the experience at WNE did for you and the difference it made in your life, and then think about how you can impact the University with your time, talent, and treasure."

"I love the place," Ken said about his passion for WNE. "The reason I do this isn't because I want to be recognized, it's because I want to give back. I had an amazing career and people need the same opportunities I had."

Grateful for the support he received as a student, Ken established the Kenneth M.

Rickson Endowed Scholarship in 2004 with the intention to support the financial needs of undergraduate students in the College of Business. To date, the scholarship has provided more than \$60,000 in aid to WNE students and continues to make a significant impact on the Golden Bear student experience.

Though Ken continues to make his mark at the University, he in turn continues to be impacted by the campus community. "Creating the scholarship has been gratifying in a number of ways," he said. "I receive scholarship reports and notes from the students who have received financial awards from the scholarship. Reading those is like gold, a real treasure, and I've saved the letters over the years."

Ken encourages students to make the most of their experience on campus, both in and out of the classroom. "You're better than you think and your education at WNE has you well-prepared, so be confident, be inquisitive, and when opportunities present themselves, evaluate them thoroughly and don't be afraid of taking chances."

A proud alumnus of WNE, Ken also encourages fellow alumni to take advantage of opportunities available to get involved with the University.

"Think about what the experience at WNE did for you and the difference it made in your life, and then think about how you can impact the University with your time, talent, and treasure," he said. "Attend Homecoming, go to a football game, attend an alumni event in your area, and talk to friends and family who have kids of college age about WNE and the opportunities here. Be an advocate. Buy a hat or a sweatshirt, wear it, and advertise it. People look at it and want to know more about what is so special about this place."

The WNE Alumni Association oversees efforts to increase alumni engagement through communications, events and experiences, volunteerism, and philanthropy. Learn more about how you can get involved at alumni.wne.edu/getinvolved or call the Office of Alumni Engagement at (413) 796-2240.

Alumnus of the Year Award

The following Golden Bears have been recognized and honored for their illustrious careers and impact on the campus and in their communities.

2022	Ken Rickson '75
2016	Colleen Loveless '84/G'93
2015	John Brennan '71
2014	Timothy P. Alben G'01
2013	Bonnie Malley '83
2012	Nicholas A. Fyntrilakis G'04
2010	George Burtch Jr. '91
2009	Stan Kowalski III '92
2008	John M. O'Brien III '74
2007	David P. Kruger '68/G'72
2006	Donald G. Campbell '73/G'79
2005	Kim A. MacLeod '73
2004	Robert H. Carnevale '68
2003	Panagiotis (Tak) Argentinis '66
2002	Francis (Frank) P. Fitzgerald '68/L'73
2001	Kevin S. Delbridge '77
2000	Timothy P. Crimmins Jr. '70
1999	Thomas S. Burton '70
1998	Michael J. Susco '70
1997	Michael A. Serafino '77
1996	Christine L. Soverow '84
1995	Neville S. Bogle '75/G'81
1994	Peter B. Stone '70/G'78
1993	Donald A. Ferguson '49
1992	Robert B. MacPherson '38
1991	Raymond Meyers '51/G'64/H'01
1990	John J. Pajak L'62
1989	Bertrand L. McTeague '64
1988	Kenneth D. Cardwell '63/G'66
1987	William J. Bailey L'36
1986	Judge Sidney M. Cooley L'41/LLD '84/H'01
1985	Sidney R. Cook '25/H'75
1984	James S. Teixeira '61
1983	Alfred A. LaRiviere '51/H'95/H'01
1982	Lucien A. Parent '62
1981	Hon. Tullio Francesconi L'36/H'72
1980	Benjamin P. Astley '48/H'01
1979	Richard E. Menzel '37 Karl A. Vester L'38 Violet L. Vester '39/H'01
1978	William H. Sleith '44/G'80
1977	Earl H. Paine '27/H'65
1976	Irving C. Jacobs '26/H'70
1975	Harley B. Goodrich '27/G'42/H'61
1974	Henry T. Downey '50/L'56, Robert R. Emerson '23/H'58, Donald M. Macaulay '24/H'56
1973	Irving M. Cohen L'32
1972	Carl O. Chauncey L'25
1971	Leon D. Chapin '39/G'64/H'79
1970	Stanley O. Smith '22/H'54



CAMPUS NEWS

By Judy Curran

For the latest news from
Western New England
University, visit.
wne.edu/news.

DR. MICHAEL J. RUST RECEIVES 2022 EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

Dr. Michael J. Rust, Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering, has been named the recipient of the 2022 Excellence in Teaching Award at Western New England University. Winners of this prestigious award are nominated by students, faculty, and administrators for outstanding contributions as educators and advisors.

Professor Rust teaches undergraduate courses in bioinstrumentation, physiology, lab-on-a-chip, and global health. He is currently the Director of the Honors Program and Co-director of the First Year Program in the College of Engineering. Professor

Rust is a Senior Member of the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers and a member the American Society for Engineering Education.

Professor Rust's research interests involve the development of point-of-care medical technologies, including bioinstrumentation for use in low-resource settings. Professor Rust received his BS and PhD degrees in Electrical Engineering from the University of Cincinnati.

KRISTINE GOODWIN NAMED VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

Western New England University President Robert E. Johnson has announced the appointment of Kristine C. Goodwin as the University's Vice President of Student Affairs. "Kristine is a widely respected administrator in the field of student affairs with over 30 years of direct experience," said Dr. Johnson. "She is a proven problem solver and highly regarded in her field. Western New England University is fortunate to have Kristine join us."

Goodwin is charged with developing and maintaining an energized approach to cultivating an engaged student environment where learning, academic success, career readiness, and personal development are top priorities. She will oversee the University's departments of Athletics, Career Education, Residence Life, Community Standards and Education, Student Involvement and Leadership, Inclusive Excellence, and the Center for Health and Wellness.

Goodwin earned a BA from Westfield State University and an MEd from UMass Lowell before graduating magna cum laude from the UMass School of Law in 2020. Goodwin has been a senior executive in higher education for over twenty years at multiple institutions, and most recently worked as an attorney and adjunct faculty member.



PHARMD CLASS OF 2021 EXCEEDS STATE AND NATIONAL AVERAGES ON NAPLEX AND MPJE

Fourth Consecutive Year of Outstanding Results

The Western New England University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences is pleased to announce that the graduates of the PharmD Class of 2021 have achieved a pass rate of 91.5% on the North American Pharmacist Licensure Examination (NAPLEX) and an 86.6% pass rate on the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Examination (MPJE).

"The NAPLEX first time pass rate of 91.5% significantly exceeds that of the state and national rate, 78% and 83.6%, respectively," said College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Dean John Pezzuto. "This is the fourth consecutive year our pass rates have topped both state and national



results. Our in-state MPJE pass rate of 86.6% also exceeds other Massachusetts programs in-state pass rate of 73.5%, and national in-state pass rates of 80.3%."



WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY LAW PROFESSOR TINA CAFARO L'95 UNANIMOUSLY CONFIRMED AS ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT

Western New England University School of Law Professor Tina Cafaro L'95 was unanimously confirmed to serve as Associate Justice of the District Court on March 2, 2022.

"I am deeply humbled and honored by my appointment," said Associate Justice Cafaro. "I have enjoyed every minute of the past two decades working at the School of Law. My colleagues are talented and skilled educators, and our student body is made up of engaged, bright, and committed students who constantly make WNE and the legal

profession proud. I am blessed to have been a part of each one of their lives. I am excited to take on a new role in the justice system, and I look forward to seeing what the future holds."

"Although we will miss her very much once she ascends to the bench, we collectively take pride in her accomplishment and look forward to the wisdom, integrity, and thoughtfulness that she will bring to the bench," said School of Law Dean Sudha Setty in an announcement to the WNE community.

COMMENCEMENT 2022

Pomp and (Overcoming) Circumstance

By Joseph Bednar

WNE's 2022 Graduates Enter a World of Challenge and Promise

In an exuberant return to in-person ceremonies, Western New England University celebrated 947 graduates on a weekend marked by themes of resilience, determination, and the importance of seizing opportunities.

The Anthony S. Caprio Alumni Healthful Living Center played host to the 2022 Undergraduate Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, May 21, which included the awarding of 591 bachelor's degrees. The Graduate Commencement Ceremony followed on Sunday, May 22, as 356 advanced degrees were awarded to graduates of the University's doctoral, law, pharmacy, occupational therapy, and numerous master's programs.

WNE President Robert E. Johnson expressed gratitude that this year's graduates and their families were able to celebrate together in person after two years of virtual ceremonies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Over the last two years in the midst of COVID, you have demonstrated resiliency and toughness unlike any generation the world has ever seen," Dr. Johnson said. "Through social distancing and remote



learning, you never gave up. At times of weariness and feeling lonely, you pursued your dreams, goals, and aspirations. When you were scared and feared for the safety and well-being of those around you, you never gave up.”

Nick Newell '08—an inspiring exam-



ple of perseverance and determination —was presented with the President’s Medallion before his keynote address during the undergraduate ceremony. He overcame the challenge of being born without a left hand to excel in wrestling at WNE and forge a successful career as a professional mixed martial arts fighter, amassing a 16-4 record and opening his own Fighting Arts Academy franchise in Connecticut. Nick is involved with a number of local and national organizations for individuals with limb deformities, and his story became the subject of the 2021 feature film *Notorious Nick*.

“To say I never doubted how far I would be able to go or what I would be able to do would be a lie,” he told the Class of 2022. “Countless times, I had felt beaten, battered, and broken down. I wondered what I was going after, why I was doing it, and if it would even be possible. I had to remind myself of why I started, why I love it, and what kind of person I am.

“In this life, you can become a victim of your circumstances, or you can create your own,” Nick added. “Nothing worthwhile in life comes easy, and as you transition to the next phase of your lives, you will experience that for yourselves. The best advice I can give you all is to be present, be consistent, be efficient, and be patient.”

At Sunday’s graduate ceremony, the President’s Medallion was awarded to Sheila Barcohana Hollender L’80. She cofounded Seventh Generation, which sells eco-friendly cleaning, paper, and personal care products; and Sustain Natural, a company that developed and marketed the first U.S. brand of condoms certified to be fair-trade, free of chemicals of concern, and sustainably produced. The company also became a major voice in raising awareness of safe sex and women’s reproductive health.

“Just because you have a graduate degree in hand today and have a professional life planned out, don’t hesitate to pivot away from what you know,” Hollender told the graduates. “The world is changing at a rapid pace—nothing is stagnant. The best advice I can give you today is to be ready to take on the challenges of the future. You can do it because you already have the tools in hand.”

In his remarks, President Johnson challenged the Class of 2022 to find their own ways to make a difference in the world.



“You are the essence of possessing an agile mindset with the ability to learn, unlearn, and relearn,” he concluded. “As we confer your degree today, I charge each of you to go out and transform the world, touch someone’s life, live your dream, and, most importantly, leave the world better than you found it.”

For ceremony videos, photos, and speaker biographies, visit wne.edu/commencement.



With Gratitude

A Heartfelt Thank You to Our Retiring Faculty

By Alex Lyman '12/G'16

Art Wolf
Professor of Law
Hired in 1974

Director of the School
of Law's Institute
for Legislative and
Governmental Affairs



As the 2021-22 academic year comes to a close, we'd like to pay a special tribute to some of the faculty members who are retiring, most of whom have served the University for many years. We are grateful for their contributions to our community, humbled by their dedication, and inspired by their achievements. We wish all of our retirees the best on their next chapter. They will be truly missed.

For full profiles on each of our retiring faculty members, please visit magazine.wne.edu.



Said Dini
Chair and Professor of
Mechanical Engineering
Hired in 1981

Research interests: heat
transfer, thermodynamics, fluid
mechanics, solar energy, and
HVAC systems.

**Bill
Bosworth**
Chair and Professor
of Accounting
Hired in 1988

Taught Corporate Finance,
Financial Markets and
Institutions, International
Financial Management,
Personal Finance,
Entrepreneurial Finance



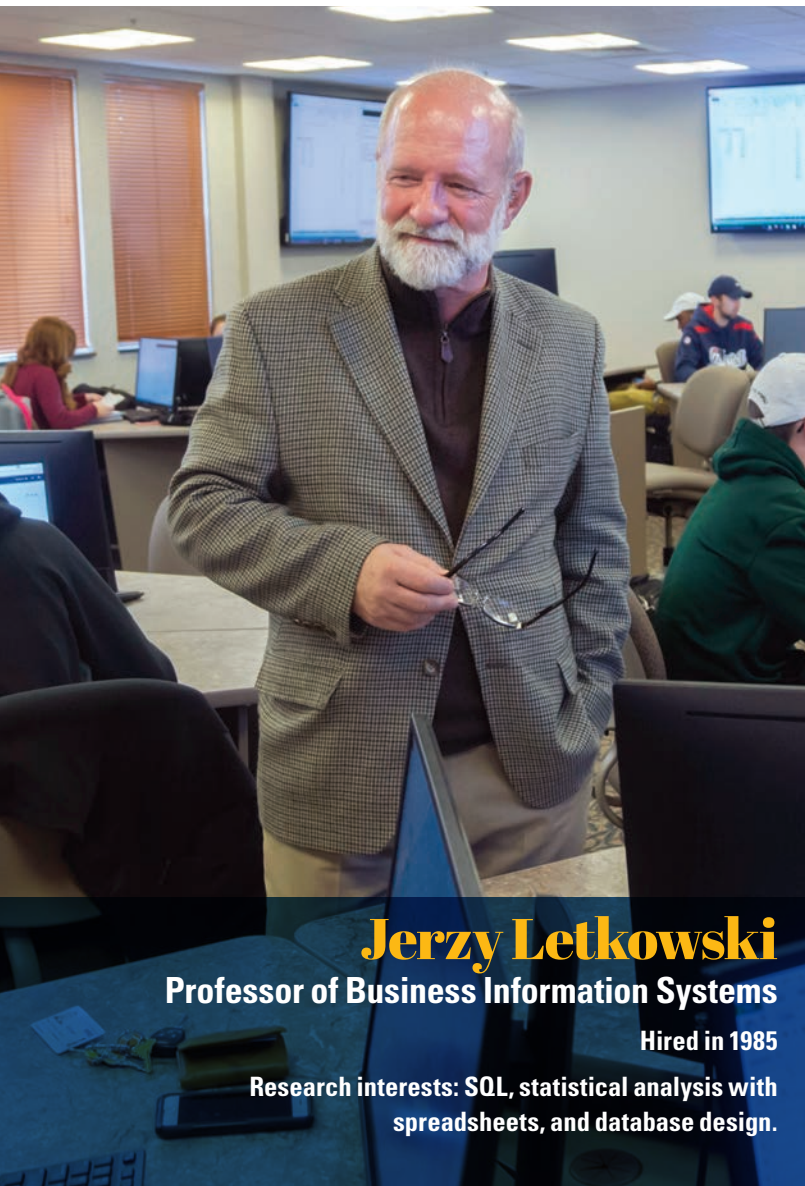


Jeanne Kaiser L'93

Professor of Legal Research and Writing

Hired in 1988

Taught legal research and writing, as well as skills-based courses.



Jerzy Letkowski

Professor of Business Information Systems

Hired in 1985

Research interests: SQL, statistical analysis with spreadsheets, and database design.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RETIRING FACULTY

As of the date of publication, WNE celebrates the following recent faculty retirements. If you are aware of any errors or omissions, please contact the Office of the Provost at provost.office@wne.edu.

Anne Goldstein

Professor of Law
School of Law

Robert Kleine III

Professor of Management
College of Business

Karl Sternberg

Professional Educator of Biology
College of Arts and Sciences

Richard Willis

Professional Educator of Business Information Systems
College of Business

Anthony Zimmermann

Clinical Professor of Critical Care
College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences



WNE ATHLETICS CELEBRATES FIRST SEASONS AND SEASON FIRSTS

By Kate Burke & Collin Quinn

Fighting for the pride of the blue and gold, Western New England University athletic programs were back in full competitive action for the 2021-2022 seasons. In golden fashion, the 21 Golden Bear athletic teams recorded numerous milestones in their highly anticipated return to the field of play, including first seasons, season firsts, and record accomplishments.

Golden Bear Football Hit the Gridiron in the First New England Bowl Series in Program History

For the first time in program history, and under the direction of fourth-year Head Coach Jason Lebeau '10/G'16, the WNE football team made an appearance in the coveted New England Bowl Series.

Ending the regular season with an overall season record of 7-3 and 5-1 in the CCC, the Golden Bears hosted the 2021 New England Bowl Series game against the United States Merchant Marine Academy on November 20, 2021. WNE was ultimately defeated in the matchup but continued to achieve season acclaim with six Golden Bears named to the D3football.com All-Region 1 Team, the New England Football Writers Division II/III All-New England Team, and the 2021 All-Noontime D3 New England Football Team.



First Season for Golden Bear Women's Ice Hockey

Opening the inaugural season of play in 2021 led by Head Coach Katie Zimmerman, Golden Bear Women's Ice Hockey transitioned from the playbook to the record book, celebrating a number of memorable first achievements in program history.

First Win: The team shut out Anna Maria College 4-0 in their first win in program history on October 29, 2021.

First Commonwealth Coast Conference (CCC) Goalkeeper of the Week Award: Rieley Jessie-Gerelli earned the first-ever CCC Women's Ice Hockey Goalkeeper of the Week award on November 1, 2021.

First CCC Win: The Golden Bears achieved their first CCC win in program history with a 2-1 victory over Curry College on November 5, 2021.

First CCC Player/Rookie of the Week Award: Alyssa Murphy earned the WNE Women's Ice Hockey program its first CCC Player/Rookie of the Week award on December 6, 2021.

First Appearance in the CCC Tournament: The Golden Bears earned a number five seed in the CCC Tournament, falling in the quarterfinal round to University of New England on February 23, 2022.



Golden Bear Wrestling Alumni Become First Two Hispanic Officials to Officiate NCAA Division I Championship

WNE wrestling alumni Angel Rivera '94 and Rey Santiago were selected to officiate the 2022 NCAA Division I Men's Wrestling Championships March 17-19 at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit, MI. As referees at the championship event, Rivera and Santiago made NCAA Division I history as the first two Hispanic officials to officiate the NCAA Championship.

In addition to their successes on the mat as top-tier wrestling officials, both Rivera and Santiago have drawn on their experiences at WNE to achieve great success off the mat as well, crediting the influence and impact of Coach Bob Skelton, founder of the WNE Wrestling program and Head Coach from 1975 to 2011.

"The program was headed by Coach Skelton, who is a tremendous human being who sacrificed a lot of his personal time during the season and on the off-season to help mold me into the man I am today," Rivera said. "'Time waits for no man' was his saying, and however simple it may seem, it is true in whatever we choose to do in life."



Men's Lacrosse Advances to Second and Third Round Play in NCAA Tournament

Men's Lacrosse became the first team in the CCC to win at least one game in the NCAA Tournament since 2015. The Golden Bears defeated the No. 11 team in the country on May 14, defeating the University of Lynchburg in the second round. The Golden Bears season closed in the third round of the tournament, concluding 2022 with a 15-6 overall record.



WNE First-Year Sensation Recognized with Eight Rookie of the Week Awards

The CCC announced the final weekly awards of spring 2022 on May 16, crowning first-year sensation CJ Willis with his eighth Rookie of the Week recognition of the season. Willis started and played in all 40 games in 2022, leading the Golden Bears with a .398 batting average, and earning team highs in runs (43), hits (68), doubles (11), home runs (14), RBIs (48), stolen bases (11), on base percentage (.441), and slugging percentage (.743). Achieving 14 home runs, Willis smashed the 35-year-old single season home run record (previously 10, by Alan Fabian '89). The Golden Bears concluded the 2022 season at 19-20-1 and were the first five seed to make the CCC Championship series since 2015.



First Golden Bear Competes in SPIRAL Tropical Bowl

Bailey Devine-Scott, a senior Golden Bear and native of Wattle Grove, Australia, was named to the roster of the Football Bowl Subdivision All-Americans SPIRAL Tropical Bowl, hosted at the Camping World Stadium in Orlando, FL, on January 15, 2022. The event culminated his senior season of play, during which he competed in 10 games and made a combined total of 63 tackles (40 individual tackles and 23 assisted). Devine-Scott has since been drafted to the Canadian Football League's Calgary Stampeders.

WNE Announces First University Women's Wrestling Team

In October 2021, WNE Athletics announced the addition of a Golden Bear Women's Wrestling program. The new program, now the 21st varsity sport at the University, is slated to begin competition in the 2022-2023 academic year.

Golden Bears Achieve CCC First-Team Honors

Recognized by the CCC for their athletic accomplishments, 13 Golden Bears achieved CCC First-Team Honors during the 2021-2022 academic year. Voting for the CCC teams and major awards is conducted by the CCC head coaches following the conclusion of each regular season.

Golden Bears on the 2021-22 CCC First Team included Field Hockey players Abby Burns and Sarah Johnston (also Rookie of the Year); Football players Zac Christian, Bailey Devine-Scott, Steven Fedorchak, David Pence Sr., Adam Razza, Joshua Salem, Cade Watkins, and Jerry Woodard; and Women's Soccer players Allison Bruehwiler (also Co-player of the Year), Autumn Hathaway, and Summer Hathaway.

Follow all the news and action for Golden Bear Athletics at wnegoldenbears.com.

The Heart of a Champion, the Soul of a Community

Rodney Smith '89/G'03, an Olympian, Coach, Mentor, and Friend

By Kate Burke



In November 2021, culminating a more than 30-year career of achievements and awards, Rodney Smith '89/G'03 was inducted into the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. Recognized for his athletic prowess and community leadership, Rodney received the Outstanding American Award.

"His influence and impact as a leader extend far beyond winning matches and earning trophies," said the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. "His desire is to give back to both his country and local community. Legacy can be seen and heard across generations; from his former coaches, teammates, and comrades, to his current students and wrestlers. Rodney Smith truly embodies what it means to be an outstanding American."

Greatly humbled by these honors, Rodney reflected on his journey from athlete, to coach, to teacher, and his continuing role as a community impact maker. "The embodiment of your body of work coming to a point, you can say to yourself 'wow, somebody appreciates what I do,'" he said. "I know I work really hard, and this award meant everything. It makes me want to do more."

An Olympic Dream

A lifelong athlete with youthful dreams of becoming a professional football player or an Olympian, Rodney earned early athletic success growing up in Springfield, MA, playing football and wrestling.

Shortly after high school, he made a decision that would ultimately change the trajectory of his life: he enlisted in the Marines, a decision and commitment that inadvertently put him on an unexpected path to achieve his Olympic dreams, just not on any roads he had ever traveled or expected to travel.

As Smith was gearing up to begin his service with the Marines, he was recruited to play football at WNE and his obligation to the Marines was halted before it began. He was permitted to

defer his service to pursue his education and athletics at WNE, with the caveat that he had to graduate and then return to the Armed Forces to fulfill his obligation.

Golden Moments as a Golden Bear Scholar Athlete

Initially recruited to play football for the Golden Bears, Rodney started college life as a "big man" on campus who admittedly took his athletic and academic opportunities for granted.

Influenced by the unwavering guidance of his mom and the support of campus faculty and staff, including current WNE Assistant Dean for Inclusive Excellence Yvonne Bogle and past WNE Athletic Director Eric Geldart, he recentered his focus, shifted his academic and athletic priorities, turned his grades around, and exchanged his football jersey for a wrestling singlet.

"As I grew with the culture of WNE, I learned to involve myself," he said.

In addition to wrestling, Rodney became involved with the campus community including as a disc jockey with the WNEK radio station, where he was known as DJ Rod Melody; as a student senator; and as the elected representative on the WNE Board of Trustees.

"What changed my life, in how I defined myself as an athlete, was after sophomore year, when I realized that I could be a scholar athlete" he said.





With restructured priorities, Rodney started having great success on the mat and that youthful dream of going to the Olympics started to become less of a dream and more of a true possibility. By his junior year, he was ranked third in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Wrestling across all divisions.

"I just became a different athlete," he said. "A lot of cool moments followed that I learned a lot from," said Rodney. "My mom always said to stick with it until you get to the end of the story."

Military Service and an Olympic Journey

Following the conclusion of his college wrestling career and earning his bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at WNE, Rodney's focus was redirected to his commitment to military service. While gearing up to deploy for Desert Storm, General Norman Schwarzkopf tasked him with the mission "to keep the health and welfare of our troops and maintain morale through the Health and Welfare Tour."

This opportunity set the wheels in motion for Rodney's collective 10 years of service with the U.S. Army, beginning with the U.S. Army's World Class Athlete Program (WCAP), which allows top-ranked soldier-athletes, selected for their ability to perform at the highest level of their sports, to perform at the international level while also serving their nation in the military.

His service and training as a member of WCAP helped pave Rodney's path to the Olympics and his commitment to community outreach. Ultimately earning the bronze medal in the Men's Greco-Roman 68 kilograms (149lbs) at the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, he became one of only 446 soldiers to have

represented the U.S. at the Olympics, contributing to the 111 medals earned by the U.S. across all sports to date.

Reflecting on his wrestling career success and the Olympic medal he won 30 years ago, Rodney encourages aspiring athletes to "celebrate your moment."

Life Lessons and a Legacy of Community Impact

Following his journey to the Olympics and his career in the U.S. Army, Rodney returned to New England to continue his commitment to service and community by becoming a coach, mentor, and teacher to countless aspiring wrestlers and students. He has impacted a number of college and youth wrestling programs including WNE, Northeast Elite Wrestling, and New Fairfield High School.

"I've had a lot of love in my life," he said. "A lot of kids need love and to know that people love them."

In 2011, Rodney started the wrestling program at Hampden Charter School of Science-East (HCSS-East) in Chicopee, MA. With background and experience as both a teacher and coach, he continues to coach and is also now Dean of Student Culture/Director of Athletics at HCSS-West in West Springfield, MA.

"Being able to be here and be an example, to be a role model, is so important," he said. "I want there to be a bunch of people like me coming out of Springfield. I want students to see me in them and know that they can do more and go beyond what I have achieved. I tell them that I know the blueprint, and if they follow the trail, they will succeed."

With his WNE wrestling roots, Rodney has continued to stay connected to the Golden Bear program and the University at large. He attends preseason wrestling practices and season competitions, participates in Sport Management guest

speaking events, and supports United & Mutually Equal (U&ME) multicultural campus programming.

"Coach Smith has been an inspiration to the student-athletes at WNE for nearly three decades," said WNE Head Wrestling Coach Mike Sugermeyer G'17. "His message to our wrestlers has always been 'Why dream, for I am the dream come true.' He has shown all of our student-athletes that no dream is too small and that with hard work and dedication, anything can be achieved."

Awards & Recognitions

- Two-time NCAA Division III All-America Selection
- Three-time New England College Conference Wrestling Association Champion
- Two-time NECCWA Most Outstanding Performer
- 1987 NCAA DIII Wrestling Championships, 4th Place
- 1988 NCAA DIII Wrestling Championships, 5th Place
- 1992 Olympics Bronze Medalist, Barcelona
- 1992 National Champion
- 1996 National Champion
- 1996 Olympian and Team Captain, Atlanta
- 1996 Solder of the Year Award and Meritorious Service Medal for Outstanding Achievement
- 1999 WNE Downes Hall of Fame Inductee
- 2021 National Wrestling Hall of Fame Inductee, Outstanding American Award

Learn more about Rodney and his induction into the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame at alumni.wne.edu/rodneysmith.

Interested in learning more about the success stories of Rodney and fellow Golden Bear alumni? Explore alumni.wne.edu/alumni-in-the-news to read about Golden Bears making headlines regionally, nationally, and worldwide.

ALUMNI NEWS

By Katie DeBeer

For the latest news from Western New England University, visit. wne.edu/news.

PRESIDENT JOHNSON REVEALS A VISION FOR THE FUTURE WITH ALUMNI, PARENTS, AND FRIENDS

Over the course of the 2021-2022 academic year, President Johnson hosted a series of regional receptions for alumni, parents, and friends to learn about the exciting changes taking place at Western New England University. Golden Bear Nation gathered together in Springfield, Washington DC, Boston, Hartford, and Providence, enjoying the opportunity to network, share favorite WNE memories, and learn about President Johnson's vision for the future of WNE.

President Johnson introduced Western New England University as a New Traditional University that prepares students not only to adapt and thrive as professionals but to discover their 'why' as they find their place in the world.

A key theme of Dr. Johnson's remarks was the strength of WNE throughout its history as an institution of choice for students looking to improve their lives and propel their careers through higher education. He shared examples of alumni who have been drivers of change in technology, commerce, and business, and reflected upon the professional success and spirit of generosity of so many alumni who represent the best of Western New England University.

To learn more and view photos from recent events, visit alumni.wne.edu. To inquire about events in your area or opportunities to host future events, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at alumnwne@wne.edu or (413) 796-2240.



WHAT CAN WE DO FOR you

SURVEY SAYS... THE WNE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION WANTS YOUR FEEDBACK!

The Western New England University Alumni Association has launched the 2022 Alumni Survey, inviting feedback from more than 45,000 WNE alumni. The survey examines the relationship between alumni and their alma mater, including attitudes about student and alumni experiences, communication preferences, program performance, loyalty, and more. The survey is anonymous, and aggregate data will be shared at the conclusion of the project. Insights gained will help shape alumni engagement initiatives in the upcoming year and beyond. All Western New England University alumni are encouraged to complete the survey before July 15 at alumni.wne.edu/survey. With questions, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at alumwne@wne.edu or (413) 796-2240.



ALUMNI SHARE THEIR JOURNEYS FROM CAMPUS TO CAREER IN WNE@WORK

Alumni representing a variety of academic backgrounds, industries, experiences, and class years are sharing their stories with the Golden Bear network through WNE@Work. An initiative of the Alumni Association, WNE@Work offers alumni the chance to share their WNE stories in their own

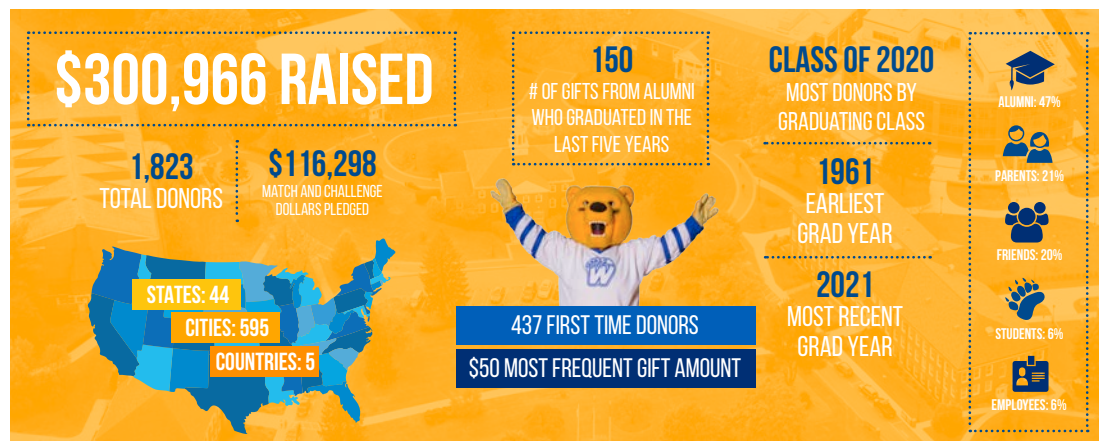
words. Participants reflect upon favorite memories, frequented hangouts, influential faculty or staff members, and how their student experience contributed to their current profession. Explore the profiles or share your own story at alumni.wne.edu/wneatwork.

DOUBLE THE GOLDEN BEAR GENEROSITY ON DISPLAY FOR WNEGIVES

On Tuesday, March 8, Western New England University launched WNEGives, our annual community giving event. Unfortunately, technical difficulties with our vendor caused site delays and prevented many donors from getting through. Ultimately the University made the decision to pause the event until the issues could be resolved. In spite of these challenges, WNEGives Take 1 raised more than \$240,000 with gifts

from more than 1,250 donors. In order to ensure all alumni, students, parents, and friends had an opportunity to make their gift, the University relaunched the day on Wednesday, April 27, as WNEGives Take 2. Hundreds of donors showed up for Take 2, supporting their favorite areas of campus and pushing the combined results over \$300,000 raised for the University with gifts from more than 1,820 donors. While the event didn't go as planned, Golden

Bear Nation proved that their love for WNE could withstand any obstacle. Thank you to all of the volunteers, ambassadors, challenge hosts, and donors who helped make WNEGives 2022 a success. Learn more and view detailed results at wnegives.com. For more information or to make a gift to the University, please call (413) 782-1335 or email thefund@wne.edu.



LET'S CONNECT!

For the latest alumni news, events in your area, nostalgic #tbt pics, and more, follow @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/classnotes to submit your note online.

1960s

J. Michael Wallace L'68 (JD) is an accomplished Balloonist and retired Cofounder and President of C&W Realty, and has been chronicled in the newly published book *A Ballooning Life: The Nine Lives of J. Michael Wallace*.

1970s

Robert Berry G'72 (MBA) has written the book *David Prince Pioneer Surgeon*, published by booklocker.com.

John M. O'Brien III '74 (Business Administration) was elected as a Trustee and Committee Member for the Springfield Museums.

Reverend John Midura '75 (Business Administration) was selected by the Board of Directors of The National Spiritual Alliance of the United State of America, Inc. to be the first-ever TNSA Ambassador Spiritualists at local, state, regional, national, and international churches and organizations.

Marc N. Needelman L'77 (JD) has recently been re-appointed as the Town Attorney for Bloomfield, CT. This is a position that Marc has held continuously since 1990, making him one of the longest serving municipal attorneys in the state. Marc also maintains his private law practice.

Puran Dang G'78 (MBA) has been awarded the IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) Kharagpur Life Fellow Award for the Year 2021. Puran was recognized for his significant contribution towards the development of the IIT Kharagpur and his help within the Institute.

Ellis M. Dumont '79 (Government), CEO and Founder of APC Hospitality, LLC has announced his company's expansion into the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast markets with new affiliates, APC Hospitality Mid-Atlantic and APC Hospitality Southeast. APC is a leading provider of hospitality, parking, and security solutions.

1980s

Brian Ade L'80 (JD) was named a Top-Rated Products Liability Attorney for 2022. Brian is a Partner at Rivkin Radley in the firm's Commercial Litigation, Complex Torts & Product Liability, and Insurance Coverage practice groups.

Fran Kirley G'80 (MBA) is the President and CEO of Nexion Health, and had the honor of delivering the 2022 commencement address and receiving an honorary degree at the Elms College 91st commencement in May.

Mark A. O'Connell '81 (Business Administration) was named to the Board of Trustees at Elms College. Mark is a Principal at Wolf & Company's assurance group and is the firm's President and CEO.

Elizabeth Dineen L'84 (JD) was named one of *Business West's* 2021 Women of Impact.

Michael E. Tucker L'84 (JD) was appointed by the Federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to its Community Bank Advisory Council. Michael recently retired as the CEO of Greenfield Cooperative Bank, but remains active as a Director within the company.

Glenn Welch '84 (Finance) was elected as a Trustee and Committee Member for the Springfield Museums.

Charles Casartello L'87 (JD) was honored with membership into the College of Workers' Compensation Attorneys in a ceremony in New Orleans. The College of Workers' Compensation Lawyers was established to recognize attorneys who have distinguished themselves in their practice in the field of workers' compensation.

Larry Michaud '87/G'97 (Management/MBA) has been appointed Senior Vice President, Finance and Accounting at American Eagle Financial Credit Union (AEFCU). Larry has dedicated the last 20 years to AEFCU.

The Honorable Kathleen Sandman L'87 (JD) has been appointed First Justice of the Franklin County Probate and Family Court in Massachusetts. Justice Sandman was appointed to the bench as an Associate Justice by Governor Charlie Baker in 2017.

Carol Sipperly L'87 (JD) has been named Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General for antitrust with oversight for civil and criminal antitrust litigation in the Department of Justice antitrust division.

Rande Roca '88 (Marketing) has retired from Manchester High School in Manchester, NJ, after 25 years of coaching at the school and 20 years of leading the football program.

Brendan Fox L'89 (JD) has been named to the Board of Trustees at the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford, CT.

Daniel Horgan L'89 (JD) was named the 99th President of the Connecticut Bar Association on June 1, 2022.

Darlene Rodowicz G'89 (MBA) was appointed President and CEO of Berkshire Health Systems. Darlene has been a part of Berkshire Health Systems for the last 38 years.

1990s

Mary Ann Butler L'90 (JD) has been voted as the new Superintendent for the Stonington Public School district. Mary Ann previously served as Assistant Superintendent for the district.

Nikki Fuller L'91 (JD) joined Colby-Sawyer College as the first Vice President for Human Resources and Chief Diversity Officer. Nikki has more than two decades of experience in education and public services, including 25 years consulting on matters of racial justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Paul Cullinane '92/G'98 (Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice Administration) has been appointed Deputy Superintendent for the Brookline, MA, Police Department.

Anthony Katagas '92 (Government) recently coproduced the psychological thriller *Deep Water*, starring Ben Affleck and Anna de Armas. *Deep Water* can be found on Hulu.

Richard Merritts '92 (Liberal Studies) published his book of poems *Sea Creatures and Poems, Plus Some Other Fish Rhymes* in January 2022.

Pamela Mikaelin '92 (Business Administration) earned her Doctor of Education, Higher Education/Educational Leadership from Central Connecticut State University in May 2021.

Richard Sampson L'92 (JD) was recognized as a 2021 Massachusetts Super Lawyer.

Eric Krautheimer L'93 (JD) was recognized as one of *The American Lawyer's* 2022 Dealmakers of the Year. Eric is a Partner at Sullivan & Cromwell, in their LA offices. This is the second time that Eric has received this recognition.

Amy LaBelle '93 (English) is the Founder and Winemaker at LaBelle Winery in Amherst, Derry, and Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Amy has partnered with Emmy Award-winning Producer Kerri Zane to produce a lifestyle show based on Amy's life as a winemaker, entrepreneur, artisan chef, wife, mom of two teenage sons, and owner of LaBelle Winery.

Derek Slattery '93/G'01 (Sociology/Criminal Justice Administration) was recently promoted to the rank of Sergeant at the Springfield, MA, Police Department. Derek has been with the department for 26 years.

Richard Allen '94 (Law Enforcement) has been appointed to Acting Police Chief of the Brookline, MA, Police Department.

William Bouyea '94 (Sociology) has been hired as the Chief Executive Officer of NexMart, Inc.

Glenn Moshier '95 (Government) is the Police Chief of Ellsworth, ME, and recently accepted the additional position of City Manager. Glenn had been Interim City Manager since September. Glenn was with the Ellsworth Police Department since 2004 and Chief since 2017.

Susan Fentin L'96 (JD) has been appointed to Board President of New England Public Media (NEPM).

Derek Licata G'97 (Criminal Justice Administration) has been promoted from Patrolman to Sergeant within the Methuen, MA, Police Department. Derek has been with the department since 1993.

Dr. Jodie Roue L'97 (JD) was honored with the 2021 Graciela Olivárez Award. Jodie was recognized for more than two decades of legal work and service specializing in human rights, violence against women, incarceration, poverty, and racial and social justice. She was also awarded the Franklin H. Williams Judicial Commissions Pipeline to Equity in Legal Education award in November of 2021. Most recently, she

received the Latino Judges Association Honorable Frank Torres Award for Commitment to Diversity in May 2022.

Elizabeth Tanner L'97 (JD) has been named to the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) Transition Support Team by Governor Dan McKee. Liz holds the position of Director of the Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation and brings extensive knowledge to this new position.

William Laramée G'98 (Criminal Justice Administration) was the recipient of the Richard Werenski Officer of the Year Award by the Western Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Administration. This award recognizes a police officer who has demonstrated within his/her department, the highest standards of professional conduct, diligence to duty, loyalty, honesty, and integrity as a police officer. William has been a Patrol Officer for the town of Amherst, MA, since 1995.

Kenneth Fong '99/G'01 (Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice Administration) has been appointed as Interim Chief of the Bedford, MA, Police Department. This announcement comes after Kenneth retired from the Boston Police Department back in 2020. Kenneth was a Captain for District A-1.

Brian Kennedy G'99 (MBA) has been appointed Executive Vice President, Chief Strategy and Revenue Officer at American Eagle Financial Credit Union (AEFCU). Brian has worked at AEFCU for the last 17 years of his 30-year career in financial services.

2000s

Peter Andrews L'00 (JD) became the new Chief Legal Counsel for MARTA (The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority) in the Atlanta Metropolitan area.

Paul Creech L'00 (JD) retired in September 2021 from his position as the Radiology Tech Program's founding Director at Capital Community College. Paul retires after 29 years of leading one of the college's nationally accredited health profession programs.

Kevin Dzioba G'00 (Criminal Justice Administration) has been promoted from Patrolman to Sergeant within the Methuen, MA, Police Department. Kevin has been with the department since 1989.

Eric Isnor '00 (Law Enforcement) retired from the Bedford, MA, Police Department after a 32-year career as a Patrol Officer.

Thomas Emberly '01 (Sport Management) has been named the Director of Athletic Communications with the Farmingdale State College (FSC) Department of Athletics.

Sean Gibbons '01/G'04 (Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice Administration) was named Wayland, MA, Chief of Police. Sean joined the Wayland Police Department in 2002 and was appointed to Interim Chief in 2020.

Chandra Juncker '03 (Economics) accepted a new position as Trust Accountant for Circle Surrogacy. Circle Surrogacy & Egg Donation is a U.S.-based surrogacy and egg donation agency headquartered in Boston, MA.

Keeana Saxon L'03 (JD) has launched kidogo.tv, a multimedia platform for preschoolers that centers and celebrates Black cultures. Through its curated videos, learning games, and live events, the media company's mission is to offer diverse, wholesome, and educational content accessible to children all over the world.

Victoria Maurer '04 (History) released her first novel, *Challenge Me—Breaking*. The book can be found on Amazon.

Melissa Ruminot '04 (Marketing Communications/Advertising) has been named the International Board President-Elect for the Themed Entertainment Association (TEA), an international nonprofit association representing the world's leading creators, developers, designers, and producers of compelling places and experiences.

Marc Strange L'04 (JD) has recently accepted the Town Administrator position in Ludlow, MA.

Tahirah Amatul-Wadud L'05 (JD), a Springfield, MA, Attorney, has been named Executive Director and Chief Legal Officer of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-Massachusetts).

James Mahoney '05 (Criminal Justice) was promoted to Detective within the West Hartford, CT, Police Department.

Meghan Mancino '05 (Management Studies) was promoted from Tax Specialist to Tax Manager at Checkwriters in Northampton, MA. Meghan has been at Checkwriters since 2017.

Dr. Chris Purcell '05 (Government) was named Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students at Chatham University in Pittsburgh, PA. Chris started at Chatham University in January 2021, having previously served as Assistant Dean of Students and Interim Dean of Students.

Janice Ward L'05 (JD) has been named first Vice President and Trust Officer at Greenfield Savings Bank Wealth Management and Trust Services. She has more than 19 years in the industry, and assists clients with financial-planning, estate settlement, and trust administration services throughout western Massachusetts.

Scott Meikle '06 (Criminal Justice) has been promoted to Sergeant of the Norwich, MA, Police Department.

Femion Mezini G'06/L'06 (MBA/JD), an Exclusive Buyer Agent for Buyers Brokers Only, LLC, has created Mezini Team to help provide an even greater level of customer service for his homebuying and investor clients. Femion was recognized as being the number one buyer's agent in the country last year.

Erik Blake '07 (Law Enforcement) retired from a 35-year career in law enforcement with the town of Oak Bluffs, MA in June, 2022.

Teresa Knox G'07 (MBA) has been appointed Executive Vice President, Chief Operations and Experience Officer at American Eagle Financial Credit Union (AEFCU). Teresa has worked at AEFCU for the last 18 years of her 35-year career in financial services.

Kendra Berardi L'08 (JD) has been elected President of the Real Estate Bar Association for Massachusetts (REBA). Kendra's one-year term started January 1, 2022.

Erica Bornemann '08 (Political Science) is the Director of Vermont Emergency Management (VEM), and has been named President of the National Emergency Management Association (NEMA). Erica previously served as the NEMA Vice President, elected by the Emergency Management directors' representing all U.S. states and territories.

Kristina Cossar '09/G'12 (Sport Management/MBA) began working at DraftKings as a Talent Acquisition Specialist.

Seth DeWitt '09 (Sport Management) has joined Penn State Sports Properties team at Learfield as Manager, Partnership Services after six years with the San Jose Sharks.

Jaimie Russell '09 (Financing) joined Halloran Sage as an Associate. Jaimie joined the firm's Litigation and Insurance practice groups and will be handling personal injury, motor vehicle accidents, product liability, and premises liability.

2010s

Robert Guiry '10/G'14 (Sport Management/MBA) passed his FINRA Series 7 and 63 exams to take the position of Vice President of Investments at David Lerner Associates in Westport, CT. In this new role, Rob will work with numerous clients to help them reach their financial goals.

Christopher Beaudoin '11 (Communication) has been named the first Head Coach of American International College's (AIC) new men's club ice hockey program.

Marissa Del Mauro L'11 (JD) has been named to the 2022 New Jersey Super Lawyers and Rising Stars list. Marissa is a Certified Matrimony Attorney, a Partner at Lyons & Associates, P.C., and serves on the firm's leadership team coordinating all billing and compensation matters.

Robyn Gallagher L'11 (JD) has been announced as a new Partner at Wiggin and Dana. Robyn focuses on product liability, aviation, and insurance.

Rafael Llano '11/L'14 (Political Science/JD) joined Saiber LLC's Insurance and Reinsurance practice group in Florham Park, NJ.

Justin Marsh '11/G'14 (Mechanical Engineering/MBA) was promoted to the rank of Major in the United States Air Force by Lieutenant Colonel Paul Tinker '03. Justin and Paul graduated from WNE and received their Air Force commission through AFROTC Detachment 370. They are both serving at the F-16 System Program Office at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH.

Casie Barnette L'12 (JD) has joined Farah & Farah's Jacksonville, FL, staff as a Personal Injury Attorney.

Alyssa Gittleman '12 (Integrated Liberal Studies) has been promoted to Director Leading Marketing and Client Services for Conning Insurance Research. Alyssa has been with Conning for six years.

Alex Lyman '12/G'16 (Communication/Organizational Leadership) has been promoted to Associate Director of Editorial Content in the division of Enrollment Management and Marketing at Western New England University.

Catherine (Gola) Rioux '12 (Management) was promoted to Commercial Portfolio Officer at Monson Savings Bank.

Glenn Rooney L'12 (JD) has been promoted to General Counsel of the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services.

Alyssa Caliguri '13 (Psychology) has been named an Assistant Director of Admissions and Student Affairs at the Webb Institute.

Peter Fatse '13 (Integrated Liberal Studies) has been promoted to Hitting Coach for the Boston Red Sox.

Laura Penney L'13 (JD) has been honored by the *Connecticut Law Tribune* with its 2022 CT Legal Award, New Leaders in Law. Laura is a Partner at FLB Law in Westport, CT.

Lydia Lefevre '14 (Sport Management) accepted a new position as a Marketing Associate at Advent International, a private equity firm in Boston, MA. She previously worked at State Street Corporation and Brown Brothers Harriman.

Andrew LeGrant L'14/G'14 (JD/MBA) has joined Halloran Sage as an Associate. Andrew joined the Commercial Real Estate and Corporate Business & Transactions practice groups and will be handling acquisitions, sales, leasing, and financing.

Laura Russell '14/G'17 (Business Administration/MSA) started a new position at Xenocs Inc. as a Senior Accountant.

Jenna Farrell '15 (Business Administration) is a Partner Account Manager at a Holyoke, MA-based company, Pixel Health.

Michael Masciadrelli '15 (Communication) has joined the WTNH television station in New Haven, CT, as a News Anchor.

Tabitha Ayer L'16 (JD) has joined the law firm of Pullman & Comley as an Associate in the Real Estate practice.

Alexander Blanchette '16 (Forensic Chemistry) earned his Doctorate in Toxicology from Texas A&M University in August 2021. Alex is currently employed as a Toxicological Consultant with Tox-Strategies in Houston, TX.

Maryann Gubala '16 (Communication) has been promoted to Social and Content Producer at Old Sturbridge Village. Maryann was also recognized by the New England Museum Association with the 2021 General Excellence Award.

Kimberly Kirchner '16/G'19 (Business Administration/MBA) has been promoted to Director of Quality Assurance at Hilcrest Educational Centers. She previously held the position of Senior Human Resource Generalist.

Kaitlyn Labbe '16 (Marketing Communications/Advertising) has accepted a new position as a Marketing Manager at Switch, a creative agency and production house located in St. Louis, MO.

Gregory Richard '16 (Sport Management) has been named Assistant Athletic Director of Marketing and Internal Operations at Kentucky Wesleyan College (KWC). As Assistant Athletic Director, Greg is responsible for all game-day activities, partnership development, community outreach, and corporate sponsor engagement.

Stephen Romano '16 (Communication) accepted a new position as a Speechwriter for New York State Governor Kathy Hochul.

Christopher Rousseau L'16 (JD) has joined the law firm of Pullman & Comley as an Associate in the real estate practice. Christopher represents landlords and tenants in drafting and negotiation of leasing documents for retail, offices, and industrial facilities.

Thomas Vega '16 (Business Administration) has accepted a new position as Program Manager at CVS Health supporting their Robotics Automation Division.

Rauchell Beckford-Anderson L'17 (JD) joined Shipman & Goodwin as an Associate in the firm's Employer Defense, Labor Relations, and School Law Practice Groups.

Sean Madden G'17/G'22 (Engineering Management/MBA) has been promoted to Vice President, Commercial and Product Development at Fluid Metering, Inc., as a designer and manufacturer of high precision microfluidic solutions.

Sophie Marini '17 (Communication) is the Communications Director at the Worcester County Sheriff's Office in West Boylston, MA.

Troy Tanzer '17/G'21/L'21 (Sport Management/MBA/JD) has been hired by Bacon Wilson as an Associate Attorney.

Brianna Akers '18 (Psychology) has been hired by OMG, Inc. as their Talent Acquisition Specialist. OMG is the leading U.S. manufacturer and global supplier of specialty fasteners, adhesives, tools, and related products for commercial and residential constructions application.

Shannon Lynch L'19 (JD) accepted the position of Title IX Coordinator at Trinity College.

2020s

Delmarina López L'20 (JD) has been elected to the Chicopee City Council, becoming the first City Councilor of color to get elected in the city's history.

Hezekiah Randolph G'20 (Sport Leadership and Coaching) has accepted a position with the Tampa Bay Rays as an Affiliate Hitting Coach.

Hannah Zirkel '20 (Sport Management) has joined Athletic Movement Protocol (AMP Syosset), as the Director of Personal Training.

Jason Cook '21 (Civil Engineering) joined TFMoran, Inc. as a Civil Project Engineer in the Portsmouth office.

Viktoriia Protsyk L'21 (JD) has joined Bacon Wilson as an Associate Attorney.

Carli Ross L'21 (JD) joined Raipher, P.C. in Springfield, MA as a Personal Injury and Civil Litigation Attorney.

Nathan Rosenkranz '22 (Finance) has launched Nate's Crypto Corner," a weekly themed crypto newsletter featuring coverage of current events and recent funding rounds.

SEE MORE ONLINE

For more Class Notes and our *In Memoriam* listing of alumni and community members who have recently passed away, view the online version of *WNE: The Magazine* at magazine.wne.edu.

Marriages



Sarah Babski '15 and Nate Szymanski '15, September 5, 2021 in Haydenville, MA



Elyse Cannata '10 and Ryan Clark, August 27, 2021 in Monroe, CT



Nicole Prosperi '16 and Adam Kozlik '17, September 4, 2021 in Spencer, MA



Morgan Kolakowski '16 and Michael Zhang, August 12, 2021 in Rowley, MA



Anthony Karpouzis '94 and Katerina Kastelloizou, September 18, 2021 in Montreal, CAN



Victoria Nandal '16 and Joseph Masse '16/L'19, October 1, 2021 in Holyoke, MA



Katelyn O'Brien '17 and Christopher Kuzia '16, August 21, 2021 in Plymouth, MA



Marisa Harris '13 and Matthew Anthonis '14, August 14, 2021 in Cromwell, CT



Morgan Halloran '17 and Matthew Woislav '16, October 24, 2020, in Meredith, NH

Baby Golden Bears



Josephine Day, August 15, 2021 to **Dana Anstett-Castro '07** and **Jessica Anstett-Castro '07**



Annie Rose, January 9, 2022 to **Danyelle (Bidga) Mindek '15** and **John Mindek '15**



Henry Francis, May 25, 2021 to **Alyssa (Obin) Gittleman '12** and **Michael Gittleman '11**



Riyaan Hirak, September 8, 2021 to **Hirak Shah L'10** and **Mansi Shah**



Carter Jo, August 7, 2021 to **Marielle (Caron) Simpson '18** and **Scott Simpson Jr. '17**



Wyatt James & William Brennan, December 15, 2021 to **Sara (Sullivan) Carlucci '11** and **Canio Carlucci '11**



Elizabeth Sharon, September 29, 2021 to **Stephanie (Hart) Schultz '12** and **Brian Schultz '13**



Mason Gregory, December 14, 2021 to **Lisa (Masella) Saunders '06** and **Jason Saunders**



Benjamin Thomas, September 27, 2021 to **Dr. Elizabeth (Morin) Gernux '16/G'18/PharmD'18** and **Eric Gernux '15**



Brooklyn Elizabeth, January 15, 2022 to **Laura (Franze) Long '07** and **Christopher Long**



Madison Rose, June 7, 2021 to **Angela (Monaco) McCarten '11** and **Dave McCarten '11**



Hailey Valentine, December 2021 to **Katie (Grogan) Staron '10** and **Sean Staron '10**



ENDOW THE FUTURE

Western New England University is fortunate to have nearly 250 scholarships established by alumni, friends, and family—the majority of which are part of the University's endowment.

But, did you know that endowments can be so much more?

The Roger W. Wade First-Year Law Student Endowed Advising Program helps first-year students as they enter and navigate the challenges of law school by engaging students in collaborative sessions that discuss topics such as mental health, financial literacy, career-preparation, professionalism and ethics, mentorship, experiential learning, and bar exam preparation. This support, in the 2020-21 academic year, led to higher levels of student engagement and motivated students to succeed with confidence in their studies.



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**—Beverly J. Dwight
Vice President for
Advancement**



To learn more about establishing an endowed scholarship or programmatic fund, please contact Elizabeth Simpson, Associate Director of Planned Giving at 413-796-2108 or elizabeth.simpson@wne.edu.

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