



**FITCHBURG STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

CELEBRATING 125 YEARS  
*of changing lives*

# Contact

WINTER 2020

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## GLOBAL FALCONS

Students and faculty enjoy  
life-changing experiences  
traveling abroad—pp. 6–23

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni and Friends,

I'm delighted to share with you this latest issue of *Contact* magazine where we show all the wonderful ways the university is connected to the world. Our community's efforts go well beyond our region and we want to continue to spread this important message to everyone.

Many of the stories feature our "study abroad" students and their feelings about their experiences in Western and Eastern Europe, Central America, and Japan. Our goal is to make these active learning opportunities available to more of our students and to extend our reach to more locations. For example, new trips have been added to include Jordan and Ireland this spring.

And thanks to a recent \$1 million gift from the Clementi Family Charitable Trust to advance the study abroad program, additional students will be able to participate in international opportunities. Read more about the generous gift on page 8.

You'll also enjoy several of the brilliant photos published here captured by our film and video students who visually documented their journeys. Plus, don't miss information about some of our international institutional collaborations that you probably never knew existed.

Flipping through the pages, I'm reminded of my own teaching experiences when traveling with my American students and the other international students that joined us in Italy to form a global classroom. We had rich and insightful conversations shaped by cultural differences and our students were broadened in meaningful ways. All gained a new appreciation for the importance and power of diversity of viewpoint.

This showcase is part of our ongoing efforts to broaden and strengthen our students understanding of how they fit into the global arena and the many ways and places their skills, talents and insights can be applied. As always, I welcome your feedback on these and other important initiatives.



Richard S. Lapidus  
President





# CAMPUS NEWS



## RECALLING ANTONELLI V. HAMMOND, 50 YEARS LATER

Members of the student newspaper who took the college administration to federal court in 1969 – and won – returned to campus to mark the 50th anniversary of the landmark case and to help the university celebrate Constitution Day.

In 1969, the student staffers of *The Cycle*, seeking to energize what they saw as a politically sleepy campus, made a point of publishing edgy material.

“We all expected there would be more of a political climate (on the campus),” recalled John Antonelli, the editor of *The Cycle*. “Those were intense and radical days back then. It was easy for me to step out of bounds.”

“I wanted to push the envelope,” added Joan Sweeney ’71, who was on the newspaper staff as well as organized concerts and speakers. “I wanted to provoke some different conversation.”

“It was a time of change, and change was either going to come slowly or very quickly,” recalled Mark Rice, who was a freshman when the events unfolded. “At Fitchburg State College, it came very, very quickly.”

When they sought to publish an excerpt of *Black Moochie*, a novella by Black Panthers member Eldridge Cleaver, then-President James J. Hammond Jr. halted printing and ordered that any future content be previewed by a faculty panel before publication. Hammond argued the sexually explicit material in *Black Moochie* was obscene.

The move spawned media attention that led to federal court action, and resulted in a ruling that overturned the president’s decision. The decision is still cited in college journalism cases.

Jay Sampson ’70 said the experience was challenging in the moment, but he was gratified that he was welcomed back to campus to recall the events and see how the school had evolved since those days. And he does not harbor ill will. “Hammond believed he was doing the right thing, and we believed we were doing the right thing,” Sampson said. “It was a culture clash.”

## BERNSTEIN TALKS JOURNALISM IN AGE OF TRUMP

Carl Bernstein, the legendary journalist who helped expose the Watergate scandal that toppled the presidency of Richard M. Nixon, discussed the challenges facing journalism in the Trump era at an address co-sponsored by the university as part of our 125th anniversary celebration. Professor Kyle Moody (Communications Media) introduced the talk by discussing the importance of combating “fake news,” a topic he has presented on at forums around the region.

University students attended and had the opportunity to speak with Bernstein after his remarks and a question-and-answer session with WGBH senior political correspondent Adam Reilly.

Bernstein said that journalism exists for the public good. “Our primary function is to give our readers the best obtainable version of the truth,” he said. “That’s something that’s very difficult to achieve.”







### SELINGO OFFERS HOPEFUL PRESCRIPTION

Education writer Jeffrey J. Selingo said he was “bullish” on the future of higher education, despite the demographic challenges affecting colleges and universities nationwide.

In an address offered as part of the university’s 125th anniversary celebration, Selingo said institutions will need to adapt to changing times by being able to serve learners at all stages of their professional lives.

Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs Alberto Cardelle introduced Selingo, whose two-decade career writing about higher education includes books and articles in major national publications, saying the author’s observations were valuable to consider as the university begins its next five-year strategic plan.

To navigate these changing times, Selingo said institutions must understand their students’ needs and segment those markets, considering who today’s students are and what students will need several years down the road. Additionally, legacy structures like departments, majors, and 15-week semesters need to be retooled, knowing students will need different services at different paces. Institutions must also be ready to serve lifetime learners, suggesting an example of a subscription model for adult learners who may pay for six years of courses and come and go during that time. And schools must foster applied learning for the hard and soft skills that are crucial to all jobs.

Selingo also said colleges must pay attention to the services today’s students need. “Services are the new amenities,” he said. “What students most want is help getting through and getting out.” He cited academic support, career services and mental health services as crucial to today’s students.

### EARLY COLLEGE TAKES CENTER STAGE

Tremain Pinnock of Leominster got a head start on his university education by enrolling in an early college program that showed him what it would take to complete a post-secondary degree.

“It’s something I know I can do,” Pinnock said at a summit last fall about the new North Central Massachusetts Early College Academy, an early college program that creates pathways for students to earn college credits while still in high school. Pinnock is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in business administration at Fitchburg State. “I feel more confident in my dreams. I can definitely achieve what I’ve always wanted to.”

Early college programs are proven to make real progress in closing achievement gaps, Board of Higher Education Chairman Chris Gabrieli and Commissioner of Higher Education Carlos Santiago said at the summit, which brought together representatives from Fitchburg State, Mount Wachusett Community College and high schools in Fitchburg, Gardner and Leominster, along with students and business leaders.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Alberto Cardelle said first-generation students often struggle to adapt to the college environment. “Early college is a way to address this, and learn how to navigate the waters of higher education,” Cardelle said. “If you’ve never had that exposure, it’s limiting.”

The new academy, unique in its consortium model bringing together two colleges and four high schools, is designed to serve students who are first-generation, low-income and otherwise under-represented in higher education.

“It’s malpractice for us not to do this,” said Gabrieli.



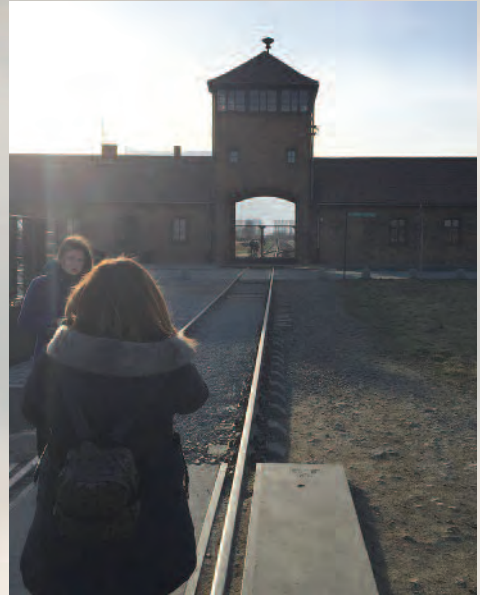




**CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF CHANGING LIVES**

Our 125th anniversary celebration began this fall with a photo shoot featuring our incoming first-year and transfer students.





Fitchburg State students and faculty made their presence known internationally in 2019. Clockwise from top left: Chinese students welcome Fitchburg State faculty for a new summer exchange program; students pause at the gates of Auschwitz in Poland; enjoying local flavors in a Japanese teahouse; nursing student Jordan Ayotte '19 examines a child at a clinic in Costa Rica; and students and faculty in Verona, Italy. At right, Madison Whitten trains her lens on Italy in a photo taken by Emily Fortin '20.



# GLOBAL FALCONS

Interviews by Miguel Cintron '20, Leanna Johnson '20, Ashley McHugh '20, and Matt Bruun. Articles by Matt Bruun.

For a growing number of Fitchburg State students, the world is their classroom. Through study abroad opportunities ranging from one week to full semesters, students are broadening their horizons and learning how to be resourceful citizens of increasingly interconnected society.

The global opportunities for students are about to expand even further, thanks to one of the largest philanthropic gifts in university history.

Our diverse campus is also enriched by an international student population, and collaborations create opportunities for cultural exchange with educational partners in China, Germany, Italy and Japan.





ONE OF THE LARGEST GIFTS IN FITCHBURG STATE'S HISTORY ESTABLISHES THE GLOBAL AMBASSADORS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, CREATING MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS.

## OPENING WINDOWS TO THE WORLD



Anna M. Clementi (left) was just a child when she visited Italy for the first time with her parents, including her father, Sandro, who first immigrated to the U.S. "I can still remember the smells and the sights, and how different it was," she said.

There were other trips back to Italy, and when she was in high school, Clementi was an exchange student with a family in

Annecy, France. "It was a lot of fun, with an intense language focus, and I still have very fond memories of that experience," she said.

Knowing how her own experiences studying abroad shaped the person she would become, Clementi is committed to creating opportunities for other students to have similar epiphanies. Twenty years ago she helped establish the Center for Italian Culture at Fitchburg State, with a mission to encourage the understanding and appreciation of all aspects of Italian language and culture. The CIC provides scholarship support to dozens of students seeking to expand their horizons through international travel, in addition to supporting programming on the Fitchburg State campus.

And this year Clementi, via the Clementi Family Charitable Trust, established the Global Ambassadors Scholarship Program that will greatly expand the opportunities for Fitchburg State students to study abroad. The establishing gift is one of the largest single donations in university history, and Clementi—a longtime member of Fitchburg State's Board of Trustees—hopes the program will change lives.

"I've seen firsthand how the students come back transformed," Clementi said. "They see the world with different eyes. It's about their self-reliance and their own renewed determination. We're creating global citizens, and that's very important in today's world. If every student that graduated from Fitchburg State had the opportunity to study abroad even for a little bit of time, it would be a great gift to them. They will be lifelong learners."

Any student may apply for the scholarship program, which will cover 50 percent of the costs for students to attend one of the university's faculty-led international trips. Students will apply for the scholarship with the endorsement of faculty, with a particular focus on first-generation students and students with no previous international travel experience.

Clementi hopes other supporters of the university will be similarly inspired. "I would invite alumni who want to participate in travel and culture to contribute to the university," she said. "We can grow this. My dream is that as these students go along in life, they remember this opportunity and they will then provide this opportunity to others. It will multiply in many, many ways."

Sonia Marks '20 took this photo in Verona, Italy last summer. "I was struck by how different the color and architecture of these buildings are from what we see in the U.S.," she said. "Studying abroad gave me the chance to experience a different culture and explore somewhere new. It was incredible to be able to learn about the areas where I was capturing images, and immerse myself in a new culture."







## TEACHING IS UNIVERSAL

Last summer, several members of Fitchburg State faculty and the senior administration made the long journey to Shanghai, China as part of a new collaboration between the university and the AUIA International Summer School. The program is designed for Chinese students enrolled at American universities who wish to continue their English-language studies while visiting family at home.

President Lapidus and Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs Alberto Cardelle participated in the opening ceremony to show their support and continued leadership in forging new international partnerships.

Professor David Svolba (Humanities) said he was struck by the intense cultural differences between the U.S. and China. "One of the most important benefits anyone can derive from exposure to different cultures is the reminder that culture is so variable," he said. "You'll return seeing your own world from a different perspective. Unlike difficult days at home, difficult days abroad are often edifying. And of course there are plenty of good days, too, when you feel like your world is suddenly many times larger and full of many more possibilities than you had previously imagined."

Professor John Lohmann (Business Administration) said the sheer scope of the journey left a strong impression on him. "The amount of time we spent on an aircraft traveling at over 500 miles an hour was staggering," he said. "The 13-hour flight gave me a new perspective on the size of the planet that even driving from Sacramento to Boston did not." Lohmann offers succinct advice to other travelers: "Pack light. You don't need as much as you think you do. But bring some chewable Pepto tablets (a real life-saver). Let go of your preconceptions and open your eyes and your mind."

Professor Jenn Berg (Mathematics) enjoyed being surrounded by another culture. "It took long-standing assumptions about the world and made me reconsider them," she said. "I think study abroad is a valuable lesson in humility and resetting mental patterns."

Professor Adem Elveren (Economics, History and Political Science) had traveled to China before, in 2005. He said he valued seeing the country again through the lens of an economist, as the nation has enjoyed unprecedented economic growth. "I have travelled over 20 countries in four continents so far," said Elveren, who was raised in Turkey. "It was very different than teaching in an American classroom. And it was a very valuable experience to work in a very different country than I am used to." He recommends a comfortable pair of sneakers for any global traveler, along with a sense of adventure. "Make sure you go out of your comfort zone," he said. "Don't keep eating hamburgers or pizza, try new foods. Don't just see the tourist places, see each corner of the city. And don't just take taxis everywhere, use public transportation. That is how you get the real sense of that country and that culture."

While he wasn't part of the AUIA trip, Professor Meledath Govindan (Biology/Chemistry) taught in China during his sabbatical in 2018 and plans to return there with students in summer 2020 for a course he is teaching on the chemistry of natural products. He has also taught courses in Italy (and plans to return there in 2021) as well as his native India, from which he emigrated in 1975 to pursue his PhD.

"I came with \$12 in my pocket," he said, recalling the generosity of family members in getting him to the U.S. "My coming here, and living in a different culture, I think that's why I'm so passionate about study abroad."





## MORE THAN A GAME

Imani Hunter '20 grew up loving anime, the fantastical Japanese animation genre. She was so thoroughly immersed that seeing Japan in person was one of her lifelong ambitions. "It was always a dream of mine," she said. "It's the place I've wanted to go more than anything."

Hunter, who grew up in Worcester and studies computer science with a minor in game design, visited Australia in high school so knew the joys of international travel. But Japan still loomed large in her mind. When she learned that students in the game design program would have the chance to visit the country, she knew she had to be a part of it.

"I loved it," she said, recalling her two-week trip in 2017 that included stops in Kyoto and Tokyo. "It was so fun. That's what really solidified my wanting to go again for a longer period of time."

She got that chance in spring 2019, when she spent a semester at Reitaku University in Japan through Fitchburg State's exchange program. In Japan she lived in a dorm with other international students, making friends with students from South Korea and Nepal, among other places. They still keep in touch.

Hunter's international experiences changed her.

"It definitely improved my independence," she said. "I did a lot of things on my own, and I just matured. I can rely on myself a lot more. Experiencing the language barrier definitely matures you, especially if it's one of your first times traveling. It's humbling, and you learn so much."

Professor Jon Amakawa (Communications Media) said the voyages let students meet game design professionals and students in Japan and appreciate how expansive the field is. "I think their work becomes more interesting and creative," he said. "Most people who have studied abroad view it as a highlight of their college experience, myself included."

Korey Kinney '20 was looking for personal development when he signed on for the Japan trip. "I was looking to go somewhere beyond what I was used to, but with something I am used to," he said, describing the visit's tours of game design firms in Tokyo and Kyoto. "It's a very weird sensation, to know something and yet be completely unaware at the same time."

Denzel Weatherspoon '19 said his trip inspired him to learn the language and is considering relocating to Japan to pursue career opportunities. "You really do not know how big and varied the world is until you visit other places," he said.







## KINDNESS MATTERS

Megan Steiger '20 knew that traveling to Africa to teach in a Kenyan school would be a memorable experience, but she didn't expect it to change her life.

Steiger, a native of Leicester, and Professor Nancy Murray visited the Nambale Magnet School in Kenya this summer via the Kappa Delta Pi education honor society. (Steiger is co-president of the Fitchburg State chapter, and Murray is its faculty advisor.) During her month in East Africa, Steiger said she gained a new appreciation for the comforts of home, but also affirmed her passion to serve children throughout her career.

The Nambale Magnet School is a residential school for children orphaned or otherwise rendered vulnerable by AIDS in rural western Kenya. Some students come from families who can pay to attend, while others are able to enroll because of donor support. There are 435 students at the school, ranging from pre-kindergarten to early teens, learning from 17 teachers. The classes are taught in English.

"The students' respect for their teachers was unbelievable," said Steiger, recalling chants of gratitude throughout their lessons. "Just being there and donating my time was so rewarding, I want to keep doing it. I didn't realize how much a kind gesture can mean until I did this."

"For as little as they have, the teachers do a great job differentiating instruction," Murray added. "And they clearly love their students. If you're a good teacher, you can teach anywhere."

The American visitors brought \$600 in school supplies and 20 iPads that were donated by Fitchburg State, and also provided a mobile app for free that supports early childhood literacy.

Steiger and Murray have kept in frequent touch with the Nambale students and teachers online since the visit.

"We talk about wanting our students to become leaders," Murray said. "Megan's own philosophy before the trip was the epitome of that, and now that's even stronger."





“STUDYING ABROAD IS LIKE AWAKENING FROM A LONG NAP. YOU MAY FEEL LIKE WANTING TO JUST FOCUS ON YOUR CLASSES OR LIFE IN FITCHBURG, BUT THINGS WILL ALWAYS BE THE SAME HERE. WHEN YOU GO ABROAD, THE ONLY THING DIFFERENT WILL BE YOU.”

—Nicole Salerno, Study Abroad Coordinator  
Study Abroad Destination: Peru



## NEXT STOP, THE WORLD

Fitchburg State’s Office of International Education in Hammond Hall is a bustling space. In addition to Director of International Education Nelly Wadsworth, Study Abroad Coordinator Nicole Salerno and International Student Coordinator Sandy Yu, visitors will see world maps and posters advertising destinations across the globe. They will also likely meet some of the dozens of international students that the university welcomes each year, some of whom work in the office as student assistants. This fall, Fitchburg State hosted 41 students representing 25 countries.

The office coordinates a variety of study abroad programs designed to let students experience the world for one week up to one year while keeping their educational plans on track. These options include faculty-led trips that are embedded into a regular semester over spring break as well as longer sessions offered during the summer.

Just in the past five years, Fitchburg State students have studied in Australia, Cape Verde, China, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Scotland, and Thailand.

Fitchburg State also has exchange agreements with universities in China, Germany, Italy, and Japan. And there are study abroad providers with whom the university works to facilitate student travel at the semester or year-long level.

“We are here to let students know that study abroad is within reach for them, and that we can help make sure they don’t miss any steps in their academic plans,” Wadsworth said.

“Study abroad allows students to be exposed to different cultures and develop skills essential for the workforce today,” said Salerno.







## DREAMING ON ICE

Anton Metelev '23 loves playing ice hockey. Growing up in Kirov, Russia (northeast of Moscow), Metelov knew he would have to leave his home if he were to balance his athletic aspirations with his educational goals.

"In the Russian system, you have to pick one (between academics or athletics) when you're 11 years old," Metelev said. "It was my choice to study in the U.S., and my parents supported me all the way."

He was just 15 years old when he departed for Massachusetts to study at Arlington Catholic High School, followed by two years of junior hockey before enrolling at Fitchburg State. "When I visited here I loved the coaches right away, and I liked the campus," he said. "And the hockey program is very strong."

He also knew that at Fitchburg State he could strike the balance he wanted between athletics and academics. As a business administration major, Metelev sees himself as an entrepreneur. He will take his hockey career as far as it can go, and then hopes to work in business. "I believe in setting almost impossible goals and trying to reach them," he said. "If you treat your dreams as a goal, and have an idea how to reach that goal, eventually you will get there."

"Anton is a focused young man who loves playing hockey, and he is an excellent student who is developing into one of our leaders as a freshman," Hockey Coach Dean Fuller said. "It's great to be able to attract a student athlete from Russia to be part of our family here at Fitchburg State."

Metelev said he's found a strong community of friends in the U.S. "I wouldn't say I'm that different from American kids anymore," he said. He also feels that his experiences in America have prepared him to go wherever he wants in the future.

"I'm a person of the world already," he said. "I feel like I can decide anywhere I want to go, and I will be just fine."





## A DIVERSE WORLD

The university recently launched an Environmental Studies major that explores the intersection between people and their environment, and it's an area that students have explored firsthand on recent voyages studying tropical ecology as well as community health.

For Moses Gomez '20, majoring in biology, it was his first trip to South America, even though he had traveled abroad as part of his military career before Fitchburg State. "Now I see the world with a much wider perspective," he said. "I can enjoy simpler things and understand that our natural ecosystem is the life blood of our survival as a species."

Professor Chris Picone (Biology/Chemistry) taught the tropical ecology course and put his multiple experiences in Costa Rica to work. "I had not been back since 1997, so I looked forward to this course as a means to reconnect with ecosystems that were once very much a part of me," he said. "Seeing rainforest plant was like visiting old friends after 20 years."

Kyle Humphries '21, majoring in biology and psychology, was delighted the trip included field research as well as meeting the local community. "We got to experience more of the culture than just the class," he said.

Nursing students also found the experience compelling.

"The amount that I learned in such a short period of time surprised me," said Danielle Ferreira '20. "My favorite memory was spending time in the emergency room of the hospital we visited, where there were so many patients waiting to be treated and there was always something to do or someone that needed help."

Hope Lively '20 said the trip was her first time abroad. "I think it's important for people to see the world from different perspectives, and studying abroad can help with that," she said. "I think what surprised me most about the experience is how much I learned about myself."

"My study abroad trip to Costa Rica helped me broaden my views and understanding of a health care system outside of the U.S.," said Jordan Ayotte '19. "It was fascinating to see how the Costa Rican culture and lifestyle influenced the health of the community. Immersing myself in the community work that we did also helped develop a sense of confidence in that I was taking on these new challenges and overcoming barriers. Overall, it helped me develop a new perspective on nursing and public health that I can incorporate into my practice for years to come."

Ayotte has been working as a registered nurse at the Miriam Hospital in Providence since last August.





## FINDING A VOICE

Mingqin “Joey” Zhang is excited to stand out in a crowd. A student in Fitchburg State’s MBA program, Zhang transferred here from a larger school in Boston because he felt he was surrounded by too many fellow Chinese students there. One of the big reasons he wanted to study in the U.S. was to improve his spoken language skills, he said, and that was hard to do in that setting.

He looked at Fitchburg State, which had the academic program he wanted—an MBA—at a greatly reduced price.

“After a couple weeks here, I felt a sense of belonging,” he said. “I’m the only Chinese student in my class and I’m there to speak out.”

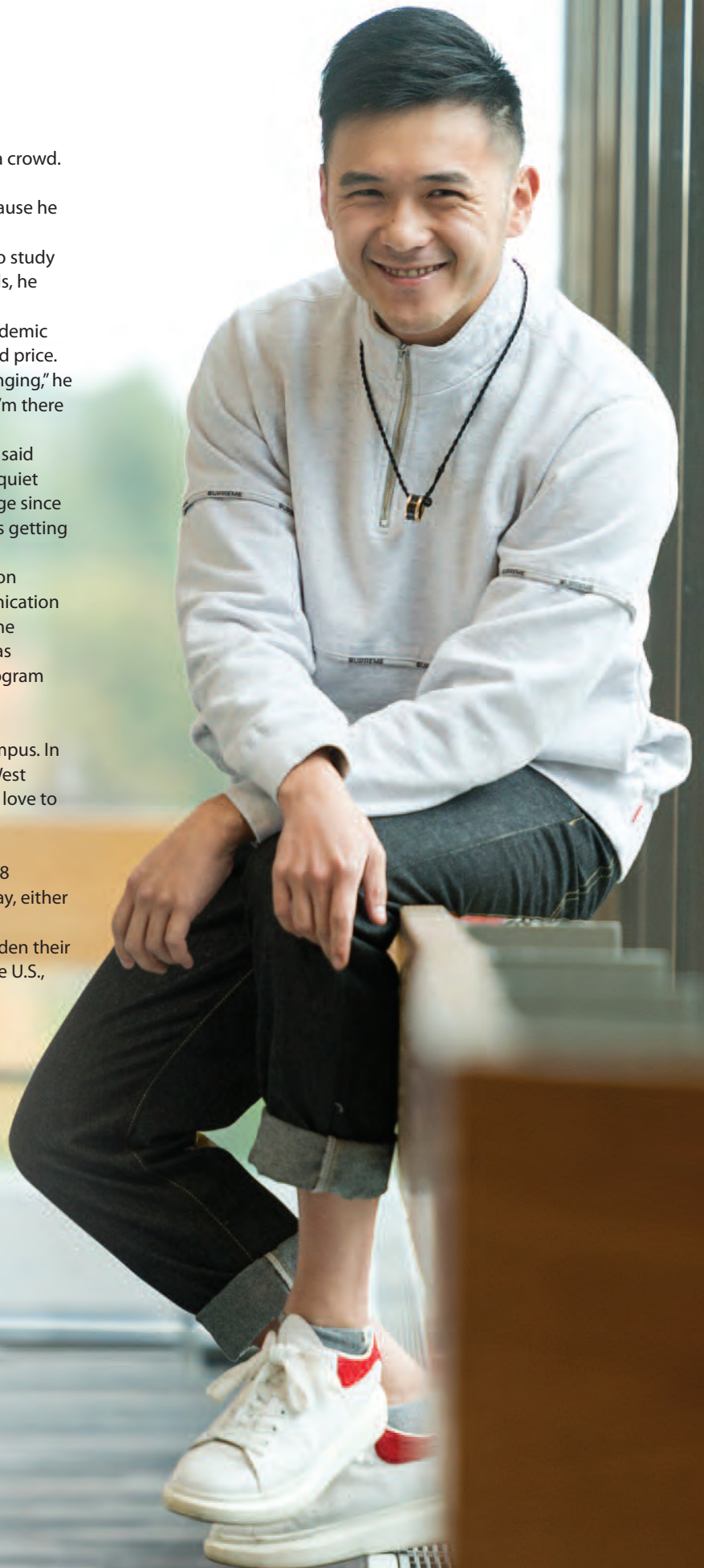
That outspokenness is a change for Zhang, who said there is a tendency among Chinese students to be quiet and shy in their native country. “I’ve had a big change since I’ve been here,” he said with a broad smile. “My life is getting better now.”

“Our diverse and multicultural student population prospers in a classroom setting where free communication of ideas and knowledge empowers us to become the leaders and entrepreneurs of the future,” said Nicolas Labovitis, one of Zhang’s instructors in the MBA program and whose class includes a number of international students.

Zhang loves the ability to travel beyond the campus. In his few years in the U.S. he has already visited the West Coast and driven from Boston to the Florida Keys. “I love to share my culture with others, and learn about the differences between our cultures,” he said.

Zhang hopes to finish his MBA within the next 18 months and plans to start his own business someday, either in China or the U.S.

In the meantime, he encourages people to broaden their minds by visiting other countries. While he loves the U.S., and will recommend Fitchburg State to his friends back home, he wants his new American friends to consider traveling to China. “People should definitely go to China. You will be welcomed there,” he said. “And you will love the food.”





## CARING FOR ALL

When Saisha Matias '19 left the airport after returning from a faculty-led study abroad trip to Ghana last summer, she burst into tears. "I felt like I'd left a piece of my heart behind," she said. "It changed my life."

Matias grew up in Worcester in a religious family that has always encouraged giving back to the community. That philosophy is part of what inspired her to make the journey to Ghana as part of a course in global nursing led by Professors Debbie Benes and Akwasi Duah from the Department of Nursing, whom Matias calls her mentors.

Matias and her classmates worked in a variety of settings during the trip, including nine hours at a community health fair. "They didn't want us to leave," she recalled. "They were grateful because no one had taken so much time to sit in their community. It was a very eye-opening experience. I realized how privileged we are here."

The trip inspired Matias to continue her education in global nursing, and she is now in a PhD program at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester. "I didn't expect the trip to change my life as it did," she said. "They really need a voice, and that's where my desire to pursue a PhD came from. I want to be a voice. Being able to go out there was the deciding factor."

That resonates with Professor Benes, who also chairs the Nursing Department. Her own passion for community nursing has manifested in her teaching and in supervising student research into local public health projects. She leapt at the opportunity to bring that philosophy to the global stage, including recent trips to Ghana and Costa Rica.

"It gives our students exposure to an alternative health care system in a developing nation," she said. "We go into the communities and participate in health screenings, and students get to see what public health looks like under socialized medicine. And learning what it's like to be a minority in another country gives them a perspective for caring for people here who don't speak the language."

The students learn beyond that appreciation of their discipline, she said. "They're so used to going to the phone and getting Uber to go where you want to go, and you can't do that in Ghana," she said. "You have to rely on each other and learn to work as a team."

Duah said the international voyages change students in countless ways. "We are always talking about transforming our students, but how do we transform our students if we don't give them transformative experiences?" he asked. "They change in ways you cannot use words to describe."

Duah, who emigrated from Ghana himself, said he was gratified by Matias' passion for helping others. "There are some things that money cannot buy. As a professor, being able to give students such an experience that so transforms them, that's all we need."



Saisha Matias '19 fostered a passion for global nursing during her trip to Ghana.





## A BIGGER WORLD

Caroline Anderson '20 grew up in Lunenburg and was nervous about being far from home when it was time to go to college. She began her studies in upstate New York, about three hours away.

"I'd never been that far from home," she said. "So I transferred to Fitchburg State and I absolutely loved it."

Yet Anderson's worldview was destined to change during the course of her studies, and she's logged many thousands of miles in the course of completing her education.

The summer after her sophomore year, Anderson went to Verona, Italy, for Fitchburg State faculty-led courses on physiology and chemistry. The courses explored those topics through the lenses of the Mediterranean diet and the chemistry of food, the latter including tours of vineyards and cheese factories.

"Going on a faculty-led program, you get to experience it but with some structure," she said. "By the time I was going home, I didn't want to leave. It made me find a new love of traveling."

In her junior year, Anderson took a course on tropical ecology that sent her to Costa Rica. The voyage included a project where students dug channels for rain as well as a

journey through the cloud forest. "Doing a lab is very structured, and you see one thing," Anderson said. "In the field, you get see multiple things interacting with each other."

Anderson has learned a lot about research during her time at Fitchburg State. She was part of the group of students who performed paid research into the health of the local community and ecosystem in summer 2018 (right after she got back from Italy), and also was part of the group this past summer, as a peer mentor to the new researchers. This summer she also got to present her own work from the research project at an international conference in Puerto Rico.

Her first trip to Italy was made possible through a scholarship from the university's Center for Italian Culture, and she's grateful for the doors it opened for her.

"Traveling abroad, you grow so much as a person," Anderson said. "I gained so much confidence. These trips made me the person I am today."

Anderson is looking at graduate schools after she completes her degree at Fitchburg State. As for where she studies, Anderson said her map is wide open.





## HITTING THE GROUND RUNNING

Vera Ziegler of Stuttgart, Germany, made the most of her semester at Fitchburg State. Enrolled via the university's exchange program with Stuttgart Media University, Ziegler embraced a variety of scholastic and extracurricular opportunities to make her experience one to remember.

She was familiar with the U.S. from spending her 10th grade year with a host family outside Dallas-Fort Worth (with whom she remains close). She was eager to see another part of the U.S. and continue developing her English language skills. "What I always loved is the country has so many different climates, and so much diversity, and so much else to offer," she said.

At Fitchburg State, those opportunities included student athletics. In Germany, Ziegler said, athletics are not so closely interwoven with academics; students who want to do sports join private clubs outside the campus. Here, she was able to join the university's cross country team.

"It's been a great experience," she said. "We do a lot together, and winning isn't the most important thing. It's more about our personal progress."

Jamie Aubuchon coaches Fitchburg State's women's cross country team and said Ziegler was a great addition.

"Vera is actually our third German exchange student in the past 10 years or so, and like her German predecessors, she has a true appreciation for all the new things she is experiencing here and is always smiling and willing to participate in other non-running activities, like fundraising and community service," Aubuchon said.

While Ziegler had no formal competitive running experience, she distinguished herself on Fitchburg State's team and helped them qualify for regional championships.

"Vera's maturity shows through with simple things like asking questions and pre-planning her day to be ready for any unexpected changes in the schedule," he said, adding that Ziegler's English skills are also exceptional. "She understands all the subtlety of our conversations and actually laughs at my dad jokes, too. The rest of the team rolls their eyes."

Beyond running, Ziegler also joined the school's Dance Club and has enjoyed activities from apple picking at local orchards to going camping on Cape Cod, where she went on a whale watch. "I'd never seen a whale before in my life," she said.

After the fall semester, Ziegler planned to visit her former host family in Texas before doing some additional travel. She will finish her studies in Germany in 2020.





GLOBAL FALCONS



Images from Italy last summer by Tyler Noctyrn (above), Emily Fortin (right) and Katie Duncan (below).





## WHERE HISTORY ENDURES

A passion for history inspired Peter Canova '20 to make his first trip to Europe. Canova was taking Professor Daniel Sarefield's World Civilizations course when the professor described his upcoming trip to Verona, Italy, a popular study abroad trip. Canova was intrigued, and traveled there this past summer where his cohort included other history students as well as those taking a course in Communications Media with Professor Peter Laytin.

"I met so many people and the professors made it so easy to ask questions and to talk to them," Canova said. "It was just amazing. I can't stop talking about it to this day.

"Going out of the country in general, you feel so separated from your comfort zone, you find so many new things about yourself," he continued. "You realize that all the insecurities and all the things holding you back are not there. You are able to open up to new experiences, and that's what I did. It was very revealing and I feel like a better person now than I ever felt. I recommend studying abroad to anyone."

"By traveling to and living in an unfamiliar and often far-away place, one where you might not even know the local language and culture, students are really taking personal and academic risks," said Sarefield. "They're putting themselves out there. When they meet the challenges of

studying abroad and succeed, they become more willing to take risks in the future, to dare to dream bigger dreams for themselves and to set out to accomplish them. It is really inspiring."

The Roman history course Sarefield teaches in Verona lets students connect with the Roman past in tangible ways, Sarefield continued. "We walk Roman streets, visit the remnants of Roman homes, villas, and buildings that were central to Roman public life and are still standing and underground throughout the city. In this way, students make connections to historical texts that are different than they would in the classroom or the library."

Laytin, whose students have documented the historic and scenic sites of Verona over several study abroad trips, agreed that travel has a powerful effect. "I have always seen not only after, but actually during the trips, a sense of self-confidence that slowly builds as the student successfully navigates through the daily routines in a new culture and all that daily living necessitates," Laytin said. "This confidence is apparent in their character upon return."

Having new experiences are key to growth, he added, noting the cultural immersion that comes with traveling to a new place cannot be accomplished any other way.





## THE HEART OF EUROPE

Philip Spadano '19 had seen the wider world during his time in the U.S. Marine Corps. Still, the veteran gained an even greater appreciation of it during a trip to Poland with Professor Joshua Spero (Economics, History and Political Science) and his class called The Heart of Europe.

"The opportunity to see Poland, a country that has witnessed and suffered firsthand through some of the darkest horrors of what man is capable of, was an offer I could not refuse," Spadano said, describing his interest in getting to know a people who never gave up hope and persevered. "The solemnity of Auschwitz and Auschwitz-Birkenau seems to draw the breath of your body and soul. It is something that even the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., as solemn as that is, fails to capture. I believe everyone should see those places firsthand. A person afterwards would only want to ensure to the best of their ability that similar acts occurring in the world today come to an immediate halt and any future sufferings are prevented."

Spadano minored in international studies at Fitchburg State, and is continuing his graduate studies at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland.

Spero took students this year to The Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, and Poland. He said showing students how Germany and Poland have endured world wars yet evolved into peaceful democracies is invaluable. "It's always a welcoming and enriching opportunity to observe my students undergoing life-transformational experiences when they witness such unique settings, people, sites, and foods, and build such important, often enduring bonds with one another, and, sometimes, with the people they've met in Europe," Spero said.

To further that collaboration, Spero has been working closely with Rhine-Waal University in Kleve, Germany, to develop faculty-student joint and cooperative research projects. This fall the campus hosted Dr. Klaus Hegemann from Rhine-Waal to lay the groundwork for those collaborations.

"Students arriving at Fitchburg State for the first time, hopefully, see the incredible, doable, scholarship-supported opportunities to study and travel abroad, particularly with professors keen to take them on these journeys," Spero said.





## GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING

Muchafara Punungwe '21, a native of Zimbabwe, had inside knowledge when he was looking to study abroad in the United States. His older sister studied in Fitchburg State's MBA program and worked in the Office of International Education. Even his mother had visited the campus, and loved its peaceful environs and contained size.

"When it was my turn to come to college, I decided to come here," he said. He has found his adopted home at Fitchburg State a warm and welcoming place. "I love the community here, and how everyone gets along."

Punungwe, 25, has noticed some major cultural differences during his time in the U.S., including a reliance by his younger peers on their cell phones. He attributes people clinging to their phones as a sign of insecurity, and wishes they would instead appreciate the value of engaging one another eye-to-eye. "After college, you still have whole other mountains to climb," he said. "There's more to life than college. It's just one chapter."

Envisioning a career on Wall Street, he decided to major in economics. However, a theater class with Professor Kelly Morgan aroused new interests. "Kelly helped me find my passion," Punungwe said, explaining his interests in theater and public speaking. "He sees potential that sometimes we don't see ourselves."

"Muchafara is a very talented, funny and thoughtful individual," Professor Morgan said. "He is socially aware and cares deeply about the community and his colleagues. He's very civic-minded, and by that I mean not only the immediate community but the world community. He is an exceptional young man. A poet!"

Punungwe, like his sister before him, works in the Office of International Education, and tries to use his position and his oratorical skills to spread the importance of cultural exchange. "I hope to bring a better understanding of the

world out there," he said. "The less you know, the more arrogant you are. The more you know, the more humble you become. I try not to be naïve, but the more opportunities we have to meet each other, the more opportunities we have to work things out."





## A COMMUNITY OF SCHOLARS

This year the Center for Faculty Scholarship (CFS), located in the Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library, launched its inaugural quarterly newsletter, Research Live. CFS co-coordinators Professor Elise Takehana (English Studies) and Professor Eric Budd (Economics, History and Political Science) said the newsletter will profile work from departments and subfields within departments over the course of the academic year.

"This year the CFS will fund an interdisciplinary group of faculty members to explore topics and issues related to the digital humanities which they will present at the new Faculty Research Colloquium on April 29, 2020," Takehana and Budd said in announcing the new program. "The colloquium, along with a number of digital humanities-based events and gatherings, will provide an opportunity for the faculty to determine the goals for the future of digital humanities on campus. Chief amongst our goals is to foster a rich intellectual life on campus."

This will take shape with monthly faculty lectures hosted at the center, and its funding of faculty-student research.

Among the faculty work highlighted in the first edition of the newsletter is an effort by Professor Catherine Buell (Mathematics) to "rehumanize" mathematics by engaging mathematicians in the ethics of their work. Buell is concerned with the lack of a code of ethics for mathematicians, with the assumption that math is pure. But the modern banking system, search algorithms and the politicized data mining of firms like Cambridge Analytica show that is not the case, according to Buell. "We mathematicians control who has access and who gets to question it. Mathematics is not neutral. It has never been neutral. But that's the idea."

The newsletter also points to the work of Professor Jon Amakawa (Communications Media), who teaches in the university's game design program. Amakawa has long been fascinated by history and the potential for augmented reality to let people study the past in new ways. Among the projects he is working on now is an augmented reality experience for Heart Mountain in Wyoming, where 14,000 Japanese-Americans were interned during World War II. The work supports his belief in art that helps expand beyond the artist's subjective experience.

The Center for Faculty Research newsletter, which also highlights research performed by Professor Steven Edwards (English Studies) during his sabbatical and Professor Danielle Wigmore's (Exercise and Sports Science) work with students gauging the health of the greater Fitchburg community, can be viewed on the university website at [fitchburgstate.edu](http://fitchburgstate.edu).

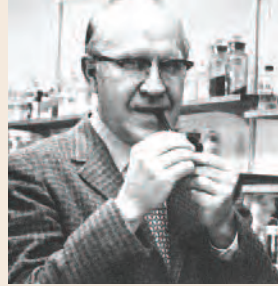




# IN MEMORIAM

## FACULTY

**PROFESSOR EMERITUS GEORGE F. CONDIKE**, of Granbury, Texas, on October 3, 2019, at the age of 102. In 1947, Dr. Condiike began at Fitchburg State, teaching chemistry, physics, geology, and astronomy. He continued his independent research, publishing many articles in scientific and educational journals. Dr. Condiike served as the Chemistry Department Chairman from 1949 to 1952 and from 1955 to 1966 and as Academic Dean from 1954 to 1956. Dr. Condiike retired from teaching in 1982 with the title of Professor Emeritus, an honor he held until his passing.



During WWII Dr. Condiike worked as a research scientist on government projects at the General Electric plant in Salem, Mass. His innovation led to the development of a burnout proof light bulb for military aircraft instrument panels, saving the lives of many American service members.

In 1972, the Massachusetts State College Board of Trustees took the unprecedented step of naming the George F. Condiike Science Building at Fitchburg State in his honor. The university rededicated the building in 2015 as the Condiike Wing of the new Robert V. and Jeanne S. Antonucci Science Complex.

## 1940s

**ETHEL P. (MANDRUS) DONAHUE '41**, of Springfield, on February 8, 2019.

**DANIEL R. O'NEIL '42**, of Worcester, on July 19, 2019.

**JOHN A. APONE '48**, of Buzzards Bay, on April 9, 2019.

## 1950s

**FREDERICK D. COLE '51, '57**, of South Dartmouth, on August 20, 2019.

**EDWIN A. DODGE '51**, of Brewster, on August 26, 2019.

**ELLEN R. (O'NEIL) SMITH '53**, of Vero Beach, Fla., on April 6, 2019.

**MARILYN (MILLER) PULA '53**, of Hingham, on May 6, 2019.

**BETTY A. (GILBOY) WASS '53**, of Leominster, on June 9, 2019.

**MARY E. (WILSON) GILLESPIE '58**, of Lexington, on June 18, 2019.

**JOHN T. MOYNIHAN '58, '62**, of Clinton, on November 18, 2018.

**JOSEPH P. HANNON '59**, of Chicago, Ill., on August 9, 2019. During 2016's Homecoming Weekend, Hannon was inducted into the Fitchburg State Athletics Hall of Fame for his outstanding achievement as a student athlete in outdoor track and field. As a junior, he brought the track team to the New England Teacher's College Championship where he won the broad jump, the 100-yard dash and the 200-yard dash and ran the anchor leg of the winning 880 relay team. He also competed in the shot put at that meet. Hannon was involved on campus as well as with athletics. He was the president of the Class of 1959 and gave the graduation address.

Hannon went on to have a distinguished career in the Chicago area, serving its public schools, the Chicago Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Chicago Stock Exchange, among other roles.

**MARGARET F. (FOX) TRAHAR '59**, of Mountlake Terrace, Wash., on September 29, 2019.

## 1960s

**PERLEY R. HERSEY '60, '66**, of Pearland, Texas on June 28, 2019.

**ROBERT C. MUSGROVE '60, '69**, of Lunenburg, on April 2, 2019.

**PHILIP M. FALLON '61**, of Fitchburg, on August 7, 2019. Between 1986-2002, Fallon was superintendent of schools in Fitchburg.

**IRIS E. DIRICO '62, '70**, of Framingham, on July 8, 2019.

**THOMAS J. FLYNN '62**, of Naples, Fla., on September 19, 2019. He was inducted into the Fitchburg State Hall of Fame in 2008 as an outstanding student athlete in soccer, basketball and baseball. In 2010 and 2014 he was inducted for a second and third time along with his teammates of the 1961 Baseball Team and the 1960 Men's Soccer Team, respectively.

**PHILIP A. LAROCHE '63**, of West Yarmouth, on August 25, 2019.

**VITA MARIE T. (TRODELLO) TORRES '63**, of Gilford, N.H., on October 7, 2019.

**MICHAEL A. MANZELLO '64**, of Ashby, on April 25, 2019.

**KATHLEEN S. (CARNEY) ANKE '65**, of Claremont, Calif., on August 20, 2019.

**RUTHANNE (KILLEEN) BERGER '65**, of Wake Forest, N.C., on April 20, 2019.

**PAUL F. CYGANIEWICZ '65**, of The Villages, Fla., on May 29, 2019.

**RAYMOND L. HEBERT '67**, of West Boylston, on August 5, 2019.

**DONNA J. (HOLDER) MENGER '68**, of Englewood, Fla., on September 11, 2019.

## 1970s

**DONNA (CLARK) GHERNA '70**, of Bradenton, Fla., on March 6, 2019.

**JAMES R. MULLINS '71, '76, '83**, of Ashby, on August 10, 2019.

**LEE T. (THATCHER SANGO) HALLORAN '74**, of Winchendon, on June 27, 2019.

**PAUL E. CAISSIE '75**, of Fort Myers Beach, Fla., on May 11, 2019.

**SHEILA R. (DREW) ELLSWORTH '76**, of Northborough, on June 26, 2019.

**CATHY A. (WHITTAKER) FRONGILLO '78**, of Ipswich, on May 12, 2019.

**JOSEPH F. DZIUBA '79, '89**, of West Wareham, on September 3, 2019.

**PAUL M. HOWARD '79, '81**, of Millis, on May 29, 2019.

**WILLIAM D. LEAVER '79**, of North Smithfield, R.I., on June 7, 2019.

## 1980s

**JANE L. MARTIN '80**, of Stoughton, on July 27, 2019.

**KENNETH H. WORTH '80**, of Potsdam, N.Y., on September 3, 2019.

**CAROL L. (LYMAN) BATCHELDER '82**, of Kittery, Maine, on June 4, 2019.

**BARRY M. FADDEN '83**, of East Templeton, on October 27, 2019.

## 1990s

**JANICE M. (PRINN) RICHARD '91**, of Gardner, on August 4, 2019.

## 2000s

**CATHERINE L. (SEVERENS) KEEFER '03**, of Lunenburg, on June 14, 2019.

**PETER R. NORDSTROM '07**, of Denver, Colo., on January 22, 2019.

## 2010s

**THOMAS P. FOOTE '11**, of Fitchburg, on August 1, 2019.



# CLASS NOTES

This Class Notes section includes news that was received between May 1, 2019 and November 1, 2019. Because of the nature of a bi-annual publication and the volume of notes we receive, you should expect to see your note about six months after you submit your information.

## 1940S



**WALTER B. PIERCE '41** celebrated his 100th birthday in July.

## 1950S

**CARMINE MOSCHELLA '56** officially retired from teaching in 1993 but has been continuing to teach furniture making and wood carving to students at Saugus High School every Tuesday and sometimes several days a week, even at 91 years old.

## 1970S

**MARK C. BODANZA '78** released *Risk Takers and History Makers: The Story of Leominster*, his ninth book, this September. Bodanza is a lawyer, a local historian, and also a city councilor in Leominster.



**DEAN A. FULLER '78**, head coach for Falcons ice hockey, enjoyed a Boston Red Sox game this summer with former players **DAVID P. UMINSKI '86, '00; CHRIS C. BAGLEY '85; BILL DOYLE, JR.; STEPHEN M. GRIMES '84** and **DANA G. NEMES '84**.



**PAULA M. GIAQUINTO '78, '95** bid farewell to the Fitchburg Public School system, where she served for 46 years. She started as an art teacher at Memorial Middle School and worked her way up to assistant superintendent of curriculum and Title I for the school system.

## 1980S

**KATHLEEN M. FORD '81** was appointed as the chief operating officer for Kura Oncology, Inc. in Cambridge, a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company focused on the development of precision medicines for the treatment of cancer.

**DIANE (MARTIN) SANABRIA '81**, the librarian for the Cormier Center for Young Adults at the Leominster Public Library for over 40 years, has assumed a new role as the local history and genealogy librarian.

**MICHAEL B. SWAN '81** retired from FedEx after 35 years of service. Swan began his career as a courier and held senior manager positions throughout the northeast region. For the last 20 years he has been the senior manager running the Boston ramp at Logan International Airport.

**MARK J. CASEY '84** is one of a handful of alumni working on the Stephen King Hulu series, *Castle Rock*. This summer the series used the pool at Fitchburg State's Athletics and Recreation Center to simulate an underwater lake scene for the show's second season.

**KATHLEEN A. TOBIN '84** graduated this past May from Framingham State University with a Master of Science in Nursing. She is currently employed as a hospital educator with Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Braintree.



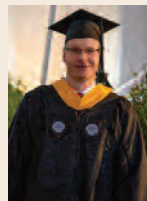
**EILEEN F. (CURRAN) HALLORAN '85** was named Holyoke's 2019 Citizenship

Award recipient by the St. Patrick's Parade Committee. The award honors a person or organization who may be of non-Irish descent that has made substantial contributions to the parade or parade committee. For 16 years, Curran hosted WGBY's

live telecast of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade. Curran began her distinguished news and anchoring career with WGGB-40 in Springfield. She became a fixture on Boston news stations, most notably with WFXT, WBZ-TV and New England Cable News. She currently serves as the Multiple Sclerosis Society's senior director of national public relations and media spokeswoman.



**KRISTIN C. (ANDERSON) LINK '85** presented a workshop on public speaking at Fitchburg State in September. A professional public speaking coach and storyteller since 2005, Link spent years working in the technology field with her computer science degree in hand. She began a career at Hewlett-Packard, first in technical roles, then in sales and marketing before moving into leadership training. She founded her business, Link Coaching, and has since worked with a variety of clients, from TEDx speakers to executives to entrepreneurs.



**ANDREW J. BARON '89** received his master's degree in marketing and innovation from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in May. Baron is the associate director of public relations at WPI. He has worked in journalism, publishing, and public relations for 30 years.

**BRIAN J. CROSSMAN '89** received the Middle School Teacher of the Year Award from the Massachusetts Technology

Education / Engineering Collaborative (MasSTEC) during the organization's annual conference this September. Crossman, an engineering teacher, has spent the last 20 years employed by Minuteman High School in Lexington, and working at R.J. Grey Junior High school in Acton as part of Minuteman's Middle School Outreach Partnership. He is also Acton-Boxborough's indoor and outdoor boys' track team coach, and was inducted into the Massachusetts State Track Coaches Association's Athletes Hall of Fame in 2017. He was inducted into the Fitchburg State Athletics Hall of Fame in 1997.

## 1990S

**PATRICK J. MALONE '90** was appointed judge for the Fitchburg District Court this summer. Malone had been acting clerk magistrate in Fitchburg until he became acting clerk magistrate of Westborough last year. He was nominated by Governor Charlie Baker for this appointment and was confirmed unanimously by the Governor's Council. An Army National Guard veteran, Malone has also been a partner at the Leominster law firm Gazourian and Malone, a special prosecutor in the Worcester District Attorney's Office and an adjunct professor at Assumption College and Fitchburg State.



**DAWN M. (POLASCK) MORTON '90** represented Fitchburg State at the inauguration of Endicott College

President Steven R. DiSalvo this September in Beverly. Morton serves on Fitchburg State's Alumni Association Board of Directors.



**JAMES F. BASILE '91** played in this year's Alumni Baseball Game where his family surprised him by donning his Fitchburg State jersey number (#8). Pictured are



three generations, including alumnae: wife, **YESLIN (CASTRO) BASILE '90** and daughter, **ASHLEY E. BASILE-OSGOOD '16**.

**SCOTT A. HUNTER '91** began his first season as head coach of the Blue Devils girls' soccer team at Murdock Middle High School in Winchendon this fall. He previously coached the Athol boys' and girls' varsity programs and the Athol Middle School girls' teams. Hunter is a seventh grade history teacher at Athol Middle School.

**MARK A. PIERCE '91, '96** was officially appointed the principal at McKay Arts Academy after serving on an interim basis for the past year.

**DEBRA J. (HAMILTON) DONOVAN '92** joined Marquis Health Services as vice president of sales and marketing for the New England region.

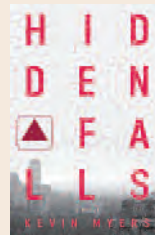
**BOBBIE J. (PARSONS) FRENCH '92, '96, '99**, former principal at Saint Anna Elementary School in Leominster, became principal of South Street Elementary School in Fitchburg in July.

**SHEILA S. (HARRISON) CARMAN '93** is among several Ayer residents involved in establishing a community garden in her hometown. Funded by the Ayer Community Preservation Committee, 13 plots were planted this year and excess produce was donated to the area food pantry. Her prior accomplishments include receiving a master's degree from the University of Tennessee in 1997, and two-plus years of service to the Peace Corps in Jamaica guiding a community through infrastructure projects. Carman also worked as social services director and archival assistance at the Lowell National Park and the Northeast regional office of the National Park Service.



**MICHAEL J. KRAMER '93** received the 2019 Joel D. Miller

Award presented to a Fitchburg State alumnus recognized as an outstanding educator. He is pictured with friend and Superintendent of Norton Public Schools, **JOSEPH F. BAETA '92** and wife **DONNA M. (CAMPINO) KRAMER '93**. Kramer has been employed by the Norton Public School District for the last 21 years and is currently the teacher of technology and engineering at the middle school.



**KEVIN T. MYERS '95** will see his first novel, *Hidden Falls*, published by Beaufort Books in summer 2020. You may

remember Myers as the character of Paul from the popular '90s Fitchburg public access show, *Fred's Fun Box*. He was the first editor of the Concord Monitor online newspaper in Concord, N.H., and was the managing editor of the *Capital City Weekly* in Juneau, Alaska. He published the personal essay "The Power of Compassion" on NPR's This I Believe series. He is currently the director of communications at Reed College in Portland, Ore.

**CAROLYN J. (MANSEAU) GUSTASON '96** is a new addition to Fitchburg State's nursing faculty.



**SHANNON (SONTAG) SYLVIA '97** just filmed a television show for the Travel Channel

called *I Saw the Unknown*, after filming for Syfy's *Ghost Hunters International* and A&E Channel's *Paranormal State*. She now resides in Winchendon and is the director of marketing for Colonial Green Products in Rindge, N.H.

**ALBERT MERCADO '98**, former assistant principal for Fitchburg High School, was recently chosen to serve as the interim principal at Reingold Elementary in Fitchburg.



**MERILLYN CHICKNAVORIAN '99** joined

Worcester ERA Key Realty as a Realtor. Before joining the real estate

profession in 2001, Chicknavorian worked in community relations, public relations and sales positions for Digital Equipment Corp.

**SEAN P. DEVEREAUX '99** was among 2019's newest members accepted into the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in the branch of visual effects. His more recent credits include *The Equalizer 2* and *The Spy Who Dumped Me*.

**CINTHIA D. REILLY '99, '05** was chosen as the new principal of Royalston Community School. For the past sixteen years, Reilly taught in Orange, six of which she served as the deputy principal in the Dexter Park Elementary School.

2000s



**KURT O. THOMPSON '00**,

Templeton resident and broker with Keller Williams Realty - North Central in Leominster,

was installed on December 17, 2019 as president of the 25,000-member Massachusetts Association of Realtors® (MAR) for 2020. Thompson's term officially began in January.

**CORALY RIVERA '01** accepted the position of director at the Revolving Museum where she has been a leader for nearly 10 years, creating public artworks, fashion shows and educational programs.



**LEANNE J. (LEHTINEN) ROY '01** was

announced the recipient of the 31st Oakmont Excellence in Education Award by the Oakmont Association. Roy is a health and fitness teacher who has been a part of the Oakmont faculty for 17 years.

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Our current engagement campaign is an ongoing effort to update, maintain, and better utilize our alumni data so we can continue to best serve our alumni. We have partnered with Publishing Concepts, Inc. to help collect information from as many alumni as possible and produce the **2020 Fitchburg State University Alumni Directory, 125th Anniversary Edition**.

PCI will soon be contacting you via mail, phone, and email asking you to participate by updating your contact information.



## ALUMNI news



**PATRICK M. FRAZEE '03** was promoted from superintendent to director of wastewater services for the city of Midland, Mich.



**SHIGEHITO TANAKA '03** was named the new principal for Longsjo Middle School in Fitchburg. For the past 10 years, Tanaka worked in the mathematics department for the Lawrence Public Schools.



**KATRINA A. ESPARZA '04** was recently named principal for the Beech Street School in Manchester, N.H.

**MICHELE L. EGERTON '06** performed in Jackson Hole Playhouse's summer rendition of *Big River: the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.



**THOMAS C. HOYE '06**, the mayor of Taunton for the past eight years, stepped down to accept an appointment as Bristol County register of probate.

**MEAGHAN P. KELLY '09** joined the Weare School District in New Hampshire last fall and serves as a math interventionist.

**2010S**

**PAUL J. ZBIKOWSKI '10, '11** joined the team at Defcon

Products, LLC, a manufacturer of the TeacherLock and SaberLock lockdown devices, as the director of life safety.

**RYAN M. BEATTIE '11** is the new principal at Gates Middle School in Scituate.

**NICOLE L. DOHERTY '11** was chosen as the new principal for Webster Elementary School.

**SHAWN M. DUMAS '11** was recently hired by Central Catholic High School in Lawrence as its new girls' indoor and outdoor track head coach. He is currently in his first year as a guidance counselor at Central.

**ANDREW C. GOODWIN '11** recently joined Fitchburg State's Academic Affairs Department as coordinator for Early College and Dual Enrollment.

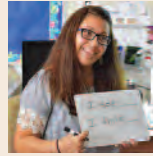
**NICHOLAS ROCHELEAU '11**, a project engineer and assembly department supervisor at Rocheleau Blow Molding Systems, was named to the board of directors for the Society of Plastics Engineers (SPE) and presented at the SPE Annual Blow Molding Conference in September.

**JOSEPH G. PHELAN '12, '16** joined the events management team at Fitchburg State as the events operations manager this June.



**PATRICK J. QUINN '12** was promoted to vice president/BSA officer for Bristol County Savings Bank.

**MICHAEL B. NEAGLE '13** was named the 2019 Massachusetts History Teacher of the Year. Neagle is a history and civics teacher at the Pyne Arts Magnet School. He will represent Massachusetts as a candidate for National History Teacher of the Year, a program sponsored by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.



**BLANCA S. OSORIO-CASTILLO '13** was awarded this year's Roger L. Wallace

Excellence in Teaching Award, presented annually to one elementary school teacher in Amherst and Pelham. She is an ESL teacher in the Amherst public school district.



**BRANDON SELBY '14**, a teacher at the Center for Educational Opportunity in Aberdeen, Md., was recognized by the city mayor and featured in the *Baltimore Sun* for giving back to the community. Selby is working on giving a neighborhood basketball court a facelift and some new basketballs, in hopes that the local kids will feel that the community cares about them and their future.



**MARISSA L. BINNALL '15** married Chantyl Gable in August during a ceremony well represented by Falcons. Pictured, from left, front row: Lauren Sweeney '14, Kayla Levesque, Katelyn Fitzgerald '15, Marissa, Chantyl, Marissa Gemma '16, Brittany Whiting '15, and Allison

Page '14; back row: Arianna (Winters) Tanguay '14, Christopher Thibodeau '14, Ashley (Forgues) Mason '14, David Mason '14, Kerry Alcott '14, Amanda Whitelaw '15, Shannon Fitzgerald '14, and Douglas Maffetone '13.

**SARA C. CAMPBELL '16** recently presented "41 Years of Sorrow," her research based on a Civil War soldier's story, at the Phillipston Historical Society.

**TAYLOR T. EKSTROM '17** spent the spring 2019 season in Barcelona, Spain, playing for the Badalona Dracs, of the Liga Nacional de Fútbol Americano, the premier American-style football league in Spain. He helped lead the Badalona Dracs to a victory in Spanish Bowl XXV, their fourth straight Spanish title.



**KYLE R. PRUDHOMME '17** accepted the position of sports information director at Clark University in Worcester this fall.

**ALEXANDER F. ALZAIBAK '18**, former Falcons men's soccer goalkeeper, has joined the Swedish professional FC Arlanda soccer team.

**SEFERINE A. BAEZ '18** represented Fitchburg State at the inauguration of Wentworth Institute of Technology President Mark A. Thompson last October in Boston. Baez serves on Fitchburg State's Alumni Association Board of Directors.

**JOHN A. FRANCIS '18** was recently hired as a campus police officer for Fitchburg State University.



**JONATHAN S. GUZMAN '18** recently joined the Wicks Insurance Group's Lowell team.

## SUBMIT A CLASS NOTE

To place a Class Note, Celebration, Introduction, or In Memoriam in *Contact*, please visit <https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/alumni/resources/alumni-updates-and-requests-form/> and fill out the form online. *Contact* reserves the right to edit for length and clarity. Notes can also be mailed to *Contact* magazine, Fitchburg State University, 160 Pearl Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420.

**PHOTO REQUIREMENTS**  
Photos should be at least 3.5 inches wide and have a resolution of at least 300 dpi. If you mail a glossy print to us, please make sure to include your contact information and the names of any people in the photo.





**JENNIFER MELANSON '18** was chosen as the town of Chelmsford's new community services coordinator. Melanson also serves on Fitchburg State's

Alumni Association Board of Directors.

**CALVIN HUDSON '19** opened a Ben's Soft Pretzels franchise in Fort Worth, Texas, with his wife, Monique. Their franchise supplies all the hot pretzels for Texas Christian University's football, basketball and baseball games. Hudson graduated with his MBA in human resources management in May through Fitchburg State's online-accelerated program. He first stepped foot on campus this May to walk in the graduate commencement ceremony. He continues to work full-time as a criminal investigator and state

police officer for the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. Based on his positive experience with the university's online MBA program, his sister, Jasmine, also enrolled in the program.



**DOMINIQUE N. GOYETTE-CONNERTY '19** was hired by the Worcester Chamber of Commerce as their communications and marketing associate following her internship with them this summer.

**JOSHUA D. VICTOR '19** signed with the Quad-City Storm, a Southern Professional Hockey League team in Illinois, after playing for the ECHL's Atlanta Gladiators last season.

## ARE YOU A LEADER? JOIN THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD.

We are looking for passionate, service-oriented alumni willing to commit their time and expertise to serve on the Alumni Association Board! Contact [alumni@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:alumni@fitchburgstate.edu) for more information or to nominate someone. Nominations may be submitted at any time, but the deadline for July 2020 consideration is March 1, 2020.

### OFFICERS

Nicholas Smith '11, President  
Jim Walsh '75, President-Elect  
Dawn Morton '90, Treasurer  
Ian James '09, Secretary

### DIRECTORS

Argyro Armstrong '13	Stephen Hogue '16
Seferine Baez '18	Amanda Kelly '07
Allison Bunnell '03, '07	Bill Mahoney '65
Rose Cardarelli '81	Stephanie Marchetti '07, '10
Rob Comeau '93	Jennifer Melanson '18
Micaela Crowley '11	Tuan Nguyen, A.L.M. '91
David Demosthenes '17	Frank O'Donnell '93 (alumni trustee)
Beverly Farias '52	Daniel Seaman '07
John Garten '89	Paula Stefanakos '92, '02
Eric Gregoire '11	

How can you stay engaged with your alma mater?

## ONCE A FALCON, ALWAYS A FALCON!

### STAY CONNECTED.

Sign up to be included in the upcoming 125th Anniversary Alumni Directory.



### JOIN US AT ONE OF OUR REGIONAL EVENTS.

Show your Falcon pride in your city!

### RECRUIT THE FUTURE.

Become an alumni representative with the Office of Admissions.



### SUPPORT FITCHBURG STATE.

Give to the part of the university you loved most. Even a small gift can make a huge difference. Participation matters. [fitchburgstate.edu/give](http://fitchburgstate.edu/give)

### VISIT CAMPUS.

Whether it's for Homecoming, commencement, one of the many programs offered throughout the year, or you just happen to be driving through, you are always welcome home.



### ENRICH THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE.

Be part of the Alumni Job Shadowing Program.

### SHARE YOUR FALCON STORY

Tell us how Fitchburg State changed your life.

### GET SOCIAL.

Find us on Social Media and spread your Falcon pride.



### HIRE FALCONS.

Share job and internship leads. #FHF-Falcons Hiring Falcons

## CELEBRATE FITCHBURG STATE'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY!

Consider attending one of the many anniversary events and exhibitions or give back to your alma mater! [fitchburgstate.edu/125](http://fitchburgstate.edu/125)

Please consider a gift to Fitchburg State today and carry on the Falcon tradition of changing lives.

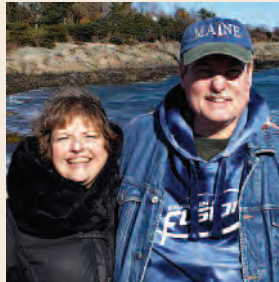
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[alumni@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:alumni@fitchburgstate.edu)

**FIND OUT MORE** At [fitchburgstate.edu/alumni](http://fitchburgstate.edu/alumni), and keep an eye on your inbox and mailbox for invitations to these and other activities. \*If your workplace employs a lot of Fitchburg State alumni, let us know, and we will come and throw an appreciation event for you!



# MET & MARRIED



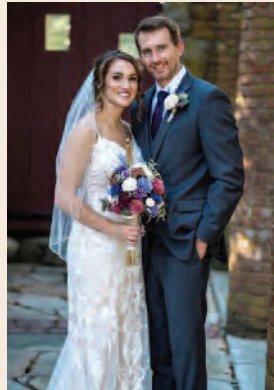
**STEVEN MCCULLOCH '83** and **DIANA D. (DREW) MCCULLOCH '83** celebrated their 33rd wedding anniversary by attending Fitchburg State's Homecoming this year. The McCullochs met in 1980 and said the Homecoming walking tour of campus brought back a lot of fond memories.

**ADELINE D. GARNACHE '13** and **CHRISTOPHER W. PYLPINK '14** met at Fitchburg State in 2009 when they were both residents at

Aubuchon Hall. They grew closer through joining Greek organizations and being classmates in criminal justice classes. On May 25, 2019, they were married at Chocksett Inn, surrounded by family and friends, many of whom they met at Fitchburg State. Both Adeline and Christopher are from different parts of Massachusetts but decided to settle down locally post graduation due to local employment and friendships, both of which they credit to Fitchburg State.



**THOMAS J. DOYLE '14** and **KIRSTIE E. BARRY '14** were married on June 28, 2019.



**SIERRA M. SANTOS '15** and **KEVIN L. HOLMES '16** married this fall, 7 1/2 years after meeting as freshmen. Having been college athletes at the time, she in soccer and he in hockey, they feel fortunate that their love of sports and Fitchburg State brought them together.

**ZACHARY R. PICARD '16** and **FELICIA E. RIEGEL '16** (below) were married on October 17, 2019.



## If you have stuff, you have an estate.

### Imagine leaving a legacy.

Imagine creating a gift you've always wanted to make, even if you never thought it was possible. Your gift could be the solution to the economic challenges many of our students face while achieving their degree. You don't have to be a certain age or extremely wealthy to make a big difference. You just need a plan.

We invite you to join **The Saxifrage Society**, an alliance of alumni, family, and friends who have included Fitchburg State in their estate plans or made a life-income enhancing planned gift to the school. Donors who remember Fitchburg State in this manner are supporting the aspirations of talented students and faculty from around the world. Offering you membership in The Saxifrage Society is our way of thanking you for your foresight and generosity.



 **FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**  
CELEBRATING 125 YEARS *of changing lives*

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**  
Go to [fitchburgstate.edu/PlannedGiving](http://fitchburgstate.edu/PlannedGiving) or contact Jeffrey Wolfman, Vice President for Institutional Advancement at 978.665.4933 or [jwolfman@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:jwolfman@fitchburgstate.edu)



# ALUMNI EVENTS



Friends and former colleagues reconnected at the ninth annual **Retired Educators Luncheon**.



**David J. Ginisi '16** and **Seferine A. Baez '18** were two of six alumni panelists who participated in this summer's **new student orientation**. Not pictured are **Danielle N. Blondin '16**, **David N. Demosthenes '17**, **Stephen M. Hogue '16** and **Jessalynne P. Brown '17, '19**.



**Peter Murner '08** joined the Alumni Association in hosting a Falcons at Cape Cod event this summer at his Naukaboot Beer Co. in Mashpee.



**Bob '72, '75** and **Cathey (Weisse) '74 Portrie** hosted a private viewing and reception for alumni at the Cape Cod Museum of Art in Dennis, which was attended by President Lapidus and his wife, Lisa. This was one of several alumni events in our Falcons at Cape Cod summer series.



Alumnae got a taste of the new and improved Carmelita Landry Arena when they played in this year's **Alumnae Field Hockey Game**.



**Lou Cornachioli '67** hosted the mini Mohawk Club reunion for alumni from the 1960s at his home in Rutland.



Each year alumni come out and compete in the **Jimmy Sheehan Alumni Cross Country Meet** at Doyle Conservation Center in Leominster.



Alumni ranging from the Classes of 1963 to 2019 enjoyed their return to campus for the **Alumnae Men's Soccer Game**.



# HOMECOMING



The Class of 1969 (top) had a grand old time at their 50th Reunion Reception in the Library Archives.

The Class of 1963 (right) enjoyed meeting their two scholarship recipients and their families.

A great turnout of students, alumni and staff enjoyed this year's Homecoming Pep Rally & Bonfire in the Ross Street lot.

Alumni were all smiles at the Homecoming Football Game and Alumni End Zone Club (bottom) where food, beverages and reminiscing were plentiful.





# ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS



Homecoming weekend included the presentation of the Alumni Association's signature awards. Here are the 2019 recipients:

## THE HONORABLE ROBERT S. HARGRAVES '60 — ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**ROBERT S. HARGRAVES** grew up in Ashby in the family's 1740s homestead where he helped his father with farming chores during WWII and throughout his high school career. He began his studies at Fitchburg State before transferring to the University of Maine at Orono where he graduated with the class of 1958 with a degree in math education. He later returned to Fitchburg State to earn his M.Ed. in Education in 1960. His thirst for learning continued through five National Science Foundation fellowships in mathematics, including two each at Oberlin College and the College of the Holy Cross, and one from Boston University where he later received a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in administration in 1968.

His career in education included teaching and administrative jobs across the region. While a school administrator, he served several years on the Groton Board of Selectmen before being elected to the state Legislature in 1995, representing the First Middlesex District. He served under four speakers and five governors and sponsored legislation on matters including Lyme disease and cyberterrorism. He was also a member of the Ways and Means Committee. In Groton, he served on the town's Finance Committee for seven years following retirement from the Legislature.

Hargraves's significant contribution to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and to the town of Groton, where he has resided for over 50 years, is unquestionable. As such, the Town of Groton declared May 1, 2017 as Robert S. Hargraves Day in honor of his decades of public service.

Now retired from politics, Hargraves enjoys antique automobiles and spending time with his wife, Ellen, his three children and nine grandchildren.



## JUDITH A. DUMONT '86 — ALUMNI LEADERSHIP AWARD

After completing degrees at Fitchburg State (BS Business) and Boston University (MS Management Information Systems) **JUDITH A. DUMONT** spent 18 years at Lightbridge, a software provider for the wireless telecom industry. She helped grow the company's revenue to over \$175 million and rose to the level of president of the largest business unit.

From 2009-2013, Dumont was the director of the Mass Broadband Institute (MBI). During her tenure, MBI built a 1,200-mile fiber-optic broadband network in central and western Massachusetts (including Fitchburg) connecting hundreds of schools, libraries and public safety facilities. They also partnered with the Massachusetts Department of Veteran Services to build an online tool to help veterans find the benefits to which they are entitled. In 2012, the MBI was named the Broadband Organization of the Year by the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors. In 2013, Dumont received the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award and was named to the Fierce Telecom "Women in Wireline 2013" list of top telecom executives.

More recently, Dumont has built and managed professional services organizations for a small health-information technology company and for PTC, a \$1 billion global industrial innovation solution provider. She prides herself on building and transforming high performing teams that meet or exceed the company's objectives.

Since 2001, Dumont has also been a member of The Boston Club, an executive women's organization with a mission to promote and elevate women to leadership positions.



## JIM TODD '76, '81 — ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD

**JIM TODD** began his career in physical education, starting with Billerica Public Schools then moving on to higher education. He coached the Notre Dame high school basketball team to a state championship and, at age 25, was named head coach at Fitchburg State, one of the youngest college head coaches in the country. Todd went on to serve as an assistant at Columbia University, Marist College and Manhattan College in New York.

In 1987, Todd returned to Massachusetts to coach basketball at Salem State University, where he led the team to nine MASCAC League Championships, one ECAC appearance and seven NCAA bids, including two Sweet Sixteen appearances. He was named the 1990 Kodak New England Coach of the Year and was inducted into Salem State's Hall of Fame in 1998, Fitchburg State's Hall of Fame in 2003, and the New England Basketball Hall of Fame in 2009. He also led the Salem State golf program to three straight NCAA appearances as their head coach from 1994-1996.

Todd's collegiate success led to the NBA, where he coached for the Milwaukee Bucks (1996-1998, 2002-2004, 2007-2008), Los Angeles Clippers (1998-2000), Toronto Raptors (2004-2007), Atlanta Hawks (2008-2010), Sacramento Kings (2011-2012), New York Knicks (2012-2014) and Minnesota Timberwolves (2016-2017), including playoff appearances. Todd also did a short stint with the Canadian Senior Men's National Basketball Team and the Zhejiang Cyclones of the Chinese Basketball Association.

Todd is also a tireless booster of his alma mater's basketball program. He has helped re-engage a large group of men's basketball alumni through annual reunions and golf tournaments. He also spearheaded an effort to raise funds to support a full-time coach's salary which has so far generated over \$150,000. Todd is now semi-retired from the NBA and jokes that his new full-time job is working for Fitchburg State. He is passionate about his alma mater and is committed to giving our Falcons men's basketball players the best college experience possible.





Alumni Association  
160 Pearl Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420

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