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Spring 2019

## Volume 28, Issue 1, Spring 2019

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SPRING 2019

# ILLINOIS WESLEYAN

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE



The Future of  
the Front Page

CHRIS FUSCO '94





Learn more about Reunion Weekend 2019 and why alumni from classes ending in 4 and 9 should celebrate on pages 30-31!



### 2018 RECAP

**\$1,326,196**

TOTAL DONATED TO REUNION GIVING PROGRAM

**658**

ALUMNI WHO DONATED TO  
REUNION GIVING PROGRAM

**310**

ALUMNI WHO ATTENDED  
REUNION EVENTS

**10**

REUNION WEEKEND  
EVENTS

*Join us for Reunion Weekend, Oct. 4-6, 2019*







# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

VOLUME 28 | NUMBER 1 | SPRING 2019

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Veteran journalist **Chris Fusco '94** oversees the *Chicago Sun-Times* newsroom as its editor-in-chief.

Portrait photo by Jason Reblando.

Digital illustration by Gary Schwartz.

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COMMENCEMENT 2019

Sunday, May 5, 2019

[www.iwu.edu/commencement](http://www.iwu.edu/commencement)



## From the President's Desk

It has been cold in Bloomington. How cold? So cold one January day that we closed our doors along with other local schools, the post office, and many local businesses. It is cold. How cold? Minus-22 at dawn the day we closed, with a high of 6 below zero. As I said, cold. But really, how cold? So cold that when I stumped over to the Memorial Center to visit the troops at lunchtime the day classes were canceled, no one was in line for “Wing Wednesday.” That’s cold! The students love their spicy wings and are normally lined up 30 or 40 strong, for an hour or more! But winter will pass. Universities are all about annual cycles, and before we know it, we’ll be awarding diplomas on a warm spring day.

We’ve begun a strategic planning exercise that we hope will describe IWU’s course over the next several years. We know that we need to do more than continue the great educational experience for which we’re known, but to improve on it in ways that allow our students to adapt and lead in a changing world. We know that we need to make our great institution accessible to students from lower- and middle-income families, and to embrace the diverse world in which our graduates will thrive. We need to make a strong case for the unique attributes of residential education, in which students interact with each other in all the large and small ways, inside and outside of class, that make living on campus so special. And we must continually be innovative and efficient in our use of human, financial and physical resources. In so doing, we ensure a thriving future for this great place.

**We know that we need to do more than continue the great educational experience for which we’re known, but to improve on it in ways that allow our students to adapt and lead in a changing world.**

We’ve begun on much of this work already, as you’ll see in this issue. You’ll read about NextSTEM, a National Science Foundation-funded project. We are the lead institution, in collaboration with Illinois State University and Heartland Community College, in a project designed to expose students from a wide range of backgrounds to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) majors. You’ll read about Signature Experiences that a group of Environmental Studies students had, in which they traveled to Vietnam and collaborated with students and faculty there. You’ll see coverage of the annual Council for IWU Women Summit, in which current female leaders interact with future female leaders, forming lasting personal and professional networks. You’ll also see coverage of women’s basketball coach Mia Smith’s 400th win, an accomplishment that highlights the sustained combination of athletic excellence and academic distinction that is so much a part of our DNA.

None of this would be possible without the generous support of the IWU family. As always, thank you so much for what you make possible.

Finally, this is the last issue for graphics editor Gary Schwartz. Gary has served in this function since the launch of the modern *IWU Magazine* back in 1992, and he will be missed.

Go Titans!





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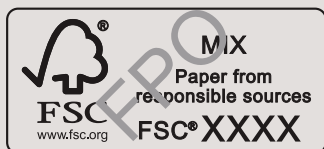
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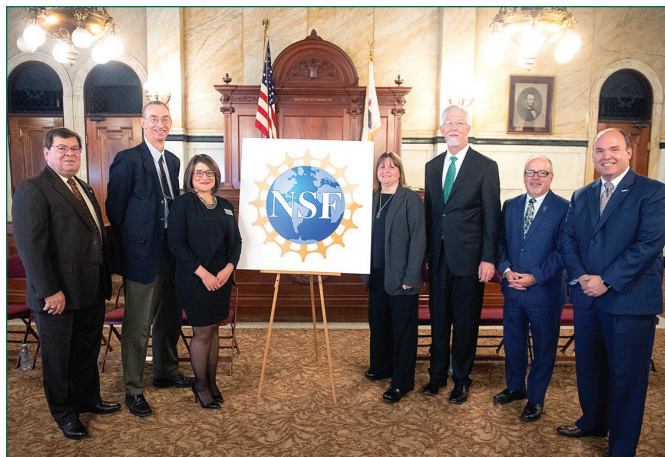
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# Inside IWU

FEATURED NEWS, EVENTS AND VIEWS FROM THE IWU CAMPUS

## \$4.6 Million National Science Foundation Grant Establishes NexSTEM



(Left) Representatives from Illinois Wesleyan, Illinois State University and Heartland Community College, including IWU **President Eric Jensen** and IWU Chair and Professor of Chemistry **Rebecca Roesner** (third and fourth from right, respectively), pose for a group photo after the announcement.

The National Science Foundation has awarded \$4.6 million to a consortium comprised of Illinois Wesleyan University, Illinois State University and Heartland Community College to fund NexSTEM: A Community Assets Program that Fosters the Next Generation of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) Leaders. The announcement was made Nov. 8, 2018, at the McLean County Museum of History.

Over the five-year granting period, the three-school consortium will disburse nearly \$2.8 million in scholarships and receive more than \$1.8 million to involve the NexSTEM scholars in community-based research projects, to support the scholars' classroom learning, to study new strategies for retaining students in STEM majors, and to keep the consortium running smoothly.

NexSTEM represents a collaborative effort between IWU, ISU and Heartland with local nonprofit agencies to increase the recruitment and retention of talented, socio-economically underrepresented students in four-year STEM programs.

"The innovative and collaborative NexSTEM program will enable students to explore, pursue and complete STEM education that might otherwise seem financially out of reach," said Illinois Wesleyan University **President Eric Jensen**. "NexSTEM students will be supported through a cross-campus mentoring network and engaged through participation in community-based research projects. The program will also foster inter-institutional cooperation that will greatly benefit faculty, students and the community."

An estimated 70 four-year scholarships will be offered through NexSTEM, with between 20 and 25 scholarships awarded to students at each of the three schools who matriculate in the falls of 2019 and 2020. Recipients may be awarded up to \$10,000 annually from the NexSTEM grant; however, each student's specific NexSTEM award is dependent upon financial need. NexSTEM scholars who begin their undergraduate educations at Heartland can carry their scholarships with them if they transfer to Illinois Wesleyan or Illinois State.

NexSTEM is spearheaded by Illinois Wesleyan Chair and Professor of Chemistry **Rebecca Roesner**, who serves as the project's Principal Investigator (PI). Co-PIs include Illinois State Director of the Center for Mathematics, Science & Technology Willy Hunter, and Heartland Instructional Chair of Science Lauren Denofrio-Corrales.

Offices of admissions, financial aid, and student services at the three institutions will join the PIs in identifying the cohort pool. Students can apply now by visiting [www.NexSTEM.org](http://www.NexSTEM.org).



## \$3.5 Million Gift to Benefit Illinois Wesleyan School of Music

The Nov. 13, 2018 sale of more than 930 acres of high-quality McLean County farmland belonging to the late **Cyril “C.B.” Frevert ‘61** netted \$11.6 million, one-third of which will benefit Illinois Wesleyan University.

The University will receive more than \$3.5 million from the C.B. Frevert Family Trust, per Frevert’s wishes. Also benefiting from the auction were two local homeless shelters: the Salvation Army of McLean County and Home Sweet Home Ministries.

“C.B. was a 1961 alum who cared deeply about Illinois Wesleyan, and specifically, his experience as a music education major with the School of Music. His incredible gift of more than \$3.5 million will support student scholarships and equipment in the School of Music,” said Illinois Wesleyan



Cyril “C.B.” Frevert ‘61

**President Eric Jensen.** “The Frevert family diligently worked their world-class farmland for generations, and we are honored to be among the beneficiaries of C.B.’s legacy, which will live on at Illinois Wesleyan for generations to come.”

A high level of interest had been expected for the auction of farmland with prime soil productivity index ratings. Much of the 932 acres auctioned off held productivity ratings in the 140s; optimum soil, considered “Class A,” must have productivity ratings between 133-147.

A standing room-only crowd filled the DoubleTree Hotel and Conference Center in Bloomington, Illinois, for the auction, where 12 tracts of farmland were sold to five buyers.

Frevert lived on his family farm in Stanford, Illinois, for much of his life. He later moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, and wintered in Florida. After earning a bachelor’s degree from Illinois Wesleyan, he went on to earn a master’s from Northwestern University. He taught in Earlville, Illinois, and played the organ for many years at churches in the Bloomington-Normal area.

## Homefield Energy Helps Replace Campus Trees Lost to Emerald Ash Borer



(Above) Representatives from Illinois Wesleyan, Homefield Energy and the Bloomington-Normal community commemorated newly planted trees donated by Homefield Energy on Nov. 27, 2018.

Furthering Illinois Wesleyan’s sustainability goals and tree diversification efforts, Homefield Energy is donating 12 trees to assist with replacing campus trees lost due to the spread of the emerald ash borer.

**President Eric Jensen,** University officials and representatives from Homefield Energy commemorated the donation during a ceremony on Nov. 27, 2018.

“We are thankful to receive these trees donated by Homefield Energy, especially now, as we’ve experienced extreme ash tree loss across campus from the emerald ash borer,” Jensen said. “The new trees will offer beauty and shade for thousands of

future Titans who will, without a doubt, spend countless hours studying and socializing under their canopies.”

The donated trees — including cobblestone bur oak, hackberry, Japanese lilac, Norway spruce, Princeton elm, and quaking aspen, among other species — were selected by assistant manager of grounds services and University arborist **Ken Detloff,** and will further diversify the school’s tree population. Ten of the trees have been planted this fall, and two more will be planted in the spring.

“As a company, one of the numerous ways we focus on sustainability excellence is through our signature tree donation program,” said Caroline Atkins, Homefield Energy community affairs manager. “In addition to their numerous ecological benefits, trees bring people together, and we hope these trees will be a part of students’ college experience for years to come.”

Since 2002, Homefield Energy and its sister companies have provided more than 285,000 trees to various partner communities. The donated trees have helped generate environmental savings and health benefits for municipalities and residents valued at approximately \$37 million annually during the lifespans of the trees. Homefield Energy is a retail electricity provider that powers thousands of Illinois homes and businesses, including the IWU campus. Approximately 30 ash trees have been removed from IWU’s campus to help stop the spread of the emerald ash borer.

Trees can be donated by contacting the  
University Advancement Office at  
[advancement@iwu.edu](mailto:advancement@iwu.edu) or (309) 556-3091.



## Former Faculty Member Establishes Faculty Scholar Program

After nearly two decades of dedicated work at Illinois Wesleyan, former faculty member and administrator **Mona Gardner** will continue to support her colleagues by establishing the Gardner Faculty Scholars program to aid IWU professors during sabbatical work.

The most outstanding sabbatical proposals from one tenured and one pre-tenured faculty member will be selected each academic year by the Faculty Development Committee. Recipients will receive an award certificate and \$3,000 to be used as a stipend or to defray costs of supplies, research, travel and data collection.

"Graduates often report that their interaction with Illinois Wesleyan faculty changed their lives in ways that are measurable even decades later," Gardner said. "Those life-changing experiences are possible, however, only if faculty members remain fully engaged in their own research and creative activity, are committed to nurturing undergraduate



Mona Gardner

students, and are, in turn, truly valued and supported by the institution."

Establishing the Gardner Faculty Scholars program is just one of the many initiatives Gardner has led at IWU. As an administrator, she served as the first May Term Director, the first Director of the Mellon Center for Faculty and Curriculum Development, and the first Associate Dean of the Faculty. As part of her teaching career, Gardner was also Chair of the Business Administration Department and was the 1993 recipient of the University's DuPont Award for Teaching, now known as the Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence. She retired from the University in 2007.

"During my years at IWU, I was privileged to work among a remarkable group of teacher-scholars who represent the best in the profession," Gardner said. "I thank them for showing, by their daily example, that a liberal arts education is one of America's greatest gifts to the world. The Gardner Faculty Scholars program is a small way of emphasizing to current and future colleagues how central they are to continuing the rich academic tradition of Illinois Wesleyan University."

Gardner's Scholarship will not only highlight the importance of faculty work, but also improve the quality of instruction for students.

"Professor Gardner's gift incentivizes her former and future colleagues to engage deeply in the scholarly and creative work that sustains cutting-edge classroom learning, undergraduate research experiences, and connections to next steps in the workforce or graduate study for our students," said IWU Provost and Dean of Faculty **Mark Brodl**. "Our faculty greatly appreciate her generous recognition of their efforts, as evidenced by the sustained applause from the faculty upon the announcement of her gift at a recent faculty meeting."

Gardner Faculty Scholars will be announced by the President at the first faculty meeting of the spring semester with a press release to accompany the announcement of the awards.

"I had many faculty remark on how important professor Gardner was to them as an inspirational and supportive colleague," Brodl said. "That inspiration and support will now continue for many more Illinois Wesleyan colleagues well into the future."

"I had many faculty remark on how important professor Gardner was to them as an inspirational and supportive colleague. That inspiration and support will now continue for many more Illinois Wesleyan colleagues well into the future."

— PROVOST AND DEAN OF FACULTY MARK BRODL



## DECEMBER GRADUATES

(Left) President Eric Jensen (right) helps **Difan Liang '19** (left) prepare for a photo at the December Graduates Dinner, on Dec. 13, 2018. Thirty-eight students earning degrees were invited to the annual event.



## Ethics Bowl Team Qualifies for Nationals



(Left) Illinois Wesleyan's Ethics Bowl team qualified for nationals at the Upper Midwest Regional on Nov. 17, 2018, at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago.

For the fourth time in the past seven years, Illinois Wesleyan University's Ethics Bowl team qualified for nationals by placing fourth out of 32 teams at the Upper Midwest Regional competition on Nov. 17, 2018, at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago.

Illinois Wesleyan went 4-0 and earned 40,473 total points at the regional to top 28 contending schools, including Carleton College, DePauw University and Northwestern University. By finishing among the top-four teams, IWU earned a spot in this year's National Ethics Bowl, held March 2-3, 2019, at the Inner Harbor Hyatt Regency in Baltimore, and hosted by the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics.

"I'm especially excited about nationals this year because no member of our current team has ever made it this far," said IWU Associate Professor of Philosophy **Emily Kelahan '05**, who serves as one of the team's faculty advisors. "They're all rookies. That makes us underdogs going into competition against more experienced teams."

In several rounds of head-to-head debates, team members collaborate to present compelling arguments for a series of cases regarding current ethical concerns, and then rebut the opposing team's argument. Since the team was established in 2011, Illinois Wesleyan has qualified for nationals in 2013, 2014, 2016, and now, in 2019.

The team's success this year is notable given that most of the members are first-year students, many of whom are exploring their passion for ethical debate through their First-Year Experience: Policy and Ethics Partners, taught by Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Ethics Bowl faculty sponsor **Andrew Engen**. With five first-year students on the eight-student team, Kelahan is eager to see how the young competitors gain experience and develop in the coming years.

"Our team is resilient and self-aware," Kelahan said. "Each member has a good sense of his or her strengths and weakness as well as those of his or her teammates. They pick up each other's slack and set each other up to shine. They know how to take criticism in stride. They are tenacious and never rest on their laurels. Even after the competition ended, they spent the ride home vigorously debating the cases. They are a team, sharing successes and taking responsibility for disappointments as a unit."

## Titan Athletics Report

### IWU Learfield Cup Ranking Fueled by Volleyball Success

Illinois Wesleyan ranked 41st out of 191 schools in the final set of fall rankings in the Division III Learfield Directors' Cup Standings, announced by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics on Dec. 20, 2018.

In the final set of fall standings, the Titans had 114 points, with 64 coming from the ninth-place finish by volleyball and 50 coming from the 17th-place finish by the women's soccer team.

The volleyball Titans finished with a 27-6 record, won the College Conference of Illinois and Wisconsin regular-season and postseason tournament titles, and played in the NCAA Division III Tournament for the third time in four seasons, advancing to the NCAA regional final for the first time in program history.

**Tyler Brown '19** was chosen as an All-America First-Team selection for the third-straight year, and is only the 33rd player ever to earn All-America honors in three-consecutive seasons. The CCIW Offensive Player of the Year ended her career as the school's all-time leader in kills (1,777), points (1,955.5) and digs (1,987).

**Rachel Burkman '19** was named an all-region pick for the first time in her collegiate career and was named an all-CCIW performer for the third-straight season.

### Women's Golf Claims CCIW Title

With five players finishing in the top eight and earning all-conference honors, the Illinois Wesleyan women's golf team won its fourth-straight and 15th overall CCIW Championship, taking a 17-stroke win at Joliet (Ill.) Country Club, Sept. 27-29, 2018. With the exception of 2013-14, IWU has won the conference championship every season since 2002.

As winner of the 2018 CCIW title, IWU earned the league's automatic bid to the 2019 NCAA Division III Women's Golf Championship, which will be contested May 14-17, 2019, at Bay Oaks Country Club in Houston.

**Rylie Loux '20** was the team's low scorer, tying for second place, while IWU's **Patrick Freeman** was chosen as CCIW Coach of the Year.



Tyler Brown '19



Rachel Burkman '19

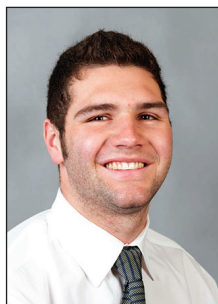


Rylie Loux '20





Trevor Staley '19



Brandon Bauer '20



Flower Edington '20

### Titan Football Shares League Title

Illinois Wesleyan's football team finished 2018 with an 8-2 overall record and was 8-1 in sharing its second-straight CCIW title, the 16th overall conference football championship.

Defensive back **Trevor Staley '19** was named to the second team of both the Associated Press Little All-America squad and the D3football.com All-America team, in addition to being a first-team choice on the all-North Region and all-CCIW teams for the second-straight year.

Quarterback **Brandon Bauer '20** has taken on the task of rewriting the Titan football record book; this past fall he set single-season records in completions (269), passing yards (3,234), total offense yards (3,299) and pass attempts (400), while becoming the school's all-time leader in completions (566), passing yards (6,746), and matching the career mark for passing touchdowns (62). After three seasons, Bauer's 62.3 percent career completion percentage is second best in an IWU uniform.

Bauer also threw for 431 yards and five touchdowns against North Park, eclipsing the single-game passing yards mark of 426, set by **John Rooney '85** against Elmhurst in 1983.

### Women's Soccer Makes Sixth-Straight NCAA Tournament

Making its sixth-consecutive and 11th overall appearance in the NCAA Division III Tournament, the Illinois Wesleyan women's soccer team advanced to the second round of the championships, finishing with a 14-5-2 record. IWU was one of 43 teams to earn an automatic bid into the national tournament as a result of winning the CCIW Tournament title on penalty kicks.



2018 CCIW Women's Soccer Champions

**Flower Edington '20** was named the CCIW Offensive Player of the Year, earning first-team honors for the second-straight season and joining **Mary Kate Schmidt '16** as the only other player in program history to win a conference player of the year honor.

### Cole Qualifies for Cross Country Nationals

**Jillian Cole '19** was the fifth Illinois Wesleyan woman ever to qualify for the national NCAA Division III Women's Cross Country Championships, where she placed 74th out of 279 competitors, with a time of 22:22.3 on the 6,000-meter course.

Cole was an all-Midwest Region selection as she finished 15th at the Midwest Regional and was IWU's top finisher at the CCIW Championships, placing third and earning all-conference recognition with a time of 21:58.



Jillian Cole '19

### MIA SMITH WINS NO. 400

(Right) IWU women's basketball head coach **Mia Smith** earned her 400th career collegiate coaching win on Dec. 29, 2019, against Whittier College, in Whittier, California.





## IWU Collaboration with Habitat for Humanity Reaches 25th Year



(Left) Illinois Wesleyan and Illinois State University celebrated the 25th anniversary of their Collegiate Chapter of Habitat for Humanity by building the group's 25th house in the Bloomington-Normal area.

For 25 years, a wide range of students, faculty and staff have chosen to get involved with Habitat for Humanity.

Illinois Wesleyan University's annual Mission Day on Aug. 24, 2018, marked the 25th anniversary of the campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity, a volunteer organization that works to build houses for local families in need.

"I am always amazed by the testimonies of new homeowners who are so proud of what they've accomplished and who are so grateful for their friends and families, as well as the communities of volunteers who have worked alongside them for many months," said University Chaplain **Elyse Nelson Winger**, who serves as faculty adviser for Habitat for Humanity. "Students love working on the sites because they know that they are a part of making this kind of transformative change in other people's lives."

On Mission Day, a one-day event during Turning Titan: New Student Orientation for students to participate in events that encourage commitment to the IWU mission, approximately 40 first-year students began framing the walls of this year's house. Chapters from Illinois Wesleyan and Illinois State University then collaborated on construction on the 25th Collegiate House build by building on Saturdays throughout the academic year.

"The process of building each house brings together people from different backgrounds and experiences toward a common goal of providing affordable, safe housing for families," said IWU Professor of Botany **David Bollivar**, a longtime volunteer. "The connections I make with our students at the work site allows the students and I to form closer connections and see that the commitment of all of us goes beyond the classroom in making a difference in the community."

In addition to building on Saturdays, students also have the option of participating in an Alternative Spring Break, where a team of volunteers travels to varying locations in the United States and collaborates on various assignments for Habitat for Humanity. Past locations have included Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Texas and West Virginia.

"I decided after participating in the Alternative Spring Break with Habitat for Humanity in Birmingham (Ala.) last spring that I wanted to get more involved," said **Ryan Ozelie '19**, current president for the IWU chapter. "The trip allowed me to witness generous, selfless volunteers make a huge impact for communities. After seeing this work and how grateful the new homeowners are with the huge difference it makes in their lives, I knew I wanted to continue my involvement with Habitat."

Ozelie encourages all members of the Illinois Wesleyan community to find a way to contribute to Habitat for Humanity's mission.

"By being involved in our campus chapter, you can make an immediate difference in our community and be part of a very fun and wholesome group that strives to make the world a better place."



## BICYCLE FRIENDLY CAMPUS

(Left) The League of American Bicyclists honored Illinois Wesleyan University with a Silver Bicycle Friendly University designation in November 2018, in recognition of the University's achievements in promoting safe, accessible bicycling on campus.





We are watching for your  
#IWUTitanPride posts on social  
media, so be sure to tag  
#IllinoisWesleyan!



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## #IllinoisWesleyan Social Lights



# Authors and the Arts

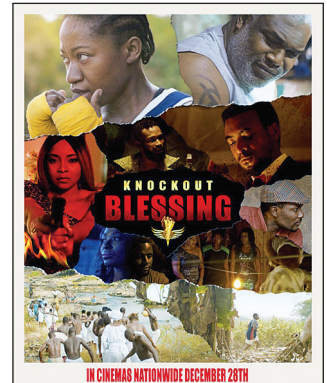
## BOOKS

**Dick Van Scyoc '49** has co-authored, with his daughter Jan Bogle, a memoir titled *Manual Labor*. The book covers Dick's personal and professional life, including 45 years as a high school boys' basketball coach. Dick spent nearly 30 years at Peoria (Ill.) Manual High School, where he won over 500 games and finished his coaching career with a state championship in his final season. In total, with victories attained in previous stops at Armington (Ill.) and Washington (Ill.) high schools, he retired in 1994 with 826 wins, then a record for the state of Illinois. Dick will host two book signings on March 30, 2019, in Peoria, first at the Lincoln Branch Peoria Public Library, from 11 a.m. to noon, and later at The Spot Coffee, from 3-4 p.m. *Manual Labor* is available at BookBaby.com and Amazon.com. All proceeds from book sales will support the Coach Van Scyoc Endowed Scholarship at Illinois Wesleyan.

**James Tosh '69** published *A Baby Boomer's Book of Poems*, a collection of 47 poems written over a period of 12 years and touching on various topics common to baby boomers: family, friends, jobs, music, sports, community and current affairs. Jim was born and raised in Bloomington, Illinois, and many of his poems reflect his upbringing. He is a former junior high school teacher and coach who now works in the furniture business. Jim wrote an autobiography in 2006 he plans to republish in the near future. *A Baby Boomer's Book of Poems* is available at BookBaby.com, Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com.



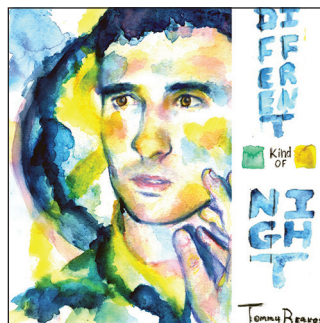
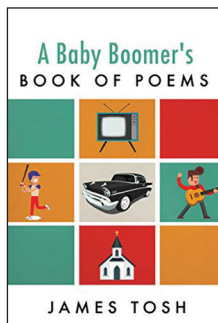
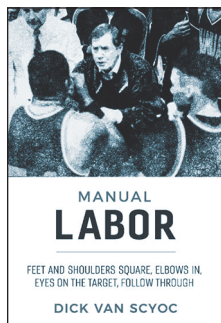
Elizabeth Laidlaw '93



2019, at The Den Theatre in Chicago's Wicker Park neighborhood. Elizabeth is the founder and artistic director of Lakeside Shakespeare Theatre. There, along with appearing in many roles, she has directed *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Taming of the Shrew*, and co-directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and, most recently, *Henry VIII*. She has also contributed as an actor, producer, consultant and designer for many productions with companies such as the Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare, Writers Theatre, Court Theatre, The Goodman and many others. She has also appeared on screen, in both films and television series, such as *Henry Gamble's Birthday Party*, *Boss* and *Chicago P.D.* Elizabeth is additionally an accomplished narrator and voice actor, whose voice can be heard in documentaries, television commercials, audiobooks and video games.

A new movie project, *Knock Out Blessing*, by Nollywood filmmaker **Dare Olaitan '13**, comes on the heels of his award-nominated debut film *Ojukokoro*. *Knock Out Blessing* is an intriguing tale of three girls' determination to survive, which takes them down a path leading into the criminal sector of Nigeria's political underworld. Dare was nominated for multiple African Oscars for *Ojukokoro*, available now on Amazon Prime.

**Pat Cavanaugh '14** is the creator, writer and producer of *Dear Dark Lord*, an eight-episode web series chronicling a young woman's struggle to make it in the big city while serving an unholy wretch known only as "The Dark Lord." *Dear Dark Lord* was screened at the 15th annual Chicago International REEL Shorts Film Fest, Nov. 9-10, 2018, at the Chicago Filmmakers Theater. Pat is a writer, improviser and composer, based in Chicago. He has studied writing and improv at The Second City and iO Chicago, and is currently pursuing an MFA in writing for the screen and stage at Northwestern University. More information on *Dear Dark Lord* is available at [www.deardarklord.com](http://www.deardarklord.com).



## MUSIC

**Tommy Bravos '17** released his debut album, *Different Kind of Night*, on Feb. 8, 2019. Tommy's Illinois Wesleyan School of Music classmates **Ryan Donlin '17** and **Robby Kuntz '18** contributed in both the recording and production stages of the album, which is available now on Apple Music, Spotify and other streaming platforms.

## FILM & TV

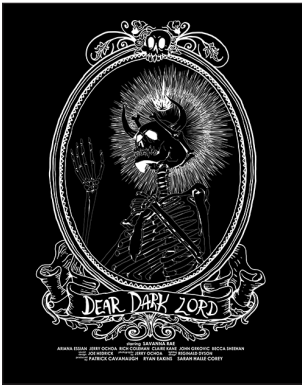
**Elizabeth Laidlaw '93** is a series regular in *The Red Line*, a new drama for Warner Bros. and CBS Television, premiering April 28, 2019. She also recently directed *Girl in the Red Corner*, for Broken Nose Theatre, which ran from Feb. 1 through March 2,

## MAGAZINE

**Coco Bassey '10** served as the guest editor for a fashion spread in the January 2019 issue of *Elle*, titled "The Holiday Party Style Index." The founder and editor-in-chief of the digital lifestyle and fashion publication *Millennielle* ([www.millennielle.com](http://www.millennielle.com)), Coco offered her picks to celebrate the season in the *Elle* spread.



All submitted content received by Feb. 4, 2019. Submissions may be edited, directed to other communications and/or preserved in IWU archives.



Coco Bassey '10

## PERFORMANCES

**David Wilken '92** is musical director of the Land of the Sky Symphonic Band, which performed a Halloween concert "filled with musical goosebump moments" on Oct. 31, 2018, at White Horse Black Mountain, in Black Mountain, North Carolina. In addition to his role with Land of the Sky Symphonic Band, David is an instructor of music at Western Carolina University, and music director and lead trombonist of the Asheville (N.C.) Jazz Orchestra.

**Amy McCabe '01** returned to Bloomington-Normal on Oct. 26, 2018, as a member of the President's Own United States Marine Band. The band played Illinois State University's Bone Student Center as part of the group's 100th concert tour. Gunnery Sgt. McCabe has been a member of the Marine Band since 2006 as a trumpeter and cornet player.

**Shelby (Sours) Byrd '02** performed in 2nd Star Productions' *Chess* at Bowie Playhouse in Bowie, Maryland, Jan. 25 through Feb. 16, 2019.

Soprano **Jenilyn (Etheridge) Roether '05** performed as part of a program hosted by the Illinois Valley Symphony Orchestra on Nov. 4, 2018, at La Salle-Peru (Ill.) High School's Matthiessen Auditorium.

**Mark Tomasino '06** is the artistic director and founder of the Wicker Park Choral Singers, who will perform June 2, 2019, at Chicago's West Side Field House, from noon to 1 p.m. Admission is free. Mark founded the group in 2008 and has since programmed and directed over 50 performances throughout the Chicagoland area.

**Liesl (Miller) Cruz '08** relocated to northwest Louisiana in 2015 and quickly became immersed in the local arts scene. She is a staff singer at First United Methodist Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, is teaching vocal classes for Shreveport Little Theater Academy (SLTA) this spring and music directing its summer production of *Seussical Jr.*, and will be performing in Emmett Hook Center's March 2019 production of *Nunsense*. After earning a bachelor's degree at Illinois Wesleyan, Liesl earned a master's degree from Indiana University. She has taught voice at SLTA the past two semesters, while music directing productions of *Mary Poppins Jr.* and *Alice in Wonderland Jr.* She also runs a private voice and piano studio out of her home. In addition to teaching, she also performs regularly, most recently in Shreveport Little Theatre's main-stage production of *One Slight Hitch* and Shreveport's Stage Center Inc. production of *Fun Home*.

**Anthony Michael Lopez '08** starred in *Henry V* at the Hartford (Conn.) Stage, Oct. 11 through Nov. 11, 2018. Anthony played the roles of Dauphin, MacMorris and Westmoreland in the Shakespeare classic. His previous credits include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* national tour, New York Theatre Workshop's *Othello* (where he starred alongside Daniel Craig) and The Public Theater's *The Penalty*. Anthony additionally played queer icon Jack Fritscher in the 2018 biopic *Mapplethorpe*, also starring Matt Smith.

**Brittany Ambler '15** performed in *A Mountain Holiday: A Classic Christmas Melodrama* and *Olio* at Mountain Repertory Theatre, a professional theatre in Cripple Creek, Colorado, from Nov. 23 through Dec. 24, 2018.

**Timothy Foszcz '18** performed in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* at the Drury Lane Theatre in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois, from Nov. 9, 2018, through Jan. 27, 2019.

**Jackie Salgado '18** made her debut at Feinstein's/54 Below in New York City, performing in *Audition Redemption* on Feb. 2, 2019.

**Juna Shai '18** recently finished an off-Broadway run of *Anne of Green Gables: Part I*, from Jan. 24 to Feb. 11, 2019, serving as the understudy for Broadway veteran Ali Ewoldt (*Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables*, *The King and I*) with Royal Family Productions, located in the heart of Times Square.



Liesl (Miller) Cruz '08



Anthony Michael Lopez '08



Brittany Ambler '15



Timothy Foszcz '18



Juna Shai '18



# CAMPUS CONNECTIONS



(Below) Student, faculty and alumni presenters pose for a group photo at the “She Speaks” event as part of the Council for IWU Women Summit.



## Council for IWU Women Summit | Feb. 8-9, 2019

(Above) **Annette R. Martinez**, senior vice president, State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Companies, provided the keynote speech, “If I Only Knew...,” as the summit concluded with the Scholarship Award Luncheon.



(Above) Students **Viana Chau ’21** (center) and **Maisha Rahman ’20** (right) attended “HERstory: Empowerment Through Sharing Our Experiences.”

(Below right) **Rachel Paturi ’13** (left) speaks during “HERstory: Empowerment Through Sharing Our Experiences.”



(Above) **Autry Isom ’22** (left), **Leah Sternberg ’20** (center) and **Alani Sweezy ’19** (right) were presented scholarships at the awards luncheon. (Inset right) **Megan Bowler ’21** (left) and **Rachel McCarthy ’21** (right) also received scholarships.





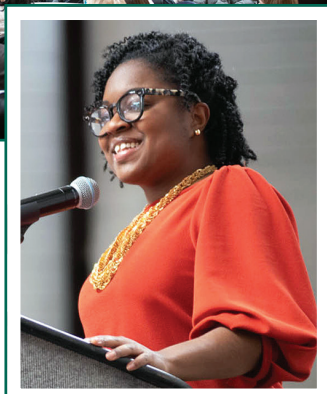
*(Right)* President of Prairie Pride Coalition **Dave Bentlin** presented “Pre-Stonewall Actions That Formed the Foundation for a Modern-Day LGBTQI+ Movement” at the 2019 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Teach-In.



## Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Teach-In | Jan. 21, 2019



*(Above and inset right)* **Charlene Carruthers '07** delivered the keynote address, “Gender Justice is Social Justice: An Unapologetic Perspective on Black Liberation,” at Illinois Wesleyan’s annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Teach-In.



## Pride Summit | Feb. 9, 2019

*(Above)* The Pride Summit hosted a panel discussion, “Ladies and Gentlemen ... And:” exploring current issues of gender and gender diversity with past and present members of the IWU and Bloomington-Normal communities.



*(Above)* **Derrick Tillman-Kelly '09** presented the keynote lecture, “Visible When Looked For: LGBTQ Folx in Higher Education,” at Illinois Wesleyan’s biennial Pride Summit.



Students broke off for group discussions during the annual event celebrating the civil rights leader who twice visited Illinois Wesleyan’s campus.



*(Left)* **Jim Richter '93**, Pride Alumni Community Co-Chair, provided opening remarks to begin the summit.



Chris Fusco '94 leads the *Chicago Sun-Times* as it delivers news and content in an ever-changing media landscape

Story by MATT WING

It's 2:30 p.m. on a Thursday in January, and the *Chicago Sun-Times* newsroom is buzzing.

Reporters huddle below banks of ceiling-mounted televisions. Some lean forward at their desks listening to audio playing through computer speakers. Others anxiously click refresh buttons on web browsers.

Chris Fusco '94 sits quietly in a modest office near the corner of the bullpen, taking infrequent bites of a breakfast bagel and sipping coffee from a paper cup while digesting the news of the day.

Three Chicago Police Department officers have just been acquitted in a Cook County courtroom on charges of conspiracy, obstruction of justice and official misconduct, stemming from the 2014 murder of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald by Chicago police officer Jason Van Dyke.

The killing of a black teenager by a white police officer garnered national attention, set off waves of protests, and prompted polarizing discussions of when necessary force becomes excessive — and how race factors into it all.

The *Sun-Times* covered each development in the case under Fusco's direction. Today will be no different.



Chris Fusco smiles, knowing he's dated himself, when admitting his first newspaper byline sat atop a story in *The Argus* about the arrival of the first ATM on Illinois Wesleyan's campus.

Working at IWU's student newspaper gave Fusco the invaluable experience he needed to begin a career in journalism. The operation was run entirely by students, and mistakes weren't pointed out by a faculty adviser until after they appeared in print.

That was the best way to learn, said Fusco, who first served as the publication's sports editor before graduating to assistant editor.

"I think it was important for us to make our own mistakes and then try to learn from them," he said. "When you're a young journalist and you make a mistake, you have to feel it. You have to absorb that blow. You have to feel ter-

# THE FUTURE OF THE Front Page





rible about it, and it needs to sink in to the point that you're never going to make that mistake again."

Mistakes were made, to be certain. They were pointed out by faculty adviser and longtime IWU English professor James Plath.

"We would be pilloried in a sieving critique, although it was delivered in a very nice manner by Dr. Plath every week," Fusco remembers, laughing.

But Fusco didn't make many mistakes. He met deadlines. His copy was clean.

His talent was apparent.

"He was both enthusiastic and serious about working for the paper, and he seemed to get a rush out of the whole process," Plath said. "Journalism was clearly a good fit for him."

Fusco's journalistic skills were further sharpened at IWU when he played a leading role in perhaps the largest project ever completed under *The Argus* banner. Hatched by student journalists at a dinner at Harry Caray's Restaurant in Chicago during the Illinois College Press Association's annual convention, the idea of a book chronicling a century of journalism at Illinois Wesleyan was proposed by the inspired students.

Fusco co-authored the book with Jennifer Barrell '94, going through every issue of *The Argus* to write the definitive history (the two eventually married, divorced, and are both remarried; Barrell is now the director of event marketing at IMPACT Branding & Design). The endeavor required enough time at Sheean Library that Plath asked if the students could stay after hours. Plath was given a key with the caveat that he would have to accompany the student authors during all after-hours time spent at the library. Many nights didn't end until well after midnight.

"Thankfully I wasn't married back then," Plath joked. "But, yeah, that's one memory that will stick with me forever."

With a breadth of knowledge and writer's toolkit assembled, Fusco left campus to serve a Pulliam Fellowship at the *Indianapolis Star*, where he was mentored by a writing coach and afforded the opportunity to learn from guest speakers like former White House



"This is going to sound as clichéd as 'he has ink in his blood,' but Chris was born to be a journalist." — IWU PROFESSOR JAMES PLATH

correspondent Helen Thomas and columnist Clarence Page.

He was on his way. "And it all began at Illinois Wesleyan," Fusco said.



Chris Fusco left his Pulliam Fellowship at a major regional newspaper thinking he had made it.

He found out soon enough he hadn't.

Fusco landed his first paying newspaper job at suburban Chicago's *Northwest Herald*, where he was assigned a rookie reporter's beat.

"You leave that (Pulliam Fellowship) experience with a vision of what a great profession this is and you're at the top of it," Fusco said. "But then you go and get your first job and realize you're right back where you started."

A year later, he moved on to the *Daily Herald*, another suburban paper, though one with a circulation that more than tripled the *Northwest Herald's* readership. He was tasked again with a community beat, doing reporting that sent him on a tour of school, village, and county board meetings.

A promotion to the metro staff was soon earned. Fusco later became the paper's lead political reporter and traveled to

both political conventions in 2000 ahead of a controversial presidential election that, for the fourth time in U.S. history, resulted in the election of a candidate who had failed to win the popular vote.

But Fusco wasn't around to cover election results for the *Daily Herald*. He accepted a new position at the *Sun-Times* that fall.

Though to advance in the newspaper world, as he had previously learned, he had to take two or three steps back before taking one step forward. He had to start over once more. "Again, rewind the tape, and start at the bottom," he said.

Fusco started at the *Sun-Times* as a suburban reporter. He then moved on to a state-government beat, where he provided award-winning coverage of former Governor Rod Blagojevich's eventful tenure. He also documented the rise of Barack Obama from state senator to president.

In 2009, Fusco was assigned to an investigative reporting role, at least in part for his ability to cover the occasionally scandalous world of Illinois politics. He began reporting for The Watchdogs, the *Sun-Times'* investigative team charged with uncovering truth and holding those in power accountable.

His reporting on corruption of police, child-welfare and government officials won more awards. He and colleagues Tim Novak and Carol Marin shared the prestigious George Polk Award for local reporting for their years-long investigation that ultimately found a nephew of former Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley culpable in a decade-old homicide case, for which the nephew later pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter.

It was difficult work, but Fusco had an ability to ask tough questions while remaining respectful. He was able to get answers. And he could clearly disseminate often-complicated findings.

"I think the public thinks a lot of things are black and white, and investigative reporters understand that there's a lot of gray there," Fusco said. "How you write one sentence can affect the entire prism of a story. There are so many challenges there — not to mention making sure you're buttoned-down on every single fact, making sure every fact has been checked two or three different ways."

Investigative reporting can be equal parts disheartening and redeeming. The often-depressing chore of reporting disturbing truth is sometimes counter-balanced by hope for change.

"The core issues are the same: you need to write clearly, understand the problem and tell the world about it," Fusco says. "And maybe if you do enough reporting, somebody figures out a solution."



Newspapers are in a fight for survival. In the last quarter century, print circulation and newsroom employment have been cut in half. Advertising dollars have dried up at an even faster rate.

Chris Fusco knows this, of course. But he also knows how some newspapers have successfully bucked the trend and remained profitable. And as a lifelong Chicagoan, he knows his city and its media appetite.

So, when the *Sun-Times* needed a managing editor in 2016, Fusco was the choice. And when the paper needed an editor-in-chief a year later? Again, Fusco.

"I have to wear a lot more hats now, and every day there's a challenge that comes out of left field, and you don't



(Above) The Jan. 18, 2019, *Sun-Times* front page played off "16 shots and a cover-up," a chant well-known to Chicagoans after the release of the Laquan McDonald shooting video. Three Chicago police officers the day before had been acquitted of conspiracy and other criminal charges, hence "16 shots — but no cover-up."

know what it's going to be," he says. "Some days it's a news challenge. Some days it's a challenge involving staff. Some days it's criticism of a story or a front page or a headline, and you become the complaint department. You have to develop this Teflon coating and thick skin.

"But it's a whole new level when you're at the management level because you're not the one who's producing the content and yet you are completely and ultimately responsible for it, so it's a lesson in trust. But I am very lucky that I trust the people here with my life."

In his new role, Fusco manages both the newspaper's print and digital content, the latter a responsibility growing by the day. "We're essentially producing two products a day now," Fusco says. "And the question is: are these two different products? Are they the same product divvied up two ways? Are there elements that work better for one or the other? And does that mean there should be things exclusive to one that aren't in the other?"

"These are all questions that we as an industry are grappling with."

Fusco has an ally in *Sun-Times* interim CEO Nykia Wright, who ardently tracks website clicks and unique visitors and page views, and has empowered Fusco to combine his experience and knowledge

(Below) A daily production meeting allows editors to coordinate news coverage.

(Opposite page) Fusco (left) and Joel Carlson '92 review the layout for the next day's newspaper.



of what will and won't work with readership analytics prominently displayed on a newsroom whiteboard.

"He has the historical knowledge of the city and the institutional knowledge of the business. He understands where we have been, and he has a good idea of where we are going," Wright said. "He has the confidence of the entire editorial staff, and that goes a long way in helping create a product that we on this side of the house can go out and sell."

Reaching the next generation of readers through non-print mediums is not a new challenge, nor will it ever be fully solved. But another challenge to newspapers is one that few could have predicted three years ago.

Criticism of media and denunciations of "fake news" are commonplace today. President Donald Trump has publicly declared the media the "enemy of the people." Some surveys have shown declining trust in traditional media.

Combating the narrative isn't easy, but the *Sun-Times* was among hundreds of newspapers — including *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Denver Post* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer* — to rebut the Trump narrative in its editorial section on Aug. 16, 2018. On its front page that day, the





But those times are sometimes fleeting. “I’m grossly out of shape because we’ve been in a really crazy news cycle here right now,” Fusco says. “Between the midterm elections, the gubernatorial election and a still-up-for-grabs mayoral election here in Chicago, it’s been a grind the last few months. But it’s been fun, too.”

Fusco does enjoy the work. He has to. As the leader of a publication that bills itself as “The Hardest-Working Paper in America,” he embodies that spirit. His colleagues can attest to his work ethic.

“Chris is a very dedicated journalist, absolutely,” said Joel Carlson ’92, an

day by his colleagues — ahead of this evening’s forum, where he’ll meet and greet candidates as the face of the *Sun-Times*.

The good-natured ribbing continues during a 3:30 p.m. production meeting, held inside a central room with glass walls offering all the privacy of a fish bowl. Fusco runs an efficient meeting, his laptop screen projecting the budget for tomorrow’s paper on walls both behind and in front of him. The meeting begins with discussion of the front page, potential headlines and coverage of the two major stories of the day: the Van Dyke cops case and the forthcoming mayoral debate. Other stories are discussed: a decline in city bus riders, the release of designs for a new terminal at O’Hare Airport, and the first whispers of a mayoral candidate being removed from the ballot (Dorothy Brown, who participated in the forum that evening, was eventually removed from the ballot five days later).

Fusco adjourns the meeting and its attendants get back to work, telling the same stories they’ve always told, but now in new ways. The newspaper game has changed and will continue to change. And it’s Fusco’s job help keep the *Sun-Times* ahead of the curve.

“The core function of journalism is still the same,” he said. “It’s the delivery methods that have changed. You call people, you look at documents, you do fair and balanced reporting.

“As long as we keep doing those things and people are willing to support us, journalism is going to survive, and I think it will survive.” ❖

“I think the public thinks a lot of things are black and white, and investigative reporters understand that there’s a lot of gray there.” — CHRIS FUSCO ’94

*Sun-Times* previewed its editorial section with the text: “Hey, Trump — here’s what this newspaper is really the ‘enemy’ of.”

“It is a dilemma every paper has to handle,” Fusco said of the current climate. “All we can do is keep doing what we’re doing, and showing the public that we are fair and committed to providing real news.”

As the *Sun-Times*’ editor-in-chief, Fusco is responsible for content on the front page, editorial page and everywhere else. He works a lot. He’s often in early. He usually stays late. When a big story is in the works — or a coordinated editorial condemning anti-media rhetoric is planned — the hours get long and the job can become a grind.

Fusco counts himself lucky to have an understanding family. His wife, Lori Rackl, is the travel editor at the *Chicago Tribune* and a former *Sun-Times* TV critic who understands the demands of the job. His son, Ben, a high school senior, spent more than a few days of his formative years in the *Sun-Times* newsroom watching his dad finish up a story or proof a front page.

When Fusco is able to escape the office, the former IWU tennis player runs, bicycles or swims. He’s run four Chicago Marathons and finished the Boston Marathon last year.

IWU alum and *Sun-Times* night news editor. “He is one of those people I would say was born to do this.”

Fusco’s former faculty adviser at *The Argus* agrees.

“This is going to sound as clichéd as ‘he has ink in his blood,’ but Chris was born to be a journalist,” said Plath.

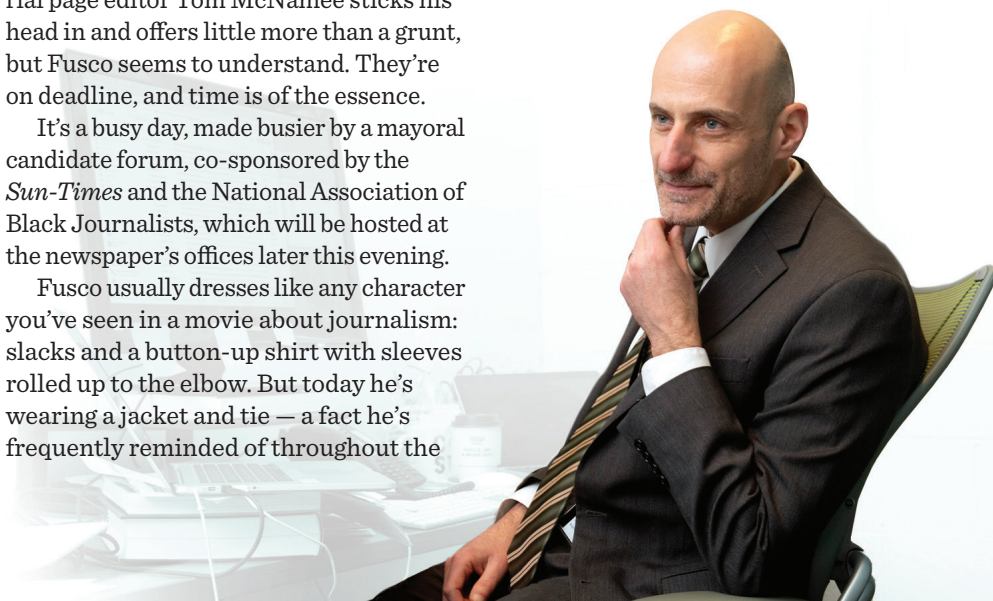


The verdict in the Van Dyke cover-up case is less than 30 minutes old, but plans are already being made for tomorrow’s coverage. It’s 3 p.m. and first edition deadline is seven hours away. The clock is ticking.

Editorial writer Thomas Frisbie slides into a chair in Fusco’s office to chat. Editorial page editor Tom McNamee sticks his head in and offers little more than a grunt, but Fusco seems to understand. They’re on deadline, and time is of the essence.

It’s a busy day, made busier by a mayoral candidate forum, co-sponsored by the *Sun-Times* and the National Association of Black Journalists, which will be hosted at the newspaper’s offices later this evening.

Fusco usually dresses like any character you’ve seen in a movie about journalism: slacks and a button-up shirt with sleeves rolled up to the elbow. But today he’s wearing a jacket and tie — a fact he’s frequently reminded of throughout the







Driven by a bold, entrepreneurial vision, Abby Reel '04 has resurrected a local dinner theatre and reunited a community with deep Illinois Wesleyan roots

PHOTO/JULIE ROBISON PHOTOGRAPHY

(Above) The Barn III was rebuilt at the site of the former Conklin's Barn Dinner Theatre and The Barn II, in Goodfield, Illinois.

(Below) Former owner Mary Simon (left) and new owner **Abby Reel '04** (right) pose together at The Barn III in January 2019.

# BRINGING BACK THE

Story by MATT WING



**G**uided by a voice only he can hear whispering the promise, “If you build it, he will come,” Ray Kinsella dutifully constructs a baseball diamond in the middle of his Iowa cornfield.

Abby Reel '04 can relate to Kevin Costner's *Field of Dreams* protagonist.

She's needed equivalent faith. Maybe more.

A self-described “mom-preneur,” Reel has worked in various roles in higher education, operated a successful wedding planning business on the side and played an active role in her community — all while raising a family. She moves fast, talks faster, and just watching her can induce fatigue, though she seems impervious to it.

But Reel's latest endeavor is perhaps her most daunting challenge yet.

Only weeks after Mary Simon, the long-time owner and operator of The Barn II

Dinner Theatre in Goodfield, Illinois, announced in 2017 her acting troupe would cease performing in the absence of a permanent home, Reel approached Simon with an idea. Reel proposed a revitalization of The Barn, which had sat empty for nearly two years after storm damage rendered it unsafe. Reel wanted to restore the building to its former glory, while also modernizing and upgrading amenities.

A revival of dinner theatre was the foundation of Reel's vision. But she saw The Barn and the adjoining property as much more. She envisioned The Barn playing host to weddings and proms and high school reunions. She saw an opportunity to utilize a smaller, adjacent barn as a fitness space. A pre-Civil War brick house where Abraham Lincoln once slumbered could be used as part bridal suite, part Airbnb.

A year-and-a-half later, The Barn III Dinner Theatre and Events Center re-



opened its doors to a sold-out crowd for *Death By Golf*, the show Simon had been rehearsing with her Conklin Players when the August 2015 storm crippled the “old Barn.”

“The goal of The Barn rebuild was simple: to create a space for community, events and entertainment,” Reel explained. “I wanted a space where people gather, memories are made and change occurs.”

The Barn III will host seven Conklin Players productions during its “Back to The Barn” 2019 season, including fan-favorite Christmas and New Year’s Eve shows. Fitness classes began at The Studio @ The Shed in 2018. The Barn will host its first prom and high school reunion in April. The venue’s first wedding is slated for the first Saturday of May.

# BARN

at the age of 5. When Les introduced Abby to co-owner and star of Barn productions Mary Simon, he did so by presenting her as “the next Mary Simon.”

Like her parents, Abby Reel was a member of The Barn family.

Reel later joined the staff at the popular dinner theatre. She bused tables before a promotion to the wait staff. Then, after proving her hardy work ethic — as all Barn employees were required to do before stepping on stage — she earned a role in a production of *Little Mary Sunshine* during her senior year of high school.

“You had to prove that you were good with people, knew how to work hard, wait on tables and interact positively with customers,” Reel said. “Only then would you be considered for a show.”

Reel stayed on staff through her college years. She remained a member of the dinner theatre family. So did her parents.

Les and Carolyn were all about family and community, and that was never more apparent than in their operation of the Reel Livestock Center, the livestock auction market they opened in a barn in 1995, just a five-minute drive from *The Barn*, a retreat to which Les

and Carolyn often took their employees and customers.

The bulk of the Reels’ business came from the sale of cattle and hogs. But there was a family-style restaurant on site, a “kiddie corral” above the sale ring, and a craft room for kids. There was something for everyone.

That desire to foster a community was important then to Les and Carolyn Reel.

And it’s important now to their daughter.

“They owned and operated their business that way. Customers weren’t customers — they were friends and they were family,” Abby Reel said. “And that’s a part of The Barn Dinner Theatre that so many have been attracted to. You feel like a cherished family member or dear friend every time you walk in the door.

“The feeling of community and family is a huge reason for me to get behind this, both personally and professionally.”



The Barn started as a family business. Chaunce Conklin ’51 and Mary Simon opened the converted Angus cattle barn as a dinner theatre in 1975.

“I cannot wait to host our first newlyweds and play a part in the beginning of their story,” Reel said. “And we’re eager to continue the legacy of local dinner theatre by keeping the performing arts alive in a central Illinois cornfield.”



Les and Carolyn Reel greeted the guests at their wedding reception, cut the cake and performed the obligatory dances before excusing themselves for the evening.

They had somewhere else to be.

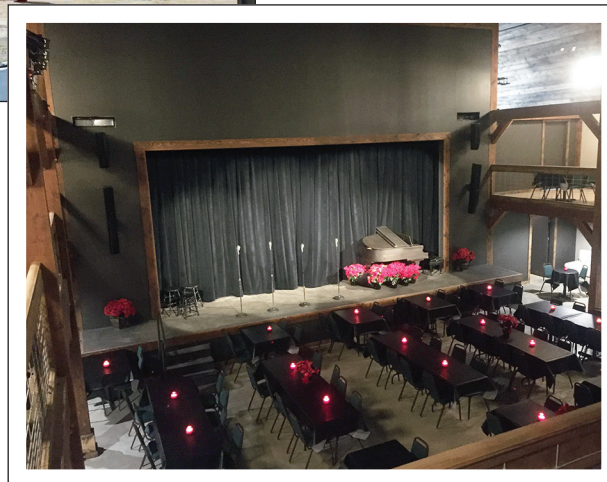
The Reels would spend the final hours of 1979 at Conklin’s Barn Dinner Theatre. Dedicated supporters of “The Barn,” Les and Carolyn had no intention of missing the annual New Year’s Eve performance.

The Reels were regulars at The Barn. They valued a place where locals could get away while never really leaving home. They first brought their daughter



(Left) Wearing hard hats and red high heels, Reel and Simon were among the women who helped raise the first wall of the Barn III at an event in June 2018.

(Right) The Barn III was built to nearly identical specifications as the previous facility, though with new and updated amenities.



## BRINGING BACK THE BARN

The staff became extended family. This was especially true of the Conklin Players, the theatre's full-time acting troupe, whose members had the rare opportunity to earn a living as working actors in a rural Illinois village of less than 1,000 residents.

Conklin's Illinois Wesleyan connections — he taught theatre and dance at IWU for 13 years — meant Titans often performed onstage. Many more became audience regulars. A community was born.

The Barn has served as the community's home ever since. The seats were usually full, even if the cash register wasn't. The only interruption in the theatre's 40-year run came in 1994, when Conklin and Simon moved shows to Missouri and Florida during bankruptcy and foreclosure proceedings. They were back within a year and performing in the same space, only with a new name: The Barn II Dinner Theatre (having declared bankruptcy, Conklin's name could no longer be on the building).

Their audience returned, too.

"We love our faithful patrons," said Pat Gaik '87, a member of the Conklin Players and The Barn's marketing director for the past 20 years. "We're friends on Facebook. We go to each other's weddings. We go to funerals."

So when a wet microburst and a mesocyclone converged on the southwest corner of The Barn and inflicted irreparable damage almost four years ago — Simon explains the phenomenon with a meteorologist's vocabulary — it was like losing the family home.

"It's been my life, my home," said April Bieschke '06, who has served in a variety of roles at The Barn over the past 13 years. "I'm here just as often as I'm at my real home, so it was like losing a very dear family member."

Simon tried to hold things together. She found a temporary home for her troupe at Five Points Washington, a community center in nearby Washington, Illinois, but found it unsustainable. An ongoing fight with her insurance company over storm damage claims had no end in sight.

She broke the news to the troupe they would cease performing at the end of 2017.



(Top left) The storm-damaged Barn II was buttressed by wooden supports before its eventual demolition in November 2017.



(Top right) Members of the Conklin Players, including **Pat Gaik '87** (far right), appear in a 2016 promotional photo for *Forever Plaid*. (Below right) Members of The Barn team — including (from left) Gaik, Simon, Reel, **April Bieschke '06** and **Claire Challacombe '20** — pose with a photo of the original Barn. (Below) A photo from a 1981 production of *Gazebo*, featuring late Barn founder **Chaunce Conklin '51** (center), is displayed in The Barn III lobby.

Claire Challacombe '20, an IWU student whose parents are longtime members of the Conklin Players, remembers hearing the devastating news. She had grown up at The Barn. Her father was performing on stage when her mother went into labor.

"When The Barn closed, it really took a toll on our family," she said. "Not only did we lose our financial stability, we lost a home."



Hearing the news wasn't easy for those who had poured years of their lives into the company and depended on a paycheck.

The Conklin Players collectively looked to Mary Simon with sad eyes, wondering what was next.

"I told them something would happen," Simon recalls. "And then Abby showed up two weeks later."

Abby Reel met with Simon in June 2017 to explore what options she'd consider. It didn't take Simon long to see

Reel's vision. "Abby is a force of nature" said Simon. "I've had my doubts along the way, but I'm all in now."

Reel says the opportunity presented itself at a time she was least expecting it. She acknowledges neighbor and fellow alum Mary (Wier) Stapel '04, and her husband Jonathon, for providing inspiration to begin the project.

"They saw the brick house for sale and thought it had potential as a wedding venue," Reel recalled. "They knew I had experience in the wedding industry and wanted to know my thoughts. When I realized the property was right next door to the old Barn, my mind exploded with ideas of reuniting the two parcels and cross-purposing The Barn for both dinner theatre and weddings."

"I will forever be grateful to Jon and Mary for looping me in."

But Simon would only sell to Reel. "I made it clear Abby was the only one I'd pursue this project with," Simon said.



"If anyone could get it done and make a home for the Conklin Players, she could."

That was easier said than done.

Reel first brought in a contractor and architect to assess the property. It was determined a rebuild would be more affordable than a restoration, at which point Reel began fundraising and financing a project that came in at an estimated \$1.5 million. Finding a lender who could see her vision was perhaps the most difficult part.

Other challenges were met head-on. A dry village for over 100 years, Goodfield's ban on alcohol sales had blocked a potential revenue stream for Conklin and Simon in The Barn's first 40 years of operation. They were thrice unsuccessful in attempts to repeal the ban and were resigned to operate their establishment with BYOB rules.

But that didn't stop Reel from trying again. By encouraging citizens of Goodfield to petition and advocate for the repeal — residing in neighboring Congerville, Illinois, she couldn't cast a vote or be directly involved in campaigning — a ballot measure passed in November 2018 by a nearly 2-to-1 margin, overturning the century-old ban and allowing permitted business, including The Barn III, to sell alcohol.

The change was symbolic of the many hurdles negotiated by Reel during the rebuilding and reopening of The Barn.

"It's only her fortitude and courage that got us this far," said Simon. "Abby has pushed through obstacle after obstacle, and it's only because she is determined to pull this off that we are still here."



Early on, when the idea of purchasing and rebuilding The Barn was only an idea, Abby Reel sat in her son's nursery contemplating her ability to pull it off. Her thoughts ping-ponged back and forth between confidence and doubt.

That's when she heard a voice.

This was her *Field of Dreams* moment.

"All of a sudden, it felt like my dad filled the room," Reel remembers. "His voice filled my mind and he said, *Abby Reel — you know better! You can do this!*"

That's when the decision was made. Reel approached Mary Simon shortly

thereafter and set in motion an undertaking emphasizing community — something for which her late father would have been proud — and in doing so, she reunited the community at the start of it all.

Simon now has a new Barn home and comfort in the fact her beloved Conklin Players have a stage to perform on.

Pat Gaik is back home on stage, too, and his hands are full now marketing not only Barn III productions, but much more.

April Bieschke is back at her second home as Jill of all Trades. In addition to her roles as set designer and technical director, she's now the bar manager. She also performed in *Death By Golf*, the first show performed in the "new Barn."

Claire Challacombe and her family are also back home. Claire's parents, members of the Conklin Players, will soon be back on stage, and her mom is now an instructor at the Studio @ The Shed. Claire will bus and wait tables at The Barn as her Illinois Wesleyan

schedule allows. Perhaps she'll find her way on stage before long. But, as per Barn rules, she'll have to prove herself first.

Abby Reel has a new home, too, with doors she can open to a loyal community of fans, friends and family. Maintaining a long-running tradition, she and Simon greet and show guests to their tables every night.

And there are many, many folks to greet.

The Barn III sold out on its opening night on Feb. 7, 2019. Over 6,000 tickets for the 2019 season had been sold before the doors even opened that night. Twenty weddings, four class reunions, three high school proms and countless other events had been booked.

"I feel like we've created a business plan here that will work," Reel said. "My goal is to see dinner theatre — and this culture of community — thrive..."

"... right here in the middle of a cornfield." ♦

"My goal is to see dinner theatre — and this culture of community — thrive ... right here in the middle of a cornfield." — ABBY REEL '04



(Above) Tamra Challacombe (top left) teaches a dance class at The Studio @ The Shed. (Above left) Donors are recognized with etched stones outside The Barn, including one paying homage to Les Reel. (Left) Abby Reel (left) and Simon (right) inspect a prop below the set for *Death By Golf*.





Illinois Wesleyan Environmental Studies students enjoy coconut milk while traveling along a tributary of Vietnam's Mekong River between visits to small-scale sustainable industries. (Inset) **Kelsey Knodel '19** (left) and Vietnamese student **Trần Huyền** (right) pose in front of a mural in Ho Chi Minh City, imploring citizens to "Cứu tê Giác" ("Save the Rhino").





# SIGNATURE SOLUTIONS

Environmental Studies students got a firsthand look at environmental issues in Vietnam before crafting proposals to promote sustainability

Story by MATT WING

**I**llinois Wesleyan University students enrolled in ENST 375 spent the first days of May Term last year in a Stevenson Hall classroom as part of a weeklong crash course, learning the geography, demography and history of Vietnam, and the challenges it faces today.

They spent the next two weeks half-way around the world, learning about Vietnam using their senses of sight, smell, sound, taste and touch.

A group of eight Illinois Wesleyan students in ENST 375: “Vietnam Today: Addressing the Challenges to Sustainable Development,” guided by professors Abigail Jahiel and Aaron Wilson, traveled to Vietnam in May 2018 as part of the Environmental Studies program’s first run of its Signature Experience program.

The research trip and collaboration with students and faculty from Ho Chi Minh University of Natural Resources and Environment (HCMUNRE) was just the first step in the Signature Experience, a new-but-not-new University initiative to provide a holistic, culminating experience to serve as the capstone of an Illinois Wesleyan education. Students later enrolled in ENST 480: “Creating a Sustainable Society” in the fall, where they applied what they had learned in Vietnam, and continued collaboration with the HCMUNRE students and faculty, to address environmental problems in Vietnam related to sustainability and climate change, a major focus of Illinois Wesleyan’s 2018-19 academic theme of “Changing Climates.”



“The idea of a Signature Experience is that it is a culmination of students’ work in environmental studies,” Jahiel said. “And, as part of the new program, we have worked to adapt our curriculum so as to scaffold in skills and knowledge along the way.”

Students interested in participating in the Vietnam travel course had to apply for a spot. Only environmental studies majors and minors were considered, and prerequisite courses included an introductory earth science systems course and an upper-level class on environment and development in Asia.

The eight students selected for the Signature Experience began their May Term with a weeklong survey of contemporary Vietnam. Jahiel and Wilson provided lectures on culture and geog-

raphy. IWU Professor of History Tom Lutze, who teaches a course on the Vietnam wars, provided historical perspective. IWU student and Vietnam native Ngan Pham ’19 offered an introduction to the language.

The classroom learning gave the group a baseline understanding of its destination and the challenges it faces with a changing political economy and a myriad of environmental issues.

“All I knew of Vietnam were things I had learned about the war. I had no idea what present-day Vietnam was going to look like,” said Katherine Henebry ’19. “As we talked about it, it became very clear that Vietnam is going through a lot of rough stuff.”

The introductory lectures also allowed for some interdisciplinary learning with Jahiel, a social scientist by trade, and Wilson, a natural scientist.

“I think that ended up being one of the most rewarding parts of the Signature Experience, interacting with Abby and the way that we were able to share views that ended up overlapping in some interesting ways, but looking at things in different ways, from the lens of natural science and social science,” Wilson said. “And I think the students also enjoyed that aspect.”

A few days later, the Illinois Wesleyan group flew halfway around the world to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam’s most populous city and cultural hub. The class went to work right away, spending its

first week in Vietnam in environmental field study, investigating the impact of climate change on Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong Delta region.

One of the group's first stops was the Can Gio Mangrove Forest, a reconstructed wetland habitat of great importance to Ho Chi Minh City as a buffer against the ravages of increasingly destructive tropical storms, exacerbated by climate change. Intentionally destroyed during the Vietnam War, successful efforts to rebuild the mangrove forest over the past 40 years have led to its designation as a biosphere reserve by UNESCO.

And the IWU group lent hands in the ongoing preservation of the protected area.

"We trudged into the muddy earth in the blazing sun, wearing rubber boots and carrying shovels, and each of us helped in the restoration efforts by planting trees ourselves," Jahiel said.

The group went on to visit a pair of environmental nongovernmental organizations: one focused on climate change, the other on reducing solid waste and promotion of recycling. They spent two days in the Mekong Delta learning about the impact of rising sea

levels and the resulting soil salinization that has wreaked havoc on local farmers in a region responsible for half the country's rice production. A local government official later described to the group how severe saline intrusion destroyed crops and adversely affected the area's lucrative pomelo farming industry.

Visits to Vietnam War sites — the War Remnants Museum and the Cu Chi Tunnels — and the opportunity to speak with an 80-year-old woman who had fought against the Americans elicited emotional reactions from the group.

"It's crazy to think that it was just a couple generations ago," said Thomas Hillebrand '20. "And they're still suffering from a lot of the fallout of it."

An ensuing three-day homestay with a host family afforded students the opportunity to test their growing Vietnamese vocabularies and enjoy authentic local cuisine.

The hospitality shown to them was sometimes surprising, some students said.

"People thought that there might be bad feelings towards us, because we're Americans and the Vietnam War," Hillebrand said. "But they were very welcoming to us. They almost celebrated

the fact that we were Americans. I kind of felt like a movie star."

An intensive week of collaboration with the HCMUNRE faculty and students followed. Broken up by sightseeing and shopping trips, and the viewing of a traditional water puppet show, students were treated to lectures on environmental challenges from HCMUNRE faculty and Ho Chi Minh City officials from the Department of Planning and Architecture, and Environmental Protection Agency.

The group visited the restoration of a major local canal channeling the Saigon River through the city, as well as a municipal water-pumping station that is the only major wastewater treatment facility serving the community of approximately 10 million residents. Students also visited a recently rebuilt Saigon district that houses many of the city's wealthiest residents — a proud symbol of progressive change but also a cause for concern due to the destruction of buffering wetlands during its construction — and spoke with government officials about the challenges they face brought on by rapidly developing industries lacking financial resources to address their environmental impact. They later visited a pig farm and a seafood-



(Above) Members of the Illinois Wesleyan group, including (from left) **Emily Asselmeier '20**, professor **Abigail Jahiel**, **Tera Wilson '20**, **Katherine Henebry '19** and Knodel, pause to appreciate the scenic beauty while traveling from Ho Chi Minh City to the Mekong Delta.



(Above) Asselmeier learns to weave a mat using reeds on one of the group's several visits to small-scale enterprises making use of local agriculture to create sustainable industries. (Left) Professors from IWU and HCMUNRE, including (from left) **Aaron Wilson**, **Huỳnh Thị Ngọc Hân**, **Jahiel**, **Vũ Phương Thư** and **Nguyễn Thị Vân Hà**, celebrated at the conclusion of the group's week of collaborative research.





(Right) The IWU group planted trees to help restore the critically important ecosystem of the Can Gio Mangrove Forest. (Below) The group visited CHANGE (Center of Hands-on Actions and Networking for Growth and Environment), a Vietnamese organization raising awareness of environmental issues.



(Right) Vietnamese professor Nguyễn Thị Vân Hà presented a lecture on climate change and water quality in Vietnam and Saigon, at Illinois Wesleyan's State Farm Hall, during the HCMUNRE student and faculty group's visit to IWU in December 2018.

**"It was a really great experience and I wouldn't take it back for anything. How many people can say they've done research in a country across the world when they were 21?" — KATHERINE HENEGBRY '19**

processing plant lauded by officials as models in their treatment of wastewater.

Finally, on a busy last day in Vietnam, the student groups from IWU and HCMUNRE joined forces to brainstorm ideas for their collaborative research projects, to be completed during the fall semester.

"The final week was getting to interact with HCMUNRE professors and learn about what issues the Vietnamese students and professors were interested in," Wilson said. "And then in one frenzied final day, we collaborated to come up with ideas for a project."

The Illinois Wesleyan students reconvened on campus two months later at the beginning of the fall semester, now as students enrolled in ENST 480: "Creating a Sustainable Society." Though they had returned home with passports stamped and a greater understanding of Vietnam achieved, their work was far from finished.

"Once we came back to IWU in the fall, the real work began," said Henebry.

After considering all project proposals, it was determined the issue students would tackle in their projects would be the negative impacts of transportation on Ho Chi Minh City. Students were tasked with providing proposals that would improve a current situation marred by pollution, congestion and flooded streets.

"Transportation is hugely problematic in terms of air pollution problems and health problems," said Jahiel. "Ninety-five percent of what you see on the streets, in terms of vehicles, are motorbikes. Our students were really struck by that, and the Vietnamese students had experienced it and recognized it as a major problem."

Students attacked the problem on multiple fronts. Some looked at public transportation. Others investigated the potential for electric motorbikes. Some

took more scientific approaches, digging deep into the pollution problem or how climate change has aggravated transportation problems.

Students reported on their experiences of witnessing climate change in an on-campus presentation in September 2018, while continuing research for their proposals. Students and faculty from HCMUNRE later visited Illinois Wesleyan's campus in the first week of December. Presentations and proposals from students from both universities were made over the course of two days.

The presentations brought an end to an academic journey that had started much earlier for the Illinois Wesleyan students enrolled in ENST 480. Building on experiences gained throughout an Illinois Wesleyan education, the Signature Experience was truly a culmination of each student's journey.

"I was really trying to step out of my comfort zone, and this trip definitely afforded me a great opportunity to do that," Hillebrand said. "It's one thing learning about different cultures from the comfort of a classroom or from a textbook, but it's a whole other thing actually being there."

The takeaways were many.

"A big part of what we learned is how we have the things that we have, how a war can just devastate an ecosystem, and how different cultures intersect and the interactions that come from that," Hillebrand said. "So, it was a really valuable experience."

Henebry couldn't help but agree.

"It was a really great experience and I wouldn't take it back for anything," she said. "How many people can say they've done research in a country across the world when they were 21?"

Henebry made sure to include her experience when applying to graduate schools over the winter months. But the experience was more than just a sentence to add to a resume.

"It has made me really proud to be an IWU student as well," she said. "It was definitely a Signature Experience. It capped off my time as an environmental studies major, and I will feel a lot more confident going out into the real world having had it." ♦



# Alumni Update

NEWS, WORKS AND CELEBRATIONS OF IWU ALUMNI & FRIENDS

## 1942

**Art Leach**, a U.S. Navy pilot during World War II, shared memories of the impact of Dec. 7, 1941, in a story in the *Pontiac (Ill.) Daily Ledger* on the 77th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

## 1949

Former Spoon River Valley (Ill.) High School head boys' basketball coach **Hendry "Hank" Bennett** will be posthumously inducted into the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame on May 4, 2019, at Illinois State University's Redbird Arena.

## 1951

**Art Runyon's** lifelong love of golf was detailed in a story in *The Pantagraph*. Even at 90 years old, Art can be found at one of the Bloomington (Ill.) public golf courses most days ... as long as there is no snow on the ground.

## 1960

**Quita (Verban) Shier** offered a presentation at The Ames Library on Feb. 11, 2019, as part of the library's exhibit "Native Voices: Native Peoples' Concepts of Health and Illness," which ran from Jan. 3 through Feb. 14, 2019. The author of *Warriors in Mr. Lincoln's Army: Native American Soldiers Who Fought in the Civil War*, Quita presented letters written by Native American soldiers, detailing time away from their communities and the impacts on their health and healing.

## 1962

**Alice (Schrader) Gruber** retired in December 2018 from the board of directors of Global Healing, an international nonprofit providing medical care in underserved areas, after nearly 15 years with the organization. Alice and her husband Howard helped establish the Roatán Volunteer Pediatric Clinic, an outpatient care center serving the Honduran island community of Roatán. The Grubers traveled to the island

25 times in their first 10 years volunteering for Global Healing, staying between two weeks and a month each visit. The Grubers recruited more volunteers and, between trips, Alice worked 20-30 hours a week from her home in Berkeley, California, coordinating airfare and housing for volunteer physicians. She also secured donations and additional funds to support the clinic. "It's a rather small and unique organization with very committed people," Alice said of Global Healing. "It's been fun to be on the board and see it grow."

## 1964

**Suan Guess-Hanson** organized a wheelchair tennis demonstration at Evergreen Racquet Club, in Bloomington, Illinois, Oct. 27-28, 2018. The event included a demonstration and clinic for wheelchair athletes of all ages.

## 1968

**Janis (Kolb) Hurd** spent 35 years teaching preschool through fourth grade, and her dedication to the profession continues in retirement. Inspired by personal accounts of the Lost Boys of Sudan, Janis has rededicated her life to training teachers in South Sudan. She made five trips to the east-central African nation from 2012-15 to provide teacher workshops, all with the common theme of cooperative learning. Janis had hoped to return to



Janis (Kolb) Hurd '68

South Sudan in 2016, but learned that all Methodist mission workers had been withdrawn from the country due to violence in the region. She returned to Africa in 2018 to work with tutors in a refugee camp in Uganda, where there are more than a million South Sudanese refugees.

**Judy Walker**, whose love of music was nurtured by her parents, has spent a career sharing her knowledge and expertise as a professor of music. She was profiled in a story in the *Waunakee (Wis.) Tribune* in October 2018.

## 1970

**David Wilson**, with the assistance of his wife **Barbara (Grace) Wilson**, researched and discovered remnants of a crash that claimed the life of a fellow Marine pilot, with whom he had been flying in tandem during a training exercise in 1972. The Wilsons' 2015 expedition to the Arizona desert prompted David to write then-Senator John McCain, who helped advance a request to have the crash site named in the late pilot's honor. David's story was recounted in a Bill Flick column in *The Pantagraph* in November 2018. David also shared his experience with students enrolled in an Illinois Wesleyan creative writing class, along with other pilots in a collaboration with the Prairie Aviation Museum, to provide source material for works of fiction.

## 1972

**Tom Wetzel** met with Illinois Wesleyan students in risk management and commercial risk classes in November 2018, and relayed their questions — and provided answers — in a story in *Insurance Journal*.

## 1973

**Deborah (Moutray) Carey** was elected to the Punta Gorda (Fla.) City Council in November 2018. Debby is active in her community, serving on the boards of the Punta Gorda Historic Mural Society and Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland. She serves as city liaison to



the Charlotte Harbor (Fla.) Environmental Center Board of Directors, Charlotte County (Fla.) Airport Advisory Board and Charlotte County Homeless Coalition.

## 1974

**Ned Carter** retired in February 2019 from the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, where he had been employed since 2004 as a work environment expert. Ned has also been an adjunct professor in the Ergonomics Department of the Royal Institute of Technology Stockholm, and a docent at Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Department of Medical Sciences, Uppsala University. Ned resides in Uppsala, Sweden.

**Curt Nord** and his wife Debi retired to Palm Harbor, Florida, in August 2018. Missing a work-related purpose every day, Curt obtained his real estate license and joined Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate in Clearwater, Florida.

## 1976

**Virginia Orr** received the CIA Office of General Counsel's Kathy Stewart Award, recognizing CIA attorneys who show dedication to service, commitment to the rule of the law and genuine caring for others. A retired lieutenant colonel in the United States Air Force and now an attorney for the U.S. government, Virginia was featured in a profile in the *Sandusky (Ohio) Register*.

## 1978

**Ed Moore** was selected for induction into the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in December 2018. Ed was a standout member of Lexington (Ill.) High School and Illinois Wesleyan basketball teams, and later coached the Lincoln (Ill.) High School girls' basketball team to a fourth-place finish in the state tournament. The annual IBCA Hall of Fame Banquet will be held May 4, 2019, at Redbird Arena.

Retired Judge **Beth Robb** was appointed to Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker's Restorative Justice and Safe Communities Committee, focused on criminal justice reform and public safety, Pritzker's team announced in November 2018.

**A.G. Webber** and **Beth Robb** spoke to students enrolled in the Illinois Wesleyan First-Year Experience "Policy and Ethics Partners," led by IWU Assistant Professor of Philosophy **Andrew Engen**, during the fall semester. Judge Robb, who retired in



Deborah (Moutray) Carey '73



Beth Robb '78



A.G. Webber '78

**{SEND}** your news to *IWU Magazine*, P.O. Box 2900, Bloomington, IL 61702, [iwumag@iwu.edu](mailto:iwumag@iwu.edu), or via our website, at: [www.iwu.edu/magazine](http://www.iwu.edu/magazine).

2014, discussed her work on the Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform Commission. Judge Webber discussed the ethics of the use of specialty courts, especially drug court.

## 1980

**Julie (Parsons) Dunbar '80**, the president and sole proprietor of Dunbar Transportation Consulting in Bloomington, Illinois, recently received the Zephyr Foundation's Outstanding Industry Contributor Award. Julie is a founding stakeholder of the Zephyr Foundation, a nonprofit organization with the mission to advance rigorous transportation and land use decision-making for the public good by advocating for and supporting improved travel analysis and facilitating its implementation. The award is presented to an individual who embodies Zephyr principles and has selflessly contributed to the good of the industry through the body of their work. Julie received the award on Jan. 15, 2019, during a Zephyr membership reception while in Washington, D.C. for the annual meeting of the Transportation Research Board. Part of Julie's agenda while in Washington each year is to reconnect with fellow IWU alum **Marsha Guenzler-Stevens '78**, a tradition they've kept for nearly 30 years.

Illinois Wesleyan Director of Government and Community Relations **Carl Teichman** was named Advocate of the Year by the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities in December 2018. Carl has served Illinois Wesleyan president's office since 1989. In addition to his work in higher education,

Carl has been civically engaged. He chairs the McLean County Regional Planning Commission and serves with the McLean County Chamber of Commerce, for which he is a past president. In 2017, the Town of Normal (Ill.) named him Normal Citizen of the Year for his outstanding commitment to community engagement.

## 1981

Kappa Kappa Gamma appointed **Beth (Uphoff) Black** to the role of National Panhellenic Conference (NPC) delegate, which acts as a liaison between Kappa and NPC, and influences the future of the sorority experience. Beth has held numerous roles within Kappa, including director of chapters, vice president, and director of programs and education. Most recently, Beth served as president from 2014-18. During her tenure, she oversaw the successful transition of Kappa's organizational structure to a governance model and the relocation of Kappa Kappa Gamma Headquarters to a new space in Dublin, Ohio. Additionally, she served on several NPC committees, including the Communications Task Force, Structure Think Tank and Structure Transition Committee.

**Dave Shields** is seeking a seat on the Normal (Ill.) Town Council, to be decided in the April 2, 2019, election. A State Farm employee, Dave currently serves on the Normal Planning Commission, and the board of directors for both the Multicultural Leadership Program and Friends of the Arts. He also served as campaign

(continued on page 28)

## Alumni Notes (continued from page 27)

manager for Normal Mayor Chris Koos' 2017 re-election.

State Farm Chairman, President and CEO **Michael Tipsord** was named to Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker's Job Creation and Economic Opportunity Committee in December 2018.

## 1982

**Janet (Best) Albers** was one of three honorees recognized at the Legacy of Learning banquet, recognizing outstanding alumni of Decatur (Ill.) public schools, in November 2018. Dr. Albers is a physician with Southern Illinois University's Center for Family Medicine, guiding young doctors through the phase of their education during which they choose a specialty. "I tell our residents, we specialize in the patient," she told the (Decatur, Ill.) *Herald & Review*. Dr. Albers was previously recognized as the SIU School of Medicine Distinguished Alumni Award winner in 2017 and received the institution's Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2018.

## 1984

**Tim Brophy** won election as the treasurer of Will County (Ill.) in the November 2018 general election. Tim serves the fourth-most populous county in the state, where approximately 274,120 real estate tax bills were mailed in 2017, with collections of approximately \$1.88 billion. Tim is also a broker with Dow Realty, Inc., in Joliet, Illinois.

Lake Land College's Board of Trustees appointed **Beth Gerl** vice president for student services, effective Feb. 1, 2019. Beth has an extensive background in student services and spent the past 13 years as vice president for student affairs and dean of students at McDaniel College in Westminster, Maryland. Her responsibilities there included residence life, judicial affairs, student conduct, student activities, Greek affairs, orientation, health and counseling services, diversity, food service, campus center operations, campus safety department, career services, and the threat assessment and crisis management team.

**Todd Pickens** was hired by Mickey Thompson Tires & Wheels to serve as vice



Janet (Best) Albers '82



Tim Brophy '84

president of sales, the company announced in November 2018. Todd will be responsible for driving profitable sales and growing market share for the Cooper Tire & Rubber Co. subsidiary. Todd formerly served in roles with KRP Associates, Goodyear, Wilson Sporting Goods, Mazda North American Operations and Ford Motor Company.

## 1985

**Linnea (Erickson) Windel** is president and chief executive officer of VNA Health Care, which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2018. The organization had a springtime gala, summer celebration, and a Founders Tea in the fall. VNA recognized the organization's growth from one nurse to a full healthcare system with 70 full-time doctors and nurse practitioners, serving 75,000 patients at 14 suburban Chicago locations. Last year also included individual recognition for Linnea, who was inducted into the American Academy of Nursing, an acknowledgement of her leadership and contributions to advancing the academy's mission.

**Jill (Misener) York** was named to the 2018 list of "Chicago's Notable Women in Commercial Banking," published by *Crain's Chicago Business*. Jill is executive vice president of specialty banking and mergers and acquisitions for MB Financial Bank, a position she has held since April 2016. A director of the bank, Jill is responsible for a portfolio of businesses including wealth management, card services, leasing and indirect lending. Jill is also a member of Illinois Wesleyan's Board of Trustees.

## 1986

**Colleen Daugherty Halberg** visited her son **Andrew Runkle '21** in London during



Colleen Daugherty Halberg '86 (right) and Andrew Runkle '21

Andrew's final week studying abroad with Illinois Wesleyan Professor of Biology **Edgar Lehr** and other IWU students taking part in the IWU London Program.

## 1988

**Doug Moews** was inducted into the (Bloomington, Ill.) Central Catholic High School Athletics Hall of Fame on Feb. 2, 2019. The former Illinois Wesleyan football standout was the quarterback on Central Catholic's 1982 state championship and 1983 runner-up teams. He also competed for Central Catholic's baseball, basketball and tennis teams. He was a three-year starter at quarterback for IWU's football team.

## 1989

**Jennie (Scott) Seeling** and her husband Tom have relocated to Las Vegas, where she now serves as the box office supervisor for the Grand Garden Arena at MGM Grand Resorts.

## 1990

**Stephan Paul Antonacci** was named president and CEO of Security Bank, headquartered in Springfield, Illinois, effective Jan. 15, 2019. Paul was previously promoted to COO of Security Bank in July 2018. He has worked in the banking industry for more than two decades. He will continue to work out of the bank's downtown Springfield headquarters.

**Deanna (Wagner) Wegehaupt** has taught in the La Vernia (Texas) Independent School District for the past 15 years, most recently serving as an intermediate school physical education teacher. Deanna has incorporated rock-wall climbing and



DrumFIT into her curriculum, while embracing new technology and creative teaching methods. She oversees safety and bus patrols before and after school, and coordinates a number of extracurricular activities, including a cup-stacking club and an exercise class for teachers. Deanna is currently in her fourth year as a physical education teacher. Prior to that, she taught fourth- and fifth-graders in La Vernia for 10 years. Before moving to the San Antonio area, she taught in Erie, Illinois, for over 10 years. She is currently in her 25th year as an educator. “I absolutely love my job,” Deanna said. “Seeing kids make progress, improve, get better and feel good about themselves is so amazing!”

## 1991

Chancellor of the City Colleges of Chicago **Juan Salgado** was named to Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker’s Educational Success Committee in November 2018.

## 1992

**Chris (Dixon) Schwartz** was named principal at a new elementary school in Franklin, Tennessee, opening in 2019-20. Chris has been the principal at Trinity Elementary School in Franklin for the past 11 years. “I am honored to have been selected to lead a brand-new elementary school,” Chris told the *Williamson (Tenn.) Source*. “I am also thrilled to be a part of building a strong culture for learning from the ground up.”

## 1993

**Todd French** is the founder of WineBerserkers.com, the world’s largest and most active online wine forum. The

site boasts nearly 25,000 highly engaged users who have combined to make over 2.5 million wine-related posts. Todd has also launched “BerserkerDay”—the Black Friday of wine commerce—held annually on Jan. 27. Todd was featured in a *Forbes* profile in January 2019.

**Patrick McGrath** is the assistant vice president of the Foglia Family Foundation Residential Treatment Center, a facility providing intensive treatment of anxiety disorders and addictions. He is also clinical director of the AMITA Health Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital’s Center for Anxiety and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Program, and president of OCD-Midwest, an affiliate of the International OCD Foundation. He’s authored a stress management workbook titled *Don’t Try Harder, Try Different*, and maintains a popular blog of the same name on *Psychology Today*’s web platform. Dr. McGrath has been featured on the Discovery Health Channel’s documentary *Anxious* and on The Learning Channel’s *Hoarding: Buried Alive*. Dr. McGrath trains students and therapists across the country in the treatment of anxiety disorders. He is also the president of a private practice group in Illinois called Anxiety Centers of Illinois.

**David Priess** has been named chief operating officer of Washington, D.C.’s Lawfare Institute, known for the prominent Lawfare Blog that focuses on hard national security problems. David served at the CIA during the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations as an intelligence officer, manager and daily intelligence briefer. His private sector management experience in the past 15 years has focused on small organizations in and around the national security arena. He is also a writer and speaker on the presidency, intelligence and foreign policy. His two books are *The President’s Book of Secrets: The Untold Story of Intelligence Briefings to America’s Presidents* (2016) and *How to Get Rid of a President: History’s Guide to Removing Unpopular, Unable, or Unfit Chief Executives* (2018).

## 1995

**Stan Nord** announced his candidacy for the Normal (Ill.) Town Council ahead of the April 2, 2019, election. Stan has worked in the information technology field for several years.



Deanna (Wagner) Wegehaupt '90



Patrick McGrath '93

## 1996

**Jeremy Henrichs** will seek reelection to the Mahomet-Seymour (Ill.) school board in the April 2019 election. Jeremy is a physician at Carle Foundation Physician Services, in Champaign, Illinois, where he serves the orthopedics and sports medicine branch.

## 1998

Having built a career creating bio-inspired materials such as tissues for drug modeling and bone regeneration, **William Murphy** has been named to the National Academy of Inventors’ Class of 2018 Fellows. “Being able to discover new things about the way the world works that no one has ever known before is just thrilling,” he told the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he is employed as the Harvey D. Spangler Professor of biomedical engineering and orthopedics.

AMB Sports and Entertainment (AMBSE) has elevated **Karl Pierburg** to vice president, technology, data and analytics, to lead day-to-day technology and analytic operations for the National Football League’s Atlanta Falcons, Major League Soccer’s Atlanta United, and Mercedes-Benz Stadium. A 14-year veteran of the Falcons organization, Karl began his career with the team as the director of football systems and special projects, designing and developing systems for the Falcons’ personnel department and coaching staff. In his new role, he will continue to oversee the Falcons Football Technology group, as well as two newly aligned groups: AMBSE Data & Analytics and AMBSE Emerging Tech.

## 1999

**Carly (Andersen) Newbold** earned a doctorate in integrative healthcare from Huntington University of Health Science in November 2018.

## 2000

**Sharon Chung** was elected to the McLean County Board in the Nov. 6, 2018, election, edging out an incumbent candidate for the District 7 seat.

(continued on page 31)



# Alumni Association News

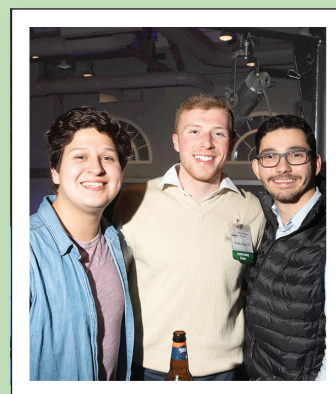
## Reunion Weekend

Be part of your class reunion giving goals and set reunion and participation records that demonstrate your Titan Pride! For more information on your class giving goals, visit [www.iwu.edu/reunion](http://www.iwu.edu/reunion) and click on your reunion year.

Planning for Reunion Weekend 2019 is well underway! We are looking for volunteers to serve on class reunion committees. Class reunion committees are vital to the success of a reunion as committee members help inspire fellow classmates to participate. If you are interested in serving as a reunion volunteer, please visit [www.iwu.edu/reunion](http://www.iwu.edu/reunion) or email [reunions@iwu.edu](mailto:reunions@iwu.edu).



## Join us October 4-6, 2019



**Scott Huch '86** spoke at Illinois Wesleyan's Pride Summit on Feb. 9, 2019.



### Dear Fellow IWU Alumni,

First, THANK YOU to all the alumni from class years ending in 3 and 8 who came back to campus for milestone reunions at Homecoming 2018. You made the reunions fun, and your pictures prove it!

Next, for alumni from class years ending in 4 and 9 — make your travel plans now! You'll want to be in Bloomington for your milestone class reunion at Homecoming, Oct. 4-6, 2019.

And as to class reunions yet to come, THANK YOU to all the alumni volunteers who are now helping IWU recruit its Class of 2023, which will enter this fall.

The next class of incoming students will find a rich educational environment that's made even richer by the involvement of IWU alumni. Recent opportunities for undergraduates to make valuable mentoring and networking connections with alumni included the MLK Teach-In, Council for IWU Women Summit, and Pride Summit (see pages 12-13).

Your Alumni Association Board of Directors will hold its spring meeting on April 5, 2019. Meetings are open to all alumni, so drop by the Davidson Room if you're in Bloomington! The next day, alumni board members will help greet prospective students and their families at Admitted Student Day. We're all doing our part to help IWU recruit another standout class!

Continuing alumni support for undergraduate education at IWU is critical. So don't miss the chance to show your support by being All In for Wesleyan on April 11, 2019.

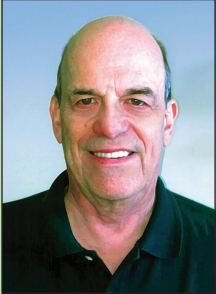
Finally, if you can't visit IWU, maybe IWU will be visiting you! Check out the schedule of upcoming Connections on the accompanying page!

Hoping to see you reconnected soon!

*Scott E. Huch*

**Scott E. Huch '86, President**  
Alumni Association Board of Directors





### Steve Nestler '68

*"Reunion Weekend is celebrated every year during Homecoming Weekend and is a time for alumni in a reunion year to return to Bloomington and give back to Illinois Wesleyan. We welcome all alumni from class years ending in 4 and 9 back to campus for Reunion Weekend, Oct. 4-6, 2019. Your milestone reunion year is the perfect time to join your classmates and make an impact on the lives of current and future IWU students by making a gift to the Reunion Giving Fund."*



### Teresa Banks '13

*"It's always great to be back! It's refreshing to reconnect with former classmates as well as connect with alumni I've never met. But my favorite thing this year at Reunion Weekend was hearing about the accomplishments and future endeavors of former classmates. Every time I come back for Homecoming I'm reminded of this go-getter spirit of all who attend Illinois Wesleyan. What a special community I have the privilege to be a part of! TGOE!"*

## Upcoming Alumni Connections

For more information, call (888) IWU-ALUM or visit [www.titanpride.org](http://www.titanpride.org).

- ◆ **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10:**  
St. Louis Happy Hour  
Wellspend Brewing Company  
St. Louis, Missouri
- ◆ **THURSDAY, APRIL 11:**  
All In for Wesleyan  
#AllInforWesleyan
- ◆ **SUNDAY, MAY 5:**  
Commencement  
Eckley Quad (Rain Location: Shirk Center)  
1 p.m.
- ◆ **THURSDAY, MAY 16:**  
New York City Happy Hour  
Location TBA
- ◆ **SUNDAY, MAY 19:**  
Titan Connection — North Carolina  
Top of the Hill, 1-3 p.m.  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- ◆ **SUNDAY, JUNE 9:**  
Titan Connection — Northern California  
Home of  
Annette Tracy & Anne Dorman  
San Francisco Castro District
- ◆ **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19:**  
Titan Connection — Washington, D.C.  
Clyde's of Gallery Place  
6:30-8:30 p.m.
- ◆ **MONDAY, SEPT. 9:**  
Chicago Golf Outing  
Mistwood Golf Club  
Romeoville, Illinois
- ◆ **FRIDAY-SUNDAY, OCT. 4-6:**  
Homecoming 2019  
Reunion Weekend 2019

## 2002

**Justin Leverton** was named partner at Indianapolis-based Kroger Gardis & Regas, LLP, on Jan. 1, 2019. Justin represents clients involved in complex business transactions, real estate and corporate finance. He is a transactional lawyer and litigator, and provides legal advice to clients in a variety of areas including corporate and business law, commercial lending, oil and gas rights, and environmental issues.

## 2003

**Tracie Crane** recently celebrated her 15th anniversary with Jacobs Technology. She is a deputy department manager on the main engineering services contract at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama. She helps supervise nearly 400 engineers, scientists and technicians.

**PJ Hoffman** is the Director of Regulatory Affairs at Electronic Transactions Association. A lobbying veteran with over a decade of experience now working in the fintech industry, PJ was featured on the podcast "The Lobbying Show" in January 2019.

**Steven Messina** was appointed executive director of advancement at Chicago's Marist High School. Steven, who went on to earn an MBA at Lewis University after his time at Illinois Wesleyan, has spent the past 12 years with the Archdiocese of Chicago, including the past four in the stewardship and development office. He played a key role in the "To Teach Who Christ Is" campaign, which raised \$423 million.

(continued on page 32)



Justin Leverton '02



*Alumni Notes (continued from page 31)*

## 2004

**Kwabena Appenteng**, an attorney in the Chicago office of Littler Mendelson, P.C., has been elevated to shareholder, effective Jan. 1, 2019. Kwabena counsels employers on a range of day-to-day employment issues with a focus on workplace privacy and information security issues, including: cross-border transfers of human resources data, biometric privacy issues, responding to security breaches, background checks, workplace surveillance, searches, electronic monitoring issues, social media issues, and questions stemming from the European General Data Protection Regulation and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

Best-selling author and medical historian **Lindsey Fitzharris** returned to Illinois Wesleyan to present a talk titled "Good Old Hospital Stink: The Grisly World of Victorian Surgery," on Oct. 30, 2018, at Hansen Student Center. The event was free and open to the public, and Lindsey signed copies of her best-selling book, *The Butchering Art: Joseph Lister's Quest to Transform the Grisly World of Victorian Medicine*, following the presentation.

**Kristin Schleiter** has joined the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) as the Vice President of Policy, Government Relations and Strategic Engagement. Kristin will play a key role in providing strategic and operational oversight for ABMS policy development and advocacy initiatives, and will lead strategic engagement with governmental, professional and healthcare organizations, as well as other public stakeholders of specialty certification, to strengthen and increase the value of ABMS specialty board certification. Kristin worked in advocacy for the American Medical Association prior to her role at ABMS.

## 2005

**Colleen (Schuster) Lawless** was named associate judge of Illinois' Seventh Judicial Circuit Court by circuit judges in November 2018. Colleen will serve Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Morgan, Sangamon and Scott counties in her role. Colleen had worked for Springfield, Illinois-based firm Londrigan Potter Randle P.C. since 2009, after graduating from Northern Illinois

## Tiny Titans

**Amy Pollitz '99**; Maggie Lynn, born June 14, 2018

**Ben Haines '00** and Elizabeth D'Antonio; Elliot Michael, born May 31, 2018

**Amanda (Scheiman) McCorry '01** and Matt; Palmer Tompkins, born Oct. 24, 2018

**John Heisel '02** and Marina; Martin Oliver, born Jan. 20, 2019

**Megan Greenfield '04** and Brian Rueffer; Paxton Kristopher, born Sept. 4, 2018

**Susie (Ireland) Halverson '04** and Will; Julia Marie, born Dec. 4, 2018

**Bethany (Kesselring) Wasik '04** and **Brian '04**; Ryan Emily, born Nov. 20, 2018

**Natalie (Swegle) Bates '05** and Nathan; Oaklee Marie, born Sept. 21, 2018

**Carolyn (Franz) Berger '05** and Joel; Jude Carl, born Dec. 1, 2018

**Stacey (O'Connell) Gaetano '05** and Steve; Lorelei Juliana, born Sept. 26, 2018

**Michelle (Bradley) Hakala '06** and Andrew; Bradley, born Dec. 27, 2018

**Megan (Teschner) Hebert '06** and Kevin; Emma Helen, born Sept. 27, 2018

**Jessica Lothman '06** and Chris Winters; Ryerson Mae, born Nov. 19, 2018

**Mary (Roth) Sump '06** and **Matthew '06**; Dorothy Jean, born Aug. 23, 2018

**Jaclyn (Nesbitt) Johnson '07** and Jack; Ryleigh Haiden, born Oct. 9, 2018

**Michelle (Carrillo) Miciunas '07** and James; Leonardo Carrillo, born Oct. 18, 2018

**Ibby (Stith) Lowery '08** and **Evan '08**; Bennett Robert, born Dec. 11, 2018

**Caitlin (Ludwig) Pusateri '08** and **Adam '08**; Marin Patricia-Eileen, born Jan. 10, 2019

**Vicki (Beata) Ward '08** and Brian; Michelle Elizabeth, born Dec. 22, 2018

**Elizabeth (Doerner) Zurek '08** and **Alec '09**; Asher Ellis, born Nov. 4, 2018

**Andrew Herrington-Gilmore '09** and Lauren; Jay Andrew, born Dec. 31, 2018

**Aly (Krawczyk) Prchal '09** and Kevin; Evelyn Rose, born Oct. 12, 2018

*All submitted content received by Feb. 4, 2019. Submissions may be edited, directed to other communications and/or preserved in IWU archives.*

University College of Law and serving as the firm's clerk for two years.

**Jon Robinson** spoke at the inaugural DevFest St. Louis, hosted by Slalom, the St. Louis Google Developer Group, and Women Techmakers St. Louis, on Jan. 26, 2019, at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Jon is a user experience designer and consultant for Slalom, a purpose-driven consulting firm that helps companies solve business problems and build for the future, with solutions spanning business advisory, customer experience, technology and analytics.

**Megan Thoma** was named Rhode Island's recipient of the first-ever National University System-Sanford Teacher Award. Fifty-one teachers, each representing their state or the District of Columbia, received \$10,000 for demonstrating commitment to creating inspirational and harmonious classrooms that support student development and achievement. The award is named for philanthropist T. Denny Sanford, who is committed to supporting inspiring teaching nationwide through Pre K-12 programs that are being



Kwabena Appenteng '04



Kristin Schleiter '04



Christopher Seps '07



Jessica Pearce '09

expanded nationally by the National University System. Megan teaches 12th-grade English at Paul Cuffee Upper School in Providence, Rhode Island.

## 2006

**Tina (Mazzulla) Wills** was elevated to income partner at Freeborn & Peters LLP, the firm announced Jan. 1, 2019. Tina is a member of Freeborn's Litigation Practice Group and focuses her practice on complex commercial lawsuits, appeals and critical motions designed to resolve cases before trial. She has extensive experience representing large corporations, small businesses and individuals in a wide range of state and federal commercial matters, including employment disputes, false claims act actions, breach of contract cases, environmental mass tort litigation, and other complex disputes.

## 2007

**Joshua Bidzinski** was promoted to partner at the Chicago-based firm Swanson, Martin & Bell, LLP. Joshua focuses his practice on product liability, commercial litigation and business disputes.

**Rebecca (Gericke) Plunkett** oversees the on-site research program at Chicago's Shedd Aquarium, where she is responsible for receiving and reviewing research requests, and providing programmatic and logistical support for field research in the Great Lakes and Bahamas, as well as for citizen science initiatives. She also administers the aquarium's college courses, including teaching a marine ecology course in the Bahamas aboard Shedd's research vessel, the R/V Coral Reef II. Before joining Shedd, Rebecca worked as the project manager on a multimillion-dollar oyster reef restoration project at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab in Alabama. She also worked as a marine science instructor at Catalina Island Marine Institute in California, where she led kayak and snorkel trips.

**Erik Schuessler** was promoted to shareholder in the law firm Burns, Figa & Will, P.C., in Greenwood Village, Colorado. Erik's practice specializes in commercial, employment and real estate litigation.

**Christopher Seps** was named to the 2019 Illinois Super Lawyers list of "Rising Stars," which recognizes the state's top attorneys, chosen for their demonstrated excellence in the practice of law. An associate with Ulmer & Berne LLP, based in Chicago,



Grace Kelmer '12



Cameron Blossom '13



Joe Musso '13 (p. 35)



Suchana Chaulagain '18 (p. 35)



Rebecca (Gericke) Plunkett '07

Chris focuses his practice on complex litigation and arbitration in the securities and commodities industries.

## 2009

**Andrea Eaton** married Christopher Aguirre on May 12, 2018, in Bloomington, Illinois.

**Jessica Pearce** earned a doctorate in horn performance and literature from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in December 2018. Jessica previously earned a bachelor's degree at Illinois Wesleyan and a master's degree in French horn performance at the University of Michigan. During her career, she has been the principal horn of the Chicago Jazz Philharmonic Orchestra, assistant principal of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, and guest principal of the Peoria (Ill.) Symphony Orchestra. She has also appeared with regional symphonies in Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Iowa. Before pursuing her doctorate, Jessica was the horn instructor at Metropolis School of the Performing Arts in Arlington Heights, Illinois, and for Lake Zurich (Ill.) School District. She is currently an adjunct instructor of French horn at IWU and Eastern Illinois University.

**Katie Stankiewicz** was hired by the Big Ten Conference as assistant director of sports administration in November 2018. Katie joined the Big Ten staff after serving in the Northwestern University athletics marketing department for seven years, most recently as assistant director of marketing. Before her time at Northwestern, Katie served as a marketing intern with the National Hockey League's Chicago Blackhawks from 2009-11 and a seasonal sales representative with Major League Baseball's Chicago White Sox in 2011.

## 2012

**Grace Kelmer** is the director of the Mendel Center Mainstage at Lake Michigan College and was selected to participate in the Association of Performing Arts Professionals' Emerging Leadership Institute, held in January 2019. The intensive two-and-a-half day seminar was held in New York City and emphasized leadership skills development for emerging performing arts professionals. Grace was also elected to serve as vice president of the Michigan Nonprofit Presenters Network, beginning in January 2019.

## 2013

**Cameron Blossom** co-founded a company called Storied Hats offering hat designs without logos. The hats are made from high-quality fabrics and feature no logos or branding — even on the inside. The company uses eco-friendly materials, pays those making the hats a living wage and designs hats that represent critical social issues with 100 percent of those profits going to nonprofits working on those issues. For more information, visit: [www.storiedhats.com](http://www.storiedhats.com).

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## ALUMNI UPDATE



**IWU Magazine** considers for publication photos of IWU people at celebrations and reunions of alumni. Please send your Titan Celebration photos to *IWU Magazine*, P.O. Box 2900, Bloomington, IL 61702, [iwumag@iwu.edu](mailto:iwumag@iwu.edu), or via our website, at: [www.iwu.edu/magazine](http://www.iwu.edu/magazine).



(Above) **Kirsten Ruby '90** (center) married Greg Hendrickson on Sept. 1, 2018, in Urbana, Illinois. Among the attendees was Kirsten's classmate **Betsy (Jackson) Young '89** (left).



(Above) **Amanda O'Brien '13** and **Bryan Senn '13** were married Sept. 22, 2018, in Kankakee, Illinois, with many classmates attending.



(Above) **Hanni Sha '12** (seated, right) and **Johnny Simonelli '12** (seated, left) were married April 7, 2018, in Chicago, with many classmates attending, including (standing, from left): **Kevin Johnson '12**, **Michael Chau '12**, **Cory Sloan '12**, **Scott Wenzel '12**, **Kate Nishimura '11**, **Bert Blodgett '13**, **Daniella Shin '12**, **Beth Grinter '12**, **Samantha Hogan '12**, **Brittany (Goldman) Rose '12**, **Jenna Jameson '12**, **Renee Schade '12**, **Kristen (Gattuso) Wenzel '12** and **Stuart Seale '08**.



(Above) **Gabriella Pittsford '13** and **Owen Carlos '13** were married July 28, 2018, in Woodstock, Illinois, with many classmates attending, including: **Megan Rogers Zaccaro '14**, **Mino Zaccaro '13**, **Joshua Slevin '13**, **Michelle Brecunier '13**, **Peter Moeller '13**, **Kelsey Hanson '12**, **Robert Heston '11**, **Kaitlin Zawacki-Nguyen '12**, **Emily Stich '15**, **Cara Fulcher '16**, **Phil Lewis '13**, **Courtney (Balk) Lewis '13**, **Nick Nichols '13**, **Juan Camilo Hernandez-Mitchum '12**, **Erin Donegan '12**, **Anne Chapman '13**, **Shelby Jones-Wehrenberg '13**, **Lily Sikes '13**, **Kelly Lamorena '14** and **Christina Hoblin '13**.



(Above) **Jill Canaday DelValley '84** is the executive director of a senior living community in Springfield, Illinois, where she serves Illinois Wesleyan alumni. The group recently gathered to reminisce about their time on campus, sharing old yearbooks and scrapbooks. They included (from left): **Mary Alice (Young) Mourey-Taft '56**, **Nancy (Vaughan) Bates '58**, **Helen (Goodwin) McGranahan '47**, **Canaday DelValley** and **Art Schmittler '54**.

(Below) **Claire Kidwell '16** and **Joe La Tulip '14** were married July 28, 2018, in Champaign, Illinois, with many classmates in attendance.





## Titan Celebrations

*All submitted content received by Feb. 4, 2019. Submissions may be edited, directed to other communications and/or preserved in IWU archives.*



(Above) **Matt Bockman '12** (left) married So Yeon Woo (right) on June 9, 2018, at Illinois Wesleyan's Hansen Student Center.



(Above) **Karolina Sierzputowska '16** received a marriage proposal from Mike Sodici during Homecoming 2018. The two met when Karolina was a student worker in Illinois Wesleyan's Business Office and Mike was an accountant doing work for IWU, and Mike fittingly proposed in the place they met.

### Looking for a venue?

Host your Titan Celebration  
at Illinois Wesleyan!





[www.iwu.edu/weddings](http://www.iwu.edu/weddings)  
**#SayIDoAtIWU**

### Alumni Notes (continued from page 33)

**Joe Musso**, the lead sports anchor for KOVR-TV in Sacramento, California, was named to the Sportscasters Talent Agency of America's "30 Under 30" list of the top 30 sports broadcasters in the U.S. under 30 years old.

**Nicole Schneider** took part in the Hart Career Center's Nursing Career Fair held on Illinois Wesleyan's campus on Nov. 14, 2018. Nicole represented her employer, UnityPoint Health, at the event.

### 2014

**Hannah Smith** earned a master's degree in nurse midwifery at the University of Colorado-Anschutz in August 2018. She is now employed as a certified nurse midwife with Carle Foundation Hospital in Urbana, Illinois.

**Veronica Watson** spoke at the Citizen Scholar Lecture during Illinois Wesleyan's 2018 Homecoming. Veronica is the Indiana Director of Patronicity, which is a civic crowdfunding and crowd-granting platform. Patronicity brings together local citizens and sponsors to support community initiatives. Veronica was engaged with the IWU Action Research Center as a student and went on to serve AmeriCorps VISTA in New Orleans and Indianapolis.

### 2016

**Haley Lower** and **Cameron Loyet '18** were married on June 16, 2018, at Illinois Wesleyan's Evelyn Chapel.

### 2017

**Olivia Simkins** married Brett Kath on Sept. 15, 2018, at Illinois Wesleyan's Evelyn Chapel.

### 2018

**Suchana Chaulagain** will begin her pursuit of a medical degree at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine in August 2019. Suchana has spent a gap year working as a phlebotomist and lab assistant at Memorial Medical Center in Springfield, Illinois, which is one of the primary hospitals where SIU medical students perform clinical rotations.

**Brock Thornton** returned to campus for a Nursing Career Fair, sponsored by the Hart Career Center, on Nov. 14, 2018. Brock represented his employer, Memorial Health System, at the career fair.



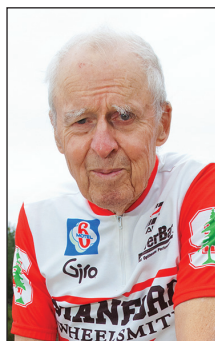
## In Memory

## Faculty and Staff



**Robert Leekley** (above right) of Bloomington, Illinois, died Jan. 1, 2019. He was 73. Bob was raised in Connecticut but came to the Midwest to attend Carleton College, as an undergraduate, and Michigan State University, where he earned a master's and doctorate. Bob arrived at Illinois Wesleyan in 1974 and served the University for 44 years before retiring in 2018. He loved teaching, especially one-on-one interactions with students doing senior and honors research papers. He taught economics and statistics, and authored a textbook, *Applied Statistics for Business and Economics*. He was also an early adopter of teaching technology and new teaching methods. He was the long-serving advisor of the student-run *Park Place Economist*, IWU's first undergraduate journal. He also served as the chair of many campus committees. But, above all, he was committed to his students and cared deeply about their lives and academic journeys. He is survived by a sister, two nieces and two great-nieces.

**D. Paul Miller** (right) died Nov. 3, 2018, in Bloomington, Illinois. He was 101. D. Paul was raised on a farm in rural Kansas during the Dust Bowl and later served as a conscientious objector during World War II. He taught sociology and anthropology at Illinois Wesleyan, but his interests extended far beyond the classroom. He was an author, gardener and avid clock repairer. He took his physical fitness seriously and competed as a Senior Olympian, winning state and national titles several times over. D. Paul is survived by three children, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



**Mary Beth Phillips** of Bloomington, Illinois, died Dec. 2, 2018. She was 78. She served as an administrative assistant for the vice president of business and finance at Illinois Wesleyan from 1987 until her retirement in 2014. She had served as an administrative assistant to the associate graduate dean at Northwestern University prior to her time at IWU. Mary Beth was active in First Presbyterian Church in Normal, Illinois, and cherished time spent with her family. She is survived by her husband, three children, six grandchildren and one brother.

## Alumni

**Ruth (Tobie) Dalrymple Wieting '41** died Jan. 22, 2019, in Le Roy, Illinois. She was 98. Ruth was active in Kappa Kappa Gamma at Illinois Wesleyan. She earned a master's degree from Illinois State University after her time at IWU. Ruth taught in McLean County Unit 5 schools for 20 years, as a first-grade teacher at Hudson (Ill.) Elementary School and as a fourth-grade reading teacher at Sugar Creek Elementary in Normal, Illinois. Ruth was a member of her local chapter of P.E.O. International, the women's educators society Delta Kappa Gamma, and Le Roy's Longfellow Club, Rike House Guild and country club. She was a member of Second Presbyterian Church in Bloomington, Illinois, where she served as a deacon. Ruth was preceded in death by her first husband **Gerald Dalrymple, Sr. '41**, second husband, and sons **Gerald Dalrymple, Jr. '66** and **David Dalrymple '69**. She is survived by a daughter, four grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, step-daughter, 11 step-grandchildren, 12 great-step-grandchildren, and many other relatives and friends.

**Elizabeth Moore '48** died Dec. 24, 2018, in Johnston City, Illinois. She was 93. Elizabeth earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Illinois Wesleyan before attending The Juilliard School. She taught music in Watervliet, Michigan, for four years before beginning a 33-year tenure at Jerseyville (Ill.) schools. Elizabeth was modest and rarely spoke of the many honors and accolades earned during her career, though she was always eager to discuss the recognition earned by her students, many of whom went on to successful careers in music. Elizabeth was active in Delta Kappa Gamma, an honorary educational sorority, and enjoyed her friends at the Wellness Center and The 518, and time spent at family gatherings during holiday seasons. Elizabeth is survived by many friends and extended family members.

**Richard Arends '50** died Dec. 30, 2018, in Urbana, Illinois. He was 93. Rick enlisted in the U.S. Navy a month before his high school graduation and served as a flight engineer in Okinawa, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Tokyo. He was honorably discharged on his 21st birthday and soon thereafter enrolled at Illinois Wesleyan. Rick and his brother Phil later operated the John Deere dealership in Melvin, Illinois. Rick served on local bank boards, the original Gibson City (Ill.) Hospital board, and the Champaign-Ford Regional Board of School Trustees. He was a member of Scottish Rite Freemasonry Valley of Bloomington AA5R for over 60 years, and was also active in Shriners, American Legion, VFW and Lions Club. He is survived by his wife, four children, 13 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and one brother.

**Dennis Watson '50** of Bloomington, Illinois, died April 18, 2018. He was 90. Dennis was raised in Bloomington and attended Illinois Wesleyan, where he met future wife **Margaret (Davidson) Watson '50**. Dennis was active in Phi Gamma Delta during his time at IWU. He spent three years in the Air Force after graduation, before returning to Bloomington and beginning a 37-year career with State Farm. Dennis served the company in Birmingham, Alabama, and Newark, Ohio, before returning to his hometown in 1970. Dennis and Margaret made many lifelong friends.



through their support and involvement in a variety clubs and causes, among them: Second Presbyterian Church, Longfellow Club, Westminster Village, Bloomington High School, Industrial Management Club, McLean County Multiple Sclerosis Society, Milner Library and Corn Belt Philatelic Society. Dennis and Margaret were also longtime supporters of their alma mater and were named recipients of IWU's Loyalty Award in 2003. Dennis was preceded in death by his wife. He is survived by two children, seven grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and two siblings.

**Mabel (Pond) Bicknell '51** of Springfield, Illinois, died Dec. 28, 2018, at her home. She was 91. Mabel attended St. John's School of Nursing in Springfield, Illinois, and earned a bachelor's degree from Illinois Wesleyan before becoming a registered nurse. Mabel is survived by her husband, son **Mark Bicknell '74**, three grandchildren, including **Jessica (Bicknell) Cincotta '00**, seven great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

**Nancy Dunbar '51** died Oct. 22, 2018, in Peru, Illinois. Nancy earned a degree in education and taught in several school districts before returning to her native Putnam County. She was a member of two local Methodist churches and enjoyed singing in church, as well as in her daily life. She is survived by 10 nieces and nephews.

**Pauline (Hurst) Fairfax '51** of Hiddenite, North Carolina, died April 30, 2018. She was 89. Pauline was raised in Chicago and studied music at Illinois Wesleyan. She was a receptionist and secretary for several churches. She was also a talented church soloist. She is survived by two daughters, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

**Warren Frederick '51** of Bloomington, Illinois, died Jan. 17, 2019. He was 88. Warren served in the U.S. Army, rising to the rank of sergeant. After his service, he farmed in the nearby communities of Chenoa, Illinois, and Fairbury, Illinois, where he was raised. Warren's hobbies included flying his Cessna Skyhawk, snow skiing, hunting and fishing. He is survived by three daughters, five grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and one sister.

**Donna (Dorland) Cate '53** died Nov. 30, 2018, in Tucson, Arizona. She was 87. Donna grew up in Bloomington, Illinois, and Streator, Illinois, where she met her husband **Ron Cate '54**. Donna was active in Kappa Kappa Gamma during and after her time at Illinois Wesleyan. She and Ron moved several times during his career with Illinois Bell and AT&T. They raised their family in Northbrook, Illinois, and Chatham, New Jersey, before moving back to Illinois. They retired to Tucson in 1989. She enjoyed spending summer months at her lake house in Wisconsin, where her family would gather every summer. Donna was a talented pianist and loved to sew, knit and play bridge. She was also an active member of P.E.O. International for over 50 years, making lifelong friends along the way. Donna is survived by her husband, two children, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

(continued on page 38)



*All submitted content received by Feb. 4, 2019. Submissions may be edited, directed to other communications and/or preserved in IWU archives.*

## Deaths Reported

**Marilyn (Dibler) Leigh '47**; Nov. 13, 2018

**Harry Ewing '48**; Jan. 25, 2019

**Edward Brown '50**; Nov. 6, 2018

**Marilyn (Craig) Hanson '51**; Sept. 5, 2018

**Al Meng '52**; Oct. 20, 2018

**Osa (Crowdson) Stokes '52**; Dec. 7, 2018

**Robert Allison '53**; Oct. 11, 2018

**Margery (Foster) Desnoyers '53**; Jan. 23, 2019

**Roger Coventry '54**; Oct. 15, 2018

**Delmar Hunter '55**; Jan. 17, 2019

**Elaine (Hutchison) Franklin '56**; Sept. 10, 2018

**C. Alfred Marshall '57**; Jan. 22, 2019

**Donna (Linton) Walgreen '57**; Oct. 5, 2018

**N. Dionne (Phillips) Bagsby '58**; Jan. 10, 2019

**Fred Tremper '58**; July 21, 2018

**Mary (Phipps) Pagliaro '63**; Oct. 28, 2018

**Linda Killian '73**; Aug. 3, 2018

**Jeff Shoemaker '77**; Jan. 4, 2019

**Jonathan Van Horn '78**; Aug. 18, 2018

**Garth Yess '91**; Oct. 18, 2018

**Joseph Daniels '98**; Nov. 2, 2018

*In Memory* (continued from page 37)

**David Neal Smith '53** died Jan. 1, 2019, in Lake Forest, Illinois. He was 87. Neal earned his bachelor's degree in music education at Illinois Wesleyan, where he was active in the musical fraternity Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. He was also active in campus music productions and, in a production of Truman Capote's *The Grass Harp*, became fond of castmate **Dorothy Elaine (Spires) Smith '54**, whom he married in 1954. Neal earned a master's degree in sacred music at Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1955. He worked for the next 58 years as an organist and choir director at churches in Arkansas, Indiana, Mississippi, and Glen Ellyn, Illinois, and was active in local chapters of the American Guild of Organists throughout his life. Neal moved to Glen Ellyn in 2003 and remained active in church and community activities, which included volunteer work at Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital, where, in 2018, he was recognized for performing more than 2,200 hours of volunteer service. Neal was preceded in death by his wife. He is survived by three children and six grandchildren.

**Neil Petersen '62** died Oct. 6, 2018, in Salt Lake City. He was 77. Neil was a member of Sigma Chi. He worked for Abbott Laboratories/Sorenson Research in distribution and materials management for 25 years, eventually earning a director position. Neil then became vice president of a company when he joined Computerland in 1988. He later retired after several years with Iron Mountain and Qwest. Neil had passions for reading and writing, travel, and his vast collections of stamps, books, coins, casino chips, beer cans and matchbooks. He is survived by his wife, three children, three stepchildren, 13 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

**Dan McCoy '64** of Irving, Texas, died Oct. 26, 2018. He was 76. "Big Dan" earned a degree in insurance at Illinois Wesleyan and an MBA from Indiana University. He was active in Phi Gamma Delta during and after his time at IWU. Dan went on to a prosperous career in the insurance industry and later provided consulting services in agency growth and management, and executive recruiting. In retirement, he helped his wife in their real estate business, "Team McCoy," which gained recognition as a top real estate team in the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex. Spending time with his family and traveling were his greatest passions. Dan is survived by his wife, four children, including **Ali McCoy '10**, and three grandchildren.

**Robert Tasker '67** of East Galesburg, Illinois, died Nov. 13, 2018. He was 73. Bob played basketball and was active in Tau Kappa Epsilon during his time at Illinois Wesleyan. He later earned his master's degree at Western Illinois University in 1991. Bob spent his career in education, mostly in the Spoon River Valley (Ill.) School District. He also taught in the Illinois communities of Neponset, Knoxville and Williamsfield. He additionally served as an adjunct professor at Carl Sandburg College in Galesburg, Illinois. Bob loved the outdoors. He was a longtime member of the Knoxville (Ill.) Hunting Club and an avid fisherman. His greatest joy, however, came from time spent with his five grandsons. Bob is survived by his wife, two children, five grandsons and a brother.

## In Memory



**Steve Doran '79** died Dec. 3, 2018, while on a medical mission trip to Haiti. He was 61. Steve met his wife **Joy Doran** while they were students at University High in Normal, Illinois. He was active in Sigma Chi during and after his time at Illinois Wesleyan. He attended dental school at SIU School of Dental Medicine and completed his oral surgery residency at Cook County (Ill.) Hospital. Steve and Joy raised three daughters, briefly in West Virginia, but mostly in central Illinois. Steve started an oral surgery practice in Bloomington, Illinois, which thrives to this day. He also provided free clinics that served thousands of patients. Steve made his first medical mission trip to Haiti in 2013, and it quickly became his life's passion. Steve spent his final years doing what he loved most: attending horse races, cheering for the Cubs and Blackhawks, golfing, performing oral surgery, and spending time with his family. A lifelong supporter of IWU, Steve earned the University's Distinguished Alumni Award at Homecoming 2018. He is survived by his wife Joy, a retired IWU piano instructor, and three daughters, including **Molly (Doran) Hesse '07**.

**Robert Burns '70** of Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey, died Dec. 10, 2018. Bob began a career in insurance sales after his time at Illinois Wesleyan. He served on the Egg Harbor Township Committee from 1991-96 and was mayor for one term, beginning in 1994. He became a radio personality at WOND-AM 1400, in the Atlantic City, New Jersey, market, beginning in 1997. He hosted the weekend automotive show "Your Neighborhood Garage," but earned his own weekday talk show, "Bob Burns in Your Afternoon," in 2011. The show hit on topics calling on Bob's expertise in politics, history, insurance advice and "whatever you want to talk about," as he would often say. He is survived by his wife, sister and many nieces and nephews.



**L. Anthony Zalucha '70** died May 9, 2018, at his home in Mount Horeb, Wisconsin. He was 70. Tony was born in Joliet, Illinois. He earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology from Illinois Wesleyan, a master's in botany from the University of Nebraska, and a doctorate in archaeology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 1971, he married **Peggy (Flora) Zalucha '72**, who survives.

**Siri (Scott) Gadbois '73** of Glen Ellyn, Illinois, died April 29, 2018. She was 66. Siri had recently retired as CEO of Educational & Institutional Insurance Administrators, Inc. (EIIA), a position she held for 14 years. EIIA is a nonprofit organization that serves the insurance and risk management needs of more than 120 religiously affiliated small private colleges and universities, including Illinois Wesleyan. After her graduation from IWU, she worked for several insurance companies, including Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. She began her service at EIIA in 1991 as vice president for risk management services. She is survived by her husband, two children, two sisters, and several nieces and nephews.

**Linda (Yeary) Hyde '76** of Wheaton, Illinois, died Nov. 28, 2018. She was 64. Linda impacted thousands of lives in her role as a pediatric nurse for over 30 years at Wheaton Pediatrics. She was a lover of dogs, Kentucky Derby parties and pumpkin-carving contests. She loved her family most and enjoyed hosting large family gatherings. Linda also loved teaching, as a mentor in her church and a bread-making instructor. She is survived by her husband, son and six siblings.

**Michael Ekstrom '79** of Mahomet, Illinois, died May 2, 2018. Mike was an accountant and bookkeeper for many years and truly enjoyed working with numbers. He was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Tuscola, Illinois, and the Tuscola Lions Club. He is survived by his wife, four siblings, and many nieces and nephews.

**Keith Smith '79** of Decatur, Illinois, died Dec. 13, 2018. He was 62. Keith studied chemistry at Illinois Wesleyan before earning a medical degree from Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. He was board-certified in internal medicine and had practiced in Decatur for the past 26 years. He loved spending time with family, caring for patients, singing and woodworking. He was an avid fan of the Chicago Bears, and a devoted husband, father, grandfather and brother. He is survived by his wife **Janet Patterson '79**, three sons, including **Ryan Smith '06**, two grandchildren and three siblings.

**Stephanie Bowman '85** of Greenwood, Indiana, died Nov. 13, 2018, in Bloomington, Indiana. She was 56. After studying at Illinois Wesleyan, Stephanie went on to earn an MBA from Tampa (Fla.) University and an RN from Ivy Technical College in Bloomington, Indiana. She was employed by Eli Lilly and Company in Indianapolis. Stephanie is survived by her parents, two siblings, and four nieces and nephews.

**Michael Ouwenga '97** of Fowler, Illinois, died Jan. 19, 2019, at his home. He was 43. After earning his bachelor's degree at Illinois Wesleyan, Michael earned an M.D. at Loyola University Stritch School of Medicine. He was a doctor of urology at Quincy

(Ill.) Medical Group and last year was named the best surgeon in the (Quincy, Ill.) *Herald-Whig's* Reader's Choice awards. He is survived by his parents, wife, four daughters, three siblings, and many nieces and nephews and other relatives.

**Rush Williams '00** (formerly Brian Williams), a longtime resident of New York City, died Dec. 21, 2018, in Houston. He was 41. Rush earned a bachelor's degree at Illinois Wesleyan and a master's degree at the University of Minnesota, both in vocal performance. After pursuing a career as an opera singer, he changed paths and completed a doctorate in clinical psychology at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Rush was a gifted therapist with research interests in clinical health psychology and a focus on veteran and LGBTIQ populations. He will be remembered for his compassion, quick wit, creativity and beautiful voice. He is survived by his husband, parents, brothers, and 10 nieces and nephews.

**Seth Reid '09** died Oct. 16, 2018, in Englewood, Colorado. Seth earned a bachelor's degree in music theatre at Illinois Wesleyan. He enjoyed traveling and immersing himself in different cultures. He was an accomplished violinist, singer, dancer, musician and linguist. He is survived by his parents, two siblings, grandmother, and a host of nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and cousins.

**Editor's Note:** *IWU Magazine* runs obituaries of alumni based on information received from our readers. Please include full name of deceased; IWU class year; date and place of death; essential biographical information; and survivors, including name of surviving spouse and names of relatives of the deceased who are IWU alumni.

Send to *IWU Magazine*, P.O. Box 2900, Bloomington, IL 61702, [iwumag@iwu.edu](mailto:iwumag@iwu.edu), or via our website, at: [www.iwu.edu/magazine](http://www.iwu.edu/magazine).

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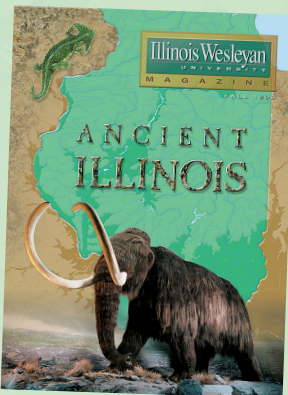
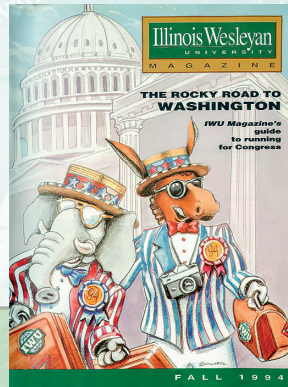
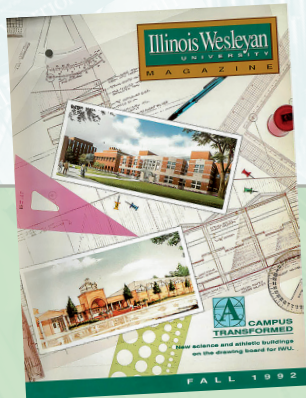
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**GARY SCHWARTZ** was hired by Illinois Wesleyan's Office of Publications, Printing and Mailing Services in September 1992, and among his first tasks was the design of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*. The first issue (top left) of the modern magazine was published that fall. Gary has served as the publication's graphics editor ever since. If you read one — or every — issue over the past 27 years, he was the one who put it together.

Gary has overseen the design of over 100 issues of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*, but this will be his last. He will retire in May 2019. From the students, alumni, faculty and staff, whose stories have been told in these pages, the entire IWU community would like to offer a sincere **thank you** to Gary for all he has done for Illinois Wesleyan.

Thank you, Gary!

(Above) Schwartz has designed each iteration of the modern *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*, from its inaugural issue (top left) to its present configuration (right), rebranded in 2018.

**“You can design and create, and build the most wonderful place in the world. But it takes people to make the dream a reality.”**

— WALT DISNEY



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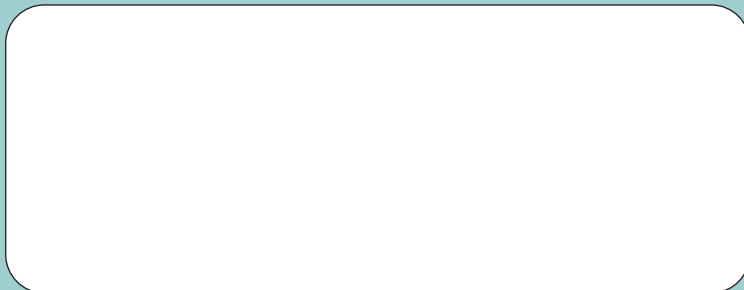
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## *middle man*

Oliver Eaves, 2, of Carlock, Illinois, ran across the Shirk Center's Dennie Bridges Court after the Illinois Wesleyan men's basketball team defeated North Park, 111-66, on Feb. 13, 2019.



PHOTO FINISH