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WINTER 2023-24

# ILLINOIS WESLEYAN

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

## Returning Leaders

BRYAN MCCANNON '98  
AMBER KUJATH '97





# PAY IT FORWARD THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS

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## FEATURES

### 14 Pilgrims of Science

**Scott Collins '02** and **Kosha (Baxi) Carstens '02** have dreamed of going to the Galápagos Islands since they were children growing up together in Ottawa, Illinois. This summer, they finally went with Scott's class of high school biology students.

### 22 Returning Leaders

Two IWU alumni, **Amber Kujath '97** and **Bryan McCannon '98**, have returned to campus as experts in their fields leading the newly organized Schools of Nursing and Health Sciences and of Business and Economics.

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

VOLUME 32 | NUMBER 4 | WINTER 2023-24

### ON OUR COVER:

**Bryan McCannon '98** and **Amber Kujath '97** have returned to IWU to lead the Schools of Business and Economics and of Nursing and Health Sciences.



Page 14

## DEPARTMENTS

- 2 From the President's Desk
- 3 Inside IWU
- 10 Authors and the Arts
- 12 Homecoming 2023 Memories
- 22 Alumni Update
- 24 Alumni Association News
- 28 Hart Career Center Happenings
- 29 Tiny Titans
- 30 Titan Celebrations
- 31 In Memory



In October, I announced to the Board of Trustees that I would be stepping down from the presidency at the end of this academic year (August 1). I arrived in Bloomington in 2019, intending to fill a one-year interim position; in August, I will have completed my fifth year at the university. I was deeply honored to have been asked by the board to serve in a more permanent role, and I have greatly enjoyed the opportunity.

One of the greatest joys for me at Illinois Wesleyan has been the opportunity to meet alumni. The graduates of this university are extraordinary — both in their accomplishments and in their appreciation for the education they received here. We are justifiably proud of being the number one small college in Illinois for placement of our graduates within six months of graduation. But I have always felt that the true measure of a university's quality is not what its graduates *do* immediately after commencement but who they *are* ten, twenty and more years after graduation.

The alumni I have had the good fortune to meet — working in medicine, business, education, the arts, not-for-profits, technology — have been extraordinary leaders in their fields. Some are well-known publicly; others are just quietly making a difference in their professions and in their communities.

These five years have been difficult ones — for our world, our country and certainly for higher education. The pandemic affected all of our lives and has had a meaningful impact on our students, whose high school education was so disrupted. At Illinois Wesleyan, I believe we weathered the pandemic very well: We had no major outbreaks and brought students back as soon as possible. But we see the effects of the pandemic in today's students. High school graduates' learning levels suffered, and social skills need to be re-learned.

“The graduates of this university are extraordinary—both in their accomplishments and in their appreciation for the education they received here.”

— PRESIDENT S. GEORGIA NUGENT

Other serious challenges face higher education. One is inexorable: the so-called “demographic cliff.” In part as a result of the 2008 financial crisis, the number of students graduating from high school has declined dramatically; this is particularly true in the Midwest. In addition, in part as a result of COVID, among those high school graduates, the number choosing to proceed to college has declined. This phenomenon has been called “the missing million.” A million fewer students are enrolling in college post-pandemic.

Illinois Wesleyan is meeting these challenges, in large part because of the loyalty and commitment of alumni. Our curricular combination of professional programs and liberal arts learning is the ideal program for today's students, and we are investing in expanding that curriculum to attract new generations of Titan talent with the reimagined Schools of Nursing and Health Sciences and of Business and Economics.

The presidential search is underway, and I am hopeful that the opportunity to lead Illinois Wesleyan into its next phase will be of great interest to outstanding candidates.

*S. H. Nugent*  
**S. Georgia Nugent**  
*Illinois Wesleyan University President*



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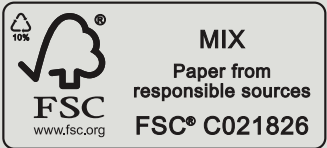
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IWU Rises in Ranks for Fostering Social Mobility

Several national ranking systems show that Illinois Wesleyan University is rising through the charts regarding its commitment to provide greater access to education, and improve social mobility for Titan graduates.

*The New York Times Magazine* recently published the College-Access Index, a list of the country's 286 most selective public and private universities ranked in order of economic diversity. Rankings were determined by the number of students at each institution receiving Federal Pell Grants, which are awarded to undergraduate students with significant financial need.

Illinois Wesleyan ranked among the top quarter of institutions for economic diversity, with about 26% of first-year, first-time students who received Pell Grants. While most of the colleges on the list saw a drop in the share of Pell Grants received by students, Illinois Wesleyan's rates rose 6% since 2011, ranking above the most wealthy Ivy League institutions such as Princeton, Dartmouth, Yale, MIT and Harvard.

Additionally, Illinois Wesleyan has been ranked #5 among four-year institutions in the nation by *Washington Monthly* for contribution to public good through social mobility, research and promoting public service. *U.S. News & World Report* also placed Illinois Wesleyan at #5 for top performers on social mobility among colleges in the midwest.

Social mobility refers to the ability of individuals to move up the socio-economic ladder as a result of their educational experiences or achievements. Measures for social mobility include schools' success at enrolling, retaining and graduating students from different backgrounds with manageable debt and post-graduate success — reflecting that Illinois Wesleyan students graduate and do well.

“These distinctions serve as a tangible statement of our commitment to equity and inclusion, affirming our belief that education is not just about knowledge, but also about empowerment and transformation,” said President S. Georgia Nugent. “Fostering a diverse campus that reflects our society means admitting and educating students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. It is exciting to see the effects an Illinois Wesleyan education has on students, especially as Titans contribute to the public good beyond graduation.”



(Above) Several college ranking systems have shown Illinois Wesleyan is a leading institution regionally and nationally for its commitment to providing greater access to education, and improving social mobility for Titan graduates.



## IWU Celebrates a Decade of Business, Economics, Finance Education at State Farm Hall

Ten years ago, the skyline of Illinois Wesleyan University was transformed when State Farm Hall was constructed on campus, where it serves as home to the IWU School of Business and Economics. Members of the Illinois Wesleyan community were recently joined by representatives of State Farm for a celebration marking the milestone anniversary.



(Above) State Farm Hall was dedicated in 2013 on the former site of the Sheehan Library. It houses the IWU School of Business and Economics.

Attendees browsed memorabilia from the 2013 dedication of State Farm Hall, which was made possible by a \$10 million gift from the State Farm Companies Foundation as part of the University's Transforming Lives Campaign. Encompassing 47,800 square feet of space on four floors, the building serves as an academic and collaborative space. It caters to students studying accounting, business administration, economics, entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, professional sales and quantitative finance.

Leaders from State Farm and Illinois Wesleyan gave remarks highlighting the impact the facility has made on campus over the last decade, and the value of the partnership between the two institutions.

IWU Board of Trustees member Kimberly Sterling said she understands the quality of an Illinois Wesleyan education, both as a 1992 alumna and as an employee at State Farm.

"Illinois Wesleyan's focus on liberal arts thinking with practical application, experiential learning, and interdisciplinary curriculums, while enjoying the arts and sports — all creates a very well-rounded student who then becomes our future employee," said Sterling, who works as an operations vice president at State Farm. "Our partnership with IWU has been important and special. This hall is not only a beautiful building, but it

represents the number of successful students who have gone through these doors and the generations to come."

President Nugent said the University is fortunate to have a modern facility that collocates several programs in one space. She noted that the study spaces on each floor of State Farm Hall are often occupied by students from a wide variety of majors.

"We're moving more and more to experiential learning where it's not just sitting in a lecture hall, it's students working together. The spaces here are perfect for that," said Nugent. "It has only been 10 years, but State Farm Hall has made an amazing impact on campus. It's a relationship we hope will last a long time."

Guests also heard from neuroscience major **Mansi Shah '25**, who is the inaugural co-leader of the IWU MakerGirl Academy, vice president of chapter wellness of Alpha Gamma Delta, a member of the executive board of South Asian Student Association, member of Students of Color in STEM, and mentor for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

Shah spoke about her experience as the daughter of hard-working Indian immigrants, and how financial aid offered by Illinois Wesleyan such as the State Farm Scholars Program Scholarship will help create more opportunities as she plans to pursue a doctorate in neuroscience.

"Being a recipient of the State Farm Scholars Program Scholarship has let me do things as a student that I'm so grateful for, such as serving as a leader in different student organizations, mentoring first-year students through the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and conducting research," said Shah.

While most of her major-specific classes take place in the Center for Natural Science building, Shah said many of her general education courses were held in State Farm Hall, which she said provides "great collaborative space."

"It also serves as a great asset to the business department, like the Bloomberg Finance Lab, and for many faculty, staff and alumni as well," said Shah. "I have some of the best memories with my friends in this building, especially with late-night studying sessions."

State Farm Hall accommodates the latest trends in learning technology, with the 2022 addition of the Greg Yess '82 Bloomberg Finance Lab located on the first floor. Students have full access to 12 Bloomberg Terminals, the leading industry tools used by top financial institutions for investing, trading, risk management and research. The building also serves as a backdrop for key University events, including commencement.

## New Grant to Increase Global Engagement on Campus

A new federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education will allow Illinois Wesleyan University students to experience more study abroad opportunities while the grant also enhances the University's existing programs related to international and global studies, world languages and preprofessional programs.

Titled "Building Capacity to Increase Global Engagement Across the Curriculum," the two-year Undergraduate and International Studies and Foreign Language Grant was received through the federal International and Foreign Language Program. One of just 13 grants of its type awarded nationwide, this funding will further advance IWU's mission of preparing students to live and work as responsible citizens in a globalized society.

Led by Professor of Spanish and Director of International and Global Studies program **Carmela Ferradans**, the IWU team responsible for securing the grant includes Byron S. Tucci Professor of Spanish Carolyn Nadeau, **Betty Ritchie-Birrer '47** and Ivan Birrer Ph.D. Endowed Professor and Chair of Political Science **William Munro**, Associate Professor of Nursing **Noël Kerr**, Dean of the School of Business and Economics **Bryan McCannon '98** and Director of the International Office Sarah Van Alebeek.

"The overarching goal of the proposal is to leverage IWU's strengths in high-impact teaching and learning practices such as internships, study abroad and experiential learning to deepen global engagement and develop skills and knowledge in intercultural competence for students and faculty," said Ferradans.

Funding from the grant, which is active through 2025, will be used to establish a Global Engagement Fellows program at IWU; develop internships with a global focus and short-term study abroad experiences; increase intercultural competence of faculty through workshops; and enhance existing Hispanic studies minors offered within business and health programs.



(Above) A new grant from the U.S. Department of Education will give Illinois Wesleyan University students more study abroad opportunities.

## Campus Welcomes Historically Black Sorority Zeta Phi Beta

Students at Illinois Wesleyan University now have the opportunity to join one of the oldest historically Black Greek sororities with the introduction of Zeta Phi Beta to campus this fall.

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority will serve as the first historically Black sorority on campus in 40 years, strengthening the university's connection with the National Pan-Hellenic Council of Black Fraternities and Sororities (NPHC).

As a member of Beta Iota Zeta, the Bloomington-Normal chapter of Zeta Phi Beta, Assistant Professor of Theatre **Michelle Cowin Gibbs** sought an opportunity to reestablish the NPHC presence at Illinois Wesleyan University. Following the sorority mission of "raising people's consciousness, encouraging the highest standards of scholastic achievement and fostering a greater sense of unity among our Black communities," Gibbs formed an immersion team through a partnership with the IWU Office of Student Involvement to bring Zeta Phi Beta to campus.

Gibbs, who serves as third vice president for the local chapter, explained "Zeta Phi Beta began (in 1920) with five undergraduate students who were strong, courageous and intelligent Black women. Our Five Pearls (the founders) envisioned an organization that would directly affect positive change, and chart a course of action for the 1920s and beyond. Our goal for establishing a chapter at IWU is to foster that same energy of strength, unity and goodness that our communities need today."

Striving to build upon a rich past of Illinois Wesleyan Greek life including Iota Zeta of Delta Sigma Theta (1972-1983) and the University's first Black Greek organization Lambda Phi Omega (1968-1970), the immersion team is seeking to enhance the Greek experience for students. Director of Student Involvement Tyler Manning said the inclusion of NPHC organizations at IWU lifts up important cultural and historical perspectives while "enriching the campus diversity and promoting unity among students."



(Above) Members of the Bloomington-Normal chapter of Zeta Phi Beta shared information with students about the sorority new to IWU during a recent RSO fair.



## Students Welcomed to Campus During Turning Titan



**(Above)** Older students serve as Titan Orientation Leaders to welcome the new class of students and lead activities during the annual Turning Titan program.

Bringing a fresh wave of perspective and talent, about 500 first-year and transfer students were welcomed to Illinois Wesleyan University this fall through the annual tradition known as Turning Titan.

The class of 2027 came from 24 states and 19 countries. Our newest Titans represent IWU's commitment to opportunity and diversity, with 168 being the first in their family to go to college and 31% identifying as students of color. New students moved into residential spaces, including the newly renovated Munsell Hall; met with Titan Orientation Leaders; chalked their dreams around Aspiration Fountain; and enjoyed meals, activities and celebrations across campus.

During the New Student Convocation, IWU President Georgia Nugent encouraged the students gathered in Young Main Lounge to consider the three branches of philosophy — ontology (what is), epistemology (how do we know) and ethics (then, what should we do) — and how those themes apply to the college experience.

"One of the most important things you can take away from your Illinois Wesleyan education will be learning how to evaluate information or misinformation that now bombards us through every medium at every hour of the day," she said. "Making reason-based arguments about the information you receive is one of the most important skills of an educated person. Make it a priority to focus on that all-important skill."

Nugent addressed the continuation of last year's intellectual theme of The Power of Place for the 2023-24 academic year, celebrating Illinois Wesleyan as a place that allows students to take stock of their talents, passions and abilities.

"This is a place to consider how to live in a way that's

true to yourself and responsible to others. We're thrilled to have you here for that adventure — welcome," she concluded.

Student Senate President **Zach Burhans '24** reminded the new Titans that their time as college students will pass quickly. He asked the crowd to visualize themselves in their final year at IWU.

"We all come from different backgrounds and we all have different experiences, but the best part is they have brought us all here to a community that champions students and gives us the opportunity to develop into people we truly want to be," said Burhans.

Provost and Dean of Faculty Mark Brodl gave students permission to start a new chapter as they begin at IWU, whether through academic experiences, internships, studying abroad or research.

"Take advantage of this moment in your lives to go ahead and reinvent yourself. We offer so many amazing opportunities at this University," said Brodl.

Professor of Theatre Arts **Curtis Trout** built on that advice during his remarks as the 2024 recipient of the Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence.

In his address titled "Where We Are Now," Trout spoke about the evolution of theatre and entertainment. He reminded students that the path toward graduation and a career might take some unexpected turns, but that the Illinois Wesleyan community is here to provide support and guidance.

"Sitting in this crowd are people that will be, unbeknownst to you, a part of your life for the rest of your life," said Trout. "Be ready to meet them. They are here with you right now — where we are now."

"You join us today as individuals, each with a unique set of experiences that have shaped who you are," said Carney-Hall. "Each with thoughtful goals for what you hope your college career at IWU will bring. Each with a deep desire to build lasting relationships and a strong community of mentors and friends. Today you begin a journey of shared experiences that build both individual character and community."



**(Above)** First-year and transfer students were welcomed to campus during the annual Turning Titan activities, including a rock-climbing wall on the Eckley Quad.

## President Nugent and Provost Brodl Announce Plans to Step Down

**S** Georgia Nugent announced on Oct. 20 her decision to step down as president of Illinois Wesleyan University at the conclusion of this academic year, on July 31, 2024.

Nugent joined Illinois Wesleyan University as interim president in August 2019, and was selected as the University's 20th president in November that year. She is the first woman to serve as the University's president.

"I have deeply appreciated the confidence the Board has placed in me," Nugent wrote in a letter to the IWU community. "I have cherished every opportunity to meet with our amazing alumni — who are so grateful for their IWU education and so effective and successful in their chosen paths after graduation. My interactions with current bright and engaging students convince me that they, too, will accomplish great things."

"The Bloomington-Normal community has also been very welcoming to my husband, Tom Scherer, and me. The relationship and collaboration among the three higher education institutions in the twin cities and other community organizations is a special treasure."

**Timothy J. Szerlong '74**, chair of the IWU Board of Trustees, expressed gratitude for Nugent's skills in guiding the University.

"She has been a passionate champion for IWU and has left an indelible imprint in shaping our future," he said. "From very early in her tenure, Georgia has been willing to make tough but necessary decisions, motivated by ensuring the brightest future for IWU and an unwavering commitment to shaping a contemporary liberal arts experience for today's and tomorrow's students — all steadily guided by the highest integrity and pursuit of excellence."

Szerlong said that as the University has begun the early stages of preparation for its next comprehensive campaign, Nugent determined that she should make way for a new leader who would be present for its launch and see the effort through the many years to its completion.



**(Above)** S. Georgia Nugent announced her decision to step down as president of Illinois Wesleyan University at the conclusion of this academic year, on July 31, 2024.

Previously, Mark Brodl announced on Sept. 21 that he will step down as the head of academic affairs effective Dec. 31, 2023, but will remain a Titan as he returns to teaching.

Brodl joined Illinois Wesleyan in July 2017. Throughout his tenure, which encompassed the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brodl provided leadership for academic programs and initiatives to support the students, faculty and educational experiences offered at IWU. He will move into a faculty position in the biology department.



**(Above)** Mark Brodl, provost and dean of faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University, has announced he will step down as the head of academic affairs effective Dec. 31, 2023, but will move into a faculty position in the biology department.

In an announcement shared with campus, Brodl said, "As I look back on my career in academia, the work that has brought me greatest joy has been being a professor in the classroom working with students. So as I approach, inevitably, the age of retirement, I have made a decision to return to the faculty to do what I love most. I look forward to returning to my teaching roots and the opportunity to work with the people of IWU in a role I love deeply."

"Mark Brodl has served in his role with integrity and compassion. He has been an excellent thought partner and has also become a friend," said Nugent. "His intention is to take a well-deserved leave and then return, with renewed excitement, to his passion: teaching and research in biology."

Nugent announced that Associate Dean for Scholarly and Creative Work and Professor of Psychology **Abbie Kerr** will serve as interim provost for the remainder of the 2023-24 academic year.

Prior to IWU, Brodl was associate vice president for budget and research and the George W. Brackenridge Distinguished Professor of Biology at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas.

He earned his bachelor's degree in biology from Knox College, a master's in plant biology from the University of Illinois at Urbana, and a doctorate in plant biology from Washington University in St. Louis. He served as a faculty member and chair of the biology department at Knox before joining Trinity and is the recipient of awards for excellence in teaching.



## Men's Soccer Makes History with First-Ever NCAA Tournament Appearance



Sam Kedzior '26



Brody Seaton '24



Emma Thorman '24



Faith Washko '24



Taylor French '26



Jordan Pierce '24

The men's soccer team claimed the program's first-ever CCIW Tournament Championship, becoming the only No. 6 seed in conference history to do so, en route to the program's first NCAA Tournament berth. Illinois Wesleyan advanced past No. 3 seed North Park and No. 2 seed Wheaton in penalty kicks, before scoring three unanswered goals to best fourth-seeded Carthage, 3-2, in overtime in the title game. **Brody Seaton '24** and **Sam Kedzior '25** earned All-CCIW Second Team honors, while Kedzior was also recognized as the CCIW Defensive Player of the Week three times through the season. The Titans ended their season with a record of 6-7-5 and went 3-3-2 in conference play.

## Women's Golf Runs Away with 18th CCIW Championship

The Titans led from start to finish at the 2023 CCIW Championship as five student-athletes earned all-conference honors. **Emma Thorman '24** marked IWU's 13th medalist, while **Jadyn Spinks '25** placed runner-up. **Lexi Onsrud '24** took third and was named the recipient of the conference's Elite 26 Award, presented to the All-CCIW selection with the highest GPA, for the third straight year. **Macy Ludwig '25** and **Jacque O'Neill '25** finished sixth and tied for ninth, respectively, to garner All-CCIW status. IWU began the champion-

ship with a conference and school record round of even par, before winning the program's 18th CCIW Championship by a 56-stroke margin.

## French & Washko Named CCIW Women's Volleyball Players of the Year

Illinois Wesleyan saw **Taylor French '26** and **Faith Washko '24** become the first Titans in program history to be named the CCIW's Offensive and Defensive Player of the Year, respectively, since the award was split in 2022. French and Washko were cited on the First Team

All-CCIW list, while **Jordan Pierce '24** represented the Green and White on the Second Team. French became the first player in American Volleyball Coaches Association history to earn back-to-back National Player of the Week honors, while also becoming the first women's volleyball player in CCIW history to earn four straight CCIW Hitter of the Week honors, and the first to earn six in a season. The Titans concluded the season 17-13, finishing tied for third in the CCIW regular season with a 5-3 mark, and compiled 10 straight wins before bowing out of the CCIW Tournament in the semifinals.

## Crabtree & Chudy Qualify for NCAA Cross Country Championship

The Green and White net two NCAA National Championship qualifiers in sophomore **Adriana Crabtree '26**, the CCIW Individual Champion, and junior **Annalese Chudy '25** after their standout top-25 performances at the Division III Midwest Regionals in November. A total of 12 IWU men and women turned in season-best performances at the Regional Championships. Chudy became the first-ever Titan to qualify for the national race as an individual in back-to-back years, while she and Crabtree both garnered All-Region and First Team All-CCIW accolades this season. Also earning All-CCIW honors was **Brooke Nazos '26** and **Amanda Wilson '24**, both of whom made Second Team with top-20 performances at the CCIW Championships.

## Women's Tennis Earns First All-CCIW Honor Since 2016-17 Season

The Titans finished the fall portion of their season with a 5-7 overall record and a 1-7 mark in CCIW action. IWU saw its first women's tennis player garner CCIW Player of the Week honors since 2016, as **Amber Ehrlich '27** earned the award Oct. 11, 2023. Ehrlich also became the first Titan to earn All-CCIW honors since the 2016-17, as she was named to the second team.



Annalese Chudy '25



Adriana Crabtree '26



Amber Ehrlich '27

## Women's Soccer Makes 21st CCIW Tournament Appearance

The Green and White concluded the 2023 season with its 21st-straight CCIW Tournament appearance with an overall season record of 3-13-2 and 2-5-1 in CCIW play. **Sawyer White '26** earned her second-straight All-CCIW Second Team honor after leading the Titans in the midfield and serving as one of three captains alongside **Sarah Johnson '24** and **Audrey Hofstetter '25**.



Sawyer White '26

## Football Puts Four on All-CCIW Teams

Illinois Wesleyan finished the season with a 3-7 overall record, including a 3-6 CCIW mark. The Titans saw **Myles Kee '25** and **Zach McNees '25** named to the All-CCIW First Team, while **Artist Benjamin '25** and **Kevin Graham '24** were Second Team All-CCIW picks. **Jahari Scott '25**, **Seth Albin '24**, and **Matthew Noguez '25** were each recognized as the CCIW's Special Teams Players of the Week over the course of the season, while McNees was twice named the league's defensive player of the week.



Zach McNees '25



Myles Kee '25

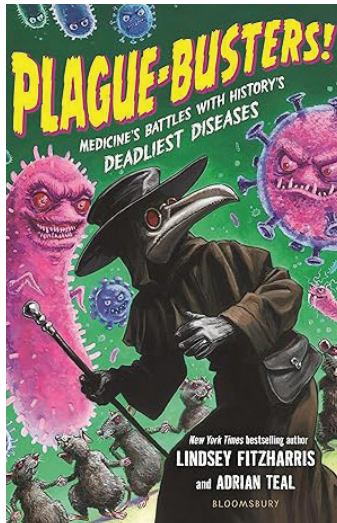
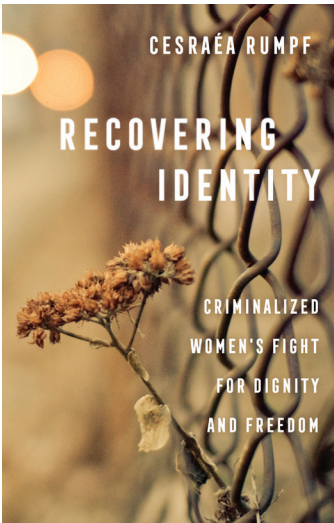
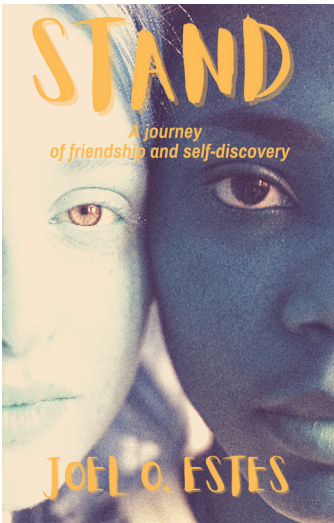
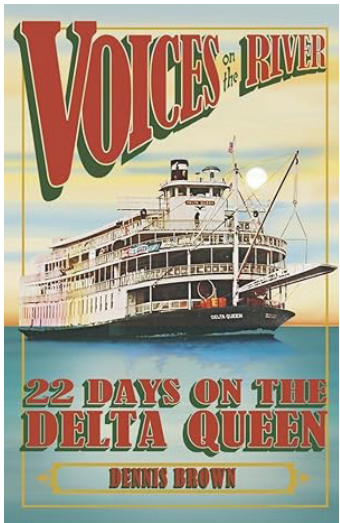


Kevin Graham '24



Artist Benjamin '25





BOOKS

**Dennis Brown '67** is the author of *Voices on the River: 22 Days on the Delta Queen*. Dennis, a former publicist for CBS, writes his account of his cruise along the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers aboard the Delta Queen steamboat. The Delta Queen is an official National Historic Landmark that will celebrate its centennial in 2027. The book is part history and part personal memoir as Dennis brings the story of America's Midwestern river passages to life.

**Joel Estes '76** is the author of *Stand*, a middle-grade contemporary fiction novel inspired by Joel's 46-year career in education and working with kids. The protagonist, Ethan Strong, has been suspended from middle school along with his best friend Demarcus Washington. Ethan is white; Demarcus is Black and is regularly confronted with discrimination and systemic racism as a young Black boy in America. As their relationship evolves, Ethan is forced to come to terms with the question of his own identity and must decide when and how he will stand for his growing consciousness of prejudice, discrimination and his own privilege.

**Marybeth Timmermann '93** is the translator of *Diary of a Philosophy Student, Volume 3, 1926-30*, an entry in the Beauvoir Series published by the University of Illinois Press. The series translates from French to

English the diaries of philosopher Simone de Beauvoir originally written in the 1920s, when Beauvoir was a teenage philosophy student at Sorbonne University in Paris. Marybeth has also translated several novels.

**Cesraéa Rumpf '01** is the author of *Recovering Identity: Criminalized Women's Fight for Dignity and Freedom* published by the University of California Press. Cesraéa's original research shows the struggle of formerly incarcerated women to recover and rebuild their identities after completing their sentences. The book honors their personal transformation and critiques institutions' imposition of life-long judgment on those who have been convicted of crimes.

**Lindsey Fitzharris '04** is the author of *Plague-Busters!: Medicine's Battles with History's Deadliest Diseases* published by Bloomsbury. Following her previous bestsellers *The Butchering Art* and *The Face-makers*, Lindsey continues to tell the history of macabre science and the leading edges of treatment for the most debilitating conditions. *Plague Busters!* cuts a broad swath across the history of epidemiology to showcase the ways that humanity has suffered, studied, treated and survived the worst and most virulent diseases on the planet.



MUSIC AND PERFORMANCES

**William Powers '64** (A) joined the Salt Creek Chamber Orchestra and cast at the First Methodist Church of LaGrange for a concert version of Don Pasquale, in Italian with English subtitles, singing the title role 63 years after he first did so at IWU. William first portrayed Don Pasquale as his opera debut in IWU's 1960 production, when he was just 18 years old. He has performed in over 130 operas around the world since then.

**Wayne Messmer '72** (B) performed the one-man play *Damien* by Aldyth Morris, with his shows being met with critical acclaim. Messmer has been portraying Father Damien, "The Leper Priest of Molokai," since 2002. He has performed multiple times in Hawaii, where the play is set and was originally performed in 1976.

**Darraugh Griffin '23** portrayed Annie Ethel Jones, a Black woman who moved to Bloomington in 1922, later becoming a nurse at St. Joseph's Hospital and the McLean County Poor Farm. Darraugh's performance was part of the 29th annual Evergreen Cemetery Walk in the Bloomington graveyard. The event is produced each fall by the McLean County Museum of History to educate local residents about the county's most notable deceased residents.

ART

**Oliver Lee Jackson '58** (C) and his paintings were featured by both the University of Iowa's Stanley Museum of Art in its inaugural exhibition and in an article detailing his career in *Iowa Magazine*. Two of Oliver's paintings are displayed in the exhibit alongside Jackson Pollock's *Mural*, and other paintings, sculptures and prints of Oliver's are displayed at museums around the country including the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Art Institute of Chicago and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

**Stew Salowitz '76** (D) had his watercolor "Orange Flower Garden" selected for display in the 96th annual McLean County Arts Center amateur exhibition in early 2023. Stew took up painting as a hobby in 2019 after retiring from Illinois Wesleyan, where he was sports information director for 31 years.



All submitted content received by **October 16, 2023**. The submitted content deadline for the Spring 2024 issue of IWU Magazine is **February 12, 2024**. Submissions may be edited, directed to other communications and/or preserved in IWU archives.



# MEMORIES FROM



Homecoming and Family Weekend 2023, and the comfortably warm and sunny autumn weather, invited hundreds of alumni and their families back to campus for a weekend of fun on the quad, tailgating on the Shirk Center parking lot, and reconnecting with old friends.



(Above) Anjali Malali '25, enjoys a cocktail hour in honor of IWU's community of international students.



(Above) New this year, the 1850 Vendor Market featured goods and treats from small businesses, food trucks and makers.



(Above) The class of '73 celebrates their 50th reunion this year.



(Above) Jessica Navarro '26 and Semaj Young '26 present their original research at the Engaged Learning Expo hosted at The Ames Library.



(Above) Young Titans join in family activities on the Eckley Quadrangle.



(Above) Alumni from the class of '73 and beyond reconnect at the Golden Titan Dinner.

SAVE THE DATE!

IWU Homecoming 2024

October 4-6

A cartoon illustration of a Titan mascot wearing a green and white uniform, holding a green foam finger with the number "1" on it.



(Above) Ryan Mack '23 pumps up the crowd for the Titan Band performance in front of State Farm Hall.



(Above) A little Titan sports green and white for the Homecoming football game.



(Above) The '23 IWU Homecoming Court.



(Above) Tom McKinney '76 shakes hands at the Heritage Luncheon.



(Above) The inaugural 1850 market brought Titans of all ages together for homecoming festivities.





# PILGRIMS OF SCIENCE

Story by CHRIS FRANCIS

PHOTO/MEGAN IDELL

Scott Collins '02 and Kosha (Baxi) Carstens '02 have dreamed of going to the Galápagos Islands since they were children growing up together in Ottawa, Illinois. This summer, they finally went with Scott's class of high school biology students.

Scott Collins '02 and Kosha (Baxi) Carstens '02 have known each other since they were two years old, and it's thanks to Illinois Wesleyan that their friendship brought them both, along with Scott's class of high school biology students, to what Kosha calls the holy ground of the Galápagos Islands in summer 2023.

Scott and Kosha both arrived on campus in 1998 as biology majors, where Kosha jokes she was "not sure what I would have done or if I would have made it out without Scott next to me." In Scott's case, he initially planned to become a doctor, but he left IWU determined to become like the teachers who had inspired him.

"Dr. (Thomas) Griffiths was a professor of mine, and I loved the way he taught. He made me realize that I don't have to be in an operating room to help people," Scott said. It also helped that Scott's mother,

Louise (Stephens) Collins '69, is a music education IWU alumna who still teaches today.

Scott became a biology teacher at Lemont (Ill.) High School, where he has stayed since graduating from IWU, and where he saw an opportunity to enhance what he had initially experienced as a high school student in Ottawa, Illinois.

"We had student trips to England and France. It was a formative experience to see other cultures and get out of the small-town bubble, which I think there's also a bubble around the suburbs. But it was a sightseeing trip," Scott says. "It wasn't until 2017 that I had enough courage to start doing my own trips."

◆ ◆ ◆

As a biology teacher trained in IWU's own experiential learning in the tradition of John Wesley Powell,

Scott was most interested in taking his students deep into nature. He wanted them to get their hands dirty experiencing a taste of the extended field work that they might perform as a biologist, and he wanted to make sure that they did something to help preserve the nature they were engaging with.

The first class trip he led as a biology teacher was to Yellowstone National Park, where Scott and four of his students "did a vegetation depletion survey, literally counting blades of grass in the middle of a vast valley with bison walking up to us," Scott said. "We were informing their decision about how many bison to cull that year, (and) they culled a little bit fewer than planned because of the data we found."

"You would never know that there are people who do that unless you see it for yourself. I had a student who was dead set on dental school, but then she switched to going to school in Montana to become a park ranger" on account of her experience at Yellowstone, he said.

Meanwhile, Kosha had earned her master's in zoology and evolutionary biology from Michigan State University. She pursued a career in the pharmaceutical industry and got her second master's in bioethics and health policy from Loyola University, but she was jokingly jealous of Scott's class trips.

"I have been begging him to let me come to every trip he's gone on," Kosha said. "Then he called me and said 'wanna come to the Galápagos?' I nearly fainted."

"I invited her to come as our resident biologist," Scott said before the trip. "She did a lot of evolutionary research on bats," inspired by Griffiths, who specialized in the field, "so she will be a great resource for the students."

Since 2017, Scott had chosen destinations based on what his students were interested in and what was feasible for a week or so of travel. Trips included surveying invasive fish species and uncovering an ancient city in Maui, measuring glacial melt and exploring land exposed by melting ice for the first time in recorded history in Alaska, and planting coral and exploring shipwrecks off the coast of Honduras. But the Galápagos Islands — which famously inspired Charles Darwin's theory of evolution — were always a frustratingly difficult dream for Scott.

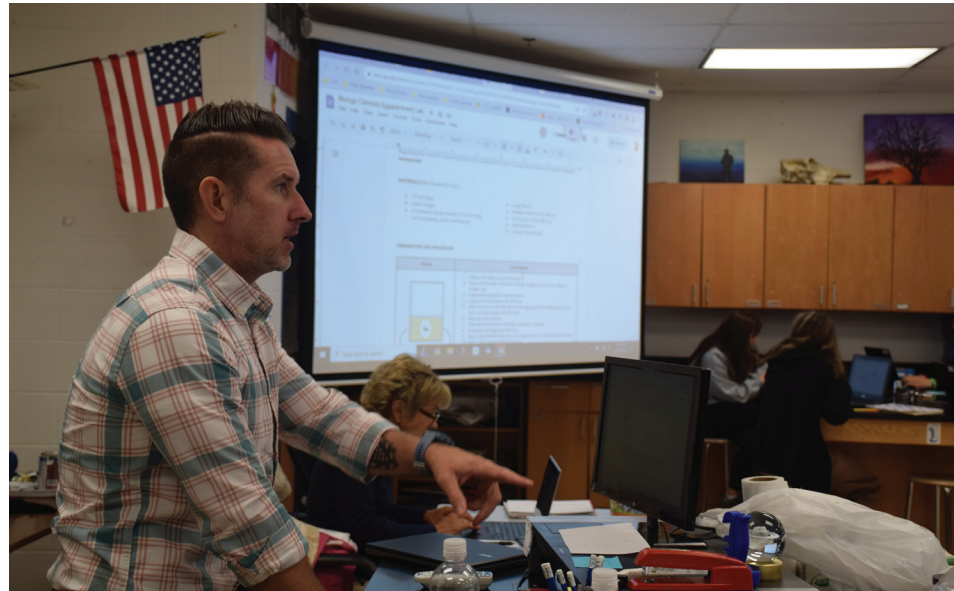
Getting to the remote Pacific islands is a two-day process in itself. The Galápagos Islands are closely protected by the government of Ecuador, for which they provide science tourism and a treasured wonder of the natural world as the location with the greatest biodiversity on land. By finding a company that could arrange the trip to fit their needs, Scott was finally able to bring his dream to life in July 2023.

"Both Scott and I are going to cry about a thousand times, I bet. It's hallowed land for scientists like us," Kosha said in the weeks before they set out.

◆ ◆ ◆

Scott and 15 of his students, along with adult chaperones including Kosha and some of Scott's former students, landed in Quito, Ecuador, where their first adventure was adjusting their lungs to ten thousand feet of elevation in the Andean foothills. The second was the highly concentrated culture of the densely populated city.

This was an important aspect of the trip for Scott's students, as he saw it. "We watched Ecuadorian dancing, visited a chocolate factory that used cacao from the Amazon, ate the delicious cuisine — which was similar to Central American cuisine but with different fruits and fish — and we saw the presidential palace," Scott said. "There was a stark contrast between the wealth of



(Above) Scott Collins '02 has been a biology teacher at Lemont (Ill.) High School since 2004. (Opposite page) Scott, pictured with students in his Lemont classroom, inspired to enter the field of education by professor of biology Tom Griffiths.

PHOTO/MEGAN IDELL





PHOTO/MEGAN IDELL

**(Above)** Driven by his experience as a high schooler going abroad on class trips with his teachers, Scott encourages his own students to discover new interests and a passion for learning on scientific service and research trips.

one side of the mountain (on which Quito is built) and the other. It was eye-opening for students coming from the suburbs of Chicago.”

The science education began in Quito as well, when Scott’s class straddled the earth’s equator and experimented with the Coriolis effect. When pouring water down a drain just a foot or two north of the equator, it created a vortex that spun clockwise. When moved just a few feet south, it spun counterclockwise. When exactly over the equator, it didn’t spin at all.

The flight from Quito to the Galápagos took 90 minutes, and, when they walked directly onto the tarmac from the plane, “I wasn’t sure how I was going to react,” Scott said, “but I got emotional. I’ve wanted to go to the Galápagos Islands since I was six or seven.”

“I am not a crier,” Kosha insisted. “I don’t even cry at Pixar movies. But I could feel my eyes start to well up a little” when she first set foot

on the island. “Forty-one years of friendship and we were on the island where Darwin did his thinking, in the seat of evolutionary theory. We just clung to each other for a half minute and [Scott] said, ‘We are here, Kosh.’ And then, not even 15 steps onto the walkway, we spotted a huge iguana.”

Scott was especially excited for a student of his, Drew Hennebrey, who wants to become a herpetologist (a scientist who studies reptiles) and served as the wildlife photographer for the trip. “He reminds me of myself as a kid,” said Scott, who grew up with pet turtles and originally wanted to be a herpetologist himself.

For their service project, Scott’s class helped the Galápagos’ conservationists remove invasive plant species that threaten the islands’ delicate biodiversity — particularly an invasive willow species.

But the creatures of the Galápagos would hardly know it for their guileless comfort with humans. “They haven’t learned to fear us,” Scott explained. Even while the islands’ resident scientists were chainsawing willow trees, a group of giant tortoises calmly observed from a short distance with mild interest.

Aside from small residential buildings, labs and museums, the islands are untouched by human development, allowing Scott and his class to experience them similarly to how Darwin did in 1835.

“There were several places where a guide would stop us to say ‘Darwin stood right where you’re standing and saw what you’re seeing,’” whether it was a flock of flamingos or blue-footed boobies. “We got to see how he made the most important discovery in biology.”

“By the end of the trip, the students were able to tell the difference between a brown finch and a cactus

finch based on the shape of their beak,” Scott said proudly.

One of the most impactful experiences of the trip happened while the class was scuba diving just off the coast of a black sand beach where a herd of sea lions sunbathed. Apparently driven by their own curiosity, the sea lions jumped into the water to examine the visiting humans for themselves, video of which can be found by scanning the QR code on this page.

“They played with us for 45 minutes. I could almost see that their eyes were dilated trying to take everything in. That meant a lot to the students,” Scott said.

According to Scott, Hennebrey said afterward, “Wouldn’t it be cool if people approached their lives as curious and wide-eyed as those sea lions did?”

“It is so clear we are part of the same system,” Kosha reflected. “You cannot help feeling connected — and responsible.”

For his next trip, Scott plans to take his class to the Sea of Cortés in summer 2024. “They call it ‘the world’s aquarium,’ on account of it having the most biodiversity of any body of water on the planet” Scott said.

He is always eager to include those who want to join, and any interested IWU alumni with children who are currently enrolled in high school or will be during the fall of 2024 can contact Scott at [sgcollins80@gmail.com](mailto:sgcollins80@gmail.com). ♦



Watch Scott and his class swim with sea lions!



**(Above)** Galápagos penguins (*Spheniscus mendiculus*).



**(Above)** Galápagos giant tortoise (*Chelonoidis niger*).



**(Above)** A marine iguana smiling for a close-up.



**(Above)** Marine iguana (*Amblyrhynchus cristatus*).



**(Above)** Green-breasted mango hummingbird (*Anthracothorax prevostii*).



**(Above)** American flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*).



**(Above)** Blue-footed booby (*Sula nebouxii*)

PHOTOS/DREW HENNEBRY



Two IWU alumni, Amber Kujath '97 and Bryan McCannon '98, have returned to campus as experts in their fields leading the newly organized Schools of Nursing and Health Sciences and Business and Economics.

Illinois Wesleyan University and its alumni are always investing in the success of future students. Among the most gratifying of those investments are the ones that alumni make possible by returning to their alma mater — knowing what is special about the educational experience they received, they can carry it forward to serve new generations. Two of the most ambitious projects IWU brought to bear in the fall of 2023 are the expanded School of Nursing and Health Sciences (SoNHS) and the newly organized School of Business and Economics (SoBE). These new investments in IWU's growth and adaptation are being

facilitated by two alumni, **Amber Kujath '97** and **Bryan McCannon '98**, emerging as ideal candidates who have returned to the institution they love to help it grow with exciting new visions for its future. “In the next five years, we want two to three new majors with our sights currently on dietetics,” Amber said of SoNHS, which will continue to incorporate health paraprofessional disciplines normally offered only at institutions that grant graduate degrees. “My goal is to have our graduates, wherever they go, be the best applicants for advanced degrees.” Emphasizing the school's early

success, Amber is quick to point out, “We just enrolled three public health majors alone in fall 2023 even though there wasn't an opportunity to recruit for the major” during the admissions cycle. As for SoBE, “We're creating systematic data collection processes, including talking to big employers, so that we can really inform curriculum development,” Bryan said. Unique assets, like the 12 terminals stationed in State Farm Hall's Greg Yess '82 Bloomberg Finance Lab, provide options that no other business school can offer to incoming students. “Our development is going to be driven by what the market is asking for, which could include opportunities for professional adults who didn't go to college straight out of high school.”

“Amber and Bryan's exceptional careers and unique combination of skills will ensure that SoNHS and SoBE are both innovative and effective expansions of IWU's academic quality and character. As alumni, they both care deeply about this institution and their disciplines, and we are excited to see what these schools will accomplish under their leadership,” said President Georgia Nugent.



After growing up in Plainfield, Illinois, Amber's decision to study nursing at Illinois Wesleyan was made in the aftermath of her sister's death when Amber was 15. “We were still in the throes of grief,” Amber said. “I didn't know anything about what to do because, usually, I had an older sister who did everything before me. College was the first big thing I did without a sibling, so we visited the schools that my parents wanted. IWU was close enough but not too close to home.”



(Above) Joe Song '26 uses the nursing school's virtual reality headset as a facet of his high-tech training. These tools include the Anatomage simulation interface, designed to be either a table for observing a virtual body or as an upright classroom instruction tool. (Opposite page) (left to right) Maddie McManigal '24 and Alexis Barry '24 give well-deserved pets to Smokey, IWU's pet therapy dog.

Her parents, wanting to encourage her goal of becoming a nurse after her sister's death from cancer, were personally impressed with Donna Hartweg, the director of IWU's School of Nursing at the time. It was Hartweg who, not long after, was fielding Amber's questions about becoming a business double-major. In other words, getting two separate degrees. “Oh, you're going to have to talk to the registrar about that,” Amber remembers Hartweg responding a little incredulously. “I had to maximize every class I could take,” including multiple classes with conflicting schedules. Like Hermione Granger without a time-turner, she overloaded by listening to recordings of lectures late at night and taking extra quizzes on the class material. Her idea behind the double major was to go into the field immediately after graduation with a career

path in hospital administration. This plan lasted about four months after she started her first job. Seeing the pressure that hospital administration was under to cut costs, even if it meant employing too few staff members to care for too many patients, Amber realized, “I would never want to do that.” She eventually decided to advance her career in a different direction. “I thought, who are the nurses with the coolest jobs, and who do I really admire for their career?” The answer was obvious. “It was by far my IWU faculty. They were incredibly smart and they cared about their students and they loved their jobs, and they still got to be in a clinical setting,” Amber said. Amber earned her PhD in nursing from the University of Illinois at Chicago, where she researched bone health in patients with diabetes. When she was thinking about



# RETURNING LEADERS

Story by CHRIS FRANCIS



where her career would go next, she reached out to Hartweg again.

Hartweg helped her consider her options. Initially, she pursued an advanced degree with the goal to return to IWU as faculty, but Amber came to feel that it wasn't quite time. That time would come after 11 years at Rush University, when IWU asked that she return to her alma mater to lead an ambitious reimaging of the School of Nursing.



Bryan was born in Bloomington and grew up in towns that orbited the two Central Illinois university hubs of Bloomington-Normal and Champaign-Urbana. Though his dad did not complete college himself, he was on staff at the University of Illinois, while Bryan's mother's alma mater is Illinois State. Both were determined that Bryan go to college, and that, wherever he went, it was not a big school.

"They saw how little attention each student received, while Illinois Wesleyan was the ideal opportunity to get a really high-quality education close to home," Bryan said.

Bryan himself was trying to figure out his direction at the time. "I

was just a teenager who only thought about college in terms of football teams and didn't think about the differences between schools," but he took his parents' advice to attend IWU, where he was initially a chemistry major "because the smart girl in my high school class was going into pre-med, and I thought the sciences were where the smart kids went."

Bryan quickly found that the business and economics classes on offer were much more interesting to him than chemistry labs, but, when he told his mother he was planning to change majors, surprisingly, she was worried that his new major wouldn't make for a good career.

"She was more interested in future job prospects than I was at the time, while I was thinking about how much I was enjoying the material in the classes," Bryan said.

Granted, what Bryan enjoyed was the academic theories and macro data analysis of economics. IWU gave him the opportunity to complete a summer-long student internship in Tokyo and work on an intensive independent research project, after which, he would spend his entire career among university faculties.

Bryan earned his PhD in economics from Pennsylvania State University, whose institutional focus on behavioral economics and game theory shaped Bryan into almost more of a political scientist, specializing in economics and law. One of his "funkiest" courses he developed — and had the most fun teaching as a professor voted "faculty of the year" in his third year at Elmira College — was about the society and economy of ancient Greece.

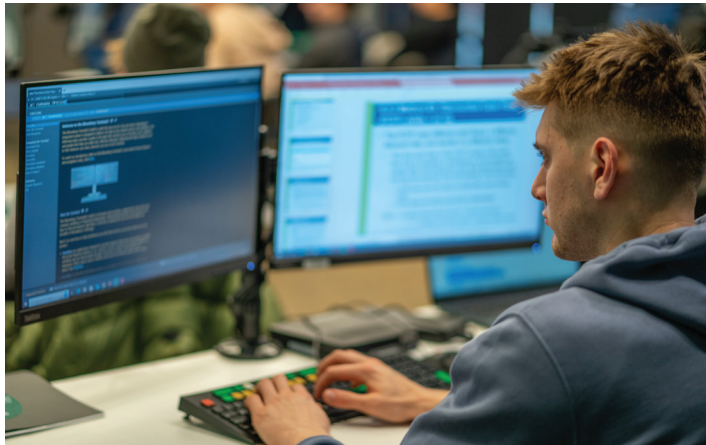
In 2015, Bryan was sought out by West Virginia University to help expand their own college of business and economics. While he felt invigorated by the opportunities to work with ambitious graduate students at a high quality national research institution, after eight years, he was compelled to take a leadership role in expanding business and economics at the small liberal arts university where his education in the field began.



SoNHS and SoBE "exemplify our consistent goal of providing our students with the education that they need and want, both today and for tomorrow's fast-changing world,"



(Above) In the nursing simulation room **Olivia Shell '24** (middle) and **Faith Washko '24** (right) treat dummy patients with a full suite of critical care instruments.



(Above) A student uses one of the 12 Bloomberg Terminals available in the Greg Yess '82 Bloomberg Finance Lab in State Farm Hall.



(Above) The Hart Career Center and IWU's finance program arranged three trips for the Finance Club to visit the Chicago Board of Exchange, BMO Harris and Northern Trust during spring 2023. Illinois Wesleyan students have the highest job and graduate program placement rate in Illinois at 97% within six months of graduating, thanks in part to gaining experience and connections through Career Center programs.

President S. Georgia Nugent said in a statement announcing the schools. "Each builds on the university's existing strengths, while evolving to offer our students new opportunities for learning. These are exciting developments for IWU."

At their heart, both are a continuation of IWU's unique position as a university where a bedrock of liberal arts education supports a curriculum that includes pre-professional training options for students seeking those career paths.

"That's the differentiator of an Illinois Wesleyan education," Nugent said. "Graduates will get that entry-level job quickly, but they're going to go further in their careers and lead richer lives because of the combination of the liberal arts and their professionally focused training."

Amber can vouch for the value that the liberal arts at IWU added to her education as a professional who, most importantly, needs to develop relationships of trust with patients.

"One of the first patients I took care of was soon after I graduated," which was also soon after Amber had returned from a study abroad trip that included a stop in Hong Kong. "The patient was interested in something on TV about how Hong Kong was changing back to being ruled by the Chinese government. I mentioned that I was there less than a month ago. It was a perfect conversation starter."

For Bryan, taking his humanities studies abroad achieved a similar outcome. "I took an Asian religion class, an Asian art history class, I made sure I picked every Asian-themed course to wrap into a contract minor in Japanese studies." When he then spent a semester living and working in Japan, his education came through a first-hand encounter with the culture and spending habits of the Japanese people at the tail end of the "Japanese economic miracle" that captured the world's attention in the 80s and 90s.

"We know from statistics that, as a liberal arts institution with opportunities like these, we're opening doors to better long-term career success for our students," Bryan said.

This was a revelation to Nugent while she was an administrator at Princeton, "The engineering school's advisory council made very clear that, if you can't write, you're not going to advance in engineering."

Today's students, being hyper-focused on specific majors as the starting points for career paths, are already drawn to IWU by what SoNHS and SoBE have to offer. But the faculty at IWU know that students' education is vastly improved by an academically diverse liberal arts environment. The goal of these schools, and the institution as a whole, will always be to give incoming students the career paths they seek with foundational skills in communication, creative problem solving, and understanding across difference that they need to thrive in their careers and lives as a whole. ❖



# Alumni Update

NEWS, WORKS AND CELEBRATIONS OF IWU ALUMNI & FRIENDS

## 1942

**Art Leach** shared his memories as a US Navy pilot in the Second World War with Illinois Farmer Today. Art was called up for the draft in his last semester at IWU, but was allowed to complete his degree before serving. He flew in the Pacific theater on the aircraft carrier Yorktown with missions over the Philippines, Okinawa, Iwo Jima, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Vietnam. One of his last missions was planned to strike Tokyo before it was canceled just before the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Art is now 103 years old.

## 1959

**Robert Riseling** served on a panel at the International Clarinet Association's Clar-Fest in Denver, Colorado. The panel celebrated the association's founding 50 years ago with a group of the earliest members who could speak to the association's history. Starting with only a few dozen members, the International Clarinet Association now has over 1,800. Robert studied clarinet, piano and music education at IWU; he was president of the Phi Mu Alpha music fraternity and was elected to the Blue Key National Honor Fraternity.



Robert Riseling '59

## 1963

**Jack Waddell** was honored as an "Unsung Hero" of theater at the 2023 American Theatre Wing Gala in New York City. Jack is a veteran stage actor and vocal teacher based in New York City who recently returned to Bloomington-Normal to perform the one-man show "Journey to Freedom," which tells the story of John W. Jones, a man who escaped enslavement in 1844 and operated a stop on the Underground Railroad in Elmira, New York. Those attending the gala honoring Jack and other unsung heroes included Lin-Manuel Miranda, Jane Krakowski and Tituss Burgess.

## 1968

**Harlan Hogan** was featured in a *Chicago Magazine* article detailing the voice-over acting industry in Chicago, of which he is one of the most recognizable and successful voice actors in the city's history, according to the article. Harlan gives *Chicago Magazine* an in-depth look at the industry and its history in the city, including the dive bar where voice actors would socialize while waiting to hear from their agents through the answering service next door. His voice is



Harlan Hogan '68

known to capture the tone of a presenter so perfectly that he was the voice actor for a Saturday Night Live parody movie trailer in 2015.

## 1970

**David Wilson** participated as a volunteer retired Marine pilot in Open Cockpit Day at Prairie Aviation Museum in Bloomington this August. David, who joined the Marines in 1968 when he was still a student at IWU, had the callsign Titan in honor of his alma mater. His plane, a Vietnam War era A-4M Skyhawk carrier-capable fighter jet, was on display for the event with his name and callsign painted beneath the cockpit. David was one of several former service members who shared memories and explained the mechanics of the aircraft on display to visitors.

## 1976

**Constance (Owens) Taylor** was ordained as a Baptist minister. She is a member of the clergy at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Freeport, Illinois. At IWU, Constance studied mathematics and education, and went on to work as an AVID District Coordinator at Freeport School District #145 before going into the ministry.



Amie (Henlon) Samp '89

## 1989

**Amie (Henion) Samp** retired recently after 32 years at GROW-MARK where she worked in various departments including accounting, finance, energy and IT. At IWU, Amie was a Sigma Pi little sister and remains close friends with many of the people she met at IWU. She plans to travel with her husband, Jeff, spend more time with family and find ways to more deeply connect with the local community.

## 1992

**Laura (Walz) Anderson** recently retired after 30 years at Abbott/AbbVie where she had been a Regional Sales Director for the last 15 years. Laura was an especially engaged Titan, being a member of the Student Senate Financial Advisory Board and vice president of the Phi Gamma Nu business fraternity. She plans to travel, volunteer and help on her family farm in Shabbona, Illinois, as well as spend more time with her husband, Kip, and her three children.

## 1993

**Todd Stocke** was featured in an article in the *Daily Herald* describing the rapid growth of



Todd Stocke '93

the Naperville-based publishing company Sourcebooks, where Todd was one of the original employees in the late 80s and is now senior vice president and editorial director. During the pandemic, Sourcebooks grew from the 10th largest publishing company in the nation to the 7th. It is the largest publisher in the country owned and run by a woman.

## 2000

**Nicole Bereolos** was chosen for the 2023 Texas Diabetes Care & Education Specialist of the Year award by the Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists (ADCES). Nicole has spent her career specializing in obesity and diabetes, and she has a doctorate in clinical health psychology from the University of North Texas. She has served as the leader of the Texas chapter of ADCES and was on the national board from 2018 to 2020. Nicole has worked in private practice since 2012.



Nicole Bereolos '00

categories, which are compiled based on an exhaustive peer review evaluation. At IWU, Michael was a member of Sigma Chi and developed an interest in law after taking a business law course. He volunteered at the McLean County State's Attorney's Office during his senior year.

## 2001

**Greg Bereiter** was appointed as the first-ever historian of the U.S. Department of Justice in August 2023. Greg was previously a historian with the U.S. Navy after serving in the Army for four years and earning master's and doctorate degrees in history from Northern Illinois University. He first fell in love with history while at IWU, particularly through his upper-division courses taught by Professors **Paul Bushnell**, **Mike Weis**, **Gordon Horwitz** and **Bob Ubriaco**.

**Matt Glavin** was honored by Loyola University Chicago School of Law with the 2023 St. Robert Bellarmine Award. The award recognizes alumni who distinguish themselves in their legal practices and support for the school. Since joining Cozen O'Connor Public Strategies in 2018, he has been involved in the expansion of its Chicago-based government



Michael Sorch '00



Matt Glavin '01

relations/public affairs practice, helping clients navigate the complex legislative and regulatory landscape in Illinois and across the nation.

## 2004

**Meredith (White) Winkelhake** graduated from Concordia University Wisconsin in December 2022 with her MSN and became a board-certified adult/geriatric primary care nurse practitioner. She now works as a nurse practitioner specializing in oncology in the outpatient Cancer Clinics at UW Health, where she has worked in various roles since 2006. At IWU, Meredith worked in the Nursing Interventions Lab



Greg Bereiter '01



Ellen Yedinak '04

and volunteered with Habitat for Humanity and as a Spanish interpreter at the nearby Community Healthcare Clinic.

**Ellen Yedinak** was chosen as a new board member for Poco a Poco, a Streator (Illinois)-based music education nonprofit founded by **Kate Tombaugh '07**. Ellen and Kate met through the Collegiate Choir at IWU and reconnected when Kate began Poco a Poco, in which Ellen's daughter participated. Ellen has been a music educator teaching in elementary schools and private lessons since graduating from IWU.

## 2005

**Jonathan Charak** was recently listed as one of *Chicago Crain's* Notable Leaders in Sustainability. Jonathan's career has been



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




My Fellow Titans,

Earlier this fall, I was handed the leadership reins of the Illinois Wesleyan University Alumni Association by **Dirk Behrends '87**. (Dirk, thank you for your leadership, service, and friendship.) While I officially became president of the IWU Alumni Association Board of Directors (AABD) on August 1, 2023, things didn't feel "real" until I returned to campus the Friday of Homecoming for the first in-person meeting of the new board.

I am thrilled to lead the IWU Alumni Association, yet humbled by the trust placed in me to represent our more than 24,000 living alumni. Like Illinois Wesleyan, the Alumni Association is special because of its people, their dedication and our collective ability to come together to make a difference. There are 21 fellow Titans on the AABD who share a passion for IWU, and I invite you to learn more about them and their current roles within the Alumni Association.

Returning to campus during this past Homecoming reminded me of the privilege to earn an Illinois Wesleyan education. I'm lucky to share that privilege with my niece **Alana Fisher-Carter '19** and each of you. Our education is even more valuable because of all you are doing in the world. I invite you to reflect on your time at IWU, return to campus and then reconnect with the university, current students, and fellow alumni.

In Titan Pride,



**Derrick L. Tillman-Kelly, PhD '09**  
*President, Alumni Association*  
*Board of Directors*



Meet Your 2023- 2025 Alumni Association Board of Directors

Officers

**Derrick Tillman-Kelly '09**,  
President

**Meg Howe '05**,  
President Elect

**Desiree Quizon-Colquitt '89**,  
Vice President of Committees

**Paige Buschman '17**,  
Vice President of Affinity Groups

**Dave Darling '79**,  
Secretary

Leadership

**Al Black '79**,  
Regional Chapters Chair

**Jazmyne Kellogg '16**,  
Alumni of Color Collective Chair

**Shannon O'Rourke Kasali '07**,  
Council for IWU Women Chair

**Ed Pacchetti '91**,  
Alumni Academic Resource Council Chair

**Jim Richter '93**,  
Wesleyan Fund Chair

**Rachel Shaffer '17**,  
Young Alumni Council Chair

**Amy Tenhouse '97**,  
Alumni Admissions Advisory Committee Chair

**Stella Wang '17**,  
International Alumni Network Chair

**Aaron Woodstein '15**,  
Pride Alumni Community Chair

At-Large

- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Debbie Burt-Frazier '75</b> | <b>Brittany Powell '10</b>    |
| <b>Alan Leahigh '67</b>        | <b>Taylor Robinson '21</b>    |
| <b>Mandy Leifheit '96</b>      | <b>Kate Roessler '13</b>      |
| <b>Beth Messina '81</b>        | <b>Kira (Larson) West '86</b> |

2024 Regional Connections

Come one, come all to the 2024 Illinois Wesleyan University Titan Regional Connections! Join the Alumni Association for memorable experiences. Enjoy a drink aboard a sunset cruise, or mix and mingle at a world-renowned museum; try out a new sport, or tour your favorite brewery. Whatever you choose, it's sure to be an event full of friends, fun, and Titan pride!

**Naples, FL.**  
Sunday, February 4, 2024  
5:00-7:00 pm  
Naples Princess Cruises

**Phoenix, AZ.**  
Sunday, February 25, 2024  
12:30-4:30 pm  
Musical Instrument Museum (MIM)

**Dallas, TX.**  
Sunday, March 24, 2024  
1-4 pm  
Fowling Warehouse DFW

**St. Louis, MO.**  
Sunday, April 21, 2024  
1-3 pm  
Anheuser-Busch Brewery

**McLean County, IL.**  
Sunday, June 2, 2024  
12-3 pm  
Epiphany Farms Estate

**Denver, CO.**  
Sunday, July 14, 2024  
12-4 pm  
Denver Botanic Gardens

Visit [iwu.edu/alumni/events](https://iwu.edu/alumni/events) for more information and to register!



Nominations for the 2024 Illinois Wesleyan Alumni Awards are now open!

Every year, Illinois Wesleyan University recognizes outstanding achievements of our alumni with the announcement of the Alumni Awards. The winners will be celebrated during Homecoming Weekend (October 4-6) at the Best of Illinois Wesleyan Awards Ceremony.

More information at [iwu.edu/alumni-awards](https://iwu.edu/alumni-awards)

Save the Date: Titan Alumni & Friends Golf Outing

Join fellow alumni and friends for a fun day of golf benefiting The Wesleyan Fund at Mistwood Golf Club in Romeoville, Illinois. Mistwood Golf Club was selected as Golf Magazine's "Renovation of the Year," one of Golf Digest's "Best New Courses," and one of Golf Range Magazine's "Top 50 Public Ranges."

Register Your Foursome at [iwu.edu/alumni/events/](https://iwu.edu/alumni/events/)

TITAN ALUMNI & FRIENDS GOLF OUTING



**Mistwood Golf Club**  
Romeoville, Illinois



devoted to Zurich North America (ZNA) where he has led operational improvement initiatives for the company's financial actuarial team. He is currently the emerging solutions director for ZNA where he analyzes new and emerging risks, which has morphed into a sustainability role. At IWU, Jonathan took jobs as a library student worker, a lifeguard and a math teaching assistant. He also did summer undergraduate research in biology with Associate Professor **Loni Walker**.

## 2006

**Sarah Mysiewicz** took a position as senior pensions counsel to the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee under Senator Bernie Sanders. While she had previously led AARP's federal advocacy on pensions, taxes, financial services and fraud prevention, Sarah began her career as a staffer in the

Illinois Senate. At IWU, she was active in Alpha Phi Omega and College Democrats and served as a political science lab mentor.

**Elizabeth (Ouart) Pratt** was featured in an article in the *Washington Post* telling the story of how she organized an effort to save the only grocery store in Sheffield, Illinois, the Royal Super Mart. Using her local nonprofit, Cornerstone Community Wellness, she was able to raise half a million dollars, both through small donations and gifts from Ameren Illinois and Royal Neighbors of America, to buy the store from its retiring owner and turn it into a nonprofit community grocery.

**Melissa Harden** graduated from Air Command and Staff College with a master's degree in military operational art and science and is now a certified joint air planner. Melissa will soon join Air Mobility Command at Scott

Air Force Base in Illinois. Melissa graduated from officer training school in 2009 and commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Air Force, following in her mother's footsteps. She was previously deployed to Afghanistan and is currently a major.

## 2007

**Carol (Rose) Durkin** received tenure at the start of her fourth year in Elmwood Park's (Ill.) School District 401. Carol was able to achieve tenure early due to her high ratings as an educator. She teaches second grade at John Mills Elementary School.

**Prianka Sharma** received the American Bar Association's Environment, Energy and Resources Section Outstanding Committee Award for her work on the 2022-2023 Endangered Species

Committee. She worked with her fellow co-chair and vice-chairs to coordinate policy discussions, webinars, articles, podcasts, social media posts and networking events celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Endangered Species Act.

## 2008

**Jenny Douglas** was promoted to director of operations & services at Northwestern University where she works to create processes and procedures that provide the best possible service to students and to support student success while promoting positive staff morale. Jenny has worked in university student affairs since graduating from Illinois Wesleyan, and she earned her MBA from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 2021. Jenny credits her time living on campus



Sean Dwyer '10

at IWU with inspiring her to enter the field.

## 2010

**Sean Dwyer** was recognized by *Forbes* magazine in their Top Next-Gen Wealth Advisors Best-in-State rankings for Illinois in 2023. He ranked number 29 in the state. Sean has been running his financial services practice with Edward Jones since 2010 in Lake Zurich, Illinois, where he finds fulfillment in connecting his clients' current financial profile to their most important life goals and ambitions. At IWU, Sean studied business administration and was captain of the men's basketball team.

## 2011

**Michael Browning** was elected as the alderman for the ninth ward of St. Louis, Missouri. He won with 63% of the vote in a two-round election against two opponents, both of whom were incumbents due to recent redistricting. He represents 21,000 people in the city's Central West End, Forest Park Southeast, King's Oak and Vandeventer neighborhoods.

## 2012

**Robin Basu** was promoted to partner in the real estate group at his law firm, Kirkland & Ellis LLP. His practice focuses on acquisitions, dispositions, financings and joint venture projects



Korey Williams '12

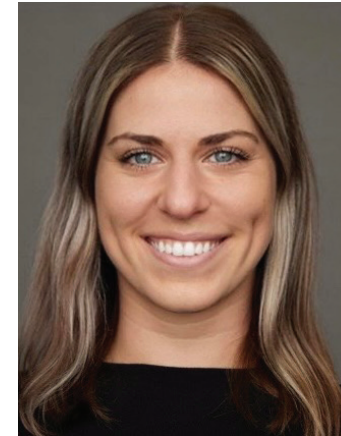
involving commercial real estate, including industrial, office, hotel and multi-family residential properties.

**Caroline (Rohloff) Boden** presented at the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management in September 2023, hosted by the German government and the UN Environment Programme in Bonn, Germany. During the conference, Caroline joined a panel about opportunities for the financial sector to advance a global transition to safe and sustainable chemistry.

**Korey Williams** was appointed as assistant professor of English at the University of Chicago, where he specializes in poetry and African American literature. Korey earned his advanced degrees in humanities and English from Cornell University and the University of Chicago, where he completed his dissertation on James Baldwin and modern malaise. His favorite course to teach has been Modern Love, and, now as an assistant professor, he looks forward to teaching Human Being and Citizen as a course within the humanities core curriculum.

## 2014

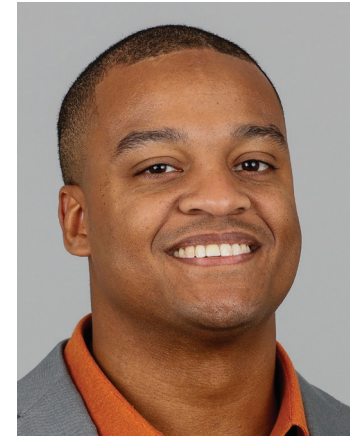
**Colleen McMahon** received her MBA from DePaul University's Kellstadt School of Business. Colleen enrolled in DePaul University during COVID in order to



Colleen McMahon '14

advance her career in her current role as a marketing investment analyst for Chick-fil-A. Colleen studied business administration with a marketing specialization at IWU, and she minored in Spanish. She played basketball at IWU for all four years and was a member of the 2012 National Championship team.

**Chris Simms** started a new position as corporate partnerships account executive with the Chicago Bears. Chris's career has revolved around finance,



Chris Simms '14

sales and football, having played for four years at IWU and been assistant head coach and defensive coordinator with ITW David Speer Academy. With the Bears, he is responsible for generating revenue for the Chicago Bears Football Club through the sale of marketing and media partnerships across all business lines.

## 2017

**Stella Wang** recently started a new job as assistant director of academic programs at the



PHOTO/MINNESOTA HEALTH FAIRVIEW

**Scott Zeller '82** was featured in an article in *The New Yorker* magazine titled "Reinventing the E.R. for America's Mental-Health Crisis." Scott is credited with developing the Alameda Model, named after the Alameda Health System in Oakland, California, where he is the head of psychiatric emergency services. The Alameda Model focuses on treating patients who come to emergency rooms with mental health issues by creating a separate, calming, social environment with medical staff who can counsel and provide psychiatric medication. The model was found to almost entirely eliminate the need for mental health patients to stay the night in the E.R., and it reduced the rate of using physical restraints on patients with mental health issues from as much as 20% of admissions to one tenth of a percent. Scott rebranded the model as Emergency Psychiatry Assessment, Treatment and Healing (EmPATH).



Sarah Mysiewicz '06



Elizabeth (Ouart) Pratt '06



Melissa Harden '06



Jenny Douglas '08



PHOTO/JAMES VITULLO

Weishfest celebrated its 10th anniversary at The Salt Shed in Chicago on Nov. 4. Weishfest is an annual event raising money for the Andrew Weishar Foundation — a nonprofit that supports families battling cancer. The organization was established by classmates of **Andrew Weishar '13**, who died of cancer during his senior year at IWU. The 10th annual Weishfest featured performances by Natasha Bedingfield, Randy Houser and The Plain White T's. The Andrew Weishar Foundation has provided nearly \$3 million to more than 500 families, and the 10th anniversary celebration pushed the organization to just over \$550,000 raised in 2023.



## HART CAREER CENTER HAPPENINGS

**Illinois Wesleyan's Hart Career Center** is constantly engaging with alumni and connecting them with current students in fun and enriching ways. Do you want to assist students to ensure their career success? Does your organization have internships or employment opportunities for Titans? Contact the Career Center staff at [ccenter@iwu.edu](mailto:ccenter@iwu.edu) or (309) 556-3095. Here's how others are getting involved.

### Finance Career Night

Colin Cheaney '21, Mike Bragg '05, Jason Gregoire '19, Corey Schieler '97, Elizabeth Cummings '22, Lesley Ortega '22, Klaudia Wyszynski '23, Colin Bonnett '19, Mike Heaton '14, P.J. Cummings '12, Ryan O'Toole '17 and Emily Diehl '17

### Careers in International Development

Will Keller '02

### Internship/Job Fair

Shawn Perrone '00, Kaity Lercel '14, Sue Seibring '82, Madison Fischer '22, Kristi Ramirez '90, Drue Anderson '00, Abby Nytko '23, Josie Schmidt '23, Idania Silva '23, Ann Tushaus '04, Emily Schirmacher '21, John Slomba '19, Lesley Ortega '22, Maggie Mascari '23, Todd Barth '93, Bernie Coderre '20, Devon Robbins '18, Bryan Crabtree '97, Adam Meyer '03, Aneesh Sehgal '15, Tim Irvin '06, Randi Deering '18, Ryan Zientara '22, Liz Fenger '12, Carolyn Villa '14, Jackson Garrett '19 and Elliott Notrica '26

### Careers in Law & Sports

Andrew Herrington-Gilmore '09

### Charting a Path to Success/Careers in Investments

Marcus Dunlop '08

### Campus Recruitment

Mike Mayberger '14, Scott Searles '95, JP Hills '05, Matt Hill '12, Haley Rojek '20, Evan Anderson '20, Eric Bennes '21, Andrea Mehrkens '21, Kailee Piwowarczyk '23, Breanna (Walker) Kaminska '20 and Tom Dulee — Friend of IWU

### Additional Programming

Mallory Penn '07, Justin Ahrens '94, Ann Tushaus '04, Dan Miller '12, Tyler Smith '07, Anna Reed '00, Eric Snowden '00 and Dan George '09

### Pre-Health Programming

Dr. Mike Henry '12, Dr. Janet Albers '82, Dr. Dan Lau '03, Dr. Bradley Grant '03, Dr. Tyler Neal '05, Dr. George Tomecki '96, Dr. Dan Durkin '14, Dr. Maggie Olson Kurbanov '10, Bridget Wall '08, Jackson Rapala '22, Ross Burandt '20 and Michaela (Lamczyk) Burandt '18



(Above) IWU alumna **Emily Diehl '17**, Marketing Manager with Marathon Capital, speaks with **Nuraika Kalmatova '25** about careers in investment banking at the Hart Career Center's Finance Career Night.



(Above) **Andrew Herrington-Gilmore '09**, Associate General Counsel with the Chicago Bulls, speaks with **Aidan Frank Herbert '24** about careers in law and sports.



(Above) IWU alumnus **Marcus Dunlop '08**, Partner with HG Vora Capital Management, speaks with an IWU student about careers in investments.

University of Chicago's Pritzker School of Molecular Engineering. She previously received her master's degree from Illinois State University. While in school, Stella founded the Chinese Culture and Communications club, helped establish the Mandarin tutor program at Illinois State University and hosted the annual Lunar New Year Celebration in collaboration with ISU and Heartland Community College.



Stella Wang '17 (p. 27)

### 2018

**Amelia (Glueck) Marino** was named the head women's track and field coach at Illinois Wesleyan. A native of Pekin, Illinois, Amelia graduated from Illinois Wesleyan with a degree in health promotion and fitness management. At IWU, Amelia was a four-year letterwinner for the Titans and is one of the most decorated student-athletes in program history. She was a two-time First Team Academic All-America selection and the 2018 recipient of the NCAA's Elite 90 Award. She remains the record holder for both indoor and outdoor long jump at IWU.

### 2023

**Dorian Lesiuk** started a new job in sales at MoLo Solutions. He previously interned with the German freight company Deutsche Bahn Schenker and studied business administration at IWU. He was also a mentor at the Ukrainian American Youth Association in Palatine, Illinois.



Dorian Lesiuk '23 (left)

*All submitted content received by October 16, 2023. The submitted content deadline for the Spring 2024 issue of IWU Magazine is February 12, 2024. Submissions may be edited, directed to other communications and/or preserved in IWU archives.*

## Tiny Titans

**Jennifer (Robb) Bahr '00** and Adam;

Isaac Lincoln Bahr, born March 23, 2023

**George '06** and **Amy (Slott) Aliaga '07**;

Lincoln George Aliaga, born July 11, 2023

**Heather (Geeser) Huftalin '06** and Andy;

Cody Law Huftalin, born April 10, 2023

**Stacy (Kaeding) Smet '08** and Justin;

Owen Nash Smet, born June 17, 2023

**Sherman Wallace '09** and **Teodora Petrova '10**;

Alex Petrova Wallace, born Dec. 16, 2022

**Adam '09** and **Paige (Maynard) Clark '11**;

Julie Jill Clark, born May 31, 2023

**Anthony '10** and **Jayne (Thomas) Gunnell '10**;

Theodore Stanley Gunnell, born May 25, 2023

**Marie Julien '10** and Sandy;

Jack Bennet Alexander, born Sept. 23, 2023

**Brian '10** and **Jessica (Hinterlong) Schaeffer '11**;

Mason Smith Schaeffer, born recently

**Doug '10** and **Karley (Bridgewater) Keller '12**;

Clayton James Keller, born June 6, 2023

**Amanda O'Brien '13** and **Bryan Senn '13**;

Elliott Thomas Senn, born Nov. 14, 2022

**Emily (Schmidt) Reuschel '13** and Andrew;

Arlie Jae Reuschel, born Oct. 9, 2023

**Genesis Brown '13**;

DeAndre Brown-Little, born April 23, 2017

**Kyle '14** and **Rosaleen (Egan) Van Der Aa '13**;

Lila Grace Van Der Aa, born July 18, 2023

**A'Kya Adams-White '14** and **Deshoun White '14**;

Akira Z. White, born Aug. 23, 2023

**Chris Simms '14**;

Leia Elisa Simms, born recently

**Jeff '14** and **Madalyn (Mazur) Beres '15**;

Ada Joy Beres, born Nov. 22, 2022

**Filip '14** and **Melissa (Mariotti) Swist '15**;

baby girl, born June 29, 2023

**Derrick Smith '16** and Madison;

Auburn Smith-Marvel, born June 19, 2023



# Titan Celebrations

*IWU Magazine* considers for publication photos of IWU people at celebrations and reunions of alumni. Please send your Titan Celebration photos to *IWU Magazine*, at [iwu.edu/magazine](mailto:iwumag@iwu.edu), via email at [iwumag@iwu.edu](mailto:iwumag@iwu.edu), or by mail at P.O. Box 2900, Bloomington, IL 61702. All submitted content received by **October 16, 2023**.



(Above) Charlie Capozzoli '11 married Nicole Capozzoli on Aug. 19, 2023.



(Above) Steve Ketcham '71 and Linda (Beeler) Ketcham '71 celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a European cruise along the Danube and Rhine Rivers.



(Above) Madie (Monk) McCormick '22 married Connor McCormick on June 24th, 2023 at The Barn at Double K Ranch in Onarga, Illinois. The ceremony was officiated by Shelby (Fulk) Williams '20 with Hayley Earl '22, Colleen Palczynski '22, Kaylee Bowers '22, Heather Dietrich '22, Madison Moore '23 and Nina Mardjetko '23 in the wedding party.



(Above) Zoie Samaan '14 and Nick Nelson '13 were married on June 3, 2023 at the Chevy Chase Country Club in Wheeling, Illinois.



(Above) Lucy Bullock '17 and Kurt Meyer '18 were married on Sept. 16, 2023 in Provence, France. The couple started dating at IWU in 2016.

## In Memory

### Faculty, Staff and Friends

**Helen Carey** died June 21, 2023. She was 91. Helen was a sister of the Catholic Church who earned her doctorate in philosophy from Fordham University in New York City. She served as a teacher and college instructor at institutions all around the country, including her positions as chaplain and faculty member at Illinois Wesleyan. Helen also served as parish associate at St. Mark's Parish in Peoria.

**George Churukian** died on March 20, 2023 at the age of 90. George earned degrees from Millikin, Hofstra and Syracuse Universities and began his teaching career as a junior high school science teacher in Patchogue, NY. In Syracuse, he directed the Urban Teacher Preparation Program before moving to Virginia where he led the Education Department at Virginia Wesleyan College. Arriving in Bloomington in 1976, he soon became head of the Education Department at IWU. He was active in education organizations globally, founding and editing the *Journal for the International Society for Teacher Education*. He was Wesleyan's first active faculty member to be named a Fulbright Scholar, and he served in Kuwait helping to rebuild the country's education system in the wake of Operation Desert Storm. He traveled widely and researched his family's ancestry that culminated in a book, *Never Settle for Second Best*. He is survived by his wife, three children and one grandchild.

**Joyce Murray** died July 22, 2023. She was 86. Joyce spent her career as a music teacher, earning her degree from Eastern Illinois University and an advanced degree later in life. She and her husband, Bill, are the parents of **Bob Murray '82**, **Michael Murray '84**, **Michele (Murray) Darnell '88** and **Chris Murray '91**, all of whom currently are or have previously been staff members at Illinois Wesleyan. Together, the siblings established the William and Joyce Murray Endowed Scholarship Fund at IWU in 2008 to honor their parents' generosity enabling their education at the University for 13 consecutive years. Joyce is survived by her children, 13 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

### Alumni

**Fryda Nicoloff '42** died Oct. 14, 2023. She was 103. Fryda was born in Bandung, Java, as the daughter of Dutch government officials. At IWU she studied vocal performance and was a member of the Delta Omicron Music Society. She taught and sang in her eventual home of San Diego. She was a devoted Unitarian who was involved with building the 1st Unitarian Church of San Diego's current facility. She served as the religious education director at her church and on the national board for Unitarian Universalist Women. Fryda is survived by three children, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

**Joanne Moore '48** died May 14, 2022. She was 95. Joanne came from Plant City, Florida, to study drama at IWU. She and her husband went on to live in Germany, Spain, Mexico and Argentina before returning to the Marco Island area. She was a member of the Marco Sailing Association and the American Association of University Women, and she was a charter member of the Marco Island Historical Society and the local Daughters of the American Revolution chapter. Joanne is survived by two children, five grandchildren and many great-grandchildren.

**Joan (Morsch) Leff '50** died July 13, 2023. She was 95. Joan was one of six children born on her family's dairy farm near Hinckley, Illinois. She spent her career teaching grade school and returning to school herself at the University of Wyoming. Joan was an accomplished artist, with her paintings having won multiple ribbons at county fairs. She

credited her longevity with her healthy diet of vegetables, which she picked up while living on her family farm. Joan is survived by her husband and three children.

**John Esch '50** died Aug. 27, 2023. He was 95. John was the last surviving child of Charles and Helen Esch's six children, all Bloomington natives. He was a student of both IWU and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign who enlisted in the U.S. Army after high school. He was a lover of sports and was the "unofficial armchair manager" of the St. Louis Cardinals and Green Bay Packers. He is survived by his wife, two children and four grandchildren, many of whom are IWU alumni.

**William Friberg '51** died July 4, 2023. He was 94. William devoted his life to education and youth sports, having received his bachelor's from IWU and master's from Northwestern University. He spent 30 years as a teacher, football coach, athletic director and administrator for the Leyden High School district. In his retirement, he started his own business creating trophies and awards for sporting events. William is survived by two children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

**Shirley (Schroeder) Mitchell '53** died Sept. 23, 2023. She was 92. At IWU, Shirley met her husband **Gilbert Mitchell '51**. The couple were longtime residents of Hinsdale, Illinois, where Shirley was an avid homemaker and gardener. Shirley is survived by two children and two grandchildren.

**Sarah (Holder) Butler '53** died Oct. 13, 2023. She was 92. Sarah came to IWU after initially enrolling at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She was a lifelong learner who loved travel, history and the arts. She was an especially devoted gardener who, as a Bloomington native, loved Sarah's Garden at the David Davis Mansion. She was also a big fan of Tony Bennett. Sarah is survived by five children, nine grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

**Mary Ann (Hagmeyer) Guenzler '53** died August 5, 2023. She was 91. Mary Ann studied sociology at IWU, which eventually became her husband **Robert Guenzler's '56** alma mater after he was drafted at the end of the Korean War. Mary Ann became an educator in Chicago's south side as well as an active member in the Illinois League of Women Voters. She became vice president of the league's board, who honored her with the Carrie Chapman Catt Award. Mary Ann is survived by three children, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

**Barbara (Barling) Williamson '53** died May 27, 2022. She was 91. Barbara was an active member of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Bloomington and an Avon sales representative, who enjoyed knitting and crafts. She was known for her keen memory. Barbara is survived by four children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**Ronald Colton '54** died Nov. 3, 2023. He was 92. Ronald achieved degrees from Kendall College, Illinois Wesleyan and Garrett Biblical Institute, where he earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in divinity. Ronald was the founding pastor of Church of the New Covenant in Jacksonville, Illinois. In his retirement, he continued to preach at Murrayville Baptist Church as well as officiate weddings and funerals. Ronald is survived by his wife, four children, seven grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

**Jean (Wideroe) Berkenstock '55** died Oct 3, 2023. She was 89. Jean grew up in rural Northbrook, Illinois, where she rode a horse to school as a child. She was a lifelong musician, learning the piano but loving



the flute. During her career, Jean played for the Atlanta Symphony, Evanston Symphony, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, Grant Park Symphony, and she spent 43 years as the principal flute of the Lyric Opera of Chicago. She and her husband, Jim, founded the Midsummer's Music festival in Door County, Wisconsin, in 1991. Jean is survived by her husband, two children and six grandchildren.

**Jerome Weistart '55** died Nov 6, 2023. He was 89. Jerome played basketball for the Titans and, after graduating, was a minor league athlete. His career eventually brought him into banking, which allowed him to become the financial advisor for St. Mark Lutheran Church and Illinois Valley Central School District No. 321. In his later years, he and his wife revived his family's tradition of farming. Jerome is survived by his wife, four children, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

**Joe Tolson '56** died July 17, 2023. He was 89. Joe was a native of Kankakee, Illinois, who was a student at Culver Military Academy Naval School before attending Illinois Wesleyan and going on to enlist in the U.S. Navy. He led a career in finance, working with 1st Federal Savings & Loan, State Savings & Loan, Kankakee County Title & Trust, Court House Title Service and First Title Service.

**Robert Mohns '57** died July 29, 2023. He was 88. Robert studied education at IWU where he met his wife, **Nancy (Cain) Mohns '59**. Robert spent his career at Hononegah High School where he was a teacher, coach and advisor until his retirement in 1994. He also earned a master's degree from Northwestern University and was a member of Midwest Officials Association. Robert is survived by his wife, two children and two grandchildren.

**Carol Williams '57** died June 26, 2023. She was 86. In her early school years, Carol attended a one-room schoolhouse with her mother as the teacher. She earned her bachelor's degree in music education from Illinois Wesleyan and a master's degree in music education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She spent her teaching career in the Champaign School District and was a well-known fan at her grandchildren's soccer games. Carol is survived by two children and four grandchildren.

**Elizabeth "Libby" Hofsas '58** died July 12, 2023. She was 86. Libby was a student of music education at IWU where she was a member of the Sigma Alpha Iota women's music sorority. She went on to earn a master's degree in library science from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and eventually became the serials librarian at Yale University, where she worked for 30 years.

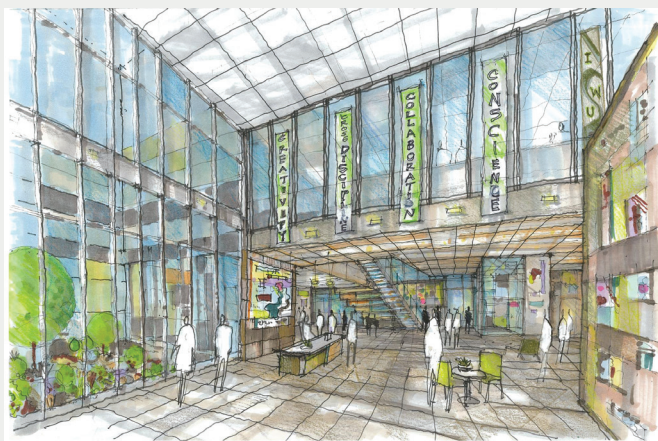
**David Fredin '58** died Aug. 18, 2023. He was 92. David graduated from Barrington High School in 1949 before enlisting in the U.S. Navy shortly before the beginning of the Korean War, during which he served on an aircraft carrier. After the war, he returned to school to earn degrees from Illinois Wesleyan and Northern Illinois University. David is survived by two children and two grandchildren.

**Judy (Snook) Brust '58** died April 13, 2023. She was 86. Judy grew up in Plainfield Township, where she was involved in Girl Scouts, 4H and the Plainfield Congregational Church. She studied nursing at IWU and spent her career as a clinical nurse, hospital nurse, surgical nurse and her favorite role as a neonatal nurse. While raising a family of five, Judy's family moved around the country and abroad to Taiwan. Judy was an excellent baker and seamstress who enjoyed gardening, was a member of the Missouri Botanical Gardens, volunteered for the sym-



**Dave Petrick '67** died Dec. 2, 2022. He was 77. Dave was born in Oak Park, Illinois, where he graduated from Maine East High School and came to IWU to pursue a degree in political science. After graduation, Dave devoted his career to greatly expanding Bretford — the educational product company founded by his father and uncle in 1948 — with the help of his family over several decades. He also highly prized the many friendships he gained along his successful journey. At IWU he married his wife, **Ellen (Reid) Petrick '68**, with whom he had three sons.

Dave and Ellen are the namesake of The Petrick Idea Center — the planned addition to campus that will serve as a living-learning facility promoting interdisciplinary innovation, collaboration and entrepreneurship among Illinois Wesleyan students. The project will be funded entirely through donor and grant support with the lead gift provided by the Petricks. Dave said of the announced building in 2021, "Ellen and I are thrilled to be lead donors for The Petrick Idea Center, a project that represents a culmination of our passions and dreams."



(Above) A watercolor-style image of the entrance lobby of the planned Petrick Idea Center.

phony, sang in the choir and played the hand bells. She is survived by five children, eight grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

**Alice Guenther '59** died July 6, 2023. She was 86. Alice studied music education at IWU where she was an active community member joining Amateur Music Club, Zetema Club, Kappa Kappa Gamma and Phi Kappa Phi. She worked as a music teacher at Ottawa Elementary Schools for 23 years and was an organist for Trinity Lutheran Church in Ottawa, Illinois, for more than 40 years. Alice is survived by her husband, four children, 10 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Robert Picking '59** died Sept. 11, 2023. He was 87. Bob was a business major and member of Sigma Chi who went on to receive advanced degrees from the Universities of Wisconsin and Michigan. In his career, he became vice president of loans at Security First Bank in Grand Haven, Michigan, before becoming president and CEO of Hastings City Bank. He was an active community member, joining the Kiwanis Club, Masonic Lodge and the Elks of Hastings and Grand Haven. Bob is survived by his wife, two children and two grandchildren.

**Jerry Philpott '59** died June 19, 2023. He was 86. Jerry was a proud member of Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity and, over the years, he kept his fraternity brothers in touch with each other and encouraged the younger members to do the same. He was an active and celebrated alumnus, receiving IWU's Loyalty Award and a citation for Distinguished and Exceptional Service from Phi Gamma Delta National. Jerry is survived by his wife, three children and three grandchildren.

**Quita (Verban) Shier '60** died Oct. 2023. She was 85. Quita studied zoology at IWU and went on to earn her master's from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign where she studied the freshwater mussels of Illinois and wrote the first thesis in ecology for the U of I zoology department. She and colleague Willie Mae Campbell made up the first interracial teaching team at the U of I. Quita is survived by her husband, three children and seven grandchildren.

**Irv Bernstein '61** died June 29, 2023. He was 88. Irv was originally from Brooklyn, New York, before his family moved to Bloomington. He was a small business owner, being the proprietor of Atlas Window Cleaning in Peoria. His passion was golf, and he won many tournaments in Bloomington-Normal. He was known for being outgoing and generous. Irv is survived by three children and five grandchildren.

**Douglas Ahlenius '63** died June 22, 2023. Doug graduated from Western Military Academy in Rantoul, Illinois, before attending IWU, where he studied business administration. He was a freelance sales representative and served as president of the Lions Club of Chicago Heights. Doug is survived by his wife, child and grandchild.

**Sheldon Nicol '64** died July 22, 2023. He was 80. Sheldon studied biology and chemistry at IWU before going to medical school at Washington University. He enlisted in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, commissioning as a battalion surgeon and captain with the 1st Infantry Division. After completing his service, he opened his own private practice. He remained board certified in internal medicine and geriatrics after retiring. Sheldon is survived by his wife, two children and two grandchildren.

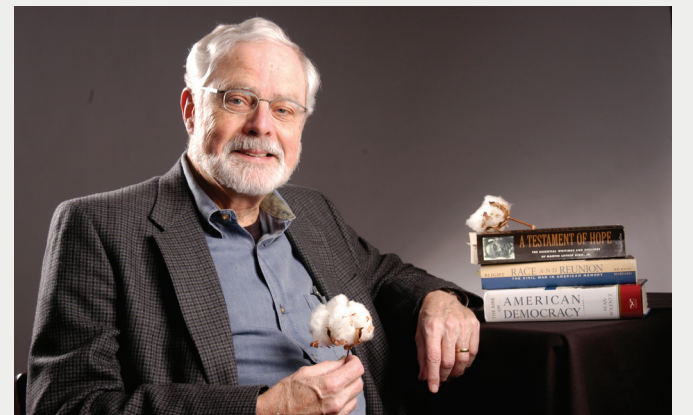
**Walter "Joe" Monti '64** died Aug. 26, 2023. He was 80. Joe played football at IWU under Coach Don Larson and was a member of Sigma Chi, where he was known to get into all kinds of mischief. After graduating,

he began a 33-year-long career in banking and served as president of two banks, 12 years as Bloomington Township Supervisor, and was a member of the Wisconsin National Guard. Joe is survived by two children and four grandchildren.

**Kirk Randles '64** died Sept. 8, 2023. He was 80. Kirk was a basketball player and member of Tau Kappa Epsilon at Illinois Wesleyan. His love of athletics led to his career in sporting goods, and he continued to be a hobby player of basketball, tennis and eventually came around to golf as well. His fondest memories were of cheering on the Fighting Illini and Chicago Bears with family and friends. Kirk is survived by his wife, two children and six grandchildren.

**Barbara (Weerts) Phelps '64** died Oct. 12, 2023. She was 81. Barbara went to the Mayo Clinic after completing her degree at Illinois Wesleyan to continue her education in physical therapy. She started her career at Kankakee (Ill.) State Hospital and Riverside Hospital before starting her own practice in Clifton, Illinois. Her passions included crafting, storytelling, music and nature, and she volunteered with the 4H Club. She is survived by her child and four grandchildren.

**Gary Johnson '64** died June 8, 2023. He was 80. Gary attended Geneva High School before going to IWU where he played football and was a member of Sigma Chi. After graduating, he worked for IBM for 30 years. In his retirement, Gary served as vice president of J.D. Edwards and resided in Marietta, Georgia, for many years. He loved tennis and was a member of the Roswell United Methodist Church. He is survived by his wife, two children and three grandchildren.



**Paul Bushnell** died Oct. 15, 2023. He was 93. As written by Professor Nancy Sultan: "Paul was indeed a giant in his field and, more importantly, as a human being. I will always treasure the deep and lively conversations with Paul... and others about current events over lunch in the old faculty dining room. His stories were legendary. He was a huge advocate for me as the new humanities professor in 1993 and absolutely crucial to the creation of the Greek and Roman Studies Program, helping us land a tenure line for an ancient historian/Latinist position. Our trip to the classics conference in New Orleans to interview candidates was epic. He not only knew all the best restaurants, but we kept running into former students of his on the street (who were there for a coaches conference)! Paul was one of IWU's greatest elder statesmen, eloquently arguing on behalf of our liberal arts curriculum and for shared faculty governance. His legacy is immortal."



**William Rader '65** died Aug 28, 2023. He was 80. Bill was a Bloomington native who studied business administration at IWU before joining the U.S. Army Finance Corps. He was deployed to Fort Carson, Colorado, and Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, where he met his wife. They moved all around the country before returning to Bloomington to raise their family. They eventually retired in Appalachian North Carolina. Bill is survived by three children and eight grandchildren.

**Verne Eyre '66** died June 23, 2023. He was 86. Before coming to Illinois Wesleyan, Verne enlisted in the U.S. Navy as soon as he graduated from Pontiac (Ill.) Township High School in 1954. After getting his degree from IWU, he opened two successful clothing stores in his hometown before joining the State Board of Elections in Springfield. He spent his retirement traveling North America with his wife in their camper. Verne is survived by his wife, six children, 12 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Richard Bremner '67** died Aug. 27, 2023. He was 79. Rick, as the son of a soldier who died in the D-Day invasion of Normandy, joined the U.S. Army after graduating from IWU. He was deployed to Berlin, Germany, as assistant secretary to the deputy brigade commander and was awarded the Commendation Medal. Back in the states, he became a member of the Deer Creek American Legion and the Lion's Club and was a 6th grade history teacher. During his life, he was able to visit the Normandy beachheads. Rick is survived by his wife and two children.

**Mark Brown '67** died July 22, 2023. He was 77. Mark was originally from Washington, D. C., before coming to Bloomington to attend IWU. He was driven by civic responsibility, serving in the U.S. Army for three years and the Department of Commerce for 44. Mark is survived by two children and two grandchildren.

**Dennis Steele '67** died Oct 18, 2023. He was 78. Denny was a product of higher education in Bloomington-Normal, being a graduate of University High School, Illinois Wesleyan and Illinois State University. He was a U.S. Army veteran who believed in community service, volunteering at the Western Avenue Community Center and the Second Presbyterian Church of Bloomington and joining the board of the Illinois Symphony Orchestra. Denny is survived by two children and two grandchildren.

**Susan Krause '70** died Sept. 15, 2023. She was 74. Susan was a piano performance major at IWU who went on to teach and perform for her local and church community. Although she had no children, she was seen as a mother figure to thousands of students, family and community members throughout her life and career. She received her advanced degree in history, philosophy and music from the University of Louisville and studied in England.

**Michael Bettasso '70** died Oct. 16, 2023. He was 75. Michael pursued a degree in law after graduating from IWU, where he was a multi-sport athlete as well as a member of Tau Kappa Epsilon, before he joined his father in the insurance industry. He was a member of the Princeton (Ill.) Public Library Board, from which he retired this year. Michael is survived by two children and six grandchildren.

**Jim Schultz '70** died recently. As written by **Dave Wilson '70**: "Jim and I were Sigma Chi brothers and roommates for three years. Jim and I both entered military service following graduation in early June, 1970. I headed for flight school with the Marine Corps and Jim went into the Navy to become a navigator on P-3 Orion anti-submarine patrol air-

craft. Jim had an illustrious career spanning over 20 years and retired in 1995 as the last commanding officer of Naval Air Station Glenview. As we say when a brother Sigma Chi passes into the 'Chapter Eternal,' 'All Honor to His Name.'"

**Stephen Plast '77** died Aug. 14, 2023. He was 67. Stephen studied religion at IWU, where he was the top singles player for the Titans tennis team. His career was in insurance, specializing in disaster relief at State Farm, where he worked for 40 years. He was also a member of Big Brothers/Big Sisters and the Knights of Columbus. Stephen remained a sports fan throughout his life, attending the US and French Open tennis tournaments and cheering on the Los Angeles Dodgers, Cowboys, Avalanche and Supersonics. Stephen is survived by his child.

**Kim Schafer-Astroth '77** died Sept. 4, 2023. She was 67. Kim was a life-long nurse and academic who received her degrees from Illinois Wesleyan, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and St. Louis University. She also completed a fellowship in behavioral nursing research at the Indiana University School of Nursing. Most recently, she taught at Illinois State University's Mennonite College of Nursing. She had more than 50 articles published and was the co-author of five textbooks. Kim is survived by three children and three grandchildren.

**Nancy (Reynolds) Howe '80** died Oct. 23, 2023. She was 65. Nancy was valedictorian at Deland-Weldon High School in 1976, before becoming a nursing graduate from Illinois Wesleyan and leading a career in nursing. Nancy is survived by her husband, four children and four grandchildren.

**Randall McCain '88** died July 6, 2023. He was 56. Randy was a life-long lover of sports, being a track and field athlete for the Titans and a fan of the St. Louis Cardinals, the Phoenix Cardinals and the Fighting Illini. After graduation, he joined Caterpillar and took up golf. Randy is survived by his mother and two children.

**Suneetha (Namboodiri) Mooss '91** died Sept 2, 2023. She was 53. Suneetha's family moved from India to Illinois when she was six years old. She followed in her father's footsteps as a pediatrician, earning her medical degree from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and completing her residency at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City. She ran her own practice for 15 years. Suneetha is survived by her parents and two children.

**Frederic Hollingworth '99** died Oct. 13, 2023. He was 47. Fred grew up loving the outdoors and sports, becoming an Eagle Scout, and he taught himself the musical skills that rounded out his life-long hobbies. At IWU, he was a member of Sigma Pi who studied biology and education. As a teacher, he regularly took students on class trips to the Florida Keys, and, being a bilingual Spanish speaker, became a teacher in Bolivia and Colombia. Fred is survived by his father and wife.

**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 the 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 at [www.iwu.edu/magazine](http://www.iwu.edu/magazine).

# THANK YOU, DONORS!

## Mansi Shah '25

is a first generation college student whose parents immigrated to the United States from India in search of the American Dream.

"My parents always emphasized the importance of saving money and also that money should not be a barrier to education. As I was receiving college acceptance letters, IWU offered me the most financial aid than any other University. The impact of your generosity on my education, my family, and my future is immeasurable."



## Clay Anderson '23

used the first full year of the Yess '82 Bloomberg Finance Lab to launch his career with a full-time job at JP Morgan Chase in Los Angeles.

"Your impact on our lives is undeniable. Because of your actions, students can compete at the highest level, have cutting-edge technology and be able to enjoy this beautiful university."





# IWU GIFT CLUBS

Gift Clubs at Illinois Wesleyan University are a longstanding tradition. Through our gift clubs, we're able to pay homage to important IWU landmarks, people, and traditions of the past, while honoring the donors of today.

Visit [iwu.mobi/clubs](https://iwu.mobi/clubs) or scan the **QR code** to make your gift and join a Gift Club today! You'll be recognized in our Annual Report and receive additional donor benefits throughout the year.



## PINEAPPLE CLUB

**\$100-\$249**

The pineapple represents prosperity, hospitality, and friendship. All IWU graduates touch the ceremonial pineapple at the end of the commencement stage, acknowledging the friendships they formed on campus and the University's pledge they are always welcome back.



## JOHN WESLEY POWELL CLUB

**\$250-\$499**

John Wesley Powell was an American geologist, U.S. Army soldier, and a founder of the National Geographic Society. He joined Illinois Wesleyan's faculty in 1865. Two years later, he took IWU students to Colorado's mountains, one of the first expeditions of its kind in the history of American higher education.



## ASPIRATION CLUB

**\$500-\$999**

*Formerly known as: University Fellows*

Home to many fond IWU traditions, Aspiration Fountain is a landmark on the Egbers Quadrangle funded by the Egbers Family. Gary Egbers '72 served as an officer of the Board of Directors and president of the Wesleyan Associates. During Turning Titan, incoming students write their goals for their time at IWU in chalk around Aspiration Fountain. At commencement, faculty and staff write each graduate's name to symbolize their ambition and achievement.



## OLD NORTH SOCIETY

**\$1,000-\$2,499**

*Formerly known as: President's Club*

Old North Hall was the first and only building on IWU's campus for 15 years. It was built in 1856 and served for 110 years before it was removed in 1966 to make way for Sheean Library.



## HANNAH SHUR SOCIETY

**\$2,500-\$4,999**

*Formerly known as: Quadrangle Club*

Hannah L. Shur was the first female graduate of IWU, who received her diploma in 1872. She was the 74th student to receive a diploma from the university.



## PHOENIX GATES SOCIETY

**\$5,000-\$9,999**

*Formerly known as: Phoenix Grove Society*

A set of gates welcoming students, faculty, staff and visitors to campus. These gates are named after the Phoenix Family who sold the land to Illinois Wesleyan University over 165 years ago.



## BUCK FAMILY FELLOWS

**\$10,000-\$24,999**

*Formerly known as: Hedding Fellows*

Martha Buck became IWU's first female member of the Board of Trustees following the death of her husband, Rev. Dr. Hiram Buck, in 1892. IWU's first free-standing library holds the family's name as a lasting memorial to their contributions of time and money.



## REV. PRESTON WOOD, SR. FELLOWS

**\$25,000-\$49,999**

Reverend Preston Wood, Sr. was an invaluable member of the Board of Trustees and served on its finance committee starting in the 1870's. Rev. Wood's fundraising prowess and financial astuteness gave the university a strong financial foundation from the beginning.



## HEARTS AFLAME FELLOWS

**\$50,000+**

The opening line to our school song, Alma Wesleyana, proclaims "From hearts aflame our love we pledge to thee." English Professor, W.E. Schultz, wrote Alma Wesleyana in 1935, and it's been sung at IWU Commencement every year since.



Club levels are determined by the total dollars given to the University during our fiscal year (Aug. 1 through July 31).



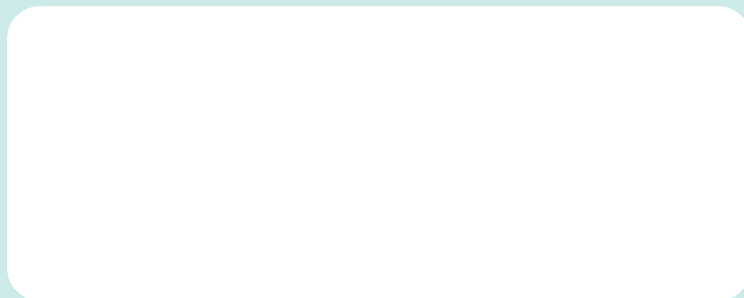


PHOTO FINISH

## *Island Life*

Giant tortoises lounge in a field on the Galápagos Islands, where students of **Scott Collins '02** spotted them while carrying out ecological conservation work.