



illumine

—University of Southern Indiana—

FALL 2022



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GRATITUDE AND PRIDE



Joanne Artz

Very proud of this woman!! USI strong! [#illumestudentnurse](#)



Connie Sutton Burgess

Great job!
[#ellieconleynurse](#)



Davetta Givens

Glad you were there. Proud of you.
[#illumSpring2022](#)



Becky Kachanuk

Blessings to you, Ms. Conley
[#riskinglifeforlife](#)



Emily Becker Cox

you have to read this
[#usinursinghero](#)



Jim Hunter

What a great story!
[#spring2020illum](#)



Jesse Marx

Impressive!
[#usisoccernurse](#)

FOND FAREWELL



hairorivas

Love you USI forever and always! Thank you for the best 4 years of my life! Until we meet again!
[#proudusialumni](#)



OUTER SPACE EXCELLENCE



sheriannemaddoxstandley

What a wonderful project for the students!!

[#engineeringstudentsCUBESAT](#)

SOFTBALL HOOPLA



michaelarnold1950

Congratulations Eagles on your NCAA DII Midwest Regional win!!!

[#thatshowitsdone](#)

POSITIVE HEADWAY



Bryan Morrison

A perfect example of why I love working in Higher Ed and USI.

[#spring2020illumheadway](#)

A HORSE, OF COURSE

Being a horse person, I enjoyed this article.

Glenn Ballard

Instructor in Mathematical Sciences
Evansville, Indiana



Kim Fruit

Dr Rochon is such an amazing person! He has so much positive energy that he radiates to everyone! Blessed to have him for our President!

POV PROUD



Whitebread_25

What a king @diegoasn

[#illumSpring2022](#)



Dimarneira1974

Congratulations nephew, may the successes continue for you with the grace of God, kisses

We invite readers to comment on articles and start conversations by bringing unique perspectives to relevant magazine topics. Correspondence and comments will not be limited to letters mailed to the editor, but may be from email or social media networks. Letters mailed to the editor may be published in the magazine unless the author states it is not for publication. Letters should be kept to 250 words, and may be edited for style, length, clarity, grammar and relevance to USI issues. Letters to the editor should be sent to magazine@usi.edu.



THINGS THAT MAKE US PREEN

OUR EXPERTS SHED LIGHT

WNIN'S NEWSMAKERS

DR. SHAWN ROBEY,
STUDENT FINANCIAL
SUCCESS SPECIALIST,
DISCUSSED FINANCIAL LITERACY
FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS.

DR. JULIE EYINK,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY,
SPOKE TO THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS
LEVEL PEOPLE EXPERIENCE IN RESPONSE
TO GUN VIOLENCE.

DR. CATHY CAREY,
PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS,
TALKED ABOUT THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF
INFLATION ON THE COMMUNITY.

WNIN MORNING EDITION

DR. WILLIAM "BILL" ELLIOT JR.
PROFESSOR OF GEOLOGY, CONTRIBUTED
HIS EXPERTISE CONCERNING INDIANA'S
KARST-LIMESTONE SYSTEMS.

EVANSVILLE COURIER & PRESS

DR. THOMAS NOLAND, PROFESSOR
OF ACCOUNTING, DISCUSSED BANKING
OVERDRAFT FEES THAT LED TO A
RECENT LAWSUIT.

IBJ MEDIA

PRESIDENT RONALD ROCHON WAS
NAMED ONE OF THE 250 MOST
INFLUENTIAL EXECUTIVES, FROM
VARIOUS ECONOMIC SECTORS, ACROSS
THE STATE BY IBJ MEDIA. IN ITS
NOMINATION PROCESS, IBJ MEDIA,
COMPRISED OF "INDIANAPOLIS BUSINESS
JOURNAL" (IBJ), "INSIDE INDIANA
BUSINESS" AND "INDIANA LAWYER",
LOOKED FOR INDIVIDUALS STATEWIDE
WHO MAKE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCES
FOR INDIANA'S ECONOMY AND
HOOSIERS OVERALL.

SPRING 2022 CORRECTIONS

- Thomas Drury, Jazz Ensemble was inadvertently left out of the feature titled "Crescendo".
- The Spring "Student POV" author's name was incorrect. It is Diego Socorro Neira, not Diego Neira Socorro.

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As an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer, the University of Southern Indiana considers all qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy or marital status, parental status, national origin or ancestry, age (40 and older), disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status or any other category protected by law or identified by the University as a protected class. Questions or concerns should be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer, USI Human Resources Department, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, Indiana 47712.





My interest in water and learning to swim happened when I was in middle school, and my mother enrolled me in lessons at the 111th Street YMCA in Chicago. I love sports but was never athletic and always the last kid picked when teams were formed during gym class. But in the water, I became somewhat of a fish, rapidly rising through the swim-skill levels from minnow to dolphin. From there, I became a certified lifeguard and swim instructor trained in CPR and water safety. The turning point in my athletic pursuits came when I qualified for the Y's competitive swim team during high school—an opportunity not offered at my school.

Swimming provided me a path in athletics, a lane of my own, away from the pressure I'd experienced in other team sports where I feared fumbling the football or leaving a player on base. In the water, in my lane, I performed solo to the best of my ability during each event, while still contributing to the team's overall success.

My teammates were extremely athletic and gifted swimmers who pushed me to become my best. But a team is nothing without a coach. Coach Rod Manifold believed in us. He believed in me. He taught us to respect our bodies through good nutrition. He taught us considerable lessons about swimming and competition and to exhibit grace in both winning and losing. Through him and being on his team I learned valuable insight into trust, growth and discovery.

While competitive swimmers stay in their lane, their performances are tied to the team. My swimming was not only about me improving my own time,

ENSURING ACADEMIC SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

my own stroke, my own method of engaging the water, but my doing well for the team. Me serving as a representative of the team. That's what athletics means to me—being an essential part of a team.

Over the years, USI has risen from a local institution to a national and international presence. Our students come from around the globe. Some graduate and go on to attend the most prestigious universities for graduate and professional school. Some leave us and immediately procure employment earning six-figure salaries. That is because of who we are. That is because of our faculty and staff. That is because of our academic programs. That is because of the reputation this institution has secured and accomplished over the past 57 years.

Just as swimming provided me a path forward in life, the University of Southern Indiana embarked on a new path forward by accepting the opportunity to transition into NCAA Division I athletics and join the Ohio Valley Conference. This move is just another step in fulfilling one of our key goals in the 2021-2025 strategic plan: elevate visibility and reputation.

Competing at the Division I level will strengthen and enhance our academic and athletic reputations in the future. For the first time, we are going to have our athletic competitions—men's and women's—streamed on ESPN+. We never had that opportunity before, and it is quite significant. For the first time, we are going to be playing teams from around the country that are extremely distinguished—academically and athletically—and all eyes will be on USI.

As we move forward with noteworthy competitions, remarkable stories and future championships, students and student-athletes will come to the University of Southern Indiana and distinguish themselves. They will contribute in special ways to our community. They will be role models. They will exhibit their ambassadorship. They will do it as a team. Because, like the individual swimmer I once was, athletics is just one part of USI's community and team. Our academics have been in the DI lane for years.

I believe in our USI team. I believe in USI's ability to take on this new challenge. I believe in this opportunity for us to grow our reputation and increase our visibility among students seeking a place to advance their lives through higher education. Our years with the Great Lakes Valley Conference (we were a founding member) and Division II, our numerous team and individual national championship wins, our student-athletes' extraordinary academic success, and our growth as an institution have prepared us for this new challenge and advances us to a new lane. From here and with intentional teamwork, we dare to compete and win at the highest level. Welcome to the future of USI. Go Screaming Eagles.

ADVISING CENTERS

Academic Advising at USI starts the moment students are accepted, and our advisors help build relationships that can last well beyond graduation. From day one, we work tirelessly to help students by answering questions, providing instructions and guiding them toward their goals. Our professional advisors and faculty members work with students to help them register for classes and—just as important—act as a lifeline when they need help understanding college processes.

ATHLETIC PEER COACHING

Housed within Academic Skills, the goal of the USI Athletic Peer Coach Program is to assist USI student-athletes both academically and with the overall adjustment to college life. All student-athletes are eligible to participate. Participants are assisted by fellow student-athletes who have been selected to serve as peer coaches. These peer coaches are positive role models, both athletically and academically.

STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Many college students quickly discover college is very different than their time in high school. Being successful at the college level requires planning, self-motivation and hard work. Students are no longer in a structured educational setting for several hours at a time during the day and some students have not developed the self-discipline required for college coursework.

ACADEMIC COACHING AND STUDY SKILLS

College students can sometimes feel overwhelmed with the academic demands. Any USI student can be paired with an academic coach for assistance and support. Academic coaches offer individualized weekly sessions that focus on a variety of academic topics, such as organization, time management, note-taking, test taking, accountability, responsibility, goal setting, breaking assignments into manageable tasks, active listening, collaboration and more.



NEW HARMONY'S ON THE RISE

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA'S HISTORIC NEW HARMONY PROGRAM HAS BEEN AWARDED A PLANNING GRANT OF JUST UNDER \$100,000 FROM LILLY ENDOWMENT INC. THROUGH ITS RELIGION AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS INITIATIVE. THE GRANT IS HELPING HISTORIC NEW HARMONY EXPLORE HOW TO STRENGTHEN EFFORTS TO DEPICT RELIGION IN ITS EXHIBITIONS, EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH AND OTHER PROGRAMS. "THIS GRANT WILL PROVIDE THE CAPACITY TO RESEARCH AND DEVELOP PLANS FOR EXHIBITS AND PROGRAMMING THAT WILL BUILD UPON NEW HARMONY'S RICH CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL HERITAGE," SAID LESLIE TOWNSEND '88 M'08, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND HISTORIC NEW HARMONY.



Spring 2022
Pen a Caption
winner
"Um...
you be you,
but someplace
other than
my mirror."

Kathy Oeth '83 M'14

Kathy Oeth



Problem solving was not a problem for USI's Romain College of Business student team participating in The Econ Games 2022. Presented with a dataset provided by Fisher Homes, this year's corporate sponsor, economics majors Parker Collignon, Jailine

McElroy, Cole Stephenson and Elijah Toavs competed against 10 academic heavyweights, such as the University of Kentucky, Murray State and University of Cincinnati, walking away the Overall Champions. "We had the chance to problem solve using data analytics software, apply our

knowledge from the classroom and work as a team, all while learning more about the economics of the homebuilding industry," said Collignon. "Our creative approach quickly won approval from the judges. It was a ton of fun."



THESE HEAVY HITTERS
 ADVANCED ALL THE
 WAY TO A SPOT AMONG
 THE FINAL EIGHT TEAMS AT
 THE NCAA DIVISION II NATIONAL
 CHAMPIONSHIP BREAKING RECORDS
 ALONG THE WAY. THEY MIGHT NOT HAVE
 BROUGHT HOME A TROPHY (AGAIN, AS THE
 TEAM DID IN 2018) BUT THEY ARE ALL WINNERS!



ENDOWMENT ENHANCES AGING PROGRAMS

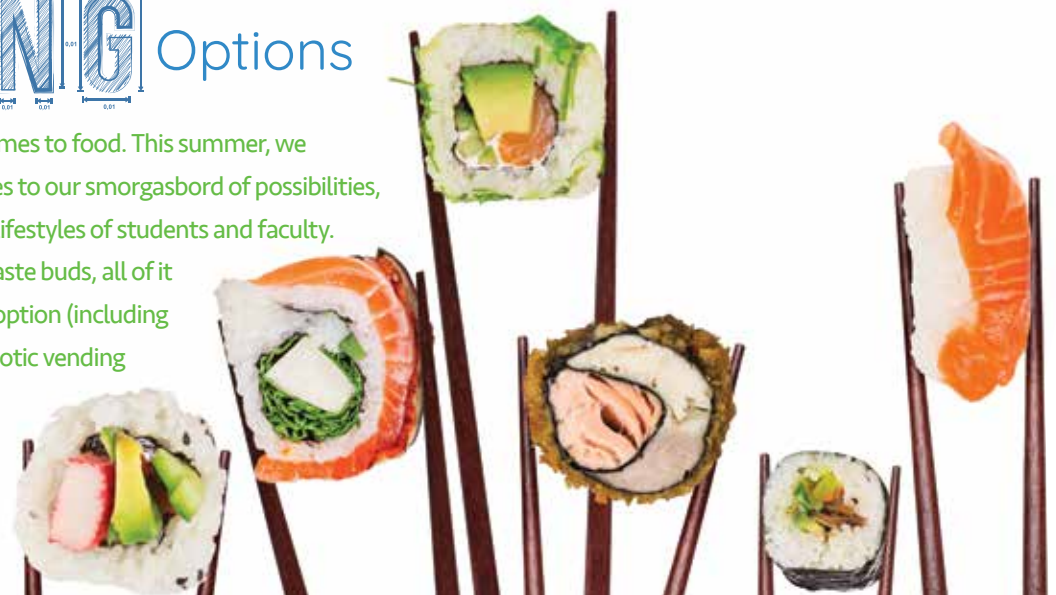
A \$1 million leadership gift from the Sol and Arlene Bronstein Foundation, established by the Bronsteins, has been gifted to the University's Foundation. The funds will focus on five key initiatives—benefitting students and faculty, regional healthcare professionals and community members—to support programs of excellence in dementia care and advance care planning education:

1. Evidence-based training and certifications
2. Develop and/or enhance artificial intelligence and/or smart home technology
3. Launch the annual Bronstein Faculty Research and/or Innovation Award
4. Launch the Bronstein Affiliate Visiting Faculty position in the University of Southern Indiana Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness
5. Host international/national speakers as the Bronstein Keynote speaker at the Mid-America Institute on Aging and Wellness annual conference

In recognition of their contributions, USI has renamed the College of Nursing and Health Professions' Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness the Bronstein Center for Healthy Aging and Wellness.

Uprooting DINING Options

Summer construction is a real thing, even when it comes to food. This summer, we renovated spaces and installed some delicious choices to our smorgasbord of possibilities, including some high-tech pathways to fit on-the-go lifestyles of students and faculty. We love to look for ways to expand the mind... and taste buds, all of it done strategically. We've got a new authentic Asian option (including sushi), an online-only ordering ghost kitchen and robotic vending that will deliver pizza and more.



The

BREAKING NEWS

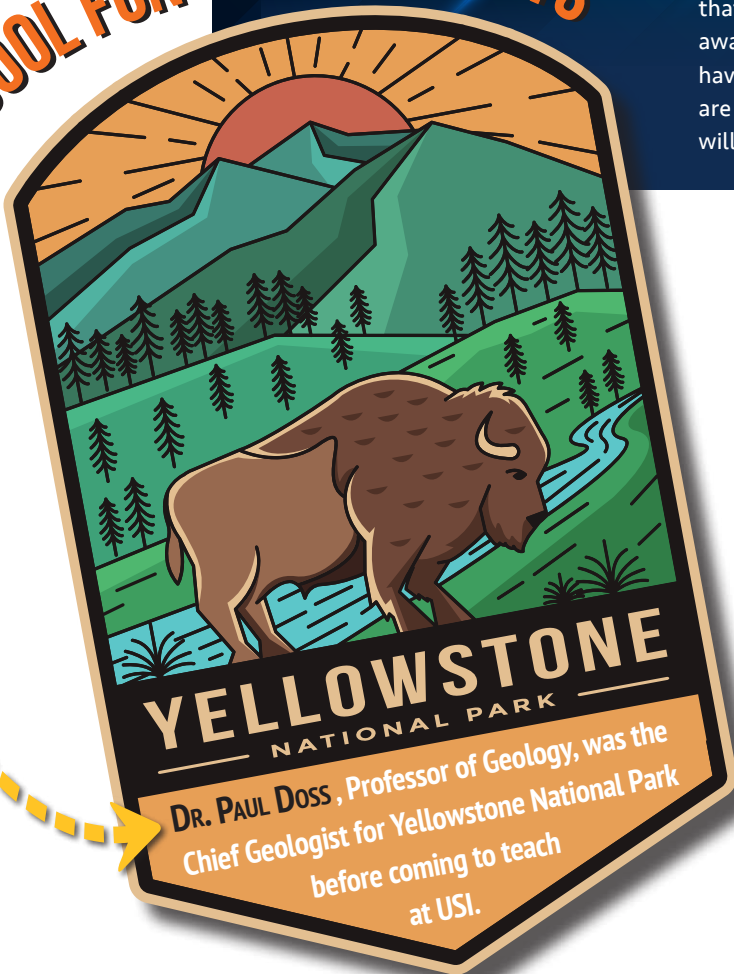
USI

ACCOLADES

SOUNDS AND LOOKS LIKE A WINNER!

USI's Radio and Television program earned the **39th Top Winning Overall Program** and **7th Audio Program** in the U.S. in the first ever ranking conducted by the Broadcasting Education Association. The program also ranked in the **top 30 for Sports Broadcasting**. "We have won many individual awards in audio and video at USI, but what makes these special is that it is a ranking of our students work over the past five years," says John Morris, Instructor of Radio and Television and General Manager at 95.7 *The Spin*. "This isn't a flash in the pan, but evidence of sustained success. It shows how strong our students are today as well as those that came before. I look at it even as a bigger picture. While this award is based on the success of those most recent, it could not have happened without the work of the students before that. They are the ones who have built the expectation of excellence and the willingness to work hard to achieve it."

COOL FUN FACULTY FACTS



STAMPS OF APPROVAL

USI's received approval on several degree programs and certificates effective Fall 2022.

1. Bachelor of Science in Diagnostic Medical Sonography
2. Undergraduate Supply Chain Management Certificate
3. Undergraduate Activity Professional Certificate
4. Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Health Informatics
5. Online Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering

For more on how these offerings can serve to advance your career, visit USI.edu and insert the program/certificate name in the search box.



Future of Flying



IMAGINE CRUISING

ALONG AT 30,000 FEET IN AN AIRPLANE

CHURNED OUT ON A (VERY LARGE) 3D PRINTER.

FOUR MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENTS—

JOEL KNACKMUHS, LANDON MAYER, GLEN ROUGH AND ISAAC WHITEHEAD—

MIGHT ONE DAY BE THE PROFESSIONALS BEHIND SUCH A FUTURISTIC FLIGHT.

THE TEAM TOOK SECOND PLACE IN THE FIXED-WING CATEGORY AND COLLECTED \$500 IN THE 6TH ANNUAL 3D PRINTED AIRCRAFT COMPETITION HOSTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, HELD IN MAVERICK STADIUM IN ARLINGTON, TEXAS. THEY DESIGNED AND BUILT MULTIPLE ITERATIONS OF AN AIRCRAFT AS PART OF THEIR SENIOR PROJECT, LEARNING TO DESIGN AN ENGINEERING SYSTEM WITH ADVANCED MANUFACTURING METHODS THAT REQUIRE A UNIQUE SET OF PROCESS AND MATERIAL CONSTRAINTS. THEY HAD TWO GREAT FLIGHTS, THE LONGEST BEING 9.1 SECONDS, JUST SHY OF THE WRIGHT BROTHERS PIONEERING FLIGHT AT KITTY HAWK THAT LASTED 12 SECONDS.

DEMAND EXPANDS NURSING ADMISSIONS

The College of Nursing and Health Professions now has two application periods for students seeking nursing degrees (Summer and Spring) and changed its admittance to a Holistic Admission process. Previously, admittance was

based 100% on GPA, now the program requires students to complete 31 hours of the required courses and 50% is GPA-based and the remaining 50% is based on personal characteristics, including a written letter, resume and an interview process. With the new application period, the nursing program will begin graduating students three times per year instead of the two traditional times.



WELCOME



Celebrating New Arrivals

TWO OF USI'S COLLEGES HAVE NEW DEANS.

DR. DEL DOUGHTY IS THE NEW DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND DR. SUDESH MUJUMDAR REJOINS USI AS DEAN OF THE ROMAIN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS.



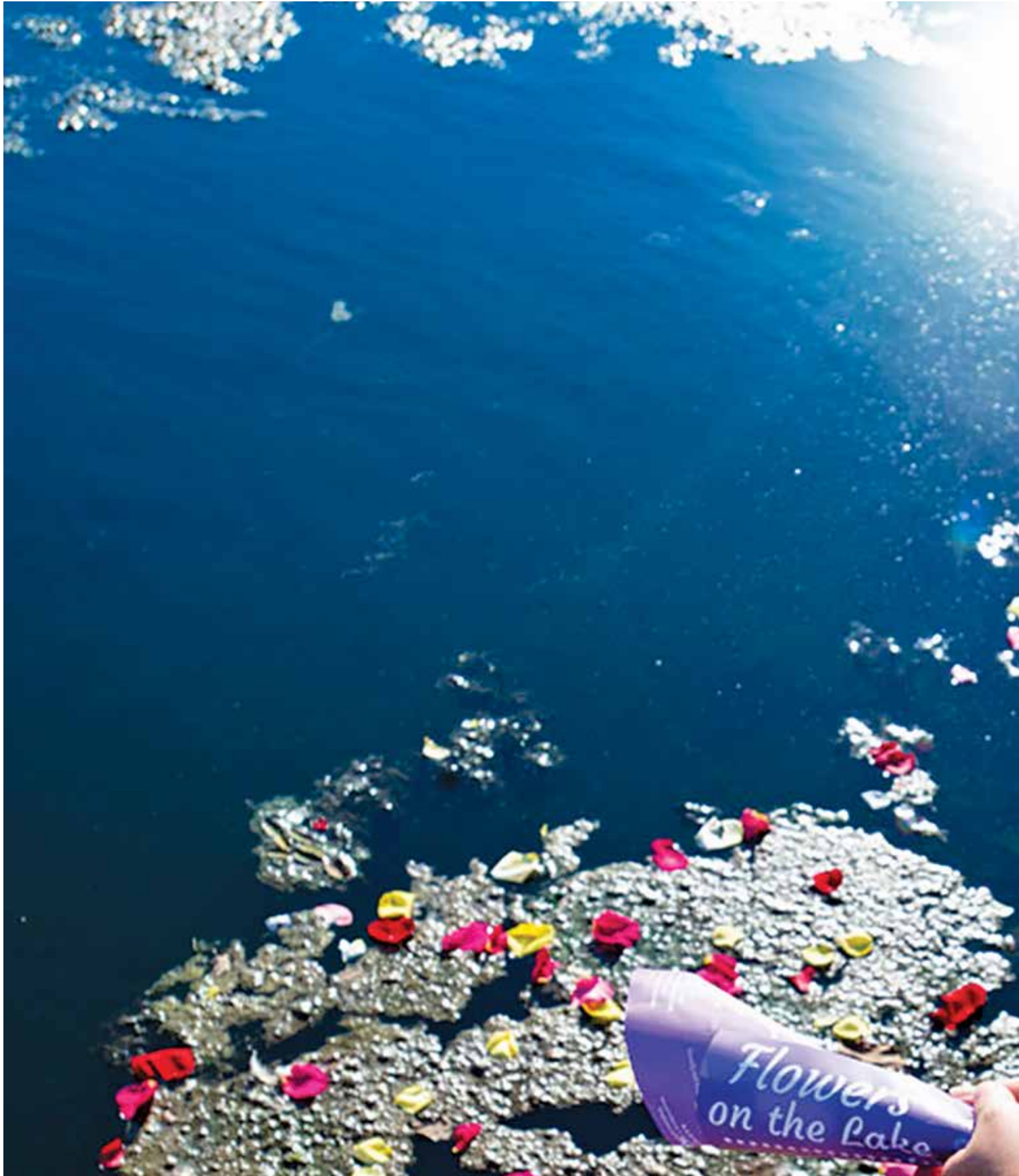
Like many in our USI family, **Dr. Del Doughty** is a first-generation college graduate with an appetite for excellence and a hungering curiosity. He brings a clear vision for the College and how it will advance students. "We're in the business of developing people, and that starts with us. The best way for us to fulfill our purpose is to model it by staying curious and leading lives of inquiry."

Dean Doughty holds a bachelor's degree in English and creative writing and a master's degree in humanities, both from the University of South Florida, as well as a doctorate in comparative literature from Pennsylvania State University. Prior to joining USI, he served as Dean for Texas A&M University, and Associate Dean and Professor of English for Huntington University. Doughty is a passionate volunteer and advocate for organizations dedicated to children and literacy.

On the business side of campus, **Dr. Sudesh Mujumdar** returns to lead the College he loves, bringing with him experience and ideas to shape a strong future. "Together, we will seek to forge strategic relationships and partnerships, leverage our rich talent and our innovation assets to co-create engaging and impactful experiential learning opportunities that strengthen identity bonds and the brand of the College."



Dean Mujumdar earned bachelor's and master's degrees in economics from the University of Bombay and master's and doctorate degrees in economics from the University of Cincinnati, as well as completed the Program on Negotiation and Leadership at Harvard Law School. He was USI's Chair of the Economics and Marketing Department before becoming Dean of the College of Business Administration at Savannah State University (SSU) in Savannah, Georgia. There he secured more than \$4 million in grants and private donor funding and established SSU as a partnership institution in Bank of America's \$1 billion initiative to expand economic opportunity and social justice.





Every year students, faculty, staff, community members and more come together for Flowers on the Lake, solemnly forming a ring around Reflection Lake to recognize and honor those killed by domestic violence. The flower petals tossed on the water are donated by local florists, and the names of each local person killed is read and a chime sounded.



The locally held, national event began at USI in 2013 and is a collaboration between the USI SAGVP*, Albion Fellows Bacon Center, SIRCAT** and the Vanderburgh County Sheriff's Office. SAGVP includes representatives from various campus departments and offices as well as community organizations and a corresponding student organization which addresses and educates people on topics related to gender violence prevention—including domestic violence, stalking, human trafficking and sexual assault. In the United States, one in four women and one in 10 men experience physical violence by an intimate partner, and more than 10 million adults experience domestic violence***. Learn more about USI's assault prevention and response here.



* Sexual Assault & Gender Violence Prevention Group

** Southwest Indiana Regional Coalition Against Trafficking

*** National Coalition Against Domestic Violence

STUDENT P.O.V.

Tegan Ruhl '24
Journalism and English

Overcoming Challenges

In the past, I have struggled with change, especially seasonal depression. It begins in early November when the clocks turn back, and the darkness begins at 4 p.m. As the temperatures cool, my little body shakes whenever it dips below 50 degrees. This winter was especially challenging for me as a first-year college student struggling to transition into a new life and semester, dealing with feelings of isolation, doubt and the college-level course load.

I was a freshman in high school when I discovered I had a hard time adjusting to change. Whether it was a change in my class schedule or losing touch with a friend I loved, it all felt incredibly overwhelming. Then winter arrived.

I thought college would be easy, when in fact, it is not. It was fatiguing to attend school full-time, maintain a social life and have a healthy sleep schedule on my own. I didn't know anyone in my classes, and it was becoming more difficult to see my friends back home as the semester progressed. I began to feel isolated, and my workload continued to increase. More assignments, papers, interviews and readings piled up on my desk with each passing day. I was adding more to my to-do list than I was marking off. I was struggling

to catch up, and I felt as if I had no one to talk to about it.

I have always dreamed of going to college, doing extremely well and being a successful writer one day. Yet, I never expected the process of getting there to be so strenuous.

During my first winter at USI, my friends and I were busy with life, and I felt as if I was growing away from them. I felt more alone with each passing day. It got to the point where it was exhausting to find the motivation to get out of bed in the morning, go to class, do my work and even say "Hi" to my friends. I was stressed to the point that my hair was falling out. I felt so distant from everyone around me that I didn't reach out to anyone.

One day, in the middle of February, something in me broke, and I found myself crying in a stall of the women's restroom on the third floor of the Rice Library, talking to my mom on the phone about how alone I felt.

She told me, "You're not alone, Tegan. That is a lie the devil put in your head."

The following weekend, I went home and told my parents that I signed up for USI's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) on campus. Although I had only a few CAPS appointments, things got immensely better after the day I broke down. I began meeting people in my classes and becoming more involved on campus. A week or two later, I agreed to write this piece for *illumine*, excited to have my writing published in an actual magazine! I began to see more blessings instead of burdens, and I'm convinced that wouldn't have happened if I didn't experience that rough winter season.

My first semester at USI taught me a lot about myself and the changes happening around me. Even now, in the fall, I struggle sometimes to see the good in every day. Seasons will always change, whether they are good or bad. But I've learned over this past semester to enjoy right now, today. To be present. To enjoy the moment I'm in, because it may not happen again for a while. To cherish it, to soak in it like you're sitting in the sun. No matter what life is throwing at you, I hope you'll be able to see that the sun is still there.

In the meantime, I'll work to savor the season for both of us.

DESK OF... FROM THE



JANET JOHNSON M'05

Director of Alumni Relations and Volunteer USI

many “mentoring moments” with seasoned professionals. I took one college night class. I got married and had a family.

Fast forward to one spring evening in the mid-90s when my brother stopped by after work. He proceeded to tell me about a college program he had heard about at work. The program was designed to meet the needs of adults already in the workforce.

I enrolled and started my first class that summer. The class of '98 was a cohort of 25 students going through the program, sharing successes, challenges and becoming friends. Mostly I studied at night after my kids were in bed. That was the easiest way for me to stay involved with my kids and be committed to earning a degree and getting the most out of the educational experience. I enjoyed the varied coursework, lectures, class discussions and getting to know my classmates, some of whom I stay in touch with today. To be successful, I focused on one assignment at a time and, class by class, I earned my degree.

It was in high school that for the first time I was a member of a professional organization—Business Professionals of America. Among other activities, members could participate in business competitions. A highlight for my younger self was advancing to state in two categories. One category was public speaking. I don't remember the topic, but I remember I had to write, memorize and deliver the speech without notes. After a full Saturday of competition, I was so pleased the next day to see my name in the paper along with some of my classmates. Competing was a team effort—our teacher coached, we students strategized, practiced and rehearsed.

With that teacher I experienced “mentoring moments.” I gained insight into the world of work organically through lessons I completed during business lab and from first-hand experiences of challenges, growth and successes she so generously shared. I think that's how it is for most people. Most of us aren't connected through formal mentoring programs, we observe those around us and emulate those we admire.

Soon after graduation, I started a job in the finance department of a bank. Onward and upward, I worked in an optometrist office, then for a local daily newspaper and lastly for a pharmaceutical manufacturing company. I gained knowledge and skills about different jobs in various industries. While those jobs didn't directly provide me with the purpose I was seeking, they did provide me with real world work experience and

None of us get to where we're going by ourselves. Our networks benefit us in ways too numerous to count—linking us to people who provide insight and firsthand knowledge, job leads, encouragement and advice. For me, a component lacking in my academic program was access to an organized network of people who were willing to serve as mentors. Even though I had work experience, it was from 15 years earlier. I would have benefited from individuals willing to share insights into the current work world.

After earning my bachelor's degree, I came to work at USI and am currently the Director of Alumni Relations and Volunteer USI. I recognize the tremendous difference mentors have made in my life and career, that's why I'm so passionate about facilitating such relationships between our students and alumni through our Screegles Mentoring Program that allows students and mentors alike to gain from the relationship.

It's a rewarding experience to connect alumni with students and each other for the purpose of mentoring. There is a personal sense of fulfillment and satisfaction in that act.



Want to become a mentor? Visit USI.edu/mentor.

ATHLETE Q&A

ADDISYN BLACKWELL '22

- MAJOR AND GRAD YEAR?**
I am an accounting major, and I will be graduating this December and then starting my MBA in the spring.
- FAVORITE PRE-GAME HYPE SONG?**
My favorite pregame song would probably have to be *Bust a Move* by Young MC.
- WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE A USI ATHLETE?**
Being a USI athlete means that I represent our basketball program and our University. Having the opportunity to bring light to my University and the city of Evansville is a privilege. I am extremely grateful to be a part of such a great team and University.
- WHAT'S THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED SO FAR IN YOUR USI ATHLETIC CAREER?**
I have learned many lessons at USI; the most important [being] that college basketball is a marathon and not a sprint. It's important to never lose faith and never forget the reason why you started [something] in the first place. Embracing the process and learning along the way will create memories that will last a lifetime.
- WHAT IS THE BIGGEST MISCONCEPTION YOU GET ABOUT BEING A STUDENT-ATHLETE?**
People believe we get everything handed to us. As athletes, we are constantly pushing our bodies to the limits during practices and games, as well as balancing our schoolwork and community involvement. We sacrifice a lot of time and energy to give our best in each aspect of life. We are regular students that still must complete assignments on time and participate in class. We are responsible for making that commitment in the classroom and on the court. Being an athlete can be very rewarding, however, it is also a test of commitment.
- WHAT'S YOUR GO-TO POST-MATCH MEAL/SNACK?**
I am not too picky about food after games, but before games, I always snack on raisins.
- REFLECT ON YOUR FAVORITE GAME AND WHY.**
This season's final regular-season matchup [against] Lindenwood. Our team clinched the number one spot overall in GLVC conference play. Being able to cut down the nets and go out on top in our final season in the GLVC will always be special to me. It's even more special to do it with your best friends.
- WHAT IS THE TRAINING PROCESS LIKE FOR BASKETBALL?**
In the summer and preseason, we focus on getting our bodies in shape for the upcoming season by weight training, conditioning and physical testing. On the court, we have a lot of focus on skill development and learning material. The cool part about our team is that at any hour of



the day you'll see players on the court, in the weight room or in the pool trying to get better for our team.

- WHAT'S YOUR INNER THOUGHT PROCESS WHEN PLAYING A GAME?**
As a point guard, I am an extension of the coach on the floor. I am responsible for getting our team in the right places on the court and making sure we run an efficient offense. Throughout the game, I am communicating with coaches and teammates to see what we need to do and or adjust during the game to win.



WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT USI GOING DI?

I believe this transition into DI will be very beneficial to not only our athletic department but to our University as well. Our athletic and University administrators have done a phenomenal job providing all the information and resources for this transition to the students and student-athletes. I believe all USI teams can compete right away in the Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) and having the opportunity to represent our University on a bigger stage will help attract more students, recruits and help grow this University on a national level. I believe that our

community engagement will continue to grow as we will represent much more than our University, but the city of Evansville. In the future, I think it will be so cool to look back and see the growth of our University and see how far we have come. I am proud of this move to DI and I'm excited about the new opportunities!



For the Women's Basketball team schedule, scan here:

“VERHEARD UOTABLES”

“*Truth* IS THE *apex* OF EVERYTHING THAT IS *good*.”

“ I MADE UP A **FORMULA** THAT *life is* ABOUT *happiness*, AND HAPPINESS WAS A FORMULA: $H = S - F$. *Happiness equals Smiles minus Frowns*. SO DO A LOT OF THINGS THAT MAKE YOU **SMILE** IN LIFE. AND BE WILLING TO TELL **JOKES**.”

“ WHEN YOU ARE *lacking sleep*, YOUR HEAD GOES OFF IN *tangents*, SOME OF THOSE MIGHT BE *ideas* THAT TURN OUT TO BE **VALUABLE**.”

“ A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO **DREAM** *outside the rules* TURN OUT TO BE PEOPLE WHO START COMPANIES LIKE APPLE.”

VERHEARD UOTABLES



APPLE COMPUTER COFOUNDER STEVE (THE WOZ) WOZNIAK

took center stage in USI's Screaming Eagles Arena last spring as the fifth speaker in the Romain College of Business Innovative Speaker Series. He peppered his story with tales of his path from self-taught computer guru during the dawn of personal computers to his role in the tech industry that disrupted and reshaped the way we all live. An engineer at heart, The Woz wanted to level the technological playing field between multimillion dollar companies and the average person by creating things that improve lives. A self-described "nonprofit person" and jokester, he delivered a string of pearls for all to live by during his interesting and entertaining talk.

“ COLLEGE IS SO IMPORTANT. YOU GET THE *intellectual freedom* TO PURSUE YOUR DESIRES IN LIFE AND YOUR *passions*.”

“ BE TOTALLY *honest* ABOUT THINGS. OBJECTIVE. DO NOT HAVE A BIAS. ONLY LOOK FOR *objective solutions*.”

“ IF YOU *love* SOMETHING..., THE NUMBER OF HOURS THAT YOU *work* [at it] IS HOW GOOD YOU GET. THAT'S WHERE THE *skills* COME FROM.”


“ I FOUND *throughout my life* IT IS LESS IMPORTANT WHAT YOU KNOW, IN TERMS OF CONTENT, AND MORE IMPORTANT THAT YOU HAVE *certain desires* IN THE WORLD. CERTAIN DESIRES WILL TAKE YOU WHERE YOU ARE *really going to go*.”



Rising Phoenix

A TRUE TALE OF TRIUMPH

By Katelyn Vinci '21 M'23



College was never on my radar. I spent the fourth grade through my sophomore year in high school homeless. My family, like many others, struggled during and after the recession. My parents worked very hard despite the economic collapse. Many nights, my father walked to and from work so my mother could use our van to take us to school. We spent six years never having a place to call home.

During those years, we routinely loaded up that van with our few belongings in search of our next place to stay. For the first few years we stayed with various family members, invading their spaces and their lives while trying to live our own. Eventually, we got a motel room, where for the next four years, all six of us lived and slept in one room.

Despite having everything we needed, my parents feared social services would get involved and take their children away, so my siblings and I were instructed to never talk to our teachers or friends about the truth of our lives. My sister and I made excuse after excuse to our friends as to why they couldn't stay the night at our house. The hardest part of all of this was trying to act like my life was no different from the other kids in school who went home to houses with dinner on the table and places to study. My parents worked to give us the essentials we needed but were unable to give us a home, the kind my friends lived in. I immersed myself in extracurriculars and played travel softball with the help of scholarships. To the outside world, we looked like any other typical family.

In middle school, all the students who received free or reduced lunch were gathered in the auditorium where a speaker told us we all qualified for a program known as 21st Century Scholars. This government program covers four years of tuition for students from

low-income backgrounds to attend an Indiana public university. Listening to this speaker made me think about my future. My preconceived notion that college wasn't for kids like me began to fade. There was a slight glimmer of hope that my dreams could be obtainable.

The thought, however, of leaving my siblings to attend college was painful. But then Mrs. Woodward, my eighth-grade guidance counselor, told me, "Katie, the best way to help your siblings is to show them their dreams are attainable. That kids in your situation can make it out to the other side."

I'm not sure how Mrs. Woodward knew of my family's situation but I'm thankful she did. Her office became a haven for me. Her words didn't carry much weight for a couple years because I didn't believe I was smart enough for college. Slowly, I began to realize what a privilege the scholarship was.

Throughout my life, I saw how hard my parents worked. I watched them fight through every barrier poverty presents. My father is a big believer of manifestation and never giving up on your dreams. Even when we were at our lowest, he knew one day we could climb out of it. I began to recognize the intergenerational patterns of poverty which existed in my family and figured out they would repeat until someone stopped the cycle.

My senior year of high school, I began frantically googling colleges. So many of my peers were already accepted into universities and seemed to have their whole lives planned out. I sat in the library of my high school trying to understand the college admission process, financial aid and the SAT. I didn't go on college visits or have a "dream school."



One day, I saw a poster for USI, and I knew I had to apply. The bright tulips and smiling students on the poster spoke of a different world. Multiple visits to USI's website and an application later, I was officially a Screaming Eagle. I had a new place to call home.

I began my USI journey as an elementary education major. I knew I wanted to make a difference in the lives of kids. However, the further I got into my education, I felt like something was missing.

The aftermath of homelessness lasts long after making it out, and it followed me to campus. I often felt alone, unprepared and apprehensive about my future at USI. I struggled academically and mentally during my first year. Housing insecurity continued its ripple effect into my young adult life.

It wasn't until I began talking to another student—I'll call her "Jaycee"—with similar experiences that I began to realize I wasn't alone. That my family's experience wasn't so unusual. Far too many students in America experience homelessness before and during college—42 million, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Other research revealed homeless students are more likely to experience physical and mental health issues, poor academic success and are less likely to graduate college.


Jaycee and I found solidarity with each other. The more we shared our experiences with others, the more we discovered others who had walked in our shoes.

There is a misconception that homelessness looks only like a man living under a bridge or a person asking for money on the side of the road. During my family's homeless years, we worked to blend in

and keep our homelessness a secret. Many, many of us are one life stressor away from experiencing housing insecurity. There is a stigma attached to those experiencing poverty. Society views the homeless and those who utilize welfare as lazy instead of human beings with unique adversities which lead them to impossible situations.

I've always had a heart for activism. My passion for helping others grew stronger the more I recognized I wasn't alone in my homelessness experiences. I decided to take a social work course. I felt like my overpouring of empathy and yearning for social justice finally had a home. It's quite a twist of fate to have spent my life avoiding social workers, only to become one. I'm now a first-generation college graduate and working on my master's degree in social work.

Every college student has their own journey. My college beginnings were not traditional. However, the support I received from my family, my therapists, my professors and this University gave me hope. We can't change our past, but we can work to change our future. It can be difficult to talk about these experiences, but I want people to know they aren't alone. I will continue to advocate for those who are often left in the dark. I want to shine a light on the issues of poverty, homelessness and food insecurity.

In the center of USI's campus is a sculpture by Richard Hunt titled *From Our Past, Toward Our Future*. Here at USI, I found friendship and support. I found a passion for social justice issues. I found a home. I found my voice. With my voice, I'll work to make the world a kinder place. 

PIECE OF THE PIE:



PUTTING OUR FORK IN IT

By C. L. Stambush



There is nothing in USI's history that suggests "we can't" because we always know we can.

The announcement of the University leaving Division II's Great Lakes Valley Conference (GLVC) to enter Division I's Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) caused not only a stir of excitement but positioned USI to grow. Again.

THE RIGHT RECIPE

Beyond competing at a higher athletic level, invitations to Division I conferences come with an expectation of rigorous academic standards, one our student athletes consistently achieve, averaging GPAs near 3.3, despite the challenges they face balancing training and studying. Our student athletes and academic programs deliver the right combination of ingredients—academic excellence, grit, talent, intellect, fortitude, pizzazz, scholastic rigor—to achieve spectacular results and meet the expectations DI requires of participants. You've got to have "game," in both body and mind.

Our secret for whipping up success, academically and athletically, is akin to grandma's prized and guarded pie recipe being passed down through generations of blue-ribbon winners. Having what it takes academically and athletically is just part of any winning recipe, the rest of it requires a vision for the future, one started by the University's founders more than 57 years ago. Our student athletes are stellar. Our academic programs, and our students representing those programs, compete scholastically in accounting, theatre, economics, engineering, journalism, radio/television and more, across the nation and internationally, with esteemed institutions.

USI's decades-long record and reputation for success have prepared us for the next level. We know we have what it takes, and we want the world to know it. This was recognized by OVC Commissioner Beth DeBauche, who said in February when USI announced it was joining the OVC, "I've been watching the developments at USI for over 13 years." The reasons she had her eye on USI is our quality measures up in terms of leadership, consistency of value, sports sponsorships, competitiveness and geographic location.

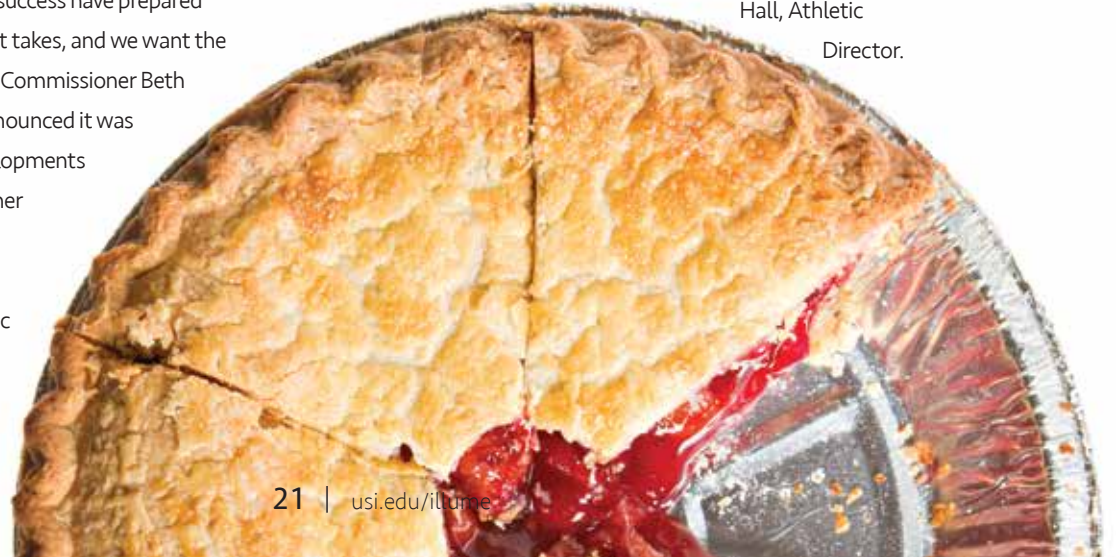
THE TABLE IS SET

For 54 years, (starting with the Men's Basketball team known as the Spartans (1968-70) which played in an Industrial League Club) USI's Athletics program has steadily grown. For the 1970-71 season, the nickname Screaming Eagles was adopted and new teams were added annually with those teams advancing to increasingly challenging conferences and tournaments. Between 1971 and 1977, we added seven teams to our roster, with Women's Basketball bounding onto the stage in 1975-76. It was Men's Basketball that scored our first national appearance playing in the 1977-78 NCAA Division II Tournament and walked away as the Great Lakes Regional Runner-up.

As USI grew its number of men's and women's competitive sports teams, it rose through the ranks from club competitions to national intercollegiate athletics to one of the founding members of the GLVC in Division II in 1978-79. To date, the Screaming Eagles have been a competitive member of the GLVC with a winning history, including 12 individual and four team national championships at the DII level.

USI student-athletes have a proud tradition of academic excellence, and 241 students hold Academic All-American status across all sports. With the addition of Swimming and Diving in Fall 2022, USI now has 19 varsity sports competing at the DI level.

"We had a proud tradition in the GLVC as a founding member and appreciated our strong partnership with conference leadership and the schools we competed against in this conference," said Jon Mark Hall, Athletic Director.





"Our success in the GLVC allowed us to move to Division I play, and we are excited about the opportunity to compete at that level."

SAVOR THE SWEETNESS

The championships, tournaments and academic excellence our students achieve make USI an institution worth touting, and Division I entry makes it possible to expand awareness of what we have to offer all students, not just student-athletes.

Entrance into Division I expands USI's footprint from the Appalachian Mountains to the Rocky Mountains. In addition to the Midwestern OVC, USI Men's Soccer and Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving will be competing in The Summit League, spanning from Indiana to Colorado, North Dakota and South Dakota, while Men's Tennis joins a partnership between the OVC and Horizon League, spanning from Michigan south to Arkansas.

USI's Athletics will be part of ESPN's 24/7 streaming of sports entertainment (ESPN+), bringing our players into homes for millions of people to see. This level of exposure will deliver national recognition and provide USI with many opportunities to capture the attention of potential students across the nation, generating interest in both athletic and non-athletic students seeking to earn a quality education. Increasing our brand awareness through this expanded footprint allows USI to broaden our student recruiting efforts and may generate a more diverse and inclusive campus population. Research shows other institutions transitioning to DI experienced increased enrollment among non-athletic students.

Two years ago, when USI released its 2021-2025 strategic plan, one of the four key goals was to elevate visibility and reputation. Going DI makes it possible for the University of Southern Indiana to promote athletics and academics to a broader set of prospective students, allowing us to attain the objectives of our strategic plan. 





A SEAT *at the* TABLE

STUDENT TRUSTEES
SHAPE POLICY

By C. L. Stambush



Most students who find themselves sitting at a table with the institution's top leaders—a table where decisions concerning the University's policies, finances, new construction, programs and more are made, where their voices and opinions are equal to everyone else—might feel like an imposter. But the students who, over the years, have served as one of nine members of the institution's Board of Trustees are not most students.

USI's Student Trustees are a select group. Only 19 of the tens of thousands of students enrolled and attending the University from 1985 (the year of USI's independence and the first appointment of a student to the Board of Trustees) to now have held the position. They come from each of the four colleges and are about evenly divided gender-wise.

The rigorous selection process is set forth by the Indiana Governor's office, including an application requiring an essay expressing why they are interested and what they will contribute to the Board, along with three letters of recommendation and their resumes. The selection process is overseen by the Student Government Association (SGA), and applicants are interviewed by a screening committee comprised of seven students and two advisors. The pool is narrowed to 5-10 finalists whose names are sent to the Governor's office for more interviews before the Governor makes the final selection. "It was imperative to me," said Kelsey McCullough, SGA President from 2020-2021, "that the committee was representative of our campus life and the unique values and experiences that we each held."

Despite the prestige the high-level position holds and the advertising SGA does for applicants, students are not always aware of the opportunity until a faculty member suggests they apply. Kristina Walker, Director of Advising for the Romain College of Business, recognized Anjali Patel (USI's 17th Student Trustee) had potential from the work she did as an AMIGO. "Right away, I could tell she cared about students," Walker says. "She worked diligently during orientations to make the day less stressful

for [first years]." Caring is just one of the qualifications these students possess to represent the student population on the Board. "The committee felt it was important that the candidates sent to the Governor were representative of campus life," said McCullough. "We wanted someone who was involved, connected and informed about the strengths and weaknesses of campus life, but we also wanted someone who was willing to listen to the voice of students. We asked the candidates about their involvement in academics, extracurriculars and off-campus activities. They were also asked about diversity, equity and inclusion, and what role that plays on campus, as well as their understanding of governance in a higher education context."

The only technical difference between Student Trustees and the other Board members is the length of time they serve the University: Student Trustees serve a two-year term while the other members serve a four-year term. All attend six regular meetings annually as well as special meetings when called upon.

USI has had two seismic shifts in which Student Trustees played an impactful part. The first, in 1985 when the University gained independence from Indiana State University, and in 2022 as the institution transitions from Division II athletics to Division I.

Eric Williams '89, management, (1985-1987) USI's first Student Trustee and Liam Collins '23, nursing, (2021-2023) reflect on what it was like for them to play a role in shaping USI's future.



ERIC WILLIAMS '89

Having the honor of service as the first Student Trustee for USI ranks extremely high on the list of things for which I am most proud.

LIAM COLLINS '23

It has always been a calling of mine to lead. Even as a 7-year-old, I worked hard to earn a spot in the Taekwondo leadership club, but this opportunity was next level.



DESCRIBE WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO ATTEND YOUR FIRST BOT MEETING?

EW: At first, very intimidating. I had a sense of being in awe of the entire situation. However, the amazing Board members at the time, Dr. Rice and team, made me feel at ease. They also helped me better understand my role as a representative of the student body and the importance of that input in discussion and decision-making.

LC: Before my first Board of Trustees meeting, I was told by the current trustees my first meeting was going to be a "trial by fire," and they were not kidding! The agenda that day was full, and we hit the ground running. Sitting in a room with very prominent people in our community and being asked to give my input on issues was not something I had done before. I had to figure out where I fit into this mix of people, where I could contribute, who was who and so much more. Despite my nerves, every single person I met that day welcomed me with open arms and truly made me feel, and still make me feel, like I'm one of them.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR YOU TO BE PART OF SUCH A MONUMENTAL SHIFT AS THE UNIVERSITY TRANSITIONED TO INDEPENDENCE/DIVISION I?

EW: At the time, I recognized that becoming

an independent state University was a big deal and important to the region. It was empowering and helped drive home the idea that big things can happen when people work together for the common cause. It was not until after graduation and being in the community, especially as a leader at the Sheriff's Office, that I realized exactly how big of a deal it was.

LC: It seemed like every other conversation I had with people around that time was centered on USI and DI. I've reflected many times on how I am involved in a decision that will make history at USI. No matter which way we voted, which of course we decided to move to Division I athletics, the vote was a historic one for USI, for my University. The pressure was definitely on, but I truly feel we made the right decision.

WHAT WAS/IS YOUR PROCESS FOR GATHERING STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES TO ROBUSTLY REPRESENT THEM AT THE MEETINGS?

EW: Almost entirely in-person...spending time on campus at events, hanging out, going to class and attending meetings created lots of opportunities to talk to other students. Electronic communication was almost non-existent. Having been involved in a variety of

other activities and groups on campus, I was exposed to a wide array of students, including their viewpoints and opinions.















LC: My biggest tool is simply having conversations. Part of being a good representative is being an excellent listener when you're in the community. Just taking the time to be approachable and listen to people has been so important for my role. Social media is also an excellent tool for learning what people are thinking, saying and wanting. If I notice any common trends, themes of praise or concern or hear any interesting ideas, I bring them forward.

HOW MUCH TIME DID/DO YOU DEDICATE WEEKLY AND/OR MONTHLY TO BOARD MATTERS?

EW: It really varied greatly. When the Board was considering a major construction project, there was a lot more time spent reviewing documents, ideas, plans, etc. Board members, myself included, received a great deal of information on a regular basis, especially leading up to meetings.

LC: For Board meetings, there are definitely hours of work to do to prep and know the material we need to know going into the room to discuss our plans. The day-to-day though is not a tremendous commitment,

STUDENT TRUSTEES OVER THE DECADES

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|
|  | Liam Collins '23 | 2021-2023 |
|  | Josi Barszcz '22 | 2019-2021 |
|  | Anjali Patel '19 | 2017-2019 |
|  | Evan Stieler '17 | 2015-2017 |
|  | Brenden Davidson '15 | 2013-2015 |
|  | Susan Ellsperman '13 | 2011-2013 |
|  | Lauren (Raikes) Gilliam '11 | 2009-2011 |
|  | Jamie (Johnson) Mull '09 | 2007-2009 |
|  | Lauren (Fultz) Lutz '07, M'16 | 2005-2007 |
|  | Samuel Tucker '05 | 2003-2005 |
|  | Walter Jermakowicz III '03 | 2001-2003 |
|  | Ryan Helzerman '01 | 1999-2001 |
|  | Brian Pauley '00 | 1997-1999 |
|  | Nicole (Cable) Hume '97 | 1995-1997 |
|  | Brent Auberry '95 | 1993-1995 |
|  | Kristel Swan-Griffin '93 | 1991-1993 |
|  | Brad Schepers '91 | 1989-1991 |
|  | Patrick Leahy '91 | 1987-1989 |
|  | Eric Williams '89 | 1985-1987 |

other than doing my best to stay vigilant in my engagement with the University community. During the Division I decision, the commitment time was a lot more than what is normally expected. There was lots of information to be taken in and understood, and it seemed as though we were meeting almost weekly with new information, especially in January 2022.

WERE/ARE YOU INVOLVED IN OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WHILE AT USI? IF SO, WHICH ONES?

EW: Yes, as many as I could manage. I relished the time I spent involved in various organizations. As a member of Sigma Tau Gamma fraternity, it was the positive influence and encouragement from many of my brothers that motivated me to get involved in a variety of areas, including Student Government. I also enjoyed being an AMIGO, intramurals, Activities Programming Board and Interfraternity Council. There was not an official club or organization, but there was a group of us that met very regularly in Redwood Lounge and operated almost as if we were an organization.

LC: In addition to being Student Trustee, I'm President of College Life Campus Ministry and Treasurer for Sigma Pi Fraternity on campus. I also do some peer tutoring in our Nursing program.

WHAT PRESSURES DID/DO YOU PUT ON YOURSELF AS THE STUDENT TRUSTEE?

EW: Pressure may not be the best word to describe it. I felt a great responsibility to those who had created the opportunity for me to serve in that capacity, and I did not want to disappoint any of them. Those around me made serving easy and enjoyable while stressing the importance of my perspective to the Board as a whole.

LC: I have pressured myself to try to please as many people as I can. This goal has been hard sometimes to accomplish. Sometimes,

decisions might not be the "popular" ones, but they are the right ones for the University. With any decision that is made, there are always going to be people who dislike or who don't understand why we settled on a certain decision. I've had the pressure of trying to explain everything and make naysayers see the "why" behind certain proposals and decisions. Sometimes I can, but sometimes, there's just no way, and that's a hard pressure to fight.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR DECISION-MAKING PROCESS ON PROPOSALS THE BOARD VOTES ON?

EW: I liked to consider myself to be a critical thinker and capable of making a decision I believed to be the best one, from the student perspective, with the information available. I asked a lot of questions of fellow Board members, staff and anyone else who would entertain my questions.

LC: With any decision, I first think about what this will do for students. That is always on my mind. Most of my decision-making centers around balancing the rewards and benefits, the risks and opportunity costs. The rewards of course being what USI receives from the proposal. The risks involve "what ifs" and cautions moving forward with decisions. The opportunity cost relates to what else we could be doing. If we're going to propose X amount of money and time is spent on project A, would it be better spent on project B? Once all the rewards, risks and opportunity costs are taken into consideration and any necessary questions are asked, I proceed with my decision.

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS DO YOU POSSESS THAT YOU THINK MOST QUALIFY YOU FOR THE POSITION?

EW: At the time, I'm not sure what qualifications I really had. Beyond being involved, pretty organized and having recently been elected by the students to serve as the

FORMER STUDENT TRUSTEES REFLECT

president of the student body, I was interested and willing.

LC: I consider myself someone who can see the bigger picture in situations and be able to analyze how one decision can impact a multitude of areas, which is critical to being a Board member. I also find myself to be an efficient problem solver, open minded to new ideas, flexible to change and quick to learn and adapt.


HAVE YOU EVER BEEN AMONG THE DISSENTING VOTES ON A PROPOSAL?

EW: That is a great question. If I did, I do not recall. My recollection is that in most cases, after much discussion, most votes were unanimous.

LC: I have not been a formal "dissenting vote" on a proposal at a Board meeting thus far. However, I have not been afraid to ask hard questions, point out flaws that need to be fixed and areas that don't make sense so the proposal that does get approved is the best it can be.

WOULD YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE DOING SO?

EW: With the Board membership at the time, absolutely. However, I think had I felt strongly about a significant issue and differently than the others, they would have wanted to understand my rationale and would have certainly factored that into their decisioning.

LC: I have not been in that spot where I've had to stand firm and dissent in a vote, so I can't say for certain. What I can say is, on a matter of principle and for my duty to USI, I would never vote in such a manner that did not bolster the mission and vision of USI and the student body. If a proposal like that was on the table, which at this point there never has been and there is no reason to believe there would be, then I would be comfortable to do the right thing, even if it meant losing the vote 8-1. 

SHAPED BY ROLE OF STUDENT TRUSTEE

Brenden Davidson '15 – Five years in the U.S. Navy navigating warships, now enrolled in The George Washington University Law School

The term "trustee" is both a title and a description. And the Student Trustee is the only member uniquely tasked with representing the voices of 10,000 peers. College students understandably prioritize their own success. We worry about affording our education, balancing work and study and attaining the necessary credits to graduate on time. Being a good Trustee means being a good listener, observer and critical thinker. These are virtues I took with me from USI and have applied them every day since.

Evan Stieler '17 – Graduated from Harvard's MD/MBA program in May and is in Harvard's Orthopedic Surgery Residency Program

Having the opportunity to pull back the curtain and see how USI operates at a 10,000-foot view impacted the plan I have for my own future. Looking forward, I realized that I could combine my passions for healthcare and leadership. Policies that affect the delivery of healthcare are all too often decided by people without any clinical experience. I hope to take what I've learned about leadership and my clinical expertise to further improve surgical care and how patients experience it.

CONTRIBUTION TO ROLE AS STUDENT TRUSTEE

Susan Ellsperman '13 – Completed Otolaryngology residency at University of Michigan and started neurotology fellowship at the House Ear Institute in Los Angeles, California

During my time on the board, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education was making changes to the performance-based funding algorithm that determines state funding per student. We were advocating for a more equitable funding system that recognized the quality education available at USI and the contributions of USI students and graduates.

Anjali Patel '19 – 3rd year medical student at Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Colorado

My term as Trustee came at a unique time in USI's history—a presidential transition. This experience provided me an opportunity to learn the intricacies of a presidential search process. The caliber of this committee's task demanded many hours outside of my coursework and allowed me to use my experience as a campus leader and my interactions with students to voice an accurate and well-framed opinion.

STRENGTHS IN ROLE AS STUDENT TRUSTEE

Lauren Gilliam '11 – Physician Assistant and Clinical Assistant Professor at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, Indiana

I brought a perspective that was often less experienced in leadership and long-term planning. While this may sound like a hindrance, it enabled me to see issues and decisions from a different vantage point. It allowed me to appreciate the importance of decisions to individual students in their daily lives while learning how to align that with goals for the entire campus and USI community.

Kristel Swan '93 – Care Transition Nurse for Deaconess Home Health and Hospice

Communication is the key to success. While being a Student Trustee, I learned the value of communication early on and feel that was my strong suit as a member of the Board.

PLUMES OF SMOKE

The Eternity of Uncertainty

By Hans Schneider '01







I REMEMBER

sitting in my eighth-grade class at Evans Middle School in Evansville on February 6, 1992, when what appeared to be a mushroom cloud rose in the sky outside our classroom window.

Throughout middle school we were told that Evansville would be a target if the United States ever went to war with the Soviet Union. However, the Soviet Union collapsed a few months earlier and such a smoke cloud seemed unexplainable. Some students worried that it was some sort of a surprise attack as there was talk that the fall of the Soviet Union was just a ruse to get the United States to let down its defenses. No one in class could come up with a good explanation for what happened, and our developing minds raced to come up with some logical answer to what could have caused this plume of smoke.

I don't remember exactly how long it took us to learn that a C-130 Hercules plane crashed into the Drury Inn and JoJo's restaurant. But the time between the plume of smoke in the air and the revelation that it was an accident seemed like an eternity of uncertainty. This event shook my perception of the world more than anything in my life in the sense that it taught me that catastrophes can happen close to home.

On February 24, 2022, another tragedy struck close to home when Russia invaded Ukraine, my wife's homeland and the nation where most of her family still lives. My love for and relationship with Ukraine and its people developed after graduating from USI with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering technology. I always enjoyed designing and building and pursued a master's in construction management and a doctorate in urban and regional science from Texas A&M University. During my PhD research, I came

across an interesting article about wooden churches in Western Ukraine and decided to pursue a Fulbright Grant to develop a preservation plan for them.

While in the Fulbright program, I lived in Lviv—a World Heritage Site and where I met my wife—and was able to travel throughout the country. It is hard to see places that I once visited turned into rubble. It is hard to see historic monuments, shopping malls and even zoos being destroyed. It is hard seeing the pain that this is causing in not only my family but the friends and families of those I care for so deeply.


My brother-in-law was drafted when Ukraine was first invaded by Russia in 2014. This year he turned 44 years old. When Russia invaded again in 2022, he was called to fight for Ukraine. and bravely went back to serve. He fought valiantly until a rocket killed him and many of his fellow soldiers in the village of Hirs'ke near Sievierodonetsk on May 30. When the war broke out, my sister-in-law took her two children to her in-law's home and spent almost every night in a makeshift bomb shelter hearing air raid sirens nearby. Eventually, the stress became almost unbearable, and they went to France as refugees, but returned to Ukraine when their husband and father was killed to hold his funeral. What does a parent say to their children in this situation?

When I was told the military called up my brother-in-law in February, I immediately started to Skype my closest male friends in Ukraine. None responded and I knew why. Eventually, I received a message from my friend Nazar. He is in Ukraine and part of it read, "we have the war, but this could not

be avoided. We need to end it finally." That was the last message I received from him although I contacted him several more times.

I'm having a lot of real-world conversations I never thought I would have, like how to help raise my niece and nephew. How to help my aging father-in-law and mother-in-law who do not want to leave Ukraine, but whose health is deteriorating. I am also having conversations with friends in Ukraine while wondering if they will be my last. Although these are painful conversations, the ones that I dread the most are in the future. I wonder how I will explain to my son when he grows up—how he had a great-grandfather that survived Hitler's Auschwitz and a great-grandmother and countless other relatives who survived the Soviet Ukraine's Holodomor and then the world is witnessing a tragedy like we are seeing happen again in our day and time.

Someone asked my brother-in-law why he didn't just take his family and leave when the war broke out and he replied that Ukraine's freedom was a worthy cause and he wanted to be an example to his children.

Six months have passed since Russia launched a large-scale military assault on Ukraine. With today's 24/7 news coverage, I witness the horrific terror Russia reigns on the people—my family, my friends. Even though I can't see a plume of smoke outside my window, the threat to Ukrainians and the rest of the world is real. I am trying to support Ukrainians in their effort however possible. I hope others will join in to make a difference too. 

UKRAINE MATTERS:

Insights from

By Dr. Andrew Buck, Associate Professor and Chair of Sociology

The horrors of war have once again ravaged Europe after decades of relative peace. The imperial ambitions of the current regime in Russia to occupy Ukraine's territory started in 2014 with the successful annexation of Crimea. An emboldened Russian president, Vladimir Putin, next set his sights on additional Ukrainian territory bordering Russia. But this time, Russian forces were met with significant resistance from the Ukrainian military backed by the support of European and U.S. leaders. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a tragedy that has impacted the lives of millions of ordinary people fighting, surviving and fleeing war. The reverberations of this conflict have reached far beyond Europe to at least one USI alumnus who has connections to the region through family, work and friendship. I talked recently with Hans Schneider '01, civil engineering technology, about his relationship and experience with Ukraine.

You pursued a Fulbright Grant to develop a preservation plan for eight wooden churches in Ukraine, why were they important to you?

On a personal level, I am passionate about historic sites and international affairs. After reading about the history of the churches, I decided I wanted to help in any way I could.

The history of these churches is amazing; some were built over 500 years ago and are made without nails. In addition to their architectural and historical significance, the connection people have to them is amazing. Part of what drove me to want to preserve the churches was reading about the persecution Christians faced in the Soviet Union.

How did your USI engineering education prepare you to pursue a Fulbright Grant?

I am thankful for my experience at USI, and it helped prepare me in many ways for my Fulbright Grant. The technical writing course and other writing courses I took at USI laid the foundation for not only my grant, but entrance into my master's

degree and PhD programs. My professors at the time—Farhad Naghdi, Assistant Professor of Engineering, and Augustine (Jay) Fredrich, Professor Emeritus of Civil Engineering Technology—were notorious for asking students questions and putting them on the spot in class. They were usually very direct, and you needed to be prepared. It was sometimes painful as a student, but I am thankful they did this as it helped me not only for my Fulbright Grant interview, but for life in general.

How did living in and researching Ukraine impact your understanding of it today?

I am fortunate that I lived in Ukraine in 2011 and 2012 when the country was full of optimism. During my year as a Fulbright, I was able to hear first-hand many of the hardships my friends and co-workers' families faced throughout history, especially during the Soviet Union. At that time, it was unthinkable those past horrors might reoccur. Therefore, it is truly saddening to see what is happening in Ukraine today. On a positive note—I have seen the country come together more than I think many people thought possible.



Dr. Andrew Buck

What did you take away from your experience?

I learned that people behave similarly no matter where they live. I had many amazing experiences and many frustrating ones as well. The last time I was in Ukraine, I was talking to a former colleague at Lviv Polytechnic National University about her hopes and aspirations and I was amazed at how similar it is to that of my friends in the United States.

We are seeing huge swaths of Ukraine's rich cultural history being destroyed. What is it like, as a preservationist, to see this erasure?

Naturally, this is sad. It is one thing to see historic buildings demolished to make way for "progress." It is another thing to see the senseless and indiscriminate bombings that are taking

place. To be honest, the physical damage to buildings and sites is nothing to me compared to the loss of life and psychological damage Russia's invasion is causing. Historic buildings undergo restorations and reconstruction to a certain extent in their lifetime, whether it is due to regular maintenance or some other event. However, lost lives cannot be restored and the mental impact this war is having will never be forgotten in our lifetime.

Do you know the status of the churches you studied and fought to preserve?

To the best of my knowledge all the churches I worked with are still intact. The majority are in rural areas that have mostly been spared from bombing.

Your ties to Ukraine are deep and personal; but why should others care about what is happening there?

First, on a human level, I think we all have the right to exist, and I think most people would agree that we shouldn't have to live under a dictator like Putin. Some people say that Ukraine wanting to join NATO and the European Union caused the war. To me, this decision is and was up to Ukraine, NATO and the European Union to decide, not Russia. Second, Ukraine has abundant resources. We are hearing about the impact the war is having on food throughout the world with Russia stealing and stopping the export of Ukrainian wheat and corn. Ukraine also has abundant reserves of coal, iron ore, natural gas, manganese, salt, oil, graphite, sulfur, kaolin, titanium, nickel, magnesium, timber and mercury. In addition, if we allow Russia to succeed, it will have these additional resources in its arsenal for future conflicts.

How can people understand the bigger picture of what is happening in Ukraine?


One of the most important things people can do is educate themselves. At the beginning of the war, Ukraine was in all the headlines. Now this has died down, but the war is still going on

and the situation is still just as dangerous. People need to listen to Putin and his regime and decide if this is a nation in which we can have any type of honest relationship. Russian leadership talks about denazifying a country whose president is Jewish. Putin continues to threaten the rest of the world and is already telling us that he will not stop at Ukraine. In a June speech, he compared himself to Peter the Great and said that Peter the Great did not take anything, "he reclaimed" what was Russia's. This isn't how sane people talk. Mikhail Kasyanov, the first Russian prime minister under Putin, said that if Ukraine falls, "the Baltic states will be next." The Baltic states are part of NATO and this will trigger a larger conflict which is part of the

reason every American should pay attention to this war and do their part to make sure Ukraine prevails.

You are a strong advocate for assisting the people of Ukraine. What is your advice to others who would like to get involved?

I think it is easier to help than most people think and helping can be as simple as contacting your local congressional representative or senators, expressing your support and asking them to continue providing support to Ukraine. If people have a personal connection to a charity or organization, that

helps. There are many wonderful organizations available to support Ukraine ranging from humanitarian to military support and almost everything in between. Lately, my wife and I have been supporting a 501(c)(3) out of Austin called Liberty Ukraine along with the memorial scholarship set up by The Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv in honor of my brother-in-law Oleh Vorobyov, who was killed in the war this spring. 



Hans Schneider '01

Andrew Buck, Associate Professor of Sociology and Chair of the Sociology Department, is a long-time observer of social processes in eastern Europe. He has published articles about Russia and the former Soviet Union on topics ranging from marketization and elites to democratization and letter writing.



WHAT DO A FITNESS COMPANY, A RESELLER OF USED PROCESSING EQUIPMENT AND A BILINGUAL PUBLIC RADIO STATION PROGRAM HAVE IN COMMON? CAR, USI's CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH. The

department operates as a bridge connecting businesses' great ideas—but no map to reach them—with USI's ability to provide technical support, economic development resources, research assistance and business solutions through the University's faculty knowledge, laboratory space and equipment. At the wheel of connecting the projects and challenges businesses are seeking help with is Steven Stump '99 M '09, Assistant Director of CAR, who steers businesses to the right USI people and resources needed.

DRIVING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

BY C. L. STAMBUSH



"When you can deliver that finished product, whatever it may be, there's always a very strong sense of gratitude from the client," Stump says. "It's usually something along the lines of, 'We tried to figure this out on our own, or we couldn't get it solved by ourselves and USI had the right people that could help us figure it out.'"

With access to 600 USI faculty members, four colleges and more than 130 areas of study, CAR can make most projects a reality. Entrepreneurs and small to mid-sized businesses without access to in-house resources really benefit from CAR's cost-efficient solutions. USI provides technical support with 3D printing/prototyping, product/material testing, chemical testing and analysis, and engineering design and analysis. Research projects cover market and social science research, environmental and efficiency studies. Business solutions include organizational development, creative problem solving, innovation/product development and facilitation services. On the economic side, USI can deliver economic impact studies, comprehensive community planning, neighborhood assessments and a connection to regional partners.

Students benefit from knowledge gained by participating alongside faculty as well as through a small stipend. "I have a good, diverse group of faculty members on campus who are always willing to help, always willing to participate, are oftentimes coming to me asking if I have anything that they can do, just because they want the chance to get involved," Stump says.

One of three recent collaborations included the Engineering Department joining forces with SIGMA Group to construct electronic testing and repair benches for SIGMA Surplus, which buys, sells and rents used packaging and processing equipment for the food, beverage and pharmaceutical industries.

The partnership project between USI and SIGMA involved designing and fabricating test benches to test surplus automation equipment (primarily human machine interfaces, programmable logic controllers and motor drives). This is where USI students came in—to provide better, more in-depth testing of the components than has been performed in the past.


Bradley Kicklighter, Clinical Assistant Professor of Engineering Technology, and two engineering students who also intern with SIGMA Group, Gregory Clevidence '22 and Brenden Bittner '23, worked on the project.

"This partnership allows USI to engage with our community in a positive way," Kicklighter says. "I am happy to have the opportunity to apply my knowledge of automation to help SIGMA expand its capability."

When BFit by Bob's (formerly Bob's Gym) wanted to expand its offerings by adding a BFit Kids program, it wanted to do it strategically, and turned to USI's Teacher Education Department to create a curriculum designed for children 3 to 8 years old, that incorporated monthly themes.

Dr. Jill Raisor '03, Chair of USI's Teacher Education Department and Associate Professor of Education, along with three USI students within the Teacher Education program, Sarah Barnes '22, Gabrielle Birge '22 and Kaiti Siedlin '22, worked on the project.

"Participating in the BFit project has helped my career in teacher education," says Barnes. "I was given the opportunity to practice several skills such as planning quality activities for students of various ages, designing a developmentally appropriate classroom layout and collaborating with others. I know having practice with these skills has helped set me up for success in my future classroom because they are vital to support my students' development, growth and learning."

A third partnership resulted when WNIN Vice-President of Radio reached out to Stump because the station was interested in creating educational content to coincide with its podcast series *¿Qué Pasa Midwest? (QPM)*, a project spearheaded by USI journalism alumna and host Paola Marizan '16. Stump and Dr. Xavia Burton, Assistant Professor of Teacher Education in the Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education, worked with Mareea Thomas, WNIN's Director of Digital Media, to put together a plan on how to convert the content of each episode of *QPM* into a mini lesson for high school and college students. As students listen to the episodes, their teachers can provide them with corresponding assignments that draw upon the central topics, such as culture, healthcare and freedom of speech. Burton, who has taught high school English classes, has a master's degree in English language rhetoric and a doctorate degree in education. Using this experience, she crafted lessons for every episode of season five of *QPM* and is currently working on lessons for seasons six and seven. 



Panamanian students have been sharing with and teaching the USI community about their culture since 2017, when the first cohort arrived on campus. USI is one of only two public institutions in the United States approved as a scholarship recipient for the National Secretariat of Science and Technology of Panama's

(SENACYT) Institute for the Formation and Use of Human Resources. In 2019, the student organization Panamanian Association (PANAS) was created as a way to share Panamanian culture, traditions and costumes with USI's students and community. "We want to show the beauty of our country, and

share our food, music and love with American and international students," said Hugo Chavez, Vice-President of PANAS. "Also, we want to explore different cultures and languages through our activities. Our vision is to create activities that allow students to get together, have fun and make new friends. Finally, we

want to create spaces where every student at USI feels welcome and teach them our first language, Spanish." This year, PANAS hosted a Panamanian Carnival featuring games, food and traditional dance competition between two festively costumed queens—María Lopez and Hilda Magallón.

Class Notes

STAY IN TOUCH

EMAIL us
at alumni@usi.edu.

UPDATE your information
and send photos
via the form
at
USI.edu/AlumniUpdate.

*Class notes may be edited
for length or clarity.*

*We regret that
we may not
be able to use all
submitted photos, and
reserve the right to select
which ones are included.*



1970s

Gary Isbell '73, art, has made a career as a self-taught graphic designer working for printers, advertising agencies and business marketing departments before shifting into self-employment. Twenty years ago, he began experimenting with "pixel painting" and created this mixed medium photo of himself from a black and white image. After retiring from Old National Bank as a Marketing Designer/ Photographer, he launched his encore act selling his pixel paintings online through Rumjahn Gallery. [1]

Greg Brown '78, elementary education, published his second book, a collection of essays titled *Matchsticks Contemplating Eternity: Life, Death, and Faith in What Is*. "Dr. Don Pitzer's class in Intellectual History kept me on a lifelong path of pursuing ideas across many disciplines rather than focusing on just one specialty." [2]

1980s

Paula (Chika) Eastmond '82, psychology, retired from the State of Indiana after 25 years as a Medical Surveyor and Team Leader, Evansville. Eastmond was a Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professional.

Glenn Reitz '82, communications, is the Chaplain at SSM Health DePaul Hospital-St. Louis in Bridgeton, Missouri.

Shawn Clodfelter '83, elementary education, taught school for 33 years in the Warrick County School Corporation before retiring in 2017 and relocating to Casa Grande, Arizona. Every morning he walks the Casa Grande Mountain to maintain fitness. [3]

Dan Hollis '83, communications, is a Professor of Journalism and Mass Communications at Marshall University, Huntington, West Virginia. [4]

Randal Hughes '86, biology, is an Ophthalmologist at Cataract and Laser Institute in Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

Tony Aylsworth '87, political science, of Boonville, Indiana, has been named President and CEO of Heritage Federal Credit Union.

Anthony "Tony" Goodwin '89, radiologic technology, has been accepted to the year-long Safety, Quality, Informatics and Leadership program at Harvard for the 2022-2023 class after which he will earn a postgraduate medical school residence certificate. Tony is currently Regional Technology Manager at Ascension Healthcare and serves as Secretary of the USI Alumni Council. He earned his PhD in Allied Health Science from Florida Atlantic University. [5]

Mark Meyer '89, mechanical engineering technology, is Vice President of Operations at Hunt Utility Services, LLC, in Dallas, Texas.

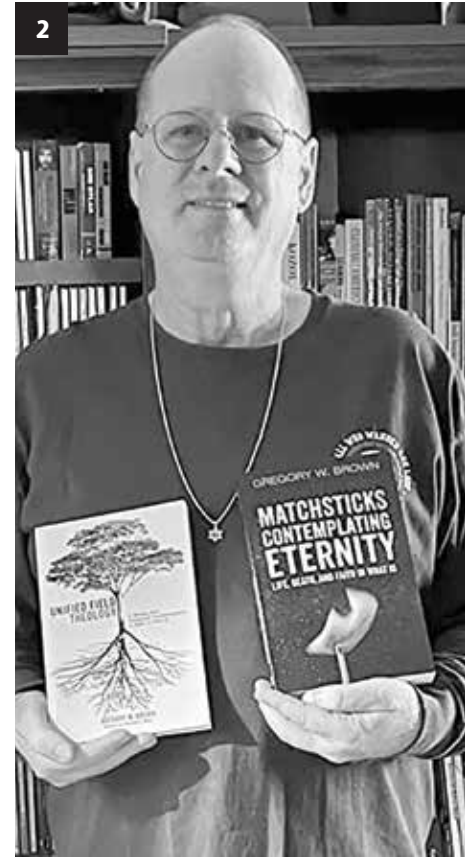
Travis White '89, general science, and **Roberta "Bobbie" (Arosteguy) White '89**, communications, celebrated the wedding of their son **Tyler White '14**, business administration, to **Jessica (Scott) White '15**, food and nutrition, November 2, 2019, and the birth of their first granddaughter, Olivia Layne, on February 2, 2021. Travis joined EHOB after retiring from 20 years at Eli Lilly in January of 2018. Bobbie has been with the Balance Institute of Indiana since 2010. [6]

1990s

Timothy Bryan '90 M'07, accounting, is an Assistant Professor and Master of Science in Accountancy Program Coordinator in the Lewis College of Business, Department of Accountancy and Legal Environment at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. Tim and fellow alum, **Dan Hollis '83**, communications, reconnected when Tim attended a teaching conference where Dan was the featured speaker. "Dan has won every teaching award that Marshall University has during his distinguished career here," Tim said. [4]

Randall Forrest Snead '91, communications, is living a safe retirement in Portugal, visiting castles and fortresses. [7]

Tara (Bonifer) Rasche '92, English (teaching), has been named Superintendent of the Northeast



Dubois County School Corporation. She assumed the role July 1.

Jenifer (Bryan) Gossman '94 M'12, business administration, elementary education, is the Cloud Mitigation Specialist for CDW/Amplified IT – Education in Lincolnshire, Illinois.

Bryan Perry '93 M'98, social science (teaching), secondary education, was appointed Superintendent of South Gibson School Corporation and oversees Gibson Southern High School as well as K-8 schools in Fort Branch, Haubstadt and Owensville. Perry will continue to teach in USI's Education Doctoral program.

Michael Sizemore '97, communications, is Director of Sales and Marketing at ProMedia Group in New Albany, Indiana.

Kimberly (Wildeman) Simon '99, communications, is Human Resources Specialist at Deaconess Health System in Evansville.

Rachael Kluesner '99 M'19, accounting, business administration, has joined the Dubois County Chamber of Commerce, serving on the Finance Committee for Young Life. She also is on the Dubois County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Executive Leadership Team and serves as Treasurer.

2000s

Christopher Collins '01, business administration, has been named Vice President of Commercial Lending at German American Bank in Evansville.

Jason Coomer '01, social science (teaching), is Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics at Lindenwood University.

R. Kyle Hodgen M '01, acute care nurse practitioner, is the Clinical Site Director for the Uniformed Services University

Nurse Anesthesia program at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. Hodgen will retire from active duty on July 1, 2023.

Adool Ferguson '02, computer information systems, is Global Head of Cybersecurity at Greif, Inc., an industrial packaging and container manufacturer in Delaware, Ohio.

John Newlin Jr. '02, accounting, completed the Master of Science in Risk and Insurance program at Butler University Lacy School of Business.

Kristan (Weber) Byers '03, Spanish studies, is a recruiter at Manpower in Evansville.

Bryce Cooper '04, sociology, is the Financial Services Sales Support Team Manager of The Cason Group in Columbia, South Carolina. He was also recently named Head Men's Soccer Coach for Newberry College in Newberry, South Carolina. **[8]**

Tonya (Rothert) Heim M'04 '08 M'09, health administration, nursing, nursing management and leadership, retired from Memorial Hospital and Health Care Center in Jasper, Indiana, after serving 12 years as Vice President of Patient Services and Chief Nursing Officer. Tonya enjoyed a long, illustrious career in healthcare.

David Ragland '04, communication studies, is Head Men's Basketball Coach of University of Evansville.

Michael Ready '04, English, Retirement Plan Specialist at Summit Business Solutions-Northwestern Mutual, Greenwood, Indiana, recently earned his Qualified Plan Financial Consultant (QPFC) credential from the National Association of Plan Advisors. **[9]**

Matthew Toothman '04, physical education (teaching), is Assistant Principal at South Knox Middle/High School in Vincennes, Indiana.



Sara (Morris) Compton '05, elementary education, is a Kindergarten Teacher at Eldorado Elementary School in Eldorado, Illinois.

Sarah (Hurst) Lee '05, elementary education, is Quality Engineering Technician II at Humana in Louisville, Kentucky.

Andy Lemon '05, journalism and computer publishing, is the Anti-Money Laundering Manager at Rush Street Interactive dba BetRivers in Chicago, Illinois.

Janelle (Merkel) Byrd '06, psychology, is House Manager at Lifespring Health Systems in Jasper, Indiana.

Lacey (Kosikowski) Moore '06, elementary education, is the Principal for Jefferson Attendance Center in Carmi, Illinois. **[10]**

Emilee Meyers '09, finance, has been promoted to Chief of Staff at The BAM Companies in Indianapolis, Indiana.



Nick Pressley '09, business administration, and his father **Tom Pressley '81**, marketing, have been celebrating Memorial Day weekend with a crew of friends and family at Tom's house and taking a group of 16 friends, family and USI alumni to the Indy 500 for the past 15 years. "We park in a strategic location, so that once the race is over, despite the traffic and road closures and detours, we're back to Tom's house within 30 minutes, which is a feat in itself!" Front far left: **Beth Ellsworth '81**, dental hygiene, far right **Nick Pressley '09**; middle row: third from left **Brandon Sherfield '10**, geology, fourth from right, **Tom Pressley '81**; back row: second from left, **Abe Maze '16**, accounting and professional services. **[11]**

Aaron Schmitt '09, social science (teaching), has been appointed Principal at Reitz Memorial High School in Evansville, as of July 1, 2022.

Amy (Seibert) Schroeder '09, early childhood education, and **Gabriel Schroeder '08**, accounting and

professional services, welcomed 3-year-old Brian into their family from foster care on March 1. Pictured are Amy, Gabe, Brian and Emma (age 7). **[12]**

Kayla (Kleinhelter) Thackrey '09, respiratory therapy, is a Registered Respiratory Therapist at Memorial Hospital and Health Care Center in Jasper, Indiana.

2010s

Kiersten (Deig) Roberts '10, accounting and professional services, is Controller at AmeriQual Foods in Evansville.

Gerald Wright '10, management, is a Manager at Wireless Advocates in Evansville.

Danielle Norris '11 M'14, international studies, journalism, communication, is the



Marketing Director for Woods and Woods, LLC, in Evansville.

Emily (Hedge) Rexing '11, respiratory therapy, is Assistant Vice President and Mortgage Loan Officer at Springs Valley Bank & Trust Company, servicing Gibson and surrounding counties. She is also a board member for Junior Achievement. **[13]**

Amanda (Allen) Crockett '12, communication studies, gave birth to her second child January 30, 2022, and was promoted to Communication and Support Services Specialist at the Perry County Development Corporation in Tell City, Indiana. **[14]**

Brianna Williams '12, communication studies, released her second children's book titled *Adventures of Bree the Bee: The Radio Station*, a sequel to *Adventures of Bree the Bee: The News Station*.

Tami (Ballard) Jaramillo Zuniga M'12, liberal studies, is an Academic Counselor





at the University of Southern Indiana. She has passed her proposal defense and the Bellarmine IRB and is currently doing primary research to complete her dissertation for a PhD in Leadership in Higher Education.

Kristin (Boe) Reagan '13 M'15 M'17, kinesiology, business administration, sports management, recently accepted the position of Senior Research Administrative Coordinator at the new Phil and Penny Knight Campus at the University of Oregon in Eugene, Oregon. She will be leading a team that supports cutting edge post-award research in biomechanics, human performance and translational science. [15]

Jessica (Holland) Atkinson '14, nursing, is a registered nurse at Franciscan Health in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Samantha (Williams) Canfield '14, radiologic and imaging sciences, is an Instructor of Anatomy and Physiology

at Ivy Tech Community College in Bloomington, Indiana.

Lucas Matte '14, computer science, participated as a volunteer for Catapult, a program teaching Tri-state high school students the basics of web development and computer science. [16]

Justin Rutledge '14, criminal justice studies, is the Executive Director at Posey County Community Corrections in Mt. Vernon, Indiana.

Ryan Schillo '14, finance, is Data Analyst at Zyllo in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Lynn Strohl II '14 M'17, management, business administration, is Director of Industries/Pre-Vocational Services and Sign Shop at Tradewinds in Merrillville, Indiana.

Jordan Whitledge '14 M'16, economics, business administration, is Lead



Investment Advisor with Donaldson Capital Management in Evansville.

Jenna Citrus '15, art, has a new Miniature Schnauzerr puppy. [17]

Alex Georges '15, history, is Staff Attorney at Barnes & Thornburg LLP, in Indianapolis, Indiana. His areas of focus include product liability defense and mass tort litigation.

John LaFief '15, individualized studies, is an IT Auditor at Deaconess Hospital in Evansville.

Natalie (Dubon) Colson '16, social work, is Community Outreach Coordinator for Lifespring Health Systems in Jasper, Indiana.

Jessica Swank '16, criminal justice, sociology, is Staff Sergeant with the Boone County Sheriff's Office in Lebanon, Indiana.



Matthew Gray '16 M'18, sports management, is Special Events Coordinator at YMCA of Southwestern Indiana, Evansville.

Anna Hackert '16, mathematics (teaching), is a Mathematics and Computer Science Teacher at Haubstadt Community School in Haubstadt, Indiana.

Cindy Mauro '16, geology, is Environmental Manager II at Indiana Department of Transportation in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Shelby (Hammell) Zacha '16, management, and her husband Kyle's only child turned 1 year old in June. [18]

Stephanie Brinkerhoff M'17, social work, is a licensed attorney, clinical social worker and owner of Brinkerhoff Law Office. Her practice combines law and mental health.



Nathan Criss '17, marketing, is Storage Equipment Specialist for McCormick Equipment in Plain City, Ohio.

Joseph Redburn '17, accounting and professional services and marketing, is Audit Senior at Deloitte in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Jacob Riedford M'17, business administration, has been promoted to Senior Asset Management Analyst at Regency Properties in Evansville.

Marius Ulrich '17 M'18, political science, business administration, is Business Intelligence Consultant for Rheindata in Cologne, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany.

Nicholas Biever '18, computer information systems, is a Seminarian at St. Meinrad School of Theology studying for the Catholic Diocese of Evansville.

Jessica Kluesner '18 M'20, individualized studies, liberal studies, is Assistant Director of Christian Education at Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

Katie (Feldmeier) Kreager '18, social work, and **Eleanor Lee '19**, visual art K-12 (teaching), have launched a podcast *Not So Ladylike*, available on Spotify and iTunes. "We are lifelong friends who continue to stick by each other's side through adulthood and talk candidly about all the ups and downs. Join our weekly conversations about life after graduation, subverting expectations and more of our millennial experiences. We'd love to hear from you and keep in touch with our fellow Screaming Eagles!" [19]

Hannah Melton '18, public relations and advertising and psychology, has been named Autism Program Coordinator at Marian University's OneAmerica Personalized Learning Center in Indianapolis, Indiana. She previously

worked at Texas A&M University with the Spectrum Living Learning Community and the Aggie Achieve Program. Both of which provide direct support and resources to students with autism spectrum disorder. [20]

Tyler Stock '18 M'20, sociology, public administration, is the Executive Director of Talent for the Evansville Regional Economic Partnership.

Johnathan Oliver '18 M'22, management, business administration, recently completed his Master of Business degree with a concentration in human resource management and accepted a position as a Human Resource Manager for A.O. Smith. He is based in Nashville, Tennessee. "Achieving my master's degree has been one of my greatest life accomplishments." [21]

Marvin Smith M'18, school administration and leadership, was promoted to Assistant Principal of Washington Middle School in

Evansville. "It has been such a wonderful experience. I enjoyed working with the students, families and staff. I could not have been blessed to work at a better school. I am looking forward to continuing to utilize the skills I developed during my time at the University of Southern Indiana." [22]

Austin Graber '19, accounting, and **Leslie (Drone) Graber '20**, mathematics, are living the good life and catching fish. [23]

Lainie Kate Krumenacker '19, psychology, was accepted into Murray State University's Clinical Psychology program in 2021 and is currently employed at a local mental health facility and volunteers within the community at local events as a first responder. "As a single mom, I had many decisions to make. It has been an incredibly hard journey. I found all of my support during my time at USI and I feel grateful to the University for everything it has given me." [24]



15



17



16



18

2020s

Travis Bell '20 M'21, sport management, joined the Evansville Police Department. **[25]**

Jordan Palmisano '20, radio and television broadcasting, graduated during the pandemic and put many things on hold, but her career was not one of them. Since September 2020, she has been working in her chosen career field doing exactly what she always wanted to do as the Morning News Video Editor with 44News/WEVV. **[26]**

Sierra (Craw) Schmitt '20, sociology, received the Emerging Alumna Award and Creative Programming Award in Social Excellence for Sigma Sigma Sigma on behalf of the Indianapolis Suburban Alumnae Chapter, Delta Eta.

Allison Schubert '20, health services, is Director of Memory Care at Magnolia Springs Bridgewater in Carmel, Indiana.

Brandyn Sims '20, exercise science, is a firefighter and EMT for Scott Township Fire Department in Evansville. Additionally, Sims is a U.S. Army commissioned officer and fire instructor.

Halie Boyce '21, health services, is a Wraparound Facilitator for Indiana Professional Management Group (IPMG), in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Brant McGill '21, psychology, criminal justice, joined the Evansville Police Department. **[25]**

Nicholas Parsons '21, exercise science, is an Exercise Specialist at Community Health Network in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Valeska Hubert '22, art, is the Administrative Associate for Alumni Relations and Volunteer USI.

Abby Sink '22, public relations and advertising, is the Social Media Specialist at Medieval Collectibles in Princeton, Indiana.

Marriages

Sarah (Wood) Howell '00, education, and **Alex Howell '01**, education, were married December 12, 2021. "Enjoying our love for each other as each day produces more love than the day before!" **[27]**

Megan (Miller) Davison '08 M'20, psychology, business administration, and **Jordan Davison** were married January 15, 2022, at the Mill Top Banquet and Conference Center in Noblesville, Indiana. The couple resides in Indianapolis, Indiana. **[28]**

Ashton (Mossberger) Logan '16, social work, and **Tyler Logan** were married April 20, 2022, in Fort Wayne, Indiana. **[29]**

Joshua Davis '17, mechanical engineering, and **Adrienne Coburn** were married March 11, 2022, in Evansville. The couple resides in Evansville. **[30]**

Kereston Hochgesang '18 M'21, communication studies, German,

communication, and **Nicholas Montee '18**, psychology, were married April 30, 2022, in Jasper, Indiana.

Nicole (Thorbecke) Lary '18, English (teaching), and **Kolby Lary '18 M'19**, sport management, were married September 5, 2021. **[31]**

Sierra Crow '20, sociology, and **Tyler Schmitt** were married April 23, 2022, at White Willow Farms in Arcadia, Indiana. The couple resides in Carmel, Indiana.

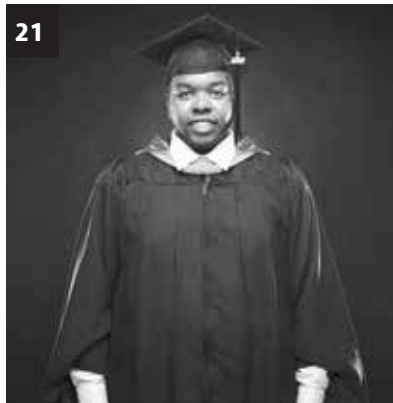
Abbey Davis '21, elementary education, and **Joseph Crawley '21**, finance, were married July 2, 2022. **[32]**

Births

Katherine (DeFries) Kote '04, nursing, and **Hasabu** welcomed **Abigail** on December 25, 2021.



19



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Sara (Morris) Compton '05, elementary education, and Chris welcomed Morris on November 4, 2021.

Gerald Wright '10, management, and Alesha welcomed Malachi Edward on February 7, 2022.

Amanda (Allen) Crockett '12, communication studies, and Blake welcomed Emmie Jane on January 30, 2022.

Tyler White '14, business administration, and **Jessica (Scott) White '15**, food and nutrition, welcomed Olivia Layne on February 2, 2021. [33]

Madison (Doan) Bannon '19, English (teaching), and Jarred welcomed Noah on October 13, 2021. [34]

Kristina (Korilko) DeWig '19, nursing, and Andrew welcomed Anderson Kate on February 12, 2022. [35]

In Memoriam

John Henry Marshall '71, business administration, of Evansville, died May 4, 2022. He attended USI (then ISUE) on the GI Bill, graduating in the University's inaugural class. John retired from a career as an auditor for the State of Indiana. He was known for his wit and ability to make the most of the moment.

Maria Elena (Lewis) Nelson '71, mathematics, of Mt. Vernon, Indiana, died June 11, 2022. She had a master's degree from Indiana State University - Terre Haute, Indiana, and taught math and science at North High School in the early 1970s before becoming a lab technician for General Electric. Maria loved horseback riding and had fond memories of being on the Shawnee National Forest trails with her family.

Gary Michael Seidl '71, management, of Evansville, died June 8, 2022. He was

dedicated to earning a college degree and worked the nightshift at Whirlpool to put himself through college. Upon graduation, Gary was employed in sales for a plastics and freight company, before returning to Whirlpool from where he retired in 2007.

Mark Bosse '72, English, of El Paso, Texas, died March 7, 2022. He had a quick wit and was funny and generous.

Mark Allen Douglass '72, elementary education, of Newburgh, Indiana, died February 9, 2022. He was a retired administrator with Scott County School District No.2 and a U.S. Navy veteran. Allen enjoyed volunteering on the USS LST-325 giving tours, was a member of American Legion Kapperman Post #44, and was happy to be included on one of the Honor Flights to Washington, D.C. He enjoyed traveling, woodworking and was an avid Abraham Lincoln historian, spending years on his research.

Linda Pauline Gamblin '72, elementary education, of Evansville, died April 30,

2022. She attended the Old Centennial Grade School, where in the second grade a wonderful teacher so touched her heart that she became a teacher herself. Linda worked for the Henderson County School System her entire teaching career. She dearly loved the children, parents and all the wonderful people she worked with.

Dennis Keith Herrenbruck '72, sociology, of Evansville, died May 28, 2022. His career in the injection molding industry came to a close after 35 years of dependability with Wabash Plastics. Dennis often spoke fondly of the products he helped to produce and the friendships he developed along the way.

Terry Southerland '72, art, of Evansville, died June 1, 2022. He had a passion for drumming, and started two bands, Terry and the Vandals, and later Corsairs which opened for Steppenwolf at Robert's Stadium. Terry was a sculptor, painter, inventor and graphic designer. Many of his iconic designs and logos are still visible



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26

in Evansville today. He was known for his sense of humor, spouting off tall tales sprinkled with just enough truth and always telling anyone who would listen how proud he was of his children.

Danny Arthur Dick '73, elementary education, of Evansville, died January 19, 2022. He was a veteran of the U.S. Navy, serving from 1965-1968, and later became a truck driver. Danny was a lifetime member of the Westside Sportsmen's Club and Germania Maennerchor. He loved hunting, fishing, reading and being with family.

Roberta "Berta" Meyer '73, elementary education, of Holland, Indiana, died June 8, 2022. She was the Pastor of Grace and Peace Lutheran Church in Evansville.

Ernest "Ernie" Jones '74, marketing, of Newburgh, Indiana, died Friday, June 10, 2022. He was a U.S. Army Veteran serving in Vietnam where he received the Army Commendation with Oak Leaf Cluster and Bronze Star Medals. He loved traveling,

golf, fine bourbon and spending time in his backyard with his wife and beloved dogs.

Gary Wayne Miller '75, sociology, of Shreveport, Louisiana, died January 9, 2022. He was in the U.S. Airforce for two years, stationed in Okinawa, Japan, and found his calling to the ministry at the age of 23. Gary was a pastor in Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Louisiana. His hobbies included art, genealogy, reading, photography, billiards and travel.

Gary Gatewood '76, sociology, of Dale, Indiana, died May 15, 2022. He was a U.S. Air Force Veteran. Gary worked as a realtor and in the construction field. He enjoyed working with miniature farm animals, was an avid sportsman who fished and hunted, competed in shooting events and spent hours training his dogs.

Sharon Ann (Shapker) Strader '76, computer information systems, of The Villages, Florida, died January 28, 2022. She was a member of the Evansville North

Civitan Club and retired from Total Titles Services LLC in 2020.

Raymond "Mike" Winters '78, sociology, of Evansville, died May 31, 2022. He proudly served his country in the United States Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. Mike retired in 2013 from the Evansville Police Department after 32 years of service. He also worked as a Security Guard at the Social Security Administration office.

Lana (Brunson) Easton '79, communications, of Evansville, died May 29, 2022. She played basketball on the first women's team at ISUE; enjoyed playing softball, reading, watching movies and gaming with her son, Joshua.

Margaret Elaine (Miller) Adams '83, elementary education, of Louisville, Kentucky, died July 13, 2022. She became a teacher at the age of 38, and spent the rest of her career as a teacher in the schools of the Catholic Diocese of Evansville, including

27 years as a first-grade teacher at St. Benedict Cathedral School.

Larry Wayne Marx '84, business administration, of Evansville, died January 19, 2022. He was a proud westsider and veteran of the U.S. Airforce, serving as an air traffic controller. Larry began his career as a custom metal fabricator at George Koch and Sons before going to Alfab Metals after earning his USI degree. He had a kind heart and told clean jokes.

Carma (Hoffman) Thimling '87, elementary education, of Jasper, Indiana, died July 10, 2022. She was a beloved teacher at Tenth Street Elementary School for 31 years.

Amy Louise Dippel '89, elementary education, of Huntingburg, Indiana, died June 6, 2022. She loved her family and her career in social work, and enjoyed playing bunco with her friends, traveling, cross-stitching, scrapbooking and weekend matinees at the movies.

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Deborah "Debi" (Schissler) Willett '89, dental assisting, of Elberfeld, Indiana, died July 10, 2022. She loved the ocean, vacationing in Key West and boating. She also enjoyed shopping and loved animals.

Thalita Floyd-Wingerter '91 M'95, business administration, accounting, business administration, of Ft. Branch, Indiana, died May 20, 2022. She worked as a graphic designer for MT Publishing, illustrating scenes for many books. Thalita enjoyed camping, hiking, gardening and caring for her pet chickens, cats and dogs. She and her husband, Derik, loved travel and went to France, Germany and Ireland.

Rodney "Rod" Jackson '91, electrical engineering technology, of Honduras (formerly of Newburgh, Indiana), died February 1, 2022. He was a former Green Beret and co-owned QTR, a local plastic recycling company. Rod moved to Honduras and established a new life after serving in the Iraq War, volunteering for an orphanage in the Trujillo region. He funded many projects for the orphanage, including

a septic system and solar panels, to free it from unpredictable electricity.

Patrick "Pat" Branstrator '92, communications, of Evansville, died January 27, 2022. He was a passionate teacher at Ivy Tech Community College, USI and YouthBuild Evansville, where he worked with adults seeking their GEDs. Pat also enjoyed auctioning and making a living through eBay.

Frederick Bacher M'95, secondary education, of Elberfeld, Indiana, died March 10, 2022. He received the Alan C. Rankin award for distinguished seniors in high school and went on to become a highly respected teacher and coach at Castle High School, who shaped the lives of countless students and athletes. Fred had a passion for teaching, coaching and was a devoted husband and father.

Benny Blackford '95, respiratory therapy, of Newburgh, Indiana, died February 8, 2022. He was a stubborn but kindhearted, fun-loving man and a passionate patient

28



29



advocate. After retiring from Select Specialty Hospital he continued helping people whenever possible while enjoying fishing, reading, AC/DC and nature.

Barbra Rogers '95, social science (teaching), of Troy, Indiana, died January 12, 2022. She was a high school teacher early in her career but worked as a nurse for 30 years. Barbra enjoyed traveling, was an avid bike rider and fitness enthusiast.

Carol Pigman '96 M'06, English, communications, secondary education, of Evansville, died May 28, 2022. She was an English teacher for more than 25 years. She also coached speech and debate at the elementary and high school levels.

Janet "Jan" Louise Waggoner '96, social work, of Melbourne, Florida, died January 15, 2022. She was a non-traditional student, earning an associate, bachelor's and master's degrees midlife. Jan was a licensed social worker in Indiana, Illinois

USI FAMILY Retiring

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Kathy Elpers, Professor of Social Work

35.5 years

POTT COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND ENGINEERING

Kim Schauss, Administrative Associate

20 years

ROMAIN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Ernest Hall, Professor Emeritus of Management

29 years

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Mary Jane Swartz D'12, Contract Assistant Professor of Nursing and Director Emerita, Center for Health Professions Lifelong Learning

14 years

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Andrew Black, AV Operations and Production Manager Emeritus

23.5 years

Jean Broyles, Administrative Clerk, Undergraduate Admissions

20 years

Carol Burgdorf, Administrative Associate, Public Safety

21 years

Vince Frazier, Science and Engineering Lab Technician

24 years

Douglas Goepfner '95, ADA Coordinator

15 years

McCoy Kemmerlin, HVAC Operator

10 years

Rhonda Moore, Custodian Services Shift Supervisor

10 years

Keely Porter, Women's Tennis Coach

22 years

Dennis Scherrer, Maintenance Mechanic

18 years

Jeanetta Lynn Scott, Public Safety Dispatcher

10 years

Karen Tuley '83, Manager Emerita of Accounting

15 years

30



32



31



and Kentucky. She included USI in her estate plans establishing an endowment for the Social Work Program.

Joan "Joanie" Elizabeth (Tyree) Scott '96, elementary education, of Evansville, died April 13, 2022. After earning her bachelor's degree from USI, she earned a master's degree from Indiana University. She worked for the CAPE Head Start program in Evansville and as an adjunct instructor at Ivy Tech and the University of Southern Indiana before becoming the Manager of the Deaconess Children's Enrichment Centers in Evansville and Henderson. Encouraging children's creativity and imagination was Joanie's greatest passion.

Sharon Sexson-Lyles '98 M'00 nursing, family nurse practitioner of Evansville, died June 27, 2022. As a nurse practitioner, she dedicated 40 years of her life to helping others. Sharon was a loyal member of multiple groups and organizations, particularly devoted to her church, faith

community, nursing and helping the Lynnville community through her non-profit Active Faith Health Ministry.

Donald Dayton Broshears M'00, liberal studies, of Evansville, died January 28, 2022. He earned his master's degree while employed at USI as Custodial Services Supervisor. Prior to working at USI, he was a commercial fisherman in Alaska for 17 years. He loved iced tea, golfing, fishing, gardening, tinkering in his garage and traveling with his wife.

Wade Eric Bulter '02, journalism and computer publishing, of Evansville, died January 17, 2022. He was an ordained minister, held a doctorate in organizational management and was an Adjunct Instructor of Journalism at USI from 2000-2007. Wade was a member of Toastmasters, a gifted speaker and a beautiful tenor singer whose hobbies included photography, scuba diving, painting, writing, camping and gardening.

Kathy Lynn Moore '04, dental hygiene, of Madisonville, Kentucky, died December 7, 2021. She loved animals, reading history books and novels.

Matthew Keith Brittain '05, biology, chemistry, of Columbus, Ohio, died May 31, 2022. An Eagle Scout and avid outdoorsman, he enjoyed camping, woodworking, cooking and serving others. When Matt wasn't running his toxicology lab, he could be found coaching his son's baseball team, directing traffic on Sundays in the church parking lot or fixing the roof at Agua Viva School in Chimaltenango, Guatemala. Most of all, though, he loved his family and was a wonderful father.

Bryce Corbin '05, engineering, of Evansville, died February 1, 2022. He enjoyed being on the water in his boat fishing and playing guitar with local rock band 3 O'Clock Charlie. Bryce had a capacity for kindness and the rescue of animals, domestic or wild, from danger.

Christian Ethridge '09, art, of Evansville, died May 1, 2022. He lived the life of an artist, and if you have visited New Harmony, Indiana, you likely saw his work. Christian renewed many murals and created commissioned paintings. His pieces could be best described as social commentary.

Andrew David Horn '14, engineering, of Dale, Indiana, died February 6, 2022. He was a talented, hardworking person who prided himself on taking care of his "girls." Andy climbed the ladder of success through his professional career, starting as a Communication Specialist before moving into engineering at Vectren Corporation, Alcoa and Berry Global.

USI FAMILY In Memoriam

Karen Anderson, Retired Lead Custodial Worker, (24 years) died January 31, 2022.

Seymour Brodsky, Assistant Professor Emeritus of Communications, (31 years) died March 4, 2022.

Don Broshears, Retired Custodial Services Supervisor, (22 years) died January 28, 2022.

Susan Donaldson, Professor of Psychology, (29 years) died February 22, 2022.

John McNaughton, Professor Emeritus of Art, (35 years) died March 11, 2022.

Amanda Sammet, Administrative Assistant, (11 months) died July 19, 2022.



TIME FOR AN UPDATE

Does your household receive multiple copies of *illumine*—yours and your children's? Would you like them to receive their copy at their home? Or would you prefer to read *illumine* digitally only?

If so, send your name, home address and USI graduation year to **USI.Editor@usi.edu** and tell me what you would like to happen:

- 1) have your children's copies mailed to their homes (include their name, current mailing address and preferred email)
- 2) combine multiple household copies into one mailing
- 3) receive digital only (include preferred email)
- 4) be removed from *illumine's* mailing list



CONTACT ME:



Sorority sisters include Sonia Sanchez, Eleanor Roosevelt, Toni Morrison and United States Vice President Kamala Harris.



She grew up listening to many musical genres, from Mahalia Jackson to The Carpenters to Dolly Parton to Dizzy Gillespie.

In grade school, in a small, rural community in Orangeburg, South Carolina, Dr. Xavia Harrington Burton first encountered superheroes as a child: her devoted teachers who inspired her and her classmates to aspire to things bigger than their small town offered. Learning from them made Burton want to be an educator and fuel future educators with a zeal to teach vulnerable student populations. In Burton's world, everyone has potential, and everyone has purpose. "My focus has always been marginalized students, first-generation students, students of color, students with diverse abilities, students with language barriers, LGBTQIA+ students, and how teachers can prepare themselves to better serve these diverse students."

Burton started her chosen career path as a high school English and Teaching English to Students of Other Languages (TESOL) teacher, arriving at USI in 2013, by way of Alabama, China and Kentucky. She believes she was predestined to come to USI because of each step she took in her educational career. "I love USI's students," she says. "They are, truly, the reason why I've been here as long as I have." That sense of dedication to USI's students and the passion she brings to education are what make her a superhero.



Your job in China as Lead TESOL Teacher Trainer was spent redesigning curriculums and lessons with students in mind. How did that experience impact your educational perspective and what you impart on your students today?

I was afforded an opportunity to put my passion for multicultural student success, my education and my experiences to the test to help others, and I was able to see some of the barriers that made students' learning so difficult.

I use this experience to remind future educators that students' failures are not always associated with student grit, intelligence or motivation; sometimes—just sometimes—students' failures are also a result of the failures in properly preparing the teacher to identify and meet diverse students' needs.

What challenges do educators face, and how do they stay steadfast despite them? Teaching is still a noble profession. It has its challenges, but it is important that the best educators do not believe the hype—that the challenges of teaching far

outweigh the benefits of teaching. That's just not true! Educators of today and tomorrow cannot become disillusioned by the current state of affairs. We must never forget that our work positively impacts students and their immediate families, their larger communities, our nation and our world. In a democratic society, the importance of teaching cannot be abandoned; the importance of teachers cannot be forgotten.



What is your vision for the future of education and teacher education? I envision a world where future educators are taught the importance of proper planning—and its correlation to quality teaching and learning—encouraged to create more positive learning environments with less, and motivated to think about their work from the students' perspectives, specifically those from marginalized groups, whose voices, oftentimes, go unheard.

What words sum you up? Change agent.

What one book should everyone read, and why? "The Moral Basis of Democracy" by Eleanor Roosevelt. The text takes an optimistic look at who we could be and how we could get there through collaborative work and equal respect of all people.

Quintessential Southern Belle



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Spirit and Heart of USI



John McNaughton, Professor Emeritus of Art, was a founding member of USI's art faculty in 1970 and a crucial contributor to the bedrock of the University's Art and Design program. A sculptor listed in *Who's Who of American Artists*, John infused energy and enthusiasm into his 35 years of teaching, growing the program into an impressive array of academically-gearred artistic career paths for students to pursue. His work graces USI's campus as well as private, public and municipal locations in the community and across the nation. His spirit imbues the heart of USI. RIP March 11, 2022.

Visit [USI.edu/spiritheart](https://www.usi.edu/spiritheart) for submission guidelines.