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COVID-19 can’t keep us down. The transformation into soaring Screaming Eagles prevailing is represented in this illustration by UI graphic designer Beth Driscoll ’18.
I recently retired from a 40-plus year career that I never would have had without my degree. And I never forget the, perhaps, most important lesson I learned while I was there, to really listen to and act upon my coworkers’ desires and concerns. And, I never forget who taught me it and I lived it.

We can look back at the tenure of Dr. Rice and what he did for me, and others too. He taught me to be humble and to always seek out help from others who are more knowledgeable than I am. He taught me to be persistent and to never give up on my goals. He taught me to be kind and to always put others before myself. He taught me to be a leader and to always strive to be the best that I can be.

But the bright lights and adulation were not there when Dr. Rice took the time to talk to me and a few fellow students, sitting at a break table during evening classes, and listen to us. I am forever grateful for the listening ear and encouragement to persevere that I received from Dr. Rice.

Michael D. Fendrich ’79
Mount Vernon, Indiana

A LEGACY OF LISTENING

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ALLIES IN BUSINESS IMPRESS

Love the collaboration and partnership between these alumni businesses in the Spring “Tale of Two Companies’ story” of S례aglePride Dr. Jennifer Hammat Evansville, Indiana

CLASS ACT

Not enough superlatives exist to describe illume publications. The quality of photography, the layout, the designs and most importantly the writing as truly reflects the glory of USI. Over the decades, I have inherited the distinct honor of working on much of the legal work for the projects and contracts that have underpinned USI’s mission and growth.

Reading illume indeed brightly illuminates for the inside world, and reminds us outsiders of USI’s many advancements. Reading illume and its very classy communications makes me and all of us in southwest Indiana so proud. Many thanks to you and your team for this outstanding work!

Mike Schopmeyer
Evansville, Indiana

THE STORY CONTINUES


Gloria Rivera
Evansville, Indiana

When Chuck Armstrong, Assistant Professor of Graphic Design, heard a student in a zoom class last spring say that they missed their fellow classmates, he lost access to his meal plan and Monte Monet, a student keeping him from eating. Armstrong acted to save USI students and alumni in need. He set up a GoFundMe account before raising $100 to fund non-perishable foods with an encouraging note to those in need. He purchased the items, including $300 in groceries, raising $20,000 and raising $5000000 nationwide.

The College of Nursing and Health Professions, the Biology, Geology and Physics Departments donated more than 1400 masks, 400 gloves and clippers to area hospitals and USI’s Veterinary Nursing Laboratory.

With limited access to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic, Amanda Walsh, Assistant Director of Library Services, began coordinating laptop deliveries around the Evansville area to make sure USI students and employees had the computing devices needed to continue learning and working.

Alumni, administrators and staff were happy to make donations at the call to make things and raise funds to keep the community safe. To mention a few, Dr. Khraisah Dow, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Tom and Marty Mann makes for the students who remained in campfire Christopher Norris, ’98, Assistant Director of Operations for Creative and Print Services, and 3-D printed 50 face shields and “war savers” for colleagues and essential workers from healthcare to stores. Kathy Bell ’05 pitched cloth masks for buses, family members and friends.

Four ventilators in the USI Respiratory Therapy Lab were sent to Ascension St. Vincent Evansville and Diagnostics Hospital to assist the broader community with the COVID-19 pandemic. The hospital’s clinical and pulmonary medicine machines were sent to the United States area and in the world to help continue the spread of COVID-19.

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We lived to make us green.

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We lived to make us green.
Not long ago, I learned of a woman named Mary whose husband was in a care facility. COVID-19 rules and health safety concerns kept the two apart, and she could only see him if she stood outside his window. Their hands pressed against the glass, Mary’s unswerving desire to touch her husband, look deep into his eyes and be with him grew stronger each day. The care facility administrators, although sympathetic, were nonnegotiable about in-person visits. This did not deter Mary. Seeking a solution, she noticed a job opening at the facility, and was hired as a dishwasher. Mary’s perseverance to be near her husband and finding honorable work to make it happen is what allowed them to be successfully reunited.

This love story—Mary’s desire to make a way where no way existed—is echoed in USI’s own incredible love story of resilience and perseverance to be reunited as a community. During the pandemic, we too forged a path where none existed. We too performed honorable work at all levels, from the staff who cleaned and disinfected the campus to prepare for our return, to Public Safety who patrolled the campus day and night to keep it secure, to the grounds crew who maintained the landscape so it would be as beautiful upon our return as when we left, to the faculty who transformed their classes into online learning environments and supported our students daily, to the students who resiliently sought academic enrichment and intellectual engagement remotely, to the administrators who Zoomed tirelessly to sustain our campus community.

Mary found her way to her husband’s side by opening herself to opportunity. Flexibility guided her, as it has this institution. It was crucial to our ability to support students and ensure their academic progress as we redirected the 2020-2021 academic year. We reshaped our courses to maximize the offerings in which education can be pursued, with health and safety top of mind, and remained true to the tenor of our mission—quality education. This flexibility, with the aim of inclusivity, enables all students access to education at USI regardless of their technological resources.

COVID-19 delivered a blow to life and education as we knew it. As a nation, we have lost 190,000 lives—a disproportionate number from our population’s most vulnerable segments. Like some of you, I too lost a loved one to this illness. This gave me incredible pause and made me appreciate what it means to be a member of a family, a member of a community, a member of a nation that cares about each other.

Like Mary, USI never abandoned its desire. We too selflessly rose to the occasion to aid our community and fulfill our mission. The word appreciation does not convey how deeply I admire and respect the students, staff, faculty, administrators, Board of Trustees and elected officials whose work supports and sustains this University. We are what I call “a one community bucket.” We are not divided by class or credentials; we are a whole that relies on each other to survive, prosper and serve.

The pandemic shook but it did not break higher education at USI. Instead, it inspired and engaged us to look at new means of achieving success. A success that is interdependent on each other—not only at this institution, but across the nation and globe. Without a web of connectivity, our successes will never be as impactful as they could be. We cannot do this alone. We need to uplift each other. Our failure to recognize this universal fact would be our greatest undoing. Please join us on this transformative journey.

*Number of U.S. deaths as of September 5, 2020.

Support
This is at the heart of USI. Supporting our students begins with faculty, staff and administrators supporting each other. It’s great to know we have one another to depend on. We are stronger because of it. Our support must go beyond the borders of our university’s campus and remain steadfast as we can continue to touch and transform lives within our community.

One
My mom taught me I was no better or less than anyone else. At USI, we are a one community bucket. We all are striving for the same collective goal—to deliver quality education. We are here today because of our interconnectedness to each other. If staff did not keep the campus clean and beautiful, admissions would falter. If faculty did not excel as educators, students’ successes would suffer. We are dependent upon one another to do our jobs. We are one.

Appreciative
It is something I feel deeply every day. The fact that we lost so many of our elders in nursing homes and assisted living facilities who were unable to say goodbye to their families is tragic. The pandemic made me more appreciative of life, of people, of the ability to love and especially of the ability to love and especially of the ability to love our elders, who maintained the landscape so it would be as beautiful upon our return as when we left, to the faculty who transformed their classes into online learning environments and supported our students daily, to the students who resiliently sought academic enrichment and intellectual engagement remotely, to the administrators who Zoomed tirelessly to sustain our campus community.

Resistance
This has been part of USI’s DNA from our inception until now. In the 1960s, we were responsive to the need for affordable, public higher education in southwest Indiana. Last spring, we were responsive to the needs of our students and the campus community by closing campus to all but authorized personnel to reduce COVID-19 risk. This fall, we were again responsive to our students by enacting enhanced safety measures and providing several modalities, face-to-face, hybrid and online options, in which they can continue to pursue their USI education.
During finals time last spring, students, faculty and staff were consumed with Zoom calls in preparation for exams and presentations. But all work and no play aren’t the USI way. Paws and Play is an event normally held on campus, where therapy animals and their owners, and even show off their own pets. to hang with therapy animals and their owners visit with students, which this spring were different but also no different.

Going to the Dogs

OFFERING the beloved event virtually: Three Zoom Paws and Play sessions in April gave students, faculty and staff the opportunity to hang with therapy animals and their owners, and even show off their own pets. The always popular Paws and Play event minimizes stress during finals, which this spring were different but also no different.

Caption

Pen a Caption

Every picture tells a story, or is that a picture’s worth 1,000 words? We don’t want you to write 1,000, just a line or two, putting some words into the mouths of those Screwing Eagles. Last Pen a Caption winner

Caption

A little bit of icing and some sprinkles makes every situation more bearable—just ask our international students, Kara Ben, Administrative Associate in the Center for International Programs, assembled and delivered spring-themed sugar cookie kits to international students still in housing after the pandemic closed campus. She put together the kits complete with freshly baked sugar cookies, colorful icing, pastel sprinkles and a personalized note with a link to a how-to decorate video making for the perfect sweet tooth satisfying study break.

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55 YEARS OF TRAILBLAZERS AND COUNTING

One hundred years ago the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified. Giving women the right to vote AND INSPIRING THEM TO SEEK THE LIVES OF THEIR CHOOSING. For the past 55 years USI has helped scores of women fulfill their educational and life dreams, graduating 28,136 women since the University’s inception in 1965. Some have pioneered in politics, science, art and business, while others turned to healing and education. While the individual roles they’ve played in the world is beyond the scope of our editorial knowledge, we are confident in saying their collective role has bettered the world for tomorrow’s Screwing Eagles.

When Derrick Maurer ’20, anthropology, approached Dr. Michael Strezewski, Associate Professor of Anthropology, about an independent study program in Fall 2019, Strezewski knew the perfect location for the budding professional to conduct his field work. The pair headed to the long gone Terry School (aka School Number 4), a one-room schoolhouse (1840-1914) situated on the Evansville State Hospital grounds to collect, download and analyze data using geophysical instruments.

To determine the school’s precise location, Maurer used USI’s magnetometer, something Strezewski acquired along with a resistivity meter using a National Science Foundation grant with additional contributions from the USI Foundation. The device looks a little like a treasure hunter’s metal detector, but it is exponentially more sophisticated and costly. Sweeping it over the ground, it can detect artifacts and soil disturbances up to about three feet below the surface.

Strezewski knew the schoolhouse was brick and its location from historic maps and photos. “I thought it would be an ideal spot for Derrick to get experiential, hands-on training because nothing has ever been built on top of this site,” he said. Over the course of three days, student and professor walked the grounds under the 210-plus-year-old Cherry Bark Oak tree on the bank of the little lake on Lincoln Avenue. Picking up signals that transmitted a ghostly image from more than 100 years ago, an outline of the school’s foundation emerged.

The location of the one-room schoolhouse has been confirmed,” says Maurer, and the study has conclusively shown that its remains are intact below the surface. He will use the information obtained from the magnetometer to produce a report for the Department of Natural Resources’ Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology.

“This is the perfect site for an independent study,” says Maurer, a student and professor walked the grounds under the 210-plus-year-old Cherry Bark Oak tree on the bank of the little lake on Lincoln Avenue. Picking up signals that transmitted a ghostly image from more than 100 years ago, an outline of the school’s foundation emerged.

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This fall, Maurer is pursuing his master’s degree in archaeology at Florida State University and he cites the experience gained in the independent study as a big factor in making it possible. “It increased my chances of being accepted into a program,” he says. “After graduate school I hope to find work as an archaeologist for a government agency like the National Park Service.”
Archibald T. Eagle (Archie), USI mascot, bounded onto the basketball court as a nameless raptor for the first game of the 1970-71 season. In 1978, students held a contest, naming him Archibald T. Eagle—the T standing for “The.” Affectionately known as Archie today, his look may have changed but his role as lead spirit rouser remains unchanged. Before standing for “The,” Affectionately known as Archie today, his look may have changed but his role as lead spirit rouser remains unchanged. Before standing for “The,”

An Eagle’s Life:

NAME?

College’s Man

Behind the

Who’s

the

Man

Behind

Pott

College’s

Name?

Robert Pott never attended or taught at USI but he will forever be part of the institution’s educational legacy. The self-taught engineer with a thirst for knowledge helped revolutionize the tool industry and workplace with his invention of the impact wrench in 1933. The tool, first marketed as the signature brand Pott Impact Wrench, was popular in heavy industry—railroad, oil refineries, automobile factories, the military—who removed bolts and nuts that previously could only be removed by hand and required a lot of force. Pott and his wife Elaine created a foundation in 1963 to benefit educational engineering institutes in Wisconsin and Indiana (their respective birth states). Campaign USI in 1998 received $2 million from the Robert H. and Elaine H. Pott Foundation toward the development of today’s Pott College of Science, Engineering, and Education. At the time, it was the largest gift in USI Foundation history. Today, Pott’s invention is known as an air gun and used by F1 and Indy 500 pit crews to change tires in five seconds.

Digging In:

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Future of Education

Traditionally, there’s been one primary path to higher education, and it started right after high school ended. But that’s no longer the case. Today, adult learners (25+ years old) are equally interested in college, and USI’s new adult student task force team is seeking to ensure the University can meet their needs.

Led by a task force formed by the Provost’s Office, the adult learner team contains members from across campus who are exploring ways to improve programming and add graduate, certificate and/or completion programs. That means understanding what potential students are interested in learning.

Teenagers and adult learners look for different things in their college of choice. Adult learners, many who work fulltime and have families, focus on scheduling flexibility and quality education at a fair price. USI is already well ahead of the game in all three areas.

The adult learner team is currently working on two initiatives. A grant proposal to the Lilly Foundation was submitted in June, said Dr. Ann White, taskforce Chair and Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Professions. “This $2.5 million grant, if awarded, will assist USI in creating an efficient and effective infrastructure to support the adult learners.” USI will submit a concept paper to the Lilly Foundation for a second grant to create an academic-business partnership to address adult learner and workforce needs in the tri-state area.
Looking for a way to keep students engaged and connected to campus after USI moved to online instruction during the Spring Semester due to COVID-19, Dr. Sarah Stevens, Director of the Honors Program, with the help of USI’s IT Department, created a Minecraft server for gamers to build a virtual USI campus. “After looking at a lot of ideas, I polled the Honors students and Minecraft emerged as something they wanted. It’s something creative to do, somewhere to go and a way for us to show how much we love USI.” The design and construction process requires architectural and engineering skills, as well as creative thinking. Stevens plans to keep the Minecraft server operating and students playing for at least a year.
I have always been honored to call myself a Screagle. With every class I have felt myself growing into a scholar, with every meeting I have felt myself falling more in love with the school I call home. From the moment I toured the University of Southern Indiana as a junior in high school, I knew that I would be happy here. What I didn’t know was that this University would be my absolute favorite place. In fact, I didn’t fully realize this until I had to leave due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Of course I was upset that the semester was being cut short, but sitting at home gave me a lot of time to think about all that I was missing.

I missed sitting in the UC with my friends chatting about the lecture we were just in. I missed my friends challenging me to take materials with my classmates before the professor walked in. I missed the loud rumble of Starbucks contrasting with the clack of my shoes as I walked toward the silent library. I missed hanging out in the Honor’s office. I missed seeing the wonderful theatrical productions. I missed sitting in the basement of the library until 10 p.m., discussing and debating philosophy. I missed arguing with professors and classmates over which policy would be most effective. I missed the late nights of studying or planning. I missed seeing all the friendly faces in the administrative wing. I missed the thrill of seeing my favorite parking spot being empty. I missed flat bumps with James the bus driver. I missed the excitement of seeing Dr. Rochon walking around campus. I missed my friends and acquaintances because they were all part of my world and the life I had built at USI.

The University of Southern Indiana isn’t just a school. It’s a life. It’s the first thing in my life that was really mine. I could shape my experience here into whatever I wanted. I could be as successful as I dared. It is opportunity and second chances. It is help when I needed it and service when I can give it. The University of Southern Indiana was the first thing in my life that was really mine. I could shape my experience here into whatever I wanted. I could be as successful as I dared. I could push boundaries and explore my interests.

USI is constantly changing and moving. Growing. Improving. It allows for the self-actualization of its students. If we see something missing, we can work to improve it. We can create concrete change in this ever so stubborn world. We can make an impact far beyond our short time as students.

The University of Southern Indiana has proven to me that I was never truly finding if I belonged. So, I played it safe and never wanted to venture out, until I met Dr. Tamara Wandel, a public relations professor whom I idolized. She was intelligent, funny and her personality was magnetic. Dr. Wandel noticed me when I felt uncomfortable being noticed. When she asked questions in her classroom, I wanted to answer but hesitated to speak up. She sensed my reluctance and began calling on me. She placed me in leadership roles in class, and I gradually came to enjoy the opportunity to guide and share my interpretations of the course material with my peers. It gave me my footing, and I slowly gained confidence. I became comfortable opening new doors and, luckily, one of the doors led to Dr. Michael Dixon. He was worldly and treated me as an equal. He asked his students for their opinions, and he truly wanted to hear them. He taught me how to express my views in a professional manner, but more than anything he taught me how to listen. Because of Dr. Dixon, I saw myself for the first time as a citizen of the world. He embraced diversity and showed others how to as well. I didn’t realize how much there was to see until I became willing to look through a different lens.

My childhood could easily be lyric to a John Mellencamp song. I grew up in a small farming community with a population just over 1,000. The summer days were filled by playing baseball with the boys down the road until the sun went down. I walked to my grade school when the weather was nice and knew who lived in each house along the road. My family’s farm was about a mile from the high school where I spent countless hours playing sports.

College, for me, was a way to have more options in my life and when a small private institution spoke to me about playing basketball for them, it seemed like an easy transition, since it would not be much different from my high school setting. My identity was always tied to athletics, but a part of me wanted to shed it. At 17, the thought of reinventing myself was both exhilarating and terrifying, and something told me to look for a greater challenge.

I struggled with being comfortable in who I was; never truly finding if I belonged. So, I played it safe and never wanted to venture out, until I looked at USI. Its size and population meant meeting someone new every day and immersing myself in a collegiate environment where academics were my first and not athletics. For the first time in my life I jumped—diving into the deep end of unfamiliarity and uncertainty—with no idea if I had what it took to be successful in this new chapter.
In a tense battle for a second shot at winning the NCAA Division II National Championship, USI trailed California-Riverside Highlanders by 22 points in the first half of the 1995 game after being defeated by Cal State Bakersfield the prior year. This time, the Screaming Eagles surged to win with a score of 71-63, scoring 14 of the game’s final 15 points to earn the University’s historic first national championship win. [The Softball (2018) and Baseball (2010, 2014) teams have since snagged three more for USI’s win column.] Twenty-five years later, the Men’s Basketball players from that first winning team and their coach, Bruce Pearl, returned to campus last spring for a reunion.

Where are they | NOW?

When Anna Hackert ’15, two-time All-American and USI Women’s Basketball leading career rebounder, graduated and began teaching mathematics and technology to elementary and middle school students, she found herself at a crossroads. Who is Anna without basketball?

After graduating, feeling the need to continue to immerse herself in the sport, Anna stayed connected to basketball as an athletic director and coaching elementary, middle and high school students. She brings what she learned from USI Women’s Basketball Coach Rick Stein to all the students’ lives she touches today.

“Coach Stein really cared about you as an individual, and he really wanted you to succeed off the court,” she says. “Being a teacher, I care about my students and what they do in class, but I also want to see them be successful later on in life, too.”

Many things have changed in Anna’s life since her USI days, but one thing remains constant—her love of the sport and how it shaped her. While USI basketball continues without Anna—albeit with her mark on it—there is no Anna without basketball.
John Spruance    
Assistant Men’s Basketball Coach

...my last days in Evansville so it was a heartbreaking moment. However, it brings me great joy for it reminds me of the best people I got to share life with and still do. I couldn’t have been matched with better roommate(s) and I will get my SWEET TALL LATTE very soon.

Erin Gibson   
USI Instructor in Communications

“As the parent of a diabetic student, this is greatly appreciated.”

Millennials Raitila    
Finland exchange student

Even with an empty campus, there is a positive outlook. Some days the news is so depressing it seems like we are watching the end of America!!!

Jon Mark Hall  
Director of Athletics

Even with an empty campus, there is energy around USI.

Sharon Parker   
referring to USI’s President Rochon’s Open Letter

“THERE ARE ALWAYS going to be good and bad days in our lives. We have to focus on the good ones and learn from the bad ones. Every day is a new day, and the sun will rise tomorrow. Don’t give up on your dreams. Things have a way of working themselves out, even if it isn’t going as we originally planned.”

Megan Brown 20   
diagnostic medical sonography, minor in gerontology

...my last days in EVANSVILLE so it was a heartbreaking moment. However, it brings me great joy for it reminds me of the best people I got to share life with and still do. I couldn’t have been matched with better roommate(s) and I will get my SWEET TALL LATTE very soon.

Lori Pytlik Byrd   
on the encouraging video message from Donna from the campus Starbucks

“Shout out to my DONNA from Saudi Arabia. Miss you and miss you saying my name ‘HELLO MO’ every single time I get my COFFEE. Stay safe EVERYONE. I will get my SWEET TALL LATTE very soon.”

Mohammed Alanazi   
on the encouraging video message from Donna from the campus Starbucks

“Loving my Black friends, colleagues and student-athletes is not enough. I need to listen, have dialogue and take action. I recognize my privilege as a White male, and I need to be better.”

Ten Mark Hall  
Director of Athletics

Education in the Time of COVID-19
By C. L. Stambush
The future is about flexibility and options—providing learning modalities to fit students’ learning preferences and their individual health and safety needs while keeping their educational goals on track. The Academic Affairs Committee of the Presidential Task Force determined the percentage of the four instructional modes already used at USI: face-to-face, technology enhanced, hybrid and online.

"These course modalities allow us to offer an on-campus experience for the students who want to return to campus," says Blanc. "These modalities are better suited for courses with experiential learning outcomes, such as laboratories, clinics, studios, practicums, etc."

Many classes traditionally taught on campus in a classroom were converted to hybrid courses because of classroom capacity limits. Students in these courses will be online 39% to 76% of the time, with the remaining being face-to-face. For example, classes meeting twice a week (Tuesday/Thursday) could have half the class attend on Tuesday while the other half Zooms from home, switching places on Thursday. Each faculty member determines the online versus face-to-face ratio and informs students which days they attend in-class versus Zoom.

Faculty teaching any course, except those already designed as online, had to develop a contingency online course plan in case the campus closed again. “They prepared each work/section/module for both in-person and online delivery methods for the Fall Semester,” says Dr. Kim Parsons, USI’s Chair for Council of Chairs and Program Directors. “While we hope course delivery will continue as planned, we recognize that our situation is fluid and changes may be necessary. Additionally, the online delivery method may be required even when courses still meet face-to-face, since it may be necessary for students to quarantine if they have been exposed to COVID-19.”
Some students had a rough ride last spring. "About 20% of our students did not have reliable access to the internet to transition to a remote learning environment when they moved off campus," says Elliott.

Overall, the Spring Semester’s learning curve revealed more positives than problems because of the attitudes faculty, staff, and students and administrators showed up with every day. "Students were resilient, engaged, and appreciative of faculty efforts," says Blunt. "It was gratifying to observe faculty collaborating with colleagues in their departments to make the transition to quality online learning in the Spring as smooth as possible. They shared resources and ideas for creating an effective learning environment for students."

Money can be a game changing resource for students. Mary Jo Harpe, Director of Student Financial Assistance, says the University received $2.9 million from the Federal program HEERF (Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund) through the government’s CARES Act in emergency financial aid grants for students. The funds help them cover expenses related to the campus’ disruption due to the novel coronavirus. "Although the funding is heavily regulated, we are following the Department of Education’s guidelines and have been successful in serving 4,798 students with need, totaling just over $2.8 million in awards" she says, noting the remaining funding will ensure more student access to education this Fall. "The Financial Assistance team has done an outstanding job of serving our students."

The pandemic certainly shook and shuttered the world, but as USI planned for the 2020-2021 academic year, its mission and vision remained, as always, fixed on the future. "It was not always easy," says Parsons, "but the amount of grace, empathy and caring that was demonstrated during these times revealed the true character of our USI community. It was a lesson I consider the greatest success of the Spring Semester."

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WHAT WAS LIFE LIKE BEFORE AND AFTER THE CAMPUS CLOSED?

Mara: Before everything happened, I lived in the apartments on campus with three other roommates who had to move out, so I ended up living by myself. At the beginning it was hard because I felt lonely, plus I had to keep up with my classes. For me, classes started being a little bit harder online than in person because the workload increased significantly. I had to start being more organized and really measuring my time to meet all the deadlines.

Fatin: Before the University closed, I was a student worker in the Center for International Programs. In that capacity, I interacted with international students daily and took them into the Evansville community to volunteer with local nonprofit organizations. When I wasn’t in the office or volunteering in the community, I spent my time in the library working on my master’s thesis or going to the Rec Center. After the University closed, I no longer had access to the office, I couldn’t volunteer anymore. I couldn’t spend my nights in the library or go to the Rec. That was a drastic change, but we had to cope with it to prevent the spread of the new coronavirus.

Hortensia: It was hard to go from being around all your friends to being alone. It was scary for me to even go out for a walk, and I know that other international students felt the same. Despite that, we understood that it was in our best interest and we got used to this new normal.

Nohemi: Before and after this pandemic and shutdown, my living situation was about the same, just my daily routine changed. I live in a two-bedroom suite with a roommate from Panama, who also remained on campus. When the campus closed, I could not go to the labs, the library or the gym. I usually make my own food, so it was basically the same. I needed to adjust to a new routine, however, which took a lot of discipline. Now I cannot stay in my room without making my bed, everything needs to be neat and organized so I can focus on what I am doing. Having that type of atmosphere helps me stay productive.

WHAT WAS SUDDENLY SWITCHING TO 100% ONLINE CLASSES LIKE?

Mara: It was hard at the beginning since I had many group projects to complete, and sometimes the communication between my classmates was not the best. Overall, the professors were really helpful, but it was not the same experience.
HOW DID YOUR INTERACTION WITH FACULTY CHANGE WITH CLASSMATES?

Mara: Everything being fully online I had to reach out to my professors by email, or in some cases, we stayed a couple minutes after our Zoom class to clarify questions. It was harder to discuss project guidelines and there were a lot of miscommunication problems. With my classmates it was a challenge to communicate, but for the most part, we managed to arrange Zoom meetings to discuss our final projects.

Fatin: Before the campus was closed, I used to have a meeting every other week with my academic advisor in his office to discuss my progress on my research. After campus closed, we moved to Zoom meetings. To be honest, I preferred the Zoom meetings because I was able to record them and refer to them at my convenience, in order to consider the suggestions he would make. It was completely different than sitting down, listening and taking notes.

As far as my interactions with my classmates were concerned, they were affected in the sense that we couldn’t meet in the library to complete activities and assignments, or do anything else. We would sometimes have a short conversation on the phone about assignments since we were all practicing social distancing.

Hortensia: I felt it became distant. The professors were too busy trying to figure out how to make our classes work and I did not have the opportunity to keep close contact with my classmates since we did not have any projects, labs or homework together. As we moved to online, it was, for me, a job between my laptop and me, and not with my professor and classmates.

Nohemi: I was pushing myself to use the office hours of my professors more frequently, and I was doing great. All of a sudden, the shutdown came. I felt more limited in my interaction with them since all we could do was email and make appointments through Zoom, which I did not really feel comfortable with. At the beginning of the online classes, I was struggling with some labs and assignments and sometimes it was so hard for me to focus and get things done for that class. Dr. Trent Engbers reached out to check in with me and asked if I needed any help several times. He was able to see the potential I have and helped me.

HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU SAW YOUR PEERS MOVING OUT?

Mara: It was really sad to see my roommates and American friends moving out; it was sadden to see how empty the campus was at that time.

Fatin: Seeing everybody moving off campus in the middle of the semester was unexpected. I felt isolated and lonely on an empty campus. I couldn’t say goodbye, in a proper way, to some of my American friends whom I had met and built solid friendships with. Seeing them leave in an abrupt manner and knowing it was probably the last time for me to see them, deeply saddened me. This was my final year at USI as well as some of my friends who left too.

Hortensia: I felt sad and melancholic. Suddenly the campus became the loneliest place in the world. However, it got worse for me because many of my international friends had to return home. It was their only opportunity to fly, so if they wanted to stay, it was an impossible situation. Students who were leaving were going to see their families, but for me I was about seeing fewer people on campus, not being able to see my family and feeling that everything was uncertain.

Nohemi: It was an interesting week, mostly because people were leaving campus early and all of a sudden. I was ok until I started seeing posts on social media from friends that were very affected, and I felt sorry for them and just prayed that things would work out for them. I felt bad for them but blessed that I was permitted to stay on campus.

HOW DID YOU COPE WITH THE CAMPUS CLOSING?

Mara: At the beginning we did not know what to think, we were really uncertain about our future at USI, but as the days went by, we realized we had a large support system at the University and a lot of people helped us through this transition. Knowing that I felt more relief and just focused on finishing the semester strong.

Fatin: After the campus closed, I continued working on my thesis. Instead of spending my nights in the library, I adjusted to working from my apartment. It was not easy because of the many distractions around. To manage stress, I sometimes jogged on off-campus trails. I stayed connected socially by talking with my family and friends back home.

Hortensia: I had to realize that even though I could call anybody, nobody was going to come and be with me. So, I pushed myself to change the uncertain time into the most successful one. I had classes, called my family, cooked the food I liked and found ways to entertain myself and feel happy. For example, I bought some puzzles, got some plants and watered them every day and started to practice yoga. Trust me, there were days that I didn’t have time to finish everything on my list because I was busy taking advantage of my day.

Nohemi: I would say that it was not such a big deal. I am a very go-with-the-flow and patient person. But it affected me in that I was not able to work. I was a bit sad that I could not use the building as I sometimes gets a little boring to stay in my apartment all the time. Thank God I was able to go for short walks by the apartments and breathe fresh air.

HOW HAS THE UNIVERSITY SUPPORTED YOU?

Mara: The International Office and Dr. Rochen (we like to call him “Baba”) have been such a great support for all of us. The International Office arranged buses for us to go to Walmart to buy groceries, and came up with activities to keep us occupied, such as gardening and baking.

Fatin: The University has supported me and many other students by allowing us to stay on campus during this difficult time. Not only did the University leadership allow us to be here but they made sure every weekend that we had food. They checked on us daily, making sure we had everything we needed. I know that this was not the case in many other universities across the United States where I have friends at different universities throughout the country. I know we were lucky to be at USI and we are grateful.

Hortensia: I should say USI has the best president, but also the best staff. When the University closed, the support from every department was tremendous. I remember that every night (international students on campus) would have an online meeting with someone from a different department, for example, Public Safety, Health Center, Housing or the Counseling Center. In all those meetings, Heidi and Dr. Rochen were present. The goal of those meetings was to make sure that the students on campus were safe, and whoever needed to come to campus would be safe.

Nohemi: The University has been doing a great job since the first day. Dr. Rochen and Heidi Gregori-Gahan have made sure we had what we needed and are always concerned about our situation. A Quarantine Café was installed in the Townsend building, and every Saturday
Dr. Rochon and Heidi fed us and brought some groceries. The Health Center offered help and interest in our well-being, and the Housing staff looked after us too. Having Dr. Rochon as our president made me feel at home during this time; I cannot emphasize that enough.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST DIFFICULT THING FOR YOU?

Mara: The hardest for me during this time has been being away from my family. I saw how my friends were spending more time with their families during this quarantine, doing fun activities like baking, playing, watching movies, and I wished I could do the same things with mine.

Fatin: One of the most difficult things for me was not having access to the library. I get easily distracted in my apartment. The library was the place for me to go and focus on my schoolwork.

Hortensia: The most difficult thing has been being away from my family. These are times when we want to be together, and we want to feel supported. Being in the middle of a pandemic, not knowing what is going to happen next, was terrifying.

Nohemi: I would say, not having a job. I do not depend on my parents or family financially, rather I help my father financially. I think having that responsibility and not being able to do much has truly been difficult.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST POSITIVE THING FOR YOU?

Mara: One of the positive things about the campus closing was being able to connect more with all of the other international students. We really bonded with each other; going through the same process and having all their support was a big help. It was sad to see them return to their countries.

Fatin: The most positive thing for me was being able to complete my degree program despite the pandemic and these unforeseen circumstances. I saw the challenges as hurdles detouring me from reaching my destination. But I overcame them one at a time and completed my program as originally set out to do. It wasn’t easy, but I’m proud to say I now have a Master of Public Administration.

Hortensia: I learned to become positive in difficult times. I knew I was going to be alone for a long time and staying in my bed 24 hours a day was not going to be helpful. I changed my mind and challenged myself to be better.

Nohemi: I think the most positive thing during this time was that I made a lot of friends in the First Love church family. I have friends in Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Missouri, Minnesota, Tennessee and other states—all students studying in different universities. Also, many do not believe me, but every week I have Zoom meetings, prayer meetings, Bible studies, gatherings, not to mention that on Sundays, I am at [online] church from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., sometimes 4 p.m., which would not be possible if this situation did not happen. I have made a lot of connections during this time, and I really appreciate and thank God for them. I indeed went through a lot of new experiences and developed new amazing skills.

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST LESSON YOU LEARNED FROM THE EXPERIENCE?

Mara: How uncertain the world is and how fragile we are as humans.

Fatin: The social skills, empathy, respect and acceptance of our differences made me grow culturally and individually. I realized that I was capable of more than I thought. Coming from a French-speaking country and being able to write a 78-page thesis in English was a great accomplishment. At times I doubted I could complete it, but by dint of perseverance I made it happen. As the saying goes, “Where there’s a will, there’s always a way.”

Hortensia: There are always going to be barriers and difficulties in my studies, but it is up to me to overcome them and become a better student.

Nohemi: That no matter what happens I still need to continue learning and acquiring new knowledge and skills in my field. I also learned that I need to find strategies to build new skills as the world changes and enters a new normal. I came to the U.S. to study and get a good education in a field that will allow me to help society.

SUCCESS FROM THE SIDELINES

by Erin Meyer
It was 2000 and he wanted distance—from basketball and its disappointment. Instead, over the next few months, in a medley of Midwest gyms, he led his first team (a group of middle schoolers from Carbondale, Illinois) to an undefeated season. A season that changed his life.

Coaching was supposed to be a back-up: a career shift when his real dream ended. But it never began.

Despite dazzling fans as a two-time National Player of the Year at USI and competing professionally overseas, “Superman’s” membership to the game’s most exclusive—and elusive—club was denied. There would be no NBA.

But basketball still beckoned.

Not long after his greatest defeat, that first team provided a much-needed victory—of them, actually. More importantly, it ignited a new passion that quickly propelled him to, and through, the college coaching ranks.

Like books judged by their covers, coaches are often judged by their records—and Gouard’s is impressive (winning 204 out of 315 games in 12 years as head coach at the University of Indianapolis before becoming USI’s Head Men’s Basketball Coach this year). But while winning is important—he longs to add another national championship trophy to USI’s case—not as his only priority. Nor is it his first. “I preach academics, character and basketball…. And we will never sacrifice the academics and character for basketball,” the former GLVC Coach of the Year said.

Gouard pushes players to their limits; lack of effort will always land them on the bench before a mistake. He encourages them to embrace instilling my wisdom into these young men,” he said. “And, as much as I know they are more than the numbers on their jerseys, more than their stat lines and highlight reels. They’re his family. And above all, he wants them to succeed.

Regardless of his decorated playing and coaching careers, Gouard knows he’ll have to continually earn that trust and respect from his players, just as they must prove themselves to him. “I want these guys to look up to me in all aspects, and I think that starts with my basketball games,” he said. Promises are nice, but actions are what really matter to my former teammates…. put my heart and my mind at ease.”

Gouard agreed; the rising senior had more to give. “It lets me know that he wants me to be great,” Price said. “So, I’m all in with him.”

Gouard’s ambition and intensity are regularly on display from November to March. And through coaching has no true off-season—there is always more to do: recruiting, scheduling, ordering equipment—outside the gym, he considers himself pretty laid back. “I don’t get too high or too low,” he said. “I’m very family oriented. You’ll see me out in the yard picking grass out of my flower bed, playing with my [10-year-old] daughter [Kennedy] on the driveway or even jumping on the trampoline…. Every day my wife [Chasity (Kennedy) ‘98, a fellow USI grad] and I take an hour-long walk.” He enjoys not just knowing, but spending time with his neighbors. A “people person” to his core, a trait that likely developed out of necessity as the youngest of eight children.

Just as he did while growing up in Danville, Illinois, Gouard values the support of loved ones and strives to cultivate an atmosphere of care within his program. He wants players to know they are more than the numbers on their jerseys, more than their stat lines and highlight reels. They’re his family. And above all, he wants them to succeed.

“That means a lot more to me than just going out and winning a lot of basketball games,” he said.

The NBA was Stan Gouard’s dream. Twenty years after that first transformative season, he has no doubt coaching is his calling. “I love instilling my wisdom into these young men,” he said. “And, as much as I wanted to play at the next level, I think I love this a whole lot more.”

He tells players: “If you’ve got a job, do a better job today than you did yesterday. If you are with your brother, be a better brother than you were yesterday. It’s not just winning on the court, but it’s winning the day.”

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Gouard pushes players to their limits; lack of effort will always land them on the bench before a mistake. He encourages them to embrace
How Two Radiology Faculty Pioneered Healthy Change Across Two Disciplines

By C. L. Stambush

In late October 2016, Joy Cook ’95 ’03 M’09 EdD’22 and Heather Schmuck ’02 M’13 EdD’22 were in their campus offices catching up on class assignments and finishing up the week when an email from a colleague across town pinged their mailboxes. One of the University’s radiological community partners needed help assessing the dirtiness of the lead apparel worn by its radiologic technologist and radiologists.
The hospital had protocols and practices for cleaning its hundreds of weighty aprons, but when contacted by an outside service to clean the apparel for them—at a cost of a quarter of a million dollars every six months—hospital administrators were prompted to ask: how germy is the protective apparel and how effective were cleaning protocols? “Our colleague knew we had been interested in doing some research on radiology lead identification markers and their use,” said Cook, Associate Professor of Radiologic and Imaging Sciences and Chair of Radiologic and Imaging Sciences.

Every research project begins with a deep dive into literature reviews. Cook and Schmuck, Clinical Associate Professor of Radiologic and Imaging Sciences and Clinical Coordinator Radiologic and Imaging Sciences, dove into discovery mode to familiarize themselves with published research before evaluating the apparel. “One study came out that they were having a rash of ringworm show up on the radiology professionals,” Cook said. “It turns out it was being spread through the thyroid collars on the shields people were wearing because that comes in direct contact with skin.”

Unlike food establishments that are inspected routinely by officials, and health code violations reported to the public in newspapers and online, medical institutions undergo no such rigorous oversight from an outside entity. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provide guidelines for infection control only. The Joint Commission, a nonprofit organization that inspects and accredits U.S. hospitals, has rules regarding infection prevention but doesn’t measure institutional cleanliness. The hospital is only required, for accreditation purposes, to have a record of the apparel in use and an annual integrity inspection to ensure the apparel is not damaged and protecting the user.

To determine the level of bioburden on lead apparel, a handheld device called a bioluminescence meter calculates the molecular material in relative light units (RLU). There are no industry standards for acceptable levels of dirtiness, and each medical institution is expected to set its own. At this particular hospital, 50 RLU was the threshold for lead apparel used in general patient care areas and 10 RLU for surgery. The apparel received quarterly cleaning using several methods—a spray cleaner with a brush and wipes—but bioburden wasn’t measured before, during or after cleanings.

Armed with one of USI’s bioluminescence meters, Cook and Schmuck randomly tested a percentage of the hospital’s wide variety of protective attire. The results were alarming: an average of 129.98 RLUs was detected. Exacerbating the issue was the fact that the protective equipment used in the many departments rarely stayed put, roaming the hospital from department to department, in and out of surgeries collecting a cocktail of bacteria. It wasn’t just lead apparel in use that teamed with germs, new products straight from manufacturers were tested by Cook and Schmuck who discovered they arrived predisposed with an average of 51 RLUs.

The hospital’s sanitizing policy needed reassessing. Cook and Schmuck recommended upping the cleaning to monthly, even though it came with a cost. “Our community partner has 700 to 800 pieces of lead apparel,” Schmuck said. “When you’re talking about having to individually clean each one of those, it can get very labor-intensive very quickly.”
They returned a year later to evaluate the effectiveness of the change. "We sampled the aprons and found that we’d gotten it down to 118 RLUs," Cook said. "That’s a huge difference from 129, but it still wasn’t where we wanted it to be.”

Since their initial research yielded little insight into best practices for cleaning lead apparel, figuring out best practices to remain under the hospital’s bioburden threshold led to a new phase of research. “We discovered that not only has no one figured out how often aprons should be cleaned,” Schmuck said, “but also what method is best, in terms of efficiency costs.”

The hospital purchases lead apparel from different manufacturers, each arriving in a box and wrapped in plastic from different manufacturers, each arriving in a box and wrapped in plastic. The goal was to not only inform the dentist’s six lead aprons. The students did all the analysis of the apparel, determining if and where the weak spots and cracks were and wrote a report for the dentist. The goal was not to only inform the dentist of his aprons’ integrity but to provide understanding and procedures to keep it free of defects and patients safe. “Our intention in doing this was to make sure that appropriate care gets maintained in practice,” she said. “We can show them just because it looks okay on the outside it doesn’t mean it is on the inside. Students at USI are taught how to store the aprons appropriately, but somewhere in practice, and not at all dental offices, that got lost.”

A chance conversation at the coffee pot resulted in a larger collaboration with Amanda Reddington, Clinical Assistant Professor of Dental Hygiene/Assisting, Cook said. "I was discussing some of the things that we were doing with our students on campus and how we had this ‘aha’ moment and realization concerning the care of lead apparel in dentists’ offices, and Amanda was very interested in getting our two groups together.”

Schmuck, Cook and Reddington devised a unique interprofessional service-learning project for the divergent, healthcare career seekers to collaborate on in USI’s Dental Clinic and Radiology Lab that combined the two research projects—the dentist’s office and hospital bioburden RLUs. The trio applied for an internal grant to purchase equipment needed for the project and received $3,000. The students were divided into four groups (the number of lead aprons in the USI Dental Clinic) to test the apparel’s cleanliness and integrity, as well as ancillary devices used in the departments.

“The student teams swabbed, cleaned and swabbed again, checking the dirtiness level of pieces of lead apparel before coming up to the radiology lab. Once at the radiology lab, students conducted a visual and manual inspection where they looked at and felt the lead apparel to see if they could detect any holes by touch or sight. They then moved the lead apparel into the energized lab to create an X-ray image of each quadrant of the lead apparel to determine if there were integrity issues,” Schmuck said.

“We thought it was important to get the two groups of students together—who don’t realize that they really have a lot in common—to catch these pre-professionals and share the importance of making sure things are clean before being used on ourselves and our patients,” Cook said.

The impact of Hollingsworth’s initial email in 2016, wondering if the hospital’s lead apparel germ levels were within an acceptable range, sparked research, collaboration, interprofessional projects and most importantly, change that has increased both patient and professional’s safety.

### Boxing in Germs

**Cook was sitting with her daughter in the dentist’s office when an epiphany struck her.** “I watched the dental hygienist unfold this apron where she had it stacked and put it on my child,” she said. “It had never occurred to me that radiology and dental, while two separate disciplines have a commonality—we both utilize X-rays.”

Germs weren’t the issue with the dentist’s office’s lead apparel, but rather its integrity. “Every time it’s folded, it creates a stress point that could crack and then it reduces its effectiveness,” Cook said. When she pointed this out to the dentist, he was rightly concerned and wanted to know if his apparel was compromised. Unlike hospitals with large X-ray machines, dental offices have no easy way of determining if cracks or stress lines have developed unless they partner with a local hospital or university, Schmuck said.

In the next few weeks, two of Cook’s students examined and X-rayed the dentist’s six lead aprons. The students did all the analysis of the apparel, determining if and where the weak spots and cracks were and wrote a report for the dentist. The goal was not to only inform the dentist of his aprons’ integrity but to provide understanding and procedures to keep it clean.

### Out of the Box

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Schmuck surveyed her hospital colleagues and discovered different technologies used types of reusable adhesives to adhere the markers to the imaging plates. Some of the choices weren’t as effective as others.

Cook and Schmuck presented their lead apparel and marker findings at the Indiana Society of Radiologic Technologists 2018 conference, prompting their peers to think more about the bioburden RLUs. The trio applied for an internal grant to purchase equipment needed for the project and received $3,000. The students were divided into four groups (the number of lead aprons in the USI Dental Clinic) to test the apparel’s cleanliness and integrity, as well as ancillary devices used in the departments.

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“The student teams swabbed, cleaned and swabbed again, checking the dirtiness level of pieces of lead apparel before coming up to the radiology lab. Once at the radiology lab, students conducted a visual and manual inspection where they looked at and felt the lead apparel to see if they could detect any holes by touch or sight. They then moved the lead apparel into the energized lab to create an X-ray image of each quadrant of the lead apparel to determine if there were integrity issues,” Schmuck said.

“We thought it was important to get the two groups of students together—who don’t realize that they really have a lot in common—to catch these pre-professionals and share the importance of making sure things are clean before being used on ourselves and our patients,” Cook said.

The impact of Hollingsworth’s initial email in 2016, wondering if the hospital’s lead apparel germ levels were within an acceptable range, sparked research, collaboration, interprofessional projects and most importantly, change that has increased both patient and professional’s safety.
The COVID-19 pandemic forces us to live in a new reality no one was prepared for. However, because of this, I learned how to conquer academic and life challenges I thought I never could. I found out where my weak spots were in my work and how to improve them, and recognized how hard USI’s faculty and staff will work for students and our individual success. After this semester, I truly prouly embrace a-schlep and will continue to wear the name confidently. When we all return, everything will be a little more special than it was before.

– Grace Tolb ’23
Public Relations and Advertising
Indianapolis, Indiana

I had taken several online classes prior to the Spring 2020-Semester But, after the surprise of the COVID-19 pandemic, my typical workload on campus turned into an unprecedented workload at home. The urge to watch Netflix or hang out with friends only grew stronger—making online learning a super difficult task. The numerous Wi-Fi connections made online exams, recorded presentations and Zoom calls even more challenging. But, a sense of strong resilience and concentration allowed me to get through it all. One step at a time, I took on each assignment, quiz and exam with an open mind, and I was able to finish the semester successfully.

– Brandon Turner ’22
Biology (Pre-Medical)
Vincennes, Indiana

This year took a turn from what we perceived as normal when the pandemic occurred. Nonetheless, I was able to pull through the tough time and learn great lessons about academics. One of the greatest lessons I learned is there are lots of individuals that genuinely care about my education, especially those directly involved, like my professors and school faculty. They could have easily done the bare minimum, but they did their best to make sure students got the material needed to learn in the class. We also saw huge support for the Class of 2020.

– Iruoghene Oruahwo ’22
Electrical Engineering
Maracaibo, Zulia, Venezuela

 Desire is a simple word that makes us what we are and helps us to identify ourselves as leaders or followers. The greatest lesson I have learned is that nothing can stop our desire to learn something and improve our academic skills. First ways to keep learning, (e.g., use books if you don’t have internet). My desire of working hard to accomplish my goals is something that goes beyond this situation, it has made me a stronger individual and has prepared me for what is next in my academic career. I’m sure that if we help each other we will get through those hard moments while improving our selves.

– Sarah Haunsperger ’22
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BEHIND THE SCENE

What began as a way to bring community members to campus for a night of food, music and fun has grown into a 51-year (and going) tradition. USI’s Madrigal Feaste—a reenactment of a 15th-century royal feast—was originally performed with German traditions that reflected the community’s heritage. It was transformed into an Irish-themed feast after Daniel Craig, Associate Professor of Music, arrived in 1990 and USI’s Chamber Choir began traveling to Ireland for musical competitions.

Two months of rehearsals, yards of fabric and a weekend of staging go into the event that has scripted processions and music accompanying each of the five courses that, over time, have been created to appeal to most palates.

1. Plum pudding was served as dessert from 1969 to the late 1990s. Originally prepared in her own kitchen, Betty Rice, the wife of USI’s first president Dr. David L. Rice, catered the entire meal for hundreds of guests. Plum pudding recipes contain no actual plums but rather raisins, the pre-Victorian word for plums.

2. An array of props is staged in Carter Hall to reflect the regal Irish manor, complete with a knight’s full suit of armor, and decorated evergreen trees significant of the season’s celebration fill out the set. The suit of armor was donated by a fan of the feast after she remodeled a medieval/renaissance themed space in her home.

3. In ancient times, the boar was considered the most dangerous and tastiest meat. To honor the hunter brave enough to slay it for the feast, the boar’s head was decorated and displayed while the meat was cooked and plated separately. USI’s boar’s head is real and has been part of the celebration since its inception.

4. The feast has a cast of approximately 60 students performing roles of lords, ladies, storytellers and jesters. They roam the room, inviting patrons to dance and sing. In the early years, a skit was performed after dinner. Today, so much entertainment is happening simultaneously that each guest has a unique perception of the evening.

5. USI’s Mid-American Singers, established in 1969, brought national attention to the feast when, in 1977, they performed it on air on PBS. The group reorganized into the USI Chamber Choir in 1999. USI’s choir performed in New York City’s Carnegie Hall in 2011 and 2019. Music is the center of the feast and each song ushers in the next course of the meal, advancing the program. The choir performs between 15-20 songs in several languages: Latin, French, German, Welsh, Irish, Scots Gaelic, Russian and English.
The Immeasurable Impact of "MAMA HEIDI"

Early in her career, Gregori-Gahan relished students’ view of her as a trustable sister. It was the ultimate compliment—until she morphed into the role of loving mother, with a name known across campus and continents: “Mama Heidi.”

“She truly became [students’] family abroad as they navigate their experiences during their stay with us,” said Dr. Emilia Zlatkova, Director of USI’s Intensive English Department and interim Executive Director for International Programs and Services. “Heidi is one of those people who approaches you with her heart and arms open, ready to welcome you, listen to you and uplift you in every possible way.”

“She led with compassion and an ethic of care, pushing us all to triumphs happened quickly. But no matter how complex or lengthy, all involved a fundamental concept. “You’ve got to be genuine, because even if people don’t speak your language, they’re going to know,” said Gregori-Gahan. “People know if you’re not genuine.”

Her unwavering dedication to international education prompted NAISA, Associations of Educators to name Gregori-Gahan a recipient of the NAISA Life Membership Award last spring, when she led with compassion and an ethic of care, pushing us all to

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John Raisor ’03, interperson/organizational communications.
“Kindergarten orientation was a little different this year, but you can see a lot of smiling faces. Mom, Dad, Uncles, and Aunts are in the top, second from left.” [10]

Andrew McCaul ’03, accounting and professional services.
“Five US alumni spurred up Bob Wolfley’s ’10, public relations and marketing, and Uncle Al’s as part of the Look, Bronx the Foundation’s ‘Great Outdoor Clean-Up’ a program that raises $300,000 for scholarships. The student members of Our Fresno chapter are...” [11]

Abby (Williams) Zwickl ’93, biology.
“If I was going to choose a program in which to pursue a science career online, this would not...” [12]

Andy Raisor ’03, Valley HFL M’14.
“Business administration, is the executive director of the O’Fallon NG (OFL). She serves the aging community “because of the relationship with my...” [13]

Mandy (Turner) Hogan ’06, professional services.
“During COVID-19 I started a new position...” [14]

Tyler Choute ’10, physical education.
“Podcast, public administration, in Fairfax High School new athletics director. He previously...” [15]

Kindy King ’06, nursing.
“I am a certified nurse anesthetist...” [16]

Adam Both ’09, business administration.
“An associate financial advisor at the Eustis, the Federal Credit Union, he is licensed through CLU (Chartered Life Underwriter National Association) Brokerage Services.” [17]

Amy Quest-Bott ’09, general studies.
“Office manager at the National Association of Perinatal Social Workers.” [18]

Abby (Williams) Zwickl ’93, biology.
“I’ve been working from home with our three children (Ryan, 4, Mia, 3, Kids). It has become...” [19]

Melissa (Carrett) Walden ’12, biology.
“A complete lifecycle, from defining a system...” [20]
The Happiness Coach, a health coaching practice in Indianapolis, Indiana. “It’s my passion to help people heal their body and mind. I started my own business because of COVID-19, and I know pure luck is not enough. I have to work hard to make it happen. I was the only one out of my friends to start working for a great organization in Vincennes, Indiana. I teach English grade six through eight at Vincennes Rivet Middle School/High School in Vincennes, Indiana. Chelsey (Hedrick) Robling ’16, alumna of Alpha Sigma Alpha. Dylan Robling ’15, alumnus of Sigma Pi Fraternity and she is an attorney, and business administration, of Wabash County, Indiana. Wabash Quilt of Honor Quilters in Wabash, Indiana, and her husband Blake, welcomed Eliab on April 23, 2020. Her other passion was her grandchildren. She loved the outdoors and spent his leisure time in the woods. She was well known in the community for her positive influence on them. Scott (Smith) Robling ’15, English, of The Villages, Florida, died February 1, 2020. Her love of travel, painting and cooking were cultivated while serving as a military spouse. A multi-faceted individual, she enjoyed golfing, downhill skiing, playing the piano, being a member of the Order of the Eastern Star and a member of the Westview Garden Club. Several students sent cards telling about his impact and how he taught his students the importance of how previous history relates to current history.
camping, working in the yard, taking long walks, fishing, boating and swimming.

Paul Wilmes ’81, accounting, of Jasper, Indiana, died January 14, 2020. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, rock and roll music, and cooking with blackened walleye. He was an ex-U.S. Louis Cardinals and Indianapolis Colts fan. Paul enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren.

Ronald Cox ’82, veteran and retired from Ireland Home, Evansville, died May 13, 2020. He was a Colts fan. Paul enjoyed spending time with his beloved wife Terry. He was especially fond of time with family and friends at Lake Barkley.

Patricia “Patti” Anne Grannan ’85, psychology and social sciences, of Evansville, died April 8, 2020. She was a talented seamstress, avid gardener and enjoyed cooking with her beloved son, Blake.

Kimberly (Stone) Tice ’00, administration, of Owensville, Indiana, died May 4, 2020. Kim dearly loved her family and especially being a faithful follower of the Lord and his family. She was co-owner of T&S Financial Services, a company she and her partner, Steve Carson, founded in 2012.

Sherry [Knoll] Baggsen ’10, nursing, of Newburgh, Indiana, died May 4, 2020. Her alacrity generously shared with her many interests. She enjoyed finding a good shopping bargain, baking, music, watching Christmas movies, dancing, wheatledding, crocheting scarves, vacatining, the beach and especially being a faithful follower of the St. Louis Cardinals.

Todd Major ’91, communications, of Evansville, died July 1, 2020. He was fiercely loyal and protective of his family, friends and pets. Todd was a lifelong fan of the Evansville Mater Dei Leafs and the Evansville college basketball. Todd loved his family and friends. He was a life-long enthusiast of all things Evansville Mater Dei and the Blue Boys. Todd’s spirit and heart will live on in the lives of those he loved and supported, who will carry on his legacy and life’s work.

Todd Mazzier ’97, management and flew 16 different types of planes. He was a master at motivating individuals and groups to produce more and especially being a faithful follower of the St. Louis Cardinals.

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Joyce Gulley

Dr. Larry Arp, Professor Emeritus of History (38 years), died June 29, 2020. He was a leader, teacher and friend to many students. He was also a cherished family man who spent countless hours with his wife, Jackie, and their children.

Travis Durham ’17

Michelle (Jones) Faulkner ’18, Spanish studies, of Evansville, died May 17, 2020. She loved to dance, talk and spend time in nature and had a passion for camping and hiking in the mountains of the American West.

Michael Adcock, Laptop Computer Services 29 years

Debra Clark, Circulation Manager 44 years

Mary Drury, Network Manager 24 years

Eliana Grayson, Contract Associate Professor of Library Science 32 years

Rodney Watson, Mac’s Varsity Basketball Coach 31 years

In Memoriam

Larry Arp, Professor Emeritus of History (38 years), died June 29, 2020.

Darrell Bigham, Professor Emeritus of Business Education (20 years), died June 29, 2020.
Dr. Steven Williams, Associate Professor of Sociology, has a handful of passions, but none are more driving than his dedication to educating USI's students. Born in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and educated at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, he considered several career choices—including hopeful rock star—before finding his niche as a sociologist and educator.

What began as a one-year contract with USI, within hours of handing in his dissertation, turned into a 19-year relationship that Williams is still jazzed about. The University's thrumming energy, physical expansions and surging stream of curious young minds form the rhythm of his love for higher education.

Williams' early research investigated how mass media responded, particularly Hollywood, to the need for new villains after the Cold War ended. Today, he seeks to understand the odd relationship between the destructive and the aesthetic, how those things which are most harmful are so often beautiful, from the snappiness of a military uniform to the gloss of consumer packaging.

Why are you a passionate advocate for public education?

I'm not sure anything is more important. An educated, informed, aware citizenry is profoundly dangerous to any absolute system of power, whether a feudal monarchy or modern totalitarian regime. And it is just as profoundly necessary for a functioning democracy. I am especially fond of universities, those beautiful bastions of research and debate and passionate free speech. There is nothing else in our society quite like a university.

What challenges do young people face today as they navigate the world?

We have so much more information at our fingertips now but I'm not sure we have any more truth. It requires a serious and uncomfortable degree of self-reflection to avoid falling into the ‘bubble’ of media messaging that simply reinforces our preexisting view of politics or the world. This process is insidiously and relentlessly operating on us every day, and we can expect our social and political arguments to get more polarized in the foreseeable future. It's pretty scary, actually.

What one word describes you?

Believe it or not: optimistic.

A lifelong hockey player who plays on two leagues, sometimes alongside his USI students.

Memorial gifts may be made to the University of Southern Indiana (USI) Foundation for the David L. and Betty Fordice Rice Presidential Scholarship Endowment. Make your gift online, by calling 812-464-1918 or by mailing a check to USI Foundation, 8600 University Blvd., Evansville, IN 47712. Together, we can persevere and help USI students achieve a higher education.

USI.edu/invest
When third-shift Public Safety Officer Matthew Crum was stationed at the temporary security check-in point during USI’s COVID-19 closure, he found himself with some time on his hands, which he decided to use to practice his alto saxophone. The quiet, empty campus lent itself as the “perfect opportunity to play it without bothering anyone,” he said. “I like tooting around on it but I’m just a beginner.”

Visit USI.edu/spiritheart for student submission guidelines.