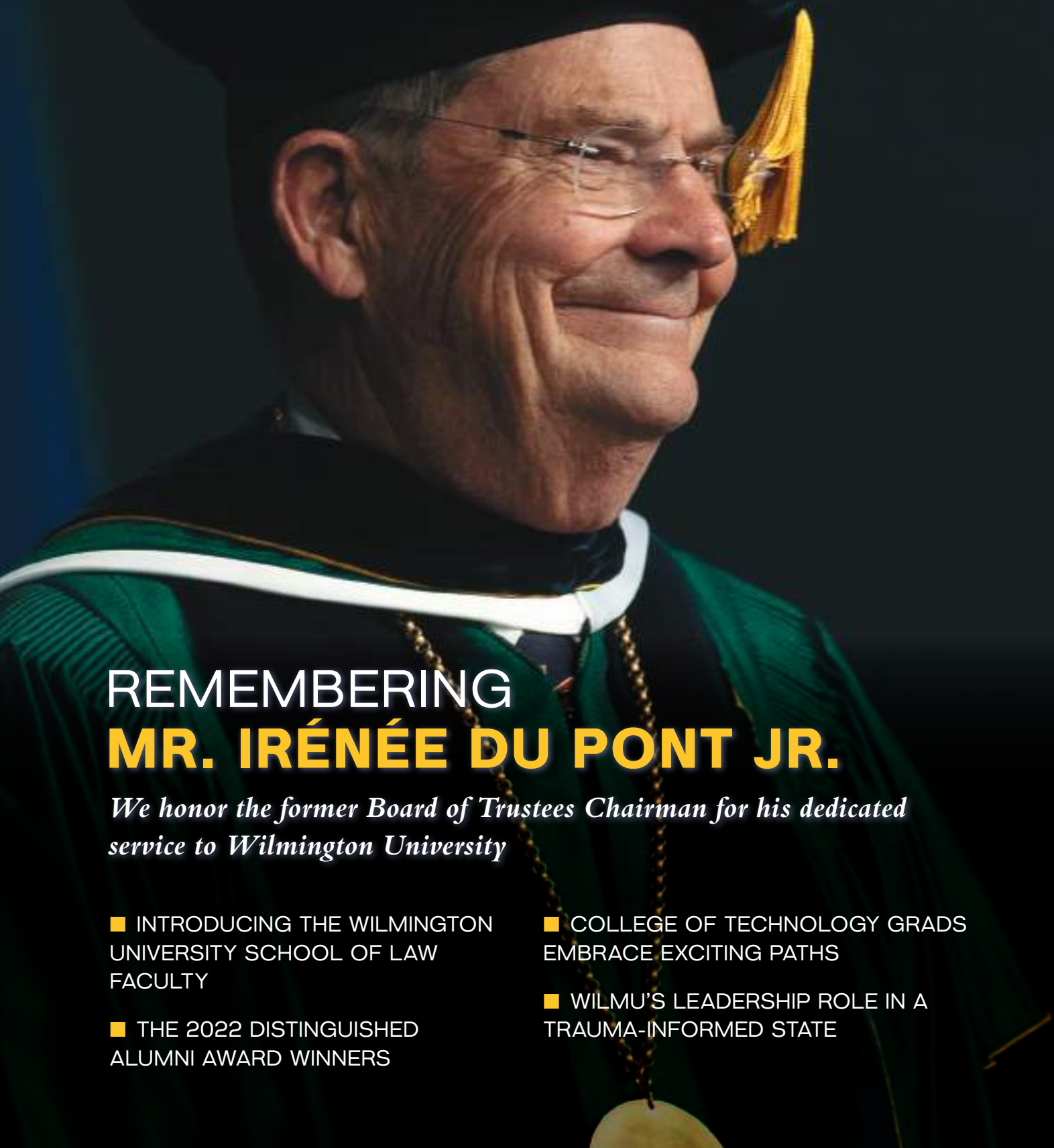


# WILMU<sup>®</sup>



## REMEMBERING MR. IRÉNÉE DU PONT JR.

*We honor the former Board of Trustees Chairman for his dedicated service to Wilmington University*

■ INTRODUCING THE WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW FACULTY

■ THE 2022 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS

■ COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY GRADS EMBRACE EXCITING PATHS

■ WILMU'S LEADERSHIP ROLE IN A TRAUMA-INFORMED STATE

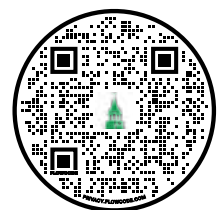


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“Mr. du Pont was a friend and constant source of support, and we celebrate his years of caring and selfless leadership.”

—Dr. LaVerne Harmon



## Dear Friends,

**W**e honor Mr. Irénée du Pont Jr., who became a member of the University’s Board of Trustees in 1971, then served as chairman from 1984 to 2013. He remained on the board until his passing on Jan. 16, 2023, at age 103. He was a friend and constant source of support, and we celebrate his years of caring and selfless leadership.

We also introduce you to the esteemed Wilmington University School of Law faculty. Each faculty member has had considerable experience in the field of law and is committed to bringing extensive knowledge and practical guidance into our classrooms. Most important, every law professor is student-centered and will place the needs of our diverse students above all else, just as the rest of our University faculty have done for over five decades. As you may know, our new law school will welcome its first class in August for the Fall 2023 semester.

Additionally, you’ll meet successful College of Technology graduates and learn about our acclaimed trauma-informed offerings. We highlight an adjunct who produced an award-winning documentary depicting the life of legendary singer Dionne Warwick. And we share with you our 2022 Distinguished Alumni Award winners. This award is the highest honor conferred by the Wilmington University Alumni Association. We’re also thrilled to report that our Cheerleading Team recently earned its ninth Universal Cheerleading Association National Championship.

This issue is filled with many other stories about our students, staff, faculty, student-athletes and alumni — the people of our community who make Wilmington University the wonderful place it is.

Please enjoy the issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "LaVerne Harmon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. LaVerne Harmon  
*President*





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Wilmington University.*

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### CONNECT WITH US

Read exclusive stories on our DIGITAL EDITION.



Don’t forget to connect with Wilmington University on **FACEBOOK**.

### CORRECTION

In the Fall 2022 issue, we incorrectly reported that Aaron Lewis earned the first sports title for the Delaware Military Academy. Its girls’ soccer team earned the Division II Girls Soccer Tournament first. We apologize for the error.

# THE NEWS

*Former Board of Trustees  
Chairman Mr. Irénée du Pont Jr.  
loved introducing student speakers  
at commencement ceremonies,  
but he loved hearing their stories more.*

*Mr. du Pont passed away on  
Jan. 16, 2023, at age 103.*





# Remembering Mr. Irénée du Pont Jr.

Former Board of Trustees Chairman **MR. IRÉNÉE**

**DU PONT JR.**, who embodied the vision and mission of Wilmington University, passed away on Jan. 16, 2023. He was 103.

To say that Mr. du Pont was dedicated to the mission and vision of Wilmington University would understate his immense impact on the institution.

“He was a guiding light,” says Wilmington University President **DR. LAVERNE HARMON**. “Mr. du Pont was a man of integrity who believed that status or background should never limit educational opportunities for anyone, and he was steadfast in his support. He was such a kindhearted person, and his leadership inspired us all.”

Mr. du Pont became a member of the University’s Board of Trustees in 1971, then served as chairman from 1984 to 2013 and remained on the board until his passing. He never missed a board meeting during his time as chairman and was always an active participant.

In 1970, then-Wilmington College offered seven degree programs. Between 1970 and 1972, enrollment grew from 310 to 630. Today, Wilmington University serves more than 20,000 students and offers over 200 degree programs. “Mr. du Pont witnessed this growth during his 52 years on the board and was there every step of the way,” says Dr. Harmon.

It was Mr. du Pont who said, “At Wilmington University, we put teachers who want to teach in front of students who want to learn,” a declaration quoted by many.

“He felt that education was the key to success, and so many lives were changed because he believed in providing opportunity and access to all who sought a college education,” says Dr. Harmon. “Mr. du Pont was always excited to attend commencement, and



*Wilmington University  
President Dr. LaVerne Harmon  
and Mr. du Pont*

it gave him great joy to witness students celebrating their accomplishments and achieving their goals of earning college degrees. He also loved interacting with student speakers before introducing them during commencement ceremonies and was genuinely interested in hearing their stories.”

“His insistence on fairness and equality was the foundation for the University’s mission,” adds Dr. Harmon. “Mr. du Pont’s leadership inspired how we treat students and each other. As a result, we are committed to maintaining a culture of

understanding and respect. He not only advocated for those values; Mr. du Pont lived them.”

In his obituary, Mr. du Pont’s family stated that contributions could be sent to Wilmington University in lieu of flowers. Those contributions will go directly toward the University’s student scholarship fund in Mr. du Pont’s honor.

“I think this was a way for Mr. du Pont’s family to express how much the University meant to him and that he would want to provide opportunities for our students even after his passing,” says Dr. Harmon.

Above all, says Dr. Harmon, “Mr. du Pont was a dear friend to many of us at the University. He was selfless, and he loved life. He was intelligent yet humble, and he never wanted to be in the spotlight. Mr. du Pont always shared his words of wisdom, and I will be forever grateful for his support and kindness.” **WU**

—*Maria Hess*





## WHEN HEALERS NEED HEALING

**T**he nursing profession took a hit during the pandemic. Yet many nurses, like **DR. MANDY BOUNDS**, remain faithful to the calling and inspire others to do the same.

When the Wilmington University alumna and adjunct was named chief nursing officer and vice president of patient care services at Atlantic General Hospital and Health System in Delmar, she was grateful for the

opportunity to influence patient care delivery in a community hospital system. The position, she says, allows her to “bring healing and comfort to individuals and families during difficult times in their lives.”

She also brings comfort to her nursing students, which, three years into a pandemic, is most welcomed.

Dr. Bounds brought 16 years of experience in health care — not to mention knowledge, passion and

expertise — to Atlantic General. Her background in nursing administration, hospital quality, safety and patient experience, and nursing education prepared her for the role. She has supervised numerous areas like infection prevention and critical care services. At University of Maryland Shore Regional Health, she was a bedside critical care registered nurse.

Dr. Bounds started as a licensed





*Dr. Mandy Bounds*

practical nurse in long-term care after completing a certificate program at Wor-Wic Community College, where she also earned an associate degree in Nursing. While gaining progressive management experience, she chose WilmU to complete three more degrees: a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, a Master of Science in Nursing, and a Doctor of Nursing Practice.

“As a doctoral student, Dr. Bounds acquired new competencies to augment her expertise as a nurse leader,” says Dean and Associate

Professor **DR. AARON SEBACH**, of the College of Health Professions and Natural Sciences. “Coupled with her passion for nursing excellence and commitment to continuous quality improvement, Dr. Bounds led the development and evaluation of a reengineered discharge process for patients admitted to a medical surgical unit. In addition, her work leading an interdisciplinary team improved patient satisfaction and reduced the overall length of stay.”

When you’re as busy as Dr. Bounds is, you need flexibility. That’s why she

selected WilmU. She has been married to Joshua Bounds for 15 years, and the couple has two daughters: Brianne (10) and Emily (6). The B.S.N., M.S.N. and D.N.P. programs were designed with working nurses in mind, and convenient course schedules allowed Dr. Bounds to juggle family, work and school — no easy feat for a health care professional. Plus, she says, “the curriculum exposes students to core competencies and skills required for leadership advancement, fosters inquiry, and prepares them for the next step.”

Faith and family come first for Dr. Bounds, so balance is critical to achieving personal and professional success and maintaining joy and passion. “I juggle my different commitments with organization, strong work ethic, balance, and the support of my husband and family,” she says. “My husband and my mom, Brenda Fletcher, have given rock-solid support throughout my career.”

## ONLY HUMAN

**N**ursing is about human connection and healing, but we sometimes forget that nurses are themselves human. Even during a pandemic, they’re supposed to remain somewhat stoic while delivering care to multiple patients. Yet, hospital and care center scenarios have been acutely stressful over the past three years, and the strain on the profession is palpable. According to a 2022 McKinsey & Company report, “Health care workers and their organizations continue to face unparalleled demands stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Thirty-two percent of registered nurses surveyed in the United States in November said they may leave their current direct-patient-care role.” That was an increase of 10 percentage points in under 10 months.

There seems to be a dichotomy between how nurses are perceived

Dr. Mandy Bounds



and how they perceive themselves. When they stood on the front lines of the pandemic, safeguarding patients and families, they garnered long-overdue respect from the masses. “In fact, for the 20th year in a row,” says Dr. Sebach, “nursing was named the most trusted profession in the United States, according to a Gallup poll.”

Yet, when nurses participated in Nurse.org’s State of Nursing Survey 2021, most said they were burnt out, underpaid, overworked and underappreciated. Such harsh realities prompt one to wonder what it takes to survive and thrive in the field.

“Nursing is a calling, and health care workers truly have a gift in a rewarding career,” says Dr. Bounds. “It’s impactful work, but it’s hard work. Whether on a difficult shift, helping a team through a challenging experience, or dealing with nursing shortages, I believe that nurses need passion, purpose, and grit. We can overcome the challenges by working collaboratively during difficult times, whether at the local, national, or international level.”

Dr. Sebach agrees. “Despite the challenges nurses faced during the

pandemic, we persevered,” he says. “We always put patients first.”

### LIFE AFTER COVID

As a visiting professor for Chamberlain University’s D.N.P. program and a nursing adjunct at WilmU, Dr. Bounds inspires and empowers future nurses and administrators to influence and improve health care delivery.

“The reward is working with students to understand the professional role of nursing practice and the impact they can make on their areas of practice,” she says. “I have the opportunity to plant seeds and challenge the thinking of current and future health care leaders to promote the professional nursing practice. The reward is making a difference by planting those seeds and witnessing students apply concepts in their daily practice at the local, national and international level.”

It’s not so easy to plant anything during a pandemic; every nursing educator must battle its uncertainty. No one knows when or if the pandemic will end, nor can they

predict the hardships nurses will sustain. But as a mentor and advocate, Dr. Bounds can inspire future nurses. Her combined experience in hospitals and classrooms informs her worldview and she grasps the importance of addressing widespread staffing shortages, developing health care leaders, and creating strategies focused on supporting the workforce.

“Nurses have the opportunity to help or impact a person or their family daily,” she says. “I still believe every day offers this chance to make a difference in someone’s life.”

Nursing also involves advocacy, and Dr. Bounds promotes positive patient outcomes. She is well-versed in Magnet recognition programs, which designate organizations worldwide where nursing leaders align strategic goals to improve patient outcomes. Her expertise extends to Leapfrog Safety Grades, which use published hospital data on safety and quality to push the industry forward, and Joint Commission accreditation, which focuses on quality improvement efforts and patient care for ambulatory surgery centers nationwide.

“The COVID pandemic and post-COVID era are the most challenging of recent times,” says Dr. Bounds. “But being open to doing things differently, leaning on each other, and staying focused on the purpose and the course has always helped me and my teams overcome challenges.”

She believes the pandemic elevated the need to support the workforce. But, she adds, “we must stay focused on the patient and the caregivers to continue to meet the needs of providing patient care. As we work through workforce shortages, we must be willing to change how we think about health care delivery and how it could look in the future.” **WU**

—Maria Hess

# A Champion in Science and Basketball



Amaja Imani Mack

**S**tudent-athlete **AMAJA IMANI MACK** is Wilmington University's first graduate fellow. Enrolled in WilmU's new Environmental Science program, which received a \$30,000 graduate fellowship from NASA Space Grant, Mack works full-time on the University's coral project while maintaining her academic and athletic career.

"Amaja's award suggests she is one of the leaders among her peers in science," says WilmU Assistant Professor **DR. MILTON MULDROW JR.**, director of Natural Sciences and chair of Environmental Science and Biology. "She will be able to use this to set herself apart in the job market and any future educational endeavors she pursues. These awards are substantive and are a testament to how far WilmU has come in its science offerings."

"Amaja has been with us for the last two years as a member of the women's basketball team," says **DR. STEFANIE WHITBY**, director of Athletics and assistant vice president of Alumni Relations and Development. "She has been a model student-athlete, demonstrating tremendous work ethic and dedication, not only in the classroom but on the basketball court. We're so happy to see her rewarded with this grant for her efforts and look forward to watching her flourish as she continues to work towards her graduate degree." **WU**

—Maria Hess



# WilmU Colleagues Receive **DAWN** Awards

*Dr. Tina Barskdale*



**“It was a huge honor to be recognized among many impressive women higher education leaders in Delaware.”**

*—Dr. Tina Barskdale*

**D**R. **TINA BARKSDALE**, Wilmington University's vice president of Student Affairs, Alumni Relations and Development, received the 2022 DAWN Leadership Award. Additionally, WilmU's Professional and Continuing Education Coordinator **GABRIELLE "GIGI" GAUL** was named a DAWN Rising Star. Both awards were presented virtually at the DAWN Annual Awards event.

DAWN (Delaware American Council on Education Women's Network) grants its Leadership Award to a woman in higher education who excels in the industry and serves as a role model to its rising stars. Criteria are established by the American Council on Education Women's Network, a national system of networks of which Delaware is a part.

Dr. Barksdale joined Wilmington University in 1995 and held roles that solidified her knowledge in student affairs, admissions, alumni relations, career services, student accessibility services, student conduct processes and development. She built a reputation as a collaborative leader adept at strategic management, assessment, fundraising and event planning. In 2010, she joined the President's Cabinet and became a member of the University's Executive Team. As a vice president, she plays an integral role in developing institutional priorities and strategic planning. She leads the offices of Alumni Relations, Development, Student Life, Student Accessibility Services, and Student Concerns. She is also an assistant professor in the College of Business and is affiliated with several organizations,

including the American College Personnel Association. In addition, Dr. Barksdale served on DAWN's Executive Committee from 2007 to 2015.

"I have had the privilege of working with Dr. Barksdale since she joined the University in 1995, and I have witnessed her professional growth, impeccable work ethic and passion for serving students," says Wilmington University President **DR. LAVERNE HARMON**. "I am delighted that Dr. Barksdale's years of dedicated service have been recognized."

According to DAWN Awards Committee members, "When examining Dr. Barksdale's support and advocacy of student development and student success, along with her contributions to the field of higher education, she was the obvious choice."

Dr. Barksdale was humbled by the designation. "I was so grateful to be chosen as this year's DAWN Leadership Award recipient," she says. "It was a huge honor to be recognized among many impressive women higher education leaders in Delaware. I've been very fortunate to work with and learn from remarkable leaders, especially my mentor, Dr. LaVerne Harmon, and extend my congratulations to all the nominees and award recipients."

Gabrielle "Gigi" Gaul, the Rising Star Award recipient, is a passionate lifelong learner who has supported Wilmington University through roles in Online Learning, Educational Technology and Academic Affairs. She is also an adjunct instructor and values the opportunity to connect with



students throughout their educational journeys.

As a Wilmington University student, Gaul chaired the Young Professionals Association. She continued to be an enthusiastic ambassador of her alma mater after earning a B.S. in Business Management and an MBA with a concentration in Organizational Leadership.

Gaul is a 2020 Recipient of the Fund for Women Driving Force Award and a current Leadership Delaware Fellow. She is also a tireless advocate for women and girls in Delaware, as evidenced by her service to area nonprofits.

"Ms. Gaul's community contributions have been many, including service as a Fresh Start Scholarship Foundation committee member and a Delaware Fund for Women board member," says Dr. Harmon. "We are humbled by her service to Wilmington University, her community and co-workers." **WU**

—*Maria Hess*

# A Passionate Educator Addresses Advanced Security Issues

**D**R. JAMES FRALEY, assistant professor and chair of M.S. Cyber Security and MSIST-Information Assurance for the College of Technology, brings decades of experience to Wilmington University students. He often presents at cybersecurity conferences and web-inars and was so popular at a Secure Delaware conference that he was invited back for an encore.

In 2021, Dr. Fraley had presented the keynote and detailed the SolarWinds Cyber Attack. At the 13th Annual Secure Delaware Cyber Workshop in 2022, an event that allows participants to enjoy an informative full-day session focusing on cybersecurity trends, Dr. Fraley offered “Implementing Zero Trust — Lessons Learned.” It focused on ways to demystify zero trust and discuss traditional security models that operate on the outdated assumption that without constant updates, all technology inside an organization stays trustworthy. Dr. Fraley explained that there is a proactive, unified, and dynamic architecture approach that must be adapted to keep resources secure, prevent data loss, and decrease costs.

Dr. Fraley has 30 years of experience as a security practitioner, holding critical positions such as senior threat intelligence strategist at Intel Security; senior director of global security practice at McAfee;

vice president for intelligence and security practice at ReliaSource, among other roles.

And he is passionate about teaching at WilmU.

“After working in industry and with governments around the world, I see the talent shortage across the cybersecurity and IT spectrum,” he says. “We need more resources to understand and address advanced security issues, migration to cloud and new architectures. I hope to provide that foundational background and bring all the cybersecurity pieces together to address strategy, policy, and operations.”

Dr. Fraley is considered a leader in the cybersecurity space. He has guest lectured at Columbia University, Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Maryland, University of Delaware, and George Mason University.

He has been asked by the government to present on technical issues such as Enterprise Security, Machine Learning for Malware Detection, and Big Data for cyber situational awareness and predictive cybersecurity defensive measures. Dr. Fraley has several papers published by Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. His dissertation and advanced research focused on leveraging machine learning (specifically cluster algorithms and deep learning) in the detection of advanced persistent threats and polymorphic and metamorphic malware.

*Dr. James Fraley*

Dr. Fraley serves on several cybersecurity working groups, addressing software supply chain management threats and cybercrime. He previously served as the industry chair of the Common Lexicon for Cyber Threat Attribution Working Group for the Department of Homeland Security’s Critical Infrastructure Partnership Advisory





Council (CIPAC). CIPAC is aligned with and supports the implementation of the National Infrastructure Protection Plan for the President of the United States. This forum provides the government and private sector entities a public and private partnership to support and collaborate on critical infrastructure security and resiliency efforts. As the

CTA chair, Dr. Fraley worked with government, law enforcement and industry to promote and share cyber threat intelligence for protection and advanced detection.

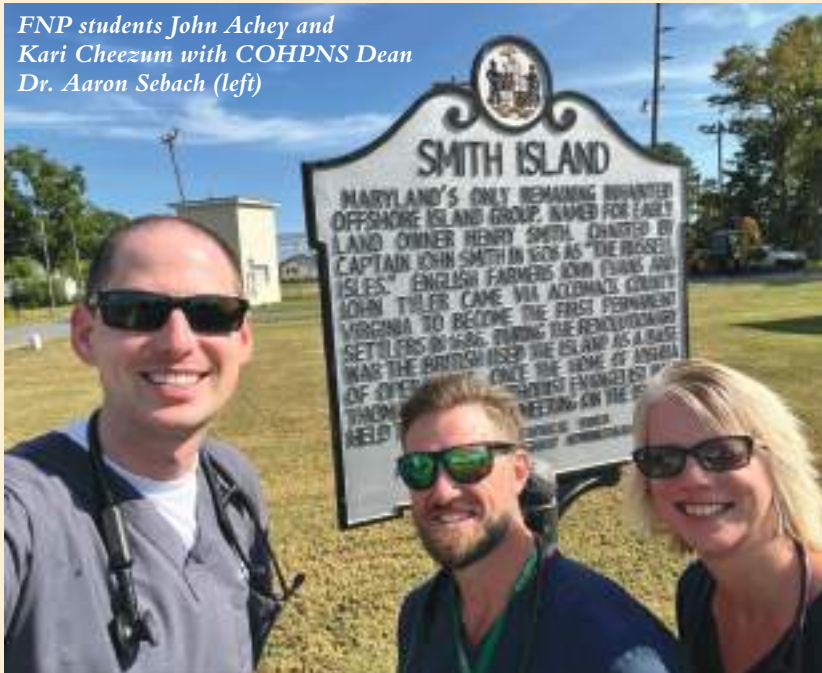
Dr. Fraley holds a Bachelor of Science from Metropolitan State University (Denver), a Master of Science from University of Maryland, an MBA (Data Science and

Analytics) from the University of Delaware, and a Ph.D. from Nova Southeastern in Information Assurance/Computer Science. He holds several certifications, including Project Management Professional, Certified Information Systems Security Professional, and AWS Cloud Certified Professional. **WU**

—*Maria Hess*

# On a Boat to Smith Island

FNP students John Achey and Kari Cheezum with COHPNS Dean Dr. Aaron Sebach (left)



Dean **DR. AARON SEBACH** is one of two nurse practitioners who provide medical care on the island.

During WilmU's Fall 2022 semester, family nurse practitioner students traveled to Smith Island with Dr. Sebach for a unique rural health clinical experience. Students conducted health screenings, ordered and interpreted diagnostic tests, administered immunizations, provided chronic disease management, and treated patients in the local church office. Golf carts were utilized to visit homebound patients. With mentoring, students developed innovative, evidence-based treatment plans. Students were required to think outside the box and consider the cost and time required for travel to the mainland for specialist appointments and for prescriptions to be delivered by boat.

Students described Smith Island as a hidden gem and characterized the opportunity as a highlight of their nurse practitioner clinical experiences at Wilmington University. Each clinical rotation ended with a piece of Smith Island cake for the 45-minute boat ride back to Crisfield. Due to the success of the pilot clinical experience, Dr. Sebach plans to continue offering the clinical experience each semester. **WU**

—Aaron Sebach



The Island Belle II boat heads to Smith Island.

Located in the Chesapeake Bay 12 miles west of Crisfield, Smith Island is Maryland's only remaining inhabited island group — and it's only accessible by boat. Known for its Smith Island Cakes and maritime activities, the island is home to approximately

200 residents. There are no grocery stores, stoplights, police officers, pharmacies or cell phone towers. Medical care is limited to bi-monthly visits from nurse practitioners from April to November. College of Health Professions and Natural Sciences





## Working Together for the Youngest Minds

**A**UDREY CAREY oversees early learning in Cape Henlopen's schools and has spent a quarter of a century in education.

"My whole career, my strength has been creating something new and different to reach children and meet their needs," she says. As the supervisor of early learning for Cape Henlopen School District, Carey applies that strength toward the youngest minds. "Every day I get to come to work for the kids. It's an exciting new world."

Carey is Cape Henlopen's first supervisor of early learning, a position the school district created to reflect the Delaware Department of Education's efforts to provide the state's children, from birth to age 5, with a foundation for lifelong development.

"It's not just an extension of kindergarten," says Carey. "Preparing children for their schooling career is a part of these efforts, but we're also focused on serving their physical and mental health needs."

A WilmU graduate, Carey earned a Master of

Education in School Leadership and Instruction in 2001 and a Doctor of Education in Innovation and Leadership in 2006. Before joining Cape Henlopen in the spring of 2022, she taught elementary school students and later supervised testing, new teachers, instruction and early learning for the Indian River School District.

In her role at Cape Henlopen, Carey seeks to build partnerships with government, nonprofit, faith-based and community agencies to ensure that area families have access to the programs and services necessary in assessing and supporting children's growth and development.

"Early intervention for children is essential, but how to coordinate that across the community can be the hard part," says Carey. "How do we accomplish what we envision in Delaware? If we're all working together instead of in our own individual silos, we could change that." **WU**

—David Bernard



*Michael Dixon*



# History with Purpose

Wilmington University Adjunct History Professor **MICHAEL DIXON** is deeply committed to studying local and regional history. His passion, he says, is ignited when he shares his knowledge with students and the community.

Fortified by graduate degrees in History and Behavioral Sciences, Dixon brings his extensive research and love of history to the classroom. He's also a visiting scholar for several humanities councils and other organizations.

A board member of the Hosanna School Museum in Harford County, Maryland, Dixon offers expertise for several projects, including "The Untold Stories of African Americans in the Lower Susquehanna Region." Funded by a Greenways grant, the book chronicles African Americans on the Lower Susquehanna River and includes a digital story map reflecting the region's cultural heritage. The book is expected to be published this year.

"Most African American history along the Susquehanna is undocumented, so this is an attempt to fill that gap," Dixon says. "There are plenty of traces from the past, going back to the Underground Railroad and the pre-Civil War era, that still

exist in that region. And this project seeks to fill that gap with a print publication and interactive website."

According to its website, the Hosanna School Museum, based in Darlington, Maryland, celebrates African American heritage by offering historical and cultural events, including an annual Juneteenth Celebration Festival, in partnership with several community organizations. Staffers identify underground railroad sites, conduct historical tours, feature book signings, author talks, film screenings, discussions, lectures, genealogy workshops, and youth workshops exploring traditional crafts.

In 2013, when Hosanna's Executive Director **IRIS BARNES** invited Dixon to join the Hosanna board, he had already worked with the group on a Smithsonian oral history project. "I was pleased to join this visionary organization whose mission is to share the rich heritage of our diverse society and foster an awareness that deepens understanding and appreciation of that diversity," says Dixon.

Dixon draws on his fieldwork and research to create applied, practical classroom exercises. "As my students engage in active learning activities in these practical lessons, it helps them understand how the past connects with

the present," he says.

His research focuses mainly on Mid-Atlantic regional and local history. He has worked extensively over three decades to encourage public interest and participation in preserving the area's past and creating an understanding between earlier eras and the present. His work also focused on African American history, with topics such as the role of African American physicians before the Civil Rights Movement, the struggle for social justice that took place mainly during the 1950s, and a current examination of health care before the passage of the Civil Rights Acts of the 1960s. He also has offered a discussion about the Jim Crow era and the Spanish Influenza of 1918, which swept the country and devastated America's Black communities.

"By helping people understand how the past intersects with the present, I encourage greater curiosity about what came before us," says Dixon. "Also, this grasp of historical dynamics provides an important foundation for understanding the world around us today." **WU**

—Maria Hess

To learn more about Mr. Dixon's work, visit [dixonhistory.com](http://dixonhistory.com).



*Havre de Grace Colored School was the first public school to provide high school education for African American students in Harford County. It is now a museum and cultural center in the Susquehanna River town.*



*The blackboard at the restored classroom at the Hosanna School near Darlington, Maryland, awaits the arrival of students. The school was the first of four Freedmen's Bureau Schoolhouses in Harford County. Today, it's a museum that interprets the history of Harford County through the lens of the African American experience.*

# The Education of an Oenophile

*An elective course helped this alumna discover her passion and a job she loves.*

**D**ANIELLE BALDWIN was a year away from earning her bachelor's degree from Wilmington University when she sat down with her advisor and made a decision that changed her career direction.

At the time, the choice didn't seem particularly momentous.

"My advisor told me I needed to take an elective," Baldwin says, "and since I had just turned 21, she said I could take a wine class. I was like, 'A wine class? I didn't even know that was a thing.'"

Laughing, she adds, "And I didn't know anything about wine. But I figured, how hard can drinking be?"

She soon learned that the course — The World of Wines — was about far more than drinking, or wine.

"It encompassed a lot of different things — art, science, history, geography," says Baldwin. "It ended up being kind of challenging. There was always something fresh and new."

True to its title, the course opened a new world to Baldwin, a world in which she is now fully immersed.

She earned a degree in

Business Management with a concentration in Human Resource Management in 2016. A graduate of Hodgson Vocational Technical School in Newark, Delaware, Baldwin had been working since she was 14. While attending WilmU, she worked in collections for Sallie Mae, the latest in what she labels "call center jobs." But because of her growing interest in wine, she got a second job with Collier's of Centreville, a Delaware wine shop owned by **LINDA COLLIER**, the mother of **KRISTEN VAN RIPER**, who taught WilmU's wine course.

"I would get off my call center job and go work at Collier's, and I loved that so much more," Baldwin says.

Van Riper recommended Baldwin to her mother. "Danielle was a great student. She had a love and a passion for wine and learning about it, and she wanted to pursue learning more about it," says Van Riper.

By 2018, Baldwin had decided wine would be her calling, and she began scouring the industry for work. Delaware, which seems to favor craft beer brewers, offered few opportunities, but she soon found a job in North Carolina,



working at one of Foxcroft Wine Co.'s four locations in the Charlotte area. She managed the wine store, which doubles as a restaurant.

She says she "learned a lot there" before returning to Delaware and becoming general manager of Girard Craft and Cork, on Ninth Street in downtown Wilmington. In addition to wine, the cozy shop sells craft beer, liquor, and boutique-style gifts.

Baldwin has brought energy and creativity to the business, which is part of the Ninth Street





*Alumna Danielle Baldwin is general manager of Girard Craft and Cork in downtown Wilmington. The quaint shop sells craft beer, liquor, and boutique-style gifts.*

Development group that includes Faire Café, Blitz Bar, Decoursey Beauty Lounge, and Red Brick Marketing, all located on the 200 block of West Ninth Street.

She leads tastings every Thursday afternoon and has introduced such innovations as the “Build Your Own Charcuterie Board” class, held at Faire Café last October. The evening of “wine, vibes, and charcuterie” attracted nearly 35 patrons, who paid \$65 to attend. With Baldwin as instructor, they learned how to build fall-

themed charcuterie boards.

“We like to focus on hands-on activities,” Baldwin says, “so we’re planning other classes, like a mixology class where we’ll have a local bartender come in and demonstrate how to make various cocktails. We also have wine classes where we actually deep dive into different wines, different regions.”

Baldwin, who lives in Newark, now has a thorough knowledge of wines and the wine industry. She has learned on the job, and

she has visited nearby vineyards in Pennsylvania as well as North Carolina and Seattle.

“I like to teach,” she says, “and I like to teach about things I’m passionate about. I could talk about wine all day. Beer and spirits too.”

And she’s no wine snob. Her advice for partaking of the grape: “It doesn’t matter what I like or what someone else likes. Some people like a fruity taste, some like more tannin. Drink what you love. The best wine is the one in your glass.” **WU**

—Bob Yearick

*The Wilmington University School of Law announced its esteemed, full-time faculty. Classes begin in August at the commencement of the Fall 2023 semester.*

# Meet the Wilmington University School of Law's New Faculty

— | COMPILED AND EDITED BY MARIA HESS | —





“Wilmington University School of Law Dean **PHILLIP CLOSIUS** and his staff have assembled an exceptional faculty who will utilize contemporary teaching methods that prepare diverse, future attorneys for the competitive field,” says Wilmington University President **DR. LAVERNE HARMON**. “Like all of the University’s faculty and staff, these professionals are student-centered and dedicated to providing individual attention to students from all walks of life.”

“I am pleased that we were able to hire eight faculty members who fully embrace the mission of our new law school,” adds Dean Closius. “Though they come from varied backgrounds, they share a commitment to excellence in teaching and service to students. The eight also possess impressive legal practice experience. I have no doubt that their hiring will enhance the culture of our Wilmington University community.”

| PHOTOS BY PAUL PATTON |

*From left: Patricia Wise, Alex J. Smalls, Lawrence Ponoroff, Alisa B. Klein, Edson A. Bostic, Veronica J. Finkelstein, Nicole Mozee and Michael Hornzell*





The faculty are listed in alphabetical order.



*Edson A. Bostic*



*Veronica J. Finkelstein*

### Edson A. Bostic

Edson A. Bostic is a seasoned litigator with many years of criminal and civil litigation experience. He has dedicated himself to zealously representing individuals charged with federal criminal offenses over the last 25 years. He is the former Chief Federal Defender for the U.S. District of Delaware (2006 to 2021) and the U.S. District of the United States Virgin Islands (2012–2014). As Chief Defender, Bostic oversaw the litigation of thousands of criminal cases during the trial, appellate, and habeas stages. He has defended

complex and high-profile criminal cases, including the 2022 trial of a client charged with offenses stemming from the Jan. 6, 2021, Capitol insurrection and the nation's first federal cyberstalking resulting in a death trial. He has tried over 35 jury and hundreds of non-jury cases, ranging from complex white-collar criminal cases to drug, RICO, and bribery matters. Prior, Bostic served for over a decade as a Senior Assistant Federal Defender with the Community Federal Defender Association of Philadelphia, including several years as the Managing Attorney for the Allentown Branch. Early in his career, he was a staff attorney at the Defender Association of Philadelphia and the Broome County, New York, Public Defender's Office. Bostic was also a senior associate at Cozen O'Connor, representing several Fortune 500 companies and other entities in complex civil matters. Bostic has chaired and served as a member of Merit Selection Committees for the Appointment/Retention of Magistrate Judges in the District of Delaware and on the Merit Selection Committee for the Selection of Federal Defender for the District of the United States Virgin Islands. He served on the 2021 Judicial Nominating Commission to fill a judicial vacancy for the U.S. District Court for the District of Delaware. Bostic has also served as an adjunct professor and lecturer, teaching trial advocacy at Temple University, Rutgers-Camden, and



*In addition to the previously listed faculty, the Law School team includes: (far left) Jeffrey Zavrotny, associate dean of Admissions; Kim Gattuso, associate dean of Experiential Learning; Taylor Warrington Purcell, administrative assistant; (fifth from left) Harvey Morrell, law librarian; Dean Phillip Closius; (fourth from right) Heather Karns, associate dean of Career Services; (second from right) Laurie Meehan, associate dean of Academics.*



*Michael Hornzell*



*Alisa B. Klein*

Widener Law Schools. He has been a lecturer and presenter for the National Institute of Trial Attorneys (NITA). Also, Bostic has presented lectures and continuing legal education programs on various criminal law topics. On Feb. 19, 2014, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, sitting en banc (on the bench), honored Bostic for his service, contributions, and dedication to the zealous representation of indigent defendants charged with federal crimes and his contribution to the administration of justice in the Circuit. He is a Rutgers University School of Law – Camden graduate and a member of the Pennsylvania and New York bars.

### Veronica J. Finkelstein

Veronica J. Finkelstein combines the best of practice and teaching, devoting herself to developing the next generation of top advocates. She is both an experienced litigator and a skilled educator with diverse scholarly interests. Finkelstein currently works as an assistant U.S. Attorney with the U.S. Department of Justice in Philadelphia and will transition to a full-time teaching role at the Wilmington University School of Law in August. She served as the training officer and paralegal supervisor for the Civil Division before being selected as senior litigation counsel. As an assistant U.S. attorney, Finkelstein handles various civil affirmative and defensive matters and criminal child exploitation cases. She has tried numerous civil cases to defense verdicts, including tort, employment law, and medical malpractice. She has also successfully litigated cases on appeal. In addition to this defensive work, Finkelstein investigates and prosecutes affirmative fraud claims, including *qui tam* actions. In 2014 she was awarded the Executive Office of United States Attorneys Director’s Award for Superior Performance as a Civil Assistant United States Attorney. Before joining the DOJ, Finkelstein clerked for the Honorable Jane Cutler Greenspan on the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. She previously worked as a construction litigator at Duane Morris, LLP and Cohen Seglias Pallas Greenhall & Furman, PC. A gifted teacher who regularly works with both lawyers and law students, Finkelstein has taught at the U.S. Department

of Justice’s National Advocacy Center on ethics, appellate advocacy, legal writing, and trial practice. She frequently serves as a program director for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy, where she teaches depositions, motion practice, and trial advocacy programs. She serves as adjunct faculty of law at Drexel Law, Emory Law, and Rutgers Law. She was awarded the Carl “Tobey” Oxholm III Outstanding Contribution to the Thomas R. Kline School of Law Community Award in 2021 and has been named Rutgers Law School Adjunct Professor of the Year every year from 2007 to the present. Finkelstein’s scholarship is as diverse as her litigation and teaching experience. Her scholarship has addressed various topics, from civil procedure to constitutional law. She is the co-author of the Professional Responsibility textbook “Ethical Lawyering: A Guide for the Well-Intentioned,” which contextualizes the rules of professional conduct in realistic litigation settings. Finkelstein graduated, with honors, from the Emory University School of Law. She was a highly competitive member of Emory Law’s moot court society and was selected for the Order of the Barristers.

### Michael Hornzell

Michael Hornzell, a career educator excited to bring his passion for teaching to the Wilmington University School of Law, will teach Property and Legal Writing. Before transitioning to legal academia, Hornzell cultivated over a decade of experience as a wrestling coach for the University of Maryland Baltimore County and a tutor for a national standardized test prep company. In both roles, he received multiple awards for improving his students’ academic and athletic performance. Hornzell began his legal journey as a student at the University of Baltimore and after a successful first year, transferred to Harvard Law School, where he received his J.D. *cum laude*. While at Harvard, he was a supervising editor of the Journal on Legislation, a Harvard Law peer advisor and research assistant, and contributed to works published in the University of Chicago Law Review, the UC Davis Law Review, and the American University Law Review. Hornzell then clerked for the Honorable Joshua Wolson of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and the Honorable D. Michael Fisher of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. In his spare time, Hornzell has volunteered as an academic tutor and coach for Beat the Streets Baltimore and the Courtyard Mentor Network in Philadelphia.

### Alisa B. Klein

Alisa B. Klein is a senior-level career appellate attorney at the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in Washington, D.C. She will join the full-time faculty at Wilmington University Law School in August 2024, after leaving the DOJ. Klein began working for the DOJ’s Civil Division appellate staff



in 1995, after clerkships with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Judge Louis H. Pollak. The principal work of her office is to defend, in the federal courts of appeals, the federal government's laws, programs and policies. As a member of the office's leadership team, Klein is responsible for her own work and for supervising dozens of other attorneys' work. She also serves on the office's hiring committee. Recent cases include the defense of the COVID-19 vaccine and mask mandates, the CDC's eviction moratorium, FDA measures to curb the youth vaping epidemic, and key Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act provisions. Klein has argued over 100 cases in federal appeals courts, briefed hundreds of appellate and Supreme Court cases, and supervised hundreds of briefs and oral arguments. She has coordinated teams of attorneys in complex matters, including dozens of challenges to the requirement that insurers cover contraceptives and many appeals from the civil judgment that the DOJ secured against major cigarette companies. Klein regularly mentors and trains new attorneys and interns and gives presentations to agencies and professional associations. She has been co-teaching a constitutional law seminar about federalism — the relationship between the federal government and the states — as an adjunct professor at Georgetown Law School since 1998 and is currently teaching a federalism seminar as a visiting professor of Political Science at Haverford College. Klein is a graduate of Harvard Law School.

### Nicole Mozee

Nicole Mozee advocates for civil liberties, civil rights, and social justice. She works as a Deputy Attorney General for the Delaware Department of Justice Division of Civil Rights and Public Trust to investigate and prosecute civil rights violations, incidents and crimes of bias and hate, public official misconduct, and law enforcement use-of-force cases. Mozee successfully prosecuted the Division's first hate crime conviction and the state's first-ever conviction of a sitting elected official. Before joining the Delaware DOJ, Mozee worked in government and policy, family law, and employment discrimination. She was associate legal counsel for Gov. John Carney, a staff attorney at Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, and a labor enforcement officer for the Delaware Department of Labor Office of Anti-Discrimination. She is also an active member of the Delaware State Bar Association's Multicultural Judges & Lawyer Section and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Breakfast and Day of Service Executive Committee. Additionally, she has held leadership roles for the Delaware



Nicole Mozee



Lawrence Ponoroff

Barristers Association and the American Constitution Society of Delaware. With a fervent belief in community service, Mozee participates in outreach and advocacy efforts involving public policy, hate crimes education, fair housing, disability rights, employment discrimination, criminal justice reform, and voting rights. She has been recognized by many local and national organizations for her work, including the Delaware Business Times, which honored her as a "Top 40 Under 40 Professional" in 2019. Mozee looks forward to transitioning to a full-time teaching role at the Wilmington University School of Law. She is a graduate of the New York Law School.

### Lawrence Ponoroff

Lawrence Ponoroff is both a professor at Wilmington University and professor emeritus at Tulane University Law School. He also served as professor and dean at Michigan State University College of Law, where he successfully negotiated the agreement leading to the full integration of the College of Law with Michigan State. From 2009 to 2016, Ponoroff was the Samuel M. Fegtly Chair in Commercial Law at the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law, where he was also dean. Additionally, Ponoroff served as the dean of Tulane Law School and held the Mitchell Franklin Professorship in Private and Commercial Law. Earlier in his career, Ponoroff was a partner with Holme Roberts & Owen (now Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner LLP), a Denver-based firm specializing in corporate and commercial litigation. He is the author or co-author of over 30 law review articles and essays and seven books focused on business and consumer bankruptcy, contracts, and commercial law. Ponoroff served by appointment of the Chief Justice of the United States on the Advisory Committee on Bankruptcy Rules to the U.S. Judicial Conference and the Bankruptcy Judges Education Committee of the Federal Judicial Center. From 1992 through 1994, he was a reporter to the Long-Range





Alex J. Smalls



Patricia Wise

Planning Subcommittee of the Committee on the Administration of the Bankruptcy System of the Judicial Conference of the United States. Ponoroff is an elected member of the American Law Institute and a fellow of the American Bar Foundation. He has previously served on the Board of Governors of the Arizona State Bar and the Louisiana State Bar Association, the Board of Directors of the American Board of Certification, the Louisiana Supreme Court Historical Society, and the Advisory Board of the American Bankruptcy Institute Law Review. In 2003, Ponoroff was elected as an American College of Bankruptcy Fellow. A graduate of Stanford Law School, Ponoroff has taught as a visitor at the University of Michigan Law School, Wayne State University Law School (Detroit), and as a faculty member at the University of Toledo College of Law where for two years, he was associate dean for Academic Affairs. He earned student-voted teaching excellence awards from four law schools.

### Alex J. Smalls

Alex J. Smalls was appointed Chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in 1997 and was the first African American in Delaware to become a Chief Judge of a State Court. Early in his career, Smalls worked in the New Castle Law Department, the Wilmington City Solicitor's Office and the Attorney General's Office. In 1985, he returned to the City of Wilmington as the Commissioner of Licenses and Inspection, followed by an appointment to the position of Director of Public Safety for the City of Wilmington. After serving in this role for six years, he was appointed Associate Judge of the Municipal Court for the City of Wilmington in 1991. From there, he moved into the Chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas position. In addition, he served on the Governor's Justice Reinvestment Task Force, the Delaware Racial Justice Improvement Project Task Force, and the Delaware Criminal Justice Council. Previously, Smalls was chairman of the Community Legal Society, and served on the Board of Directors of the Layton Home and the

Board of Trustees for both St. Edmond's Academy for Boys and Ezion-Mount Carmel United Methodist Church. In a story for Delaware Public Media upon his retirement from the Court in 2021, Delaware Supreme Court Chief Justice Collins J. Seitz Jr. said that Smalls "led one of the State's busiest courts with great distinction. Litigants and attorneys who appeared before him, and his judicial colleagues, know the Chief Judge as a humble, caring, and compassionate man. We thank him for his service to the citizens of the First State." Smalls is a graduate of the Rutgers University School of Law.

### Patricia Wise

Patricia Wise is a nationally known employment law practitioner. She has been interviewed by NPR, quoted in the Wall Street Journal and The Economist, and has contributed to publications from San Francisco to Atlanta. Wise has testified before a Congressional subcommittee, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the California State Legislature. Wise was appointed by former EEOC Chair Jenny Yang to its Select Task Force on Workplace Harassment and is a past member of the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Labor Relations Special Expertise Panel, which she co-chaired in 2014–2015. She has trained thousands in civil rights and employment law, including state banking associations throughout the country, and has been a part-time professor for the University of Toledo College of Law for 20 years. Wise is a member of the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin in Madison faculty. She has published books on harassment and retaliation, most recently the third edition of her book, "Understanding and Preventing Workplace Retaliation," published by the Thompson Publishing Group. Wise previously served as in-house counsel to a multi-billion-dollar bank holding company and was appointed as special counsel by the Ohio Attorney General from 2003–2007. She is certified by the Ohio State Bar Association as a labor and employment law specialist and represents diverse clients of all sizes and industries. In 2014, the Ohio Supreme Court appointed Wise as a member of the Board of Professional Conduct, where she served for nine years, including two as chair. For over 10 years, she has held Martindale-Hubbell's AV Preeminent rating, the highest possible rating in both legal ability and ethical standards. Wise is a College of Labor and Employment Lawyers member and a certified Title IX investigator. Wise is a graduate of The University of Toledo College of Law. **WU**

*Bios were supplied by the faculty. For more information about the Wilmington University School of Law, visit [law.wilmu.edu](http://law.wilmu.edu).*

# STEMMING

# UP

Technology graduates take varied paths to promising futures.



Each year, we celebrate Wilmington University students at commencement — for their hard work, their sacrifices, and their fierce passion for futures filled with possibility and promise.

And we continue to celebrate them long after, as they move along the path their goals take them.

Four College of Technology students, who have found successful futures following their academic careers at WilmU, are examples of what hard work and determination can bring.

BY JANICE K. COLVIN | PHOTOS BY SUSAN L. GREGG

## MATTHEW DOYLE

For **MATTHEW DOYLE**, who graduates with a Bachelor of Science in Spring 2023 after taking his last class, choosing a major in Video and Motion Graphics was a logical choice.

He makes it clear video production is his passion, to the point of returning to school in his 30s to accomplish his goal of moving into that field.

But to do this, he left a different career path behind.

“When I first went to college in 2000, I went to a maritime academy

in Massachusetts, and learned to operate boats,” Doyle says. His connection with his father’s business in a health safety consulting company led to involvement operating boats in oil spill clean-up in various places around the world

“I was getting into all these oil spills,” he notes. “They just kept popping up, everywhere I went. And it was lucrative, so I kept doing it.” This included clean-up of the BP Deepwater Horizon incident in 2010 in the Gulf of Mexico, which created the biggest marine oil spill in history. At first, he worked as a boat operator, but quickly was promoted

to a manager, helping with the operations side as a contractor for BP, assigning people where they needed to be, he says.

Doyle worked that particular incident for seven months, but worked in the industry for a total of 15 years, traveling and teaching BP terminal personnel how to clean up oil spills.

Then, he says, “The truth is, you get burned out.”

Around the same time, as a side gig, he had been working as a musician.

“I was around equipment and videography and photographs, and



*Matthew Doyle*

I'd come back and tell these stories of places I've been," Doyle says. Those who heard his stories told him he should write a book, or he should make documentaries. "That's really where the light bulb went off, and I said, 'I should be doing documentaries. I can tell these stories.' So I had to finish college."

He started at WilmU, first considering Organizational Management, but the video classes soon caught his attention. "I saw the video thing and all the 'you should write a movie, you should make a movie, you should make a documentary,' and I said this looks really fun. I

think I would enjoy this. And I did."

He used his new skills to launch a successful video and streaming production company, accomplishing a variety of assignments, including streaming regional and national dance competitions, marching band events, cheerleading competitions and streaming WilmU's sporting events.

Doyle also works with regional and national companies and organizations to produce, shoot and edit their video content. Those clients include FloSports, Hearst TV, Kittch TV, Delaware City Refinery, Creative Media Group, Broadreach

Communications, Shoot the Moon Communications, Propulsion Media Labs, and most recently, working with Skycam during NFL games.

During Doyle's academic career, he took six courses a semester while also working full-time. "The whole time I just loved every class," he says. "I loved getting up and going to class. I barely missed any classes." He went from a middle-C student when he first attended college years ago to a 3.82 GPA today. "Clearly I found something I loved," he adds. "And thanks to Professor Tim Day and all the teachers there. They made that experience a tremendous one."





*Kellee Brown*

## KELLEE BROWN

**K**ELLEE BROWN echoes Doyle's assessment. Brown graduated *summa cum laude* in 2021 with a Bachelor of Science in Media Design with a Multimedia concentration.

After transferring in with an associate degree, she says, "I wanted to get into more graphic design, multimedia design. I thought that WilmU was a better fit for that because I felt they had more adjunct professors actually in the field and could provide

more hands-on experience and relevant work within the courses."

While in the program, she accepted an internship at Nemours Children's Hospital in Wilmington and began to put her new skills to work immediately. Soon after, she came onboard full time as a multimedia graphic designer, continuing the work she started during her internship.

"At Nemours, I'm mainly helping out in their volunteer services department," she says. "I do basically all of their media. I've redesigned two of their brochures, which are displayed

in the front of the office. I make promotional materials and videos. I do editing for them, interviews and so on. Everything I do is showcased on a monitor right outside the office."

The office maintains a YouTube channel, to which Brown contributes. For the last holiday season, she put together a montage of photos for a slideshow presentation.

Her enjoyment on the job continues. "I'm great where I'm at right now, being a designer. That's what I really enjoy. When I first came to WilmU, I was a photography major

**“I wanted the basic understanding of just the technology and the different software tools that were used. The WilmU courses were a good fit to my schedule because of the evening classes.” —Alice Lymon**

and I did a bit of that at Nemours, too. But I took one motion design course, for After Effects. I was ‘Oh, this is much cooler. I want to keep doing stuff like this.’” That’s when she switched her major.

Brown spoke about her studies and how those contributed to success in her duties today. Her classes, coupled with the internship experience, have been helpful in assisting her job growth. “Alongside my courses has been my own practice and reinforcing my own skills,” she says. “I can see something that I made back when I first started, and the things I’m doing now, and it’s a huge improvement. I’m really grateful of being able to practice my own skills in that environment.”

But it’s seeing a finished product that gives her the most satisfaction.

Her employer recently went through a rebrand process. “Everything I had done up to that point, and what they still wanted to use, I had to update with new signage and new colors and new logos. It was fun to do,” she says.

“It’s really cool to see a physical product, like the brochures I made, displayed,” she adds. “It’s rewarding. Even if no one around knows that I’m the one that did it, I know.”

## **ALICE LYMON**

**A** **LICE LYMON**, who graduated in 2018 with a Master of Science in Information Systems Technology with Internet and Web Design, came to WilmU with a varied background that included studying zoology, botany, biology and

chemistry, and working in a medical office as a transcriptionist.

But perhaps her most important job of all, for a few years, was as a stay-at-home mother supporting her young children, including her son who was diagnosed with autism in the fourth grade.

It was important to her, she says, to be there for her children, especially her son, to help with their education. But eventually, as they got older and were in school, she did return to

employment outside the home.

Lymon says she always had an interest in technology. “I had the opportunity of a short training that put me on the track of software testing,” she says, and this helped fuel her interest in learning more about testing.

“I wanted the basic understanding of just the technology and the different software tools that were used,” Lymon says. “The WilmU courses were a good fit to my schedule

*Alice Lymon*





because of the evening classes, and, of course, the different modules were flexible. You could choose ‘either/or’ from those different categories.” She notes that convenient schedules and coursework timelines were conducive to maintaining a home-work balance.

Today, Lymon works as an IT specialist for the Small Business Administration.

“I work as part of the regression testing team,” she says. “We test software they use for disaster lending, disaster assistance programs. It’s called the Disaster Credit Management System.”

Software developers continually update and enhance the software, and Lymon says it is her department’s job to support the testing of those changes before they go into production. The team also assists business developers troubleshooting the software.

Not only does the agency help small businesses but individuals, too.

“It’s exciting, and especially when you think about being a part of the ultimate goal of helping the disaster survivors, especially during hurricane season,” Lymon adds.

As for her future goals, she is looking forward to moving more into business analysis, and she notes, “Even when I’m testing, I’m always looking at how it’s connected to the business processes.”

Lymon says her success, first, is dependent on her faith in God, “and that’s important to me.”

Second, she says, “I originally came from India and it’s growing up in a male-dominated society. I was really fortunate to have parents who supported me, especially my father. They never held us back from the educational goals we had.”

Lymon says she earned a master’s degree in Sociology in India but never used those skills in any of her career goals.

Reflecting on her decision to return to school while working and raising a family, Lymon notes, “I guess with my kids, it was a challenge, thinking about going back to college.”

Of course, there were times when she was “crazy with assignments,” she says. “But my husband and kids are very supportive as well, so they helped me.”

## JUANITA BUCHANAN

For someone seeking a real challenge, **JUANITA BUCHANAN** found WilmU to be the perfect place.

From earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Web Information Systems in 2015, she continued to earn a graduate certificate in SCADA Cyber Security in 2018, and later topped it off with a Master of Science in Information Systems Technologies, Information Assurance, in 2019. And in 2020, she earned two ISACA certifications; Certified Information Security Manager (CISM) and Certified Data Privacy Solutions Engineer (CDPSE).

But all those successes came after she did an about-face on her plans as a student in a business management program at a local college. Turns out, technology was calling.

“I really wanted more of a challenge and a business degree just didn’t give me that,” she says.

Her husband was already working in the field of technology, so







COURTESY OF JUANITA BUCHANAN

**Juanita Buchanan**

she looked into universities with an eye toward technology programs and affordability. She found that WilmU met her requirements. And her children and grandchildren supported her efforts as well.

“The College of Technology offered a couple of different degree programs, and so I said, ‘OK, let me go ahead and give that a try,’” she says. “Initially, I thought I was going to be sitting on a beach writing code for the rest of my life.”

She found an internship with Pepco Holdings (PHI) in 2013. “I was looking for a company that I could transition into that I could really make an impact and grow with.”

The internship was supposed to run for 12 weeks, but they kept extending it, she says.

“My manager pretty much worked around my school schedule,” Buchanan notes. “So, I was able to pick up a full-time load and still take courses with Wilmington. And everything I was learning through that technology program I was able to then incorporate into what I was doing in practice, working in IT client support.”

Buchanan completed her degree in 2015 and was hired in a new position with PHI in their Operation Control

**“I’ve continued to grow through the challenges I’ve faced, and I am grateful to be in a position where I’m now able to mentor others to navigate their careers in a positive progression.” —Juanita Buchanan**

Center, “playing an important role in the maintenance and restoration of electric and gas distribution and transmission,” she says.

Her work led to another realization — she became fascinated with understanding how the electric grid works, so she continued her studies for a second degree in Electric Transmission System Technologies.

But a master’s degree was something she really wanted. Completing the SCADA graduate certificate and then the master’s work in information assurance was a path she felt she was meant to take.

Understanding the electric grid led to something else, she says.

“Securing the electric grid became my passion. How are we securing them?” This led to the focus of her master’s thesis.

Buchanan also notes how she, through her work, developed a great appreciation for the people who work on the electric lines. “That is a risky job. Sometimes the lines are live. And there’s been unfortunate cases where it really just comes down to safety. It just gives you such a great appreciation for the people who are out in the field keeping the lights on.”

In 2019, she was invited to teach as an adjunct in the College of Technology, something she continues to do.

“I wanted to be in a space where I could mentor others, where I could coach others. And I thought that teaching would be the greatest opportunity to do that, especially with the university that I felt

comfortable with.”

Buchanan notes she built her teaching philosophy around WilmU’s vision and mission statement. CTA 206, Computer Applications, was the first course she taught, and she says she later helped enhance it through designing practical assignments in Excel, Word and PowerPoint. She also taught cyber courses.

“I’ve continued to grow through the challenges I’ve faced, and I am grateful to be in a position where I’m now able to mentor others to navigate their careers in a positive progression,” she says. “I’m able to mentor students as well and I really enjoy that.”

Buchanan recently accepted new opportunities at her company, Exelon (which had acquired PHI). She was named a supervisor in Security Risk Management in 2021, then moved to a new role as an IT manager in IT Talent and Workforce Development in 2022.

“I always envisioned my career to lead me into a management role, but I didn’t think it would be in IT Talent and Workforce Development, not if you asked me in 2015,” she says. “As I have progressed in my career, I’ve been a learner, and an analyst, a teacher, an instructor and most of all, a leader. I realized that the only way to truly live out my passions are to combine them completely. I am now in a role where I can constantly ‘think security,’ while leading and impacting the change that is required.” **WU**







**T**he Distinguished Alumni Award is given to alumni who lead with compassion and positively impact their fields. It reflects the excellence of the University and those who have created a legacy others may strive to achieve.



The Distinguished Alumni Award is the highest honor conferred by the Wilmington University Alumni Association. For the first time, three alumni were chosen for the honor.

HERE ARE THEIR STORIES.

### Dr. Hugh Broomall

Dr. Hugh Broomall's parents met in classic World War II style. His father, a Wilmington native, served in the Navy and was assigned to the cruiser USS *Canberra*, which sailed out of Boston to fight in the Pacific. At the same time, his mother was doing a "Rosie the Riveter" job in Boston's Charleston Navy Yard. They "met cute" there, got married after the war, and returned to live in Delaware.

With that kind of romantic legacy, it's little wonder that Dr. Broomall and his older siblings also entered the military; his brother joined the Navy and his stepbrother enlisted in the Army (and served in Korea). Naturally, young Hugh followed them, enlisting in the Delaware Air National Guard (DE ANG) in 1967, the year after he graduated from Salesianum School.

That decision set him on a 45-year career trajectory that culminated in the rank of major general. Along the way, he collected a staggering array of honors, including the USAF Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, a Meritorious Service Medal, and a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Dr. Broomall's connection to Wilmington University has lasted nearly as long, beginning in 1983 when he was an undergraduate and continuing today as adjunct professor at an institution he credits for much of his extraordinary career.

Soon after that career began, the newly minted airman 1st class was

deployed to help quell the 1968 civil disturbance in Wilmington, which was sparked by the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It was a sobering reminder of the National Guard's vital role, in both peacetime and in war.

Looking back on those pivotal days, Dr. Broomall says: "It was surreal to see your hometown burning. But we were treated well and most of the public I encountered were glad we were there."

He soon entered Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant in the DE ANG in 1974. A year later, he became the first 2nd lieutenant in the nation to lead a state National Guard Association. America's new all-volunteer force required a focus on recruiting and retention of Guardsmen, and with that in mind, in 1980 Dr. Broomall spearheaded an effort that resulted in the Delaware General Assembly enacting the first state education tuition program for Army and Air Guardsmen.

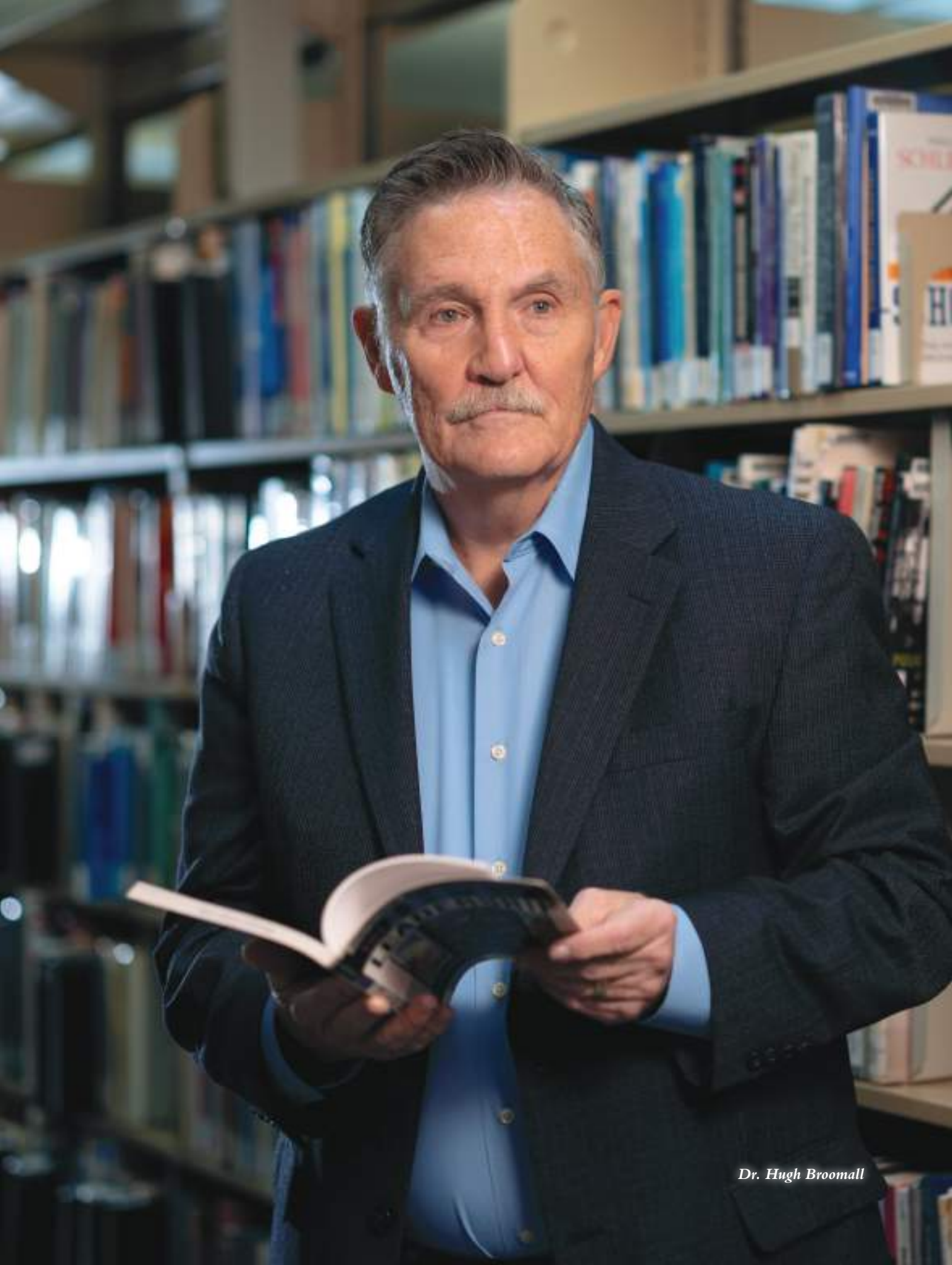
Even as he led the DE ANG, he was gaining a reputation as a military intelligence officer. From 1974 to 1990, he supported USAF and Air National Guard missions worldwide, including operations in Europe, Central and South America, and the Middle East. In 1985, as a major, he was the first Air Guard member to be named U.S. Military Airlift Command Intelligence Officer of the Year.

His other career highlights are too numerous to detail here, but he lists among the most significant his

successful effort in 2005 to save the Delaware Air National Guard Base at the New Castle County Airport. The Department of Defense, led by Donald Rumsfeld, wanted to close about 180 military installations, including the Delaware base. As a brigadier general and assistant adjutant general, Dr. Broomall assembled a team of experts from the Guard, local government, and the Delaware Congressional delegation that identified errors in the government's process and repelled the DOD recommendation.

He retired as a major general in 2012. At his retirement ceremony, his boss, Air National Guard Director Lt. Gen. Harry Wyatt III, called him "an outstanding asset to the nation. During critical budget times, his tireless work with the military, private industry, and the Hill directly contributed to keeping the Air National Guard ready, relevant, and reliable to serve our state and federal military requirements well into the future. He is an outstanding American."

At Dr. Broomall's side during the ceremony at the New Castle Airport was his wife, Christy. Married for 55 years, the Broomalls have three children and four grandchildren. He credits her with doing most of the parenting: "She was here raising three kids while I was out seeing the world." Following his retirement, Dr. Broomall became an adjunct professor at WilmU, teaching graduate courses in Global Leadership, Human Resources, and Marketing. He also often sits on doctoral dissertation committees for students who are in the military.



*Dr. Hugh Broomall*



This marks a return to the school where he earned a master's in Public Administration and Human Resources in 1996, thanks to WilmU's remote learning offerings. And while serving as an adjunct, he found time to earn a doctorate in Business Administration in 2016.

"I'm a big fan of Wilmington University," Dr. Broomall says. "It's one institution that has stayed aligned to its original mission statement, with a focus on the adult learner."

"And I love the whole experience of teaching. It's a way for me to pay back Wilmington U for all it's done for me. My career in the Air Force would not have gone as it did without Wilmington University."

### **Dr. Rachael Rudinoff**

**R**achael Rudinoff was a math whiz at Horace Greeley High School in Chappaqua, New York. So, not surprisingly —

and encouraged by her father — she planned to major in Accounting in college. But in her first year after graduation, she was committed to a year in Israel as part of a work/study program sponsored by Hadassah. And that changed her plans and her life.

In Israel she initially lived on a kibbutz (a communal settlement, typically a farm). After one day of working in the fields, she asked for a transfer and was assigned to "the baby house."



*Dr. Rachael Rudinoff*



That's when, she says, "I suddenly realized that I had a passion for working with children."

Next, she was assigned to teaching English to Ethiopian refugees fleeing persecution in their homeland. "And that was when I absolutely knew I wanted to be a teacher," she says. "I was not going to be an accountant."

Accounting's loss was special education's gain. She went on to become Dr. Rachael Rudinoff, receiving her Ed.D. in Innovation

third grade. The Long Island native fell in love with the Hockessin school and stayed there for nine years.

But she eventually realized her calling was special education, and after receiving her master's in School Psychology she interned as a school psychologist in the Christina School District. Then she moved to the Smyrna School District, where she has served for 21 years. She was a school psychologist for the district from 2001 to '09, then spent two years as

she leads a staff of 60.

As the Department of Education's liaison to the district, **LINDA SMITH** has seen that staff in action. In a letter supporting Dr. Rudinoff as a Distinguished Alumna, Smith writes: "In meeting the needs of the most complex youth, Dr. Rudinoff and her staff make home visits, arrange social service supports, and supplement basic needs resources. For those youth who require unique education alternatives, Rachael travels to private programs in neighboring states to support and maintain relationships with these students and provide direct oversight to the private program staff."

Calling Dr. Rudinoff "a role model," Smith says, "She truly cares about others."

The passion Dr. Rudinoff brings to her job is duplicated in the WilmU classes she teaches. In fact, she designed some of the courses.

"I cherish the opportunity to help prepare our future educators," she says. "Wilmington University helped to prepare me for my leadership roles and I'm happy that I can use that knowledge to help others."

She and her husband, Mark, whom she met at Sanford, live in Earleville, Maryland. Away from work, she says, "I'm very focused on family."

And that family is growing. The Rudinoffs have two sons and two stepdaughters, and recently welcomed their fourth grandchild and first granddaughter.

***"I cherish the opportunity to help prepare our future educators. Wilmington University helped to prepare me for my leadership roles and I'm happy that I can use that knowledge to help others."*** —Dr. Rachael Rudinoff

and Leadership from Wilmington University in 2011. She has served as director of Special Services for the Smyrna (Delaware) School District since 2015, and she has been an adjunct professor at WilmU since 2006, teaching graduate-level special education teacher candidates in the School of Education.

Her academic journey shows a single-mindedness that, from the start, honed the skills she would need for her new-found calling.

In 1990, she earned a B.A. in Psychology with a Business minor from the University of Albany, SUNY. Graduating *summa cum laude*, she was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. The next year, she received an M.S. in Early Childhood and Elementary Education at Bank Street College of Education in New York City. Her second master's — in School Psychology — came in 2001 from the University of Delaware, where she was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society.

After receiving her first master's, Dr. Rudinoff attended a National Teachers Conference job fair and was recruited by Sanford School to teach

a Special Education instructional specialist before being named Special Services director.

During her time in Smyrna, Dr. Rudinoff has seen the district double in size. "When I came here," she says, "there were fewer than 3,000 students in the district; now there are over 6,000."

Under her leadership, the district has been able to expand its capacity to educate students with increasingly diverse needs.

"Given that we were a small district, we used to send our students with more significant disabilities, such as those with autism, intellectual disabilities and physical impairments, to consortium schools in Kent County," she says. "I've made it my mission to build my team and the level of expertise in our district so that we can provide programming for students with complex needs, allowing these students to remain part of their home district."

She has indeed built her team, which numbered little more than a dozen when she became Special Services director. Eleven years later,

## Dr. Michelle Shaivitz

**B**roken Is A Gift" is more than just the title of Dr. Michelle Shaivitz's book; it's pretty much her guiding philosophy — a philosophy that saved her life.

Dr. Shaivitz, who earned an Ed.D. from Wilmington University in 2015, has been an educator for more than 20 years, teaching at every level from pre-school to college, and moving on to executive positions in the nonprofit field. She is currently vice president of Student Success with United Way of



*Dr. Michelle Shaivitz*

*“The key to success for future generations is educating our youngest learners. It’s the biggest return on investment you can get in this country today — bar none.”*

*—Dr. Michelle Shaivitz*

Delaware, overseeing United Way’s educational initiatives in the First State.

She focuses primarily on literacy through a continuum of services from birth all the way to career and college readiness and success. “We are trying to meet each person at the level of their needs,” she says. “We work on supporting the whole child, not just in the classroom, but in the family, the educators that work with them, the community that surrounds that child.”

She is especially invested in improving early learning. “The key to success for future generations is educating our youngest learners,” she says. “It’s the biggest return on investment you can get in this country today — bar none.”

She discovered the importance of early learning through personal experience. She and her husband, Mitchell, who live in Abingdon,

Maryland, spent more than a decade as foster parents to what she calls “some of the neediest children you can imagine.”

Fifteen years ago, they adopted sisters Isabella and Alena from foster care. At the time, Isabella was 12 and Alena was 1½, and both were in poor health.

Today, Alena is a senior at the Teacher Academy of Maryland and Isabella is married, a specialist 4th class in the Army, and the mother of a three-year-old daughter.

As proud as she is to be a mother and grandmother, Dr. Shaivitz is equally proud of another title: recovering alcoholic.

She has been sober and an active member of Alcoholics Anonymous for more than a decade, but drinking, she says, “sucker-punched me,” and nearly ruined what on the surface seemed to be the perfect life: a happy marriage, two beautiful daughters, a nice house,

a successful career, and many friends. But like the proverbial duck, just below the surface she was paddling frantically to stay afloat.

Alcohol posed no problem for her until about 15 years ago, after a vacation in Jamaica. “I started chasing that vacation brain,” she says, “where you’re relaxed and you don’t have responsibilities, and you’re not worried about kids and work and everything else.”

Over the next 18 months, the progressive disease transformed her from an occasional social drinker to a full-blown alcoholic. “It became something I needed,” Dr. Shaivitz says. “I wanted to drink more than I wanted to be a mother, more than I wanted to be a wife, more than I wanted to breathe.”

She got help, went to AA meetings, got a sponsor, and stayed sober for two years. Then, one summer night in 2012, driving home from classes at WilmU, she hit bottom. A detour off I-95 took her past a liquor store. Inexplicably, she pulled in, bought several mixed mini-drinks, and downed them in the parking lot. On the way home, she was arrested for driving under the influence. Already on probation for DUI, she was sentenced to 33 days in the Harford County Detention Center.

While the experience was “awful,” she says it saved her life.

The lifesaver was a woman who came to the jail to conduct an AA meeting, and her message resonated so profoundly with Dr. Shaivitz that she asked the woman for a hug — despite a strict “no touching” rule.

After that tearful embrace, Dr. Shaivitz says, “I went back to my cell and hit my knees and asked for help, and I haven’t had the desire to drink since.”

She went on to earn her Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership, Learning and Innovation, doing her dissertation on recidivism, then served as adjunct professor at WilmU for four years, teaching SEC 6010 Planning for Information Security in the master’s level.

Meanwhile, she had been telling her story at AA meetings and elsewhere and realized that “the more I told it the more I saw it really helped people, because there are so many suffering in silence.”

So she began writing. Three years later, “Broken Is A Gift” was published — on June 24, 2020 — her eight-year sober anniversary. It’s available through Barnes & Noble, Walmart, and Amazon and has been translated into several languages.

The book’s title comes from Dr. Shaivitz’s belief that being broken is a gift because it means you can rebuild yourself however you want. It addresses addiction and other problems, and the process of overcoming those challenges. Mostly, though, says the author, “It’s about getting yourself unstuck and truly living your own life instead of just poking along and existing.”

“Humbled and grateful” to be chosen one of WilmU’s Distinguished Alumni, Dr. Shaivitz has followed her own blueprint and rebuilt her life. Today, as she says in her bio, she is “a wife, mother of two amazing daughters, ‘Grammy’ to her first grandchild, lover of all animals, good food, great coffee, and all things uplifting.” **WU**

## HONORABLY MENTIONED

### THESE **6** ALUMNI RECEIVED HONORABLE MENTIONS.



*Gail Carter-Hamilton*

#### Gail Carter-Hamilton

As chief Racial Equity Officer in the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Gail Carter-Hamilton draws on both her professional training and background as well as her upbringing in the church. “Our goal in public health is to reach people, especially those that are the most marginalized,” she says. “My job is to go beyond engagement and help mobilize the public to continue the work beyond

what even we can offer. I believe community mobilization is the outcome of effective engagement, both of which I learned through my early teachings in the church.”

Prior to being appointed to her present position in January of 2022, Carter-Hamilton served for 16 months as Pediatric Partnership manager in the department’s COVID-19 Containment Division. In that role, she was the primary coordinator for the implementation of the city’s COVID-19 guidance and regulations at all schools and early childcare settings. She previously worked as a school nurse for Philadelphia city schools and served Albert Einstein Medical Center for six years in various roles, including admissions coordinator, case manager and staff nurse.

A Philadelphia native, she completed her B.S. in Nursing at La Salle University in 1998, and earned a master’s in Nursing, Executive Leadership from Wilmington University in 2020.

Offering “a profound thank you” to the University, she says: “Wilmington provided a robust and experiential yet inclusive environment for me to learn at my own pace and with the dignity provided by the professors. Each class was conducted by a professor who truly accounted for the adult learner and was empathetic to the needs of each individual.”





*Rob DeMasi*

## Rob DeMasi

When not traveling throughout Delaware and the region educating the public about neuromuscular disease, Rob DeMasi is busy collecting degrees from Wilmington University. Or recruiting students for St. Mark's High School in Newark.

In 2016, he earned a bachelor's degree in Behavioral Science from the University. A year later, he received a master's in Management with a Concentration in Nonprofit Management. He followed that in 2018 with a Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management, and he's now working toward his Ed.D. in Prevention Science.

"Wilmington University has served as an incredible asset for my personal and professional development over the past five years," he says.

DeMasi is president of the Muscle Movement Foundation, a charity he founded in 2012 to provide life-changing accommodations and support to families who are affected by neuromuscular disease. In his talks, he shares his own story about overcoming the debilitating effects of a muscle disease.

At St. Mark's — his alma mater — DeMasi is director of Admissions and has played a vital role in increasing the school's enrollment by 54 percent over the past three years, making it the fastest-growing Catholic school in Delaware and bucking national enrollment trends in Catholic education. In each of those three years, St. Mark's also was voted Best Private

School in the state.

His professional and charitable efforts earned him a spot on the Delaware Business Times 40 Under 40 list in 2018. The award recognizes 40 ambitious professionals under the age of 40 who are making a name for themselves through innovative ideas, business excellence, and community involvement in Delaware.

## Dr. Steven Hicks

Dr. Steven Hicks teaches and is acting program manager of Graphics Technologies at Eastern Florida State College in Cocoa, Florida. He received an M.Ed. in Applied Educational Technology from Wilmington University in 2003, and followed up by earning an Ed.D. in Innovation and Leadership from the University in 2007.

This year, he was among a handful of educators chosen to participate in the K–12 Global Fellowship Program at Ohio State University. As part of the program, teachers participate in guided, in-person discussions over the course of seven months, culminating in a final pedagogy session.

Dr. Hicks joined EFSC as an adjunct professor in 2020, and moved to a full-time position in October of 2021. "As full-time faculty," he says, "I now plan courses for adjuncts and I'm also updating the entire program to include new software and new technologies for students so that they leave better prepared for careers in graphics-related fields."

He also serves as senior editor, contributing writer, photographer, and graphic designer for two Central Florida publications, Spacecoast Living Magazine and Spacecoast Business Magazine.

Dr. Hicks was in the first doctoral cohort at WilmU's Dover Campus, receiving his degree in January 2008. "My lasting impression of the University is of how the professors encouraged us while challenging us to be better," he says. "I completed the doctoral program purely for myself. It was years later when I returned to



*Dr. Steven Hicks*

education that the credential proved to be a substantial benefit personally and professionally.

"I've never been prouder to be a WilmU alum, and I still keep the decal in the back window of my car."

## Charles Schneider

Charles Schneider's experience in the financial industry has helped him become a leader in the classroom and earn accolades from the education community. Schneider, who earned a master's in Secondary Education from WilmU in 2008 and an MBA in Management Information Systems in 2017, was recognized as the 2023 Teacher of the Year at Alexis I. duPont High School in Wilmington.

He joined the A.I. faculty in 2007 after working for six years in banking, where he rose to the position of supervisor at BNY Mellon. As chair of the Career and Technical Education Department at A.I., he has focused on career education, specifically in banking and marketing.

In his first year at the school, he started a DECA (formerly Distributive Education Clubs of America) chapter and helped create the banking pathway that offered internship opportunities for students. In 2010, he initiated the school store, which has grown from a closet to a full classroom and has been nationally recognized by DECA several times.

"The best part is that students are doing this in the classroom, gaining real-world experience that they can apply in the future," Schneider says.



In 2011, he was named Delaware Marketing Teacher of the Year, and in 2017, he was inducted into the Sigma Beta Delta Honor Society.

Schneider has forged solid partnerships throughout the country as a National Academy of Finance Fellow, helping to write curriculum for the Academy of Finance and Business Information Technology programs. He also serves as state DECA advisor and as an adjunct faculty member at WilmU.

He is working on a third master's from WilmU, this time in Leadership.

### **Avshalom Shongwe**

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As founder, president and CEO of ProftUp Technologies, former Wildcat golfer Avshalom "Arvy" Shongwe has parlayed his love of the sport into a career. Shongwe, who graduated in 2020 with a degree in Business Management, founded ProftUp Technologies in 2021. Headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa, the company has grown into one of the major golf optics technology firms in that country.

This is Shongwe's second start-up. While still a student at WilmU, he founded Sketch Golf LLC, a bespoke golf accessory manufacturer that has worked with numerous private golf clubs and PGA Tour players. The company has partnered with Justin Rose, an English professional, in support of his Rose Ladies Open.

As a student, Shongwe was named to the Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference All-Academic Team and



achieved the fourth highest GPA in the conference. He made the dean's list three times and was a member of Chi Alpha Sigma, a student-athlete honor society.

He also interned with the Leon N. Weiner Education Foundation's Positive Points Program, a year-round educational and cultural enrichment program for children from families with low-to-moderate incomes.

"The staff at Wilmington were incredibly supportive and responsive," he says. "Whenever I had any difficulties as an international student-athlete, either in school or for internships, they always helped tackle those situations in a timely and supportive manner. I really appreciated my time there and I look forward to seeing the University continue to grow over the years."

A native of Swaziland, Shongwe resides in Johannesburg. He plans to split his time between South Africa and the United States as he oversees his two golf enterprises.

### **Dr. Debra Webster**

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Dr. Debra Webster was appointed director of the Salisbury (Maryland) University School of Nursing in 2020. She brings to the office more than 38 years of experience in mental health, public health, leadership, and nursing education. She has worked in a variety of settings with adults, children, and adolescents.

Prior to her appointment as director, Dr. Webster was the Undergraduate Program chair at Salisbury from 2018–2020 and the associate chair



from 2009–2018. Before moving into academia, she was an assistant administrator and director of nursing. As a nurse, she cared for the high-risk HIV population.

Dr. Webster earned her Ed.D. in Innovation and Organizational Leadership from Wilmington University in 2008, after receiving an MSN and BSN from Salisbury University.

She holds NLN certification as a Certified Nurse Educator and ANCC certification in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing, and much of her work and research has been in that discipline. With more than 40 presentations on the use of Standardized Patients (SPs), her research on the use of SPs to teach therapeutic communication skills, core psychiatric nursing skills, leadership, empathy, and care of individuals with PTSD and dementia has been presented at the local and national level. Her work has been published in several peer reviewed journals, including *Simulation in Nursing*, *Journal of Nursing Education*, and *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing and Mental Health Services*.

She is currently Co-PI (co-principal investigator) on a \$1 million NSP 2 (Nurse Support Program) grant through the Maryland Higher Education Commission. To help meet the demand for more nurses, the grant is designed to produce more nurses and accelerate their entry into the workforce, thus reducing the strain on high-demand clinical facilities. **WU**





# A LEADER IN A TRAUMA- INFORMED STATE

**T**raumas great and small can tear gaps in the fabric of daily life. The father who has trouble holding a job still suffers the sting of a battered childhood. An elderly widow struggles to emerge from the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic. A teen is embarrassed on social media when she flunks her driver's test.

In the World Mental Health Survey Consortium, more than 70 percent of respondents reported experiencing trauma, an event or series of events viewed by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening.





*Dr. Julius Mullen*



*Erin Mitchell*

## WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY IS ACCLAIMED IN ITS APPROACH TO **TRAUMA-INFORMED TRAINING**. HERE'S WHY.

— | BY EILEEN SMITH DALLABRIDA | —

In the First State, Wilmington University is a leader in trauma-informed (TI) care, partnering with social service providers, educators, healthcare professionals, and employers to identify trauma and respond with compassionate strategies that help individuals build resiliency. It's an integral part of an initiative launched in 2018 when **GOV. JOHN CARNEY** signed an executive order declaring Delaware a trauma-informed state, adopting an intentional approach to understanding and interacting with people experiencing trauma.

"Trauma can be the result of a single event, like losing a job, or long-term exposure, like living in a neighborhood with gun violence," says **DR. DEBRA BERKE**, director of WilmU's Psychology Programs and the Center for Prevention Science.

Research shows that people who experience trauma, especially trauma

that occurs in childhood, are more likely to suffer behavioral health issues and chronic physical health conditions that reduce life expectancy. Substance abuse and other risky behaviors also have been linked to trauma.

Causes of trauma include domestic violence, sexual abuse, death in the family, poverty, and having a parent who is incarcerated. But smaller wounds also can have a devastating impact.

"If the paper bag rips while you are carrying in groceries and a few jars break, you might be annoyed, but you aren't traumatized," Dr. Berke says. "But that loss could be traumatic if you are struggling to put food on the table and you don't have money to replace those items."

**TRACEY QUILLEN CARNEY**, Delaware's first lady, was traumatized as a young girl when her father suffered an accident at home. Although her father

recovered, her life felt out of control. She couldn't focus on homework or sports.

Her family had top-notch health benefits and ready access to resources. But she didn't find healing until her trauma was identified.

"I know what it's like to have your life derailed by unaddressed trauma," she says. "The missing piece in my situation, really, was information. Awareness and practical knowledge are so important to keep the impacts of trauma from upending the promise of our children's future."

Trauma-informed approaches are paving a helpful highway, getting to the root of problems. For example, a friendly conversation with a girl who was often late for school revealed that her cellphone charger was broken. With a new charger, she could set an alarm and get to school on time. Likewise, a boy who punched a classmate who



Dr. Debra Berke

“ WITH A TI-PERSPECTIVE, THE INSTRUCTOR REACHES OUT AND SAYS, **‘HEY, I SEE YOU’RE STILL STRUGGLING. HOW CAN I HELP?’** THE APPROACH ISN’T ASKING ‘WHAT’S WRONG WITH YOU?’ IT’S ASKING, ‘WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?’” —*Dr. Debra Berke*

insulted his mother was haunted by the memory of not being able to protect his mom when his stepfather assaulted her.

Consider a common scenario in education. A student is struggling in class. He is chronically late and has difficulty completing assignments. In emails to his instructor, the student asks for more time. The instructor gives him a break. She accommodates him by extending the deadline for his assignment.

But the problems continue. In his emails, the student’s tone becomes strident. The instructor feels she’s being treated disrespectfully. Then, because

he doesn’t complete his coursework, the student fails. The instructor feels frustrated.

Dr. Berke says that if the instructor had taken a trauma-informed approach, the student and the instructor might have shared a positive outcome.

“With a TI-perspective, the instructor reaches out and says, ‘hey, I see you’re still struggling. How can I help?’” she says. “The approach isn’t asking ‘what’s wrong with you?’ It’s asking, ‘what happened to you?’”

Instructor and student talk about what is weighing on the student and ways to help him succeed. The

instructor is a calm, compassionate listener and a referral person, connecting the student with the extra help he needs. The student completes his coursework and passes the class, confident he can succeed in other courses. The instructor gains the satisfaction of a job well done.

WilmU is working with health and social services providers, educators, health systems, and other organizations throughout the state to nurture and strengthen trauma-informed initiatives. The University trains trauma-informed coaches through its Center for Prevention Science.

“We recognized that we could share information and resources and come together and do professional development across institutions,” Dr. Berke says.

Children & Families First, a Wilmington-based agency, offers school-based trauma intervention programs for children ages 5–18 who have been exposed to stressful and traumatic events. “Our relationship with WilmU and trauma work goes back years, starting with a community training program for early childhood providers on trauma for very young children and how to respond to it,” says **KIRSTEN OLSON**, CEO.

Research has shown that children who participate in trauma intervention programs have significantly fewer symptoms of post-traumatic stress and depression than children who don’t receive help. As a result, they are far more likely to flourish as adults. “Our goal is that their trauma symptom scores go down and their coping skills improve,” Olson says. “By intervening early, we can help brains rewire.”

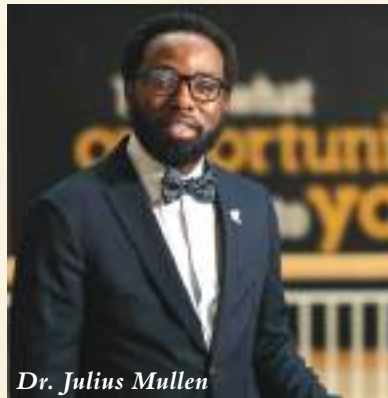
Providing services to students in a school setting removes obstacles such as transportation, schedule conflicts, and any stigma related to mental health. With early intervention, kids are less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol, commit crimes or engage in other dangerous behaviors as adults.

Most people are likely to experience a traumatic event at some point in life, says **ERIN MITCHELL**, CEO of Trauma Matters Delaware (TMD), a hub that provides training, education, coaching, technical assistance, and advocacy for organizations throughout the state. Trauma-informed responses can help individuals to build resilience and lead happier, more productive lives.

“Building resilience is a learned behavior. Taking care of yourself is being in tune with what boosts your mood, like going to the gym. It’s about being proactive and taking the time to learn what gets you back on track,” Mitchell says.

TMD and WilmU are longtime partners, joining forces to train volunteers and advance TI-informed approaches. **DR. JULIUS MULLEN**, who teaches in WilmU’s Prevention Science doctoral program, is president of TMD’s board. He has written a series of trauma-informed children’s books with his wife, **NATASHA**. Dr. Berke also serves, along with **KIERAN MOHAMMED**, an adjunct instructor, and **NANCY MCGEE**, one of WilmU’s four trauma-informed trainers.

Dr. Mullen applies TI principles in his work at WilmU, with profoundly positive results. Students are more engaged and do better work. “I started



*Dr. Julius Mullen*

staying after class so students would have an opportunity to ask questions. I also slowed down the pace in class, walking through assignments in a concrete way,” he says.

He collaborates with students, asking for their ideas on how to make up missed classes or assignments. In addition, he makes himself available for tutoring. Dr. Mullen says that meeting people where they are, listening with an open mind and heart, and working together to find solutions soon becomes second nature.

“I am TI, trauma-informed,” he says. “For me, it’s personal and is reflected in everything I do.”

At Beebe Healthcare, Dr. Berke and the WilmU team partnered with TMD to develop a 45-minute educational module with pre-and post-surveys, a mandatory educational

module for employees.

More than 1,100 Beebe team members opted for a second, optional module, says **KIMBERLY BLANCH**, director of Community Outreach for Population Health. More than 60 individuals stepped up as volunteer resources for colleagues. Plans include bringing in an on-site coach to observe the health system’s workflow and practices from a TI approach, from patient intake to nutritional services.

“It’s an ever-evolving infrastructure providing layers of support for team members and management,” Blanch says. “A compassionate, wellbeing-centered culture supports our goal



*Erin Mitchell*

of being an employer of choice.”

Throughout Delaware, heightened awareness and effective training in dealing with trauma mean more people are getting help, Tracey Carney notes. People impacted by trauma also are likely to receive care faster.

“Our state owes a lot to those original compassionate champions, including Dr. Deb Berke and her colleagues at WilmU, who have provided bold and inspiring leadership,” she says. “I don’t think there can be any true, lasting improvement in our society without an understanding of what real human beings are going through. Being trauma informed is a way of understanding people, including ourselves, better. Improved relationships almost always lead to improved outcomes — and better experiences for all.” **WU**



*Wilmington University Alumnus and Adjunct Dave Wooley's documentary "Dionne Warwick: Don't Make Me Over" premiered on CNN in January and is streaming on HBO Max. It's an award-winning retrospective worth watching.*

# Don't Make Her Over

| BY MARIA HESS |



Wilmington University alumnus and adjunct **DAVE WOOLEY**'s documentary "Dionne Warwick: Don't Make Me Over" premiered on CNN on Jan. 1, 2023, and continues to stream on HBO Max. The film he wrote, produced and co-directed (with **DAVID HEILBRONER**) recalls moments from Warwick's childhood, where she sang at her grandfather's church in Newark, New Jersey, and her collaboration with legendary songwriting team Burt Bacharach and Hal David. The retrospective also explores Warwick's crossover from R&B to pop, a monumental feat in 1968, the year Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert F. Kennedy were assassinated, and social unrest over the Vietnam War persisted. Warwick's music exploded in Europe, though her first album was released under the guise of a blonde-haired, blue-eyed white female artist. That she was the first African American woman to win a Grammy in the pop category was significant, given the nation's deep-seated racial turmoil.



| PHOTOS SUPPLIED BY DAVE WOOLEY |



*Wooley prepares to interview renowned record producer, musician, songwriter, composer, and arranger Quincy Jones at the icon's home.*



**“I wanted to make a film that was genuinely symbolic of Dionne’s stellar career. People needed to know that she was more than a hit maker. She’s a transformational leader.” —Dave Wooley**

Capturing Warwick’s life and 60-plus-year music career, Wooley and Heilbroner blended archival footage and conversations with superstars like Stevie Wonder, Smokey Robinson, Quincy Jones, Cissy Houston, Burt Bacharach, Elton John, Gladys Knight, Snoop Dogg, and producer Clive Davis — among others. Wooley also interviewed Civil Rights leader Jesse Jackson and former U.S. President Bill Clinton. Never-before-seen archival interviews with the late Whitney Houston (Warwick’s cousin) are prominent in the film, and Wooley interviewed singer Olivia Newton-John before her passing. There’s an interesting discussion of German-born actress-singer Marlene Dietrich, who nurtured Warwick when she first performed in Paris in 1963 and introduced the singer to haute couture. Wooley’s daughters, Veda and Davina Wooley, both WilmU grads, were associate producers on the film, which took five years to make.

Warwick also was an AIDS activist who spoke out about the epidemic when most wouldn’t and spearheaded the recording of “That’s What Friends Are For,” which generated millions for AIDS research.

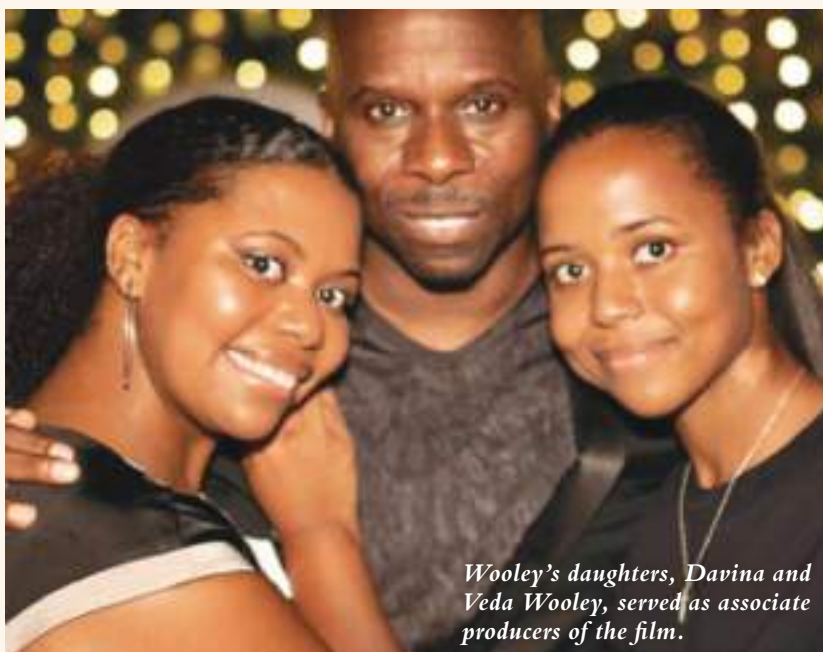
The retrospective garnered several notable reviews. Variety’s Owen Gleiberman wrote, “Warwick, as a singer, had such a spectacular run that just seeing it all play out, and watching the clips that have been assembled of her spellbinding performances on stage and television, is more than satisfying, especially because the movie truly understands what a transformational figure she was.” The Hollywood Reporter said the documentary contained enjoyable anecdotes and devoted its final third to non-musical activities, reminding us “of the singer’s activism, especially her early recognition of the AIDS crisis.” Victor Stiff of *That Shelf* wrote, “What elevates it above similar docs is its dazzling star and soul-rocking

archival material. Warwick features prominently throughout the doc, speaking directly to the camera and talking us through clips. If you’ve never experienced a Warwick interview, let me tell you, it’s a sight to behold. Warwick always calls it as she sees it, but her harsh words come from a place of love.”

“I wanted to make a film that was genuinely symbolic of Dionne’s (60+ years) stellar career,” Wooley told CNN’s Alexis Garfield and Janelle Davis. “However, people also needed to know that she was more than a hit maker. She’s a transformational leader. A real leader does not create followers; a real leader creates other real leaders. The people featured in this film, from former president Bill Clinton to Snoop Dogg, all say how Dionne made them better individuals.”

At the time of this writing, “Dionne Warwick: Don’t Make Me Over” had won the Best Feature Documentary category at the Annapolis Film Festival, the Bronzelens Audience Award at the BronzeLens Film Festival (Atlanta), Montclair Film Festival’s Documentary Feature Award (New Jersey), and the Special Tribute Award at the Toronto International Film Festival. On New Year’s Day, CNN reported that the film’s premiere debuted at #1 among cable news viewers in the demographic of adults aged 25-54.

Like most documentaries, there was a certain amount of selling to get it produced. “One of the most challenging aspects of this fantastic five-year journey was convincing others that this was a worthy cause,” Wooley told CNN. “A documentary film about an iconic, global African American woman who is still with us could work, and there was



*Wooley’s daughters, Davina and Veda Wooley, served as associate producers of the film.*





*Wooley and Warwick have been working together for decades.*

a market for ‘Dionne Warwick: Don’t Make Me Over.’ I didn’t take no for an answer. When someone tells me the word ‘no,’ I hear opportunities. I felt that if we made it, they would watch it. With prayer, being relentless eventually paid off.”

Wooley, who has been a WilmU College of Business adjunct for over 20 years, has enjoyed a prolific career as an author, teacher, concert promoter, filmmaker and entrepreneur. He rose to prominence as the only African American man in the nation to be awarded exclusive pay-per-view and

closed-circuit television broadcasting rights for several states to the 1988 Mike Tyson vs. Michael Spinks match, the largest fight in history at the time. (He was featured in the 2021 documentary series “Mike Tyson: The Knockout” as a result.) Wooley produced “The Clash of the Legends,” a 1992 pay-per-view TV hoopfest that pitted retired NBA stars Julius “Dr. J” Erving and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar against each other, and he worked with megastars like Stevie Wonder, James Brown, Run-DMC, Loretta Lynn and Tony Bennett. Wooley’s rewarding

collaboration with Warwick has lasted for decades, and the duo co-wrote her autobiography and children’s book, “Say A Little Prayer.”

More recently, Wooley was named talent and content advisor for the Biden/Harris Inaugural Committee. And on March 1, 2022, The City of Wilmington named a street after him, designating the corner of 16th and Claymont streets, where he launched his producing career in 1985 at a nightclub called Ambrosia. “David F. Wooley Way” stands as a testament to a life well lived. [WU](#)



# SPORTS

PHOTO BY DAN LAULETTA

## CACC HALL OF FAME **INDUCTS WILDCATS** 2015 BASEBALL TEAM

*Team Captain Sam Goines brings the Regional Championship trophy to his teammates to spark a late-night celebration.*





**W**ilmington University's 2015 baseball team has been elected to the Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference (CACC) Hall of Fame.

Announced in September, the HOF class also includes legendary men's basketball coach **HERB MAGEE**, of Thomas Jefferson University; all-time great men's basketball player **RASUEL MCKUNE**, of Post University; and All-American women's soccer player **MELISSA MURPHY**, of Holy Family University.

"This is a fantastic class that is entering the CACC Hall of Fame," said Commissioner **DAN MARA**. "Each individual and team brought regional and national attention to the CACC through their athletic exploits."

The 2015 Wildcats claimed both the CACC and NCAA Division II East Region Championships during a season in which they compiled an overall record of 37-15. The team came from behind to win in extra innings versus Chestnut Hill College in the CACC Championship Final, then won a pair of games on the final day of the NCAA regional to become the first CACC team to advance to the Division II World Series.

One of the wins on the final day of the regional came

against Franklin Pierce University, ranked No. 1 nationally.

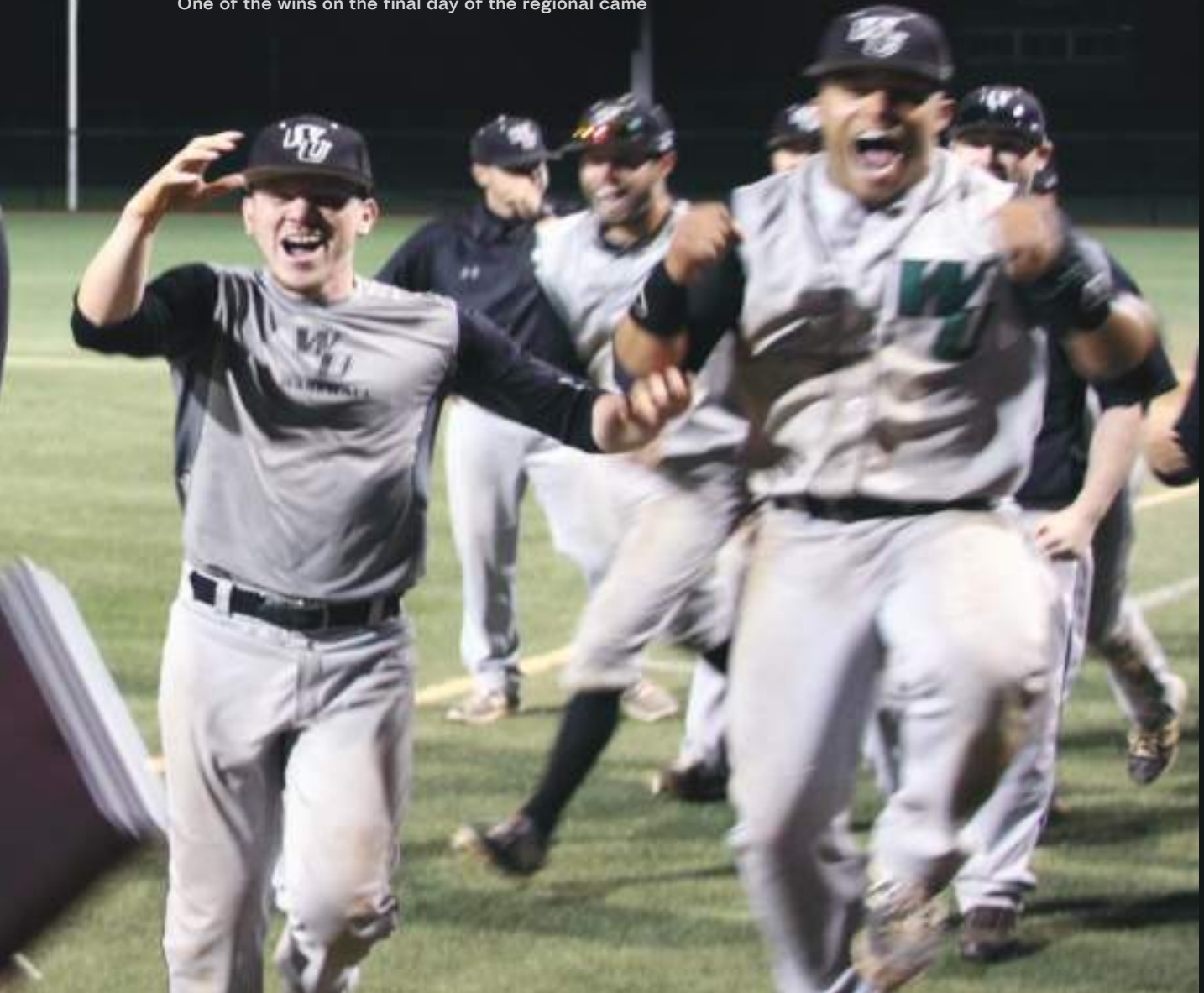
The team featured CACC Player of the Year **SAM GOINES** and six other Wildcats who earned All-CACC honors. Goines, along with **TYLER FRIES**, **CHRISTIAN ADORNO**, and RHP **FRANK SAMLUK**, earned All-America honors. Head Coach **BRIAN AUGUST** was named CACC Coach of the Year, an honor he has received three times, including last year.

August says that when he thinks of that team, the first word that comes to mind is "leadership," particularly from the seniors.

"It was top notch, the best I've ever had," says August, now in his 19th year at the helm of Wildcat baseball. "And they worked their butts off, on the field and in the classroom."

He says that members of the team, including some parents, have remained close. "A lot of them return for the alumni game," he says, "and there have been a lot of weddings that we attend. Everyone is doing well."

The team was scheduled to celebrate its HOF induction at an April 1 doubleheader at the Wilson Field at Jim Sherman Sr. Stadium. **WU** —*Bob Yearick*







*Front: Chris Stella. From left: Luis Zamora Patino, Dan Boeher, Will Razzano, Amanda Denney*

## ATHLETIC TRAINERS: HELPING THE WILDCATS WIN

**W**ilmington University's athletic trainers are a busy bunch. The University fields 16 teams — nine women's and seven men's — in NCAA Division II sports. An athletic trainer is present at every home contest, some of the away games or matches, and at every on-site, in-season practice.

"It can get hectic," says Head Trainer **CHRIS STELLA**. But he and his staff of one part-time and three full-time trainers manage their duties with skill, dedication, and enthusiasm.

And those duties are many, varied, and critical to the success of the University's athletic program.

Recognized by the American Medical Association (AMA) as an allied health care profession since 1990, athletic training requires skill in five domains of clinical practice: prevention; clinical evaluation and diagnosis; immediate and emergency care; treatment and rehabilitation; and organization and professional health and well-being.

Professional standards for athletic trainers are becoming more demanding. Says **LAGWYN DURDEN**, director of Sports Medicine at Sport Science Institute: "Emerging science has allowed for better understanding of how to address various injuries and reduce incidence. As such, athletic trainers need to find time in their already busy

schedules for continuing education to ensure that they are providing care based on current industry standards of care and best practices."

In the near future, all athletic training education programs must be at the master's level in order to be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education. Transition to this requirement has been gradual for the past seven years and will take full effect with incoming students during the next academic year, according to National Trainers' Association President **DR. KATHY DIERINGER**.

She notes that the profession is expanding beyond the world of sports.

“In the last decade or so, athletic trainers have found their way into a number of other settings,” she says. “They are working in performing arts, physician practices, military and industrial settings, hospitals, rehabilitation clinics, and in public safety, working with police and firefighters. There are so many opportunities out there.”

Stella, who marks 19 years as head trainer in 2023, says he and his staff typically work a six-day week. “Everyone picks their day off,” he says. It helps that his team works well together and exchanging shifts so someone can take off a specific day is common. Also, they get a bit of a breather in the summer, when no teams are in action.

He points out that there is a close-knit core of people in the Athletics Department “who have been here for a long time,” and the result is “a fun experience, a family atmosphere.”

Making up his immediate University family are full-time Assistant Trainers **DAN BOEHER**, **AMANDA DENNEY**, and **WILL RAZZANO**, plus part-timer **LUIS ZAMORA PATINO**. All five have B.S. degrees in Athletic Training, and all sit for a board exam and have to be state licensed in order to practice.

Each member of the team has specific assignments, although all trainers are capable of covering any of the sports. In addition to his administrative duties, Stella, who has a master’s in Physical Therapy from the University of Delaware, covers volleyball, men’s and women’s cross country, men’s basketball, baseball, and golf. The entire staff splits up spring track and field.

Razzano, who has been on the staff since 2015, covers men’s soccer, softball, plus cheerleading, and he assists with women’s basketball and track and field. His workday varies

depending on the season. “For example,” he says, “preseason soccer runs three-a-day practices — 8 a.m., 10 a.m., and 6 p.m. So, I’m in the office from 7 a.m. until about 9:30 p.m.”

On routine, non-game days, trainers write any injury notes, catch up on doctor or physical therapy appointments for the athletes, complete paperwork, and work on the athletes, who often fill the 10 training tables and four taping stations evenly split between two rooms — one at the Pratt Student Center and one at the Athletic Complex.

Over his two decades at the University, Stella has seen a significant upgrade in athletic training facilities. “We have high-end, Division I-type whirlpools, and the equipment in both rooms is excellent,” he says. “We try to use it as a recruiting tool.”

Game days are the most demanding. While players arrive at least an hour early, trainers arrive before that. Timing depends on the sport.

“For soccer, they get there an hour early,” says Razzano. “For softball, they start stretching about 2½ hours prior to the start time.”

When trainers arrive, they first gather the tools of their trade: Gatorade, cups, water bottles, ice chest, crutches, splint bag, defibrillator, medical kit, and the injury binder, in case anyone needs to be seen immediately due to injury. For soccer and lacrosse, these items are loaded into the Gator utility vehicle, which is also used to cart any injured players off the field.

“Postgame is mostly cleanup and being available for anything that happened during the game,” says Razzano. “Afterward, we clean and wipe down the training room with disinfectant, change the pillowcases, and finish any team laundry and towels.”

Denney, the longest-tenured assistant trainer, joined the staff in 2008. She supports women’s soccer, women’s basketball, women’s lacrosse, and women’s bowling.

Admitting to an obsession with working out, Denney is a triathlete who completed the 2014 Ironman Lake Placid (New York) race. But even this Ironwoman concedes that her work can be “very physical some days.”

“It seems we always have a new injury to evaluate and treat,” she says. “And we basically have one athletic trainer for each team, which means I will have to treat, by myself, possibly 10–15 athletes a day in the athletic training room.”

Yes, the job is demanding. “But,” says Boeher, “returning an injured athlete to play or helping an athlete feel better in order to help them compete is so satisfying.”

Adds Denney: “What I found to be the best part of my job is how grateful some athletes can be when you help them get back on that field.”

Boeher, who joined the staff in 2017, is responsible for men’s lacrosse as well as tennis, and also assists with track and field and men’s basketball. Because

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**The number one priority is preventing injuries.** Nothing gladdens the heart of an athletic trainer like helping an athlete stay healthy throughout his or her season.

lacrosse is a contact sport, he must travel with the team to all away games. (In the other, non-contact sports, the home team's trainer is responsible for the visiting team.)

For Denney and Boeher, life got a little more demanding in December, when they both became first-time parents.

Stella brought in Zamora Patino as a part-time assistant more than a year ago to work with the softball and baseball teams during their off seasons. As a runner and recreational soccer player, Zamora Patino says, "I understand the frustration that the athlete goes through when they're medically unable to safely return to the sport that they love."

He says his experience at WilmU will help him reach his career goal: working as an athletic trainer in Major League Soccer.

When they're not icing down sore muscles or wrapping ankles (Stella estimates they used 3,800 rolls of tape/prewrap last year) trainers are treating ankle sprains, shin splints and knee problems. And the occasional concussion.

While lower-body injuries are the most frequent, Wildcat athletes also suffer the occasional concussion, even though the University doesn't field a football team. In fact, Stella says, all sports — including bowling and golf — have recorded concussions. Some have occurred away from the sport, in the student-athlete's everyday life, but all are treated by the athletic training staff.

"We're very thorough and at the conservative end of the spectrum when it comes to concussions and return to play," Stella says. "We treat them all the same. Every student goes through the same process. Basically, the person is resting until their symptoms clear.

"We inform their professors and get them extensions for class

work. Returning the student to the classroom is the first priority. Once their symptoms resolve, we put them through a series of tests, both written and physical, then functional testing — running, sprinting — then they return to non-contact practice before upgrading to full contact."

The mental health of athletes is another, and relatively new, area of concern for athletic trainers. "We were definitely in the forefront of this in 2017 when the NCAA recommended schools offer mental health counseling," says Stella. "We started with one counselor and we're now up to three, and we're still trying to grow that pool."

Stella says he and his staff work closely with Head Team Physician **DR. JOSEPH STRAIGHT** in dealing with mental health issues. "Dr. Straight has some specialists working with him who help determine whether there will be treatment in house, treatment by the doctor, or referral to long-term treatment."

**DR. ARLEN STONE** also treats WilmU athletes. His priorities are illnesses, general medicine, and urgent care issues.

The entire sports medicine team stays in contact to plan each athlete's progress through injury and rehabilitation. But, as Stella emphasizes, the number one priority is preventing injuries. Nothing gladdens the heart of an athletic trainer like helping an athlete stay healthy throughout his or her season.

Fortunately, since they spend so much time with athletes, the trainers are not only diligent and skilled professionals, they also are fans. Just ask the coaches.

Razzano, for instance, "loves the sport," says Softball Head Coach **MIKE SHEHORN**.

Razzano plays softball in a local league, and he often brings his glove

to practice. "He'll come out and shag fly balls," says Shehorn. "And at games, he's just as much in the game as if he was a coach. The girls love him."

Razzano is "fair and honest," Shehorn says. "If he says they can't play or practice that day, the players respect him and accept that."

**CHRISTIAN ZWICKERT**, head men's lacrosse coach, says Boeher "is one of our biggest supporters, not only in the physical aspect, but also in dealing with mental health issues. Dan is the first step in creating mental health support for the guys. They absolutely love him and trust him."

As Zwickert points out, men's lacrosse is the only sport "where a piece of equipment can be used to hit another player," so injuries are fairly frequent, and the athletic trainer becomes all-important.

"In the training room, Dan is boss," Zwickert says. "Every day after practice he gives me clinic notes, basically an update as to injuries and treatment. He even attends some coaches' meetings."

**KEVIN DAY**, head coach of women's lacrosse, says Denney is "absolutely phenomenal. She's very thorough and caring. She's almost like a big sister to the girls."

On road trips, Day and Denney sometimes work out together at the local YMCA. Well, not exactly together. Day, a competitive power lifter, is usually done long before Denney, who often hits the treadmill, the stationary bike, and the pool in her workouts.

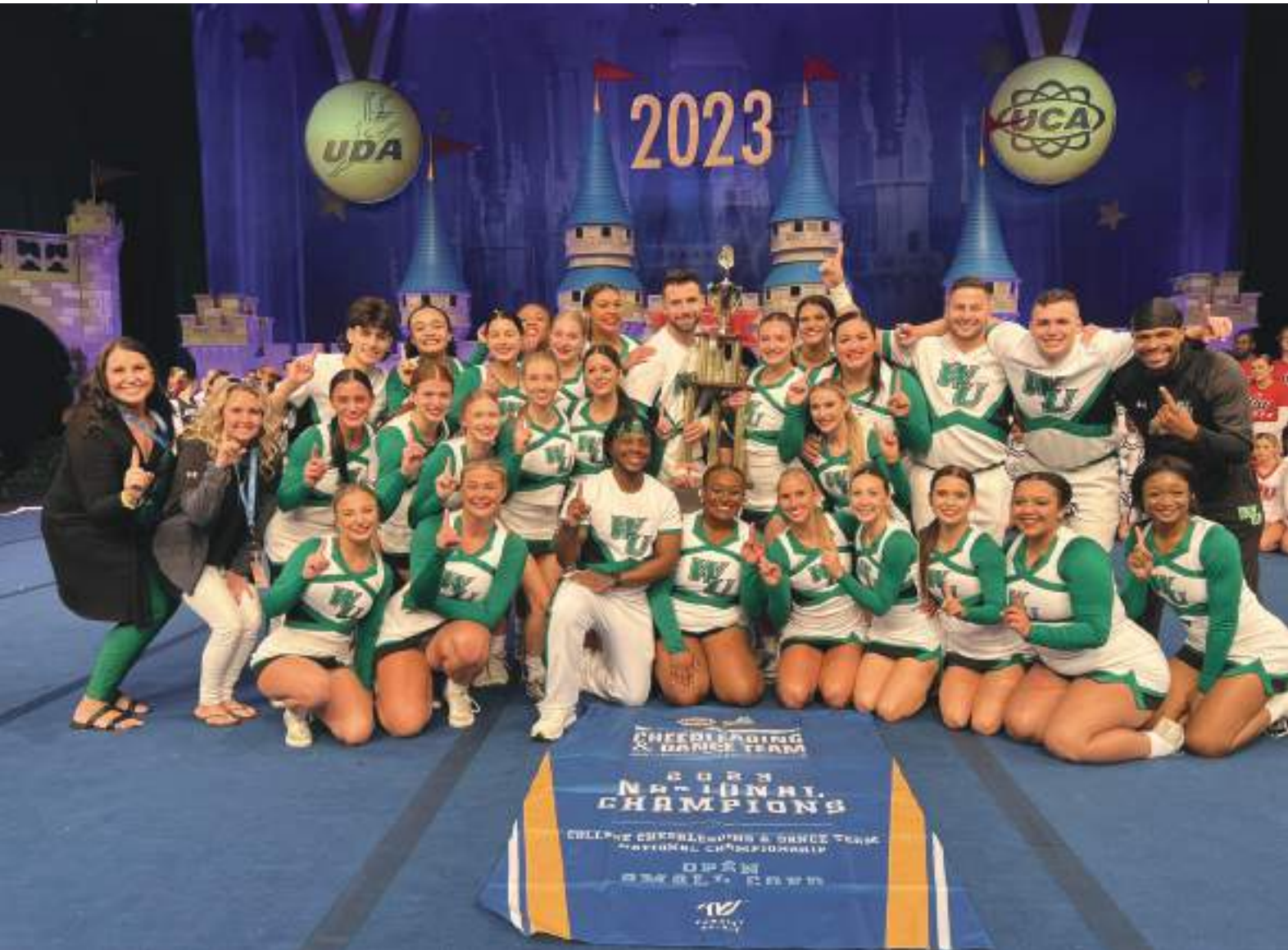
The trainers regularly join their teams in celebrating victories, which the Wildcats did a lot of in the 2021–22 academic year. They came out on top 65% of the time — 174 out of 266 contests. And while players and coaches rightly deserve most of the glory, some of it should go to Chris Stella and his skilled staff. — *Bob Yearick* **WU**



# CHEERLEADERS

## RULE!

In January, the WilmU Cheerleading Team earned its *ninth* Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA) National Championship in Orlando, Florida. To secure the win, the Wildcats needed to overcome Drury University in the finals and did so without deductions at the 2023 UCA College Nationals.



# ALUMNI

## DR. ANNIE NORMAN: The Presidential Appointee

by Maria Hess

In August, **PRESIDENT BIDEN** selected Wilmington University alumna **DR. ANNIE NORMAN** to serve on the National Museum and Library Services board. The state librarian of Delaware and director of the Delaware Division of Libraries, Dr. Norman led the establishment of the Delaware Library Catalog, which comprises 74 participating libraries that share 2.5 million items, including e-books and audiobooks.

The access to data immediately led to increased partnerships with other state agencies. According to the state's Live Love Delaware site, it became clear that libraries were a unique solution to many statewide challenges. Teams worked with the Department of Labor to place employment specialists physically in the libraries. "They created substantial relationships with Delaware Health and Social Services to connect social workers to patrons who needed them. And they received funding from Delaware Division of the Arts for two arts performers to travel to every library throughout the summer."

Also under Dr. Norman's tenure was the 2020 launch of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in Delaware. It provides books by mail every

month for children from birth to age 5. According to its website, Parton's Imagination Library "is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting books free of charge . . . through funding shared by **DOLLY PARTON** and local community partners in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland."

On the Live Love Delaware site, Dr. Norman said that **GOV. JOHN CARNEY**'s election and **FIRST LADY TRACEY QUILLEN CARNEY**'s focus on literacy inspired her to seek solutions that combined relationships with existing opportunities. She used the Imagination Library to partner with Delaware Pediatricians' Reach Out and Read Program.

On the same site, she added, "I have always believed children should be in book floods, not book deserts." Her goal has always been to help a small state make a significant impact, but her national appointment obviously has a broader reach.

"This appointment by our own President Biden to the National Museum and Library Services Board is an honor for me and a win for Delaware Libraries," says Dr. Norman, repeating her message to

the Delaware library community, humbly attributing her selection to its "winning collaboration."

Dr. Norman is also the first librarian inducted into the Hall of Fame of Delaware Women. She earned her Ed.D. in Innovation and Organizational Leadership from Wilmington University and received the Audrey K. Doberstein Award for Leadership for her dissertation, *Librarians' Leadership for Lifelong Learning*.

"WilmU has had a tremendous impact on our work in libraries," says Dr. Norman. "For me, the dissertation was most impactful. (Professor) **DR. SVENNING** set me up in the second class to begin conducting research, so that meant I had several years of data and lots of time for experimentation. Dr. Svenning and (Professor) **DR. FRAZIER** were my advisors, and they took an interest in my project, which was very helpful. The work since then builds on what I learned then." **WU**

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*The Wilmington University Library is a member of the statewide Delaware Library Consortium. Visit [wilmu.edu/library](http://wilmu.edu/library).*



*Dr. Annie Norman*





*Dr. Gregor, center, at WilmU's 2022 commencement ceremony.*

# DR. ROBERT GREGOR: Serving His Home Community

by Bob Yearick

**L**uzerne County, Pennsylvania, is populated by hard people, made so by hard times.

Coal mining spurred an economic boom in the county and its major city, Wilkes-Barre, from the 1860s through the first half of the 20th century. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants arrived, eager to earn a decent wage by toiling underground, prying anthracite from the earth's grasp.

The city's population peaked in 1930, at about 86,000. But following World War II, the area's mining industry collapsed, and today Wilkes-Barre is home to only about 44,000 people. Per capita income is \$20,785, compared to a national average of \$35,384. Family median income is \$40,505, while the national figure is \$64,994. Twenty-three percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

Wilmington University alumnus **DR. ROBERT GREGOR** is Luzerne County right down to the bone. Born and raised there, he has spent more than two decades working in health care in the Wilkes-Barre area, giving him first-hand knowledge of the maladies his sometimes economically challenged patients suffered. He put that knowledge to good use when he enrolled at WilmU in 2019 to pursue a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

“As alums, **we should help to build the school’s overall reputation.** It’s up to us to represent the university to the world, and that’s something I’m happy and proud to do.” —*Dr. Robert Gregor*

Early on, Dr. Gregor had decided he wanted to go into health care. “From a very young age,” he says, “I wanted to try to help sick people.”

He became even more focused on that career after developing ulcerative colitis as a teenager and being treated successfully by a gastroenterologist. The experience demonstrated to him the healing power of proper medical care.

But first, he needed a quality education. And football seemed as if it might be a ticket to that education. The strapping young man grew into a 6-2, 250-pound guard on the James M. Coughlin High School football team, and college scouts soon came calling.

In his senior year, Cornell University recruited him. Offered an academic scholarship and student aid package, Dr. Gregor jumped at the chance to get an Ivy League education. He spent four years in the classroom and on the gridiron for the Big Red, graduating in May of 1997 with a degree in Nutritional Science.

After Cornell, he returned home and completed basic nursing training at Luzerne County Community College in Nanticoke. Then it was on to another Luzerne County school, Misericordia University, for his master’s in nursing and certification as a Family Nurse Practitioner.

For the next 15 years, Dr. Gregor worked as a family nurse practitioner and also served as a student clinical

preceptor in the Berwick area. During this time, he discovered low vitamin D levels among an alarming number of his elderly patients, especially during the winter.

“Your body makes vitamin D when exposed to adequate sunlight,” he says. Indulging in the exaggeration allowed of a native son, he adds: “And up here, sometimes you don’t see the sun for three months.”

Vitamin D deficiency is associated with myriad preventable chronic illnesses, increased fracture risk, low calcium absorption, decreased bone density, and diminished muscle health.

The knowledge he gained from working with his patients became the focal point of his thesis at WilmU. “I wanted to tie in not only my nursing background, but also my degree in Nutritional Science in the doctoral project,” says Dr. Gregor. “WilmU provided me the opportunity to do that.”

He cites three reasons for choosing Wilmington: “The reputation of the program, coupled with the reputation of the director of the program, **DR. AARON SEBACH**, and the ability to do the courses remotely.”

Dr. Sebach was not only Dr. Gregor’s teacher; he also served as his doctoral project advisor. The evidence-based practice project focused on vitamin D screening and supplementation in an at-risk elderly family practice population, a program Dr. Gregor successfully implemented among his

patients over a three-month period in 2021.

Dr. Gregor and Dr. Sebach co-authored an article based on the project that was published in the February 2022 issue of the *Journal for Nurse Practitioners*.

“Bob was one of those students who makes a lasting impact,” Dr. Sebach says. “He was brilliant and dedicated to his studies, and was always looking to go above and beyond. He always wanted to make his work product exceptional. He wanted it to be something that he would be proud of, his colleagues would be proud of, his patients would be proud of, and the University would be proud of.”

Dr. Gregor started a new job last fall: Impact Clinic director at the VA Hospital in Wilkes-Barre. There, he clears veterans preoperatively for surgery, ensuring that risk is minimized. “It’s all about having the foresight to avoid poor outcomes,” he says.

His wife, Melissa, is a medical-surgical nurse at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital. They have two boys — Robert, 15, and Ryan, 7. Dr. Gregor helps to coach Robert, a 5-11, 225-pound lineman on the Lake-Lehman High School football team. This is his first year as an assistant coach, but, he says, “I love it. I’ll probably continue to do it until Ryan graduates.”

Noting that earning his doctorate was “rigorous and time-intensive,” Dr. Gregor is a proud alumnus of Wilmington University. “The people that I have met at WilmU have been top-notch academics who have excellent reputations. And I feel as alums, we should help to build the school’s overall reputation. It’s up to us to represent the university to the world, and that’s something I’m happy and proud to do.” **WU**

# STAY INVOLVED

## WITH YOUR ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

### MEMBERSHIP IS FREE!

Become an active member of your local chapter. Learn more about Wilmington University Alumni Association's events and meetings by visiting [WILMU.EDU/ALUMNI](http://WILMU.EDU/ALUMNI).

### 2003



#### ERIN GANNON

M.Ed in Literacy, of Milton, was named assistant principal at Sussex Consortium.



**JENNIFER GRIFFIN** M.S. in Administration of Justice, of Newark, was selected as Temple

University's inaugural vice president for Public Safety. A longtime Temple adjunct professor, Griffin also has more than 20 years of high-level law enforcement experience.

### 2005



#### TONY TRONGONE

M.Ed. in School Leadership, of Barrington, New Jersey, was named president

of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA) for the 2022-2023 school year.

### 2007



#### CLAY SERMAN

B.S. in Finance, of Millsboro, was named chief lending officer and SVP of County Bank in

Rehoboth Beach.



#### JESSICA HAZZARD

M.Ed. in Applied Technology, of Millsboro, has been named assistant

principal at Cape Henlopen High School.

### 2008

#### KRISTIN DEGREGORY M.Ed.,

in Applied Technology, of Newark, was named principal of Cape Henlopen High School.

### 2009



#### JENNIFER LEACH

M.Ed. in Elementary Education K-6, of Rehoboth Beach, was named assistant

principal at H.O. Brittingham Elementary.

### 2010



#### SUSAN BROWN

Ed.D. in Education Leadership and Innovation, of Whiteford, was named

superintendent of the Smyrna School District.





## 2012



### **MANDY BOUNDS**

B.S. in Nursing; M.S. in Nursing, and a D.N.P., joined Atlantic General as chief nursing officer

and vice president of Patient Care Services. Bounds has more than 16 years of experience in healthcare, with a background in nursing administration, hospital quality, safety and patient experience, and nursing education.

## 2013



### **ASHLEY LOCKWOOD**

M.Ed. in Elementary Education K-6, of Dover, was named 2023 Delaware Teacher of the Year.

## 2014



### **PAMELA SCOTT**

M.Ed. in Education Studies, of Newark, authored the textbook "From Kindergarten to Kollege in 10

Steps," which was part of the 2022 Manila International Book Fair.

## 2015



### **JACLYN LEWIS**

M.S.N. in Family Nurse Practitioner, of Felton, has joined Atracare, which provides care to pediatric

patients.



### **TYLER KUHM**

B.S. in General Studies, of Dover, was named vice president of Marketing and

Digital Strategy at Service Credit Union.

## 2017



### **KERI TUCKER**

B.S.N. in Nursing, of Easton, Maryland, joined UM Shore Medical

Group - Palliative Care Practice.



### **SHAQUONA MEYERS**

M.Ed. in Education Studies, of New Castle, was named principal of

Nativity Preparatory School of Wilmington.

## 2018



### **MARTHA DARLING SPARKS**

MBA, of Easton, Maryland, was named director of Talbot

County Finance.

## 2020



### **ALFREDO RODRIGUEZ**

M.Ed. in School Leadership, of Millsboro, was named assistant principal at

Lewes Elementary School.



### **DOUGLAS SHOEMAKER**

Ed.D. in Organizational Learning, Leadership and Innovation,

of Grand Junction, Colorado, was sworn in as chief of the Denton Police Department.

## 2021



### **FRANCINE MARZE**

Ed.D. in Organizational Learning, Leadership and Innovation, of Macungie,

Pennsylvania, was named dean of the Technical College of the Lowcountry's Culinary Institute of the South.

## 2022



### **NATALY GUZMAN**

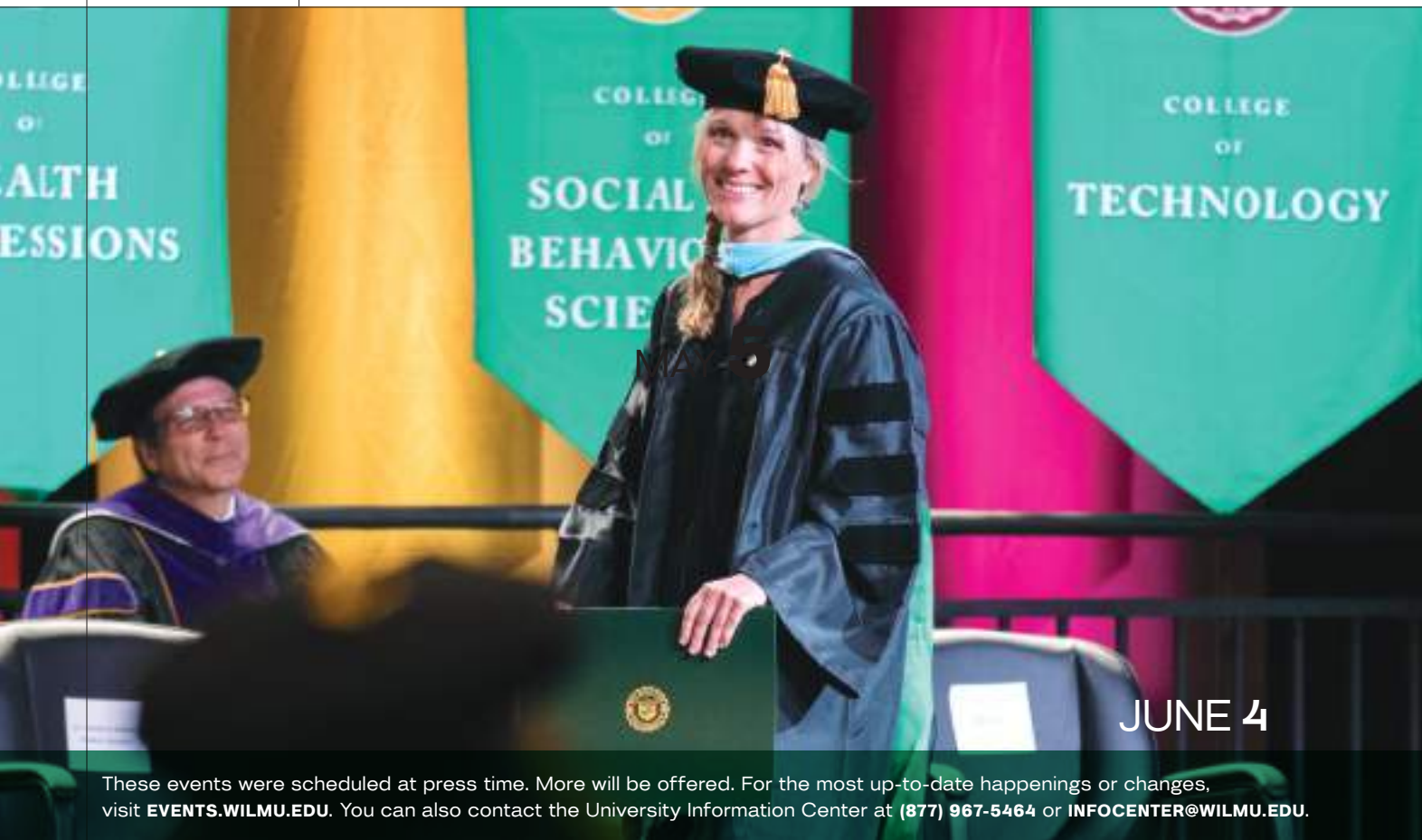
B.S. in Communications, of Anaheim, California, is a first-generation graduate earning

her degree with Disney Aspire.

**VISIT US AT**

**WILMU.EDU/ALUMNI**





JUNE 4

These events were scheduled at press time. More will be offered. For the most up-to-date happenings or changes, visit [EVENTS.WILMU.EDU](https://events.wilmu.edu). You can also contact the University Information Center at (877) 967-5464 or [INFOCENTER@WILMU.EDU](mailto:INFOCENTER@WILMU.EDU).

# University Events

## Monthly



### WILMU ONLINE BOOK CLUB

Students, alumni, faculty, and staff are invited to take part in a virtual book club hosted monthly by the WilmU library. Visit [wilmu.edu/library/bookclub.aspx](https://wilmu.edu/library/bookclub.aspx) to preview the latest selection, borrow the book from a local library, and register for the discussion.

## April 25–27

### VIOLENT CRIME SYMPOSIUM

Open to all members of law enforcement agencies, the Criminal Justice Institute's 2023 Violent Crime Symposium features speakers and training resources on the issues and current events affecting the law enforcement field. Contact [cji@wilmu.edu](mailto:cji@wilmu.edu) or visit [cji.wilmu.edu](https://cji.wilmu.edu) for costs and registration.

## May 9

## April 25

### HUMAN TRAFFICKING STUDIES WEBINAR

Lt. Col. Daniel Meadows, deputy superintendent for the Delaware State Police, and Det. Josh Rowley, criminal intelligence officer and statewide human trafficking coordinator for the

DSP, highlight law enforcement's role, strategies, and partnerships in combating human trafficking for WilmU's continuing webinar series. 2–3 p.m., free and open to the public, registration required. [wilmu.edu/humantraffickingsymposium](https://wilmu.edu/humantraffickingsymposium)



Vincent Pankoke

### TRUE CRIME LECTURE SERIES: VINCENT PANKOKE

WilmU's Criminal Justice Institute presents retired FBI Special Agent Vincent Pankoke, who

led a historical investigation into who reported the family of Anne Frank and the existence of their Secret Annex to German police in 1944. During Pankoke's career with the FBI, he tracked down kidnappers and fugitives, intercepted Colombian cocaine shipments in Miami, and pursued corrupt politicians as an undercover agent. 5:30–8 p.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 4727 Concord Pike, Wilmington. **Free and open to the public, registration required.** Visit [cji.wilmu.edu](http://cji.wilmu.edu) for more information.

## June 4

### 52ND COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES

Wilmington University's Class of 2023 will be recognized at the Chase Center on the Riverfront in Wilmington. [wilmu.edu/Graduation](http://wilmu.edu/Graduation)

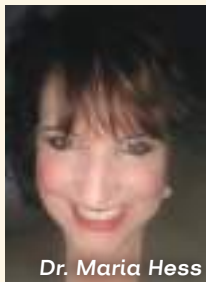
## June 13



Mark Bowden

### TRUE CRIME LECTURE SERIES: MARK BOWDEN

WilmU's Criminal Justice Institute presents journalist Mark Bowden, author of the bestselling "Black Hawk Down," as he discusses his new book, "Life Sentence: The Brief and Tragic Career of Baltimore's Deadliest Gang Leader."



Dr. Maria Hess

The event will be moderated by Dr. Maria Hess, editor-in-chief of WilmU Magazine and assistant vice president of executive communications. 5:30–8 p.m. at the DoubleTree by Hilton, 4727 Concord Pike, Wilmington. **Free and open to the public, registration required.** Visit [cji.wilmu.edu](http://cji.wilmu.edu) for more information.

# Alumni Events



## 3rd Thursdays

### ALL-ALUMNI CHAPTER MEETINGS

Connect, engage, and grow with WilmU! All alumni from New Castle, Kent, and Sussex counties, New Jersey, and everywhere else are invited to meet fellow graduates on the third Thursday of each month from 6–7 p.m. **Please contact [donna.j.hardy@wilmu.edu](mailto:donna.j.hardy@wilmu.edu) for information on in-person and/or virtual meeting plans.**

## April 20 and 27, May 4 and 11

### VIRTUAL VISIT WITH CAREER SERVICES

Join Career Services' Thursday afternoon Zoom sessions anytime between 3 and 6 p.m., for free advice on career planning, résumé writing, job search resources, and more. **Students and alumni can contact Career Services at [careerservices@wilmu.edu](mailto:careerservices@wilmu.edu) or (302) 356-6792 for the link to the online video meeting.**

## 4th Wednesdays

### YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION

Students and alumni are invited to network and plan events of interest on the fourth Wednesday of each month from 6–7 p.m. **Contact [donna.j.hardy@wilmu.edu](mailto:donna.j.hardy@wilmu.edu) for information on in-person and/or virtual meeting plans.**

## May 4

### SCHOLARSHIP GOLF CLASSIC

WilmU's annual golf outing helps to raise funds for student scholarships. Enjoy refreshments, raffles, and a scholarship dinner with silent auction and live music at the Deerfield Golf Club, 507 Thompson Station Rd., in Newark. **For more information, please contact [brandi.d.redding@wilmu.edu](mailto:brandi.d.redding@wilmu.edu) or visit [wilmu.edu/GolfClassic](http://wilmu.edu/GolfClassic).**

# Admissions Events

## Ongoing

### WILMU WEBINARS

Listen to 20- to 30-minute sessions covering financial aid, undergraduate programs, graduate studies, and other topics, then submit your questions to WilmU staff. The next Open House is **May 3**. **View upcoming webinars or open houses at [wilmu.edu/VisitUs](http://wilmu.edu/VisitUs).**





# UPDATES



Dr. Matt Wilson (far left) was inducted as an honorary commander at the Dover Air Force Base.

COURTESY OF MATT WILSON

## Honorary Air Force Commanders Inspire Community Engagement

Division of Liberal Arts Director **DR. MATT WILSON** was recently inducted as an honorary commander at Dover Air Force Base.

The program was established to partner the commanders of Dover AFB with Delaware's distinguished community and political leaders. Dr. Wilson is assigned to the 436th Communications Squadron, where he uses his expertise to

help engage military and civilian communities in Kent County.

"By building and strengthening community relationships, commanders and honorary commanders can positively impact their community," Dr. Wilson says.

The 436th Airlift Wing has a proud history, tracing its roots back to the 436th Troop Carrier Group of World War II fame that activated at Baer Field, Indiana, on April 1,

1943. Flying the C-47 Skytrain and based out of Bottesford, and later, Membury, England, the 436th TCG participated in four major airborne operations prior to the Allied victory in May 1945. Known as the Eagle Wing, the 436th TCG is now based at Dover and operates the largest and busiest aerial port in the Department of Defense. [WU](#)

—Eileen Smith Dallabrida

# New Master's Program Tailors to Individual Needs

**A** new Master of Science in Professional Studies degree equips future leaders to succeed in a diverse global environment while pursuing their passions in an innovative program tailored to each student.

“We situated the program in the context of what is happening globally as more international citizens enter our society. What leaders need for the future is the capacity to reflect on cultural differences and understand cross-cultural communications,” says **DR. JOHANNA BISHOP**, director of Behavioral Science Programs.

Up to 12 credits from another institution can be applied to the 33-credit degree. In addition to 15 core credits, students can individualize their degree with credits from a WilmU graduate certificate program or 18 credits from a menu of approved courses.

Based on data from the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institute, the curriculum emphasizes leading by influence to collaborate, solve problems, and analyze local and global challenges and opportunities.

The program launched in January. In addition, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences introduced a graduate certificate in Financial Management, explicitly



*Director Dr. Johanna Bishop*

COURTESY OF JOHANNA BISHOP

geared toward leaders in human services. Developed by **DR. MARY STEPHANIE BERRIDGE**, the certificate provides professionals with the skills to dive deeply into the financials of the organizations they serve. **WU**

—Eileen Smith Dallabrida

# DNP Student a Double Scholarship Winner

*Lisa Lietzke*



COURTESY OF LISA LIETZKE

**LISA LIETZKE**, a Doctor of Nursing Practice student, is the recipient of two prestigious scholarships that will help her realize her goal of educating other leaders in nursing.

She is one of 32 nurses nationwide to receive a competitive scholarship from Nurses Educational Funds (NEF), which

supports nurses seeking master's and doctoral degrees in nursing education, practice, research, and administration. She is also one of 11 recipients to receive a scholarship

from the Emergency Nurses Association Foundation.

Lietzke grew up in a family with three nurses, aspired to follow in their footsteps as a young girl, and began her career as a psychiatric nurse and case manager. However, she discovered her passion for education while working as a pediatric emergency nurse. She has been a clinical nurse educator in the pediatric emergency department at Nemours Children's Health in Wilmington since 2015. She earned her Master of Science in Nursing Leadership at Wilmington University in 2017.

“Lisa's commitment and passion for pediatric emergency nursing is unparalleled, and as a result, she is most deserving of both scholarships,” says **DR. AARON SEBACH**, dean of the College of Health Professions and Natural Sciences. **WU**

—Eileen Smith Dallabrida

# A Platform for Student Success



*Dr. Michael Yakubov*

TANYA SERRANO

**W**ilmU Alumnus **DR. MICHAEL YAKUBOV** believes a free product his company produces can give students the professional advantages they need.

For many students, the thought of graduating is both exciting and daunting. There's a relief in knowing that assignment deadlines and hours poured into academic work will end, though the uncertainty of the next career step looms. It's common for students to worry about the competitive job market and whether they are qualified for the positions they want. Given numerous job platforms and career-oriented resources, deciding the best resources to use can be challenging.

Dr. Yakubov earned his Ed.D. at Wilmington University in April of 2021. He looked for an online doctoral program that provided open educational resources and chose WilmU for its "culture of student engagement,

challenging curriculum, and strong networking base," he says. He happened to work as an account executive for Instructure, an education technology company that owns Canvas and Portfolium. At WilmU, he used Portfolium because of its focus on professional development. Even though he's connected to the product professionally, he wanted students to know that it's free at WilmU and that they can benefit from it.

Portfolium is a cloud-based student e-portfolio platform that lets students display class projects, achievements, work samples, certificates, and video content instrumental to their personal and professional development. Portfolium is user-friendly and makes it easy to upload and share projects. Its target audience, extensive content, and distinctive collaborative feature are perfect for students. Unlike LinkedIn and other job-seeking platforms, Portfolium is designed mainly for college students and their career needs. "It provides access

to an external network with like-minded peers, as opposed to a more scattered approach on LinkedIn," says Dr. Yakubov.

According to the American Psychological Association, "When progress is recorded or documented physically or publicly, the higher the likelihood of success." Portfolium offers unlimited access to uploading artifacts, so students can keep track of their skills and accomplishments while identifying areas of improvement. Plus, it fosters professional growth, which could make students more confident about their career journeys. The traditional résumé is replaced with curated videos that students can embed or add as links, allowing recruiters to get more insight into their personalities and skills. For college students who don't have lots of work experience, visual projects portray their digital literacy, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving abilities.

Graduates continue using Portfolium because it allows them to keep track of their peers and connect with academic professionals. "It can be used on a greater level for career development, sharing of ideas, and as a place for collaboration," says Dr. Yakubov. "I can see this being a great tool for sharing during application candidacy for career-minded professionals, and the badging feature helps elevate the experience. It can also be connected to LinkedIn."

Dr. Yakubov recently founded TheResumaniacs.com, a development and training company focused on employee retention. Also, he credits his WilmU dissertation for helping him start TheCorporateScorecard, a business dedicated to employee retention, company succession planning, and fiscal alignment for resources. **WU**

—Ray Brookman



# Student Receives Prestigious Scholarship



COURTESY OF ASHLEY WEINMAN

**ASHLEY WEINMAN**, a student in Wilmington University's dual Doctor of Nursing Practice and Master of Business Administration program, was awarded a \$20,000 scholarship from the New Jersey League for Nursing (NJLN). The scholarship honors the legacy of **MAUREEN SULLIVAN FOLEY**, who served as president of the NJLN from 1986 to 1988 and president/CEO of the Bayonne Visiting Nurses Association for nearly 50 years.

Scholarship award applicants must be permanent in-state New Jersey residents enrolled in an accredited nursing program. They also must have completed at least one semester in an accredited degree nursing program (B.S.N., M.S.N. or doctorate) and earned at least a 3.0 GPA. They should also intend to practice nursing in New Jersey after attaining their degree and be a current, active member of NJLN.

Weinman, a palliative care nurse practitioner at the MD Anderson Cancer Center at Cooper Health in Camden, New Jersey, is nationally board-certified as a family nurse practitioner, adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner, and advanced certified hospice and palliative care nurse. A leader at Cooper Health, she co-chairs the Advanced Practice Provider Council, representing and advancing practice initiatives for nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists, and physician assistants.

She maintains a 4.0 GPA and will complete the dual degree program in May of 2024. Through her doctoral coursework and evidence-based practice project, Weinman intends to embrace advice from her mother, a Camden City school teacher, to leave the world better than she found it. She will address health, social, and financial disparities to accomplish this goal. **WU** —Aron Sebach

# Alumna Serving the Delaware State Board of Education



COURTESY OF MEGAN SZABO

Alumna **DR. MEGAN SZABO** was appointed to serve on the Delaware State Board of

Education. Named Delaware's 2015 State Teacher of the Year, Dr. Szabo was chosen for her experience as a science, technology, engineering, and math resource teacher, and for her leadership in professional development, according to a statement released by **GOV. JOHN CARNEY's** office.

Dr. Szabo earned her master's in Secondary School Counseling and Ed.D. in Leadership and Innovation from WilmU. She serves the Caesar Rodney School District as an achievement liaison teacher at Magnolia Middle School. **WU**



COURTESY OF DEBBIE TAYLOR

# Best Wishes, Debbie

**S**tudent Success Center Manager **DEBBIE B. TAYLOR** retired after 19 years of service to Wilmington University.

Taylor was revered for her big smile, and a warmth that comforted students and inspired colleagues. And her accomplishments were many. As manager of the Student Success Center, she welcomed every student enthusiastically, making them feel like valued members of the University family. In other roles, including administrative assistant, publications

coordinator, project manager, and associate registrar, Taylor went beyond the call of duty. Student success was always her priority.

Her kindness extended to colleagues, and she was often the first to lend a hand to anyone in need. "I loved my time at Wilmington University and will always think fondly of my WilmU family," says Taylor. "Now I'm looking forward to spending more time with my family, grandchildren, books, and my garden." **WU**



## Concentration in Mental Health and Wellness for Psychology Majors

**P** psychology undergraduate majors can now choose to focus their studies on learning more about how individual (race, age, disability, knowledge), social (peer groups), and environmental (community violence, worksite wellness programs) factors shape our mental health and well-being across the lifespan. Students who complete this concentration will build knowledge and skills that can help them

improve their quality of life. This concentration will also prepare students for entry-level positions, such as mental health aides and caseworkers, or graduate work that will lead to careers in community and social service occupations, which includes marriage and family therapists and substance abuse, behavioral disorder and mental health counselors.

“The Wilmington University Psychology degree uses a strengths-

based perspective and focuses on resilience and health holistically,” says **DR. DEBRA BERKE**, director of Psychology/Organizational Dynamics programs in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. “This new concentration is a great addition to the other options we offer students so we can best prepare them for work and life.” **WU**

*For more information, visit [wilmu.edu/behavioralscience](http://wilmu.edu/behavioralscience).*

# WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW

## EXPRESS ADMISSION FOR **WILMU GRADUATES**

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Pursue a legal career with a Juris Doctor degree from WilmU Law. Graduates of any Wilmington University degree program who meet specified academic criteria are guaranteed admission.

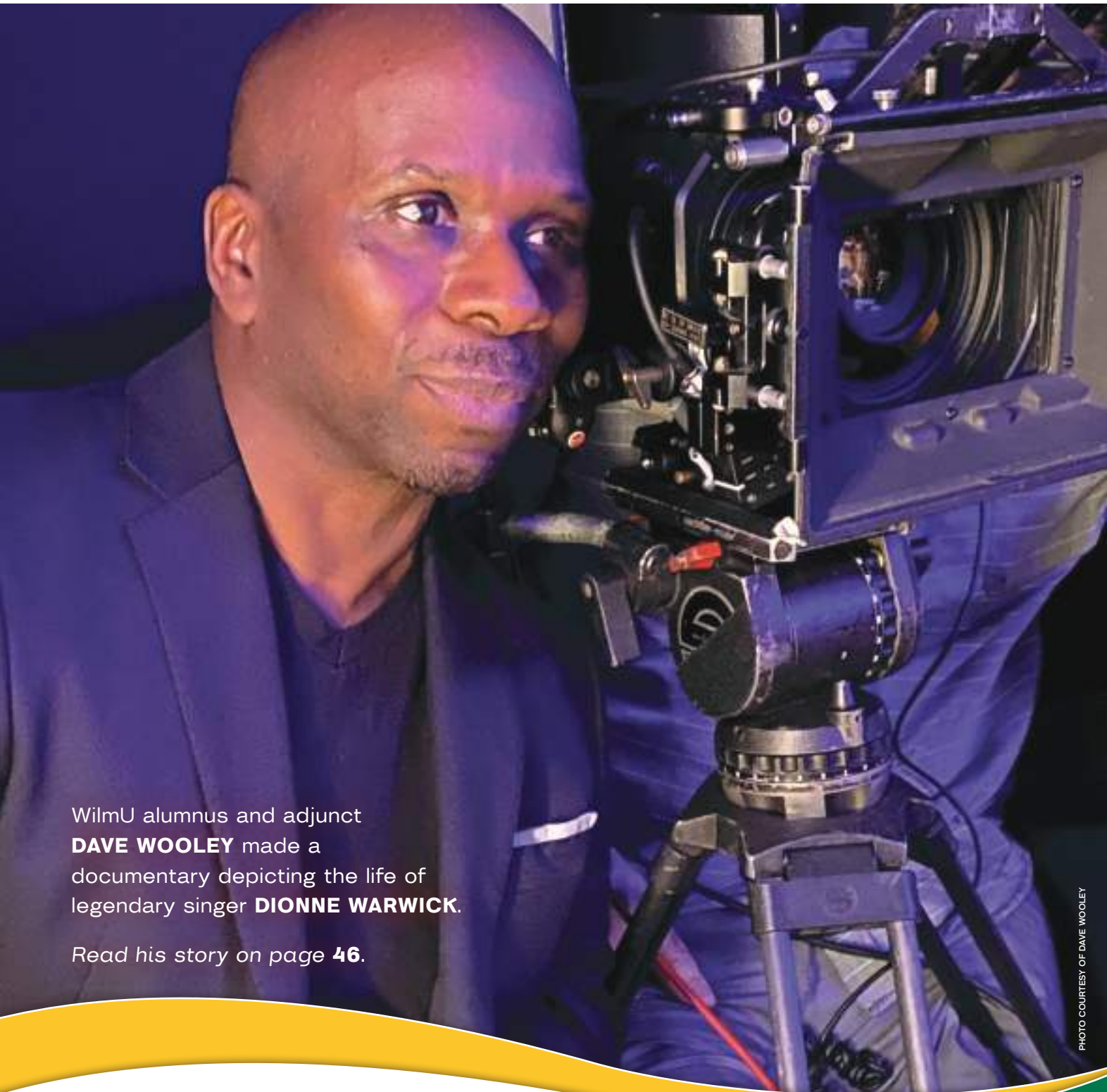
Accessible, student-focused legal education is here, right at WilmU. Learn more at [law.wilmu.edu](http://law.wilmu.edu)



**Wilmington University**  
**School of Law**







WilmU alumnus and adjunct  
**DAVE WOOLEY** made a  
documentary depicting the life of  
legendary singer **DIONNE WARWICK**.

Read his story on page **46**.