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Uncovering the rich history and untold stories of black nuns in the US Catholic Church

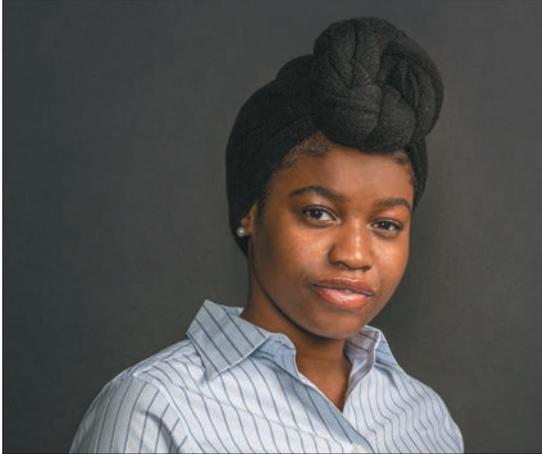
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**Smart Brain**

Engineering professor works with a team of scientists to outsmart traumatic brain injury

# Villanova Magazine

SUMMER 2019



**When  
Opportunity  
&  
Promise  
Meet**



The O'Toole Family  
Presidential Scholarship  
delivers on its promise



# The Future's Bright



Dear Friends,

Villanovans do not rest on their laurels—a truth that is certainly made evident by the stories in this magazine and by the constant activity in our community. Our students are in perpetual motion, filling their years here with classes, research projects, internships, service trips, clubs and teams. Our faculty are inspirations to their students and are making constant advances as leaders and innovators in their fields, while our staff work tirelessly to support and grow all facets of the University. Our alumni go into the world and identify opportunities to make their communities better.

Villanovans are restless. We are always striving to become what we are not yet. But what roots us is our common bond to our Augustinian Catholic values—values that inspire us to pursue academic excellence, learn, grow and ignite change, all in service to the greater good.

As we prepare to enter a new decade, we are looking ahead to the next great chapter in the University's storied

history. Throughout the fall, you'll be hearing more about our ambitious new strategic plan that will shape the next 10 years at Villanova. It's a plan you helped us write. Over the past two years, we've heard from more than 5,000 Villanovans—you've told us what's important to you, what you hold dear about the University, and where you see opportunities to grow.

We listened. And together, we will build upon our strengths, honoring the legacy of those who have come before us. We will improve the experience of those who are on campus now, and open our doors wide to those who will join our community in the future. I look forward to sharing the details of this plan with you in the months to come.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Peter M. Donohue,  
OSA, PhD, '75 CLAS  
President

PHOTO: BOWSTRING STUDIO; ILLUSTRATION: PETER JAMES FIELD

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**VICE PRESIDENT FOR UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING**  
Ann E. Diebold

**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Marian Butcher

**ASSISTANT EDITOR**  
Colleen Donnelly

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**  
Claire Curry  
Yasmine Iqbal  
Meg Maxwell  
Queen Muse  
Valerie Neff Newitt

**DESIGN**  
Landesberg Design

**COVER PHOTOS**  
Colin Lenton

**WEBSITE**  
villanova.edu

**TWITTER**  
@VillanovaU

**INSTAGRAM**  
villanovau

**MAIL**  
We'd like to hear from you. Please send correspondence and address changes to: [magazine@villanova.edu](mailto:magazine@villanova.edu) or Editor-in-Chief, Villanova Magazine, Constituent Publications, Griffin Hall, Villanova University, 800 Lancaster Avenue, Villanova, PA 19085.

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**Setting a High Bar**  
Freshman high-jumper makes Villanova history



# Nova-Worthy

## Ants Marching

Biology professor studies sticky quality of ants' feet to improve synthetic adhesives

Ants are persistent little creatures that can be hard to get rid of, but Alyssa Stark, PhD, assistant professor of Biology, actually seeks them out because she thinks there is a lot to be learned from their literal ability to stick it out.

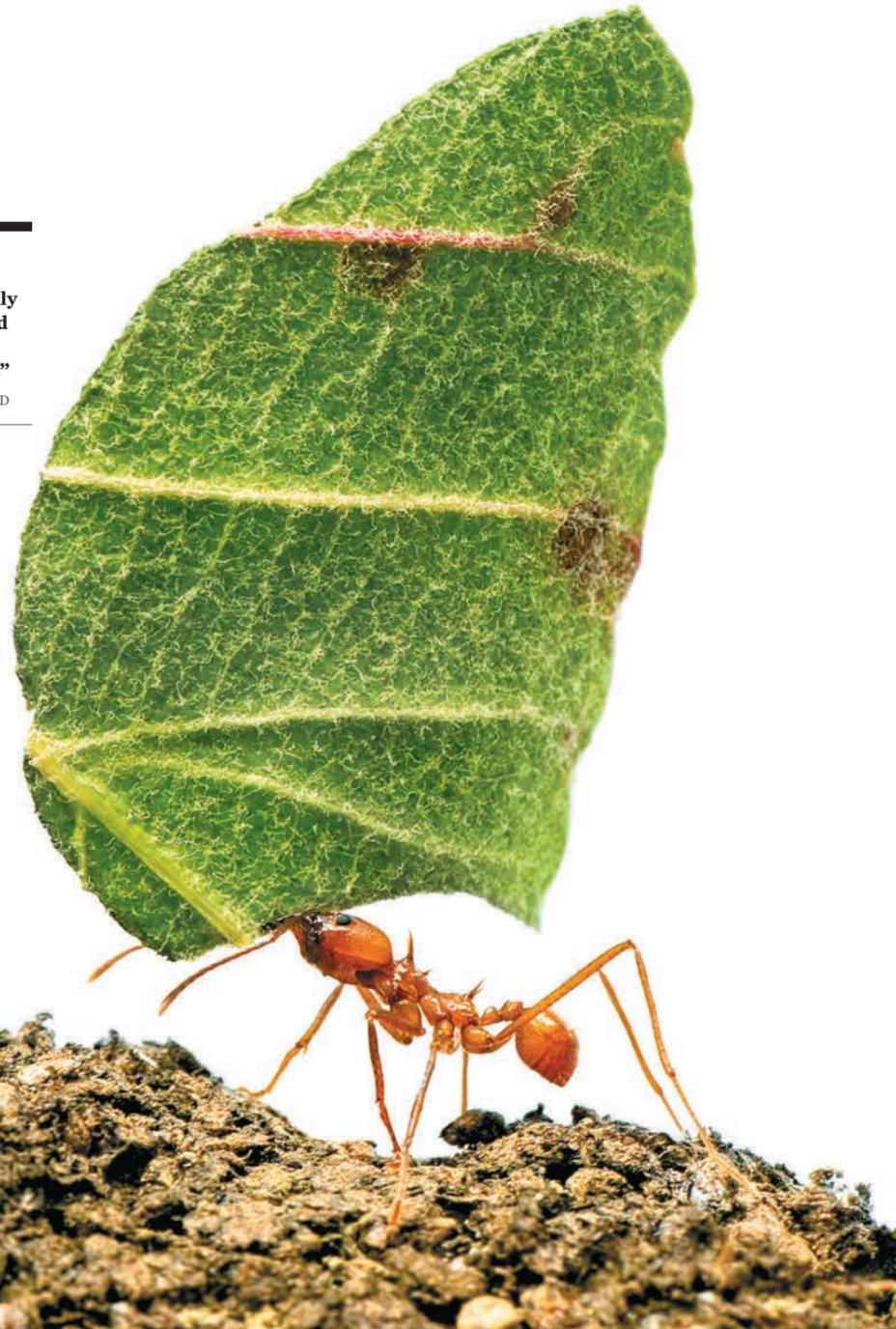
"I am interested in the application of bio-inspired design and biomimicry to real-world problems," Dr. Stark says. "I apply the insights I glean from the mechanistic, performance and behavioral attributes of natural adhesive systems to synthetic adhesive systems."

Dr. Stark and her research colleague, Stephen Yanoviak, PhD, from the University of Louisville, studied adhesive performance of one species of tropical canopy ant in Panama when sticking to glass, plastic and wood substrates under dry and wet conditions, replicating the highly variable conditions of the tropical canopy. What she learns from ants—as well as from other research into the adhesive qualities of geckos and sea urchins—has vast potential for the creation of sustainable forms of adhesives.

"I am excited by the application of the natural world to solve our own problems. ... On a small scale, a takeaway from my research may be if and when ants can stick to hot surfaces," she says. "On a broader scale, my research supplies knowledge for multiple fields to learn from and apply to improve the world around us."

“Nature is truly an unlimited supply of inspiration.”

Alyssa Stark, PhD



## A Vision for 2030

Villanova University's next strategic plan

Over the past two years, the University has asked Villanovans: "What is your vision for Villanova's future?" And thousands of alumni, faculty, staff, students, parents and friends have responded, providing invaluable feedback, ideas and perspectives. Their answers have shaped Villanova's next strategic plan, a visionary roadmap for the next decade of growth and innovation at the University.

Throughout the fall, University President the Rev. Peter M. Donohue, OSA, PhD, '75 CLAS will unveil the full details of the new plan, charting a course for the University's next 10 years. The strategic plan is the result of an inclusive, engaged planning process—led by University Provost Patrick G. Maggitti, PhD, a strategic management expert—that is a reflection of the strength of this community, united in a shared goal to build an even greater Villanova.

**“The strategic plan was shaped by the community, for the community. Guided by this vision, Villanova will continue its impressive upward trajectory throughout the next decade, rooted in its Augustinian Catholic values and restless in its desire to ignite change.”**

The Rev. Peter M. Donohue, OSA, PhD, '75 CLAS

5,000+ Villanovans participated in strategic planning process

1,000+ alumni & parents engaged during process

35+ sessions for planning and feedback

6 colleges aligned to move forward

**1** united vision for Villanova University's future



**Villanova Nurse Honored at the United Nations**

Sister Jackline Mayaka, FSJ, '15 FCN, '17 MSN, RN (left), a PhD student in the M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing, received the Inspiring Nurse Award from Nurses with Global Impact during the third annual International Nurses Day at the United Nations in May. Sister Jackline's work as a community health nurse and midwife in Kenya and her studies at Villanova have focused on bringing effective, professional nursing care to vulnerable populations, particularly HIV-positive mothers and their babies.

**MPA Students Top Global Competition**

A Villanova team of five Master of Public Administration students took first place in the global 2019 Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration Student Simulation Competition. Competing against nearly 600 students from 27 countries, Villanova's MPA students impressed the judges with their quick thinking and collaboration in proposing public policy solutions to complex issues during a simulated forced migration crisis.

>25%

of workers participate in the gig economy, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**Out of the Office**

VSB researchers find American gig workers have higher job satisfaction

A growing segment of the American workforce is finding its happy place: People who work for themselves as independent contractors and “gig” workers are notably more satisfied with their jobs than traditional 9-to-5 employees, according to a study by **Cheryl Carleton, PhD**, assistant professor of Economics, and **Mary Kelly, PhD**, associate chair of Economics, in the Villanova School of Business.

To compare job satisfaction among Americans working in alternative and traditional jobs, the researchers analyzed data of a representative sample of US workers collected by the University of Chicago.

“We found that people with more control over their schedules and who could choose which tasks they would take on are significantly more satisfied with their work than their peers who hold regular salaried jobs,” Dr. Kelly explains, adding that this is particularly true among women.

It is estimated that 15 to 20 percent of the entire labor force now works in alternative jobs. While Dr. Carleton and Dr. Kelly don't anticipate a gig economy takeover, more workers may choose self-employment because of the happiness factor.

“Employers seeking to hire and retain productive and happy workers will need to offer greater autonomy and flexibility so that workers can find their desired work-life balance,” Dr. Carleton says.

**Did You Know?**

Dr. Carleton and Dr. Kelly's research was the subject of a recent episode of VSB's *Inspiring Minds* podcast. More than two dozen faculty scholars from across the college have been interviewed on the podcast by VSB students, offering insights into their recent research projects. Search “Inspiring Minds Villanova Business” in iTunes to download episodes.



“We have stood on the shoulders of academic giants. ... Our hearts have caught on fire with passion.”

MARY KATHLEEN “MK” SMITH '19 CLAS

Mary Kathleen “MK” Smith '19 CLAS delivered the undergraduate student address at Commencement. As an Arab and Islamic Studies and Political Science major, she studied abroad in Qatar, Jordan and London, immersing herself in the study of the Arabic language and Middle East politics. Two days after graduating, Smith moved to Washington, D.C., where she is now the director of communication for the Arab Studies Institute.



**Boosting Student Startups**

Two Villanova undergrads, the creators of Savvy, billed as the world's first live mobile dating game, tied for third place in the inaugural Big East Startup Challenge, held during the 2019 Big East men's basketball tournament. Fernando Delgado '19 CLAS and Brendan Kenny '21 VSB joined teams of student entrepreneurs from the Big East conference's 10-member institutions in pitching their innovative business ventures to a judging panel, which included Kristy Wallace '99 CLAS, CEO of Ellevate Network.

▶ An artist's impression of the frozen surface of Barnard b, the super-earth orbiting Barnard's Star

# Across the Universe

Villanova astrophysicists gain international attention for stellar findings

Can life find a way on a cold planet? The answer—that nearby super-earth Barnard b has the potential to sustain life—attracted international attention for Villanova astrophysicists, earning them media coverage in more than 265 outlets.

**Edward Guinan, PhD, '64 CLAS** and **Scott Engle, PhD, '03 CLAS** had no idea it would garner so much fanfare when they put together a last-minute poster on the topic with Ignasi Ribas, PhD, director of the Institute of Space Studies of Catalonia, Spain, for the American Astronomy Society this past January.

"Barnard b receives only 2 percent light relative to the Earth and thus is cold. However, all hope for life on Barnard b may not be lost," the authors wrote. "As a super-earth, Barnard b could have a large hot iron core that could result in enhanced prolonged geothermal activity."

The collaborators announced their discovery of the super-earth orbiting Barnard's Star in the journal *Nature* in 2018. Just six light years away, Barnard b orbits the closest single star to our own sun and is more than three times the size of Earth. However, its estimated surface temperature is minus 238 degrees Fahrenheit, which likely means ice covers its rocky terrain.

"This looked like a cold, dead planet, but if it has geothermal heating like Earth, there's a chance that this planet could potentially harbor primitive life," Dr. Guinan says. Geothermal heating is heat generated by the Earth itself. Estimated to be about 10,800 degrees

Fahrenheit, the temperature of Earth's inner core heats almost 400 subglacial lakes in Antarctica. In an Astrobiology course Dr. Guinan teaches on extreme life, he and his students explore life in Lake Vostok, the largest of these lakes.

"If I didn't teach that course, I don't know that I would have thought about the possibility of geothermal heating on Barnard b," Dr. Guinan explains. "Even though it's cold and has a frozen surface, similar geothermal activity could create lakes underneath the ice, where you could have subterranean life like we do."

Dr. Guinan is currently working with Dr. Engle and Dr. Ribas on a follow-up paper that will be published later this year, with help from Villanova Undergraduate Research Fellows **Zachary Ferguson '20 CLAS** and **Kasey Purcell '20 CLAS**.

**DEVELOPING A NEW CAMERA FOR NASA**

Villanovans are reaching for the stars—and taking pictures of them. Physics professor **David Chuss, PhD, '95 CLAS**, who previously worked as an astrophysicist with the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center for 11 years, and undergraduate collaborator **Joseph Michail '19 CLAS** helped develop a camera for NASA's Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA).

They worked with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory team to develop the High-resolution Airborne Wideband Camera-plus (HAWC+), which unveils the magnetic fields that can affect star

“... This planet could potentially harbor primitive life.”  
Edward Guinan, PhD



formation. The Villanova team, which also includes **Javad Siah, PhD**, assistant professor of Physics, and postdoctoral researcher **Jordan Guerra, PhD**, has led the analysis of some of the first results from HAWC+.

**FIRST GLIMPSE OF BLACK HOLE**

Imagine a telescope the size of Earth—that's essentially what it took to piece together the very first picture of a black hole. "This is an extraordinary scientific feat accomplished by a team of more than 200 researchers," says the Event Horizon Telescope project director Sheperd S. Doeleman of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

Two of those researchers, Villanova Physics assistant professor **Joey Neilsen, PhD**, and Physics major **Jadyn Anczarski '20 CLAS**, contributed their analysis of X-ray observations on behalf of the EHT's Multiwavelength Working Group. "X-ray observations help connect the dots between high-energy emission and the behavior of matter near the event horizon," Dr. Neilsen says. "It's incredible to be a part of this project."

ILLUSTRATION: ESO/M. KORNMESSER

COMMENCEMENT

# 2019

## Navigating the Road Trip of Life

More than 2,500 graduates and 15,000 guests celebrated two days of pomp and circumstance in May for the Class of 2019 Commencement. New this year was a separate Graduate Commencement ceremony to celebrate the unique Villanova experiences and accomplishments of those earning graduate and doctoral degrees, in addition to the traditional ceremonies for undergraduate and Law students.

During the undergraduate Commencement ceremony, Life Is Good co-founder and honorary degree recipient **Bert Jacobs '87 CLAS** addressed the Class of 2019, punctuated by a few tosses of signed frisbees into the eager audience seated on the Villanova Stadium field.

After returning home to Boston from a long and laborious road trip 25 years ago, Jacobs and his brother, John, founded their positive lifestyle brand, which is now worth \$100 million and donates at least 10 percent of its annual net profits to the Life is Good Kids Foundation. Fittingly, in his speech, the Life Is Good “Chief Executive Optimist” shared tips for the road trip of life.



### Three tips from Life Is Good Chief Executive Optimist:

#### 1 Turn on the Lights

“Ralph Waldo Emerson said, ‘To the illuminated mind, the whole world burns and sparkles with light.’ When you wake up in the morning ... make the decision to be an optimist. Focus on the good things in your life and the good things around you.”

#### 2 Trust Your Navigation System

“Only you can choose what your value system is. ... Work for an organization that is bettering the world. Find your way with your navigation system—know what it is, know who you are, and act like it.”

#### 3 Enjoy the Ride

“When we are young, everyone tells us we need more—more stuff, more money, more education, more clothes, more and more and more. But as we get older, we all come to realize that the only thing we need more of is time: time to do the things you love, and time to be with the people you love. ... Protect your time with your life because, ladies and gentlemen, it is your life.”



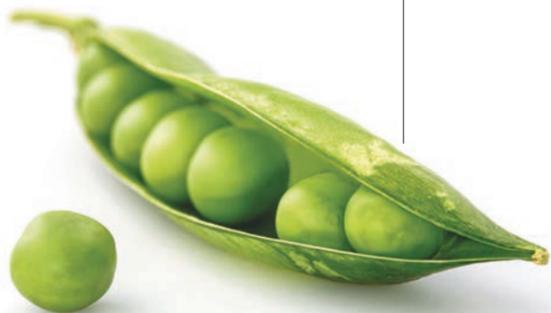
PHOTOS: JOHN SHETRON AND PAUL CRANE

**Making Cultural Connections**

Through a partnership between the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and the six clinics in the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law, undergraduate students are gaining valuable, hands-on experience with their Spanish language skills and cultural competencies. As Community Interpreter interns, the students act as translators and interpreters, assisting Villanova student lawyers in their interactions with clients in the Hispanic community.

**On Mendel and GMOs**

Villanova hosted its third biannual, multidisciplinary Mendel Symposium in March, assembling international experts in food security, genetic engineering and plant diversity to explore connections between 19th-century Augustinian Friar Gregor Mendel's plant hybridization research and today's food supply challenges. Symposium attendees were called to consider how these issues raise philosophical, ethical, security and economic questions related to stewardship of the Earth's resources.



▶ Wanda Edmonson '19 CPS received this year's Grit Award from the College of Professional Studies.



PHOTO: JIM MCWILLIAMS

**True Grit**

What motivated this College of Professional Studies grad and Grit Award winner to persevere

**“**You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it.”

**Wanda Edmonson '19 CPS** thought of this quote from Maya Angelou as a mantra throughout her time earning a degree in Villanova's College of Professional Studies. “It helped me focus on remaining persistent and never giving up in spite of any obstacles, challenging classes or assignments,” Edmonson says.

It didn't go unnoticed. At the fourth annual CPS Awards Dinner, **Dean Christine Kelleher Palus, PhD**, presented Edmonson with the Grit Award—an honor that celebrates a student who has demonstrated exceptional passion, courage, persistence, commitment and strength of character during their academic studies at Villanova.

“Wanda is a passionate, energetic woman who will not let anything get in the way of accomplishing her goals,” Dean Palus said in her remarks. “Her drive and ambition never diminished, but have only strengthened over the years, as she delved deeper and deeper into her studies.”

A network coordinator at Verizon, Edmonson works on 4G and 5G networks, collaborating with engineers and a number of other departments to keep cell towers up and running. It's a very technical role and, for years, she wanted to go back to school to get a technical degree.

“When I was finally ready,” Edmonson says, “I set a goal for myself and once I did, it was full speed ahead. I knew I had to rise to the occasion and do it.” Her goal was to complete a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies in Media and Technology in five years—and she did, adding a minor in Leadership Studies along the way. “There was no taking breaks for me. I had to be 100 percent committed, loyal to my goals and tough,” Edmonson says.

When she enrolled at Villanova, she still had two children at home. “They're a little older now and have graduated, but they got to witness me studying and doing papers and assignments,” she says. “It was an avenue for me to talk to them about education, to set a good example.”



**I set a goal for myself and once I did, it was full speed ahead.”**

Wanda Edmonson '19 CPS



**Combating an Epidemic**

Educating the next generation of nurses

**D**rug overdose is now the leading cause of accidental death in the United States—the National Institute on Drug Abuse estimates that more than 130 Americans die every day from opioid overdoses. While drug-related deaths have increased dramatically in all age groups, the greatest percentage increase has been among adults ages 55 to 64, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The epic proportion of the opioid problem in the US puts every health care provider on the front line. And yet, most nursing and medical students have had only limited education on substance use disorder.

“Given that this is such an epidemic in health care and at the forefront of patient care, I realized that more time was needed in the curriculum to address these issues,” says **Amy McKeever '08 PhD, RN, CRNP, WHNP-BC**, an associate professor in the M. Louise Fitzpatrick College of Nursing and a women's health nurse practitioner in obstetrics and gynecology.

That's why she introduced a new Villanova Nursing elective in spring 2018: “The Opioid Crisis in America.” The weekly two-hour seminar prepares senior students to enter the health care system with a better understanding of substance use disorder and the opioid crisis, and provides them with the skill sets and a toolkit to screen, assess and refer patients to the appropriate level of care.

Dr. McKeever brings in a number of guest lecturers to inform the conversation, including a nurse who works in recovery at a crisis center and addresses the screening assessment and the detox process; a physician who has treated patients at the women's prison at Rikers Island in New York; first responders; a military police officer; a certified addiction counselor; and family members who have lived through a sibling's or child's addiction.

One guest speaker is a parent who talks about their child's trajectory from the onset of opioid abuse and full addiction, up to the time of death. “It's a very informative and empowering discussion for everyone,” Dr. McKeever says.

The course also includes some important overlap from theory into clinical practice. Students participating in certain clinical groups during their health promotion or community health experience visit sites such as recovery centers, where they teach health promotion. In these rotations, students work with health care staff to develop education classes or programs on topics related to what patients need to do now that they're in recovery.

“My hope is that when they encounter individuals with substance use disorder, that they have a better understanding and are better equipped to communicate and support these individuals and their families,” Dr. McKeever says. “I developed this seminar because I want my students to be well-equipped with the understanding of the science of addiction as a disease.”

**Did You Know?**

Villanova's College of Professional Studies has offered an Alcohol and Drug Counseling certification program since 2005. In 2018–19, 26 students successfully completed the Recovery Specialist and Alcohol and Drug Counselor certificate programs.

ILLUSTRATION: CHRIS GASH

# On the Mark



**F**or the second year in a row, Villanova led all Division I schools in the nation with the highest percentage of teams earning NCAA Public Recognition Awards for academic achievement.

A total of 17 teams—77 percent of Villanova’s teams—received multiyear Academic Progress Rate scores that ranked in the top 10 percent of their sports nationwide. APR measures student-athlete performance in the classroom by assigning points each semester for academic standing and retention.

Student-athletes also achieved a new Villanova Athletics record with their spring semester GPA of 3.346. Spring marked the 32nd straight semester in which the overall GPA was above 3.0, and the ninth consecutive semester with a 3.2 or higher.

## Honoring Outstanding Seniors

Villanova Athletics recognized two Cross Country and Track and Field athletes as its Student-Athletes of the Year.

Nicole Hutchinson, who has been named an All-American six times, earned eight Big East titles and participated in seven winning relays at the Penn Relays, graduated with an Accounting degree and accepted a position as an audit associate with PWC Vancouver.

Casey Comber, who completed his Marketing and Business Analytics major in May and will return as a graduate student in the MS in Analytics program this fall, is a three-time All-American and nine-time Big East champion.

## Leaps and Bounds

Villanova’s Track and Field athletes shone brightly again on the conference and national stages this past spring, bringing home individual and team titles.

The Women’s Track and Field team dominated the Big East championships, winning overall as a team, as well as in two relay races and eight events to complete its second straight “triple crown”—Big East championships in cross country, indoor and outdoor events over the course of the academic year. The Men’s team claimed its own Big East trophy, winning five individual events and one relay.

Several student-athletes also advanced to NCAA championships: Sanaa Barnes in the high jump (see pages 42–43), Caroline Alcorta in the 10000 and 5000 meters, and Casey Comber in the 1500 meters.

## Hitting It Out of the Park

At the plate, on the mound and in the field, a Villanova Softball player and a Villanova Baseball player had banner seasons this past spring.

Sophomore Paige Rauch, a pitcher and infielder, broke Villanova’s single season home run record and was unanimously voted the Big East Player of the Year, the first player in program history to earn the honor. She was also a unanimous selection to the All-Big East First Team.

Freshman Nick Lorusso, a pitcher and third baseman, was named the Big East Freshman of the Year, the first time in 25 years that a Villanova player has won a major postseason Big East award.



**Vatican Prize for Economist and Theologian**

Calling it “a fascinating dialogue between the world of economics and the world of faith,” the Vatican’s Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice Foundation bestowed its “Economy and Society” International Prize on the book *Aquinas and the Market: Toward a Humane Economy*, written by Mary Hirschfeld, PhD, associate professor of Economics and Theology. The prize is given every two years to work that upholds the Catholic Church’s social doctrine.

**Campus Wins Award for Beauty**

Villanova’s expert grounds maintenance crews, responsible for keeping campus spaces in tiptop, lush green shape, have been recognized with the highest honor—a Grand Award—in the Urban University Grounds category from the Professional Grounds Management Society. “We strive to make every first impression a great one and make Villanova University a little more beautiful every day,” says Jared Rudy, superintendent of Grounds.



**An Inside Perspective**

Why a recent JD/MBA alum created a reading group for inmates and Villanova Law students

Spending time inside a correctional facility as an undergrad led **Anna Boyd '16 CLAS, '19 JD/MBA** to Villanova Law. Her experience as a volunteer literacy and GED tutor in the Villanova Graterford Prison Program (now the Villanova Program at SCI Phoenix) sparked a passion for criminal justice reform.

Once enrolled in the Charles Widger School of Law, Boyd wanted to ensure her classmates had the same opportunity. “How can you be a prosecutor or public defender and never set foot in prison prior to practice?” she says.

With support from the Office of Service Learning and Villanova Law, Boyd and a group of her classmates began leading reading groups for inmates once a week at the State Correctional Institution at Chester, an all-male, medium-security prison outside of Philadelphia. The program is the first of its kind at Villanova Law.

The inmates studied student-selected readings on the criminal justice system, and about 10 to 15 men came each week prepared to participate in active and vigorous dialogue. “These men are incredibly informed,” Boyd says. “Many of them have been incarcerated for a decade or more, and a lot of their legal education comes from advocating for themselves.”

Villanova’s student-run Criminal Law Society has plans for this academic year to continue working with the SCI Chester reading group.

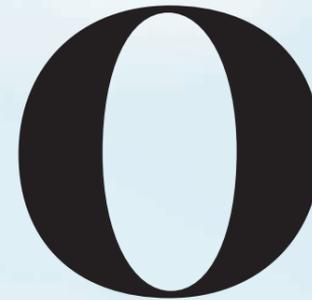
**Did You Know?**

Established in 1972, the Villanova Program at SCI Phoenix—formerly the Graterford Program—is one of the oldest continuously running degree-granting prison education programs in the US.

PHOTO: JENNA KOLANO '21 CLAS

**Take It Outside**

The Villanova Outdoors Club enables students to unplug and connect in the great outdoors



On most Saturdays and Sundays during the school year, members of the Villanova Outdoors Club have piled into a University van by 7:30 a.m., their backpacks stocked with water, snacks, extra layers and cameras. The club organizes one to four trips almost every weekend, with activities like hiking, kayaking and camping in the fall and spring, and skiing, skating and snow hiking during the winter. This past year, they organized a total of 44 trips.

Their email list reaches 2,000-plus interested students each week. Participants can be experienced mountaineers or novice hikers, in any class, with any major. The only requirement is a desire to explore the natural world (within 300 miles of campus).

“Our mission is basically to get people outside,” says club President **Lauren Holmes '20 CLAS**. “People work so hard during the week that they need a chance to relax. We always say that with each mile we cover on a hike, a little more stress melts away.”

The VOC executive board—a group of about 24 students—is always on the lookout for new trip ideas. They’ve organized paintball battles, night hikes and rock climbing. This past year, they added a bike tour through Philadelphia and an archery outing in Marsh Creek State Park. At least one member of the executive board goes on each trip to serve as a guide and a host of sorts, encouraging conversation among old and new members.

For club Vice President **Jenna Kolano '21 CLAS**, the sense of community she has found in VOC is its biggest asset: “Something about being in nature often brings out a lot of honest conversation, whether we are on the trails joking around, bonding over similar struggles or celebrations, or having more in-depth discussions.”



## Making a Residence Hall a Home

There's always a lot of anticipation surrounding move-in day. In August, the excitement reached a new level as Villanova was able to welcome more of its students to live on campus than ever before. About 20 percent of the University's 5,400 resident students are the first-ever residents of Arch Hall, Trinity Hall, Canon Hall, Chapter Hall, Cupola Hall and Friar Hall, the six buildings that make up the newly opened Commons residence complex.

## The Commons by the Numbers



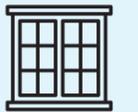
6

buildings



425,000

square feet



2,471

windows



7

rain gardens



1,135

beds



**When  
Opportunity  
&  
Promise  
Meet**

The O'Toole Family  
Presidential Scholarship  
delivers on its promise

BY COLLEEN DONNELLY

**“We couldn’t be prouder to have you be the first O’Toole Scholars to graduate from Villanova. Hopefully you’re the first of 100 to come through this program.”**

Terry O’Toole ’80 VSB



PHOTO: JIM McWILLIAMS

▲ Polly and Terry O’Toole VSB ’80 catch up with O’Toole Scholar graduate Alex Alberti ’19 COE and present him with a personal gift on graduation day.

**A**mid the camera flashes, hugs and cheers on Commencement day, Polly and Terry O’Toole VSB ’80 beamed with pride at their two graduates. Alex Alberti ’19 COE and Mafatta Janeh ’19 CLAS aren’t their children, but they are undoubtedly part of the O’Toole legacy at Villanova.

In 2013, the couple committed to a \$10 million gift to establish the endowed O’Toole Family Presidential Scholarship—Alex and Mafatta were the first recipients. “This day is a dream come true for us. We couldn’t be prouder to have you be the first O’Toole Scholars to graduate from Villanova,” Terry O’Toole told the graduates as they shared brunch together. “Hopefully you’re the first of 100 to come through this program.”

This unique promise scholarship model—the first of its kind at

Villanova—gives two high-potential, high-achieving high school sophomores from the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., the opportunity to attend Villanova with all expenses paid for four years.

“When opportunity and promise meet, a spark is created,” explains J. Leon Washington, Villanova’s dean of Enrollment Management. “The vision was to look for young persons who had promise but who may not have encountered this type of opportunity.” That vision belonged to Washington’s predecessor, the late Stephen Merritt ’78 CLAS, who came up with the idea when the O’Tooles approached him with their desire to do something different and distinctive.

“Unfortunately Mr. Merritt passed away our freshman year, so he didn’t get to see it come to fruition,” Alex says. “But he helped get it started, which I am really thankful for because a scholarship like this is immeasurable. This

moment has been seven years in the making, and it feels like only yesterday I was interviewing for it.”

**IDENTIFYING THE SPARK**

Just two weeks after Alex and Mafatta became the first O’Toole Scholar alumni, six finalists began the same interview process to follow in their footsteps.

The O’Tooles aren’t involved in the actual selection of the students who receive the scholarship—and that’s the way they designed it. “It’s a completely University-run program,” Polly O’Toole says. “A selection committee interviews the students, and they make the hard choices about who will receive the scholarships.”

With so many factors and promising candidates to consider, Villanova established the multidisciplinary committee to represent several academic and co-curricular departments critical in supporting the recipients throughout their transition to and arrival at Villanova:

- University Admission: Director Michael Gaynor
- University Career Center: Executive Director Kevin Grubb, assistant vice provost of Professional Development

- Center for Access, Success and Achievement: Nicole Davis, associate director of Retention and Outreach Counseling
- Diversity and Inclusion: Associate Vice Provost Teresa Nance, PhD, chief diversity officer
- Enrollment Management: Dean Leon Washington and Vice Dean Cathy Connor
- Honors Program: Thomas Smith, PhD, Anne Quinn Welsh Director

“Besides the generosity of the O’Tooles, I think the team effort and composition of our selection committee is one of the major keys to the success of the scholarship,” Connor says. “We’re making sure the scholars are supported from start to finish: academically, economically, emotionally and socially.”

This year, the committee received 19 nomination letters from 11 high schools in the Archdiocese of Newark—a record high in the seven years they’ve been doing this. They met in early May to narrow the pool down to fewer than 10 applicants, looking at the principal’s nomination letter, PSAT scores, report cards, rigorous courses, extracurriculars and the personal essays each applicant has to write.

**By the Numbers**

**\$10 million**  
endowed scholarship gift

**7 multidisciplinary members**  
serve on the O’Toole Selection Committee

**4 high school students**  
from the Archdiocese of Newark selected as scholarship recipients

**7 O’Toole Scholars**  
currently enrolled at Villanova

**2 alumni**  
O’Toole Scholars graduated

## In Their Words



**Mafatta Janeh '19 CLAS**  
Major: Biology

"I want to combine my love for science with my desire to help underserved communities. The opportunity that was given to me doesn't happen to the average person, and so to be able to use what I was given and complete what the O'Tooles wanted is so valuable to me."



**Alexander Alberti '19 COE**  
Major: Civil Engineering

"In high school, I'd pass by low-income housing that looked like container boxes stacked on top of each other. I felt like it wasn't fair—everyone should have the decency of growing up in a home they can be proud to live in. That gave me the idea to be an engineer—I'd like to design low-income housing that does that."



**Anthony Freay '20 CLAS**  
Majors: Computer Science and Psychology

"As both a first-generation American and college student, my mother's comfortability in Villanova was a huge factor in my decision to attend. Her sacrifices and support have gotten me where I am today and come spring 2020, I will be the first in my family to graduate—the culmination of her American Dream."



**Erika Llivicota-Guaman '20 VSB**  
Majors: Accounting and Finance

"I'm the first one in my family to go to college. Simply having the opportunity to go to college is something I wouldn't have had in Ecuador where I was born—I feel blessed to have this opportunity that many people don't have."



**Keith Mathews '21 CLAS**  
Major: History

"Even though Villanova is fairly big in terms of enrollment, you don't feel like a statistic, you feel like a person, which is a really big deal for me. My professors are really approachable, and I know it's always an option to talk with them."



**Julia Jureidini '22 VSB**  
Major: Accounting

"I always want to be that person—for other O'Toole Scholars—who's approachable, who's visible, who's available, who can show them the way."



**Sheydlene Moise '22 CLAS**  
Major: Communication

"I would love to give back in the future. I would really love to go back to my high school in my hometown and provide them with the kind of opportunity that I have because a lot of them have the capability but they just don't have somebody to believe in them."

In addition to measurable factors like grades and test scores, nuanced non-cognitive skills like leadership, grit, critical thinking and perniciousness weigh heavily in their decision. "These students bring huge advantages," Dr. Smith says. "They bring a different perspective in our classes—a different set of questions, a different set of experiences, a different set of challenges they've overcome in their lives, and everyone in the class learns from that."

### JUST THE BEGINNING

The committee gets an even better sense of each finalist when they meet for an intensive full-day interview in Newark at the Archdiocese headquarters. While the students are interviewing, Grubb and Connor talk to the parents about Villanova and the college process in general.

"For these parents to get their students to a Catholic high school in the Archdiocese, they've already made tremendous commitments, and you just see that love for their kids when they're asking questions," Connor says.

There's one question she gets every year: "Someone will say, 'Explain this again—these people are really willing to pay for two students to go to Villanova full time for four years?'" Connor says. "It's hard to comprehend."

The committee reconvenes on campus to deliberate and select the next two scholars from that group. "It's such a diverse, broad committee that we have a good feel for whether a particular individual is likely to flourish on our campus," Washington says. "These young women and men have developed excellent critical-thinking skills from their life experiences. And you get that sense of, 'Oh boy, there's a leader here in the making.'"

At many schools, that would be the end of the process, but at Villanova, it's just the beginning. With decades of experience in admissions, Merritt was convinced that opportunity alone doesn't guarantee success—it needs to come with the right support.

Upon selection of the newest scholars, Villanova works with each of their respective high schools and meets with the students two to three times a *(continued on page 26)*



## Paying It Forward

**O**n his first day at Villanova's School of Business, Terry O'Toole '80 VSB received an invitation from Dean Al Clay to step into his office.

The intimidating request came with reassuring words. "He said, 'You're one of our first Presidential Scholars in the business school, and we want to make sure we do this thing right,'" O'Toole recalls.

A former accountant with a formal exterior, Dean Clay proved to be a supportive mentor who watched out for O'Toole over the next four years. After graduation, O'Toole received another invite to the dean's office—this time, he was surprised to receive a card with a personal check from Dean Clay. "It was his graduation gift to me," O'Toole says. "He was proud of me, and he really cared."

O'Toole went on to a successful Wall Street career at Goldman Sachs and several private investment firms before founding his own, Macanta. Dean Clay's gesture and his gratitude for the

full scholarship he received stuck with him. Over the years, O'Toole has given back to Villanova in just about every conceivable way. As he finished his tenure as chairman of the University's Board of Trustees and took on the role of co-chair of Villanova's capital campaign in 2012, he wanted to do something different and distinctive.

Residents of Short Hills, N.J., just 12 miles outside of Newark, O'Toole and his wife, Polly, have been very involved for years with the Scholarship Fund for Inner-City Children, an organization that raises money and provides assistance to students attending school in the Archdiocese of Newark from first grade to high school. "With Terry's love for Villanova and desire to give back, we thought creating an endowment scholarship tied to the SFIC program would be a great thing," Polly O'Toole says.

The late Stephen Merritt '78 CLAS, who was Villanova's dean of Enrollment Management at the time, came up

with the idea of a promise scholarship that would identify academically high-achieving SFIC students with leadership ability early in their high school careers and support them in their transition to Villanova. That promise came to fruition this past May, with the first two O'Toole Family Presidential Scholar graduates to complete the program. With 11 more students following in their footsteps, the future looks promising, too.

"One of my hopes for the program would be that we inspire other alumni to create similar programs in other cities—my dream would be to have two O'Toole Scholars from the Archdiocese in Newark, and then someone else endows scholars from Boston and Chicago and Philadelphia and so on," O'Toole says. "The most fulfilling gifts of all are the endowment gifts that allow promising students who otherwise couldn't afford it to get an education. That's what it's all about."

## From Day One to Graduation Day

The transition from high school to college can be a challenging one, especially making a move to Villanova from Newark, N.J., where a quarter of families live below the poverty line. “This scholarship isn’t just paying the bills; it’s more than that,” says Teresa Nance, Ph.D., associate vice provost for Diversity and Inclusion and chief diversity officer at Villanova. “We’re taking care of the whole student, thinking both on the macro level and also on the personal level.”

At the deepest layer of that personal level is Nicole Davis, associate director of Retention and Outreach Counseling in the Center for Access, Success and Achievement. She is part of the unique support system that begins for the O’Toole Scholars as soon as they’re selected in their sophomore year of high school.

“Nicole takes mentorship to a different level. It’s hard to put everything she does into words because it’s all-encompassing,” says Polly O’Toole. Davis goes to Newark twice a year to meet with each student throughout their junior and senior years, ensuring that they have the right courses they’ll need to succeed at Villanova, identifying summer programs and prep courses that may ease the transition, and answering the questions they might be hesitant to ask.

“Having a history with them and knowing them from high school is so key in building a relationship with them,” Davis says. “Before they even walk in the door, they know, ‘I have someone I can reach out to at any time.’”

That relationship continues to evolve when they arrive at Villanova, where Davis meets with them twice a month. “I’ve known Miss Davis since I was 15. We talk about everything. How’s school going? How are you? How’s your stress level?” says Shedyline Moise ’22 CLAS. “She’s like my mother on campus.”

Davis has helped students come out of their shell, transition through homesickness, join new clubs, discover their interests. “I ask them, ‘What do you love? What are you passionate about?’” she says. “I encourage them to take advantage of the full experience a scholarship like this offers.”

▼ Nicole Davis, associate director of Retention and Outreach Counseling in the Center for Access, Success and Achievement, with the first two O’Toole Scholar alumni, Alex Alberti ’19 COE and Mafatta Janeh ’19 CLAS.



PHOTO: JIM McWILLIAMS

## “What makes this scholarship unique is that you build a relationship with the donors as well as all the people involved in the scholarship selection.”

Erika Llivicota-Guaman ’20 VSB

year to get them thinking early about what they need to do to prepare for college and what they need to do to stay on track.

“What makes this scholarship unique is that you build a relationship with the donors as well as all the people involved in the scholarship, and they’re always there whenever you need them,” says Erika Llivicota-Guaman ’20 VSB, who’s entering her senior year at Villanova.

Upon graduation from high school, the students are accepted into Villanova University as Presidential Scholars. This year, for the first time, the O’Toole Presidential Scholarship pipeline is full—from four high school students preparing for their future at the University, to seven current Villanova students and now two alumni who have completed the program.

“The goal is for this program to exist long after we’re gone and hopefully just keep self-generating and growing and building this family of O’Toole Scholars,” Terry O’Toole says. “It would be great in 15 years to look back and see that we have 30 or 40 students who have gone through the program and the older ones are helping to mentor the younger ones, shaping future generations of scholars at Villanova.” ■

PHOTOS: PAUL CRANE



▲ Finishing up her freshman year at Villanova, O’Toole Scholar Julia Jureidini ’22 VSB was excited to welcome the newest scholarship recipients to campus.



◀ In April, scholarship recipients Bryan Barahona and Jonathan Marte and their families spent the day on Villanova’s campus for the annual O’Toole Scholar luncheon.



## A Community of Scholars

Just as the scholarship recipients begin building a relationship with Villanova as soon as they’re selected, they also become a part of the O’Toole Scholar community right away. Almost immediately, they begin developing connections with the O’Toole Selection Committee, the other O’Toole Scholars and donors Polly and Terry O’Toole ’80 VSB.

“One of the great things about working in a program like this is you get to meet these students in high school. You get to see their potential and watch it unfold,” says Thomas Smith, PhD, Anne Quinn Welsh Director of the Honors Program.

In their junior year of high school, the scholarship recipients come to Villanova’s campus in the spring with their families for a luncheon with the current O’Toole Scholars, members of the selection committee, Provost Patrick G. Maggitti, PhD, and University President the Rev. Peter M. Donohue, OSA, PhD, ’75 CLAS. They tour the campus, talk about expectations and explore the resources that will be available to them.

“When I was at the luncheon this year meeting the next generation of O’Toole Scholars, I couldn’t believe it’s only been two years since I was sitting on the other side of the table,” says Julia Jureidini ’22 VSB. “I was so excited to help out with their tour of campus and talk about my experience with Villanova because that luncheon really stood out to me as a high school student—it was just one of those amazing moments where I realized, ‘Wow, this is really happening, and it’s such an honor to be here.’”

In addition to this annual luncheon, the O’Tooles catch up and chat with the scholars at events throughout the year, including Villanova’s Endowed Scholar Dinner and the Scholarship Fund for Inner-City Children Annual Gala at the Archdiocese Center in Newark.

“You’re getting to know the people who are benefiting from your gift, and, as a donor, that’s a tremendous thing,” Terry O’Toole says. “It doesn’t really get any better than that.”

# A Driving Force

Examining Villanova's most recent Economic and Social Impact report

BY MARIAN BUTCHER

Villanova recently engaged leading economic consulting firm Econsult Solutions Inc. to conduct an independent analysis of the University's economic and social impact. The resulting report clearly demonstrates the University's significant contributions to and impact on Radnor Township, Delaware County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Villanova's statewide economic impact is nearly \$900 million, which supports 6,120 jobs in the state with more than \$460 million in annual earnings. This impact comes from the University's ongoing operations, including the purchase of goods and services and the employment of more than 2,700 faculty and staff; its capital investments, which have averaged \$120 million annually over the past five years; and the ancillary spending of students and visitors on food, lodging, shopping and entertainment locally and regionally.

In Delaware County, Villanova's impact totals \$326 million, and in Radnor Township, home to the University for its entire 177-year history, the University's impact is \$62 million. Villanova is the township's largest employer and one of its most significant economic engines, paying taxes and fees of approximately \$11 million to the township over the past six years.

"Villanova's operations, along with spending by students, their parents, alumni and visitors, has a tremendous positive financial impact on the community," says Executive Vice President Kenneth G. Valosky '82 VSB.

Villanova's connections to the local business community are especially strong. The University is a driving force for Main Line businesses and has partnered with business and civic associations for programs like Villanova Dines Out

Restaurant Week, which encouraged students and neighbors to dine out locally, and the inaugural Main Line Small Business Panel and Networking Event for small-business owners, which Villanova co-hosted.

"We hear time and time again from business owners that proximity to the Villanova is an asset to them and the community as a whole," says Chris Todd, owner of Christopher's restaurant in Wayne and president of the Wayne Business Association.

The University's mission, rooted in its Augustinian Catholic values, calls students, faculty, staff and alumni to ignite change around the world, and that commitment begins close to home. Each year, for example, more than 5,000 Villanova volunteers give back at more than 100 sites throughout Greater Philadelphia, including more than 30 around the Main Line, during the St. Thomas of Villanova Day of Service.

"We at Villanova believe strongly in being a good neighbor—lending a hand to meet needs in the community, providing access to our academic and recreation facilities, and inviting our neighbors to athletic, arts and cultural events," says Chris Kovolski '96 CLAS, assistant vice president for Government Relations and External Affairs. "That outreach is a critical part of our mission." ■

“

**Villanova has a tremendous positive financial impact on the community.”**

Executive Vice President  
Kenneth G. Valosky  
'82 VSB

Villanova's statewide \$877 million economic impact supports

**6,120 jobs**  
with \$461 million in annual earnings



PHOTO: BOWSTRING STUDIO

	 PENNSYLVANIA	 DELAWARE COUNTY	 RADNOR TOWNSHIP
Total	\$887 million	\$326 million	\$62 million
Impact of Annual University Operations	\$656 million	\$232 million	\$28 million
Impact of Capital Investments	\$130 million	\$31 million	\$6 million
Impact of Ancillary Student & Visitor Spending	\$101 million	\$63 million	\$28 million

SOURCE: ECONSULT SOLUTIONS INC.

# America's Real Sister Act

Villanova History professor uncovers the rich history and untold stories of black nuns in the American Catholic Church

BY QUEEN MUSE



◀ Sister Cora Marie Billings '67 CLAS entered the Religious Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Merion, Pa., on Aug. 22, 1956.

PHOTO: SISTER CORA MARIE BILLINGS, RSM

As a graduate student at Rutgers University, Shannen Dee Williams came across an image of four black nuns in a 1968 *Pittsburgh Courier* article announcing the formation of the National Black Sisters' Conference in Pittsburgh. She was in search of a topic for a short seminar paper. What she found was a story that sparked an excitement and curiosity that would drive the focus of her research for years to come.

"After that moment, I knew I wanted to know as much as possible about this organization and the women who founded it," says Dr. Williams, who now holds the Albert R. Lepage Endowed Assistant Professorship in History at Villanova.

That was 2007. Before then, the only black nun Dr. Williams had ever seen was Whoopi Goldberg's Sister Mary Clarence in the *Sister Act* movie franchise. "I had so many questions," she says. "Of course I wondered, 'How was it possible that I, a cradle Catholic, the daughter of the first black woman to graduate from the University of Notre Dame, had no idea that black nuns existed?'"

Despite the invisibility of black sisters in the annals of Catholic history, Dr. Williams discovered a rich tradition of black women participating in religious leadership as early as the first century.

"The story of the real 'Sister Act' (in the United States) is how generations of African American women and girls fought against racial segregation and exclusion to answer God's call in their lives and minister as women religious, as sisters," she says.

#### A PIONEER IN PHILADELPHIA'S RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

At Commencement this past May, Dr. Williams proudly introduced one of these trailblazing African American women religious to receive an honorary doctoral degree from Villanova.

"Father President, for her leadership in breaking down racial barriers in our Church and in honor of all of the

lives that she has touched and inspired over the years as a pioneering sister, teacher, campus minister, pastoral coordinator and all-around freedom fighter, it is with tremendous joy and the greatest honor that I present to you for the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, Honoris Causa, Sister Cora Marie Billings '67 CLAS."

It was a full-circle moment for Dr. Williams—Sister Cora Marie was one of the sisters who established the National Black Sisters' Conference in 1968 and inspired her research for the past 12 years. Sister Cora Marie was one of several Sisters of Mercy at that conference.

In 1956, Sister Cora Marie had desegregated the Mercy Community in Merion, Pa., and begun blazing a path of being the "first" or the "only" in many settings over her six-decade career as a Catholic nun. She is one of many pioneering African American women religious Villanova counts among its alumnae.

Early in the 20th century, new state laws began requiring parochial school educators to obtain formal certifications and college degrees to teach. This presented an additional challenge for the nation's black teaching sisterhoods, which had been established in response to the exclusionary admissions policies of other religious orders. Most Catholic institutions of higher education at the time did not admit African Americans, whether they were Catholic or not.

Villanova was one of the first Catholic institutions of higher education to open its doors to black women



Dr. Shannen Dee Williams presented Sister Cora Marie for an honorary doctoral degree at Commencement in May.

PHOTO: JOHN SHETRON

**“I knew in order to change the Church, I had to remain within the system and look for the strategies and the people who were going to help me change it.”**

Sister Cora Marie Billings, RSM, '67 CLAS

Sister Cora Marie in May 1957 with her father, Jesse Billings, and her grandfather, John A. Lee Sr., in Merion, Pa.



PHOTOS: SISTER CORA MARIE BILLINGS, RSM



Sister Cora Marie with her grandmother Gertrude A. Lee and her aunt Sister Mary Paul Lee, OSP, in June 1964 in the garden of St. Ignatius Convent.

religious, most notably the Oblate Sisters of Providence, headquartered in Baltimore, Md., after World War I.

Sister Cora Marie hails from a family of devout African American Catholics who fought against racist barriers to participate in the Catholic faith and wider American life. Her pioneering great-grandparents had labored as slaves under Catholic auspices in Washington, D.C. Amid much opposition, Billings' grandfather, John Aloysius Lee Sr. became the first African American person allowed to play in Philadelphia's Catholic high school basketball league in 1902. The city later built the John A. Lee Recreation Center to honor his legacy of fighting for black inclusion in local athletics. His daughters, Susan Grace Lee and Bertha Amelia Theresa Lee, however, were denied admission into religious life in Philadelphia in the 1940s because of the color of their skin.

It's a dichotomy Sister Cora Marie still faces: knowing the undeniable barriers faced by her aunts, who ultimately became Oblate Sisters of Providence, and being the one who ultimately knocked those same barriers down. "I realize that, to get to where I am, I'm standing on the shoulders of ancestors," she says.

Kicking off Villanova's 2019 Black History Month celebration earlier this year, Sister Cora Marie shared these thoughts and experiences during a fireside chat with Dr. Williams in the St. Thomas of Villanova Chapel.

Ultimately, Sister Cora Marie says the experiences of her ancestors fueled her determination to become a part of the Church and work to ensure the same opportunity for other black sisters in the faith. "I have never seen a system changed by somebody from the outside," she says. "I knew in order to change the Church, I had to remain within the system and look for the strategies and people who were willing to help me change it."

Over the past 63 years, she's done just that. In the 1960s, she became the first African American person to teach at an all-white grade school in Levittown, Pa., and the first African American sister to teach in a Catholic high school in Philadelphia. She went on to become the first African American sister to work as a campus minister at Virginia State University, and then became the first African American nun to lead a US Catholic parish, serving as the pastoral coordinator for St. Elizabeth Parish in North Richmond, Va., for 14 years. She also led the Diocese of Richmond's Office for Black Catholics for 25 years and was director of the Human Rights Council for the state of Virginia from 2007 to 2010.

"Her story and the story of her family's extraordinary journey from slavery to freedom in the Catholic Church typify what many scholars call the uncommon faithfulness of the black Catholic community," Dr. Williams says. "It mirrors that of so many sisters who understood that segregation and racism have no place in the universal Church and fought to make the Church live up to its Catholic ideals."

**PIECING HISTORY TOGETHER**

Dr. Williams has spent the past 12 years conducting extensive research on the lives and labors of these sisters, including more than 100 interviews with former and current black and white nuns. She's poured all of these newly uncovered truths about the roles of black sisters in American Catholic history into the manuscript for her first book, *Subversive Habits: The Untold Story of Black Catholic Nuns in the United States*.

Dr. Williams' research suggests black sisters were not omitted from American Catholic history by accident. Many black women and girls who had been educated by white

▶ Early members of the National Black Sisters' Conference outside the conference headquarters in Pittsburgh in the early 1970s.



PHOTO: SISTERS OF CHARITY OF NAZARETH

nuns were later denied admission into the religious communities of their educators on the basis of race alone. Rare exceptions were made for black women and girls with light skin prior to World War II. Still, others who did desegregate, or even help to establish, white congregations were often later excluded from the histories of those communities.

Dr. Williams' work is especially timely now, not only because of its historical originality but also because of the changing demographics in the Catholic Church, which is projected to experience its greatest growth in Africa, Asia and Latin America over the next three decades. "It's particularly important that we understand who makes up the Church and recognize the contributions of those who made the Church what it is today," she says.

Her book will provide the first full historical examination of black Catholic sisters in the United States, and it will be a transformative work for anyone who reads it, according to Maghan Keita, PhD, director of the Africana Studies Program and professor of History at Villanova.

"It's going to be an eye-opener. It's definitely going to prompt a lot of conversation," he says. "Dr. Williams' efforts to highlight the contemporary notions of people of African descent, and particularly African American women in the Catholic Church, invites us to go back and take a closer look at the history of the Catholic Church in ways that we never have before." ■

**"I keep the images and prayer cards close because their tradition of great and steady faithfulness inspires me."**

Dr. Shannen Dee Williams



PHOTO: MICHAEL ALEXANDER / GEORGIA BULLETIN

▶ A preeminent scholar, Dr. Williams has traveled across the country speaking about the history of black Catholic sisters to religious communities and assemblies, including the Leadership Conference of Women Religious assembly in Atlanta (pictured here).

## Corr Chapel Envisions Sister Thea Bowman in a New Light

This summer, specialists installed a new stained glass window in Villanova's Corr Chapel depicting Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman. The Rev. Richard Cannulli, OSA, MFA, '73 CLAS, professor of Studio Art, designed the window highlighting the Franciscan nun, who is one of six black Catholics who are being considered for canonization.

Sister Thea changed the fabric of the American Catholic Church in the late 20th century, but her story is not well-known, says Shannen Dee Williams, PhD, assistant professor of History. The granddaughter of slaves and the only African American member of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in the Diocese of La Crosse in Wisconsin, Sister Thea was known for her powerful preaching and singing at Church gatherings across the country.

Though the four-stage process for sainthood can take decades or even centuries, Dr. Williams believes the causes of Sister Thea and other black Catholics further encourage the Church to embrace African Americans as part of the American Catholic experience.

"Even if they never become saints, the fact that their causes have been formally opened means we'll have an opportunity to tell their stories in a host of new ways," Dr. Williams says.

▶ The window depicting Servant of God Sister Thea Bowman in Corr Chapel, which also features Servant of God the Rev. Bill Atkinson, OSA, '73 CLAS in its other panel, was donated by the Russomano family—Michael '79 VSB and Deborah Russomano; James '82 VSB and Anne Russomano; Frank '87 VSB and Aimee Russomano; and Donna Maria '88 CLAS and Gregory DeRosa—in memory of their parents, Michael and Frances Russomano.





# S | M | A | R | T | B | R | A | I | N

Villanova Engineering professor works with a team of scientists to outsmart traumatic brain injury with new “smart brain” technology

BY VALERIE NEFF NEWITT

**A** scientific milestone rests on the worktop in Villanova's Cellular Biomechanics and Sports Science Laboratory in White Hall: a highly instrumented, first-of-its-kind "smart brain." Separated from its transparent skull by a thin layer of fluid, the deeply creviced pink gel mold mimics the physiological makeup of the human brain.

Though it stops short of actually thinking, the smart brain holds important implications for research, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of traumatic brain injury (TBI). Inventor Qianhong Wu, PhD, director of the laboratory and associate professor of Mechanical Engineering, and his collaborators received a patent for this new technology in December 2018.

With it, they hope to advance fundamental understanding of how the human brain works and provide unprecedented access to its inner workings. Dr. Wu compares the technology to the black box recorder on an airplane. "When a plane goes down, officials know there has been an incident—but why it happened is discovered only when the black box is recovered," he says. "Similarly, the smart brain can give us a better understanding of why a brain injury occurred."

Equipped with high-speed cameras, accelerometers, and displacement and pressure sensors, the smart brain can record hard data pertaining to various types of impact, the actions they prompt and the injuries they cause in the brain. "Prevailing technology looks at the skull and brain as a whole, but we were determined to show what happens to the brain itself upon impact—something no one has done previously," Dr. Wu explains.

"We've always known impact causes damage, but we'd never seen the mechanism that lies between the two," he says. It was precisely this "between the lines" mystery that has eluded foundational science pertaining to TBI until now.

#### MAKING THE SMART BRAIN

**F**inding the right materials for the model was the biggest challenge, according to Ji Lang, a doctoral candidate in Mechanical Engineering who's been working with Dr. Wu since 2016. The two collaborated to build the technology with a multidisciplinary team of scientists who have expertise in fluid mechanics, materials, instrumentation and manufacturing.

They experimented with many different materials and made many brains. Finally, the smart brain took form—with design input from Kei-Peng Jen, PhD, a retired Villanova associate professor; Chris Townend, laboratory manager for the Department

▶ Dr. Qianhong Wu and doctoral candidate Ji Lang test their smart brain apparatus in the laboratory.

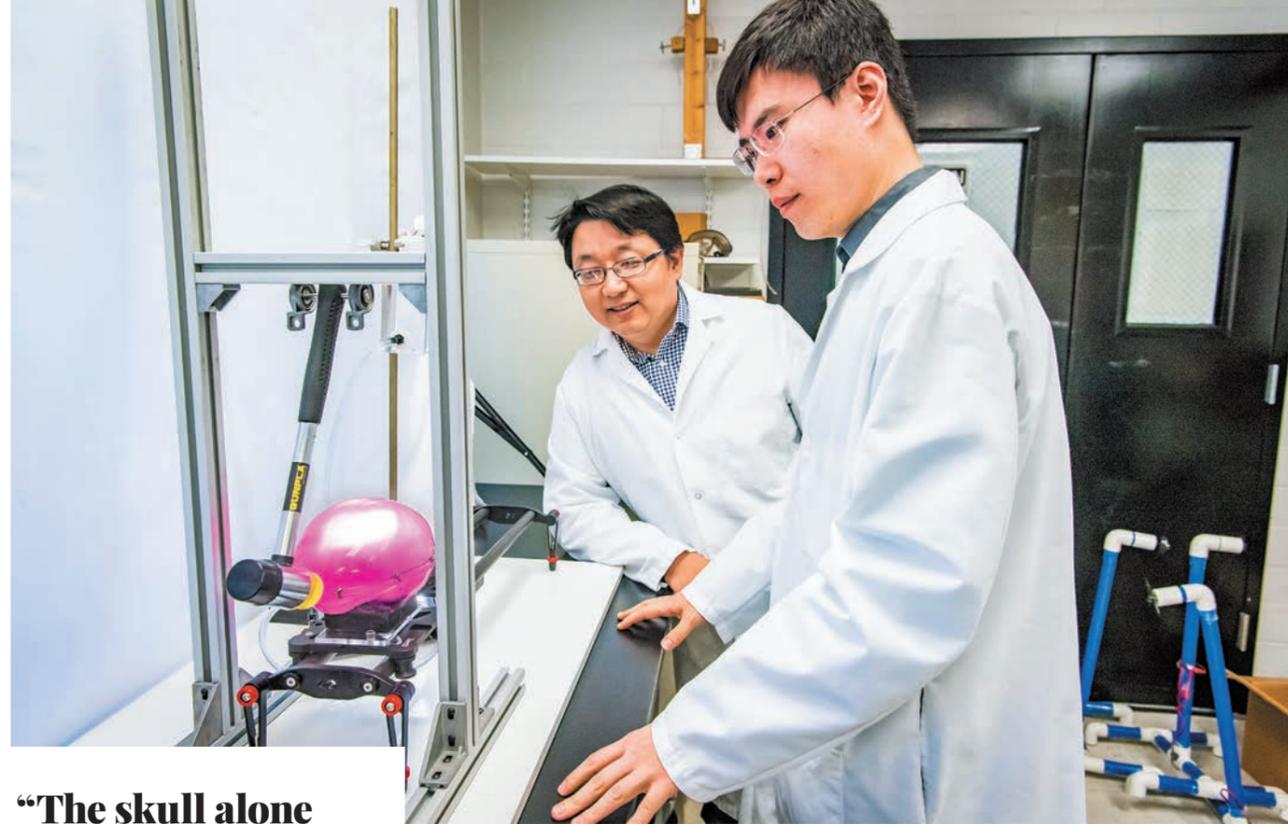


PHOTO: PAUL CRANE

**“The skull alone required two months to develop the correct shape and transparency. After all, we couldn’t just go out and buy one. We had to develop the machinery to make it.”**

Ji Lang, PhD candidate

of Mechanical Engineering; and Rungun Nathan, PhD, associate professor and chair of Engineering at Penn State Berks, who previously taught at Villanova. The team incorporated 3D printing to form a shape from which to cast a brain mold. Using CT scans for reference, they settled on hydrogel as the material of choice for the brain because it best captures the soft, squishy nature of anatomical matter in terms of elasticity and density. In crafting the shape of the skull, the CT scans again proved useful. "The skull alone required two months to develop the correct shape and transparency," Ji says. "After all, we couldn't just go out and buy one. We had to develop the machinery to make it."

Ji was critical to that process, Dr. Wu says. He is one of six doctoral candidates in the Mechanical Engineering department who work with Dr. Wu in the Cellular



▶ PhD student Jennifer Muller uses neuroimaging at Jefferson Hospital to collect data and validate the model's findings.

Biomechanics and Sports Science Laboratory. Director of the Mechanical Engineering graduate programs, Dr. Wu sees his students as collaborators rather than simply trainees.

"We work toward a meeting of the minds, and inspire each other to come up with our best ideas," Dr. Wu says. "I don't say, 'This is my idea, now do it.' I want students to be motivated to pursue critical thinking."

Another of Dr. Wu's PhD students, Jennifer Muller, also plays an important role in the smart brain project—in the clinic rather than the lab. She is working with clinicians and researchers at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in Philadelphia to validate the model's findings and demonstrate the utility of the work in TBI treatment.

#### FROM LAB RESEARCH TO CLINICAL FINDINGS

**A**ccording to the Brain Injury Association, a brain injury occurs in the US every nine seconds, and at least 2.5 million people sustain a TBI every year. One of every 60 Americans lives with a TBI-related disability, ranging from sight, hearing and/or memory loss, to depression and cognitive impairments.

"Until now there has been no proactive way to determine how these TBIs occur," Dr. Wu says. "Most work has been computational, lacking experiential verification. There has been no real-life way to validate computational findings." That's exactly what he and Jennifer are hoping to do in their work with Jefferson

#### FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



### A Way into the Brain

**ormally trained in biofluid mechanics,** Dr. Qianhong Wu sees his smart brain as "a new adventure" in brain biomechanics that began when he attended Villanova Law's 2013 Moorad Sports Law Journal Symposium. "Concussion Conundrum" explored key issues among players, teams, leagues, doctors and lawyers regarding head and brain injuries.

Coincidentally, about that time, Dr. Wu took his car to be serviced and began talking to a station employee who had played football for years. "He was very obviously having cognitive difficulties and was confused. He told me he hadn't realized how important protective headgear was, and he had no idea how many concussions he'd suffered," Dr. Wu says. "I realized right then that this happens to a lot of people, and as a scientist and engineer, I could do something to help with this issue."

That desire to make a difference eventually morphed into the smart brain for which he holds high hopes. Dr. Wu envisions the technology as a launching pad for the creation of a preeminent center at Villanova University for the advancement of fundamental brain biomechanics research, identification of all manner of impact relating to TBI, and the capacity for state-of-the-art testing and design of protective headgear. The end game? Prevention of life-altering brain injuries.

Dr. Wu and his team applied for a second patent in January 2019, which, if approved, will take his work on TBI much deeper. "We have come up with new ideas and have continued to improve our approaches," he says. "The work we are doing can affect people's lives in a very real and positive way. We've come too far to stop now."



PHOTO: PAUL CRANE

**“We can look inside the brains of people with head injuries and determine how their brains’ structures and functions are affected, and Dr. Wu’s modeling helps us to understand that.”**

Dr. Andrew Newberg

neuroscientist Andrew Newberg, MD, professor of Integrative Medicine and Nutritional Sciences, and Feroze Mohamed, PhD, director of Jefferson Integrated Magnetic Resonance Imaging Center.

“This collaboration is translational in terms of combining the work that Dr. Wu is doing in his laboratory and incorporating those ideas and findings into clinical research,” Dr. Newberg says. “Specifically, we can look inside the brains of people with head injuries and determine how their brains’ structures and functions are affected, and Dr. Wu’s modeling helps us to understand that.”

While Drs. Newberg and Mohamed have been scanning brain injury subjects, Jennifer has been scanning normal control subjects, then looking for differences between the control and injured brains in specific regions based on Dr. Wu’s analysis. “Dr. Wu’s lab looks at brain biomechanics from a purely engineering perspective, whereas Jefferson offers some anatomical information from real subject data,” Jennifer says.

The ability to pinpoint the exact cause and precise position of brain injury will be the climax of this trailblazing translation. Such a specific focus eventually may allow treating physicians to use more targeted imaging, yielding more specific and personalized information. “Medicine in general is subjective and qualitative; it is not an exact science. But here we are trying to make it quantitative and develop quantitative biomarkers for the status of the brain,” Dr. Mohamed says.

Dr. Wu hopes to provide doctors with a guideline for the diagnosis and treatment of concussive and subconcussive injury, and to inform the design of different types of protective helmets, not just for athletes, but also for construction workers, military personnel, and bike and motorcycle riders. “Caring is at the very heart of Villanova,” he says. “We are doing something meaningful here that will help improve the lives of many people. That is something of which I am truly proud.” ■

PROJECT IMPACT

ONE QUESTION,  
FOUR PERSPECTIVES:

How could this technology help patients in the future?

“Developed using real anatomical data, these mathematical models could help us to understand how the brain functions even better.”

Feroze Mohamed, PhD  
Jefferson Integrated Magnetic Resonance Imaging Center



“This technology could help us understand anatomically where and how changes in the brain are related to TBI symptoms.”

Jennifer Muller, PhD student  
Department of Mechanical Engineering, Villanova University



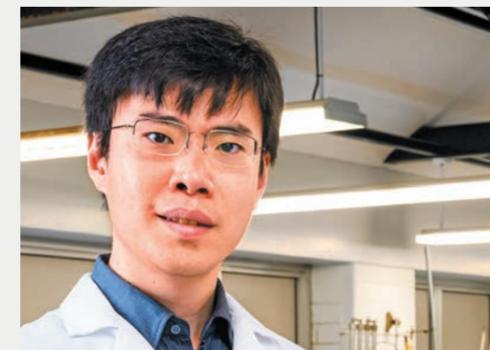
“It could help us pinpoint areas of the brain that are affected (by an injury) and determine which therapeutic approaches seem to have an effect.”

Andrew Newberg, MD  
Jefferson Hospital of Neuroscience



“With this information, doctors could much more quickly and accurately distinguish the position, type and extent of the injury.”

Ji Lang, PhD student  
Department of Mechanical Engineering, Villanova University



PHOTOS: JOHN WELSH AND JOHN SHETRON

**Setting a High Bar**

Hailing from Keller, Texas, freshman high-jumper Sanaa Barnes became the first Villanova woman to be an All-American in a field event with a fourth-place finish in the high jump at the NCAA Indoor Championships in March and a sixth-place finish at the NCAA Outdoor Championships in June. She broke the Villanova record in the high jump for the second time this season when she cleared the bar at a height of 1.84 meters at the indoor competition.



PHOTO: MICHAEL NANCE

# Class Notes



**Edwin A. "Ted" Bergin, PhD, '86 CLAS**, professor and chair of Astronomy at the University of Michigan, studies the physics and chemistry of star and planet formation. His pioneering research in astrochemistry has earned him the 2019 Dannie Heineman Prize, awarded jointly by the American Institute of Physics and the American Astronomical Society. In awarding the prize, AAS President Megan Donahue, PhD, said Dr. Bergin's work explores answers to "one of our big questions: how primordial gas turned into stars, planets and homes for life."

## 1950s

1957

**Robert F. Lima Jr., OIC, IDHCV, PhD, '57 CLAS, '61 MA** wrote two poems that recently appeared in two magazines—"Winter" in *Centered* and "Old Botany" in *Wood Coin Magazine*. He also edited and translated the poetry in the book *Ikons of the Past: Poetry of the Hispanic Americas*.

## 1960s

1962

**Peter C. Nolan '62 CLAS** published his second nonfiction book, *News Stories*. It is a memoir that chronicles his years as a broadcast newsman from Niagara Falls to Chicago in the latter half of the 20th century.

1965

**Herbert J. Davis, PhD, '65 VSB** is professor of Strategic Management and International Affairs at George Washington University, as well as Distinguished Professor of Business and International Affairs at the University of Dubai.

1968

**Alan Fischer '68 CLAS** published a book, *The Death Mist*, a faith-centered memoir of a combat pilot in Vietnam. Several Villanova alumni are featured.

1969

**William Steigerwald '69 CLAS** published a book, *30 Days a Black Man*, about a famous Pittsburgh journalist who went undercover as a black man in the Jim Crow South.

## 1970s

1973

**Howard Bowen '73 VSB** was recently named the Hagerstown, Md., *Herald-Mail* Person of the Year.

**Stephen J. Nolan, Esq., '73 CLAS** merged his practice with Smith, Gildea & Schmidt, LLC, a regional law firm in Towson, Md. He has been involved in a wide variety of complex litigation, class actions and other cases, including serving as Maryland counsel for the NFL Players Association, special counsel for CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield in a pharmaceutical class action, and lead counsel for Anne Arundel and Baltimore County public schools and governments in the asbestos property damage litigation.

1975

**Marc Abrams '75 CLAS** recently joined the firm Whiteford, Taylor & Preston in Wilmington, Del. He has been named to the Global M&A Network's 2017 "A-List" as one of the top 100 restructuring and turnaround professionals. *The American Lawyer* named him 2009 Dealmaker of the Year. He is a member of the Board of Directors and a Fellow with the American College of Bankruptcy.

**Judy Burke '75 CLAS** was recently honored by Macomb Community College in Michigan, where she is a professor of Communications and Creative Writing, for her successful novel, *Blackrock Island*.

1976

**Paula Orndoff '76 CLAS** produced and co-directed the documentary *How Sweet the Sound* as part of the Smithsonian 2019 Year of Music event. The Smithsonian will be screening

the documentary and acquiring *How Sweet the Sound*, along with 400 photographs and 11 hours of video footage, for its permanent collections.

1978

**Jock Sommese, MBA, '78 VSB** completed his Doctor of Business Administration from Wilmington University and relocated to the Greater Chicago area.

1979

**Lawrence Jakows '79 VSB** published *Jesus: Perfect Love* and is now writing a novel.

**Mark Redmond, MPA, '79 VSB** will be performing his one-man show, *So Shines a Good Deed*, on Broadway in October 2019. His show was chosen from among hundreds of applications for inclusion in the 2019 United Solo Theatre Festival in New York City. Redmond is the longtime executive director of Spectrum Youth and Family Services in Burlington, Vt.

## 1980s

1980

**Diane Dewey '80 CLAS** published her debut memoir, *Fixing the Fates: An Adoptee's Story of Truth and Lies*.

**Robert J. McKiernan '80 VSB** is senior vice president at McKiernan Group at Merrill Lynch in Bala Cynwyd, Pa. He was recently named to *Forbes'* "Best-in-State Wealth Advisor" list. He also received the Five Star Wealth Managers Award from *Philadelphia Magazine* for the 10th year in a row.

1981

**Joseph Lewis '81 CLAS** released his first book, *The Ghosts of Westthorpe Academy*, through eLectio Publishing.

**Mary Myers '81 FCN** received the 2019 Lynn Giglione Women in Leadership Award from the National Home Infusion Foundation for her contributions to the field of home infusion.



PHOTO: RESOURCES FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT/FAMILY PRACTICE & CONSULTING NETWORK

The leader of the largest nurse-managed health care network in the country is a Villanova nurse. **Donna Torrissi '72 FCN, MSN, CRNP, FAAN**, is retiring this year after nearly 30 years as director of the Family Practice & Counseling Network, which serves 24,000 patients each year in five locations around Philadelphia, mostly in underserved neighborhoods. A nationally recognized leader in the field of nurse practitioners, Torrissi was instrumental in changing Pennsylvania law to allow nurse practitioners to prescribe medications and be recognized as primary care practitioners.

**John G. Shutack '81 CLAS**

was recently promoted to chief of Web Reporting and Data Analytics with the administrative office of the courts in Trenton, N.J.

1982

**P. Timothy Kelly, Esq., '82 CWSL** was named to the 2019 Pennsylvania Super Lawyers list in the area of plaintiff's personal injury. He has been named a Pennsylvania Super lawyer every year since 2008.

1983

**Marcy N. Hart, Esq., '83 CWSL** was named an "Influencer of Law" by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* for her work in commercial real estate.

1984

**Natalie D. Ramsey '84 CWSL** joined Robinson+Cole as a partner. She has practiced in the areas of bankruptcy and corporate reorganizations for more than three decades.

1986

**Brian J. Buerke '86 CLAS** was re-elected president of the school board for the Reading (Pa.) School District. He was also elected for a fourth consecutive year as president of the Reading Public Museum. Buerke is an associate professor and chair of the Physics Department at Albright College in Reading, where he lives with his wife and four children.

1987

**Nancy Lane '87 CLAS**, president of the Local Media Association, has received Borrell Associates' 2019 Award of Merit for outstanding leadership and innovation in local media. She transformed and rebranded the organization from a newspaper-only association to an inclusive, innovation-focused entity. Lane is the current president of the Villanova University Alumni Association.

**Gregory Skinner '87 CLAS, '91 MS** was sworn in as the 15th mayor of the Borough of Peapack and Gladstone, N.J. He retired as the borough police chief after a 30-year career.

1988

**Kathleen Barnett Einhorn, Esq., '88 CLAS**, a partner at Genova Burns LLC in Newark, N.J., was recently profiled by the New Jersey Super Lawyer 2019 edition in the article, "It's Handled: Got a Billion-Dollar Problem? Give Kathleen Barnett Einhorn a Week." The article delves into her career highlights and role at Genova Burns and as a mentor to female associates.

**Chris Tecca '88 CLAS** joined Calderys and assumed the role of vice president, Americas. Calderys, a member of the Imerys Group, manufactures monolithic refractory materials, bricks and precast shapes.

1989

**Marybeth Donahue Connelly '89 CLAS** is an elected member of the Falls Church, Va., City Council. One of seven council members, she also serves as the vice mayor. She focuses on community building through public education, community partnerships, civic engagement and regional cooperation.

**Jack Kolmansberger '89 VSB**, CMO of Herbein & Company Inc., a leading accounting firm headquartered in Reading, Pa., was recently inducted into the Association for Accounting Marketing Hall of Fame.

## 1990s

1990

**Robert A. Bezzone '90 VSB**, a senior financial advisor at Merrill Lynch in Florham Park, N.J., has been recognized on the 2019 *Forbes* "Best-in-State Wealth Advisors" list.

**Susan Corcoran '90 CLAS** has been named senior vice president, director of Publicity, at Penguin Random House.

1991

**James McGowan, JD, '91 CLAS** retired from the University Circle Police Department in Ohio in 2018. He is now a practicing attorney in Cleveland

with his own firm, the McGowan Law Office LLC.

1992

**Daniel Sforza '92 CLAS** was named executive editor of *The Bergen Record* in New Jersey and *The Journal News* in New York, as well as NorthJersey.com and LoHud.com. Sforza was the editor of a Pulitzer Prize-finalist project on the heroin epidemic and was the lead editor on the Bridgegate scandal coverage.

1996

**April Barton '96 CWSL** has been named dean of the Duquesne University School of Law. She spent more than 20 years as a professor and administrator at the Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law, most recently as the associate dean for Academic Affairs. At Villanova Law, Barton launched leadership development initiatives for students and taught courses in administrative rulemaking and leadership skills for lawyers, computer law, the First Amendment and regulation in cyberspace and digital law.

1997

**Benjamin V. Sanchez, Esq., '97 VSB** and his wife, Karen, welcomed their third child, Ben Jr., in August 2018. In November 2018, Sanchez was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for the 153rd Legislative District for a two-year term.

1998

**Anisha S. Abraham, JD, MA, '98 CLAS** has joined the Philadelphia office of Rawle & Henderson LLP as of counsel to the firm. Abraham concentrates her law practice in the areas of environmental, mass and toxic torts.

**Fred Santarpia, MS, '98 VSB** has been named US Chief Digital Officer of the Year by the Chief Digital Officer Club, the world's largest organization of c-suite digital and data leaders.



# Reconnect, Reunite

Villanovans from all classes—especially those ending in 4 and 9 celebrating their milestone Reunions—came together for 2019 Reunion Weekend. University President the Rev. **Peter M. Donohue, OSA, PhD, '75 CLAS** provided his vision for Villanova during the President's Lecture, and other celebrations included class meetups, a Mass for married couples, a family-friendly outdoor festival and

Supernova—Villanova's annual Reunion dinner dance. The Class of 1969 was honored at the Half-Century Dinner, where **Nance Dicciani, PhD, '69 COE** (pictured above, center), a former University Trustee and the retired president and CEO of Honeywell Specialty Materials, received the St. Thomas of Villanova Alumni Medal, the Villanova University Alumni Association's highest honor.



## 2000s

2000

**Brian S. Edlin '00 CWSL** published the second edition of *Common Interest Communities*, a treatise on planned communities and condominiums in North Carolina.

**John A. Ervin, RN, BSN, MBA, '00 FCN**, a candidate in Jefferson University's Doctorate of Management in Strategic Leadership program, has accepted a position with Physicians Endoscopy as the director of Clinical Support for New Jersey and New York.

2001

**Katherine L. Parr '01 VSB** recently gave a TEDx Talk, "Conscious Consumerism is the Road to Economic Empowerment." She is the founder of two luxury ethical businesses, Katherine Parr Jewelry and Parré Chocolat. Parr has been involved as a speaker, moderator and panelist on entrepreneurship for the Villanova School of Business and Villanova's Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship Institute.

2002

**Patrick J. Cusick '02 CLAS** joined the Philadelphia-based law firm of Bardsley, Benedict & Cholden LLP in April 2019 as the accounting manager.

**Ray Dominguez '02 COE** has joined Dewberry's Bloomfield, N.J., office as the manager of the Traffic Engineering Department.

**Katherine J. Sullivan, Esq., '02 CLAS** was promoted to shareholder of the Wilmington, Del., office of Wharton Levin Ehrmantraut & Klein.

**Davis Lee Wright, MBA, '02 CWSL** joined Robinson+Cole as a partner. His practice is focused on bankruptcy-related litigation.

2003

**Aldo Vultaggio '03 COE** welcomed a boy.

2005

**Christopher Bilbao '05 CLAS** and Mary Sheridan Bilbao

welcomed their first child, Ellie Ruth, on Nov. 28, 2018.

**Daniel DiCenso, PhD, '05 CLAS** has been promoted to associate professor of Music with tenure at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Mass.

**Christopher M. Samis '05 CWSL** joined Potter, Anderson & Corroon LLP in Wilmington, Del., as partner in their bankruptcy and restructuring practice.

**Quinn Schmiede, JD, '05 CLAS** became partner at the law firm of Gallagher Sharp LLP in Columbus, Ohio. She focuses her practice on general litigation, truck accidents, professional liability and employment practices liability claims.

**Kerry (Faria) Witterschein**

**'05 CLAS** is the new director of Client Experience for The Westhoff Group with Raymond James Financial Services. She and her husband, Rob, live in Bend, Ore.

2006

**Lauren Chiarello Mika '06 VSB** is celebrating 10 years cancer-free from Hodgkin's lymphoma.

2007

**Mike Thomas, PE, '07 COE** has been promoted to deputy practice leader for Site/Land Development at Urban Engineers in Philadelphia.

2009

**Jerry Luciano '09 MBA** was appointed vice president of



PHOTO: DAVID DEBALKO PHOTOGRAPHY

**Bridget Whan Tong '18 CWSL** was awarded first place in the Philadelphia Bar Association's Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg "Pursuit of Justice" Legal Writing Competition. Her winning paper, "What's in a Name? *Matal v. Tam* and the Right to Own Disparaging Words," was published in *The Philadelphia Lawyer*. Whan Tong is serving as a judicial law clerk for Magistrate Judge Sherry R. Fallon in the US District Court for the District of Delaware.



PHOTO: NYPD

Drawing on his decades of experience in the criminal justice system as a judge and lawyer, the **Hon. Ernest Hart '83 CWSL**, a New York State Supreme Court judge, has been named the new deputy commissioner of legal matters for the New York City Police Department. As the NYPD's chief legal officer, Hart will oversee the Legal Bureau, assisting department personnel in interpreting and enforcing laws, ensuring the department is operating lawfully, and developing legislation pertaining to both the NYPD and public safety concerns.



PHOTO: MARCBATES

The impact of the work of Operation Progress, led by Executive Director **Theresa Gartland '03 CLAS** is the subject of a Netflix documentary, *A Week in Watts*. Gartland has worked in education and youth programs in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles, Calif., for 16 years and has spent the last six years with Operation Progress, which works with youth in the community to build leadership skills, provide educational opportunities and build support systems through mentorship with Los Angeles Police Department officers and community involvement.

Omnichannel Marketing at TGA&S Advisors in East Norriton, Pa. He oversees a team responsible for analysis and recommendations to clients on all aspects of interactive marketing, brand strategy and organizational alignment.

**Alessandro L. Roco '09 COE** is the founder of Sanzo, the first Asian-inspired line of sparking water in the United States.

## 2010s

2010

**Robert Gibiser '10 VSB** was promoted to vice president of Quantitative Investor Services

Credit Risk at JPMorgan Chase & Co. in New York.

2011

**Cristina D'Averso Collins '11 CLAS** and **Brian Collins '99 COE** welcomed a daughter, Gianna Maria, on April 2.

**Rebecca A. LaMarca '11 FCN** started her own business, IV Elements, an on-demand mobile IV hydration company based in New Jersey.

**JC Lamb '11 CLAS, '14 MA** is moving to New York City while transferring to KPMG's 345 Park Ave. office.

**Meghan Price Travaline '11 CLAS, '15 CWSL** welcomed a girl, Isabelle Rose, on Feb. 12.

2012

**Warren Jay Wilson Jr. '12 VSB** married **Jenna Feibus '12 CLAS** on Oct. 6, 2018. Alumni from the 1960s, 1970s, 2000s and 2010s were present.

2013

**Liz Gee, JD, '13 CWSL** recently joined the law firm Tanenbaum Keale in its Malvern, Pa., office as an associate. Gee focuses her practice in the area of complex litigation, construction litigation and commercial matters.

2014

**Kathleen Reilly '14 VSB** launched Chicago's first blockchain innovation ecosystem, Omnium Blockchain.

2015

**John Lucas '15 VSB** joined Marshall Gerstein's expanding Chicago office as an associate. He defends clients against infringement claims. While attending DePaul University College of Law, Lucas served as a law clerk for two intellectual property law firms in Chicago.

2016

**Icely Guzman '16 FCN** is enrolled in the George Washington University Family Nurse Practitioner MSN program.

**Taylor Smith '16 CLAS** won a 2018 Sports Emmy Award in the Outstanding Studio Show—Daily category as an associate producer for MLB Tonight on the MLB Network.

**Samantha Testa '16 VSB** joined the Armenian Assembly of America as one of the newest South New Jersey State co-chairs, along with her brother Nicholas.

2017

**Julie Clark '17 FCN** graduated from Vanderbilt University in August with an MSN and now carries the credentials of PMHNY-BC as an advanced practice psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner.

**Vicki L. Hoffman '17 MPA** joined the executive team at Englewood Health in Englewood, N.J., as vice president of Operations.

**Michael Lee '17 CLAS** has been hired as account representative and digital media associate at Bellevue Communications Group in Philadelphia.

**Lori Rothe Yokobosky, CPA, MT, '17 MA** was recently made partner at the Roseland, N.J., office of CohnReznick LLP, one of the top advisory, assurance and tax firms in the United States. Within the practice, she specializes in working with associations, higher education institutions, private foundations, and affordable housing and health care organizations.

## 2018

**Sharae Fulton '18 FCN** has taken a position on a pulmonary medical stepdown unit at New York Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center.

**Robert Hamer '18 MA** accepted an executive leadership role as the Human Resources director for Ron Marhofer Auto Family in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio. His team supports more than 450 employees and provides employee relations guidance to senior leaders throughout the organization.

**Miriam Niedelman '18 MS** was promoted to manager in the Tax practice at Baker Newman Noyes' Boston office. She specializes in high net-worth individuals and family groups.

**Nicholas Schaeffer '18 FCN** accepted a position at Hershey (Pa.) Medical Center in the neuroscience intensive care unit.

**Nicholas Testa '18 VSB** joined the Armenian Assembly of America as one of the newest South New Jersey State co-chairs, along with his sister Samantha.

## In Memoriam

## 1940s

The Rev. John Gaffney, OSA, '42 CLAS, March 19.

Austin F. Gavin '43 CLAS, Nov. 1, 2017.

William F. Zentler Jr. '43 VSB, Dec. 1, 2018.

James H. Redditt '47 COE, Sept. 6, 2018.

Edward J. Bonnes '49 VSB, March 18.

## 1950s

Maurice A. Crane, PhD, '50 CLAS, June 1, 2014.

Edward V. Heiskell '50 COE, May 20, 2018.

Hugh T. Maguire '50 CLAS, June 1, 2017.

Joseph P. Capponi '51 VSB, May 15, 2018.

Richard V. Holmes, Esq., '51 VSB, Dec. 25, 2018.

James C. Long '51 VSB, Dec. 26, 2018.

M. Robert Semmer Jr. '51 VSB, Feb. 2.

Robert D. Callahan, DDS, '52 CLAS, Feb. 5.

Howard F. Eckenroth '52 COE, Dec. 28, 2018.

Otto A. Fohl '52 VSB, Feb. 12, 2018.

Edward S. Kardaszewski '52 VSB, Sept. 29, 2018.

Daniel M. McGee '52 COE, March 31.

William D. Miller '52 VSB, Feb. 13.

Robert A. Natiello '52 CLAS, July 3, 2018.

Donald W. Blaha '53 VSB, March 1.

James J. Costigan Jr. '53 VSB, Jan. 26.

Martin A. Hall '53 VSB, Dec. 4, 2018.

Basil J. Ingemi, MD, '53 CLAS, Aug. 12, 2018.

Michael A. Siravo '53 VSB, Nov. 6, 2018.

John J. Carella '54 VSB, April 10.

James A. Carter '54 CLAS, Dec. 23, 2018.

John G. Kneafsey, Esq., '54 CLAS, '57 CWSL, Nov. 4, 2018.

Joseph T. McGarigle '54 VSB, Jan. 12.

Thomas F. McNichol '54 CLAS, April 16.

James L. Nolin Jr. '54 CLAS, Dec. 10, 2010.

George P. Rowan, MD, '54 CLAS, Dec. 7, 2018.

Patrick M. Burgoyne '55 VSB, Feb. 8.

Mark J. Connor '56 COE, March 25.

Geraldine M. Ling '56 MA, March 22.

Thomas F. McCarthy, Esq., '56 CLAS, Dec. 5, 2018.

John E. Roncevich '56 COE, Dec. 24, 2018.

Harry A. Widmeier '56 VSB, Feb. 23.

Donald G. Bragg '57 VSB, Feb. 16.

John T. Decker '57 COE, July 13, 2018.

R. Allen Griffith '57 VSB, April 16.

Arthur J. Ladner '57 COE, March 31.

Thomas W. Reiley '57 VSB, Dec. 25, 2018.

Charles J. Stehli '57 VSB, Nov. 5, 2017.

Michael F. Tavani '57 VSB, March 2.

John C. Altmiller, Esq., '58 COE, Jan. 16.

August T. Groover, Esq., '58 CWSL, April 5.

Francis P. McHugh '58 VSB, Jan. 24.

Edward F. Meyers '58 COE, Aug. 20, 2018.

Robert W. Rosko '58 COE, April 4.

Arnold T. Vandervalk '58 VSB, Dec. 6, 2018.

John W. Canavan '59 VSB, Jan. 23.

John G. Carr Jr. '59 VSB, Dec. 12, 2018.

The Rev. Alfred J. Ellis, OSA, '59 CLAS, April 4.

William V. Engelberger '59 VSB, March 3.

Leon A. Mankowski, Esq., '59 CWSL, Jan. 28.

Christopher J. Miedzius '59 COE, Jan. 26.

## 1960s

Edward W. Heywood '60 COE, Feb. 26.

Peter J. Lavezzoli '60 VSB, July 28, 2018.

R. Kent Lydic '60 CLAS, Feb. 24.

Vincent J. Minkiewicz, PhD, '60 CLAS, April 4.

The Rev. Walter J. Quinn, OSA, '60 CLAS, Jan. 15.

John J. Fee '61 CLAS, Jan. 17.

Michael B. Hirsch '61 VSB, Dec. 11, 2018.

Robert W. Kempen '61 COE, April 4.

Thomas Richard Kennedy, Esq., '61 CLAS, Feb. 14.

Joseph P. Leonzi Jr. '61 CLAS, April 19.

Enrico Nardini '61 VSB, March 12, 2018.

Robert S. Cosgrove '62 VSB, Dec. 2, 2017.

John J. Kelly, Esq., '62 CWSL, Feb. 1.

Peter J. Kelly '62 VSB, March 26.

Mary Louise Scanlon Quigley '62 FCN, March 23.

Anthony L. Bevilacqua '63 CLAS, Dec. 23, 2018.

Rodney L. Broadbelt '63 VSB, March 23.

Mark A. Galgano '63 COE, April 4.

Donald A. Risley '63 CLAS, April 12.

John E. Winter, PhD, '63 MA, Jan. 8.

William T. Bouchelle '64 COE, Feb. 25.

Carl D. Buscaglia '64 COE, Aug. 16, 2018.

John H. Byrne '64 CLAS, Dec. 19, 2018.

The Rev. Brian S. Lowery, OSA, '64 CLAS, Feb. 23.

The Rev. George P. Magee, OSA, '64 CLAS, April 7.

Raymond A. Rizzi '64 COE, July 4, 2014.

Ronald E. Wolfe '64 CLAS, Jan. 4, 2018.

William H. Woolard '64 VSB, Jan. 23.

Charles J. Craig '65 VSB, Jan. 25.

James S. Curran '65 VSB, Dec. 23, 2018.

Frederick N. DiMarco '65 MA, Jan. 3.

Daniel J. McGarrigan '65 COE, Jan. 1.

Mary C. Moses '65 COE, Aug. 15, 2018.

Carl J. Schwab '65 CLAS, Jan. 18.

John A. Brunner '66 COE, March 25.

Helen M. Doherty '66 MS, Jan. 16, 2018.

James J. Farley, Esq., '66 CLAS, May 7, 2018.

Philip D. Gedney '66 VSB, March 5, 2018.

Harold M. Rich '66 COE, Dec. 25, 2018.

John Barry Donohue Jr., Esq., '67 CWSL, March 21.

William F. Losquadro, Esq., '67 CWSL, Feb. 28.

David J. McGraw '67 CLAS, '74 MA, March 2.

Richard A. Paini '67 CLAS, March 16.

D. Willis Hartman '68 MS, Jan. 25.

Samir S. Kassees '68 MA, April 6.

The Rev. James E. Mortimer '68 MA, Feb. 2.

Dale E. Pappert '68 CLAS, Dec. 26, 2018.

Martin Y. Sponaugle '68 CWSL, March 24.

Sister Rose Harmsen '69 CLAS, Aug. 23, 2017.

William J. Kamon Jr. '69 COE, March 25, 2015.

Francis J. McNulty '69 VSB, Dec. 9, 2018.

Francis J. Murphy '69 VSB, Jan. 5, 2017.

Phyllis C. Neill '69 MA, Jan. 28.

John J. Peters '69 CLAS, '73 MA, Dec. 22, 2018.

Anthony S. Pizzurro '69 COE, April 18.

Ronald Pomante, MD, '69 CLAS, Dec. 3, 2018.

Michael C. Walko '69 COE, Jan. 6.

## 1970s

Peter J. Cappadona '70 CLAS, Nov. 16, 2017.

Pierre C. Niesen '70 CLAS, Dec. 18, 2017.

Nancy M. Torpey '70 MS, Jan. 29.

Thomas F. Traud, Esq., '70 CWSL, Feb. 6.

Christopher J. Ball '71 CLAS, May 16, 2018.

Gerald W. Flynn '71 VSB, March 7.

James B. Gross '71 COE, Dec. 8, 2018.

Sandra C. Dombroski Fritsch, PhD, '72 MS, Jan. 13.

Paul P. DiNatale '73 CLAS, April 15.

Robert G. Fitzpatrick, Esq., '73 CLAS, Jan. 9.

William G. Pennella '73 VSB, June 8.

Pasquale A. Storti '73 VSB, Feb. 19.

Barbara A. Birney '74 MS, Feb. 28.

James J. Byrnes, MD, '74 CLAS, July 21, 2013.

Joseph P. Cunnane '74 VSB, Jan. 13.

Gregory H. Lindsay, Esq., '74 CLAS, April 7.

Helen M. McGroarty '74 MA, April 4.

Thomas J. Yesalvage '74 MS, Feb. 24.

Doris J. Curran '76 MS, March 24.

John H. Johannessen '76 CLAS, Jan. 10.

Donald A. Garritano '77 CLAS, Feb. 16.

Barbara Kuhn Pistilli '78 VSB, Dec. 22, 2018.

Rocco A. Valenti '78 CLAS, Feb. 17, 2017.

Robert A. Box '79 MCE, March 1.

Janet Hirn Laflamme '79 VSB, March 12.

## 1980s

John M. Chrostowski '80 VSB, Sept. 6, 2018.

Elaine M. Schaller '80 CLAS, March 2.

Dorothy E. Golden '81 VSB, April 21, 2018.

Petra Theodos Knox '81 MA, Jan. 1.

Sister Justina Eileen Tsoku '81 MA, March 15.

Joanne I. Tierney '82 MS, Feb. 15.

Anita C. McGowan '84 MA, Feb. 27.

Kristin Lally Clerico '87 CLAS, April 10.

Kathleen Foley Fisher '87 AA, July 26, 2018.

Christian K. Popoff '88 VSB, Feb. 17, 2016.

Nora Psula '88 MSN, Dec. 12, 2018.

John J. Wentz Jr. '89 COE, '93 MEE, Jan. 28, 2018.

## 1990s

Megan White Paugh '91 CLAS, March 14.

John F. Hochschwender '95 MBA, Feb. 23.

Kelly C. Soule '95 MSN, Jan. 8.

Robert J. Stevens '96 COE, March 8.

## 2000s

Edward W. Morris '02 MS, April 7.

## Faculty &amp; Staff

Donald DiCarlo, retired staff, Athletics, May 6.

Ronald Duska, adjunct professor, Dec. 25, 2018.

Anthony Francisco, retired staff, Jan. 31.

Joan Fricker, retired staff, Charles Widger School of Law, Jan. 17.

Paul Gormley, retired faculty, Mathematics and Computing Sciences, May 8.

Cornelius Kiley, retired faculty, History, Feb. 18.

Lewis Mathers, retired faculty, Civil and Environmental Engineering, May 7.

Edward Rideout, retired staff, University Advancement, May 16.

Regina Ruane, retired staff, Alumni Relations, Jan. 28.

Howard Spencer, retired staff, Public Safety, April 23.

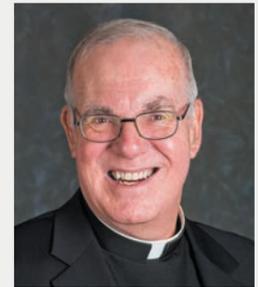


PHOTO: BARBARA JOHNSTON

## Augustinian, Former Trustee Remembered

The Rev. Anthony M. Genovese, OSA, '70 CLAS, widely known as Father Mickey, passed away peacefully on July 21. Father Mickey was a former member of the University's Board of Trustees and had served as pastor of St. Thomas of Villanova Parish, where he oversaw the completion of renovations to the church in the early 1990s; Prior of St. Thomas of Villanova Monastery; and Prior Provincial of the Augustinian Province of St. Thomas of Villanova. Most recently, he served as chaplain of the Villanova Women's Basketball team.

"Father Mickey was a kind, caring and compassionate person who was a big part of our program," says Villanova Women's Basketball Head Coach Harry Perretta '95 MA. "You could always count on him for his enthusiasm, passion and positive outlook to the players, coaches and support staff. It won't be the same next year not having him sitting at the end of the bench during our games. We will all miss him dearly."

Each issue, Villanova Magazine will give readers a glimpse of a culminating project for a Villanova student or group of students. In these experiences, students get to apply what they know, pursue what they love and present what they discover.

# Rethinking Recycling

MBA students help a recycling innovator unveil a new zero-waste packaging platform to the world.



## 1 THE CLIENT

A global leader in collecting and repurposing hard-to-recycle waste, Trenton, N.J.-based TerraCycle Inc. launched Loop, a new project to take their mission one step further. The program aims to eliminate waste by creating durable, refillable packaging for common grocery, household and personal care goods. After using the products, customers return the empty containers to Loop to be thoroughly cleaned, refilled with new product and redelivered.

## 2 THE NEED

Consumer packaged goods companies that partner with Loop need to create or obtain packaging that meets Loop standards for cleanability, refillability, zero-waste labeling and recyclability. However, explaining these requirements to potential partners was complex and time-consuming, and Loop needed a simplified and streamlined onboarding process that would help these companies develop their own packaging or find suitable packaging vendors.

## 3 THE INNOVATORS

That's where a team of Villanova MBA students came in. As Loop prepared for its official reveal at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, earlier this year, 2019 MBA grads Rebekah Hopper, Elizabeth McShane, Sejal Patel, Marissa Smatlak and Mishel Stearns partnered with the company to help them develop a short-term solution that could be implemented quickly.

Advised by Manuel Nuñez '03 MBA, professor of Practice, Management and Operations, and alumni adviser Stacy Hudgins '06 EMBA, the student team completed this project for their Social Enterprise Consulting Practicum. This Villanova Business capstone course is designed to give MBA students the opportunity to develop their professional skill set with a client firm that is serving the common good within the greater Philadelphia community—reflecting Villanova's Augustinian values while teaching students how to work at the intersection of profit and purpose.

## 4 THE BIG REVEAL

The team created an interactive digital guide to assist new partners with the onboarding process. The guide provided an overview of the Loop concept and packaging and labeling standards, as well as suggestions for design agencies, manufacturers and off-the-shelf packaging vendors.

"The team provided a fresh set of eyes and came up with a number of different ideas that were really helpful," says Jasmin Druffner, a durable packaging developer at Loop. "Their work provided a great foundation for the guide I ultimately presented in Davos." Now available in certain Northeast US states and Paris, Loop is in the process of expanding across the US and internationally.

## NOVA NATION Hats Off!

In May, more than 2,500 Villanova graduates walked across the stage and into the next chapter of their lives. Over two days, more than 15,000 guests arrived on campus to celebrate our graduates at three Commencement ceremonies, three masses, five undergraduate convocations and one Naval ROTC commissioning ceremony.



PHOTOS BY Pete Brown, Paul Crane, James Judy, Maria Mueller, John Shetron and Marissa Reinhart

### **Undercover Campus**

Villanovans haven't hesitated to get their hands dirty at the new on-campus research garden this year. More than 250 volunteers, numerous undergraduate and graduate classes, and researchers have gotten to work—including the garden's first funded Villanova Undergraduate Research Fellow. Established by the Villanova Consortium for Agricultural Research and Education, the garden boasts 19 raised beds that house plentiful fruits, vegetables and herbs, as well as several research projects.

