It’s difficult to talk about Tom Holt Jr. ’85 VSB and the Holt family tradition he started at Villanova without going back 90 years into Holt family history.

In 1926, Holt’s grandfather, Leo Holt, was looking for a better way to support his family. He bought a truck and started delivering cargo. He worked tirelessly throughout the Great Depression and other challenges. Later, Tom Holt Sr. and his brother worked alongside their father to help grow the trucking business.

Tom Sr., Holt’s father, was “larger than life” and thrived in the family business. A graduate of a Catholic high school, he enrolled his children in Catholic schools. He also encouraged them to do something he had never done—get a college education.

**SETTING THE TREND**

Holt took his father’s words to heart, and when he enrolled at Villanova, he became the first Holt to attend college. “Villanova was just what I was looking for,” Holt says. “I was coming from a small Catholic high school, and I wanted to be close to my high school sweetheart, Angela DiBello, who was attending St. Joseph’s University. I really enjoyed my time at Villanova and learned a lot about business.”

Holt’s positive experience had a profound influence on his family. Over the next decades, his two brothers, Leo ‘86 CLAS and Michael ‘95 CLAS, and Leo’s wife, Melinda DeNofa-Holt ‘96 VSB, attended the University. Holt and Angela married, and Villanova was the college of choice for their five children: Tom III ’06 VSB; Eric ’07 VSB; Phillip ‘10 VSB; Angela Marie “Minnie” Devine ‘09 CON, ’17 MBA; and Tom Holt Jr. ’85 VSB.

Today, Holt Logistics Corp. is a group of affiliated transport companies—encompassing logistics, port and warehouse services—that spans nine counties in southeastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. By any measure, the Holt businesses are innovative and successful. But what makes the third generation of Holts proudest is something much more personal.

“Our grandfather’s and father’s devotion to family is the thing that probably means the most to us,” says Leo. “Today, we have the fourth generation of Holts coming on board. And the company not only supports the entire Holt family, but also supports more than 1,000 families in the Delaware Valley.”

**NOVA PRIDE**

In the 1990s, Holt’s dad, Tom Sr., donated to Villanova to pay for scholarships for those who couldn’t afford to attend. Holt says giving back to Villanova is a priority for him as well. “I reconnected with Villanova through one of the early campaigns, and I have a lot of passion for and commitment to the University,” Holt says. “I have many more Villanova friends now than I did when I graduated. They are involved in many different things, and giving back is a big part of it.”

“It’s amazing to look at the evolution of the University and see what Villanova has become over the past 30 years,” Holt’s brother Michael says. “As alums, we can go beyond simply supporting our alma mater and have a meaningful impact on a tremendous success story.”

Holt serves on the President’s Advisory Council, which meets with University leaders, helps alumni and parents stay connected to Villanova, and has been instrumental in the momentum behind the Villanova Campaign to Ignite Change. The Holt family has hosted various Villanova events, and was one of the major donors who helped create and fund Villanova’s Institute for Innovation, Creativity and Entrepreneurship.

“We even had 11 Holts in Houston in 2016 supporting our basketball team for the championship game,” Holt says. “We had a tremendous time. From my perspective, reconnecting with Villanova is probably one of the best things I’ve ever done.”
Expanding Reach

The days when the majority of Villanovans came from, and returned to work in, cities in the Northeast are gone. Villanova attracts students from across the country and around the globe, and it has more than 123,000 alumni worldwide. For example, today, thousands of Villanovans live in California, which boasts the University’s fourth-largest alumni population.

Edgar Grey ’67 CLAS, who was born and raised in Sewickley, Pa., outside of Pittsburgh, is one of those thousands. Grey went west to work after graduation. Through a chance encounter with a fellow alumnus, he became involved in the Villanova University Club of Orange County.

“I take great pride in being a part of this community, so I wear a lot of Villanova gear,” Grey says. “The man noticed my clothes and struck up a conversation about the club. It was that easy.”

In addition to alumni moving to the West Coast after college, the University has received an increasing number of applications from the region over the past decade. One such case is Grey’s son Aaron ’12 VSB.

The father-son duo returned to campus to celebrate milestone reunions this past June.

“It was my 50th reunion—and the first Reunion Weekend I’ve ever attended,” Grey says. “I was happy to see how far Villanova has advanced—academically, culturally and physically—while remaining true to its foundation.”

Patricia Rodriguez ’10 CLAS also knows what it is like to feel connected to her alma mater and other alumni. Rodriguez, who came from a close-knit community in Puerto Rico, felt right at home at Villanova. When she returned to the island after graduation, she wanted to find a way to bring her two worlds together.

Rodriguez has helped to reinvigorate interest in the Villanova University Club of Puerto Rico, of which she is currently president.

“We’re modeling events after what we loved on campus—meeting new people, participating in community service, cheering on our teams during game watches,” she says. (See Page 50 to learn about the many ways Villanovans have contributed to hurricane relief efforts in Puerto Rico and elsewhere.)

Growing Affinity

Alumni often build community because they share common ground or interests. Thanks to the University’s deep connections with the nursing and military communities, Navy nurse Cmdr. Kim Shaughnessy, CNM, ’97 CON, ’17 DNP has moved across the country—and the world—but has never been far from fellow Villanovans.

“I went to the NROTC reception at Reunion 2017 and met many current students and older graduates in the Navy,” she says. “It expanded my network and made me feel part of what’s happening now.”

 Cmdr. Kim Shaughnessy, CNM, ’97 CON, ’17 DNP has traveled extensively for her work as a nurse midwife in the US Navy but has always stayed connected to Villanova.

The College of Nursing has a strong presence in the Navy,” she says. “I’ve been fortunate to meet and work with other alumni at every hospital where I’ve been stationed, from San Diego to Okinawa.”

While working at US Navy hospitals in Japan from 2007 to 2012, Shaughnessy also began to use Facebook—including the Villanova University Alumni Association’s page—to keep in touch with classmates, share news and see campus updates.

Now back in Virginia, Shaughnessy has taken advantage of opportunities to attend events with the Club of Greater Washington, D.C., and serve on the board of the new Villanova Vets affinity group.

“I went to the NROTC reception at Reunion 2017 and met many current students and older graduates in the Navy,” she says. “It expanded my network and made me feel part of what’s happening now.”

Villanova gave me the greatest gift of all—the confidence and the connections to pursue my career halfway across the world.” —Paul Parisi ’09 VSB
Clockwise from top left: New VUAA board members Christine Kraninger ’93 CLAS, Jon Williams ’03 CLAS, Patricia "Patti" May ’77 CON and M. Brian Muscarella ’80 VSB.

M. BRIAN MUSCARELLA ’80 VSB

After a 27-year career in the insurance industry, Brian Muscarella saw his life change dramatically when a spinal stroke rendered him paralyzed in 2011.

Since that day, Muscarella, managing director at NYLEX Benefits, has dedicated his life to helping others with disabilities, frequently speaking at schools, organizations and rehabilitation centers in the Charlotte, N.C., area, as well as at Villanova.

President of the Villanova University Club of Charlotte, Muscarella has been on the club’s Leadership Council since 2004 and received the VUAA Leadership Award in 2013. The club received the Rev. Ray Jackson Community Service Award in 2014. He lives in Charlotte with his wife, daughters and granddaughter.

JON WILLIAMS ’03 CLAS

As a student, Jon Williams was a stand-out goaller for Men’s Soccer, recognized as a Big East All-Academic All-Star. As an alumnus, he has been a strong supporter of Villanova, serving as president emeritus and co-founder of the Villanova University Club of North Central Jersey.

Senior Director of Brokerage Services at Cushman & Wakefield in Morristown, N.J., Williams remains involved with the Soccer program.

Williams has also consistently been a top producer at his company and is a part of the Rising Leadership Council, which helps Cushman & Wakefield leadership create many of the company’s most important initiatives and policies.

PATRICIA “PATTI” MAY ’77 CON

Patricia "Patti" May is director of Perioperative Nursing as a consultant with Surgical Directions, based in Chicago, and has more than 30 years of experience in perioperative services.

Members of the President’s Club, May and her husband, David ’75 COE, have been active alumni in Colorado since the 1980s. They have hosted the Colorado New Student Send-Off for the past 15 years.

Along with their three daughters, Meaghan May Hildreth ’08 COE; Katrina May Rolston ’10 CON, ’14 MSN; and Erin May ’13 CLAS, the Mays were the hosts for the Class Gift Match, pledging to donate for each senior who made a gift of any size to Villanova.

CHRISTINE KRANINGER ’93 CLAS

Christine Kraninger married her husband, Dan Kraninger ’93 CLAS, in 1996. As Dan was starting a financial services company, the Kraningers founded the Villanova University Club of Fairfield and Westchester and welcomed three children.

Through the growing Villanova Club and her family, Christine discovered her true passion: supporting her children and working with local nonprofit organizations.

She is proud that her eldest son, Ben, is now a freshman at Villanova. He is the third generation in her family to attend Villanova. Her father, Armando Cuesta ’64 COE, started the tradition when he attended the University as a refugee after an Augustinian priest gave him safe passage from Cuba.

THOUSANDS OF PROUD VILLANOVANS, FAMILIES AND FRIENDS GATHERED FOR REUNION WEEKEND 2017

Thousands of proud Villanovans, families and friends gathered for Reunion Weekend 2017, June 8-11, with nearly 40 events across campus.

Highlights included the family picnic, president’s lunch, alumni Mass, and Supernova dinner and dance.

Additional special events and parties honored the classes of 1967 and 1992 as those Wildcat alumni marked their 50th and 25th reunions, respectively, and shared memories of their undergraduate experiences.

Reunion 2018 will be held May 31–June 3 and honor class years ending in “3” or “8.”