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## Talk and squawk in the news



STEVE PUPPE

**“Good Morning America” correspondent Becky Worley:** *“Guys, this is a dream assignment, I tell ya.”*

**GMA host Robin Roberts:** *“Are you really there? Because that looks like a movie set. So picture-perfect.”*

**Worley:** *“It’s incredible, you guys. I can’t even believe I’m standing here and it’s gotten more beautiful as we’ve been here all morning long.”*

—Worley reporting live on ABC alongside Ted Ginter, '92, on his family's beloved sunflower farm near Tonganoxie, during the live stand-up segment of Worley's Sept. 9 “Rise and Shine” travel feature. Worley's report also included a visit with men's basketball coach Bill Self in Allen Field House and “Ted Lasso” actor Jason Sudeikis' parents at Sporting Kansas City's soccer stadium, and pieces on the Eldridge Hotel, Joe's Kansas City Bar-B-Que, and, because of course, Wamego's Oz Museum.

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KU NEWS



ISTOCK PHOTOS/BRIAN MCENTIRE

**“These terms don’t exactly roll off the tongue. A kid’s not going to want to grow up dreaming to be a civilian crew. Space tourist is not a good Halloween costume.”**

—Andrew McKenzie, associate professor of linguistics, in a Houston Chronicle story on the debate over what to call Jeff Bezos, Richard Branson and others who flew on private spacecraft this year, the first time Americans not trained by NASA orbited Earth.

**“Norm @normmacdonald was a great talent, and I loved laughing with him on SNL. \*Bob Dole\* will miss Norm Macdonald.”**

— A tribute tweet from former U.S. Sen. Bob Dole, '45, after the Sept. 14 death of his Saturday Night Live doppelganger, who made America laugh with his good-natured impersonations during Dole's 1996 presidential campaign.



@SENATORDOLE/TWITTER

**“Would be a lot cooler if this was a pool but whatever.”**

—A Twitter post by @StudentsofKU in response to the giant, blue “KU” letters atop the Wescoe Hall roof. CentiMark, a commercial roofing company in Lenexa, recently installed a new roof on the building and added the rooftop logo at no extra charge. According to KU officials, the graphic, which measures 80 feet from top to bottom, will be highly visible on Google Earth.



COVER STORY

Statistics for Smarties and Other Fun Stuff

Of brownies, bubble-gum and books for people who (think they don't) have a head for numbers.

by Chris Lazzarino

Cover illustration by Susan Younger; photograph by Steve Puppe



First Sight

In a new exhibition, treasures from the Spencer's permanent collection are ready for their close-ups.

by Jennifer Jackson Sanner



A Man Walks Into a Bar

A funny thing happened on the way to the border: Sean Powers found his comedy voice on the Pacific Crest Trail.

by Steven Hill



Profile: Gwen Westerman

Connections to family and land inspire Minnesota's new poet laureate.

by Steven Hill

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ONLINE EXTRAS

Videos

Statistics guru Neil Salkind suggested mayonnaise belongs in brownies. We investigated.



Digital Feature

KU Alumni Association Annual Report



From the Archives

After an \$8 million renovation, the Spencer Museum of Art unveils transformed first-floor galleries in "The Big Reveal," issue No. 5, 2016.

kansasalumni magazine.org

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Kansas Alumni welcomes letters to the editor. Our address is Kansas Alumni magazine, 1266 Oread Avenue, Lawrence, KS 66045-3100. Email responses may be sent to the Alumni Association, [kualumni@kualumni.org](mailto:kualumni@kualumni.org). Please limit your comments to 350 words. Letters appearing in the magazine may be edited for space and clarity. For letters published, we'll send a free KU gift, a \$5 value.

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*Jennifer Jackson Sanner, Editor September 29, 2021*



### Lots to like ...

I HAVE BEEN RECEIVING the alumni magazine for decades, but the current issue stands out as one of the very best.

Admittedly, I usually flip through each issue, rarely reading any story in depth, but always checking Class Notes for updates and, sadly, obits of people I knew.

This issue, however, grabbed my interest with the compelling cover photo.

I wrongly assumed that the two were professional colleagues involved with the leadership of the University.

To read the article and learn of the personal story of this married couple and their important professional work,



"More than Meets the Eye," issue No. 3, 2021

along with the photos, was a joy.

Kudos to the graphic designer who chose to show the "then-and-now" photos of the couple. Seeing that was enough to get me to read the article.

The "More than Meets the Eye" photo contest article was a visual treat. Growing up in Salina, I sometimes take for granted the beauty in the humble landscape and lives we lead.

When I turned the page to "My Son's Story," I knew I had to read it, too. Thank you to everyone who was involved in the decision to bring this important story into the light. Jerri Clark's personal essay on the subject of mental illness was gripping. It put a face on a topic that we hear about in the news and yet so often keep at a distance.

Sadly, I know of two fellow KU alumni whose lives have been greatly lessened by the horrors of mental illness (schizophrenia).

When I got to the 1983 Class Notes, I was surprised to find myself and struck by the fact that I shared that I am simply "an artist." That stood

out from all the "loftier" achievements on the page—those who are now CEO, CFO, president or chairperson.

Sure, my updates read more like the others through the years, as I achieved higher levels during my 29-year career with Hallmark, culminating in creative director.

Still, I think I may be more proud of my current status than any previous one.

Writing this after reading the current issue has me thinking about many memories from my days on the Hill and the people I have known. Isn't that what the publication is all about? Well done, all. Well done.

*—John Keeling, f'83  
Kansas City*



Calvin Clark

### ... Cover to cover

THANK YOU SO much for the inspiring stories and photographs in the latest issue of *Kansas Alumni*. The articles really sparked my interest, and I read the magazine from cover to cover.

As a Kansan now living in Florida, the striking photography in the article "More than Meets the Eye" by Steven Hill made me very nostalgic for my Midwestern roots.

In addition, "My Son's Story" by Jerri Niebaum Clark introduced me to health care issues I had never been exposed to. Her bravery in giving us her family's story was compelling, as is her continuing work in the mental health field.

It's also great to know we have such brilliant KU doctors and researchers to be proud of as Barney Graham and Cynthia Turner-Graham. How wonderful to know that a Kansan was instrumental in creating the COVID-19 vaccine!

All in all, you and your staff did a fantastic job on this issue. I am already looking forward to the next one.

*—Cynthia Bender, g'88  
Trinity, Florida*

### DROP US A LINE

WE WELCOME letters to the editor. The Alumni Association and the University remain committed to free speech and the rights of all individuals to express their differing personal views, including those that others might find challenging or inappropriate. Letters appearing in Lift the Chorus represent only the authors' opinions, and *Kansas Alumni* reserves the right to edit as needed for clarity and as space requires. Please limit responses to 350 words, and send them to [kualumni@kualumni.org](mailto:kualumni@kualumni.org) or 1266 Oread Avenue, Lawrence, KS 66045-3100.

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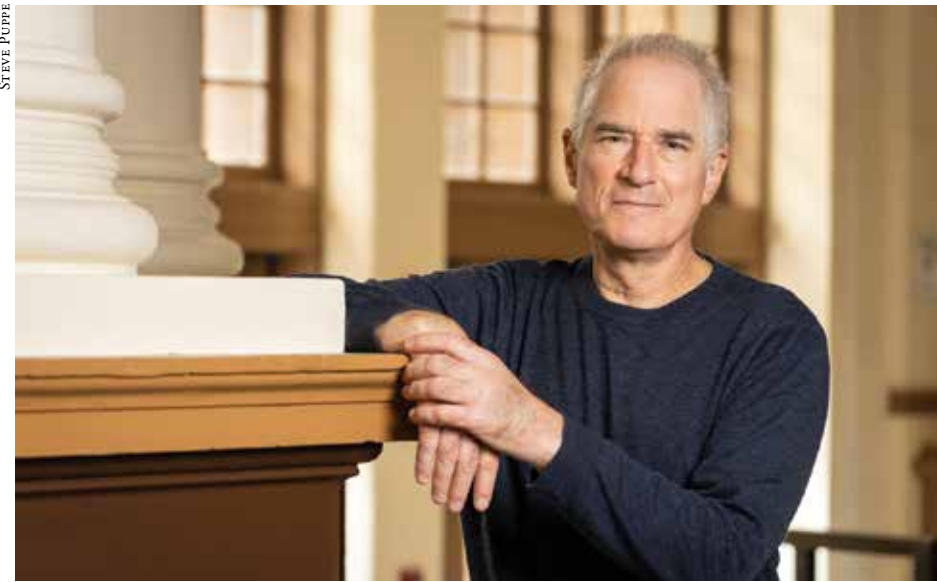


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STEVE PORPE



A KANSAS CITY TV news reporter recently contacted me to discuss teaching at the University in the midst of COVID-19. She began the interview by asking how I explained the unprecedented nature and impact of the pandemic to my students.

Now, I'm a historian, and we historians are generally of the Ecclesiastes school of thought: "There is no new thing under the sun." Unprecedented? If you want to talk about a pandemic, try the Black Death, which killed millions of Europeans during the Middle Ages; the waves of smallpox epidemics that devastated American Indians from the 17th to the 19th centuries; and, of course, the 1918-'19 influenza pandemic, which first became evident at Fort Riley and killed at least 675,000 Americans (in a total U.S. population of just over 100 million). Nonetheless, the reporter had a point.

We have responded to COVID differently from how Americans reacted to most previous public health crises. Almost from the beginning, the pandemic became a fiercely partisan political issue. Americans quickly came to have radically divergent understandings of what could and should be done to manage the illness, and those divides have only deepened over time. KU students, I soon learned, likewise held widely different views on COVID—

often based on their political leanings.

Consequently, discussing the issue with students remains tricky. As a professor, I feel strongly that it is not my business to push an ideological or political position on my students. At the same time, as we professors like to say, COVID has presented the University community a useful "teachable moment."

The battles over how to respond to COVID open the classroom door to some of the most vexing questions of our time. In the morass of social media, cable TV and the near-endless recesses of the internet, how do we know which information is trustworthy? What is and what should be the basis of expertise and cultural authority in America's democratic society? How should we balance individual freedom with the public good? And, from a vantage point of institutional self-interest, what does or should education at KU, one of only 131 Carnegie Research 1 universities in the United States, contribute to the search for truth in a world where so many, regardless of their training or analytic sophistication, feel called upon "to do their own research" on all matter of issues, even the most technical and scientifically complex?

None of these questions, obviously, have simple answers. That's part of the learning experience at KU: embrace complexity

and be open to intellectual uncertainty. I know my students live in a culture driven by social media bluster and clever memes, but I want them to learn how to recognize and make a well-substantiated argument based on the best available evidence.

To develop those skills, as is a historian's wont, I ask my students to look to the past to prepare themselves for the future. During the early months of the pandemic, for example, we read essays crafted in two distinct eras by two starkly different American thinkers: conservative philosopher Russell Kirk's "The Essence of Conservatism" (1957) and President Theodore Roosevelt's "New Nationalism," the address he gave in 1910 at the dedication of the John Brown memorial in Osawatimie. How do these two Americans, I asked my students, envision good citizenship? How do they justify their claims to their respective audiences? How do they establish their authority to make such claims? To what extent do their essays reflect the times in which they lived? By examining these and other readings and by answering such questions, students can develop the habits of mind that just might enable them to see through the carnal shenanigans of too many of today's public figures and withstand the dark rabbit holes of internet "research."

Teaching at KU in the Age of the Pandemic has offered both students and instructors unexpected opportunities for intense educational exploration. COVID and the fraught political battles that have swirled around it have forced us all to confront the meaning of leadership in our democracy, the utility of evidence in the search for truth, the acceptable balance between conflicting values and interests and much more. At KU, many of us have done our best—even amid so much COVID-related sorrow and uncertainty—to use our classrooms to grapple with the enduring questions the pandemic has placed in such tight focus.

—DAVID FARBER

*Farber is the Roy A. Roberts Distinguished Professor of History.*



*NATIVE HOSTS*, A FIVE-PANEL SERIES by Edgar Heap of Birds, f'76, (Cheyenne, Arapaho) on Oct. 14 returned with proper ceremony to the Spencer Museum of Art after vandals defaced four of the panels and the fifth was stolen. KU's First Nations Student Association, University leaders and about 100 community members rededicated *Native Hosts*, which acknowledges tribes that historically or currently inhabit the region and serves as this year's KU Common Work of Art. Professor Robert Warrior (Osage) described *Native Hosts* as an invitation to pause and consider the struggles of Indigenous peoples and acknowledge those who came before.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN WAGGONER



STEVE PUPPE

STUDENTS

## New admissions standards

*First-year students no longer need to report ACT or SAT scores*

THE KANSAS BOARD of Regents has approved new admissions standards for the University that no longer require incoming freshmen to submit standardized test scores. First-year students will now be assured admission to KU if they have:

- a 3.25 GPA on a 4.0 scale, or
- a 2.0 GPA plus an ACT score of at least 21 (or an SAT score of at least 1,060).

These changes take effect in spring 2022 and are similar to test-optional pathways at other Kansas universities, including K-State, Wichita State and Emporia State. The KU application deadline for freshman scholarships is Dec. 1 for new students planning to enroll for the fall 2022 semester.

According to Matt Melvin, vice provost for enrollment management, COVID-19 helped drive the revision of KU's admissions criteria. "The pandemic forced our hands, and it forced the hands of most schools across the country," he says, explaining that the widespread closure of standardized test sites

prevented many students from taking the exams. "It forced institutions to do what a lot of schools were looking into anyhow—decreasing emphasis on standardized test scores."

Over the past year, several university systems in the United States, including those in California, Oregon, Colorado and Illinois, have moved to test-optional standards for admissions, allowing students to choose whether they submit ACT or SAT scores. Some institutions have gone a step further and become test-blind, meaning that even if students submit exam scores, those scores aren't considered in the application process. KU's test-optional pathway allows the University to remain competitive in attracting out-of-state students.

"The market shifted, and one of the things we talk about at KU all the time is, 'How can we maintain that we are in equilibrium with the market?'" Melvin says. "That really was a driver."

The new policy also helps ensure that the University's admissions process is as fair and equitable as possible, regardless of a student's background. In recent years, Melvin explains, high school students have often taken the ACT or SAT multiple times and even enlisted coaching services to obtain higher scores—critical advantages for some but not all students. By eliminating the test requirement and putting greater emphasis on GPA and the academic intensity of a student's high school curriculum, "It levels the playing field a bit," he says. "It looks at the success of a student over the course of their

academic career in high school versus how they did on a Saturday morning."

Though standardized test scores are no longer required, Lisa Pinamonti Kress, director of KU Admissions, still encourages students to take at least one of the exams, reminding them that the score may be helpful for placement into courses or for scholarship purposes. But she admits that not having to continually chase a high score is a relief for many students and their families. "I know students are certainly excited about not having to retake the test," says Kress, g'98. "If they have the GPA, they have the confidence of knowing they're getting in. Some students are super-successful at GPA and they take the test and they're like, 'Oh, it's not the score I want,' and they kind of feel pressured to keep taking it." But with KU's new test-optional policy, students are required to report only their GPA and, if they want, their test score. "If you meet the requirements you're admitted within 48 hours," Kress continues. "If you don't, we review your application and it takes another seven to 10 days to hear back. I think it eases up the stress of retaking that test."

Melvin, who for years has advocated that GPA is the best predictor of student success in higher education, hopes the new standards ultimately will boost student enrollment and retention. "Our admissions requirements aren't designed to keep people out," he says. "That's never what we're about. Our admissions requirements were designed to say, 'Can we predict success in college? Can we predict success at KU?' That's what we're about."

"Over the next year or two, we are clearly going to start looking at how are these students doing in terms of their academic performance, their academic progress from term to term, their success rate with certain courses, their retention rates. There becomes a whole opportunity for an assessment to say, 'Are those variables that we're collecting predictive of success?' And I think that's going to be the next round of research that we do."

—HEATHER BIELE

## Fall 2021 Enrollment

- **27,685** on **all campuses** (+ 66 students, or .2 %)
- **23,598** **Lawrence/Edwards Campus** (-6 students from fall 2019)
- **4,119** new **freshmen** (+290 students or 7.6%, 6 fewer than pre-pandemic Fall 2019)
- **3.66** freshman **average** high school GPA (highest on record)
- **84.8%** one-year **retention rate** for **Fall 2020** freshmen (3rd-highest on record)
- **6,681** **minority students** (24.1% of total KU population, largest on record)
- **1,584** **veterans, active-duty and military-connected (dependent) students** (+.4%)



STEVE PUPPE



The new policy helps ensure that the University's admissions process is as fair and equitable as possible, regardless of a student's background.

**“I came here with the idea of building and maintaining our relationships with everyone out there.”**

—Chief Nelson Mosley



CAMPUS

## Open-door policy

*Accountability, transparency are priorities for KU’s new police chief*

NELSON MOSLEY, the University’s new chief of police and director of KU Public Safety Office, has led departments both large and small in his nearly 35-year career in law enforcement. So, then, what attracted him to the Jayhawk community? “Well, number one, I’m a KU fan,” he says with a grin, “and I have been for a while.”

But for Mosley, who in September replaced retired KU Chief of Police Chris Keary, c’83, it’s more about continuing the good work of his friend and predecessor and promoting community policing by strengthening relationships with KU students, faculty and staff. “Just like anything, we can always make things better,” he says.

Mosley grew up in Felton, Delaware, a town with just over 1,400 residents, and moved to Kansas after completing basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio. Throughout his military service, he remained committed to a career in law enforcement. “I always wanted to be a police officer, since I was little,” he says. “I had two uncles who were state policemen, and I remember they had the high boots. I used to help take them off and I

thought, ‘I want to do that.’ So that was my motivation from then on.”

In 1987, Mosley joined the Wichita Police Department and was promoted to deputy police chief in 2009. Along the way, he served as captain of the Crimes Against Persons Bureau and led the unit that responded when the city’s notorious serial killer BTK resurfaced in 2004. He retired in 2016, after nearly two years as Wichita’s interim police chief, but the break was short-lived. “After getting through my list of chores and things that needed attention around the house—and that went rather quickly—I made a decision,” Mosley, then 50 years old, says. “I’m ready to get back to work.”

When the chief of police position opened in 2016 in Rose Hill, a suburb southeast of Wichita where he and his family lived, Mosley jumped at the chance. The change of pace was welcome, and he embraced the opportunity to get out and interact with community members, something that didn’t come easily as chief in a much larger metropolis. Now, five years later, Mosley enjoys a similar experience on Mount Oread. “I came here with the idea of building and maintaining our relationships with everyone out there,” he says.

In his first few months, Mosley has focused on the 12 recommendations created last fall by the 27-member Chancellor’s Task Force on Community-Responsive Public Safety. The recommended changes, all of which Chancellor Doug Girod approved this year, include improvements to KU’s

response to behavioral health crises, updates to policies on officer conduct and the formation of an oversight board [“Public Safety changes planned,” issue No. 3, 2021]. Mosley also stresses the importance of recruiting a diverse staff of qualified law enforcement officers—more closely representative of the University community itself—and prioritizing accountability and transparency, an increasingly important issue following the recent deaths of George Floyd and other Black men and women during police encounters.

“It’s just a matter of making sure we’re doing the right thing,” he says. “Most police departments are doing it and should be. I know we’re ahead of the curve; we’re doing those things. We’re a leader by continuing what we’ve been doing.”

Mosley, who recently served as president of the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police, also looks forward to working with local law enforcement agencies, which KU relies upon during games and other University events, and getting involved with the greater Lawrence community. But for now, KU students, faculty and staff get his immediate attention.

“I have an open-door policy,” he says. “If I’m here, you can stop in and talk to me about any number of things.

“This is your police department.”

—HEATHER BIELE

NEWS BRIEF

## Sun salutation

AFTER LOSING BOTH her father and husband 20 years ago prompted Toni Brou to adapt the motto “The sun always rises,” the visual artist began crafting smiling sun artworks that draw inspiration from her father’s love of making art from found objects in his Dodge City workshop.

Since 2011, two dozen of Brou’s suns—which she sculpts and affixes to hubcaps before painting—have been featured on the long-running CBS News program “Sunday Morning.” Now her digital collage “Sun Over Sunflowers,” which combines her sculpture “Spring’s A Comin’” and her photograph of Grinter’s Sunflower Farm, is featured in the show’s first calendar, *Follow the Suns*, a 2022 day-to-day calendar published by Simon & Schuster.

“The current sun curator at the show has been at her position for 20 years and during that time hand-picked 9,000-plus suns,” says Brou, f’91. “When I heard my sun was one of 12 chosen out of 9,000

shown over the years, I was kind of shocked—and very honored.”

In addition to her sun sculptures, Brou also creates ceramics, paints silk scarves, and does graphic design, including for *Kansas Alumni*. See more of her work at [tonibrou.com](http://tonibrou.com).

Making art is a meditative activity that has helped her cope with personal loss, and she often hears from people who say her suns do the same for them.

“When I was first widowed, I had three little boys, and holidays were really difficult,” Brou says. “We had family friends who always made sure we weren’t alone. At one holiday dinner, a really kind lady told me a story about her dad. He worked in Colorado on the railroad and would get up in the middle of these brutal winters early in the morning to go to work, and he’d always say, ‘Well, spring’s



Toni Brou’s digital collage, “Sun Over Sunflowers,” brightens the month of May in *Follow the Suns*, a 2022 calendar featuring art from the popular news program “CBS Sunday Morning.”



a comin.’ I knew she was trying to tell me things would get better.

“So now that I’ve kind of come through—hopefully—the worst of things, I like to encourage other people. It’s really worth a lot to know that it’s helping someone else.”



**“This award highlights the key role Kansas plays in advanced manufacturing and how they continue to innovate in critical areas such as renewable plastics that will benefit the entire nation”**

—Sethuraman Panchanathan



RESEARCH

## Project to create safer plastics

*NSF director, Sen. Moran announce grant during campus visit*

THREE KU PROFESSORS will help lead research to improve the manufacturing and recycling of plastics as part of a four-year, \$4 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF).

“We’re excited to advance technologies that will help society transition to a more sustainable plastic economy,” said lead investigator Bala Subramaniam, Dan F. Servey Distinguished Professor of Chemical & Petroleum Engineering and director of the Center for Environmentally Beneficial Catalysis (CEBC).

Subramaniam’s KU colleagues on the project are Alan Allgeier, associate professor of chemical & petroleum engineering and CEBC deputy director, and Donna Ginther, Roy A. Roberts Distinguished Professor of Economics and director of KU’s Institute for Policy & Social Research. Completing the leadership team are Timothy Dawsey, executive director of the Kansas Polymer Research Center at Pittsburg State University, and Raul Lobo, Claire D. LeClaire Professor of Chemical & Biomolecular



Engineering at the University of Delaware. News of the grant was delivered personally by NSF director Sethuraman Panchanathan, who

visited KU Sept. 17 with U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, c’76, f’82, to meet some of the researchers and students involved in NSF-funded research at the University.

“This award highlights the key role Kansas plays in advanced manufacturing and how they continue to innovate in critical areas such as renewable plastics that will benefit the entire nation,” Panchanathan said.

The project will strive to reduce the environmental toll of discarded plastics in two ways. First, researchers will develop sustainable methods to



OPPOSITE, l to r: NSF Director Sethuraman Panchanathan’s momentous visit to KU was years in the making. Panchanathan and U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran met with Ana Rita C. Morais, assistant professor of chemical and petroleum engineering, to learn about her research.

TOP, l to r: Panchanathan, Moran and graduate student Victor Sharma also heard from Alan Allgeier, associate professor of chemical and petroleum engineering and part of the team that will help create more sustainable plastics with the new NSF grant.

ABOVE, l to r: Mark Shiflett, Foundation Distinguished Professor of Chemical and Petroleum Engineering, and his students presented the Shiflett Research Group’s work.

transform non-food biological resources such as grasses and crop leftovers into plastic products—which in turn will advance economic growth for farmers. Second, the team will improve processes for breaking down used plastic into elements to create new plastic.

The KU grant was one of nine the NSF announced in September to fund collaborative projects that target national priorities. Kansas and Delaware both participate in the NSF EPSCoR, which stands for Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research. For 40 years, the initiative has strengthened studies in science, technology and engineering in about half of all U.S. states.

Since 2006, KU has received 11 EPSCoR awards totaling more than \$72.4 million.

Over the past decade, 26 KU faculty members, including eight women, have received NSF career awards.

In fiscal year 2021, the NSF awarded \$23.1 million to KU for projects that include 37 principal investigators across 17 research centers and departments.

## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

*For full listings of events, visit the links below.*

### *Lied Center*

**Dec. 5** Vespers

**Dec. 10** Ashley Davis Winter Solstice with special guest Cormac De Barra

**Dec. 17** “Summer: The Donna Summer Musical”

**Jan. 18** Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis

**Jan. 23** Russian National Ballet: “Swan Lake”

[lied.ku.edu](http://lied.ku.edu)

### *Spencer Museum of Art*

“Debut,” through fall 2022

[spencerart.ku.edu](http://spencerart.ku.edu)

### *Murphy Hall*

**Dec. 3** Chamber Music Ensembles

**Dec. 7** Rock Chalk Singers

[music.ku.edu](http://music.ku.edu)

### *University Theatre*

**Dec. 3-5, 7-9** “The Devils Between Us”

[theatredance.ku.edu](http://theatredance.ku.edu)

### *Humanities Lecture Series*

**Dec. 7** Simone Marchesi

[hallcenter.ku.edu](http://hallcenter.ku.edu)

### *Academic Calendar*

**Nov. 24-28** Thanksgiving break

**Dec. 10** Stop Day

**Dec. 13-17** Finals week



The Kansas Biological Survey in July changed its name to the Kansas Biological Survey & Center for Ecological Research to better reflect its mission and scope, which includes research in terrestrial, aquatic, remote sensing and analytical subjects, as well as management of the KU Field Station. "This re-designation aims to more clearly convey our prominent role in generating basic and transformative ecological knowledge to national and international audiences while maintaining emphasis on the important work we conduct for the state," said Director Sara Baer.



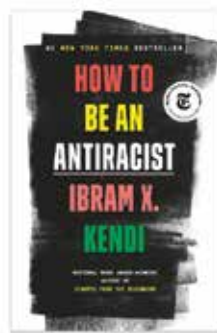
STEVEN VOSS

**NEWS BRIEF**

**Self lecture features Kendi**

THE BEST-SELLING AUTHOR of *How to Be An Antiracist*, Ibram X. Kendi, visited campus Oct. 7 for the annual Self Graduate Fellowship Symposium Lecture, joining Professor of Film Kevin Willmott in a wide-ranging discussion on race in American politics, history and culture.

Asked what the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol says about the scale of division now, Kendi noted that the bid to overturn election results through violence is both a result of the campaign to misinform Americans about what constitutes the gravest existential threat to the republic and a very stark demonstration of the real threat—namely, white supremacist domestic terrorism.



"In recent decades we've realized that climate change is an existential threat, in the last year and a half we've realized that pandemics are an existential threat, and what I'm also trying to get the American people to realize is that bigotry is an existential threat," Kendi said. Many forms of bigotry (racism, sexism, classism,

ableism, homophobia, antisemitism) "are causing humans to see different groups as not human like them, that they're the problem, they're the threat. Certainly the scale of the division now is something that I think we should be concerned about, but not only the scale of the division, the scale of the denial. ... There's mass denial about climate change, there's mass denial about the threat of pandemics and there's mass denial about a persistence of bigotry, despite all the inequality that persists between many of these groups."

The Andrew Mellon Professor in the Humanities at Boston University and founding director of the BU Center for Antiracist Research, Kendi is the youngest person to win a National Book Award, for his 2016 cultural history *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. The week before visiting KU he was awarded a 2021 MacArthur Fellowship. His symposium appearance was sponsored by the Madison and Lila Self Graduate Fellowship program; Academic Success; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging; and the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

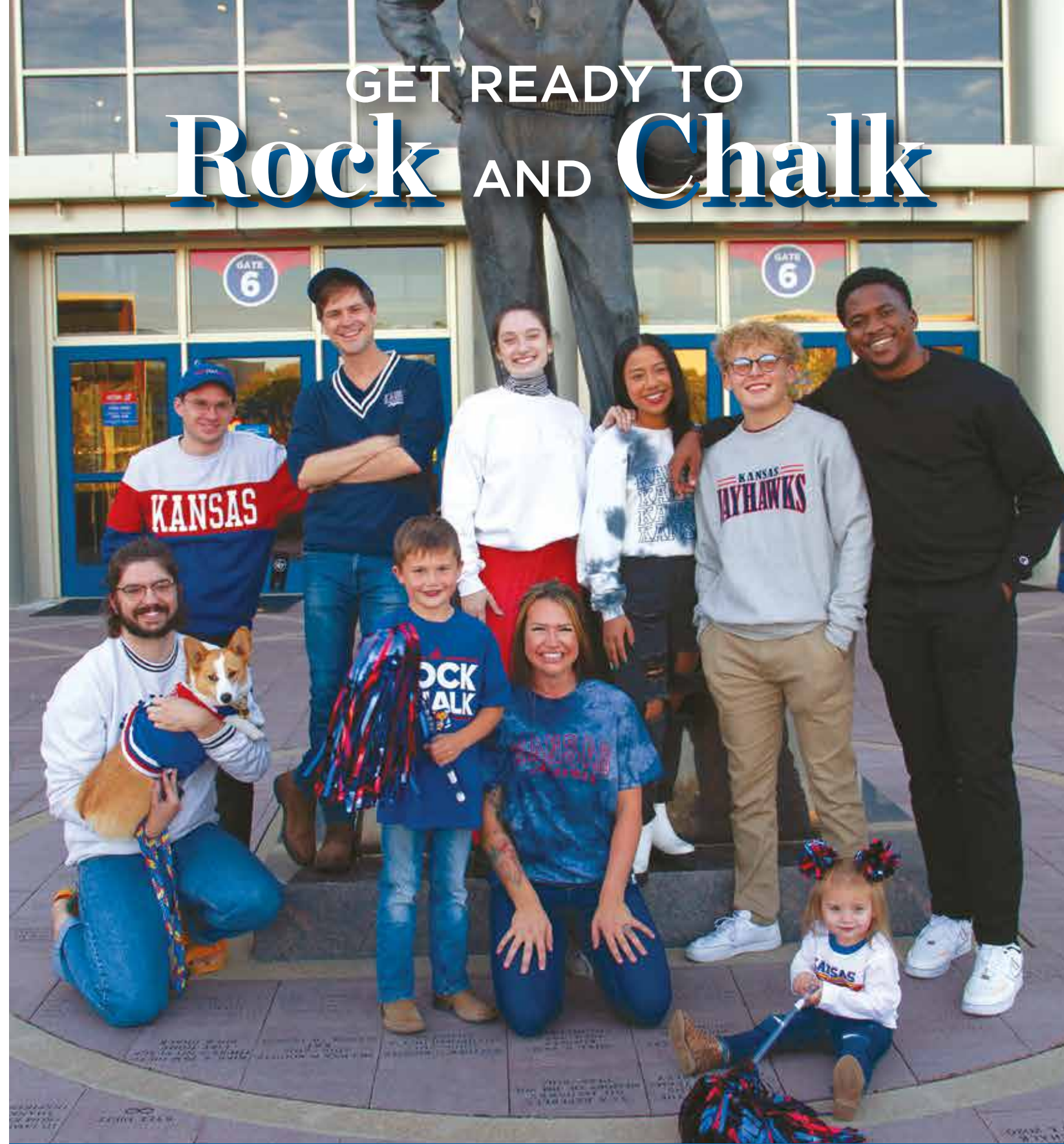
**Home on the Hill**

The First Nations Student Association in mid-October celebrated what was thought to be the first tipi outside Strong Hall. When alumni reminded FNSA that they also did so in 1978, the current Jayhawks responded with joy: "It is our strength," they said of connecting with those who came before.



DAN STOREY

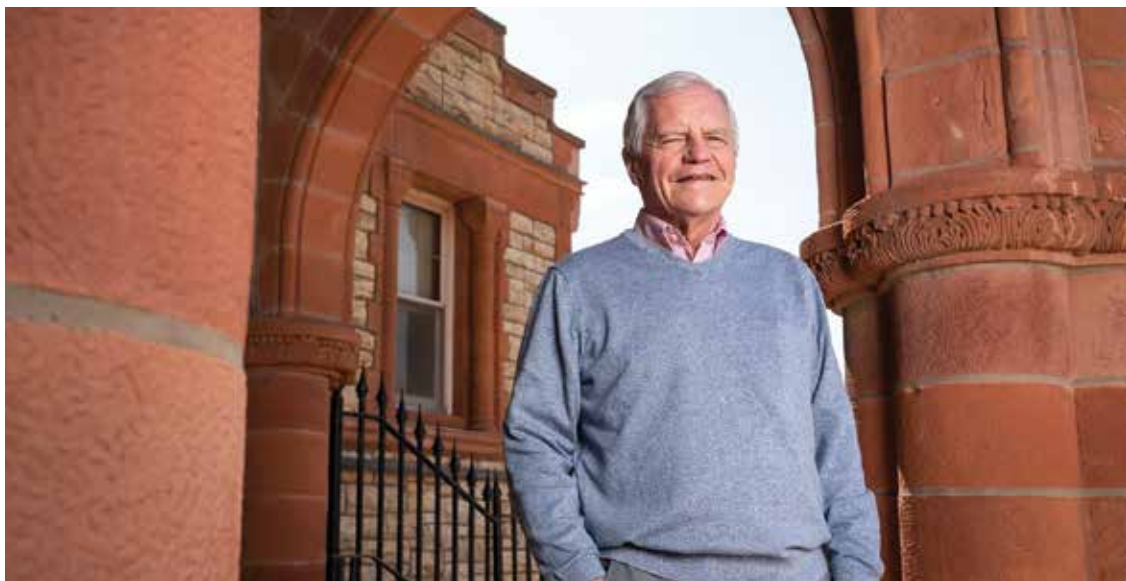
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STEVE PUPPE

BOOKS

**'Always on the edge'**

*Former CIA officer illuminates yet more corners of the shadow world*

ONCE WAS A TIME when Bob Wallace lived within the shadows of the secret service, forging a long career as a CIA operations officer, including three tours as a chief of station. Even when he capped his career at the CIA as director of the vaunted Office of Technical Service, Wallace continued his work behind the scenes, unknown to all but his closest colleagues.

Wallace, g'68, shed his invisibility cloak when he co-wrote *Spycraft* [issue No. 4, 2008], the authoritative history of the CIA's super-secret spy techs and their brilliant inventions and espionage adventures, his first public partnership with the internationally recognized intelligence historian H. Keith Melton. The latest of five Wallace-Melton book collaborations is *Spy Sites of Philadelphia*, which follows earlier histories of espionage from the Revolutionary War to the Cold War and beyond in New York City and Washington, D.C.

Wallace and Melton are also co-executive producers of the eight-episode Netflix docuseries "Spycraft," based loosely on their book, for which they also appeared as expert commentators and helped filmmakers find former espionage officers who were free to speak on camera.

"Since the Second World War, we have had this established intelligence apparatus, the intelligence

community, the well-organized agencies, and I think that presents a false picture of what the history of American intelligence is really like," Wallace says of the appreciation he's gained for the history of global espionage since leaving the CIA. "Beginning with the Revolutionary War, through the Civil War, World War I, and even through much of World War II, a lot of the best intelligence work was done by people I would call 'citizen spies.' There was not a professional intelligence service. There wasn't an organization that trained people to be intelligence officers or spies. These individuals just kind of came to it on their own, and they made do."

As with the previous installments of the *Spy Sites* series—all gorgeously illustrated, thoroughly researched and presented with hundreds of short entries illuminating people and places otherwise forgotten or even unknown to history—Wallace and Melton's latest book tells stories that originate in and around one locale, yet serve the larger sweep of American history.

As they demonstrate throughout the *Spy Sites* books, the national destiny turned time and again on unlikely heroes risking their lives in unexpected adventures.

"You can't tell who the spy is," Wallace says. "They could come from any walk of life. The spy really can be the person next door. Spy operations occur wherever the spy can conduct the operation, not where you think it might be. Spies aren't met just in dark corners and back rooms of bars. They're out there in plain sight and you never see them."

After earning his master's degree in political

science, Wallace enlisted in the Army and served harrowing tours as a Ranger in Vietnam; he was a Congressional aide when the CIA finally took notice of the application he'd submitted before leaving KU. More than 25 years later, *Spycraft* required years to pass muster at the CIA's publication review board, yet the agency eventually signaled its enthusiastic, hard-won support by approving a foreword by former director George Tenet.

Wallace hesitates to agree that intelligence work can, at times, be characterized as *fun*, instead describing it as an "adrenaline-producing" career path, a keystone to America's founding and ongoing existence.

"Whenever the nation was facing a crisis, intelligence was a vital element in resolving it, to the good or the bad. If we got it resolved well, intelligence played a critical role. If it didn't get solved well, or addressed well, intelligence probably didn't do its job well," Wallace says. "The fun side of it is kind of parallel to the idea that spies all believe that what we are doing is important. There's a high level of satisfaction in doing it well."

"You're a race car driver, in a sense. You're right on the edge, always on the edge. You're trying to push it to the maximum. You also know that if you go over the maximum, you wreck the car and you kill yourself. When you go over, an intelligence failure frequently has severe consequences. It's not a mistake that can be erased."

—CHRIS LAZZARINO

NEWS BRIEF

**Support for nurse educators**

BAXTER SPRINGS NATIVE Christine Ness Hartley, n'73, g'86, and her husband, Ross, l'74, recently made a \$1.5 million gift to KU Endowment, supporting nursing professorships at KU.

To honor her rural upbringing, Hartley, an avid skier who now lives in Wyoming's Jackson Hole valley, directed \$1 million to establish the Hartley Rural Nursing Professorship for faculty at the KU School of Nursing Salina; \$500,000 supports the Christine A. Hartley Centennial Professorship, currently held by University Distinguished Professor Janet D. Pierce, at the School of Nursing at KU Medical Center.

Hartley cites the influence of now-retired nursing faculty Rita Clifford, n'62, PhD'81, and Sue Popkess-Vawter, n'69, g'72, who allowed her to explore

her interest in societal change while a student in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a time when authority figures tended to insist health care providers maintain distance from social upheavals of the era.

"My classmates and I stretched the faculty, we stretched our education, and we stretched our limits," says Hartley, whose nursing practice was in coronary and critical care and as a clinical nurse educator. "During that time there was some push-back for nursing students and professional nurses to actually be agents of change."



KU ENGINEERING

**Aerospace awards:** *Four aerospace engineering teams recently won design awards in prestigious competitions, including first place for graduate students in a regional jet design competition offered by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.*

*The winning KU team, led by Lendon Jackson, e'21, unveiled designs for a family of jets they dubbed the Skyblazers, which would be faster than current models while also reducing carbon footprints; they also include a "magic carpet" conveyor belt to offload cargo for reduced labor costs.*

*"This is the pinnacle of aerospace design competitions around the world," Professor Ron Barrett-Gonzalez, e'88, PhD'93, told the Lawrence Journal-World.*



*Spy Sites of Philadelphia*  
By H. Keith Melton and Robert Wallace  
Georgetown University Press, \$24.95



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## Book brief

CHICAGO ADVERTISING executive Paige Meyer loves a man who cherishes her every word and mood, and she adores her two unlikely friends-for-life. But, as author and Chicago advertising executive Alison Hammer, '01, reveals in the fast-paced opening of *Little Pieces of Me*, her second novel, Paige can't breathe.

She's been laid off from her job and frets over her 43rd birthday. Her supercilious mother back home in St. Louis grates on her last raw nerve. And, churning just beneath the ripples of otherwise commonplace troubles, her father's car-crash death two years earlier still hurts in unexpected ways, stopping Paige cold when she allows herself fleeting feelings of good cheer.

At this unsettled moment, Paige gives no thought to an email from FamilyTree.com; she had submitted a DNA kit as part of her research for a failed pitch on behalf of her former agency, so the company now means nothing to her. Upon closer inspection, even the news that FamilyTree found a parent-child match is shrugged aside.

*It must be a mistake on their end—I would know if I'd ever had a child.*

From the moment Paige learns that she is the child half of the life-altering DNA match, the search is on for her biological father and his place in her disjointed world.

*I look out the window at the apartment building across the street. If someone over there is looking in*

*here, I wonder what they'll see. A woman about to have her world knocked off its axis.*

*"I want to tell you a story," Aunt Sissy says.*

Hammer's confident narrative soars as Paige's free-spirited aunt reveals details about an unfortunate night of passion back in the late 1970s, when Sissy, Paige's mother and both of her fathers were all Jayhawks who socialized at KU Hillel. As close as she was to the events in question, though, Sissy doesn't know everything—far from it—and it's left to Paige to illuminate, with a depth of compassion that startles even her, the true identities of her uptight mother, the "DNA dad" assumed to be a predatory Lothario, and the fine father who raised her as his own despite unmistakable differences in physical features.

Families are complicated and, as Paige learns, parents were once young, too, and unsure of themselves, and the future is found only in forgiveness.



*Little Pieces of Me*  
By Alison Hammer  
William Morrow, \$27.99



*featuring cash awards, gift cards, parking passes, basketball tickets and more, for students who receive and report their voluntary COVID immunizations. The program was funded with more than \$200,000 in federal money designated for vaccines, testing and incentives.*

**Lucky shot:** *Santiago Patino, a senior in architecture from Eureka, Missouri, was the first student to win a whopping \$5,091—equivalent to one semester of in-state tuition—for uploading his COVID-19 vaccine record to the Watkins Health Services student portal. In August, Chancellor Doug Girod announced an incentive program,*



*In September, KU's Office of Institutional Opportunity and Advancement announced that it would now be called the Office of Civil Rights & Title IX to more clearly communicate its role in investigating reports of racial, ethnic and sex-based discrimination on campus. In addition to the name change, the office launched a new website, [civilrights.ku.edu](http://civilrights.ku.edu), to provide greater support resources and an improved reporting process for the KU community.*



UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

**KU's senior** class has selected Jonathan Hagel, assistant teaching professor of history, and Sarah Jen, assistant professor of social welfare, as recipients of the 2021 HOPE Awards. Given annually through the Board of Class Officers to Honor Outstanding Progressive Educators, the long-standing tradition was established by the Class of 1959 and is the only award given to a faculty member by the senior class. Jen and Hagel were recognized Oct. 23 at the KU-Oklahoma football game in David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium.



COURTESY OF THE LITERARY ESTATE OF EVAN SHELBY CONNELL, JR.

BOOKS

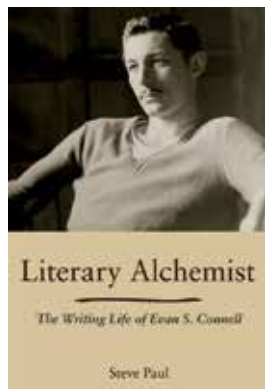
## The writing life

*Biography explores Connell's 'quaint mania'*

AS A WRITER AND AS A MAN, Evan Connell could be hard to read.

Enigmatic, introverted, emotionally distant and averse to the publicity chores like interviews and personal appearances that publishers typically require of writers, Connell, c'47, was fiercely independent, iconoclastic and uncompromising not only in his personal life, but also in the subjects he chose to explore in 20 books published in a half-century career.

*Mrs. Bridge* (which established his reputation when it appeared to widespread acclaim in 1959) and *Mr. Bridge* (which followed in 1969) are quintessential Kansas City novels whose emotionally remote title characters were instantly recognizable to most Americans, even as the books' inventive structure—short, impressionistic sections that eschewed traditional plotting and narrative drive—prodded mainstream readers to reconsider what a novel could be. Yet his most well-known work, surprisingly, was a nonlinear,



*Literary Alchemist: The Writing Life of Evan S. Connell*  
By Steve Paul  
University of Missouri Press, \$45

boldly innovative indictment of the Indian Wars as exemplified by Gen. George Armstrong Custer's resounding defeat at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, *Son of the Morning Star*.

Elsewhere, in collections of short stories, novels, essays and in nearly uncategorizable forays into history, philosophy, religion, art and alchemy (Were they fiction? Poetry? Nonfiction? Even publishers and critics struggled to put a label on his work), he constantly defied expectations and challenged readers, setting out on wildly esoteric journeys to deeply explore the things that interested him, with seemingly no concern for whether or not anyone would follow along. He simply wrote what he wanted, publishing conventions be damned.

"He is undoubtedly among the best of recent American writers, one who possessed an extraordinary range of talent and output," former Kansas City Star journalist Steve Paul writes early on in *Literary Alchemist*, the first full-length biography of the Kansas City-born Connell, who died in 2013. "Yet, reflecting the characteristic cruelty of the predominant cultural measuring apparatuses, he is also one of the least known."

Undaunted by Connell's "relatively sparse paper

trail," the author of *Hemingway at Eighteen: The Pivotal Year That Launched an American Legend* sets out to portray the "writer's writer" who even friends concede was essentially unknowable. He finds Connell's youth and adolescence "hard to trace," aside from the hints he later left behind in his writing. The college years—first at Dartmouth and then at KU, where he finished his degree in three semesters and a summer term after serving as a Navy pilot during World War II—are more enlightening. On the Hill he pledged Phi Kappa Psi and helped found the Bitter Bird, a campus humor magazine to which he contributed drawings and writing; studied with the painter Albert Bloch, who later became the subject of one of his first published short stories; and cut a dashing figure in his leather flight jacket. He made training flights from the naval air station in Olathe, Paul reports, until one spring day when a fellow flyer, a war buddy also enrolled at KU, buzzed Memorial Stadium, causing both men to lose their flight privileges. He also studied creative writing with the novelist and editor Ray B. West, who became a longtime mentor and champion.

*Literary Alchemist* shines welcome light on events and milestones in the life of a writer who shunned public attention; especially enlightening are descriptions of Connell's world travels and his deeply held connection to nature, which illumine his most adventurous, genre-busting books. Even more valuable, though, is the literary appraisal put forth by Paul, whose 40-year tenure at the Star included a stint as editor of the paper's book section. Synthesizing a wide range of sources, including book reviews, award citations and personal notes sent to Connell by contemporaries such as John Updike and William Styron, and adding his own incisive analysis of Connell's formidable work, Paul reminds us that even books that did not generate the broad adoring readership granted his most successful titles still added to his exalted reputation in the literary world. With each new project Evan Connell pushed the boundaries of literature, unshakable in his conviction that what mattered beyond all else was this "quaint mania," as he called the obsessive writing about topics that captured his imagination and challenged his redoubtable intellect. In that regard, *Literary Alchemist* would seem to do all its subject could ask: It sends us back to his books with renewed appreciation for his lifework, challenging bold readers to claim this "writer's writer" for our own.

—STEVEN HILL

## Mass Street & more



STEVE PUPPE (2)

## Coffee shop wades into quiet waters

EVEN IN A DOWNTOWN district beloved for fun and funky coffee-shop concepts, Great Blue Heron Outdoors is quickly—and quietly—getting noticed for its new take on two old ideas: a full-service coffee bar within a tidy showroom of outdoor gear.

Bob Marsh's hope for Great Blue Heron Outdoors, at 823 Mass, is to encourage "community and connection"—without TVs or a blaring stereo—among water-sports enthusiasts from across the region, as well as curious newbies and even visitors looking only for a relaxing spot to read while enjoying coffee and a pastry.

"You don't need an outboard motor," Marsh says of the fishing and boating interests supported by Great Blue Heron. "Paddle or wade. Simplify, so you don't need to carry a bunch of gear in a big basket. We're the quiet-water outfitter."

Amid a challenging time for acquiring retail stock, Marsh was delighted when the owners of a popular local fly fishing store, which had moved online years ago, dropped in shortly after the shop's recent opening and offered to sell him their inventory; now Great Blue Heron features flies, lures, rods and reels alongside carefully curated outdoor gear, as well as a custom-built coffee bar and sparkling espresso machine.

"The heron is the patient but strong wading bird, quietly working in the water, hunting and fishing alongside us, familiar with us but keeping its distance," Marsh says. "It's that message, of patience and wading, that we keyed in on with Great Blue Heron."



Great Blue Heron, outdoors and coffee shop

*Mass Street & more*



STEVE PUPPE

**Mural with a message**

HOME-IMPROVEMENT enthusiasts and visitors to the weekly farmer’s market at Cottin’s Hardware & Rental have a new sight to behold: A 50-foot mural, spanning the entire east exterior wall and a smaller one on the adjacent south wall were designed and painted this fall by longtime Lawrence artist Dave Loewenstein.

Loewenstein created the work, which highlights the environment and its current endangered state, with input from store owners Tom and Linda Cottin, b’04. “They were interested in doing something about the earth and climate,” says Loewenstein, ’93, “and that was exciting to me.”

The expansive mural features an image of the earth, with North America at the center, and includes illustrations of hurricanes and wildfires, which have increased in frequency and severity in recent years. Native and ancient plants that transform into constellations are pictured below the earth, bearing its weight. A 15-foot hourglass, representing the imminent threat to our planet’s natural inhabitants, is featured on the adjacent wall.

Lawrence artists Missy McCoy, f’77, and Ardys Ramberg, who in 2002 painted the other popular mural on Cottin’s exterior, assisted with the project, as did fellow Lawrencians, who were invited to help during two community-painting events. “We hope that Dave’s thoughtful design

inspires us all to take what actions we can to address the seriousness of climate change,” Linda Cottin says. For viewers willing to listen, these walls can talk.

**Make a wish**

WHEN EAST LAWRENCE’S beloved “Wishing Bench” burned down after an early-morning fire in August, devastated neighbors rallied to restore the sacred structure.

The bench, a community-art installation at Ninth and Delaware streets in the Warehouse Arts District, had been a fixture in the neighborhood for years, inviting passersby to stop for a moment, make a wish and contribute meaningful, sometimes quirky items to its whimsical and ever-changing appearance.

In the days following the fire, neighbors and fans of the bench mobilized to rebuild it. And thanks to HAMM Companies and Diamond Everley Roofing Contractors, which donated materials and labor, the East Lawrence treasure has been restored and is ready for a new generation of artistic offerings.

“It’s a community art project with secret participants—ongoing, no deadlines. It belongs to everyone,” says KT Walsh, ’83, a longtime Lawrence resident and vice president of the East Lawrence Neighborhood Association. “This is how our culture is created and sustained in East Lawrence.”

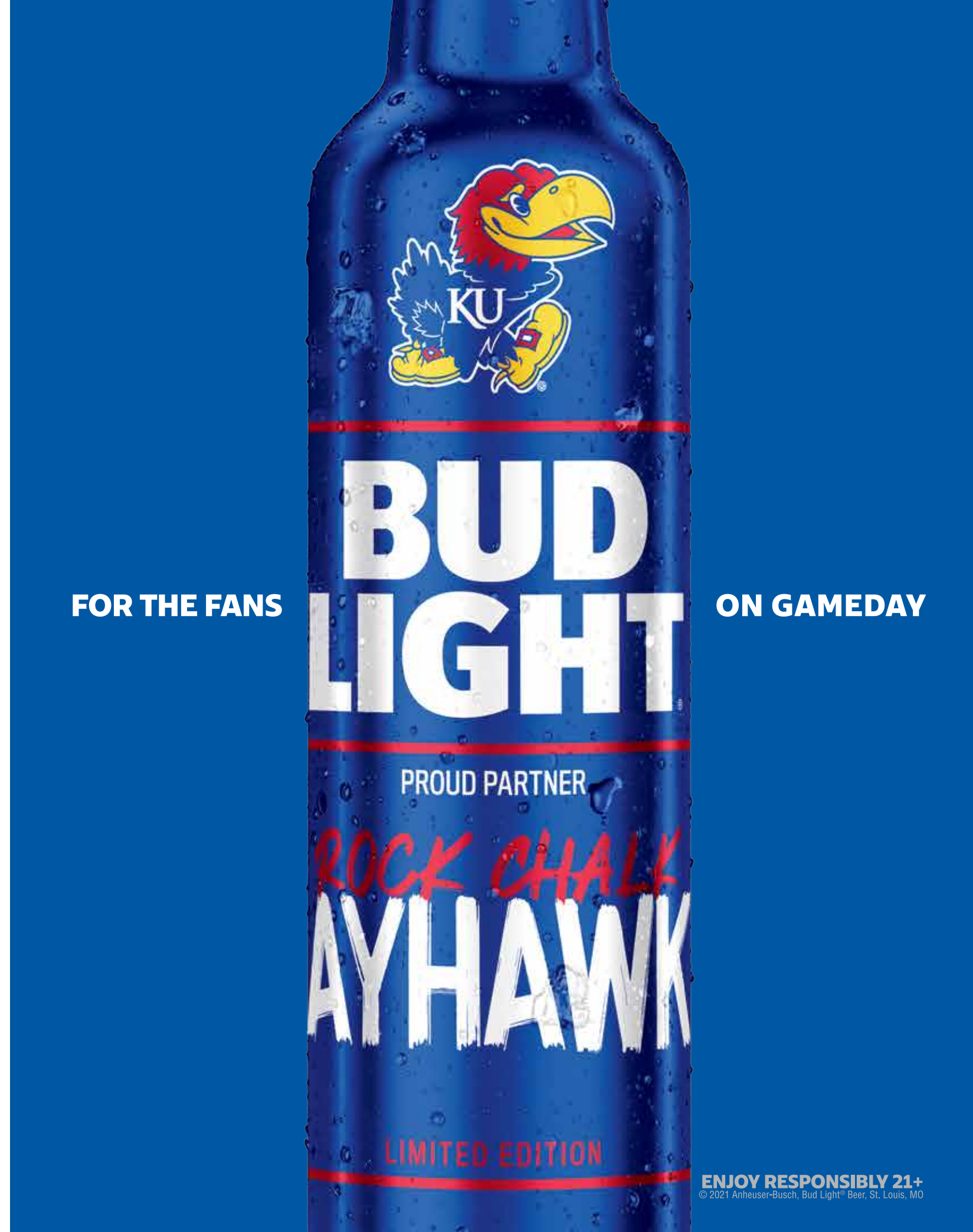
Before an early-morning fire destroyed East Lawrence’s Wishing Bench, a longstanding community-art installation in the Warehouse Arts District (left), resident Tony Peterson, j’85, had been documenting neighborhood treasure. Thanks to community support, the Wishing Bench was restored to its original form in September (far left).



STEVE PUPPE



COURTESY TONY PETERSON



**FOR THE FANS**

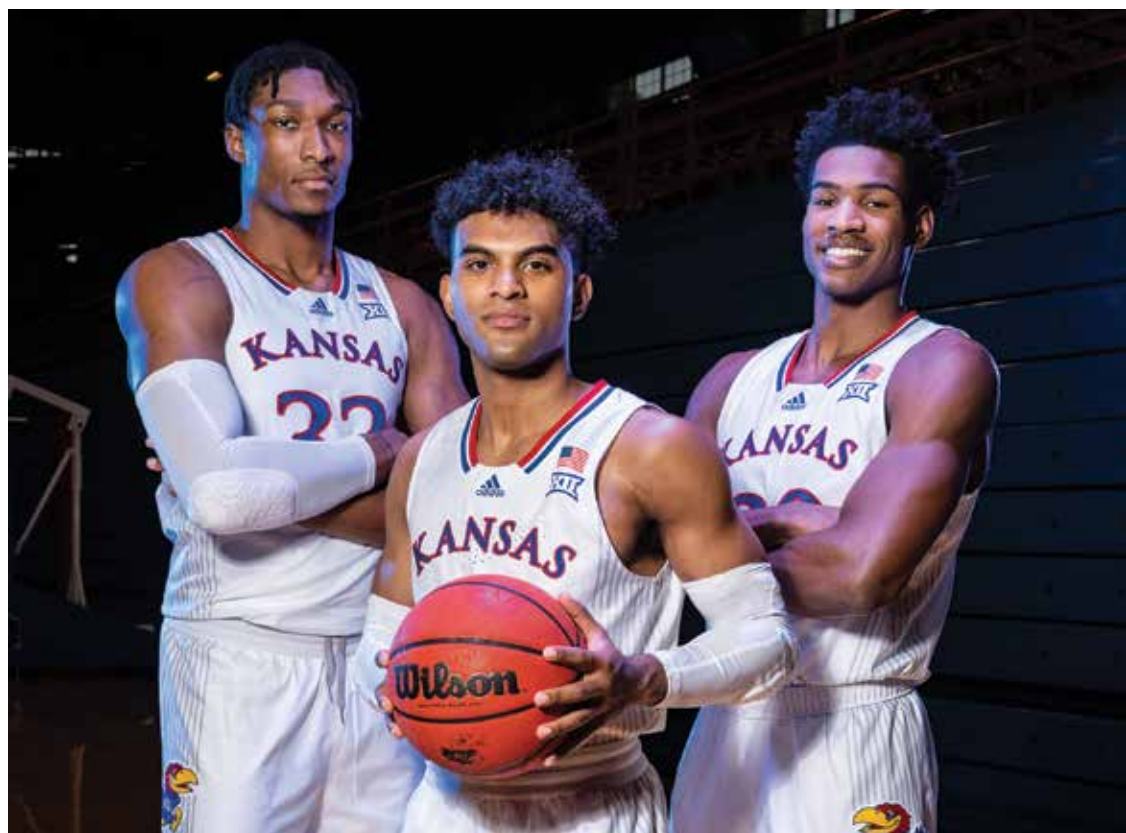
**ON GAMEDAY**



STEVE POPPE

“The challenge is, how do you get from 14 to 10, because 1 through 14, we probably never had a team with as many guys who are pretty similar to the other guys. Trying to determine who’s actually going to play will be the challenge.”

—Bill Self



STEVE POPPE (5)

MEN’S BASKETBALL

## The right mix

*Sorting through deep roster is Self’s challenge with third-ranked ‘Hawks*

OUTSIDE OF WINNING national and conference championships, few aspects of the KU basketball experience are more satisfying than watching Hall of Fame coach Bill Self juggle lineups and sift through a long bench before settling on his preferred rotation early in the Big 12 season.

Which means that, with eight recruits joining a roster loaded with returning starters for the third-ranked Jayhawks, this season could be as fun as any in recent memory.

“The challenge is, how do you get from 14 to 10,” Self says, “because 1 through 14, we probably never had a team with as many guys who are pretty similar to the other guys. Trying to determine who’s actually going to play will be the challenge.”

Big 12 coaches voted super-senior guard Remy Martin, an Arizona State transfer who last year led the Pac-12 with 19.1 points per game, as their Preseason Big 12 Player of the Year. Joining Martin on the all-league squad are senior forward David

McCormack and senior guard Ochai Agbaji.

KU’s other returning veterans include junior guard Christian Braun and sophomore guard Dajuan Harris Jr., both of whom Self described as having made “the biggest jumps” from last season, and the fan-favorite sixth-year super-senior Mitch Lightfoot.

Self says super-senior guard Jalen Coleman-Lands, an Iowa State transfer, was the team’s best shooter during preseason preparations, and he describes sophomore guard Joseph Yesufu as the team’s best on-ball defender.

Outside of his headline stars, though, Self’s eventual starting roster and regular rotation are both TBD, and likely won’t be settled any time soon.

“I love our roster, I’m not downplaying that at all, but you don’t have a roster that people are looking at as top-10 picks, lottery picks, things like that,” Self says. “We got a bunch of guys who are good basketball players. One thing I would like to see



Harris



Braun



Cuffe

that we haven’t seen yet is some separation. It always occurs, but it hasn’t occurred yet.”

As of *Kansas Alumni* press time, the Jayhawks awaited their Nov. 3 exhibition opener against Emporia State and the Nov. 9 showdown with perennial rival Michigan State in New York City’s Madison Square Garden. As the Jan. 1 Big 12 opener approaches, all eyes will be on Missouri’s Dec. 11 return to Allen Field House; also of note is the Jan. 29 home game with Kentucky.

“Unless you’re a junior, unless you’re Christian Braun’s age, nobody has felt what it’s like to play at Kansas,” Self says, referencing the abrupt closure of the 2020 season, when KU had been the consensus favorite to win an NCAA Tournament that never happened, and pandemic restrictions that muted last season’s Allen Field House experience. “Then you [bring in] a recruiting class and none of them have felt what it’s like to play at Kansas. None of them visited.

“Everybody has a home-court advantage, don’t get me wrong, but one of the things that makes it special about playing at our place is that we feel like ours is unique in many ways. They haven’t had a chance to experience any of that uniqueness. I don’t even know if 10 of our 14 scholarships know what it’s like to play ball at our place.”

Fresh starts for all. Let the fun begin.



Preseason All-Big 12 First Teamers (left, l-r) David McCormack, Remy Martin and Ochai Agbaji, and multidimensional guards (from top) Dajuan Harris Jr., Christian Braun, Kyle Cuffe Jr. and (r) Jalen Coleman-Lands are among the Hawks competing to stand out in a crowd.

## Hottest ‘Hawks

*Men’s golf wins four in a row, paced by sophomore with PGA dreams*

THE NEWS THAT CAME OUT of Maui Oct. 31 had to be read twice to be believed: Men’s golf, KU’s hottest team of the early fall, won the Ka’anapali Classic by 20 shots, at 52-under par, for the Jayhawks’ fourth-consecutive stroke-play tournament victory.

The Jayhawks’ 54-hole score, 800, was the team’s lowest since at least 1986-’87, and their 20-shot margin was the fifth-largest in program history. With the spring season still ahead, the 10th-ranked ‘Hawks have already tied the school record for most tournament victories in a season.

“Wow, what a way to end the fall,” said ninth-year coach Jamie Bermel. “I think the guys are really starting to believe in themselves and continue to get better every day. We still have some work to do, but we are definitely headed in the right direction.”

KU first pointed in the right direction in the season’s second tournament, the mid-September Gopher Invitational in Independence, Minnesota. Sophomore Luke Kluver entered the final round with a two-shot lead, but, after a bogey at No. 8, knew he was in trouble.

Unlike PGA Tour events, collegiate tournaments don’t often include huge leaderboards. So, after firing his tee shot on No. 9, Kluver pulled out his cellphone and checked the standings online.

“At that point, I saw I was three shots behind,” Kluver said in an interview with Wayne Simien, c’05, on *The Jayhawker Podcast*. “When I saw that, I was kind of like, ‘If you want to win a golf tournament, you’re going to have to go get it. You’re going to have to go catch this guy. I don’t have a win yet, so let’s make this happen.’”

With a hot putter and strong wedge play, Kluver rallied with five birdies in the final 10 holes for a two-stroke victory, his first as a Jayhawk, and his team withstood a late rally by Notre Dame to finish as co-champions.

“Luke was a man out there this week,” Bermel said afterward. “If he has a good putting week, like he did this week, it’s a win.”

Through the first four events of the season, Kluver, of Norfolk, Nebraska, boasted a 69.42 scoring average while shooting under par in 10 of 12 rounds—and even par in the other two—which earned him Big 12 Golfer of the Month and placed



Kluver

him among 14 others on the Haskins Award watch list, honoring the country's top collegiate golfer.

As he explained to Simien ([kuathletics.com/luke-kluver-loving-the-big-stage](http://kuathletics.com/luke-kluver-loving-the-big-stage)), Kluver is not shy about his talents and goals. He intends to one day win on the PGA Tour, and says he already has "a lot of the golf shots that the best players in the world are hitting."

He comes from an athletic family. Kluver's mother played collegiate golf, and his

brother, Jake, currently plays at Creighton. At a broad-shouldered 6-foot-3, he inherited the stout frame that allowed his father to play both football and basketball as a collegian.

Kluver spent Nebraska's long winters playing basketball in his hoops-mad hometown, which he says honed his fearless competitive instinct.

"I love being able to go out on that floor and guard the best player on the other team, make a big shot, whatever it is. I take

that basketball mentality of, I'm a competitor, I want to prove people wrong and I want to put myself in that spotlight. And I think that's why, when I get on a stage like that, I love being there and I want to perform at my best."

Kluver naturally expresses admiration for U.S. Open champion Gary Woodland, c'07—"the Kansas legend, basically"—and is quick to draw comparisons with Woodland's own basketball background and competitive drive.

"I would never play a sport if I didn't want to make it to the biggest league or the biggest stage," Kluver told Simien. "So why did I come to KU? Because I wanted to gain experience, I wanted to play for these coaches, I wanted to play for the University, and, ultimately, I want to get to the PGA Tour."

KU won back-to-back tournaments for the first time since 2016 with victory in the Windon Memorial, in Illinois, where sophomore Davis Cooper earned medalist honors at 10-under par. KU's third-consecutive stroke-play victory came Oct. 18 at the Quail Valley Collegiate in Florida, where seniors Harry Hillier and Callum Bruce tied for second at 11-under.

The Jayhawks return to action Feb. 21 in Stanford's tournament, The Prestige.

UPDATE

Sophomore forward **Brie Seaverns** in mid-October was named soccer's National Player of the Week and Big 12 Offensive Player of the Week, with game-winning goals and an assist in KU's 2-1 victory Oct. 7 against No. 23 Baylor and a 2-1 Oct. 10 upset of No. 9 West Virginia, both at Rock Chalk Park. Freshman midfielder **Raena Childers** was named Big 12 Freshman of the Week with a goal and assist against the Mountaineers. ... Super-senior



Seaverns

**Jenny Mosser** and freshman **Caroline Bien** each recorded 15 kills in a 3-1 victory Oct. 1

over Iowa State, running volleyball's midseason win streak to nine matches. ... Junior guard **Holly Kersgieter** was named to the Preseason All-Big 12 women's basketball team. Kersgieter scored at least one three-point field goal in every KU game last season and led the 'Hawks in scoring at 17 points per game. ... Freshman running back **Devin Neal** was named Co-Big 12 Newcomer of the Week in recognition of his 100 rushing yards and two touchdowns Oct. 23 against No. 2 Oklahoma. ... Senior **Kate**

**Steward** won three individual events and a relay in the Oct. 22-23 Kansas Double Dual, earning her third career Big 12 Swimmer of the Week honor. ... Women's golf recorded nothing higher than a bogey in the Oct. 8-10 Moore Intercollegiate in Denver. "It's incredible to have a completely clean scorecard," said first-year coach **Lindsay Kuhle**. Senior **Lauren Heinlein** shot a final-round 69 to finish tied for seventh, her second top-10 finish of the fall season.



*JUNIOR QUARTERBACK Jason Bean rushed for 65 yards and completed 17 of 23 passes for 246 yards and a touchdown in KU's ob-so-close 35-23 loss to No. 2 Oklahoma Oct. 23. When the Jayhawks carried a 10-0 lead into halftime, Kansas Athletics announced on Twitter that gates were open and urged students to flood the stadium—which they did, filling much of the east stands for the thrilling second half.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY KANSAS ATHLETICS





# STATISTICS FOR SMARTIES and Other Fun Stuff

Whether he's using humor to help students embrace their stats class, writing heavy books with a light touch, or recording his bubblegum pop podcast—yep, bubblegum music—Bruce Frey prefers the sunny side of the street

## SIDE A *All the Statistics Hits!* feat. Professor Bruce Frey

Destinies can, and often do, swerve with the slightest nudge, a glance that steals a heart or a comment that calls forth action to alter everything. Professor Bruce Frey still recalls the moment when his professional fortunes first found direction.

One sentence, with as many syllables as words: “Bruce, are you smart?”

Frey, c’85, PhD’95, was a doctoral student in educational psychology at the time, working as a graduate teaching assistant with his first crucial KU mentor, Professor Nona Tollefson, “who was sort of famous at the time for just being the greatest professor there ever was.” One day he received an unexpected phone call at home from Tollefson’s colleague Professor Neil Salkind, whom he had not met.

“Bruce, are you smart?”

A simple question, but, for most of us, difficult to answer; because he answered as he did, Frey gained another mentor—and focus for what to that point had been a scattered scholarly career.

“You know, if I had given a different answer than I did, who knows? I’d be working at Family Video to this day. Or I’d be a DJ in Topeka,” Frey says. “But I said what I thought was the truthful answer, which was ‘yes.’ And so Neil hired me for a project he was working on. He was running a journal. He needed some help with that. And then he began writing books. And not necessarily scholarly books, but books for normal people.”

Because he answered in the affirmative, Frey, professor of educational psychology, started down a path that eventually brought him back to KU as a faculty colleague of Salkind’s, and—thanks in part to their shared appreciation for the offbeat and unexpected—their mentor-mentee relationship morphed in a professional collaboration that has continued beyond Salkind’s 2017 death.

One of Salkind’s enduring textbooks, *Statistics For People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, this fall was released in its seventh edition, with Frey writing revisions and updates as co-author.



BY CHRIS LAZZARINO  
Photographs by Steve Puppe

“That was a very successful book, and he had Bruce in mind all along,” Leni Salkind says of her late husband’s plans for *Statistics For People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*. “Bruce has the same kind of sense of humor as Neil did.”

We promise this won’t be a story about statistics, but even if it were, that wouldn’t be a bad thing—at least not as Salkind and Frey present it in their book. Nearly every page includes passages of empathy and humor, repeatedly asking students to trust their assurances that this time the dreaded topic will be different—and it is. Readable, understandable, interesting and even fun—all of which can also be said for Frey’s own stats book, *Statistics Hacks: Tips & Tools for Measuring the World and Beating the Odds*.

We do acknowledge, however, that we are nowhere near qualified to present the evidence of successful statistics presentation, but there *is* this:

Appendix I: The Brownie Recipe

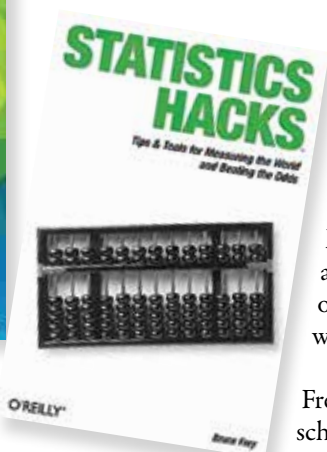
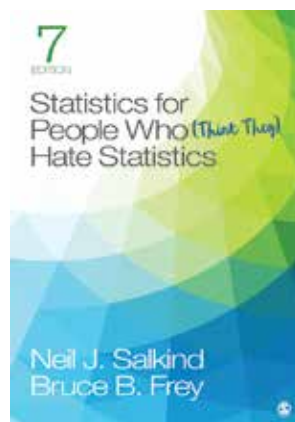
*You have probably worked hard on this material, whether for a course, as a review, or just for your own edification. And, because of all your effort, you deserve a reward. Here it is.*

“They were really good,” Leni Salkind recalls wistfully. “You couldn’t just have one.”

Statistics, Frey says, are “the one topic that, even for graduate students, scares most people, because it’s so different from anyone’s experience.” An acknowledged authority in research design and classroom assessment, Frey explains that good students build on what they’ve already learned, so they rarely begin a course without a base level of understanding.

“Then when they come to statistics,” he says, “it’s this whole weird, separate thing.”

When he taught introductory statistics, Frey treated the first day of each semester as a “therapy session,” during which he and the students would face their anxieties. Gaining comfort with statistics might not be easy, but it is possible, and important, and so say colleagues who don’t even teach it.



“Statistics,” contends Google Earth co-creator Brian McClendon, e’86, research professor of engineering, “is the most useful class one can take in high school or college.”

Frey anticipates students’ discomfort with the topic because he once shared it. In fact, he was never anywhere near a statistics course until he made his unanticipated return to KU as a graduate student.

He grew up in Topeka, where he gained lifelong affection for pop-culture touchstones such as comic books, Saturday morning cartoons, quirky little paperback adventure stories based on popular TV shows, and, especially, radio. His father, Don, a psychiatric clinical social worker at The Menninger Foundation, collected old-time radio recordings, and around 1980 launched his own show, “Memories of You,” a free-form Saturday program that ran for years on KTOP-AM.

Frey came to KU in 1981 as a film studies major. When it dawned on him that the nearest production studio was in Hollywood, Frey took his degree back home and went to work in a video store—“At least that was kind of related to film studies”—then followed his father’s lead and became a DJ at KTOP. As he tired of the minimum wage work, Frey took notice when a friend enrolled in KU graduate courses to study school psychology.

“I thought, oh, those are the people who give tests and they do counseling with kids, and I loved the idea of both of those things,” Frey recalls. “I always loved multiple-choice tests, I loved IQ tests, I loved ‘Jeopardy!’, all that stuff. So I said, I’ll be a school psychologist, and I applied, very naively, to the school psychology

program at KU.”

One problem: His uninspired undergraduate GPA hovered below 3.0. Because he was a whiz at tests, however, Frey scored high enough on entrance exams to be admitted “on a sort of double-secret probation,” which he promptly flubbed. “I essentially flunked out,”

Frey says, explaining that school psychology, especially 7 a.m. team meetings during his practicum, was not his thing. Statistics, research design and measurement courses were, and he still relishes the first “aha!” moment, in Tollefson’s stats class, when he realized that he not only understood the topic—“because it was being taught well to me,” he notes—but he could also help others understand, too.

Given no other option Frey switched departments and, finally, flourished.

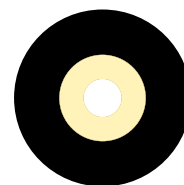
“Being a good teacher was important to me,” he says, “so I gave it a lot of thought, and I tried to be creative and innovative even as a young grad student teaching other students.”

After earning his PhD—“It was just sort of by chance and sideways that I ended up getting a doctorate in quantitative methods”—Frey took a couple of “real world jobs” involving statistical research, yet maintained his connection with KU by teaching courses, including classroom assessment and introduction to research, that senior faculty preferred to avoid.

When he finally landed a tenure-track position in the School of Education and Human Sciences, Frey, now Budig Teaching Professor, became that rarest species in academia: full-time faculty hired by their undergraduate and graduate alma mater.

“You want voices and ideas from somewhere else, not just people you’ve created,” he says. “Even if you know an internal candidate is going to be a great teacher and a good researcher, there is still a sort of taboo against that.”

Frey, though, isn’t the only such example at KU. Turns out, he’s not even the only one in his home.



## SIDE B

### *Echo Valley: The Original Bubblegum Music Podcast*, feat. Professor Bubblegum

Bonnie Johnson, professor and director of KU’s vaunted urban planning program within the School of Public Affairs & Administration, came to KU in the mid-1980s from Oklahoma, intending to make her way to law school after studying political science. She originally thought she’d spread her wings at an eastern school, but fell hard for Mount Oread at first sight.

“The campus was just what I had always imagined of this ‘university on a hill,’” Johnson says. “It *is* that fictional university. And, they had a good political science department.”

Shortly after moving into Hashinger Hall, during Country Club Week her freshman year, Johnson, c’90, g’92, g’94, PhD’07, met a new grad named Bruce Frey when he returned to visit his Hashinger friends. They soon became a couple and have been together ever since.

“Hashinger Hall, being the creative arts residence hall, was huge for both of us,” she says. “We were able to find our people, creative people, people who weren’t always welcome in the mainstream. It was home, and to this day our best friends are from Hashinger. It was my family, and still is.”

After earning her undergraduate degree in political science—with the late Professor Burdett Loomis as a mentor—and Latin American studies, Johnson completed master’s degrees in political science and urban planning, and, while maintaining a long-distance relationship with Frey, took planning jobs in Amarillo, Texas, and Liberty, Missouri, before returning to Kansas to work for Johnson County. She caught the teaching bug by filling in at KU



Frey recently tracked down “probably the rarest bubblegum album of them all,” *Josie and the Pussycats* featuring Cheryl Ladd, but most of his library is digitized. “When I first started the show, I didn’t have much of a collection. I wasn’t even really aware that there are thousands of bubblegum songs out there.”



for faculty on sabbatical, and returned for a doctorate in political science and public administration. (Hers was the last PhD awarded by the combined department before public administration split off into its own school.)

Johnson's vision of a university on a hill turned out to be the map of her life: education, career, family, love.

"One of my favorite memories of our first, early dating," Johnson says, "is sitting on the steps of Hashinger Hall, looking out at the sunset, and he said, 'Someday, all this is going to be ours.' And here we are. We got married in Danforth Chapel. We're full professors at KU. It is just amazing. We are a KU love story. We're so KU."

As with many girls of the 1970s, Johnson grew up listening to David Cassidy and The Partridge Family records. When progressive music arrived in the early '80s, Johnson drifted away from the bubblegum pop of her childhood and never gave it another thought—until her husband announced that he was going to create a

bubblegum pop radio show.

Even Frey was never a big bubblegum fan. He adored doing a fun weekly show with his father on Audio-Reader, but Frey craved a satisfying creative outlet, ideally a radio show of his own, and hit on the idea of bubblegum pop when he came to the realization that he admired classic rock 'n' roll but didn't much enjoy it.

He preferred happy music, lightweight, catchy pop tunes that spoke to the "13-year-old brain in me," and promptly identified an overlooked niche in the crowded world of radio: sweet, innocent, bubblegum, brilliantly engineered to speak to lovesick 11-year-olds.

"What if I did a show where I treated that with the same respect we give classic rock? Suppose I played a Brady Bunch song and pretended it was as good as Pink Floyd? That would be fun."

With a format forming in his mind, Frey pitched the idea to KANU/KPR, and was told something along the lines of, cute idea, not for us. He tried again a year later;

"He has a theatricality to what he does," Bonnie Johnson says of her husband, "and it's part of being a teacher for him. It's not the 'sage on the stage'; it's the ham on the stage. It's Professor Bubblegum, the secret identity. He likes bringing that joy to his teaching."

still no. That's when Frey began assembling his own production equipment, including a good microphone and open-source editing software, and created the first episodes of a show set in the Lake Wobegon-esque fictional town of Echo Valley (a nod to the Partridge Family tune), where he would serve as mayor and citizens young and old listened only to bubblegum music.

KPR passed a third time, so Frey turned to podcasting. Eight years and more than 150 episodes later, he is now one of the world's leading authorities on the genre, with more than 5,000 hard-to-find songs—the great majority of which were donated by fans or found online—in his

iTunes library and a fully formed Echo Valley universe playing out for devoted bubblegum enthusiasts around the world.

For the first 20 episodes, Frey hosted the show as himself; it was University Distinguished Professor Neal Kingston who suggested he adopt the persona "Professor Bubblegum." Professor Steve Lee—who had flunked Frey out of the school psychology graduate program years earlier and, as Frey notes, has been gracious enough to never mention it since—suggested Frey bundle the shows in seasons, with distinct narrative arcs. Another friend suggested the sidekick "Kid Bubblegum" and created and maintains Kid's @bubblegum\_music Twitter account.

And serving as producer? The one whose opinion he values the most, and who, miraculously, came to appreciate the historical significance and musical talent underpinning bubblegum pop.

"I thought it sounded really cool, kind of back to what brought us together," Johnson says of her husband's wacky idea. "When I was in high school, I was in the theatre and forensics, and a friend and I did the school report on the local radio station

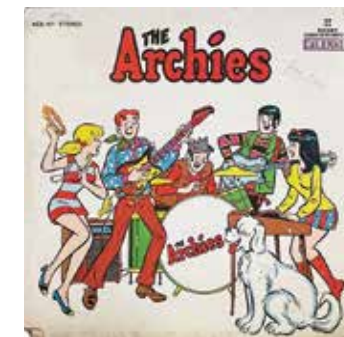
every other week, so I have some radio, and I grew up loving comic books as well. That's the glue that binds us.

"But who knew he would do it this long? I was like, OK, this will be a hobby for a little while, but it just keeps going."

Beyond the music, which she's grown to truly enjoy, Johnson sees value in "Echo Valley" for its representation of her husband's values: kind-hearted, easygoing, avoids taking himself too seriously, a bit of a ham, looking out for others as others looked out for him.

"With the bubblegum podcast, you can listen to it just to have some silly fun," Johnson says. "You can listen to it to learn about the roots of pop culture. You can listen to it for just the story of visiting Echo Valley, where all of your favorite cartoon characters come to life. And if you listen to the podcast over time, it tells a story of Professor Bubblegum and his mentee, Kid Bubblegum, who he takes through the ups and downs and angst of his teenage years.

"And so that's very like an academic. You're mentoring someone. He has his intern that he mentors on the podcast, and bubblegum music saves him."



## LINER NOTES

Professor Frey's books are available for order online, including e-book versions for purchase or rent—yes, rent—as well as at your local library, if it's any good. "Echo Valley: The Original Bubblegum Music Podcast" can be found online at [echovalley.podbean.com](http://echovalley.podbean.com), YouTube and on your preferred podcast platform, if you're into that sort of thing. Multimedia maven Professor Bubblegum is crushing YouTube with his concise yet comprehensive history video, "The Golden Age of Bubblegum Music," viewed 1.1 million times; Professor Frey



has notched 469 total YouTube views for his charming student film from Hashinger Hall circa 1984 and a fairly hilarious cellphone video of him winning a professor prize at a KU football game, after not telling his family why they were there and suggesting that his wife be ready to shoot video of Gale Sayers during an on-field ceremony while he “went for snacks.”

Q&A interview that follows originally published in Kansas Alumni magazine, issue No. 4, 2021; questions have been condensed for clarity and also because some of them were ... kinda wordy, to be honest.

Reprinted with permission.

**Kansas Alumni:** We’re thrilled that Professor Frey and Professor Bubblegum both took time from their busy schedules to join our correspondent over expense-account breakfast at Milton’s Café, in beautiful downtown Lawrence, for a lively Q&A sure to be of interest to their many fans.

**Q:** What’s your favorite song?

**Frey:** I’ll give you the scholarly answer here. There are two bubblegum songs that I will mention. Both were No. 1 hits, both were massive hits. Some scholars argue that one of them is not bubblegum.

**Q:** Bubblegum scholars?

**Frey:** So, the song that I think is the most fun to listen to is “Sugar, Sugar,” by The Archies. I would not argue that it’s my favorite. The best pop single ever made is [insert synthesizer drum roll here] ... “I Think I Love You,” by The Partridge Family.

**Bubblegum:** A huge, smash, No. 1 hit.

**Frey:** Many would argue that it’s just a solid pop/rock ’n’ roll song. David Cassidy had a great pop voice ...

**Bubblegum:** ... purely by chance, by the way. When he was cast in the show, they didn’t think that he would actually sing. They were going to let a studio singer sing for him, but one of the great pop voices ever ...

**Frey:** ... so a lot of people would say, no no no, it’s too good to be bubblegum pop, but The Partridge Family of course was a fictional band that didn’t really exist.

**Q:** Wait, what? They didn’t really drive around in a groovy bus?

**Frey:** And they didn’t live together in a house somewhere in a fictional California town. And, except for David Cassidy and Shirley Jones, the kids didn’t actually sing on any of the recordings. I mean, Susan

Dey didn’t actually sing on any of those records. But, as I say, “I Think I Love You” is, in fact, the best pop single ever made. So if it’s a bubblegum song—which I would say it is, because it’s sung by fictional characters—then that’s my favorite bubblegum song.

**Bubblegum:** There’s never been a better record than “I Think I Love You,” by The Partridge Family. In any genre.

**Frey:** There’s some Beatles stuff that’s perfectly fine, but none are better. “Let It Be” is a good song, but it’s no better than “I Think I Love You.”

**Q:** Uh-oh. We’re going to get letters. Will they be the fun kind of letters?

**Bubblegum:** At least we could have that argument without feeling bad about your fellow man. —

Bet you thought we forgot. You deserve a reward. Here’s your brownie recipe, Professor Salkind’s favorite, from *Statistics For People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*.

1 stick butter  
4 ounces unsweetened chocolate  
½ tablespoon salt  
2 eggs  
1 cup flour  
2 cups sugar  
1 tablespoon vanilla  
2 tablespoons mayonnaise (Professor Salkind: *I know*)  
6 ounces chocolate chips (or more)  
1 cup whole walnuts (optional)

Preheat oven to 325; melt unsweetened chocolate and butter in a saucepan; mix flour and salt in a bowl; add sugar, vanilla, nuts, mayonnaise and eggs to melted chocolate-butter stuff and mix well; add that to flour mixture and mix well; add chocolate chips; pour into an 8” x 8” greased baking dish; bake for about 35 to 40 minutes, or until tester comes out clean.

(P.S.: “If you think [mayonnaise] sounds weird, then don’t put it in. These brownies are not delicious for nothing, though, so leave out this ingredient at your own risk.”—Neil Salkind)



Among the many roles he happily inhabits, Frey’s current favorite might be as a writer, during his regular morning retreats to Milton’s Cafe.

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# First Sight

## Hidden gems and the latest finds are on display at the Spencer

Within the Spencer Museum of Art’s collection of more than 45,000 objects, discoveries always await. A new exhibition, “Debut,” showcases more than 120 works, most of which are on view for the first time since the museum opened in 1978.

Kris Ercums, curator of global contemporary & Asian art, took on the enormous task of selecting objects from a roster of nearly 1,000 little-known wonders.

Winnowing the list began with the most practical consideration: sensitivity to light. “Debut,” which opened Oct. 15 in the Sam and Connie Perkins Central Court and adjacent galleries, will continue for more than a year, through December

2022, so light-sensitive objects, such as textiles and works on paper, could not be included. While “Debut” remains on display, the museum’s closed fourth-floor galleries will be transformed in the final phase of the Spencer’s multi-year renovation.

After Ercums eliminated works too fragile for the lengthy exhibition, he surveyed about 500 remaining objects, first sorting them into classical categories: landscapes, portraiture and still life. He then incorporated a variety of 20th-century works into what he calls “global currents,” arranged on the soaring walls of the Central Court like undulating waves to show contemporary art from countries around the world, “from Pakistan to Australia, Myanmar to Costa Rica, showing the real diversity of

the Spencer’s collection,” he says.

Amid these never-before-seen works, Ercums and designer Trang Nguyen, head of exhibitions, thoughtfully placed familiar works from the collection—including Thomas Hart Benton’s *The Ballad of the Jealous Lover of Lone Green Valley* (1934), and Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s *La Pia de’ Tolomei* (1868-1880)—that have become sentimental favorites and mainstays for teaching and research. The resulting evocative, eclectic groups, Ercums says, create “new kinds of conversations that come from these more familiar works with these works that you haven’t heard from before. It was about creating new relationships and discoveries.”

“Debut” also served as the project for

by Jennifer Jackson Sanner | Photographs by Ryan Waggoner



[1]



[2]

the Spencer’s 2020-’21 graduate interns, including students in art history, museum studies, philosophy, social welfare, Indigenous studies and education. Led by Ercums and Rachel Quist, g’17, a doctoral candidate from Brookline, Massachusetts, the interns researched the scores of objects that had no previous exhibition records. For each work, students outlined the artist’s biography, along with the work’s date of origin, materials, and cultural, social or political context. The ultimate, most demanding task was to distill their research into concise narratives for the exhibition labels that introduce the objects to the public.

Interns began by asking questions, Quist explains: “At the base level, what would they want to know about the piece, and what would audiences like to know?” During two rounds of peer review and editing over several weeks, the interns continued to refine their research and writing until their labels earned approval.

“Debut” illustrates the invigorating

1) Manuel Neri, *untitled (female figure)*, circa 1970-1990, United States. Gift of Sam and Connie Perkins Collection, 2021.

2) unknown maker from Spain, vase, 1700s-1800s, William Bridges Thayer Memorial, 1928.

challenges and rewards of internships at the Spencer, where students take on hefty, meaningful projects, “not just the work no one else wants to do,” says Quist, who in the summer completed two years as the museum’s Andrew W. Mellon Foundation/Loo Family Intern in Asian art.

In addition, internships are paid positions, thanks to the support of donors and foundation grants. “It’s a rare opportunity to get a paid internship to do this kind of work,” Quist says. “Professional positions require experience working in museums, but that’s an inaccessible expectation because people can’t afford to work for free. They need to keep food on the table and the lights on. The Spencer program ensures that interns have something to live on, and everyone at the Spencer has made it clear to me that they care about my well-being.

“I gained hands-on experience with a really warm, welcoming group of people. They actually believed in my ability to take on independent projects.”



[4]



[5]



[3]

3) Unknown maker from China, *Long baozuo*, (dragon throne with foot rest), late 1800s. Gift in memory of James H. Walker Jr., by his family, 1993.

4) Paw Oo Thet, *Birds*, 1972, Burma. Gift of Jack and Liz Kaufman, 2014.

5) Gerald Cassidy, *Navajo Goat Girl*, early 1900s, United States. Gift of the Balfour Family, 1977.



[6]



[7]

The museum’s staunch commitment to education, especially through its internship program, holds special meaning for Connie Engle Perkins, d’57, who with her husband, Sam, b’53, has devoted 60 years to collecting art—a passion inspired by Connie’s mentor, Maud Ellsworth, f’33.

Perkins says she “jumped at the opportunity” to create a new internship



[8]

for the Spencer’s thriving program. The Connie E. Perkins Endowed Internship in Contemporary Art will support young scholars’ study of the genre that first captivated Connie when Ellsworth, associate professor of art education, introduced her students to the bold, abstract works of German-American artist Josef Albers. Ellsworth also encouraged Perkins to

6) Deborah Butterfield, *untitled (horse)*, 1980, United States. Gift of Sam and Connie Perkins Collection, 2021.

7) Landry, *L’ambiance nocturne de Kinshasa (Nightlife of Kinshasa)*, 2013, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Museum purchase: R. Charles and Mary Margaret Clevenger Art Acquisition Fund, 2013.

8) Pablo Picasso, *Hibou (Owl)*, 1953, France. Anonymous gift, 2006.

become an art education teacher in the Olathe public schools, where Perkins in turn readily welcomed student teachers recommended by Ellsworth.

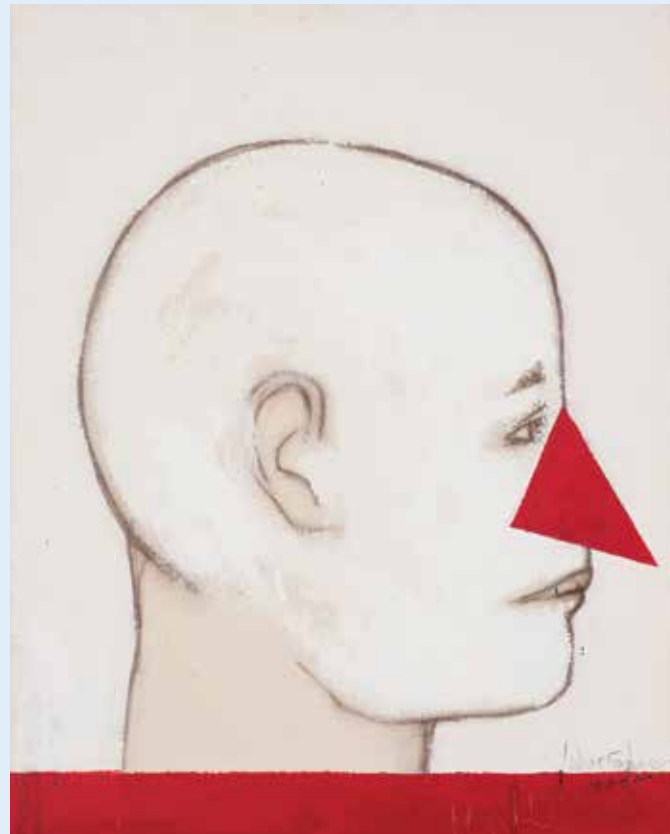
Saralyn Reece Hardy, c’76, g’94, Marilyn Stokstad Director of the museum, says the new internship will extend an important legacy. “I deeply appreciate the influence that Connie is so quick to share about the



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9) Wilner, *Rejouir (Rejoice)*, circa 1970, Haiti. Mary Lou Vansant Hughes Collection, 2011.

10) Victor Cartagena, *Anatomy of La Mentira, Red Noses (Lies)*, 2004, United States. Gift of Joyce and Don Omer, 2013.



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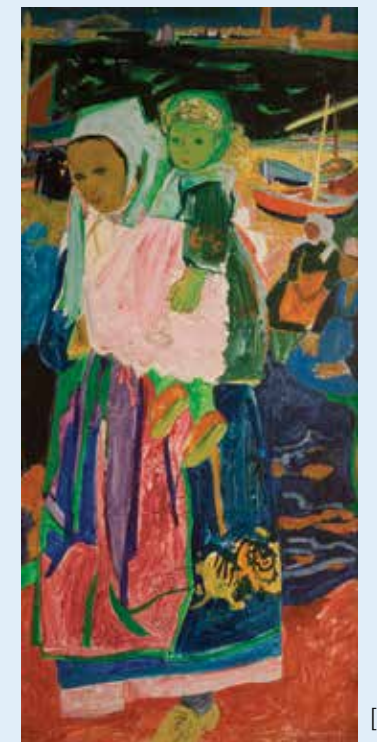
11) Robert Lazzarini, *Teacup, saucer and spoon*, 2003, United States. Gift of Peter Norton, 2003.



[12]

12) Calixte Henry, *Three fishing boats and two fishermen on open water*, circa 1955-1985, Haiti. Bequest of Jane Wofford Malin, 2016.

13) Roger Bezombes, *Breton Peasant Woman*, 1900s. Gift of Morris Sprayregen in honor of Dr. A.M. Ginsberg, 1955.



[13]

presence of Maud Ellsworth in her life. Maud was a role model for so many people, especially those who loved art.

“Connie’s understanding of the importance of education in the arts and the importance of art in a large university has been very inspiring because she has devoted her life to research of her own collection and the selection of beautiful and significant objects.”

As Connie and Sam traveled to 173 countries, they carefully acquired an extensive collection of art in all forms from many cultures. “We did our own quiet thing in collecting,” she says of their years



ABOVE: “Cabinets of Curiosities” were the forerunners of modern museums; the Spencer’s spans almost an entire wall. For “Debut,” the shelves and drawers are stocked with dozens of objects that display the immense diversity of the collection.

of study and meeting with artists and gallery owners. “You get to know the artists and follow their careers.”

Their affection for the objects grew stronger with time as their acquisitions became part of their home. Over 60 years, they sold only one piece.

But this summer the couple fulfilled a longstanding promise to give their entire acclaimed collection to the Spencer. The objects arrived in time for more than a dozen to be unveiled in “Debut.”

Perkins praises the museum’s strong commitment to education through internships, academic partnerships across KU and varied public exhibitions and programs. “That is exactly why we offered

our collection to the Spencer,” she says, “because they will use it for education of the future generations.”

The gifts of the collection and the internship are the culmination of the couple’s long relationship with the museum as benefactors, including their leadership gift for the first phase of the Spencer’s renovation [“Partners and patrons,” issue No. 5, 2016].

Reece Hardy praises the couple’s keen knowledge and precision as collectors. “Connie and Sam are unusual in their diligence about documentation and research and understanding of their collection,” she says. “The collection comes with their care for it.”

These newest items in “Debut” include a stunning variety of works: breathtaking sculptures in the Central Court; small, fanciful bronze figures and ceramics in the museum’s Cabinet of Curiosities; and, in front of the wall of glass that looks out onto lush Marvin Grove, exquisite, black-leather chairs that appear designed with the Spencer in mind.

As curator Kris Ercums led a tour of “Debut” during the jubilant opening reception, he assured hesitant visitors that, yes, it’s really OK to sit in the chairs. “It’s art you can interact with,” he declared with a laugh.

Just another way in which the Spencer feels like home. —



# A MAN WALKS INTO A BAR

**T**he day he turned 28, Sean Powers made a promise to himself. Three actually.

He would quit drinking, maybe for a year, maybe forever. He would hike the Pacific Crest Trail, a 2,654-mile beast of a wilderness challenge that snakes through California, Oregon and Washington in some of the highest mountains of the Cascade and Sierra Nevada ranges. And he would try his hand (finally!) at stand-up comedy.

All at the same time.

Forsaking booze while trekking through remote areas where resupply opportunities are intermittent and physical challenges constant, where sheer drops and ice chutes and avalanches are real possibilities instead of action movie boilerplate, where trailside liquor stores with hike-through windows number exactly zero—yeah, that makes sense.

But stand-up?

Schlepping a heavy pack on blistered feet for months through wind, rain and the occasional high-altitude snowstorm might not strike you as a mother lode of pure comedy gold,

**An aspiring stand-up comedian sets out to chase his long-held dream—one dusty, thirsty, footsore step at a time**

**by Steven Hill**

*Portrait by Randy Godfrey*

but for a young adult deep in the throes of a quarter-life crisis who'd already embraced risk-taking as a viable life strategy, the unconventional pairing looked like an elegant solution to a dilemma.

Powers, j'14, worked in advertising sales at the University Daily Kansan all four years on the Hill, rising to become the student paper's director of sales as a junior and business manager as a senior. After graduation he landed a job as account executive at a major-market TV news station, Denver's ABC affiliate Channel 7. Within a year, he'd chucked the promising career and moved to Guatemala to teach economics and history to high school students.

The reason?

"Love," Powers explains. "I met a girl at KU."



They lived together in Denver until she took a teaching job in Central America, and when he helped her move and learned more about international teaching, it appealed to him.

“I got this feeling in my stomach that I got when I first heard about KU, when I first heard about the journalism school, about the Kansan. And the same feeling I got when I heard about international teaching is the same one I got with the Pacific Crest Trail and comedy.”

That feeling, Powers says, is the first thrilling spark of an adventure blazing into being.

“It’s your gut telling you, ‘Hey, this is scary. This is going to be a long road. This is going to be a risk,’ but a bigger part of you overrides the risk and says, ‘Yes, but it will be fun doing it.’”

He taught for three years in Guatemala before taking a teaching gig at a middle school in Colombia. He was there when COVID-19 prompted a strict lockdown that turned Bogotá into a ghost town.

“It was devastating because the kids are just demoralized; they’re sitting in their rooms, separated from friends,” Powers recalls. “And I wasn’t able to give them the answers, to say it’s going to be OK.”

To inject some fun into their online classes, he began making playful lesson intros that tapped a love of comedy dating to his own childhood, when he’d come home from elementary school every day and—unbeknownst to his parents—watch Comedy Central.

His students loved it, and the work reawakened his ardor for setups and punchlines and making people laugh.

“I put all this effort into making an entertaining experience just to be part of some seventh-grader’s afternoon,” Powers says. “I was like, I could put this energy into building my own brand as a comedian. Why not do that?”

COVID eventually forced him to leave Colombia. He lined up a teaching job in



COURTESY SEAN POWERS

Performing every chance he got along the border-to-border Pacific Crest Trail helped Sean Powers prepare for his big night, headlining his own stand-up comedy show in Bellingham, Washington (p. 44).

Bangladesh, but employers were slow to resolve transportation, health care, pay and safety issues. With Plan A looking shaky, he focused more closely on his perennial Plan Bs: He’d long wanted to hike the Pacific Crest Trail; he’d long wanted to see if he had what it takes to tell jokes onstage in front of strangers.

Trouble was, the pandemic had shut down both the trail and stand-up comedy. In October 2020 the Pacific Crest Trail Association postponed a decision on releasing hiking permits for the coming year. Comedy clubs in Powers’ hometown, Minneapolis, Minnesota, were dark.

Therein lay the dilemma: The very crisis that had inspired him to act was making it impossible to do so. What was a wannabe thru-hiker/joke-cracker to do?

“I came up with an idea: If I get the permit for the PCT, why don’t I just walk and

work towards a show? Why don’t I just write all my material from day one on the trail and try to have a show by the end?”

He began studying a book by Stephen Rosenfield of the American Comedy Institute (ACI), “probably the best-known comedy teacher in the country” according to *The New York Times*. Soon he reached out to Rosenfield with a question: If I come to New York, will you teach me?

“He said, ‘You don’t have to come to New York; we’re on Zoom.’”

Powers took Rosenfield’s online class and discovered a world of stand-up Zoom rooms where aspiring comedians try out new material—for one another, as a rule, rather than for appreciative audiences primed by a club’s two-drink minimum.

“Usually it’s four or five other comics waiting to perform, not really listening to



you,” Powers says. “It’s a terrible, terrible environment, but it teaches you cadence. You get better. And if you can make *them* laugh, chances are your stuff is actually funny.”

A lively online gathering in Bellingham, Washington, the Ember Open Mic, was a welcome exception—a spirited, fun mix of comedians *and* fans that felt more like comedy heaven than Zoom purgatory.

“They had music and they’d get 30, 40 audience members who were interested, engaged. It felt like performing.” He showed up every Saturday night, and after several weeks he pitched an idea.

“I said, ‘Look, I want to hike the Pacific Crest Trail. Has anyone heard of that?’” Powers recalls. “Most of them hadn’t.”

He explained that the trail spans the United States from Mexico to Canada and near its northern terminus passes within a few dozen miles of Bellingham. He’d make the hike, writing material as he went and trying it out in pop-up shows along the way, then headline a performance in Bellingham at trail’s end. Not only did the idea give him a framework for generating a show, it gave him a hook for promoting it. “I said, ‘Why don’t I walk to my first show?’”

By spring 2021 Powers had hiking permits in hand, resupply boxes packed and ready to mail ahead to towns along the trail, and more new gear (he’d joke onstage later) than an REI mannequin.

He set out April 17 on a journey that would take 136 days to complete, with as many emotional ups and downs as the desert-to-mountain course he traversed. One moment he was plunging down an ice chute in terror; another he was waiting in line at a small-town post office to pick up a box packed with custom toilet paper and stage props.

“It was,” Powers says of the epic trek, “a lot like comedy. You fall flat, but you have to keep going.”

The Walk of Shame had begun.



## You gotta get a gimmick

if you want to get ahead. So goes the old show-business saw.

As gimmicks go, building one’s comedic chops by hiking 2,654 miles while writing jokes and testing them on fellow hikers along the trail turns out to be a pretty original one.

“I’ve never heard anything like it,” says Nathan Romano, organizer of Ember Open Mic and co-founder—with his wife, Cecilee Romano—of Bellingham Entertainment, a comedy production company. They agreed to help Powers promote two Bellingham shows.

“I was definitely intrigued,” Romano says. “I will say I didn’t know how realistic it was, in terms of actually happening, but I believed in it 100%.”

Headlining a show so early in one’s stand-up career “is unheard of, as far as drawing a crowd that’s big enough and then having the confidence to stand in front of a hundred people and perform something you came up with,” according to Romano. “There’s people I started doing stand-up with 11 years ago, and none of us have headlined our own show.”

There were many ways the whole venture could go south. Wildfires or other acts of nature could shut down the trail. COVID restrictions could shut down Bellingham. And there was the small detail of the miles Powers had to cover: Nearly 3,000 in four months of often dusk-to-dawn hiking.

“It’s hard to relate that to someone who doesn’t thru-hike,” Romano says. “It’s hard to picture that mentally. Looking at a map, it looks small: There’s Mexico, there’s Canada. But using your two feet to walk it? I don’t know if there’s a way to impart that distance to people. It’s huge.”

Thru-hiking, as the end-to-end back-packing of long trails like the Pacific Crest, Continental Divide and Appalachian is called, has its own culture, and one of its

quirks is the bestowing of trail names on hikers. A couple of weeks into the trip, Powers already had acquired his.

Trail names are often based on a physical characteristic or an embarrassing story, and they must be given by another hiker, not self-selected, although you can refuse a proposed name. “So trail names are like bullying,” Powers quips, “but you get to choose how.” His trail name—a mispronunciation of his first name—was Shame. He embraced it.

“Everyone wants a fun trail name,” he says. “Sunshine. Skittles. Butterfingers. Twinkletoes. Yogi Bear. Shame! It’s very different. I grew up Irish Catholic in the Midwest. I *am* Shame!” Best of all, it made people laugh. One day during a trail performance, he had an idea: “I’ll call my comedy show ‘The Walk of Shame.’”

For the first thousand miles he put on trail shows almost daily. Hikers tend to gather in communal campsites by night, and using an oversize inflatable mic he’d brought as a prop, Powers would stand before PCTers and riff on the absurdities of life on the trail and life in general. He enlisted fellow backpackers to film skits to promote the shows. One introduced an alter ego, Shame LeGüf, a cranky, chain-smoking mime rejected in his native France and forced to walk to the only city that accepts his art, Bellingham. Another posits a world ruled by Bigfoots, who search for an elusive, mythical human who prowls the wilderness.

He started handing out matchbooks emblazoned with his logo, part gift, part marketing piece, until he hit on a better idea.

Thru-hiking’s joys and challenges—including snowy passes, beautiful vistas, elusive cell signals, and the ever-present need for more toilet paper—provided material and a chance to connect with fellow trekkers in pop-up shows all along the trail. “I think true comedy is magic realism,” Powers says. “It’s 10% to 20% based in truth, and 80% to 90% exaggerating the truth.”



COURTESY SEAN POWERS (6)



“People would take matches, but I was like, OK, what is something that everybody really wants? Oh my God, toilet paper! Everyone wants toilet paper. I told my sister this idea. She was like, ‘Hey, your birthday’s coming up. Let me do this for your gift. Let’s put your logo on toilet paper.’ So she shipped it to me and I started giving that to people instead of matches. It’s got my face on it.”

While other hikers are getting care packages stuffed with Mom’s cookies and fresh socks, Powers says, “I’m getting shipped toilet paper, a Bigfoot mask and mime makeup.”



That marketing savvy—a skill developed in his sales roles at the Kansan, Powers points out—would prove valuable.

“The fact that he walked such a great distance ... really helped people want to find out more,” Romano says. Bellingham Entertainment’s other shows had drawn pushback from people who felt it unwise to put on events amid a pandemic. “With Sean, people were willing to venture out, local magazines were willing to write about it, and we were able to get sponsors ... because this was such a big, unheard of thing he was doing.”

Gimmicks, of course, are designed to draw attention, to heighten interest by playing to our fascination with the novel. For that reason they’re often derided as hollow stunts with little substance beneath the flashy surface. But Powers discovered that writing a stand-up routine while hiking the PCT was no mere contrivance: The comedy affected his trek and the trek affected his comedy.

For the first weeks on the trail, he explains, the adventure is fresh and the months and miles stretching before you seem like a gift. “You’re having so much

fun, and every day is incredible. And then after several weeks, after you get out of the high Sierras around mile 1,000, it really starts to hit you that you’re not even halfway through this hike yet. It starts to dawn on you, am I making the right decision? I’ve got three more months to go. Why am I doing this?”

Hiking starts to seem less like a lark and more like a job, “not a 9-to-5 job but a 5:30-in-the-morning-to-7-at-night job,” he says. Strenuous days, when comforts are few, food is scarce, or weather is nasty, take a physical and mental toll.

“Comedy gave me a sense of purpose; the pressure I put on myself to come up with a show helped get me through some pretty hard days, gave me something creative to think about. You’re trying to process not just what’s happening, but how is it relatable? How can I articulate this to other thru-hikers, to people who just like the outdoors, to somebody who doesn’t know what a thru-hike is? And how do I make it funny?”

Such discomfort, angst and suffering aren’t just bearable for comedians, notes Stephen Rosenfield. They’re essential.

“The golden land for a comedian is putting yourself in a struggle, because that’s where the laughs are,” the ACI founder says. “In comedy, you *want* the short end of the stick.”

Powers possesses something that is the most essential asset for a performer, Rosenfield believes. “It’s what I call joyous communication. Sean has a great time being up there talking to the people sitting out there in front of him. It doesn’t mean you’re happy, because a happy comedian is a contradiction of terms. It means that you are happy to express how mad you are or angry or frustrated about something. You can’t succeed in this business without being capable of expressing that to an audience. And he clearly has it.”

Those sitting in front of him at trail shows could be just a few folks gathered around a campfire, or (as happened one memorable night at a national park after the power failed, leaving Shame the only show in town) dozens of entertainment-starved trekkers.

“It helped me broaden my voice,” he says of the PCT performances, “because I’m not just pitching my comedy to the Midwest or the West Coast. Every night you’re meeting people from a different part of the world, and if you’re open to it, they’ll give you feedback.”

Strangers even sought him out to ask if he had any new jokes to share. Then there was his “trail family,” hikers who moved at the same pace as Powers, and thus saw—and heard—a lot of him day after day.

“After a while, they’re like, ‘Dude, stop with the jokes! We’ll give you extra Power Bars if you’ll just shut up.’ I may be the only comedian ever paid not to perform.”

Sean Powers: The world’s first sit-down comedian.



### By late August, with Powers

nearing the end of his hike and with shows scheduled for Sept. 23 and 24 in Bellingham, Nathan Romano went out to the PCT to film a promo with him.

“I wanted to meet Sean for the first time while he was still on the trail,” Romano says. “As we were shooting, he kept talking about his *next* project, and I tried to tell him, ‘Hey, you’re at the tail end of *this* huge project, maybe just take a moment and sort of sit with the fact that you’ve done this amazing thing. Because to me it seemed like he was so used to walking the 30 or 40 miles each day, with the twist of writing comedy and performing comedy the whole way, that it wasn’t really such a big accomplishment. I tried to remind him that this is not something that a lot of people do.”

Powers, he notes, has a lot of ideas—and a lot of ambition to follow through on them. “He’s definitely an outlier in that regard,” Romano says. “But I guess the other side of that is, there might be some self-doubt: Am I able to do this thing? I think at some point the gravity of it really set in that once this long five-month trail is over, I have to headline a comedy show, and I’ve never done my own comedy show.”

On Aug. 30, Powers reached Monument



78, the wooden pillar at the Canadian border that marks the official end of the PCT. “I feel like I’m a little kid waking up on Christmas day, and I can’t wait to see this monument, even though it’s just a piece of wood on a border,” he says in a video he filmed of himself walking the last mile. “But it means so much because it signifies the experiences that I’ve had on this trail, both good and bad, that have made me, I believe, a better person.” The video shows one image from every day of his hike, and 19 weeks flash by in a blur of friends, laughter and stunning landscapes. Condensed into two-second snippets, the 136 days look deceptively easy, success predetermined. But the hurdles were legion, and they could be harrowing, as Powers discovered one day near Lake Tahoe.

Threading around a high ridge, he came upon a trail section blocked by ice. Instead

of finding a way around, he tried to cross, lost his footing and plunged down the steep chute, glissading out of control across the ice toward exposed rock 150 feet below. He considered himself lucky to survive his fall with only torn clothing and abrasions, not broken bones.

“Everything could have ended in that moment because I made one stupid decision to not take five seconds to assess where I was,” Powers says. “I realized, just because you’re out of the Sierras doesn’t mean the hard part of this hike is over.”

Now, marking the end of the trail at Monument 78, he knew the next big challenge awaited.

“Everyone else is like, ‘The end of the hike! The journey’s over!’ But in my head I knew my journey doesn’t end until I finish these shows.”

On Aug. 31, he hiked back down the trail and headed to Bellingham.



### So, a man walks into a bar ...

Actually, it’s an old firehouse converted into a performing arts venue, but it does have a bar up front (OK, more of a cafe really) that serves beer and wine.

A man walks into The Firehouse Arts and Events Center, then, where his name is on the marquee, and thinks, “What the hell have I got myself into?”

He’s done a little stand-up—trail shows and five-minute open mics, mostly, a few warmup gigs for Bellingham comics as practice—but he’s never headlined. His parents have flown out from Minnesota to see him perform, and the place is packed with trail friends and curious strangers.

He’s nervous. He’s afraid he’ll forget his lines, and he does. Sometimes he cribs from notecards spread on a stool near a bottle of water emblazoned with his logo

(available for \$1 at the cafe, he pitches shamelessly). But he rolls with it, even gets a few laughs out of his mistakes. The next night goes even better. He’s more relaxed as he makes fun of jokes that don’t land (“Does this SOS button work in here?” he ad libs, fingering the emergency locator strapped to a backpack he wears while pacing a stage cluttered with hiking gear), his long-suffering parents (“Aren’t there less expensive ways to walk away from your problems, Sean? What about a bowling league?”) and himself and his PCT brethren. (“Thru-hikers are just like sociopaths,” he says, before listing all the hilarious ways this is true. “The difference is sociopaths have no feelings—and thru-hikers won’t shut the @#! up about them.”)

Who knows if it will play in Peoria, but the Bellingham crowd eats it up. Tonight, that’s enough. As the show ends, a visibly elated Powers thanks his audience and—in a final flourish—throws his notecards in the air.

“It’s fair to say that actually headlining your own show when you have little or no

experience as a performer and comedian is in fact a very unusual way to get started,” Rosenfield says, with a wry chuckle. “It is a sign of Sean’s courage, really, because I think most people would be too terrified to even attempt it. The fact that he pulled it off is great.

“He’s an adventurous soul,” the teacher adds, “and I like that.”

“He walked the trail and got to the northern terminus and that was the end of the trail,” Romano says. “But to see him throw all these cards that he’d been working on for five months in the air, to me, that was the real end. ‘I hope you liked my material. I’m done with it. Thanks for coming to the show.’”

But there are more ideas. Always more.

He’s selling an 80-minute special that mixes footage of both Bellingham shows on his website, seanpowerscomedy.com. He’s also working to develop a TV show that would feature him walking the Appalachian Trail in six sections with six comedians, each representing a different style of comedy. (Think “Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee,” but with a LOT more commitment asked of the comics.) He hopes to pitch it to Netflix and other networks.

“I’m at a stage where I know that I can learn from anyone from a beginner on up and we could do this together,” he says. “Of course, I’m not going to get Jerry Seinfeld.”

“It’s really ambitious and I have no reason to doubt he will follow through,” Romano says of his friend’s plans. “If he continues on this path of hiking and adventure, along with stand-up, I think he can follow it to the end. So I’m excited to see what he’ll do next. Or maybe he’ll stop doing it altogether. I don’t know.”

Though impressed by his student’s bold spirit, Rosenfield—who’s seen ACI alumni

like Jim Gaffigan and Lena Dunham make it big—cautions there are no shortcuts. “In the field of stand-up there is no such thing as an overnight success; there is years and years of apprenticeship,” he says. “Having a pipe dream and actually doing it is kind of terrific. But it’s not a career path.”

Yet Powers has shown promise by a metric Rosenfield values: the laughs-per-minute ratio. Pro level is about four, he explains. During a virtual show for his ACI class, “Sean hit that mark, which was really cool for the first time out,” he says. “So I would say that for the long run, if he ever decided that he actually wants to do this—and I don’t know if that’s the case or not—he’s showing the early signs of being capable if he wishes to.”

To be honest, Powers doesn’t really know either. His Appalachian Trail pitch is a great idea that would be murder to execute. (“I immediately envision a cameraman walking backwards for 2,000 miles,” Romano says.) His mindset might be described as committed, but realistic.

“The best advice I ever got,” Powers says, “is that happiness is the routine, it’s the plan, it’s having the foresight to think about something and execute it from beginning to end and then to go back to regular life.

“But joy is the unexpected. Joy is where adventure comes in. Joy is when the plan falls apart and you start improvising and surprise yourself.”

Learning to walk both paths at once, with a plan for happiness and an openness to adventure, that’s the goal.

“Let’s create something, let’s throw a little drama on this, let’s figure it out,” Powers says. “With both you’ll live a very balanced, happy, fun life.”

The hike is over, but the journey continues. A man walks out of a bar and into the rest of his days.



COURTESY SEAN POWERS

Powers celebrated trail’s end Aug. 30, but the true finale came three weeks later in Bellingham. “When an audience turns their brains off and lets you think for them, you can lead them down a path and then make a sudden turn,” Powers says of performing stand-up. “That unexpected twist, that’s where the laughter comes.”

**“I had been looking for ways to strengthen my resume and learn how to get a job post-graduation. I wanted to improve some of those skills.”**

—Jessica Blom



Straughn and Healey

STEVE POPPE

CAREER

## Boot Camp bonus

*KU senior gains more than professional connections, skills at career event*

LONG BEFORE THE START OF HER last semester at KU, Lenexa senior Jessica Blom had contemplated her future and how she could make herself more marketable to potential employers. When an email from the University Career Center landed in her inbox, advertising a three-week virtual Winter Boot Camp to help graduating students launch an effective job search, she immediately signed up.

“I had been looking for ways to strengthen my resume and learn how to get a job post-graduation,” she says. “I wanted to improve some of those skills.”

In addition to offering students job-hunting tips, networking advice and resources for building an impressive resume, the event featured opportunities to participate in more than 50 mock interviews with professionals in a variety of industries, thanks to a collaboration with the Alumni Association’s Jayhawk Career Network.

Blom, c’21, who was majoring in history and international studies, expressed her interest in

libraries and archives and was paired with Celka Straughn, deputy director for public practice, curatorial and research at the Spencer Museum of Art.

During their mock interview, Straughn learned more about Blom’s career goals and immediately thought of KU colleague Elspeth Healey, a special-collections librarian at the Kenneth Spencer Research Library. “A critical part of the learning experience is getting to know other people and learn from and with them,” says Straughn, who also serves as Andrew W. Mellon Director of Academic Programs at the art museum and works closely with KU faculty and staff. “Jessica seemed like someone who was eager to gain new experiences and opportunities and would make the most of them, so I wanted to connect her with Elspeth and expand those possibilities.”

Healey scheduled a virtual meeting with Blom over Zoom and discussed the senior’s interest in attending library school, sharing information about the costs of graduate studies, professional organizations and additional opportunities for growth and development. In a follow-up email to Blom, Healey encouraged her to apply for KU Libraries’ Rubin-

stein/Mason Award, which supports graduate study in librarianship.

Blom applied for the award during the spring semester and in June received notice from Kevin Smith, dean of libraries, that she was one of two students selected for the \$1,000 scholarship. Healey was thrilled to learn that Blom took home the honor.

“I don’t know that students always realize how impressive they are,” she says. “It’s good for them to talk to someone who is in the career that they’re interested in and have that person recognize for them that they are doing some of the right things to be on that career path.”

For Blom, who this fall began her graduate studies in library and information science at Simmons University in Boston, the connections she made through Winter Boot Camp proved particularly helpful in more ways than one.

“It was really valuable for me to build both professional connections and professional skills that I’ll need in the field,” she says. “And it ended up being really awesome that I got a scholarship out of it, too.”

HOMECOMING

## Back in Action

*Jayhawks celebrate 109th Homecoming with return of in-person events*

THE UNIVERSITY CELEBRATED its 109th Homecoming Oct. 13-16, culminating in the KU football game against Texas Tech Oct. 16 in David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium. The theme for this year’s event was “Back in Action.”

After canceling in-person events last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Alumni Association scheduled the return of several popular Homecoming traditions and also debuted new activities, all of which aimed to celebrate KU and connect all Jayhawks.

Students returning from Fall Break participated in Homecoming Kickoff, a two-part event that featured food and giveaways, followed by a movie in the Kansas Union. Other campus activities included a virtual sign competition, Chalk ‘n’ Rock and Jayhawk Jingles. The Association’s Jayhawk Career Network also hosted Kyou Networking Week, a series of nine virtual events that drew more than 300 student and alumni participants—a 40% increase over last year’s networking week.



DAN STOREY (3)



Throughout the week, students participated in Chalk ‘n’ Rock, Homecoming Kickoff and other activities, and trophies were awarded to winning groups. During halftime of the football game, Navya Singh (far left) received the Jennifer Alderdice Homecoming Award, and Lily Nguyen, Javen Betts and Nikki Brown (left to right) were named winners of the ExCEL Award.



PAIGE FREEMAN



COURTESY JESSICA BLOM

Blom

The Association and the Student Alumni Leadership Board named Andrew, c'82, and Cecilia Romero Godwin, c'82, of Leawood as winners of this year's Rich and Judy Billings Spirit of 1912 Award, which recognizes Jayhawks who consistently display school spirit, pride and tradition. The award commemorates the first year of KU's Homecoming and honors Rich, c'57, and Judy Howard Billings, d'57, of Lakewood, Colorado, who in 2011 created an endowment to fund future editions of Homecoming. The Godwins received their award at the One Team tailgate, before kickoff of the football game.

During halftime, three students, Javen Betts of Kansas City, Kansas; Nikki Brown of Kansas City, Missouri; and Lily Nguyen of Wichita, were announced winners of the 31st-annual Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership (ExCEL) Awards, which provide an annual \$250 scholarship to students. Nominees were selected on the basis of leadership, effective communication skills, involvement at KU and in the Lawrence community, academic scholarship and ability to work with a variety of students and organizations.

The Association also honored Navya Singh, a pre-medicine sophomore from Chandigarh, India, with the Jennifer Alderdice Homecoming Award, which recognizes students who demonstrate outstanding loyalty and dedication to the University. The award honors Alderdice, g'99, of Lawrence, who led student programs for the Association from 1999 to 2009.

"This year's Homecoming experience was a week to remember," says Paige Freeman, '22, director of student programs. "We received stellar participation from the KU and Lawrence communities, and we were excited to jump back in action to provide opportunities for both students and alumni to celebrate what it means to be a Jayhawk."

KU's 109th Homecoming was sponsored by Best Western Plus West Lawrence, KU Bookstore and Truicity Credit Union.



Paige Freeman



Austin Johannning



Brett Leonard

DAN STOREY (7)



Cindi Long



Annie Miller



Trish Powell

ASSOCIATION

**On the team**

*Association welcomes new staff for existing and new positions*

THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION recently hired new team members to carry out essential roles in alumni, student and career programs; hospitality; business development; donor and member relations; administration; and finance and human resources. The Association also created a new position to help elevate its focus on diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. The new staff are:

- Paige Freeman, '22, director of student programs, who earned her bachelor's degree from Western Kentucky University and her master's in higher education and student personnel from the University of Mississippi. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in higher education administration at KU. A Kentucky native, Paige previously served as associate director of orientation programs at KU's Office of First-Year Experience.



Mykala Sandifer

- Austin Johannning, g'20, assistant director of membership, who earned his bachelor's degree in business and sports administration from Baker University and his MBA from KU. Formerly with Kansas Athletics and the Williams Education Fund, he joined the Association to help promote member recruitment and retention.
- Brett Leonard, d'09, assistant director of business development, a Caney native and lifelong Jayhawk. He recently spent eight years at the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, where he focused on corporate sales, digital marketing and publications. He lives in Lawrence with his fiancée, Caitlin.

- Cindi Bogard Long, '85, accountant, who joined the Association in 2020. A lifelong Jayhawks fan, Cindi and her husband, Dennis, '85, have two sons, Nick, '17, and Carter.
- Annie Santarelli Miller, c'18, assistant director of legacy relations and event services, who hails from Wisconsin. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in communication studies and earned her master's in communication at Wake Forest University. Annie is happy to be back in Lawrence, where she lives with her husband, Chris.
- Trish Powell, office coordinator, a longtime KU fan. She lives in Lawrence and has two sons, Korbin, a basketball

- player, and Kenzi, a first-generation Jayhawk in his junior year at KU.
- Mykala Sandifer, c'15, director of inclusive programs and talent development, who joined the Association to bolster its efforts in diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging through inclusive programs and community and campus partnerships. She also supports talent development and culture for Association staff. A Chicago native who previously worked for Kansas Athletics as assistant director of the Williams Education Fund, Mykala this fall completed her master's degree in diversity and equity and human resource development from the University of Illinois.

**New Life Members**



*The Association thanks these Jayhawks, who began their Life memberships Aug. 1 through Oct. 24. For information, visit [kualumni.org](http://kualumni.org) or call 800-584-2957.*

Robert J. & Pamela R. Ardis  
James D. Atkisson  
Jon R. & Judith A. Bakalar  
Rick Ball  
David D. Biegel  
John C. Bocox  
Zanice Bond  
Jeanine A. Brizendine  
Marie Coffin  
Dennis D. Delaney & Tiffany C. Barry

Kevin R.C. Dickson  
Michael & Pamela D. Dlugopolski  
Alexander J. & Erin Donoso  
Joseph E. & Lauren Taylor Feifer  
Jason R. & Jill E. Feldman  
Bryan J. & Lauren Burns Garton  
Stephen J. & Michelle Murphy Grindel  
George & Rhonda L. Guilbeaux  
Kathryn S. Hawkinson  
Jennie Alicea Hocking

Bradford J. Hollingsworth  
Benjamin Johnson & Elena M. Khoury  
Dale & Bobbie L. Keyser  
Stanley Konda  
William C. & Julie A. Leibach  
Jennifer J. Lindsay  
James E. & Susan Bauer Lund  
Dia Noel Montgomery  
David P. Nixon  
Christopher J. & Sui Sum Olson  
Abraham T. Pfannenstiel

James B. & Renee A. Phillips  
Andrew M. Poehling  
Juan Rojas-Anderson  
Pat Ryan  
James M. & Mary P. Santarelli  
Joseph C. Shields & Christine A. Fidler  
Steven B. Witte  
Bonnie J. Wohler  
Lucas J. & Angel Lee Zeller



**Become a Life Member today!**

**Members ignite student and alumni success and career growth! Visit [kualumni.org/join](http://kualumni.org/join).**

## Jayhawk Profiles



STEVE PUPPE

### TOM CARR

#### Garmin pilot lauded for flight tests on automated landing system

by CHRIS LAZZARINO

Garmin Ltd. recently unveiled a radical change in the future of aviation, hatched at its Olathe headquarters; few of us who live and work outside the business of flying even took notice, and it is Tom Carr's sincere hope that few ever will.

That's because Autoland, the world's first certified system designed to assume complete control of an aircraft in distress, all the way from high-altitude flight to landing and engine shutdown, activates only when pilots are incapacitated and all aboard the aircraft face imminent peril.

"The only time it's meant to be used," says Carr, 77, Garmin's chief test pilot and director of flight operations, "is when

there's nobody left to land the airplane."

Industry praise for Autoland was swift, with the National Aeronautic Association (NAA) awarding Garmin's Autoland team the Robert J. Collier Trophy in recognition of "the greatest achievement in aeronautics or astronautics in America"—Autoland, said NAA Chairman Jim Albaugh, "will save many lives in the future"—and the Society of Experimental Test Pilots awarded Carr its Iven C. Kincheloe Award for "outstanding professional accomplishment in the conduct of flight testing."

Carr was honored for his Autoland certification flights, including hundreds of approaches and fully automated landings. With more than 5,000 hours as pilot in command on experimental flight tests for Garmin and, earlier in his career, Wichita's Beech Aircraft and Raytheon Aircraft, Carr describes his work on Autoland and the Kincheloe Award as "kind of the pinnacle of my career." He quickly adds, "And we're just as proud of the team award."

Carr dreamed of flying while growing up

Tom Carr says he's nowhere near ready to end his test-pilot career by retiring from Garmin. "I love what I'm doing, I'm still having fun, and we still have young kids coming along who I really want to mentor."

in Washington, D.C., yet the only airport he could reach by bus or bike was Washington National (now Reagan National)—hardly a welcoming environment for a "prototypical airport rat." But he happily made do, spending weekends watching big planes come and go, hanging around the general aviation terminal and paying premium landing fees when he began his flight training.

"I may be the only person I know," Carr says with a chuckle, "who started his flying career at Washington National Airport."

He had family in Kansas, so Carr came to Mount Oread to study aeronautical engineering "at the best aero school around," hoping to one day become an airline pilot.

He joined Beech after graduation, in part to make himself more attractive to airlines by boosting his flight hours, but when he made his way to flight test after spending one year as a control systems design engineer, Carr knew he'd found his niche.

"It's more interesting than airline flying, to me," he says, "so I started down the path toward a career in flight test."

Carr explains that flight test consists of two varieties: production flight test, confirming airworthiness when planes exit the assembly line; and experimental, or engineering, flight test, in which pilots push new products and designs through performance expectations. "It's a different ball game every day," Carr says of his specialty, experimental flight test.

Carr's broad interest in all forms of aviation, from gliders to jets, is so all-consuming that he and his wife recently built a home in rural Leavenworth County with acreage for a grass airstrip; family trips are taken in family planes.

A system capable of landing such an aircraft in the event of a pilot emergency required that Garmin software engineers create routing algorithms capable of sorting through terrain, weather, wind and runway lengths at nearby airports. Automated throttles, all but unheard of for propeller-powered aircraft, had to be robust enough to work on aircraft from small prop planes to powerful jets, and the system also includes steering and braking once on the ground.

Garmin's "human engineering" foresaw instructions for passengers on how to communicate with air-traffic controllers and, once safely stopped, open the aircraft door.

Autoland engages automatically should high-altitude hypoxia cause loss of consciousness among the flight crew—as with the 1999 private-jet crash that claimed the lives of golfer Payne Stewart and five others, and the 2005 downing of a Greek airliner that killed 121. Should the pilot suffer a heart attack or other medical emergency, a passenger can push one dedicated button to begin the safe conclusion of a terrifying event—a transformative leap in aircraft safety that Carr was the first to prove safe and effective.

"Essentially, this is what would be called a 'digital parachute,'" Carr says, explaining that once activated, Autoland instantly transforms the cockpit environment with displays designed for passengers rather than pilots. "You really don't expect to use it, but there's some peace of mind in knowing that it's there."

### GWEN WESTERMAN

#### 'Working poet' touts diverse voices in laureate role

by STEVEN HILL

The appointment of Gwen Westerman as Minnesota's new poet laureate in September was hailed as an important first: Westerman, who grew up in Kansas

steeped in the traditions of two tribal cultures, is the first Indigenous person to hold the title in a state that owes so much of its history and culture—in fact, its very name—to the Native Americans who called Minnesota home for centuries before white settlers arrived.

An enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, her father's people in South Dakota, and a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, her mother's people in Oklahoma's Flint District, the writer and textile artist draws much of her creative inspiration from tribal and family stories and from traditional bead and ribbon work that can still be seen in the regalia of Kansas tribes today.

Incorporating traditional Native stories and crafts into her own poems and quilts is an essential part of Westerman's creative approach. And yet ...

"At first, I was kind of hesitant about that addition to the title, the first Native



"There's so much potential here for being an advocate for inclusion, for the arts, for education in a time when those areas seem to be less valued," says Minnesota poet laureate Gwen Westerman.



Textile, "Return to Crow Creek" by Gwen Westerman

COURTESY GWEN WESTERMAN (2)

American poet laureate,” says Westerman, PhD’94. “Then I thought, ‘Well, I won’t be the last.’ It also sets the stage for the first African American poet laureate, the first Chicano-Latino, the first Asian or Hmong or Somali poet laureate of Minnesota.

“To me that is exciting. And then there will be no more firsts, and that will be even more exciting.”

Westerman’s parents met at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, and later moved to Wichita, where she graduated from high school. She attended Oklahoma State University as a chemistry major, switching to English senior year. “I couldn’t pass physical chemistry,” Westerman says, laughing. “I just hit a brick wall.” Her English degree and deep science background led to a job as a technical writer and, eventually, head of corporate communications for a Kansas City company. Taking advantage of her employer’s tuition assistance benefit, she enrolled in KU’s PhD program in English.

As poet laureate, Westerman will try to encourage and support a wide range of voices, including beginning poets, writers outside of the Minneapolis-St. Paul arts epicenter, and people of color. The role requires her to participate in at least five public events annually at schools and public libraries, and Westerman hopes to use that platform to focus attention on Minnesota’s varied landscapes by asking “younger, aspiring” writers to write about the state park nearest their home.

While programs are important, there’s also value in the example she sets by filling the role, which is appointed by the governor and overseen by the Minnesota Humanities Center, an independent nonprofit affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities.

“When I interviewed with the Minnesota Humanities Center, I said I will be a working poet, because I have a full-time job,” says Westerman, who is professor of English at Minnesota State University, Mankato. “I won’t be sitting as much as I would like to in the rose-covered cottage by a lake dreamily writing poetry all day.” For anyone who wants to write but thinks they don’t have time, she hopes her exam-

ple “lets them know that here’s somebody who has a job and other responsibilities and makes time to write, that it’s not such a Herculean task as some people might think.

“I also believe it’s important for communities of color to see a person of color in a prominent arts position in this state. It kind of falls in with that if-you-see-it-you-can-be-it idea, that yes, our voices are important, and validated and held up.”

Westerman wrote a 2013 poetry collection, *Follow the Blackbirds*, and co-authored *Mni Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota*, a history that won two Minnesota Book Awards. Her textile artworks, mainly quilts that feature traditional Native bead work and hand-applied ribbon work, are included in the permanent collections of the Minnesota Historical Society, the Great Plains Art Museum, the University Art Galleries at the University of South Dakota and the Children’s Museum of Southern Minnesota in Mankato.

“I see textile art and poetry as almost two sides of the same coin; to me they’re both forms of storytelling,” Westerman says. “The quilts I create tell traditional

tribal stories and tell stories about the land. I’m choosing fabrics and often creating smaller pieces and putting them together to create a larger shape to tell a story, and it’s the same thing with writing. I have an idea, I choose my words carefully and they have to complement each other in the same way that colors in my textile art complement and work together. The foundation for both of those art forms is storytelling and a connection to family and the land.”

**ERIN LESH FLETT**

**Alumna takes passion for prints from small idea to big business**

by HEATHER BIELE

For graphic designer Erin Lesh Flett, a single pillow provided all the inspiration she needed to launch an entire textile and home-goods brand—and change the trajectory of her career.



COURTESY ERIN FLETT (2)



“We hand-print and sew everything we make,” says Erin Flett, owner of Erin Flett Textiles and Home in Maine. “It’s really important to me to stay the course on that.”

Shortly after graduating from KU with a bachelor’s degree in fine arts, Flett, f’01, and her husband, Maslen, ’97, loaded up their belongings and drove from Lawrence to Portland, Maine, where Flett took a job at an advertising agency. When she became pregnant with their first child, Flett transitioned to freelance design, thinking it would give her greater flexibility and more creative control. But the daily grind of meeting client demands continued.

“I was probably three or four years in, and my heart just wasn’t whole,” Flett explains. “I knew that there was more in me. So, I started drawing stuff on the side.”

Flett’s distinct illustrations soon drew the attention of friends, one of whom asked Flett to create a custom gift for her wedding. She came up the idea for a handmade pillow, sketching a unique pattern and hiring a local T-shirt company to print the design on fabric. “As soon as I printed one pattern on a piece of cloth, I was hooked,” she recalls. “I knew that was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.”

Flett immediately followed that pattern

with six more, and her first textile line was born. By 2009, she was selling her hand-crafted pillows on the e-commerce site Etsy and could barely keep up with demand. “I was really taking over this poor guy’s T-shirt company,” Flett admits, adding that after almost two years, the shop owner kindly suggested that she take on the print-making herself.

With her husband’s help, Flett learned the multistep, silk-screen process, first setting up a workspace in their kitchen and eventually moving to the basement, where the couple toiled for hours after putting their daughters to bed. “That’s what we did in the middle of the night after our day jobs,” she says. “We were literally like little elves downstairs for a good two years.”

As her business blossomed, Flett was featured as an up-and-comer in several national magazines, including *O*, *The Oprah Magazine*; *Better Homes & Gardens*; and *Real Simple*. The exposure—and the influx of orders that followed—gave her the confidence in 2013 to move business operations out of her basement and into the Dana Warp Mill, a historic waterfront property with a rich tradition in textile manufacturing in downtown Westbrook, Maine. With 1,400 square feet of work space, Flett expanded her business to include a variety of bags, tea towels, glasses, wall art and other accessories, and she hired additional staff to help bring her bold, vintage-inspired ideas to life.

More than a decade after creating her first designs, Flett hasn’t wavered on her brand’s dedication to local craftsmanship and high quality. Now in an even larger space with a retail area, she still employs a team of about 20 Maine residents and continues to source her canvas and bark cloth from a textile weaver in North Carolina. To this day, she maintains a small-business mentality, despite the fact that in recent years she has teamed up with major retailers like Anthropologie and L.L. Bean for collaborative collections.

“I just really, truly love what I do,” Flett says. “I really enjoy doing my art and seeing it on different products. ... Even in the hardest weeks, I still feel so much passion and excitement for what’s to come.”

**LT. GEN. DAVID G. BELLON**

**Once answered, ‘call to service’ motivates Marine general**

by CHRIS LAZZARINO

It’s a safe guess that when he stood at attention in the back ranks of formation, holding a rifle while wearing Levi 501s and a long-sleeve Ocean Pacific T-shirt during his introduction to ROTC, David Bellon couldn’t have imagined a day when he would wear three stars as a lieutenant general in the U.S. Marines.

“I walked up to the soldiers, handed them back the rifle and said, ‘This isn’t for me, man,’ and I walked out, finished college, then went to law school at the University of Missouri and never really gave it another thought,” Lt. Gen. Bellon says of the initial halting steps that led to his current billet as commander of Marine Forces Reserve and Marine Forces South.

While in high school in St. Louis, Bellon, b’87, dreamed of flying for the Air Force, until a recruiter saw his eyeglasses and announced, “You’ll never fly.”

“I had this image in my mind,” Bellon says, “of putting gas in a wing.”

No longer interested in the Air Force Academy, Bellon turned his attention to KU, which his older sister had visited. “I knew immediately that was where I wanted to go to school,” he says of his first visit to Mount Oread, beginning a Jayhawk tradition that now includes a brother, three nieces and nephews, and his daughter, Abby, a KU senior.

Bellon fell in with a group of swimmers with whom he later shared a house on Missouri Street, and gave no thought to the military—until the summer after freshman year, when Army and Navy recruiters called with unexpected scholarship offers; the Army ROTC visit was so awkward he never even followed up with the Navy.

“I must have had some call to service in me,” Bellon says. “I just wasn’t mature enough yet to answer it.”

That happened during his second year

of law school, when Bellon met a Marine recruiter “who saw me coming from a mile away.” He was corresponding at the time with a friend who had become a Marine sergeant, and Bellon figured a visit with the recruiter might make for a funny letter.

Instead, it changed his life.

Proud of his physical fitness, Bellon was stunned to hear the recruiter dismiss his chances of becoming a Marine by sneering, “Yeah, I don’t see it. You can try out, but I don’t see it.”

“And that was it,” he says. “I was a scrapper and I grabbed the bait. The next thing I know, I was a Marine.”

Bellon that summer completed Officer Candidate School, yet told himself he would probably decline a commission: “OCS is a tryout both ways. You’re trying out for the team, and if you make it, they offer you a commission. You can say no. I really went to OCS thinking I was probably going to say no; I just wanted to see if I could do it.”

Bellon relented and agreed to a single tour of duty, and the rigorous Basic School—infantry training required of all Marine officers—convinced him to drop his law contract and prove himself within the hyper-competitive Marine infantry.

Even then, he still could not envision a career in uniform. Deployment to an elite Force Reconnaissance team nearly did the trick, until Bellon’s father, a son of immigrants eager to see his children exceed his own accomplishments, pleaded for his son to reconsider. He’d already passed the bar exam, so why turn down a law career?

Bellon honored his father’s advice and requested a transfer to the Judge Advocate division, which assigned him to Camp Pendleton, in Southern California, “in the middle of a crime wave. It was crazy.” He left active duty at the end of his harried JAG tour to work for an international underwriting firm. He signed up for the Reserves and relished command of a Marine Reserves infantry company, but he had a growing family and a busy private practice; in late summer 2001 Bellon resolved to march into his commander’s office and end his uniformed career.

“That was going to happen on a Sat-



urday,” he says, “and Tuesday morning, 9/11 happened. I remember knowing, consciously feeling it, that my life had just changed. And then I spent the next 10 years or so going back and forth to Iraq and Afghanistan.”

After leading Marines through the invasion of Iraq, Bellon was recruited by then-Col. Joe Dunford, later to become chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to join the 1st Marine Division for deployment to Al Fallujah, seen as a mission about “winning hearts and minds, handing out soccer balls and all that,” but instead infamous for two notably intense battles. Following that “pretty hard-core deployment,” Bellon commanded a battalion of nearly 2,000 Marines and sailors at Haditha.

While attending Naval War College in Rhode Island, he received orders for deployment to Afghanistan, where he served as chief of operations for Southern Afghanistan during NATO’s 2010 surge of forces in and around Kandahar City.

He received his first general’s star in 2013 and moved through increasingly

Lt. Gen. Bellon takes seriously his legacy as a grandson of immigrants and empathizes with others around the world enmeshed in harsh conditions. “If you’ve lived your whole life in the Midwest,” he says, “it’s hard to understand how blessed we are as a people. We’ve won the lottery by being born in the United States.”

prominent commands, leading to his 2019 installment as commander of Marine Forces Reserve as a three-star general—apparently the highest military rank attained by a KU graduate since now-retired Gen. Charles G. “Chuck” Boyd, c’75, g’76, received his fourth Air Force star in 1992.

When the Marine Corps last spring chose to upgrade command of Marine Forces South—the Corps’ element within Miami-based U.S. Southern Command, which is the Department of Defense unit responsible for Central and South America and the Caribbean—from a colonel to a general, Bellon was tapped for the job.

It’s an ideal fit, he says, because challenging missions within Southern Command’s area of operations await his 100,000 reserves. “It works out pretty well,” Bellon says of the new joint command structure.

Anticipating the Corps’ celebration of its Nov. 11 birthday, Bellon reflects on the annual pause “to renew our vows,” a sacred rite for all U.S. Marines.

“We basically say, ‘Hey, we signed up to do hard things, to stand in the path of peril for our people.’ That’s the oath we take every time we get promoted,” Bellon says. “The longer you’re in it—I’m in my fourth decade of doing this, and I have a son who is a Marine officer now—when you see the end coming, you begin to appreciate the days more and more.”

# The impact of your Presidents Club dollars makes such a difference.

## Thank you.



The Alumni Association and KU Endowment established the Presidents Club in 2007 as an opportunity for alumni and friends to make an immediate impact in strengthening the University and to help students achieve academic and career success.

**Your annual gifts of \$1,000, \$3,000, \$5,000 and \$10,000 or more support:**

- Enhancing our personalized recruitment of legacy students in partnership with KU Admissions
- Building a strong pipeline of future alumni, leaders, volunteers and donors via the Student Alumni Network
- Facilitating meaningful career connections between students and the powerful worldwide alumni network with the Jayhawk Career Network
- Connecting alumni with networks throughout Kansas, across the country and around the world

For more information on the Presidents Club, contact:

**Angie Storey**

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#### Dear Jayhawks,

We all have endured many challenges this past year, and we have learned a lot. We are proud of the creative ways in which our team managed through a complex, uncertain health crisis that we are all still navigating today. Thanks to your support and dedication, the Association continued its vital work to advocate for the University of Kansas, communicate with Jayhawks in all media, recruit students and volunteers, serve students and alumni, and unite far-flung Jayhawks online. Our successes would not be attainable without your leadership and commitment to KU and your alumni association. A few highlights include:

- The Jayhawk Career Network continued to grow through the pandemic. More than 9,000 Jayhawks are making thousands of career connections through KU Mentoring+, which has expanded to gather Jayhawks who share common professions, cultures, and civic and social interests.
- Paid membership in the Association grew by 2,800 alumni. In addition, we updated thousands of biographical records through the KU Alumni Directory Project to help Jayhawks remain connected to KU and one another.
- We hosted our first virtual fundraiser, Jayhawks Flock Together, and raised more than \$70,000 for KUAA programs and \$20,000 for KU Campus Cupboard to help students and other community members who face food insecurity.
- We launched our dramatically redesigned website, [kualumni.org](http://kualumni.org), which features timely, relevant content and improved navigation to more easily connect you with the information and resources you need. We also unveiled [kuconnection.org](http://kuconnection.org), a convenient calendar of online and in-person events hosted by the Association and units across KU.
- The Association, KU Endowment and the University broke ground on the new Jayhawk Welcome Center, connected to a renovated Adams Alumni Center. The state-of-the-art complex will usher in a new era of KU student recruitment by creating unparalleled campus visits. When prospective students walk through our doors, we want them to see how KU, at every step of the way, will position them for success as students and as alumni. We will create modern spaces for prospective students and families, current students, alumni, faculty and staff while preserving the best of history and tradition. We're eager to welcome you to your new home on the Hill!

These pages and our complete online annual report ([kualumni.org/annualreport](http://kualumni.org/annualreport)) offer many details about the Association's progress toward strategic goals and our ongoing efforts to strengthen the University.

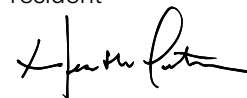
One of the most important ways in which we can lift one another and our proud alma mater is by dedicating resources to measurably improve diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. Our goal is to ensure that the KU Alumni Association creates a community where all Jayhawks rise — where every person is seen, heard, celebrated and feels a sense of belonging. We have completed an internal survey to identify our strengths and opportunities, formed a committee dedicated to culture and belonging, and we are collaborating with more than a dozen KU partners in this comprehensive effort. We look forward to sharing more about our progress in the coming year.

Looking ahead, considerable challenges remain and many opportunities are on the horizon. We are privileged to serve KU as a trusted, strategic partner, striving to enhance student and alumni experiences through our programs and services — all made possible by YOU. Thank you.

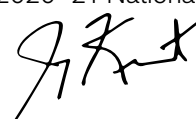
We believe Jayhawks are stronger together!

Rock Chalk!

Heath Peterson, d'04, g'09  
President



Jay Kerutis, c'82  
2020-'21 National Chair




Kerutis and Peterson

#### Strategic Plan

Four goals, approved by the national Board of Directors, continue to guide the Association:

- 1 Grow revenue sources, creating future funding for programs and services
- 2 Assure student engagement by providing quality educational resources and diverse, inclusive programs within the Student Alumni Network to drive long-term loyalty and philanthropy for KU
- 3 Expand the Jayhawk Career Network to give students and alumni access to career resources at every stage of career, embracing our Jayhawk heritage to lift one another and advance society
- 4 Modernize the Adams Alumni Center and build the Jayhawk Welcome Center, creating an unrivaled experience for prospective students and families, current students, alumni and friends, and faculty and staff

#### Student Alumni Network

- **5,393** members
- **largest** student group on campus
- largest student alumni group in the **Big 12**

SAN offered weekly Focus Fridays online programs to connect students through fun and informative activities, including workouts, career programs, Alumni Learning Consortium webinars and more.



#### Presidents Club

**510** Presidents Club members donated annual gifts of **\$1,000** or more. Since 2007, donor support has enabled the Association to dramatically expand its programs and services. **Thank you!**

For a complete list of Presidents Club donors, visit [kualumni.org/annualreport](http://kualumni.org/annualreport).

#### Website Redesign

After a discovery process that collected input from alumni stakeholders, including Association board members, current KU students, staff and faculty, the Association worked with the Ruckus Group to unveil a revamped website at [kualumni.org](http://kualumni.org) in the spring. The new site features:

- **Improved navigation and findability**, serving primarily two audiences: insiders, who know what they want to find (watch sites, for example), and seekers, who want to learn about Association membership, programs and activities.
- **More modern look and feel**, combining bold KU colors and brand elements that invoke a sense of celebration, fun and nostalgia, and faces that reflect our broad and diverse alumni base.
- **Reduced footprint**, including collapsible content modules that allow users to view more information with a simple hover or click, streamlining the entire site by reducing pages.





**Membership** (as of June 30, 2021)

- **329** Monthly Subscription
- **10,023** Annual
- **2,948** Premium
- **22,487** Life
- **35,787** Total Paid members—an increase of 2,810 from 2020 (32,977)
- **5,393** Student Alumni
- **41,180 Total Members**



**Alumni Records**

- **104,861** records updates made in FY '21
- **264,173** total degreed alumni
- **485,608** total constituent database (including donors and friends)

**KU Connection**

The Association hosts a central online calendar, [kuconnection.org](http://kuconnection.org), for all KU and Association events, both online and in person. From July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021:

- **12,364** total visits
- **9,414** unique visits
- **2 minutes, 42 seconds** average time on page
- **#4** most-visited page on [kualumni.org](http://kualumni.org)

**Jayhawk Career Network**

Engagement grew in new ways throughout the year. To unite Jayhawks worldwide during Homecoming 2020, JCN hosted Kyou Networking Week, a series of 11 virtual events for students and alumni in a variety of fields, including journalism, design and architecture, business and education.

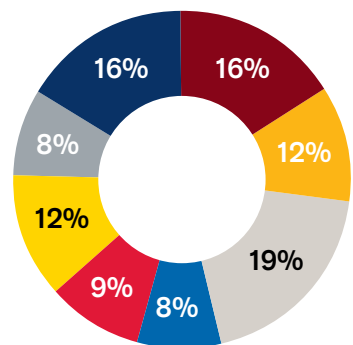
In January, the Association partnered with the University Career Center to bring alumni expertise and support to Winter Boot Camp, a program that focuses on helping graduating seniors prepare to enter the workforce. Alumni served on panels and conducted more than 50 mock interviews with seniors.

KU Mentoring+ expanded to include project-based opportunities through Bridges and new affinity groups:

- more than **9,000** total users, including more than **2,400** students
- nearly **17,000** messages sent
- **4,358** subscribers to the Water Cooler E-Newsletter (**52% open rate**)
- **350** job posts
- average rating of **4.7 out of 5 stars**
- more than **100** career partners
- new affinity groups, including Asian, Asian-American & Pacific Islander Jayhawks, Jewish Jayhawks and 13 industry groups
- **14** micro-internships through the Bridges Program

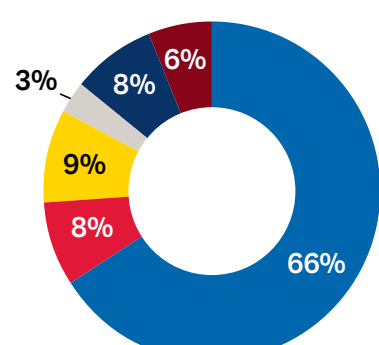
**Finances**

Operating Revenues— \$5,277,000\*



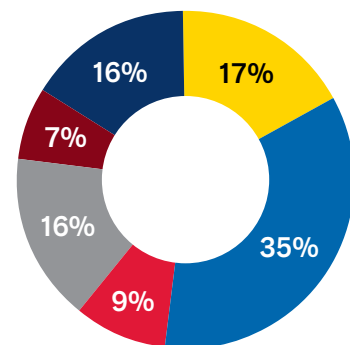
- Membership Dues
- Royalties
- Contributions, unrestricted
- Net assets released from restriction
- Sales & Commissions
- External Grants
- University Support
- Investment Income

Operating Expenses—\$4,934,000



- Staff
- Occupancy, Insurance & Depreciation
- Printing & Postage
- Events & Hospitality
- Professional Fees
- Other

Operating Expenses by Function



- University services
- Alumni Programs
- Student Programs
- Publications
- Management & General
- Membership & Fundraising

\*In FY21, the Alumni Association had unrealized gains of \$5.5 million on investments and permanently restricted endowment funds held by the KU Endowment Association that are not included in operating revenues. The Alumni Association also received donor-restricted contributions and other non-operating income of \$6.2 million, including gifts to permanently restricted endowment funds and \$4.2 million for building expansion and renovation. As restricted contributions, these latter funds may be used only for their donor-designated purposes.





**The Jayhawk Welcome Center**

The entrance to the historic Jayhawk Boulevard corridor of the Lawrence campus will make the perfect starting point for tours of beautiful Mount Oread, especially for prospective students and families. The Jayhawk Welcome Center and renovated Adams Alumni Center will powerfully tell our story, illustrating the incomparable KU experience and what it truly means to be a Jayhawk.

Funded entirely through private gifts, the \$29 million, 30,000-square-foot structure will connect to the Adams Center, headquarters of the KU Alumni Association. Generous alumni and KU-led companies already have committed \$26 million to the project.

The Alumni Association and KU Endowment seek remaining funds to support new technology, modernize the Adams Center (which opened in 1983) and connect the existing structure to the new Welcome Center's event spaces.

Features will include:

- expansive views of campus, including David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium, the World War II Memorial Campanile, Dyche Hall and the iconic flags atop Fraser Hall
- a two-story LED screen that will offer personalized greetings for visitors and customized videos, photo slideshows, animations and social media feeds; visitors will receive individual QR codes, which they can scan at each digital display to see content tailored to their academic, geographic or professional interests
- a 360-degree virtual exhibit that captures experiences in classrooms, laboratories and Allen Field House as well as the walk down the Hill at Commencement
- interactive displays of the global Jayhawk alumni network that feature alumni mentors, KU-led companies and career resources available through the Jayhawk Career Network
- exhibits highlighting KU research, discoveries and innovations and KU's economic impact
- stories of KU leaders and accomplished alumni, including recent graduates and notable Jayhawks throughout history
- exhibits and artifacts that capture KU traditions and history
- dedicated space for Student Alumni Network programs, the Student Alumni Leadership Board and Jayhawk Career Network programs

***"The Jayhawk Welcome Center is going to be a real game-changer for our university. It will be a meeting place for every member of our community, including alumni, current students and, most importantly, prospective students who are visiting our campus and deciding whether to attend the University of Kansas."***

*—Chancellor Doug Girod*



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**National Board Members**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Chair</b><br>Jay Kerutis, c'82, Mesa, Arizona   | Rosa Aguirre Mitchell, s'85, Elkhart   | <b>Directors to July 2025</b><br>Bobb Meckenstock, c'76, Hays<br>Jessica Nelson Palm, j'11, Overland Park<br>Ryan Pfeiffer, j'02, Prairie Village<br>Becky Nettels Sloan, '85, Pittsburg<br>Lisa Evans Tuchtan, d'74, Bethesda, Maryland   |
| <b>Chair Elect</b><br>Keturah Harding Pohl, f'04, g'08, Findlay, Ohio  | Keturah Harding Pohl, f'04, g'08, Findlay, Ohio  |  |
| <b>Executive Committee</b><br>Jay Kerutis, c'82, Mesa, Arizona (Chair)<br>Keturah Harding Pohl, f'04, Findlay, Ohio (Chair-Elect)<br>Sasha Boulware, c'98, g'00, Fairway<br>Taylor Burch, p'88, g'98, PharmD'09, Lantana, Texas<br>Michael J. Happe, j'94, Eden Prairie, Minnesota<br>David Hoese, e'86, Chicago, Illinois | <b>Directors to July 2023</b><br>Sasha Boulware, c'98, g'00, Fairway<br>Taylor Burch, p'88, g'98, PharmD'09, Lantana, Texas<br>Brenda Dicus, b'83, Topeka<br>Eric Edell, c'76, MD'81, Rochester, Minnesota<br>David Hoese, e'86, Chicago, Illinois<br>Peter Johnston, c'94, l'97, Salina | <b>Association Representatives to other University boards</b><br><b>Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Athletics</b><br>Aaron Brinkman, j'98, Dallas, Texas<br>Scott Seyfarth, b'83, Hinsdale, Illinois<br>Becky Nettels Sloan, '85, Pittsburg<br><b>KU Memorial Unions Corporation Board</b><br>Catherine Bell, c'04, l'07, Shawnee<br>Joseph Day, e'10, Long Beach, California<br>Marlon Marshall, c'13, Washington, D.C.<br>Shanda Vangas, b'94, Denver, Colorado<br>Paul Wise, b'80, Austin, Texas |
| <b>Directors to July 2022</b><br>Steve M. Dillard, c'75, Wichita<br>Michael C. Flowers, c'77, Apollo Beach, Florida<br>Michael J. Happe, j'94, Eden Prairie, Minnesota<br>Portia Kibble Smith, c'78, Overland Park   | <b>Directors to July 2024</b><br>Julie Andrews, j'95, Waukee, Iowa<br>Joseph C. Courtright, p'89, Little Rock, Arkansas<br>Allen Fee, c'84, Hutchinson<br>Jackie Hall, b'75, Sublette<br>Clint Rogers, b'98, Ellsworth<br>Jody Sellers, p'81, Council Grove                              |  |

by HEATHER BIELE

**1943 Lucy Thompson McDowell**, b'43, celebrated her 100th birthday in October. She was a member of Gamma Phi Beta sorority at KU and remains an avid Jayhawks fan. Lucy lives in Prairie Village, where she watches all the KU football and basketball games.

**1951 Ken Philo**, e'51, is a retired civil engineer in San Rafael, California. He has written two books about his experience constructing high-profile bridges, *Memoirs of a Bridge-Man* and *The Making of America*.

**1958 Richard Larry Meuli**, c'58, m'62, in June was named Person of the Year by the Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce. In 2002 he was honored as Wyoming Physician of the Year by the Wyoming Medical Society, and in 2004 he received the Dr. Nathan Davis Award from the American Medical Association for extraordinary public service and contributions to health care. A retired physician and Wyoming state representative, Larry continues to make his home in Cheyenne.

**1959 Bruce Voran**, d'59, wrote *Behold, It Was Very Good*, which was published in June by Fulton Books. It's a companion book to *Trembling*

*Before God: Twelve Homilies Explore the Origin, Development, and Failure of Christianity Today*, which came out in late 2020. He lives in Strawberry, Arizona.

**1963 Betty Jane "Janie" Wullschleger Curtis**, n'63, is CEO of Curtis Machine Company in Dodge City. She was included in Ingram's magazine as one of "50 Kansans You Should Know: Class of 2020." **James Hesser**, c'63, is retired and lives in in British Columbia, Canada. He's director emeritus at Dominion Astrophysical Observatory.

**1965 Gary Gradinger**, b'65, lives in Fairway, where he's chairman at Golden Star Inc.

**Janet Heck Kittlaus**, b'65, is a criminal justice and juvenile justice specialist for the League of Women Voters in Illinois. She recently advanced updates to the League's criminal justice position, which allows the organization to more effectively advocate for criminal justice reform in Illinois.

**1967 William Fleming III**, c'67, was honored in May with the Texas Medical Association's Distinguished Service Award. A longtime neurologist in Houston, he's the first Black

physician to receive the association's highest honor in the 59-year history of the award.

**1968 Paul Haney**, j'68, is principal at Paul A. Haney & Associates in Pasadena, California.

**1969 Doug Irmen**, c'69, g'70, l'74, wrote *Let There Be Light: Saving Ourselves and Our Planet Through a Global Social Impact*, which was published in May. He lives in Chicago.

**1970 James Zakoura**, d'70, l'72, in July was elected chairperson of the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System board of trustees. He was reappointed by Gov. Laura Kelly in January to a second four-year term on the board.

**1971 C.W. King**, s'71, retired this year as a city councilman in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin. He served three separate terms after his first appointment in 1986.

**1972 Colin Martin**, c'72, is retired executive director of Berkeley County Water & Sanitation Authority. He lives in Summerville, South Carolina.

**1973 Kent Lynch**, c'73, l'76, retired in July after 16 years as a judge in the 11th

Judicial District in southeast Kansas. He continues to make his home in Baxter Springs.

**Wade Martin**, c'73, m'77, is a staff cardiologist and professor of medicine at the VA St. Louis Health Care System and Washington University School of Medicine. He lives in University City, Missouri.

**Alicia Hoover Rieder**, d'73, lives in Lawrence, where she is secretary and treasury at RAR Inc.

**1974 Jim Doepke**, d'74, also known as "Mr. Trumpet," will perform the national anthem and alma mater before the KU vs. Kentucky men's basketball game Jan. 29. It will be his ninth performance in Allen Field House. In 2019, Jim completed his personal goal of performing the national anthem at every Major League Baseball stadium in the United States.

**Perry Smith**, c'74, m'77, retired in July as a physician at The University of Kansas Health System Family Medicine. He and his wife, **Krista Schmidt Smith**, h'75, live in Great Bend and have two children and three grandchildren.

**1975 Jim McDonald**, c'75, retired as director of current programming at Columbia and Universal TV. He lives in Canyon Country, California.



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- c College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
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- e School of Engineering
- f School of Fine Arts

- g Master's Degree
- h School of Health Professions
- j School of Journalism
- l School of Law
- m School of Medicine
- n School of Nursing
- p School of Pharmacy
- PharmD School of Pharmacy
- s School of Social Welfare

- u School of Music
- AUD Doctor of Audiology
- DE Doctor of Engineering
- DMA Doctor of Musical Arts
- DNAP Doctor of Nursing Anesthesia Practice
- DNP Doctor of Nursing Practice
- DPT Doctor of Physical Therapy
- EdD Doctor of Education
- OTD Doctor of Occupational Therapy

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- (no letter) Former student
- assoc Associate member of the Alumni Association



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1. Retrieved on October 6, 2021, from usnews.com/education/online-education/education/online-educational-administration-rankings

**Ronald Shaklee**, c'75, g'79, PhD'83, is retired after a long career as professor of geography at Youngstown State University in Youngstown, Ohio, where he lives with his wife, Sharon.

**Mary Prohodsky Shepherd**, c'75, lives in Emporia, where she's a retired professional counselor.

**Wint Winter**, c'75, l'78, in June was appointed by Gov. Laura Kelly to the Kansas Board of Regents. A former bank president, he is currently a partner at Stevens & Brand in Lawrence and previously served in the Kansas Senate from 1982 to '92.

**1976 Edward Martinko**, PhD'76, lives in Lawrence, where he's professor emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology at KU.

**1977 Rex Donahey**, c'77, g'83, PhD'86, is director of innovative concrete technology at the American Concrete Institute in Farmington Hills, Michigan. He also serves as editor-in-chief of ACI's monthly magazine.

**Eric Voth**, c'77, m'81, in May was named president and chairman of the International Academy on the Science and Impact of Cannabis. He retired in 2020 as vice president of primary care at Stormont Vail Health after 36 years of medical practice in Topeka. Eric also is a clinical professor of internal medicine at KU Medical Center.

**1978 Jill Sadowsky Docking**, c'78, g'84, in July joined the Kansas Health Founda-

tion board of directors. She is senior vice president at the Docking Group, a financial services firm in Wichita.

**1979 Tom Palen**, '79, retired as a senior vice president in SBA lending at Wells Fargo Bank, where he worked for nearly 30 years. He and his wife, Carole, make their home in Scottsdale, Arizona, and have two children, Drew and Kelli.

**1980 Rex Archer**, m'80, is professor and director of population and public health in the department of curriculum and integrated learning at Kansas City University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

**James Corbett**, b'80, in June was appointed to the

AVITA Medical Inc. board of directors. He lives in Aliso Viejo, California, where most recently he was CEO of Cath-Works.

**Jay Hinrichs**, c'80, g'83, president and general manager of the Kansas City Monarchs baseball club, in September was honored by the American Association of Professional Baseball as the league's Executive of the Year. The Monarchs won the league championship in September.

**Debra Riechmann**, j'80, recently retired after a 36-year career with The Associated Press. She began working with the AP in Kansas City and later covered the White House and the war in Afghanistan. Deb makes her home in Hagerstown, Maryland.

## JAYHAWK BUSINESS DIRECTORY



The Jayhawk Business Directory is the newest way to increase exposure to your business. Adding your business to the directory is exclusive to KU Alumni members and corporate partners.

*List your company to reach the worldwide network of Jayhawks!*

[kualumni.org/jayhawk-business-directory](http://kualumni.org/jayhawk-business-directory)

**John Whitesides**, j'80, in April retired after a long career as a journalist at Reuters. He lives in Arlington, Virginia.

**1981 John Ryan**, m'81, retired in April after 55 years as a health care professional and nearly 40 years as a family physician at Community Memorial Healthcare in Marysville, where he makes his home.

**Jay Smith**, c'81, g'85, is the pastor at Bethel Baptist Church in St. Charles, Illinois.

**1982 Kathleen Lambert Jaeger**, g'82, is a multimedia artist in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. Her work, which primarily is in mosaic and acrylic painting, was featured in March at the Kailua Village Artists Gallery.

**1984 Larry Englebrick**, g'84, EdD'04, is executive director of facilities and operations for Lawrence Public Schools.

**Edwin Goldberg**, c'84, a rabbi at Congregation Beth Shalom in The Woodlands, Texas, co-edited *Because My Soul Longs for You: Integrating Theology into Our Lives*, which was published in August by CCAR Press.

**Scott Jackson**, '84, is vice president at Panhandle Oilfield Services in Oklahoma City. He and **Michelle**, assoc., live in Yukon, Oklahoma.

**Ross Myers**, g'84, a naval aviator and vice admiral, in 2020 became commander of the U.S. 10th Fleet/Fleet Cyber Command. He and **Deidre Meyer Myers**, d'84, make their home in Fort Meade, Maryland.



**Thank You**  
to our restaurant partners



These restaurant partners proudly support the Association by providing gift cards, discounts and in-kind donations for student programs and alumni events.

We appreciate and thank them for their support.



**1985 DeLome Godsey Fair**, e'85, g'88, was promoted to principal process engineer at KP Engineering in Houston.

**Stephen McAllister**, c'85, l'88, in June joined Dentons law firm's litigation practice as counsel in a part-time consulting role. He returned to the KU law faculty full time as the E.S. & Tom W. Hampton Distinguished Professor of Law after serving as U.S. Attorney for the district of Kansas.

**Loraine Wright Turec**, j'85, is managing director of sales operations at DEG Digital Marketing & Advertising in Leawood. She recently was a guest speaker in the sales strategies class at the KU School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

**Diane Yetter**, b'85, president and founder of YETTER Tax, a sales tax consulting and tax

technology firm in Chicago, celebrates her 25th year in business and as a leader in the industry.

**1986 Holly Benson**, s'86, EdD'89, is a psychotherapist and fiber artist in Kansas City.

**William Purinton**, c'86, makes his home in St. Joseph, Missouri, where he's pastor at Wesley United Methodist Church.

**John Shaw**, c'86, m'93, is a physician in the general vascular and thoracic surgery department at the Hutchinson Clinic. His daughter, Molly, started her freshman year this fall at KU, where she's a journalism major and a fourth-generation Jayhawk.

**1987 David Bellon**, b'87, in May became commander

of U.S. Marine Corps Forces South. A three-star lieutenant general, he also will remain commander of the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve.

**Bill Jaeger**, g'87, was the featured member artist in March at Kailua Village Artists Gallery in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, where he lives with **Kathleen Lambert Jaeger**, g'82.

**Jennifer Anderson Leaf**, c'87, g'92, is places and open spaces manager at Central Hawke's Bay District Council in Waipawa, New Zealand.

**1988 Timothy Buckley**, j'88, is an associate attorney at Smith Slusky Pohren & Rogers in Omaha, Nebraska.

**Rob Farha**, c'88, this year is quietly marking a quarter-century of owning The Wagon

Wheel Café, the beloved 14th Street tavern ["Where Everybody Knows Your Name," issue No. 5, 2015]. "Knobbie" and his wife, Becke, live in Lawrence with their two children, Colin and Camille, and look forward to celebrating their 20th wedding anniversary in May.

**Anne Bloomfield Fischer**, c'88, l'92, is a retired U.S. Navy captain and judge advocate general. She and her husband, Jeffrey, have two sons, Andrew, a junior at KU, and Adam. They make their home in Alexandria, Virginia.

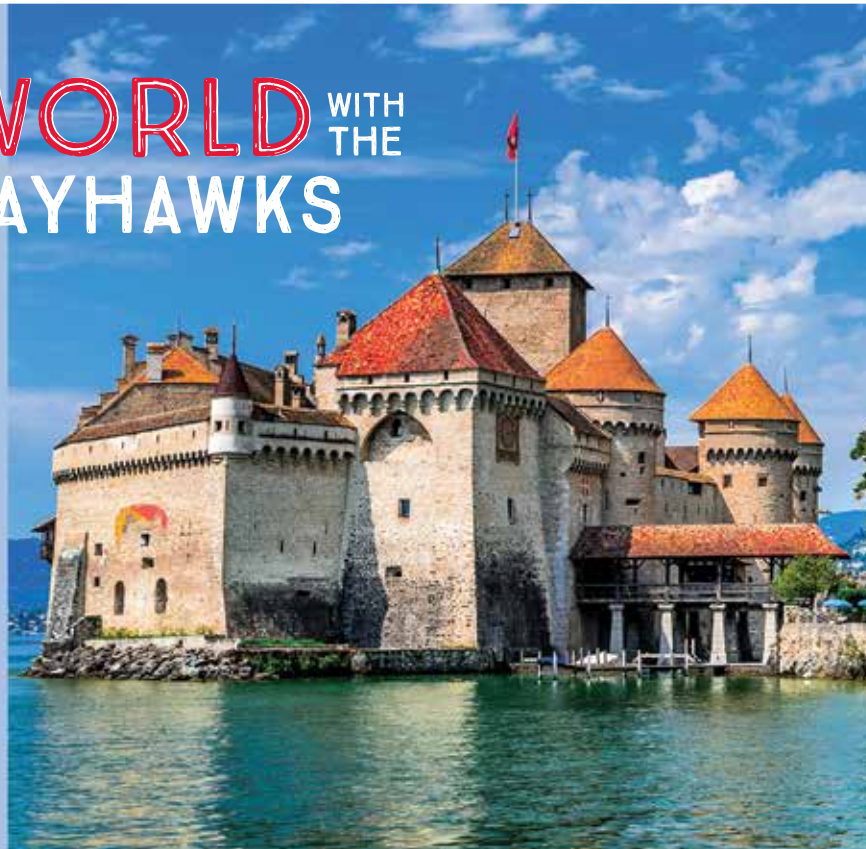
**1989 Daniel Grainge**, j'89, is president of NEP Group, a production company. He and his wife, Julie, live in Elmhurst, Illinois, and have four children.

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**Patrick McCurdy**, a'89, is principal and health care practice leader at Hoefer Welker in Leawood.

**Jeff Robertson**, c'89, in August was promoted to associate vice president for academic affairs at Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. He has been on faculty with the university since 1997 and most recently served as dean of the College of Natural and Health Sciences.

**1990 Samantha Pipe Cook**, b'90, is senior program manager of technology communications at T-Mobile. She lives in Belton, Missouri, and has two children, Courtney and Chandler.

**Gerry Dixon**, b'90, is the U.S. government and public sector managing partner at

Ernst & Young. He lives in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey.

**Brian Gordon**, e'90, is president and CEO of Mega-KC. He and **Lynne Schnobelen Gordon**, c'89, live in Leawood.

**Madeleine McDonough**, l'90, in April was elected to a second five-year term as chair at Shook, Hardy & Bacon in Kansas City.

**Candice Niemann Wolken**, j'90, manages marketing at SS&C Technologies in Kansas City, where she lives with her husband, Charles.

**1991 Rachele Becker Humiston**, c'91, is executive consultant and director of Cultivate at Haberfeld in Lincoln, Nebraska.

**Laura Okmin**, j'91, a sideline reporter for NFL on

FOX Sports and founder of GALvanize, was recently featured in an NBC story for her organization's work in training and mentoring women in the sports industry.

**Allan Peters**, b'91, lives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where he's chief revenue officer at Qualys Inc.

**Scott Schuetz**, b'91, is chief operating officer and executive vice president at GCU, a financial services company in Pittsburgh.

**1992 Robert Burns**, g'92, directs the home region program at the Walton Family Foundation in Bentonville, Arkansas.

**Matthew Finnegan**, j'92, a senior trial attorney for the U.S. Department of Labor in Denver, recently was a guest

on the Cheers to Careers podcast at the KU School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

**Tiffany Harness**, j'92, is foreign policy editor at The New York Times. She works in Washington, D.C.

**Ellen Kuwana**, c'92, lives in Seattle, where she is a freelance science writer and editor and founder of We Got This Seattle, a volunteer effort that feeds frontline workers and supports local restaurants. She's also vice president of the board of the Northwest Science Writers Association.

**Christine Keehn Long**, j'92, is a senior account executive at Neil Patel Accel, a marketing firm. She and her husband, Ronald, live in Aurora, Colorado.

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1P9

**1993 David Harden**, m'93, is a dermatologist at Manhattan Dermatology in Manhattan, where he lives. He also sees patients at the outpatient clinic at Community Memorial Healthcare in Marysville.

**Matt Tucker**, b'93, is a partner, wealth adviser and senior portfolio manager at Bowersock Capital Partners in Lawrence and Overland Park. He and **Angie Bryan Tucker**, c'93, live in Leawood and have four children.

**Amy Schwartz Walker**, b'93, lives in Kansas City, where she's vice president of tax transformation at H&R Block.

**1994 Aran Cleland**, c'94, is senior loan partner at National Healthcareer Association. He makes his home in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**Michael Wade Freeman**, d'94, works in admissions at Trinity School of Medicine in Roswell, Georgia.

**Mendi Stauffer Hanna**, j'94, directs the life plan community at Saint Luke's Bishop Spencer Place in Kansas City. She and **Scott**, j'92, g'00, live in Olathe.

**Josh Mistler**, c'94, is associate general counsel at Gardner Capital in St. Louis.

**Bryan Phillips**, e'94, is senior vice president, general counsel, chief compliance officer and corporate secretary at Inspire Medical Systems in Osseo, Minnesota. In April he was elected to the Minnesota Public Radio board of trustees.

**Gwen Westerman**, PhD'94, a professor of English at Minnesota State University, in September was named Min-

nesota's third Poet Laureate by Gov. Tim Walz. She is an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. Gwen is Minnesota's first Native Poet Laureate.

**1995 Marybeth Foster**, g'95, is regional director of Iowa State University Extension in Ames.

**Dawn Brockopp Julian**, g'95, DNP'11, is a nurse practitioner at Geary Community Hospital's Wound Care Center in Junction City.

**Sean Roland**, c'95, makes his home in Moraga, California, where he is co-founder and president of Trainsweet Labs.

**Hsin-Fu Wu**, e'95, is senior manager of systems engineering at Raytheon Missiles &

Defense. He lives in Tucson, Arizona.

**1996 Brett Atlas**, b'96, wrote *Three Things Matter Most: Linking Time, Relationships, and Money*, which was published in September by Atticus Books. He is an attorney and lives in Omaha, Nebraska, with his wife and three children.

**Michelle "Micki" Bicknell**, b'96, election manager for Shawnee County Election Office in Topeka, has been designated as a Certified Elections/Registration Administrator (CERA), the highest professional achievement for election officials in the country.

**Julie Klinock Cortes**, j'96, is founder of Freelance Exchange KC and an adjunct



professor at the Kansas City Art Institute. She lives in Overland Park.

**1997 Jason Engkjer**, b'97, is an attorney at DeWitt in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He's a member of the firm's transportation and logistics practice group.

**Canyon Knop**, c'97, is combat plans division course manager for the 505th training squadron in the U.S. Air Force. He lives in Fort Walton Beach, Florida.

**Steve Novak**, c'97, f'01, is managing director at RGT Wealth Advisors in Dallas.

**Brad Spickert**, e'97, lives in Atlanta, where he's senior vice president of supply chain at the Coca-Cola Company.

**Christopher Stipe**, g'97, is president and CEO of McPherson Hospital.

**Jeffrey Stowman**, f'97, who owns Stowman Law Firm with his father in Detroit, was one of several attorneys representing George Floyd's family in the successful wrongful death civil suit filed against the city of Minneapolis.

**Leslie Bowyer VonHoltten**, c'97, g'15, directs grants and outreach at Humanities Kansas in Topeka. She and her husband, **Tim**, f'97, live in Lawrence.

**1998 Aaron Brinkman**, j'98, is vice president of U.S. sales at Activision Blizzard Inc. in Dallas.

**Carrie Breusing Burleson**, c'98, is an optometrist at Front Range Eye Associates in Broomfield, Colorado, where she lives with **Todd**, f'97, creative lead at Pivot Communication. They have two daughters, Claire and Brynn.

**Katherine "Kate" Bickel Swingle**, f'98, g'02, lives in St. Louis, where she's a health information nurse specialist at St. Louis Children's Hospital.

**1999 Joan Benefiel**, c'99, coordinates art services at Salina Arts and Humanities in Salina.

**Jan Guidry Lacina**, PhD'99, in September was named the inaugural Bezos Family Foundation Endowed Chair for Early Childhood Education at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. She also serves as associate dean of graduate studies in the College of Education.

**Amy Claycamp Ragland**, c'99, is a freelance writer and owns Amy Ragland Communications in Wichita, where she lives with her husband, Brad, and their daughters, Alissa, 14, and Ashley, 12.

**Kent Salisbury**, a'99, is director at Baca Architects in Sherman, Texas. He lives in Celeste and has three sons, Cole, Vaughn and Dane.

**Justin Schmidt**, b'99, lives in Houston, where he directs wholesale marketing at Atlas Oil Company.

**Paul Voiles**, e'99, senior managing director of transportation at Binkley & Barfield in Houston, in June was named a fellow by the American Society of Civil Engineers board of direction.

**2000 Stacy Abernathy**, j'00, g'10, is a retail pharmacy sales specialist at National Healthcareer Association. She lives in Prairie Village.

**Jason Booker**, d'00, in July was named deputy athletics director for external affairs and revenue generation at Kansas

Athletics. He previously was senior director of corporate partnerships and broadcast sales for the Kansas City Royals.

**Tom Ference**, PhD'00, is director of psychology at Northcoast Behavioral Healthcare in Northfield, Ohio.

**Natalie Feuerborn Miller**, c'00, f'03, is of-counsel attorney at Spencer Fane in Overland Park.

**Jennifer Schrimsher**, h'00, g'05, m'10, is a physician at Lawrence Memorial Hospital. She specializes in internal medicine and infectious diseases.

**2001 Nicholas Beckmann**, c'01, m'05, is associate professor of radiology at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. In April, he was reappointed to the Texas Board of Medical Radiologic Technology.

**Venus Bishop**, g'01, '13, lives in Derby, where she retired after teaching special education for 26 years. Most recently she worked at Derby High School.

**Nicole Hayden**, f'01, lives in San Francisco, where she's an artist. She recently created a mural outside the city's Zen Center that celebrates the National Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman.

**John Stinnett**, e'01, lives in Wylie, Texas, where he's energy team leader at Half Associates.

**Cristyn Glidewell Watkins**, c'01, is a physician and owns aNu Aesthetics & Optimal Wellness in Kansas City.

**2002 Chris Brandon**, c'02, j'03, is vice president of investor relations at Jack in the Box. He lives in Saline, Michigan.

**Misty Brown**, f'02, in April was promoted to chief counsel

for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas. She previously served as deputy chief counsel.

**Peter Innes**, m'02, is a general surgeon at Surgical Associates of Siloam Springs in Arkansas. He lives in Springdale.

**Jennifer Schiele**, g'02, is the new superintendent for the Lake Oswego School District in Oregon. She was promoted in April after serving as assistant superintendent for the past three years.

**2003 Leita Schultes Walker**, c'03, j'03, f'06, lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she's a partner at Ballard Spahr. She recently represented a coalition of media outlets covering the Derek Chauvin trial.

**Robin Harnden Ward**, g'03, is a communication designer and owner of The Write Design in Lawrence.

*Born to:*

**Douglas Donahoo**, j'03, and his wife, Rebecca, son, Daniel, May 19 in Lenexa, where they make their home.

**2004 Lisa Miles Bunkowski**, PhD'04, is associate professor in the College of Education and Human Development at Texas A&M University-Central Texas in Killeen. She also serves as director of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning.

**Latasha Reed**, n'04, is a nurse practitioner at the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment in Olathe. She lives in Gardner with her husband, Mike Conley, and their daughter, Bella.

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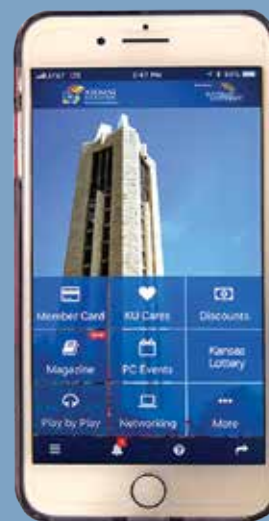


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**Andrew Rhea**, b'04, lives in Phoenix, where he's controller at Suntec Concrete.

**Jessica Skubal Rowan**, c'04, is a substitute teacher in the Katy Independent School District in Katy, Texas, where she lives with her husband, Jeremiah, and their daughters, Breanna, Jolene and Alaina.

**Cindy Tran**, j'04, managing director at Slalom, was recognized in March as a top business leader in Dallas by D CEO magazine. She lives in Dallas with her husband, Toan, and two sons.

**2005 Joseph Parra**, m'05, is chief medical officer at Medical City Healthcare in Dallas.

**Corinne Hale Reid**, d'05, g'07, is associate athletic director at Missouri Southern State University in Joplin. She and

**Nicholas**, c'15, have three children, Lillian, Duke and Vivian.

**Wayne Simien**, c'05, is the new associate athletics director for engagement and outreach at Kansas Athletics. For the past 12 years, the power forward and All-American, who played for KU from 2001 to '05, has held various roles on campus and as a volunteer in the athletics department. He and his wife, Katie, live in Lawrence and have five children.

**2006** The Rev. **Arthur Jones**, c'06, is senior pastor at St. Andrew United Methodist Church in Plano, Texas. He and his wife, Becky, have two children, Sam and Ella Reece.

**Craig Lee**, c'06, is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S.

Air Force. He and **Lindsay Nesbitt Lee**, d'06, make their home in Omaha, Nebraska.

**Stephen "S.J." Moore**, l'06, is an attorney and shareholder at Krigel & Krigel in Kansas City.

**Tony Quartaro**, c'06, lives in Chicago, where he is chef and owner of Gemma Foods, a fresh-pasta delivery service.

**Eric Wiedower**, c'06, m'14, is a physician at West Cancer Center & Research Institute in Southaven, Mississippi. He makes his home in Memphis, Tennessee.

**Natalia Villate**, m'06, lives in Boca Raton, Florida, where she's an ophthalmologist at Fort Lauderdale Eye Institute.

**Martha Moreno Wolf**, n'06, g'20, directs patient safety at South Bay Hospital in Sun City Center, Florida. She

and her husband, **Mark**, assoc., live in Bradenton.

**2007 Samuel Snyder**, c'07, lives in Lawrence, where he's a data specialist at OppMiner.

**Jade Tittle**, j'07, is the music director at KCMP 89.3 FM in St. Paul, Minnesota. She's been a DJ at the station since 2008.

**2008 Ashley Campbell Aune**, c'08, represents Clay and Platte counties in the Missouri House of Representatives.

**Lexy Kohake Kelley**, j'08, manages internal communications at Credit Karma. She and **Rhodes**, b'08, principal product manager at Twitch, live in San Francisco with their son, Cooper.

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**Jason McGlynn**, b'08, is senior vice president and chief financial officer at Amplify Energy Corp. in Houston.

**Dylan Schoonover**, j'08, chief marketing officer at Strategic Wealth Designers in Denver, recently was a guest speaker on the Cheers to Careers podcast at the KU School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

**Born to:**

**Adam Jenkins**, c'08, and his wife, Chakshu Bavalia, son, Vyan Adam Bavalia-Jenkins, in August in Stetchworth, England, where they make their home. Adam is a pilot in the U.S. Air Force.

**2009 Rauf Arif**, g'09, is an assistant professor of journalism and creative media industries at Texas Tech University in

Lubbock. He wrote *Movements for Change: How Individuals, Social Media and Al Jazeera Are Changing Pakistan, Egypt and Tunisia*, which was published in 2020.

**Dimitra Atri**, g'09, PhD'11, is an astrophysicist at the New York University Abu Dhabi Center for Space Science, where he leads the Mars research group.

**Scott Rollheiser**, h'09, is a senior support integration architect at Cerner. He and his wife, Emily, live in Shawnee with their daughters, Elyse, 2, and Adalyn, who recently turned 1.

**Timothy Spencer**, c'09, u'10, g'21, lives in Lawrence, where he's a research manager at KU's O'Leary Shared Service Center.

**Jesse Tanksley**, l'09, was promoted to partner at Mann,

Wyatt & Tanksley Injury Attorneys in Hutchinson.

**Nathan Totten**, j'09, is a freelance writer in Portland, Oregon.

**2010 Gates Brown**, g'10, PhD'13, is an associate professor of military history at U.S. Army Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth. In March he was named Civilian Educator of the Year.

**Daniel Johnson**, c'10, j'10, lives in Washington, D.C., where he's a consultant at Education Elements.

**David Jones**, c'10, e'13, '21, is a software engineer at the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City.

**Megan Lemon Kerr**, b'10, g'11, is a senior auditor at Every. She and **Zachary**, c'09, shop manager at Buckner's Heating & Cooling, live in

Kansas City and have a son, Rylan, who's almost 3.

**Ayesha Mehdi**, l'10, g'10, a partner in the health care group at Spencer Fane in Las Vegas, recently was named one of Real Vegas magazine's "Women Who Wow of Las Vegas" for her practice, community involvement and dedication to DEI efforts in the legal profession. She makes her home in Henderson, Nevada.

**Kara Schwerdt Rodriguez**, j'10, in July was promoted to director of digital strategy at the KU Alumni Association. Kara and her husband, **Cesar**, c'12, live in Lawrence with their children, Adrian and Cesar.

**Jomo Tariku**, a'10, an artist and industrial designer, owns Jomo Furniture in Springfield, Virginia. He designs modern, African-themed furniture. The

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved on September 24, 2021, from [www.usnews.com/education/online-education/university-of-kansas-155317](https://www.usnews.com/education/online-education/university-of-kansas-155317).  
<sup>2</sup> Based on a limited sample of self-reported data from alumni of the University of Kansas School of Business online MBA program from graduating cohorts from 2016-2019.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art recently added his Nyala chair to its permanent collection.

**2011 Sarah Phillips Aligo**, g'11, is a development consultant at Prenger Solutions Group. She lives in Lawrence.

**Dan Reynolds**, g'11, is a project architect at A&E Design in Bozeman, Montana.

**Nico Roesler**, j'11, is the North American pretzel and snack equipment sales manager at Reading Baking Systems. He lives in Shawnee.

**Hannah Barnes Weekley**, c'11, is geographic information systems director at CRW Engineering in Anchorage, Alaska, where she lives with **David**, PhD'20, a geographer at the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

**Richard Welton**, b'11, g'11, directs project management at Care Coordination Systems. He lives in Castle Rock, Colorado.

**Patrick Woods**, g'11, '14, manages regulatory affairs and strategy at ITC Holdings in Topeka, where he makes his home with his wife, **Anna**, assoc.

**Neil Young**, PharmD'11, is an attorney at Blank Rome in Houston.

**2012 Andrew Fillmore**, j'12, is a senior customer relationship management specialist at Quigley-Simpson in Los Angeles.

**Francis Park**, PhD'12, directs the basic strategic art program at the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. He previously

served in the Joint History Office at the Pentagon and also spent six weeks in Qatar, where he archived nearly 15 years of operational records before the end of the U.S. mission in Afghanistan.

**2013 Kaston Anderson-Carpenter**, g'13, PhD'15, assistant professor of psychology at Michigan State University, in May was a keynote speaker at Western Connecticut State University's research week, a four-day virtual event.

**Annie Bigby**, d'13, '21, is an academic adviser at KU. She commutes from Kansas City.

**Kristen Glover**, j'13, g'17, g'18, is a client strategist at Magid and lecturer in the School of Journalism and Mass Communications at KU.

**Gina Ortiz Jones**, g'13, in

July was confirmed by the U.S. Senate as Under Secretary of the Air Force. She was nominated in April by President Joe Biden. She is an intelligence officer and Texas congressional candidate who served in Iraq during the Bush administration.

**Henry Spingola**, c'13, lives in Oklahoma City, where he's a foot and ankle surgeon at OKC Orthopedics Sports & Pain Medicine.

**Billy Thomas**, c'13, is head basketball coach and assistant athletics director at Rockhurst High School in Kansas City. He was a guard at KU from 1994 to '98.

**2014 Rebecca Berger**, j'14, manages marketing at Dickies Arena in Fort Worth, Texas.

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**Jamie Gellerman-Baker**, e'14, is a senior customer reliability engineer at GE Digital in Kansas City. She and **Frank**, '21, live in Shawnee with their son, Gunner.

**José Muñoz**, d'14, g'16, senior program coordinator at the University of Arizona College of Nursing, is co-chair of the college's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force.

**Pavel Panko**, c'14, is a research staff member at the Institute for Defense Analysis in Alexandria, Virginia.

**Zachary Rothschild**, PhD'14, in July was promoted to associate professor of psychology at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine.

**Lydia Young**, c'14, j'14, is an associate marketing manager for social media at Hallmark Cards in Kansas City.

**2015 Amelia Arvesen**, j'15, is a freelance journalist in Boulder, Colorado.

**Philip Depew**, c'15, is an associate attorney at Depew Law Firm in Neodesha.

**Evan Dunbar**, j'15, is an ESPN disaster recovery operator at Disney Media & Entertainment Distribution. He lives in Houston.

**Alison Lusk Friday**, e'15, manages sales at Petroval. She makes her home in Beaumont, Texas.

**Adam Gillaspie**, b'15, f'18, lives in Lawrence, where he's a research attorney for the State of Kansas.

**Jacob McMillian**, f'15, is director of diversity and inclusion at Dickinson Wright. He lives in Chicago.

**Paul Pierce II**, j'15, in July was promoted to associate

athletics director for inclusive excellence at Kansas Athletics. He previously served as assistant athletics director of compliance and interim chief diversity officer. Paul and **Carolina Gutierrez Pierce**, d'15, live in Lawrence.

**Mary Pointer**, j'15, lives in New York City, where she directs client partnerships at Axios.

**Derick Shackelford**, c'15, owns Shack Built in Olathe, where he lives with his wife, **Shelley**, assoc.

**2016 Caleb Bobo**, c'16, is a senior analyst of supervision policy and consumer affairs at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

**Wesley Hoffman**, e'16, lives in Seattle, where he's a senior data engineer at Starbucks.

**Alyson Oliver**, b'16, is an insurance consultant at Kansas Insurance in Lawrence.

**Robin Randolph**, f'16, is an attorney at Jeppson Law Office in Kansas City. She lives in Lawrence.

**Micaela Sheffield**, a'16, is an interior designer at Leo A. Daly in Dallas. She recently was named to Boutique Design magazine's 2021 Boutique 18 Class and will be featured in the magazine's fall issue.

**2017 Nashia Baker**, j'17, is associate editor at Meredith Corporation in New York City.

**Ryan Camenzind**, j'17, in July was promoted to assistant director of digital strategy at the KU Alumni Association.

**Freddy Gipp**, j'17, is founder and CEO of Lead Horse,

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Aaron Quisenberry, Keon Stowers

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Jeremy Shellhorn

[kualumni.org/homecoming](http://kualumni.org/homecoming)

a Native American-owned consulting firm specializing in performance entertainment. He lives in Lawrence.

**Justin Lyle**, g'17, PhD'20, is a visiting assistant professor of mathematics at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

**Katherine Gail Okesson**, DMA'17, in July became the new director of Suzuki Strings and Orchestral Studies for Sedona Charter School in Sedona, Arizona.

**Christopher Savage**, c'17, lives in Westwood, where he's director of operations at First Liberties Financial.

**Austin Tuggle**, c'17, lives in Overland Park, where he's a mechanical engineer at Honeywell Federal Manufacturing & Technologies.

#### Married

**Reese Randall**, b'17, g'19, to Brittany Joyce, May 23 in Charleston, South Carolina, where they make their home. Reese is a multimedia account executive at The Post and Courier.

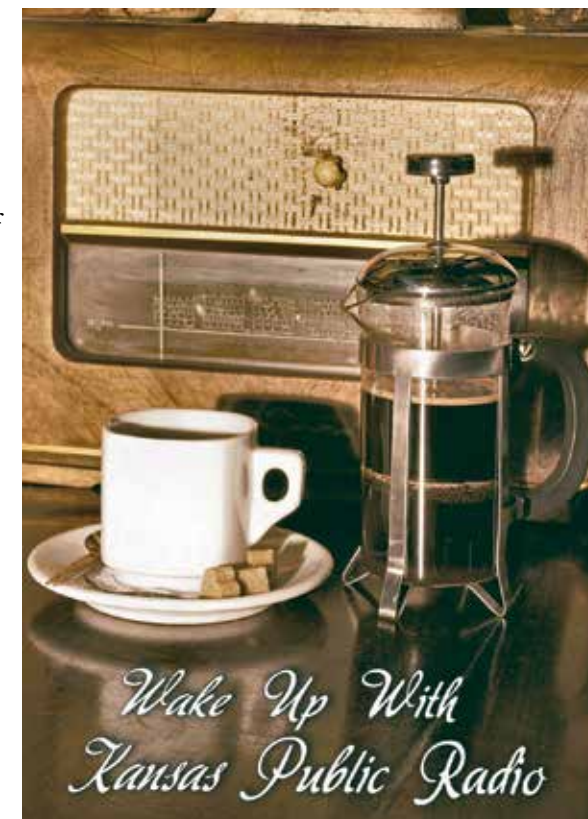
**2018 Matt Chomicky**, g'18, makes his home in Kansas City, where he's a geographic information systems specialist at Burns & McDonnell.

**Kyle Gratton**, c'18, writes features and reviews for the video games section of Screen Rant.

**Jessica Meyers Hammer**, d'18, lives in Kansas City, where she is a running coach and owns KC Endurance.

**Ian Hutcheson**, g'18, is a management and budget specialist for the City of Oklahoma City.

**Amelia "Amie" Just**, j'18, is a sports reporter at The Times-Picayune and New Orle-



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ans Advocate. She lives in New Orleans.

**Teresa Nunez**, m'18, recently completed her residency at the KU School of Medicine-Wichita Smoky Hill Family Medicine Residency Program in Salina. She is now a physician at Salina Regional Health Center.

**Jessica Pletcher**, h'18, lives in Chicago, where she's team lead for patient accounting at Northwestern Medicine.

**Justin Schmidt**, g'18, g'19, was promoted to division director of regulatory compliance at Methodist Healthcare System in San Antonio.

**2019 Angie Allen**, d'19, is assistant to commissioner/special events for the Missouri Valley Conference in St. Louis.

**Spencer Gray**, j'19, coordinates marketing for the Zin

Team at CrossCountry Mortgage in Overland Park.

**Emory Saucedo**, l'19, is a health policy analyst for the State of Maryland. She and her husband, Zack Knight, live in Ellipton City.

**2020 Emily Beckman**, c'20, j'20, is a project associate at Bark Media in Lawrence.

**Stacey Langley**, h'20, is a coding and reimbursement specialist at Children's Mercy Hospital in Kansas City. She and her husband, Craig, live in Leeton, Missouri.

**Rachel Phelan**, j'20, directs marketing and communications at the United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

**DeAsia Paige**, j'20, is the Black communities reporter at the Belleville News-Democrat, in partnership with Report for

America. She lives in St. Louis. **Raeley Youngs**, j'20, is a communications specialist at T-Mobile in Ballwin, Missouri.

#### Married

**Janae Horchem**, g'20, to Charles Unsderfer, June 26 in Kansas City. They live in Overland Park, where Janae is an occupational therapist.

**2021 Sydney Hoover**, c'21, j'21, is a reporter covering education and health for Star News Online in Wilmington, North Carolina.

**Ali Eustis Mearns**, c'21, is an executive assistant at WealthMD in Atlanta. She and her husband, Andrew, live in Smyrna, Georgia.

**Eric Sedlacek**, b'21, lives in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, where he's a logistics supervisor at Ferrellgas.

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**1940s Margaret Fesler Ewing**, b'45, 97, Aug. 27 in Overland Park, where she was a homemaker and volunteered in her community. Surviving are three sons, C. Craig, g'78, Kent, '79, and Bart, c'85, s'88, g'12; a daughter; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

**Lois Marie Jamison Gibson**, d'48, 95, Sept. 23 in Lincoln, Nebraska. She was active in her community. Survivors include a son, Richard, d'73, g'82; two daughters; two sisters, one of whom is Marlene Jamison Courtney, '81; seven grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren.

**Charlotte Nelson Goland**, c'45, 96, Nov. 12 in Sacramento, California. Two sons and a daughter survive.

**Judson Goodrich**, c'47, g'48, 99, Aug. 26 in Lafayette, Colorado, where he was a retired research chemist at Chevron. He is survived by a son, two daughters and two grandsons.

**Delmer Harris Jr.**, c'49, 92, June 9 in Lenexa. He was a longtime resident of Concordia, where for nearly 45 years he owned the Delmer F. Harris Playground Equipment Company. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. Surviving are his wife, Ruth Brotherson Harris, d'50; three sons, Delmer, e'74, John, e'79, and Dan, d'82, g'91; two daughters, Susan, c'76, g'78, and Nancy Harris Spatz, e'83, g'91; six grandchildren; and a great-granddaughter.

**Carol Graham Howe**, b'47, 93, Jan. 6 in Prescott, Arizona. She was an adult education instructor.

**Samuel Nash**, e'42, 102, May 30 in Philadelphia. He was a lecturer at Drexel University.

**David Pohl**, b'47, 97, Sept. 11 in Mason, Ohio. He was a retired sales manager. Two daughters, four grandchildren, three step-grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren survive.

**H. DuMont Reed**, e'48, 94, Sept. 12 in Kansas City. He had a long career with General Electric and later worked in commercial real estate. Surviving are his wife, Barbara; three daughters, one of whom is Robin Reed Thies, f'82; seven grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**James Townsend**, d'49, g'52, EdD'71, 96, Aug. 17 in Lenexa. He was a retired principal in the Shawnee Mission School District. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. He is survived by his wife, Winona Klotz Townsend, d'49; two daughters, one of whom is Cheryl, d'76; three grandchildren; and a great-granddaughter.

**Martha Cable Wagner**, c'45, g'50, 97, July 30 in Overland Park. She was a teacher and bookkeeper. Survivors include a son, a daughter, two grandchildren and a great-granddaughter.

**Gordon Walters**, b'49, 96, July 31 in Grove, Oklahoma. His career as an accountant spanned decades, and he also served as Ottawa County election secretary. Surviving are a son, a daughter, a sister, two grandsons and three great-grandchildren.

**Mary Ihloff Watson**, c'43, 101, Sept. 4 in Jetmore, where she was a retired social worker. Several nieces and nephews survive.

**Florence Richert Williams**, c'46, 96, July 21 in Portland, Oregon. She was a substitute teacher and active in P.E.O.

Sisterhood. Surviving are two sons, a daughter, seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

**1950s Richard Arnsperger**, b'51, 94, Aug. 24 in Ashland, where he retired after nearly 60 years with Don Spotts Lumber Company. He also served as Ashland's mayor. He is survived by two sons, one of whom is Richard II, c'78, m'82; two daughters; 15 grandchildren; and 20 great-grandchildren.

**George Belcher**, c'56, m'60, 86, May 9 in Independence, where he was a retired U.S. Air Force colonel and family physician. He is survived by his wife, Cora; three sons; three daughters; two sisters, one of whom is Virginia Belcher Jones, n'51, n'84; 18 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren.

**D. Wallace "Wally" Benton**, e'50, 95, Aug. 16 in Huntington Beach, California. He was an architect and owned Arc Tec Inc. Survivors include his wife, Shirley, two sons and two daughters.

**Donald Cordes**, l'59, 86, May 29 in Wichita, where he was senior vice president of legal and corporate affairs at Koch Industries. Surviving are his wife, Bettie, a son, a daughter, two stepchildren, three grandchildren, four step-grandchildren and a great-granddaughter.

**Patricia Brown Dougherty**, c'53, 89, Aug. 6 in Marietta, Georgia, where she was active in Tri Delta sorority, P.E.O. Sisterhood and numerous volunteer organizations. She is survived by a son, Patrick, c'80; a daughter, Diane Dougherty Taylor, b'85; 10 grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

**Wayne Fling**, e'54, 90, June 14 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where

he had a long career in the oil industry. He is survived by his wife, Patricia, three sons, 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

**Dean Frisbie**, e'51, l'53, 90, June 6 in Fairfield, California. He owned Ledgewood Creek Winery. Two sons survive.

**Bernard Gay**, d'57, 86, May 17 in Boulder, Colorado, where he was a high school science teacher and coach. Surviving are his wife, Marlyn, three daughters, a sister, a brother and nine grandchildren.

**James Glass**, c'52, 90, May 13 in Redmond, Washington. He was a Presbyterian minister. His wife, Bertha, four sons and a daughter survive.

**Robert Grissom**, b'50, 93, May 7 in Portland, Oregon, where he owned Hickory Farms stores throughout the Northwest. He is survived by his wife, Sybil, two sons, a daughter and six grandchildren.

**Jack Harrington**, b'58, 85, April 30 in Bluffton, South Carolina, where he was a retired pilot. Survivors include his wife, Lynn; a daughter; two sisters, Mary, c'72, n'74, and Michelle, c'75; and a brother, Rick, c'67.

**Hal Marshall**, c'56, m'60, 86, June 19 in Kansas City, where he retired after nearly 35 years as a pathologist at Menorah Medical Center. Surviving are his wife, Joan; two sons, Hal Jr., '87, and Christopher, '90; and a granddaughter.

**Martha Fry Mathews**, '58, 91, Jan. 28 in Coldwater. She lived for many years in Illinois, where she was a teacher and administrator. Survivors include three sisters and a brother.

**Gene Nelson**, b'50, 94, Aug. 30 in Lenexa, where he had a long career as a CPA. A memorial has been established with

KU Endowment. He is survived by his wife, Betty Dunne Nelson, c'51; two daughters, Sally Nelson Davenport, f'78, and Elizabeth Nelson Beck, c'83; two sons; seven grandchildren; and a great-grandson.

**Walter Phillips**, c'55, 87, May 20 in Wichita. He was a geologist and CEO of Pintail Petroleum. Surviving are his wife, Karen; a daughter, Julie, c'85; four stepchildren; two grandchildren; nine step-grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

**Cecilia Medved Rinehart**, g'50, 93, May 28 in Overland Park. She retired as a personnel analyst at Phillips Petroleum Company after 30 years. Survivors include a sister, Helen Medved Cobb, '57.

**John "Jack" Rodgers**, b'53, 90, Aug. 29 in Mercer Island, Washington, where he retired as senior vice president of business development at Starbucks. He played basketball and football for KU and was a member of the 1952 National Championship basketball team. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. Surviving are two sons, two daughters, seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

**Shirley Wilkie Sager**, '53, 89, Sept. 19 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She was a homemaker and volunteered for Meals on Wheels. Survivors include two daughters, six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

**Karl Schuchert**, '55, 97, Nov. 14 in Auburn Hills, Michigan, where he worked at General Motors.

**Judith Garver Slawson**, '57, 86, July 12 in Wichita, where she was a homemaker and active in her community. She is survived by three sons,

two of whom are Craig, c'80, and Todd, e'84; five grandchildren; and a great-granddaughter.

**Yvonne Schenck Stracke**, d'57, 87, April 24 in St. Joseph, Missouri. She was an ordained minister through the New Life Cathedral Church and sat on the boards of several ministries. A son, a daughter, seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren survive.

**Barbara Thomas**, c'55, 87, Dec. 7, 2020, in Houston, where she worked at Chevron Corp. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment.

**Margaret Pickett Warren**, '54, 88, July 18 in Kansas City, She was a lab technician.

**1960s Henry "Jerry" Brauer**, p'64, 80, Nov. 10, 2020, in St. Louis. He owned A&B Prescription Shop. Survivors include his wife, Shirley, a son and two grandchildren.

**Desi Bravo**, c'65, 76, Oct. 6 in Merriam, where she managed the Mid-America Sarcoma Institute. A daughter and two sons survive.

**Richard "Dick" Davis**, '62, 83, April 30 in Lakeland, Tennessee. He played professional football and later became a salesman in the plastics and coating industry, eventually owning Polycryl Corp. Surviving are his wife, Mary Jane; three sons, one of whom is Rich Jr., '91; two daughters; a brother; and nine grandchildren.

**Nancy Abbott Dillingham**, '63, 79, Aug. 8 in Kansas City, where she was active in her community. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. Survivors include her husband, John, two sons,

and five grandchildren.

**Bill Dotson**, d'63, 80, June 16 in Nebraska. He was a record-breaking All-American on KU's track & field team and won the Big 8 Conference Championship in the outdoor mile and the 800 meter. He was inducted in the Kansas Athletics Hall of Fame in 2008 and the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame in 2016. Surviving are a brother and five sisters.

**Douglas "Mike" Elder**, c'65, m'69, '17, 80, Jan. 14 in East Lansing, Michigan. He was a radiologist for many years in Topeka. Two sons and several grandchildren survive.

**Marilyn Mull Fead**, c'60, m'64, 83, March 23 in Boulder, Colorado, where she was a pediatrician and artist. She is survived by a son, and a brother, John "Jack" Mull, c'57, m'61.

**Mike Finnegan**, '67, 76, Aug. 11 in Los Angeles. He was a renowned keyboardist and vocalist and performed with Jimi Hendrix, Bonnie Raitt and Crosby, Stills and Nash. Surviving are his wife, Heather "Candy" House Finnegan, '68; a daughter, Bridget, '02; and a son.

**Julie Glenn**, d'67, 75, July 28 in West Chester, Ohio, where she was a retired teacher and reading specialist. Two sons and two daughters survive.

**Phil Hammons**, c'66, 77, May 4 in Fort Scott, where he owned Hammons Realty Company. He is survived by a daughter, a son and two grandchildren.

**David Hiebert**, m'61, 84, April 19 in Lawrence, where he founded Radiological Professional Services and served as team physician for

Kansas Athletics from 1967 to '85. He is survived by his wife, Gunda, '76; three daughters, Kimberly Hiebert Purvis, p'85, Laura Hiebert Carbrey, '87, and Megan Hiebert, c'91; a stepson; five grandchildren; and a great-grandson.

**Nancy DeLong Hoch**, c'61, 84, May 5 in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, shortly after the death of her husband. She lived for many years in Nebraska City, Nebraska, where she served on the University of Nebraska Board of Regents and several other councils and boards. She was one of the first women to run for governor in Nebraska. Surviving are two daughters, one of whom is Hannah, '92; a son; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

**Richard Hoch**, b'61, 82, Jan. 23 in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. A longtime resident of Nebraska City, Nebraska, his career as an attorney spanned more than 50 years. He is survived by two daughters, one of whom is Hannah, '92; a son; four brothers, one of whom is James, c'80; two sisters; his stepmother; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

**Ronald Jones**, c'64, 78, March 22 in Ypsilanti, Michigan. He was a military veteran and worked for JCPenney Inc. Survivors include a son; a daughter; and a brother, Larry, c'61, g'63.

**Ronald Keeler**, b'60, 82, May 3 in Las Vegas, where he retired as president and CEO at Lockheed Federal Credit Union. Survivors include his wife, Susan, a daughter and a son.

**Craig Lehman**, m'68, 78, April 6 in Kingwood, Texas,

where he was a retired U.S. Air Force lieutenant colonel and partner at Humble Radiology Associates. His wife, Sandy, a son, two daughters and four grandchildren survive.

**Gregory Lewis**, c'69, 74, April 3 in Lockport, New York. He was an attorney and had a long career as a city administrator, retiring as city manager of Lebanon, New Hampshire. Surviving are his wife, Ruth, two sons and a daughter.

**Shirley McCrary**, c'65, 77, March 4 in Wichita, where she retired as a para-professional at Mead Middle School.

**Annie Young Merriam**, '62, 94, July 5 in Lawrence, where she was a genealogist and historian. Surviving are three daughters, two sons, a sister, 11 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

**Paul Meyer**, e'63, g'65, 82, March 22 in Kansas City. He was an advisory industry specialist for nearly 30 years at IBM. Survivors include a sister, Jo Meyer Missildine, c'67, g'67.

**Robert Onek**, '60, 84, Dec. 17 in Topeka. He was a U.S. Army veteran and self-employed architect. Surviving are his wife, Carolyn Fischer Onek, f'61; a son, Austen, c'91; two sisters; a brother; and two grandchildren.

**James Poinsett**, '64, 80, March 11 in Mansfield Township, New Jersey, where he retired after a long career with the State of New Jersey. His wife, Linda, a daughter, two brothers and a grandson survive.

**John Reiff**, b'61, l'64, 82, July 2 in Wichita, where he was chief legal counsel at the Coleman Company and later became president of Sheldon Coleman Enterprises and Big Dog Motorcycles. Surviving are his wife, Lorene Valentine; two

daughters; a son; a stepdaughter; a stepson; a sister, Susan Reiff Brown, d'64; and six grandchildren.

**Robert Schneider**, '63, 80, Aug. 13 in Tyler, Texas. He had a long career as a pilot. Survivors include his wife, Gipsy, four daughters and eight granddaughters.

**Robert Shenk**, c'65, g'71, g'73, PhD'76, 77, Jan. 30 in Mandeville, Louisiana, where he retired after nearly 35 years as professor of English at the University of New Orleans. He is survived by his wife, Paula Elshire Shenk, '76; two sons, Peter, c'99, and Henry, '08; two daughters; and three grandchildren.

**Nancy Whalen Sherman**, '60, 82, Dec. 13, 2020, in Wichita. She lived for many years in Hutchinson, where worked in the records office at Hutchinson Community College. She is survived by two daughters, a brother, two sisters and four grandchildren.

**Charles Swyers**, '60, 84, May 27 in Wichita, where he was an executive vice president at Koch Industries. Surviving are two sons, Scott, c'91, and Chris, b'95; a brother, Bill, b'63; and four grandchildren.

**Robert Weaver**, e'69, 74, Jan. 20 in Brownsville, Texas. He owned Weaver Overhead Door. Survivors include three sons, a daughter, a sister and six grandchildren.

**Foster "Paul" Young**, d'64, g'70, 79, Feb. 24 in Lenexa, where for 25 years he was a choral director in the Shawnee Mission School District. He is survived by his husband, Tony Rudloff.

**1970s James Boatright**, '79, 66, July 22 in Topeka, where he was a software

developer at TBC Software & Vocshop Solutions Group. He is survived by his wife, Sherry; a daughter, Amanda, c'00; a son, Zacory, '05; two brothers; and three grandchildren.

**Lula Durham**, '71, 101, May 24 in Dearborn, Missouri. She was a high school instructor and later taught speech and theatre at Missouri Western State University. She also volunteered in her community.

**William Edds**, c'70, 73, June 28 in Topeka, where he was an attorney and retired after a long career with the State of Kansas. Survivors include a son, a sister and three grandchildren.

**Daniel Hamblin**, c'72, 78, May 16 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he was an energy economist and ran his own consulting firm. A son, a daughter, a stepdaughter, a sister and five grandchildren survive.

**Stephen Lane**, e'75, g'93, 68, Aug. 28 in Kansas City. He owned an industrial equipment company. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. Surviving are his wife, Crista Swindler Lane, f'77; two sons, one of whom is Matthew, d'06; his mother; and two grandchildren.

**David Laney**, c'70, 72, April 4 in Lenexa, where he retired after a long career in office furniture sales. He is survived by his wife, Becky; a son; and two brothers, Randy, c'76, g'78, and Tom, '81.

**Melinda Starkey Maturo**, d'79, '12, 63, April 26 in Clearwater, Florida. She was a special-education teacher in schools throughout Kansas, Indiana and Florida. Surviving are a son, Matthew, b'14; two daughters; and two grandsons.

**Andrew Michael "Mike" Neuner**, g'76, 79, Feb. 19 in

Lawrence, where he worked in computer services at FMC Corp. He is survived by a brother.

**Lynne Prouty**, d'70, g'77, 72, Jan. 25 in Tucson, Arizona, where she retired after a long career as a special-education teacher. Surviving are her husband, Eduardo Quintana; two daughters; a son; and a sister, Nadine Beth Prouty, c'63.

**Kathleen Ganson Taylor Rude**, g'77, 78, March 11 in Brandon, Florida. She was a teacher in Olathe and Florida and active in her community. Survivors include her husband, Richard, a daughter, a son and four grandchildren.

**Robert "Robby" Steinhardt**, '72, 71, July 17 in Tampa, Florida. He was a violinist and vocalist for the band Kansas. His wife, Cindy, survives.

**1980s Bradley Carlson**, c'89, 56, Aug. 8 in The Woodlands, Texas, where he was a real estate agent. He is survived by his wife, Heather Hampton Carlson, b'90; two daughters; his father, Robert, '81; two sisters, one of whom is Dianna Carlson Dykes, c'91; and a brother.

**Durema Fitzgerald Kohl**, g'87, 96, March 16 in Wheaton, Illinois. She was a pianist in chamber ensembles and also a church organist. Survivors include a son, a daughter, a brother, four grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

**Juanita Koilpillai**, g'87, g'90, 58, July 25 in Tracy's Landing, Maryland, where she was founder and CEO of Waverley Labs, a cyber-risk engineering company. She has posthumously been honored by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers as a

nominee for the Cybersecurity Award for Practice. Survivors include a daughter; a son; and a brother, Andrew Koilpillai, e'91, g'93.

**Henry May**, e'81, 62, July 14 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he retired after a 36-year career at IBM. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. He is survived by his wife, Anne Drolet, two daughters, his mother, two sisters and four grandchildren.

**Michael McAnarney**, c'81, g'84, 62, Sept. 24 in Raleigh, North Carolina. He was an independent broker at several real estate firms. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. Survivors include his wife, Maureen Luecke McAnarney, d'81; five daughters; a sister, Kathleen McAnarney Terrill, s'78; and two brothers, Mark, g'85, and Jeff, '88.

**Leona Brehm Sigwing**, d'82, 78, June 11 in Kansas City. She taught English, American literature and drama for more than 20 years in the Piper School District. Surviving are two daughters, one of whom is Renea Sigwing Richards, j'93; four grandchildren; and two great-grandsons.

**Stephanie Smith**, f'81, 62, July 24 in Kansas City, where she was a graphic designer and president of S&Co. Design. She played basketball for the Jayhawks from 1977 to '78. A brother survives.

**Robert Tackett**, c'83, m'87, 59, May 23 in Wamego, where for many years he was a family physician before joining the medical staff at K-State's Lafene Health Center. He is survived by his wife, Becky; two sons, Brandon, c'09, m'13, and Paul, c'11; a brother; a sister; and three grandchildren.

**1990s Douglas Adams**, c'91, l'94, 51, Oct. 6, 2020, in Wichita, where he practiced law for more than 25 years. Survivors include his wife, Judi Abeson Adams, h'95; a son; and a daughter.

**Barbara Blevins**, b'97, 73, May 12 in Lawrence, where she was an accountant and chief financial officer at Cottonwood Inc.

**2000 Angela Harness Cline**, c'05, g'07, 37, May 10 in Morgantown, West Virginia, where she was assistant city manager. She is survived by her husband, Scott; a son; her parents, Phil, c'75, and Marcie Harness; a sister; and her grandmother.

**2020 Troy Manz**, m'20, 46, Feb. 28 in St. Augustine, Florida, hit by a car during a bicycle race. A Marine veteran and medical resident in Evansville, Indiana, he is survived by his fiancée, Trish Wilkinson, a son, a daughter, his parents, his grandmother, a sister and two grandchildren.

#### UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

**Zamir Bavel**, 92, Aug. 4 in Lawrence. He was professor of computer science and symbolic logic for more than 45 years. He is survived by two sons, one of whom is Ari, c'81; a daughter, Elana Bavel Goldberg, d'87, g'00; and two grandchildren.

**Catherine Bossi**, c'47, c'49, 94, July 8 in Arkansas City. She was a registered medical technologist for more than 40 years at KU Medical Center. Surviving are a sister, Berneice Bossi Southcott, c'51, c'53; and three brothers, one of whom is Tom Bossi, '58, and five grandchildren.

**David Brackett**, g'90, 65, Aug. 5 in Lawrence, where he retired as associate professor of visual art. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. He is survived by his mother and three sisters.

**John Foret**, m'54, 95, Sept. 7 in Westwood, where he was professor emeritus of surgery and urology at KU Medical Center. Surviving are his wife, Ruby Noll Foret, h'87; a son; four daughters, three of whom are Ann, b'78, Jean Foret Giddens, n'81, and Carol, p'84, h'09; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

**Bruce Linton**, assoc., 97, July 28 in Lawrence, where he was professor emeritus of journalism. A memorial has been established with KU Endowment. He is survived by a son, Marc, d'74, g'81; a daughter, Wendy Linton Blackwell, c'77, g'92; four grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.

**Burdett "Bird" Loomis**, 76, Sept. 25 in Lawrence. He was a longtime professor of political science and chaired the department for several years. In the 1980s he developed an internship program

in Washington, D.C., for which he received the Kemper Foundation Teaching Award in 1996. He also served as director of administrative communication for former Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and was interim director of the Robert J. Dole Institute of Politics from 1997 to 2001. Surviving are his wife, Michel, '85; a son; and two granddaughters.

**Herman Munczek**, '79, 94, Aug. 17 in Plantation, Florida, where he was professor emeritus of physics and astronomy. Survivors include his wife,

Phyllis Brill Munczek, '81; a daughter, Debora, '74; a son; a sister; and two grandchildren.

**Floyd Preston**, 98, April 1 in Lawrence, where he was professor of chemical and petroleum engineering and chaired the department from 1974 to '79. Surviving are four sons, three of whom are Donald, '78, Steve, h'83, and Harold, c'85; six grandchildren; and eight great-grandchildren.

#### ASSOCIATES

**Julie Birk-Tutin**, assoc., 87, Aug. 19, 2020, in Joplin, Missouri, where she and her late husband, Raymond, b'54, l'58, owned two restaurants. She is survived by two sons, Philip, e'81, and Peter, '91; a daughter; three grandchildren; and a great-grandson.

**Walter "Chip" Dickey**, assoc., 80, Oct. 18, 2020, in Prairie Village, where he retired as a manager of consumer affairs at Hallmark Cards. Surviving are his wife, Gay, a son, three stepsons, a sister, three grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

**Joseph Jackson**, assoc., 86, Oct. 12, 2020, in Overland Park, where he was president and CEO of Stanley Bank. He is survived by his wife, Sally; a son, Joe, '86; a sister; and a granddaughter.

**Peggy Jo McIntosh**, assoc., 85, Dec. 9, 2020, in Prairie Village. She was a nurse and active in her church community. Surviving are four daughters, Heather, b'85, Kendra, e'88, Shaunna, c'89, and Kerry, h'91.

**Carol Mattox Wilkins**, assoc., 99, Dec. 31 in Kansas City. She was a homemaker. Two sons, a grandson and two great-grandchildren survive.





THIS YEAR'S EDITION of the Marching Jayhawks is the largest in recent memory—more than 310 members. The rows and rows of virtuosos are a sight to behold on the Hill or storming down the stadium steps for the traditional pregame performance and filling the field for the halftime show. “The sound we’re putting out is great,” says director Matthew Smith. “There’s a ton of enthusiasm. There was so much anticipation for that first game.”

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE PUPPE



TRADITION

## Like-minded women

*Friends in Council celebrates 150 years*

ELIZABETH PERKINS LEONARD’S zest for teaching and learning led her to Lawrence in 1869, when Chancellor John Fraser hired her as the first woman to teach at the young University of Kansas.

The New Englander also possessed considerable courage: She had first visited Lawrence in August 1863. On Aug. 21, she witnessed the terror of Quantrill’s Raid, when marauders murdered nearly 200 men and boys and burned the town. Leonard had arrived that summer to visit her schoolmate, Sara Lawrence Robinson, and Sara’s husband, Charles, who had led Kansas as its first governor and would become one of the University’s founders. On that dreadful morning, Charles happened to be out of town and Quantrill’s gang inexplicably spared the Robinsons’ home, north of the Eldridge Hotel on Massachusetts Street.

As KU’s fifth faculty member, Leonard became professor of language (French and German), painting and art, earning an annual salary of \$1,600—the same as KU’s other professors. Two years into her tenure, she resolved to share her abiding spirit

of inquiry with other local women; on Dec. 5, 1871, she invited nine women to her apartment to form Friends in Council (FIC). She had belonged to such a group in Quincy, Illinois, where she had taught at a seminary for women.

Fifteen decades later, the club’s current 32 members believe FIC to be the oldest women’s study group west of the Mississippi. Through the years, most members have been affiliated with KU as alumnae, faculty, staff members or their spouses. Among the charter group in Leonard’s apartment was Jane Appleton Aikens Snow, whose husband, Francis, was a professor and later chancellor. Four other chancellor’s wives also have been members through the years.

This year’s president is Kathryn Nemeth Tuttle, d’72, PhD’96, a longtime KU administrator who joined in 2018: “I continue to be amazed by the intellectual curiosity of my fellow members.” Tuttle says. “It is invigorating and inspiring to know we are linked to similar women over 15 decades.”

Leonard’s legacy so inspired local historian and playwright Betty Laird, ’66, that in 2008 she wrote a play, “A Song on the Wind,” about KU’s first female professor. Laird, who joined FIC in 1960, also prepared a paper that she presented in 2017, on the club’s 145th anniversary. Quoting historian Hannah Oliver, Laird described Leonard’s “noble presence” and “vigorous and penetrative” mind. Laird noted that Chancellor Fraser had urged the handful of young women studying at KU in the early years to emulate Leonard.

Scholarly papers are among the club’s enduring traditions. Each year the group selects a study theme for papers they present at meetings, hosted by members three Tuesdays monthly through most of the academic year. Themes have spanned history, cultures, literature, the arts, geography, natural science, architecture, religion and more. This year members will explore, in no particular order, the history and culture of each of the past 15 decades.

Meetings begin at 1:30 p.m. (the club’s guidelines advise members to be “prompt but not zealous”). First Tuesdays are Tea Days, though members occasionally sip sherry, in keeping with another long-held tradition. Every five years, they invite their spouses to toast the club’s anniversary at a special celebration; the sesquicentennial soiree is set for April 19, 2022, in the Malott Room of the Kansas Union.

Georgann Hansen Eglinski, l’78, first joined in 1968, left for law school and her career, then returned 42 years later. “What drew me to the group in the beginning is what I found on return,” she says, “the company of intelligent women who share a lively curiosity about the world.”

“I feel connected to our founders and the many members who followed them, all of whom shared an enthusiasm for learning and an enjoyment of the company of like-minded women.”

Laird, now 95, remains thankful to the noble Professor Leonard: “I’m certainly glad she founded Friends in Council. It has been a major part of my life for a long, long time, and an important one. I’ve never regretted joining.”



The 2021-'22 Friends have adopted a thoroughly modern logo while continuing Tuesday traditions that originated with their forebears, including the members of 1892.

BOOKLET COVER DESIGN BY KRISTEN SPENCER; PHOTOGRAPHS, KANSAS COLLECTION, SPENCER RESEARCH LIBRARY (2)

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# Representing a legacy.



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