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Talk and squawk in the news



COURTESY STEVE DENISON



**“When it was time for the launch, [the crew] said, ‘Steve, can we take her up as our pseudo mascot?’ So we said, ‘Of course you can.’”**

—Steve Denison, e’89, a former NASA engineer, chatting with KXAN News in Austin, Texas, in August about how a Barbie he received in a white elephant gift exchange became the first Barbie in space. Barbie blasted off on Nov. 15, 1990, aboard the space shuttle Atlantis, nearly 33 years before she would rocket to the top of the box office.



*“She said over and over again, ‘Where are all the good people to put a stop to this?’”*

—Marion County Record Editor and Publisher Eric Meyer, j’75, as quoted in the Aug. 15 New York Times obituary for his mother, Joan Meyer, an Alumni Association Life Member, who died the day after local police on Aug. 11 confiscated computers and phones in raids at her home and the offices of her family’s newspaper. As the Times noted, Joan spent nearly 60 years as a reporter, columnist, editor and associate publisher. The startling raid drew worldwide coverage and condemnation—and a defiant banner headline in the Record’s Aug. 16 edition. Later that day, a local prosecutor withdrew the search warrant and ordered the return of all property.

Meg KUMIN/KU MARKETING (2)



**“It struck me that we can learn about the rest of the world by asking these questions of Kansans in their daily work lives and communities.”**

—Paul Stock, associate professor of environmental studies, discussing the Kansas Abroad program in an interview with the Kansas Leadership Center. The two-week road trip in June took students throughout the Sunflower State to explore issues of global environmental concern—water, agriculture, energy and more—in the context of Kansas’ own challenges and solutions.

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*“It’s a strange kind of joy, marred by the thing that set it into motion, but that’s the word.”*

—Dave Tell, professor of communication studies, writing for Esquire about President Joe Biden’s July 25 signing of the proclamation to establish a national monument honoring Emmett Till. Tell, author of the book *Remembering Emmett Till*, traveled to Washington, D.C., for the occasion with Rev. Wheeler Parker (in the red tie), Till’s cousin and the last living witness to Till’s murder.



WHITE HOUSE



**COVER STORY**

**Swiftology**

What can millions of Swifties tell us about human community and pop culture? Through his scholarship and teaching, one KU professor is finding out.

*by Steven Hill*

*Cover photograph by Steve Puppe*



**Rural Renewal**

Melinda Merrill's mission is more than restoring old buildings: It's a bid to preserve vitality and pride in a small Kansas town.

*by Megan Hirt*



**Modernism, Here and Now**

An expansive new textbook and a bold Spencer Museum acquisition expand KU's modern art mastery.

*by Chris Lazzarino*



## SUMMER 2023

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### Profile: Myltin Bighorn

A Native student savors the chance to learn—and teach—during an internship with the Chiefs.

*by Chris Lazzarino*



### Hail to Old KU

Meet Mount Oread's newest sculpture: a half-sized cutie-pie with two times the charm.

*by Chris Lazzarino*

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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

*Kansas Alumni* welcomes letters to the editor.

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## Oops, we did it again

THE EXCELLENT STAFF of *Kansas Alumni* keeps on winning my heart—and becoming a source of books for my reading list!

Chris Lazzarino's excellent story about former KU professor Charles Forrest Jones' retirement project of completing his novel ["Plot Twist," issue No. 1] had me immediately buying *The Illusion of Simple*. Chris captured the spirit of the professor and the fulfillment of his dream of being a fiction book author. This made it easy for me to put the book in my Kindle queue.

Thanks for once again adding to my reading list. You folks have done this to me several



times over the years, and I have never been disappointed in your suggestions.

You still have the best alumni magazine in the country.

—Peter Haggart, g'63  
Spokane, Washington

## Unsettled no more

I JUST FINISHED READING the article about Maj. Glenn McCubbin in *Kansas Alumni* ["A rededication," Hail to Old KU, issue No. 1]. I went through school from K-12 with Glenn and his brother Harold. Harold was in my class; Glenn was a year younger. Thank you for clarifying some unsettled issues in a very kind way.

—Fred Gilhousen, m'66  
Prairie Village



## Considered praise

I VERY MUCH appreciate receiving the magazine. It is wonderful! As a graduate of several universities and past president of five universities, I must say that *Kansas Alumni* is by far the best.

—Roseann Runte,  
g'69, g'71, PhD'74  
Ottawa, Ontario

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## History and His story

I ENJOYED the article by Eric Thomas expounding on earbuds in our society [KU Voice, issue No. 2]. I also enjoyed the article "Joyous soul" by Howard Graham [Hail to Old KU, issue No. 2]. I really liked Hannah Oliver's positive attitude as brought out in the article. However, I am mainly responding to Professor John Hoopes' thoughts on critical thinking ["Consequence of Conspiracy," issue No. 2].

I am dismayed by the things in our country that are being passed off as truth. I need to state at this time that I am writing because of my beliefs as a Christian. Jesus said to one of His disciples, Thomas, "I am the Way, and the Truth,

and the Life" in John 14:6. I believe that God gave us His story (the Bible) as a guide and as a means of salvation for those who believe.

The Bible has been substantiated by archaeology, geography and history. Dr. Hoopes' last thoughts in the article stated that theories about humanity's ancient past need not be conspiracies. The Bible offers the explanation of humanity's ancient past.

The Book covers how we got here, how we should lead our lives, and our life after death. It is full of stories that showcase our sinful nature, but it also gives us the way out of our natural inclinations.

Thanks for publishing a great magazine.

—James Rosander, p'64  
Shawnee



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PROFESSOR CHUCK MARSH COULD tell that something was a bit jittery about his Journalism 101 class.

Marsh was instructing the spring 2009 installment of Media & Society. During the April 27 class, he walked around the Budig Hall auditorium while his graduate students presented about an issue from current events. The student chatter seemed a bit amplified compared to normal, but nothing disruptive.

It was probably about then that he noticed one of his students sitting apart from most of the class with two other people in the second tier of student seats.

His student, Abigail Anderson, gave him an embarrassed smile.

But was that her father sitting with her? The man looked too old to be a student.

And was that another student rounding out the group of three? Marsh wondered.

As he began lecturing, Marsh didn't know this would be the most extraordinary class period of the 20 semesters that he taught J101. That it would be a story he would tell his children. That it would be a story reported in the campus and community newspapers. That it would be a story I would interview him about 14 years later.

"As soon as class was over, it was like somebody had turned on a vacuum," said Marsh, c'77, g'80, PhD'85. "Everybody ran in that direction. And I turned to my graduate students, and I said, 'What's going on?' They said, 'That's Taylor Swift.'

"So, I was the only one in the classroom who didn't know who was sitting there."

Anderson, '12, had brought her best

friend Taylor to Lawrence for a visit. As The University Daily Kansan reported, the celebrity sighting spread through text messages, attracting a crowd to the back of the auditorium and the hallways outside.

Students huddled around Swift, posing for photos. One student even worked to slip the pop star his number.

Anderson competed on KU's swim and dive team. She set two school records in the backstroke and now works in mergers and acquisitions for a Nashville company.

Some benefits of being Swift's best friend? Nearly 429,000 Instagram followers. A write-up on your 2022 marriage in E! News. And being the "redhead" best friend referenced in Swift's hit song "Fifteen."

I loved hearing this anecdote about one of the most famous people in the world visiting Marsh's class. First of all, because Swift went on to give KU a shoutout during an interview recorded by the Oprah Winfrey Show.

"My perfect day off would be going to visit my best friend Abigail in Lawrence, Kansas," Swift said. "She goes to Kansas University, so basically that's my best friend since I was 15. I love going to visit her."

Second, because my wife was charming enough to land tickets to Swift's July 8 Kansas City concert for the two of us.

But mostly because I am teaching the same course in the same lecture hall this fall. What a mind scramble it would be to have a celebrity—or a "starlet," as the Kansan put it—in class.

To be clear, Swift's 2009 visit was only two albums into a discography that has now ballooned to 10 studio albums. She is doubtlessly the most successful recording artist of the past few decades—and there she was on Jayhawk Boulevard.

Marsh and I struggled to compare her to other musicians in terms of fame. I offered the closest comparison for my generation: Michael Jackson. His worldwide fame and tours created a spectacle that was only rivaled by his bizarre public controversies and accusations of child assault. Regardless of your musical tastes, you have to admire

Swift's composure and juggernaut success in the spotlight.

Marsh suggested the Beatles. However, he pointed out, they could escape from fame in a way that seems impossible for Swift.

"They were in their comparatively relentless spotlight," Marsh said. "But they could escape to Greece or India, and no one would know they were there. I'll bet Taylor Swift can't do that.

"She's having to invent a way to do this with dignity and class. I can't imagine. Just from the sidelines, I'd say she's succeeding."

The Taylor Swift empire has become so much more than those KU students could have imagined back in 2009. A single bodyguard couldn't control the crowd that Swift would attract today. Just imagine the viral tweets. The crush of students. The cellphone cameras held up for a glimpse.

Swift is now subject to academic inquiry ("Swiftology," p. 30), has accomplished a career so extensive that it has eras, cultivated a pop star supernova capable of crashing an online ticketing service, and triggered controversies profound enough to trigger Congressional hearings.

Indeed, to be as famous as Swift means that you leave a wake behind you wherever you have been.

After Swift's two-night stand at Arrowhead Stadium, the wake of her fame remains in Kansas City in the shape of teenage girls flaunting their branded T-shirts and middle-aged dads posting photos from the concerts on social media.

Even 14 years later, when the visit of any normal person would be forgotten, Swift's presence still has people talking at KU.

"That was honestly one of the funniest things I've seen in all my years of teaching," Marsh said. "That was how quickly students got out of their seats and up to the level where she was sitting. They were thrilled. They certainly knew who she was."

—ERIC THOMAS

*Thomas directs the Kansas Scholastic Press Association, teaches visual journalism and photojournalism, and contributes to Kansas Reflector (kansasreflector.com), where this essay first appeared.*

AN EARTHWORK portrait of U.S. Sen. Bob Dole, '45, graces the grounds of the Dole Institute of Politics, which celebrated its 20th anniversary and the late senator's 100th birthday with "A Landmark Celebration" July 22. The tribute, created by renowned artist Stan Herd, '86, will remain on display through Homecoming, Oct. 23-28. Bordering Dole's likeness are more than 1,000 tiles contributed by Kansans of all ages to commemorate the longtime senator and statesman.

PHOTOGRAPH BY  
STEVE PUPPE



**“People told us we would become a family and our worlds would be changed, and I thought, ‘Nah, it’s only five weeks.’ But it’s true. I’ve never felt so much support. These women are now my sisters.”**

—Faren Kudzai  
Sakupwanya



STEVE PUPPE

#### ACADEMICS

## Passion for change

*Institute builds young leaders,  
dissolves borders and stereotypes*

MEMORABLE TRIPS, those that refresh our outlook and stay with us for years, often build day by day. Each new vista or experience tops the day before, stacking best moment upon best moment until it seems the wonders will never cease.

For the 24 women of the Kansas Women’s Leadership Institute (KWLI), a summer sojourn to KU was just such a transformation.

“People told us we would become a family and our worlds would be changed, and I thought, ‘Nah, it’s only five weeks.’ But it’s true,” marveled Faren Kudzai Sakupwanya, one of three students from Zambia, following the July 27 closing celebration. “I’ve never felt so much support. These women are now my sisters.” As she spoke, laughter and animated conversations resounded throughout the Lied Center Pavilion, and tears and hearty hugs among the students, faculty, staff, KWLI alumnae, donors and well-wishers affirmed that five whirlwind weeks can indeed work wonders.

This year’s institute was the 13th hosted by KU as part of the Women’s Global Leadership Consor-

tium, funded by the U.S. Department of State.

Since 2014, thanks to support from donations to KU Endowment, the KWLI also has brought women from throughout Kansas to Lawrence. The 2023 class included four women from Arkansas City, Dodge City, Madison and Mulvane, along with 20 women who traveled from their homes in Hong Kong, India, Mongolia, Morocco, Pakistan and Zambia. Including this year’s class, KU has hosted 313 women from 12 far-flung locations.

KU also plays a larger role as the organizing partner of the entire initiative, which each year includes women from 20 home locations around the globe. In 2018, the State Department selected KU to coordinate the national program, which includes three partner institutions: Green River College in Auburn, Washington; St. Mary’s College in Notre Dame, Indiana; and the University of Delaware in Newark.

To begin the 2023 edition, the KU team created a four-day orientation and leadership conference that started June 24 in Washington, D.C., where more than 80 women began their summer stays before dispersing to Lawrence and the three other schools for the remaining jam-packed four weeks. The KU team also worked with embassies (which select participants from thousands of worldwide applicants) to organize travel for all of the women. In addition, KU will conduct a nine-month online follow-up program, along with all of the program evaluations



and assessments that the State Department requires.

Mary Banwart, KWLI program director and associate professor of communication studies, summed up the program as a testament to “our continued belief—and the evidence—that when we put our minds to it, borders, stereotypes, misconceptions and misperceptions can be crumbled by the simple but powerful and intentional forces of empathy, understanding and passion for making progress on the issues that we care about most, because, as has been our motto since our first day in D.C., women get the job done.”

During the program, academics and adventures combined for a schedule that was short on sleep but overflowing with opportunities to learn and connect. KU’s regimen culminated in capstone projects that aim to improve communities in Kansas and the six other global locations. Participants designed and presented their ideas for “smart experiments,” and in the months ahead, the KWLI Class of 2023 will launch 24 varied projects. A few examples include:

- Olivia Ramos, a Dodge City native who attends Wichita State University, will start Kansas Healthy Homes, a prevention program that will encourage traditional Hispanic families to talk more openly about mental health, beginning when children are in elementary school, and will help them safely cope with mental health challenges, especially as they navigate their teenage years. “I want kids to have the home environments I didn’t have growing up,

to know that emotions are OK,” said Ramos, whose program builds on another mental health project she started in her Dodge City middle school.

- Akakandelwa Kandepwe, in her fourth year at the University of Lusaka in Zambia, will begin a program to help ensure that the mentoring she has received from one of her university lecturers is available to more women ages 18 to 25. Mentoring is common in Western countries, but still rare in Zambia, she said: “I believe mentoring should be a right for all. Women must invest in themselves and in one another. Thanks to my mentor, I can walk into a room, claim my space and ask for what I want. I will not be exploited.”

- Anusha Gangakrishnan, from India, will design and host workshops for children in fifth through seventh grades to help eliminate gender bias. She says too often schools in her home community separate boys and girls and point them toward stereotypical paths. “I am done sitting and waiting for someone else to make the change,” she said. “I want to make the change.”

- Sodgerel Gansukh, from Mongolia, will begin a program to promote internships and fieldwork in geological sciences and mining, a vital national industry that has offered only limited opportunities for women. She is inspired by her mother, a geologist.

- Rime Zouzi wants to create an online community of support for abuse survivors in Morocco; she cited studies revealing that 54% of Moroccan women have experienced violence. Current services

KWLI students included four Kansans and 20 women from homes in Africa and Asia. Pictured are (top photos, l-r): Charmaine Ser, Hong Kong; Memory Tapela Banda, Zambia; Eemaan Binte Fayyaz, Pakistan; Faren Kudzai Sakupwanya, Zambia; Olivia Ramos, Dodge City; Akakandelwa Kandepwe, Zambia; and Anusha Gangakrishnan, India. Professors Mary Banwart and Alesia Woszidlo (below, l-r) lead a KU team that coordinates the Madeleine K. Albright Young Women Leaders program for the U.S. State Department.



STEVIE PUPPE (2)

**“It is because of each one of you that a farmer’s daughter is standing in front of you. I’ve been suffocated and been put in a box and silenced all my life. I now know I have a voice. I know I cannot stay silent.”**

—Anusha Gangakrishnan

provide only short-term shelter, she said, and she hopes to establish accessible online services to offer support and address the long-term consequences of abuse.

The women designed their projects with guidance from Banwart, c’90, and KWLI academic director Alesia Woszidlo, associate professor of communication studies who also directs KU’s Institute for Leadership Studies. KWLI students spent more than 100 classroom hours studying the process of leadership from academic and pragmatic perspectives, according to Woszidlo. “Authority and title don’t help you equitably engage in the process of leadership,” she explained. “We challenged them with the idea that, instead of leadership being about individuals, leadership is about finding allies and taking responsibility for the system, deploying acts of leadership in both big and small ways so the system can thrive.”

This year’s participants also learned from the example of a legendary leader, the late Madeleine Albright, who in 1996 became the first woman to serve as the U.S. secretary of state. Woszidlo, Banwart and their team learned in April that the State Department has dedicated the women’s leadership initiative to Albright’s memory, renaming the national effort the Study of the U.S. Institutes’

Madeleine K. Albright Young Women Leaders Program.

At the closing banquet, as each of the 24 women shared key lessons from their summer in the states, several echoed one of Albright’s most enduring declarations: “It took me quite a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it, I am not going to be silent.”

Kansan Olivia Ramos, who wants to become a community organizer, recalled that common themes began to emerge at dinner on the first night of the institute. “Even though we come from different countries and different situations, we all have suffering in common as women,” she said, “but we all also possess passion, we have drive, and we have grit. I will never stop fighting.”

Faren Kudzai Sakupwanya, from Zambia, said she learned that “the change you want to make in your community is not just for you; it’s for the many women who have been sidelined. [KWLI] has shown me that I have the capacity to do it.”

Anusha Gangakrishnan, from India, said, “It is because of each one of you that a farmer’s daughter is standing in front of you. I’ve been suffocated and been put in a box and silenced all my life. I now know I have a voice. I know I cannot stay silent.”

May their voices and their wonders never cease.

—JENNIFER JACKSON SANNER

## Tan Man turns 80!

*John Schneider, celebrated by generations of Jayhawks as the legendary Tan Man, on June 24 returned to Lawrence from his Rose Hill home for yet another Johnny’s Tavern birthday bash organized by Marc, b’78, and Celeste Carrier Jaspersen, ’79.*

*In fighting trim, thanks to his home exercise regimen, and sporting a sunny lei over his sleeveless Kansas T-shirt, Schneider enjoyed face-to-face renewals of the many KU*

*friendships he maintains with regular phone calls.*

*“Feeling great!” Schneider said, cradling a cold glass of beer before diving into a particularly festive birthday cake baked in his honor.*

*As we reported from the milestone birthday party that the Jaspersens threw for Tan Man five years ago (“Tan Man Returns,” issue No. 5, 2018), Schneider recalls fondly the years he perched shirtless on Wescoe Beach, overcoming his shyness to greet students as they accepted him as a*



CHRIS LAZZARINO

*treasured member of the Jayhawk flock.*

*Here’s a toast to many more happy and healthy years for our fine friend of a feather, but next time, let’s take it to the Beach!*

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—Gov. Laura Kelly



HNTB

CAMPUS

## Gateway to the future

*Ambitious plan will create new campus entrance, renovate stadium*

AS THE FRASER HALL FLAGS appeared through the mist on video screens, and the unmistakable sports-broadcasting baritone of Jayhawk Kevin Harlan declared “an audacious new era,” the faithful who had packed into the Jayhawk Welcome Center knew Aug. 15 was a high holy day for the University.

On that afternoon, KU leaders and Gov. Laura Kelly unveiled the first architectural renderings for the new Gateway District and the renovated David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium at 11th and Mississippi streets. They outlined plans to complete the colossal project, which will create a new entry point to the Lawrence campus; a modern stadium for Kansas football student-athletes, coaches and fans; and a destination for conferences, entertainment and other commerce to drive economic growth for Lawrence and the entire state.

For the historic occasion, Athletics Director Travis Goff, c’03, j’03, invoked the state motto, Ad Astra per Aspera, “to the stars through difficulties,”

as he described an ambitious venture to create “an unrivaled home-field advantage” for KU’s resurgent team and coach Lance Leipold, who in only his second season led the 2022 Jayhawks to KU’s first bowl game in 14 years.

The stadium will be among the finest in the nation, Goff said, and a new conference center “will drive year-round traffic to Lawrence, to our campus and to our region, and will attract new meetings and groups who are eager to tap into all that this wonderful community and institution have to offer.”

With the first phase of renovations to the Anderson Family Football Complex already complete, including the team’s new locker room and weight-training space, construction on the first phase of the stadium renovation will begin immediately after the 2023 season, with the goal of completing the stadium and conference center by August 2025.

Through a combination of private gifts and a state





HNTB (2)

economic development challenge grant, plus federal pandemic recovery dollars allocated by Kelly and the Kansas Legislature, KU has secured \$165 million toward the \$300 million goal, which includes \$50 million for the Allen Field House renovation already underway.

Much of the money has been raised in the 10 months since Oct. 8, 2022, when, as Chancellor Doug Girod recalled, “We announced this project ... in a very subtle way, which was to invite ESPN and College GameDay to come to campus and let us tell the world.” On that sparkling fall day, as the sold-out stadium crowd spilled onto the Hill, KU released a teaser video, calling on Harlan, j’82, to give voice to KU’s commitment: re-create the stadium and reimagine the corner of 11th and Mississippi to rev up both Kansas football and the state’s economy.

The venture will build on KU’s already formidable power as an economic engine, Girod said, citing the \$400 million in KU research dollars that flow into Kansas each year, along with the fact that, combined with The University of Kansas Health System, KU is among the state’s largest employers.

Kelly, who credited Girod’s persistent lobbying (“nagging,” she joked) for state investment in the project, said the venture would build on Kansas’ economic momentum by making it “a premier spot to host state and national conventions and myriad other events. Development of this mixed-use facility alone is projected to support 720 permanent jobs, once constructed, and 670 jobs during the building phase.

“Likewise, the David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium is projected to support 2,600 temporary

jobs while underway and 240 permanent jobs.

Once all is complete, the new complex will generate millions of dollars through sales and income taxes that will go toward making Kansas a better place for everyone, in every corner of the state, for generations to come.”

Kelly also credited David Toland, c’99, g’01, lieutenant governor and secretary of commerce, for urging the Legislature to approve the University Economic Development Challenge Grant program. KU received a \$50 million grant, to be matched 3-to-1 by private dollars, for the Gateway District.

To make the case for the continued philanthropy that will be essential to complete the entire project, David Booth, c’68, g’69, urged fellow Jayhawks to seize the historic opportunity. “It’s time to participate now and step up and do your part,” said Booth, whose commitments to Kansas Athletics have included funding the Booth Family Hall of Athletics; purchasing James Naismith’s “Rules of Basket Ball,” now displayed in the DeBruce Center, adjacent to Allen Field House; and, in 2017, providing \$50 million for the football stadium.

KU embarks on the Gateway District and stadium venture with design partners HNTB and Multistudio. HNTB, headquartered in Kansas City, specializes in sports architecture and has been the lead designer for Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas and other high-profile projects. Multistudio, a Lawrence firm, emphasizes community improvement and immersion.

Turner Construction Co. will manage the project. The firm has been touted by Engineering News-Record as the nation’s No. 1 construction

The project’s first phase, to be finished by August 2025, will include construction of new southwest, west and north sides of the stadium, along with a new conference center attached to the north end. Future development will focus on revamping the south and east portions of the stadium and adding year-round amenities that could include arts and entertainment, dining, retail shops and possibly a hotel.



The KU Common Book program ventures into the not-so-distant future with its 2023-'24 selection, *Parable of the Sower* by the late Octavia E. Butler, who published the book in 1993 but set the story in 2024. “My students have been amazed—and occasionally a bit shaken—by the accuracy of some of Butler’s predictions about our current era,” says Giselle Anatol, co-chair of the Common Book steering committee, professor of English and interim director of the Hall Center for the Humanities. The book, which centers on themes such as climate change and socioeconomic disparity, will be the basis for events across campus for the academic year.

manager and the No. 3 sports venue builder.

In addition, Kansas Athletics in May began a long-term partnership with Legends, a global premium experiences company, to revamp the fan experience and increase revenue.

Stadium improvements will include a new north seating bowl to bring fans closer to game action; first-row seats in the west stands that are 4 feet higher off the ground; larger seats that offer more leg room; better sight lines overall, or as Goff put it, “There won’t be a bad seat in the house”; and a new videoboard, more than twice the current size and 60 feet closer to the field. Fans also can expect about 2,300 club seats in three different spaces, along with suites 80 feet closer to the field. Concourses will feature more food and beverage choices along with more restrooms.

The stadium’s capacity is still a moving target, Goff said in a press conference after the formal announcement. “We’re roughly 47,000 today,” he said, adding that the larger seats and more premium options will reduce the overall capacity, but “what we have absolutely locked in from the jump is that this stadium will absolutely be greater than 40,000.

“We haven’t committed to what the east or the south is going to be in that future phase, and so in a lot of ways, it’s up to our fans. Are we going to fill this thing up every game? If we do, I’m really confident we’re going to design an east stands or a south that will accommodate a greater capacity. But that will be for a different day.”

Girod also answered the question he hears most often: KU’s iconic Commencement tradition *will* continue. “That’s what every student remembers

on graduation—that walk through the Campanile, down the Hill, into that epic environment,” he said. “Absolutely everyone on the team knew that we not only had to keep that, but we had to improve on it.”

Leaders also remain mindful of the stadium’s historic origins, Girod noted. “We’re actually working right now with the World War I national museum in Kansas City to think about how we can elevate that so people are immediately aware that it’s a memorial to 129 Jayhawks who were lost in the first World War,” he said. “Right now, it’s sort of a hidden secret. We have an opportunity to make that front and center as we redesign this.”

Already front and center is the new culture of Kansas football. “In our program, we talk about culture being action,” Leipold said, “and what we see in the people here, the governor, from everyone, we’re seeing action.” Leipold recalled discussing with Goff the improvements that could benefit the current players, “and he went to work. He understood. And to see their faces a week ago, walking into their new environment. ... It’s their work. It’s their hours they put in, and it’s gonna be the future.”

Lawrence native and junior running back Devin Neal spoke for his teammates. “The momentum is already real, but today it went to another level,” he said. “From the very top of the state and University, everyone is aligned in trying to provide the very best for my hometown. That means so much to me. I knew when I committed to KU that I was making the right choice, because I wanted to help be the change.”

—JENNIFER JACKSON SANNER



KU football players present and past attended the announcement celebration a few days after touring their new locker and weight rooms in the Anderson Family Football Complex. The renovated complex also will include a sports medicine center.

STEVE PUPPE



## NEWS BRIEF

### Colossal investment boosts Cancer Center project

A HISTORIC GIFT of \$100 million, plus \$43 million in federal research funding, will help The University of Kansas Cancer Center take a giant step toward building a new Kansas City headquarters—and achieving its goal to unite all of the center’s research and clinical outposts across the metro area under one roof on the KU campus at 39th and Rainbow.

The Sunderland Foundation, which has helped fund several new KU buildings in Kansas City and Lawrence, contributed the eye-popping \$100 million, the largest philanthropic gift in the history of KU and the state of Kansas.

During the formal announcement June 27, Charlie Sunderland told a jubilant crowd that the gift signified the foundation’s commitment to assuring that KU’s advanced cancer research and treatment will “benefit a large, diverse population for many decades to come. We have a long history with KU, and we have great trust in this team. We look forward to making more strides in the future.”

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, who in July 2022 heralded the news that the KU Cancer Center had achieved National Cancer Institute (NCI) comprehensive designation, once again had the honor of reporting good news: Congress and President Joe Biden have allocated \$43 million in National Institutes of Health funding to support construction of the new KU Cancer Center headquarters. Over the past three years, the NIH has invested \$243 million in KU research, said Moran, c’76, l’82, and the latest infusion for the new building will make KU a world-class

center for cancer research and treatment.

Moran’s guest for the special occasion was Dr. Lawrence Tabak, acting NIH director, who commended KU for uniting teams of great people who are passionate about their mission. As one of only 54 NCI comprehensive cancer centers in the nation, KU already has demonstrated “depth and breadth of knowledge across many scientific disciplines,” he said, noting that the NCI last year acknowledged that having labs and clinics scattered across the Kansas City area was not the most ideal approach, “so we very much look forward to this new facility.”

Tabak also hailed KU’s most recent advances, including five anti-cancer agents, now in clinical trials, to treat bladder cancer, and promising new early detection of ovarian cancer. He praised KU’s work across Kansas and Missouri to promote education and awareness of breast cancer prevention and the dangers of tobacco use and obesity. And he put the decades-long challenge to treat cancer in personal terms familiar to countless families: “The cancers that took my mother, my aunt and an uncle would have been cured today,” he said. “But we have to keep going, because the cancer that took my grandfather is still a challenge. We have much work to do.”

Tabak’s words echoed the tireless, inspiring crusade of Dr. Roy Jensen, Cancer Center director, who since 2004 has led KU’s quest to reach the pinnacle of research and treatment and one day eliminate cancer. In July 2012, when KU first achieved NCI designation; in July 2022, when KU rose to comprehensive status; and this summer, with the announcement of \$143 million toward the construction of a new headquarters, Jensen set his sights on the heights still to climb.

Cancer is not one disease but hundreds, he said, and only continued collaboration among dedicated, passionate scientists and clinicians can vanquish the scourge. By building a new hub for all of its research and treatment programs, “The University of Kansas Cancer Center will become a global destination and a blue beacon of hope on the hill for all cancer patients.”

—JENNIFER JACKSON SANNER



**Don't call 911:** Fire crews in June swarmed the Delta Delta Delta sorority house on Oxford Road, but instead of putting out a blaze, they started a few of their own—of the simulated variety. The unique opportunity for firefighter training arose when the Tri Delts decided to raze their house, built in 1955, and replace it with a new brick home.

As announced in a news release from Lawrence-Douglas County Fire Medical, “theatrical smoke” reduced visibility inside the structure, which, according to Fire Chief Rich Llewellyn, “provides opportunities for firefighter training that are otherwise difficult or impossible to create.”

Along with battling simulated blazes, fire crews from all three of the department’s shifts conducted training in search and rescue, hose advancement, coordinated ventilation, and the proper use of power tools and ladders.

Going out in a blaze of educational glory: What more could a sorority house ask for?

**CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS**

For more information, visit the websites below.

*Homecoming*

**Oct. 23-28**  
[kualumni.org/homecoming](http://kualumni.org/homecoming)

*Lied Center*

**Oct. 4** Air Supply  
**Oct. 29** Nikki Glaser  
**Nov. 4** "Jesus Christ Superstar"  
**Nov. 6** Buddy Guy  
**Nov. 28** "Annie"  
**Dec. 7** "A Christmas Carol"  
**Jan. 27** Ira Glass  
**Jan. 31** "Mean Girls"  
[lied.ku.edu](http://lied.ku.edu)

*University Theatre*

**Oct. 6-12** "Collective Rage: A Play in Five Betties"  
**Nov. 30-Dec. 6** "Milking Christmas"  
**Feb. 16-22** "Sweeney Todd"  
[kutheatre.com](http://kutheatre.com)

*Spencer Museum of Art*

"Black Writing" through **Jan. 7**  
 "Reading the World" through **Jan. 7**  
[spencerart.ku.edu](http://spencerart.ku.edu)

*Academic calendar*

**Oct. 14-17** Fall break  
**Nov. 22-26** Thanksgiving break  
**Dec. 7** Last day of classes  
**Dec. 11-15** Finals



RAY HARRYMAN/PIXABAY

BOOKS

**KC and its QB**

*Book deftly weaves urban history with Mahomes' meteoric rise*

AS THEY PONDERED the implications of what they'd seen in the Feb. 2, 2020, Super Bowl—a 31-20 triumph by the Kansas City Chiefs over the San Francisco 49ers—veteran journalists Mark Dent and Rustin Dodd ventured beyond overwrought hysteria surrounding all-world quarterback Patrick Mahomes and his potential Chiefs dynasty.

Dent, j'09, a Dallas-based features writer for the business and tech newsletter The Hustle, and Dodd, j'09, a New York City-based features writer for The Athletic who previously spent 10 years writing sports for The Kansas City Star, both grew up in Overland Park. They began a friendship as KU freshmen working at The University Daily Kansan and KJHK, and in the long wake of that thrilling Super Bowl victory, they knocked around a notion that somewhere within the Mahomes madness there lurked an even larger story.

"We sensed that, all right, something's happening in Kansas City," Dent recalls. "Like there's this superstar athlete who has come crashing down to the Earth in a spaceship—that's how good he is, and Kansas City, where football matters so much, is the perfect city for that."

At the same time, the authors note, the city itself seemed to be elevating, with downtown upgrades



Dent and Dodd

COURTESY MARK DENT

and a new airport, while also taking the first difficult steps in confronting its segregationist history.

"We wanted to figure out how to tell all of that together," Dent says, "and we found that there was more overlap than we even imagined when we started the project."

*Kingdom Quarterback: Patrick Mahomes, the Kansas City Chiefs, and How a Once Swingin' Cow Town Chased the Ultimate Comeback*, published in August by the Penguin Random House imprint Dutton, achieves its lofty goals, and it's worth noting that the unlikely concoction has been praised by prolific author Joe Posnanski, the most popular sports columnist in Kansas City before his departure for Sports Illustrated, and Pulitzer Prize-winning historian David Maraniss, who celebrated *Kingdom Quarterback* as "a brilliant weave of football and urban sociology, popping with illuminating detail and as smart about Kansas

City as it is about the meaning of Patrick Mahomes.”

Calling Kansas City “the quintessential American town,” the authors describe their hometown as “a heartland petri dish of every pioneering impulse and social disaster, a stand-in for every town and city that is not quite *somewhere*, the kind of place that creates the man who creates *Ted Lasso*. Kansas City’s problems may not be unique, but if you want to understand what happened to the American city, you can start with the story of Kansas City.”

The modern story of Kansas City—and its past and present problems, many of which exist in other urban areas that were eager to follow Kansas City’s once-audacious example—begins with its most ardent civic booster: J.C. Nichols. Still described by some as a visionary, Nichols, c1902, designed and developed the Country Club Plaza and engineered the city’s residential expansion, all while perfecting racial covenants that blocked Black citizens from living in his subdivisions. His methods and madness were even codified by the Federal Housing Administration.

As thoroughly detailed in *Kingdom Quarterback*, the segregationist system now known as “redlining” pushed minority citizens into substandard neighborhoods where they were denied mortgage insurance, health care and good schools. In Kansas City, the “Troost Wall” became the dividing line, a border not even famous athletes could cross: *Kingdom Quarterback* tells heartbreaking stories of legendary Chiefs Mike Garrett, Bobby Bell and Curtis McCClinton, d’62, all being denied housing in Nichols neighborhoods.

In a creative turn of sleuthing, the authors even dove into the history of the house Mahomes bought as he transitioned from his Plaza penthouse toward family life with his then-fiancee, Brittany Matthews. The house they chose was in Kansas City’s Sunset Hill neighborhood, a subdivision that Nichols launched in 1908.

At a time when cities were unpredictable, Nichols sought control, and began drafting rules for his subdivisions. The first one-page list included minimum con-

struction prices, mandatory space between homes, a ban on apartments, directions for sewer lines and electric poles, and, last but certainly not least, binding and theoretically perpetual racial covenants that automatically renewed before expiring. Citing research by Tulane professor Kevin Fox Gotham, the authors write that the “federal government copied the DNA of Sunset Hill, Mission Hills, and Armour Hills and incentivized developers to paste replicas—in huge quantities at huge profits—at the edges of major metros across the country.”

As unearthed by the authors, the plat for the State Line Road ranch house purchased by Mahomes featured 16 *pages* of covenants, including, on page 15, what the authors describe as “the familiar all-caps clause”: *OWNERSHIP BY NEGROES PROHIBITED*.

“I’m hoping that people understand that Kansas City was a really influential place,” Dodd says, “in terms of the way people live and the neighborhoods they live in. There’s a deep influence from Kansas City throughout the rest of the country, and I hope people appreciate that.”

Much lighter fare, too, is found throughout the book, which also serves as the first serious biography—or perhaps biography-adjacent, since, as the authors note, Mahomes in September turns only 28—of the NFL’s most influential new superstar. Mahomes, who rarely grants one-on-one interviews, chose not to participate, but the authors did have access to his father, former professional baseball player Pat; his grandfather Johnny; as well as many former coaches and his longtime trainer. The book relates tales about the family’s early days in East Texas and the many forces that conspired to create the once-in-a-generation talent who would turn Kansas City on its ear.

“There might be some people who like to read about urban planning who might be skeptical about a book with a quarterback on the cover,” Dent says, “and maybe some sports people might say, ‘Mahomes, sure, but what do I really care about American cities?’ But they *are* intertwined.

“I’m sure the really artsy people are going to kill me for this, but sports are prob-

ably the most important cultural piece of most cities in America, and the way that we think about them, the way that impacts how we’re living, certainly has an effect on cities. They definitely go hand in hand.”

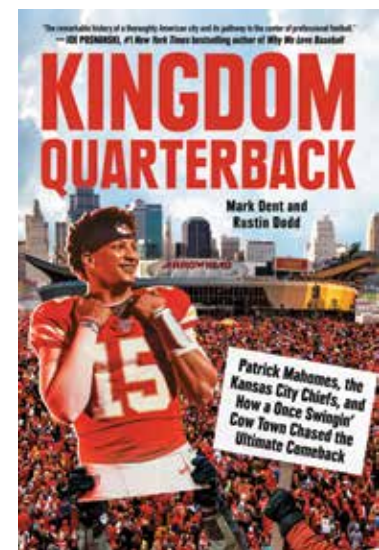
In Kansas City, nationwide protests after George Floyd’s murder in Minnesota coalesced around the J.C. Nichols Fountain—on J.C. Nichols Parkway. On June 30, 2020, city officials removed Nichols’ name from both, a move supported by the Nichols family and the foundation that bears his name.

“I think you can definitely take pride in Kansas City, especially in what it can become,” Dent says. “I hope that what we did, and certainly what we intended to do, was to show that there were a lot of people, including J.C. Nichols, who shaped Kansas City into something that is segregated and something that needs a lot of change.

“But I hope that we also showed that there are people right now who are really pushing for that change in ways that we didn’t really see even 20 years ago.”

Asked for his views on Nichols’ legacy, Dent pauses before replying, “I honestly don’t know what I’d say about Nichols. I want to leave that to the reader, frankly.”

—CHRIS LAZZARINO



*Kingdom Quarterback*

by Mark Dent and Rustin Dodd

Dutton, \$30

## The gift of music

When Ineta Bebb showed up in March to help with a production of “Peter Pan,” at the Little Theatre in Muskogee, Oklahoma, she had no idea the rehearsal would be any different from the many, many other musicals, concerts, contests and recitals she has assisted with in her 50-year career as a local music director and accompanist.

COURTESY INETA BEBB



Bebb and Marsh

More than 100 friends, choir members and former students were there to unveil a \$50,000 surprise they’d been building and keeping secret for two months with the help of Curtis Marsh, j’92, associate development director for KU

*Endowment: The Ineta Williams Bebb Voice Scholarship to benefit School of Music students.*

Bebb, d’65, f’68, g’68, declared herself both humbled and surprised—“and I don’t do surprises well,” she says with a laugh. “My gosh, it’s just amazing what they were able to do.”

Bebb hopes the scholarship inspires recipients to make the most of their college experience and all the opportunities that follow.

“The best years of my life were spent at KU,” she says. “When somebody loves a university and what it’s done for that person, you hope they would want to share their talent and what they’ve learned with the rest of the world as they go through life. I’ve totally appreciated every opportunity I had, from receiving wonderful scholarship help, to living in a scholarship hall, and having a teaching assistantship when I was working on my master’s. I would hope the students feel that way and communicate it to others—that it is such a gift.”

—STEVEN HILL

## MASS STREET & MORE

### Welcome to the Jungle

RACHEL YBARRA GUFFEY, ’12, says her husband, Jhami, ’16, has nurtured an entrepreneurial spirit ever since he sold tomatoes to Topeka restaurants as a boy, and she brought to the marriage “a houseplant hoarding problem.” They merged their passions with a houseplant pop-up shop during a 2018 Final Fridays event, sold out in less than two hours, and, sensing an untapped houseplant market in Lawrence, promptly opened Jungle House at 924 Delaware St.—a shop that thrived during pandemic lockdowns with its suddenly popular houseplant delivery service.

When The Raven Book Store left its longtime home at 6 E. Seventh St., the Guffeys locked up the lease, intending to use the space to realize Jhami’s longtime dream of opening a candy store with nostalgic and imported sweets. Turned out the candy store was not yet ready to



Rachel, Jolly and Jhami Guffey

become a reality, so instead they used the space for a Christmas plant pop-up in 2021, after which “everything kind of came to a halt” when Rachel became pregnant. Still owning the lease on the former Raven space, the Guffeys last spring finally moved Jungle House (junglehousegoods.

LEAH EVANS PHOTOGRAPHY

com) downtown, where it has blossomed into one of Mass Street’s must-visit new businesses.

“Plants, pots and good times sums it up well,” Rachel says. “It should be a fun and relaxed vibe when you come in.”

Along with its gorgeous array of houseplants, the shop also sells pots, tools and books, and offers delivery and repotting services along with workshops for newbies, experts and kids.

“Even if plants aren’t your thing, I think you

should come in and experience it sometime,” Rachel says, speaking repotter to repotter. “In a world where we do so many things digitally and online, being able to come into a store and interact with each other and interact with the plants is such a unique experience.”

—CHRIS LAZZARINO

## MASS STREET & MORE

### Made in the shade

THE COOLEST NEW SPOT in Lawrence to grab a bite and a cold drink this summer is the Knot Bar at Clinton Lake Marina; that it's not the hottest is thanks to the work of industrial design students in KU's School of Architecture & Design.

Professor Nils Gore's ARCH 509 class collaborated with marina owners Peter and Erin Meiusi and project manager Travis Andregg, c'13, a'20, c'20, a design program alumnus, to sketch plans for making the nearly 600-slip marina's prime lakeside locale an entertainment destination. Job one: Provide a place to get out of the sun.

"We had a small patio with no shade and maybe two picnic tables," Andregg says. "We knew we wanted shade. We knew we wanted to entertain. We knew we maybe wanted some beverages, or maybe not."

Beverages ultimately made the cut, but that initial ambivalence—"We didn't



COURTESY NILS GORE

wanna be serving tequila shots till 2 in the morning; that's just not the vibe out here"—is enshrined in the Knot Bar name. The floating patio includes a bandstand, a Tiki hut and a serving station that marina staff dubbed a "not bar" during the design phase; the spelling twist adds a double pun on nautical speed and sailing knots. Seating space expanded tenfold, and a louvered, curvy canopy inspired by

a water-skiing wave provides a stylish sun shelter.

Andregg says marina staff loved brainstorming with students. "It was cool to work with them and see their horizons get huge, then fun to kind of dial back and pinpoint specific things we liked. I think it turned out great."

—STEVEN HILL

## Winners on the world stage

*Competing against choirs from around the world at the 41st International Choir Festival in Preveza, Greece, the KU Chamber Choir received first-place honors in free program and mixed choirs.*

*The Jayhawk singers also won the Special Prize for Best Program, and Eduardo Garcia-Novelli (inset), director of choral studies, was named Best Conductor.*

*The weeklong event included street performances and cultural exchanges—the KU Choir joined new Slovenian friends for an impromptu sidewalk performance of "Ta Na Solbici"—fostering camaraderie built on a shared love of the language of music.*

*"We are enormously proud of the KU Choirs and the incredible work of our choral faculty of Eduardo Garcia-Novelli and McKenna Stenson," says Interim Dean Paul Popiel. "Our KU choir students have worked diligently over the past several months, and we are so proud of their accomplishments on this world stage."*

*Or, put another way, as aptly summed up in the KU School of Music's July 9 social media announcement: "WE WON!"* —CHRIS LAZZARINO



COURTESY SCHOOL OF MUSIC (2)



## ALUMNI ADVENTURE

**O'Hara soon to become fourth Jayhawk in space**

IF ALL GOES AS PLANNED, NASA astronaut Loral O'Hara, a graduate of the KU School of Engineering's aerospace engineering program, on Sept. 15 will join two cosmonauts aboard a Soyuz spacecraft at Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

When she launches for the International Space Station, O'Hara, e'06, will become the fourth Jayhawk to travel into space, following legendary forebears Joe Engle, e'55, who qualified for his astronaut wings in 1965 by flying the experimental X-15 beyond 50 miles high, and later commanded the second space shuttle test flight, as well as a 1985 Discovery mission; Ron Evans, e'55, who piloted the command module on the final Apollo moon mission and completed a 65-minute spacewalk during the flight home; and Professor Emeritus Steven Hawley, c'73, whose

five shuttle missions included both deploying and repairing the Hubble Space Telescope.

"It's hard to believe that something that I've been dreaming about since I was a little kid is actually going to happen," O'Hara told *Kansas Alumni* following a July 25 news conference at NASA Johnson Space Center. "That first moment, looking down at the Earth from space, it's surreal to think about now, and I'm very excited for it."

O'Hara joined NASA with the Astronaut Candidate Class of 2017 ("Fly High," issue No. 4, 2017) and earned her astronaut wings in 2019. She began intensive Soyuz training in summer 2021 with her first trip to Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center at Star City, Russia. O'Hara returned for further training in February 2022, and she was on hand as part of the backup crew when classmate Frank Rubio launched from Baikonur in July 2022.

NASA's SpaceX Crew-7 mission—with an international crew of four, including O'Hara's classmate Jasmin Moghbeli—launched Aug. 17 from Kennedy Space Center. Once O'Hara and her crewmates arrive in September, ISS Expedition 70, scheduled for 190 days, officially begins.

O'Hara came to Mount Oread from her Sugar Land, Texas, home as a National Merit Scholar.

While an undergraduate, she won an internship at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, and, supported by the School of Engineering and the Kansas Space Grant, she completed the intensive NASA Academy at Goddard Spaceflight Center. She spent two years as a project manager at Rocketplane Limited in Oklahoma City, completed a master's degree at Purdue University, then joined Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution as a mechanical systems engineer aboard the venerable submersible Alvin.

"When I was at Kansas, and then at Purdue, it was those astronauts who came before me who helped inspire me and make me think that it was possible, or that I should even try to apply," says O'Hara, who plans to pack a KU flag and a stuffed Jayhawk among the personal belongings she'll carry aboard her flight. "Getting to fill that role now and hopefully inspire some of the students at Kansas and Purdue is something that I would love to do."

Although O'Hara focused on her space station mission for the past two years, she also knows that greater adventures are in store for astronauts, including missions to the moon and perhaps even Mars. "I don't know what awaits for me," she said, "but there's a lot of exciting stuff going on." Judging by the smiles on administrators' faces when asked to comment on O'Hara, she has earned a glowing reputation. "Loral has demonstrated great flexibility, smarts, energy," Kenneth Bowersox, associate administrator for NASA's Space Operations Mission Directorate, told *Kansas Alumni*, "and I know she'll continue that on orbit and when she gets back."

As she prepared for her Aug. 4 departure to Star City and then on to the Baikonur Cosmodrome, O'Hara said she planned to savor the coffee she sips each morning on her front steps, "watching the sun rise and watching the world wake up. That's my time to reflect, and, yes, I'm thinking about what I want the launch to be, what I want the mission to be, what kind of crewmate I want to be, how I want to work with the ground, all those little aspects of the mission that it's easy to forget about when we're so focused on launch and so focused on getting through all of the work we have to do each day."

O'Hara says plans are in the works for her to connect with KU engineering students on a video call while she's in space, and there's little doubt where she'll be gazing when the space station soars over the middle of North America.

"Lawrence," she says, "is a really special place in my heart."

—CHRIS LAZZARINO



**"It's hard to believe that something that I've been dreaming about since I was a little kid is actually going to happen. That first moment, looking down at the Earth from space, it's surreal to think about now, and I'm very excited for it."**

—Loral O'Hara



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STEVE PUPPE



BOOKS

## A war within

*Vietnam-era history analyzes Army's about-face on 'race consciousness'*

AS THE U.S. MILITARY grappled with an intractable war in Vietnam that grew more and more unpopular the longer it dragged on, one branch of the armed forces was also battling a war within its ranks—"the problem of race," in the Army's phrasing, that put white and Black soldiers into conflict with one another.

In the two decades after President Harry Truman ended segregation in the armed forces with Executive Order 9981 in 1948, the nation's integrated military came to be viewed as positively progressive, especially when compared with the violence and vitriol inflicted by civilian society on the Civil Rights Movement. In 1966, *Time* Magazine declared that, "despite a few blemishes, the armed forces remain the model of the reasonably integrated society that the U.S. looks forward to in a new generation." A *Washington Post* headline from the same year reflected an assessment shared by many Black leaders: "Army Cited as Example of Integration's Success."

As Beth Bailey writes in *An Army Afire: How the US Army Confronted Its Racial Crisis in the Vietnam Era*, that all changed

by 1969, when the Army's chief of staff and its secretary "put race second only to the war itself in their catalog of concerns."

A Foundation Distinguished Professor in KU's history department since 2015, Bailey has written extensively about the military, war and society. In *An Army Afire*, she identifies the tumultuous year of 1968 as a turning point in commanders' awareness of the growing anger and resentment of Black soldiers who felt unfairly treated by the military and by the communities that surrounded Army bases at home and abroad. She highlights two events that proved the rank and file did not view the Army as the progressive haven trumpeted by the Army brass, mainstream media and community leaders.

On Aug. 29, Black soldiers imprisoned in the stockade at Long Binh, a large U.S. base in Vietnam, seized the jail for several days, burned buildings, and beat guards and other prisoners, killing one. A few weeks later, in mid-October, Maj. Lavell Merritt, a veteran infantry officer nearing mandatory retirement, interrupted the official military press briefing in Saigon to

pass out a statement that called American armed forces "the strongest citadels of racism on the face of the earth."

Bailey traces how top commanders, spurred by these and other worrying incidents, gradually came to see that "racial violence, racial discontent, racial tension, racial discrimination, and flat-out racism" presented a fundamental crisis that threatened the Army's core mission of national defense. She chronicles, in granular detail, how the institution turned its massive bureaucracy to evaluating, defining and solving the problem—often showing, in the solutions proposed, a remarkable creativity and a surprising willingness to challenge Army tradition.

Embracing the methodology of the human potential movement then in vogue, bases held rap sessions and encounter groups to foster communication between Black and white soldiers. After its chief of staff mandated the training in 1969, the Army developed "the world's largest race relations education system in the space of seventeen weeks," Bailey writes, "a minor miracle."

By the 1970s, PXs were stocking Black hair products, and commanders were encouraged to tolerate the cultural symbols (Afro hairstyles, soul bracelets, Black Power insignia and dap handshakes) that soldiers claimed as part of their Black identity. Some cultural accommodation turned out to be only a temporary reaction to crisis; other changes were permanent. By 1972, education on race relations and Black history and culture was integrated into Army training at all levels. "This was no longer a response to crisis," Bailey writes. "It was a part of army life."

The transformation *An Army Afire* documents is an institutional shift in philosophy from "race blindness" to "race consciousness." A common refrain of the Vietnam-era Army, "I only see one color—olive drab," was replaced by a more nuanced understanding of individuality and group pride spearheaded largely by Black enlisted men, but also driven by a broader generation gap that pitted old against young regardless of race. Summing up one argument, Bailey writes,

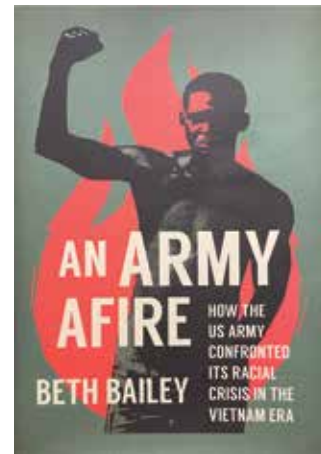
“Contemporary youth—Black and white alike—wanted their respective ‘identities’ recognized.”

The final chapter of *An Army Afire* asks a basic question: Did it work? If the goal was to restore stability and bolster the Army’s readiness to defend the nation, Bailey concludes, the decision to hear out its critics, honestly assess its shortcomings, and ask hard questions about the effectiveness of a “color-blind” approach to race clearly succeeded. If the goal was to create racial equality in the Army, results were more mixed. Much has changed, she writes, but much remains to be done.

The racial tensions Bailey reexamines in this important work resonate in our own

divided era, when the teaching of history is a battleground in a different kind of war. Had those tensions been allowed to fester unexamined until they exploded, the effects on a fighting force (and a society) already neck-deep in a difficult and divisive conflict might have been catastrophic. Instead, by facing America’s historical and cultural legacy of racism, slavery, segregation and prejudice, one of the country’s most conservative, tradition-bound institutions found itself up to the hard task of grappling with “the problem of race.” From the vantage of these current turbulent times, that seems a miracle more major than minor.

—STEVEN HILL



*An Army Afire: How The US Army Confronted Its Racial Crisis in the Vietnam Era*

by Beth Bailey

The University of North Carolina Press, \$35

## Big spinach squeeze

*Alerted by a rando social media post a couple of summers ago, in which a former KU Dining employee bemoaned her memories of the iron spinach squeezer used to prep the wildly popular spinach lasagna served at new student orientation buffets every Tuesday of every summer—“There are some cooks who carry emotional scars from the never-ending spinach squeezing”—we reached out to Rob Cashman, KU Dining’s assistant director of catering and event services, to get the inside story.*

*Cashman informed Kansas Alumni that the old hand-crank press of lore had squeezed its last batch three or four years ago, and his catering services cooks have since squeezed frozen—or, rather, thawed, or mostly thawed—spinach by hand.*

*Preparation for feeding daily swarms of 500 visitors in the*



*Kansas Union ballroom is squeezed into the two weeks between Commencement and the launch of orientation for incoming students and their families. During that time, catering services cooks prepare and freeze seven weeks’ worth of spinach lasagna, chicken enchilada casseroles, chicken tenders, and barbecue beef and pork.*

*On a typically busy Tuesday, catering services cooks, working from their third-floor kitchen, will send up, along with a host of side dishes, 12 trays of lasagna, each of which contains 18 pounds of spinach-cheese mixture; for the summer, 96 trays are prepped and frozen in advance.*

*As for emotional scars, our fact-finding mission revealed none. Cashman and Executive Sous Chef Christian Cornelius reflected only pride, especially considering that enough food for 500-person buffet meals, four times a week for seven weeks, is prepped in two weeks by a crew of about 10, including hot and cold sides of the kitchen and the bakery. “Same team,” says Cashman, “same dream.”*

NEWS BRIEF

## Law, medicine join 37 other graduate programs with elite rankings

THE SCHOOL OF LAW for the first time cracked the overall top 50 in the latest U.S. News & World Report rankings, placing No. 40 among all law schools, an improvement of 27 spots over last year’s list. Among public universities, KU Law soared to No. 18 from 36.

KU officials attributed the attractive assessment “in large part to the School of Law having some of the highest bar percentage and employment rates in the nation.”

Also lauded for its performance among public universities was the School of Medicine. Its primary care and research programs placed in the top 50 among public universities.

Perhaps even more crucially, given its mission to educate doctors to serve a largely rural state, KU Medicine ranked No. 5 in percentage of graduates practicing in rural areas, No. 9 in percentage of graduates practicing in primary care, and No.



STEVE PUPPE

11 in percentage of graduates practicing in health professional shortage areas.

U.S. News & World Report earlier released rankings for all graduate programs outside of law and medicine, which included 37 KU programs ranked among the top 50 of public universities.

Ranked No. 1 were local government management, paleontology and special education; other top 10 programs included public management and leadership, physical therapy, speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, audiology, and education.

U.S. News & World Report also honored The University of Kansas Hospital as the Best Hospital in Kansas City for the

14th consecutive year and the Best Hospital in Kansas for the 12th time. No other hospital has ever received either honor.

More good news for the School of Law came from the University of Houston Law Center’s moot court rankings, which placed KU at No. 10, the program’s highest ranking.

“We have had a strong moot court program for decades,” says program director Pam Keller, l’93. “In the last decade or so, we have had increased financial support from donors, allowing us to send more talented students to national and international competitions.”

KU this year won the National Native American Law Student Association’s Moot Court Competition for the third consecutive year, with Emily Depew, c’20, l’23—honored with KU Law’s Polsinelli Advocacy Award—a member on all three championship teams.

Ally Monson, l’23, and Amanda McElfresh, l’23, this year won the Federal Bar Association’s Thurgood Marshall Memorial Moot Court Competition, with McElfresh also winning Best Oralist honors in the final round.

—CHRIS LAZZARINO

MASS STREET & MORE

## The ax is back

AFTER A FIRE CLOSED Blade & Timber in 2019, Massachusetts Street suffered a dearth of (sanctioned) ax-throwing options. No more. Swell Spark, the Kansas City interactive entertainment company led by Matt Baysinger (“All for Fun, Fun for All,” issue No. 3, 2019), returned to Lawrence in August, opening its seventh Blade & Timber location, at 722 Mass.

The 9,000-square-foot building, which formerly housed Signs of Life bookstore, dedicates 2,000 feet to competitive ax-throwing (think darts, but with bigger projectiles). The remaining space will house a unique miniature golf and craft cocktail combo called Sinkers Lounge, scheduled to open in 2024.

“Mini golf is a concept that in the ’80s and ’90s started to get a little stale,” says Baysinger, c’09, g’11. “We’ve made it a little more contemporary with a really cool concept called tabletop golf. It’s mini golf played on a billiard-style table with this thing we call a sinker—essentially a pool cue with a putter head.”

The Lawrence Sinkers joins the original Kansas City location in the Power & Light District and a second opening in Manhattan this fall. Along with seven Blade & Timber outlets in five states, Swell Spark operates escape rooms in Kansas City, Leawood and Honolulu.

“Our mission is to gather people for shared experiences and make it easy to have fun,” a tough business model to sustain through COVID restrictions, Baysinger notes. “The pandemic was not kind to the entertainment industry, but it

certainly stirred up an appetite for social gatherings. Folks are eager to hang out now, and we’re grateful for that.”

—STEVEN HILL

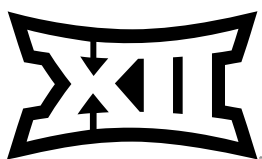


STEVE PUPPE



**EASY TO DRINK.  
EASY TO ENJOY.**





“Top to bottom, we’re confident that this is the most competitive conference in Power Five football.”

—coach Lance Leipold



KANSAS ATHLETICS

FOOTBALL

## Leipold's 'Hawks prep for the new Big 12

*Challenging schedule, including 3 of 4 new conference schools, looms*

GIVEN THAT EVERY FOOTBALL coach who’s ever seen a Bill Belichick press conference would sooner post playbook pics to Instagram than discuss distant opponents, it seemed KU football’s Aug. 16 media day might be the best—and only—opportunity to get third-year coach Lance Leipold to offer insights into the new-look Big 12 and the rugged schedule awaiting his 'Hawks. In the spirit of full disclosure, it was also apparent that a big-picture overview might work best, since this issue of *Kansas Alumni* would go to press a week before the Sept. 1 season opener against Missouri State.

Turns out Leipold *was* in the mood to look down the road, as evidenced by his glancing toward a wall display that highlights the full season’s game schedule—a Mrkonic Auditorium feature that feels utterly out of character for a team that preaches complete focus and total commitment to living in the now, with daily goals of 1% improvement.

“Control what you can control, and, in this instance, we don’t control a whole lot about who’s in the conference, but we’re excited about the new members,” Leipold said. “I kind of go back to my early coaching days, when playing different teams was fun. Sometimes we lose that about some of



ANDY WHITE/KU MARKETING

these experiences, but, again, top to bottom, we’re confident that this is the most competitive conference in Power Five football.”

True to form, Leipold circled back to the next opponent, which at the time was 16 days away from arriving on KU’s home turf: In their third game of the season, Leipold noted, the 2022 Missouri State Bears carried a 24-17 lead into the fourth quarter at Arkansas, until the Razorbacks—who later defeated KU in the thrilling Liberty Bowl—rallied with three late touchdowns, including a 73-yard scoring pass and an 82-yard punt return.

“They could have won that game,” Leipold said of the Bears, who closed their season with three wins

in their final four games. “We need to make sure we show full respect there.”

After Missouri State, KU welcomes Illinois, travels to Nevada, and, on Sept. 23, opens Big 12 play with a home game against conference newcomer BYU. Coaches across the conference will be challenged by game preparation for unknown newcomers—which for KU will be BYU, Central Florida (Oct. 7) and Cincinnati (Nov. 25)—yet Leipold pointed out that, by closing the regular season with the Bearcats, the Jayhawks might enjoy a slight edge on other Big 12 teams since they’ll have a full season of game tape available to review for a program with a new coaching staff.

“And next year we’re adding four more schools that are going to be challenging, so it’s going to be exciting,” Leipold said. “I think we’re going to be sitting here from now on talking about balance and competitiveness.”

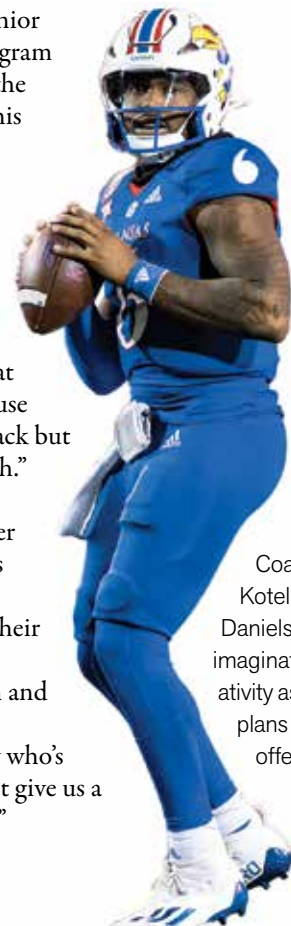
As of media day, the biggest news to emerge from August training camp was a back injury—described only as “tightness”—that had kept junior quarterback Jalon Daniels out of practice for at least nine days. “We expect him to be back,” Leipold said of Daniels, who last season threw for 2,014 yards and 18 touchdowns despite missing four games to a shoulder injury. Said Daniels, “I’m feeling good. I’m staying in contact with the trainers and just waiting for them to let me get back.”

Should the injury persist for KU’s first Preseason Big 12 Offensive Player of the Year, Daniels has a rock-solid backup in senior Jason Bean, who returned to the program after initially indicating—following the Liberty Bowl game that ended with his errant pass—that he’d likely depart.

“He could have packed up and left town, but he came right back and said he wanted to be part of this program,” Leipold said. “His growth, maturity and leadership have taken leaps and bounds from January to where he’s at now. ... I think it’s a great story, one I’ll always remember, because Jason’s growth, not just as a quarterback but as a young man, has been fun to watch.”

Said offensive coordinator Andy Kotelnicki, “Look at how many Power Five teams have starting quarterbacks right now who have won games, and then look at how many have *two* on their roster. It’s a blessing. He’s had a great camp, and we’re super proud of Jason and what he’s done.

“He’s a great example of somebody who’s just getting better every day, so does it give us a lot of confidence? Heck yeah it does.”



Coach Andy Kotelnicki cited Jalon Daniels’ experience, imagination and creativity as central to his plans to “add more offensive volume.”

## UPDATE



Turner

Conference coaches in July voted junior setter **Camryn Turner** onto the Preseason All-Big 12 Team. Turner averaged 9.3 assists per set while appearing in every KU set last season. She was second on the team in both service aces

(23) and digs (287). ... On the eve of three August exhibition games in Puerto Rico, coach **Bill Self** said last season’s early NCAA exit would not serve as a motivator this year: “I was really proud of our team. Those kids hung in there and won the



Jayhawks in Puerto Rico

league and got the 1 seed. I thought they did great last year.” ... Three-sport star **Jill Larson Bradney**, d’81, g’90, on Oct. 1 will be inducted into the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame. ... In honor of Title IX, the Kansas Athletics Hall of Fame’s Class of 2023

features only women athletes, including volleyball’s **Ainise Havili**, d’18, and **Kelsie Payne**, c’18; tennis players **Nina Khmelnitckaia**, d’20, g’21, **Janet Koch**, b’19, and **Anastasia Rychagova**, c’20; soccer’s **Liana Salazar**, b’16; and NCAA heptathlon champion **Lindsay Vollmer**, d’16. ...

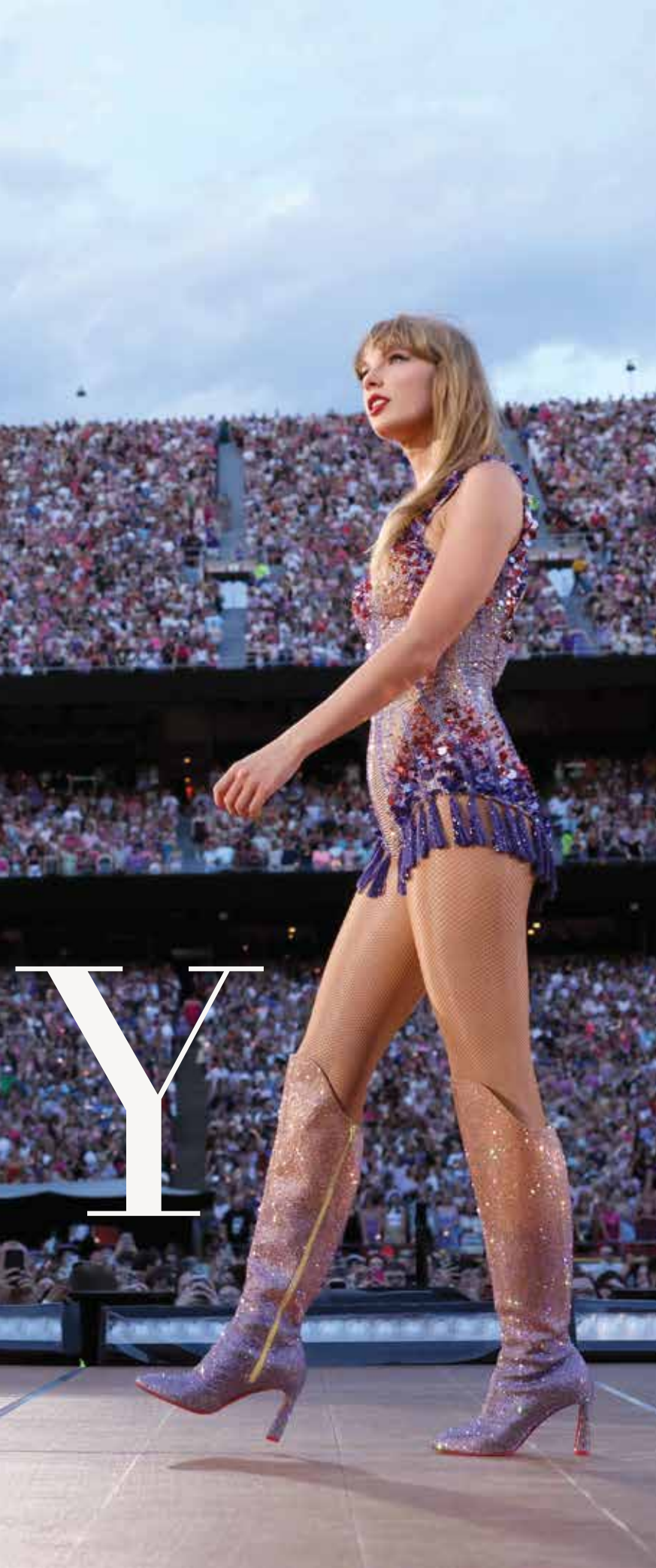
Big 12 Commissioner **Brett Yormark** on July 27 confirmed rumors that Colorado would return to the Big 12 with an official statement epic in its succinctness: “They’re back.” Also joining the Big 12 in 2024 will be Arizona, Arizona State and Utah, at which time the Big 12 will include 16 member schools. In other Big 12 news, Chancellor **Doug Girod** was appointed vice chair of the conference executive committee. ... Second baseman **Kodey Shojinaga**, who hit a league-best .418 in conference play, was named Freshman All-American.



# SWEET OLOG

*In pop icon Taylor Swift's music, a sociologist finds inspiration for teaching, research and singing along with the band*





## July 7 has arrived, the sun has risen, and Kansas City is waking to the Taypocalypse.

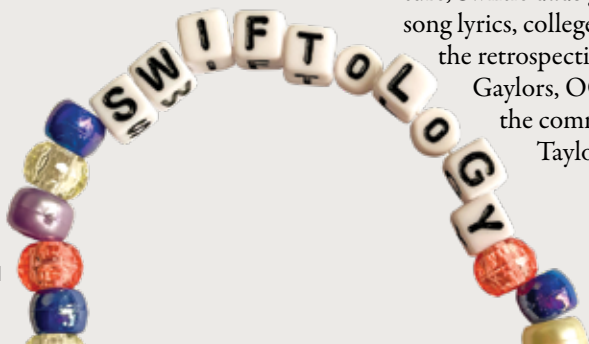
The economic and cultural juggernaut that is Taylor Swift's Eras Tour has thundered into town for two long-awaited shows at Arrowhead Stadium. My 14-year-old daughter is out of bed shockingly early for a high school student on summer break—especially considering that last night, at 11 p.m., Swift dropped her latest album, the rerecorded Taylor's Version of her 2010 LP "Speak Now," the most recent flex in the 33-year-old global pop star's ongoing power move to reclaim control of her back catalog by releasing note-for-note reconstructions of early albums whose master tapes were sold against her wishes. Any new music release—even new *old* music—is a major happening for millions of Swifties (as the worldwide community of hardcore Taylor Swift fans call themselves) who analyze and debate every song lyric, Instagram photo, tweet and snippet of stage patter like scripture. The buzz this morning, my daughter tells me, is that Swift changed a lyric in one of her "Speak Now" songs that some fans and critics had deemed sexist. This development is not entirely surprising, but still thrilling for the Swiftie legions who stayed up half the night playing, deconstructing and discussing the new release. This is the first of what will be many news flashes today. My daughter, against all odds, has landed tickets to one of the Kansas City shows, defying scalper bots and Ticketmaster's meltdown, thanks to the help of her mother, aunt and cousin, who spent hours online during the Nov. 15 presale. It takes a village to raise a Swiftie.

Taylor Swift, The Eras Tour, July 7, Kansas City  
Photograph by John Shearer/Getty Images



Professor Brian Donovan finds Swift and her fans "sociologically fascinating."

**T**he Eras Tour will inject around \$4.6 billion into the U.S. economy and is expected to propel Swift herself to billionaire status. More than 110,000 ticket holders will pack Arrowhead for the Friday and Saturday night concerts, and many of them will be screaming teenage girls. But not all. Also out in force will be Taylor mamas introducing their daughters to Swiftie culture, Swiftie dads gamely sporting themed T-shirts emblazoned with song lyrics, college students attending their third or fourth show in the retrospective journey through the singer's 17-year career, plus Gaylors, OG Swifties and a host of other subgroups that defy the common stereotype that the obsession with all things Taylor is exclusively a teen mania.



concentrating his teaching and scholarship on the entertainment icon—in particular, on a product of her music and the community around it that is more difficult to quantify than tax revenue and other economic boosts, but that is essential for human well-being:

Joy.

**D**onovan joined the KU sociology faculty in 2001 and for two decades has taught the department's class in cultural sociology. The class explores popular culture, and in the past few years the professor noticed that students often mentioned Taylor Swift in class discussions. Those references increased during the pandemic, which coincided with an uptick in Donovan's own interest in Swift's music.

He has considered himself a "low-key" fan since 2014, having bought Swift's fifth album when it came out.

"I was really late to the party, but I fell in love with '1989,'" Donovan says. "I thought it was a perfect pop album. But I didn't consider myself a Swiftie."

He listened to her next album, "Reputation," and followed the celebrity news about her feud with Kanye West and Kim Kardashian. A documentary on Swift, "Miss Americana," provided a glimpse into her private life and hinted at a greater depth lurking behind her public persona.

But it was the pandemic that moved Donovan from casual fan to Swiftie. In 2020, while presumably on lockdown like many of her fans, Swift made two spare, folk-influenced albums. As families coped with isolation and schoolchildren's relationships with friends and teachers suddenly narrowed to computer screens, Swift's "Folklore" and "Evermore" arrived like a double shot of hope. Hearing her music ringing out during breaks from Zoom school offered consolation that at least some of the traditional delights of childhood were still there for the taking.

"When she released those two albums and I heard the song 'The Last Great



American Dynasty,' something just clicked," Donovan says. "That song seemed so brilliant to me that I just fell down the rabbit hole. I was listening to her back catalog and realizing I'd had a lot of preconceptions about her as a musician. I realized what a genius she was.

"I can claim that I was a fan during the '1989' era, which is true, but like a lot of men my age, I only started to identify as a Swiftie in the 'Folklore' era."

At KU Donovan has won several awards for his work in the classroom, including the Gene A. Budig Award for Excellence in Teaching. His classes often deal with tough topics: poverty, health disparities, racial and gender inequality, human trafficking, genocide, intimate partner violence. His three scholarly books tackled white slavery, sex crimes and the negative impacts of the gold digger stereotype.

All part of the territory for his field of study.

"Sociology as a discipline is extremely good at analyzing suffering and inequality," Donovan says. "And we should study those things for sure. But we are, I think, less able to talk about joy and happiness. We tend to give those topics to the psychology department."

But in the early days of the global pandemic—as health care professionals struggled to develop effective COVID treatments, the global economy tanked, and the delivery of a successful vaccine was

Among them will be a 51-year-old KU sociology professor whose scholarship and award-winning teaching focus largely on cultural sociology, which is concerned with the study of societal institutions, norms and practices. The author of three books that have peered into popular culture's seedier corners, Brian Donovan will bring to his first Taylor Swift show the dual interests of a social scientist and a fan. Thanks to a research pivot that has its roots in the COVID-19 pandemic, the professor and self-described Swiftie is now

far from assured—a change in tone seemed called for.

“There was this sense of maybe I could do something in these pandemic times that’s more upbeat, that isn’t about human suffering as much,” Donovan says. “Focus on something that’s more joy-producing.”

Thus was born The Sociology of Taylor Swift, an honors seminar that (according to the syllabus) uses the pop supernova’s life and career “as a mirrorball to reflect on large-scale processes like the culture industry, celebrity, fandom, and the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality in contemporary American life.” The class, new this fall, will explore many of the cultural sociology topics Donovan normally teaches, such as the construction of authenticity, symbolic boundaries and gatekeeping, fandom and fan labor, and celebrity politics. “We will also use recent controversies and legal conflicts involving Swift,” the syllabus continues, “to examine questions about intellectual property, copyright, and the economics of creative industries.”

There will undoubtedly be some time for sampling Swift’s catalog of 200-plus songs and viewing her music videos. But The Sociology of Taylor Swift will not be a fawning fanfest. By analyzing the sprawling cultural impact of her superstardom, by comparing how popular media depictions of Swift differ or align with academic analysis of her celebrity and her fandom, the class will explore weighty topics.

“Let’s carve out a space for happiness,” Donovan says of his concept for the seminar. “At the same time, some of the conversations I hope we have in class do get at some of the more serious questions about race and gender in American society. You know, is Taylor Swift a good ally? She says she’s a feminist: What kind of feminist is she? Most of her fan base are white women: Is there room for folks from marginalized communities within this largely white fan base? Those are some of the conversations that I hope we have.”

Donovan’s wife, Natalie, is an occupational therapy assistant whose work in nursing homes meant she was “bringing home a lot of doom and gloom” during the pandemic. At the same time, her hus-

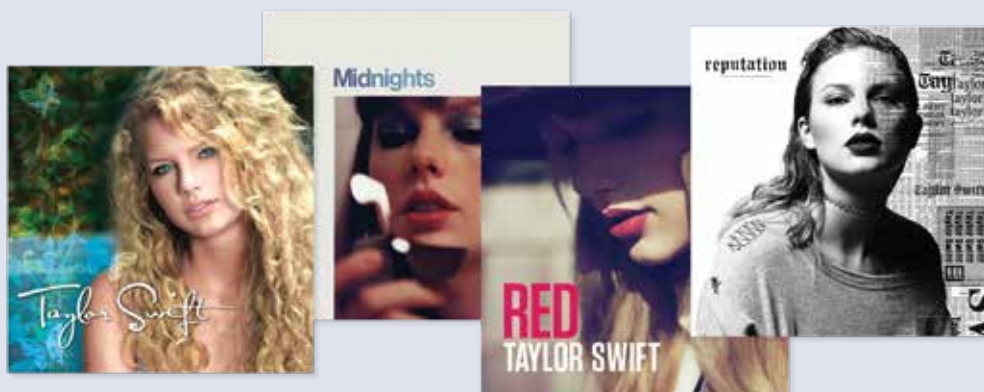
band, in his role as associate chair of the sociology department, was scrambling to find alternative ways to deliver classes at a time when the traditional college campus experience seemed imperiled. She says the emphasis on positivity was a welcome departure from the grim mood of those days, and she believes the pivot has boosted his teaching—never low-energy—into a higher gear.

“He has always been a very enthused teacher, but he is so passionate about this subject and it is something that brings him such joy that I see this extra huge twinkle in his eyes, and he wants so much to share what he’s thinking and learning,” she says. “He really is like a street preacher out there, trying to get everyone into it. He’s keeping it very professional, with good

academic boundaries, but I can tell there is a part of him that just wants to explode with some song lyrics.”

**T**he Sociology of Taylor Swift is one of several first-year seminars meant to foster community within the University Honors Program, and to the extent that it will likely attract Taylor Swift fans—which Donovan absolutely expects it will—community will already be built in. Swifties are a close-knit tribe.

He learned as much when he discovered TikTok. Already an enthusiastic social media convert, Donovan sought out the video platform because his students were



## Why study Taylor Swift?

**T**he weeks leading up to The Eras Tour were a carnival of hype, as Kansas City bars held Taylor Swift nights, restaurants renamed menu items for her songs, and a Missouri farmer created a gigantic crop mural of Swift’s face to welcome her to town. Local news offered wall-to-wall coverage of Swiftapalooza, drawing some predictable grousing from those who wondered why so much attention should be lavished on a mere pop star.

It’s a fair question, one that even some academics have posed: *Why study Taylor Swift?*

The better question, Brian Donovan says, is *why study pop culture in general?*

“Things that look trivial on the surface—pop music, TV shows, video games, sports teams—are important to the social order,” he says. “They’re important to people yearning for self-discovery and meaning, or searching for

referencing it in class, and he thought he should try to understand the new tech capturing their attention. “Finding students where they are” is a phrase that comes up often when he talks about his teaching, and where his students were, it turned out, was on TikTok. So he joined.

Exploring areas devoted to Swifties, he started to notice the social organization of the fandom, the different subgroups within the larger whole, and the “meaning-making practices” they engaged in. The sociological term refers to how people build culture within a community.

“They’re speaking a similar language; there are inside jokes and references that only other Swifties would know,” Donovan explains. “There’s toxicity in any fandom or in any group of people, honestly. But I

was impressed by a lot of the warmth and just genuine sort of happiness that I saw. What sociologist Émile Durkheim called ‘collective effervescence’: people getting excited about being in a crowd.”

Hardcore Swifties engage in “clowning,” which is a search for “Easter eggs” and other hidden meanings and secret messages not only in Swift’s song lyrics, but also in her social media posts. To be a Swiftie is to be a detective, searching for clues that hint at the timing or content of future music releases or concert set lists and unraveling any number of conspiracy theories about her tangled romantic life. Some of this is encouraged by Swift herself and some is the result of certain subgroups within the fandom, but clowning is approached at an ironic remove: We know our obsessiveness

is a bit much, Swifties seem to signal, but it’s mostly harmless because it’s all in fun.

A classic example, Donovan says, is a 2019 Instagram post from Swift that included a photograph of her peering through a fence with five holes in it. Swifties interpreted the image as a tip that her highly anticipated new album “*Lover*” would be released in five days. That didn’t happen, but Swifties still talk about how much they loved the game.

“Sociologically, that is fascinating: It’s almost like these millenarian cults that think a new social order will come into being on, you know, July 7th, and then it doesn’t happen, so they come up with a new theory,” Donovan says, chuckling. “She’s brilliant at marketing. She knows she is keeping us on tenterhooks, and she knows that she is keeping the energy level high in the fandom.”

A photo of a pop star looking through a fence (or, for that matter, the topic of pop culture in general) strikes some as a subject unworthy of serious academic study, Donovan knows, but the episode is an example of how human beings build social capital. Such posts get people talking. “It provides a pretext for those conversations and allows fans not just to feel closer to one another as fans, but to make a human connection they might not get in their family life or their work life,” he says.

“It’s making a meaning out of something that is completely trivial. It doesn’t affect the war in Ukraine or climate change, but it’s a way that people are finding some joy in their life.”

**D**onovan eventually came to see that the Swiftie culture could be the focus of more than just a class: It could be the subject of his next research project and fourth book. After clearing it with the Institutional Review Board at KU’s Office of Research, he put out a call on his Taylor Swift fan site on TikTok asking Swifties to contact him if they were interested in being interviewed for “a new sociological study on the Swiftie fandom ... that will

like-minded others to form bonds with. It’s how we make meaning in our lives. It’s how we find joy in our lives.”

Pop culture gives us a way to imagine a different way of living, Donovan says. “In that sense it can be a space of utopia and resistance, and at the same time pop culture can reflect and create all the negatives—the divisions and inequalities in all their various forms, such as class and gender.”

Consider the venue for Swift’s concerts: Arrowhead Stadium, home of the Kansas City Chiefs. Newspapers set aside whole sections and radio stations devote 24/7 programming to analyzing the feats that unfold there. When’s the last time you saw a letter to the editor complaining of that?

Swift talk and sports talk are similar, because neither “has any kind of real consequence for the way we live our lives,” Donovan says. “But it’s a way for us to build connections with people that we wouldn’t otherwise.”

There is perhaps another element at work, one that goes all the way back to the days of Beatlemania, when crowds

of teenage girls screamed so loud the Fab Four couldn’t hear themselves play.

“With criticism of pop culture as a field of study, and especially the criticism of studying Taylor as being unserious, I think there is a kind of gendered assumption,” Donovan says. “The sociology of sports has a longstanding tradition. It’s been around awhile. But when it’s a phenomenon that is primarily enjoyed by girls and young women, I think some sexism sneaks into those assessments about whether it’s important or not.”

In the end, no one is arguing that we should study popular culture instead of climate change or gun violence or social inequality, Donovan says. We can do both.

“Academia is big enough that people can focus on these subjects that might seem unimportant, but are actually deeply consequential for the people who are bound up in them. Those domains seem trivial from the outside, but there’s a lot more going on than people think.”

—S.H.

help us gain a better understanding of the social dynamics of fandom and how fandoms produce joy and collective identity.”

Responded one TikTok wag, “Your sample size is about to be wild.”

Indeed, Donovan’s inbox blew up with more than 1,600 replies—many long testimonials about how much Swift’s music meant to respondents. He has interviewed 50 so far, gathering material for academic papers and a book. Specifically, Donovan says, he’s interested in the development of social capital among the fans and in rethinking the idea that “parasocial relationships” (one-sided relationships in which one person extends emotional energy, interest and time, while the second party—often a celebrity or sports team—is completely unaware of the first’s existence) are necessarily a negative phenomenon.

“What I think is interesting about Swifties is that there is an element of hero worship in that we’re all kind of looking up to Taylor at the top of the mountain,” he explains, “but there’s also a lot of lateral connections that are being made among the Swifties themselves.”

Alexis Greenberg can speak to that. An Overland Park senior in the William Allen White School of Journalism on the strategic communications track and a longtime Swiftie, Greenberg was 16 when she started college, 17 when she transferred to KU with enough credits to take junior-level classes.

“Everybody’s 21,” Greenberg says of her classmates that first year on the Hill. “It’s hard to build a connection because there’s a big difference in college between a freshman and a senior. The first semester was difficult.”

What helped ease the transition was bumping into fellow Swifties on campus.

“More people than I could have imagined had Taylor Swift jackets, Taylor Swift hats, Taylor Swift bracelets,” Greenberg recalls. “I stopped almost every one and said, ‘What’s your favorite song on the new album?’ I got some of their phone numbers when I was here for freshman orientation. One girl had a Taylor Swift shirt on, and she and I still text every week. We didn’t



COURTESY BRIAN DONOVAN

“I knew people would dress up, but in some ways the show felt like a Halloween party: If you weren’t in costume, you stood out,” Donovan says. He and his wife, Natalie, donned outfits showing Swift and her cats. For her Taylor tribute, Veronica Hill reached all the way back to the “Fearless” tour, which rolled into Kansas City in April 2010, when she was 21 months old.

have any classes together. We didn’t live in the same building. The only connection we had was Taylor Swift, but that was our way of making friends at KU and starting to build our own personal communities.”

That experience ultimately led Greenberg to organize Swiftie Jayhawks and to reach out to Donovan: She founded the KU Swift Society and asked him to serve as the faculty adviser. The official student club has around 70 members who meet regularly for Swift-themed get-togethers such as trivia, mocktails and crafts. Rather than merely lending his name to fulfill student club rules requiring a faculty sponsor, Donovan became an avid participant in Swift Society activities.



MARY O'CONNELL

“I think he breaks a lot of the stereotypes about Taylor Swift fans by being, you know, not a teenage girl,” Greenberg says, laughing. “It’s really fun that he can engage with us about those topics. He’s got kind of a different angle coming from sociology. He’ll often sit down at a table with some

of our members during an event and start a more philosophical conversation than just, ‘What’s your favorite song?’ or whatever. He comes at it from a really interesting perspective.”

This fall, she is one of Donovan’s seminar assistants for The Sociology of Taylor Swift.

“It’s gonna be really fun,” says Greenberg, who attended an honors seminar her first semester at KU. “It’s a pretty small class, like 15 people. All the honors seminars are really small, which allows for a great opportunity to connect with each person individually on a very personal level. My honors seminar assistants told us their favorite places to eat in Lawrence, their favorite places to study on campus, and just overall tips for being a freshman at KU.

“I think it’ll be a great way to make a difference, to impact more students at KU and kind of help them in their journeys.”

**B**y 3 p.m. on Friday, the Arrowhead parking lot is nearly full. Swifties of all ages tailgate under shade tents, and the merch lines coiling around the stadium seem to vibrate with elastic energy. There’s a crackle in the air. No one seems the least bit bothered by the long wait or the blaring sun.

“You’re gonna see a lot of sparkles, a lot of pink, and some floor-length gowns,” my daughter tells me when I ask what to expect.

Indeed, Taylor Nation has turned out and dressed up in outfits reflecting their favorite Swift era: A young lady swathed in purple taffeta toddles by in a Lavender Haze, followed by an older man with a T-shirt that reads, “It’s me, Hi. I’m the dad. It’s me.” My daughter—in a white dress, bejeweled ten-gallon hat and cowboy boots—reps the “Fearless” era, which seems a popular choice with Cowtown fans. Swifties are trading friendship bracelets, volunteering to snap photos for strangers and generally frothing with

anticipation. Gates open at 4. By 8, when Swift kicks off a show that lasts until nearly midnight, the collective effervescence is off the charts.

Even from the parking lot, it’s easy to pinpoint the precise moment she takes the stage: The noise level from inside the arena, already seemingly pegged at 10, somehow kicks up a notch and the massive concrete bowl seems to levitate for a moment as 55,000 Swifties begin belting in unison with Swift the lyrics to “Miss Americana & The Heartbreak Prince.”

*You know I adore you  
I’m crazier for you  
Than I was at 16*

This one is going to 11.

Somewhere in the sea of singing Swifties is Alexis Greenberg. She attends with her father, Greg Greenberg, b’96, who manned the online presale to snag tickets to both Kansas City and New Jersey shows, and who also accompanied his daughter to Swift concerts in 2015 and 2018. “He’s definitely a Swiftie dad,” Alexis says. “He lets us paint his nails and put glitter on his face. He recognizes and appreciates how the shows build community.”

About 50 members of the KU Swift Society make it to an Arrowhead show—as does their faculty sponsor. Dressed in custom-made outfits that feature pictures of Swift with her cats, Brian and Natalie Donovan attend the Saturday concert. As the date approached, Donovan shared that he planned to go as a fan, but knew he’d likely be tempted to bring a notepad and pen to jot down some observations.

The after-action report tells a different story.

“I think he probably abandoned a large part of his ability to stand outside himself

and observe sociologically, because he was so deep in the experience,” says Natalie Donovan, for whom the night marked a transformation from casual fan to full-fledged Swiftie. “I think all the yelling and him scream-singing along with everyone else was not conducive to note taking.”

“Once the music started, I was completely in fan mode, reveling in the moment,” Donovan says. But there was ample time for observation before and after the concert. What he saw reinforced his belief that Swift and her fandom are rich subjects for sociological study.

“Seeing strangers connect in a positive way—that’s always a good sign of the value of a given cultural phenomenon,” he says. “Anything that can move 55,000 people for good or ill is worthy of our attention.”

One fan Donovan interviewed through his TikTok outreach, a 30-something Swiftie with a high-pressure job, suddenly found herself stuck at home during the height of the pandemic. She noticed that another resident in her apartment building had a Taylor Swift doormat. She left the neighbor a note, and the women began texting, then talking—with masks, at a distance, in the hallway—before eventually getting together for an overnight listening party to celebrate the midnight release of one of Swift’s 2020 recordings. Three years later they’re attending together an event that seemed inconceivable during those dark days—an Eras Tour concert uniting thousands of thrilled fans—asking, for a few brief hours, nothing more than what we have always asked of our idols: joy and deliverance. ✨





# RURAL RENEWAL



An alumna's passion  
for preserving historic buildings  
has brought tourism, vitality  
to a small Kansas town







**by Megan Hirt**  
Photographs by Steve Puppe

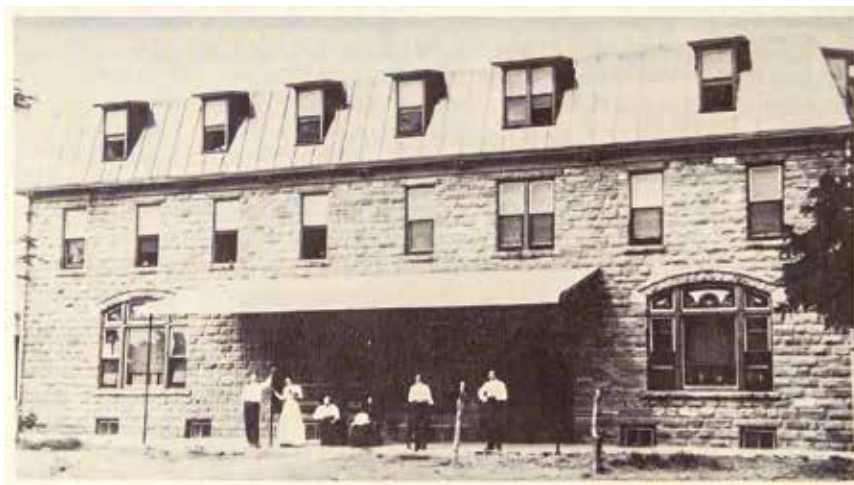
Melinda Merrill outside The Barn, a 1906 stable she has converted into a bar and event venue in Wilson.



**T**he Midland Railroad Hotel welcomes visitors to Wilson today in much the same way it did over a century ago, when the town was a midway stop between Kansas City and Denver on the Union Pacific Railroad. Inside the stately, three-story limestone building with the red roof, guests still enjoy cozy accommodations surrounded by refurbished original woodwork and other trappings of a bygone era. But unlike long-ago railroad travelers, many of the Midland's modern-day patrons consider the hotel itself the destination.

"Coming to the Midland is like stepping back in time," says Melinda Merrill, g'03, who has owned and operated the hotel since 2014 and turned the once-shuttered landmark into a renowned regional hub. "It's a place where people can relax and get away from their day-to-day grind, and a place where people can just enjoy being in a small town."

The hotel is one of a handful of revival projects Merrill has been involved with in the rural community of Wilson, population 859, about 180 miles west of



Now and then: The Midland Railroad Hotel today and circa 1904. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Lawrence via I-70. The structures under her stewardship, which also include a repurposed grade school and a rescued tin barn, take on new lives and, in turn, provide new opportunities for hospitality and connection in a place once short on such amenities.

"The motivation started as not wanting to see these buildings torn down or fall

down," Merrill says. "But as I got immersed in the culture of Wilson, I saw what a special place it is." Her goal gradually morphed into a larger mission to promote the town, which boasts unique charm as the self-billed Czech Capital of Kansas and host of the annual After Harvest Czech Festival every July. "For people to come and spend any significant time in Wilson,



Melinda Merrill stands beside the Midland's original staircase woodwork, crafted in the late 1890s, which is among the many time-honored touches found throughout the hotel.

there has to be somewhere for them to stay," Merrill says. "So the hotel is kind of the backbone in making this a stable community."

A fully operational hotel makes travel to Wilson and its neighboring attractions—including Wilson Lake and the quirky art enclave of Lucas—far more feasible, and visitors boost more than the economy. "You don't often see towns of this size with the kind of entertainment and events and dining that Wilson has thanks to the Midland," says Christy Dowling Thomas, a board member of the Wilson Tourism Hub. "The hotel not only brings people in and makes them want to come back,

but it's big for the people who live in town and this part of the state in terms of taking pride in the area."

**G**rowing up, Merrill relished summer stays at her grandparents' farm near Wilson and, later, at their home in town. "My dad was in the flour milling business, so we moved a lot," Merrill says. "The one constant was coming to Wilson. I had an affinity for it even then. For me, it was always a matter of coming back here."

Her connection to KU was similarly strong. Her mother, Virginia Urban Merrill, c'47, studied speech pathology at



## STONE AGE

Post rock limestone, used to construct the Midland Railroad Hotel and several other buildings in Wilson, is the upper layer of the Greenhorn Limestone formation, which stretches through 18 central Kansas counties. The material was formed from sediment deposited during the Cretaceous Period, from 145 to 66 million years ago, when much of the state was under water.

The rock layer, typically 8 to 12 inches thick and located relatively close to the surface, furnished an ideal building material for those settling on the wide-open Kansas prairie in the mid- to late 1800s. With scarce trees to use as lumber, they quarried and shaped post rock limestone to fashion all manner of infrastructure, from homes and businesses to bridges and the region's characteristic limestone fence posts. State Highway 232, an 18-mile route that connects the towns of Wilson and Lucas, has been designated the Post Rock Scenic Byway by the Kansas Department of Transportation and offers glimpses of the native stone as fence posts and farm buildings. "There's a whole life to this limestone," says Midland owner Melinda Merrill. "It reflects both the history of the land in this part of the country and the work ethic of the people who built with it." —M.H.

**“It’s a place where people can relax and get away from their day-to-day grind, and a place where people can just enjoy being in a small town.”**

—Melinda Merrill



the University, and her late father, Fred, '47, attended before serving in the U.S. Army. In 1990, Merrill's parents endowed the Merrill Advanced Studies Center, one of 14 centers within the KU Life Span Institute, an internationally known hub for human development research and policy. The Merrill Center hosts research retreats, publishes findings and sets policies for future studies. “My parents believed in higher education and wanted to support the research and collaboration that happens at universities,” Merrill says. “They saw that as a need in society.”

Merrill graduated from Colorado State University with a bachelor's degree in sculpture and worked as an artist and in art galleries until she pursued a teaching career. She earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from the University of Saint Mary in Leavenworth and began teaching in Kansas City. In 1995, she attended a KU symposium on gifted education. “It was an amazing new world for me,” Merrill says, “and I enrolled in KU after that.”

She continued teaching while completing her master's in curriculum and instruction in the School of Education & Human Sciences. She focused on gifted education, and says learning how to foster creative problem-solving skills in her students has served her well in the hospitality business, where the unpredictable reigns. “You learn



not to panic,” she says. “When something goes wrong, the mindset is, ‘How can we make this work? What can we change? What strategies can we use?’ I truly think that came out of my time at KU and my gifted-ed degree. It taught me a whole different way to think.”

After graduation, Merrill taught gifted education in Kansas City and later in Estes Park, Colorado. In 2009, she retired from teaching and moved to Wilson part time to manage her family's farm, and the big brick building sitting vacant in the center of town captured her interest. A plan to convert the former grade school, built in 1916, into an assisted living facility had fallen by the wayside, but Merrill still saw potential. “I'd consider myself a conservationist,” she says. “I believe in making use of what already exists, even if it takes some reengineering.” She purchased the school in 2012 and oversaw its overhaul into a 17-unit apartment complex. Her vision and follow-through on the venture caught the attention of a group of local leaders looking to ensure the long life of another Wilson landmark.





Treasured remnants: Inside The Barn, the back bar (above) is from the former Muehlebach Hotel in downtown Kansas City, and a piece of the exterior of Wilson's old train depot hangs on the wall (top right). The Barn was relocated from a farm outside Wilson to its new home next to the Midland in April 2021.



Bottom right: Wilson's Czech heritage is on grandest display with the "World's Largest Czech Egg," a 20-foot-tall fiberglass homage to "kraslice," the traditional Czech art of hand-painting eggs.

**B**uilt from central Kansas' distinct post rock limestone, the Midland opened for business in August 1899. Originally known as the Hotel Power, it was renamed around 1902, following a fire that destroyed much of its interior. A brick addition in 1915 expanded the hotel, which today offers 28 rooms. Located just 200 feet from the train tracks, the Midland prospered throughout the 1920s and was a popular stop for traveling salesmen, who would display samples of their merchandise in the hotel's basement. The Midland remained in operation for nearly 90 years, until 1988, chugging along even after the Union Pacific discontinued passenger service in the early 1970s.

When the building went on the market in the late 1990s, a group of town leaders formed the Wilson Foundation and bought the abandoned, dilapidated property. Over the next few years, the foundation secured grants and donations that would go toward recapturing the Midland's original look and feel. The

sweeping restoration began in 2001. "They took out all the woodwork, refinished it and reinstalled it," Merrill says, noting that such commitment to authenticity touched every facet of the hotel's renaissance. "They did a beautiful job."

The Midland reopened in 2003 and changed hands twice over the next decade. In 2014, when the owner was looking to sell, members of the Wilson Foundation approached Merrill about potentially buying the hotel. While her primary objective at the time was to preserve another antique structure, she was also optimistic the hotel could flourish. "I thought, 'We're 2 miles off I-70 and just a few miles from Wilson Lake,'" she recalls. "I figured I could make it work."

It has worked indeed, thanks in large part to Merrill's efforts to reimagine the Midland as not just a place for passers-through. Alongside the old-meets-new comforts of the revamped hotel, today's Midland experience features a rich mix of social happenings presented throughout



the property's assorted spaces: a full-service restaurant, The Sample Room, located in the basement and named as a nod to the downstairs' early use; a vibrant outdoor tract complete with two fire pits, flower and vegetable gardens, and a chicken coop; and Merrill's newest acquisition, The Barn, a 1906 stable relocated just east of the Midland that she has transformed into a bar and event venue.

Live music, themed dinners, corporate retreats, wine tastings, art showcases and

more bring locals and out-of-towners alike to the Midland, often on a recurring basis. “The activities give people a feeling of connection and ownership,” Merrill says. “They’re not only coming to the Midland, but they’re taking part in something special. It has been gratifying to watch the friendships that have formed among the people who come here regularly.”

May through October is the busy season for Merrill and her staff of 20 to 25. Rooms sell out for July’s Czech Festival months in advance, and many outdoor enthusiasts bound for Wilson Lake make the Midland their home base. The Sample Room serves dinner six nights a week, with comfort foods like chicken-fried steak and meatloaf always on the menu. Merrill maintains a robust online presence for the hotel, which she credits with helping spread the word to travelers searching for accommodations. Guests have come from across the U.S. and numerous countries, and Merrill says the people she meets are her inspiration to stay the course. “The

folks who come through the hotel are absolutely phenomenal,” she says. “Most have an appreciation for the history of the building, for the building materials, for nature. I learn so much from them.”

**M**any small towns have a Midland of their own—a relic from a different, perhaps livelier time that still looms large, for better or for worse. “Buildings like the Midland were built well and don’t deteriorate rapidly, so they can either sit empty, as an incredible eyesore for the community, or they can be an anchor for the community,” says Marci Penner, author of *The Kansas Guidebook for Explorers* and co-director of the Kansas Sampler Foundation, which works to spotlight and sustain the state’s rural communities and culture. “In the Midland’s case, it has definitely become an anchor.”

Penner, c’79, whose work has taken her to each of Kansas’ 627 incorporated towns and cities, commends how Merrill

has blended historic appeal with modern purpose. “There’s always a fine balance between honoring the past and making sure you’re moving forward, and I think the Midland is a perfect example of achieving that balance,” Penner says. “Melinda honors the past by keeping the Midland in great shape, and all the events she hosts honor the present by providing what people are looking for today.”

Merrill aims to improve some aspect of the Midland every year, ever mindful of ways she can help Wilson thrive. “I feel good that we’ve been able to give a nice foundation to a rural town,” she says. “I want people to come to Wilson and go, ‘Oh my gosh, I love the fact that we’re here. This is exactly where we want to be.’”

She hopes the Midland and Wilson can inspire tourism to other small towns as well, and she thinks fellow Jayhawks in particular would delight in discovering some of the Sunflower State’s lesser-known nooks. Says Merrill, “All of Kansas is Jayhawk country.”

## THE MIDLAND’S HOLLYWOOD MOMENT

The 1973 movie “Paper Moon,” starring Ryan O’Neal and his daughter, Tatum, filmed scenes in several Kansas locations, including at the Midland Railroad Hotel in Wilson. Set during the Depression, the story follows a con man, Moze, who is saddled with transporting an orphan, Addie, across Kansas to her family in Missouri. The two team up to pull off a string of scams, forming an unlikely bond as they swindle and try to stay a step ahead of the law. For her performance, 10-year-old

Tatum became the youngest actor ever to win an Academy Award.

On a Friday evening in May, about 150 people gathered on the Midland’s back patio for a showing of the movie on the building’s limestone exterior, part of the two-day Paper Moon Festival in Wilson celebrating the film’s 50th anniversary. Several area residents who were present during filming stopped by the Midland to share memories, among them two brothers who



PARAMOUNT STUDIOS/ALAMY

appeared as extras in the movie when they were young children. “We had a great turnout, with people from as far away as San Diego,” Melinda Merrill, owner of the Midland, says of the festival, which also featured a

walking tour of Wilson filming locations, an antique car display and activities for kids. “The movie is such a fun piece of history for Wilson and something people in town still unite around.” —M.H.

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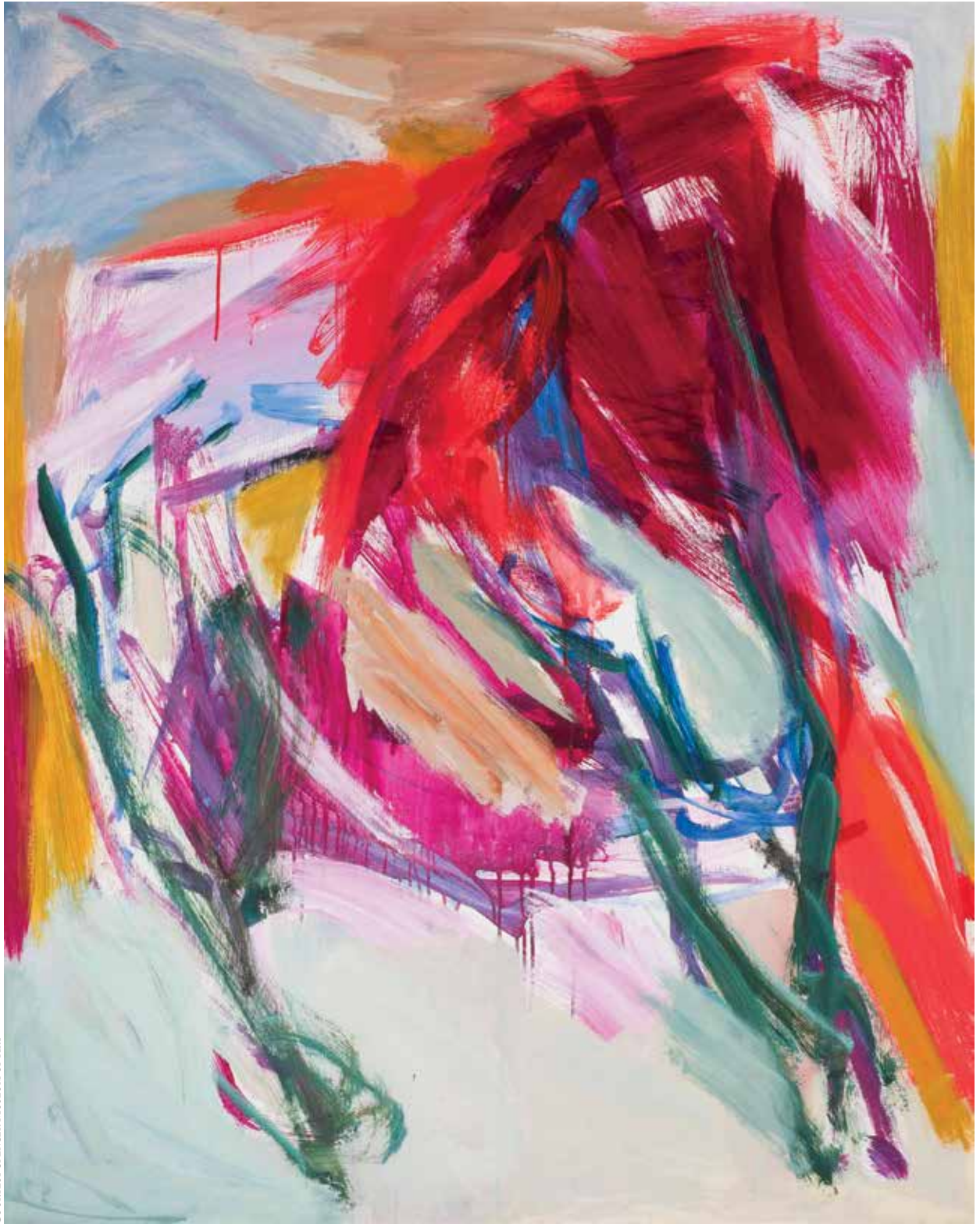


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COURTESY SPENCER MUSEUM OF ART

Elaine de Kooning, *Arena*, 1959, oil, board,  
Gift of Virginia Jennings Nadeau and Richard Pierre Nadeau  
© Elaine de Kooning Trust, 2021.0005.



by **Chris  
Lazzarino**

# Modernism, Here and Now

Professor's epic modern art textbook debuts in delightful synchronicity with the Spencer's abstract expressionist masterpiece

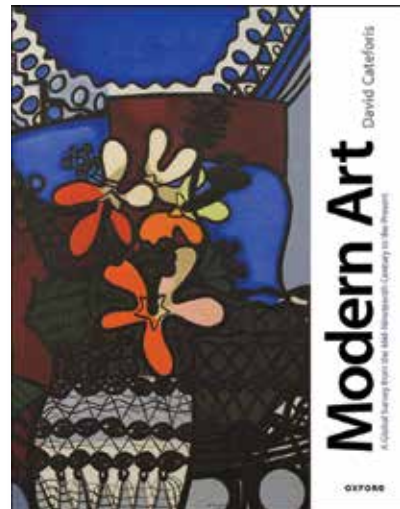
# A

lthough they are called “Senior Sessions,” the Spencer Museum of Art’s regularly scheduled weekday gallery lectures are open to one and all. So it was that on April 13, David Cateforis, professor and chair of KU’s Kress Foundation Department of Art History, found himself before a sizable gathering in the museum’s fourth-floor Michaelis Gallery.

Cateforis opened his lecture—“Three American Modernists: Elaine de Kooning, Louise Nevelson, Elizabeth Murray”—standing near one of the museum’s most important and exciting recent acquisitions, a 1959 de Kooning painting titled *Arena*.

“It’s a painting that seems restless, that seems to be very fresh, with a quality of immediacy, the quality of spontaneity,” Cateforis began, before sharing a brief synopsis of abstract expressionism’s 1940s emergence in New York City.

Trim, sharply dressed and precise in his speech, Cateforis suggested to his audience that perhaps *Arena* is not so much about a bull in the throes of a doomed show-down as it is about the artist’s confident brushstrokes and dynamic use of motion and color. Even the title, Cateforis suggested, might refer not to the bullring but instead to the canvas, “a setting for action, or even struggle, between the artist and her materials. ... The artist doesn’t know the outcome of that process. It’s risky. It could go wrong. But it’s exhilarating.”





COURTESY SPENCER MUSEUM OF ART (2)

As he turned toward the next topics of discussion—Murray’s massive *Chaotic Lip*, a 1986 piece acquired by the Spencer in 1987, followed by Nevelson’s 1971 aluminum sculpture *Seventh Decade Garden IX-X*, recently refurbished and moved indoors after decades of sentry duty on the Spencer’s front walk—Cateforis held his gaze on *Arena* for an extended beat.

“This,” he said, “is such a treasure.”

Although the hourlong gallery talk was a thrilling and seemingly complete overview of what museum patrons might find in three prominent works of modern art, Cateforis curiously omitted even a passing mention of another important development in the field of modern art at KU: the arrival of his massive yet elegant textbook *Modern Art: A Global Survey From the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Present*, published this spring by Oxford University Press.

Louise Nevelson, *Seventh Decade Garden IX-X*, 1971, aluminum, paint, welding, Museum purchase: Reid Foundation, Helen Foresman Spencer Art Acquisition Fund, Kansas University Endowment Association, and the National Endowment for the Arts, 1983.0028.

Elizabeth Murray, *Chaotic Lip*, 1986, oil, canvas, Museum purchase: Friends of the Art Museum and Helen Foresman Spencer Art Acquisition Fund, 1987.0035.

Professor Cateforis chose for the cover of his book a splendid image up to the task: *Marpacífico*, by the Cuban painter Amelia Peláez, an alumna of Havana’s Academia de San Alejandro who abandoned her country’s prevailing academic art while studying in Paris from 1927 to 1934. The first work of art encountered in *Modern Art* signals a fresh, inclusive and welcome approach to a subject too often dominated by towering European men whose work, after initially horrifying critics and public

alike with startling images far beyond the norm, soon swept across the continental birthplace of modernism.

“I think it’s a very attractive image, it’s very modern, it’s by an artist who is largely unknown, and I feel privileged to help bring her more visibility,” Cateforis says. “I had the opportunity here to expand the canon, and that’s exciting.”

Six years in the making—a project that Cateforis began at the invitation of Richard Carlin, at the time Oxford University Press’ executive editor for higher educa-

tion books in music and art—*Modern Art* is the first survey textbook to include people and regions “that have not been part of the narrative before,” including artists from Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East.

“This book is not quite encyclopedic, but it is certainly broad and extensive,” Cateforis told Rick Hellman, j’80, of KU News Service. “I think that is an important contribution, representative of the global

turn in the discipline of art history.”

And yet, the titans still loom large. For the big book’s all-important introduction—a ho-hum opening would not have boded well for the long journey ahead—Cateforis compared a pair of contemporaneous train images from late 19th century Western Europe: *Arrival of a Train at Vienna Northwest Station*, an 1875 painting expertly rendered by Karl Karger in what Cateforis describes as an illusionistic

style, alongside *The Gare Saint-Lazare: Arrival of a Train*, painted in 1877 by the Impressionist master Claude Monet.

Obvious visual differences, of course, are striking, yet Cateforis contends that the stories presented by these two works also provide context for the birth and role of modernism.

With his traditional use of artistic conventions, Karger delivers an image of formal composition, with passengers depicted so precisely that social status would have been immediately identifiable to viewers of the day. Lifelike colors are used throughout, and Karger’s dexterity with perspective devices creates spatial recession into a cavernous train station. The painting was so successful that, following its 1875 Vienna debut, *Arrival of a Train at Vienna Northwest Station* was acquired for Austria’s national gallery.

“To most twenty-first century viewers, however, Karger’s picture appears like a quaint artifact from a bygone time,” Cateforis writes, “whereas Monet’s still conveys a vivid and relatable sense of the experience of modernity.”

A mere two years later, Monet, painting “in a technically innovative way,” treated a similar topic with a fresh outlook that “invests his picture with the quality of discovery.” One angry critic argued that Monet’s painting was “filled with black, pink, gray, and purple smoke” that evoked nothing more profound than “illegible scrawl.”

David Cateforis says writing his textbook allowed him to undergo “intense learning” on genres outside his usual arenas—including modern architecture and modern art in India, Asia, Africa and Latin America—and yet the fundamentals remain: “What is interesting about art of any age is how it’s asking us to think about the world in a way that we did not before we encountered that work of art.”



STEVE PUPPE



Professor Cateforis introduces the concept of modernity with 1870s artworks by (from top) Karl Karger, Claude Monet and Kobayashi Kiyochika that offer wildly different takes on trains—at the time, still a transformative new technology. “Understanding modern art in a specific context is an important framework for art history,” he says. “It’s not just about appreciating the work of art aesthetically, but also understanding the historical forces that surrounded its creation and motivated the artist.”

From the distance of time, however, it is evident that Monet depicts the arrival of a train at the Gare Saint-Lazare with an enthusiasm that should remind us that in the 1870s, trains and their stations, and such pleasures as leisure-time excursions to the countryside, were new. Unlike Karger, who presented the novelty of train travel by draping it in staid societal conventions, Monet identified the event as distinctly modern.

“I think the key word is ‘innovation,’” Cateforis says. “Innovations in the arenas of science and technology, and industry, and commerce, and communication, and entertainment—all the various ways in which modernity transforms the experience of people—particularly in industrialized, highly developed societies.

“Art is participating in that process of change and discovery and innovation, and, furthermore, overturning traditions and conventions that people accepted and may have found reassuring. Modern art is often upsetting or causing controversy because of its experimental or exploratory nature.”

Cateforis carries the theme—and brilliantly pushes the first steps of his long exploration of modern art beyond its European roots—by next introducing *Hazy Moon at Ushimachi, Takanawa, between Tokyo and Yokohama*, an 1879 color woodblock print in the style known as ukiyo-e (pictures of the floating world). The artist, Kobayashi Kiyochika, imagined an American-style locomotive, then unknown in Japan, traveling through the night on a



railway that had been constructed only seven years earlier. The train’s artificial, Industrial Age lights contrast with the moonlight reflecting off water, representing traditional Japanese reverence for nature scenes. Even the woodblock print’s collaborative creation process, Cateforis writes, predicts modern art’s later acceptance of artists such as Andy Warhol and Bridget Riley employing assistants.

“One of the things that I hope the book does,” Cateforis says, “is make accessible and provide ways of thinking about and understanding modern art’s innovations, so they aren’t just seen as shocking and upsetting, but actually exciting and progressive.”

“Modern art is often upsetting or causing controversy because of its experimental or exploratory nature.”

—David Cateforis

**E**xciting and progressive: exactly the tone Saralyn Reece Hardy, Marilyn Stokstad Director of the Spencer Museum of Art, uses when describing her late friend Virginia Jennings Nadeau, f’57, the Kansas City arts patron who, with her late husband, Richard, purchased *Arena* for their private collection and later bequeathed the colorful piece to the Spencer.

“[Elaine de Kooning] was very interested in dance. She had experience working with Merce Cunningham, and I think that awareness of movement is very evident in our painting,” says Reece Hardy, c’76, g’94. “It’s less a painting about a fixed state and more about the dynamism of a moment and the fleeting nature of time as figures move through it.”

Shortly after an amicable separation from her mentor-turned-husband, the abstract expressionist artist Willem de Kooning, Elaine decamped for Albuquerque, where she taught at the University of New Mexico. She became fond of making the five-hour drive to Ciudad Juárez, where, sketchbook in hand, she attended bullfights, later creating a series of paintings inspired by her immersion in the vibrant border city.

“Ours,” Reece Hardy says of the Spencer’s de Kooning, “is almost as if the figure is turning, and that—*the turn*—is where all the excitement is in life. It’s the unexpected, the excitement. Virginia saw this painting and she just fell for it. She said, ‘It was something I couldn’t walk away from.’ This was the symbol of Virginia.

“She had that dynamism and flair. She believed in livable elegance, because she was an interior designer, but she was not a format; she was about expressing individ-

uality, and she was a color expert. She was known for bringing colors together in ways that other people would never have thought of, and I think that is also true of Elaine de Kooning—bringing colors together not as a study, but as a dance, an experiential exercise.”

Born in 1934 in Independence, Missouri, where her family owned Jennings Furniture Store, Virginia Jennings came to KU to study fashion illustration and, after her 1957 graduation, studied at the Parsons School of Design in New York City. A remembrance published by the Jackson County Historical Society after her 2020 death described her as, among other endearing traits, tall, elegant, charming and intelligent, with a twinkle in the eye that made others feel, in the words of a former student from her stint as a high school art teacher, “as though we shared a secret.” Recalled Independence Mayor Eileen Weir, “Virginia is the person you want to sit by at a dinner party.”

The icon of Kansas City society and arts patronage—an embodiment, in Reece Hardy’s words, of Kansas City and Lawrence’s shared history of expressing “civic pride through cultural heritage and cultural futures”—was already on the Spencer’s advisory board when Reece Hardy was hired as director in 2005. Reece Hardy recalls meeting Virginia and Richard Nadeau at her introductory talk and promptly becoming enamored with “a radical couple” who “had their own vision of what life should be like, and art was at the very center of it.”

The Spencer chose to hang *Arena* in the Michaelis Gallery to honor the gallery’s stated theme: empowerment. With the equally powerful works by Nevelson and Murray that Cateforis analyzed at his April 13 gallery talk, and many other clustered in the vicinity, *Arena* highlights the gallery’s intention to, in Reece Hardy’s words, “bring attention to the power of women in the arts.”

“Throughout the museum, you will see many underrepresented voices whose day is way overdue,” Reece Hardy says. “And those are not only women, but the varieties of people and varieties of artists who haven’t had their place in the in the spotlight. We have brought them out. When you walk through the galleries, you’ll see some of your old favorites mixed in with things you didn’t even know we had. We want to open doors for our audiences to see that art comes from many, many different places and ways. It’s all deliberate.”





**B**efore publishing *Modern Art*, one of Cateforis' recent forays into public arts outreach was the 2015 Lawrence Arts Center exhibition, co-curated with Ben Ahlvers, on Albert Bloch, a prominent member of the modernist European group of painters known as The Blue Rider and later professor and chair of the painting department at KU.

Before the Bloch exhibition, Cateforis was probably best known outside of KU's art circles as a collaborator on the 2002 second edition of *Art History*, the seminal survey textbook written by Professor Marilyn Stokstad, who retired in 2002 as the Judith Harris Murphy Distinguished Professor of Art History and died in 2016.

Stokstad's book instantly became the field's flagship, and Cateforis says he took lessons as well as inspiration from his collaboration with his celebrated colleague when he set out to write his own book with similar aspirations for lasting influence.

"That was a generation ago," Cateforis says, "but, because I worked on the chapters on modern art, it gave me the confidence to be able to write my own book. I can only hope that my book has some fraction of the impact that Marilyn Stokstad's book had, but, whether it does or not, I'm proud of it."

His pride is well earned: Unlike many other academic publications of such breadth and depth, *Modern Art* was written entirely by Cateforis, including a detailed table of contents, deeply



*Modern Art* is a sumptuous textbook that invites readers to immerse themselves in stories of artists, eras and locales, all while lingering over one startlingly beautiful image after another. "We're a department at a research-intensive university where many of my colleagues are producing important research in scholarly monographs and journal articles," Cateforis says, "and textbook publishing is another aspect of scholarly work that has a sort of different audience. ... I am committed to textbooks. I see it as a valuable contribution that complements the original research that's going on in our department."

researched notes and glossary, and a comprehensive index.

Standing alongside *Art History*, *Modern Art* bolsters the art history department and museum's already strong national and international reputations, established in the modern era by giants of the field such as Charles Eldredge, Hall Distinguished Professor Emeritus of American Art and Culture, and buoyed by alumni who have soared to impressive heights, including, most recently, Stephanie Fox Knappe, g'00, PhD'14, who in June became the senior curator for global modern and contemporary art and head of American art at Kansas City's Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, and Randall Griffey, g'94, PhD'00, who in 2022 was named head curator at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, where he follows a strong Jayhawk tradition.

Eldredge, a KU professor and director of the Spencer in the 1970s, left KU to direct the Smithsonian American Art Museum from 1982 to 1988. His successor and former student Elizabeth Gibson Broun, c'68, g'69, PhD'76, directed the Smithsonian museum from 1989 until her 2016 retirement.

"It's a point of pride, and it is legacy," Reece Hardy says, referencing the Stokstad and Cateforis books as well as the long history of superior art history scholarship existing in concert with KU's world-class campus art museum. "It's a legacy to be artistic. It's a legacy to artistic scholarship. And it's a legacy to the artistic imagination as it is manifest in museums and universities."

This, it could be said, is such a treasure.

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Mucci



Seuferling

## ALUMNI AWARDS

## Leaders in the Ellsworth tradition

*Highest honor for KU service goes to Mucci, Seuferling*

TWO PIVOTAL UNIVERSITY leaders received the 2023 Fred Ellsworth Medallion, the Alumni Association's highest honor, for their dedicated service to the University. David Mucci, assoc., and Dale Seuferling, j'77, both of Lawrence, were honored Sept. 7 at the Jayhawk Welcome Center in conjunction with the fall meeting of the Association's national Board of Directors. Both men retired in 2022.

The Association created the medallion in 1975 in tribute to Ellsworth, c1922, who became known as "Mr. KU" as he led the Association from 1929 to 1963.

Mucci directed the KU Memorial Union for 23 years, leading its programs through an era of dramatic growth and change. He is known for building strong relationships throughout the KU community, expanding facilities as well as operations and programs, and always putting the interests of students first.

Seuferling's 41-year career at KU Endowment included two decades as president. He nurtured trusted relationships with countless alumni and guided fundraising campaigns that provided unprecedented support for students and

faculty, along with new buildings and major renovations that transformed and expanded KU across all campuses.

Mucci arrived at KU in 1999 after overseeing student unions at the University of Idaho, Ohio State University and his alma mater, the University of Kentucky, where he earned his bachelor's degree in English and film studies and his master's in business administration. As an undergraduate, he was elected student body president, a role that prepared him well to mentor a succession of KU students who participated in Student Union Activities, Student Senate and KJHK radio. More recently, he supported new student initiatives, including the annual community volunteer day (known as The Big Event) and KU's Esports team.

Jay Howard, b'79, served five years on the KU Memorial Union board as the Alumni Association's representative and later chaired the Alumni Association. "David was a great friend and mentor to dozens of student leaders throughout his tenure," Howard attests. "The chair of the Memorial Union board was always a student, and David must have been a

very good example, because if you look at the chairs from the early 2000s, you have Keturah Harding Pohl, who later became the national chair of the Association; Kevin Yoder, who became a U.S. congressman; and Marlon Marshall, who played a key role in President Barack Obama's administration in the White House. David clearly affected a number of students in a very positive way."

Under Mucci's leadership, the Union completed ambitious renovations that modernized the Jayhawk Boulevard landmark while preserving traditions and history. Mucci's devotion to Mount Oread's proud past is evident not only in the physical spaces of the Kansas Union, the new Ascher Plaza and the Burge Union, but also through his collaboration with the late Henry Fortunato, g'07, and a team of graduate students and staff to create the website [kuhistory.com](http://kuhistory.com) and add history display panels throughout the unions.

He also oversaw dramatic growth in programs at the new Burge Union and the DeBruce Center on the Lawrence campus, and he helped establish Union programs to serve students on the Edwards Campus in Overland Park as well as KU Medical Center campuses in Kansas City and Wichita. Mucci also led the repurposing of the Jaybowl for students in architecture and graphic design, the transformation of the KU Bookstore and the opening of the South Dining Commons. Through the years, he provided vital employment opportunities for hundreds of students.

Mucci served on the KU Master Plan Steering Committee and the Sesquicentennial Steering Committee. He helped develop the Union Alumni Council to engage recently graduated student leaders and encourage them to continue their involvement with KU. During the pandemic, he guided the Union through tremendous challenges, continuing to connect students and the community despite severely limited budget and staff resources.

Howard says Mucci's management style helped him unite teams and find solutions to even the most vexing challenges. "I doubt this is in any business school textbook, but David embodied what I call



‘management by cheerfulness,’” Howard says. “He never failed to have a sense of positivity, happiness and empowerment for everybody he met.”

Seuferling launched his KU career using his journalism degree in radio, television and film to land his first job as a radio news reporter and staff member for University Relations. In 1981, he became public relations director for KU Endowment, beginning a 41-year career that quickly transitioned to a fundraising role. His responsibilities continued to expand until he became president in 2002.

During his four decades with Endowment, annual contributions grew exponentially. During his first year of fundraising, KU Endowment raised \$15 million; during fiscal year 2021, donors contributed \$212 million.

His KU tenure spanned seven chancellors and included three of KU’s four major fundraising campaigns—Campaign Kansas, KU First and, most recently, Far Above: The Campaign for Kansas, which concluded in 2016. All three campaigns surpassed their initial fundraising goals. Far Above, which aimed to reach \$1.2 billion in gifts and pledges, ultimately raised \$1.66 billion to benefit KU. The campaign’s many notable accomplishments included the creation of 735 new scholarships and fellowships, 53 new professorships, and 16 new buildings or major renovations.

Seuferling also helped develop new programs, including Women Philanthropists for KU (WP4KU) and the Student Endowment Board. Sue Shields Watson, d’75, who led the Alumni Association as national chair and, with her husband, Kurt, co-chaired Endowment’s Far Above campaign, praises Seuferling for creating new leadership avenues through WP4KU. “Dale realized that some women hadn’t had the opportunity to get to know the University,” she says, “and the fact that he brought them in and gave them the opportunity to know what was going on, to become involved, to serve on KU boards and ultimately to serve on the Endowment board, was such an important touch.”

Kurt Watson, d’75, former Endowment chair who continues to serve as a trustee, adds, “Dale is singular when you think about the University and all that he has given to KU over the years. He’s a very special guy. His ability to bring people together and do the right thing are among his greatest strengths.”

Seuferling provided essential fundraising guidance for comprehensive landmark initiatives across the University, most recently KU’s successful quest to earn National Cancer Institute designation for the KU Cancer Center in 2012, followed by NCI comprehensive designation in July 2022.

Seuferling and his team collaborated often with the Alumni Association, and he strongly advocated for the Jayhawk

Welcome Center construction and Adams Alumni Center renovation. In addition, he became a national leader in higher education philanthropy through his work with longtime KU Endowment consultant Grenzbach Glier and Associates and his many years of involvement in the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

#### ASSOCIATION

## Board elects officers, directors

*Alumni pass the gavel, add six new volunteers*

THE ASSOCIATION’S national Board of Directors in May elected officers for the 2023-’24 fiscal year, along with six new directors who began their five-year terms July 1.

Each year the board accepts alumni nominations of new directors from January 1 to March 1, and the Nominating Committee meets in April to submit a slate of candidates for the full board’s consideration at the spring meeting.

The 2023-’24 national chair is Michael Happe, j’94, of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, who served as chair-elect during 2022-’23. He leads Winnebago Industries as president and CEO, a role he began in 2016 after 20 years in senior leadership positions with The Toro Co. He majored in broadcast news at KU and earned his master’s in business administration from the University of Minnesota. For the Association, he chairs the Executive Committee and formerly led the Revenue Development Committee. He is married to Shannon Fitzsimmons-Happe, j’94; they are Life Members and Presidents Club donors.

Happe succeeds Keturah Harding Pohl, f’04, a’08, who remains on the board for an additional year as immediate past chair. She co-owns and manages Putnam Family Dental in Findlay, Ohio, with her husband, Brad, c’05. They moved to Ohio from Lawrence, where she was an architect with Treanor Architects. Harding Pohl



Burch, Harding Pohl and Happe

DAN STOREY



Garcia



Marshall



Maxwell

COURTESY PHOTOS (6)



Ochoa



Stump



Wise

used her professional experience to help guide the planning and construction of the Jayhawk Welcome Center and Adams Alumni Center renovation. Before joining the board in 2016, she volunteered for the Lawrence Network and served five years as the Association's representative to the KU Memorial Union board. She and Brad are Life Members and Presidents Club donors.

The 2023-'24 chair-elect is F. Taylor Burch, p'88, g'90, PharmD'09, of Lantana, Texas, who has worked for more than 20 years at Eli Lilly and Co., where he is currently a global operations consultant, creating strategy and supporting the various platforms used by the medical affairs teams worldwide. He remains connected to the School of Pharmacy as a donor and volunteer, creating an endowed scholarship named for his father and returning to Lawrence often as a guest lecturer to first-year pharmacy students. He also volunteers for KU Admissions. With his wife, Lisa Howell Burch, c'92, he served on KU Endowment's Far Above campaign committee

for the school. They are Life Members and Presidents Club donors. Their daughter, Allie, is a 2023 KU graduate.

In addition to officers, the Board elected six new directors: Monique Garcia of Wichita, Marlon Marshall of Denver, Joy Larson Maxwell of Salt Lake City, David Ochoa of Fairway, Lisa Olson Stump of St. Louis, and Paul Wise of Austin, Texas.

Garcia, c'96, owns Garcia Group, a marketing and communications consulting firm. She works with federal and state agencies to expand access to health care in underserved communities across the region. She also assists federal agencies in improving language access for public safety efforts. As a volunteer for the Wichita Network, Garcia helped create a mentor program that connected alumni with local high school students and recruited several students to KU. Most recently, she appeared in "Together We Rise," a video highlighting the Association's efforts in diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. As a student, she participated in the His-

panic American Leadership Organization, the KU rowing team and the St. Lawrence Catholic Campus Center. She is a Life Member and Presidents Club donor.

Marshall, c'13, of Denver, is CEO of The City Fund, a nonprofit organization that works with partner cities to improve public schools through grant funding. He formerly worked as special assistant to President Barack Obama and principal deputy director in the White House. As a student from 1997 to 2002, Marshall served as student body vice president, and he received the Rusty Leffel Concerned Student Award in 2001. He left KU to begin his career in political campaigns and public service and returned in 2013 to finish his degree in communication studies. He is an Association Annual Member, and he served five years on the KU Memorial Union board. He also volunteers with the Dole Institute of Politics. He earned a master's degree in policy management from Georgetown University.

Maxwell, c'03, j'03, worked for the Association for more than a decade after beginning her KU career in student recruitment for Admissions. She served as the assistant director of Kansas City programs, working closely with the Kansas City Network Board to coordinate the annual Rock Chalk Ball. She also collaborated with Admissions colleagues to enhance the recruitment of students from KU families and increase the undergraduate enrollment of these Jayhawks from 15% to 23%. She and her husband, Kevin, e'05, m'14, are Life Members and Presidents Club donors.

Ochoa j'06, g'08, is the mid-America area executive director for ALSAC, the fundraising and awareness organization for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. He began his career at the Alumni Association as membership coordinator before moving to KU Endowment, where he was the development director for the School of Pharmacy and later development director and team lead for the School of Medicine. He left KU to become executive director of the Greater Kansas City Hispanic Development Fund. David currently serves on the KU Biodiversity Institute Advisory Board. As a student, he played football for

KU and twice was elected team captain. After completing his journalism degree, he earned his master's degree in education. He and his wife, Emily Jean Ochoa, m'13, are Life Members and Presidents Club donors.

Stump, b'86, is president of the law firm Lashly & Baer in St. Louis. After completing her bachelor's degree in business, she earned her law degree from Washington University in St. Louis. As an attorney, she has represented numerous educational institutions, including school districts and libraries. She also has worked with many public and government agencies, advising them on contracts, public employment, procurement, open meeting and records policies, conflicts of interest policies, and many other issues. In 2019, she was selected as a recipient of the Women's Justice Award by Missouri Lawyers Media and honored as a YWCA Metro St. Louis Leader of Distinction. She is a third-generation Jayhawk, and she and her husband, Stephen, e'85, are Alumni Association Pre-

mium Annual Members. Their four sons—Curtis, '15; Brent, b'16; Kevin, b'18, c'18, g'19; and Mark, '24—are Jayhawks.

Wise, b'80, retired as chief technology officer for Dimensional Fund Advisors. He recently completed a five-year term as the Alumni Association's representative on the KU Memorial Union board, where he helped enhance coordination and communication between the Union and the Association. He also volunteers to assist current students and fellow alumni through the Association's KU Mentoring+ program. As a student, Paul played in the KU Marching Band. He and his wife, Donna, are Life Members and Presidents Club donors, and they have a daughter, Grace, d'20.

The Association's board members also elected alumni representatives to two key campus advisory groups.

Lori Anderson Piening, b'92, of Austin, Texas, joins the KU Memorial Union board. She is president and owner of Cadence Marketing. After completing her

term on the Alumni Association's national Board of Directors, she served on the Athletics Advisory Committee, the KU Biodiversity Institute board and the School of Business marketing advisory board. She and her husband, Mark, are Life Members and Presidents Club donors. Their eldest child, Ella, '24, is a Jayhawk.

Barbara Gill MacArthur and Elizabeth Schartz will serve on the Athletics Advisory Committee. MacArthur, g'81, of Kansas City, recently retired as vice president of cardiac services for The University of Kansas Health System. She served on the advisory board for the Midwest Stem Cell Therapy Center at KU Medical Center. She is an Alumni Association Life Member, Presidents Club donor and a KU Medical Alumni Association Life Member.

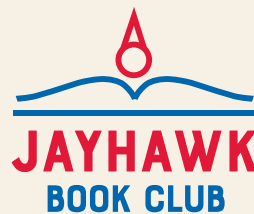
Schartz, l'88, of Dallas, is a partner in the law firm of Holland & Knight. She is an Alumni Association Life Member and a KU Endowment trustee. In addition, she serves on the business advisory board of the Big 12 Conference.

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2. Join the Jayhawk Book Club Facebook Group.

### Questions?

Contact Kelsey Galle, assistant director of Kansas City programs, at [kelseygalle@kualumni.org](mailto:kelseygalle@kualumni.org), or call 785.864.4760.



**Jayhawk Profiles**

STEVE PUPPE

**BRENDAN GALLAGHER****Kansan helps Ukrainians cope with war's toll***by* STEVEN HILL

European history has interested Brendan Gallagher since his KU days, when he made the region a focus of his studies for a history degree. Now living in Ukraine, he finds himself with a close-up view of history unfolding, his graduate work at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv interrupted by a war driven by conflicting interpretations of the past.

After President Vladimir Putin launched Russia's February 2022 invasion and his troops closed in on the capital, Gallagher joined the many Kyiv residents leaving for safer areas in western Ukraine. He went to Lviv, where he had lived for a time after moving to the country in 2015. In the city 40 miles from the Polish border, he found ways to help people fleeing the fighting in the east.

Joining forces with another American who lives full time in Ukraine, Gallagher helped organize a safe house that provides refugees with shelter, food and supplies. The work is supported by UA Lifeline, a registered Ukrainian charity.

"It's a good place for people to relax and get anything they need" before continuing their journey west, Gallagher said during a March visit to Lawrence, where he grew up. "Some stay a few hours, some a few days."

After strong Ukrainian resistance forced Russian troops to abandon their ground assault of Kyiv, Gallagher returned to the city. From there he continued to volunteer, often traveling back to Lviv. He raised money to buy bunk beds and eyeglasses for children at a hostel, and pitched in to help a theatre troupe that delivers food and other badly needed supplies to troops.

Learning that soldiers needed athlete's foot cream, he decided, "OK, I will take care of that. That will be my thing." He's since met soldiers who know him as "the American guy who takes care of our feet."

"Even these small things contribute, and

"Voicing support and understanding the importance of a free Europe to our own prosperity is very helpful to Ukraine," says Brendan Gallagher. "Free society is what Ukrainians want. They are inspired by us."

it means a lot to those people," Gallagher says. "There's a distribution network specifically focused on the military, and when I help load a station wagon that's driven straight to the front, I know that medicine will be used less than 24 hours later by people who need it."

"His hands are definitely full," says UA Lifeline founder and operating manager Robert Nuey, a U.S. Army veteran and chef from Chicago living in Lviv. "He's been in Ukraine for quite some time and formed many great friendships over the years. You see his sense of commitment to the country and these people. His heart and mind and soul are in it. It says a lot about his character that he continues to do what he can."

Gallagher, c'06, settled in Ukraine after traveling widely throughout the region.

"My dream, as a child, was to go around the world," he says. "And that's what I did."

Immediately after graduating from KU, he spent a year teaching English in Seoul, South Korea. He visited China, crossed Russia on the Trans-Siberian Railway, and in 2008 got a job teaching in Kyiv. After leaving to teach in Slovakia and Russia, he moved back to Ukraine in 2015. He earned a master's degree in international relations, social communications and regional studies at National University, where he was studying for his doctorate when the war began. In October 2022, a Russian cruise missile—one of nearly 5,000 launched on Ukraine in the war's first year—damaged the school's administration building.

His time in Russia, where he taught near the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, convinced Gallagher that war between the countries was likely, because national beliefs about the past are so incompatible.

“You’ll often hear Putin talking about their thousand-year history, and the underlying text is that the Ukrainian nation is a splinter group of the Russian nation. For Ukrainians, this is very offensive. They grew up hearing stories of a Soviet-orchestrated famine”—the Holodomor, a “murder by hunger” engineered by Soviet premier Josef Stalin to quash a Ukrainian independence movement, killing 3 to 5 million Ukrainians from 1932 to 1933. “At the root of [today’s] problem are these arguments about history.”

With a second UA Lifeline safe house now open, a food distribution and culinary center planned, and numerous “small things” still in need of attention, demand for volunteer aid remains high, Gallagher says, and probably will as long as the war continues. That could be a long time, given the determination he sees around him.

“It’s important to know this is deeper than just some political games for the elites. Regular Ukrainians are not detached from this war; they feel very much a part of what’s going on. Everyone knows someone who has died, someone who is fighting, and they have confidence in their military.

“The narrative that Ukrainians are resilient and motivated is true. They are fearful of what might happen if they don’t fight, if they don’t take a stand for their

country now. Their motivations go back to the stories their grandparents told them. Those family histories are the basis for the unity we see today.”

MYLTIN BIGHORN

## New grad hopes NFL internship inspires Native youth back home

by CHRIS LAZZARINO

As he’s done each summer since leaving for college, Myltin Bighorn was working as a ranch hand back home in Montana when he first heard about an intriguing internship opportunity. The call came from one of Bighorn’s KU mentors, First Nations Student Association adviser Melissa Peterson, who urged him to apply for the new LoneBear/H. Roe Bartle Rotational Internship with the Kansas City Chiefs.

The NFL franchise created the program, named in honor of the enduring friendship between Chief LoneBear of the Northern Arapaho Tribe and former Kansas City Mayor H. Roe Bartle, to “expand career opportunities in professional sports for individuals of American

Indian heritage” while also offering interns a platform to inform and encourage the club’s “continued efforts to engage with the American Indian community.”

Bighorn, d’22, was, at the time, a month from beginning his graduate studies in KU’s sport management program, so he saw value in spending a year inside an elite pro sports franchise; he also was wary, given concerns many have about the team’s name, logo and game day traditions.

Before agreeing to meet with the Chiefs in person, Bighorn first reached out to his friend Johnny Learned, ’76—a member of the American Indian Community Working Group that has for years counseled the Chiefs on eliminating hurtful traditions—as well as elders and family back home in Poplar, on Montana’s Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes Reservation.

“I asked them, ‘What do you guys think of this? How am I going to be received in Native country? Is it going to be seen as a token?’” Bighorn recalls. “And they gave me the greatest talk. They told me to see this as an opportunity.”

In the final days of his internship nearly a year later, Bighorn reflected on working with eight departments in the Chiefs’ organization, as well as on the thrills of accompanying the team to its Super Bowl victory in Arizona—even smooching the Lombardi Trophy on the charter flight home—and assisting with the NFL draft, which the Chiefs hosted in April.

Along with maintaining the online coursework for his KU graduate program while logging high-paced workweeks at team headquarters, Bighorn also made time to share knowledge about his Native heritage, even teaching colleagues snippets of the Dakota Sioux language.

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After a year spent working at 1 Arrowhead Drive, Myltin Bighorn had nothing but praise for the Kansas City Chiefs: “From the first day that I’ve been here, everything is genuine. Everything’s been sincere. I have all the respect for these guys, and they treated me with respect.”



MEG KOMIN/KU MARKETING

ANDREW WHITE/KU MARKETING



COURTESY KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Myltin Bighorn carrying banners that represent his life's journey: the huge Jayhawk flag at the sold-out Sept. 24 football game against Duke, and his Fort Peck Tribes flag—which he displayed in his Arrowhead Stadium office—at the Chiefs' Nov. 27 game against the Los Angeles Rams, celebrating American Indian Heritage Month. "I was timid. I wasn't really outgoing, but KU helped me embrace who I am, as a Native individual," Bighorn says. "Even though I was born and raised on Fort Peck, I didn't really learn about the culture as much as I should have. It wasn't until KU that I really took a deep dive into that."

"I saw it as a two-way street," Bighorn says. "The internship itself gave me experience in how an NFL organization is run, through each department, but I also took on a goal to present my culture with the staff, on a personal dimension. I talked to them about tradition, the cultures, and the way the truth is supposed to be out there. I kept telling them, 'Ask me anything. There's no dumb questions.' They were all open to that."

After graduating high school in Poplar, Bighorn earned an automotive technology associate degree at Montana State University Billings. Grasping that he "didn't want to work in the shop the rest of my life," he decided to "get out of my comfort zone and try something new," and chose Haskell Indian Nations University, in part because his father lives in Topeka. When he discovered that Haskell did not offer physical education, his preferred major, Bighorn promptly transferred to the Hill and embarked on yet another adventure.

"KU is a big school, a type of university that you see in the movies," Bighorn says, "and I wanted to get that experience."

Active in both the First Nations Student Association and the KU cheerleading squad—that was Bighorn carrying the

huge Jayhawk flag featured in issue No. 4, 2022, and above—he found the home away from home he'd been searching for.

"His engagement and visibility on a campus like KU has made this institution better," says Peterson, g'11, '24, "so that now students like him can come here and be supported—and *feel* supported—because folks here ... had practice with Myltin, so now they can do it."

With his yearlong access across the breadth of the Chiefs' front office and even a stint on the game day grounds crew, Bighorn will seemingly have plenty of pro sports career options once he completes his sport management master's degree next spring, but he affirms his ultimate intention to return to the Fort Peck Tribes.

Peterson explains that many Native students use a college education to inspire others and lift their communities—ideals for which Bighorn is an exemplar. He plans to teach school, coach youth sports, use his experience with the Chiefs to create programs for a new wellness center, and become a mentor who helps others find their own paths toward success.

"Humbly, to be a role model for these kids back home means everything," Bighorn says. "That's why I wake up in the

morning, that's why I have this drive, to show our youth that anything is possible. You're not bounded by these reservation lines. You can go out and do whatever you want. There's no bar set that you can't surpass and keep going, keep driving.

"I had no plans for going to the Super Bowl, and look what happened for someone who grew up where they grew up. I can prove to them that it's possible. Nothing's holding you back but yourself."

**HANNAH LASORSA**

**Entrepreneur blends love of plants, words**

by MEGAN HIRT

As the owner of a content marketing business, Hannah Kincaid Lasorsa is well versed in modern-day concepts like hashtags, page views and search engine optimization. As the owner of a plant-focused business, she also prizes a centuries-old body of knowledge and approaches her work with a reverence for the past.

"Herbalism is more of a remembering, a remnant that has been passed down through generations," says Lasorsa, j'12, who in 2020 founded Herbal Content Cottage, which helps businesses with a botanical bent create and refine their messaging. "A lot of it comes down to making sure this information—knowing how to use the plants that grow around us—isn't lost."

Through thoughtful text and elegant images, Herbal Content Cottage positions brands to better reach and resonate with interested audiences. Clients include Five Flavors Herbs, a manufacturer of plant-based medicinal formulas; Make & Mary, a line of all-natural beauty and wellness products; and Dandelion Wish Apothecary, an online tea and tincture shop.

“This industry is full of down-to-earth people who just want to spread the good,” Lasorsa says. “The idea is that with a little help telling their stories, the cool things they’re doing will take off.”

Lasorsa had long had an affinity for writing, and she devoted her years at KU to studying strategic communications in the School of Journalism. She’d always loved nature too, but pairing the two interests didn’t occur to her until her first job after graduation, as an editor for a gardening magazine. “Working on those articles, I became enchanted by the fact that we’re surrounded by all of these plants that can nourish and support us,” Lasorsa says. “It was a grounding realization; it made me feel very much at home.” She sought ways to learn even more about the plant world, and gained know-how through online courses, books and an apprenticeship with a Lawrence herbalist.

Her career blossomed, and she was eventually approached to lead Mother Earth Living, an eco-minded health and lifestyle magazine, as editor-in-chief. It was in this role that Lasorsa first took note of brands—most of them small businesses—that boasted strong products but lacked effective materials for promoting them. The idea took root for a marketing business that would cater to plant-centered products. After working Herbal Content Cottage as a side gig for about a year, Lasorsa made the leap to full time.

Now with a team of six

freelancers, Herbal Content Cottage provides clients with the necessary tools—well-crafted website text, product descriptions, photography, videos, social media posts, newsletters—to champion their goods and connect with customers.

A cornerstone of the company is Lasorsa’s photography, which showcases clients’ products and the plants at their heart. Her top advice for budding content marketers? Get comfortable behind the lens to offer a full slate of services, not just writing. She encourages targeting a specific subject matter, too, and says this is where profession and passion can meld: “Think of any brand you love, and there is someone whose job it is to write that content. Every brand out there needs a team member who can write well. Now, it’s just up to you to pick the journey you want to go on.”

An especially gratifying element of her work, Lasorsa says, is touting the utility and charms of a diversity of plants, from

spice rack staples to lesser-known species, such as motherwort for calming anxiety. She also enjoys spotlighting familiar, easy-to-grow herbs that pack a multipurpose punch. The flowers of calendula, for instance, can be used internally for digestive support (try them in tea), as well as topically, in infused oils and lotions, to soothe and replenish skin.

And while herbs are valued for their healthful and flavorful qualities, Lasorsa says they also can lead to a closer relationship with nature. “A really motivating factor for me is helping people realize they can forge a deeper connection with the plants right outside their door, and in pretty simple ways. And I hope that translates to people being more likely to conserve and be good stewards of the environment.”

Originally from the De Soto area, she now lives in northeast Pennsylvania with her husband, Jake. When she reflects on

her time at KU, what stands out most are, fittingly, scenes of Mount Oread’s natural beauty: a day spent sledding near Potter Lake, the distinct passage of the seasons, the simple splendor of a campus stroll. “I always loved spending time on campus,” Lasorsa says, “and the community and culture that Lawrence has is so special.”

MORGAN BARRETT



Lasorsa

### Hannah's easy tea for focus

- 1 teaspoon green tea leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried peppermint (*Mentha × piperita*) leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried oatstraw (*Avena sativa*) aerial parts

Combine herbs in a strainer in a teapot of your choice. Cover with just-boiled water. Cover teapot, and let steep 5 minutes. Remove strainer from teapot. Enjoy.



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Edmonds



Husmann



Neuner

DAN STOREY (3)

ASSOCIATION

**3 for the team**

THE ASSOCIATION this summer welcomed three new staff members to fulfill roles in student programs and marketing.

Ryan Edmonds, assistant director of student programs, works with the Student Alumni Endowment Board after working in new student orientation for KU. A Kansas native, Ryan returned to the state after graduating from North Carolina State University with a bachelor's degree in psychology and earning a master's degree in higher education and student

affairs from the University of South Carolina.

Noelle Husmann, marketing communications specialist, is a Fort Hays State University alumna with a bachelor's degree in communication studies. She is originally from Kearney, Nebraska, but considers Hays her Kansas hometown after living there for more than a decade. Noelle joined the Association in July.

Kate Neuner, content specialist, also joined the marketing team in July. A St. Louis native, she earned her degree in interpersonal communications with an emphasis in social media marketing from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

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## New Life Members

*The Association thanks these Jayhawks, who began their Life memberships May 1 through July 31. For information, visit [kualumni.org](http://kualumni.org) or call 800-584-2957.*

Adam Abernathy	Hannah L. Forker	Joshua A. LeClair	Brandon L. Parrott	Ernie & Keri
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J. C. Anderson	Meg Friday	Erin E. Liston	Carlyle Peterson	Jack S. Stallard
Johnathon F. Anderson	J. Jeffrey & Annette	Jianhui Liu	Emma Pinsky	Peterson Q. Stanton
Margaret E. Anderson	Glorioso Gerner	& Tingting Wang	Lindsay Plunk	Joshua J. Steinmetz & Kim
Katherine R. Barnthouse	Katelyn B. Girod	Erlenne Lohman	Ashley J. Pontuti	Carrington
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Divya R. Bhalla & James	Brendan Griswold	Margaret C. Maloney	Rahjes	Caroline E. Stuckey
Mitchell	John P. Haertling	Alison Hickman Maloy	Kent E. Rains	Afzal S. H. Syed
Emily T. Bono	Holdyn G. Halperin	Madison Mas	Justin W. Redinger	LesLee Taylor
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Samantha R. Bower	Heidebrecht	Berkley P. Matthews	Dylan M. Riley	Andru T. M. N. & BriAnna
Renz E. Breen	Michael A. & Elizabeth C.	William F. & Monica May	Joseph S. Robinow	Tovi
Douglas D. Brubaker	Hemme	Carl E. McFarland Jr.	Karryn V. Robinson	Jordan F. Toyne
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Small-group touring and the Lands Down Under are a perfect combination as you travel from Australia’s spectacular Great Barrier Reef and the Outback to sophisticated Sydney; from New Zealand’s towering Mount Cook to high-spirited Queenstown and nautical Auckland.



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by MEGAN HIRT

**1957 Marilyn Eaton Russell**, f'57, g'76, PhD'81, retired library director at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, in April received the Distinguished Service Award from the Art Libraries Society of North America.

**1968 Bill Sampson**, c'68, l'71, wrote the novel *Wheat Fields*. Published in January by Flint Hills Publishing, the book portrays athletics and academic life at KU. Bill is retired from a career in law and lives in Lawrence with his wife, **Dru Mort Sampson**, l'96.

**1969 Philip Higdon**, j'69, g'70, is of counsel at Perkins Coie in the law firm's Portland, Oregon, office.

**1970 Mary Jo Stuart Hoard**, s'70, g'72, wrote *Sacred & Settled: Spiritual Applications for Embracing Conscious Serenity*, a devotional journal. She lives in Orlando, Florida.

**1973 Cliff Illig**, b'73, is a principal owner of Sporting Kansas City, a Major League Soccer franchise, and co-founder of Cerner.

**1974 Sam Ford**, j'74, is the D.C. bureau chief at WJLA-TV in Washington, D.C., where he has worked for over 35 years. He is a found-

ing member of the National Association of Black Journalists, and in June was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Washington Pro Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists.

**Roy Oyer**, c'74, is a retired physician. He lives in Lenexa.

**Randy**, c'74, and **Martha Schinke Ragle**, d'74, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in May. They live in Durango, Colorado.

**1975 David Elkouri**, b'75, l'78, received the School of Law's Distinguished Alumni Award. He is executive vice president and general counsel at Petrohawk Energy Corp. and Battalion Oil Co. in Houston.

**Cyd Gilman**, c'75, a retired attorney, in May received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Wichita Bar Association.

**1976 Katherine Conway-Turner**, c'76, g'80, PhD'81, retired in June after nine years as president of Buffalo State University in New York and a 43-year career in higher education.

**Diane DeFever Klingman**, c'76, m'79, retired as a family physician. She lives in Wichita.

**Jerry Moran**, c'76, l'82, who has represented Kansas in the U.S. Senate since 2011,

received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Law.

**Mark Watson**, c'76, g'78, retired in May as city manager of Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

**1978 Janet Justus**, c'78, l'81, was honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Law. Throughout her career in sports law and higher education, she has worked as an NCAA senior administrator, law firm counsel, consultant and university athletics administrator.

**John Yeh**, c'78, is a business technology analyst for U.S. Bank.

**1979 Mark Kowalski**, PhD'79, m'81, in May was named chief medical officer at Eupraxia Pharmaceuticals.

**1980 Dave Giddens**, c'80, l'83, is founding shareholder of Giddens & Gatton Law in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

**Nancy Johnson**, f'80, is principal second violin in the Wichita Symphony Orchestra and adjunct instructor of violin at Bethel College in North Newton.

**1981 Jill Larson Bradney**, d'81, g'90, will be inducted into the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame Oct. 1. Jill received

All-America honors as a KU softball player and also played volleyball and basketball at the University. She is retired from a 37-year career in the Perry-Lecompton school district, where she taught at Perry Elementary and coached softball and volleyball.

**1983 Steve Lovensheimer**, c'83, is a chemist III at HF Sinclair Corp.

**1984 Mike Kelly**, c'84, g'93, is vice president of organizational learning and development at TBC Corp. in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida.

**Marsha Kindrachuk Loversky**, j'84, teaches English at Creekview High School in Canton, Georgia.

**Jeff Taylor**, j'84, in August became executive editor at The Post and Courier in South Carolina. He was previously executive editor for news and investigations at USA Today.

**1985 Denise Mears Gibson**, c'85, g'90, is director of learning and development at Mainstream Nonprofit Solutions in Topeka.

**Philip Heintzelman**, c'85, is a specialty account manager for Axsome Therapeutics. He and his wife, **Kelly O'Keefe Heintzelman**, d'86, live in Naples, Florida.

#### School codes

- a** School of Architecture & Design
- b** School of Business
- c** College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
- d** School of Education & Human Sciences
- 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

- PhD** Doctor of Philosophy
- SJD** Doctor of Juridical Science
- (no letter)** Former student
- assoc.** Associate member of the Alumni Association



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**Susan Parrish Jensen**, b'85, retired as professor of management at the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

**Mark Keeny**, c'85, is CEO of Citizens Bank of Kansas, where he has worked for 30 years. He lives in Wichita.

**1986 Diane Fitzcharles Covello**, e'86, is clinical professor of law at the University of Connecticut and a patent attorney with the law firm Alix, Yale & Ristas.

**Erin O'Shea Sneller**, j'86, lives in Corvallis, Oregon, where she is associate director of events and production at PRAX, the Patricia Valian Reser Center for the Creative Arts at Oregon State University. She and her husband, **Steven**, c'83, c'83, g'85, have two grown children.

**Paul Wuennenberg**, a'86, a principal at KWK Architects in St. Louis, received the Outstanding Corporate Friend Award from the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International. He has designed student housing and dining facilities on over 50 college campuses.

**1987 Stephen Johnson**, f'87, f'87, created the children's book *My Big Silver Rocket Ship*, published in April by Simon & Schuster. A prolific artist, he is the author of several interactive children's books and teaches illustration and animation in the School of Architecture & Design.

**David Rankin**, d'87, owns RankinOrgans150, an organ dealership, and tunes and services pipe organs through-

out Kansas. He is the director of music and organist at First Presbyterian Church in Ellsworth.

**Alan**, c'87, g'88, and **Gayle Miller Sims**, c'77, live in Cedar Hill, Texas, where Alan is retired as city manager and serves on the city council. Gayle is president of the board of the Cedar Hill Independent School District.

**Candace Stowell**, g'87, is planning director for the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony in Nevada.

**1988 Jeffrey Coldren**, g'88, PhD'92, received the James P. Tressel Endowed Chair in Leadership Award at Youngstown State University in Ohio, where he is chair of the department of psychological sciences and counseling.

**Alison Young**, j'88, a veteran investigative reporter, wrote the book *Pandora's Gamble: Lab Leaks, Pandemics, and a World at Risk*, published in April.

**1989 Tim Barton**, b'89, in May joined the logistics technology company Onepak as strategic adviser.

**Jenn Johnson**, j'89, was named interim director of the Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute, where she has held various leadership roles since 2020. She is retired from a 22-year career with the Kansas City, Kansas, Fire Department.

**Scott Kreamer**, l'89, is a trial attorney and managing member at the law firm Baker Sterchi Cowden & Rice in Kansas City.

**KU Alumni Member Exclusive**

# The Classic HAT for every Jayhawk



Add to your fall fashion with this classic Jayhawk hat from the KU Alumni Association and Sandlot Goods. From the Booth to the backyard, these exclusive hats offer timeless style and incredible comfort.

The vintage Jayhawk script and 1923 mascot give a classic feel to a hat made of thoroughly modern moisture-wicking materials. Each hat is cut and sewn in Kansas City by Jayhawks for Jayhawks.

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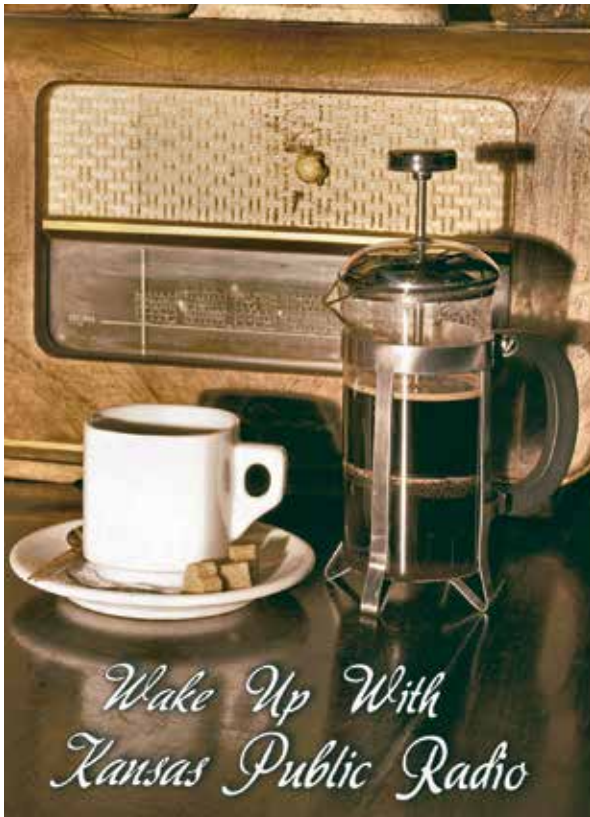
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**Joel Rhodes**, d'89, is professor of history at Southeast Missouri State University.

**Daniel Wethington**, e'89, is senior project manager at ZFI Engineering Co. in Oklahoma City.

**1990 Janet Cinelli**, j'90, is executive director of the Al & Sharon Cinelli Family Foundation. She lives in Lawrence with her husband, **Eric Ryan**, c'92, g'95, who is the foundation's deputy executive director.

**Stacy Schreiner**, c'90, retired as principal of Landon Middle School in Topeka. She worked for Topeka Public Schools for 30 years.

**Enrique Suarez**, a'90, is co-CEO of the architecture and engineering firm HED. He lives in Chicago.

**1991 Adam**, p'91, and **Sandie Durlinger Kueker**, p'98, in July purchased Trapp Pharmacy in Abilene from longtime owner **Leonard Schmitz**, p'76. The Kuekers also own and operate pharmacies in Hesston and Newton.

**Debbie Cawley Moeller**, l'91, joined the Kansas City law firm McDowell Rice Smith & Buchanan as partner.

**Susan Novak**, g'91, PhD'12, was awarded the title of professor emerita from the State University of New York at Potsdam, where she taught journalism, media law and public relations before her retirement in 2022.

**Carolyn Yatsook**, c'91, in May was named economic development director for the city of Kearney, Missouri.

**1992 Chuck Baldwin**, c'92, is a field account specialist for HD Supply. He lives in Fort Myers, Florida, and was a volunteer with Rebuild SWFL on Hurricane Ian cleanup.

**Jason Glidden**, c'92, is a senior vice president in the corporate banking division at U.S. Bank. He and his wife, Kim, recently relocated from Denver to Washington, D.C.

**Jennifer Mead Hoyt**, b'92, directs marketing for the printing company Stouse.

**Julia Mathias Manglitz**, e'92, g'99, is senior architect at Quinn Evans.

**Sarah Mason Sears**, f'92, is founder and principal of S Design, a branding and marketing consultancy. She lives in Oklahoma City.

**Karin Brondell Tollefson**, PharmD'92, is senior vice president and head of global medical affairs at Seagen Inc.

**Paul Torline**, l'92, is a member at Lewis Rice and chairs the real estate department in the law firm's Kansas City office.

**1993 Stefan Cox**, b'93, is general manager of the entertainment venue Spare Time Texas in Pflugerville, Texas.

**James Holt**, c'93, c'93, is senior counsel at Koch Engineered Solutions in Wichita.

**Charlie Hunt**, d'93, g'00, in April was appointed director of the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment.

**1994 Kevin Admiral**, c'94, a major general in the U.S. Army, in July took command of the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Cavazos, Texas.

**Jennifer Sundgren Brull**, c'94, m'98, is a family physician in Plainville and vice president of clinical engagement for Aledade, a network of primary care providers.

**Chelan David**, j'94, wrote *Beautiful States of Mind*, a memoir about traveling to all 50 states with his two teenage daughters. He lives in Overland Park and is development director at Lead to Read KC.

**Brandon Sanders**, c'94, g'98, a jazz drummer, released his debut album, "Compton's Finest," in August. He is a social worker and counselor in New York City.

**1995 Sandy Wilder Evers**, d'95, is principal of Oak Mountain Middle School in Birmingham, Alabama.

**1996 Marc Havener**, c'96, president of Resonate Pictures, in June won national gold and silver American Advertising Awards for cinematography and editing, respectively, for an ad the company created showcasing an earthwork installation in Washington by Lawrence artist Stan Herd, '86. Marc and his wife, **Jenea Hooge Havener**, c'98, live in Lawrence and have three children, Luke, Lily and Mae.

**1997 Jim Becklenberg**, g'97, is Littleton, Colorado, city manager.

**David Broz**, a'97, is a visiting professor of design at Columbia College Chicago.

**Garrett Lindemann**, PhD'97, is director of life sciences at Ramaco Carbon. He lives in Big Horn, Wyoming.

**Cynthia Patane**, c'97, is a partner at Gordon & Rees law firm in Phoenix.

**Cathy Theisen**, l'97, is a Douglas County District Court judge.

**1998 Andre Graham**, m'98, is a general surgeon with North Texas Surgical Specialists.

**Michael Gratz**, c'98, is chef and pitmaster at Prairie Fire, a Kansas City-inspired barbecue restaurant in London that he founded in 2013.

**Jason Stein**, c'98, is vice president and research director at the Wisconsin Policy Forum.

**1999 Jill Mohrman Ehnes**, b'99, is president of Delta Faucet Co.

**Evan Schmidt**, c'99, is CEO of Valley Vision, a civic leadership organization in Sacramento, California.

**Paul Woelk**, c'99, g'04, was promoted to senior vice president of cable operations business planning at Charter Communications.

**2000 Ryan Bartlett**, c'00, PhD'07, in July was named chief technology officer at the food and agriculture company Pairwise.

**Bob Bishop**, b'00, is vice president of product management at Oracle in Kansas City.

**Mike Eber**, c'00, is a partner at the law firm Caplan Cobb in Atlanta. He and his wife, Alison, have two daughters.

**Rebecca Shore**, c'00, g'05, lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she is lead program therapist at Children's Minnesota.

**Alan Tipp**, f'00, is an industrial designer and the founder of ATIPPICAL design studio in Omaha, Nebraska. He has designed products for Under Armour, Lands' End, Dick's Sporting Goods and other prominent brands and retailers.

**2001 Scott Filmore**, b'98, l'01, is senior director of private client services at RSM. He lives in Bloomington, Minnesota.

**Catherine Licata**, c'01, was promoted to associate professor of cinema and media studies at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota.

**Chris Stoppel**, b'01, g'02, EdD'23, is director of budget and financial planning at the Colorado School of Mines.

**2002 Rich Federico**, l'02, a federal public defender and captain in the U.S. Navy Reserve, has been nominated by President Joe Biden to serve

on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit.

**Kyle Krueger**, d'02, g'03, is general manager of the University of Montana's Grizzly Sports Properties.

**Eric Tadda**, j'02, directs marketing for Joe's Kansas City Bar-B-Que.

**2003 Alison Anway**, l'03, chairs the health policy advisory group for Ballard Partners, a government relations firm.

**Yasmeen Coleman-Rhinehardt**, c'03, is a clinical pharmacy technician II at Option Care Health in Overland Park.

**Anthony Corporon**, l'03, is senior counsel at MetLife Investment Management in Overland Park.

**Mark Gencarelli**, c'03, and his wife, Marissa, are the founders and owners of Yoli Tortilleria in Kansas City. In June, the tortilla bakery won Outstanding Bakery in the 2023 James Beard Awards, among the highest honors in the culinary industry.

**Jennifer Huang**, c'03, m'07, is a pediatric cardiologist and associate professor at Oregon Health & Science University in Portland.

**Julee Schreiber Koncak**, j'03, director of the Burns & McDonnell Foundation, was named one of Kansas City Business Journal's 2023 Next-Gen Leaders.

**2004 Heather Hunt Frayre**, c'04, an immigration attorney, was elected member at Dickinson Wright in the law firm's El Paso, Texas, office.

**Nick Hobbs**, c'04, is an associate professor in the department of biology at the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

**Breva Rose Spencer**, s'04, is the maternal and child health supervisor for the Riley County Health Department.

**2005 Alysen Stockinger Abel**, g'05, g'18, joined the engineering firm Garver as a municipal team leader in its transportation division. She lives in Overland Park.

**Natalia Leistner**, n'05, g'10, founded CASA Medical in Lawrence.

**Beth Hall Martino**, g'05, in May was named president and CEO of Three Square Food Bank, which serves southern Nevada. She and her husband, **Stephen**, c'95, j'96, live in Las Vegas.

**2006 Ben Lowenthal**, l'06, is a deputy public defender in Maui County, Hawaii.

**Lindsay Bruce Navarre**, c'06, n'14, is a nurse practitioner. She and her husband, Chance, live in Gainesville, Florida, and have a daughter, Katerina, and son, Elliot.

**2007 Lauren Akitake**, l'07, an attorney in private practice in Wailuku, Hawaii, was appointed to the University of Hawaii Board of Regents for a five-year term by Gov. Josh Green.

**Eric Avery**, c'07, is the producing artistic director at AlterTheater in San Rafael, California.

**Emily Knopp Hood**, d'07, g'09, is a physical therapist at UT Health San Antonio. She has four children, Brooks, Nora, Collins and Adeline.

**Nicholas Tejada**, g'07, is western region group president for Tenet Healthcare, overseeing operation of 17 hospitals





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## Commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice, July 1953

All proceeds from the KU Vets Day 5K support the KU Veterans Alumni Network, the KU Student Veterans of America chapter and the Lt. Gen. William K. Jones Military-Affiliated Student Center.

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Register at [kuvetsday5k.com](http://kuvetsday5k.com)



in Texas, New Mexico and California. He and his wife, **Elena Keefe Tejada**, c'05, live in El Paso, Texas.

**2008 Stanley McClurg**, m'08, is an otolaryngologist at Ascentist Healthcare in Merriam.

**Amelia McConnell**, g'08, is the business manager for Sisler Builders in Stowe, Vermont.

**Destaney Sperry**, j'08, is a morning executive producer at ABC15 Arizona in Phoenix.

**2009 Belinda Bagby**, n'09, g'14, is a psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner at PrairieStar Health Center in Hutchinson.

**Stephanie Winn Putzke**, g'09, is a principal and director of interior design at the archi-

itecture firm Cyntergy in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

**Darcey Rapp Schumacher**, g'09, is a structural engineer and principal at Wallace Design Collective in Kansas City.

**2010 Alessandra Ainsworth**, c'10, m'14, is an obstetrician-gynecologist and director of patient experience at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

**Michael Draper**, a'10, c'10, is principal analyst of regulatory services for the Mammoth Community Water District in Mammoth Lakes, California.

**Patrick Johnson**, g'10, associate professor of psychology at Chico State University in California, in April was honored with the university's

Outstanding Faculty Service Award.

**Spencer Lott**, c'10, and **Grace Townley-Lott**, s'10, g'11, are the founders of Simple Mischief Studio, a puppet design and performance business. The studio's clients have included HBO Max, Nickelodeon and TriStar Pictures. Spencer has performed as a puppeteer in numerous TV shows and films, including "Sesame Street," "Saturday Night Live" and "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood."

**Melody Morgan**, g'10, is development officer for the Association of Health Care Journalists.

**2011 Marie Biggs**, c'11, j'11, is a director of engagement strategy at Fishawack

Health. She lives in Seattle.

**David Cohen**, b'11, g'12, is vice president of accounting at Alaska Communications.

**Stacey Michaelis Dimitt**, m'11, is a family doctor, obstetrician and chief of staff at Cibola Family Health Center in Grants, New Mexico.

**Alyssa Johnson**, a'11, an artist and graphic designer, owns After Another Studio and recently debuted a home decor collection at Target.

**Michael Kennedy**, PhD'11, is professor of special education at the University of Virginia.

**Peter Uritis**, c'11, is an enterprise account executive with ORO Labs. He and **Alex Beshk Uritis**, c'12, live in Kansas City, where she is an events manager for Sierra



The advertisement features a blue background with a crowd of fans. At the top center is the Kansas Jayhawk logo. Below it, the text "KANSAS FOOTBALL" is written in white, spaced-out capital letters. A large red banner across the middle contains the text "TICKETS ON SALE NOW" in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below the banner, the text "CALL 800-34-HAWKS OR VISIT KUATHLETICS.COM" is written in white. At the bottom center is a QR code that, when scanned, likely leads to the ticketing website.

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Winter Jewelry. They have two children, Hattie and Harrison.

**Cassie Wilson**, c'11, g'14, is a meteorologist at KSHB 41 News in Kansas City.

**2012 Cat Ward Carothers**, c'12, owns The Selby House, a vintage furniture studio in Dallas.

**Christi Davis Delaroy**, j'12, g'16, directs marketing and brand strategy for the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City.

**Trisha Horsley**, PhD'12, in May was named dean of the school of nursing at Texas A&M University.

**Michelle Jantzen**, n'12, lives in Aurora, Colorado, where she is a pediatric clinical nurse specialist at Children's Hospital Colorado.

**Seth Johnson**, b'12, is global director of sales and marketing at Zochem, a chemical manufacturing company.

**Kelli Blacklock Llorence**, a'12, g'14, is a designer III at Perkins&Will in Dallas.

**Beth Newton Rankin**, d'12, g'15, PhD'21, is an assistant professor in the college of education at Oregon State University.

**2013 Arthur Ankeney**, c'13, m'19, is an emergency medicine physician at Blessing Health System in Quincy, Illinois.

**Jenny Conforti Brcic**, g'13, lives in St. Louis, where she is a project manager at Srote & Co Architects.

**Mike Cappo**, l'13, a partner at the law firm Shook, Hardy

& Bacon, was named one of Ingram's Magazine's 2023 "40 Under Forty" honorees. He and his wife, Elizabeth, live in Kansas City.

**Brooke Estell**, c'13, g'19, is associate creative director at Conscious Minds Studios.

**Thea Glassman**, c'13, an entertainment journalist, wrote the book *Freaks, Gleeks, and Dawson's Creek: How Seven Teen Shows Transformed Television*, published in June.

**Katherine McBride Goyette**, l'13, is a staff attorney with the Conservation Law Foundation in Boston.

**Katie Murphy Hershon**, m'13, is medical director of outpatient clinics at Service-Net, a nonprofit mental health and human services organization in Massachusetts.

**Matt Keane**, l'13, a lieutenant colonel in the Kansas Army National Guard, in June took command of the 235th Regiment in Salina.

**Michael Carver Kirwan**, c'13, lives in Chicago, where he is a property tax manager at RWE Clean Energy.

**Kim Hopewell Knackstedt**, g'13, PhD'18, is a senior fellow at The Century Foundation and director of its Disability Economic Justice Collaborative.

**Christal Lloyd**, c'13, is a member of the New Hampshire House of Representatives. She and her husband, Joseph, have a daughter, Olivia.

**Zack McQuiston**, c'13, j'13, is a marketing transformation manager at Accenture in Chicago.

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**Luke Nitchals**, b'13, is a finance manager at Amazon.

**2014 Kaitlin Lugo Shulman**, d'14, is diversity, equity and inclusion coordinator for the Shawnee Mission School District.

**Kathryn Smith**, p'14, PharmD'16, is an emergency medicine clinical pharmacist at UCHealth Medical Center of the Rockies in Loveland, Colorado.

**2015 Ashley Booker Brunhoeber**, j'15, is marketing manager at Keycentrix, a pharmacy software company in Wichita.

**Ryan Falk**, g'15, is an architect at Hoefer Welker in Leawood. He and his wife, **Molly Foltz Falk**, c'14, have three children, Weston, Emma and Bennett.

**Kyle Grose**, p'15, PharmD'16, is a pharmacist with The University of Kansas Health System. He and his wife, **Carlie Thomas Grose**, d'16, have a 1-year-old daughter, Molly.

**Kelsey Hagan**, g'15, PhD'20, is a clinical psychologist and assistant professor in the department of psychiatry at Virginia Commonwealth University.

**Amanda Parks Witthaus**, e'15, is a manager in the networks, integration and automation department at Burns & McDonnell. She and her husband, **Eric**, e'13, live in St. Louis.

**2016 Sage Morander D'Amico**, b'16, is a senior account manager at Moxie Communications Group. She lives in Providence, Rhode Island.

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**Madeline Dickerson Gonser**, c'16, j'16, is the protection order project coordinator for the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence.

**Allison Kite**, j'16, a reporter for The Missouri Independent and Kansas Reflector, received the 2023 William E. James Outstanding Young Journalist Award from the Missouri Press Association.

**Cassidy Ritter**, j'16, covers technology for the Denver Business Journal.

**2017 Bradon Bitter**, m'17, is a general surgeon at Newman Regional Health in Emporia.

**Walter Cayce**, j'17, is a communications adviser at ConocoPhillips in Houston.

**Maddie Dobyns**, c'17, g'19, g'19, a former KU soccer play-

er, in June was named assistant women's soccer coach at the University of Kentucky.

**John Killen Jr.**, b'17, was promoted to director of marketing at Fanatics Inc. He lives in Tampa, Florida.

**Leah Speaks**, m'17, is a general surgeon with Salina Regional Surgical Associates.

**2018 Ashton Fee**, b'18, is a business account manager at Fee Insurance Group in Hutchinson.

**Charlie LaBarr**, c'18, is vice president of multifamily investments in the Kansas City office of Colliers International.

**Faith Ries**, j'18, is associate communications manager for the video game developer Naughty Dog.

**BriAnna Dittberner Tovi**, c'18, is a registered nurse with

The University of Kansas Health System. She and her husband, **Andru**, c'21, live in Olathe.

**2019 Abdelaziz Alloghani**, e'19, is a drilling engineer with Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. in the United Arab Emirates.

**Devan Burris**, j'19, is a digital producer at CNBC in New York City.

**Cody Campbell**, c'19, is an intermodal business manager for Alliance Shippers. He lives in Shawnee.

**Katelyn Crim**, b'19, is an assistant in the business office at The Feathered Nest, a home furnishings store in Belleville.

**Matthew Hanson**, e'19, is a mechanical engineer at WSP. He lives in Minneola, Florida.

**Mariah Jones-Greif**, m'19, practices obstetrics and gynecology at Mowery Women's Clinic in Salina.

**Tony Raper**, e'19, is a dentist at Lawrence Dental Center. He and **Sarah Stuhlsatz Raper**, d'19, have a 1-year-old daughter, Brooklyn.

**Joseph Stroud**, n'19, DNP'23, is an advanced practice registered nurse at HealthCore Clinic in Wichita.

**2020 Michael Jenia**, e'20, is a product engineer at MSE Audio, a speaker design and manufacturing company based in Lenexa.

**Arun Nair**, g'20, g'21, is a solutions architect manager for Amazon Web Services.

**Brett Sitts**, l'20, directs career services in the School of Law.



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### 2023 Homecoming Schedule

#### Homecoming Kick-Off

**Monday, Oct. 23**

**5:30 to 7 p.m.**

Jayhawk Welcome Center  
front lawn, patio and lobby

#### Sign Competition

**Monday, Oct. 23, to**

**Friday, Oct. 27**

**Noon to noon**

Jayhawk Welcome Center

#### Homecoming Awards Banquet

**Tuesday, Oct. 24**

**6 to 7:30 p.m.**

Jayhawk Welcome Center,  
The Pub and Bruckmiller Room

#### Chalk 'n' Rock

**Wednesday, Oct. 25**

**10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Wescoe Beach

#### Jayhawk Jingles

**Thursday, Oct. 26**

**6 to 8 p.m.**

Kansas Memorial Union,  
Woodruff Auditorium

#### Home Football Friday: Homecoming Edition

**Friday, Oct. 27**

**1 to 3 p.m.**

Jayhawk Welcome  
Center front lawn

#### Homecoming football game vs. Oklahoma

**Saturday, Oct. 28**

**Time TBD**

David Booth Kansas  
Memorial Stadium

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**2021 SJ Gulick, c'21, c'23**, is an outreach coordinator for the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

**August Johanson, b'21**, is a relationship manager at the software company Sprinklr. He lives in Austin, Texas.

**Elise Kratz, g'21**, is a special education teacher in the Goddard Unified School District. She and her husband, Jeremiah, live in Wichita and have four children, Josh, Emma, Maddie and Nathan.

**James Lang, b'21**, is a senior business analyst for Atmosphere TV. He and **Abigail Veneziano Lang, c'21**, live in Austin, Texas, and have a son, Louis.

**Peyton Pender, l'21**, is an associate attorney at Horn Aylward & Bandy in Kansas City.

**Jordan Vitt, b'21, g'22**, a tax

specialist with Glass Consulting in Lawrence, in May was named one of 50 winners of the Elijah Watt Sells Award from the American Institute of CPAs, presented to the top national scorers on the Uniform CPA Examination.

**2022 Gabriel Altenbernd, g'22, g'22**, is Belleville, Wisconsin, village administrator.

**Erin Bradley, g'22**, is a community engagement coordinator for Front Porch Alliance, a nonprofit serving east Kansas City, Missouri.

**Megan Hatfield, g'22**, is assistant director of education and leadership initiatives for Alpha Chi Omega sorority. She lives in Kansas City.

**Rebecca Kramer, EdD'22**, is superintendent of the

South Brown County Unified School District.

**Luke Sunderland, l'22**, practices law in Sabetha.

**Evan Svetlak, e'22**, is a process engineer at HF Sinclair Corp. She lives in El Dorado.

**Cole Young, b'22**, is an investor relations associate at Griffis Residential in Denver.

**2023 Patrick Anderson, g'23**, is treasury manager at Amgen, a biotechnology company. He and his wife, Richelle, live in Lutz, Florida.

**Seth Dibble, e'23**, is a process engineer at Kiewit.

**Alexis Getzel, b'23**, is an audit assistant at Deloitte.

**Devin Gouger, e'23**, is an engineer I at Atkins Global.

**Jack Heller, a'23, g'23, g'23**, is an architectural project

coordinator at CLB Architects in Bozeman, Montana.

**Kristin Kaipust, j'23**, is strategic communications coordinator for the Kansas Water Office.

**Trevor Kohl, e'23**, is a mechanical engineer at Kiewit.

**Joseph McClain, e'23**, is an assistant chemical engineer at Burns & McDonnell in Kansas City.

**Lauren Nelson, c'23, j'23**, is media coordinator at Trozzolo Communications Group in Kansas City.

**Sophia Peterson, c'23**, is a behavioral health specialist at Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center in Lawrence.

**Alyssa Wingo, j'23**, is a writer at Rank Fuse Digital Marketing in Overland Park.

**1940s Robert Banker**, c'49, Lenexa, 96, May 16. Bob, a U.S. Navy veteran, worked for Black & Veatch for 42 years, retiring as a partner. His wife, Nancy, preceded him in death.

**Joseph Gray**, c'44, St. Joseph, Missouri, 100, June 17. Joe served in the U.S. Navy and founded Gray Manufacturing, a shop equipment company. His wife, Anne, preceded him in death.

**Elizabeth "Betty" Abels Hazlett**, c'42, g'63, Lawrence, 102, May 30; and **Emerson Hazlett**, b'48, g'64, Lawrence, 98, June 18. Betty taught high school English and journalism. Emerson, a World War II veteran, taught junior high, high school and college.

**Patricia Coolidge Kidder**, b'47, Denver, 96, Sept. 4, 2022. Pat and her late husband, Robert, owned Bob Kidder Ski Shop in Denver.

**Janice Jacobs Klein**, '48, Tribune, 95, Oct. 18, 2022. Janice worked as an X-ray technician and clinical assistant at Greeley County Hospital. Her husband, William, preceded her in death.

**Lawrence Lehman Jr.**, c'49, Greenville, Alabama, 96, Oct. 26, 2022. Larry, a World War II veteran, was a carpenter and woodworker. He was preceded in death by his wife, Janice.

**Marvin Martin**, c'49, '50, Wichita, 97, Sept. 1, 2022. Marvin served in the U.S. Air Force and practiced law for over 40 years. His first wife, Ellie Churchill Martin, c'48, and second wife, Joan, preceded him in death.

**Jobelle Anderson Shands**, c'43, Madison, Wisconsin, 101, Oct. 22, 2022. Jobelle was a teacher and nature guide. Her husband, H. L., preceded her in death.

**1950s Larry Baker**, b'57, '60, Denver, 86, Oct. 16, 2022. His wife, Lona Soice Baker, d'57, preceded him in death.

**Dolores "Dodie" Myers Brown**, d'54, Kansas City, 90, Aug. 1. Dodie was an actress and performed on Kansas City stages for over 50 years. Her husband, Robert, c'57, preceded her in death.

**Donald Carey**, d'53, g'59, Missoula, Montana, 91, Sept. 28, 2022. Donald, a U.S. Army veteran, was a choral conductor and music educator. He is survived by his wife, Charlene Campbell.

**Frank Chesky**, c'55, m'59, Newton, 89, Nov. 26, 2022. Frank served in the U.S. Army and Army Reserve and practiced psychiatry for over 30 years. His wife, Sondra Long Chesky, c'56, preceded him in death.

**Irvin Chronister**, g'58, Kansas City, 97, Dec. 9. Irvin served in the U.S. Navy and was an engineer with Kansas City Power and Light Co. His wife, Betty Park Chronister, j'51, preceded him in death.

**Thomas Clevenger**, b'57, Dallas, 87, Nov. 1, 2022. Tom was a bank president and served on the boards of several organizations in Topeka and Wichita. He is survived by his wife, Linda.

**Joseph Cox**, b'55, g'70, Golden, Colorado, 89, Nov. 13, 2022. Joe worked in the petroleum business for 30 years and, with his late wife, Charlene Welsh Cox, '70, ran several antique stores.

**Mona Ratzlaff Crump**, d'50, Lawrence, 94, Dec. 5. Mona and her late husband, John, '49, were longtime diplomats with the U.S. Foreign Service.

**Alice Eastwood Davis**, c'55, Irvine, California, 89, Oct. 29, 2022. Alice was a technical editor in the aerospace industry. She is survived by her companion, Jack Minney.

**Joann Bowman Duncan**, '56, Naples, Florida, 88, Dec. 18. Joann worked at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City for over 20 years. Her husband, Marty, b'50, preceded her in death.

**Calvin Engelmann**, c'53, m'57, Prairie Village, 90, Nov. 2, 2022. Calvin, a U.S. Army veteran, practiced medicine for over 30 years. His wife, Anneliese Schnierle Engelmann, b'53, preceded him in death.

**Joanne Beal Feist**, c'58, Lawrence, 85, Oct. 31, 2022. Joanne managed the office of a law firm.

**Phillip Friedeman**, c'59, Lawrence, 85, Dec. 30. Phil was a minister and facilitated bereavement support programs. He was preceded in death by his wife, Patricia.

**Richard Gier**, c'54, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 90, Dec. 3. Richard was a family physician and psychiatrist. His wife, Ruth, preceded him in death.

**Esther Brown Giffin**, '54, Prairie Village, 90, Dec. 24. Esther volunteered with many organizations in the Kansas City area. She was preceded in death by her first husband, Gordon Atha, '51, and second husband, Donald, c'51, '53.

**John Hedrick**, b'58, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, 86, Dec. 2. John worked for IBM and was later a business consultant. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jan Rodgers Hedrick, d'60.

**Donald Herrman**, c'50, g'61, St. Simons Island, Georgia, 95, Dec. 9. Don served in

the U.S. Navy and Army and was a city manager in several states. His wife, Virginia, preceded him in death.

**Robert Hovey**, c'53, '54, Mission Hills, 91, Dec. 11. Bob practiced law for 50 years. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Carol, and is survived by his second wife, Eugenia.

**Charles Janik**, c'57, Corona, California, June 7, 2022.

**Richard Jones**, b'52, d'60, Wheeling, West Virginia, 91, Aug. 26, 2022. Dick, a U.S. Air Force veteran, was an FBI special agent and an investigator for various federal and state agencies. He is survived by his wife, Cheryl.

**Mary Swedlund Knudten**, c'57, New Berlin, Wisconsin, 87, Oct. 23, 2022. Mary was campus dean and CEO of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee at Waukesha.

**Carol Krehbiel Kreischer**, c'52, h'54, Saline, Michigan, 92, Feb. 25. Carol was a medical technologist and later worked as a travel agent. Her husband, Larry, preceded her in death.

**Charles Lindberg**, c'50, '54, Bethel, Connecticut, 93, July 6, 2022.

**Norman Love**, c'59, Estes Park, Colorado, 87, Nov. 16, 2022. Norm worked for Xerox Computer most of his career. He is survived by his wife, Jackie.

**Robert Macy**, j'59, Las Vegas, 85, Nov. 11, 2022. Robert worked for the Associated Press for nearly 30 years and was the agency's longtime Las Vegas correspondent. He is survived by his wife, Melinda.

**Sally Anderson Martell**, d'58, Topeka, 86, Nov. 5, 2022. Sally taught elementary school. She is survived by her husband, John.

**Virginia Osborne McAdoo**, c'50, San Juan Capistrano, California, 94, Sept. 29, 2022. Her husband, Norman, b'51, preceded her in death.

**Belden Mills**, c'56, g'61, Wichita, 88, Nov. 23, 2022. Belden was president and CEO of Wilko Paint and active in Music Theatre Wichita. He is survived by his wife, Anna Wilson Mills, c'58.

**Edward Moody**, c'57, Kansas City, 91, Dec. 25, Ed, a U.S. Army veteran, was an entrepreneur and owned several businesses. His wife, Donna, preceded him in death.

**Sally McKernan Nousek**, c'54, Chagrin Falls, Ohio, 91, April 10. Sally was a pathology laboratory technician and was involved with the ALS Association. Her husband, James, preceded her in death.

**Sue Summerville Padgett**, f'56, Lawrence, 89, April 16. Sue founded the Friendship Club at Citizens National Bank and received the Mildred Clodfelter Alumni Award for her volunteer service to KU. She is survived by her husband, Gary, b'55.

**Robert Parman**, m'54, Topeka, 96, July 7. Bob was a pediatrician and lifelong advocate for children's welfare issues. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Arlene Mohler Parman, n'54, and is survived by his second wife, Frances.

**Gerald Peterson**, c'50, Flagstaff, Arizona, 96, Nov. 9, 2022. Gerald, a U.S. Navy veteran, worked for the U.S. Geological Survey and was later a partner in a civil engineering and land surveying business.

**Eldon Savage**, c'50, Fort Collins, Colorado, 96, Oct. 7, 2022. A U.S. Navy veteran, Eldon worked for the U.S. Public Health Service and was later a

professor at Colorado State University. His wife, Ella Nail Savage, p'46, preceded him in death.

**Caryl Dillon Sills**, d'58, Greeley, Colorado, 86, Dec. 9. Caryl was a kindergarten teacher. She is survived by her husband, Ted, c'57, m'62.

**Frank Spurney Jr.**, c'56, l'58, Belleville, 87, Feb. 23, 2022. Frank, a U.S. Air Force veteran, was a lawyer and served as Republic County attorney. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jean.

**Jean Letteer Stewart**, c'54, Bath, Maine, 90, Oct. 25, 2022.

**Richard Stilley**, b'59, Olathe, 85, Oct. 27, 2022. Dick served in the U.S. Army Reserve and worked for various retailers throughout his career, retiring as a vice president at Halls. He is survived by his wife, Patricia.

**Carl Supplee**, f'59, Plano, Texas, 90, May 28. A U.S. Army veteran, Carl worked most of his career for Rexnord, retiring as regional sales director. His wife, Linda, preceded him in death.

**William Turner**, e'53, Kansas City, 93, Nov. 5, 2022. Bill, a U.S. Air Force veteran, was a building official for the cities of Kansas City, Missouri, and Merriam. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Joette, and is survived by his second wife, Arlene.

**Margaret "Marge" Walker**, d'57, Pittsburg, 87, June 8. Marge taught elementary school. Her husband, Bud, b'56, preceded her in death.

**Charles Wheeler**, m'50, Kansas City, 96, Oct. 25, 2022. Charles, a physician and judge, served as mayor of Kansas City, Missouri, and later as a state senator. He was a U.S.

Navy and Air Force veteran. His wife, Marjorie Martin Wheeler, n'49, preceded him in death.

**Marianne Anderson Wilkinson**, c'57, g'64, Lawrence, 87, Nov. 5, 2022. Her husband, John, preceded her in death.

**1960s Stephen Ashcraft**, p'69, Hutchinson, 76, Nov. 8, 2022. Steve was a pharmacist and founded Ashcraft Pharmacy in Hutchinson. He is survived by his wife, Jacquelyn Andrews Ashcraft, d'69.

**Serean Griesel Borcharding**, d'64, Kansas City, 80, Oct. 17, 2022. Serean was an art teacher and taught for over 20 years in the Shawnee Mission School District. She is survived by her husband, Larry, b'63.

**JoAnn Navarro Cloninger**, '61, Overland Park, 82, Dec. 11. JoAnn sold Tupperware for over 50 years. She was preceded in death by her husband, Jerry, f'69.

**Sara Clawson Colt**, d'61, g'64, Mission Hills, 83, Nov. 7, 2022. Sara volunteered with several organizations in the Kansas City area. Her husband, Mack, b'61, l'64, preceded her in death.

**Paul Coulter**, PhD'65, Medina, Ohio, 84, Sept. 8, 2022. Paul worked at Union Carbide Corp. for 30 years, retiring as vice president of technology. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Geraldine, and is survived by his second wife, Victoria.

**Mike Deer**, c'64, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 82, Dec. 25. Mike played football at KU and later opened an insurance agency. He is survived by his wife, Rita Harrington Deer, c'65.

**Sandra Lohr Flachsbarth**, d'62, Lawrence, 82, July 14. Sandra taught in the Lawrence school district for many years. Her husband, Leland, d'64, preceded her in death.

**Ralph Hall**, c'63, Ivins, Utah, Oct. 3, 2022. He is survived by his wife, Judith Hackett Hall, '63.

**James Hills**, d'62, g'69, EdD'72, Lawrence, 88, May 25. Jim, a U.S. Air Force veteran, was a teacher and administrator and later a professor at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence. He is survived by his wife, Clenece Roberts Hills, d'62, g'77.

**Robert Hodgdon**, b'61, Shawnee, 84, Jan. 14. Bob served in the U.S. Air Force and spent his career with Hodgdon Powder Co., serving as the gunpowder company's president for over 20 years.

**Delano Lewis Sr.**, c'60, Las Cruces, New Mexico, 84, Aug. 2. Delano was president of NPR and later served as the U.S. ambassador to South Africa. He received the Distinguished Service Citation from KU and the Alumni Association and was also honored by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the KU Black Alumni Network. He is survived by his wife, Gayle Jones Lewis, '58.

**Charles Long**, PhD'63, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, 86, March 1, 2022. Charles, a U.S. Army veteran, was a professor of biology for 30 years at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. His wife, Claudine, preceded him in death.

**Harrison Long Jr.**, c'69, Irvine, California, 75, May 8, 2022.

**Kenneth Martinez**, d'60, g'66, EdD'71, Lawrence, 87, June 5. Ken and his wife,

Sheila Olsen Martinez, d'66, g'68, EdD'75, founded A.S.K. Associates, an IT support services and conference management company. He was a U.S. Army veteran.

**Dan Matthews Jr.**, b'60, Waipahu, Hawaii, 83, Feb. 14, 2022. Dan served in the U.S. Air Force.

**Susan Shotliff Mattingly**, c'63, Edmond, Oklahoma, 81, Nov. 2, 2022. Susan was professor emeritus of philosophy at Lincoln University in Missouri. She was preceded in death by her husband, Richard, c'60.

**Robert Murray**, b'60, Columbia, Missouri, 84, May 24, 2022. Bob served in the U.S. Marine Corps and founded a health care accounting and consulting firm. His wife, Carolyn Braun Murray, d'62, preceded him in death.

**Douglas Neckers**, PhD'63, Perrysburg, Ohio, 84, Nov. 22, 2022. Doug, a pioneer in 3D printing technology, was a professor of chemistry at Bowling Green State University and later founded Spectra Group. His wife, Sue, preceded him in death.

**Michael Quinlan**, e'60, Parkville, Missouri, 86, April 19. Michael was a structural engineer for over 40 years and worked on many buildings in the Kansas City area.

**William Robinson**, c'67, g'72, PhD'76, Chicago, 76, Nov. 7, 2022. Bill was professor emeritus of communication at Purdue University Northwest. He is survived by his wife, Jean Hardy Robinson, c'67, g'69, g'73, PhD'77.

**Raymond Ross**, b'60, g'66, Colorado Springs, 85, Dec. 18. Raymond worked for Colorado Interstate Gas Co. as a certified public accountant. He is survived by his wife, Barbara.

**Larry Shankles**, e'69, Topeka, 76, June 5. Larry was a bridge engineer for the Kansas Department of Transportation for 40 years.

**George Smith**, b'60, Prairie Village, 85, Jan. 1. George worked in industrial engineering consulting and served in the U.S. Army Reserve for 20 years. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn Malcolm Smith, '61.

**Kent Staab**, '63, Phoenix, 83, May 15. Kent played football at KU. His wife, Joni, preceded him in death.

**Ray Stroup Jr.**, e'64, Lafayette, Louisiana, 80, June 17. Ray, a U.S. Army veteran, was vice president of marketing for Stuller, a jewelry manufacturer, and later taught at the University of Louisiana. He is survived by his wife, Pamela Stone Stroup, d'65.

**Jane Welchons Twibell**, d'66, Oro Valley, Arizona, 78, Dec. 10. She is survived by her husband, Tony, '67.

**Delwin Weightman**, b'62, La Jolla, California, 83, Nov. 22, 2022. A U.S. Air Force veteran, Del worked for Kaiser Aluminum for over 30 years and was later a manufacturer's representative for various metal distributors. He is survived by his wife, Maryl.

**Tracey West**, c'61, Loveland, Colorado, 83, Nov. 10, 2022. Tracey, a U.S. Army veteran, was a civilian contractor with the Defense Intelligence Agency.

**Phyllis Wood Wheeler**, f'66, Naperville, Illinois, 79, Jan. 1. Phyllis was a piano accompanist for many organizations in Naperville. She is survived by her husband, Richard, e'66.

**Delbert Williamson**, '60, Wellington, Florida, 83, Oct.

24, 2022. Del worked for General Electric for 45 years, holding various executive positions in the company. He is survived by his wife, Barbara Ossian Williamson, d'63.

**Harry Wilson**, b'66, Marshall, Missouri, 81, Jan. 5. Harry was an insurance agent and served as mayor of Grandview, Missouri, for 20 years. He is survived by his wife, Linda.

**1970s Hank Booth**, '70, Lawrence, 77, July 7. Hank, a U.S. Army Reserve veteran, was a prominent broadcaster in Lawrence, hosting a daily radio show for 50 years and serving as an announcer for KU sports and Lawrence High School football. He is survived by his wife, Sue Shumate Booth, '74.

**Paul Bradshaw**, c'71, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 75, June 1. Paul worked in contract sales for Sears for over 25 years. He is survived by his wife, Mary Sunderland Bradshaw, '69.

**Kay Bradt**, c'72, Lawrence, 72, Oct. 28, 2022. Kay worked at Baker University in Baldwin City for 40 years, eventually serving as director of libraries. She is survived by her husband, George Wiley.

**Kathleen Johnson Brann**, h'77, Arlington, Texas, 67, Jan. 2. Kathy was a physical therapist and seamstress. She is survived by her husband, Ben, c'76.

**Ingrid Ellis**, s'79, Kansas City, 66, June 23. Ingrid was a social worker and alcohol and drug counselor and later worked as a gardener.

**Thomas Gleason Jr.**, j'70, l'73, Lawrence, 74, June 15. Tom practiced law in Lawrence and Ottawa. He is survived by his wife, Ann Gardner, j'75.

**Charles "Jim" Haug**, PhD'76, Starkville, Mississippi,

76, Sept. 16, 2022. Jim was professor emeritus of history at Mississippi State University. He is survived by his wife, Ruth Severson Haug, g'78.

**Margaret Heitland**, d'74, Lenexa, 70, Oct. 13, 2022.

**Lewis Ketcham**, j'71, Louisville, Kentucky, 74, Dec. 27. Lew, a broadcast journalist, was a longtime host for C-SPAN. He is survived by his wife, Barbara.

**David Lutz**, '78, Lawrence, 88, June 18. A U.S. Air Force veteran, Dave was a motion picture sound engineer and later worked for the KU Life Span Institute.

**Charlotte Wiley McDonald**, d'77, g'83, Seattle, 70, Nov. 4, 2022. Charlotte was an elementary school science teacher and served as science coordinator for the Blue Valley School District for many years. She is survived by her husband, Harry, '80.

**Donald Moss**, PhD'74, Lawrence, 86, Sept. 2, 2022. Don served in the U.S. Army and was a clinical psychologist. He is survived by his wife, Madelyn Minnich Moss, d'77, g'86.

**Richard Mundis**, c'70, m'74, Leawood, 74, Dec. 13. Richard practiced medicine for 37 years, many at the KU Cancer Center. He is survived by his wife, Mary Nagy.

**Edward Nelson**, PhD'75, Covington, Louisiana, 75, Oct. 1, 2022. Edward served in the U.S. Army Reserve for over 40 years and was a professor at Southeastern Louisiana University. He is survived by his wife, Dorothy.

**David Petrie**, e'75, g'76, Cunningham, 70, Dec. 20. David worked for General Electric and was later in IT consulting.

**Donald Raybern**, s'75, g'76, Lawrence, 77, Dec. 11. Donald was a school social worker and special education paraprofessional. He is survived by his wife, Shari Vick Raybern, d'70.

**Rodney Smith**, p'78, Olathe, 67, Nov. 6, 2022. Rodney was a pharmacist and owned the Medicine Shoppe in Lawrence and Hutchinson. He is survived by his wife, Roxanne.

**Perry Sprague**, d'70, c'76, Wichita, 75, Oct. 1, 2022.

**Glenn Tucker**, g'78, PhD'80, Denver, 74, Feb. 8, 2022. Glenn, a U.S. Army veteran, worked for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. His wife, Janice Rahmeier Tucker, n'73, preceded him in death.

**Joseph Waxse**, c'75, e'80, Olathe, 71, Nov. 4, 2022. Joe was an engineer, project manager and consultant. He is survived by his wife, Marianne.

**Don Williams**, PhD'75, Nashville, Tennessee, 75, Aug. 31, 2022. Don was a flavor chemist for Frito-Lay and McCormick. He is survived by his wife, Susan.

**Genevieve Wolff**, g'74, g'86, Olathe, 91, Dec. 14. Genevieve taught French at Olathe North High School and Johnson County Community College. Her husband, Robert, g'85, PhD'89, preceded her in death.

**1980s Nancy Bjorge**, '83, Lawrence, 83, Jan. 5. Nancy was a teacher, realtor and origami artist. She is survived by her husband, Gary.

**Stephen Blackwell**, c'82, Lawrence, 67, Sept. 15, 2022. A U.S. Army veteran, Steve worked for the Kansas Foundation for Medical Care for 29 years. He is survived by his wife, Jeanie Brown, p'87, g'97, PharmD'11.

**Lloyd Dethloff**, c'80, Killingworth, Connecticut, 68, May 8.

Lloyd worked in pharmaceutical drug safety for 30 years. He is survived by his wife, Genie.

**Luanne Moehlman Loggan**, c'81, n'84, Kansas City, 64, July 11, 2022.

**Jack Turcotte**, c'87, g'90, Topeka, 71, July 30, 2022. Jack was a field analyst for NCR Corp. and later a purchasing and inventory manager. He is survived by his wife, Patricia McCoy Turcotte, '80.

**1990s Kari Torkelson Anderson**, d'93, g'99, Leavenworth, 51, March 19. Kari was a teacher and high school counselor. She is survived by her husband, Brian.

**David Vaughn**, '98, Lawrence, 55, June 14. David was on the KU baseball team and later worked as a financial adviser. He is survived by his wife, Laura.

**Maureen Wener**, c'96, Deerfield, Illinois, 49, June 2. Maureen served on the boards of the Deerfield school district and public library. She is survived by her husband, Paul Rundell.

## UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

**Robert Casad**, c'50, g'52, Lawrence, 93, April 21. Bob, a U.S. Air Force veteran, was a professor in the School of Law for 38 years. He was preceded in death by his wife, Sarah McKeighan Casad, '92.

**Steven Colson**, PhD'88, Kansas City, 72, May 26. Steve was a professor of special education and worked at the University for 29 years. He is survived by his husband, Tom Blake.

**Paula Courtney**, b'87, Lawrence, 72, May 15. Paula worked at KU for 37 years and was director of the College

of Liberal Arts & Sciences' digital media services.

**David Dinneen**, g'54, Lawrence, 91, May 12. David was a professor of French and linguistics at the University for four decades. His wife, Nancy Lane Dinneen, g'55, PhD'72, preceded him in death.

**Wakefield Dort Jr.**, assoc., Lawrence, 99, May 13. Wake, a U.S. Marine veteran, was professor emeritus of geology and worked at KU for over 35 years. He was preceded in death by his wife, Doris.

**Diane Whitaker Ebbert**, g'89, PhD'07, Tonganoxie, 66, June 7. Diane, a family nurse practitioner, was a professor in the School of Nursing. She is survived by her husband, Joe, l'82.

**Sam Enna**, Mission Hills, 78, June 15. Sam was a professor of pharmacology and physiology at KU Medical Center, where he worked for nearly 30 years. He is survived by his wife, Colleen.

**R. Vance Hall**, assoc., Seattle, 94, May 20. Vance was a professor of applied behavioral science and directed KU's Juniper Gardens Children's Project for 25 years. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Alice, and second wife, Marilyn Hawkins Hall, g'66, EdD'75.

**Monsignor Vince Krische**, assoc., Lawrence, 84, May 13. Monsignor Vince served as director of the St. Lawrence Catholic Campus Center for 28 years.

**Anthony Redwood**, Alamo, California, 88, April 28. Tony was professor emeritus of business and worked at KU for over 20 years. He is survived by his wife, Mollie.

**Marion Temple**, assoc., Lawrence, 90, June 11. Mari-

on, a U.S. Army veteran, worked for KU Student Housing for 20 years. His wife, Opal Martin Temple, g'74, preceded him in death.

**Keith Tennant**, Vero Beach, Florida, 80, Jan. 13. Keith was professor emeritus of health, sport & exercise sciences. He is survived by his wife, Laurie.

**Theodore Wilson**, assoc., Lawrence, 82, May 6. Ted worked at KU for 49 years and was professor emeritus of history. His wife, Judy, '67, preceded him in death.

**Robert Zerwekh**, assoc., Lawrence, 84, May 5. Robert was a professor in the School of Engineering for 39 years. He is survived by his wife, Marilyn Bevan Zerwekh, d'72.

## ASSOCIATES

**Janie Noll Denzel**, assoc., Kansas City, 68, Nov. 27, 2022. Janie worked nearly 40 years in the insurance industry. She is survived by her husband, Bob, c'77.

**Carol Hester**, assoc., Kansas City, 74, March 12, 2022. Carol worked in life insurance sales and marketing. She is survived by her husband, Duke.

**Charles Hughes**, assoc., Olathe, 71, May 16. Charlie worked in banking and for State Farm. He is survived by his wife, Susan.

**Joan Meyer**, assoc., Marion, 98, Aug. 12. Joan worked in numerous roles at the Marion County Record for nearly 60 years and was co-owner of Hoch Publishing Co. Her husband, Bill, j'48, preceded her in death.

**William Moffett**, assoc., Lenexa, 98, Dec. 26. Bill, a World War II veteran, was a bank founder and president. His wife, Nancy Brown Moffett, c'45, preceded him in death.



BLOOMING FLOWERS,  
a burbling fountain and  
quiet streets make for a  
peaceful midsummer  
evening on Mount Oread.

PHOTOGRAPH BY  
STEVE PUPPE







welcomes campus visitors young and otherwise, arms spread wide, happy and joyful and everything a Baby Jay should be. Please drop by and say hello, and, of course, pose for pics with the darlinest, dancingest li'l statue you'll ever see.

But please also allow those of us of a certain generation—the aforementioned “otherwise”—to also retain our affection for our aerie’s other statue, the stoic Eulich Jay, of 1983 vintage, which has been slightly repositioned yet retains its perch of pride. Few children have ever danced in its stern shadow, but it is a comfort to know there’s an adult watching over things out front of the Adams Alumni Center and its dazzling new neighbor, the Jayhawk Welcome Center—even if Baby Jay gets all the Instagram love.

—CHRIS LAZZARINO

TRADITION

## Well, hey there, sweet Baby Jay!

*Alumni Association unveils first campus statue of the cutie in our mascot flock*

UNDER A GENTLE, robin’s egg sky reflecting off the glass facade of the jazzy new Jayhawk Welcome Center, the school year on Aug. 18 took its first bouncy steps: “Horns ... are ... up!” commanded Marching Jayhawks drum major Rachel Rellihan, “... and ... ‘Fighting!’”

And so boomed the stirring return of “Fighting Jayhawk”—the leadership pep band’s first publicly performed song of the semester—followed by “Kansas Song” and “Sunflower Song,” all while Baby Jay bopped and cheerleaders cheered.

With Traditions Night festivities beckoning down the Hill, Alumni Association President Heath Peterson, d’04, g’09, offered a snappy speech, thanking donors William E. Roskens, j’86; Brenda Roskens Dicus, b’83; and Barbara Roskens Blount, j’81. The bronze bird is a memorial to their late nephew, Daniel Torson, c’10.

Then, in a matter of minutes, it was time for the unveiling. Assisted by student

officers of the Homecoming Steering Committee and Student Alumni Endowment Board, Baby Jay pulled away a crimson-and-blue cover to reveal: Baby Jay!

The first Baby Jay statue anywhere—by Oregon sculptor Alison Caswell—now



DAN STOREY (3)





# *WELCOMING the NEXT GENERATION of JAYHAWKS*

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is a privilege.  
I never forget that.”

- **Becky N. Lowry, MD**  
Physician, Internal Medicine

For me, there's nothing more rewarding than the meaningful connections I make with my patients. Maybe it's growing up in a small town where those personal values remain strong. Or maybe it's the belief, shared with all of my co-workers, that people come first. Whatever it is, the opportunity to provide care is a privilege I never forget.

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