

BRIDGE BUILDER
Advocate Cynthia Bryant

MURDAUGH MURDERS
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kansasalumni

ISSUE 1 | WINTER 2024 | \$7

New Perspective

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Talk and squawk in the news



“I don’t think Allen Field House is that hard of a place to play. The problem is, they make you play Kansas when you come here.”



STEVE PUPPE

—College basketball analyst Jay Bilas during men’s basketball’s Jan. 22 home game against Cincinnati. The Jayhawks prevailed 74-69 in the ESPN Big Monday matchup.

COURTESY BLAKE WOOLBRIGHT



“3 people in this picture went to KU. The rest are just great folks.”

—Blake Woolbright, e’02, in a December Reddit post sharing that his wife, Kathryn Brown Woolbright, c’07, has built a devoted Jayhawk fandom in San Francisco, where they’ve lived for 12 years. The flock gathers at Red Jack Saloon—which hangs a “Pay Heed” banner—for potlucks and KU gamedays.

COURTESY ERIKA NELSON (2)



“I create my small versions as a way to capture some of the magic and wonder that I feel at the embracing of whimsy on such a grand scale.”

—Artist Erika Nelson, g’01, on the motivation behind her “World’s Largest Collection of the World’s Smallest Versions of the World’s Largest Things,” in a January article in Smithsonian Magazine. Nelson crafts mini versions of jumbo roadside attractions—such as Otto the Otter in Fergus Falls, Minnesota—and displays them in her museum in Lucas.

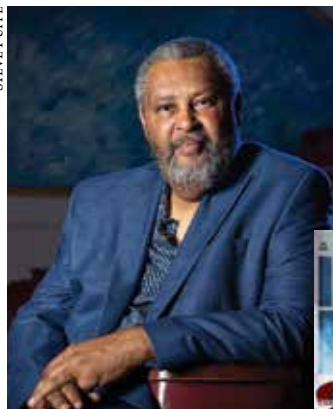


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STEVE PUPPE



“I was hoping it showed what they went through—to put a human face on the guys. The movie clearly educated people.”

—Oscar-winning screenwriter Kevin Willmott, professor of film & media studies, discussing his 2020 film “The 24th,” which tells the story of the 24th Infantry Regiment, a Black U.S. Army unit that mutinied in response to harassment and abuse in Jim Crow-era Texas during World War I. In November, the Army overturned the convictions of 110 Black soldiers who participated in the 1917 revolt, 19 of whom were executed.





COVER STORY

Resilient and Sustainable

Focusing on needs rather than wants, the latest campus master plan establishes the playbook for Mount Oread's evolution.

by Chris Lazzarino

Cover photograph by Andy White



The Translator

As an advocate for The Seeing Eye, Cynthia Bryant draws on her professional and personal experience of bringing separate worlds together.

by Steven Hill



'The Truth Matters More Than Anything'

Determination fueled Mandy Matney's pursuit of the real story behind the Murdaugh murders—and her decision to carve out a career in journalism.

by Megan Hirt



WINTER 2024

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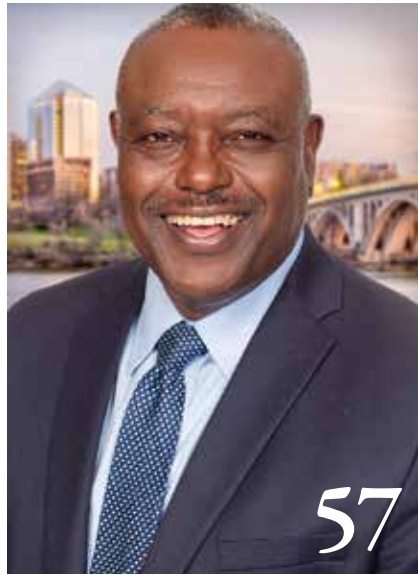
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Profile: Sam Ford

A TV newsman wraps up a decorated career that spanned a half-century of change.

by Steven Hill



Hail to Old KU

Our cups ranneth over: Cheers to bygone football fun.

by Chris Lazzarino

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Kansas Alumni welcomes letters to the editor. Our address is *Kansas Alumni* magazine, 1266 Oread Avenue, Lawrence, KS 66045-3100. Email responses may be sent to the Alumni Association, kualumni@kualumni.org. Please limit your comments to 350 words. Letters appearing in the magazine may be edited for space and clarity.

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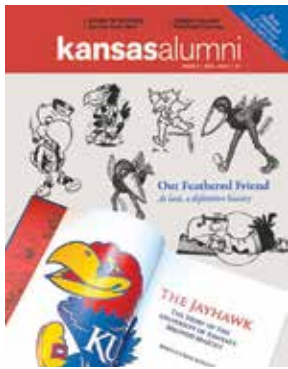
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Cruising with Big Jay

THANK YOU for the expansive article about Rebecca Ozier Schulte's book, *The Jayhawk: The Story of the University of Kansas's Beloved Mascot* ["At Long Last," issue No. 4, 2023]. It was most informative.

I was privileged to wear the Jayhawk mascot costume from September 1959 through May 1962. In fact, I stored the costume on the third floor of my fraternity house and transported it to all home basketball and football games. At the time, I drove a 1957 Corvette with no top, so it was always fun to place the costume in the passenger seat and "parade" to the games.

I have great memories of trips to Nebraska, Oklahoma and Missouri. After all these years, I still feel so honored to have been a small part of the promotion of our University.

—John McCartney, c'62
Rocky Mount, North Carolina

Mom would be proud

I READ WITH great interest the article "Life, Amplified" in the fall issue of *Kansas Alumni* about KU audiologist Jessica Whitfill Johnson.

My mother, Miriam Levitt Krantz, was the first audiologist hired by KU Medical Center, in 1947. Her annual salary was \$2,400, and her apartment rent on The Plaza was \$30.

Mom worked at KUMC until the birth of her first child in 1953, and she returned to work part time in 1965, when I started school. As a full-time instructor in KUMC's department of speech and hearing from 1968 until her retirement in 1988, she mentored graduate students and directed the Parent-Home Center, a program to optimize the development of young hearing-impaired children.

Mom was a pioneer in the field of speech pathology and audiology, having received her master's degree from the University of Iowa in 1947. She would've been so proud to read the wonderful article in the alumni magazine.

—Rachel Krantz, c'82
Leawood

Mag-nificent!

I AM BLOWN AWAY by the increasing excellence of *Kansas Alumni*. Wow! The fall 2023 number is awesome.

After graduating from KU, in 1967 I became editor of *Cordon*, the monthly magazine of the National DeMolay Organization in Kansas City. In 1984 I became business manager for LEADERS magazine, based in New York City. So you understand my interest in awesome magazine publishing.

Kansas Alumni is a great promotional and recruitment piece for KU, as well as

providing lots of interesting reading. And lots and lots of advertisers. Nice!

Please keep up the great work!

—Dennis Daugherty, c'64, d'65
Utica, New York

THANKS FOR YOUR great magazine! It's a great read cover to cover. Not every word or every article of course, but plenty of interesting, well-written content, and it seems to be getting better all the time.

The fall cover story on the history and mystery of the Jayhawk answered a big question with fascinating reading and great graphics. We have all wondered and never known!

The stadium photo in "First Glance" takes us right on site, and "Banner year" tells a great story of record enrollment. I also appreciated "Accidents happen," the review of Alison Young's book, *Pandora's Gamble*, on biolab leaks—a serious presentation in a critical field, and the last line is all too true for all sorts of endeavors: The enemy is us! "Hooray for teacher" highlights nice recognitions of our faculty.

I also noted the plaque commemorating Western Civ in "Gone but not forgotten." My engineering study provided few hours of electives, which were taken by ROTC, so I quit ROTC and started grabbing other stuff: history of art, business accounting, geology and a few others, creating my own version of liberal arts.

Thanks for it all, and for the upward trend of content and presentation. Well worth the read, every time.

—Fred Buchanan, e'57
Vail, Arizona

The jazz was jumpin'

THE RECENT ARTICLE on Brandon Sanders ["Beat of a Different Drum," issue No. 4, 2023] reminded me of the many excellent late-1950s jazz musicians on the Hill—some of whom attained national prominence.

Saxophonist Gary Foster, f'59, d'61, migrated to California and a decades-long recording and performance career, often with Cal Tjader.

Keyboardist Charles Kynard, d'59, settled on Hammond organ and recorded often with Les McCann.

Saxophonist Nathan Davis' fiery quintet included trumpeter Carmell Jones, '62; pianist Elaine Acres; bassist-vocalist ("Elderly Man River") Danny Gomez, d'59, g'64; and drummer Delano Lewis, c'60. Davis, d'60, recorded several albums and worked with Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. Jones performed and recorded extensively with Bud Shank, Harold Land and Jimmy Heath. One of his albums was "Jayhawk Jump!"

Has anyone considered compiling a history of jazz at KU? We heard some great music.

—Jeff Reynolds, c'60, m'64
Fargo, North Dakota

Editors' note: Nathan Davis was profiled in "A Study in Jazz" in issue No. 5, 2013. Carmell Jones' posthumous album, "Carmell Jones Quartet: Previously Unreleased Los Angeles Session," was reviewed in issue No. 5, 2015. Not a comprehensive history, but it's a start.

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EXP 12/24

GAUTAM SUNDARAM, who knows his way around many university campuses, is smitten with Mount Oread. “Every time I’m walking on Jayhawk Boulevard, I pinch myself,” the Boston-based architect told students, faculty and staff Nov. 17, as he finished presenting the 2024 edition of KU’s master plan. “I can’t believe I’m here, working with all of you on this amazing campus.”

As a principal in the firm Perkins & Will, Sundaram has devoted more than 20 years to helping universities create master plans. For nearly two years, he and his team have explored the Hill, learning how Jayhawks traverse the campus every day. Their process and their innovative plan, both true departures from previous renditions, are the focus of our cover story.

Each time Sundaram returns to Lawrence, he relishes morning or evening walks. “I always feel humbled,” he told *Kansas Alumni* in early January. He calls the boulevard the “civic heart” of campus, a distinction confirmed by the team’s research. “It’s not just what I felt,” he says. “It’s what the entire community said.”

But access to our cherished boulevard is not easily available to all. Steep staircases, lack of shade, harsh stretches of concrete and dim nighttime lighting behind some buildings keep some Jayhawks away from the heart of campus. The master plan envisions accessible outdoor havens for learning, collaboration, rest and reflection that will solidify the sense of community and add new vibrance to traditional campus hangouts, including the spot known for decades as Wescoe Beach. (Sundaram, who grins at the absurdly affectionate nickname but after two years can almost say it with a straight face, says Wescoe Hill will be even better than the beach.)

The updated campus plan also features a new data dashboard that will help leaders wisely manage excess space and scarce



ANDY WHITE/KU MARKETING

resources and make tough decisions to help Mount Oread flourish for many more decades.

The University’s long-term health and the need for access inspire another ambitious, far-reaching project: Jayhawk Global, a new hub for online offerings, including academic courses and degree programs plus noncredit options for employee training and professional development. Jayhawk Global serves students who yearn to learn from KU faculty but are stymied by geography, time and many other barriers. As our story on p. 10 explains, the online center provides access to all who want to be part of the community, and it will help KU navigate the dramatic demographic upheavals that threaten traditional higher education.

Jayhawk Global, the campus master plan and other strategic ventures also exemplify the good stewardship that should be the calling of all Jayhawks.

We must continue to demonstrate the countless ways in which public and private investments in the University provide essential, invaluable returns—by strengthening KU’s power to lift individuals, families and society.

As increasing numbers of critics doubt the value of higher education, we must continue to demonstrate the countless ways in which public and private investments in the University provide essential, invaluable returns—by strengthening KU’s power to lift individuals, families

and society. As a research university, KU fuels the workforce and the economy, and its faculty and students make discoveries that treat illnesses, protect the environment, enhance development across the life span, increase safety and security, and help us affirm and enrich human connections in the digital age.

Those whose lives have been transformed by KU are our alma mater’s best advocates—as volunteers for Jayhawks for Higher Education (kualumni.org/jhe), the Alumni Association’s network of alumni and friends who communicate with Kansas legislators, or as ambassadors who assist KU Admissions and the Association in recruiting students. By supporting bold new programs and sharing our own KU stories, alumni can help ensure that the University thrives far into the future, continuing to change lives and serve the state, the region and the world for generations to come.

—JENNIFER JACKSON SANNER

FIRST GLANCE

CRIMSON AND BLUE PRIDE reached a fever pitch during player introductions before the KU-MU game Dec. 9, when the Kansas men trounced Missouri, 73-64. The electric atmosphere, the Jayhawks' rousing performance and the return of Thomas Robinson, former Big 12 Player of the Year and consensus All-American, combined to create classic Allen Field House memories. Robinson, c'23, celebrated with his family and grateful fans during halftime as his jersey ascended to the rafters. Before the game, T-Rob summed up the fierce rivalry for current players: "It's personal."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
STEVE PUPPE





Jayhawk Global strives to increase the enrollment revenue that is vital to KU's strength and financial health by delivering KU's acclaimed teaching and student support services to new students far beyond Lawrence and Overland Park—while preserving the missions of the two locations.



PUBLIC DOMAIN PICTURES

ACADEMICS

Education evolution

Jayhawk Global expands KU's reach through online courses, degrees, and other offerings that span the learning continuum

LEARNERS OF ALL AGES, in all places, and in all stages of their professional and personal lives now can access the University's online undergraduate and graduate courses and degree programs—as well as certificates and professional training and development—through one central entry point: Jayhawk Global (jayhawkglobal.ku.edu). The ambitious venture promises to “meet learners where they are” by uniting and streamlining online offerings and student support services led by faculty and staff of the Lawrence campus and KU Edwards campus in Overland Park.

Last fall, more than 1,100 students enrolled in online courses through Jayhawk Global, and the website currently lists more than 150 offerings (see box, p. 12), including the School of Journalism's online master's degree in digital and online marketing communications, which Forbes recently named among the best online marketing master's programs for 2024.

Jayhawk Global began in early 2022, when Barbara Bichelmeyer, provost and executive vice chancellor of the two campuses, designated the project as a key initiative of the Jayhawks Rising strategic plan, following months of study by deans and vice provosts, who thoroughly evaluated all of KU's online courses, many of which had

launched in 2020 after the pandemic forced KU to close campuses and move classes online.

Jayhawk Global strives to increase the enrollment revenue that is vital to KU's strength and financial health by delivering KU's acclaimed teaching and student support services to new students far beyond Lawrence and Overland Park—while preserving the missions of the two locations.

“We want to make sure that we continue to keep what I call the ‘research residential experience,’ which is the Lawrence campus, as robust as it can possibly be—and to fill the Hill with students who are able to and want to have that experience,” says Bichelmeyer, j'82, c'86, g'88, PhD'92.

Last fall's record-setting freshman class of 5,259 new Jayhawks is testament to KU's successful student recruitment, bucking regional and national

trends. But maintaining enrollment will become far more difficult in 2026, when all of higher education faces the dreaded “enrollment cliff,” the gloomy name for the dramatic plunge in the population of high school graduates that will occur 18 years after birth rates fell during the Great Recession.

“If we know that we're going



Bichelmeyer

to be working hard just to keep that enrollment steady as the demographic cliff comes,” Bichelmeyer says, “then we have to ask ourselves, ‘Where are other opportunities for our growth?’”

Bichelmeyer identifies three opportunities for growth beyond the Lawrence campus. First, there are those she calls “learn and earn” experiences at KU Edwards campus. “We must make sure we’re meeting the workforce development needs of the state and particularly of the Kansas City region,” she says.

The second opportunity is to develop more online offerings, and the third is to develop competency-based programs, she adds.

In February 2022, Bichelmeyer named Michelle Mohr Carney as founding vice provost to lead the launch of Jayhawk Global. Carney retained her role as dean of the School of Social Welfare.

Carney came to KU as dean in 2017 from Arizona State University, where she directed the School of Social Work and led a team that created a new online master’s degree in social work. In only three years, ASU’s online master’s program grew from 25 students to 900.

“We did a lot of research, and we didn’t just put the curriculum that was already existing online,” Carney recalls. “We built a curriculum that we felt filled the gaps, with faculty support and doing field education all over the world.”

Drawing on her ASU experience, along with KU’s record of providing master’s programs in social work in other Kansas communities, including Garden City and Salina, Carney and her KU team created online master’s and doctoral programs as the first degrees offered through Jayhawk Global. The demand for master’s in social work degrees is high, she says, “because our students work full time. Many are juggling family life. So not having to travel is key.”

In addition to new online courses and degree programs, Jayhawk Global unites long-standing noncredit KU programs for professional development and training.

“We’ve done professional continuing education at KU for 100 years,” Carney says. “We’ve certified firefighters, and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute has been part of KU for many years. We think of Jayhawk Global as learning across the continuum, from basic training to a doctoral degree in education or social work and everything in between. And because it’s all housed under the umbrella of Jayhawk Global, there’s synergy and we can be agile.”

Carney credits KU partners in the academic units, enrollment management, academic success, student support services, and instructional design for collaborating to create the new hub.

“Our instructional designers help ensure that online courses are fun, engaging and thoughtful,” she says. “A student knows exactly how to work through a course, and the faculty member has the support. The faculty member remains the content expert, but instructional design is a critical piece to ensure the content is high-quality and engaging.”

From the outset, Carney and Bichelmeyer had agreed that Carney’s role as founding vice provost would be temporary.

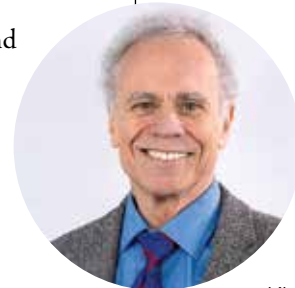
By last fall, the team had completed the assignment to build what Carney describes as “pretty sturdy scaffolding” for Jayhawk Global, and she was ready to focus solely on her role as dean of social welfare. She concluded her Jayhawk Global duties on Dec. 31, and Bichelmeyer appointed Neal Kingston to succeed her as vice provost of Jayhawk Global and Competency-Based Education.

Kingston, who first joined the KU faculty in summer 2006, retains his role as Distinguished Professor of Educational Psychology and director of KU’s Achievement and Assessment Institute, where researchers have guided assessments for the state of Kansas for more than 40 years. Since 2010, KU also has created Dynamic Learning Maps Alternate Assessments for 23 state departments of education, a project funded by a \$22 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Kingston and Carney co-chair KU’s Quality Initiative in preparation for the 2025 accreditation review by the Higher Learning Commission (which



Carney



Kingston

“We think of Jayhawk Global as learning across the continuum, from basic training to a doctoral degree in education or social work and everything in between. And because it’s all housed under the umbrella of Jayhawk Global, there’s synergy and we can be agile.”

—Michelle Carney





Belinda Sturm, professor of civil, environmental & architectural engineering and director of the Kansas National Science Foundation EPSCoR Program at KU, was named interim vice chancellor of research in November. She will serve as the University conducts a national search to replace Simon Atkinson, who left last fall for a similar role at the University of California, Davis. Sturm, who previously worked in the Office of Research as associate vice chancellor, studies the application of biological processes in environmental engineering for public health protection.

occurs every 10 years), and they collaborated on the Center for Certification and Competency-Based Education (C3BE). Kingston will lead the Jayhawk Global team in developing new, competency-based courses, slated to begin in 2025, which will be delivered under the brand name Jayhawk Flex.

Competency-based education serves people whose lives require more flexibility than traditional on-campus programs or even online courses, Kingston explains. “There are all sorts of people who can’t predict in advance that they’re going to be available at 3:00 on Wednesday,” he says, “whether it’s because they’re caring for an aging parent, or they have a young child, or they have physical conditions or a chronic illness and they don’t know if they’re going to have a good day on Wednesday or a bad day on Wednesday—or they’re working in a job and if a project comes along, hell or high water, that project has to be completed.”

KU’s version of competency-based education, which Kingston also refers to as “asynchronous direct assessment,” frees students not only from place, but also from time, he adds. They enroll in entire programs rather than individual courses, working at their own pace to master a certain number of competencies, advancing from one skill to the next as they demonstrate mastery based on assessments. Students also can advance based on their prior learning or experience, he says: “Whether you were in the military, working on a job, had a hobby, or just had an interest on your own, you deserve just as much credit—if you can demonstrate at the same level of anyone else who’s enrolled in the program.”

Kingston’s C3BE research teams will continue their studies of learning and assessments, and those studies will inform the competency-based programs that are added to Jayhawk Global, he says.

Bichelmeyer emphasizes that Jayhawk Global will help fulfill the vision of KU that guides the Jayhawks Rising strategic plan: “an exceptional learning community that lifts each member and advances society.”

“We’re all engaged in learning together,” she says, “and the kind of format in which that learning occurs should be as variable as the kind of people who want to be connected.

“If we have a great curriculum in cybersecurity, we shouldn’t just be delivering it on the Hill. We should be delivering it through workforce development programs at Edwards and through online graduate programs and through noncredit-bearing programming and through competency-based

education for military people or for whoever has worked in the field, because the demand is so great.”

In addition to offering education to meet society’s pressing challenges and increase enrollment revenue, Jayhawk Global will expand KU’s learning community to include students who have not yet participated, Kingston says.

“To me, the leading reason is that there are potential learners who have not been able to access higher education and the opportunities it brings,” he says, “so the University can do well by doing good, and that is a confluence that does not always occur. We’re not going to ignore that opportunity.”

—JENNIFER JACKSON SANNER



Jayhawk Global

THE UNIVERSITY’S education innovation center includes more than 150 courses, degree programs, certificates, webinars, workshops and other offerings in the categories below. For detailed lists and additional information, visit jayhawkglobal.ku.edu.

Online Undergraduate Programs

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Online Graduate Programs

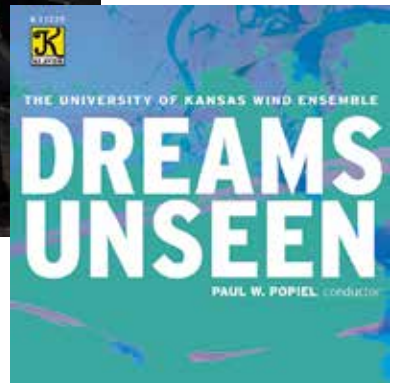
- Master’s degrees
- Doctoral degrees
- Certificates

Noncredit Programs

- Professional programs
 - Aerospace
 - Boot Camps
 - Leadership
 - Other professional development
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
- Kansas Fire & Rescue Training Institute

Coming in 2025

- Competency-based education, known as Jayhawk Flex



MUSIC

Sweet sounds of success

KU Wind Ensemble earns top prize; conductor is the new music dean

THE KU WIND ENSEMBLE’S symphony of recent successes, including concerts in hallowed national halls and critically acclaimed recordings, reached a crescendo in November, when the group was awarded the 2023 American Prize in Band among college and university wind ensembles.

Paul Popiel, the ensemble’s conductor, in December was named the new dean of the School of Music. He had served as interim dean since January 2023. He joined the faculty in 2010 as a professor of music and director of bands, a post he held until 2022.

The American Prize, established in 1910, is the nation’s most comprehensive series of competitions in the performing arts. The KU



Popiel

Wind Ensemble earned the 2023 prize for its recent album, “Dreams Unseen.”

As KU’s premier wind band, the ensemble is described by The New York Times as “one of America’s most esteemed concert bands.” In 2013, the ensemble and Popiel celebrated their Carnegie Hall debut by performing the world premiere of “In the Shadow of No Towers,” a symphony depicting the post-9/11 world, created for the ensemble by a leading young composer, Mohammed Fairouz. The commission was funded by arts patron James Zakoura, d’70, l’72.

In addition to Carnegie Hall, the ensemble performed for President Barack Obama in 2015 and at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2018. Other concerts included the national convention of the College Band Directors National Association in 2017; the Milan, Italy, Festival of Bands in 2022; and the American Bandmasters Association national convention in 2023.

Popiel was elected to membership in the bandmasters association in 2013. As a KU faculty member, he has received the University Scholarly Achievement Award and the School of Music’s Outstanding Teaching Award. Last fall, he completed a four-week residency with the renowned Osaka Shion Wind Orchestra in Japan.

—JENNIFER JACKSON SANNER

The KU Wind Ensemble’s “Dreams Unseen” recording won the 2023 American Prize in Band, the latest honor for the School of Music’s highly decorated wind band.



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BOOKS

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How Matt Kirkland created an internet sensation, and put a modern twist on Bram Stoker’s Gothic tale

IMAGINE you discovered a novel you really liked, started a book club to share it with others, and more than 250,000 people showed up.

That’s pretty much what happened to Matt Kirkland when he created Dracula Daily, an email newsletter that breaks Bram Stoker’s classic vampire novel into sections that each encompass a single day of action.

Because *Dracula* is an epistolary novel, told through diary entries, letters, telegrams and newspapers, every scene is pegged to a date. The story starts May 3 and ends Nov. 6. Kirkland figured that by delivering each passage to inboxes on the day of the year it takes place in the novel, Dracula Daily could provide participants with a new way of reading the 125-year-old classic. And they’d do it as a group.

“I was reading it in 2020, and that was the summer of not going places,” says Kirkland, f’04, a web designer and co-founder of Brand New Box, a Lawrence design studio. “We were all missing human connection, so reading it together with a bunch of people sounded really appealing.”

What Kirkland had no way of knowing was just how big that bunch would get—and how idiosyncratic would be their take.

In 2021, when Dracula Daily launched, about 1,500 people signed up to receive emails. Some passages spanned chapters; some were only a few sentences. Sometimes weeks passed without an email when nothing was happening in the book.

The project was originally intended as a one-off, but as May 2022 approached, Kirkland was surprised to see sign-ups had doubled. He decided to send out Dracula Daily a second time.

“It’s not like I’m saying, ‘Look at this cool thing that I did,’” Matt Kirkland says of the Dracula Daily phenomenon. “I’m saying, ‘Look at the ways people came together around this weird thing, and then produced such an interesting community and event.’”

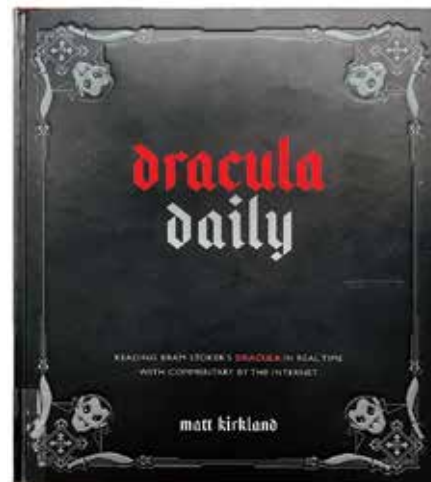
As the May 3 launch approached, a funny thing happened to his passion project, which Kirkland self-deprecatingly describes as part of his “bad habit of making silly side projects for the internet.”

It went viral.

“I was sitting in a baseball game refreshing the numbers because it was going from 10,000 to 20,000 to 30,000 to 40,000,” Kirkland recalls. “It was like, ‘I think this thing’s going to cross 100,000 people before the seventh inning.’ It was hard to pay attention to the baseball game.”

Ultimately, 200,000 people joined the readalong that year, and more than 250,000 signed up in 2023. Readers took to Tumblr, Twitter and other websites to post memes, comics, snarky commentary, original artwork and thoughtful takes “half a term paper long,” says Kirkland, who was “entirely delighted” by the outpouring. At one point, his humble project was getting more play on Tumblr than the new Marvel movie.

“The whole thing was shocking and just super fun,” he says. “Seeing all the ways



people embraced it and responded—it was like this big water-cooler moment.”

As he printed out screenshots to save his favorite commentaries, Kirkland hit on another idea: Why not publish a book that featured not only his “lightly remixed adaptation” of *Dracula* (because Stoker’s novel is not entirely chronological, Kirkland had to do some minor rearranging to put the text in strict linear order), but also a sampling of reader responses.

Dracula Daily: Reading Bram Stoker’s Dracula in Real Time With Commentary by the Internet, published by Andrews McMeel last fall, is a striking embossed hardcover that sprinkles dozens of written and visual-art responses from *Dracula Daily* participants throughout the text as marginalia. The book was launched during Lawrence Public Library’s Booktoberfest, the annual community reading event that distributes a selected title and holds public events encouraging discussion of the book’s themes. The 2023 selection was *Dracula*.

In his talk, Kirkland, a voracious reader, said the *Dracula Daily* phenomenon made the typical book experience feel like binge watching. “Oh, you’ve dropped the whole season on me in one copy?” he joked.

On the other hand, spreading *Dracula* over seven months—by subscribing to the newsletter at draculadaily.com or by using a little self-discipline and “the innovative technology of a ribbon bookmark” with the print version—is an entirely different reading experience.

“I think having that interrupted, slow, spaced-out cadence gives us a new way to think about the book,” Kirkland says. “You feel a little more suspense. It’s a fun way to live through this.”

—STEVEN HILL

Dracula Daily: Reading Bram Stoker’s Dracula in Real Time With Commentary by the Internet

by Matt Kirkland

Andrews McMeel, \$27.99



ANDRYS STIENSTRA/PIXABAY

ALUMNI

Jayhawks selected for Kansas Newspaper Hall of Fame

ELEVEN ALUMNI were among 34 new members inducted into the Kansas Newspaper Hall of Fame at a Kansas Press Association event in Topeka Nov. 3.

- Jean Eblen, '00, (posthumous inductee) was a reporter, copy editor and freelance writer and throughout her career worked for The Kansas City Star, Better Homes & Gardens, the Lawrence Journal-World and the Kansas Press Association.

- Patricia Weems Gaston, j'81, is the Lacy C. Haynes Professor of Journalism at KU. Before she returned to her alma mater, Gaston’s nearly 30-year career in newspapers included editor positions at The Dallas Morning News—where she was co-editor of a 1994 Pulitzer Prize-winning series on violence against women—and The Washington Post. In 2021, the KU Black Alumni Network named Gaston among its Mike and Joyce Shinn Leaders and Innovators.

- Bonita Gooch, j'77, g'78, is editor in chief of The Community Voice, a state-wide publication for Kansas’ Black community. She has owned the newspaper—now a multiplatform news source—since 1996. The KU Black Alumni Network named her among its Mike and Joyce Shinn Leaders and Innovators in 2021.

- Steve Haynes, j'70, began his career at The Kansas City Star and for nearly 30 years was president of Haynes Publishing Co., which published several newspapers in Kansas. He is a past president of the Kansas Press Association and the National Newspaper Association.

- Sarah Kessinger, g'89, is editor and publisher of the Marysville Advocate. She previously covered the Kansas Legislature for Harris News Service.

- Susan Lynn, '79, has been editor and publisher of the Iola Register since 2001 and is a past president of the Kansas Press Association.

- Marjorie Harbaugh McLaughlin, c'38, (posthumous inductee) worked at the Miami County Republic for half a century, eventually serving as the newspaper’s publisher.

- Colleen McCain Nelson, j'97, is executive editor of The Sacramento Bee and the California regional editor for McClatchy Co. She won the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing while at The Dallas Morning News and was The Wall Street Journal’s White House correspondent for four years.

- Susanne Shaw, d'61, g'67, began her career as a high school journalism teacher and was later on the School of Journalism faculty for over 35 years. She also served as executive director of the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism.

- Vickie Walton-James, j'81, is managing editor for news at NPR in Washington, D.C. She has worked at NPR since 2008 and was previously senior manager at Tribune Publishing, Washington bureau chief for the Chicago Tribune, and a reporter and editor for The Kansas City Star.

- Kathrine Klinkenberg White, '26, (posthumous inductee) worked at Time magazine and later was editor of the Emporia Gazette. She edited the Pulitzer Prize-winning autobiography of her father-in-law, William Allen White.

—MEGAN HIRT

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Alumni Association

April 27 Rock Chalk Forever
rockchalkforever.org

Lied Center

March 1 Leo Kottke
March 12 Shane Hennessy
March 19 Lawrence Brownlee
March 25 Juilliard String Quartet
March 27 KU Jazz Ensemble I with Camila Meza
April 1 Mandy Patinkin
April 3 KU Symphonic Orchestra
April 5 "Tetris"
April 21 Janice Carissa
April 23 The Brother Brothers
April 24 KU Symphonic Band
May 3 "Whose Live Anyway?"
lied.ku.edu

University Theatre

March 22-27 "Sweat"
kutheatre.com

University Dance Company

April 5-7 Spring concert
dance.ku.edu

Spencer Museum of Art

"Jacob Lawrence and the Legend of John Brown"
through June 16

Continued on p. 18



RESEARCH

Monarch metamorphosis

MONARCH WATCH, the education, conservation and research program founded by KU professor Orley "Chip" Taylor in 1992 to enlist thousands of citizen scientists to help study the migration and habitat of the monarch butterfly, transitioned to new leadership in November with the arrival of biologist and monarch researcher Kristen Baum.

Formerly a professor of integrative biology and associate dean for research at Oklahoma State University, Baum has studied monarchs and other pollinators in the Great Plains for more than 25 years, focusing on how land use and management practices affect distribution and abundance of monarchs and the milkweed plants that are key to their survival.

"I've participated in several Monarch Watch programs over the years, including tagging monarchs as part of my research and creating a Monarch Waystation in my home," Baum says, referring to the Monarch Watch effort to create backyard butterfly habitats with milkweed and nectar-producing plants that monarchs depend on during their spring and summer breeding seasons and their annual fall migration. More than 46,000 Waystations have been registered with Monarch Watch across North America, and the campus-based group and partner nurseries nationwide have distributed more than 800,000 free milkweed plants since 2015.

"Under Chip's leadership, Monarch Watch has developed an international reach through research, education and on-the-ground conservation efforts that have benefited the monarch butterfly, as well as other pollinators and wildlife," says Baum, who also serves as senior scientist at the Kansas Biological Survey & Center for Ecological Research and as a

professor of ecology & evolutionary biology. "I'm honored to have been selected to lead Monarch Watch and build on these efforts that have been decades in the making."

Taylor, professor emeritus of ecology & evolutionary biology, marked his retirement from Monarch Watch at the end of 2022 with a \$1.4 million gift from him and his wife, Toni, to help establish the Chip and Toni Taylor Professorship in support of Monarch Watch, which he co-founded with local high school science teacher Brad Williamson as a research project. Taylor and Williamson began by recruiting volunteers to capture monarch butterflies each fall and affix tags to their wings. The tags emblazoned with KU's return address urged anyone recovering a butterfly along its migration route to Mexico to mail the tag to campus, furnishing data that helped Taylor unravel the mystery of how these butterflies migrate thousands of miles each year. Monarch Watch volunteers have tagged more than 2 million butterflies, according to Taylor's estimates.

"It's no surprise to me that the first research project I did on monarch butterflies has led to this," he said when the Taylors seeded what they hope will become a \$3 million professorship. "For me, it's important that we sustain the monarch migration. The loss of monarchs would mean that we have lost habitats that support a large number of species ranging from important pollinators to hawks and owls. It's all about sustaining the environment that sustains us."

—STEVEN HILL



STEVIE PUPPE

Baum



A great move for KU alumni

As a University of Kansas graduate, you and qualifying family members may be eligible for senior living discounts that can help you get the care you deserve. You could experience a senior living lifestyle with restaurant-style dining, housekeeping, laundry, concierge services and more, with special savings available for University of Kansas alumni.

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OFF

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OFF

service rate**

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**Discount is only applicable to new clients of personal assistance services by a Brookdale agency under an executed service agreement.

***Discount is only applicable to new residents of a Brookdale assisted living or memory care community admitting under an executed respite agreement. Discount applies to the daily rate.

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 **BROOKDALE**
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CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Spencer Museum of Art

“Mountains and Water: Landscape Paintings from the Kanō School” **through July 1**
 “Conversations in Clay” **through fall**
spencerart.ku.edu

Dole Institute of Politics

March 25 Kansas Speaks: The Crossroads of Policy and Public Opinion
March 30 Easter Egg Roll with Dole
April 3 World Leaders in Wartime: King Henry II of England
May 1 World Leaders in Wartime: William McKinley
doleinstitute.org

Hall Center for the Humanities

March 4 Celebration of Books
March 21 Sheyda Jahanbani
April 4 Ayah Wakkad
April 10 Deja Beamon
April 11 Ihor Lylo
April 23 Margot Versteeg
hallcenter.ku.edu

Academic calendar

March 11-17 Spring break
May 2 Last day of classes
May 12 Commencement



BOOKS

History lived here

One Kansas City neighborhood tells larger story of civil rights struggle

ELEVEN YEARS AGO, writer Margie Carr discovered Montgall Avenue in Kansas City, Missouri, by accident. Reporting a story on a historic Black church in Lawrence, she came across several letters to civil rights leader W.E.B. Du Bois received from the 2400 block of Montgall.

In a 1919 letter, a World War I veteran shared his experiences in the all-Black 325th Field Signal Battalion. In another, a former Atlanta University colleague of Du Bois’ whose daughter lived on Montgall invited the scholar to visit. And a 1911 letter from Anna Holland Jones told how she and other Black families on the street had been targeted in dynamite attacks that nearly destroyed a house. She asked if Du Bois and his newly formed civil rights organization, the NAACP, might help in their fight against violence.

Research into the people who penned the letters led Carr, d’84, g’89, PhD’03, to conclude that she had to write their stories: They were too rich, too layered and too historical to ignore. “It convinced me I should share not only their stories, but also the story of the evolution and devolution of Montgall Avenue itself,” she says.



Jones

In *Kansas City’s Montgall Avenue: Black Leaders and the Street They Called Home*, Carr writes that Montgall’s story provides a vessel and a context for the larger story of the African American experience. “The street itself is a microcosm of the changing face of discrimination in the twentieth century as it transformed from a middle class, integrated community to the neglected, blighted place it is today.”

The Black residents who settled there alongside white residents founded or led some of the most important institutions in Kansas City’s Black community, including Lincoln High School, Wheatley-Provident Hospital and Roberts Motor Mart, the first car dealership in the country owned by an African American. Montgall also was home to two longtime editors of Kansas City’s *The Call*, one of the most influential newspapers in the country: founder Chester Franklin and his successor, Lucile Bluford, c’32.

Although not a trained historian (her degrees are in education and museum studies), Carr appreciates how difficult it is to study populations who have been marginalized historically. “Very little has been written about most of these residents,” Carr says, “and only the Franklins and Lucile Bluford have some of their personal papers in a public institution.”

So, Carr had to be creative when it came to research. “Fortunately, the earliest Black residents of Montgall were active politically

and socially. They belonged to groups, and I was able to find them in the social pages of various Black-owned newspapers,” she says. “They also wrote letters to political leaders, so there is some of their correspondence in the collections of Missouri governors like Arthur Hyde and Forrest Donnell and even President Truman.”

The lives of Montgall Avenue residents were informed by attitudes within the white community that morphed into government policies such as the Depression-era federal program that redlined neighborhoods like theirs. “It can be hard for people to appreciate the impact that government actions can have on people, because the effect often isn’t immediate,” Carr says. “How can one examine how redlining affected an individual person? But it’s hard to deny the devastating consequences of the policies when you focus on a street.”

Although the 2400 block of Montgall housed many of the city’s most important Black leaders, Carr wasn’t thinking about residents’ professional accomplishments on a recent visit to the street. Rather, she focused on the more intimate connections that tie neighbors together. Pointing out the home of John Edward Perry, the physician who founded Wheat-



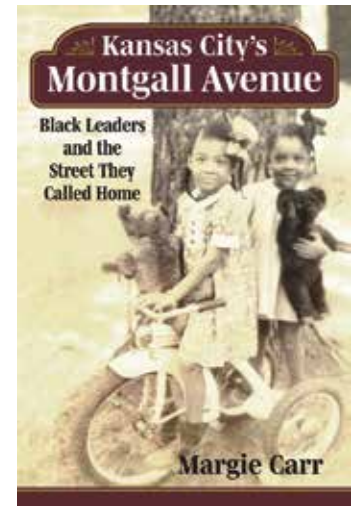
Perry

ley-Provident, Carr noted that he attended the deaths of several neighbors. “John Bluford died at home,” she said, pointing to the home of Lucile Bluford’s father, “and Perry signed his death certificate. He also signed George Gamble’s death certificate,” she said, pointing out another home on the street. “I think about those things a lot. Things that happen in our homes: the celebrations and the arguments with our loved ones. Our home is where we eat and sleep. It’s where we get dressed every morning. The most intimate things people do take place in our homes.”

Kansas City’s Montgall Avenue, which last fall won Historic Kansas City’s George Ehrlich Award for an outstanding publication, illuminates a street in the heart of America by lovingly sharing the stories of the people who lived there. Carr hopes it continues to find an audience.

“I wrote this book because I care about Montgall Avenue,” she says, “and I want others to as well.”

—KARA LYNCH
Lynch, g’94, taught 10 years in the William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications.



Kansas City’s Montgall Avenue: Black Leaders and the Street They Called Home

by Margie Carr

University Press of Kansas, \$26.95

Editor, publisher, activist

ONE MONTGALL RESIDENT who made a lasting impact on Kansas City was KU alumna Lucile Bluford, c’32. Editor and publisher of *The Call*, the weekly African American newspaper, and a civil rights activist, she lived at 2444 Montgall Avenue in the 1940s.

In 1939, Bluford was accepted into the University of Missouri’s graduate journalism program; when she tried to enroll, she was told the school wasn’t open to her because of the state’s separate but equal policy. With support from the NAACP, she sued the school, pursuing her case to the Missouri Supreme Court, which ruled in her favor. But Bluford never attended: The university closed the program, citing a shortage of students and faculty caused by World War II military service.

Bluford remained a civil rights leader and used the pages of *The Call* to speak out, especially on Jim Crow laws. She was later honored by both Mizzou and KU, which awarded her the Distinguished Service Citation in 1990.



Bluford at KU (top row, second from left) circa 1930, and at *The Call*, 1940s



KU COMMUNITY

Fabulous firsts

Poster program encourages pride, connection among KU's first-generation collegians

WHEN THE CENTER for Educational Opportunity Programs introduced the I Am First Too poster in 2019 to showcase the role of first-generation college students at KU, it was important to those who came up with the idea that the roster of smiling faces include not only current students who were the first in their families to attend college, but also staff, faculty and alumni whose completion of a four-year degree was a pioneering achievement in their families as well.

Since then, 60 members of the Jayhawk community have been featured on the annual posters, which are released on or around Nov. 8 each year as part of the University's marking of National First-Generation College Celebration Day. Honorees, who are nominated by the campus community, have ranged from students still working on a bachelor's degree to deans and senior faculty members with PhDs.

"We want people to see all the success stories," says Alex Hernandez-Castro, c'05, g'18, associate director of TRIO SES and STEM programs at KU. "We want people to see that first-generation students are going on to become first-gen professionals. They're teaching in our universities, working at our universities. We really want to highlight the success within the entire first-gen community."

A first-generation college graduate herself, Hernandez-Castro says the posters are also intended to acknowledge the challenges that first-generation students can encounter.

"First generation," according to the official federal definition developed for TRIO program acceptance and Pell Grant eligibility, applies to students from families where the biological parents did not complete a four-year college degree. The designation recognizes that these students may not have access to the cultural capital that benefits students whose parents completed college: namely, built-in help navigating what the national Center for First-Generation Student Success calls the "hidden curriculum"—policies, procedures, jargon and expectations built in to higher education culture that can have a



big impact on a student's confidence and sense of belonging.

"I Am First Too is also raising awareness and helping spread the message that first-gen people, students specifically, come with a lot of strengths, a lot of wonderful things, and there are also a lot of barriers they face in higher education," Hernandez-Castro says. "But given support, we succeed and we do amazing things."

At KU, that support can be direct (lending active assistance) and indirect (simply modeling success), suggests Gretchen Heasty, director of TRIO SES and STEM.

"I think it's so important for students to be represented and to hear their story in other people who they admire or who are thriving," says Heasty, s'94, c'94, g'98. "It's like, 'Oh, wow, they're doing it. So can I?'"

"I also see first-gen faculty, staff and alumni spending hours outside of their workday to meet with students or create research ideas or just going that extra mile because they want to help students on a personal level, which I think is amazing," Heasty says. "Being first-gen doesn't end once you get a college degree. You're a first-gen professional, you're a first-gen doctoral student, maybe you're first-gen faculty. Recognizing the trailblazers in those areas and learning what are some of the systemic barriers, what are you experiencing, what are your successes—I think that's an important part



2019



2020



2021



2022

2023 I Am First Too honorees

Students

Kylie Kookesh, senior, School of Education & Human Sciences

Angel Martin Meza-Gonzalez, b'23

Michael Oliver, junior, School of Engineering

Ladazia Taylor, j'23

Staff

Anna Balmilero, c'16, g'20, transfer coordinator, KU Edwards campus

Nikita Haynie, director, Emily Taylor Center for Women & Gender Equity

Dawn Tallchief, assistant director for student programs, Center for Undergraduate Research

Faculty

Deanna Hanson-Abromeit, associate professor of music therapy and music education

Anna Pope, assistant teaching professor of psychology

Alumni

Jacob Chamberlin, c'17

Erin Kelley-Garrison, g'19

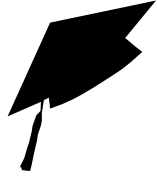
Irene Olivares, g'12, PhD'16

of this recognition: creating the space for those conversations.”

Nominations are accepted each spring through Feb. 23, and the poster reveal in November exemplifies that space for community and conversation that Heasty and Hernandez-Castro envision. Held in 2023 at the Burge Union as part of KU's inaugural weeklong First-Generation Student Conference, the reception brought out past honorees, faculty, staff and student families in support of the 2023 honorees.

“Last November was really awesome, because I feel like people were getting to know each other,” Hernandez-Castro says. “Everybody's sharing stories, there's faculty, staff, students, and it was such a cool experience. It really made you feel like, ‘OK, this is my community. Here we are.’ It was a proud moment, I think, for everybody.”

—STEVEN HILL



TRIO Supportive Educational Services (TRIO SES)

is a student support service program for first-generation, low-income or disabled KU students. TRIO is not an acronym, but refers to three federal programs founded in the 1960s under Title IV of the Higher Education Act: Upward Bound, Talent Search and Support Services. A 2015 federal grant allowed KU to enhance services for TRIO students majoring in science, technology, engineering, math and health care, and the program name was changed to TRIO SES and STEM. In 2023, KU celebrated 50 years of continuous federal TRIO funding.

Happe recognized as America's top entrepreneur

Michael Happe, j'94, chair of the Alumni Association's national Board of Directors, was named the 2023 Entrepreneur of the Year in November for his work as president and CEO of Winnebago Industries.

The Ernst & Young Global program recognized 12 national winners and dozens of regional winners through a monthslong nomination and interview process. As winner of the U.S. National Overall Award, Happe will represent the United States at the World Entrepreneur competition in June.

Judges praised Happe's leadership in rejuvenating the iconic recreational vehicle manufacturer in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, with an employee-first culture that improved workplace safety, gave workers a financial stake in the company, and energized morale, and for evolving the company from a product-oriented manufacturer to a lifestyle brand that focuses more broadly on the outdoor experiences its products make possible. Winnebago has posted 500% revenue growth since Happe took over in 2016.



Happe

RESEARCH

'Future of science' cited for international outreach

Mary Rezac will be the School of Engineering dean effective March 1. She comes to KU from her role as dean of Washington State's Voiland College of Engineering and Architecture, where she oversaw seven academic schools and the college's \$80 million budget. She previously worked for 15 years at Kansas State, where she earned her bachelor's degree in chemical engineering. She completed her PhD at the University of Texas at Austin.

RAFE BROWN, professor of ecology & evolutionary biology, is internationally respected for his intrepid treks through all-but-inaccessible jungles of the Philippines, Indonesia and the Solomon Islands, along with his research projects in India, the tropical Americas and central Africa. Yet according to a recent honor from colleagues whose own research takes them around the world, Brown's quests are equal parts discovery and documentation of tropical land vertebrates as well as teaching and inspiring new generations of scientists, both here and abroad.

For his intensive collaborations, Brown, curator-in-charge of the KU Biodiversity Institute & Natural History Museum's herpetology division, was recently named the inaugural recipient of the KU International Affairs Advisory Board's International Research Award, which recognizes faculty members who "provide outstanding leadership in international education through their research and discovery efforts."

Nearly as impressive as the award itself was the Biodiversity Institute's all-star faculty lineup responsible for Brown's nomination: Director Jorge Soberón, University Distinguished Professor A. Townsend Peterson, and Lena Hileman, chair of the department of ecology & evolutionary biology.

"This model of 'full partnership' in international education," Brown's colleagues wrote, "represents

the future of science, particularly in biodiversity science."

Brown—who speaks fluent Tagalog, the official language of the Philippines—for more than two decades has led field trips of KU undergraduate and graduate students, who join equal numbers of Filipino students to create, according to the nomination letter, "mind-broadening experiences with a very different set of people and cultures and landscapes."

Praised by Filipino colleagues for inspiring and mentoring an entire generation of local students in herpetology and biodiversity education, Brown has mentored 17 doctoral students, six postdoctoral researchers and 39 undergraduates, many of whom were international students from around the world.

In 2019, Brown helped develop a three-week biodiversity science course, funded by the Philippine government, which brought Brown and seven members of his KU lab to a Philippine university, where the Jayhawks provided educational opportunities for more than 40 local undergraduates and livestream sessions joined by hundreds more. Brown has also recently collaborated with two Philippine universities to study biodiversity within pristine habitat on the Caramoan Peninsula, from coastal forests to reefs, sea grasses and small islands.

"We have witnessed," said research partner Michael Clores, dean at Partido State University, "how he is dedicated to the understanding and sustainable management of the Philippine terrestrial vertebrate."

—CHRIS LAZZARINO



COURTESY RAFE BROWN (2)

Mass Street & more



Weinbergs

Museum acquires Quantrill painting

THANKS TO DONORS Jeff, d'64, g'70, and Mary Haynes Weinberg, j'65, the Watkins Museum of History at 1047 Massachusetts St. recently acquired "Lawrence Massacre," depicting William Quantrill's ruthless 1863 raid, by the late artist Ethel Magafan.

The painting has its roots in a mural design Magafan submitted for a 1936 Works Progress Administration competition for Lawrence's U.S. Post Office. Although Magafan won the competition, her mural was never completed; instead, an unnamed Lawrence couple who collected her works in 1979 commissioned Magafan to complete the mural as a painting.

When that work became available at a Denver gallery, the Weinbergs, both members of the Douglas County Historical Society as well as the Alumni Association's Presidents Club, purchased it to honor the historical society's 90th anniversary. "Lawrence Massacre" is now on view in the museum's ground-floor Community Room.

"The painting's subject and its interesting history made it an important addition to the museum's collection," said director Steve Nowak, "but purchasing it would have required a significant fundraising

effort. Luckily, Jeff and Mary Weinberg came forward."

In his more than 40 years at KU, Jeff Weinberg worked in KU's financial aid office before being named associate vice chancellor for student affairs. He then worked as an assistant to chancellors Robert Hemenway and Bernadette Gray-Little, and retired in 2013 as an Honors Teaching Fellow.

—CHRIS LAZZARINO

A taste of downtown, in Wichita

THE CHECKERED FLOOR, black booths and the menu filled with throwback favorites signal that the new Quinton's Bar & Grill in Wichita aims to recapture the feel and flavors of the former Quinton's Bar & Deli that catered to college crowds at 615 Massachusetts St. from 1991 to 2020.

"I wanted it to be a nostalgic vibe for KU alumni," says owner Steve Gaudreau, who founded the original Quinton's in Lawrence and operated it until 2018. "I know a lot

of KU alumni in Wichita, so I knew there was KU support. It's a place for everybody, but I figured it would be fun for KU alumni in Wichita. I hope they embrace it."

Gaudreau already owned the new Quinton's space at 550 N. Rock Road in Wichita, which was previously a barbecue and brunch spot, Crutch & Biscuit. In December, he reopened it as Quinton's, and he says diners can expect to find many of the signature soups—available in house-made bread bowls—and sandwiches offered at the original Lawrence location.

"It's as close as I could get it," Gaudreau says of the new menu. "All the biggest sellers on the original sandwich menu and soups are there for sure, and we now have grill items." The selection features burgers, grilled sandwiches—including The Jayhawk, made with grilled chicken breast, provolone, tomato, lettuce and honey mustard—mac and cheese, salads and a weekend brunch.

And as one of the Alumni Association's official watch party locations for KU men's basketball, Quinton's in Wichita serves a hearty helping of Jayhawk present alongside satisfying tastes of days past.

—MEGAN HIRT



The original Quinton's on Mass Street closed in 2020, but the sandwiches and other fare are now available in Wichita.



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BUD LIGHT



BUD LIGHT



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ALUMNI

Endowment elects 6 new trustees

KU ENDOWMENT'S board of trustees held its annual meeting Oct. 27 and welcomed six Jayhawks as new trustees:

- Stephonn Alcorn, b'17
- William "Trey" Humphrey III, b'87
- Schalie A. Johnson, l'06
- Allison Long, b'85
- Winifred "Win" Pinet, c'80, g'82
- Abbey Rupe, c'01, m'05

Alcorn, New York City, is a vice president of the Blackstone Group, where he manages the firm's investments in affordable housing. He is pursuing his master's degree in urban planning at New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. On the Hill, he served as KU's student body president.

Humphrey, Mission Hills, followed

his KU business degree by earning his law degree from the University of Missouri-Kansas City in 1990. He is chief legal officer at Lockton, where he has worked since 2000. He volunteers as a board member for the Kansas Alpha of Phi Delta Theta Education Foundation.

Johnson, Kansas City, Missouri, completed her bachelor's degree in environmental studies at Connecticut College before graduating from KU's School of Law. She is a partner at Wallace Saunders, and she serves on the law school's board of governors.

Long, a third-generation Jayhawk, lives in Lawrence, where she and her husband, Jeff, '85, returned in 2012 after he completed his career in the U.S. Air Force. She joined KU Endowment in 2012 and now serves as senior vice president for administration, chief operating officer and secretary.

Pinet, Plymouth, Michigan, is president and CEO of Sycamore Associates. She has

more than 25 years' experience in capital structure, treasury, risk management, and environmental, social and governance (ESG) investing. She is a certified treasury professional (CTP), and she earned a certificate in sustainability management from the University of Colorado. She co-chairs KU's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences advisory board, and she previously served on the Alumni Association's national board of directors.

Rupe, c'01, m'05, Salina, is a faculty pediatrician at Salina Family Healthcare Center, where she helps train family medicine residents for future practice in rural Kansas through the Smoky Hill Family Medical Residency Program. She completed her residency in pediatrics at the School of Medicine-Wichita. She is a member of the sports medicine advisory board for the Kansas State High School Activities Association.

—JENNIFER JACKSON SANNER

FACULTY

'Meaningful connections' with students drive much-lauded HOPE winner

PRAISED as a "relatable and compassionate" educator who "helps students achieve their goals outside the classroom," Shuai Sun, assistant teaching professor of chemistry, on Nov. 18 was named the 2023 recipient of the HOPE Award, established by the Class of 1959 to Honor an Outstanding Progressive Educator.

Given to faculty by the senior class through the Student Alumni and Endowment Board, the prestigious honor recognizes a faculty member who exemplifies Jayhawk values in the classroom through exceptional teaching strategies and who greatly affects students' lives.

"This recognition holds a special place in my heart," Sun said, "as it reflects the meaningful connections and impactful learning experiences shared with my

students. I am grateful for their trust and the opportunity to contribute not only to their academic growth but also to their personal and professional development."

Sun earned his bachelor's and master's degrees at Chinese universities, and his doctorate in theoretical and computational chemistry at Canada's University of Alberta. At KU, he teaches between 300 and 600 students each year in introductory chemistry courses. Sun has also won first place in the Best of Lawrence's teacher category five years in a row.

"My journey in chemistry, from my academic roots in China and Canada to teaching hundreds of students each year at KU, has been driven by a passion for education and a commitment to the well-being and success of every student," Sun



Sun

said after he received the HOPE Award at halftime of the KU-Kansas State football game. "The joy and fulfillment I find in teaching are amplified by the engagement and curiosity of my students. Together, we continue to uphold and advance the esteemed Jayhawk values in every aspect of our academic journey."

—CHRIS LAZZARINO



“(Juan) needs to quit listening to me and he needs to quit listening to everybody else. ... It’s ridiculous, including me.”

—Bill Self



STEVE PUPPE (7)

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Harris makes a great point

Senior guard assesses potential postseason benefits of Big 12 journey

TWO DAYS AFTER the Jayhawks' 79-75 loss to hot-shooting Iowa State Jan. 27 in Ames, which knocked KU's conference record to 4-3, senior point guard Dajuan Harris Jr. arrived in the Allen Field House media room in something of a talkative mood, carefully projecting a calm presence while discussing his team's urgent challenges.

Oklahoma State would be up next, the following night, already concluding KU's home-and-away matchups with the Cowboys. After that would come fourth-ranked Houston, a Big 12 newcomer arriving on its first trip to Lawrence as one of the country's hottest teams.

"Last year we lost three straight in conference and we always believed," Harris said, referencing the 2023 squad that won the Big 12 at 13-5, despite losing January games at Kansas State, home to TCU and at Baylor. "This year we've got to continue to believe. Stay together. We've been through it all. We've seen this stuff before."

Despite the loss, Harris described his performance at Iowa State—nine points, seven assists and only two turnovers—as one of his best games of the

season, an assessment that coach Bill Self later seconded. Leading the Big 12 in assists at 6.9 per game heading into February, good for eighth nationally, Harris was named among 10 finalists for the prestigious Bob Cousy Point Guard of the Year Award.

"The best is still to come," Harris added. "I still haven't been playing as the best player I could be."

Harris said he would watch that evening's Houston-Texas game—a 76-72 Cougars victory in Austin: "That's going to be a bear fight, and we play Houston on Saturday. Our schedule gets tougher every game from now on.

"We've got to go into practice every day and try to get better. We've got to do a better job today at practice, getting energy up. This is the main focus. We've got to be our best this week. If we lose tomorrow or we lose Saturday, that's going to hurt us. It starts with today's practice."

Indeed, KU prevailed in both of those games, including a 78-65 thumping of Houston that Self described afterward as the best home environment to that point of the season. (The eighth-ranked Jayhawks were home underdogs for only the second

time in Self's 21 seasons at KU; the first was in 2021, to eventual national champion Baylor, also a 13-point KU victory.)

When asked by *Kansas Alumni* whether this season's rugged, 14-team league schedule can be even more helpful than past years in preparing KU for postseason, Harris said he thought it might do exactly that—but not merely for the competitive challenge of trying to prevail over tough opponents.

"Every team is going to help us out," he said. "Every team has their different playing styles. There's a lot of athletic teams, teams that can shoot, teams that can really guard. We'll see it all, but, to be honest, I think it just comes down to us handling our own business, doing our part."

Self commented on Harris' assessment by rattling off an extended series of coaching and playing styles encountered in the Big 12—assorted ball-screen philosophies, baseline and zone defenses, switching in and out of defensive sets within a possession—and happily concluded that the senior he relies on to direct on-court action was onto something.

"I think Juan's point is pretty spot on," Self said, "although we haven't talked

like that. That's just him, on his own, realizing that."

After Harris scored 12 against OSU, Self shared his pregame advice: "I told Juan he needs to quit listening to me and he needs to quit listening to everybody else, what they think he should be doing to play well. It's ridiculous, including me.

"I tell him, 'Just play and trust your instincts. Quit trying to do what other people say you need to do.' He needs to make sure his team wins, and that's what he does."



With fitter and fiercer coach Bill Self directing the action (center), Allen Field House highlights included (clockwise from top) Kevin McCullar Jr. defending the rim against UConn, a game that superfan Jason Sudeikis managed to lasso into his busy schedule; a team huddle against Mizou; and Hunter Dickinson with a block against Oklahoma.

FOOTBALL

Home is where you hang your helmet

With new stadium set for 2025, football to play 2024 home games in KC

WHEN UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS on Aug. 15 announced plans for the transformational Gateway District and a reimagined David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium, they hoped to play at least part of the 2024 season at home, with fans squeezed into limited seating in the east stands, which will remain until the second phase of the multiyear project.

But as demolition of the World War I-era stadium's west stands and north bowl got underway, it became evident that scheduling games for the site would likely delay construction and jeopardize the plan to reopen for the 2025 season.

Instead, KU announced Jan. 30 that while 2024 and 2025 Commencement ceremonies are still scheduled for the stadium, football will move to Kansas City. KU's first two home games—Aug. 29 against Lindenwood and Sept. 14 against



KANSAS ATHLETICS (4)

Thanks in part to 71 yards rushing and a touchdown by Devin Neal (4)—along with 449 yards passing and six TDs by quarterback Jason Bean—coach Lance Leipold celebrated his first KU bowl victory Dec. 26 in Phoenix.

UNLV—will be played at Children's Mercy Park, home to the Sporting Kansas City soccer franchise. Four Big 12 home games—TCU (Sept. 28), Houston (Oct. 19), Iowa State (Nov. 9) and Colorado (Nov. 23)—are set for GEHA Field at Arrowhead Stadium, home of the Kansas City Chiefs.

"While we are disappointed we can't play in Lawrence," said Athletics Director Travis Goff, c'03, j'03, "ultimately we want to create the best possible experience for all involved. (This) allows us to do that."

KU capped its 9-4 2023 season with a 49-36 victory over UNLV in the Guaranteed Rate Bowl in Phoenix. Stars expected to return include running back Devin Neal; quarterback Jalon Daniels; receivers Lawrence Arnold, Luke Grimm and Quentin Skinner; and cornerbacks Cobee Bryant and Mello Dotson.

"We all love playing in Lawrence at The Booth," said Neal, a Lawrence native, "but this will be a great experience for the team, and it's what's best for the future of the program and the stadium."

UPDATE

After leading the Big 12 in Assists per set with a 10.67 average, Topeka junior **Camryn Turner** in November was named Big 12 Setter of the Year and First Team All-Big 12. Turner also posted the second-most digs per set (2.95) for the Jayhawks and added 84 kills and 58 total blocks. Advancing to their 12th NCAA Tournament, the 24-6 Jayhawks, led by Big 12 Coach of the Year **Ray Bechard**, lost a second-round five-setter to Penn State. ...

Although the 'Hawks placed fifth at the Jan. 22 Match in the Desert, women's golf recorded a team score of 5-under-par, including top 10 finishes by juniors **Lauren Clark** and **Lily Hurst**. ... After starting league



Turner

play with three losses, women's basketball on Jan. 10 beat a top five opponent for the first time since 2009 with an 87-66 victory in Allen Field House over previously unbeaten Baylor. "Their backs were up against the wall and they responded in a huge way," Baylor coach **Nicki Collen** said of the 'Hawks. "They were the tougher team." Super-senior center **Taiyanna Jackson** scored a career high 27 points against Baylor, along



Jackson

with 19 rebounds. Jackson and freshman guard **S'Mya Nichols** combined for 42 points in KU's first Big 12 road win Feb. 3 at TCU. ... Sophomore pole vaulter **Clayton Simms** on Jan. 28 won the Iowa Black and Gold Invite with a meet-record jump of 5.41 meters. Fellow sophomore **Anthony Meacham** placed second by tying the previous meet mark of 5.31 meters.

PLAYING WITH his high-energy style that lights up Allen Field House, powerhouse junior forward KJ Adams Jr. on Jan. 30 scored 16 points with 7-for-7 shooting from the field and a pair of free throws on as many attempts—and added six assists, two steals, two rebounds and a blocked shot—to help muscle KU to an 83-54 victory over Oklahoma State.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
STEVE PUPPE







The Translator

by Steven Hill

Having lived in both the sighted and blind worlds, Cynthia Bryant helps bridge the two

Portraits by Lewis Diuguid

courtesy of The Seeing Eye

Cynthia Bryant is accustomed to the questions. She hears them while waiting to cross a street, when she enters an elevator, and in other moments as she negotiates—with the help of Summer, her guide dog—crowded public spaces that most people pass through without much thought.

The phrasing can range from diplomatic to blunt, but most who ask are curious about the same thing: How can a person who has little or no access to a sense that is said to account for 80% of human perception move with such apparent ease, even with the help of a trained dog?

Since retiring in December 2022 from a two-decade career as a lawyer with the Federal Communications Commission, Bryant, 195, has built a consulting practice that draws on her work as a professional mediator. She also completed the first year of her term as chair of the board of trustees at The Seeing Eye, a school in Morristown, New Jersey, that trains dogs to guide blind people and instructs its

blind students in the care and handling of their canine companions. Bryant is the first graduate of The Seeing Eye training program (and the first woman of color) to lead the board of the nonprofit organization, which annually serves about 260 people who are blind or visually impaired and has fostered more than 18,000 partnerships between people and their Seeing Eye dogs since its founding in 1929.

The travel associated with both roles requires her to navigate busy airports, hotels and streets in unfamiliar cities. But the questions can also come when she's strolling her own neighborhood in Chevy Chase, Maryland. While she may be used to hearing them, they can sometimes take her aback.



Once, while attending a conference, she entered an elevator with Summer and pushed the button for her floor.

“The door closes, and there’s a woman in the elevator with me,” Bryant recalls. “And she says, ‘You need sight to move like that, don’t you?’”

Bryant explained that she has some light perception, but not much sight, and assured the woman that people who are totally blind can function quite well with the help of a trained dog.

“I could have been offended. But there’s a part of you that says, this is a question. You need to be patient. Rather than shut the person down, you need to answer, because that sends the person away with a nugget of knowledge that they can carry forward,” Bryant says.

“When you’re a guide-dog handler, you become a kind of unofficial ambassador for the rest of the community,” says Michelle Barlak, spokesperson for The Seeing Eye. “When our graduates get their first guide dog, we do a lot to prepare them for that, because it’s something they’re not used to. Graduates often tell us they felt invisible before they had a guide dog, so it is a big adjustment to suddenly be the person in the room with the dog that everybody wants to know about. Cynthia is just so gracious in taking the time to speak with members of the public who have questions. She sees it as an opportunity to represent other guide-dog users. On a larger scale, she’s also representing other people with disabilities and really helping to bridge that gap between people who live in this world and work with guide dogs every day and those who maybe don’t understand what it is the dogs and the graduates are trained to do.”

That equanimity is rooted in Bryant’s training and her professional work in mediation and negotiation, in her family upbringing, and in her life experience as a woman and an African American. Most of all, it is rooted in her experience with blindness.

“It’s interesting for me as someone who is female, someone who is African American, and someone who is blind, that my greatest challenge is my disability,” Bryant said during a 2021 conversation with Eksteen De Waal on his “Exponential Leadership” podcast. “Race doesn’t require as much patience as disability. Disability crosses all spectrums.”

Bryant was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa as an adolescent growing up in south Kansas City. A group of rare eye diseases that affect the light-sensitive area at the back of the eye, RP is a genetic condition that causes cells in the retina to break down over time, starting with a loss of peripheral and night vision. When she arrived at KU, after graduating from Bradford College in Massachusetts and working several years as an early childhood and music educator, Bryant’s vision had deteriorated to the point that she needed assistive technology when she entered the School of Law. She was 29 years old.

After law school, Bryant joined the Missouri Public Service Commission, the agency that regulates the state’s utilities and telecommunications providers. She was drawn by a fascination with administrative law, regulatory policy and mediation that she discovered while studying at KU.

A memory from childhood, however, suggests the seed of that interest may have been planted long before law school.

Watching TV at around 10 years old, Bryant saw news coverage of two heads of state conferring. What enthralled her wasn’t the world leaders, but the person between them: a translator, dressed all in black, hair pulled back in a ponytail. “I was just fascinated by this person in the middle that bridged them,” Bryant recalls. “How that person could switch languages and talk to one and then the other, and how, because of the translator, the two leaders

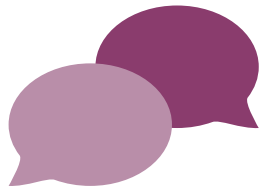
could talk to each other. That was the earliest time I can remember that I liked that concept of bridging people. That was the first time that I thought, ‘That person in the middle is fascinating.’ And I wouldn’t have had that, had my mother not exposed me to things.”

Her mother, Rose Bryant, is a chemist who has long been involved with arts and culture organizations, most recently as a member of the National Advisory Board at KU’s Spencer Museum of Art. Her father, TJ Bryant, m’63, who died in 2008, was a doctor who graduated from the School of Medicine. Cynthia Bryant says that when she was growing up in Kansas City in the 1960s, the African American community had two approaches to dealing with the formal and informal policies that dictated where Black families should and should not live.

“One is to stay in the African American community and economically boost that area, which is positive and works well, and which many African Americans did,” she says. “And then there was the mindset of, ‘Well, let’s penetrate this. The laws allow us to buy in the areas that offer our children opportunities.’ So that’s the route that my parents took—to get in the mix.”

Bryant and her two older brothers attended a Jewish day camp and went to Catholic schools. The family saw the first neighborhood they lived in transformed by white flight; later, they had a seller take a house off the market when they tried to buy in a different part of town. They kept looking, and the neighborhood they moved to when Bryant was 7 was “overwhelmingly welcoming,” she recalls—though not unanimously so. “Did our house get egged and all that? Yeah, it did,” she says. “Was a BB shot through the window? Yes, through my bedroom window. So of course my father was on high alert, because this was his child’s window. But we moved in, and we were welcomed by most.”

Adds Bryant, “My parents’ mindset was always, we’re going to get in this and our children are going to receive an education,



and our children are going to learn about others in the community and in the world. That probably is what gave me that desire to learn about others and be as embracing as I am. It's almost a thirst to really know what others are doing in the world."

.....

Another question Bryant hears, often posed in a concerned tone that carries a whiff of judgment: Does the dog ever get to play?

Her answer: Yes. Oh, gosh, yes.

Summer is Bryant's third Seeing Eye dog. (Although often used generically to describe guide dogs trained to assist people with a wide range of visual impairments, the description "Seeing Eye dog" is, in fact, a protected term trademarked by the organization in 1940.) A yellow Labrador/golden retriever cross, Summer answers to a panoply of pet names—Sun-Sun, Baby Girl, Love Bug. Whenever Bryant needs to go somewhere, whether a multiday business trip or just an impromptu run to the corner market for a bag of chips, Summer is on it, ready to work the moment Bryant reaches for the leather-and-steel harness that connects the two when they step out the door.

"I try to let people know that when these dogs are in harness, they simply have their business suit on," Bryant says. We all have our business suits, our work clothes, our Sunday best, she notes—and the comfortable jeans and T-shirt we slip into as soon as we get home. Compartment changes with costume.

"It's the absolute same for the dog," Bryant says. "When they're out of harness, they're simply a dog in the house. These dogs are loved and cared for more than you know."

Had Summer not met The Seeing Eye's rigorous standards to qualify as a guide dog (of the approximately 500 puppies born each year at the organization's breeding facility, about 60% become guide dogs or are incorporated back into the breeding program), Bryant believes she'd have made

a fine Frisbee champ. Like most dogs, Sun-Sun enjoys a good cuddle-and-scratch and a tasty treat. But there is also a bond between the two that goes beyond the usual human-pet connection, Bryant feels.

"We are basically one when we are out together. Even while I'm talking to you now, she is on her bed not far away. There is a devotion that I think is deeper than even a pet. They're beyond children; they're beyond spouse.

"There is a deep reliance on me to her and her to me, and that's necessary when we're walking around. She has that deep connection to make sure that I am safe. And the reverse is true, too: I have to get to a point where I know she's going to keep me safe, and I'm not grabbing the harness, pulling her to the side, making it hard on her, but I relax in the harness and hold on with just my fingertips, knowing that we're good. We're moving as one, literally connected as one. At this point, when I travel out with her, I have a level of trust with her that I don't have with a sighted person."

It wasn't always so. When Bryant was 8, she went outside to search for her cat, and

came face-to-face with a snarling German shepherd named George.

"George was a neighbor's dog known for biting," she recalls. The Bryant home had a doorknob-sized hole in the wall of the entry, the result of neighborhood kids frequently flinging open the front door in a mad dash to get inside, away from the dog. "When I called the cat, George came jetting around the corner, his teeth at face-level for an 8-year-old, and I had to run back inside. Luckily I made it."

The encounter instilled her fear of big dogs that persisted into adulthood. So when a friend who is blind suggested that she consider using a guide dog, she hesitated.

When Bryant made the move to the FCC in Washington, D.C., in 1999, part of the appeal had been the chance to live again in a city with a strong public transit system that would allow her a large measure of freedom and independence. But as her retinitis pigmentosa progressed, she found it harder and harder to navigate the city's dimly lit subway system with a cane. Getting from point to point took much planning and coordination, and—during the early nightfall of winter—adjusting her work hours to leave the office in time to get home before dark.

She decided to visit The Seeing Eye to learn more about the process of working with a guide dog.

"I remember asking about the dogs' temperaments, their personalities," Bryant recalls. "I was very unsure and wanting to know how the dogs are with people. The dog they brought out to meet me was absolutely beautiful, and he just sat there and let me pet him. I was kind of feeling his face and play-handing with his mouth, and I remember saying, 'Oh, he's got teeth!' and the trainer kind of laughed."

In 2008 Bryant matched with her first guide dog, Royale, a black Labrador/golden retriever cross. Her second dog, Sophia, was a black Labrador. Her partnership with Summer began in 2017.

A speech Bryant gave recently to The Seeing Eye's Heritage Society donors



Bryant and Summer

illustrates just how much her relationship with dogs—guide dogs, in particular—has changed.

As a way of alerting her audience to “the importance of tapping into all of your senses to get a true view of what’s going on around you,” she invited them to join her on a “mental walk” with her and Summer.

Her vivid narration of a morning stroll through her neighborhood brims with sensory detail.

The sizzle of bicycle tires on pavement.

The sweet scent of a blossoming tree so strong she can taste it. A symphony of birdsong.

The tickle of a cool breeze on her skin and the thump of the dog’s wagging tail on her leg. The thrill of momentum

and confidence when navigating a tricky passage—“just like when I was a child, and you’re on that bike and you lean in as you take a turn.” Sense by sense, she transforms her singular experience and close partnership with Summer into a language her listeners can understand.

“It’s a joy,” she tells her audience. “It is a true joy to walk with my dog.”

The Seeing Eye’s Barlak recalls that “you could have heard a pin drop. People who have never had to think about what it means to lose your vision, it just doesn’t occur to them how blind people experience the world. So when she gave that description of what it is like to go on a walk with her dog, she was able to tell the story; she was able to translate what she feels and what she hears and how she perceives the world in a really beautiful way.”

Adds Barlak, “A sighted person could never replicate that. So having somebody like Cynthia, who’s such a talented speaker and so good at making that connection with people, is just invaluable to us and helping to make our donors feel that connection to our mission.”



At the FCC, Bryant worked first in the agency’s enforcement division, where she adjudicated consumer complaints against telecommunications carriers, including helping Native American tribes hold the companies to their promise to deliver affordable basic phone service. She enjoyed the process of finding common ground between opposing parties, so she began to focus on mediation, twice attending the Harvard Negotiation Institute to study mediation and negotiation. As part of the leadership program Blacks In Government, she joined the Darlene H. Young Leadership Academy and traveled to Plains, Georgia, to interview former President Jimmy Carter (and, in an unexpected but welcome twist, former first lady Rosalynn Carter) about the negotiating tactics and strategies used to forge the Camp David Accords.

Bryant spent 23 years at the agency, the final stretch as special counsel managing a program that encourages employees to use mediation to resolve workplace conflicts. She also led mediations conducted at other federal agencies in the D.C. area and helped develop training on collaboration and communication for federal employees in hopes of heading off issues before they arose.

Personnel cases often revolved around allegations of age, gender or racial discrimination, and Bryant came to believe that basic differences in personality type and cultural background were often the source of conflicts. It became clear to her, as she talked separately to both sides in disputes, that people really weren’t understanding each other. “We may have the same end game,” she says, “but how we communicate is sometimes on two different planes.”

Many missed connections, she believes, are caused by a tendency to rely too much on what we *see* when judging others’ intentions. This insight—drawn into even sharper focus by the pandemic-fueled rise of videoconferencing, with its almost obsessive reliance on faces on screens—led her to develop an idea she calls “sensory

mindfulness,” a communication strategy that encourages using empathy and deep listening to solve problems.

“As a person who has lived in both the sighted world and the blind world, I can reflect on how I perceived others as a sighted person and how I perceive others now as a blind person,” Bryant explains. “Being someone who is blind, and experiencing discrimination here and there, I have come to feel and recognize even more how our eyes can prevent us from coming in close to someone. We view them from a distance, we make an assumption, and that assumption may not be correct. So when I talk about sensory mindfulness, I talk about ways to break down that barrier so that we come in close, we have critical conversations, and we engage with someone. We truly listen to them.”

Truly listening—to what’s being said and what’s not being said—is handy not only for resolving disputes, but also for deciding how to handle personal questions that are not always diplomatically framed.

Another that Bryant has fielded more than once: How’d you get to be like this?

“There was a time I might have said, ‘That’s really inappropriate to ask somebody,’” she says. “But there’s a part of me that has to smile and understand there is more to the question, and it’s not necessarily about me. If I shut the question down, I don’t learn that backstory.”

Nine times out of 10, she finds, the questioner has someone close—a mother, a cousin, a dear friend—who is blind and whom they want to help.

“People don’t necessarily know how to begin,” Bryant says. “I’ve learned that sometimes I need to try to open up the conversation to educate them more about who I am and what I do. And maybe mediation has helped me with that, too. Stay neutral. Try to figure out what’s being said.”

If she can be a bridge between those with sight and those without, between ignorance and understanding, between confusion and enlightenment, she’s willing. It’s what good translators do. —



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Resilient **and** **S**ustainable

by Chris Lazzarino



Proposed master plan creates data-driven toolkit for fiscally responsible campus evolution instead of another wish list for pricey new buildings

Memories live within our private viewfinders, selfies and video clips that create personal social media feeds on endless loops. They are how all Jayhawks process, over lifetimes, formative years on the Hill, but any current visit to Mount Oread—a stroll down Jayhawk Boulevard, a picnic in Marvin Grove, a football afternoon, basketball evening or gallery getaway—provides abundant evidence that time moves on.

Things change. And not always for the better. Enter the concept of a campus master plan, which provides a playbook for KU's talented architects, planners, designers and engineers to ensure change is not merely good, but healthy.

The latest iteration in the century-plus cycle of KU master plans is currently being finalized for approval by the chancellor and provost for forwarding to the Kansas Board of Regents, which requires such updates every 10 years. This time around, though, even the concept, creation and intention of the plan have changed.

If, in earlier times of KU's dynamic growth—in both place and purpose—master plans resembled shopping lists, the current version is perhaps more akin to a budget.

"We knew we had some needs," says University Architect Mark Reiske, "but we also believed that we didn't really have to build a lot."

Turns out, our hilltop household already has much of what it requires to exist comfortably and securely. Now, how can we sharpen the Jayhawk family's resource management? How can we do more, much more, with less? How do we lovingly turn our attention from wants to needs, a concept that Reiske, a'86, refers to as "rightsizing" campus.

"This," Reiske insists, "is so much *not* a typical master plan."

KU's first master plan was drafted in 1904 by a pair of noted landscape architects, both of whom favored open green spaces: George Kessler, the visionary behind Kansas City's interwoven parks and boulevards, and Lawrence-born Henry Wright, who was only 23 when he partnered with Kessler in designing the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis.

The primary influence of their Mount Oread vision was to shift campus to the south and west, along the ridge, and direct future expansion down the Hill. The Kansas City firm Hare & Hare in 1928 and 1932 drafted plans that introduced Strong Hall as the campus centerpiece and anchored the University along the spine of campus, Jayhawk Boulevard.

Internal planning by Alton Thomas, landscape architect from 1948 to 1983, and Vice Chancellor R. Keith Lawton,



KU's first master plan, in 1904, placed the primary academic building roughly where Wescoe Hall sits today, but its creators saw little hope for a verdant campus springing to life along Mount Oread's rocky ridge. Instead, they foresaw campus growing to the north, down the Hill and toward the city below—much as it eventually did, thanks to the foresight of master plans of the 1920s, but as green space expansion from Jayhawk Boulevard's academic core.

b'47, director of facilities planning, brought to post-World War II campus such innovations as intentional designs for trees and other plantings and development of Memorial Drive. The Board of Regents in 1973 began requiring formal planning documents, which continued the University's evolution into a comprehensive research and educational complex, and KU planners in 1997 followed up with a 20-year plan that addressed such topics as future building sites, traffic flow and transportation needs, and preservation of campus beauty.

In an era of limited state support for new construction, 2014's 10-year master plan, supporting the Bold Aspirations strategic plan, led to \$737 million being spent on 40 major projects. That included such landmark developments as the \$350 million Central District, anchored by Gray-Little Hall and the Burge Union; the DeBruce and Earth, Energy & Environment centers; and Capitol Federal Hall. When his 41-year KU career closed in 2021, University Architect Jim Modig, a'73, had guided or had been significantly

involved in 168 construction and renovation projects worth \$1.5 billion.

The current master plan, created to support the Jayhawks Rising strategic plan, envisions *only three* new Lawrence building projects—a much-needed health and wellness center; a new interdisciplinary science building, dubbed ISB2; and reconstruction of David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium and development of the historic site's planned conference center and Gateway District—along with “resets” for Lindley and Twente halls and Robinson Center, and renovations and additions for Anschutz Library's student success center, the schools of architecture and law, and Watson Library.

Outside of those projects, the plan, as proposed by consultants Perkins & Will and Multistudio, is more about looking inward, a self-reflection on who we are and how we can best succeed, both now and long into the future.

“Perkins & Will is as thrilled about this as we are. It excites them beyond belief, because they've never done a master plan like this,” Reiske says. “Usually the state

of Kansas follows the coasts by about 10 years. This is one time where we're actually very forward-thinking, regarding how we become resilient and sustainable, looking to the future. Everyone is going to have to do something similar. I think this gives KU the best chance of, 100 years from now, being the place everyone's proud of today."

Gautam Sundaram, Perkins & Will's Boston studio principal and a leader in its urban design practice, has worked in higher education planning for more

than 20 years. He first arrived on Mount Oread nearly two years ago, while campus, as everywhere, was still grappling with COVID-19 restrictions.

He says he found here a beautiful campus where leaders—including Chancellor Doug Girod and Provost Barbara Bichelmeyer, j'82, c'86, g'88, PhD'92, along with their design and operations teams—had embraced the need to find the best road forward into eras of stable or declining on-campus populations, which have the potential to become an existential crisis for higher education across the country. It seems the opportunity Sundaram had been searching for presented

itself when he first read Reiske's request for proposals, and his connection with KU has since grown so strong that he now uses "we" when discussing all things KU.

"This is really unlike any other campus master plan," Sundaram told *Kansas Alumni* in an interview from his Boston office. In an era of post-COVID changes to learning environments and workplace trends, Sundaram saw at KU the chance to implement a data-driven approach that, given enough input, can create a toolkit, along with a real-time dashboard offering updated data across a massive range of variables, for University leadership to continually assess needs and resources.



STEVE PUPPE (3)

November presentations in Woodruff Auditorium, hosted by University Architect Mark Reiske, allowed attendees to meet with designers while viewing renderings of their proposals for campus improvements.



PERKINS & WILL



Earlier master plans boasted of hundreds of interviews with students, faculty and staff; Sundaram and his team gathered information from *thousands* of interactions—“5,000 touch points,” in his description—that allowed for creation of a fluid document that is more like a flow-chart algorithm than an architectural blueprint.

“We’ve kind of framed the story around finding the beauty in rightsizing,” he says. “It doesn’t have to have a negative connotation, or negative idea. It’s something that actually allows you to do far more powerful, and experiential, aspects.”

Eighteen months of research revealed patterns that startled Sundaram, notably the deep affection Jayhawks have for the campus landscape, especially the site that he identified as the heart of campus: Wescoe Hall, Wescoe Beach and surrounding open spaces, all of which are loved and loathed in equal measure.

Options for improving Wescoe reflect much of the design focus proposed for all of campus: refining public plazas and green spaces, fashioning terraced nodes along the south slope, even replacing the old concrete beach with an amphitheater-style pavilion that attracts group interactions all day long and into the evenings—all of which is more about embracing a change in vision than funding massive capital improvement projects.



Emblematic of changes envisioned across campus, architects propose fine-tuning the environment around Wescoe Hall to create entirely new settings that attract invigorating outdoor interactions and call to mind traditional campus quads—a request they heard repeatedly from students.

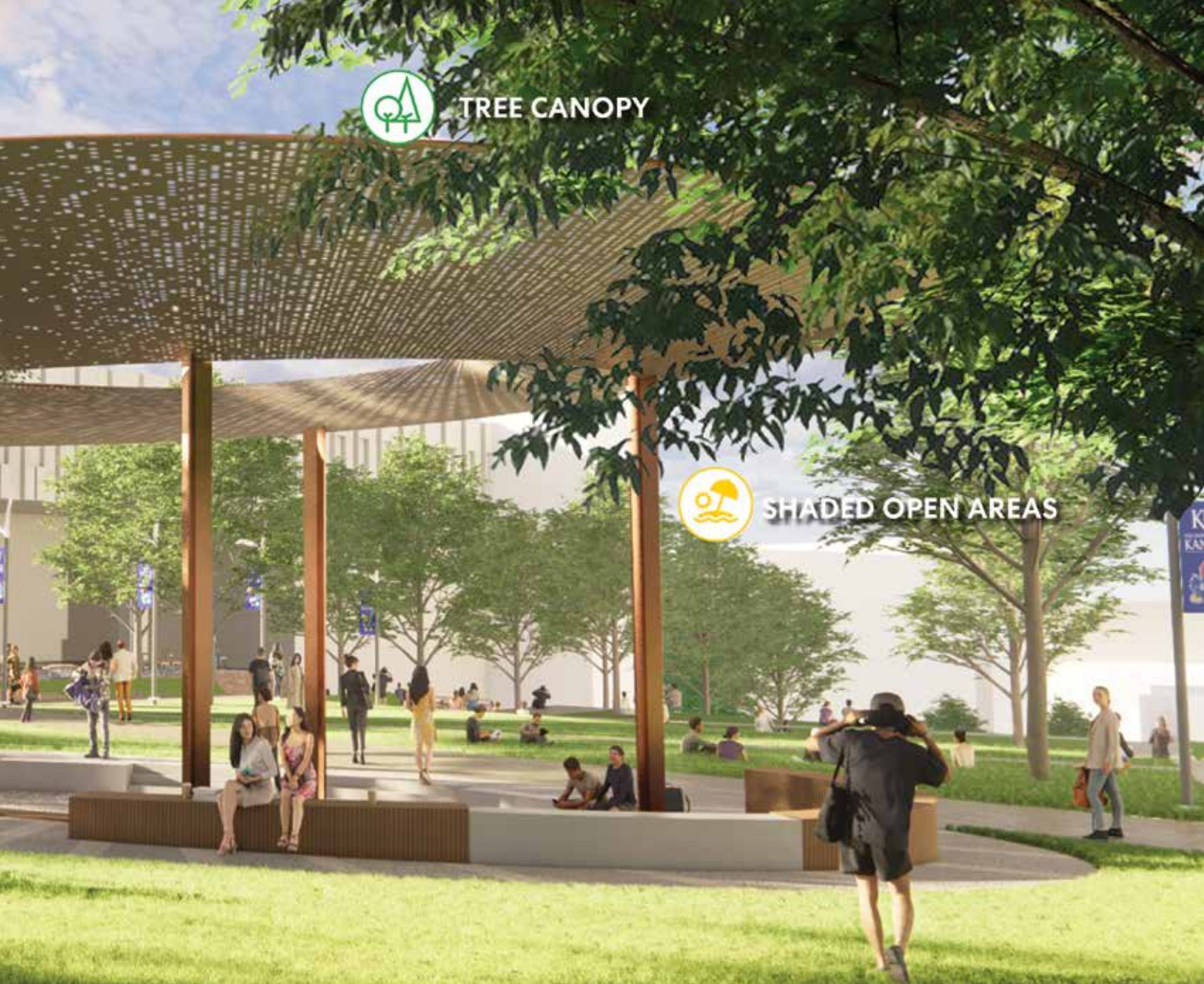




TREE CANOPY



SHADED OPEN AREAS



SMART WAYFINDING

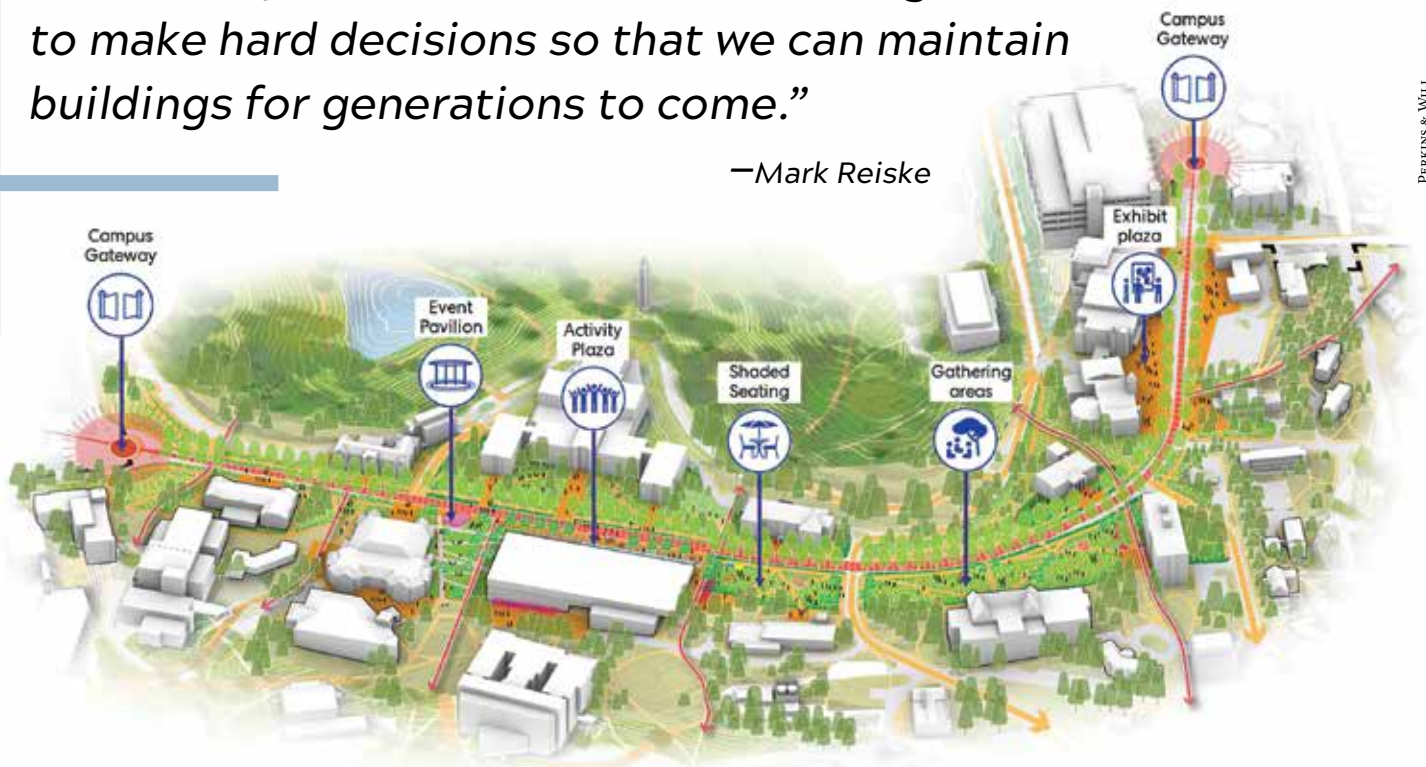
DIGITAL CAMPUS SYSTEMS

“We’ve kind of framed the story around finding the beauty in rightsizing. ... It’s something that actually allows you to do far more powerful, and experiential, aspects.”

—Gautam Sundaram

“We should be so proud that people care so deeply about campus. At the same time, we’ve got to make hard decisions so that we can maintain buildings for generations to come.”

—Mark Reiske



PERKINS & WILL

In other words, mind over money.

“This whole data-driven and toolkit approach is critical, because it assembles the data in a manner that allows everybody to understand where the gaps are,” Sundaram says, “and empowers the KU community to start making the decisions required of them to put us in a much better place.”

Among the plan’s numerous areas of interest, Sundaram highlights an emphasis on sustainable natural and built environments, biodiverse green spaces that include greenway hiking trails and bike paths, mitigating heat islands worsened by ongoing climate change, increased shading and thinned undergrowth along walkways, and designs for outdoor spaces that remind the KU community that our “quad”—a desire he says was referenced repeatedly in his interviews—is already plentiful and beautiful, but goes by a different name: Jayhawk Boulevard.

What some might see merely as lawns

or hillsides, Sundaram views as potential learning environments where campus denizens and visitors alike are naturally invited to pause, rest, study, chat.

“These different moments will start to create opportunities for gathering and respite,” Sundaram says, “completely transforming Jayhawk Boulevard into a series of programmable spaces that become active for all community members.”

The 18 months of research behind the current master plan proposal confirmed a dire situation campus leaders were already aware of: The University has more than 900,000 square feet of extra space in its rapidly transforming learning environments, and that extra space weighs heavily on a campus already burdened by an estimated \$750 million in deferred maintenance.

It is an overwhelming number that, for decades, has seemed impossible to surmount. Until now.

Reiske explains that a KU software suite called Maximo currently tracks such vital data as work orders, enrollments, and usage of every seat in every classroom on campus. With that information, KU operations leaders can direct limited maintenance funds to the most highly used classrooms that need the most work.

Along with the master plan’s new toolkit, KU planners now have access to real-time data on enrollment, office assignments and building conditions ranked in four specific categories, all of which will help direct looming tough decisions on how best to pull some campus space offline and out of the deferred maintenance logs, with the intention of not spending good money on bad options.

“We want to make sure that this institution is resilient and sustainable for genera-

tions to come,” Bichelmeyer said at one of two town hall meetings where Sundaram introduced the proposed master plan to campus audiences. “This isn’t just about the next 10 years. This is about planning for the next 100 or so, and thinking about how we do our job as stewards at this moment in time to help drive toward that kind of future.”

As deeply as Mark Reiske cares for the nostalgia of Mount Oread—a sentiment he personally embraces as an alumnus who bleeds crimson and blue—he also acknowledges his professional responsibility to rip significant chunks out of the deferred maintenance backlog for the University’s present and future financial stability. He’s already bracing for blowback that he knows will come.

“One of the great things about KU—and I do sincerely mean this—is how passionately people love everything that is KU,” Reiske says. “It will be very difficult to step away from buildings. We will have any number of people who truly believe that we should never step away from any buildings, ever, so no matter what we decide to sell, or liquidate, or close, or mothball, someone will have very strong feelings about that from their time at KU.”

“As I said, we should be so proud that people care so deeply about campus. At the same time, we’ve got to make hard decisions so that we can maintain buildings for generations to come.”

In discussing the tough decisions that await KU planners—all of which will be guided by the new master plan and its high-tech, data-driven toolkit—Reiske draws comparisons with gardeners culling their crops, resulting both in fewer plants to tend and more and better tomatoes. He also carefully notes that “historic doesn’t equal old” and “there’s a lot more to historic than just an age.” KU’s “signature” buildings, regardless of age, are deserving of more resources than others, he explains, and alumni need to support the critical need for rightsizing the campus environment.

“Business as usual is not sustainable for us any longer,” Reiske says. “It’s probably



Gautam Sundaram, a friendly, soft-spoken landscape architect from Boston, led Perkins & Will’s design team through 18 months of intensive research into what makes KU’s unique campus tick: “What an amazing opportunity I’ve had to be part of a journey that really is about celebrating the cultural history and the legacy of the campus itself, and we hope we’ve done the right approach in celebrating that history and legacy.”

very hard for our alumni to understand this, because we’re saying, ‘Hey, we’ve got the biggest freshman class in the history of the University, and next year we’ll probably have a bigger freshman class,’ so they’re seeing all these students coming in. But what they don’t see is a cliff. The chancellor and provost are desperately trying to make us resilient to that cliff,” which refers to a plummet in the population of 18-year-olds in 2026, 18 years after the Great Recession.

A grim tone that inevitably accompanies talk of tough times does not represent the spirit surrounding the new master plan.

Campus leaders are thrilled for the opportunities it presents, delivering up-to-date information that will help them create premium research environments, attractive high-traffic areas for student and faculty interaction, and properly maintained havens for outdoor living and private contemplations.

“This will allow us to be better than we are, and we have to be,” Reiske says. “In the market we’re working in, we have to be better.”

Better, in fact, than ever. Not in spite of the change we know is going to come, but because of it. —

M master plan renderings online

To view Sundaram’s campus presentation and four dozen slides detailing the master plan’s concepts and applications, visit fpd.ku.edu/2024-master-plan.





‘The truth matters more than anything’

Through her massively popular “Murdaugh Murders Podcast,” Mandy Matney has illuminated a complex saga of crime and corruption for millions of listeners and emerged as a trusted, tenacious investigative journalist

Around 2:20 a.m. on Feb. 24, 2019, a boat crashed into the Archers Creek Bridge in Beaufort County, South Carolina, causing the death of one of the six passengers, 19-year-old Mallory Beach. In the five years since the accident, the details surrounding it and the jaw-dropping chain of events that followed have been covered by every major U.S. news outlet, recounted for prime-time audiences in episodes of “20/20” and “Dateline,” and dissected in docuseries from Netflix, HBO and other merchants of mass entertainment.

But back in 2019, before goings-on in the South Carolina Lowcountry were a topic of widespread fas-

ination, before the last name Murdaugh was among the most notorious in true crime, Mandy Matney was a local journalist with an inkling there was more to the story. Matney, j’12, was working at The Island Packet, a newspaper in Hilton Head Island, also in Beaufort County. She and her colleagues set about reporting on the fatal crash and learned that Paul Murdaugh, the 19-year-old son of well-connected attorney Alex Murdaugh, had been at the helm of the boat that morning. Three generations of Murdaugh men—Alex’s great-grandfather, grandfather and father—had consecutively held the top prosecutor role in the region for 86 years, from 1920 to 2006.

by **Megan Hirt** | Portrait by Steve Puppe

“The stories we wrote that first week after the crash got hundreds of comments on social media, with people saying things like, **‘The Murdaugh family gets away with everything.’** I had this feeling that if even half of it was true, it was a huge story, and this was a chance to do something big that mattered.”



Alex Murdaugh

“The stories we wrote that first week after the crash got hundreds of comments on social media, with people saying things like, ‘The Murdaugh family gets away with everything.’” Matney remembers. “I had this feeling that if even half of it was true, it was a huge story, and this was a chance to do something big that mattered.”

Matney began researching the Murdaughs and steadily unearthed a tangle of suspicious deaths and dubious financial dealings linked to the family. When Paul Murdaugh and his mother, Maggie—Alex’s wife—were found murdered on June 7, 2021, the shocking turn jolted the story into the national spotlight, and Matney’s years of dogged investigative work provided critical context for a country suddenly riveted by the plight of the prominent family. Amid the booming interest, Mat-

ney decided the time was right to venture into a new medium, one she thought would allow for a clearer presentation of the full, complicated Murdaugh picture. From her kitchen table, she launched the “Murdaugh Murders Podcast” two weeks after Paul and Maggie’s deaths.

“I started the podcast primarily because I wanted people to understand the story,” Matney says. “A lot of the national media were pointing at the boat crash victims as being suspects in Paul and Maggie’s murders. They weren’t understanding all the different layers of how corrupt this area is and the different power dynamics involved.”

Matney’s pivot to podcasting proved life-changing: The “Murdaugh Murders Podcast” hit No. 1 on Apple Podcasts in September 2021, and Matney has narrated for an audience of millions the dramatic, winding Murdaugh tale, continuing into the aftermath of Alex’s March 2023 conviction for Paul and Maggie’s murders. Throughout Matney’s unexpected journey—which has included releasing more than 120 podcast episodes; founding an independent news organization, Luna Shark Media; and writing a book, *Blood on Their Hands: Murder, Corruption, and the Fall of the Murdaugh Dynasty*, published in November by William Morrow—she has remained guided by her resolve to uncover the truth. “What has always stuck with me from journalism school is the saying, ‘Journalists run to the fire,’” Matney says. “Everybody else runs away from the fire, but as a journalist, if you see smoke, you run to it. With the Murdaugh story, I learned that when

things are scary, you don’t run away; you don’t ignore it. You go see what’s going on and you figure it out.”

Matney grew up in Shawnee, and early on showed an inclination toward her future profession. She pored over her parents’ copies of *The Kansas City Star* and excelled in English classes. “I remember in third grade, the first time I ever felt like a teacher thought I was good at something was when we were constructing complex sentences,” Matney recalls. “She used mine as an example for the class, and I remember her saying, ‘You’re really good at this.’ The more I had to do any type of writing, the more I realized that I had a talent at it.”

When Matney was just 7, her family endured the devastating loss of her brother, Michael, her only sibling, who died at age 9 of complications from the flu. “It changed my whole life in a lot of ways, but it made me want to help other people who were in similar situations of losing a loved one however I could,” Matney says. Out of her grief grew a deep empathy, a trait that touches several aspects of her work today, such as interviewing family members of crime victims. “Making people feel like they aren’t alone, that they can get through it, that they have someone there—all those things really matter to me,” she says.

Matney honed her writing skills as a reporter and columnist for her high school newspaper, and by the time she arrived at KU in fall 2008, her heart was set on becoming a journalist. As a sophomore, she began writing opinion pieces for *The*

University Daily Kansan. Her column, “Text and the City,” explored the changing norms of dating, relationships and communication amid increasing social media use and evolving digital culture. “I thought having my column in the UDK was the coolest thing,” Matney says. “It was really great for me to gain confidence in my writing—just having that practice of getting your words and your name out there and getting used to people seeing your work.” The newspaper became a cornerstone of her education, and she held various roles on its staff throughout the rest of her time at KU.

Matney also found new, transformative perspective in studying sociology. She took her first course as a freshman and decided to minor in the subject. “Sociology gave me an understanding of why I was so self-conscious about so many things,” Matney says. “I realized how I was so programmed by mainstream media to focus on my looks and to think that my worth was 100% what I looked like. I remember

having so many moments of enlightenment and clarity. It was awesome to have those tools, to be able to take a step back. It makes you see the world differently, and it helped me develop into who I am as a journalist.”

As graduation approached in May 2012, Matney admits she was nervous and uncertain about her next steps. “Everyone was telling me at the time, ‘There’s no future in journalism,’” Matney says. “But I just couldn’t leave it. Journalism was one thing I was good at.” Determined, she landed her first job at the Waynesville Daily Guide in Waynesville, Missouri, and in 2014 joined the Danville Commercial-News in Danville, Illinois. At both papers, budget constraints meant she often shouldered an outsized workload for meager pay, and as burnout crept in, so too did persistent doubts about her career choice. “I constantly had to figure out if continuing to pursue it was worth it,” she says. “And the stories I got to tell and people I got to meet are what made it worth it.”

One of those people was Dick Van Dyke, whom Matney interviewed in 2015 when the entertainment icon reached out to the Commercial-News on social media upon learning the city of Danville had condemned his childhood home. “He had the most amazing, vivid memories of growing up in Danville. He could remember the color of the wallpaper,” Matney says. “We put him in contact with the owners of the home, and he was eventually able to buy it. He really cared about his hometown, and he gave a local reporter his time. It was one of those things that makes you excited to get up and do your job.”

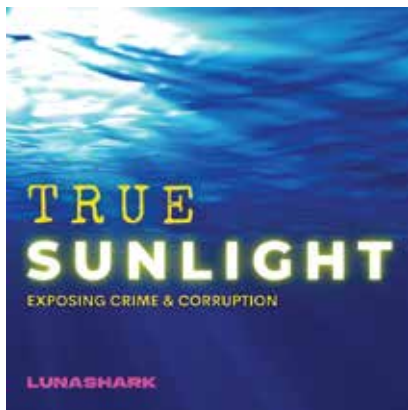
During one of her commutes to the newsroom in Danville, Matney began listening to “Serial,” the 2014 podcast that examined in depth the 1999 murder of 18-year-old Hae Min Lee in Baltimore and the subsequent trial and conviction of Lee’s ex-boyfriend, Adnan Syed, for the crime. Hosted by journalist Sarah Koenig, “Serial” racked up an estimated 40 million downloads in 2014, and its success highlighted podcasts as a platform for compelling storytelling and propelled the medium into the mainstream. Matney was hooked. “It was so beyond surface level,” she says. “The host took you into the process and into how she was coming up with her conclusions instead of just, ‘This person’s guilty.’ I thought, ‘Wow, this is journalism and storytelling in a different form, and people are listening to it and paying attention, and it’s making change.’”

In 2016, weary of Illinois winters, Matney moved to Bluffton, South Carolina, and signed on at The Island Packet. She dove into learning all about her new



LUNA SHARK MEDIA

Matney and her husband, David Moses, with their dog Luna—the namesake for their news organization, Luna Shark Media—in their home recording studio in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. The couple also has a corgi, Joe Pesky.



The “Murdaugh Murders Podcast” became “True Sunlight” in May 2023. The new name reflects Matney and her team applying their investigative chops to other crimes beyond just those with a Murdaugh connection. Luna Shark Media’s second podcast, “Cup of Justice,” launched in January 2023. New episodes of “Cup of Justice” and “True Sunlight” come out every Tuesday and Thursday, respectively.

community, where dangerous storms and rogue alligators regularly led the news, and she kept an eye out for a story that might present a change-making opportunity of her own.

As Matney continued investigating the Murdaughs following the boat crash that killed Mallory Beach, an image emerged of a family with a formidable presence in the Lowcountry, a legacy of unchecked legal influence, and ties to more than one mysterious death. Her findings lit a fire in her to do the tough work of piecing together the mountain of seemingly unrelated bits of information into a coherent record of the family’s affairs. She often spent her free time tracking down and interviewing sources and sifting through public records.

Though she wouldn’t know its significance until later, Matney made a breakthrough in June 2019, when she discovered a wrongful death settlement in a lawsuit brought against Alex Murdaugh by the family of 57-year-old Gloria Satterfield, the Murdaughs’ longtime housekeeper. Satterfield had died in February 2018 after a curious trip-and-fall accident at the Murdaugh home. Matney was the first journalist to report on the settlement, and her coverage became the initial tug on a lengthy thread that, in its unraveling, would reveal Alex Murdaugh’s heap of appalling financial crimes.

Eric Bland, an attorney who represents Gloria Satterfield’s sons, credits Matney with bringing Alex Murdaugh’s financial crimes to light. “In an age of clicks and sound bites, Mandy is the principled, hardworking journalist who does it the old-fashioned way,” Bland says. “At tremendous risk to her, she educated the public on the full Alex Murdaugh—the nuts and bolts of how he treated and financially manipulated clients.”

After Gloria Satterfield’s death, Alex suggested to her two sons that they sue him. Through an elaborate scheme, Alex then pocketed over \$3.5 million in insurance settlement money. Bland says Satterfield’s sons never knew of any settlement money

until they read Matney’s article. “That’s kind of what opened the floodgates for Alex’s clients to come forward and say there were questionable things that happened in their cases regarding finances,” Bland says. (In 2023, Alex pleaded guilty to 22 counts of financial fraud and money laundering.)

Through her sleuthing, Matney also discovered that Buster Murdaugh, the eldest of Alex and Maggie’s two sons, had been mentioned in tips to law enforcement regarding the death of 19-year-old Stephen Smith, whose body was found in July 2015 on a rural road not far from one of the Murdaugh properties. Smith’s death was initially ruled a hit-and-run accident. In reviewing recorded interviews and the South Carolina Highway Patrol’s case file, Matney learned of rumors that Smith and Buster had been romantically involved. (The investigation was reopened in 2021, and Smith’s death was ruled a homicide in 2023. Buster has denied any romantic relationship with Smith and any involvement in his death. No one has been charged with the crime.)

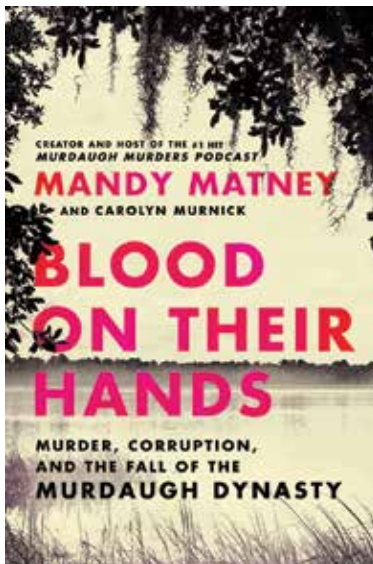
In January 2020, Matney took a job at an independent South Carolina news website, where she could devote more time to covering the Murdaughs. Throughout her odyssey, Matney and her boyfriend, David Moses, casually entertained the idea of creating a Murdaugh-focused podcast. The couple even recorded a mock episode about the boat crash to pass the time during COVID-19 lockdowns. With both working full time, however, the endeavor never progressed beyond aspirational. “We wanted to do a podcast, but it was never the right time,” Matney says. “Then when Paul and Maggie’s murders happened, David looked at me and said, ‘You need to do this now.’ I was terrified, but I wanted to do it.” Some humble preparation got the ball rolling. “David just Googled, ‘how to start a podcast,’ and that’s literally how we learned,” Matney says. “And our first episode came out two weeks after the murders.”

Episode No. 1 of the “Murdaugh Murders Podcast” discussed the double homicide of Paul and Maggie through the lens of Matney’s more than two years

of research. She laid out for listeners the integral backstory regarding the family's intimidating reputation, enmeshment with law enforcement, and connections to the deaths of Mallory Beach, Gloria Satterfield and Stephen Smith.

"I think it took 60 hours to put our first episode together, and it was only 12 minutes," Matney says. "I was so bad at it. I couldn't say full sentences. It doesn't sound great at all, but I'm so proud of that episode because it's now gotten millions of listens. And I think it shows people that you can start somewhere. You can improve."

Throughout the summer of 2021, Matney, with Moses as producer, published seven installments of the "Murdaugh Murders Podcast." More and more listeners tuned in with each episode. The leap from print to audio wasn't entirely painless, though. "I immediately got criticism," Matney says. "Not criticism about my journalism, but about how my voice sounded." She pressed on, a sharp finish line in her mind: "I originally thought that we would do 10 episodes, tops." But the Murdaugh saga, it would turn out, had even more bombshells in store: On Sept. 4, 2021, Alex Murdaugh claimed he sustained a gunshot wound to the head. "And then our numbers just skyrocketed," Matney says. (Alex later admitted to orchestrating the shooting himself; it happened the day after



"We have a very clear mission to give a voice to the voiceless, to expose the truth wherever it leads, and to get the story straight."

the law firm he worked for confronted him about missing money.)

"All of a sudden, it seemed like the whole world was watching the Murdaugh case, and we were the go-to podcast for it," Matney says. "Because I had been working on the case for so long and had a lot of sources on the ground who knew what was going on, the episode we put out after the shooting incident was questioning it—was saying, 'This is why this is suspicious.' It was way different from what the rest of the world was reporting. I was leading my audience in the correct direction, and because of that, I think people realized how good our sources were and that we were a voice they could trust in this, and they got really immersed in the story."

Matney recalls mid-September 2021—when the "Murdaugh Murders Podcast" topped the Apple Podcasts chart, a feat especially impressive for an independent production—as a blur. She stayed in constant reporter mode, always ready to write about any new activity in the case, which trickled out around the clock. Deciphering all the developments—assessing them beyond face value—required diligence and additional time. "Every single thing that happened in this case, you had to look at the strategy behind it, where it came from, all the context around it," Matney says. "And I think that was the hardest part. There was no rule book for a story like this that stretched on for so long with so much consistent news."

On top of reporting at her day job and recording the podcast in her free time, Matney soon found herself inundated with requests to participate in TV shows and documentary projects about the Murdaugh case. What might seem a podcaster's

dream didn't appeal to Matney, however. "Some people think I'm crazy for not wanting to be on Netflix," she says. "It was a hard thing to say no to—they were offering more than my salary at the time. They really come at you with the idea that everyone wants to be on TV and everyone wants to be famous. But at the time, I was getting a ton of bullying and harassment online, so I already saw the downside of doing something like that. It ultimately wasn't worth it."

Advice from friend and fellow journalist Liz Farrell, whom Matney had worked with at The Island Packet, steadied her during the otherwise dizzying chapter: "Liz was like, 'The podcast is your documentary. You should focus on that.'"

Matney heeded the guidance, and since August 2022 has worked full time on the podcast alongside Moses, now her husband. They formed Luna Shark Media—the name is a nod to their dog Luna—and brought on Farrell as a writer and co-host. With each episode, the podcast methodically unpacked the multiple Murdaugh-related mysteries, put a spotlight on Alex's financial misdeeds, and gave listeners nuanced insight into the case's many unfolding storylines. On July 14, 2022, Alex Murdaugh was charged with Paul and Maggie's slayings, and on March 2, 2023, after a six-week trial, a jury found him guilty of their murders.

"I was speechless and shaken, but full of positivity," Matney says of her reaction to Alex's conviction. The outcome also kindled a sense of validation for her yearslong quest for answers and accountability. "I just couldn't believe all the blood, sweat and tears that had gone into exposing this man, and for a jury to find him guilty—I felt elated," she says. In another uplifting turn, musician Sheryl Crow, a fan of the podcast, mentioned Matney on social

media during the trial. “Your podcast has been an incredible example of amazing reporting & shining a light on the injustices in the legal system for those (who) have money & power,” Crow tweeted on Feb. 23, 2023. “It reminded me how big the moment was,” Matney says of the shoutout, “and that the whole world was watching this case.”

At the heart of the Murdaugh story, beneath its spectacle of bizarre twists and turns, lies a familiar scenario, Matney says, to which she attributes the enormous interest the case garnered: “I think a lot of people in towns across America know families like the Murdaughs that have run things for years without people questioning them. I think we, early on, caught on to the corruption aspect of the story and the major problems with our justice system. We’ve been proud we’ve been able to highlight and educate people on so many different things within the justice system through this case. It’s important to show people this corruption does happen and is very real.”

Outside media have largely left the Lowcountry, but Matney still keeps tabs on the Murdaugh case, albeit with some adjustments. The “Murdaugh Murders Podcast” is now “True Sunlight,” and although the podcast still covers Murdaugh news—in late January, a judge denied Alex’s request for a new trial—Matney has branched out, digging into different cases and partnering with other journalists to investigate them. Ten people currently contribute to Luna Shark Media projects, and the organization offers a membership platform, Luna Shark Premium, with enhanced content, in-depth articles and educational materials. “We have a very clear mission to give a voice to the voiceless, to expose the truth wherever it leads, and to get the story straight,” Matney says of “True Sunlight.” “We don’t want to compete with the big media. We want to stick to our mission and what we’re good at, which is cases where crime meets corruption.” In

selecting subject matter, Matney says she prioritizes lesser-known cases that have yet to be sufficiently scrutinized by an investigative journalist.

As Alex Murdaugh’s murder trial began, Luna Shark Media launched a second podcast, “Cup of Justice,” which features legal analysis and commentary from Matney, journalist Liz Farrell and attorney Eric Bland. “Cup of Justice” reached No. 1 on Apple Podcasts shortly after it debuted in January 2023. New episodes of “True Sunlight” and “Cup of Justice” come out every week. Together, the two podcasts average over 2 million listeners monthly.

In writing *Blood on Their Hands*, Matney says she wanted not only to take readers inside her work on the Murdaugh case, but also to share her personal story of carving her path in the industry, handling disappointment and setbacks, and finding the courage to hold the powerful to account. The result is a book she hopes can inspire readers, particularly women and young journalists who may feel downplayed or discouraged in their careers, as she once did.

Matney values the experience she gained at small-town publications, and she stresses that, in many high-profile true crime stories, the foundational fact-finding is done by boots-on-the-ground local journalists long before bigger media outlets swoop in. “The hard part was connecting the dots,” Matney says of covering the Murdaughs. “It was months of running into brick walls. We spent two years connecting all the dots before the murders even happened, and then we were able to lay it out for everyone and for the national press to pick up and run with. And I think we also made it easier for sources to speak out against the Murdaugh family. I think a story like Alex Murdaugh really shows how important local journalism is and how much good it can do.”

In Matney’s view, Alex Murdaugh may not have faced consequences for his host

of other crimes without the efforts of local journalists that drew attention to the victims. “I don’t think authorities or the media would have cared nearly enough about the financial victims without knowing those very personal stories and just how horrible Alex Murdaugh was to these extremely vulnerable people,” Matney says. “Being able to tell those stories and show people the really personal side of financial crimes—I’m very proud of that.”

Matney is also proud of her Jayhawk roots and holds fast to the principles of good reporting instilled in her at KU. “The way we tell stories will change, but you still have to learn how to captivate an audience and get the information accurate, and those are skills that I absolutely took with me from KU and that provided a great foundation for my career,” she says. She looks back fondly, too, on the budding of lasting friendships and an environment that nurtured self-discovery. “I had the best memories at Anschutz with my girlfriends at like 3 in the morning,” she laughs. “I’m still a chronic procrastinator. I’ve learned to embrace it.” She is often up into the wee hours of the morning finishing podcast episodes, though she has traded her kitchen table setup for a professional recording booth in her home studio.

A particularly rewarding aspect of her work, Matney says, is the loyal, engaged audience she has cultivated. “It’s people collectively who believe in doing the right thing and who want to see justice for victims, and they’ve made ‘Murdaugh Murders Podcast’ and ‘True Sunlight’ more of a movement than a podcast,” Matney says. Several listeners have told her the podcast galvanized them to get involved in grassroots advocacy or local government. “It’s exciting to do work for an audience like that. They motivate me to do better,” Matney says. “I’ve always wanted my work as a journalist to create positive change, so that has been the best thing in the world.”

Turning ambitions into future achievements.



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“Geoff bird-dogged this from start to finish; he was the one who drove the whole thing. It just shows that it’s key to have someone on the ground like Geoff who understands the local process—which is different in every state—and can communicate with lawmakers. Full credit to him for doing that.”

—Dwight Parman



CHARLIE NEUENSCHWANDER

Legler

OK to proceed

After Oklahoma’s approval of a KU license plate, all that’s needed are Jayhawks who are ready to ride

GEOFF LEGLER ATTENDED the University of Oklahoma, not KU, but he did spend a lot of time in Lawrence when he was dating the Jayhawk who would become his wife, Katrina Conrad Legler, c’92. More campus visits followed when they sent their two children to KU: Käte-Marie Legler Parsons, c’22, j’22, and Mathias Legler, a senior in the School of Business.



“I like KU,” Legler says. “The attitude that graduates and athletic fans have is like one big family. I like that camaraderie.”

So when the couple pulled up to a stoplight in their hometown of Norman last year and spied a car with an Oklahoma license plate bearing the Power Cat and the phrase Go Wildcats!, Legler was nonplussed.

“We’d never seen an Oklahoma tag for a school outside the state, hadn’t heard anything about it,” he recalls. “We were both kind of like, ‘Hmm, that’s weird.’ I said to my wife, ‘Well, that just doesn’t sit right with me, that Kansas State has a plate and KU doesn’t.’”

A U.S. Air Force veteran who is now a safety officer in the Oklahoma National Guard, Legler understands the state’s rules for making specialty plates available to drivers. Through his work with the Guard, he has experience with the creation and

approval of specialized plates of a military nature, including one commemorating Operation Iraqi Freedom, which adorns his own car.

He contacted his state representative and got the KU tag added to a bill already being written to introduce a pair of new military-themed license plates. Legler then worked with the Alumni Association's Dwight Parman, assoc., chief financial officer and executive vice president, and Susan Younger, f'91, creative director, to get the KU plates designed and submitted to Service Oklahoma, the state agency responsible for distributing automobile plates. The Oklahoma Legislature passed the bill, only to see it vetoed by Gov. Kevin Stitt, who singled out the Jayhawk tag as the reason for his decision. In May, the Legislature overrode the governor's veto, opening the door for alumni, fans and friends of KU in the state to sport their Jayhawk pride on their rides.

"Geoff bird-dogged this from start to finish; he was the one who drove the whole thing," says Parman, who notes that a similar effort in Oklahoma a few years ago hit a brick wall when the Legislature balked. "It just shows that it's key to have someone on the ground like Geoff who understands the local process—which is different in every state—and can communicate with lawmakers. Full credit to him for doing that."

The legislation requires at least 100 prepaid applications for the specialty plate by May 1 or no Jayhawk plates will be manufactured. For more information on cost and how to order, visit kualumni.org/license.

Legler hopes Jayhawks will come through, making Oklahoma the third state—along with Texas and Maryland—to offer KU specialty plates outside Kansas. He already has plans for a new project later this year: getting the Legislature to pass an addendum that would allow the Jayhawk tags to be personalized.

"It feels good to know that I was able to help with this process," Legler says. "It's a lasting contribution, hopefully, to the University and the state of Oklahoma."

—STEVEN HILL

Requirements and procedures for specialty license plates vary widely from state to state. If you are interested in making Jayhawk plates available in your state, please contact legislators or other appropriate officials to learn more about your state's process for approving and creating new specialty plates.

New grad cherishes Jayhawk identity

Uniting students is a passion for young alumnus

FOR THE THREE AND A HALF YEARS he was a KU student, Thanh Tan Nguyen strived not only to make the most of his time on Mount Oread, but also to enrich the college experience for fellow Jayhawks. With leadership roles in Student Union Activities (SUA) and on the Homecoming Steering Committee, among other organizations, Nguyen helped foster Jayhawk kinship, uphold traditions and contribute to what he describes as the "social effervescence" on campus.

But it was a fleeting encounter outside Kansas that solidified Nguyen's own sense of belonging to the Jayhawk flock. On a visit to Estes Park, Colorado, with friends, Nguyen recalls the delight in hearing a warm "Rock Chalk!" from a passerby who noticed Nguyen's KU cap. "That moment where a complete stranger greeted me really gave me a sense of identity that I never had before," says Nguyen, who graduated with honors in December with a bachelor's degree in business analytics and supply chain management. "It made me realize I share something in common with anyone who has attend-

"That moment where a complete stranger greeted me really gave me a sense of identity that I never had before. It made me realize I share something in common with anyone who has attended KU, regardless of their background."

—Thanh Tan Nguyen



STEVE PUPPE

Nguyen

ed KU, regardless of their background.”
 Nguyen grew up in the city of Tuy Hoa in Vietnam’s Phu Yen province, where he lived with his family above the shoe store his parents owned. He started learning English at age 7 and knew early on he wanted to attend college in the United States. A self-professed lover of data and efficiency, Nguyen was initially drawn to KU because of the business analytics program in the School of Business. Heartfelt support bumped KU to the top of his list. “The international admissions staff were really caring,” he says. “They reached out before I even knew what I needed help with, and they also connected me with an alum who was from my high school. That was one of the turning points.”

Another came during his first semester, in fall 2020, when he spotted an SUA booth outside his dorm, Lewis Hall. At the time, COVID-19 had halted most student activities. “I found out that somebody was still fighting for students to feel like they got the college experience,” Nguyen says of SUA. “And as soon as I knew that, I knew I had to give back.”

Nguyen remained part of SUA

throughout his time at KU, eventually serving as executive director, and says his involvement helped him adapt to a new culture and become a better active listener—“helping people feel safe around you and feel like they can share their stories,” he says. Of the hundreds of campus events he had a hand in, a standout for Nguyen was the 2022 Kansas Drag Showcase. “I loved bringing people together to celebrate different communities on campus,” he says. “This annual event aims to amplify the LGBTQ+ community’s voices at KU and advocate for their inclusion.”

At halftime of the Homecoming football game Oct. 28, Nguyen was one of two students (along with Libby Frost of WaKeeney) who received KU’s 2023 ExCEL Award, presented by Konica Minolta. The annual honor recognizes outstanding leadership, involvement and academics.

Nguyen is now preparing to pursue graduate studies and says he’d ultimately like to work in the field of artificial

intelligence. No matter where life may take him, a continued devotion to KU is a certainty. “I always plan to be connected to KU and to give back to help future students achieve their dreams,” he says. As a student, Nguyen benefited from donations given through KU Endowment’s annual 24-hour fundraising campaign, One Day. One KU, and from mentorship through KU Mentoring+, part of the Jayhawk Career Network. He intends to donate and volunteer as an alumnus, and also hopes to be an ambassador for KU, encouraging college-bound students to consider a home on the Hill, a place that for Nguyen fueled possibility and inspired pride.

“I started as a stranger to KU—my blood was only crimson; there was no blue in there,” he laughs. “But now I am all crimson and blue.”

—MEGAN HIRT



As a winner of KU’s 2023 ExCEL Award, Nguyen received a class ring from Jostens. His custom ring features his zodiac constellation (Leo), and engraved on the inside are the names of Nguyen, his parents and his grandma.

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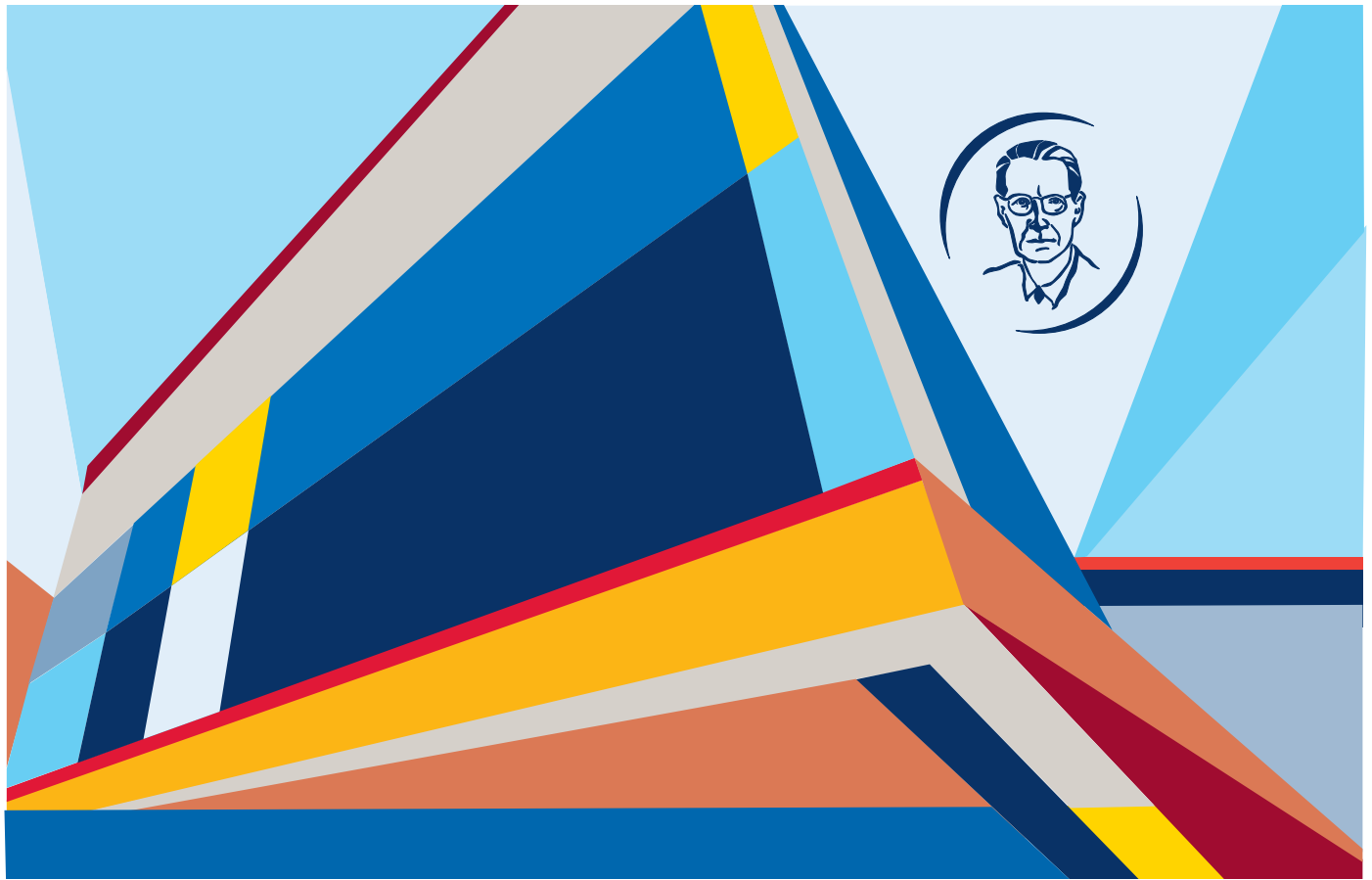
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Jayhawk Profiles

SAM FORD

D.C. journalist signs off after long news career

by STEVEN HILL

In 40 years as a newsman in the nation's capital, TV journalist Sam Ford likes to say, he's covered everything from the White House to the crack house.

Ford, j'74, came to Washington, D.C., during a 10-year run as a correspondent for CBS News, following stints in Atlanta and New York City, where the evening news was anchored by one of his idols: Walter Cronkite.

He covered the Reagan White House for CBS before moving to Channel 7 News after a round of network layoffs. D.C. was then one of many American cities hit hard by the crack epidemic.

At the urging of his news director, Ford went into the streets and reported on two kids, both 10 years old.

"One was basically out there with no parents, and the other was also poor but had a stable situation," Ford recalls. He did a story, then returned from time to time for follow-ups, most recently a couple of years ago.

"Both of them had been to prison, but at 40 years old both owned businesses, and they were both what I would call productive members of society," Ford says. "Both told me they learned stuff in prison that helped them get into business. So my phrase to viewers was, 'It ain't all bad news, folks.' People find a lot of trouble here on the street, but that's not the end of life."

Reached by phone in December, at the start of his final week before retiring after 36 years with Channel 7, Ford was still chasing stories with high energy and good humor, laughing often as he reflected on a career that—all told—spanned more than a half-century, beginning while he was still a student in the William Allen White School of Journalism.

His first break came when broadcaster

Jerry Bailey, j'60, of WREN radio in Topeka, asked him whether he'd be interested in working at the station.

"They had heard me, I guess," says Ford, who was already on air at KUOK, the low-power campus radio station, "and decided I was good enough for a regular broadcast station."

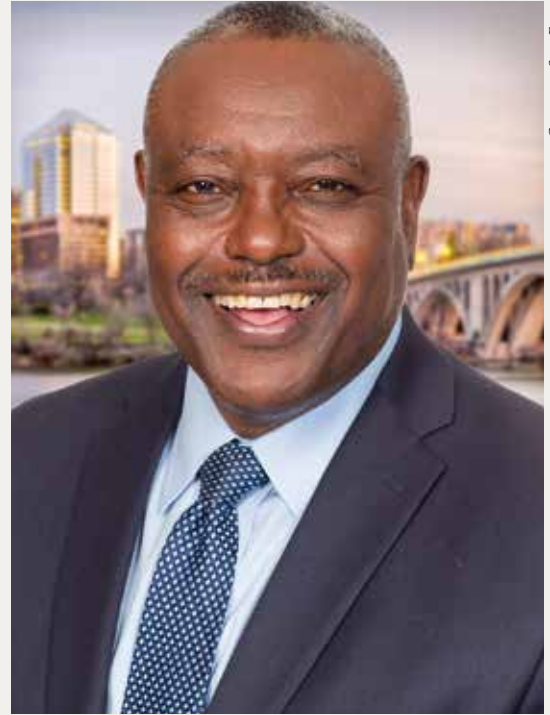
The summer before he entered KU, Ford had lived in Washington with his sister and worked to save the money for his KU tuition. What struck him most, though, was what he saw on television.

"At the time, they didn't have many minorities on television or radio in Kansas," says Ford, who grew up in Coffeyville and Independence. "In D.C., there were a lot of Black people on TV. I was amazed. That was really inspiring for me."

The WREN job led to work as the morning newsreader at KANU, the campus NPR station; after earning his KU degree he went to grad school in Minneapolis, where he worked at another NPR station and landed an internship at WCCO, the CBS radio and TV affiliate in the Twin Cities. There he made the jump to television.

As Channel 7's D.C. bureau chief, Ford has focused on government, life and crime. His reporting has won Edward R. Murrow and Emmy awards, and in June he was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the Society of Professional Journalists' Washington, D.C., Pro Chapter.

He has witnessed big changes in the profession, both technological and cultural. A founding member of the National Association of Black Journalists and a voting member of the Cherokee Nation, Ford sees more representation for people of color at all levels of journalism. "It's not great, but it's certainly better," he says. "You do see numbers of Black people on TV, almost



COURTESY SAM FORD

"When I was an intern in Minnesota, a CBS correspondent looked at me with a sad look on his face and said, 'Are you sure you want to do this? It's rough.' I looked at him like he was crazy," Ford recalls. "Of course I want to do this. Somebody's got to. Why not me?"

anywhere you go now. And when you talk about the networks, the NBC anchorman now is Lester Holt, right? A Black man. It's not uncommon at all."

During his hall of fame induction at the National Press Club, he was introduced by his daughter, Gina Ford, j'08, g'14, currently the communications director for a U.S. Senate campaign in Maryland. Then Ford himself took the dais.

His message: As a journalist you get into a lot of places and see a lot of things you wouldn't otherwise—not all of it pleasant. But you also get to make an impact on a lot of people.

"One of my news directors said to me once, 'You care.' And I think that's what you've got to have, especially in local news, where you basically solve problems for people. You've got to care about the stories and the people."

Jayhawk Profiles

CHLOE BURNS

Filmmaker turns trauma into triumph, earns acclaim for web series

by JENNIFER JACKSON SANNER

Stand-up comedy might seem a cringe-worthy choice for portraying the lingering impact of domestic violence, but thanks to her deft writing and pitch-perfect performance, Chloe Burns, c'18, makes it work in her six-episode web series, "Trauma Bonded," loosely based on her own struggle as a survivor of abuse.

"Trauma Bonded" combines dark comedy with elements of a quirky action thriller to tell the story of dual personalities Casey and Kate, both played by Burns.

Burns also guided the project as executive producer and raised the \$15,000 budget through an online crowdfunding campaign.

"Trauma Bonded" won honors as Best Web Series at the 2023 Chain NYC film festival in New York City and Outstanding Achievement for Best Web & New Media at Indie X in Los Angeles, where the series also appeared last year at the La Femme International and Lift-Off festivals. In addition, it earned a spot in the London edition of Lift-Off, and it is available on YouTube via traumabondedseries.com.

Not bad for a project born of the pandemic. Burns, a film & media studies graduate, was starting to find her footing as a writer and actor in Los Angeles when COVID-19 abruptly shut down the entertainment industry. She drove to Lawrence, uncertain of her future and grappling with the pain and anxiety caused by an abusive relationship that had ended years earlier.

She returned home, but she did not retreat. She found a trauma therapist and soon began to write the story of Casey and Kate. "Once the nugget of the idea got planted, it just didn't let me go," she says. "I would wake up in the night with an epiphany about how a character really feels, or if

I was driving, I would be thinking of it as a puzzle, like, 'Can I make this work?'"

As she continued to write, Burns vowed to avoid all the conventions she'd seen in other films about domestic violence. There would be no flashbacks depicting the abuse, and the abuser would not appear as a character. Why should she relive the trauma—or trigger another survivor watching the story, she reasoned. Why should she include the abuser, who doesn't deserve attention and isn't part of her forward-looking story of recovery?

KRISTINE CANTERBURY PHOTOGRAPHY



ANA GUSSON



Burns wisely nestles her character Casey's description of domestic violence in episode three, where it comes out, surprisingly, as a comedic monologue—complete with a laugh track.

"I was trying to find a way to talk about this thing I had experienced, and it kept coming out of me like a stand-up routine," she recalls. "But I was like, I don't feel like I can actually perform this without some heavy disclaimers around it. I don't want it to hit somebody the wrong way in the wrong moment. And so the series was kind of built around that."

Even as a student, Burns displayed a knack for comedic tone and timing that caught the attention of Laura Kirk, courtesy professor of film & media studies. "Chloe was a standout for original work in my course Directing Actors/Acting for the Camera," says Kirk, c'89. "I think of her every time I madly scroll for a recipe online. She made a hilarious PSA about that. Her final utilized half the class. It's a rare creator who moves that decisively in a college course."

Burns credits Kirk for encouraging her work on "Trauma Bonded." "I sent my scripts around to a few people, and she understood what I was going for and helped me arrange a table read," Burns says. "She's been a really great resource for me."

Burns considers herself a writer first, but she relishes the experience of producing and acting in her own projects. Last fall, the "Trauma Bonded" ensemble celebrated a festival appearance in Los Angeles: (from left) cast member Vivian King, Burns, director Toni Lane Ross and sound engineer Nick Abercrombie.

Burns continues her day job as communications manager for The Provenance Co., a regenerative agriculture nonprofit based in Lawrence. Her short film, “The Wallace Project,” on the company’s work in western Kansas, premiered in 2022 at the Kansas City Underground Film Festival, and she’s currently making a documentary about Provenance.

She’s also writing a horror feature about conquering the fear of leaving your hometown—a challenge she knows well. She recently moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico. The drive to LA is shorter, and “there’s a lot of cool opportunity in film for not the same cost of living,” she says. “I want to continue producing my own projects, so I am a lot more mindful of where rent money is going.”

ANTWAN WINKFIELD

Cheerful survivor hopes to use his life experience to motivate others

by CHRIS LAZZARINO

A Baby Jay-sized man filled with Big Jay dreams, Antwan Winkfield is in danger of making a big mistake. He’s talking about spending his money—hard-earned as a member of the management team at Main Event Entertainment in Olathe—to join workshops with gurus who claim they can help wishful thinkers become motivational speakers.

But in Winkfield’s case, the transaction would be backward: Even legit greats like Eric Thomas, with whom Winkfield hopes to study, should pay *him* to motivate *them*.

“If I can use my story to help someone else, I feel like it makes a big difference,” says Winkfield, s’08. “That makes it all worth it, going through so much.”

Winkfield was 2 when his mother discovered that his constant tears signaled true pain: Doctors confirmed that he had inherited severe scoliosis and neurofibromatosis. Prompt spinal surgery did little to slow a disease that was “beginning to wrap itself around the upper portion of



STEVIE POPPE

Antwan Winkfield describes himself as “the healthiest sickest person you’ll ever meet,” meaning that despite all the attacks his body has faced over the years, he keeps on smiling and lives life on his terms. “I became a man when I moved here,” he says of formative years on the Hill. “The person who graduated high school is not the same person who graduates college. You’ve got to elevate. Change how you do things. Take it all up a level.”

my spine, and, like a python, was slowly squeezing my vertebra,” Winkfield writes in his heartfelt chapter of *Breakthrough Leadership*, a book project that features life stories from 30 hopeful inspirationalists.

Because his doctors were not confident that he’d have a long life span, Winkfield says, they stabilized his torso with metal rods; but as he exceeded expectations, the steel rods prevented his body from making room for adult-sized lungs. So began years of fluctuating diagnoses, extended hospital stays and, in all, 18 surgeries.

His life finally took a turn for the better, Winkfield says, the day he received his KU acceptance letter. His family had no resources for, or history with, higher education, so the idea of even applying to KU—the school he fell in love with while watching Baby Jay dance during the 2003 NCAA title game—had never occurred to him.

Maj. Stevie Brooks, who led Junior ROTC at Kansas City’s Paseo Academy of Fine and Performing Arts, and to whom Winkfield dedicated his book, was the first adult to encourage Winkfield to aim

for college, assuring him that if he did the work, the money could be found. Maj. Brooks also told Winkfield that getting in would be the easy part.

“So I kept that in my mind,” Winkfield says. “I was determined to stay.”

Living his freshman year in Ellsworth Hall, Winkfield worked from his first week on the Hill at the Office of Multicultural Affairs, where, along with getting to be Baby Jay for OMA admissions events, he also discovered a range of resources that helped him overcome gaps in his educational background.

“The big thing is, you have to want it for yourself, and if you don’t know how to do something, you have to be willing to admit that you need help,” he says. “Luckily, KU has so many resources. You just have to have the discipline to go out there and find those resources.”

Despite a severe bout of H1N1 flu and pneumonia following his KU graduation, Winkfield went on to earn an MBA at Baker University, but another round of pneumonia nearly ended his life and forced him onto a ventilator. Winkfield

in 2013 had to leave Lawrence and move back with family in Kansas City, where he has since launched a clothing line called SMILS, which refers to his “pillars for strength”: smile, mindfulness, inspiration, love, success.

As a boy, Winkfield says, children teased him mercilessly for being different. Finally a teacher asked him and one of his tormentors—“the meanest girl ever”—to find a way to get along. On the bus that afternoon, the girl sat next to him. “‘Oh my goodness, she’s about to mess with me,’” he recalls thinking. “But then she asked me my story.” As he unburdened himself to the girl—soon to become his new bestie—Winkfield felt his life change.

“I fell in love with myself that day. I loved everything. I loved every scar on my body. It changed my whole life.”

Exactly the spirit he hopes to share with others who feel burdened by life’s hard turns.

“I’m still here,” he says. “You can’t stop me now.”

RICH FEDERICO

Navy lawyer, federal public defender joins 10th U.S. Circuit

by CHRIS LAZZARINO

Rich Federico, the latest KU School of Law graduate appointed to the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, arrives on the federal bench with an atypical professional background for a federal judge: He worked since 2015 in Federal Public Defenders offices in Oregon and Kansas, and previously as a military judge, prosecutor and appellate defense lawyer.

“Historically speaking, the pathway to the federal bench was not through the public defender’s office,” says Federico, ’02, speaking with *Kansas Alumni* from his Lawrence home one week after taking his oath to join the Denver-based 10th Circuit. “I think diversity, however defined,

makes for a healthy judiciary. What that ultimately means is best left to the presidents who get to make the nominations, but I think every organization is better diversified, in the broadest sense of that word.”

A native of small-town Indiana, where he grew up a fan of the Indianapolis 500—“Every Memorial Day weekend, you’d have race parties,” he says with a laugh, “and I didn’t know the rest of the country didn’t do that”—Federico attended Indiana University, where he discovered KU at a law school fair. Immediately recognizing the school as a basketball fan, he was first intrigued by the relatively low out-of-state tuition.

“Which was important,” he says, “because I was a work-and-put-myself-through-school kind of guy.”

He fell in love with the campus and community on his first visit, and in 1999 moved to Lawrence.

“I didn’t know a person in the state of Kansas,” he says, “and obviously became a Kansan and love it.”

Federico’s father had served in the Navy as a petty officer second class during the Vietnam War, and his grandfathers and uncles had also all served in the Navy.

“I’d heard a lot of stories,” Federico says, “and I was always interested in the Navy—and in the JAG Corps, in particular, because I wanted to be a trial lawyer.”

When terrorists struck the U.S. on Sept. 11, 2001, Federico, then in his third year of law school, had already been talking with recruiters about a Navy career. “That,” he says, “turbocharged my motivation to serve.”

Federico received his commission the following February and found himself serving as a military leader and lawyer in the midst of a global war on terror. Among his numerous military duties, Federico served as a shipboard legal adviser to combat commanders; served as trial counsel



HUMBELINA HARPER

Rich Federico was working as a federal public defender when word first reached him that he was being considered for nomination to the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. “Just to have my name out there and to start receiving inquiries about the circuit was not something that I thought was going to happen. I can’t say I ever thought to myself, ‘Well, one day I’m going to sit at the 10th Circuit.’ That seemed a little too lofty.”

and supervisor for courts-martial cases in Europe and Asia; led investigative missions to Afghanistan and Korea; and, beginning in 2008, traveled to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to defend detainees viewed as heinous enemies by his own military while serving at the Office of the Chief Defense Counsel.

“It was not popular, within the public, to represent Guantanamo detainees, but I was a military officer, which meant I wasn’t invited to go—I was given orders to go. It’s not like it was something I had any hesitation to do, but it did force me to put a lot of thought into how to reconcile my deeply rooted patriotism, and love for our country and our values, with what I saw as real problems with the system that we created to deal with this national security problem and challenge.

“When I was representing someone charged with plotting the 9/11 attacks and

was asked, ‘How can you represent that guy?’—the same way I’ve been asked that 100 times as a public defender: ‘How can you represent this person, those people, those criminals?’—the answer is the same. Representing persons who were charged by the government—no matter who they are or what they’re charged with—and affording those people lawyers who are duty-bound to do their best to represent them under the law—that’s what makes us, all of us, more free. That is a core American value. And so it wasn’t something I ultimately had to reconcile—my love of country and my duty to individual clients—because, to me, they were completely in alignment with each other.”

Upon leaving active duty in 2015, Federico, now a captain in the Navy Reserve, joined the Office of the Federal Public Defender in Portland, Oregon, and in 2017 transferred to the public defender’s office in Kansas. He and his wife, Ann Premer, j’99, l’02, chose to raise their family in Lawrence, where Federico hopes the 10th Circuit will allow him to establish his chambers. (For now, he’s based in Topeka.)

Judicial watchdog groups have described Federico as a public defender with a humanistic core. Federico says he hopes that description is accurate and remains so as he serves on what is, other than the U.S. Supreme Court, the highest bench in the land.

“As a lawyer representing clients, I examine the legal issues and the evidence involved in their case. As a counselor, it’s my job to understand this person and develop relationships with trust, to understand what motivates different people, and just sort of be a better person and be attuned to the struggles of what makes people do things in their lives.

“As a judge, I think that’s only going to be helpful for me in understanding that these records that I read are ultimately about people. Yes, our job is mostly untangling the law, but the law is only what we apply to our lives and our communities. Ultimately, the job is understanding people and how they intersect with the law.”

New Life Members



The Association thanks these Jayhawks, who began their Life memberships Nov. 1, 2023, through Jan. 31. For information, visit kualumni.org or call 800-584-2957.

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 Andrew M. Patton
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by MEGAN HIRT

1956*Married:*

Kenneth Felts, c'56, and Johnny Hau, July 8, Arvada, Colorado. The couple lives in Arvada.

1958 Robert Hartley, j'58, wrote *Obsessed: The Presidency and Illinois Senators Percy, Stevenson III and Simon*, his 13th published book. He and his wife, **Mary Carttar Hartley**, d'58, live in Winfield.

1963 Bill, b'63, g'73, and **Pat Ross Gordon**, d'64, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in September. They live in Fort Worth, Texas. Bill is retired as president of Fort Worth City Credit Union, and Pat is a retired teacher.

1966 William "Rob" Lasater, c'66, l'69, is in his 25th year serving on the board of directors of the Presbyterian Healthcare Foundation in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He is a past chairman of the board and a semiretired attorney.

1969 Craig, c'69, l'73, and **Barbara Rice Crago**, d'69, g'73, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary Jan. 24. They live in Liberty Lake, Washington, and have two granddaughters.

David Henton, g'69, PhD'73, is retired from a 31-

year career at Dow Chemical Co. He holds more than 40 patents and consults in the fields of green chemistry, materials science and renewable resource-based products.

1973 Dean Karnaze, m'73, is a neurologist at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Stockton, California.

1974 Ann Vigola Anderson, c'74, wrote *The Adventures of Bottle Calf*, a children's book set on a Kansas farm. It was published last year. Ann lives in Lawrence and coaches tennis at the Jayhawk Tennis Center.

Richard Lauter, c'74, is a therapist in private practice near Chicago and previously practiced law for 42 years. His daughter, Hana, is a freshman at the University.

1975 David Decker, g'75, PhD'77, is president of Franklin University in Columbus, Ohio.

Pat Madden Grzenda, d'75, g'80, in May was inducted into the Kansas State High School Activities Association Hall of Fame. She is retired from a 34-year career as a teacher and swim coach in the Lawrence school district.

1976 Reid Findley, b'76, retired as operations manager

at Papé Machinery in Eugene, Oregon. He has five grandchildren.

1977 Galen Oelkers, b'77, g'78, is director of The Daniel Island Co., a real estate development company based in Charleston, South Carolina.

1979 Steve Bieszczat, e'79, is chief marketing officer at the software company DELMIAWorks.

1980 Lorraine Mangione, g'80, PhD'84, is professor of clinical psychology at Antioch University New England in Keene, New Hampshire, and co-author of the book *Mary Climbs In: The Journeys of Bruce Springsteen's Women Fans*, published last year.

Kent, b'80, g'81, and **Missy Hodge McCarthy**, c'86, g'88, own the Kansas City franchise of the new Pro Volleyball Federation, a women's professional league. The league begins play in seven cities in 2024, and expansion in 2025 will include Kansas City. The McCarthys' son, Charlie, is a guard on the KU basketball team, and one of their daughters, Molly, plays on the KU volleyball team.

Tom Tingle, a'80, a'82, retired after a 42-year career as a sports architect. His projects included the Spectrum Center in Charlotte, North Carolina,

home of the NBA's Charlotte Hornets, and numerous arenas and minor league ballparks. He most recently worked at DLR Group in the design firm's Kansas City office.

1981 Ramon Murguia, b'81, in October was honored with the dedication of the Ramon Murguia Visitor Entrance at Union Station in Kansas City. The entrance features a 360-degree mural by Kansas City artist Chico Sierra. Ramon is immediate past chair of the Union Station board of directors and owns Murguia Law Office in Kansas City.

Joy Simpson, c'81, g'87, is senior pastor at Metropolitan Community Church of Omaha.

Joe Waters, a'81, retired in December as Johnson County assistant county manager.

1982 Thomas King, g'82, in December was appointed to the board of directors of TFF Pharmaceuticals. He is a biotechnology consultant and adviser and also serves on the boards of Achieve Life Sciences, Kinaset Therapeutics and Concentric Analgesics.

1983 Mike McGrew, b'83, CEO and chairman of McGrew Real Estate in Lawrence, received the National Association of Realtors' 2023

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- 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

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- assoc.** Associate member of the Alumni Association

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Distinguished Service Award. He has held various leadership positions in the association for 27 years.

1984 Philip Heying, f'84, is a photographer whose photos are included in permanent collections in KU's Spencer Museum of Art and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City. For the past three years, he has lived near the tiny town of Matfield Green in the Flint Hills, photographing the landscape and wildlife to draw attention to disappearing prairie ecosystems. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for his Flint Hills project in 2022.

Mark Parkinson, l'84, former Kansas governor, will be honored in March with the

2024 McKnight's Pinnacle Career Achievement Award. He is president and CEO of the American Health Care Association and the National Center for Assisted Living.

1985 Mehdi Paborji, PhD'85, in January was named senior vice president of technical operations at the biopharmaceutical company Ashvattha Therapeutics in Redwood City, California.

Loraine Wright Turec, j'85, is vice president of alliances and partnerships at Bond Brand Loyalty, a marketing company.

1986 Janet Schrunk Ericksen, c'86, is chancellor of the University of Minnesota Morris.

Brian McClendon, e'86, research professor in the department of electrical engineering & computer science and senior vice president of engineering at Niantic, in December was named a fellow of the National Academy of Inventors. Brian was one of the primary drivers behind the creation of Google Earth and was vice president of engineering at Google for 10 years. He and his wife, Beth Ellyn, live in Lawrence.

Matt Selby, l'86, in October was appointed Stone County, Missouri, associate circuit judge by Missouri Gov. Mike Parson.

1988 Ric Anderson, j'88, is a staff writer at the Jacksonville Daily Record in Jacksonville, Florida.

Katherine Tischer Bello, e'88, is an artist whose abstract paintings were recently on display in a solo exhibition at Cerbera Gallery in Kansas City.

Angela Gupta, b'88, was honored by Kansas Continuing Legal Education with the organization's 2023 Robert L. Gernon Award, which recognizes outstanding service to continuing legal education in the state. Angela is a mediator, arbitrator and independent investigator with Associates in Dispute Resolution in Kansas City.

Sarah Hirsch, a'88, in October was named director of technical services at BNIM. She has worked for the Kansas City-based architecture firm since 1995.

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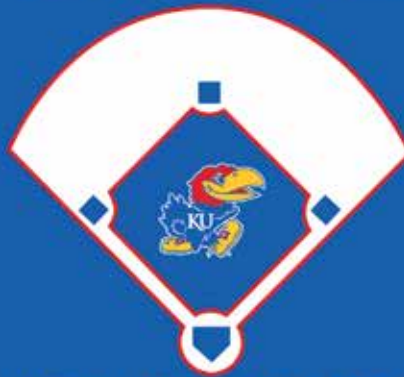
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1989 Michael Hinton, '89, directs sales and marketing at AgTrax, an agriculture software company based in Hutchinson.

Jerry Howard, g'89, is director of community outreach at KDRV NewsWatch 12 in Medford, Oregon.

Eric Kelley, j'89, in November was named chief investment officer at UMB Bank, where he has worked for over 25 years.

1990 Marilu Madrigal, m'90, in January was named chief medical officer at HCA Florida Mercy Hospital in Miami.

Nicole Rees, c'90, is a product director at AB Mauri North America, a bakery ingredients company. She serves in various roles in the milling and baking division of the Cereals & Grains Association.

1991 Brett Brenner, c'91, j'91, l'94, in December was named deputy chief operating officer for the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. He lives in Washington, D.C.

Deryck Malone, b'91, is vice president and chief financial officer at Armed Forces Insurance. He and **Sarah Sneed Malone**, j'91, live in Kansas City, where she is director of project management at AdFarm.

Sue Sadecki, c'91, g'93, is executive director of Ka Hale A Ke Ola Homeless Resource Centers in Wailuku, Hawaii.

Brian Sipes, a'91, is founding principal of Sipes Architects in Minturn, Colorado.

Shawn Smith, e'91, is president and CEO of DL Smith Electric in Topeka. He and his

wife, **Olga Avila Smith**, '95, have two sons, **Nicholas**, c'18, and **Nathan**, b'21.

1992 Angela Neale Clark, n'92, in November was named chief sales and marketing officer at Distinctive Living, a management company for senior living facilities.

Mike Gabrawy, c'92, is president of Midnight Express and has been a producer of several feature films, including "Hotel Mumbai," "Jungle" and "Resident Evil." He most recently produced "Silent Night," directed by John Woo, and "Red Right Hand," starring Orlando Bloom, which opened in theatres Feb. 23.

Keith Mazachek, PhD'92, is a senior lecturer in the engineering transfer program at Washburn University. He

and his wife, **JuliAnn**, g'87, PhD'94, live in Topeka.

Melissa Perkins, c'92, g'98, PhD'00, is a biotechnology solutions lead at Merck in the company's De Soto facility. She and her husband, **Brian Maloney**, b'91, have two children, Finley and Rylan.

Mohammed "Rab" Shanableh, e'92, g'95, is co-founder, CEO and chairman of OxeFit, a fitness equipment and technology company.

1993 Jeff Bridgforth, a'93, is a senior developer at LGND, a full-service digital agency. He and his wife, **Anne Glidewell Bridgforth**, g'92, live in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and have three children, Katy, 23; Ryan, 19; and Lydia, 17.

Darrel Hopkins, g'93, in January was promoted to president of the trucking company Prime Inc.

Kayden Vold Howard, l'93, in August was named senior vice president of health, safety and environmental programs at the transportation company OmniTRAX.

Amy Barrett Hughes, g'93, is a physical therapist at Kansas City Orthopaedic Institute.

Susan Savage, b'93, is an associate broker and realtor with eXp Realty.

Jake VanLandingham, c'93, is vice president of aircraft brokerage at QS Partners.

Ashley Wilson, e'93, g'97, PhD'01, is an adjunct faculty member at Ivy Tech Community College in Indianapolis.

1994 AJ Cleland, c'94, is a customer success specialist in the financial and corporate compliance division of Wolters Kluwer. He and his wife, Kathleen, live in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Christopher Hesse, e'94, a colonel in the Nebraska Air National Guard, commands the unit's 155th Air Refueling Wing in Lincoln.

Kenneth McCain, e'94, is a senior structural engineer at Kiewit. He lives in Overland Park.

1995 Ronald Cox, m'95, is an allergist-immunologist with Greater Austin Allergy in Texas.

Sean Mayers, c'95, is director of national accounts at Radius Health, a biopharmaceutical company. He lives in Overland Park.

Greg Payne, b'95, in August was named market managing partner in Kansas City



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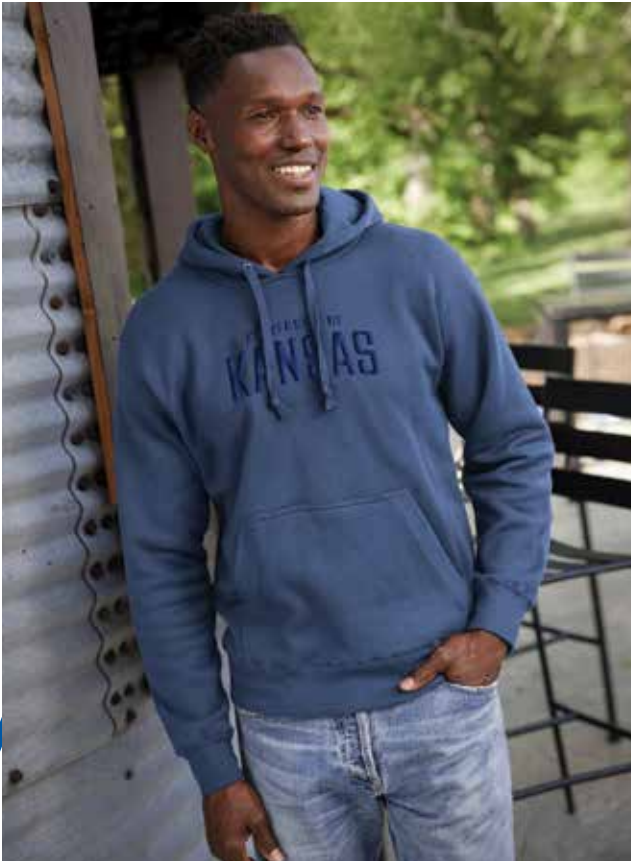


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² Late payments or going over the credit limit may damage your credit history.

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at Grant Thornton, an audit, tax and advisory firm.

Julie Quirin, g'95, is president of St. Luke's Health System in Kansas City.

1996 Travis Hiles, c'96, m'03, is an anesthesiologist with Anesthesia Associates of Kansas City.

John McIntyre, g'96, a senior foreign service officer with the U.S. Department of State, in October was nominated by President Joe Biden to serve as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Eswatini, a country in Africa.

1997 Kimberly Lawrence Brey, c'97, m'08, is an OB-GYN physician with Stormont Vail Health in Topeka.

Jamey Burris-Fish, g'97, is a psychiatric-mental health nurse

practitioner at Coastal Family Health Center in Astoria, Oregon.

Simmie Clincy, g'97, in December joined Kansas City-based HNTB Corp. as senior project manager for the firm's architecture practice. He is a retired U.S. Army Reserve officer.

John Robinson, e'97, leads the Pittsburgh office of Michael Baker International, an engineering and consulting firm.

Teresa Veazey, j'97, is a community services representative for the city of Wichita.

1998 Erik Blechinger, g'98, received the 2023 Lt. Gen. John W. Morris Civilian of the Year Award from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He is deputy district engineer

for planning, programs and project management in the Army Corps' Savannah, Georgia, district.

Jared Johnson, c'98, l'01, in January was appointed by the Kansas Supreme Court as chief judge of the 28th Judicial District, which comprises Ottawa and Saline counties.

Lori Santos, g'98, associate professor of art education at Wichita State University, was named the 2023 Outstanding Higher Education Art Educator of the Year by the Kansas Art Education Association.

1999 Samantha Low, e'99, is director of the global tenant real estate advisory group at Cushman & Wakefield in San Francisco and co-founder of TenantSee, a commercial real estate technology platform.

The San Francisco Business Times named her one of its 2023 Most Influential Women in Bay Area Business.

Andrea Snowden, l'99, is vice president and associate general counsel at Ameritas in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Sara Carman Soseman, j'99, is vice president of media operations at the Kansas City-based advertising agency Barkley.

2000 Bob Bishop, b'00, is chief product officer at Streamline Healthcare Solutions, a software development company. He lives in Overland Park.

Neil Dennis, b'00, is managing director for new business at Woodbridge International, a global mergers and acquisition firm.



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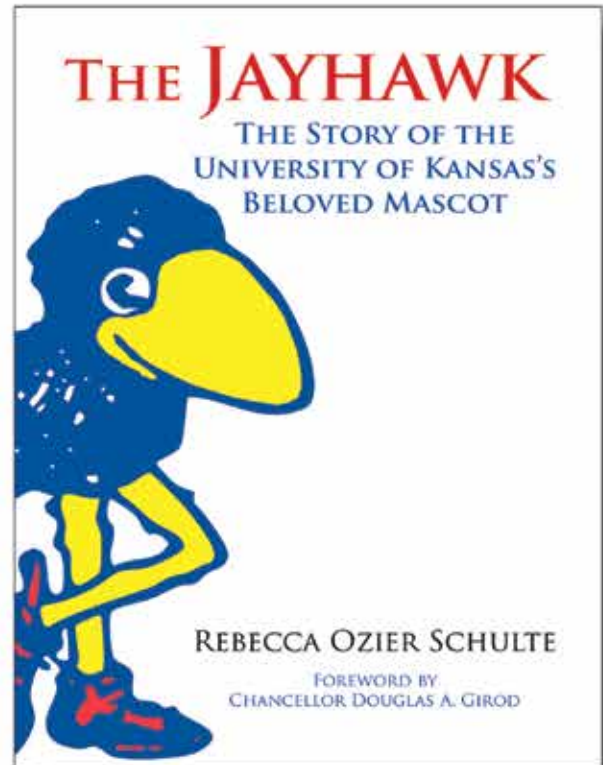
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BELOVED MASCOT

REBECCA OZIER SCHULTE

FOREWORD BY
CHANCELLOR DOUGLAS A. GIROD

"From free-state activists adopting the term 'Jayhawkers' during Bleeding Kansas to alumni greeting each other with a 'rock chalk' while passing in airports, the University of Kansas's Jayhawk has become an internationally recognized symbol of independence and integrity. *The Jayhawk* draws deeply on University Archives and other sources to offer fans of KU an in-depth view of our favorite fictional bird's evolution. From the range of western Kansas to the study in Cedar Crest to the Cabinet Room and beyond, Becky Schulte's beautiful book will bring a piece of Kansas to all who wear the Jayhawk with pride."

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Kerrie Crites Greenfelder, c'00, in May was named a fellow of the National Society of Professional Engineers. She is the water engineering director at Burns & McDonnell in Kansas City and president of the Kansas Society of Professional Engineers. She lives in Olathe with her husband, Matt; son, Carter; and dogs, Cosmo and Pogo.

Jeremiah Johnson, d'00, in December was named defensive coordinator for the Louisiana Tech University football team.

Fred Patton, l'00, a former Kansas legislator, in December joined the government affairs division of the law firm Harris Kelsey, Chartered, based in Ottawa.

Alex Ramthun, c'00, a colonel in the U.S. Marine Corps, in September assumed command of the Presidential

Helicopters Program Office in Patuxent River, Maryland.

2001 Troy Hill, l'01, is a Baltimore City Circuit Court judge.

Abbey Smith Rupe, c'01, m'05, is a pediatrician at Salina Family Healthcare Center.

Vanessa Whiteside, j'01, wrote *Secret Wichita: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure*, her second book, published in September. She is a freelance travel writer.

2002 Brad Ashley, b'02, is managing director of property and facilities management at Newmark Zimmer, a commercial real estate company headquartered in Kansas City.

Zach Fee, b'02, is a senior vice president at BankUnited. He lives in Frisco, Texas.

Audrey Hickert, c'02, g'03, is an assistant professor in the

school of criminal justice at the University of Cincinnati.

Scott Hudnall, j'02, is a lecturer in KU's Applied English Center.

Jamel Sandidge, g'02, PhD'06, is an entomologist and the national director of technical services at Nisus Corp., a manufacturer of pest management products.

2003 Stephen Andersen, g'03, founded Canopy Compliance, a financial consulting business.

Daniel Harriman, j'03, is a communications manager at Allianz SE, a financial services company. He lives in Munich.

Allison Sutera, b'03, in December was named president of SIG North America, a manufacturer of food and beverage packaging.

Shannel Wickliffe, c'03, is chief development and

operating officer at the Kansas Children's Discovery Center in Topeka.

2004 Roger McVey, DMA'04, associate professor of piano at the University of Idaho, in October was inducted into the Steinway & Sons Music Teacher Hall of Fame. He and his wife, Giselle, have three children.

2005 Matt Mentzer, b'05, l'08, is an estate planning attorney with Foulston Siefkin in the law firm's Overland Park office.

2006 Kara Tan Bhala, g'06, PhD'09, is founder and president of the Seven Pillars Institute for Global Finance and Ethics, a think tank headquartered in Kansas City. She is the author of the book *Ethics in Finance: Case Studies from*



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a Woman's Life on Wall Street, published in 2021.

Laura Lombard, c'06, in September was named director of the Kansas Department of Commerce's international division.

Yieyie Yang, PhD'06, is a partner at Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner. She is based in the intellectual property law firm's Washington, D.C., office.

2007 Michelle Rushing Dixon, l'07, in November was appointed Jackson County, Missouri, family court commissioner.

Dan Forrest, DMA'07, is a widely published composer of choral, orchestral, instrumental and wind band works. He is an adjunct professor of music composition at Furman

University in Greenville, South Carolina.

Jaime Zazove Herzberg, c'07, is vice president of client services at TradePending, which develops software for car dealerships.

Mike Zagurski, c'07, is vice president of sales at Something Inked, a marketing and promotions company in Nashville, Tennessee. He is a former MLB pitcher and pitched for the KU baseball team.

2008 Brady DeSanti, g'08, PhD'13, is director of Native American studies and associate professor of religious studies at the University of Nebraska Omaha.

2009 Adam Hurly, j'09, is a freelance writer and editor whose clients include GQ,

Men's Journal and Forbes. He lives in Berlin.

John Tripp, c'09, manages the Kansas City, Missouri, branch of ABC Supply Co.

2010 Kevin Hardy, c'10, j'10, covers business, labor and rural issues for Stateline.

Brian Martinek, l'10, is chief financial officer at Palladium Media in San Antonio.

Born to:

Chad Gerber, d'10, and his wife, Jessica, daughter, Kate, Aug. 8. Kate joins older sisters Grace, Claire and Ella. The family lives in Baldwin City, where Chad is assistant professor of sports administration at Baker University.

2011 Melissa Morris Bean, j'11, is a copywriter at A Place

for Mom. She lives in Lansing with her husband, Marcus, and has two children, Eleanor and Calvin.

Mason Haggerty, d'11, is a new product marketer at 3M Health Care. He lives in San Antonio.

Josh LaRosa, d'11, in December was promoted to senior associate athletic director of external operations at the University of Pennsylvania.

Godfrey Riddle, a'11, g'15, is founder and president of Civic Saint, a Kansas City-based company that uses compressed earth blocks to build affordable homes. Last year, Godfrey and Civic Saint won the Communities of Color Initiative Biz Pitch and the overall Biz Pitch competitions hosted by the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce.

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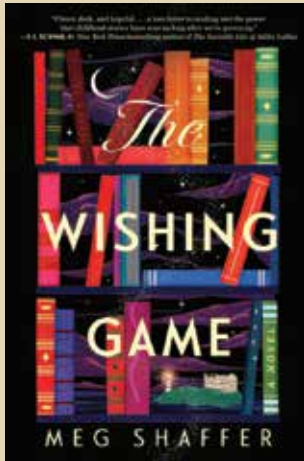
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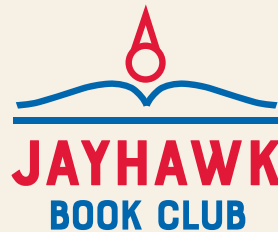


Spring 2024 book

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by Meg Shaffer

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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, or call 785.864.4760.



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2012 Andrew Brown, g'12, in November was promoted to deputy secretary for programs at the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services.

Joel Petterson, c'12, j'12, is senior editor in The New York Times' London newsroom.

2013 Jacob Burmood, g'13, is a sculptor whose works are on display in several U.S. cities. He teaches sculpture and 3D design at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park.

Jordan McGreevy, l'13, is a partner at Genesa Reimbursement Group in Fort Worth, Texas.

Chris Nicholson, c'13, g'18, g'19, is senior business process manager at Tyler Technologies, a software company. He and his wife, **Leah Maness Nicholson**, c'14, g'16, live in Lawrence.

James Rankin, l'13, is chief compliance and legal officer at Modern Wealth Management. He works in the firm's Lenexa office.

2014 Obi Agborbesong, m'14, is a general surgeon at Beckley ARH Hospital in Beckley, West Virginia.

2015 Taylor Hanna-Peterson, c'15, g'17, is an academic programs coordinator in the School of Social Welfare.

Hannah Ceule Terry, p'15, PharmD'17, is a clinical pharmacist practitioner at John J. Pershing VA Medical Center in Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

Born to:

Andy Larkin, c'15, and his wife, Kimberly, daughter,

McKenna, Oct. 21. Andy is an orthodontist at Otto Orthodontics in St. Louis.

2016 Kelly Harrington, g'16, is senior research manager at Boston Indicators.

Emma Flynn Kester, c'16, m'20, practices family medicine at Mowery Clinic in Salina.

Katie Kutsko, j'16, is a strategy and solutions consultant at BlueLena, a marketing agency serving independent local media. She lives in Chicago.

Madeline Nave, j'16, lives in New Orleans, where she is executive administrator at Legacy Professional Services, a construction management firm.

Rob Peare, b'16, in October was named vice president

of TRM Equity in Southfield, Michigan.

Devan Shihata Swiontkowski, g'16, a health care planner at the architecture and design firm BWBR in St. Paul, Minnesota, was named a 2023 Rising Star by Healthcare Design magazine.

2017 Ruben Castillo, g'17, is a visual artist whose work is included in collections in the Mulvane Art Museum in Topeka, the Mexic-Arte Museum in Austin, Texas, and the National Museum of Mexican Art in Chicago, among others. Ruben is an assistant professor in the art department at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Ryan Chapman, a'17, is an industrial designer at Sun-

lighten, a sauna company based in Overland Park.

Juan Pablo Marroquin, j'17, is a donor engagement officer at KU Endowment.

Marshall Rutter, e'17, is an aseptic applications engineer at NJM Packaging.

2018 Skylar Dailey, d'18, is a physical therapist at ATI Physical Therapy in Dallas.

Justin Schmidt, g'18, g'19, g'19, division director of regulatory compliance at Methodist Healthcare, received the 2023 Methodist Healthcare Pillar Award for the system's San Antonio division.

Natalie Sitek, j'18, coordinates social media for the entertainment news website Deadline.

2019 Deva Freeman Conti, c'19, '22, is coordinator

of advancement services at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. She and her husband, **Joe**, '22, live in Willoughby, Ohio.

Tiffany Littler, j'19, is a communications specialist at the Kansas State Department of Education.

Karla Martinez, g'19, is a therapist at The Center for Counseling & Consultation in Great Bend.

Michael McCurdy, j'19, is an account supervisor at Stephens & Associates, an advertising agency based in Overland Park.

2020 Kaitlyn Bussmann, s'20, is a women's director at KLIFE Ministries. She lives in Searcy, Arkansas.

Phillip Dixon, g'20, wrote, produced and directed the film "Midwest Skidmark," which

debuted in Kansas City in December.

Dylan Geissert, g'20, g'20, is associate head coach of the North Dakota State University women's basketball team.

Alexandra Speakar, c'20, l'23, is an associate attorney with Baird Holm in Omaha, Nebraska.

2021 DJ Washington, EdD'21, in October was elected vice chair of the board of trustees at Union College in Barbourville, Kentucky. He is director of employer and regional engagement in the Meruelo Family Center for Career Development at the University of Notre Dame.

2022 Aaron Hahn, d'22, is head minor league equipment and clubhouse manager for the Colorado Rockies.

Nicholas Hale, c'22, is an economist at the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. He lives in Kansas City.

Katie Kingsley, g'22, is a music therapist at Ascend Health in Lee's Summit, Missouri.

Stef Manchen, j'22, is a multimedia journalist at KJRH-TV in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

2023 Andrew Arbuckle, l'23, g'23, is a corporate finance attorney with Stinson. He is based in the law firm's Kansas City office.

Izzy Domine, c'23, is a tour coordinator at the Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum.

Marco D'Orazi, b'23, is a commodity procurement analyst for Hostess Brands.

Joe Eubanks, g'23, is executive director of climate, culture, diversity and belonging at Wenatchee Valley College in Wenatchee, Washington.

Christina Farr, DNP'23, is a women's health practitioner at CareArc in Emporia.

Michael Hemme, e'23, is a compliance manager at Harcros Chemicals in Kansas City.

Lisa Marin, g'23, is a therapist at Lilac Center in Lee's Summit, Missouri.

Pedro Martinez Lopez, g'23, is a technical solutions engineer at Ainstein, a Lawrence-based radar technology company.

Lindsay McQuinn, l'23, practices law with the firm Hampton & Royce in Salina.

William Sachs, l'23, is an attorney with Aaron Sachs & Associates in Springfield, Missouri.

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1940s Betty Whitney

Alderson, p'46, Lawrence, 98, Nov. 4. Betty was a pharmacist and worked at KU's Watkins Health Center for many years. Her husband, Donald, b'45, g'60, preceded her in death.

Eugenia Hepworth Berger, d'46, Littleton, Colorado, 97, Jan. 1, 2023. Eugenia was a professor and chair of the department of education at Metropolitan State College in Denver. Her husband, Glen, b'48, preceded her in death.

Charles Franzke, b'48, San Antonio, 97, Aug. 24. Chuck was a division CEO of Dillard's. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Alice Wright Franzke, c'48, and is survived by his second wife, Mary Ann.

Barbara Varner Frizell, c'47, Hutchinson, 97, Dec. 15, 2022. Barb was active in several organizations in Hutchinson. She was preceded in death by her husband, Bud, '51.

Phoebe Hahn Hansen, d'42, Aurora, Colorado, 103, Oct. 29.

J. Kenneth Higdon, b'48, Lenexa, 97, Aug. 29. Ken served in the U.S. Navy and Air Force and later held executive positions at Business Men's Assurance Co. His wife, Mary, preceded him in death.

Georgiana Sewell Morrill, '49, Lone Tree, Colorado, 96, Dec. 2. Georgiana volunteered with many organizations in Topeka. Her husband, Edmund, b'49, preceded her in death.

1950s Lue Diver Barndollar, '55, Coffeyville, 88, Oct. 25, 2022. Lue was an English instructor at Coffeyville Community College and later served on the school's board of trustees. She was preceded in death by her husband, Pratt.

Martha Collingwood Barnhardt, c'58, Bucklin, 88, Aug. 4. Martha was a physical therapist and served in several community organizations in Bucklin. She is survived by her husband, Robert, assoc.

Donald Dunaway, b'59, Naples, Florida, 86, Dec. 9. Don, a U.S. Army veteran, worked for A.O. Smith Corp. for over 20 years, eventually serving as executive vice president. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Betty Kipp Dunaway, c'59, and is survived by his second wife, Sally.

Robert Halliday, c'56, Fort Worth, Texas, 91, May 19, 2023. Bob, a U.S. Army veteran, worked in the mining, cement and lime industry. His wife, Joan, preceded him in death.

Pamela Hutchinson Hanson, c'57, Prairie Village, 88, June 17. Pam served as an elder in the Presbyterian Church and sang in numerous choirs. She is survived by her husband, Karl, c'55, m'58.

Harold Henson, c'54, l'59, Evans, Georgia, 90, Jan. 21, 2023. Harold, a U.S. Air Force veteran, practiced law in Kansas City. His wife, Virginia, preceded him in death.

Donald Hilton, b'58, Wichita, 92, June 29. Donald served in the U.S. Navy and worked in marketing. His wife, Imogene, preceded him in death.

Ralph Johnson, c'58, m'62, 90, Nov. 20. Ralph was a primary care physician and later a professor in the school of medicine at the University of California, Davis.

Rebecca Swander Johnson, c'59, f'80, g'84, Leavenworth, 85, Feb. 26, 2023. Becky was a ceramic artist and co-founded the Carnegie Arts Center in Leavenworth. She

was preceded in death by her husband, Paul, c'57, m'61.

Betty Carmean Jury, '54, Austin, Texas, 91, Sept. 24. Betty had a long career at Commerce Bank. She was preceded in death by her husband, Jack.

Graydon Luthey, c'52, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 92, June 18. Graydon served in the U.S. Air Force and later practiced law for over 35 years. He was preceded in death by his wife, Anne Murphy Luthey, '53.

Frank Mastin, e'57, Quitman, Texas, 88, Jan. 10. Frank was an aviation engineer. He was preceded in death by his wife, Lowannah.

Charles McCarthy, b'50, Palm Desert, California, 96, Nov. 11. Charles served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and worked in the oil business for over 30 years. His wife, Marie Schumacher McCarthy, d'51, preceded him in death.

R. Jonathan Meigs, b'57, Overland Park, 87, April 5, 2023. Jon, a U.S. Army veteran, worked in information technology for companies such as Hallmark and IBM. He is survived by his wife, Barbara.

C. Robert Parks, d'57, g'65, Lawrence, 93, Jan. 12, 2023. Bob, a U.S. Army veteran, taught math at Topeka West High School for over 20 years. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Betty, and is survived by his second wife, Barbara Howey Parks, g'73.

Mary Jo Huyck Pugh, d'56, Stockton, California, 88, May 9, 2023. Mary Jo was a musician and taught middle school choir. She also worked as a legal secretary. She is survived by her husband, Bill.

Laura Nelson Savage, c'50, St. Louis, 96, Nov. 26. Her husband, Leo, b'59, preceded her in death.

Janet Shepherd, d'56, Long Beach, California, 90, Dec. 22, 2022. Janet taught PE, geography and English in Long Beach.

Carolyn Hogan Stiles, c'59, Overland Park, 86, Dec. 22. Carolyn was a consultant and an elder in the Presbyterian Church. She is survived by her husband, Merrill, c'60, m'64.

Harvey Wall, g'54, EdD'60, Clayton, California, 95, Oct. 20. Harvey was a school psychologist and later director of research and development for the Mt. Diablo Unified School District in California. He is survived by his wife, Louise.

1960s Pamela Dutt Bell, d'69, Florence, Kentucky, 75, April 15, 2023. Pam was a teacher and choral singer. She is survived by her husband, Ted, j'69.

Carol Askins Beller, c'66, d'67, g'68, Garnett, 79, May 1, 2023. Carol was a teacher and later a business owner. Her husband, Pat, '63, preceded her in death.

Herman Bonett, g'63, PhD'76, Warrensburg, Missouri, 92, March 22, 2023. Herman, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, worked as a journalist and professor and was later in real estate. His wife, Susan Hartmetz Bonett, '68, preceded him in death.

Karen Stenzel Brown, d'64, Long Beach, California, 80, March 1, 2023. Karen worked in the insurance industry.

Donald Dawson, p'66, Russell, 81, Jan. 2, 2023. Don owned Don Dawson Pharmacy in Russell for 42 years. He is survived by his wife, Carol.

Susan Eggleston Donaghue, d'60, Prairie Village, 86, July 27. Susan taught music at elementary and junior

high schools. Her husband, Alan, d'60, preceded her in death.

Howard Ellington, a'61, Wichita, 85, June 14. Howard was an architect and director emeritus of Frank Lloyd Wright's Allen House. His wife, Nelda, preceded him in death.

Donna Laptad Godfrey, d'61, Overland Park, 84, May 16, 2023. Donna was a teacher for over 40 years.

Ruth Heaton, n'66, Portland, Oregon, 80, March 15, 2023. Ruth worked at KU Medical Center.

Robert Hughes, m'68, Kansas City, 81, April 17, 2023. Bob, a U.S. Army veteran, practiced medicine in Kansas City for many years. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen Hogan Hughes, n'70, g'79.

Sara Coleman James, b'63, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 81, Dec. 9, 2022. Sara was an organist and worked in accounting. She is survived by her husband, Ivan, e'63, g'69.

Stanley Jones, b'64, McKinney, Texas, 81, Oct. 7. Stan worked at IBM for over 30 years. He is survived by his wife, Sally Frank Jones, '65.

Ron Larimore, b'62, Taos, New Mexico, 82, May 26, 2023. Ron was a financial adviser at Edward Jones and later part of the management team. He is survived by his wife, Carol.

Diane Larson Lazzarino, g'69, Lawrence, 87, Jan. 5. Diane was a School of Journalism faculty member for 37 years. She advised the KU Ad Club and was founding director of the Bremner Editing Center. Her husband, Alex, assoc., preceded her in death.

James "Dave" Madison, d'65, Bakersfield, California, 79, May 20, 2023. Dave served in the U.S. Army and later prac-

ticed law for many years. He is survived by his wife, Pat.

Nita Cleveland Merriweather, '61, Denton, Texas, 84, Nov. 16. Nita was a medical librarian at Hutchinson Hospital for 25 years. Her husband, Terry Merriweather, p'61, preceded her in death.

Steven Priest, b'67, Warsaw, Missouri, 79, Jan. 3. Steve worked in information technology in several industries, including medicine, manufacturing and insurance. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn.

Helen Berge Richards, d'65, Olathe, 79, May 26, 2023. Helen taught third grade and later worked in the insurance industry. She is survived by her husband, Gary, c'62, g'70.

Milo "Mike" Sloo III, c'63, m'67, Salina, 81, June 6. Mike was an orthopedic surgeon and practiced in Salina for 33 years. He is survived by his wife, Carol Ann, assoc.

Brewster Snyder, b'66, Valrico, Florida, 84, June 24. Brewster served in the U.S. Air Force for 20 years, retiring with the rank of captain. He was preceded in death by his wife, Carol Lou Watkins Snyder, '66.

Joanne Prim Shade Thompson, j'64, Chicago, 80, March 31, 2023. Joanne was a newspaper reporter and freelance writer. She is survived by her husband, Richard.

Kermit Wedel, m'60, Minneapolis, 90, July 27. Kermit practiced family medicine in Minneapolis for over 40 years. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen, assoc.

Lynn Weis, d'68, g'71, PhD'74, Charlotte, North Carolina, 77, May 27, 2023.

Carlee Wilson, c'61, g'63, Topeka, 89, Aug. 19. Carlee was a hospital and high school social worker.

1970s Carol Cornish

Allen, b'71, Santa Monica, California, 73, Aug. 23, 2022. Carol worked on the sales team at F.A. Davis Co., a medical textbook publisher. She is survived by her husband, Bill.

Janice Bassford, c'74, Beloit, 71, Oct. 18. Janice worked in various roles, including as a medical transcriptionist, fundraiser and restaurant manager.

Charles Cape, j'71, Sarasota, Florida, 74, Oct. 3. Charlie taught English at Mundelein High School in Mundelein, Illinois. He is survived by his wife, Linda Hayne Cape, n'73.

David "Jan" Collins, d'70, Highland, 76, May 14, 2023. Jan was a teacher, coach and longtime school district superintendent. He is survived by his wife, Barbara.

Michael Howard, l'74, Olathe, 75, Aug. 14. Mike worked in the athletic apparel business and was a salesman for brands such as K-Swiss.

Christy Chapman McCord, d'72, Lebanon, Indiana, 71, Oct. 6, 2022. Christy worked in finance. She is survived by her husband, Clinton.

Robert Melichar, m'70, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 79, Oct. 1. Robert was a general and vascular surgeon. His wife, Lucinda Farmer Melichar, m'68, preceded him in death.

Harold Nye, g'76, Hays, 82, April 26, 2023. Harold worked for the state of Kansas his entire career. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn Unruh Nye, c'71, n'81.

Frank Slover, g'71, Atlan-

ta, 77, April 17, 2023. Frank practiced commercial real estate law and later served as a pro bono lawyer for Atlanta Legal Aid. He is survived by his wife, Deborah.

1990s Alan Swarts, g'92, Lawrence, 72, May 13, 2023. Alan worked in information technology for Douglas County and KU. He is survived by his wife, Margene Zumbunn Swarts, g'89.

2010s Tyler Anderson, b'10, Leawood, 37, May 13, 2023. Tyler was a personal financial planner. He is survived by his wife, Michelle Goldstein Anderson, b'10, g'12.

Betty Sponsel Bowman, p'15, PharmD'17, Rochester, Minnesota, 32, Aug. 20. Betty was a pharmacist at Mayo Clinic.

UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

Albert Rowell, Lawrence, 94, Sept. 28. Bert was professor emeritus of geology and curator emeritus of invertebrate paleontology at the KU Biodiversity Institute & Natural History Museum. He is survived by his wife, Margery, g'71, PhD'77.

Lawrence Sullivan, assoc., Overland Park, 92, Dec. 18. Larry, a U.S. Army veteran, was professor emeritus of physiology at KU Medical Center. He was preceded in death by his wife, Florence.

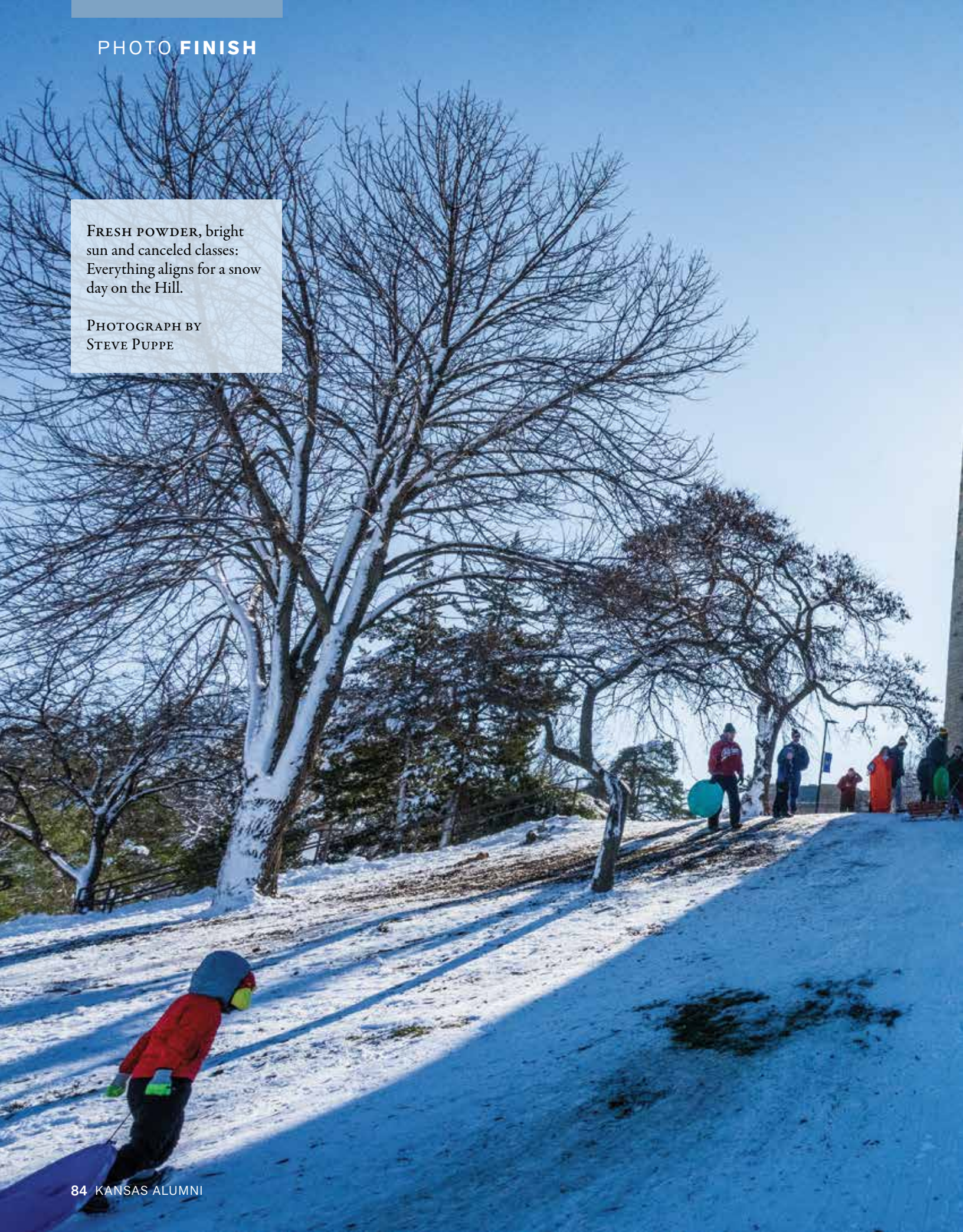
ASSOCIATES

David Drummond, assoc., Lawrence, 74, June 15. A U.S. Army veteran, Dave worked for the St. Joseph, Missouri, fire department and later the U.S. Coast Guard. He is survived by his wife, Rheva.

PHOTO FINISH

FRESH POWDER, bright sun and canceled classes: Everything aligns for a snow day on the Hill.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
STEVE PUPPE







CUP FIGHT!

Vintage keepsakes spark memories of high-flyin' football fun

AS HUGE CHUNKS of David Booth Kansas Memorial Stadium began to crumble under heavy machinery to make way for renovations, we grew wistful for a certain aspect of the KU football experience: *CUP FIGHT!* Nostalgia compelled us to convene an elite panel of three subject matter experts. (As did the prospect of a holiday reunion of schoolmates from Hillcrest Elementary on—Hillbillies, Warhawks, Lions, Jayhawks and Lawrencians all—and, of course, expensed breakfast.)

“Ahhh, the canonical cup,” intoned Mark Henderson, b’87, a former Berry Global (né PackerWare, né Packer Plastics) executive who now works as a financial software programmer, as we settled in at Milton’s Cafe. Henderson held aloft one of the three plastic KU cups that he’d brought for show-and-tell.

Indeed, sir. Business before pancakes. Let’s cut to the cups.

When the notion first occurred to Mount Oread historians stalking the halls of *Kansas Alumni* magazine that a stadium remembrance piece would be in order for this issue, we reached deep into our meticulous archives and produced a stack of stadium cups, long ago proactively pilfered from a basement storage room. Exactly as Henderson did a few weeks later, we proudly held them aloft, signaling their exalted status. We shared stories of glory days when, ignited merely by someone yelling

CUP FIGHT!, barrages of colorful chalices arced across the stadium’s east stands, later to be scooped up as priceless treasure by KU students and local schoolkids alike.

We then convinced our social media mavens to create a cups query for the Alumni Association’s Facebook page, asking Jayhawks to share their own anecdotes. The Dec. 12 post drew nearly 300 comments, shares, likes and loves.

“I remember cup wars being a highlight of many games 1980-’83,” responded one, while another recalled “taking my huge umbrella to the game to hide under when the cup fights broke out!” Many shared stories of saving stadium cups for decades, while a few tumbler grumblers tried to spoil the party. “I received a nasty cut in ’80 during the second half of the Nebraska game,” wrote one; said another, “getting hit with a cup wasn’t fun and getting hit with a full cup even worse.”

Not for the faint of heart, those cup fights—and not merely for the prospect of bodily harm. Just because he could, Professor John Bremner for years purchased season tickets adjacent to the student section, and warned that if his sainted wife, Mary, were to be struck, editing students would face heinous Monday morning quizzes. Hence, the human shield wall enveloping the Bremners when cups started flying.

And fly they did.

The original cups, Henderson explained

at breakfast, were “fluted” for rigidity. “The downside to the flutes,” he added, “is that it’s harder to print. You can’t do it. That’s why it’s only printed on the rim.”

Palming one, tech pioneer Brian McClendon, e’86, said, “But they do make it easier to grip. It feels so good in the hand.”

What about the aerodynamics of a fluted cup, rather than its replacement, the round, printable version? “It would probably help,” said Henderson, who never participated in cup fights as a KU student because he was otherwise occupied as a bruising fullback. But, as a longtime senior manager for the Lawrence plastics plant of assorted appellations, he knew the cups well and shared bits of their history.

Although the Association’s Facebook post prompted comments about the cups being designed by either an art professor or a KU machine-shop whiz, Henderson assured us they were invented by the late Jim Schwartzburg, assoc., who founded Packer Plastics in 1968.

“I would almost bet, knowing Jim, that this was originally intended for something else,” Henderson said. “Trying to come up with an ice cream cup or who knows what, but it didn’t pan out, and he’s like, ‘Oh, well, let’s put some Jayhawks on it and we can sell ’em to KU concessions.’ The probability of that versus not is above 50%.”

Schwartzburg’s creation is, in fact and improbably, enshrined in the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History. The museum’s online catalog description of its blue cup, emblazoned with “University of Kansas” around the rim, confirms that Packer Plastics in 1970 sold 50,000 to KU Memorial Unions.

Alas, the exalted arbiter of American history makes no mention of Memorial Stadium cup fights, which doesn’t mean they didn’t happen. Bruises fade faster than memories, and memories of our fluted flights of fancy shall linger long.

Cup fight, anyone?

—CHRIS LAZZARINO



HIGHLIGHTS BY THE HUNDREDS

A tribute to Jayhawk milestones and memories

From the top of The Hill to new heights of achievement, including record-setting performances, scores of Jayhawks have made their mark on campus and around the globe. KU Libraries' traveling exhibit, *Highlights by the Hundreds: A Tribute to Jayhawk Milestones and Memories*, celebrates a century of KU greats — both the people who have reached high, and the places and experiences that shaped their journey.

Featuring items from the University Archives and celebrating a century of Watson Library, the exhibit will be showcased at KU Alumni network events. We look forward to sharing pieces of KU history in a city near you!



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supports every Jayhawk:
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The University of Kansas



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The University of Kansas
1266 Oread Avenue
Lawrence, KS 66045-3100

“Providing care to people
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.

To schedule an appointment, call **913-588-1227** or
visit [KansasHealthSystem.com/Appointments](https://www.kansashealthsystem.com/Appointments).



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