



FALL 2023

Duquesne

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

The World Around Them

DUQUESNE STUDENTS EMBRACE
LEARNING TOGETHER IN NEW MEXICO

In this issue: Cultivating Communities of Diversity ♦ Building Castles with Compounds

Contents



2 | The World Around Them



10 | Building Castles with Compounds



22 | Football and Friendship



Check out new *Duquesne University Magazine* videos at duq.edu/magazine highlighting: the student experience in New Mexico and campus diversity initiatives.

Every Issue

Seen and Heard36

Athletics38

Bluff in Brief.....40

Alumni Updates42

Cover photo courtesy of Andrew Dignazio.

Also...

14 Nursing Fellowship Aims to Effect Real Change

Nursing students and faculty look to make a difference in women's health care

34

For the Future

Numerous construction projects are leading to bigger days for the campus community

Thoughts from the President

We're honored at Duquesne to help students engage with the world – on campus, in our region and around the globe. We believe that higher education should open up bold new perspectives, enabling students and graduates to improve lives across a diverse array of communities and cultures. Since the founding of this university in 1878, our Spiritan values and vision have always nurtured, challenged and inspired our students to do great things for others. In this issue of the *Duquesne University Magazine*, you'll read about such students, as well as faculty and staff, whose views of the world continue to expand, so that the sky's the limit when it comes to new ways to reach out and serve.

The cover story, "The World Around Them," explores the enriching experiences of our School of Education students and faculty members during a Maymester trip to a school on a Navajo reservation in New Mexico. You'll also read of Fr. Shawn Conoboy, a 2021 alum, who is now working in the Dicastery at the Vatican, focusing on human rights issues. And you'll hear about the important impact of our Gussin Spiritan Division, which helped then-freshman John Foster fill in the gaps in his high school education, so he could earn life-changing Duquesne degrees in history and international relations, with a concentration in U.S. Foreign Policy and Security Studies. Today, Foster travels the world while serving the U.S. Department of State.

These stories and others you'll find inside this magazine demonstrate the wide-open possibilities for our students, faculty and staff to do good in the world, starting with the values, skills and knowledge developed here on the Bluff. I hope you enjoy it! ♦

Sincerely,

Ken Gormley
Duquesne University President



AS YOU READ...

...you will see the icons below on many stories. They reflect the imperatives of *Re-Imagining Duquesne's Spiritan Legacy for a New Era: Strategic Plan 2018-2023*. The stories told here show how the plan is alive and vital, often reflecting more than one imperative. To learn more about our progress, visit duq.edu/strategicplan.

Five Strategic Imperatives

- Re-Imagine the Student Experience for 21st Century Success
- Become a Flagship for Community Engagement
- Be a Leader in Interdisciplinary Programs
- Create a Vibrant Campus Community
- Encourage Entrepreneurial Spirit



The World Around Them

FUTURE EDUCATORS LEARN TOGETHER AT THE TOHAALI COMMUNITY SCHOOL

By Jeremy Neeley

You are supported. You are loved.

When school administration, faculty, local councilmen, and famous Navajo skateboarder and artist Di'orr Greenwood repeat that message to a small class of eighth-graders at their promotion ceremony, you know you are in special surroundings. Tohaali Community School is such a place.

Nestled atop the soft, red sands in remote northwest New Mexico at the base of a glorious mountain range, Tohaali is a bureau school serving kindergarten through eighth grade. While the federal government manages it on a Navajo reservation for an entirely Navajo student population, it also benefits from tribal association.

In an effort to enrich their education and preserve their heritage, the Navajo governing council ensures the curriculum includes culturally relevant topics. Students at Tohaali are held to the same federal education standards as children in any other school when it comes to things like math, reading and STEM. They also receive additional instruction on their native language, ceremonies and heritage.

In May 2023, Duquesne education students arrived at Tohaali to learn together with that community in an environment unlike any other.

DUKES IN THE DESERT

Duquesne's School of Education already had several established study abroad programs when School of Education faculty member Melissa D. Boston, Ed.D., Professor of Mathematics Education, and Dr. Karen Levitt, Interim Associate Dean for Teacher Education, were searching for a Maymester program—a shorter, fully-immersive opportunity that would embed students in an environment they had never experienced before while fitting

into their schedules more easily. Due to student teaching obligations and the requirements of their major, for many education students, participating in lengthy study abroad trips can pose some challenges.

With COVID making prospects trickier, Boston and Levitt sought a domestic option that would still embed students in a culture unlike anything they would experience in Pittsburgh.

The professors learned about Tohaali through Indiana University's Global Gateway for Teachers program. Tohaali's principal, Delores Bitsilly, had a relationship with Indiana University, sending student teachers there in the past, and the director of IU's Global Gateway for Teachers program connected them.

Bitsilly was also already familiar with Duquesne. After growing up in Ohio and earning her teaching degree, she traveled to New Mexico for work. At one of her schools, she met Chris Jadowiec, a recent Duquesne graduate. The two young teachers bonded over their passion for the profession and their "go get 'em" attitudes. Jadowiec even learned to drive using Bitsilly's Pinto on the long, endless stretches of New Mexico highway.

So, when Duquesne professors reached out, Bitsilly's fond memories of Jadowiec played a part. Not only did the potential program make sense from an educational perspective, but for Bitsilly, "It felt like a way to honor my friend."

"We approached it with a lot of listening, showing true respect, admiration and appreciation for what they are trying to do."

The Tohaali Community School campus comprises several academic and residential buildings.



Duquesne graduate student Valerie Luutran helps sixth- and seventh-graders with their class work.



Duquesne students Regan Elenz (top) and Regan Holstein (bottom) discuss their experiences at Tohaali.



The Duquesne group helps to organize supplies for Field Day, an annual school event that features games and activities for the entire student population.

By that November, Boston and Levitt themselves drove over the stretches of New Mexico highway for their first meeting with Bitsilly on Tohaali's campus.

"We approached it with a lot of listening, showing true respect, admiration and appreciation for what they are trying to do," said Boston. "And Principal Bitsilly is always looking for potential new connections, resources and future teachers, so having people come to visit and, in turn, promote the school was seen as a good thing."

Levitt was clear, and even a bit Spiritan: "Whatever you need is what we are here to do. How can we support you?"

LEARNING FROM THE EARTH

By mid-May, five Duquesne students and three professors were on Tohaali's red sand grounds ready to serve the community. They resided in the same campus dorms used by some of the students at Tohaali.

Due to the remote location and, at times, varying family circumstances, Tohaali students as young as first grade stay

in the dorms during the school year for whatever duration makes sense. Parents check them in and out.

Graduate student Valerie Luutran was a teacher's aide in a classroom with sixth- and seventh-graders. The combined age group and the wider range of learning levels made it an interesting challenge she'd not yet experienced. But she embraced it and, through conversations with the students, gained insights she felt could really impact her future career as a science teacher or STEM curriculum builder.

"Here they infuse learning from the Earth into the curriculum, and that was very informative. The kids can tell me what plants are around them, which are healthy to eat, and why there's a waterfall now and not two months from now," Luutran found. "Future science teachers should know that even if kids don't have the academic language to describe the science, if they can describe the world around them, that is valuable learning."

Doctoral student and adjunct faculty member Carol Schoenecker also felt an immediate professional impact.

"There are so many places in our own country that students don't get to see. To think more critically about what they are learning in the classroom and then apply it in real life is an invaluable experience," she said.

Regan Elenz, a middle level education major, was able to spend one-on-one time with students who may have needed extra help. "I hope to be a special ed teacher. One student I worked with aced his math test after working with me, and that was really rewarding to see," she said.

Embedded with the kindergarten students, early childhood education major Abigail Messner noticed a difference in her experience at Tohaali versus her previous field placements.

"I did field placement teaching in two suburban Pittsburgh schools. Tohaali has a much smaller class size. This place feels like it has a greater emphasis on student-teacher relationships. I've been grateful for the time I've got to sit and talk with them."



Above: Duquesne student Andrew Dignazio chats with a student from Tohaali School. Below: The curriculum at Tohaali includes classes on Navajo culture and heritage.



THE CORE OF TEACHING

The sense of relationship-building Messner felt was no accident. It’s a core characteristic of Tohaali evident the moment a student steps through the doors.

Bitsilly knows her community well. “It is an impoverished community, but only money-wise. There is plenty of heart.”

The school calls its year-end eighth-grade ceremony a promotion and not a “graduation.” Challenges posed by the remote location, the lack of material resources and a perception of limited opportunity can often derail students as they grow older, and it was important that students leaving the school for the next stage of their lives didn’t feel like it was an end, but instead a promotion to a higher level of opportunity.

Such care has enabled the school to flourish even with limited resources. Through partnerships with community leaders, government agencies, nonprofits and generous benefactors, Tohaali’s small but motivated staff has been able to do amazing things.

Unlike other schools her students might be placed in, Boston knew the Duquesne students would benefit from being surrounded by this type of energy. “How Principal Bitsilly has managed to operate and bring connections and resources is extremely impressive. It is valuable for our students to take note. Before you blame the system



The Duquesne group takes a moment to enjoy the scenery.

“There are so many places in our own country that students don’t get to see. To think more critically about what they are learning in the classroom and then apply it in real life is an invaluable experience.”

or blame the students, realize ‘what is my role here and what can I do to contribute.’ The ultimate goal is student learning.”

Bitsilly fully embodies this relationship-first philosophy. Amy Denet Dale, an entrepreneur of Navajo decent, once visited the school with a relative. She had grown up as the adoptive daughter of two white parents and attended a school where she was the only Native American. At Tohaali, surrounded by the all-Navajo student population, she connected.

Conversations with Bitsilly furthered that bond. Detenay’s generosity has been immense. She donates to the school and used her connections to bring international skateboarding legend Tony Hawk to nearby Two Grey Hills, where a new skateboard park was built and christened.

More day-to-day, when COVID hit, donations of equipment, clothes and food came pouring in, and school staff sorted the donations and delivered them to even the most remote students and their families. When the school was the target of after-hours break-ins, Bitsilly obtained a grant to establish a summer school and an after-hours community program, which provides a venue for games, crafts, bingo and other activities. After the evening programs started, the break-ins stopped.

Building these relationships from individuals to the community has positioned the school as a positive influence in the lives of so many.

BONDS THAT BROADEN

“Getting this deep perspective from people living here was very special. The students were exceptional and shared stories with me from the first day,” said Duquesne student Andrew Dignazio.

“They were very open with me. Living a thousand miles away, you just don’t know these things. To learn about Navajo traditions and ceremonies firsthand was amazing.”

For Tohaali faculty members Erika Begay and Barton Begay, the cultural exchange between students was invaluable. Erika saw it in how her seventh-grade son interacted with the Duquesne students.

“As a parent I do a lot to make sure my kids know there is life beyond the reservation,” she said. “It can be difficult to teach issues like integration and race, and having people come in, like those from Duquesne, is really valuable. There may be a tendency for our students to withdraw in those instances, but it’s important for them to know that even in those scenarios, you have a voice and can speak your mind to people who may be different than you.”

Teaching Duquesne students the cultural significance of how Navajo introduce themselves by not only their name, but their clans, was especially meaningful for Barton Begay. The clan names are significant to relationships, establishing bonds with fellow Navajo who they might not know, but who share the same clan lineage.

“I make sure to know all the kids’ clans so that I can establish an immediate connection with them,” he said.

Bitsilly knows these types of interactions and cross-cultural learning opportunities go both ways.

“My whole purpose in having people come is to show our students there is a bigger world out there and there are other people that care about them,” she said. “It’s a breath of fresh air. Our kids become curious, they ask questions, and it’s a real benefit.”

For the Duquesne students, immersion at Tohaali broadened their horizons and made them look at their futures through a new lens.

Education student Regan Holstein makes it clear: “The culture is so different from anything you would experience in Pittsburgh. It’s so interesting and rich and something you just want to soak up. I had thought about teaching locally, but now I am considering Teach for America, an agency that places teachers in areas of greater need.”

For this group of Duquesne students, coming away with a greater sense of purpose and a broader mission-centered outlook was worth the trip. ♦

Kindergarten students are exposed to basic scientific principles through a "bubble experiment" using pipe cleaners and soap. Below, from left: Duquesne student Abigail Messner demonstrates proper bubble-blowing technique. Dr. Karen Levitt helps students fashion their wands. Dr. Meilssa Boston looks on as students have fun while learning.



Visit duq.edu/magazine to hear more about the trip from DU students.



Alumna Designs Her Role in Pharmacy

By Jamie Hornstein

For Duquesne University alumna Renee Richardson, GP'09, the journey to her fulfilling career in pharmacy was guided by a deep-rooted desire to help people and make a positive impact on her community. Drawing strength from her interactions with others, Richardson's passion for health care and community service has led her to excel in her field and carve out her own unique career path as a pharmacist.

"I always knew that I wanted to work with people. I love helping and teaching people," she recalled.

It was a family friend, a school nurse, who recommended she explore the field of pharmacy. Intrigued by the blend of math, science and health, Richardson was drawn to this career path. "I saw that pharmacy was an accessible profession that combined a lot of the subjects I enjoyed most and it still allowed me to help people."

CHOOSING DUQUESNE

During her college search, Richardson visited several colleges, but it was Duquesne University that captured her attention. Located just far enough from her hometown of Vandergrift, Pa., to allow her to spread her wings, yet close enough to maintain strong family connections. Duquesne's beautiful, private campus felt like a world of its own within the lively city of Pittsburgh. The personalized attention she received during her visit, including the one-to-one conversations with student ambassadors, made her and her family feel valued and welcomed.

At Duquesne, Richardson's passion for community service continued to blossom. "As a student, I was able to go out into underserved communities, offering health care screenings, bringing access to care to the patients, counseling on test results and interacting with the community. Being able to do this work at Duquesne helped to prepare me."

It was this experience, as well as service projects, that helped shape her understanding of the importance of accessibility and representation in health care.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

After graduating, Richardson joined the Giant Eagle Pharmacy team, a move that provided her with numerous opportunities for growth and leadership. By speaking up and passionately involving herself in



"As a student, I was able to go out into underserved communities, offering health care screenings, bringing access to care to the patients, counseling on test results and interacting with the community."

"Richardson knows building relationships are vital for creating better health outcomes."

various community initiatives, she was able to help create a new role as the senior manager of pharmacy community relations where she actively works to build connections between the company, neighborhoods and organizations with health and wellness-aligned missions.

One example includes working locally with the Black Equity Coalition. Richardson and her team help expand vaccine access into communities—ensuring people are able to understand and receive vaccines. Her team also educates community members on topics such as familiarizing students with the benefits of a pharmacy career path; STEM-related activities; drug take-back programs; ways to handle a drug overdose and proper medication disposal.

Richardson knows building relationships is vital for creating better health outcomes. "Having team members who relate to the communities they serve fosters trust and empowers patients to take charge of their health."

GIVING BACK

Beyond her work in the pharmacy industry, Richardson is an active member of the Allegheny Pharmacists Association (ACPA), where she has held several leadership roles, including treasurer and most recently as the newly elected president.

Her dedication to the pharmacy field extends beyond her daily responsibilities, as she frequently visits her alma mater, engaging with new pharmacy students and helping them understand the many traditional and non-traditional paths of pharmacy from research and industry to the field of pharmacy law, to name a few. Richardson also presents on the topic of social determinants of health to students preparing to embark on their final year of pharmacy practice experiences.

"Renee goes beyond just presenting the information and effectively engages the students, promoting an active learning environment where students can thoughtfully reflect and share their ideas on the subject," said Thomas J. Falcione, RPh, P'86, director of experiential education for the School of Pharmacy.

PERSONAL IMPACT

Balancing her career, community work—including currently running for her local school board—and personal life as a wife and mother of three boys, Richardson finds joy and excitement in spending time with her husband and sons.

"With our children's sporting events we get to spend time watching them as well as socializing with friends and family," she said. "Having a really supportive husband, I'm able to do a lot of the things I enjoy and be with the people that make me the happiest, my family." ♦



Above: Renee, surrounded by her husband Shawn, and sons Shawn Jr., Max and Madden. A cause entrepreneur, Renee poses by her ONEHOPE Wine charity table display.



Building Castles with Compounds

TEACHER-SCHOLAR CHALLENGES STUDENTS TO EXPLORE AND DISCOVER

By Ken Walters

One look at Aleem Gangjee's office in Mellon Hall and you immediately know this is a room full of ideas.

There are the stacks of research papers on his desk and table, and shelves filled with books on everything from medicinal chemistry to classical music. Various plaques hang on his office wall, noting his more than 400 publications, patents and scientific presentations. On his computer screen rests a molecular design, which he will revise and revise again to develop pharmaceutical compounds that may help fight and even cure cancer.

And it wouldn't be possible without the freedom of discovery that comes with the Duquesne University campus.

"There are people who will say you can't build castles in the air," said Gangjee, distinguished professor and Adrian Van Kaam Chair in Scholarly Excellence at Duquesne's School of Pharmacy. "But you have to build them in the air before you can build them on the ground."

RESEARCH TEAM WORKS ON BREAKTHROUGH DRUG FOR BRAIN CANCER

The castles Gangjee and his research team build are compounds—molecules designed, analyzed and synthesized to prevent and treat cancer. His most recent breakthrough is a drug that targets a rare and difficult to treat brain tumor found

in children. Created at Duquesne, the drug has received a Rare Pediatric Disease designation from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, helping pave the way for future trials.

The FLAG-003 drug treats Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma (DIPG), a highly aggressive brain tumor found in children typically ages 5-9. There is no cure for the disease and current treatments are not effective, with most patients dying less than two years after being diagnosed.

The Duquesne compound, which has a 100 percent success rate in animals, works in two steps. It initially attacks the cancer cell, but does not kill it. "The first step is like a boxer who wears down his opponent and brings him to his knees," Gangjee said. "The second step knocks out the cancer cell, killing it by delivering a low but sufficient amount of toxicity, which is also safer for the patient than current treatments."

The new drug is the latest success in Gangjee's 44-year career at Duquesne, where he has received numerous awards and recognition and grant support from the National Cancer Institute. Yet what continues to drive him is a much more personal quest.

Gangjee understands the loss of a loved one from cancer, as he lost his grandmother to breast cancer. "That loss is devastating for families, especially those who lose children. So, that's why I do what I do."





Dr. Gangjee works with graduate students Krishna Kaku (left photo) and Abhishek Sharma.

BECOMING A TEACHER-SCHOLAR AT DUQUESNE

Long before joining Duquesne in July 1979, Gangjee knew he wanted to use his interest in organic chemistry to help fight diseases. After earning an undergraduate and graduate degree from the Indian Institute of Technology, where he finished first in his class, he left India for the U.S.

"I knew I had to come to the United States, where I would have access to better materials and equipment," he said. "With God's blessing, I made it here."

"The reason I chose Duquesne was because we value teaching as much as conducting research," he said. "That really drove me because I wanted to do both, and not many universities offered that opportunity."

STUDENT RESEARCHERS WORK ALONGSIDE GANGJEE

Gangjee said that graduate and undergraduate students conduct much of the research in his lab, working and learning together to help create a drug that may someday save young lives.

Over the years, his students have been the beneficiaries of his teaching and open research approach, allowing them to explore options in the lab.

"There are a lot of ways to make something, and Dr. Gangjee gives us the freedom to explore and learn new things together," said Krishna Kaku, a Duquesne graduate student pursuing a medicinal chemistry doctorate who works in the lab. "There are several hundred molecules that we analyze and then we whittle them down to a couple hundred molecules that may help us reach our goal. So having the freedom to explore options while receiving his feedback is invaluable."

Yesha Shah, another medicinal chemistry doctoral candidate, said Gangjee's multi-faceted approach and

"There are a lot of ways to make something, and Dr. Gangjee gives us the freedom to explore and learn new things together."

dedication to developing cancer treatments were key factors in her decision to attend Duquesne.

"I'm passionate about finding treatments for cancer," she said. "Working in Dr. Gangjee's lab is so satisfying because we are working to help patients who need help the most. He also gives us opportunities to share what we learn, by working as teaching assistants, presenting at conferences and writing grants for future projects. Plus he has more energy than anybody in the lab, which keeps us going."

The good news for his students is that Gangjee, after 44 years at Duquesne, still enjoys his work.

"Some people golf for pleasure," he said. "To me, this work—designing molecules, writing research papers, applying for grants, exploring options—it's exciting."

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

Another part of the joy for Gangjee is watching his students succeed in the lab and in the industry. All of his 42 doctoral graduates are successfully employed, primarily in pharmaceutical companies.

"My hope is that these graduates are infinitely better than me," he said. "They are here to be given the time to discover, work and innovate toward new and better treatments." ♦

Living the Spiritan Mission for a Lifetime

By Rose Ravasio, A'90

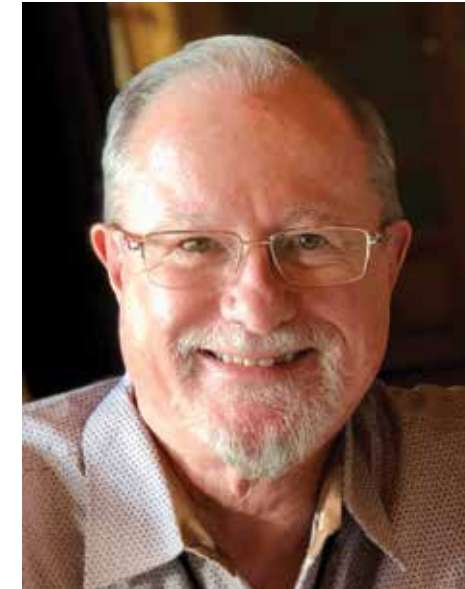
"**H**ola," "Me llamo Charlie" and "Buenas días" are among the first phrases former Duquesne President Dr. Charles J. Dougherty learned in an intro to Spanish class at his local library in Phoenix. Little did he know that these simple phrases would lead to his bringing food to the hungry and unexpected spiritual growth.

"After I retired, I knew that I needed something for myself, something both intellectually challenging and personally satisfying," Dougherty said. "I chose to study Spanish."

After completing the intro course, Dougherty hired a Spanish tutor. They met regularly, and while his reading and writing improved, Dougherty says his conversation skills still needed work. His tutor suggested Dougherty check out a small Catholic parish chapter of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which provides meals to some of the most underserved individuals and families, many of whom speak Spanish, in downtown Phoenix. For Dougherty, it was a good opportunity not just to improve his language skills, but also to serve a community in need.

Similar to Duquesne's founders—the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, or Spiritans—whose global mission of more than 300 years is to evangelize the poor and the marginalized, St. Vincent de Paul Society members are lay Catholics who serve the poor, suffering and deprived.

"An important lesson I learned from the Spiritans and my years at Duquesne is that, though there are surely dramatic Pentecost-like moments, for most of us the Holy Spirit works



Retired President Charles Dougherty

far more subtly," said Dougherty, who served as University president from 2001-2016. "The guidance of the Spirit often comes through choices that we make thinking that they are primarily for ourselves—only to discover later that they also open opportunities to serve others."

Twice a week, Dougherty, 74, spends up to three hours loading boxes of food—canned goods, cereal, frozen meat, powdered milk and supplies for infants and toddlers—and delivering them to individuals and families who are struggling. He talks to them in Spanish, learning about them and their families, and listening to words of thanks. "De nada," he says, receiving smiles and handshakes in return.

The Rev. John Fogarty, C.S.Sp., senior advisor to the president for

Spiritan mission and campus culture at Duquesne, says it's both inspiring and "not surprising" that Dougherty's openness to the Spirit and outreach to the poor continue to shape his life in retirement.

"His significant contributions as president truly strengthened Duquesne's sense of its Spiritan mission and identity, fostered strong community engagement around the core values of the Spiritan charism and helped to link the University to the worldwide Spiritan mission," said Fogarty.

Duquesne President Ken Gormley agrees. "Charlie's continued dedication to the work, similar to that which Spiritans have done for 150 years in the U.S., is an inspiration. He may have left Duquesne, but clearly the University and what we value still lives in his work."

At the end of each food delivery, it's customary for society members to pray with the people they serve, a practice that Dougherty says has had an immense impact on his spiritual growth.

"Although I have spent my life in Catholic education, on both sides of the desk, I generally left public praying to the experts—Franciscans, Jesuits, Spiritans. Now I'm leading prayers, sometimes in Spanish, in small groups in homes, on doorsteps, in parking lots, etc.," he said. "Even though these prayers are always brief—at times no more than 'Remember that God loves you and your family'—they're almost always powerful moments for those we serve and for me." ♦

"...though there are surely dramatic Pentecost-like moments, for most of us the Holy Spirit works far more subtly."



Emmala Le, N'22

Nursing Fellowship Aims to Effect Real Change

By Rose Ravasio, A'90, and Kara Pasquinelli, MA'10

Emmala Le, N'22, eventually wants to be a midwife. In 2022, she was selected to be a Duquesne Maternal Child Health Equity Fellow, a two-semester program that would provide her practical and eye-opening experience. In fall of 2022, 11 inaugural Fellows started, gaining insight and hands-on learning about promoting and providing equitable prenatal and postpartum care, parenting, labor and delivery, and more, while immersed in communities similar to those they'd serve later as professionals.

In their work, they accompanied assigned birth workers, community leaders and activists. For Le, the experience connected to her research on the disparities that Black women face while giving birth. "We visited places like the local Mothers' Milk Bank, the Family Care Connections Center and other nonprofits in Pittsburgh to learn about the important resources they provide to women and families," said Le, who also is a Duquesne Spirit of Diversity awardee. "I also got to follow a young pregnant woman for two months while working with a home health nurse and got to experience how she navigated her daily visits with other patients." Designed to help senior-level nursing students understand maternal-child health disparities and promote equity, the School of Nursing's groundbreaking Maternal Child Health Equity Fellowship is building meaningful connections with the community. Students and professionals work alongside leaders and stakeholders for safer motherhood and collective change.



Emmala Le

MISSION CRITICAL

This year, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) published that Black mothers-to-be are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women. Among the contributing factors are variations in quality health care, structural racism and latent bias. Additionally, the CDC reports that many people from racial and ethnically diverse groups who experience negative social determinants of health are denied fair opportunities for economic, physical and emotional health. Le says that the fellowship opportunity connected what she had learned in doing her research and as a community-engaged scholar at Duquesne. "These inequities in maternal and child health have real impacts," she said. "It's so disheartening. These women are not just statistics. They're real women who deserve to have healthy babies and go home just as much as the next person." Another fellow, Lily Golden, N'22, now works in the NICU at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. "I was nervous at the start of my first home visit. This was somebody's home, their space, and I didn't want to do anything wrong or upset them in any way," said Golden, whose grandmother is a nurse and a Duquesne graduate. "But every client was so welcoming. It was interesting to see the various family dynamics, learn about their culture, and discover what made their child and family unique." Golden also was impressed by the relationships between her instructor and those she visited. "The relationships that she had with each of those families and the trust they had in her was memorable," she said. "She has been following some of these families for years. I think it's special to be able to have that trust in a nurse and have her with you and your family from your pregnancy through the birth, postpartum period and everything that follows."

A LONG TRADITION

"The fellowship goes beyond standard nursing education and creates a focus on issues of equity."

Jessica Devido, PhD, CPNP, associate professor in Duquesne's School of Nursing, is part of a long tradition of profound concern for the health and economic well-being of people and communities on the margins. Duquesne itself has championed for the marginalized for nearly 145 years. The School of Nursing understands that achieving health care equity demands dramatic shifts, and its faculty and students work together to effect real change. Devido developed the fellowship initiative in 2021 as part of the application process for the national Josiah Macy Faculty Scholar program. She was one of only five interdisciplinary educators nationally selected as prestigious scholars.



Jessica Devido, Ph.D.

"The goal is to help build a better working relationship between nurses, interdisciplinary colleagues and new mothers in communities of color," said Devido, a pediatric nurse practitioner and former bedside labor and delivery nurse. "The fellowship goes beyond standard nursing education and creates a focus on issues of equity." Devido turned to the birth-work community for partnership and recruited several doulas who are women of color to help shape and implement the fellowship's curriculum. Together, they created a program advisory board and staffed it with leaders from across Pittsburgh, including a community advisor. Three Duquesne faculty experts in sociology, history and clinical affairs also serve as content experts for the project. "The fellowship works to educate nurses, widen the perspective and strengthen leaders within our health care system," said Iyanna Bridges, the community advisor for the fellowship, a doula in Pittsburgh and owner of The Birthing Hut. "After the fellowship, these nurses are equipped to discuss race conversations within health care, connect patients with tangible community resources and provide equitable care." Devido says the fellowship has enriched her knowledge, especially with what she has learned from the advisory board. "They are experts in this field and this community, and that is so much of what we want to address with this program—that our experiences are different, but when we work together toward a common goal, they can make us stronger." ♦

 Read more about Jessica Devido's work as a Macy Scholar: <https://www.duq.edu/academics/colleges-and-schools/nursing/news/publications/mch-fellowship.php>



Century Club Welcomes Three New Members

Three new members were inducted into the Century Club of Distinguished Duquesne University Alumni at the President's Dinner during Homecoming and Family Weekend Oct. 21.

The Century Club was established during Duquesne's 100th anniversary in 1978 to recognize graduates with exemplary records of professional achievement and service to the University and their communities. Only 349 alumni have been admitted to its ranks.

The 2023 new Century Club inductees are:

MARIANNE CORNETTI, M'88

*World Renowned Dramatic Mezzo-Soprano
Artistic Director, Pittsburgh Festival Opera*

Blessed with a voice described by *Seen and Heard International* as "... a miracle of power and flexibility from top to bottom," Cornetti studied at the Manhattan School of Music, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and Penn State University before receiving her bachelor's degree from Duquesne in 1988. She made her professional debut the following year and is an internationally renowned mezzo-soprano who has performed with the most prestigious opera

houses and on many world stages across the globe.

She has performed in the United States and Canada with the Pittsburgh Opera and the Metropolitan Opera, among many others, along with opera companies across the globe. As a teacher, she is an adjunct faculty, has participated in young artists' programs, including at Duquesne, and has presented masterclasses at schools internationally.

Cornetti also serves as artistic director of Pittsburgh Festival Opera, which presents innovative opera for the widest possible audience to redefine opera as an experience that is approachable and relevant to today's audiences.

Locally, she has produced benefit concerts for churches and charities. She has been recognized as the Pittsburgh Opera Renaissance Singer of the Year (2009) and as a Carlow University Woman of Spirit (2016). She remains an active Duquesne alumna as a guest teacher, lecturer, student mentor, performer and ambassador for the University.



DAVID D'ERAMO, P'65

*Retired President and CEO
Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center*

After receiving his bachelor's degree in pharmacy at Duquesne, D'Eramo went on to earn an MBA in hospital administration from Xavier University, and a master's degree in community health planning and Ph.D. in political science from the University of Cincinnati.

He served as president and CEO of the largest Catholic hospital in New England, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center in Hartford, Conn., from 1988 through 2004. D'Eramo's vision and leadership transformed a respected but aging metropolitan hospital into a nationally recognized integrated health care network.

D'Eramo has served on numerous national and local health care and community organizations including chairman of the Council of Teaching Hospitals, the Metro section of the American Hospital Association, chairman of the board of Connecticut Public Broadcasting, and President George H.W. Bush's Task Force on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

Among his many personal and professional honors are Xavier University's Distinguished Alumni Service Award and the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Duquesne University's School of Pharmacy.

D'Eramo is currently a member of Duquesne University's board of directors, where he has chaired the mission and identity committee and serves on the academic affairs committee. He and his wife, Judy, are leading benefactors of the University's new Center for Student Wellbeing and related programs.



SAMUEL W. SPANOS, B'80

*Senior Vice President, Investments and Managing Director
Spanos Group of Raymond James*

As a student in business administration and accounting at Duquesne, Spanos was appointed by the University president to serve on the University Statutes Committee and was a member of the Dean's Student Advisory Council. After earning his degree, he joined Merrill Lynch as a financial consultant.

After 34 years with Merrill, Spanos joined Raymond James in 2014, establishing the firm's first office in Western Pennsylvania. He leads a team that manages more than \$850 million in client assets.

Spanos holds the Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor® credential and the designation of Accredited Retirement Plan Consultant. He is co-author of *Replacing Your Paycheck: Strategies to Grow Your Savings, Generate Income, and Preserve Your Retirement Assets* and *Financial Therapy: For Tips on Better Investor Behavior*. He has been repeatedly and consecutively listed among *Barron's* and *Financial Times* Top Financial Advisors and *Forbes* Best In-State Wealth Advisors.

Spanos served at the U.S. Army War College Commandant's National Security Program in 2013 and is a member of the Defense Orientation Conference Association. He completed the Federal Bureau of Investigation Citizens Academy in 2021 and is also a deputy on the Allegheny County Sheriff's Reserve.

Spanos is a member of the Advisory Board of the Rochester, Pa., Corps of the Salvation Army and has served on several boards of directors. He belongs to the Pittsburgh Chapter of Legatus, Pennsylvania Masonic Fraternity and the Rotary Club of Beaver.

A recipient of Duquesne's Mind Heart and Spirit Award in 2007, Spanos financially supports more than 70 Pittsburgh-area charities, and has established a Third Alternative Resource Fund at Duquesne. ♦





Journalism from the Classroom to the Community

By Elizabeth Shestak

Duquesne undergraduate Zachary Petroff has had his byline published regularly in *The Duquesne Duke*, where he has held several editorial positions since 2021. He also has had a byline in this magazine.

Petroff's writing has taken him into the community. This spring, he reported about Tone Turner, missing since 2019, for the *New Pittsburgh Courier*, a weekly newspaper whose history covering Black communities dates to the early 20th century. The headline asked a question, "When Black women go missing, why doesn't the media care as much?" in an echo of a study that made news in early 2023.

It was one of many contributions. As a student in the Community Journalism course offered by the Media Department, Petroff worked with fellow classmates to contribute articles to both the *Courier* and *TribLive.com*.

For the *Courier's* editor-in-chief and only staff writer, Rob Taylor, these contributions helped them cover more stories, and also create connections for students, something that's important for all involved.

"They were really engaged; a lot of them weren't from Pittsburgh but it didn't stop them from wanting to be immersed into the community," Taylor said.

Taylor emphasized that the bar for publishing student work remained high, noting that the students had to be able to fit the *Courier's* standards.

EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCES

These contributions do more than teach students how to meet deadlines and write copy, said Professor Pamela Walck of her Community Journalism course..

"Journalism programs across the U.S. can help be a solution to the news desert problem," she said, referring to information gaps underserved communities endure when media is limited.

For students like Petroff, experiences generated through the coursework are similarly impactful.

"It opened my eyes," said Petroff, a U.S. Army veteran attending Duquesne on the GI Bill. "It was just really heartbreaking that this young, beautiful woman went missing, and there wasn't this huge story, this outcry."

"Even researching the information," he continued, "there wasn't a lot out there. So, I thought that there was some actual credence to this argument that we don't do a good job when it comes to non-white people in the news."

HITTING THE STREETS

The internet is incredibly helpful when it comes to reporting, as students in Professor Maggie Patterson's Investigative Journalism course can attest—analyzing 2020 U.S. Census data is much easier on a computer.

But there's still something essential about getting into the community itself, and that's just what Walck insists her students do in their Community Journalism experience.

There was a day last semester when her students shared they were not having much success reaching folks electronically to comment on their stories.

"Grab a notebook, grab your pen and get in my car. We're leaving!" she told them, and headed for the nearby Hill District for a lesson in shoeleather reporting.

Some were more successful than others in connecting with sources face-to-face, but it showed them they were capable of things most find intimidating, such as starting conversations with complete strangers, asking provocative questions and perhaps most terrifyingly, trying something new without any guarantee of success.

"We can only teach you so much and then you just have to go out there and get your hands dirty," Walck said.

"You're going to end up in places and talking to people who maybe don't have a good feeling about the paper that you write for. Understanding that, you can do things to rise above and gain that public trust; it's something that I can't teach you by reading the textbook." ♦

IN MEMORIAM: David Pappert

By Ken Gormley, Duquesne University President

P. David Pappert, A'60, H'22, died June 28 at age 86 in Maryland, peacefully surrounded by family and loved ones after a brief illness. An innovator in the computer industry and passionate patron of the arts, he leaves an indelible legacy with his alma mater. President Ken Gormley shares his remembrances.



David grew up on the North Side of Pittsburgh—which, for those unfamiliar with the city, was a fairly rough-and-tumble place. Home of the Rooney family, who founded the Steelers, it was working-class neighborhoods that perched atop hillsides and overlooked the Monongahela and Ohio Rivers. From this modest place that valued grit and tenacity but placed an even higher premium on simple virtues and adherence to principle, David pursued an education at Duquesne.

David loved to tell the story that he helped to pay for his tuition by driving trucks up and down the Mon Valley, delivering to the mill suppliers and coal mines, the "company towns." At Duquesne, David met his future wife, Janet, in German class. Janet was a pre-med student. At that time David was working at night as a clerk in the trust department of PNC.

David and Janet were married in 1959, after she graduated from Duquesne. David graduated from the College of Liberal Arts in 1960 and went on to achieve great success in the computing and technology industry. After serving as president and CEO of ITEL's federal services unit, he engineered a purchase of the division in 1980, and ultimately became founder, chairman and chief executive officer of ViON Corporation, rising to the top of his profession in the business world.

The cut-and-dry facts—as impressive as they are—don't do justice to the man. There was nothing cut-and-dry about transformational contributions he made to his alma mater, even as he raised his family and made his mark in business. His greatest gifts were about his love of people; his belief that education could change lives; and his deep sense of ethics and principle that allowed him to power forward, in the midst of obstacles, and get results with a joy and understated sense of humor that made everyone in his orbit feel they were part of a grand, noble adventure.

David was instrumental to multiple presidents at Duquesne. He was a trusted advisor to the 11th President, John Murray. Then, when Charlie Dougherty was named President in 2001, David took an even more prominent role, and was elected Board Chair in 2007.

David didn't particularly like attention or awards. But he had plenty of them.

In 1996, David and Janet were inducted into Duquesne's Century Club of Distinguished Alumni—the highest award the University bestows. He received the 1997 Distinguished Alumnus Award from the McNulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts; the 2009 McNulty Service Award; and the 2017 Spiritus Award, recognizing his exceptional leadership in philanthropic service to our University and our students.

Most notably, David and Janet created an endowment to name the Mary Pappert School of Music after his beloved mother, Mary. And I can tell you: David is literally the person

who shaped our music school into the world-class educational institution it is today—and changed the lives of countless students in the process.

I loved going to the Concerts on the Bluff series when David came to town, which he did regularly. He was unfailingly supportive of deans Ed Kocher and David Allen Wehr, and these performances. He picked out a choice seat; closed his eyes; and seemed to drink in the music—he told us it brought back memories of his mother playing piano in a room at the top of the stairs in their North Side home, performing with a small group of friends. He delighted in treating all of the musicians and some of the student staffers to a dinner at the Capital Grill afterwards.

David also tolerated the hot weather in Florida for alumni events, especially if his brother Tom—also a Duquesne alum—and his wife Joyce were attending. He was proud when his three daughters, Stacy, Kathryn and Wendy, his son, Bill, or a grandchild appeared at an event he was hosting at the Columbia Country Club in Chevy Chase. He was extraordinarily proud of all of them.

David Pappert was a fierce competitor. A perfectionist. Someone who insisted on excellence in everything he did. But he had a heart of gold—with his ultimate goal in life being that he wanted to make everyone else around him better.

I was fortunate to talk with David about 10 days before he died. I was astounded: David sounded more chipper and positive than ever. The end was near—he knew that. But he was filled with satisfaction for all that he'd been privileged to do with his life, he said, and, "it's been a good run."

David Pappert was an extraordinary human being. He may have grown up of modest means, but he conquered the world of business; married Janet, the love of his life; raised a wonderful family; and helped to shape an entire University and a new generation of graduates, so that they would have the same improbable opportunities as he did.

It's hard to imagine how the limited time that God has given each of us on earth could be lived more meaningfully. ♦



John Foster gorilla-trekking in Volcanoes National Park Musanze, Rwanda.

“I would do anything for the division because they saw something when truly no one else did.”

From the Gussin Division to Globetrotter

By Elizabeth Shestak

This summer, John Foster, A'16, spent his time stateside in Washington, D.C., learning yet another language. This time it was Portuguese. The French he honed while living in Rwanda the previous three years was not going to get him very far in Brazil, his next post as a member of the Foreign Service.

When Foster was a teenager living in Reading, Pa., he could not conceive of one day living abroad, let alone jet-setting across continents as a member of the U.S. Department of State with his wife and daughter in tow.

But the Gussin Spiritan Division (GSD) saw something in him that others didn't, and his horizons were expanded more than he could ever have imagined.

THE GSD AND THE SPIRITAN WAY

Each year, the division admits students who show potential but may have some gaps in their high school transcripts for acceptance at Duquesne. They spend their first year committed to receiving additional academic supervision and services, and then matriculate into their respective programs to complete their degrees at Duquesne.

The graduation rate of GSD students rivals that of the traditional population, said Dr. Judith Griggs, director of the division for more than four decades.

“I graduated high school with a 2.97 GPA, did not even break a thousand on the SAT. And the division was like, ‘Wait a minute, let's not discard this applicant.’ That's something that I always carried with me,” Foster said.

BELIEVING IN MORE FOR HIMSELF

After completing the GSD program in his first year at Duquesne, Foster began to believe that his potential was more limitless than limited.

With the guidance of the staff and faculty he had come to trust and love in the GSD, he decided to pursue degrees in history and international relations rather than his original plan to study education. He finished with a dual concentration in U.S. foreign policy and security studies. A 10-week summer program at the Villa Nazareth in Rome gave birth to the globetrotter he didn't know was within him.

Though technically he wasn't an official member of the GSD after his first year of college, there is a saying in the division: Once a Gussin student, always a Gussin student.

“Even after I left the division, I was in a calculus class and it was just kicking my butt. I can remember spending countless hours with Ms. Wade and with Ameya on



The Foster family wearing traditional Rwandan attire with fellow Dukes/Grace's godparents Desiree, A'16, and Alex, B'16, Fedigan in Kigali, Rwanda.

calculus,” he recalled, referencing two GSD staffers still there today, April Wade and Ameya Ranade. “They went out of their way to do that. You didn't just leave the program, you were still a part of it.”

PROVING THEM RIGHT

Foster became Student Government Association (SGA) president his senior year at Duquesne, before going on to earn a Master of Arts in international security studies and political economy from Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 2020.

He passed the notoriously rigorous Foreign Service test the first time, joining the 3 percent of applicants who make it to the end.

“It was wonderful witnessing his growth from Spiritan Division student to SGA president to the young man who deserves accolades for his many accomplishments,” Griggs said. “We are all so very proud of John.”

The feeling is mutual.

“I would do anything for the division because they saw something when truly no one else did,” Foster said. ♦

The views expressed in this article are those of the interviewee and do not reflect the official policy or position of the U.S. government or the Department of State.



Football and Friendship

TRADITIONS ENDURE
AFTER MORE THAN
FIVE DECADES

By Bob Woodside, A'83

Fifty-five years ago, in November 1968, a group of students gathered on campus with an ambitious goal: to revive intercollegiate football on the Bluff after a nearly two-decade absence.

Duquesne was a national football power in the 1920s and '30s, ranked alongside programs like Alabama, Tennessee and Notre Dame, but the sport was dropped in 1950 for financial reasons.

The "Grid-Iron Dukes" would be part of a rising tide of club football teams, largely at smaller northeastern schools—many of them Catholic—that could not afford to field varsity teams.

Five years later, in November 1973, they won a national championship on the hallowed Tartan Turf of Three Rivers Stadium. The friendships formed and the foundation laid endure to this day.

WORKING, LEARNING AND PLAYING TOGETHER

Building a football program requires just the right mix of elements—savvy management, talented players, outstanding coaching and devoted fans. All four came into play once the University Athletic Committee approved football as a student-run club.

Sam Costanzo, A'72, a member of the Athletic Committee, was at the center of it all, first as assistant director then director. The team's "front office" was St. Martin's Hall. "Pete Kulyk, B'70, Ken Curcio, B'71, Bob Skoff, B'72, GB'75, Lou Greci, E'72...a whole raft of guys jumped on board with us right away," Costanzo remembered.

While varsity football had been absent for 19 years, there was no shortage of talent. "Intramural sports were huge," explained Leo Marshall, E'72, GE'75. "And two teams



Four Club Football All-Americans returned for the 1972 season. Left to right: head coach Dan McCann; John Stefanik E'74; Jack Schroeffel, B'73; Steve Sherer, E'74; Rod Hess, A'73; and assistant coach Jim Vrbanic.



1. Offensive starters from the 1970 team: (Backs) Tom Manley; Bob Mongillo, B'74; Eros Siano, A'70, GE'73, George Sikon, P'73. (Line): Rod Hess, A'73; Jock Daurora, B'70; Jim Vumbaco, A'72; Chuck Seifert; Bob Hohman, E'72; Harry Dudro, A'71; Jim Breisinger, B'72. 2. The 1973 national champion Iron Dukes. 3. The Iron Dukes were the first Pittsburgh college team to play at Three Rivers Stadium.

really dominated back then, the Playboys and the Sheiks.” Members of both independent social club squads migrated to the new team, followed by their fans.

“Many of the Sheiks were playing for the team or involved in operations, and a lot of Sheiks were dating Alpha Phis,” said Rod Hess, A’73, who joined the team during the 1970 season and became a three-time All-American receiver. “By ’71 and ’72, night games at North Park became the Saturday night thing to do. The Phis put signs up. The Sheiks had their ‘unofficial’ marching kazoo band. We just kept that connection going over the years.”

EXACTLY WHAT THEY NEEDED

The final piece of the puzzle was coaching. Inexperience and injuries contributed to a 2-4 record in the inaugural campaign. The team’s coaches quit after the first season, leaving Costanzo with an important decision. A large pool of candidates applied, but Costanzo made the call based on Dan McCann’s record, coaching North Catholic’s freshman team at the time. “He was 27-0. He was undefeated. If you go for three years and don’t lose, this guy knows what he’s doing.” McCann was appointed head coach and became a legend.

“His vision was to bring big time football back to Duquesne—and that’s what he did,” Hess said.

Under McCann’s tutelage, the team improved to 4-3-1 in 1970, and 4-4 in 1971. “The ’72 team, I think, was our best team,” Hess recalled. That squad finished 7-1, the only blemish being a two-point loss at Canisius College, which many blamed on questionable officiating. “We got a home job up there,” Hess sighed.

There would be no such disappointment in 1973. The Dukes steamrolled through the regular season, outscoring their opponents 144-18 and setting up a national title game in Pittsburgh.

PUNCHING ABOVE THEIR WEIGHT

The opponent would be Mattatuck College of Connecticut. On paper, the game was a mismatch. The Chiefs fielded 64 players; the Dukes 33. “They outweighed us 25 pounds a man,” Hess said.

“His vision was to bring big time football back to Duquesne—and that’s what he did.”



1. Coach Dan McCann working with a player at practice. 2. Allegheny County Commissioner Tom Foerster presents the 1973 national championship trophy to Iron Dukes’ senior fullback Bob Mongillo, B’74. 3. 1973 team members Vic Mastandera, B’75, and Rich Sprys, P’76, with the 1973 championship trophy at this year’s GASF Reunion.

Club founder Sam Costanzo, A’72, and the 1973 championship team were inducted into the Merle E. Gilliland Duquesne University Sports Hall of Fame in 2004.



“If we play Mattatuck 10 times we lose nine of them,” Costanzo agreed.

Graduated and no longer officially involved with the team, Costanzo watched from a broadcast booth as a color analyst for local TV coverage. Following a touchdown by Steve Sherer, E’74, the Dukes were up 6-0 at the Chiefs’ 42 with just seconds left in the first half. The commentators guessed McCann would run out the clock and go into the break with the lead. Costanzo knew better. “We’ve only gotten over the 50-yard-line once,” he told them. “We’ll line up and throw a bomb to Hess and try to score right here.”

The Dukes broke the huddle and the play unfolded just as Costanzo predicted, giving the Dukes a 13-0 lead. The defense held off a late Mattatuck charge and Duquesne won 13-7. “It was just our night,” Hess said. The Dukes triumphantly raised the national championship trophy.

BIGGER GOALS FOR A LIFETIME

On June 2, 2023, the same hardware, lovingly restored through Hess’ efforts, was proudly displayed at South Hills Country Club at a reunion of “GASF” (Gridiron Dukes, Alpha Phis, Sheiks and Friends). Scores of former players, fans and friends gathered to celebrate half a century since that championship season, and each other’s accomplishments and lifelong bonds.

“We haven’t seen much of these men and women in 50 years but we’re still tight when we get together,” said Marshall.

Also in attendance were head coach Jerry Schmitt and members of today’s Duquesne football squad, an appropriate tribute to the enduring influence of McCann, who passed away last year.

After the 1973 championship, McCann led the Dukes to four more top 10 finishes in the club ranks before the program advanced to NCAA Division III in 1979. He would coach a total of 19 years. Longtime assistant coaches



Redshirt sophomore defensive back Ayden Garnes (foreground) and head coach Jerry Schmitt (background) represented the current Duquesne football squad at the GASF Reunion.

Terry Russell, E’75, and John Stefanik, E’74, were part of the 1973 championship team. Schmitt coached as a Duquesne assistant under McCann and Russell.

“Jerry talks about it all the time,” Costanzo said of the tradition McCann started on the Bluff. The Division I Dukes that now play schools like West Virginia, Florida State and TCU can trace their roots directly back to him and the early club teams. “Dan’s smiling at us from heaven.” ♦

Read more about the history of Duquesne’s club football program at duq.edu/gridirondukes.

GASF is working to strengthen lifelong relationships among Iron Dukes, Alpha Phi and Sheiks alumni and friends and followers of Duquesne club football. Another reunion is planned for 2024. To learn more and connect with GASF, email Joel Burk, A’78, at duqgasf@gmail.com.



ETHICS OF GENERATIVE AI HIGHLIGHTS GREFENSTETTE CONFERENCE

A national conference that examined how generative AI like ChatGPT has changed the world and what it means for an ethical future was recently held at Duquesne University.

Hosted by the Carl G. Grefenstette Center for Ethics in Science, Technology and Law, the November conference focused on practical steps for the future of AI from the perspectives of policy, business, education, health care and faith.

“Generative AI is changing how we work, live, learn and play on many fronts, with its ability to integrate information, analyze data and, as a result, influence decision making,” said Dr. John Slattery, director of the Grefenstette Center. “When we engage with this technology, it is essential that we understand the ethics of the questions we ask and the answers it gives us. Are these answers accurate? Biased? Helpful? Nonsense? The question to ask is not whether or not to use the new technology, but how we’re going to ensure an ethical future given that the new technology is here to stay.”

The one-day symposium featured national speakers, student and faculty discussions, community conversations, and a wide variety of research and teaching best practices. All of these pieces worked together to explore practical solutions to difficult and new questions raised by generative AI. ♦

Emphasizing the Human Element

HOW AI-POWERED TOOLS HELP FACULTY REVOLUTIONIZE THE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

By Gabrielle Payne

In the halls of Duquesne University, where tradition and innovation dance hand-in-hand, a new era of education is unfolding. As the world embraces the digital revolution, Duquesne’s horizon-expanding professors are leading the charge by harnessing the power of AI in the classroom. This dynamic synergy between human intellect and technology is redefining the educational experience, empowering faculty and students alike to explore new frontiers of knowledge. AI-powered tools, such as ChatGPT, have the ability to help students cultivate new critical thinking skills, create adaptive learning experiences, learn to assess the reliability of new information, and even write entire paragraphs...like this one. Yes, up until this sentence, this entire opening was written by ChatGPT.

As technology continues to evolve, so does the art of

instruction. Duquesne’s professors embrace AI as an aid, not a crutch, to empower students to elevate their experiences with emerging technologies. At the same time, students become co-creators of knowledge as they actively participate in the learning process.

“One of the most beneficial aspects of AI, like ChatGPT, is that it provides you with a source to find information, while also emphasizing the human element in the sense that AI only takes us so far, and then we need people to help interpret those messages,” said Communications and Rhetorical Studies Assistant Professor Dr. Sarah Deluliis.

As author and media theorist Neil Postman famously said: “Technology gives, and technology takes away.” Simply put, for every advantage that technology offers, there is always a corresponding disadvantage that may either exceed in

importance the advantage or the advantage may be well worth the cost.

“As new technologies emerge, we learn more about the ethics behind them,” said Deluliis. “We have to take that ethical lens to the utilization of these emerging technologies. It’s important to have conversations about how we can work with these technologies and use them for their advantages, while still being mindful of the disadvantages of them. I look forward to exploring with my students how we can balance AI as a tool in the classroom.”

Associate Professor of Rhetoric, Communication Ethics and the Catholic Intellectual Tradition Dr. Anthony Wachs said the best way for students to effectively utilize AI is by asking questions—not merely ones that seek specific answers, but rather, questions that explore new possibilities, challenge assumptions, and spark further curiosity.

“Our Essential Questions Seminar prepares our students to be forward-thinking about emerging technology,” said Wachs. “Questioning is so important to who we are as human beings. The more our students learn the value distinction of effective questions, the more capable they will be of adapting and understanding these new technologies. Duquesne is at the forefront of how education should be done in the world of artificial education.”

Director of the Center for Emerging and Innovative Media Don Maue plans to integrate AI into his classrooms at Duquesne. “This is an important step in the continuing emergent pedagogical approach to teaching and learning. I’m adding a section in my syllabus that addresses that AI is an acceptable tool, and to have students specifically cite AI’s contribution to their work.”

One way that Maue plans to utilize AI in his coursework is to create dual exercises for students—one in which they use AI, and one without. “This is all about creating an informed experience. For example, in my sound production courses, students will use AI to build literacy by learning terminology and concepts that will help them better articulate and inform their own personal experience.”

Professors across disciplines agree that one of the main reasons why pursuing higher education at Duquesne is such a strong value is because the university walks alongside students to create diverse, expansive opportunities. When students learn how to ask AI effective questions, this fosters a more nuanced understanding of various topics and equips students to tackle real-world challenges with confidence.

“Any system is only as good as its input,” said Professor of Communication and Rhetorical Studies Dr. Erik Garrett. “What really matters is the person utilizing the technology. Many professional fields are based on the ‘what’ and the ‘how.’ We teach our students to think critically and uncover the ‘why.’ Understanding the bigger context in which ChatGPT and other forms of AI exist will help our students better adapt to new technologies.”

As the digital age continues to unfold, Duquesne’s campus community looks forward to embracing transformative technology and reimagining the educational landscape. The University’s quest for knowledge remains unyielding, driven by a collective desire to broaden horizons, empower lives and shape a brighter tomorrow. As the technology takeover evolves, so does Duquesne’s legacy—bound by the pursuit of truth, wisdom and bigger goals. ♦



BRACELETS REPRESENT ALL OF US

DUQUESNE CELEBRATES ITS FIRST DEI CERTIFICATE PROGRAM GRADUATES

By Amanda Dabbs

“In order for us to serve our students better, as colleagues we need to be more well-versed in DEI practices and ideas.”

Crystal McCormick Ware, A’85, GE’94, chief diversity officer and senior advisor to the president for DEI

Patricia Lee, director of benefits for the Office of Human Resources at Duquesne, pleasantly surprised attendees at Duquesne University’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) certificate program graduation ceremony when she presented uniquely designed bracelets to each of the 35 members of the inaugural DEI cohort.

“These bracelets mean community to me. A community is a connection of people, and these bracelets symbolize our forever-connected DEI cohort,” Lee told the graduates.

Designed by Lee and her teenage son, the bracelets were created in all shapes, sizes and colors, representing the variety of experiences, interests and goals of the cohort—and the entire Duquesne community.

Duquesne’s alumni, students, faculty and staff come from all 50 states, more than 70 countries and an array of faiths, races and socioeconomic backgrounds.

“The bracelets mean so much more than just a piece of jewelry. They signify a group of people with different disciplines, backgrounds, genders and races who came together to accomplish the completion of Duquesne’s first DEI certificate program. The bracelets represent all of us working together to make campus a better place,” said Jen Smith, A’14, GA’16, assistant director for parent relations.

HELPING TO KEEP THE WELCOMING EXPERIENCE

The DEI certificate program will continue to be offered each academic year and through summer intensive sessions. Participants gain increased awareness and develop tools and strategies to enhance success and belonging in academic and workplace settings.

“In order for us to serve our students better, as colleagues we need to be more well-versed in DEI practices and ideas,” explained Crystal McCormick Ware, A’85, GE’94, chief diversity officer and senior advisor to the president for DEI.

Led by McCormick Ware and Dana Whatley Smith, GA’22, assistant director of learning and development for the Office of Human Resources, the program covered topics including cultural, generational and socioeconomic characteristics, religious diversity, veterans issues—and much more.

“We had so many awesome elective courses to offer our participants, as well as important foundational DEI knowledge,” remarked Whatley Smith.

A variety of Duquesne faculty, staff and alumni instructors taught the courses, as did DEI professionals outside of the University.



Top: Inaugural DEI Certificate cohort poses with President Ken Gormley after special June graduation ceremony. Bottom, left to right: Patricia Lee models the bracelets she created and shared with the cohort; Jefferson Dedrick and Crystal McCormick Ware participate in interactive learning activity; round-table discussion among cohort classmates.

One of those instructors was Adam Wasilko, Ed.D., S'08, GHS'10, GE'19, associate vice president for Student Life and dean of students, who taught Disability Awareness: Creating an Accommodating and Inclusive Campus.

"As a three-time alumnus, it was great to facilitate one of these classes. When I was a student, I certainly felt welcomed on the Bluff. It is rewarding to be on the other side of that as a graduate of Duquesne, helping our current faculty and staff offer the same welcoming experience I had," noted Wasilko.

Duquesne's first cohort of graduates represented departments and schools from across the University including Admissions, Human Resources, Public Safety, Law and Pharmacy, to name a few.

Karina Chavez, executive director of the Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education (PCHE), in which Duquesne is a member institution, was also part of the inaugural cohort.

"During a conversation with Crystal McCormick Ware and President Ken Gormley regarding this initiative, I asked if I could join the inaugural cohort since it would give me a chance to study and grow professionally. It would also allow me to work more closely with staff and faculty from one

of our leading PCHE institutions [Duquesne]," explained Chavez. "This program really allowed me to stretch myself and understand what a truly inclusive environment should encompass."

CONVERSATION STARTERS

"This program tackled many of the critical DEI issues that are encountered in today's academic environment with productive discussion and valuable perspectives from the Spiritans, as well as faculty and staff," remarked James Drennen III, Ph.D., P'85, dean of the School of Pharmacy and Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Lee hopes the bracelets she made will serve as a conversation starter about diversity at Duquesne. She said, "I am so thankful that Duquesne is committed to growing its diverse communities, which ultimately benefits each and every individual of our campus." ♦



Dive into more about DEI at Duquesne by watching the testimonial video at duq.edu/DEIcertificatevideo and visiting duq.edu/diversity.



Duquesne Alum's New Role is at the Vatican

By Stephanie Cairns, A'25

Duquesne alumnus the Rev. Shawn Conoboy, a Youngstown-based priest, was called to the Vatican in June for a temporary staff position in the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

Developed in 2016, the Dicastery focuses on progressing human rights issues afflicting migrants and other efforts like taking care of the goods of justice, peace and the safeguarding of Creation, as well as issues regarding human rights, health, charitable works and more.

Similar to the mission of service instilled by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit which founded Duquesne to educate the people and communities on the margins, Conoboy shared, "Pastoral ministry to the most vulnerable has been a consistent focus throughout my life and ministry."

Conoboy, who has served the Catholic Diocese of Youngstown since his ordination in 2006, is pastor of Ohio's Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Aurora, St. Joseph Parish in Mantua and St. Ambrose Parish in Garrettsville. He

"Pastoral ministry to the most vulnerable has been a consistent focus throughout my life and ministry."

also is director of ecumenical and interreligious affairs and chair for the presbyteral council for the Youngstown Diocese, as well as an adjunct professor at Walsh University.

A 2021 graduate of Duquesne, Conoboy received a Ph.D. in systematic theology. He also has a Bachelor of Sacred Theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, and a specialized Licentiate in Sacred Theology from the Teresianum, Pontifical Institute for Spirituality. ♦





It's Important to Show Up

The first firefighters to arrive at the train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio in February 2023 were from Beaver Falls, Pa., a small city near the Pennsylvania-Ohio border, where Dr. Kenya Johns, G '18, has been mayor since January 2022.

It just so happened that the week prior to the incident, the Beaver Falls fire chief had attended special training to handle larger fires. The preparation helped the town do their part in the early response to the disaster.

It would not be the last time that need and circumstance collided for Johns. A professor and school counseling program director at Geneva College, Johns never had political aspirations.

Johns grew up in Beaver Falls and moved back after earning her bachelor's degree in psychology and Spanish from Slippery Rock University. She earned a master's in clinical mental health counseling from Geneva College, and then a Ph.D. in clinical supervision and education from Duquesne.

"Being a counselor and caring about my community, I wanted to make Beaver Falls a better place when I started to see it go downhill," Johns said. The community had blighted properties to manage, and morale was low. Johns also describes how negative perceptions proliferated—spread most often by people who did not live in Beaver Falls.

Johns reached out to the mayor at the time. "I asked, 'What can we do to help support you?' I don't have aspirations. I want more transparency," she said. "Well, that didn't go over well."

She decided to run, winning the primary (both were Democrats) and then the general election, in which the former mayor ran a strong write-in campaign. When sworn in, she became the first Black woman to serve as mayor in the city's 153-year history.

Johns rattles off a litany of what the city has done since. "We've been pretty busy. We revamped several

parks, changed downtown structure, helped opened new businesses, we're dismantling blighted properties and developing plans that make people want to be involved."

Duquesne is a factor in her success, beyond the degree that hangs in her home, beyond what her doctoral regalia signifies. "The red and blue colors stand out wherever you go," she said.

In fact, the red and blue connected her to a fellow mayoral mentor and friend—and Duke—Joelisa McDonald G'22 the current mayor of Rankin, a Pittsburgh borough along the Monongahela River, near Braddock.

"We are both young mayors, and we met at local government academy, a training course for public officials to learn government's structure, rules, checks and balances," Johns said. "We are a similar age and have similar back stories."

The two are navigating a realm new to both of them. They also realize that there are plenty of communities in southwestern Pennsylvania fighting for resources. "There's only so much money," Johns said, "but we can work together and support our communities and it doesn't have to be a competition."

Part of the uphill battle is tackling perception. "People create their own ideas about a space when they aren't there," Johns said. "We want to build new spaces here."

As one of the 10 alums honored as 2023 Dukes of the Last Decade, Johns gives thought to what she values. "The thing I'm most proud of is being a servant in all aspects of my life—public service, education, and not just as mayor or mom or wife or community member. We all don't get the opportunity to serve and connect or make a difference, so it's important to show up when you do."

Attending the awards ceremony itself was about more than a photo and a bauble to put on a shelf. "A lot of times, we feel like we're in a box by ourselves. It's good that these awards remind us there are other people doing this work." ♦



Dukes from the Last Decade Honored

The Duquesne University Young Alumni Network hosted the third annual Dukes from the Last Decade Awards Reception at the Energy Innovation Center in Uptown Pittsburgh on June 4.

The evening of celebration brought together alumni, staff, faculty and friends to recognize the exceptional achievements of 12 recent graduates. Honorees were selected based on their professional excellence, commitment and service to their communities, and dedication to their alma mater. Most importantly, the recipients live out the mission of Duquesne University in their daily lives.

The 2023 Dukes from the Last Decade recipients were:

Allison Broaddrick, M'16, Founder and CEO, Three Rivers Community Care

Brianna Dzurickso, B'19, Director of Development and Funding, Main Street Ventures

Daniel Ferrere Jr., B'14, Solution Architect, Grant Thornton LLP

Britnee (Nwokeji) Harvey, E'16, GE'20, Contractor/Consultant, Cairn Guidance

Kenya (Coleman) Johns, E'21, Mayor, City of Beaver Falls

Emily Kinley, N'16, Nurse, United States Navy

Carly Koza, S'17, M'17, GM'18, Attorney, Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC

Sara Makin, E'15, Founder and CEO, Makin Wellness

Derrick Maultsby Jr., L'20, Associate Attorney, Frost Brown Todd LLP

Joanne (Kinney) Niemkiewicz, HS'16, GHS'17, Graduate Fellow, Pennsylvania State University

Sara (Katrancha) Sarnoski, S'13, Social Sector Engagement Manager, McKinsey & Company

Chelsea Zahn, B'14, Corporate Sales Partnership Manager, Pittsburgh Steelers

The event featured live music by a jazz trio from the Mary Pappert School of Music, rooftop views of campus and the Pittsburgh skyline, and remarks from Jim Miller, B'87, senior vice president for University Advancement. Herff Jones, official provider of Duquesne's distinctive class ring, was presenting sponsor of the event.

To learn more about this year's award recipients and nominees, the 2021 and 2022 award recipients, and information about 2024 nominations, visit duq.edu/lastdecade.

The 2024 awards reception will take place April 20 at the Energy Innovation Center. ♦





For the Future: How campus construction is leading to bigger days ahead

By Ian P. Hurley

Cranes, scissor lifts, drywall and lots of construction professionals are making their presence felt across campus. The new College of Osteopathic Medicine and 556-bed student apartment building along the Forbes Avenue corridor are two of the most visible campus initiatives currently under construction.

Enhancements to Towers Living Learning Center (LLC) and a brand-new façade and entrance to the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University are also being undertaken. The latter will feature an exhibit and conference room overlooking the entranceway. Within the year after completion of the new entrance, the University plans to re-imagine and renovate the main student lounge area on the first floor.

When visitors, prospective students and parents walk into the Union they will be greeted with an updated atrium and visitor center experience. This prime campus location will showcase the welcoming community that is Duquesne.

Just behind the updated UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse, a new state-of-the-art turf surface was installed on McCloskey

Field this summer that will make it safer for student-athletes. Students in club sports and student organizations, like ROTC, also regularly use this space.

To facilitate Pittsburgh Regional Transit's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) initiative, Forbes and Fifth Avenues have seen construction that will yield long-term gains for the Uptown and Duquesne University community. As part of it, there will be a BRT station right across the street from the Power Center, allowing students easier access to downtown, Oakland and points east.

A bit further up Forbes Avenue stands the recently completed UPMC Mercy Pavilion, another neighborhood success. That facility brings experts from the UPMC Vision Institute and UMPC Rehabilitation Institute even closer to where Duquesne health and nursing students gain firsthand clinical experience.

There are many exciting projects happening around campus that will benefit students, faculty, staff and the Pittsburgh region. We hope that you can visit us soon to take a look! ♦



1, 3 - The new 11-story, 556-bed student apartment building on Forbes Avenue will feature amenity spaces, bicycle parking, a fitness area and outdoor courtyards. 2 - The College of Medicine is nearly complete and almost ready to welcome its inaugural class in 2024. 4 - The University Wellbeing Center has been relocated to its own new dedicated space on the third floor of Gumberg Library and just off Brotter Commons. 5 - The Duquesne Union atrium face lift features updated transparent railing panels, a welcoming wide digital display and selfie-worthy wall graphics. 6 - Used by club sports, intramurals and student "3 on 3 pick-up" games during study breaks, McCloskey field has received new synthetic turf and updated Athletic branding.

Seen and Heard

FROM FESTIVE CAMPUS EVENTS TO NEWSWORTHY HAPPENINGS, THE DUQUESNE SPIRIT BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER.



On May 8, 2023, **Pope Francis** received and gave his apostolic blessing to the 49 members representing the 2,600 members of the Spiritan community worldwide to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the fusion of the Congregation in 1848.

“The publication *Praying St. John’s Gospel with Francis Libermann* is an edited and condensed version of original commentary by the Venerable Rev. Francis Libermann, C.S.Sp. Released in May 2023, it marks the 320th anniversary of the founding of the Spiritan Congregation.

Beloved Duquesne adjunct professor and long-time, Pittsburgh news professional **Mike Clark** celebrates twenty years in broadcast news.



“You are about to embark on an adventure of a lifetime. It is a sacred profession that so many of us are proud to be a part of. Be excited for the journey because you will never stop growing and learning in nursing.

Jodi Licata, DNP, RN, MSN, CCRN, CNL, clinical assistant professor in the School of Nursing, shares this message with incoming nursing students



Food Truck Friday came back to the Bluff this fall.

“It is imperative to critically evaluate these decisions by the court to understand their impact on both the individual and society as a whole.

Duquesne University Law Professor **Kate Norton** discusses the importance of Constitution Day as a learning opportunity for Duquesne students



DU swimmer Haley Scholer recently qualified for the Olympic Trials.



Former Steelers coach **Bill Cowher** was the commencement speaker for McNulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts.

“We want to create a delivery system that safely and effectively delivers healthy mitochondria to repair damaged cells.

Dr. Devika S. Manickam, associate professor of pharmaceutical sciences in Duquesne’s School of Pharmacy, talks about her research on extracellular vesicles



Joella Baker, **Michaela Soper** and **Colleen Myers** were named head coaches of three newly established D1 women’s teams within Duquesne Athletics—they will lead triathlon, acrobatics and tumbling, and golf, respectively.



A New Song Born of Tradition

Duquesne President Ken Gormley writes—a lot. Most Dukes know about the books—from the legal histories to his novel, *The Heiress of Pittsburgh*, published in 2021. But this spring, something he wrote was performed by a jazz band, noised over with electric guitar, blasted by a tuba quartet and even lip-synced by a dog.

Pairing up with Robert Traugh, GM’17, who teaches composition in the Mary Pappert School of Music, Gormley wrote new lyrics while Traugh worked out new music, with help and input from recent alumni and friends, to update Duquesne’s alma mater.

The refreshed and contemporary alma mater was first performed publicly at the winter 2022 Commencement ceremony and has been performed at each of the commencements since then.

Gormley envisioned the new piece as a way to mark the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Spiritan priests in Pittsburgh *and* to update a piece of music that, while reverent, was difficult to sing.

While official performances with academic regalia and the trappings of commencements are the expected place to hear the new composition, students also had an opportunity to make the new work their own. The University offered \$3,000 in prizes to reward creative interpretations that students submitted as videos.

Trumping a troupe of tubas and edging out an edgier punk version, first place went to the Duquesne University Jazz Ensemble and its members: Alex Luketich (piano/arranger), MM ’23; Alex Perez, M ’23; Alex Weibel (guitar), MM SP ’24; Anthony Smith, B ’25; Caleb Drayer, M ’26; music sophomore Evan Weston (bass); music junior Gabe Pecar; Jake McCormick, MM ’23; Joe Segelke, MM ’24; Jon Runion, M ’23; Jonah Hanlon, M ’23; Jordan Dove, MM ’24; Mason Donohue, M ’23; Nathan Sekela (Voice), M ’23; Nicolas Provenzo, B ’25; Shawn Holl, MM ’23; Soojin Park (drums), MM ’23; and Ted DeSanti, MM ’23.

To see the original debut from the 2022 Christmas concert as well as all the creative submissions, visit Duquesne’s YouTube channel. ♦



The team celebrates Dambrot's 500th win against George Mason last season.

Head Coach Dan Burt instructing senior Ayanna Townsend.

Q&A WITH MEN'S BASKETBALL COACH KEITH DAMBROT

Tell us about your roster and your expectations for this season.

Our roster is composed of eight players who have played for four or five years as well as a great nucleus of young athletes—we are a more mature and experienced team this year. However, despite building a veteran squad, they are inexperienced in their time together. The key will be how quickly we can get a relatively new group to play together. One of our strengths is in our roster depth. The ability to stay fresh for the duration of the season will allow us to play at a faster pace, be more aggressive defensively and most importantly, become the aggressor in most of the games we play.

After having one of the best turnarounds in college basketball last season, including a 20-win season, how do you hope to build off that for this year?

The 2021-2022 season was an aberration, but last year was important to rebuild our credibility. I always have said there are three parts to developing a program: 1) becoming competitive, 2) becoming a contender and 3) sustaining that contender ability. We're at the point where we can sustain, and now we want to take the next step. We scheduled tougher opponents at neutral sites to elevate our postseason resume and better prepare for conference play. We've added depth as well as talent in key areas. With the players coming back and the additions we have, we know we can earn a top seed in the conference tournament and make a run.

How do you think the team will match up with the rest of the Atlantic 10 conference?

We feel like we have a pretty good chance to have a special season. It's a little hard to gauge because we have all experienced significant roster turnover. However, we have good depth in the front court and some of our most athletic players in the backcourt. Again, how quickly we become a cohesive unit will play a significant role in our success. We did a good job last year of sharing the ball; our assist numbers increased. We can be a good defensive team and better defensive rebounding team than we were last year.

What should fans be most excited about this season?

We're going to play with a lot of enthusiasm. We're also going to play fast and hard. Our identity is to be a team that just lays it out on the line and really has that Pittsburgh toughness—that's the thing to be most excited about.

Q&A WITH WOMEN'S BASKETBALL COACH DAN BURT

The 2023 roster returns all your starters and main contributors from last season. What strides has this group made over the offseason?

We return 98 percent of our stats from a team that won 19 games last season. Statically, here's a glimpse into this season: the leading shot-blocker in the A-10; a top-10 defensive rebounder in the country as well as the league's leader in assists; and a player who was top 20 in the country in 3-points made. Our off-season focus has been to help of all our athletes become more complete players—whether that has been to improve their confidence, develop leadership skills, build functional strength or log reps to improve shot-making ability—we've seen significant growth in everyone.

Share some information about the new members of the roster.

We added four newcomers along with having two post players who redshirted last season.

Jerni Kiaku was the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) Freshman of the Year; she brings explosiveness, speed and an open-court ability that would be best described as a one-woman fast break.

Both Kiandra Browne and Kaitlyn Ammons were Top 100 post-players coming out of high school. Browne, a 6 foot 2 inch wing-player, is a transfer from Indiana University with a good can attack from the arc. Ammons redshirted last year and is an excellent ball mover with a high basketball IQ.

Another redshirt from last season, Selma Kulo, is a 6 foot 4 inch center who plays with a deliberate style that embraces physicality.

We added two freshmen: Gabby Grantham and Raymie Coueta. Grantham was an all-state basketball and volleyball player who has a strong guard with a good jump shot. Coueta is from Cayenne, French Guiana in South America. She is a left-handed, physical guard who attacks downhill.

How do you think the team will fare in the Atlantic 10 conference?

Statistically, we return the highest number of points, rebounds, assists and blocks of all teams in our league. Plus, we added a lot of skill players. With them, we have greater speed and quickness. Our size and overall depth are near the top of the league. If we stay healthy and focused on one game at a time, we have a chance to win the league.

What should fans be most excited about this season?

We are a veteran squad that is long and strong. These young ladies bring a significant amount of experience, and we've added depth. We attack in multiple ways: big line-ups to small, fast ball. This is a very good team that is going to be fun to watch!

CATCH ALL THE ACTION THIS SEASON!

Join us in the UPMC Cooper Fieldhouse to cheer on both the men's and women's basketball teams!

MEN'S BASKETBALL

In addition to hosting Princeton (2023 NCAA Sweet Sixteen team), the men's non-conference schedule features Stony Brook, Rider, Saint Peter's, Bradley and Chicago State. For the A-10 Conference slate, the Dukes will face Dayton, Fordham, St. Bonaventure, Saint Joseph's, Davidson, George Washington, La Salle, Richmond and Saint Louis at home.



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

The women's home season tips-off on Saturday, November 18 vs Pitt for the annual City Game. They will also host Delaware, Kent State and Longwood in December. This season, the women face Rhode Island, Fordham, George Mason, La Salle, Loyola Chicago, La Salle, St. Bonaventure, George Washington, Richmond and St. Joseph's for A-10 Conference play.



For complete schedule information and to purchase tickets visit goduquesne.com/tickets or scan the QR code below.

Bluff in Brief

DUQUESNE
PEOPLE AND
PLACES ARE
ABOUT THOSE
MOMENTS
THAT MOVE
YOU TO A NEW
AND CLEARER
VANTAGE POINT;
THESE BRIEFS
EMBRACE
“BIGGER GOALS”
IN ACTION.



\$1.1 MILLION ENDOWMENT SUPPORTS CLUB SPORTS

President Ken Gormley directed support from a \$1.1 million unrestricted, anonymous estate gift that will yield roughly \$45,000 per year in perpetuity, to support Duquesne's 14 club sports, which include baseball, field hockey, ice hockey, men's and women's lacrosse, men's and women's soccer, swimming, tennis, track, women's volleyball, and wrestling. The goal, Gormley stated, is to grow that endowment through additional gifts and donations. Large numbers of Duquesne students participate in club sports.

Read more...duq.edu/clubsportsendowment

DIETRICH DEAN OF MEDICINE

The latest gift made by the Pittsburgh-based Dietrich Foundation in its ongoing philanthropic support to Duquesne creates an endowment to support the William S. Dietrich II Dean of Medicine in Duquesne's College of Medicine. Once fully established, the named endowment will have a value of \$10 million and will support the position and activities of Dr. John Kauffman, named founding dean of the medical school in 2019. Kauffman has overseen the development of the medical school from concept to construction and is steering it through the accreditation process.

Read more...duq.edu/dietrichgift



COSTELLO FAMILY ENDOWED CHAIR IN ENGINEERING

In August, months after announcing a plan to add engineering programs and rename its School of Science and Engineering, President Ken Gormley announced the University received a major gift to name the first endowed chair in the new school.

The Costello Family Endowed Chair in Engineering will help recruit and retain an outstanding associate dean and senior faculty leader to help guide Duquesne's new engineering programs. The Costello Family Endowed Chair's prominence and expertise will help shape the programs and attract talented engineering students to Duquesne.

Read more...duq.edu/costellogift

To learn more about
establishing endowments
through gifts and
bequests, please visit
ignite.duq.edu
or email
ignite@duq.edu.



GIFT SUPPORTS SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION IN COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

The Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust gave Duquesne a \$1.5 million gift to support disability and special needs education in the University's College of Medicine. The Edith L. Trees Professorship in Special Needs Medicine will develop a disability and special needs curriculum to inform medical educators regarding disability and special needs care.

Read more...duq.edu/treesgift

FACULTY UPDATES

In July 2023, Bridget Calhoun was named associate provost for academic affairs at Duquesne.

"We are pleased to have Dr. Calhoun take on this important role," said Provost Dr. David Dausey. "She is an accomplished educator and scholar who will strengthen our abilities to deliver a world-class academic experience for our students."

A national leader in physician assistant (PA) education, Calhoun has held various positions at Duquesne for more than 20 years at the Rangos School of Health Sciences. Calhoun earned a doctoral degree in infectious diseases and microbiology at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health and her master's and bachelor's degrees from St. Francis University.

Read more...duq.edu/calhoun

In addition, President Gormley announced the reappointment of four academic deans—Barton, Blair, McFarlin, and Wehr, also effective July 1.

Read more...duq.edu/reappointeddeans

Recent Rankings

#89 Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University climbs 40 spots to No. 89 in *U.S. News & World Report's* list of top law schools in the nation.

U.S. News & World Report's Best Colleges rankings put Duquesne at

#56 Best Value – National Universities

#52 Best Undergraduate Nursing

#151 National University

TOP 13 *The Wall Street Journal* ranked Duquesne University in the Top 13 schools in Pennsylvania, and No. 143 of top 400 in the country.

The Princeton Review lists Duquesne in its
Best Colleges 2024 Edition.

Money Magazine lists Duquesne in its

Best Colleges in America 2023

rankings which highlights schools that combine quality with affordability.

4th *Washington Monthly's* annual college guide and ranking lists Duquesne at 4th among Pennsylvania schools for its service rank (63 in the list) and 5th in the state for graduates' earning power (46th nationally). Also listed among the "Best Bang for the Buck" schools in the Northeast.

U.S. Veterans Magazine included Duquesne among its

Top Veteran-Friendly Schools

and among its 2023 Yellow Ribbon Schools list.

4th KnowInsiders.com ranked Duquesne's School of Pharmacy 4th in the nation as one of the "Best Schools for Pharmacy/Pharmaceutical Sciences."

#7 Nurse.org ranked Duquesne University No. 7 among its best 10 psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner online programs.

Alumni Updates

1960s

Bernard Flynn, A’61, GA’64, GA’67, had his work in political philosophy showcased at a conference presented by the graduate faculty of philosophy of the New School for Social Research in New York City.

Carol (Mamula) Morgan, A’63, had her collage *Ricky Scaggs* juried into the May show at the Alexandria (Va.) Art League Gallery. The 28" x 21" artwork depicts the Grammy winner playing the guitar.

Salvatore Greco, B’69, gives away his miniature art to encourage kindness. Since the summer of 2021, he has given away more than 500 paintings that he crafts on small pieces of reclaimed wood. Simple kindnesses such as holding a door, courteous driving or friendly customer service have been rewarded by Greco’s gifts of art. Greco enjoys creating them and gets much joy from giving them away.

1970s

Mark Tolan, B’71, is a private wealth advisor with Confluence Wealth Management Group. An affiliate of Ameriprise Financial Services, Tolan was named to *Forbes’* Best-in-State Wealth Advisors for 2023.

James H. Dissen, L’72, was honored by the West Virginia State Bar at its annual reception and 50-Year Recognition Banquet held at The Greenbrier Resort on March 26.

Milap C. Nahata, PharmD, MS, FASHP, FCCP, FAPhA, FPPA, GS’75, delivered the 2023 Harvey A.K. Whitney Lecture at the 2023 American Society of Hospital Pharmacists Summer Meetings in Baltimore, Md. Nahata is professor emeritus of pharmacy, pediatrics,

and internal medicine at The Ohio State University Colleges of Pharmacy and Medicine.

Claude Manno, A’78, retired after 45 years of combined military and federal civilian service. He was the associate administrator for security with the Federal Aviation Administration from 2010-2022. He previously served in security, intelligence and counterterrorism roles in the U.S. and overseas, including a tour at the U.S. Embassy in Rome. He previously retired from the U.S. Air Force Reserve in 2002.

1980s

John C. Schmidt, A’80, received the Volunteer Award from Abilities of Northwest Jersey Inc. Schmidt has been providing pro bono public relations support for Abilities, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the employability and quality of life for people with different abilities for the past five years.

Joseph L. Lewis III, A’87, an award-winning television producer with more than 25 years of experience in nonprofit marketing, has joined Delaware Prosperity Partnership (DPP) as its new director of marketing and external relations. DPP is a nonprofit organization marketing Delaware to potential businesses and employees.

Susan Stuart, N’88, president and CEO of the Center for Organ Recovery and Education, was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Association of Organ Procurement Organizations. The award recognizes individuals across the country for outstanding contributions to the field of organ, tissue and cornea donation sustained over at least two decades.

1990s

Daniel Mink, GA’91, recently published his book titled *The Voice of Paranoia: From Misery to Greater Autonomy*. The book deals with paranoia as a psychological phenomenon; how it starts in life, what is the lived experience, trust issues, loneliness and isolation, and the effects this has on self-esteem.

Tim Oldakowski, Ed.D., A’93, was recently promoted to chair of the Department of Languages, Literatures, Cultures and Writing at Slippery Rock University in Slippery Rock, Pa.

2000s

Amy L. (Maulsby) Potts, PharmD, MMHC, BCPPS, FASHP, FPPA, P’00, has been named a Fellow of the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists in recognition of excellence in pharmacy practice. Potts is program director for quality, safety and education at Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt University.

Christopher Kail, GA’04, has been named chief marketing officer of Legend Financial Advisors, Inc. Kail leads the firm’s website and digital marketing initiatives. He previously

served as an adjunct professor of marketing at Duquesne.

Sarah (Golembiewski) Marker, A’06, has been promoted to senior manager for Operating Model Oversight at Healthfirst.

Dr. Jared O. Bell, A’08, was recently appointed to the U.S. Agency for International Development’s Foreign Service. He is a post-conflict development expert with extensive experience in designing and managing international human rights and justice sector programs. Bell’s previous U.S. government experience includes program administration and presentations in central Asia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Latvia, Poland, The Gambia, and the United States..

2010s

Alexis (Schaming) McGann, A’14, L’16, is an associate in the corporate, real estate and lending, and private client practice groups with the law firm Meyer, Unkovic and Scott. She serves as the firm’s young lawyer representative to Meritas, a global alliance of independent law firms.

2020s

Emma Frey, E’21, graduated from Arizona State University with a master’s degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. She teaches third grade in Maui.

Marriages

Alex Will, B’15, married **Renae (Fichter) Will, HS’16, GHS’17**, on June 4, 2022, at the Duquesne Chapel.

Births

Amy Wyke Nikithser, HS’12, and husband **Brice Nikithser, GB’17**, welcomed their son, Brody Roy Nikithser, on Aug. 12, 2022, in Alexandria, Va.

Megan (Miller) Hudak, A’14, and **Zachary Hudak, B’14, L’17**, welcomed a daughter, Charlotte Grace Hudak.

In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that we list the following alumni and friends who recently passed away. This list is provided through Duquesne’s Advancement Services office and includes deaths reported to us between Jan. 24 and July 15, 2023. If you have information about an alumnus or friend who is not listed, please contact the Office of Alumni Engagement at (412) 396-6209 or alumnionline@duq.edu.

Deceased Alumni from Jan. 24-July 15, 2023

Mary Grace Buerkle-Joyce, E’48
William H. Burke, GB’48
Dorothy D. Cibulas, GE’48
Ann I. Ridge, A’48
Dr. Marvin Buncher, E’49, GE’51
Ruth M. Brilmyer, E’50
Rita S. Dean, N’50
Elizabeth R. Duralia, A’50
Glenn B. Johnson, CPA, B’50

John J. Miller, B’50
John P. Nasci Sr., B’52
M. David Palmer, A’53
John O. Roy, A’53
Robert T. Schwer, B’54
Gloria A. Swan, E’54
Domenic F. Debonis, B’55
Mary A. Dodson, A’55
C. Dennis Laman, P’55
Joseph M. McBurney, E’55
Eugenia L. Sudol, S’55
Rev. Joseph J. Borodach, A’56
Rosemarie H. Keane, E’56
William P. Helsel, R.Ph., P’56
Antoinette G. Lattari, A’56
Joan McKissick, N’56
George T. Meindl, M.D., S’56
Edward W. Miller, B’56, GB’63
Terri Vojtilla, R.N., N’56
Leo Einloth, P’57
Terrence M. Mahoney, A’57
Darline F. Alderson, M’58
Raymond A. Burovac, B’58
Vincenzo Calla, S’58, P’59
John J. Halterlein, A’58
Jo-Ann C. Liddick, N’58
Sr. M. Eileen Marcinko, VSC, E’58, GA’67
Michaeline A. Sweeney, A’58, GA’64
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James S. Curtin, Esq., A’59, L’70
Sr. Maureen Halloran, SC, N’59, GN’63
J. Raymond Holihan, B’59
Mary Ann Tkacik, E’59
Barbara A. Turbessi, P’59
John R. Zyla, B’59
Ronald C. Baker, E’60
Robert C. Bizub, E’60
Leonard V. Reed, B’60
Carl T. Severini, Esq., L’60
The Hon. E.G. Shuster, GB’61
Edward D. Wintermantel, A’60
John K. Amrhein, A’61
Jane M. Conner, P’61

In MEMORIAM

Sr. Melanie Kambic, N’50, passed away July 14 at age 102. She was believed to be the oldest living Duquesne alumna prior to her death. Before studying at Duquesne, she graduated from Braddock Hospital School of Nursing in 1944 and served in the Army Nurse Corps during World War II. A native of Swissvale and raised in Rankin, she entered the Sisters of Divine Providence in 1954 and later earned a master’s from the University of Maryland and nurse practitioner certification from the University of Pittsburgh. She taught nursing at Allegheny General, Braddock and South Side hospitals, Johns Hopkins and Catholic University in Ponce, PR. She also worked as a department supervisor at Divine Providence Hospital and as a family nurse practitioner at Latrobe Area Hospital and Mercy Hospital.

Gary Major, E’69, passed away April 24 in San Pedro, Calif., at age 75. Major was integral in the resurgence of the Duquesne men’s basketball program. Duquesne improved from a program-worst 7-15 during his 1967 sophomore year to 18-7 and an NIT bid in 1968 before posting a 21-5 record and No. 9 Associated Press ranking during his senior year. A co-captain of the 1969 team, Major was drafted by both the NBA Baltimore Bullets and ABA Kentucky Colonels in 1969. He signed with the Colonels, was released and later played for the Akron Goodyear Wingfoots of the National Industrial AAU Basketball League. He relocated to Southern California in the 1970s where he worked in the auto industry. Major was inducted to the Duquesne Sports Hall of Fame as part of the 1968-69 team in 2016.

John “Paul” Martha, L’69, a former Pittsburgh Steelers first-round draft pick, died Feb. 4 at age 80. An All-American halfback at the University of Pittsburgh, Martha earned his law degree at Duquesne while playing for the Steelers. After retiring as a player, he joined the Reed Smith law firm and later became general counsel for the DeBartolo Corp. in Youngstown, Ohio. Martha was named executive vice president, general counsel and CEO of the Pittsburgh Penguins in 1977 and an executive vice president and general counsel of the San Francisco 49ers the following year. He also held executive roles with the Pittsburgh Maulers of the USFL and the Pittsburgh Spirit of the Major Indoor Soccer League, which were owned by the DeBartolo organization. Martha also was in charge of operations of the Civic Arena.

Anthony DeRosa, Ph.D., GA’61, GA’67	Joseph M. Giovannelli, A’62
Paul E. Dornin, D.M.D., S’61	Dr. Evelyn A. Hovanec, E’62, GA’66
Martin F. Ide, GM’61	Eugene A. LaFace, E’62
James A. McCarthy, Sr., B’61	Richard G. Dillman, GM’63
Alvin S. Moses, P’61	Mary Barbara Lagiovane, N’63
Edward J. Waldman, III, B’61	Rockne L. Laubham, S’63
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The Office of Career Development, in partnership with the Office of Alumni Engagement, is excited to offer our DukesConnect platform. This online community provides the platform for alumni who wish to serve as mentors for alumni and students, or wish to find a mentor themselves. You can register for the platform using your personal email or LinkedIn account.



SCAN TO CONNECT

In MEMORIAM

Garry Nelson, B’71, L’82, died June 4 at age 73. With his twin brother Barry, Nelson starred on Duquesne basketball squads from 1969-71 that went 59-16 and appeared in two NCAA tournaments and one NIT. Nelson was drafted by the the NBA Buffalo Braves and the ABA Dallas Chaparrals, and played professionally in Italy before earning a law degree from Duquesne. He worked in the Allegheny County District Attorney’s office before joining the firm Grogan, Graffam, McGinley and Lucchino, and later working as a contract attorney and sole practitioner. Nelson served on the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University Alumni Board of Governors and was inducted into Duquesne’s Sports Hall of Fame in 1984.

E.G. “Bud” Shuster, GB’60, passed away April 19 at age 91 in Everett, Pa. Shuster earned his MBA from Duquesne after receiving his bachelor’s degree from the University of Pittsburgh and serving as a U.S. Army intelligence officer from 1954-1956. He went on to earn a Ph.D. in business from American University in 1969. Shuster went to work in the early computer industry, serving as an executive with RCA and Datel. In 1972, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Pennsylvania’s Ninth District and served until 2001. As chair of the House Transportation Committee from 1995-2001, he became known as the “King of Asphalt” for his advocacy on behalf of highway infrastructure projects.

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Susan Rostek, B’07
Francisco S. Junkin, GB’08
Margaret E. Bowles, Ph.D., GN’09
John E. Rigney, Esq., GB’09, L’10
India Christian, GE’16

Deceased Friends from Jan. 24-July 15, 2023
Kenneth L. Burky
Marlene A. Cegelski
Lesley Dennis
Janet M. Fagan
Virginia M. Fisher
William T. Fritz, M.D.
Stuart C. Gaul
Rev. Anthony J. Gittins, C.S.Sp.
Jean R. Higgins
John F. Horgan, Jr.
Karen L. Krzywicki
Clare L. McPaul
Donald J. O’Rourke
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Submit Alumni Updates or a Photo
Alumni Updates, online and in print, are an opportunity for alumni to share personal and professional news and accomplishments. Members of our alumni community are invited to log into www.myduquesne.duq.edu/alumninews to tell us and others about a recent job change, promotion, award, publication, marriage, new family member, reunion or anniversary.

Submissions are subject to editing for clarity and length. All submissions will be available online; however, space limitations prohibit us from including all alumni updates in our magazine.



 **Check out www.myduquesne.duq.edu/events for more information on upcoming virtual and in-person events that will be scheduled. Alumni also can visit duq.edu/alumni for the latest details on what’s happening at Duquesne, events and how to get involved and stay connected.**





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- **Discover their** interests, strengths, values and passions
- **Shape their future** career paths, consider social and community impact and think about their goals and purpose

A dedicated network of student success coaches, faculty advisors, career planning and development counselors, wellbeing and health advocates, financial aid counselors, alumni mentors, and others will walk alongside them on their path to success at Duquesne and beyond.



Contact us at admissions@duq.edu to get your student started. Be sure to include Student Referral in the subject line. Or, call us at **412-396-6222** to speak to an admissions rep or schedule a visit to campus.