

illumine

—University of Southern Indiana—



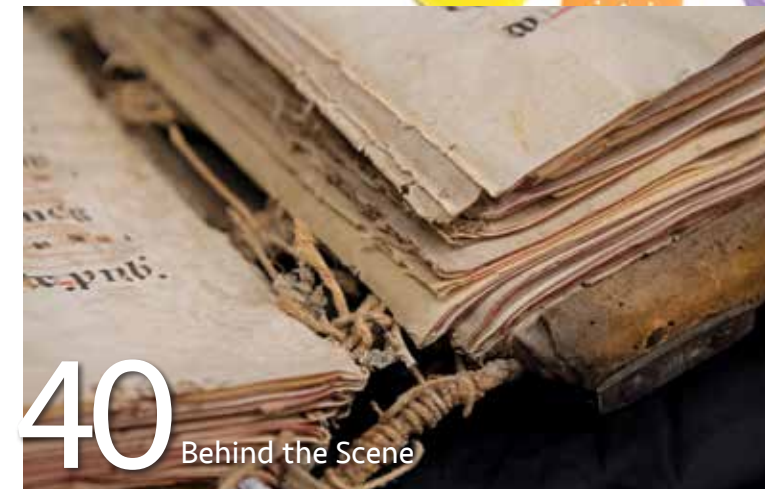
DARE | FALL 2021



features

Dared to Do It 18-37

Rebels with Causes from 1971 to 2021



departments

- You Said/We Did 2
- State of the U 4
- Student POV 14
- From the Desk of 15

- Quotables 38
- Open Dialogue 39
- Class Notes 43
- Tailfeather 48

SHINING EXAMPLE

Your story on Courtney Johnson is fantastic! I love the analogy with farming, and the photos are great. I am so grateful that you could shine a light on this extraordinary young man.

Keep up the good work!

Lee Ann Shafer
Evansville, Indiana



INSPIRING GROWTH

I enjoyed this article about Seeds of Change. I started a youth mentoring program last year in April here in Spencer County, Indiana. My wife is a USI grad and sent me this article. I have started through my mentoring program a community garden named Gary's Place. We supply veggies to anyone in need and have supplied the families in our mentoring program. We also have our mentor/mentees work in the garden and they seem to greatly enjoy it. Our goal with the garden was to hand out 2000 lbs of veggies and as of today we have sent out 7,309 lbs of veggies and still going. Thank you for this article, it has really inspired me.

Steve Buse
Hatfield, Indiana



DISAPPOINTED

Editor. This was not your best work. Much of it sounded like the political tripe in the Evansville Courier which thousands of us have cancelled. I appreciate your objective news in the back, since I attended in the 70s and there seems to be someone I know passing. The human-interest stories are good, but they don't reflect what I went through. We weren't Woke. We were 90% or better Christian, middle America, middle income, raised to respect our country, flag, national anthem,



police officers, professors and classmates who may or may not look or sound like us. We had no one trying to stir things up to make a problem either. WKDQ, playing primarily DISCO, was about the worst thing we had to deal with, other than the three worst winters in a row. Your call to Activism is unnecessary and hurtful. The harder I worked, the better I did. Kids of other colors or races were in my classes. Some did better than me, some not. When I graduated and took State Boards and got my license to practice, they never looked at anything but my grades, clinical experience and my involvement on campus. That's the way it works in real life. Some kids tried to be the Editor, but they chose you. That's life. I don't hear them out on the street with a bull horn complaining. I'm asking you to focus on what will make a young person more effective in their work, family and community and drop the politics.

Dennis Webb
Newburgh, Indiana

A SPARK PLUG

Your Spring issue of illumine is beautiful. Thank you!!!

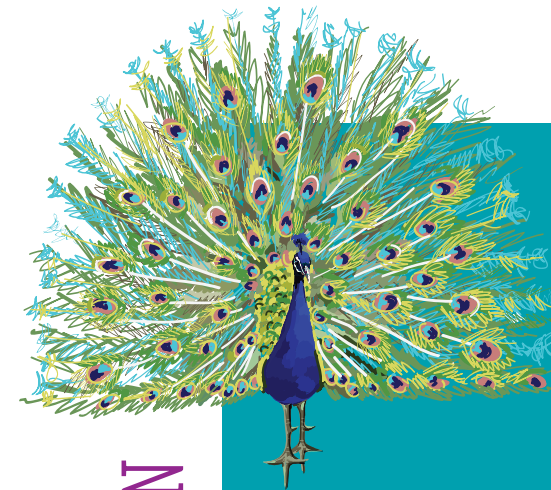
Barbara Marr
Evansville, Indiana

WELL DESERVED

I just wanted to say thank you for featuring Larry Back and his work with NAMI in the most recent issue of illumine. He's a wonderful man who has helped me personally through my own mental health struggles. He definitely deserves the recognition.

Danielle Norris '11 M'14
Evansville, Indiana

We invite readers to comment on articles and start conversations by bringing unique perspectives to relevant magazine topics. Correspondence and comments will not be limited to letters mailed to the editor, but may be from email or social media networks. Letters mailed to the editor may be published in the magazine unless the author states it is not for publication. Letters should be kept to 250 words, and may be edited for style, length, clarity, grammar and relevance to USI issues. Letters to the editor should be sent to magazine@usi.edu.



WE ASKED ALUMNI WHY THEY CHOSE USI

THINGS THAT MAKE US PREEN

"I ENCOUNTERED THE SCHOOL THROUGH THE STUDENTS AND OFFICIALS THE FIRST TIME I MET THEM IN GHANA. THEY WERE A BEAUTIFUL, FRIENDLY AND WARM GROUP. I WAS INTERESTED IN FURTHERING MY EDUCATION AT THE GRAD LEVEL ... SO I STARTED MY INQUIRIES, READ ABOUT THE MPA PROGRAM AND IT HAPPENED."

SHADRACH MENSAH '17
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

"IT HAD A VERY HIGH ACCEPTANCE PERCENTAGE INTO DENTAL AND MEDICAL SCHOOLS."

LANA (STOLL) HELMS '92
BIOLOGY

"I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE CAMPUS WHEN I CONDUCTED A SITE VISIT AND THAT THE FOCUS SEEMED TO BE ON ACADEMICS AND NOT SO MUCH ON ATHLETICS."

VICTORIA SPOONER '05
MARKETING

"I STARTED AT USI BECAUSE OF THE AFFORDABILITY OF THE EDUCATION. HOWEVER, I STAYED AT USI BECAUSE OF THE QUALITY OF INTERACTIONS I HAD WITH THE PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS, AND THE PROFESSORS CONTINUED TO PUSH ME TO BECOME A BETTER STUDENT AND INDIVIDUAL."

JOSH BEACH '12
MARKETING

"I HAD A CHILD AT AGE 18 AND STAYED CLOSE TO HER. I COULD STILL PLAY BASEBALL AND WORK AT THE PAC WHILE GETTING A QUALITY EDUCATION."

CHRISTOPHER MOORE '88
POLITICAL SCIENCE

"UPON VISITING THE COLLEGE, I WAS BLOWN AWAY BY THE FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS THAT I MET."

CHRISTIAN BARRETT '18
HISTORY

"IT WAS JUST A GUT FEELING I HAD TO ATTEND USI. MY FIRST VISIT WAS FOR MY FRESHMAN ORIENTATION, AND I IMMEDIATELY FELL IN LOVE WITH USI. I GUESS I JUST FELT IT WAS THE PLACE FOR ME FROM THE FIRST PIECE OF MAIL I RECEIVED."

CHELSEY (BURTON) SULLIVAN '09
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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As a boy, I watched with raptured fascination as my father blew cigarette smoke rings, piercing them with long, thin smoke arrows. His two-pack-a-day habit was a perpetual presence in my impressionable life, and I often fetched his pack for him. Each ethereal ring he blew drifted into my psyche, deepening my quiet desire to be like him. When I discovered candy cigarettes, replete with red tips to signify a lit fire, I emulated my father, “puffing” my own imaginary rings.

For him, smoking was solitary. But for me, it was laying the foundation of a legacy, one he unwittingly delivered with each smoky arrow.

Legacy is a weighty word. It connotes authority, tradition, birthright and privilege. As such, we often equate it to the actions and behaviors of revered societal leaders—such as Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King Jr.—or attach it to generational attendance at exalted, expensive educational institutions. But I define it as something more ubiquitous: it is *anything* that transforms the life of another. No matter the intent or lack of.

USI has been purposefully transforming lives for 56 years. Beyond our faculty’s academic craft, we impress upon our students—in large and small ways—life lessons of how to react, interact, and respond to and treat people from all walks of life. We want our students to be educated citizens, to assess and weigh ideas, and be fully informed before embracing them, as opposed to being unquestioning followers.

To march forward in life toward our destinies with passion and purpose, let us first learn to explore and examine our beliefs and attitudes. Let us look in a mirror and comprehend our whole selves. Let us have the mental wherewithal to deconstruct the complex attitudes, born from experiences, that do not serve us or our societies well.

The visionary women and men who pushed to found USI did so because they understood the life-changing legacies that access to an affordable college education would bring to the region. Education leads to expanded minds through critical thought and examination, enhanced perspectives through new avenues of discourse, engaged responsibility of a shared community as well as skilled workforces receiving higher wages. It bridges the gap between poverty and privilege. This is the legacy of USI.

Like I was by my father’s smoke rings, we are surrounded by attitudes and habits capable of drifting silently into our psyche, of affecting our thinking, our perceptions, our lives, either negatively or positively. When we are not being intentional in our actions and words, they can have unintentional consequences on others. It was never my father’s aim that I smoke. Thankfully, he quit, one day putting down his cigarettes and never picking them up again. No longer seeing him smoke, a different legacy formed, and I never became a smoker.

As children, we are unaware of how others’ actions, attitudes and values influence and shape us. But as adults, we owe it to ourselves to vigilantly scrutinize what we have absorbed, to decode the impact it has on our well-being and that of others, before we embrace or banish them. For legacies to be healthy, let us first think about what we are imparting. Let us be intentional and deliberate.

We all have the power and authority to create a legacy. Let us do so responsibly and thoughtfully when igniting little fires in future generations through our words and actions.

HOW TO LEAVE AN INTENTIONAL LEGACY.

WORDS

Words are powerful. Strung together they form ideas that possess the ability to impact others—negatively or positively. Sometimes we are careless with them and not aware of the lasting impact they’ll have on another. Let us choose our words mindfully, with the awareness that we hold a power that can shape the future of others.

ACTIONS

We may think no one is watching, but chances are someone is—especially our children, nieces, nephews, friends, family, coworkers, neighbors, strangers on the street. Let us be courageous in our behavior, striving to be aware of what we are doing and why. When we are neglectful with our behavior, when we are not mindful of our behavior, we are potentially laying the groundwork that will not serve ourselves, families, societies and future generations well.

ENGAGEMENT

Going outside our comfort zones to meet with, listen to and understand those whom we encounter with different perspectives, life experiences, cultural backgrounds is not always easy. It takes effort. Effort that will reward us richly with growth and insight. Seek out new relationships. Engage new people, new communities, new knowledge, new possibilities with authentic concern, respect and curiosity.

SELF-REFLECTION

We are all born with the gift of legacy, it is what we do with that gift that matters most. I ask that you take a moment and reflect on the mark you are leaving in the world, the mark you are leaving on USI, the mark you are leaving on your children, family, friends, workplace and more. Reflect on what you stand for and how you will be remembered.



Every picture tells a story, or is that a picture's worth 1,000 words? We don't want you to write 1,000, just a line or two, putting some words into the mouths of these Screaming Eagles.

Last Pen a Caption winner



"The pandemic is over, and we can finally be social again!"

Taylor Krieg '19

Be creative, fun and succinct in writing your caption and send it to magazine@usi.edu or C. L. Stambush, editor, University of Southern Indiana, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, Indiana 47712

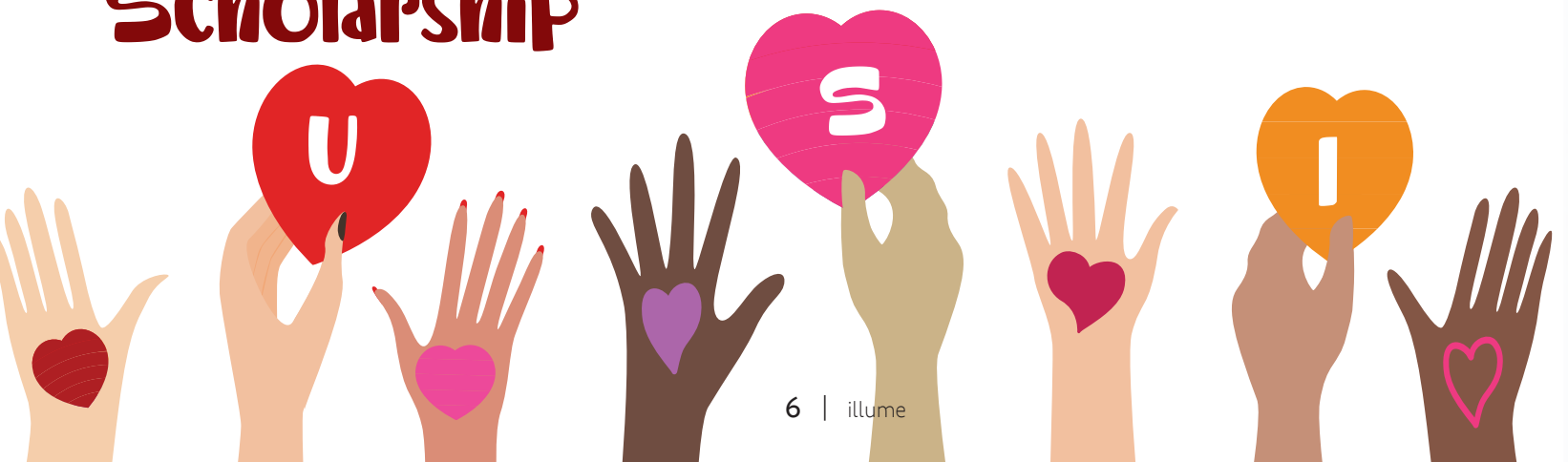
Elite Heart Lifting Scholarship

The University of Southern Indiana is one of five institutions nationwide receiving funding from Heart to Heart Hospice Foundation to create a scholarship endowment. The scholarship is awarded to students based on academic

ability, with preference given to students pursuing a career in hospice care and/or advance care planning.

"The dying process is often overlooked during the healthcare education experience, and we

are honored to help teach these students about allowing people to reach the end of their life's journey with peace, dignity, compassion, hope and comfort," said Jacquelyn Fehd, Executive Director of Heart to Heart Hospice of Evansville.



CATTING

AROUND



USI has been home to many feral cats over the years, and students have wanted a program to help the cat colonies that call USI's campus "home." Now, a student-led initiative (with support from the Dean of Students' office and Feline Fix), to trap, neuter and release has been launched to control the feral cat population. "It is just horrible seeing how many strays and kittens are brought [to shelters] every year,"

said Payton Broshears '22, who organized the program.

"It really changes your perspective to go into a place like VHS and to know some of these cats are going to be euthanized based off the sheer numbers."

The traps are harmless; simple wire cages baited with food that shut after

the cat enters. "The goal is to use humane traps to capture the feral cats, give them vaccines and spay/neuter them, and then release them back to their former habitat. This ensures the cats do not continue to breed rampantly and will not have problems with starvation, over

population and helps prevent diseases within the cat colonies," said Dr. Sarah Stevens, Director of Honors Program and Living Learning Communities. "We also expect to catch raccoons, opossums or even foxes, which will be released after eating their free meal in the cage."

In the memorable words from the film *Field of Dreams*, "Build it and they will come," USI's Athletic Department is doing just that, with a new Aquatic Center for our new competitive sports coming in Fall 2022: Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving varsity athletic programs.

"There is a strong and passionate swimming and diving community in our region, and we are thrilled to implement a new program to allow students to represent USI in the sport they love," said Jon Mark Hall, Director of Athletics.

The teams join USI's 17 existing varsity athletic programs competing for conference and national championships at the Division II level.

Swimming is the eighth most popular sport for girls and the 10th most popular sport for boys nationwide, according to the National Federation of State High School Associations. In 2018-2019, 4,383 girls participated on 239 teams and 3,944 boys participated on 233 teams.

The new Swimming and Diving teams will compete in NCAA Division II and Great Lakes Valley Conference competitions. Currently, the GLVC houses 10 men's and nine women's swimming and diving teams, and more than 400 student-athletes are expected to participate in the 2022 conference championships. USI expects to field a roster of 25 men and 25 women for the combined teams made up of students primarily new to USI.



ADULT LEARNER PROGRAM LAUNCHES

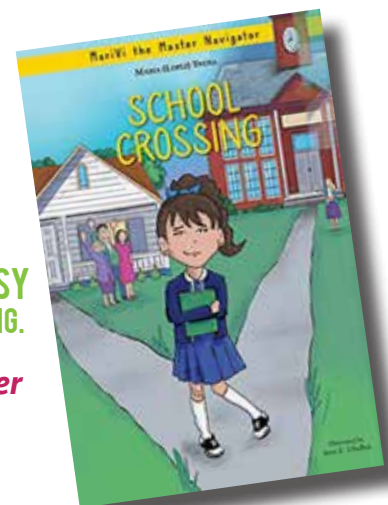
Crack a Spine

USI EMPLOYEES HAVE BEEN BUSY WRITING, ILLUSTRATING AND PUBLISHING.

School Crossing: MariVi Master Navigator

Independent, 2020

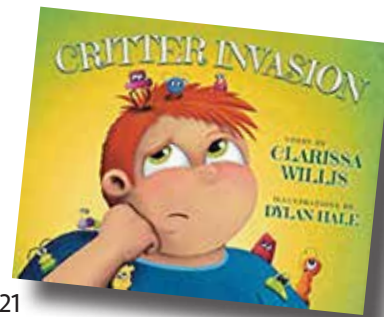
Amy Ubelhor, Assistant Director of Creative/Designer, illustrated the children's book that follows the experiences and challenges MariVi encounters as a bilingual/bicultural child.



Critter Invasion

Young Dragons Press, 2021

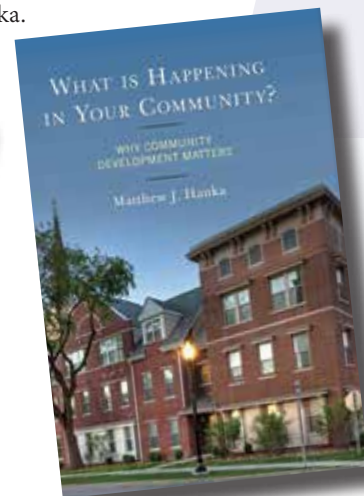
Dr. Clarissa Willis, Associate Professor of Education, published a picture book for children to help them learn to deal with anxiety and nightmares.



What is Happening in Your Community? Why Community Development Matters

Lexington Books, 2021

Dr. Matthew Hanka, Associate Professor of Political Science, published a book exploring the fluid and dynamic change of communities over time. USI faculty Dr. Trent Engbers, Associate Professor of Political Science, and Dr. Anne Statham, Professor Emerita of Sociology, co-authored chapters four and one, respectively, with Hanka.



Where is Juliet Stuart Poyntz? Gender, Spycraft, and Anti-Stalinism in the Early Cold War

University of Massachusetts Press, 2021

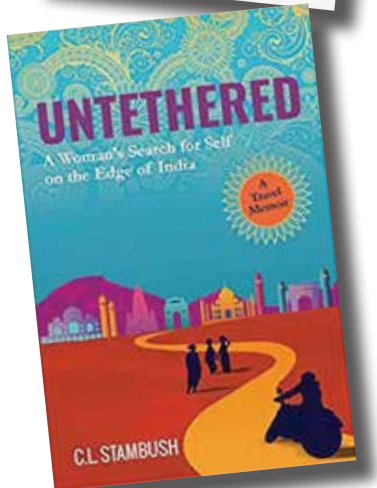
Dr. Denise Lynn, Professor of History, published the story of Juliet Poyntz, an American citizen working as a Soviet spy, who went missing and was never seen again.



Untethered: A Woman's Search for Self on the Edge of India - A Travel Memoir

Independent, 2021

C. L. Stambush, Editor/Senior Writer, published a narrative nonfiction book of her solo 7,000-mile motorcycle journey around the edge of India on a Royal Enfield Bullet.



Vicious Infants: Dangerous Childhoods in Antebellum U.S. Literature

University of Massachusetts Press, 2021

Dr. Laura Soderberg, Assistant Professor of English, published a counter narrative to the popular belief that all childhood is innocent, vulnerable and precious in her exploration of childhoods defined by things other than love, education and nurture.



HEERF III FUNDING

USI received a third round of federal stimulus funding under the American Rescue Act, totaling approximately \$17 million. Just over \$9 million of it will be used for students who are experiencing financial difficulty that's directly related to COVID. The Financial Assistance office began accepting applications from needy students in early summer and will continue through fall or until the funding is expended. All students, including incoming freshmen, have been notified of the funding and we encourage students to apply early.



Action for Elders

USI joined a new program called the Indiana Nursing Home COVID-19 Action Network (NHCAN) Extension of Community Healthcare Outcomes (ECHO).

The 16-week program offers nursing home leadership weekly calls from experts and the opportunity to discuss the challenges their facilities face. The calls provide COVID-related best practices and guidance, implementation and quality improvement techniques and case-based discussions to identify successes and challenges experienced at the facility-level.

The program is headed by Indiana University School of Medicine and IU's School of Public Health, and USI is collaborating directly with them to lead a cohort of facilities in Southern Indiana through the program.



If there was ever a time to return to college to earn or finish a degree, now might be it. The University has initiated an innovative infrastructure for adult learners to obtain additional education credentials with \$2.5 million awarded to USI by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. Through a cohesive approach, USI and its collaborators will address the needs of employers seeking talented employees with skills that transition to a future workforce environment.

USI has established a Center for Adult Learner Success to provide support and guidance in terms of student financial assistance, admissions, registration, advising and IT support. The new center will work toward three strategic goals: to identify, to enroll and to graduate adult learners. Strategies include creating multiple pathways that allow adult learners to achieve educational goals; identifying multiple access points to efficiently complete educational credentials; and creating effective communications to market to adult learners. The end goal is to establish a center meeting the needs of the state and developing skills in a way that prepares individuals to tackle changing workforce needs.



PUMPED UP FOR ACTION

The long-awaited phase II renovation and expansion of USI's Screaming Eagles Complex, formerly the Physical Activities Center (PAC), and the new Aquatic Center are finished.

The Complex houses newly renovated offices for the Athletics Department and Kinesiology and Sport, a weight room, classrooms, labs, student lounges, and locker rooms for men's and women's Soccer, Baseball, Softball, and men's and women's Track and Field teams.

The new 1,200 square foot Kinesiology and Sport Instructional Performance Center features hands-on lab space that enhances students' learning for performing, teaching and providing corrective feedback for strength training exercises, as well as a Bod Pod, underwater weighing and DEXA to measure health and fitness. The weight room is five times the size of the previous facility and equipped with technology-based racks that provide instant feedback on bar velocity, power output and work.

The new 25,000 square-foot Aquatic Center features a 25-meter by 25-yard pool for the USI community's recreation, with eight competitive lanes and three warm-up lanes for the new swim and dive teams' practices and competitions, with spectator seating, including ADA spaces.

Outside the Complex is a stainless-steel sculpture, *The Screaming Eagle*, designed by John McNaughton, Professor Emeritus of Art, and Joan Kempf deJong, Professor Emerita of Art and Design, and a gift of Terry and Ron '81 Boren and Tim Mahoney, Instructor Emeritus of Economics.

COMING SOON

NEW COURSES OFFERED

RELIGIOUS STUDIES MINOR

Fascinated with cultures around the world and the role religion plays in them? You are not alone. To satisfy interests, the College of Liberal Arts has created a new minor in religious studies aimed at understanding, comparing and analyzing religious beliefs, institutions and practices and resident issues. This is an interdisciplinary program which brings together courses and faculty from many departments, such as philosophy, political science, history, economics, English and art.



LONG TERM CARE

USI's new graduate certificate in administrator in training is a post-baccalaureate program offering residency training to nursing home administrators, qualifying them for national and Indiana nursing home administration licensure exams. The certification, offered through the Master of Health Administration Program and the College of Nursing and Health Professions, is a nine-credit course that provides candidates with exposure to all nursing home operations, business and regulatory practices and resident issues.



AG BUSINESS

No matter what discipline a Romain College of Business (RCOB) student pursues, from banking to marketing, at some point in their career they'll likely encounter farming. Food, after all, touches all our lives. In keeping with the RCOB theme that "everything has a business side," the College has launched a set of agricultural business courses—drone technology and farm/ranch management—to meet the needs of students and farmers. "Indiana is the 10th largest agricultural producing state in the U.S. with a net farm income of over \$2.1 billion. The Tri-state also includes Illinois and Kentucky who are ranked sixth and 24th (respectively) in cash receipts," said Dr. Cathy Carey, Dean of the Romain College of Business. "According to the USDA, almost half of employment opportunities in food, agriculture, renewable resources and the environment will be in management and business, and there are no other agribusiness programs offered in the southern region of Indiana to support this industry."





Loading...

USI is venturing into streaming video with the creation of a 30-minute program that will feature 10 USI students and highlight our welcoming campus community to prospective students. *The College Tour* will be filmed on campus in November 2021, and is expected to begin streaming on a number of platforms, including Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV and Roku in early 2022. With a potential global reach of over 200 million viewers and growing, we are excited for this inventive opportunity to showcase the University. You can find out more about the show at thecolleetour.com. We're launching a new advertising campaign this fall, too! Go Screaming Eagles!

WE'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF *illume*, SO WE CAN CONTINUE TO MEET YOUR NEEDS.

Go to USI.edu/magsurvey for a chance to win **USI SPIRIT WEAR*** from the Campus Store.



We hope you're enjoying *illume* and would like to ask you take a moment to help us update our records so we can keep costs down.

If you are an alumni, visit USI.edu/AlumniUpdate or use the QR code.



*Prizes were made possible, in part, through a donation from the Campus Store.



A significant part of returning to the interactive, in-person life we enjoy on campus pre-pandemic involves vaccinations. Making it easy for students, staff, faculty and administrators to be vaccinated against COVID-19 was essential for USI's plan to fully reopen campus this fall. During the Spring Semester and over the summer, the University Health Center hosted several vaccine clinics in its offices and the Screaming Eagles Arena. The Health Center became an official public vaccine site for the state in July, allowing anyone



to make an appointment to be vaccinated with the FDA-approved Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. It takes a team to coordinate and achieve this kind of wholistic strategy, and with the help of USI's College of Nursing and Health Professions faculty, nursing students, Health Center employees and the campus community, we are striving to keep everyone safe. You can make an appointment at

[USI.edu/covidshots](https://usi.edu/covidshots).



STUDENT P.O.V.



Ben Pfingston '21
Psychology

High Stakes

As the youngest of four siblings and the first of them to graduate from college, I have always had to push myself to achieve my goals. Since my first semester at the University of Southern Indiana, my dream has been to be accepted into a Psychology PhD program. Because of this, my entire college experience has been high-stakes. It was pertinent for me not only to attend and graduate from university, but be highly accomplished while doing it.

Looking back, the pressure to do well in school isn't new. I've always been the scholarly black sheep in my family. In elementary school, while my siblings largely occupied themselves with video games and sports, I spent much of my time reading piles of books. Moving to middle and high school, my three older siblings took primarily general education classes. I, on the other hand, found myself in all honors classes and a member of my school's academic team. As such, my scholarly persona is how I distinguished myself from other members of my family, and I have felt obligated to keep up this image.

When it came to college, however, there was another added pressure. I'm a first-generation

college student, meaning neither of my parents have four-year college degrees. Because my parents had children young, they weren't able to attend college in their youth. My dad eventually received a two-year technical degree, but my mother was never able to graduate from a post-secondary program. While she entered college for nursing when I was in middle school, she withdrew because of her worsening disability. Seeing my mom get sicker, unable to achieve her dream of being a nurse, saddened me. I'm nearly inseparable from my mother—some would call me a “momma's boy”—so I wanted nothing more for her than her accomplishing everything she'd desired. Witnessing my mother surrender her own dream motivated me to make my parents proud and fulfill my own goals of attending college and, eventually, graduate school.

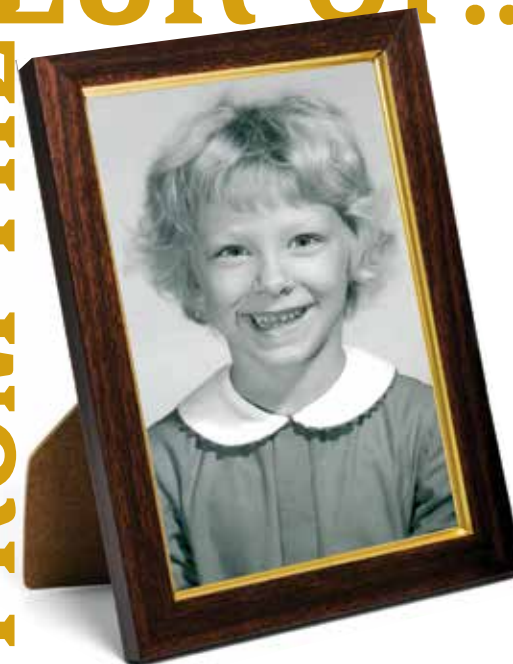
Even with my high motivation and academic aptitude, college has not come without its fair share of struggles. Because my parents don't have college degrees, neither of them were fully prepared to assist me in the process of navigating college. Learning how to talk to professors, ask for help and find resources, and properly interact with my classmates was a battle that I initially lost

more often than I won, and had to struggle with on my own.

At times, this was frustrating; I wished more than anything that my parents could fully understand how hard I was working. Additionally, the pressure to do well, compounded with my parents' struggles to help me, elevated my stress. However, with time, I sought out faculty and staff at the University who were able to relate and assist more. With their support, college was much less daunting than it could've been.

Despite all of the pressure and struggles associated with my family and first-generation status, I am thrilled to say I accomplished all of my goals. I graduated *summa cum laude* and as a University Honors Scholar, and I have been accepted into the University of Oregon's Psychology PhD program, which I began this fall. Although I know the path ahead will contain just as much pressure and struggle as my undergraduate career, I am excited to move forward, knowing I am making my parents, siblings and community proud.

DESK OF... FROM THE



LEE ANN SHAFER

Academic Programs Manager/Advisor in Professional Studies

have to pay all college expenses and began working part-time in sales and clerical work to cover tuition, books, gas, etc.

Jane, then in her 30s, worried she wouldn't succeed because of the time elapsed since her last college class. Her years as a 4-H leader, PTA president and Junior League member, however, brought experience in volunteerism, leadership and communications that gave her a strong advantage in every class. One class assignment involved creating a survey and making phone calls to gather opinions and data. Jane later turned this classroom exercise into a 22-year career in marketing research after graduating from Indiana's newest university in 1986—the University of Southern Indiana.

Today, there is no USI alum prouder than my sister Jane. Her college journey was much more difficult than my traditional experience, and her story continues to inspire me. I have worked with adult learners for over 20 years, helping them navigate college classes toward graduation. I know that many face challenges of limited time and limited funds and often do not get support from family and co-workers as they juggle time commitments and competing priorities.

Nevertheless, they thrive. Just as Jane found value in her life experiences in leadership and volunteerism, many adult students bring strengths and motives that traditional students often lack.

1. Adult learners know exactly why they are in college and have specific goals—often to enhance career opportunities.
2. Adult learners know how to set priorities, manage time and other resources to reach their goals.
3. Adult learners can integrate classroom learning with lived experience from family, career and community activities.
4. Adult learners rarely make excuses and blame others for their failings, rather they attend class, participate in discussions and meet assignment deadlines.

My career in higher education has rewarded me with the opportunity to work with adults like my sister, seeing them survive and thrive at USI. Through it all, I never lost sight of the fact that adult learners are “whole persons” with life stories, challenges, goals and grit.

Lee Ann Shafer

I had a traditional college experience, graduating from high school in June and moving into a high-rise dorm on a university campus that August. I graduated after four years of classes, sorority life and an exciting senior year on a steering committee well-known for running a famous bicycle race. My summer jobs during college included bank teller, shopkeeper, babysitter and house cleaner with my earnings used for spending money through the school years.

I stayed to pursue a master's degree in College Student Personnel Administration where I learned from a professor the importance of seeing college students as whole persons—not just tuition dollars, seats filled in classrooms or beds in dormitories. She emphasized college was far from a “one size fits all” experience, and the importance of acknowledging diversity and recognizing the social and emotional needs of students.

My first experience with adult learners came from my family. My three older sisters were all married by the time I was 12 years old. My sister Jane had interrupted her college experience to marry and start a family. When her two sons were teenagers, her desire to return to college was strong, and she was happy to see that Indiana State—where she began college—opened its campus in Evansville (ISUE). It offered her the chance to finish the degree she'd begun many years earlier. Starting slowly with general education classes, she took one night class. She could maintain her roles as mother and farm wife and still work toward a degree. She knew she would



WINNING MESSAGES

Great coaches know the path to winning attitudes and teams is through relationships. Thirteen of our current coaches were once USI student athletes themselves. Their coaches

relayed messages and advice that resonates with them still—things they pass on to their players. A sampling of them had this to share:

“Coach Tony Colavecchia told me, ‘Believe in yourself and trust your abilities.’ This philosophy is one of our program’s core beliefs.”

Eric Schoenstein '93
Head Women's Soccer Coach

“Coach Jon Mark was like a father figure to most of us, so we always listened to him and tried to represent him as best we could. One of the most important pieces of advice was, ‘Be a good teammate and represent the school and the community with pride.’”

Chris Crawford '02
Head Men's Tennis Coach

“The most memorable advice I received is when Coach Stein told me ‘There’s a time when basketball ends. Everyone’s playing career comes to a stop at some point. The best thing you can do is enjoy every second that you’re given to play the game you love, and never take it for granted.’”

Stephanie Carpenter '14
Women's Basketball Assistant Coach

“Coach Bere fortified our confidence as individual players and as a team. He truly cared and invested in us in a loving way. Today, as a coach of young women that same age, I try to make sure each of my players not only truly feels confident in her strengths, but she also feels loved and respected.”

Randi Raff '05
Head Volleyball Coach

“Coach Steggie valued hard work over talent. He instilled the belief in us that, if we worked hard enough, then we could accomplish anything we set our minds to. Steggie would do anything for his guys, and in turn, they would run through brick walls for him.”

Mike Hillyard '93
Men's/Women's Cross Country/Track & Field Head Coach

“Coach Tom Ashman told me, ‘The quality of your relationships is the best predictor of future relationships. Who would you call in the middle of the night if you were ill? Who would call you to share life achievements such as weddings, family additions?’ Having people on that list gives you a sense of comfort knowing you have invested in strong relationships.”

Stan Gouard '99
Men's Basketball Coach

ALUMNI COACHES

ROBERT BENNETT '14
Assistant Men's Soccer Coach

RICK STEIN '92
Women's Varsity Basketball Coach

LARRY NOHALTY '94
Assistant Women's Soccer Coach

RANDA GATLING '99
Women's Assistant Basketball Coach

AUSTON BRUDER '17
Assistant Men's Soccer Coach

IAN GRAVES '20
Assistant Men's/Women's
Cross Country and Track Coach

MACKENZI DORSAM '15 M'18
Assistant Softball Coach

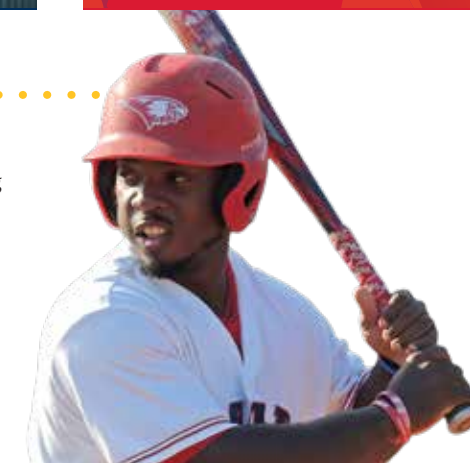
Where are they | NOW?

Jaylen Quarles '17 M'19, former USI Baseball outfielder and designated hitter, never expected a career homerun so soon after graduation, but a Facebook message from Dan Marcacci '12, a former USI Baseball player and member of the 2010 national championship team, offering him a job in Tianjin, China, had him sliding across home plate.

Arriving in China in Fall 2019 to work for D-BAT, a baseball training organization out of Addison, Texas, with facilities and operations globally, Quarles was tasked with teaching children ages 3 through 11 the fundamental skills of the sport that molded him. “In China, baseball is more like PE class,” Quarles said. “Parents want their kids to try something new, and this is typically their exercise for the day.”

Quarles' one-year contract was cut short four months into it by COVID-19. The pandemic threw him a curveball but ultimately led to him reconnecting with a former childhood pitching coach and an opportunity improving kids' athletic performance with Pro-X at Grandpark, an athletic training facility in Westfield, Indiana. Quarles now instructs baseball and softball players in hitting and

defense and loves the passion he's able to instill in his athletes for the sport that's given him so much. “I'm living the... highlight of my life. My end goal has always been to work at the facility I'm at now.”



Dared to Do It

REBELS WITH CAUSES

Until the mid 1960s, there was a statewide agreement among university presidents and many politicians in Indiana that no city would have a public, higher education institution where a private college existed. That was the situation in Evansville. But the people hungered for an affordable education option, one that didn't force them to leave the life they knew to earn it. One that kept them in the community

with family and loved ones as they obtained an education, gaining knowledge needed in the workforce.

Supported by citizens and city leaders, the University dared to go against the gatekeepers and fought for the establishment of today's USI. The institution, however, would be nothing without the students who dared to make a better life for themselves.

The Class of 1971, the University's first graduating class, is 50 years old this year. Many who enrolled were nontraditional students fresh from the fields of Vietnam's war zones in the late 60s. Others were young mothers or innocent high schoolers seeking to make something of their lives. In this section, we proudly share the first graduating classes' reflective stories of triumph and the voices of many alumni over the decades.

**They said
it couldn't be done.**

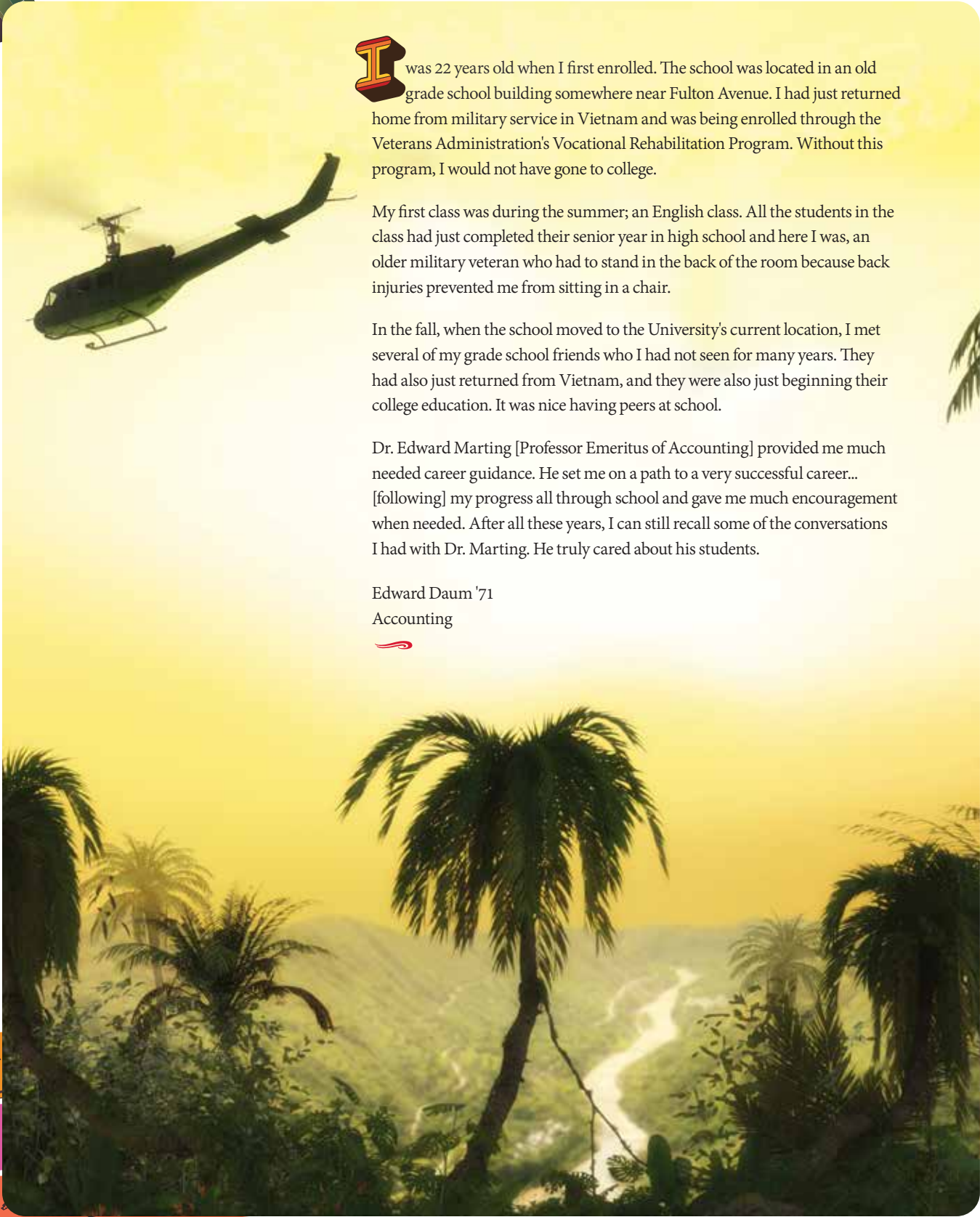
**They said
it shouldn't be done.**

They were wrong.

by C. L. Stambush

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

CLASS OF 1971



I was 22 years old when I first enrolled. The school was located in an old grade school building somewhere near Fulton Avenue. I had just returned home from military service in Vietnam and was being enrolled through the Veterans Administration's Vocational Rehabilitation Program. Without this program, I would not have gone to college.

My first class was during the summer; an English class. All the students in the class had just completed their senior year in high school and here I was, an older military veteran who had to stand in the back of the room because back injuries prevented me from sitting in a chair.

In the fall, when the school moved to the University's current location, I met several of my grade school friends who I had not seen for many years. They had also just returned from Vietnam, and they were also just beginning their college education. It was nice having peers at school.

Dr. Edward Marting [Professor Emeritus of Accounting] provided me much needed career guidance. He set me on a path to a very successful career... [following] my progress all through school and gave me much encouragement when needed. After all these years, I can still recall some of the conversations I had with Dr. Marting. He truly cared about his students.

Edward Daum '71
Accounting



I was graduating from Cannelton High School, Cannelton, Indiana, in 1967 at 17 years old. The motivation for male high school grads to attend college in 1967 was the Vietnam War, which was at full throttle, and yes, there was a draft if you weren't enrolled in college full-time. I had two college options: a basketball scholarship at a startup college or an ISUE academic tuition scholarship. I chose basketball and spent [my] first college quarter at Northwood Institute, where I made it to the final cut but didn't make the team. I moved back to Cannelton and enrolled at ISUE/USI.

During my three and a half years at ISUE/USI, I worked 30-35 hours a week at Arby's on the east side—full time during the summer—and dated my high school sweetheart, Cindy. We married in October of my senior year. I joined the Army Reserve in June after graduating, because I would have been drafted in July.

My ISUE/USI degree helped me secure my first job, helped me move into management for two years and allowed me to be a "personnel specialist" in the Army Reserve. I had a successful 30-year career in sales. I'm proud to see how amazingly far the University has advanced in 50 years.

Charlie Scheidegger '71
Marketing



IN THEIR OWN WORDS



I started my "life's great educational adventure" in a two-room brick country school in Posey County. It was during this time I came to love history and geography. I liked Native American Indian culture and found arrowheads in the fields by our house.

When I graduated from Mt. Vernon High School in 1960, I had no plans of attending college. After four years in the Army National Guard, during the height of the Cold War, I worked at Kroger and Whirlpool until 1966. I never forgot my love of history, geography and anthropology.

In 1966, I started thinking seriously about my future. I'd heard motivational speakers challenging me with "everyone has a purpose and a gift for doing something to make the world a better place." The ISUE campus would be the catalyst that allowed me to help change things for [others].

I wondered if I could attend...if I could afford it. I went to ISUE's office on St. Joe and said I wanted to enroll. A pleasant young lady reached into a filing cabinet and pulled out some papers. After filling them out, she said, "You are now a student this fall. What would you like to take?" I took ancient Greek, Roman, English, Russian and of course, American history classes, and later, educational courses. My senior year, I did my student teaching at Harrison High School in 1970. Because of my experience at ISUE/USI, I was able to share my love for history and fulfill my dream of challenging the minds of many students.

Gerald "Jerry" King '71
History



To understand the character of the class of '71, it's important to understand the changing world we were born in to. Our parents grew up in the Great Depression where the highest education usually obtained was a high school diploma. Their parents often had no more than an eighth-grade education. College was for rich people only.

We Baby Boomers started arriving at the end of World War II—and there were lots of us! I remember, as far back as kindergarten, waiting my turn to play with a toy only to have the teacher call time before it was [ever my turn]. Education, however, was changing. By the time I was ready to graduate from grade school, I had to decide whether I wanted to take the college or business lane in high school. I chose the college lane, although I had no idea how I could afford it or where I could go.

In my sophomore year, Indiana State University started an extension in Evansville, and for me it was a golden ticket to higher education. To finance my education, I had to gamble on the future with student loans, small scholarships and the occasional part-time job. I studied English. I loved writing and hoped to have a career in it.

I graduated and reality set in; the economy was in a recession. I had a classical education, looking for work in blue collar Evansville. After months of searching, I found a job with the local welfare department as a caseworker. The doors that were opened [by my education] have never closed.

Karen Markham '71
English



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

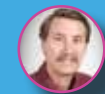
Remembering 54 years ago, when I enrolled at USUE as an "older" student. I was 33 at the time and enrollment was in the old Centennial Gymnasium. I was scared to death and would have run out the nearest door, had I not shot my mouth off to so many people about going to college. I was just lucky enough to get Eric von Fuhrmann's table to enroll in [his English class and Dr. Donald Pitzer's history course]. [Professor Von Fuehrmann] asked what I had written in the past 16 years. "Uhhh, grocery lists and notes on the refrigerator."

Several days later, when I sat in Dr. Pitzer's classroom with my notebook and pencil in hand, curling plaster falling on the floor, a certain calm engulfed my body. The 16 years had not made a difference. I was ready!!!

Patricia Houglan Phillips '71
Elementary Education



In one of my 400-level biology courses, students had to write multiple essays on various topics during the semester. Since the goal was to make an argument, and mechanical issues (bad grammar, poor punctuation, misspelled words, etc.) affect clarity, the grade was always based on the strength of the argument (evidence and logic) and then reduced for excessive mechanical issues. One frustrated student whose most recent essay score was reduced by a full letter grade due to mechanical issues told me that doing so was unfair. When I asked why, he said because I didn't have the standing—after all, I was not an English prof."



Dr. James Bandoli, Professor Emeritus of Biology
1982-2014

In an upper-level class, students had a large, semester-long project due as their final assessment. One student failed to turn the project in, stating all files on his computer had become corrupt after his roommate used his laptop to watch a very niche and specific type of pornography. It's a bit too graphic to share, but did provide for an interesting excuse, real or not."



Dr. Amie McKibban, Associate Professor and Chair of Psychology
2009-current

I remember excuses ran in fads. One year it was grandmothers dying and funerals to go to—possibly legitimate—but one student had a lot of grandmothers who died in just one semester. Another year the fad was car accidents and broken-down cars. By the end of that semester, however, I concluded that if there had been that many accidents on the highways to USI, they would be littered with disabled vehicles and assorted car parts and tires."



Marjorie [Jones] Melvin, Instructor Emerita in Anthropology
1989-2005

FACULTY HAVE HEARD IT ALL. EVERYTHING FROM PORNOGRAPHY AND DRUGS TO QUESTIONABLE DEATHS IN THE FAMILY HAVE BEEN PROFFERED AS EXCUSES FOR NOT DELIVERING AN ASSIGNMENT ON TIME OR ATTENDING CLASS. WE ASKED CURRENT AND RETIRED FACULTY TO MINE THEIR MEMORIES FOR THE RICHEST EXCUSES; HERE ARE THREE OF OUR FAVORITES.

ADDITIONALLY, DR. JOSEPH PALLADINO, PROFESSOR EMERITUS IN PSYCHOLOGY (1981-2011) POLLED HIS USI PEERS IN 2002 AND PUBLISHED A PIECE ON THE SUBJECT IN EYE ON PSI CHI, THE INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY IN PSYCHOLOGY'S MAGAZINE, THE MOST PRECIOUS APPEAR HERE.

PALLADINO'S LIST

- "My dog needs surgery and I have to be there early for the workup, so I will be too tired to be in class today."
- "My dog had surgery last week, as you will recall, and I have to have the staples removed today."
- "I can't find my keys, I think my dog ate them. You know, the one who had surgery two weeks ago."
- "My stepsister's mother-in-law's cousin died in California and I had to go."
- "I finished my paper days before it was due—even before the weekend—but I left my sunroof open and it rained and the paper floated away."
- "I can't come to class because I was away for Spring Break where it was warm. Now it is cold and it is too much change."
- A distraught student called to say a family member had died and she would not be able to make the exam or to take any makeups during her religion-prescribed mourning period of six weeks. Later, when she arrived to take a makeup, she confessed that the family death was a cat.
- Two students apologized for not letting the faculty member know they would miss a class. They said they were allowed only one phone call.
- A student who was arrested and jailed missed class but provided a note from the bailiff.
- A student called a faculty member at home at 2 a.m. on a Monday morning. The obviously inebriated student slurred the following message: "I'm going to be too hungover to take the exam at 10 a.m. in the morning. I'd like to take a makeup."

FROM TIMEKEEPER TO KEEPING WATCH OVER USI

BY C. L. STAMBUSH

Robert "Bob" Roeder '71 (1947-2021) was 8 years old when his father died, leaving his mother, pregnant with her youngest son, to raise three children alone. Watching his mother divvy the sum from cashed Social Security checks into separate envelopes to cover church donations, food and utilities for the month (in that order of priority), made an impression on Bob. "To help mom out, at age 16, I started working about 30 hours a week at Tommy's Key Market, located at Third Avenue and Virginia Street (in Evansville)," he wrote in his booklet *A Lifetime of Memories*.

Reading and learning were priorities in the Roeder household, and his mother wanted him to be the first in their family to graduate from college. But, when he graduated high school in 1965, an affordable college degree wasn't yet possible in Evansville. So, he took a job at Whirlpool earning \$2.25 an hour as a timekeeper, working nights and waited for Indiana State University–Evansville (ISUE) to open its doors on September 15, 1965, in the Old Centennial grade school building Mead Johnson leased to the institution for \$1.

"I had attended Centennial for kindergarten, seventh and eighth grades... and now my first year of college would be in that same building," he writes.

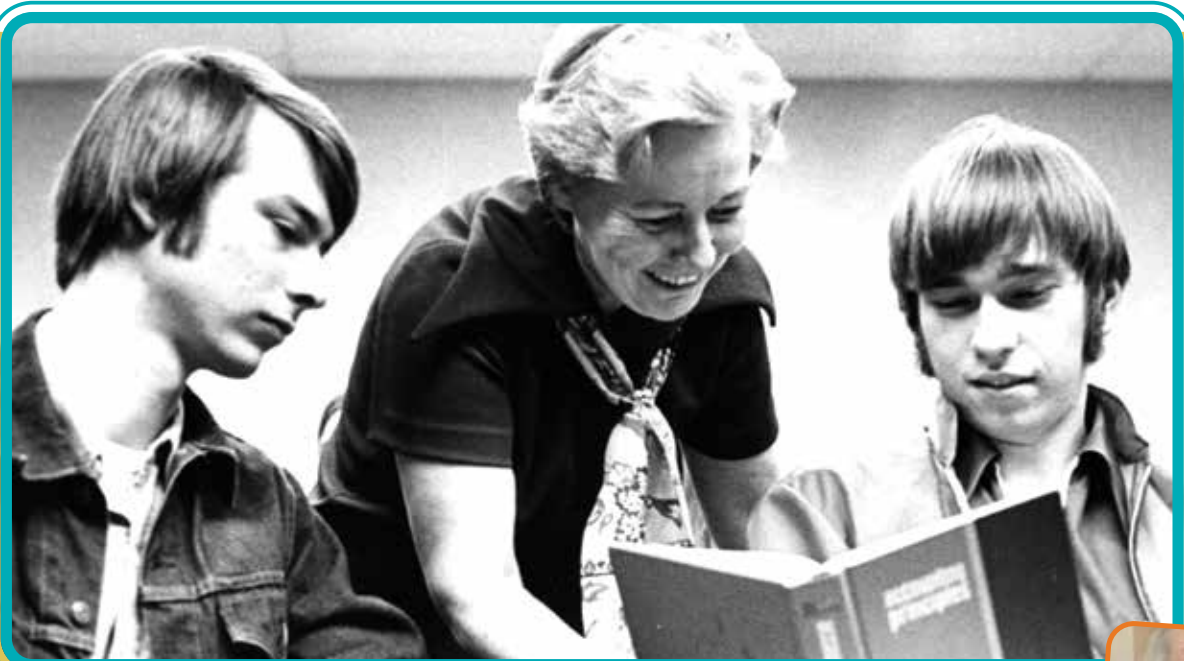
Bob wanted to help the fledgling University thrive, and approached Dr. David L. Rice, President, about a Student Union Board being created. "While all of us were there for the academic opportunities, the real opportunity was for enhanced growth and learning in campus activities where leadership roles could be provided to students," he wrote.

Scouring other universities in the state for ideas, Bob discovered they all had a place for students to gather and engage with each other. To encourage students to remain on campus, the University transformed an old house into the Temporary Union Building (TUB*).

Upon graduation, he received the Outstanding Student Achievement Award, and in 1975 was the first recipient of the USI Distinguished Alumni Award. Bob was a Commencement speaker and received an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree.

Over the last five decades, Bob's engagement helped ensure USI grew and succeeded through his many leadership roles. But his real legacy are the organizations he helped create that have served students yesterday, today and for decades to come.

*A symbol of the TUB (a clawfoot tub) is still on display in University Center East.



A MISTAKE ADDED UP TO LIFE-LONG PASSION: The Dr. Wanda Hibbitts' Story



By C. L. Stambush

When 15-year-old sophomore Wanda June Best was given the opportunity to choose one of her high school classes in 1936, she picked bookkeeping. "I thought, oh good, I'll get to work in the library," said Dr. Wanda Best Hibbitts, Professor Emerita of Business.

That miscalculation instilled the now 100-year-old (April 26, 1921), retired USI faculty member with a love for accounting and put her on the path to teaching the discipline for more than 40 years, despite not being allowed to earn a degree in it and told "there were no opportunities for women in accounting." Instead, she earned a degree in business education and "took accounting courses on the side."

After graduating college in Owensboro, Kentucky, she taught bookkeeping (accounting) in a high school, quickly learning it was not for her, as well as night classes in a business college. When she discovered one of the premier business colleges (Lockyear Business College) was in Evansville, she applied, remaining there for the next 27 years until she "saw the writing on the wall."

There was a time when universities didn't teach business courses, and business colleges flourished. But a new discipline—master of business administration—was taking hold, and Wanda knew she needed an MBA to teach at a university, seeing that business colleges were starting to go under.

There was just one hitch: women weren't allowed in the program at the first institution she wanted to attend. Not to be deterred, she applied to Indiana State University and was the first woman to be accepted into its MBA program and the first woman to graduate.

Sheepskin in hand, Wanda knocked on Indiana State University–Evansville's door in 1970 and was a welcomed addition to the seven-member faculty. "I had no trouble getting on with just an MBA, they were so short-staffed and needed help so badly," she said with a chuckle.

The first year she taught a little bit of everything: statistics, accounting, typing and maybe one other that she can't recall. "We all taught overloads. Students piled in when we opened because so many people were in need of an education they could afford."

True to the times, Wanda's first students were "all fellas," with class sizes limited to 40. "Most of them were older students," she said. "They were the ones who recognized how badly they needed an education, I guess."

Dr. Hibbitts' memories of USI's early days brim with energy and excitement.

Buildings sprang up like wildflowers and were filled with faculty because of a growing student population. Between 1970 and her retirement in 1988, the student body expanded from hundreds to thousands, and she moved offices three times. What she recalls best was USI fighting for its independence. Other Indiana institutions were not in favor of it. "The only way we got our independence was because [then Governor Robert Orr] was from Evansville," she said.

Today, Wanda's memories are refueled by the cards she received in April from former students when she turned 100. More than a 100 arrived, most with handwritten letters updating her on their career paths—some having already retired. "It's impossible for me to thank every one of them individually. I'm just so appreciative of their letters. I just can't believe it."

What she can believe is how well they've all done in their careers. "They've all done so well," she said. "I'm so proud of all of them."

OTHER INFLUENCERS

"Dr. Schibik was my guidance counselor when I came to USI, and he led our Living Learning Community (LLC) classes for the business LLC my freshman year. I cried in his office a couple times, and he never made me feel less in my struggle to figure out what I wanted to do with my life, but instead encouraged me to believe in myself to figure it out in time."
Michaela Livengood '17, business management

"Dr. Gabennesch in sociology—loved the way he opened my mind and perspective on the world around me—I ended up with a minor in sociology solely because of him!"
Cindy (Eskew) Erwin '86, communications

"Dr. Jessica Jensen. She was my guide every step of the way. I owe everything to her. Fun fact about her—did you know she never stops smiling? Even when she is stressed and mad at you."
Tharushi Wattewewa '18, French and international studies

"J. Wayne Rinks. He was the new head of the broadcasting division and did a great job mentoring those in the program, knowing which ones showed promise for a future in the field, and shared his experiences in the field to reinforce his messages."
Kevin Bayer M'12, liberal studies

"Nancy Bizal—Romain College of Business. She was so knowledgeable and encouraging. She KNOWS business basics, and I can still hear her correcting and influencing me in my head today, as if I were still in class with her."
Kelsie (Ball) Conner '14, business management

"Hilary Braysmith—Art History. She taught me that if I try hard, I could obtain what many thought would be impossible."
Thomas MaVeety Sr. '90, art

"Dr. Pitzer's history classes taught me the past is what makes the present and the future, and we need to remember that now, especially."
Michael Buchanan '71, business administration

"Sandy Hermann, Director of University Division and English Professor. She is the reason I did not quit when I was struggling and went above and beyond to encourage me. She is a treasure."
Michelle (France) Schweizer '94, radiologic technology

"Leslie Nunn. His life stories were so interesting and memorable. I still tell his stories to people today—especially when I see a Cadillac roll by."
Justin Casey '07, business administration

"Dr. Jason Hardgrave. His passion for history pushed me to love it more and influenced me heavily to pursue further education in the field of history."
Christian Barrett '18, history

LIFESTYLES OF STUDENTS

STUDYING

	LIBRARY	CAMPUS	HOME
1970s	43%	28.5%	28.5%
1980s	60%	30%	10%
1990s	58.5%	25%	16.5%
2000s	40%	27%	33%
2010s	49%	34%	17%
2020s	40%	40%	20%



The campus landscape and students' lifestyles have witnessed some winds of change over the years. What started as a commuter campus with open pastures and packed lunches, has flourished into a hub for student life, filled with no shortage of places to eat, hang out, do laundry and study. What has changed—according to responders, aside from preferred music formats being 57% vinyl in the 70s to 60% apps in the 20s—are the ways students spend their out-of-class time.

BETWEEN CLASS

	HUNG OUT	NO TIME EXERCISED
1970s	50%	28.5%
1980s	40%	40%
1990s	73.5%	10.5%
2000s	66.5%	9.5%
2010s	62.5%	24.5%
2020s	67%	33%



LAUNDRY

	HOME	CAMPUS
1970s	87.5%	12.5%
1980s	80%	20%
1990s	58.5%	41.5%
2000s	50%	50%
2010s	69%	31%
2020s	—	—



EATING

	OFFCAMPUS	ONCAMPUS
1970s	93.75%	6.25%
1980s	87.5%	12.5%
1990s	79%	21%
2000s	40%	60%
2010s	25%	75%
2020s	0%	100%





Traditions Tried and True

Rites of passage and the transmission of customs from generation to generation echo through every institution. Some are student based and others University sanctioned, but no matter what the origin, they all signal a time in our lives.

- "Jumping into the fountain."
- "The Christmas lighting ceremony."
- "Movie nights on Thursdays."
- "Greek Week chariot races."
- "Who could forget Franklin Fridays?"
- "The Madrigal Dinner was a phenomenal tradition."
- "Hang out in the Pyramid and snack on French fries."
- "Jumping in bodies of water. I've swam in the lake behind the dorm buildings as well as the fountain in the middle of campus."
- "Thirsty Thursdays...but I was busy studying, in clinicals and working at the hospital!"
- "Wing hand signals at basketball games when USI shoots free throws."
- "Midnight breakfast before finals week."
- "Steak fry 'n auction."
- "Apple butter fundraiser."
- "Archie's Birthday Bash."
- "Live at the Apollo."
- "Concrete Canoes."
- "Spring Fling."



FORTUNE COOKIE ADVICE

from alumni to future students...that all of us can use

Don't settle for black and white. There is a whole world of gray out there...that's where life is.

Take time to reflect on where you are currently in your life vs. striving for the next thing.

Open your mind to opinions and people different from you.

Study what you enjoy, but commit yourself to all of your classes and learn as much as you can. Have fun, make friends, stick with them.

It will happen, stay the course.

Don't be scared to change your path. If something isn't sitting right, sit with yourself for a little while and consider all options. There is an entire world of options and paths.

Explore, explore, explore! Join clubs, expand your circle of friends, ask questions in class, be the best version of yourself.

Try new things, get involved and get out of your comfort zone. That's where the magic begins.

Relax and enjoy the situations of the moment—experiences pass too quickly.

Hang in there. As potentially tough as it is to get through a class and a program, it is even tougher to look back on an incomplete dream.

Don't procrastinate! Take advantage of your time to get ahead on things.

Ask twice as many questions. Learn, learn and learn some more.

Reach out early for internships. It's never too soon.

Never too late to change gears.

Step out of your comfort zone.

Absorb everything you can, especially experiences and points of view that are different from how you grew up.

Don't stress, it will all work out.

CARVING CAREERS

BY TRISTA LUTGRING

LIKE WATER COURSING THROUGH A CANYON, TENS OF THOUSANDS OF CAREERS HAVE BEEN SHAPED OR REDIRECTED AT USI. THREE ALUMNI SHARE MOMENTS IN THEIR LIVES THAT LED TO WHERE THEY ARE TODAY.

FOLLOWING INSTINCTS

The morning of February 6, 1992 started off clear and unseasonably warm, as a five-member crew from the Kentucky Air National Guard ran practice drills at Evansville Dress Regional Airport. The crew was wrapping up the touch-and-go landings of the C-130 Hercules, when tragedy struck: at 1,300 feet, the craft stalled, then plummeted. It crashed into the Drury Inn and the east side of JoJo's restaurant along Highway 41. All five crew members, along with 11 civilians on the ground, died in the disaster.

Around the same time, Jim Beck '92, a senior and editor of USI's newspaper, *The Shield*, should have been heading across campus to class. When news of the crash reached him, however, his instincts told him to go. He trusted himself, ignoring a faculty advisor telling him he should probably go ahead to class, and headed to Highway 41.

"I'm willing to admit now that I skipped a class or two to go to the scene of the crash with a few fellow student journalists," says Beck, "against the better counsel of our faculty advisor, who later was effusive in his praise for the in-the-moment learning, although a tragic situation."

Though the tragedy of the crash and the events that day were impactful in many ways, Beck noted the experience was something that solidified his pursuit of a career in journalism and in helping inform others.

"While the coverage from myself and my fellow student journalists was rudimentary (we were still learning), it was impressive to cover a story like a pro," he says. "The news helped inform many on our campus, as this was a time before the internet. The responsibility of accurate and timely news reporting caused me to pursue journalism as a career, which I was fortunate enough to begin in my hometown."

His work while at USI landed him an internship with the *Evansville Courier* newspaper upon graduation. It launched his career in communication and journalism. For almost 16 years, Beck worked as a journalist and metro editor for the *Evansville Courier & Press* paper, and as an adjunct professor of journalism at USI for almost four years. In 2008, he transitioned into the role of Public Affairs Manager for an international manufacturing company and now serves as its Vice President of Corporate Communications.

Note: This was a tragic loss for the University family as USI student Charles Bergwitz, two former students Darrel Arnold and David Horton, and the fathers of two students, Robert Hays and Harry Tenbarg all died. Two instructors from the Continuing Education Department, William Capodagli and Lynn Jackson, were conducting a seminar in the Drury Inn at the time of the accident. Both survived their injuries.

ONE CLOSED DOOR LEADS TO AN OPENING

For many University students, campus resources are essential. For Stephanie Buchanan '97, those resources were just as important to her at the end of her USI journey as they were when she first stepped on campus.

"Oddly enough, it was a setback that became my big break after USI," Buchanan explains. "I had an internship at a company, which led to a job offer. Two weeks before I graduated, the company rescinded the offer, which left me scrambling for a job."

Unsure of what she should do next, she turned to USI Career Services.

"Most resources available were postings in the Career Center, papers on bulletin boards and quite possibly the most important were the instructors and staff," says Buchanan. "These resources were instrumental in my ability to find opportunities to advance my career search while at USI."

Arriving more than a little panicked, she said, the staff were eager to help the struggling student find other avenues for employment.

"I absolutely feel like the USI Career Services staff offered as much support as they could," she says. "I found a job opening at a little telecom company run by John Steven Johnson '86, a USI alumnus. He hired me and I entered an amazing field of technology that I never would have otherwise."

Buchanan worked as a sales rep for that company for nearly 14 years, selling fiber services to carriers. In late 2019, she was recruited by a national fiber-optic communication infrastructure, where she continues her fiber-sales career as a Carrier Account Director.

THE RIGHT FOOTING

Starting a new journey can be as full of doubts as opportunities. For nursing graduate Verena Sink Bailey '19 M'21, the people she met when she first came to campus quieted her fears that, at 40 years old and after raising seven children, she could have the professional career she dreamed of.

"Starting an educational journey is anxiety inducing at any age. USI stood out to me because not only were the [advisors] I talked to incredibly friendly and helpful, but they made it easy for me to navigate the enrollment," says Sink Bailey. "It felt like family from the beginning."


That acceptance helped Sink Bailey find a path she had not considered before. While

in high school she'd dreamed of becoming a physician, her plans changed when she enrolled at USI after raising her family. Her eldest child was born with multiple disabilities and the nurses who cared for him opened Sink Bailey's eyes to the role of nurses in healthcare.

"As a young person, I had no idea what the role of nurses was in the care of a patient," she says. "As an adult, I learned my passion for medicine actually stemmed from the role nurses play."

Her nursing professors solidified her choice, showing her they were invested, devoted and dedicated not only in teaching but in their students as well. Those qualities helped Sink

Bailey finish her nursing undergraduate degree and convinced her to earn her master's at USI.

"I'm very proud to be a USI alumna. I have referred several students and will continue to do so for anyone wanting to begin their journey of secondary education," says Sink Bailey, who works in a major hospital. "Maybe, one day, after I obtain my doctoral degree, I will come back to USI as a professor to give back all the support and love I have received." 

Shifting TIMES

Fifty years brings a lot of change—economically, technologically and culturally.

1971

vs.

2021

SHOPPING:	Sears catalog	AMAZON
COMMUNICATING:	handwritten, mailed letters	TEXTS
RESEARCH:	card catalogs	GOOGLE, SIRI
PHONING:	landlines	SMARTPHONES
MEETINGS:	face-to-face	VIRTUAL
COST OF EVANSVILLE HOMES (AVERAGE):	\$13,000	\$145,000
GASOLINE PER GALLON:	40¢	\$3+
AVERAGE AUTO MPG:	13	30
FOOTWEAR:	platforms, Birkenstocks, toe socks	PLATFORMS, CROCS, CONVERSE, TEVAS, NO SHOW SOCKS
PANTS:	bell bottoms	DISTRESSED JEANS, LEGGINGS
HAIRSTYLES:	long and straight, mullet, afro	LAYERS, EXTENSIONS/WEAVES, BRIGHT HAIR DYE
TELEVISION:	4 national network channels	1,761+ NETWORKS, CABLE, SATELLITE, INTERNET
SHOWS:	daytime soap operas, variety shows, game shows	REALITY SHOWS, 24-HOUR NEWS, ANIME, DOCUDRAMAS
MEALS:	home-cooked	SUBSCRIPTION DELIVERY
ENTERTAINMENT:	movie theaters and drive-ins	STREAMING ON PERSONAL DEVICES
MEMORIES:	photo albums	DIGITAL/CLOUD-BASED STORAGE
TERM PAPERS:	typewriters	COMPUTERS
ROAD TO USI:	Division Street	LLOYD EXPRESSWAY
NATIONAL AVERAGE INCOME:	\$6,497	\$54,100
COSTS TO RETIRE:	\$64,970	\$540,999

EDUCATING THE EDUCATOR

by C. L. Stambush

“MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OTHERS.”
—Harolyn Torain, USI Board of Trustees 1990–2006

M

iddle and high-school science teacher Harolyn Torain '71 had been in her profession for 21 years when she learned the value of accepting opportunities when asked to be the first alumna and first African American to serve on USI's Board of Trustees. A humble, quiet woman—one of four children her parents insisted all earn educations beyond high school—she didn't seek to sit at the table where decisions with lasting impact are made. Although she preferred the classroom, being part of USI's board was the best experience of her life. “You are not sitting around voting on things on a whim, these are things that make a difference in the life of the University. The life of the students and faculty,” she said.

Torain recalls her time as a student in the 60s, starting out in the Centennial building before the current campus opened, as freeing and fun. “I'd drive to campus and stay all day,” she said, hanging with friends and studying. Torain, a Black woman, was a traditional student surrounded by older people returning from Vietnam, young mothers and few people of color sharing one commonality. “I saw different levels of seriousness about the work,” she said, “but we all got along well.”

Appointed by USI's President David Rice (1967–1994) to the Board in 1990, Torain recalls his leadership and caring nature. “When I was a student, I used to talk to him about things I was concerned about on campus. Maybe me having the guts to talk to him was the reason he selected me for the board.”

Torain served on USI's Board for 16 years (1990–2006), during a time of rapid, dramatic growth and witnessed many firsts, such as Dr. Linda L. M. Bennett becoming the first female president and Dr. Ronald S. Rochon, the first African American provost. Buildings sprang up and courses and degree opportunities were charted. Four new graduate programs and 11 new academic majors were created. “You had to be ready to foresee the needs of the future,” she said. “There were so many people doing wonderful work who helped me so much. I smile every time I think of them.”

The Harolyn Torain Multicultural Leadership Scholarship offers \$5,000 to any high school student who meets the criteria. usi.edu/torain

Life Lessons

“I LEARNED THAT IT'S OKAY TO EXPRESS YOURSELF EVEN IF YOU AREN'T ACCEPTED.”

Calista Romhill '22, psychology

“I HAD TO TAKE A CLASS OVER AND THAT DIDN'T TEACH ME DEFEAT, IT TAUGHT ME PERSEVERANCE.”

Desiray (Hoffman) Scalf '12, elementary education

“THAT I WAS SMARTER THAN I GAVE MYSELF CREDIT FOR, AND THAT I WAS COLLEGE MATERIAL.”

Kerry Nix '06, finance

“SCIENCE IS NOT JUST FOR NERDS!”

Imogene (Schmitt) Kurre '73, biology

“I LEARNED THAT NO MATTER WHAT AGE, YOU CAN ACHIEVE ANYTHING YOU SET YOUR MIND TO.”

Terry Sullivan '17, early education

“NEVER TOO OLD TO GO TO SCHOOL.”

Lisa Thomson M'14, adult gerontology nurse practitioner acute

“DON'T SIGN UP FOR THAT (CREDIT CARD) JUST TO GET A FREE T-SHIRT.”

Julie (Wittman) Morrison '02, public relations and advertising

“ASK QUESTIONS. CHALLENGE YOUR THOUGHTS.”

Anthony “Tony” Goodwin '89, radiologic technology

“IT'S OKAY TO COME IN AS UNDETERMINED. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO HAVE IT ALL FIGURED OUT AT 18!”

Roberta (Mitrison) Rolley '11, health services, M'14, health administration

“DON'T EXPECT ANYTHING JUST BECAUSE YOU WENT TO COLLEGE.”

William “Bill” Nadeau '96, art

“TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH—INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM.”

Lana (Gee) Bunner '72, business education, M'91, secondary education

“BRING ENTHUSIASM TO YOUR COURSES EVERY DAY. LEARNING IS A TWO-WAY STREET.”

Warren Fleetwood '97, English

From 1971 to 2021, 47,398 students have graduated from USI to pursue their dreams.

And the beat goes on...



“WHEN YOU BUILD A *town*, YOU NEED TO HAVE A *tavern*.”

Dr. MICHAEL STREZEWSKI | Associate Professor of Anthropology, College of Liberal Arts' Spring Faculty Colloquia

“OVERHEARD QUOTABLES”

“WHERE WE ARE HERE IN EVANSVILLE, INDIANA, IS *contested* GROUND. WE SHOULD ALWAYS BE *mindful* AND RESPECTFUL OF DESCENDANT *communities* THAT CAME FROM THESE REGIONS.”

Dr. KRISTALYN SHEFVELAND | Associate Professor of History, College of Liberal Arts' Spring Faculty Colloquia

“MOST *people* KNOW THEY ARE *loved* WHEN THEY HAVE BEEN *seen* AND *heard*.”

AMI LLOYD '97 | College of Nursing and Health Professions Mental Health Symposium

“I IDENTIFY AS A *motherscholar* - “ONE WORD.”

Dr. JOY HOWARD | Assistant Professor of Teacher Education, Pott College Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Colloquium Series

“I DO *hope* THAT EDUCATION, AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION ARE ENOUGH FOR US TO *wake up* FROM OUR SLUMBER OF THE PRETTINESS WHICH IS KILLING US. WE MUST *rise* ABOVE OUR OWN SELF-ALIENATION. IT IS THE ONLY WAY WE ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO DEAL WITH WHAT IS HAPPENING BY OUR OWN HANDS.”

Dr. STEVEN WILLIAMS | Associate Professor of Sociology, College of Liberal Arts' 13th Annual Interdisciplinary Colloquium "Filth and Foulness"

“THERE IS A REASON WE REMEMBER THE 1920S AS A TIME OF *frivolity* AND EXCESS BECAUSE THEY ARE OFTEN DEFINED AGAINST THE ROLES WE PUT UPON YOUNG *women*. THEREFORE, THEY ARE *easy to dismiss*. CONVERSELY THE YOUNG *men* ARE THE ONES WHO MADE *history* AND THE OLD MEN AND WOMEN ARE NOT EVEN IN THE PICTURE.”

Dr. STELLA RESS | Assistant Professor of History, College of Liberal Arts' 13th Annual Interdisciplinary Colloquium "Filth and Foulness"

“ALTHOUGH TODAY THE *University* IS OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH ITS ROLE IN PRODUCING A *skilled workforce*, THIS CONCEPTION FOR ANY UNIVERSITY ONLY FEATURES PART OF ITS MISSION. UNIVERSITIES ARE *places* WHERE STUDENTS AND FACULTY COME TOGETHER AS A *community of scholars* TO SHARE IDEAS, EVALUATE INFORMATION AND ENGAGE IN INNOVATION.”

Dr. LEIGH ANNE HOWARD | Professor of Communication Studies, College of Liberal Arts' "Community and Civil Discourse: Perspectives" Spring Speaker Series



I came to USI in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic last August. The reason I have decided to study at USI and get a college degree in the U.S. is because I would like to study political science from other perspectives. Japan is a small single-nation state, and our ideas tend to be fixed. I have not only learned English, but also expanded my knowledge. I would like to get a job related to an international organization to support developing countries. I believe my experience here will be good for it.

– Tamami Okada '23
Political Science
Nagoya, Japan



I chose to study in the U.S. because I wanted to experience a different cultural and ideological environment. Most United States universities are bastions of diversity since they host students from across the globe. I have immensely benefited from an open and pluralist perspective that comes with exposure to cross-cultural encounters. I had tremendous support from my professors and the staff at USI, and I managed to achieve more than I anticipated. I arrived in the United States in August 2017. USI is the only college that I applied to, and I received the Global Ambassador Scholarship.

– Robert Manyoni '21
Finance, Economics and Pre-Med
Chipinge, Zimbabwe

Open Dialogue Education in the U.S.A.

The main reason I decided to come to the United States to earn a college degree is I knew that a lot of Icelanders had been to the States to play soccer and get a degree, and most of them liked the experience. I got soccer scholarship offers from many universities, but I liked the program and the campus best at USI. As a guy from Iceland, I have always wanted to try to live somewhere where the weather is warmer, having the opportunity to do that and get a degree at the same time was too good an offer to not give it a try.

– Aevor Ofjord '23
Mechanical Engineering
Grindavik, Iceland



I decided to study in the United States because of its renowned universities. I believe getting a master's degree from a university in the U.S. opens many doors, wherever you are. I chose USI to pursue my master's degree because I had family here at the time, and I am so glad I did. I met so many amazing people from all over the world. I had amazing conversations with them and I have also learned so much from my professors. I feel like I achieved a lot in my time here, both personally and academically. This has been an amazing experience for me, and I will cherish the memories I made here forever.

– Esra Oz Cetindere M'21
Second Language Acquisition Policy and Culture
Eskisehir, Turkey



Each person has goals they want to achieve; for me, one of them is to complete my college degree in the United States because it is a country that has a lot of things to offer. There are many attractive aspects about the U.S. The most positive ones are high-level education, great work opportunities, rich culture and the language. Getting a college degree in the U.S. makes you a competent candidate in any work field. I chose to come to USI in 2020 because it has the major that I want to study and would give me a new experience. So far, it is an amazing and welcoming place that makes me feel like I'm home.

– Claribeth De Leon '25
Manufacturing Engineering
Veraguas, Panama



Besides academic and career reasons, I decided to come to the United States for personal development and to take on new challenges. There is a deep diversity in U.S. universities, and I wanted to be a part of that diversity, learn from it and contribute to it. Also, on a U.S. campus, students have more opportunities to be actively involved in activities where they can pursue their interests. Therefore, I am happy to have chosen USI. Here, we have a diverse campus, which not only promotes students academically but also encourages personal growth.

– Nihat Onur '21
Master of Business Administration/
Data Analytics
Osnabrück, Germany

BEHIND THE SCENE

Stepping into the John M. Lawrence '73 Library, in the bowels of the Liberal Arts Center, feels a little...quiet, at first. But on closer examination, you'll discover an eclectic trove of rare, ancient manuscripts and artifacts shouting mysteries of ancient lives and nine cultures around the world.

manuscripts, who, through his friendship with the late Patricia "Patty" Aakhus, Associate Professor of English, established the subset of the University's collection. It employs one to three student archivists each year, enabling them to gain hands-on experience conceptualizing and curating museum-quality shows and running the day-to-day operations, overseen by Susan Colaricci Sauls M'16, Director of University Art Collections.

The hidden gem is named after alumnus John Lawrence '73, accounting, an international expert and collector of medieval

1. White cotton gloves are still available in the Lawrence Library but are going out of fashion when handling archival documents. They dull the handler's senses and easily snag and tear fragile artifacts. The Library's mixed collection of artifacts, paper and artwork like "sweater weather and overcasts skies," so the temperature is kept between 55-64 degrees with 50-55% relative humidity and low, indirect lighting.
2. Student research projects mirror those conducted in museums, archives and historical societies to deliver real-world skills. Students research exhibits, translate text and content, develop programs, input data into professional museum software, preserve manuscripts and more. Eleven student archivists (with majors in history, English, accounting, anthropology and business administration) have worked a combined 35 semesters to create 10 exhibits.
3. Seeing a man slice pages from a 14th-century manuscript the year before he graduated led Lawrence on a lifelong quest to preserve rare books and illuminated manuscripts. Since then, he's amassed an extensive collection, donated or loaned to USI for research. Along with the Aakhuses, their contributions make up two-thirds of the artifacts.
4. One-third of the 250 artifacts in holding are manuscripts (handwritten) and printed leaves, consisting of 550 individual pages and dating from 800 CE. The oldest object in the holding is a Greek Bell Krater from mid-4th century BCE.
5. Ancient objects contain secrets from the past, and the artifacts in the Lawrence Library are whispering about past lives through a thumbprint left in the clay of the Roman jug, circa 150 CE, unearthed in North Africa. Scholars can examine such prints to determine if the creator was male or female. Some believe the items are capable of more than this and claim the painting of St. Dorothea (14th century) makes noises.





A Herculean Event

The tens of thousands of alumni who have participated in Commencement since 1971 know the pride, joy and anticipation experienced waiting for their names to be called and their degrees finally conferred after years of sacrifice and effort.

But there's a backstory: the hours and spirit invested by multiple departments across campus to ensure the event is spectacular and flawless. From the faculty and deans who grade and report eligibility, to the Registrar's Office where names and spellings are triple checked, to the Custodial and Physical Plant employees

who hang boulevard banners and clean before and between ceremonies, to IT which livestreams each ceremony on USI's YouTube channel, to Special Events which run the show by renting draping, placing plants and wrangling volunteers, to Creative and Print Services, Public Safety, Disability Resources, Alumni Relations, University Communications and more which design programs, ensure safety, facilitate media, feed hungry volunteers and so much more. Every aspect of Commencement is tended to by someone who cares enough to make this day as special as it's meant to be.

▶ \$50 WORTH OF CANDY WAS PROVIDED BY AN EMPLOYEE FOR EVERYONE WORKING TO SET UP THE ARENA FOR THE CEREMONIES.

▶ AN 18-PAGE SCHEDULE—WITH ACTION STEPS, ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES, DUE DATES AND MAPS—ENSURED ALL DETAILS WERE ATTENDED TO.

▶ ONE EMPLOYEE RECORDED WALKING 42 MILES WHILE ATTENDING TO HER DUTIES DURING SETUP WEEK.

▶ THE REGISTRAR'S OFFICE MANUALLY ENTERED THE 1,835 NAMES OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR GRADUATION INTO THE DIPLOMA DATABASE.

▶ 10,500 PEOPLE WATCHED THE MAY 2021 CEREMONIES ON USI'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL, SOME AS FAR AWAY AS SAUDIA ARABIA.

STAY IN TOUCH

EMAIL us at alumni@usi.edu.

UPDATE your information and send photos via the form at usi.edu/AlumniUpdate.

Class notes may be edited for length or clarity.

We regret that we may not be able to use all submitted photos, and reserve the right to select which ones are included.



1970s

Jo Ann Frick-Volz '73, art education, is working on a Graffiti booklet series—handmade and self-published. "My first bookbinding endeavor began in 2015 with the making of a book on children's artwork." [1]

Harry Lyles '75, communications, won the Radio Media Specialist Award 2021 and was inducted into the National Black Radio Hall of Fame Museum.

1980s

Teresa Seitz '80, accounting, received her 5,000-hour award for riding American Quarter Horses.

1990s

Lynette (Imel) Carter '92, Spanish studies and political science, gained the title of National Certified Guardian and member of the National Guardianship Association.

Chad Higgins '98, accounting, M'04, business administration, has been appointed as the Logansport Financial Corp's new Chief Executive Officer starting August 31, 2021, in Logansport, Indiana.

2000s

Christina (Flickner) Kiger '00, nursing, defended her dissertation

from Indiana University on October 1, 2020. "I was hired in November as the Nurse Residency Program Director at San Francisco Veterans Health Administration Medical Center in San Francisco, California." [2]

Tim Putnam M'00, business administration, was named to the White House COVID-19 Task Force by President Joe Biden.

Christina Jefferson '01, art, was named Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the San Francisco 49ers.

Justin Best '02, English and economics, is a film writer/director who is producing his first feature film, completely independently. It is a dark comedy/horror film that also deals with issues such as mental health, body image and self-love.

Cathy (Labhart) Hoffman '03, elementary education, M'08, elementary education, was honored with Elementary Teacher of the Year at Delaware Elementary in Evansville.

Andrea (Chapman) Gash '04, communication studies, earned her master's in strategic communication from Purdue University. She is currently the Assistant Director of Annual Giving and Special Projects at Franklin College in Franklin, Indiana. [3]

Robert Kozsan '04, accounting and professional services, earned the Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor designation through the College for Financial Planning with Stifel Financial Corp. in the Evansville office.

Tara (Chaffin) Ricketts '04, management and marketing, M'05, business administration, is Head of People at Foresight Risk & Insurance Services. She has more than 20 years of experience in human resources, eight years specifically working in the insurance industry at American International Group. [4]

Laverne Jones '05, art, retired as a USI photographer in 2021. Six months into a new phase in life, she's considering getting back into quilting, something she did before earning her degree, or carving her collection of sticks into walking sticks. "This is just part of my list, which I chose to not call a 'bucket list,' since I don't plan to kick a bucket. I plan on enjoying more time for myself and large family." [5]

Nick Mayhall '06, chemistry, was selected as the 2021 Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellow in Chemistry. He is an assistant professor of Chemistry at Virginia Tech.

Jennifer Murphy (Bloodworth) '06, journalism, went from working in an office and regularly traveling, to working from home, oftentimes traveling no farther than her backyard when COVID-19 hit the nation last spring. [6]

Amanda Lechlitter '07, nursing, built a home in Denver, Colorado, completed this summer. She's adjunct faculty at Denver College of Nursing, teaching obstetric clinicals for nursing students. [7]

Amy Beard '09, economics and Spanish studies, was selected as the new Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Insurance (IDOI).

Class Notes



Brandon Whobrey '09, marketing, was promoted in June to E-8, Senior Chief in the U.S. Navy.

2010s

Samantha Wells '10, accounting and professional services and finance, **M'18**, business administration, accepted a position as Lead Accountant with Supportive Insurance in Vincennes, Indiana.

Kelli (Tincher) Heil '13, art, authored and illustrated her first children's book titled *My Day at the Art Museum*. "I'm now an artist, author, wife, traveler and mom of two little girls." She is working on her next two books. **[8]**

Kristin (Boe) Reagan '13, kinesiology, **M'15**, business administration and **M'17**, sports management, is living and working as a Fiscal Coordinator for the University of Oregon, overseeing the



financial transactions, budgets and funds for the University's College of Design. She also serves as a Wellness Ambassador for the institution. **[9]**

Natalie Wojtowicz '13, management, was promoted to Operations Officer with the Itasca Bank and Trust Co. to go with her current title of Branch Manager of the Roselle Branch in Roselle, Illinois.

Nikolette Pazell M'14, adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner, is working in a COVID ICU. **[10]**

Courtney Wathen '15, psychology, turned 30 and has taken a huge interest in photography and videography. "It's become an exciting hobby and possibly a future career path." **[11]**

Paul Goodman '16, history, USI's New Harmony Experience Coordinator, has been perfecting his photography skills. **[12]**

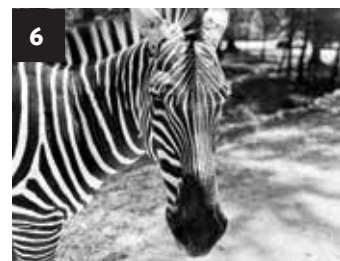
Ashton Mossberger '16, social work, was named Office Manager at Parkview

Behavioral Health Institute located in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Zach Payne M'17, human resources, was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives in November, and now represents District 66. **[13]**

Karen Ritscher M'17, family nurse practitioner, is a Lieutenant Commander (O4) with the United States Public Health Service, stationed with the Indian Health Service on the Navajo Nation Reservation, and is serving on the frontlines as a medical provider for testing and treating COVID-19 patients. The Navajo Nation's per capita rate of COVID-19 infection is among the highest in the U.S. LCDR Ritscher states that her "education and training at USI were instrumental in developing me as a healthcare professional." **[14]**

Kereston Hochgesang '18, communications and German studies, **M'21**, communications, and **Nicholas Montee '18**, psychology, got engaged. They met while attending USI. "We walked around campus reliving

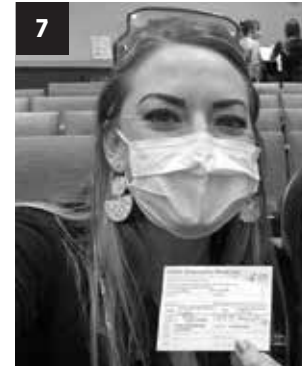


our many firsts experienced at USI and ended up at the gazebo where he got down on one knee to ask me the most important question at my absolute favorite place." **[15]**

Roberto Munoz M'18, human resources, was named Manager of TCU Crawfordsville Service Center in Crawfordsville, Indiana.

Marvin Smith M'18, school administration and leadership, "my wife, Audrey, and I are excited to see many things in life returning back to normal. It has been so easy over the years to overlook how blessed we are. Through all the negativity and downsides of the pandemic, we have a new appreciation for our lives together." **[16]**

Bernard Weithman II M'18, business administration, was announced as the new Ports of Indiana-Mount Vernon Port Director. He has more than 30 years of experience in business development, startup and long-term sustainable operations.



2020s

Mitzi (McGinnis) Wasik M'20, healthcare administration, was recognized with the Distinguished Service Award from the Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy.

Marriages

Travis Gillison '01, radio and television, and **Kristyna Porento** were married on August 30, 2020. The couple resides in Greenwood, Indiana.

ReAnna Hart '13, public relations and advertising, and **Dorian Moore '06**, history, were married on November 6, 2018, in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado. The couple resides in Newburgh, Indiana. **[17]**

Tonya (Hamilton) Peters '13, individualized studies, and **Brian Silence** were married on October 30, 2020. The couple resides in Seymour, Indiana.



Blake Bruner '15, sport management, and **Alexis (Leak) Bruner '15**, health services, were married on September 19, 2020. The couple resides in Evansville.

Megan (Randall) Dick '16, nursing, and **Craig Dick** were married on August 1, 2020. They live in Mount Vernon, Indiana, with their dog Luna. **[18]**

Amber (Hibler) Phillips '16, public relations and advertising, and **Nicholas Phillips** were married on August 29, 2020. They reside in Greenwood, Indiana.

William Brokus '19, business administration, and **Ashley (Wright) Brokus '17**, business administration, were married on January 2, 2021. The couple resides in Martinsville, Indiana.

Births

Jeffrey Polding '06, management, and **Mary**, of Kansas City, Missouri, welcomed **Nicholas** on November 2, 2020.

Jamie Beck '15, elementary education, and **Jenna (Carr) Beck '16**, social work, of Evansville, welcomed **Jayson Carter** on November 2, 2020.

In Memoriam

George Potter '71, history, of Jasper, Indiana, died January 7, 2021. He was an Eagle Scout, receiving the Ad Alare Dei award from the Boy Scouts of America.

Doraine (Witcomb) Rickard '71, education, died February 15, 2021. She was devoted to teaching, earning her bachelor's, master's and doctorate in the field, for 20 years. An avid reader, dancer and traveler, her favorite destinations were Europe, Hawaii and the Caribbean.

Michael Tempel '73, marketing, of Evansville, died January 10, 2021. He was a veteran of the U.S. Navy who enjoyed watching television and planting tomatoes.

USI FAMILY Retiring

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Leisa Belleau, Instructor Emerita in English
27 years

POTT COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, EDUCATION, AND ENGINEERING

Lisa Wilson, Academic Advisor Emerita
10 years

Teresa Branson, Instructor Emerita in Teacher Education
10 years

ROMAIN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Jong Rhim, Professor of Finance
32 years

Maryann Shifflet, Contract Assistant Professor of Economics
14 years

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Larry Back, Senior Application Administrator
27 years

Rebecca Ball, Senior Administrative Associate
24 years

Patricia Beagle, Advisor and Coordinator Emerita Special Populations
14 years

David Enzler, Director Emeritus of Recreation, Fitness and Wellness
20 years

Laverne Jones '05, Photographer
16 years

Terry Martin, Administrative Associate
30 years

James Neighbors, Senior Maintenance Mechanic
20 years

Keietsu Nishimura, Principal Emeritus of Southern Indiana Japanese School
24.5 years

Jong Rhim, Professor Emeritus of Finance
32 years

Susan Ruholl, Lead Custodial Worker
15 years



Deborah (Jerrald) Ervin '74, accounting, of St. Louis, Missouri, died November 4, 2020. She lived her life with gusto and always faced challenges with courage and determination.

Michael Goebel '74, history, of Newburgh, Indiana, died June 3, 2021. He enjoyed teaching Tai Chi, playing chess and making music with friends. Michael was a talented musician who played in bands and was proud of his west side roots even though he lived in "The Burgh".

Daniel Hayden '75, sociology, of Chernivtsi, Ukraine, died February 27, 2021. He joined the Peace Corps and moved to Ukraine where he then founded and ran Americana, an English language school. He loved reading history, international politics and current culture.

Viola Scherry '76, elementary education, of Huntingburg, Indiana, died February 8, 2021. She was a retired elementary school teacher, member of the Huntingburg United Methodist Church, Business &

Professional Women's Club and Indiana's Retired Teachers Association.

Harold Tepool '80, communications, of Haubstadt, Indiana, died January 12, 2021. He was a member of Vincennes University's faculty for 28 years. Proud of his students and ever supportive, Harold established a book stipend scholarship in memory of his mother.

Jackie Elliott '82, social science teaching, of Henderson, Kentucky, died January 24, 2021. She was a social worker with the Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources in Henderson, Kentucky and was a therapist with Green River Comprehensive Care who lived and worked on a farm for over 31 years.

Gregory Franke '82, electrical engineering technology, of Louisville, Kentucky, died January 29, 2021. He worked as an electrical engineer, helping to build our nation's nuclear submarines for nearly 30 years. He was a gentle man who loved his family, animals, learning and reading.

David Laine '82, mining engineering technology, of Evansville, died June 23, 2021. He was an avid supporter of University of Southern Indiana Athletics and a member of the USI Varsity Club. Dave loved ice cream, his family and especially his grandchildren.

Janice (Weisling) Winiger '84, accounting, of Evansville, died February 19, 2021. She was a homemaker and a member of St. Philip Catholic Church.

Joseph Brown '87, computer information and accounting, died February 5, 2021. He was dedicated to his work as an accountant of more than 21 years, an avid and knowledgeable PC enthusiast, collector of trinkets he found meaningful and excellent conversationalist.

Ronald Schuster '90, social science teaching, of Evansville, died February 28, 2021. He enjoyed being an active father, supporting his daughters in their theatre and choir program, and loved baking pies with his family during the holidays. Ron

had a contagious sense of humor and would do anything to get a laugh.

Thomas Perkins '91, political science, of Boonville, Indiana, died March 8, 2021. He loved music, making playlists for friends and family, and his doggies and grand dogs. He traveled and explored national forests and parks, camping and hiking as a young man, and loved Alaska.

Raymond Pritchett '91, accounting, of Evansville, died April 27, 2021. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1950, serving as a dental technician on the USS General W.A. Mann and worked for Mead Johnson for 30 years. Ray was a lifelong music fan (especially early jazz) who read widely on science-centered topics and developed a passion for race walking in retirement and supporting youth track and cross country.

Raymond "Skip" Trapp '94, social science teaching, of Newburgh, Indiana, died April 12, 2021. He was the current Girls' Head Tennis Coach at Harrison High School. He enjoyed teaching and sharing his

passion for the game and was an official for tournaments too.

Charlene Wilhite '96, nursing, of Taswell, Indiana, died February 16, 2021. She was the Editor of the Fort Branch *Star-Times* for 13 years, a wonderful nurse and case manager for 21 years, and a devoted mother and grandmother, leaving them with wonderful memories of sleepovers, camping trips and the annual pilgrimage to Camp Ondessonk.

Brian Ricketts '98, English, of Evansville, died January 27, 2021. He enjoyed writing poetry, playing the guitar and photography. He loved the weekends he spent with his son and family holidays.

Cathy (Wade) Hames '99, sociology, of Newburgh, Indiana, died March 5, 2021. She was known for her home-cooked meals and enjoyed hosting family and friends for any occasion. Her hobbies included cross-stitching, crocheting, sewing, gardening, crossword puzzles, writing and drawing. **Brian Kerchief '99**, electrical engineering

technology, of Evansville, died January 28, 2021. He honorably served in the U.S. Air Force. He owned and operated O'Brian's Sports Bar and Grill for over 15 years. Brian enjoyed riding his Harley, was an avid Colts fan, sports enthusiast and loved music.

Bradley Willis '01, psychology, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, died January 25, 2021. He was a counselor, social worker and behavioral analyst before attending medical school where he earned degrees in public health medicine and hyperbaric medicine. Upon completing his residency at Cedar Rapids Medical Education Foundation through the University of Iowa, he joined the faculty to teach medical students and resident doctors.

Samantha Chandler '06, public relations and advertising, art, of Evansville, died June 7, 2021. She enjoyed painting.

Curt Hammack '09, business administration, of Evansville, died January 17, 2021. He was an avid sports fan of University of Kentucky basketball and football, University of Evansville basketball

and the Cincinnati Reds, as well as a kind, soft spoken Christian man that thought of others before himself without complaint.

Michael Erdmann '12, history, of Evansville, died May 22, 2021. He loved his wife, children, his family, the Cardinals, music and frozen margaritas. He hated tomatoes, true crime documentaries and people who are rude to their servers.

Eric "Daniel" Gourieux '13, biology, M'19, engineering management, of Evansville, died February 18, 2021. He was passionate about life and lived it to the fullest. Daniel was a brilliant and talented person who loved to learn. His smile was infectious, and he always gave the best hugs.

Serge Pacome Yao Pre M'18, secondary language acquisition policy and culture, of Cote D'Ivoire, died January 22, 2021. A Fulbright Scholar and Global Ambassador, He was a gifted teacher who was dedicated to improving the human condition through his actions, teachings, friendship and faith.

USI FAMILY Retiring (continued)

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Mary Beth Rush, Campus Store Clerk 24 years

Connie Schnarre, HR Generalist Benefits 12 years

Sheree Seib, Provost's Administrative Associate 23.5 years

Katherine Weinzapfel, Career Coordinator Emerita 12 years

In Memoriam

Timothy K. Buecher, Director Emeritus of Career Counseling (38 years), died February 20, 2021

Steven Richard Cox, Professor Emeritus of Economics (16 years), died February 19, 2020

Thomas Julian Dieter, Laboratory Supervisor (11 years) retired, died October 26, 2020

Mamie (Duerson) Dulin, Custodial Worker (12 years) retired, died February 19, 2021

Augustine Jay Fredrich, Professor Emeritus of Engineering (24 years), died September 29, 2020

Yen-Tzu Fu, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics (28 years), died March 22, 2021

Sheila Griggs, Senior Accounting Assistant (19 years), died May 6, 2021

Mary (Pile) Killian, Senior Administrative Assistant (14 years) retired, died January 5, 2021

James Sanders, Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations (15 years) retired, died June 25, 2020

Anthony Schmitt, Assistant Professor Emeritus of Respiratory Therapy (11 years), died May 13, 2020

Harlan Clay VanOver, Professor Emeritus of Business (11 years), died January 9, 2021

Took USI's Public Safety Driving Course—learning the ins and outs of a high-speed chase—resulting in one casualty that later became a trophy.



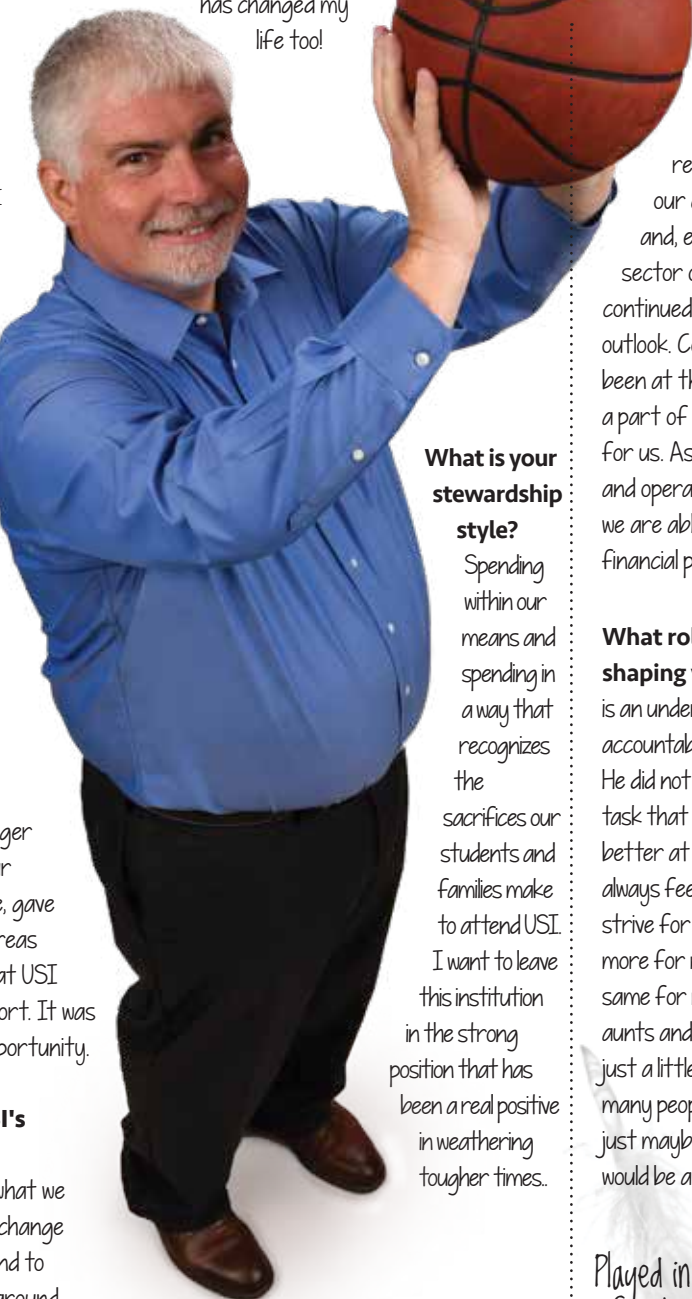
From the farm fields of Kentucky to the Finance and Administration Office at USI, Steve Bridges '89 M'95 proves himself to be an interesting mix of wit, humility, dedication, competitiveness and accountability, as well as the first USI alum to serve as a vice president. The Henderson, Kentucky, native always knew accounting was his path forward in life, and USI offered the educational trifecta he desired: accounting major, location near home and cost-effective. "In a lot of ways, I felt like I was the student USI was built to serve," he says.

Since graduating with two degrees, Bridges has returned the favor by pouring himself and the knowledge he gained back into serving the institution, advancing through 10 positions since being hired as a staff accountant in 1989 and working alongside all the finance vice presidents in USI's history.

What prepared you most for the role of VP for Finance and Administration? There were many opportunities and people along the way who helped prepare me. The three years I spent as project manager for the implementation of Banner, our campus-wide administrative software, gave me the opportunity to work with all areas of the campus and with so many great USI individuals, in this unified, massive effort. It was an incredible professional learning opportunity.

Why are you so dedicated to USI's success?

This one is simple for me. I believe in what we do. I have seen the ability we have to change lives with our high-quality education and to economically change the community around



An abacus mounted on a wood plaque in the shape of Indiana is a prideful reminder of the financial leaders who came before him.



us and beyond. I was lucky to see the first leaders who developed USI from its beginnings and their passion was instilled in me from my start. Incidentally, USI has changed my life too!

What is your stewardship style?

Spending within our means and spending in a way that recognizes the sacrifices our students and families make to attend USI. I want to leave this institution in the strong position that has been a real positive in weathering tougher times.

What is USI's financial outlook? USI continues financial resiliency. External groups, such as our credit rating agencies, review USI and, even with the overall higher education sector outlook listed as negative, have continued to rate our campus with a positive outlook. Conservative financial practices have been at the heart of that success, but being a part of a triple 'A' rated state is also helpful for us. As demand, demographics, resources and operational needs change, so must we and we are able to do so strategically given our financial position.

What role has family played in shaping your values and ethics? Huge is an understatement. My father was about accountability before it was a common term. He did not dwell on success but instead the next task that needed to be completed. I am a little better at reflecting on accomplishments, but always feel something can be improved and strive for better. He and my mother wanted more for me than they had, and I want the same for my personal and USI families. My aunts and uncles pushed me to be better and just a little competitive! I am a product of so many people who were in my life and hope that, just maybe, I can provide that to others. It would be a legacy that would leave me smiling!

Played in the NBA—USI's Noon Basketball Association.



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Spirit and Heart of USI



Don Fleming, Property Supervisor and Service Coordinator

"When I hear Naked Eyes' "Promises, Promises," I am mentally driving west on the highway towards campus in our Pontiac Sunbird."

Thomas MaVetty '90
Art

Visit USI.edu/spiritheart for submission guidelines.