

CREIGHTON

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**BUILDING
HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES**

**MEN'S BASKETBALL
VOLLEYBALL
MEN'S SOCCER
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL**



**THE ONLY D1 SCHOOL
TO HAVE THESE 4 SPORTS
APPEAR IN THE LAST
2 NCAA TOURNAMENTS**

ILLUSTRATION BY CREIGHTON ATHLETICS

Rising to the Moment

These past few months have been nothing short of amazing as we all had the tremendous opportunity to watch our men's basketball team's historic NCAA tournament run to the Elite Eight for the first time in the modern tournament era.

In the time I have had to reflect on what that run has meant to our student-athletes, our University, and our alumni and fans, I am reminded that no one person succeeds solely on their own. It takes a community, working together toward a common goal, that allows us to find the passion and strength we need to rise to the moment.

That sense of community, made up of more than 2,800 employees, nearly 8,000 students, and over 80,000 alumni worldwide, continues the vision of Creighton University's founders, Edward, Mary Lucretia, John, and Sarah Emily Creighton. We see the power of their vision in the students who come from across the nation and around the world to experience what a Jesuit education has to offer, going on to become alumni and carrying those lessons with them as they support their own communities at home and abroad.

These are the 80% of our students who arrive in Omaha from outside Nebraska, nearly half of whom choose to stay in the state after graduation and make a tangible impact. This is also the approximately 500 future Creighton professionals we are educating in Arizona, across five distinct disciplines, with plans for expansion underway to help address the state's healthcare provider shortage. And we've seen it for 50 years in the Dominican Republic, where Creighton faculty, staff, and students have provided healthcare and infrastructure resources to communities in need.

However, this impact is felt well beyond the clinical setting. Our cover story discusses Creighton's role in building healthy communities, which resonates in our students' academic success, their spiritual discernment, our investment in a sustainable planet, and in the community of peer institutions that together make up the BIG EAST, our conference home for the past decade.

I want to congratulate our student-athletes and coaches for their successes in competition and beyond this past year and for the ways they have represented our University. I also want to recognize the students who contributed to the second annual BIG EAST Undergraduate Research Poster Symposium, where Creighton once again finished in the top three. These are communities of innovation today that are setting the stage for the discoveries of tomorrow.

We also celebrate our alumni community whose continued investment, engagement, and support of Creighton University allows us to recruit, retain, and inspire future generations of students who will go on to do amazing things as Creighton professionals.

The year 2023 has already provided an incredible opportunity to reflect on Creighton's past and offered a preview of our future. This fall, we will realize the completion of the CL and Rachel Werner Center for Health Sciences Education, Graves Hall, and our Jérôme Nadal, SJ, Jesuit Residence. Plans are also underway for future investments in our campuses made possible because of our Creighton communities.

So, as we continue to light the way forward toward our 150-year sesquicentennial in 2028, I want to express my gratitude to be able to share the Creighton University story and, in doing so, celebrate the story of everyone who calls Creighton home.

May you and your families have a blessed remainder of spring and a fruitful summer of joy and happiness.

Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD
President



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© Clockwise from top are Fredrick King (men's basketball), Allison Whitten (volleyball), Owen O'Malley (men's soccer) and Lauren Jensen (women's basketball).

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on the cover

BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

From narrowing disparities in healthcare to inspiring the next generation of diverse, compassionate health professionals and addressing other critical determinants of health — including financial literacy, juvenile justice, mental health and healthy eating — Creighton is collaborating across disciplines and with partners in Omaha and Phoenix to find innovative ways to create vibrant, healthy communities in which everyone can thrive.



SPORTS AND SPIRITUALITY

The relationship between spirituality, religion and the experience of sports is a topic of ongoing study and research for two Creighton professors whose labors have resulted in a book exploring the subject and an invitation to the Vatican.



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Men's soccer coach Johnny Torres, BSW'08, led the Bluejays back to the College Cup last fall. As he prepares for his fifth season, Torres reflects on his time at Creighton as a player, a student, an assistant coach and now as leader of the men's soccer program.

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CREIGHTON MAGAZINE'S PURPOSE
Creighton magazine, like the University itself, is committed to excellence and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in all its forms. The magazine will be comprehensive in nature. It will support the University's mission of education through thoughtful and compelling feature articles on a variety of topics. It will feature the brightest, the most stimulating, the most inspirational thinking that Creighton offers. The magazine also will promote Creighton, and its Jesuit, Catholic identity, to a broad public and serve as a vital link between the University and its constituents. The magazine will be guided by the core values of Creighton: the inalienable worth of each individual, respect for all of God's creation, a special concern for the poor and the promotion of justice.

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© Creighton students and faculty at the Jesuit genocide memorial at Centre Christus in Rwanda. At far right is Fr. Tite Mutemanganbo, SJ, superior of the Jesuit community, Centre Christus, Kigali, Rwanda.

A Pilgrimage of Solidarity

BY EUGENE CURTIN

Creighton Honors Program students traveled to Rwanda to study the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, learning life lessons and the importance of community

As the 30th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide of 1994 grows ever nearer, 11 students enrolled in Creighton University's Honors Program spent 10 days last October visiting the central African nation.

There they visited the Kigali National Genocide Memorial, attended the Church of Ntarama where approximately 5,000 Tutsis were murdered while seeking refuge, and learned about the emerging Rwanda where reconciliation and healing have joined with advancements in medicine and education to produce a new generation committed to peaceful coexistence.

The trip, which was described as a "pilgrimage," took place during fall break from Oct. 7-16 and was part of

the honors class Christianity and the Rwandan Genocide, taught by Jay Carney, PhD, assistant professor of theology and director of the Christian Spirituality Program, and Tricia Ross, PhD, resident assistant professor, Honors Program.

Sitting in a classroom learning about one of the 20th century's great crimes against humanity is one thing. But visiting the country where it occurred and speaking to people who lived through it reflects Creighton's commitment to global education and the Jesuit commitment to relocating to the margins.

Creighton Honors Program students Adele Varley and Camille Vigil both made the trip.

"I was excited to be able to travel to Rwanda," Varley says. "I think it really

broadened my perspective about how lucky I am to have an education at Creighton and to be part of an Honors Program."

She recalls her second night in Rwanda, when Fr. Innocent Rugaragu, SJ, PhD, one of their Rwandan Jesuit hosts, celebrated an English-language Mass and invited her to join the choir.

"I sing with choir at Creighton, so it was really cool to experience what it would be like to sing in a choir in Rwanda," she says. "A lot of the songs were in Kinyarwanda, which is the native language of Rwanda. I don't know Kinyarwanda, but it was a great

“
Global educational opportunities play a vital role in Jesuit higher education since they provide unique ways in which to engage both minds and hearts.
”

experience to be invited to participate. I would never have been able to do that anywhere else."

The Rwandan Genocide, which lasted approximately 100 days between April 7 and July 15 of 1994, saw more than 800,000 Rwandan Tutsis murdered by government-directed Hutu militias in the aftermath of the Rwandan Civil War that commenced in 1990. The reverberations of the genocide later spread across the border to eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where insecurity and violence continue to reign today.

To visit those tragic sites, Carney says, was to embody the Jesuit commitment to experiencing global humanity in person and up close.

"Since their origins in the 16th century, the Jesuits have been a global

order," Carney says. "Likewise, global educational opportunities play a vital role in Jesuit higher education since they provide unique ways in which to engage both minds and hearts."

Carney says the students were urged to consider the trip a "pilgrimage of solidarity" that focused on the four "Rs" of remembrance, reconciliation, rebuilding and reflection.

Ross says the trip brought course material to life, developed a sense of connection to Rwandans and inspired reflection about how to build on this experience in future personal, professional and community engagements.

"We believe this course's vision of global engagement exemplified Pope Francis' recent teaching in *Fratelli tutti*: 'To speak of a culture of encounter means that we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone.'"

Vigil says the trip proved impactful and reminded her of the importance of community, both in her own life and globally.

"This was a very unique Creighton experience," she says. "We stayed with a group of Jesuits, and the ability of our classmates to really engage and be present was something special that I think is particular only to the Creighton Honors Program."

Given the somber nature of the events they were studying, the students were well prepared.

"The instruction we received was very thorough," Vigil says. "We were prepped with spiritual advisors as well as historical information to really help us get the most out of it. I felt prepared for what we saw there and for what we experienced."

The ultimate lesson taught, Vigil says, was very much one of community and of supporting one another.

"If you want to go fast, go alone," she says, quoting a common Rwandan proverb. "But if you want to go far, go together."



FR. IGNACIMUTHU
Renowned scientist the Rev. Savarimuthu Ignacimuthu, SJ, PhD, DSc, will hold the Anna and Donald Waite Endowed Chair in Jesuit Education for the 2023-2024 academic year.

New Waite Chairholder Announced at Convocation

Creighton's next holder of the Anna and Donald Waite Endowed Chair in Jesuit Education for the 2023-2024 academic year is the Rev. Savarimuthu Ignacimuthu, SJ, PhD, DSc, a renowned scientist.

Fr. Ignacimuthu, a Jesuit priest, researcher and administrator from India, was the first vice chancellor of two state universities in India and also served for more than 20 years at the Entomology Research Institute at Loyola College in the city of Chennai.

He has published more than 800 research papers and 80 books, including college textbooks on biotechnology, bioinformatics, bioethics and the environment. Much of his research has focused on overcoming the ill effects of chemical pesticides on the environment and human health, as well as biopesticides to control insect pests.

The Waite Chair was established in 2011 by Donald Waite, BSC'54, and his wife, Anna, to augment the Jesuit presence at Creighton.



STROKE RESEARCH
Jee-Yeon Hwang, PhD, assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacology and Neuroscience, received a \$145,000 grant from the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, a division of the National Institutes of Health, to study improved recovery for stroke victims. Creighton undergraduate and graduate students, along with postdoctoral fellows, are involved in her research.

Cura Project Transforming Lives

Briann Clark wanted to eat better, get her Type 2 diabetes under control and improve her life. But she didn't feel like she could afford to. It just cost too much to be healthy.

That changed when she learned about the Cura Project, a Creighton-run program and study of Omahans with Type 2 diabetes. The Cura Project addresses food insecurity and economic instability to improve diabetes-related outcomes, seeking to prove that the path to better health runs right through the pocketbook.

Across four "interventions" in the 18-month program, Clark's finances, diet and life improved markedly. A financial social worker helped her find housing and connected her with resources

for her son, who has special needs. A biweekly “food pharmacy” provided free diabetic-friendly food to help her maintain her blood sugars (not to mention free up some of her income). A health coach showed her ways to prepare that food. And the Cura Project’s financial success program helped Clark open a savings account.

Stories like Clark’s are common among the 100 Omahans who have participated in the Cura Project. In the program, they have found a tangible source of good food and education. But just as important, they have found a bridge linking them to other invaluable community resources they weren’t even aware of, services that make life more manageable.

The cause and effect of so many of our ills — monetary or medical — is stress, says Julie Kalkowski, leader of the financial success component.

“If you’re stressed out of your mind about your money, you can’t think about eating healthy or planning ahead,” she says. “We have repeatedly seen that reducing financial stress also decreases other life stressors. When people feel like they have more control over their lives, life just gets better.”



NEH GRANT TO SUPPORT FIRST-GEN STUDENTS

Creighton and Arizona State University have been awarded a \$149,497 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to support a project for first-generation students to pursue healthcare professions. The funding runs through January 2025 and is expected to benefit 80 participating students (15 at Creighton and 25 at Arizona State per year).

© Carmen Bradley, left, a program supervisor with the Financial Success Program, meets with Briann Clark as part of the Cura Project’s financial success component.

Kalkowski is the executive director of the Financial Hope Collaborative (a Creighton financial education program that has graduated more than 1,000 participants since 2009). This is where the seed of the idea of the Cura Project first took root. The program started in 2021 with a \$2.3 million investment from the Diabetes Care Foundation. The Cura Project has since obtained \$500,000 in funding from UnitedHealthcare of Nebraska and, in December, \$1 million from a Nebraska Department of Economic Development Financial Literacy Grant.

The Cura Project is the only financial-medical partnership in Nebraska and one of just a dozen or so in the country. Part of what makes it so unique is its need for the kind of innovative and interdisciplinary approach Creighton thrives on.

The Cura Project is an interprofessional effort, made possible by students, faculty and staff in the Heider College of Business, the School of Medicine and the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, as well as the clinical team at CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center – University Campus, where the research is taking place.

The study’s lead investigators — pharmacy associate professors Nicole Gillespie White, PharmD’10, and Kevin Fuji, PharmD’07 — say the early data is promising.

“Diabetes, as much as any condition, is really significantly impacted by social determinants,” White says. “This is a disease affected deeply by poverty, food insecurity and stress, making it the ideal condition to study this wide range of financial and medical interventions.”

For all the good the Cura Project is already doing in the individual lives of its participants, the end game is to obtain results that can potentially be scaled up to an even larger and more transformative form of financial healthcare for all.

Residency Programs Aim to Combat Rural Physician Shortages

Rural hospitals across the country are facing challenges, including physician shortages. The School of Medicine in Omaha and its primary academic medical partner in the region, CHI Health, have created first-of-their-kind residency programs to give new medical graduates experience in both urban and rural areas.

Creighton’s Office of Graduate Medical Education and CHI Health have created hybrid rural tracks for internal medicine residents and psychiatry residents. Those accepted spend half of their residency training at CHI Health Creighton University Medical Center – Bergan Mercy in Omaha and the other half of their residency at CHI Health Good Samaritan in Kearney, Nebraska.

In Nebraska, 34% of the population lives in rural areas, which is higher than the national average. According to the Rural Health Information Hub, rural communities in Nebraska see higher death rates from cancers, lung disease, heart disease, stroke and trauma and higher diabetes rates when compared to Nebraska metropolitan areas. The



newly launched hybrid residency programs aim to increase access to healthcare in underserved rural communities.

The hybrid programs are not only the first of their kind in Nebraska; they also are the first in the country to gain the designation as an accredited rural track program by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education in which all medical residents gain both urban and rural experience, with more than half of the education and training taking place in rural areas.

Kilimanjaro Beckons Professor, Burn Survivors

When Kevin Foster, MD, a professor in the School of Medicine in Phoenix, was approached with an opportunity to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro, he jumped at the chance. Taking on “Kili” was appealing for the recreational hiker, but the thrill of the challenge wasn’t the main incentive.

Foster was more excited to join the other participants — burn survivors who had been admitted to the Arizona Burn Center at Valleywise Health, where Foster is the director. The expedition was initiated as a way to show what survivors can accomplish. For Foster, it was personal.

“I’m close with all of the survivors who climbed. I helped care for them.”

He wanted to support them from a medical standpoint and also notes, “I’m really lucky because I have this great job where, while I see people who are at their absolute worst, I get to watch them get better and really triumph over adversity.” It’s a powerful source of inspiration, and he knew the climb would provide more of the same.

The Kilimanjaro climb also served as a fundraiser for an expanded burn center. The project was an initiative of the Valleywise Health Foundation, the nonprofit 501(c)(3) partner supporting Valleywise Health, and K2 Adventure Travel.

The Arizona Burn Center is the premier regional burn center in the Southwest, treating thousands of patients each year. Valleywise Health is a member of the Creighton University Arizona Health Education Alliance and Creighton medical students and emergency medicine residents receive training at the burn center.

The new burn center will offer state-of-the-art facilities that emphasize patient- and family-focused care, with inpatient as well as ongoing outpatient care, treating psychological and emotional needs, too, and other essentials such as job retraining.

Over seven days in June 2022, 47 climbers — eight survivors and their supporters — along with guides and porters took on the mountain in Tanzania.

© From left, burn survivor Stephanie Nielson, Kevin Foster, MD, Michael Murphy and burn survivor Christian Nielson while climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

With chilly nights and full days of hiking, the climb took its toll. Some members of the group turned back before the final climb, but in the end, all eight of the burn survivors, along with Foster, made it to the top.

“It was just such a great relief to get there,” Foster says. “A lot of the survivors were still at the top when I got there, and I got to celebrate with them.”

And while the expedition was tough, Foster says, “It’s a piece of cake compared to what the burn survivors all went through.”

Survivors who made the climb included Christian and Stephanie Nielson, who were injured in a plane crash; Jason Nelson, who was burned over 80% of his body in a natural gas explosion; and Christin Lipinski, who had a rare bacterial infection. The eight survivors represented months of hospitalization, operations and immeasurable pain, but also triumph.

“It demonstrates the triumph of the human spirit. I know these people really well. I know what they’ve been through, and I knew that they would all work very hard to be successful at this, and they did. It was really rewarding, and a wonderful thing to watch and to be a part of.”

A documentary of the journey will premiere this year. The expedition raised more than \$350,000 for the new burn unit, set to open in late 2023.



AL-REFAIE NAMED SURGERY CHAIR

Waddah Al-Refaie, MD, is the new chair of the Department of Surgery at the School of Medicine Omaha campus and chair of the Department of Surgery for CHI Health Clinic. He will oversee and direct the clinical, research, education, academic and innovative missions of general surgery, colorectal, trauma/acute care surgery, cardiovascular and thoracic surgery at Creighton and CHI Health.



DAVE WEAVER



40 Years of Service and Justice

Above, a string connects Omaha to eastern Kentucky as the trip that launched a Creighton tradition. The blue pins represent trips taken to various locations throughout the years. To date, **7,466** participants have gone on **966** Service & Justice Trips.

LIKE SO MANY GREAT THINGS AT CREIGHTON, the Service & Justice Trips started small. In the spring of 1983, seven students — possessing little more than good intentions and a stack of peanut butter sandwiches — packed into a van and hit the road for a spring break trip to Kentucky.

Once the students arrived, their host, the Christian Appalachian Project, split them into two groups, dispatching them to the poverty-stricken coal-mining towns of Martin and Harlan, where they would visit the elderly, build steps, repair homes, clean yards, chop firewood and whatever was needed.

It wasn't, the students knew, the kind of work that changed the world. But it did end up changing *their* world. More than 900 miles from campus, they got to experience Creighton's values — and their own — in a whole new light.

There was no plan beyond the trip itself. They didn't intend to start an annual program. They weren't trying to form a student organization. They just wanted to help.

Now, reflecting on it 40 years later, those former students are a bit overwhelmed by what that first trip turned into — a program that has shaped the lives of thousands of alumni; a tradition so thoroughly woven into Creighton's DNA that it's hard to believe it hasn't existed since 1878.

The first seven students included Ellen Townley, BSN'83, Paul Pavlik, BSW'84, and his sister Katie Pavlik Hollmann, BA'87. The idea for a spring break service trip was Townley's, who had served in a summer program in Appalachia the previous year.

"Looking back," Townley says, "I realize the purpose of that first trip was twofold. One was to do something worthwhile. The other was to educate people and raise their consciousness and increase awareness of how things are in a different part of the country." — **BY MICAH MERTES**

Read more: A group of students, alumni and staff reflect on four decades of Service & Justice Trips — from that first ride to Kentucky through today. Visit alumni.creighton.edu/news-events/news/service-justice-trips-anniversary or scan the QR code to read more.



Zaruba Lands Obama Foundation Scholarship

It has been an exciting year for Creighton student Liza Zaruba who is among 100 recipients of the inaugural Obama-Chesky Voyager Scholarships for Public Service.

She was already having an over-the-top academic experience in the fall at the University of Sydney in Australia through a Creighton-sponsored study abroad program. Then, in November, she and the other Voyagers were invited to the two-day Obama Foundation Democracy Forum in New York City.

The forum gathered together additional program participants in the Obama Foundation Network, leaders of nations and others, to facilitate discussions on strengthening democracy.

"To hold a seat at the table with individuals who hold such foresight and unbridled aspirations for change is incredibly energizing," Zaruba says.

She says the students participated in a live Q&A with former President Barack Obama and Airbnb co-founder and CEO Brian Chesky.

Planning to attend medical school, Zaruba is majoring in health administration and policy with minors in

#CreightonMatch
Match Day
2023

IT'S A MATCH

Graduating Creighton School of Medicine students in Omaha and Phoenix learned of their medical residencies during Match Day ceremonies in March. Of the 165 participating Creighton students, 92% matched into their specialty of choice in 20 different specialties, with programs in 30 states.

© Liza Zaruba during her study-abroad trip to Australia. Zaruba was chosen from 1,800 applicants as one of 100 recipients of the inaugural Obama-Chesky Voyager Scholarships for Public Service.

biology, public health and global health equity. Her goal is to improve health systems in poorer parts of the world.

The scholarship provides financial aid to students seeking a career in public service, meaningful travel experiences to expand their horizons, and a network of mentors and leaders to support them.

Funded by a \$100 million contribution from Chesky, the scholarships apply to juniors and seniors, with a maximum of \$25,000 per year for tuition or other education-related expenses. Recipients also receive \$10,000 to design a "summer voyage" between their junior and senior years to pursue internship or self-designed experiences anywhere in the world, while using Airbnb travel credits to stay in Airbnbs. Recipients also receive a 10-year, post-graduation Airbnb travel allowance of \$2,000 a year to encourage continued international exposure.

Eighteen hundred students applied for 100 scholarships. Zaruba says it was a stunning moment when she saw her award notification in her email inbox.

"I was sitting in one of my classes on a random Monday going through my inbox when I stumbled on it," she says. "It said, 'Congratulations, you've been selected.' I looked at it for about 10

minutes, thinking it was some kind of spam email. This really was my dream scholarship," she says.

Zaruba's summer experience will be in Geneva, Switzerland, and will involve medical resource distribution and trade-related issues within low-resource settings.

Creighton Nursing, CHI Health Grant to Impact Behavioral Health Workforce

Creighton and CHI Health have received \$499,964 from the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska to help develop, recruit and retain Nebraska's behavioral health workforce. The funding is part of the American Rescue Plan Act.

"This is an innovative project that combines the resources of the College of Nursing and CHI Health to address the critical shortage of psychiatric-mental healthcare in Nebraska," says Catherine Todero, PhD, BSN'72, dean of the College of Nursing and vice provost for Health Sciences Campuses. "We believe expanding the scope of practice for primary care nurse practitioners by adding certification in psychiatric-mental health will bring this vital service quickly to areas where it is desperately needed."

In this project, current family, pediatric and/or adult acute geriatric nurse practitioners employed by CHI Health in Nebraska will be provided the opportunity to become dually certified as psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioners in a one-year online program. The program will allow for a rapid increase in the behavioral health workforce of Nebraska.

Potential candidates will be recruited, and those eligible for the program will receive scholarships to Creighton's one-year postgraduate psychiatric-mental health nurse practitioner certificate program.

This project is designed to expedite increases in the behavioral health



provider workforce in rural Nebraska. Nebraska is acutely experiencing a gap of available psychiatric-mental health providers to meet current needs. Eighty-eight of 93 counties in Nebraska are designated as a mental health provider shortage area, with 29 counties lacking the existence of any behavioral health professional.

Ebner Channels *Star Wars* to Teach Conflict Resolution

During his 15 years teaching conflict resolution at Creighton, Noam Ebner reached an important conclusion: Darth Vader should have sweetened his offer to Luke Skywalker.

It could have saved a lot of trouble, even as it rendered the post-Death Star story of galactic struggle between darkness and light less tenable. There are, after all, as Obi-Wan Kenobi assures an irate but poorly armed Han Solo in the original *Star Wars* movie, “alternatives to fighting.”

Ebner, a professor of negotiation and conflict resolution in the Heider College of Business, is a self-described *Star Wars* nerd who takes a wry delight in explaining how lessons about conflict resolution may be gleaned from the epic space opera now beloved by several generations across the globe. Compare, for example, the hostility and fighting around the table characteristic of dark-side conferences, to the vigorous but collaborative process displayed by the rebel/resistance forces.

Note also, Ebner says, Vader’s brilliant but ultimately flawed negotiating strategy as he tries to persuade his son, Luke Skywalker, to join him on the dark side. “Join me,” he says, “and we’ll rule the galaxy together as father and son.” The Sith Lord offers both power and family connection but fails to recognize that Luke has embraced different values. And so, he loses an opportunity to win the son by letting those values shape the governance of the galaxy.

It’s a fun approach to learning, and

Ebner is eager to tell the world about it. In fact, he and 24 fellow *Star Wars* aficionados teaching at universities around the world have done so in a newly released book, *Star Wars and Conflict Resolution: There Are Alternatives to Fighting*. The book constitutes the first step toward embodying a conviction Ebner has long carried that popular culture can be used as a vehicle to teach not only university students, but humanity in general, that conflict resolution need not involve blowing up Death Stars.

“For years, a lot of teachers, me included, have used bits and pieces of popular culture to clarify an idea or to give a demonstration in class,” he says.

“Pop culture is a very powerful engine. The question I am asking is, ‘How can we hitch the wagon of conflict resolution, and some basic conflict literacy, to that vehicle in a way that will open a channel to the general public?’”

Arizona Awards \$11.9 Million to Provide Next-Generation Nursing Education

The College of Nursing has been awarded \$11.9 million from the Arizona Department of Health Services. Of that total, \$5.9 million will go toward scholarships for 80 accelerated nursing students and supporting their success with the hiring of an additional academic counselor, a clinical placement



© Nursing students Marley Walke, left, and Dylan Sneed work through an obstetrics simulation in the Phoenix campus’ simulation suite.

coordinator and a program manager. The other \$6 million will go toward further enhancing Creighton’s campus in Phoenix, pushing forward the University’s intentional plan to create cutting-edge academic spaces to help meet the future healthcare needs of Arizona.

“Creighton’s commitment to Arizona has been longstanding and this investment will strengthen our ability to provide the state with highly trained nurses,” says the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD, Creighton president.

Nurses who graduate from Creighton’s accelerated 12-month program with this scholarship will be clinic-ready and committed to working in Arizona for at least four years, ultimately creating a more talented and diverse nursing workforce within the state.

“We are grateful for this support and the recognition that Creighton’s national reputation for excellence will help to attract some of the best and brightest students to Arizona,” says Catherine Toderò, PhD, BSN’72, dean of the College of Nursing and vice provost of Health Sciences Campuses. “By providing exceptional nursing education and meaningful clinical experiences, Creighton is equipping graduates to serve and succeed in Arizona, delivering a significant return on investment for the state.”



BIG EAST RESEARCH
Creighton student Rhiannon McCracken, a biochemistry major, placed third at the BIG EAST Undergraduate Research Symposium held in March at Madison Square Garden in New York. The symposium is held in conjunction with the BIG EAST Men’s Basketball Tournament. It brings together top undergraduate research students from BIG EAST universities to present research posters to expert panels.

ARRUPE GLOBAL SCHOLAR

Meet Celine Rukiidi

As a member of the first cohort of Creighton’s Arrupe Global Scholars Program, **Celine Rukiidi** was drawn to the University’s mission and Jesuit tradition of service. She says she wanted to train at an institution that would teach her how to care for the whole person. As an Arrupe Global Scholar, Rukiidi is learning about global health and health equity.

At the end of the five-year program, she will have earned a medical degree and a master’s degree in public health, and she will be equipped with the knowledge to make a difference on a global scale. Rukiidi shares some thoughts about her experience in the newly formed program.

What made you decide to study medicine?

I knew I wanted to pursue a career as a physician from a very young age. My mom went to nursing school when I was a toddler, and I believe this exposure sparked my interest in healthcare. Additionally, my parents raised me with an acute awareness to global suffering due to their own challenges accessing healthcare.

I was born in New Jersey. However, I spent most of my upbringing in Canada. Ethnically, I am Rwandan and Ugandan. The Rwandan genocide and HIV epidemic in Uganda are two events that I grew up hearing a lot about. I could not think of a better career — one that will combine my interests and allow me to advocate for social justice and global equity — than becoming a physician.

What has your experience been like so far?

Being a member of the first cohort of the Arrupe Global Scholars has been a complete honor. The close-knit community we have formed has been an unexpected and consequential blessing of the program. Jason Beste, BS’03, MD’08, our program director, has been an outstanding mentor throughout our first year of medical school.

What did you do during your two-week orientation in the Dominican Republic?

Our time in the Dominican Republic was focused on introducing us to the basics of global health. We spent time listening to the stories of locals and understanding what healthcare looks like in different settings — whether that was rural communities, called *campos*, or in the busy city of Santiago. We acquainted ourselves with ongoing projects that the Institute for Latin American Concern (ILAC) and Creighton have. We had lectures where we learned the fundamentals of global health.

What are your long-term career goals?

Following medical school and residency, I hope to split my time between working in the U.S. and abroad. While in the U.S., I plan to work with marginalized patient populations, with a specific focus on refugees and immigrants. For my time outside of the U.S., I hope to practice medicine, teach and possibly work for a nongovernmental organization (NGO) in Rwanda.





How is the 'White-and-the-Blue' Embracing Green?

BY EUGENE CURTIN

Laudato si' provided the inspiration. Creighton students, faculty, staff and administration listened, and now Andrew Baruth, PhD, is tasked with guiding sustainability efforts on campus.

The 2015 papal encyclical, *Laudato si'* ("Praise Be to You"), published two years into the papacy of Pope Francis, urges "care for our common home" by resisting environmental degradation and global warming, encouraging responsible development, reigning in consumerism and embracing sustainability practices.

In 2017, Creighton President the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD, signed the global St. Francis/*Laudato si'* Pledge, thus renewing Creighton's commitment to building a culture of environmental care.

That act, Baruth says, marked the beginning of a determined push to embrace sustainability practices.

"It was really at that point that the idea of sustainability became very intentional here," Baruth says. "Before that there were some ad hoc sustainability initiatives from some staff and faculty, but there was no obvious effort coming from a central hub or from a central office dedicated to the purpose."

Now, there is.

Baruth, former associate professor of physics at Creighton and a leader in the field of solar technology, is the second, newly appointed director of the University's Office of Sustainability Programs, which is now a three-person office committed to guiding Creighton's embrace of the papal encyclical.



Baruth

Creighton's student body led the way, Baruth says, by successfully pushing to eliminate some single-use plastics on campus and by urging University administrators to begin disinvesting in fossil-fuel companies. Students rose to the occasion during the COVID-19 pandemic by establishing a composting system that continues to provide soil for Omaha community gardens, and by promoting the use of reusable crockery and silverware.

"A boldness emerged from the encyclical that inspired students to take action and to make sure that administration, staff and faculty were taking it as seriously as they did," Baruth says. "A lot of what we are doing now reflects that."

Creighton's campus today is a place where energy use is monitored everywhere, sometimes inspiring a competitive spirit among students in residential halls. Buildings old and new are constantly examined for efficiencies, new buildings are designed to reduce campus square footage while maximizing efficiencies, and innovations such as LED lighting and solar panels are retrofitted to existing buildings and incorporated in new construction.



Even relatively new buildings such as the School of Dentistry, which was completed in the fall of 2018, are subjected to regular inspections to identify areas that can be updated and improved.

"We are constantly reviewing buildings, even spaces that don't feel particularly old," Baruth says. "We have an outside company that comes in and basically goes top to bottom looking for potential inefficiencies. There are always new technologies coming out, so the question becomes, 'Can we do this better?'"

Well, yes, we can, which is why the roof of the new CL and Rachel Werner Center for Health Sciences Education currently arising along Cuming Street near the North Freeway, will be covered in solar panels, and why solar technology will be incorporated into the new Graves residence hall.

"It is a great thing that as we build new buildings — and as everybody has noticed we are in a period of building — some type of solar integration and building efficiency is always a piece of the conversation," Baruth says.

At the very heart of Creighton's commitment is the Sustainable Creighton Initiative (SCI), a plan to focus on greenhouse gas emission reduction and waste diversion through 2028. For Baruth, the SCI constitutes a road map, a critical resource in Creighton's path forward.

"I think that is the big success story in our effort to address *Laudato si'*," Baruth says. "Between 60 and 70 people worked on that document. It wasn't just a top-down directive. It was really an inclusive process where students and faculty and staff in different schools and colleges all came together."

"I was part of that almost two-year task force. It gave us a document that said these are the priorities and this is how we think we're going to get there. It laid out a road map so now we have well-defined goals and methodologies to get there."

Finally, Baruth says, sustainability drives are about more than emissions. They are about hope.

"I don't want our students to feel that we are doomed to some fate that is a foregone conclusion, but that we can take actionable steps," he says. "The Sustainable Creighton Initiative lets students be part of that solution. I find that very encouraging."

A Decade in the BIG EAST

When Creighton officially joined a reconfigured BIG EAST Conference at 12:01 a.m. on July 1, 2013, it marked the beginning of an exciting new era not only for Creighton Athletics but for the University itself. Then-President the Rev. Timothy Lannon, SJ, EdD, BS'73, called the University's entrance into the BIG EAST, which was home to seven (now nine) Catholic schools, a "match made in heaven."

Today, the conference is thriving, with 11 nationally prominent colleges and universities finding success in athletic competition, in the classroom and beyond. Creighton President the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD, who serves as president of the BIG EAST's Board of Directors, says the conference is well positioned for a future of preeminence.



10

BIG EAST
tournament titles

16

BIG EAST
conference titles

9

BIG EAST
Coach of the Year
honors

27

BIG EAST
Team Academic
Excellence Awards

45

BIG EAST
Player of the Year
honors

15

CoSIDA Academic
All-Americans

Above numbers as of March 30, 2023

In Their Own Words

Creighton's current and former athletic directors and six coaches who have been at Creighton since the move to the BIG EAST Conference in 2013 reflect on what the move to the conference has meant for Creighton, its athletic programs and its student-athletes.

"It's getting our excellent athletic and academic programs noticed. It's attracting quality students and quality professors to teach them. It's a fantastic conference, and I'm excited for the ways it will continue to put the University on the map."

Marcus Blossom
McCormick Endowed
Athletic Director



"There's no question that being in the BIG EAST has raised our profile. It's been transformative and continues to catapult our institution."

Kirsten Bernthal Booth
Volleyball Head Coach



"I think I was most impressed by how the student-athletes handled the transition. It was a huge adjustment, but I never heard a complaint out of them. They just looked forward to the new opportunities being in the BIG EAST presented us."

Ed Servais
Baseball Head Coach



"I remember when Rass was talking to us about the move, he said, 'This isn't just for Athletics. It's for the whole University.'"

Tom Lilly, BA'93
Men's and Women's
Tennis Head Coach



"We were walking into a world that we knew was going to be pretty cool, even if we didn't really know how to navigate it yet. But it's ended up being a great ride."

Greg McDermott
Men's Basketball Head Coach



"There's no question in my mind that Creighton is in a better place for having gone to the BIG EAST. Was it a risk? Yes. But I think if you look at what it's done for our programs and the University over the last decade, it would be very hard to say it wasn't the right decision."

Jim Flanery, BA'87
Women's Basketball Head Coach



"The No. 1 thing it's helped me in is recruiting. My job is about a lot more than coaching my players on how to hit a golf ball. The most important thing is the relationships you're building with these kids."

Debbie Conry, BA'77
Women's Golf Head Coach



"With all of our sports, what I'm most proud of is that on a much more national platform, we've been able to demonstrate through our athletics programs that to a team, they love each other, they love the sport they're playing, they love the fans."

Bruce "Rass" Rasmussen
Former McCormick Endowed
Athletic Director

Building Healthy

BY EUGENE CURTIN

Creighton is collaborating across disciplines in Omaha and Phoenix to find innovative ways to create vibrant and healthy communities by ■ **narrowing disparities in healthcare** ■ **inspiring the next generation of diverse, compassionate healthcare professionals** ■ **addressing critical determinants of health including financial literacy, juvenile justice, mental health and healthy eating**

Though the striking new buildings transforming Creighton's campus earn frequent notice, and though the University's exciting sports programs build name recognition across the United States, another aspect of life at Creighton exerts a quiet but transformational influence on the lives of ordinary people.

An expansive understanding of what constitutes "community health" is guiding the University's outreach into underserved communities. This effort encompasses traditional healthcare education along with teaching financial literacy; pursues juvenile justice, healthy eating, diabetes education, classes and video presentations about mental health; offers guidance for African American seniors navigating confusing healthcare systems; and connects people to health resources in the Omaha community, which includes Creighton's own low-cost or free community clinics.

This tradition of community service exists also in Phoenix, where Creighton has long

maintained educational partnerships with healthcare institutions and in 2021 opened its own newly built health sciences campus. Community involvement is woven into its educational curriculum.

Among the agencies and organizations benefiting from the involvement of Creighton's Phoenix-based health sciences students who gain experience on the way to graduation, are: the St. Vincent de Paul Society, a partnership made possible by a \$10 million, 2021 investment from the Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust that aims to increase access to healthcare for uninsured patients; First Place, which provides housing for adults with autism and Down syndrome; Gigi's Playhouse, a community center for people with Down syndrome; Huger Mercy, an assisted living center for people with dementia; Ability 360, which provides personal care attendants for people of all ages with disabilities; and the Special Olympics.

In Omaha and its surrounding areas, Creighton's community health outreach is well established and continues to grow — stretching

out through a network of partnerships, including those with schools and nonprofit organizations, connecting students and faculty with those in need of care.

In the heart of historic North Omaha, at the Highlander building, an integral part of the Seventy Five North housing complex, Creighton leases approximately 4,000 square feet of space, where, together with such community icons as the Charles Drew Health Center and Metropolitan Community College, it carries healthcare knowledge from Creighton's campus to the doorsteps of ordinary people.

"It's consistent with this broader idea that health is not just administering medications but also about the social and economic conditions that impact health," says LaShaune Johnson, PhD, associate professor of public health at Creighton and director of Creighton University at Highlander.

"That's why we were so excited last year when we started partnering with the Creighton School of Law, because we know that people need help to engage with our social systems so

Communities



ILLUSTRATION BY ANNA GODEASSI



ALEJANDRA BUCON

“It’s consistent with this broader idea that health is not just administering medications but also about the social and economic conditions that impact health.”

LASHAUNE JOHNSON, PHD
Associate Professor of Public Health
Director of Creighton University at Highlander



DAVE WEAVER



JIM FACKLER

© **Top left:** John Anwar, MD, the Virginia G. Piper Chair of Medicine at Creighton and chief medical officer at St. Vincent de Paul’s Virginia G. Piper Medical Clinic in Phoenix, with a patient at the clinic. **Top right:** Julie Kalkowski, left, and Deborah Dogba, a participant in the Financial Success Program through the Financial Hope Collaborative, housed in the Heider College of Business. **Bottom left:** LaShaune Johnson, PhD, at the Creighton University at Highlander.

they can remake their lives. If they don’t, their health will probably be impacted.”

Creighton’s Highlander-based activities touch many challenges facing underserved communities.

“A keystone program is helping people complete their high school diploma, because education is tightly linked to healthcare outcomes,” Johnson says.

Guided by John Gallion Jr., MS’15, director of Creighton’s Educational Opportunity Center, the program offers adult basic education courses and college enrollment assistance.

“Then, we had a grant from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine to educate African Americans about mental health,” Johnson says.

Co-investigated by Kathryn Onorato, MS’15, EdD’22, program manager for Creighton’s Center for Interprofessional Practice, Education and Research (CIPER), and Elizabeth Kiscaden, University librarian, the grant funded the “Sick and Tired” project.

“We partnered with providers of color in Omaha and other cities to do videos and presentations about mental health, both online and physically for people who couldn’t access Zoom,” Johnson says. “We know communities that experience digital disparities also experience health disparities.”

Julie Kalkowski, executive director of the Financial Hope Collaborative at the Heider College of Business, reduces financial stress for families in the Omaha area through financial education and coaching. By focusing on monthly cash flow management, participants begin to feel in control of their finances and move toward financial stability and away from late fees, shut-off notices and overdraft fees.

Such knowledge might not seem especially related to healthcare, but Kalkowski begs to differ. A clinical trial on the Financial Hope Collaborative’s model, she says, found reductions in smoking and fast-food consumption along with increases in income, promotions and school attendance.

“In America, the higher your income, the better your health, and the lower your income, the worse your health,” Kalkowski says. “For example, the life expectancy in the 68111 ZIP code is 60 years compared to 80 for people in the 68132 ZIP code.

“Less than five miles separates North Omaha in 68111 and the Dundee/Fairacres area in 68132. That might be Exhibit A for highlighting health disparities in Omaha.”

Like Johnson, Kalkowski pursues her mission from the Highlander building, and she does it with an empathy born of repeated exposure to the financial storms endured by single mothers and struggling families.

“People work very hard, but they’re still not making it,” she says. “They just don’t have time to create a realistic budget when they are working two jobs and trying to raise their kids. It’s a lot of stress for people earning low wages. Meal planning, or starting an exercise program, is not top of mind when you are worried about a shut-off notice.”

Still, health should be monitored.

That’s where Sade Kosoko-Lasaki, MD, MBA’05, comes in. As associate vice provost at Creighton, professor of ophthalmology, preventive medicine and public health at the School of Medicine and director of the Department of Health Sciences-Multicultural and Community Affairs (HS-MACA), Kosoko-Lasaki plays many roles, none more vigorously than leading HS-MACA’s community outreach activities from Creighton’s Hixson-Lied Science Building.

Since 2000, when she created HS-MACA, Kosoko-Lasaki has drummed up grant money to fund a wide range of outreach activities. The latest of these is a \$3 million federal grant to train 240 volunteer community health workers.

“Many people have questions about healthcare, about where to go and whom to see,” Kosoko-Lasaki says. “These community health workers live right there in the neighborhoods, trusted neighbors who can answer questions about accessing healthcare services, who understand healthcare needs and can promote individual wellness from chronic diseases that are highly prevalent in minority communities.”

This latest HS-MACA outreach builds on a long history of working with youth and young adults, which has seen the department since its 2000 creation impact the lives of more than 15,000 students through pipeline programs



© **Photo above:** Jillian Wallen, BDS, dean of the School of Dentistry, right, with dental student Silvia Nweze-Okudo in the adult dental clinic. The dental school serves more than 14,000 patients annually. **Photo right:** Medical students Elise Tidwell, left, and Matthew Merwin prepare to see patients at the student-run Magis Clinic at the Siena Francis House in Omaha.



that, beginning in the fourth grade, guide them toward a college education. The department also operates a Mini Health Science School, which similarly guides local children toward a health sciences professional education.

HS-MACA is not alone in focusing on children. The University's new Mini Medical School, operating in Omaha and Phoenix, along with academic service-learning work led by Vicki Bautista, EdD'18, are important components of Creighton's juvenile outreach.

Mini Medical School, a program of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion in the School of Medicine, works with underrepresented fourth- through 12th-grade students whose parents never graduated from college. A variety of interactive activities stimulate interest in medicine and health as these youth learn what it takes to apply to medical school.

Bautista, who teaches in the Master of Integrative Health and Wellness program in the Department of Family and Community Medicine in the medical school, leads another outreach effort.

Having previously taught tobacco cessation to high school students and then managing health and wellness programming at Offutt Air Force Base, Bautista now partners with FitGirl Inc. to empower girls and young women to build healthy lifestyles by engaging in outdoor, multisport activities.

"I really believe in the mission of that organization, which is to empower young girls between the ages of 8 and 16 to think of health and wellness more holistically," Bautista says. "Right now, some of the girls are training with

“Population health is a team sport, requiring the alignment of diverse perspectives and expertise to improve equity in health and healthcare. There is a great opportunity to make population health an embodiment of Creighton’s social justice mission.”

SCOTT SHIPMAN, MD
CyncHealth Endowed Chair for Population Health

the Creighton rowing team with the goal of participating in a 5K challenge.”

The collaboration works for everyone, she says.

“Most nonprofits don’t have enough personnel, so if my students can help, and they also get some real-world experience, then it’s a win-win for everybody.”

Back at the Highlander, Creighton is harnessing the power of healthy foods and nutrition education to help improve health outcomes. Tom Lenz, BA'92, PharmD'99, MA'17, professor of family and community medicine, partners with the Charles Drew Health Center and Whispering Roots, a nonprofit dedicated to bringing nutrition education to urban communities.

“Food pharmacies,” as they are popularly known, began appearing across the country some five to 10 years ago, Lenz says, with the goal of providing healthy food and education to those experiencing significant economic hardship who have been diagnosed with a chronic disease such as diabetes.

Creighton’s program, “The Enrichment Co-op,” began in 2019.

“We provide education on basic nutrition and healthy eating, especially related to diabetes, and provide healthy recipes that can help manage blood sugar levels,” Lenz says.

Providing healthcare for the excluded has always been part of Creighton’s mission. From bustling campus clinics — such as those at the School of Dentistry, where low-cost dentistry has been provided since 1905 — to a number of community clinics and partnerships — such as the student-run Magis Clinic, located at the Siena Francis House, Nebraska’s largest provider of services to individuals experiencing homelessness — serving the healthcare needs of the community, while educating the next generation of compassionate healthcare professionals, is in Creighton’s DNA.

As the future beckons, Creighton is planning.

Scott Shipman, MD, who since Sept. 1, 2022, has held Creighton’s CyncHealth Endowed Chair for Population Health, is charged with establishing a University-wide focus in population health. This work will center on implementation, research and evaluation, and training for innovations in clinical practice that support high-value care, alongside community-engaged population health initiatives.

Formerly the national director of clinical innovations and the physician lead for primary care and workforce initiatives for the Association of American Medical Colleges, Shipman will work with leaders of Creighton’s health sciences programs in Omaha and Phoenix, as well as the University’s other colleges, in a joint effort to build a Population Health Institute.

“Creighton has a long history of outstanding work by individuals committed to serving the health and well-being of the community,” Shipman says. “Every school at Creighton has much to offer to positively impact population health, at the level of the health system, the community, the state and beyond.

“Population health is a team sport, requiring the alignment of diverse perspectives and expertise to improve equity in health and healthcare. There is a great opportunity to

make population health an embodiment of Creighton’s social justice mission.”

A major element of this endeavor will be a partnership between Creighton and CHI Health, as well as CyncHealth’s Nebraska Healthcare Collaborative, to establish research, policy and practical expertise for evaluating the impact and return on investment of population health interventions.

All of this, from exposing youths in underserved communities to possible careers in healthcare, helping people understand their legal rights or complete a high school education, and helping underserved communities better navigate the maze of healthcare services, reflects a historic calling.

“It all really connects to Creighton’s mission and its Jesuit values,” says Bautista, “which is to support the community. It’s in our heart to do that.”

Creighton Community Health Outreach Initiative Praised on First Anniversary

A LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR AFTER its founding, the Creighton Community Collaborative was celebrated during a joint press conference between Creighton University officials and then-Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts.

The collaborative, which is made possible by a \$5.4 million multiyear investment from UnitedHealthcare and Nebraska Medicaid, seeks to improve the health of vulnerable families by creating community-based projects that address the main social determinants of health — access to housing, food and healthcare.

The executive steering committee of the collaborative includes representatives from Creighton University, the Douglas County Health Department and community members.

Maureen Tierney, MD, associate dean of clinical research and public health at the School of Medicine, and Ashley Aubry, assistant professor in the School of Dentistry and public health hygienist for the Healthy Smiles dental sealant program, represented Creighton at the press conference, which was held in December.

“What we endeavor to do is measure the success of each program to determine if it’s working — then we define outcomes tailored to specific projects to see if the interventions have been successful,” Tierney says. “So far, we have provided support for 15 community-based programs, some new and some already existing.”

UnitedHealthcare and Medicaid funding has made Creighton programs like Healthy Smiles and the Cura (diabetes) Project not only possible but has allowed them to expand.

“This expansion has helped us grow so that we can be in more places at once and more effectively serve our community,” Aubry says.

Jeff Stafford, CEO of the UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Nebraska, says UnitedHealthcare seeks to reduce disparities in healthcare access.

“We want to help strengthen the infrastructure of key community-based organizations,” he says. “Our mission is to serve the needs of Nebraskans through innovative programs and community investments that reduce disparities and increase access to high-quality care.”

Spirituality, religion and the experience of sports is a topic of ongoing study and research for two Creighton professors

Sports & Spirituality

BY EUGENE CURTIN

POOR OLD GOD. There stand the multitudes, their praying hands begging divine favor upon the soccer player about to take a game-winning penalty kick. Discordant voices, however – hands also joined in supplication – beg favor on the goalkeeper.

What's the Creator to do? Like foxholes, there are no atheists in sports, not, at least, when everything's at stake. Indeed, it has often been observed that in some places – New York City, perhaps, or Manchester, England – sport carries the flavor of religion, complete with cathedral-like stadiums and generational piety.

This relationship between the human experience of religious faith and its kindred expression in sports has been the subject of much thought at Creighton, especially in the work of Max Engel, PhD, associate professor in education and theology, and Jay Carney, PhD, associate professor of theology.

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHANIE DALTON COWAN

“As the Jesuits would say, you find God in all things, not only in explicitly religious activities but everywhere.”

JAY CARNEY, PHD
Associate Professor of Theology

© Max Engel, PhD, left, and Jay Carney, PhD, are co-authors of *On the Eighth Day: A Catholic Theology of Sport* and teach the theology course Sport and Spirituality.



“As the Jesuits would say, you find God in all things, not only in explicitly religious activities but everywhere,” Carney says. “We have found that often the most profound experience students have of the transcendent, of moral formation, of community and relationship, have come not necessarily in a formal church setting but through a sports team.”

And, of course, less edifying elements too, such as cheating, betrayal, the full spectrum of human experience, the good and the bad.

“In some ways,” Engel says, “you might argue that sports teach valuable lessons, but the research says that you have to be really clear about what is being taught because sports unfortunately can tap into our basest tribalistic mentalities.”

“Sports can act as a proxy for economic, social and cultural differences such as we see in Scotland, where the historical Protestant/Catholic divide has shaped the conflict between the Glasgow Rangers and Glasgow Celtic soccer teams.”

RELIGIOUS IMPULSE, PASSIONS UNLEASHED

The two Creighton professors are clearly on to something. Chess grandmasters do not run around celebrating checkmate. Stage actors do not pause the proceedings to punch the air after a well-delivered oration.

So, why does sport inspire such obeisances? What is the relationship between the religious impulse and the passions unleashed by sports?

Addressing these questions caused Engel and Carney last year to join forces with Matt Hoven, PhD, associate professor of sport and religion at the University of Alberta in Canada, to publish *On the Eighth Day: A Catholic Theology*

of Sport. The book resulted in Engel being invited to a 2022 Vatican conference on inclusivity in sports. If that weren’t reward enough, he met briefly with Pope Francis, himself a sports enthusiast, who was given a copy of the book.

The conference cast light on the significance of sports to the human experience as understood by the Catholic Church. Titled “Sport for All: Cohesive, Accessible and Tailored to Each Person,” the conference encouraged participants to break down barriers to sports involvement for as wide a spectrum of people as possible. The conference identified longstanding issues of disability, gender and income as barriers, but also the development of what might be described as “sports cartels” in whose hands the business of sports is increasingly concentrated.

“Whether it’s the European Super League, or UCLA and USC joining the Big Ten, or the increasing expense and professionalization of youth sports with 10-year-olds going to tournaments in Florida and California and Las Vegas, the conference represented a prophetic voice calling us to recognize that sports are not to be commodified, that sports are for everyone to encounter, because in sports people encounter each other, themselves, and, ultimately, God,” Engel says.

The theology course (Sport and Spirituality) that he and Carney teach at Creighton follows that path.

“The course starts with the premise that most students are familiar with and enjoy sports, both participating and viewing,” Engel says.

“But students are rarely asked what sports have to do with their religious faith and spirituality, or how sports can contribute to or detract from cultivating a more just and equitable society. Key to this is our claim that sports

Science and Tech Help Creighton Athletes Soar

Ultimately, athletes must sink the basket, get on base and run the miles. Although that never changes, Creighton University support staff are developing ever more scientific methods to help them succeed.

From computer chips in basketballs gathering data from devices attached to players’ shoes, to specially crafted shoes that help cross-country athletes run better and recover quicker, to teams of student analysts conducting baseball analytics so thoroughly that their services were recruited by the NCAA Men’s College World Series, Creighton is exploring new frontiers in sports science.

Creighton’s cross-country program has benefited from donor generosity that has made possible the purchase of Nike “super shoes” that feature high-performance upgrades shown to reduce injury, speed recovery and boost performance.

“These items have had a profound impact on our program and elevated our performance,” says cross-country head coach Chris Gannon. “Because of our donors, we are continuing to provide our student-athletes with the tools they need to perform at their best, and we’re building a program that gets better every year.”

Creighton basketball players, for their part, are charging the basket with charged-up

basketballs. The computer chips embedded in the balls enable vast data collection that lets coaches assess the strengths and weaknesses of players as well as the effectiveness, or not, of shots from various distances and parts of the court.

As Greg McDermott, men’s basketball head coach, told Omaha television station KETV, “It’s one thing as a coach to tell a guy what I think I see. It’s a little bit better when I have the data to back it up.”

Students on the Creighton Baseball Analytics Team (CBAT) know all about data.

CBAT is a prolific source of stats for Creighton’s baseball coaches, assisting scouting and baseball theory. With 15 members gathering data, crunching numbers and making numerical sense of what happens on the field, this Heider College of Business-associated group has made analytics an important part of the baseball program.

So effective have they been that the NCAA Men’s College World Series came calling in 2022, asking CBAT to handle analytics for the tournament.

“Our program started with one guy and a notebook at Creighton games,” says Rourke Jensen, student director of CBAT. “Three years later, we have a team of 15 being asked to work the (College) World Series.”

© Creighton cross-country runner Anika Nettekoven competes wearing the Nike high-performance shoes.





© David Weber, JD, professor of law, is one of four Creighton faculty members teaching an NIL course for student-athletes.

REBECCA GRATZ

NIL Course Guides Students Through Dangers, Toils and Snares

Name, Image and Likeness. When the U.S. Supreme Court held the NCAA in violation of antitrust law on June 21, 2021, four Creighton professors saw emerging a new and more complicated world of student-athlete remuneration.

So, they created a four-module course titled Seminar in Business: NIL Issues for Student-Athletes. The course is designed to guide student-athletes through the potential pitfalls of a new world in which large amounts of money potentially could come their way.

David Weber, JD, professor in the School of Law, teaches legal issues. Personal branding is taught by Tim McMahon, PhD, associate professor of practice. The basics of running a small business are addressed by Tim Bastian, instructor in economics and finance; while financial planning is taught by Kenny Washer, DBA, professor of economics and finance.

The court's decision itself, Weber says, was not particularly revolutionary, merely blocking on antitrust grounds the NCAA's cap on education-related benefits. But the NCAA saw that broader rulings on the commercial use of athletes' names, images and likenesses were just a matter of time, so the governing body of collegiate sports wrote new rules.

The Seminar in Business course responds to that new world.

"We are trying to give some financial tools to these student-athletes so that when they do get an NIL deal, they are doing everything necessary to put themselves on the best financial and legal footing going forward," Weber says.

Though the course is currently available only to student-athletes, Weber says he hopes it will eventually be made available to the whole student body.

"I think a lot of students would be interested in this," he says. "Even if they are not student-athletes, I think there is a high amount of interest about, well, what is NIL? We hear about it on the news, but we don't really know. We hear about this Supreme Court decision, but we don't really understand it.

"So, I think this could be a foundation for a very successful course widely available to other students."

serve as a distillation of human experience that includes hope, joy, suffering, relationships and disappointment.

"What do these experiences mean in sports? In life? And ultimately, what do these experiences mean when viewed through a theological lens?"

A RECEPTIVE STUDENT RESPONSE

Students prove receptive to this line of inquiry, Engel says, because the reality of loss, suffering, disappointment and other foundational human emotions are much more present to them through the experience of sports than through a theology class.

"For many of them, sports have been central to their identity and sense of self, which offers yet another fruitful opportunity for reflection and personal, spiritual growth," Engel says, all critical elements of a Jesuit education.

Interesting and novel as this line of inquiry may be, potential students should know that the course involves far more than watching and discussing ESPN highlights.

Vivian Relan, who is pursuing a degree in exercise science with a minor in dance and had never previously considered the relationship between sports and spirituality, described the course as "engaging." Each class, she says, saw students assigned a text discussing how sports related to emotions like envy, as well as to coaching, ritual and superstition.

"After taking the course, I now think spirituality is meant to enhance the experience people have with sports," Relan says. "Through playing and practicing, we have the ability to experience God's grace and recognize His presence.

"Sometimes, it can be hard to think about this, as sports can become the main focus of our lives, but it's important to remember that sports are not just about winning or losing."

The course proved a useful moment of reflection, Relan says.

"While we all have different beliefs, we can all take a step back and realize that God is working through athletes to give them the power to do all they can do," she says.

The proposition that sports and religion might reflect each other had also not occurred to Andrew Crane, a Creighton student studying biology.

"The idea of sports intersecting with the spiritual and religious experience never crossed my mind until taking this course," he says. "We discussed and dissected a wide variety of topics and views in class and asked important questions about why and how we act as people, how we deal with different events and emotions like excitement, joy, fear, suffering, and, ultimately, renewal — all through the lens of athletics viewed through a spiritual, mainly Catholic, scope of life."

For Julia Staniszewski, a Creighton student pursuing a management and international business degree at the

"For many of them [students], sports have been central to their identity and sense of self, which offers yet another fruitful opportunity for reflection and personal, spiritual growth."

MAX ENGEL, PHD

Associate Professor of Education and Theology



© Max Engel, PhD, was invited to a 2022 Vatican conference on inclusivity in sports. He met briefly with Pope Francis and gave him a copy of *On the Eighth Day: A Catholic Theology of Sport*.

Heider College of Business, the course touched a religious disposition that already guides her life.

"Though I am religious, I didn't really think there was much to say about religion and spirituality in sports," she says. "I couldn't have been more wrong."

"We spoke about different types of religious belief in sports, including directly praying to God, and even more spiritual takes where athletes sometimes mention feeling an aura from their sports. My main takeaway was that if you look at a problem or situation in sports, more likely than not, there will be a religious tie."

The modern secular world does not lack people who mock religious devotion even as they devotedly follow the efforts of 11 grown men to transport an oval piece of inflated leather across a white line located 100 yards away. Is this sporting devotion, with its significant expenditure of personal wealth, investment of time, and endless debate and analysis, an expression of religious piety? In religious terms, can God use sports to touch the human soul in ways that saints and sages did in prior eras?

Pope Francis certainly thinks so.

POPE FRANCIS: SPORTS CAN DEVELOP HOLINESS

In a 2018 letter to the Catholic Church's Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, marking publication of a church document titled "Giving the Best of Yourself: A Document on the Christian Perspective on Sport and the Human Person," Francis says sports can develop holiness.

"This pursuit puts us on the path that, with the help of God's grace, can lead us to the fullness of life that we call holiness," he wrote. "Sport is a very rich source of values and virtues that help us to become better people."

"Giving the Best of Yourself" develops that thought.

"The Church has been a sponsor of the beautiful in art, music and other areas of human activity throughout its history," it says. "This is ultimately because beauty comes from God, and therefore its appreciation is built into us as

his beloved creatures. Sport can offer us a chance to take part in beautiful moments, or to see these take place. In this way, sport has the potential to remind us that beauty is one of the ways we can encounter God."

Religion, and the religious impulse, are foundational human characteristics, Carney says, and so students learn to recognize its presence, both in the current day and throughout history.

"During the spring semester, we often have our students watch the Super Bowl as a ritual model of what a sports liturgy looks like," he says. "We look at the history of Christianity in sports and the shifting attitudes toward social justice and race and especially how sports either encourages humanization and justice or how it encourages greater injustice.

"Then we look at questions of ritual and prayer in sports, even at how the Christian story of life, death and resurrection is mirrored in the sports realm."

Finally, Carney says, there is the future of sport and its role in shaping souls.

"Many of our students have interest in coaching and may already be volunteer coaches," he says. "I have found that the classes we do on mentoring and coaching, where we use things like John Wooden's *Pyramid of Success* as a sort of Christian affirmation of what moral coaching can be, can have a big impact on students.

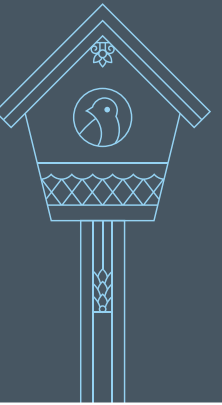
"For many of them the super-competitive phase of their sports life is over, but a lot of them do see coaching in their future, and maybe families in their future, and I think for those students the idea that sports, morality and spirituality relate to each other is a critical insight."



Finding Their Path

BY Eugene Curtin

New division guides student path to success



Many a mom and dad have stood in the driveway waving goodbye as a turn signal announces a child's journey to a new world of academic rigor. Too often, the newly minted college student was on his or her own.

That, says Wayne Young Jr., PhD, BA'93, vice provost for Student Success, is not the Creighton way.

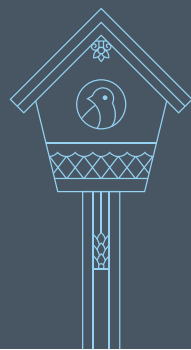
"We are not going to keep family members on the sidelines," he says. "For decades higher education did that, as in, 'Thank you, we will take it from here.' At Creighton we say, 'Oh no, we want that partnership, we want that engagement.'"

Young heads the newly created Division of Student Success, which helps students navigate the challenges inherent to entering a new world of unfamiliar people, a vaguely mysterious campus, schedules, fraternities and sororities and a long list of clubs and societies, not to mention deadlines and finals. The goal is to assist students in managing the culture, pressures and trials of college life so that four fleeting years later they walk proudly across the commencement stage.

As a recipient of the 2023 Pillar of the Profession Award, granted by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators to individuals who have distinguished themselves as leaders, teachers and scholars in student affairs and higher education, Young carries experience and reputation into his new role.

Part of the Division of Student Success is the Office of Student and Family Support. The inclusion of "family" in the title is purposeful as the office acts as a central point for parents or other responsible family members to seek student support.

"This is a very new world not just for the student, but also, especially when it comes to first-generation students, for the family," Young says. "That does not mean we won't gently remind family members of their swim lane, and that their student is still responsible for their behavior, their decisions and their learning, but we know they want to see them succeed too, so we are happy to partner."



“Students and their families can be confident that when they commit to Creighton, that Creighton commits to them.”

MARY ANN TIETJEN
Senior Director, Success Center



“Student retention is about being managers of hope.”

WAYNE YOUNG JR., PHD, BA'93
Vice Provost for Student Success

The Division of Student Success has a wide remit, encompassing undergraduate and preprofessional advising, student retention, academic coaching and tutoring, student accessibility services, TRiO Programs and the career center, all elements that can make or break the student experience.

The Success Center, located in the Reinert-Alumni Memorial Library, is the hub of the division's work. A one-stop resource for undergraduate, graduate and professional students, it coordinates student services not just within its own office but also those available among Creighton's nine schools and colleges.

Other services encompassed by the new division include the Office of Academic Success, the Center for Advising Resources and Support, the John P. Fahey Career Center, Student Accessibility Services, the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs, and the TRiO Programs, which are federally funded services provided to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Mary Ann Tietjen, senior director of the Success Center, says the office uses conversations with students and families, along with data analysis, to identify student needs and to partner with complementary student services such as the Department of Residence Life.

“Success hubs” are an example of such partnerships. These hubs exist in Deglman, Kiewit and Swanson halls, all residence halls for first-year students, where they keep hours deep into the evening to help students with academic coaching, tutoring or general wayfinding needs.

“Last year alone, the Success Center served more than 30% of our undergraduate students,” Tietjen says. “With enhanced effort in the success hubs this year, we anticipate this number to grow.”

“Students and their families can be confident that when they commit to Creighton, that Creighton commits to them. The Success Center is just one example that demonstrates the University's continued commitment to *cura personalis* (care for the whole person).”

Not everyone who enters college knows what they will do after graduation. Dispelling the fog that sometimes shrouds such decisions is the job of the Center for Advising Resources and Support (CARS), located in the Hixson-Lied Science Building.

“CARS is a clearinghouse, a switchboard for all things advising,” Young says. “In partnership with our schools and colleges, and with faculty, it provides pathways for undergraduate students to learn more about professional programs, and to figure out which one is right for them.”

“That might involve shadowing, research, taking the right courses, all those kinds of things. Preprofessional advising is of paramount importance at Creighton because we get such great students and so we want to make sure they can get into the best professional programs.”

Student retention is a key concern as it is considered an indicator of a university's ability to keep the promises made to students, which often requires managing the bumps in the road that every student encounters.

“Having a strong first- or second-year retention rate, having a strong graduation rate, is a very important way to show parents, students and family members that Creighton gets it done, that we hold up not just our end of the deal but that we enhance students' lives, that we deliver on that dream that they were sold,” Young says.

“Student retention is about being managers of hope. Something might not be going well, but we coordinate with the student, with parents and family, with faculty, to make things right so that the student can continue.”

“I would say that in the area of student retention, Creighton cannot be beat. Our level of service, the support officers we have here, the *cura personalis* that we show students, to all the great things that we do as a university community, I just don't think it can be beat, and I think our graduation and retention rates indicate that.”

Young pays close attention to first- and second-year retention rates, for these are the most vulnerable



© Mary Ann Tietjen meets with students to identify student needs and to partner with complementary student services.

years when a student might feel overwhelmed, or, sometimes worse, lonely.

“A lot of people assume cost is the primary reason people don't continue their education,” Young says, “and sometimes that does cause a lot of stress. But we tag every student who withdraws to understand why they leave, and although cost is among the top three or four reasons, the top reason is a lack of social and academic integration.”

“For some reason, they have not built an affinity with us.” Either they feel like they're not connecting, or they haven't gotten involved, or they haven't met a faculty member or discovered a major or interest area that has really captured their mind or heart.

For 15 years, Young says, Creighton's second-year retention rate sat at a healthy 89.5%. During the past three years, he says, that rate has increased to 92%, which approaches the 95% to 96% achieved by universities considered among the nation's elite. Creighton's six-year graduation rate, a commonly used window in higher education, is about 79%, a

figure that far outpaces the 68% six-year rate for private nonprofit institutions nationally.

Students, of course, are first in line for plaudits as they cross the commencement stage, but their journey there reflects a team effort.

“Our retention and graduation rates are not the students' success alone,” Young says. “They belong also to the University. Retaining a student takes the faculty, it takes the Jesuits, it takes the resident assistants, it takes student government, it takes alumni, it takes the city, too — sometimes you're happy with an institution because you also love the city.”

Academics and faculty interactions are, of course, important, but so are financial aid packages, parent and family support, social and extracurricular activities, leadership, spirituality and networking opportunities, and the list goes on.

“It is a team effort, always,” Young says. “Student Success makes sure that all the various stakeholders are working together for the success of each and every student.”

FOR 15 YEARS, CREIGHTON'S SECOND-YEAR RETENTION RATE SAT AT A HEALTHY 89.5%. DURING THE PAST THREE YEARS THAT RATE HAS INCREASED TO 92%, WHICH APPROACHES THE 95% TO 96% ACHIEVED BY UNIVERSITIES CONSIDERED AMONG THE NATION'S ELITE.



IMPACT

DAVE WEAVER

Program Offers Greater Access for All

For first-year student Camille O’Neill, Creighton is the perfect fit. And not just metaphorically. The actual physical size and shape of Creighton’s campus has proven essential in her everyday experience.

“It takes me twice as long to walk places,” says O’Neill, who has two disabilities — impaired vision and cerebral palsy. “So I knew I needed a campus, and a community, that could accommodate me. I found that in Creighton. It feels like home.”

O’Neill, a Heider College of Business student from Gretna, Nebraska, likewise found a smaller life-changing community within Creighton — the Union Pacific Diversity Scholars Program. This academic year, she joined seven other students in the new class of scholars.

The Union Pacific Diversity Scholars Program — formed in 2020 by a partnership between Union Pacific and the University — awards a \$25,000-per-year scholarship to incoming freshmen for their full four years at Creighton. In that time, each student receives support, training and mentorship in diversity and inclusion approaches to their future careers.

O’Neill and two of her fellow UP scholars share what being part of the program has meant to them.

What has this program meant to you?

O’Neill: The program gives me networking and internship opportunities. It connects me with a Union Pacific mentor. It expands my knowledge and helps me gain real-world experience and build the relationships that will define my career.

Lauren Burris, second-year UP scholar from Omaha: Beyond the financial support, Union Pacific offers so much more than I even realized. The mentor programs, the real-life experiences, the connections and resources they provide. And the diversity aspect is, of course, important to me. It really shows they care.

Nathan Tshishimbi, first-year UP scholar from California: This scholarship has lifted the weight off my family’s shoulders. And the program has also been a gateway for me

© From left are Union Pacific scholars Camille O’Neill, Lauren Burris and Nathan Tshishimbi.

to getting to know some great people and starting to put down roots in an unfamiliar place.

What do you love about going to Creighton?

O’Neill: I was born and raised Catholic, and I’ve been going to St. John’s Church as a parishioner since eighth grade. I already had a community here, and I felt like I could expand that community to the whole campus. I feel like I’ve accomplished that. I’m so excited to continue my life here.

Tshishimbi: Moving to Omaha from California was kind of a leap of faith. But coming to Creighton knowing that I had the Union Pacific Scholars program, knowing that I had a group of people supporting me, it really helped me put both my feet in the water. Feeling the support of a community of people is truly a blessing.

Burris: The first week I got here, I was like, “Is everyone actually this nice or is it a first-week kind of thing?” That’s my favorite part about Creighton. No matter what type of day you’re having, if you’re walking across campus, you’re going to see someone smiling at you. That’s just who this community is.

— BY MICAH MERTES

ALUMNI NOTES

Send Us Your News

Penned your long-awaited novel? Traveled around the world? Received that awesome promotion? Earned a prestigious honor? If so, we want to hear about it. Share your memories and milestones by emailing us at alumninews@creighton.edu.

56 George Blue Spruce Jr., DDS, Surprise, Arizona, received admission to the International College of Dentists, honoring his integrity, leadership and service.

61 Jean Luckett Harkin, BA, Portland, Oregon, recently published her debut novel *Promise Full of Thorns: A Family Saga*.

64 J. Richard Tamisiea, BS’60, MD, Wilmington, North Carolina, received the Lifetime Achievement Award in Medicine from the *Greater Wilmington Business Journal*, which annually recognizes healthcare heroes.

65 Donna Cody Vargas, BS, Las Cruces, New Mexico, was inducted into the U.S. Army Operations Research and Systems Analysts (ORSA) Hall of Fame. The ORSA Hall of Fame honors individuals who have contributed significantly to ORSA over a sustained period, have influenced ORSA through doctrinal or technical accomplishment and innovative development, and have demonstrated outstanding personal leadership and noteworthy achievements that inspired others in operations research. During her 40-year civilian career, she was hailed as a pioneer in the development and use of models and simulations in combat system analysis and theater-level training. Her career led her from a physical scientist up to the director of TRAC-WSMR, the Research and Analysis Center — White Sands Missile Range.

68 P. Rodney Morris, BA, Omaha, was appointed to the ServeNebraska board of commissioners by then-Gov. Pete Ricketts in November 2022. Morris also was appointed by Gov. Ricketts to the Nebraska Fire Safety Appeals Board in December 2022.

70 William D. Glenn, BA, Santa Rosa, California, recently published the book *I Came Here Seeking a Person: One Gay Man’s Spiritual Journey* by Paulist Press in New York. Glenn currently serves as chair of the board of trustees of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, of which the Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara is a constituent member.

75 Dr. Amy M. Haddad, BSN, Omaha, won two awards in the *American Journal of Nursing* Book of the Year Awards 2022 for her poetry collection *An Otherwise Healthy Woman*. Her collection won first place in the Creative Works category and second place in the Professional Issues category. Haddad’s work explores modern healthcare, drawing on her experiences as a nurse, patient and caregiver. **Dr. Ann E. Potter, BSN,** Omaha, co-authored the book *EMDR & Trauma-Focused Therapy in Adults* with Debra Wesselmann, published in fall 2022 by Springer Publishing.

76 Daniel E. Monnat, JD, Wichita, Kansas, of Monnat & Spurrier, Chartered, has been

recognized on the Top 10 List of Missouri and Kansas Super Lawyers. He has been among the overall Top 100 of Missouri and Kansas Super Lawyers for 17 years. **David N. Petruska, BA,** Tucson, Arizona, is the executive producer of the short film *Candlepin, the Documentary*, about the sport of candlepin bowling. The film is an official selection of the 2022 MidCoast Film Festival.

77 John P. Heithoff, JD, Council Bluffs, Iowa, recently published the book *The Rosary Tail*. **Mark A. Weber, BA’74, JD,** Omaha, was inducted into the Alumni Hall of Fame by the American College of Financial Services in November 2022. From the American College, Weber earned his Master of Science in Financial Services and the following designations: Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU), Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC) and Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP).

78 Stephen W. Kay, JD, North Platte, Nebraska, had his article “Japanese Immigration and Nebraska’s 1921 Alien Land Law” published in *Nebraska History Magazine* (winter 2022 issue).

81 Lori Wiese-Parks, JD, St. Paul, Minnesota, was recognized by the *World Trademark Review* (WTR) in its recently released “WTR 1000: The World’s Leading Trademark Professionals for 2023.” Wiese-Parks, a transactional attorney at Lathrop GPM in the Minneapolis office, was recognized

in the prosecution and strategy category.

84 Mary Kay McCarville Gillan, BSN, Lincoln, Nebraska, was promoted to director of perioperative services at CHI Health St. Elizabeth in Lincoln in August 2021, and graduated with a MSN/MBA degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University in May 2022.

85 William D. Putman, BS’81, MD, Springfield, Illinois, was elected chairman of the board of directors of Springfield Clinic, a 400-physician multispecialty medical group based in Springfield, with clinics throughout central Illinois. He continues to practice OB/GYN and is an associate faculty member at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine.

89 Stephen T. Amann, BS’85, MD, Tupelo, Mississippi, a gastroenterologist in Tupelo, has been active in the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG) for more than a decade. He is the past ACG governor for Mississippi, current chair of the ACG practice management committee and has been appointed to the board of the ACG Institute for Clinical Research. Founded in 1994, the institute is a major source for funding for clinically oriented gastroenterology research and has awarded more than \$27 million to investigators.

90 Lt. Gen. Ronald J. Place, MD, Crozat, Virginia, retired from the U.S. Army after more than

36 years of service in February 2023. He last served as director of the Defense Health Agency, which manages the healthcare of more than 9.6 million Department of Defense beneficiaries in 700 hospitals and clinics along with the TRICARE Health Program.

91 James D. Wilson, BSBA, Chicago, was named chief financial officer of the Mayo Clinic Health System in Rochester, Minnesota, in August 2022.

92 Lisa A. Foster, BA, Seattle, has joined the communications team of the Washington State House Democratic Caucus as a senior public information officer. The Washington State Legislature is based in Olympia, Washington.

94 Robyn N. Davis, BA, Ridgewood, New Jersey, joined the law firm Freeborn & Peters as a partner in its New York office. A member of the firm's corporate practice group, Davis helps businesses succeed through the thoughtful and thorough management of internal and intra-organizational relationships and external connections with business partners, investors, clients and relevant sectors of government.

95 Dr. Steven C. Cunningham, BSChm, Ellicott City, Maryland, published his book *It's Considerate to Be Literate About Religion*.

96 The Hon. Patricia A. Freeman, JD, Papillion, Nebraska, has been elected president-elect designate of the Nebraska State Bar Association (NSBA). Freeman will serve as NSBA president from October 2024 to October 2025. She currently is the presiding judge for the 2nd Judicial District County Court bench.

98 Brenda Nord Paikowski, BSBA, Spring Hill, Kansas, was promoted to EMS division chief at the Kansas City Fire Department in Kansas City, Missouri.

00 Kenneth W. Hartman, JD, Omaha, was elected chair of the Nebraska State Bar Association House of Delegates. Hartman is a partner with the law firm Baird Holm LLP in Omaha.

02 Dr. Angela Morrison Swan, BA, Elizabeth, Colorado, recently published "Teen Suicide Prevention Strategies: Why the Current Model is Failing, and a New Approach is Necessary" in the *Journal of Statesmanship and Public Policy*. Swan is an adjunct instructor of criminal justice at Liberty University.

04 Joshua J. Boesch, BSBA, Omaha, is president of Boesch Enterprises, a private equity group in Omaha. Boesch was named to the *Midlands Business Journal* 40 Under 40 in 2021.

05 Michael T. Brewer, JD, Burlington, Iowa, published the article "The Basics of Mental Health Alimony in Divorce" in the *Nebraska Lawyer Magazine*. Brewer is an attorney at the law firm Koenig|Dunne in Omaha.

07 Lindsey Ward Larsen, OTD, Colorado Springs, Colorado, published her first children's picture book, *Meeting Exceptional Friends*, focused on asking questions about disabilities. **The Hon. Sarah Wakin Moore, JD,** Omaha, was appointed to the bench of the Separate Juvenile Court of Sarpy County in September 2022. Prior to her appointment, Moore had been a deputy county attorney in the Sarpy County Attorney's Office since September 2021, where she was the lead attorney of the juvenile division.

09 Luke T. Mohrhauser, JD, Ankeny, Iowa, was elected managing member of the law firm McKee, Voorhees & Sease, PLC, in Des Moines, Iowa. Mohrhauser, an intellectual property attorney, is chair of the firm's mechanical and electrical practice group.

10 Mark M. Heneghan, BSBA, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, earned the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) designation in February 2022 and was promoted to vice president-portfolio advisor at Northern Trust in Boca Raton, Florida, in September 2022.

13 Mitchell F. Engel, JD, Prairie Village, Kansas, has made partner at the law firm Shook, Hardy & Bacon LLP in its Kansas City, Missouri, office.

14 Brice Nengsu Kenfack, BA'08, JD, Kansas City, Missouri,

has made partner at the law firm Shook, Hardy & Bacon LLP in its Kansas City, Missouri, office. **Jenna Bishop Sabroske, BA,** Des Moines, Iowa, was elected shareholder at the law firm Ahlers & Cooney, PC, in Des Moines. Sabroske serves as the firm's economic development/urban renewal practice group leader.

15 Caer Hallundbaek, EdD, Lincolnville, Maine, received a 2021 First Place, Nonfiction award from *Top Shelf Literary Magazine* for her book *Dear Little One: Thoughts to My Child in an Uncertain World*. **Lauren Micek Vargas, JD,** Omaha, executive director of the Education Rights Counsel in Omaha, accepted the Award of Special Merit at the 2022 Nebraska State Bar Association's annual meeting held in October. The Award of Special Merit is presented to an individual or organization for services advancing the legal profession, the administration of justice and the public interest. **Chase C. Webb, BS'12, JD,** Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, was elected a shareholder at the law firm McAfee & Taft in Oklahoma City. Webb is a registered patent attorney whose practice is focused on intellectual property counseling and transactional matters involving patents, trademarks, copyrights, licensing agreements and trade secrets.

22 Lisa M. Moody, MS, Omaha, was awarded the prestigious Milken Educator Award in January 2023. Moody, who teaches K-6 special education at Jefferson Elementary in Omaha, received \$25,000 as part of the national award. The Milken Educator Awards, created by Lowell Milken in 1987, have rewarded and inspired excellence in the world of education by honoring top educators throughout the U.S. **Lexi A. Weisbeck, JD,** Bellevue, Nebraska, has joined the law firm Woods Aitken as an associate attorney. Weisbeck is part of the litigation team.

WEDDING

19 Taylor J. Johnson, BS'15, DDS, and **William H. Putman, BA'13, DDS'17,** Oct. 15, 2022, living in Springfield, Illinois.

BIRTHS

04 Susan N. Smith, DPT, adopted a son and daughter, Asher Bear and Lilou, June 30, 2021; and adopted two sons, August and Luca, Aug. 29, 2022, living in San Antonio.

16 Michael K. Holdsworth, BA, and Sara Holdsworth, a daughter, Ivy Mae, Sept. 28, 2022, living in Omaha.

17 Lucas R. Morrow and Micah F. Marth, DDS, a son, Owen Wilder, Jan. 2, 2022, living in Bellingham, Washington. **Valerian Peterson, BS'12, MD,** and **Sarah Furjanic Peterson, BSBA'12,** a daughter, Violet Rosemarie, Sept. 11, 2022, living in Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

DEATHS

41 Dr. Elnor T. Zikmund, BS, Omaha, Oct. 28, 2022.

43 John J. Heider, BS, Shakopee, Minnesota, Dec. 30, 2022.

44 Rosemary Baines Turner, SCN, Omaha, Oct. 2, 2022.

46 Robert W. Salen, ARTS, Arvada, Colorado, Oct. 20, 2022.

47 Margaret Bell Knight, SJN, Tallahassee, Florida, Jan. 15, 2023.

48 James P. Beasom III, MD, La Canada Flintridge, California, Nov. 13, 2022. **Irving B. Epstein, JD,** Omaha, Dec. 25, 2022. **Elizabeth Schroeder Gorny, SJN'45, BSN,** Cheyenne, Wyoming, Dec. 21, 2022. **Clifford A. Johnson Jr., MD,** Hudson, Ohio, Sept. 30, 2022.

Dr. Joseph F. Karpinski, DENT, Skaneateles, New York, April 7, 2020. **Dr. Herbert I. Singer, BS,** Los Angeles, Dec. 16, 2022.

49 Richard F. Johns, BS, Omaha, Aug. 26, 2021.

50 Doloris Urek Brooks, SJN, Arnolds Park, Iowa, Sept. 17, 2022. **Edward R. Clare, BS,** Platteville, Wisconsin, June 10, 2021. **Leonard V. Hassenstab, BS,** Humphrey, Nebraska, Jan. 27, 2023. **Phyllis Hastert Hatt, SJN'48, BSN,** Lincoln, Nebraska, Jan. 28, 2023. **Thomas P. Heafey, ARTS,** Omaha, Feb. 10, 2023. **Richard L. Leise, BS,** Omaha, Feb. 12, 2023.

Edward E. Strickland, BS, Issaquah, Washington, Jan. 26, 2022.

"I'd watched standup forever and I liked the idea of gifting someone a genuine belly laugh, and that became a cool thing to strive for."



ALUMNI PROFILE

Make 'em Laugh!

Who knew that being the class clown in high school might signal a calling? **BRITTANY MASCIO, BA'11,** graduated from the College of Arts and Sciences with a degree in journalism and immediately began a successful, creative career.

She worked in Omaha for eight years with Just Jump Films, an award-winning production company funded by the Sherwood Foundation that specializes in stories about public schools. Eventually becoming director of impact and marketing, she wrote more than 100 digital shorts, participated in more than 400 interviews, and co-produced eight documentary features, many of which were selected for U.S. and Canadian film festivals.

She also developed impact campaigns and orchestrated screening tours for films

addressing such issues as poverty, English language learners and mental health.

One project she is especially proud of is the widely acclaimed I Love Public Schools campaign, which included I Love Public Schools Day, a celebration nationally recognized by some 3 million people.

"Every time I spotted someone in an airport wearing an I Love Public Schools T-shirt or heard my voice on our commercials, I beamed with pride knowing our team had made a significant impact on support for public education," Mascio says.

She then began working with BrightFocus Foundation, which funds research to defeat Alzheimer's and other diseases. One of her projects is helping produce a live talk show series, Brain Info Live, that blends entertainment and cutting-edge research.

But there was another creative outlet that kept whispering in her ear, "Hey, you're pretty funny."

She says, "Being funny and telling stories have been a part of me since I was little," adding that she comes from a "big and loud Italian family," and usually found herself gravitating to the adult table.

"Whenever we had family, friends or neighbors over, my mom used to say, 'Brittany, tell everybody that story,' and I would immediately start storytelling.

"I come alive a little bit more when I share a story."

One day her brother, Nick Mascio, BA'14, reminded her that comedy was something inside her all along. After all, she had been the class clown in high school. She had to agree that was true.

She began letting the idea ruminate. It felt good. She *was* funny. She liked making people laugh.

"I'd watched standup forever," she says, "and I liked the idea of gifting someone a genuine belly laugh, and that became a cool thing to strive for."

She became involved with Omaha's comedy scene and helped plan last summer's Omaha Comedy Fest, which drew more than 70 acts at multiple venues, including Amber Ruffin, head writer of *Late Night with Seth Meyers*. Mascio made her own debut, taking the stage for her first official performance. This year, in addition to performing, she will be the festival communications director.

She did something else in 2022. She decided to make a big move — from Omaha to Los Angeles — to explore a career in comedy.

"Moving to L.A. feels like the right step in the right direction," she says. She's continuing other creative work, but she's diving head first into the comedy scene.

She took classes at the renowned Westside Comedy Theater, performs almost weekly at open mic nights, and has been accepted into a six-month intensive program that involves creating a one-hour comedy show.

She describes her humor as "effervescent and goofy," and favorite topics include life in transition, mental health and family ties.

A recent show opener that brought a big laugh was, "Hi, I'm Brittany, and thank you so much for letting me out tonight — the #FreeBritney movement worked! When you free one of us, you free all of us!"

Most of her storytelling is "offbeat and observational, and often includes a silly story" from her life. Her college days often make the cut, including amusing anecdotes about being a member of Blue Crew.

Does she ever get performance anxiety? Sure, but she talks about it as part of her act, and the more she learns about the "sport" of comedy, "the more I remember I'm putting my reps in. Every set is just another rep. It helps me remember to try my best and not be so hard on myself." — **BY CINDY MURPHY MCMAHON, BA'74**

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51 Robert F. McCarville, BS, Moorland, Iowa, Jan. 10, 2023.

52 Sallie Fuccio Averill, BS, Omaha, Oct. 21, 2022. **Josephine Cuva Caliendo, SCN,** Omaha, Dec. 10, 2022. **William R. Charleston, BS,** Hoffman Estates, Illinois, Nov. 14, 2020. **Darlene Munderloh Kardell, SJN,** Gretna, Nebraska, Oct. 7, 2022. **Darlene Koke Kreifels, SCN,** Lincoln, Nebraska, Oct. 18, 2022. **R. James Wickham Jr., BUSADM,** Council Bluffs, Iowa, Dec. 6, 2021.

53 Herman E. Doyle, MD, Denver, Aug. 6, 2022. **Anita Lee Ho, BSPha,** Honolulu, Nov. 8, 2022. **Therese Kealey Wolters, BS,** Omaha, Jan. 27, 2023.

54 Loren L. Augustyn, MD, Kingman, Kansas, Oct. 16, 2022. **Mary Katherine O'Neill Fagan, SJN,** Palm City, Florida, Jan. 8, 2023. **James W. Knowles Sr., LAW,** Omaha, Dec. 21, 2022. **Gerald E. Ries, BS'50, MD,** Omaha, Nov. 1, 2022. **Rita A. Ryan, SJN,** Omaha, Oct. 2, 2022. **Marilyn Sucha Schneider, BS,** Papillion, Nebraska, Dec. 2, 2022.

55 Joan Gurney O'Brien, SJN, Elkhorn, Nebraska, Nov. 23, 2022. **Rose Jellison Vana, BSPha,** Holly, Colorado, Feb. 22, 2023.

56 Richard L. Korth, BS, Parker, Colorado, Dec. 14, 2022. **Leo P. Penn, BS,** Nevada, Missouri, Sept. 23, 2022. **Nellie Kostel Puccinelli, BSMT,** Stockton, California, Jan. 6, 2022. **Robert J. Radtke, BSBA,** Marshfield, Wisconsin, Jan. 10, 2023. **Ann Yocum Watke, SJN,** Raleigh, North Carolina, July 5, 2022.

57 Michael K. Cavanaugh, BSBA, Chicago, Feb. 14, 2023. **Noran L. Davis Sr., JD,** Council Bluffs, Iowa, Oct. 2, 2022. **Mary Ruzicka Hatcher, BSPha,** Lake Charles, Louisiana, Feb. 19, 2023. **William H. Keefe, BS,** Agoura Hills, California, June 5, 2021. **Sr. Ann Verona Kessler, OSB, MA,** Yankton, South Dakota, Feb. 1, 2023. **Bernard L. Kratochvil, MD,** Omaha, Nov. 28, 2022. **William G. Latka Jr., BSBA,** Omaha, Dec. 9, 2022. **Robert E. Lindsey, DDS,** Tucson, Arizona, May 21, 2021. **Thomas E. Morrissey, BS'53, MD,** Alton, Illinois, Feb. 28, 2023. **Theresa Urzendowski Wetherell, BS,** San Diego, Dec. 22, 2022.

58 James G. Burns, BSPha, Pueblo, Colorado, Sept. 29, 2022. **Martin J. Hackett, DDS,** Eugene, Oregon, Sept. 18, 2022. **Stephen M. Hutfless, BUSADM,** Omaha, Feb. 8, 2023. **Margaret Kiser Carrica, SCN,** Omaha, Nov. 7, 2022. **Patricia Wajda Kavaliauskas, ARTS,** Omaha, Nov. 3, 2022.

59 John D. Borman Jr., BSBA, Fort Collins, Colorado, Jan. 6, 2023. **Bruce E. Haney, BSBA,** Omaha, Dec. 1, 2022. **Judith K. Morgan, BSBA,** Denver, Jan. 15, 2023. **Dr. Donald G. Nugent, MA,** Corydon, Indiana, Nov. 12, 2022. **Robert C. Schneider, BA,** Tucson, Arizona, Jan. 15, 2023.

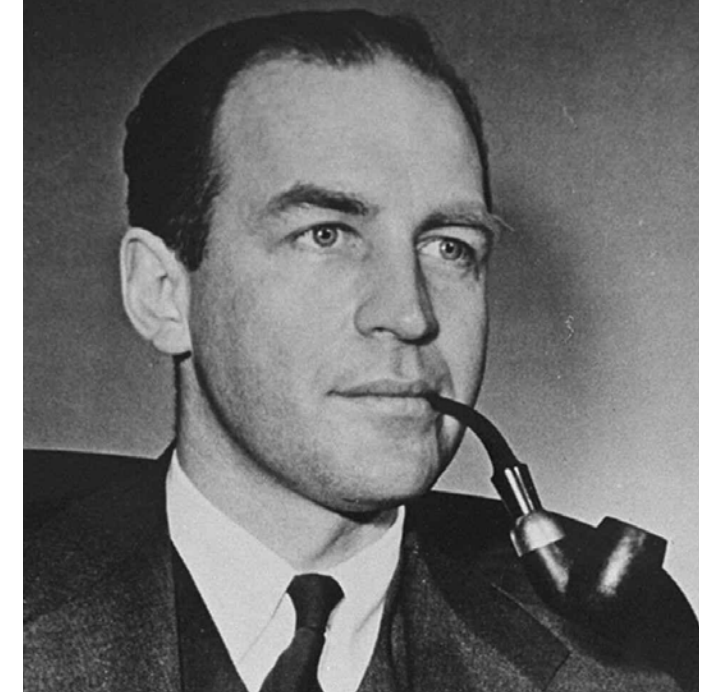
60 Patricia L. Butler, BA, Osawatomie, Kansas, April 17, 2022. **Victor Chigas, GRAD,** Chicago, Aug. 2, 2022. **Sr. Betty Jean Korte, BA,** St. Louis, Oct. 23, 2022. **Thomas J. Lux, BSBA,** State Road, North Carolina, Jan. 1, 2023. **Maurice W. Rule, ARTS,** Omaha, Dec. 1, 2022.

61 John J. Girolami, DDS, Bonita, California, Nov. 29, 2022. **Dr. E. Cary Halpin, ARTS,** Everett, Washington, Dec. 26, 2022. **Thomas F. Kawa, BUSADM,** Omaha, Sept. 23, 2022. **Roger W. Kuhl, MA,** Omaha, Oct. 1, 2022. **Patrick A. Ryan, BA,** Whitefish, Montana, Nov. 1, 2022. **Edward R. Trout, BUSADM,** Omaha, Feb. 3, 2023. **Rev. Thomas J. Woerth, BA,** Port St. Lucie, Florida, Jan. 4, 2023.

62 Eugene A. Baciocco, MD, Atherton, California, Oct. 4, 2022. **Pierre Eilian, MD,** Chicago, Dec. 26, 2021. **Merrill C. Kullbom Jr., BS,** Norfolk, Nebraska, Nov. 9, 2021. **Csaba L. Magassy, BS'58, MD,** Poolesville, Maryland, Sept. 18, 2022.

63 Donald V. Brummer, BSBA, Omaha, Dec. 28, 2022. **Rev. Jerome P. Cosgrove, MSEdu,** Sioux City, Iowa, Oct. 18, 2022. **Lawrence T. Eischeid, BSBA,** Omaha, Jan. 13, 2023. **David D. Martin Jr., BSBA,** Slidell, Louisiana, Nov. 17, 2022.

64 The Hon. Stephen A. Davis, JD, Omaha, Dec. 22, 2022. **H. Jeffrey Deeths, MD,** Omaha, Sept. 21, 2022. **J. William Gallup, JD,** Omaha, Jan. 13, 2023. **Solomon L. Riley Jr., MD,** Los Angeles, Jan. 14, 2022. **Paul T. Silas, BSBA,** Denver, North Carolina, Dec. 11, 2022.



ALUMNUS HELPED SAVE 200,000 LIVES IN WWII

He was one of the most consequential people ever to graduate from Creighton University, though few know his name.

Yet more than 20 years since his death, **John Pehle, BA'30,** was recently a key figure in the three-part PBS documentary series *The U.S. and the Holocaust*, directed by Ken Burns and his longtime creative partners Lynn Novick and Sarah Botstein. The series examines the American government and press' weak and belated response to the Nazis' mass murder of European Jews.

The series shows Pehle, a Treasury Department official, as one of the lone figures running against the grain of governmental indifference and obstruction amid the Holocaust. His outrage at his government's, in particular the State Department's, failure to act culminated in an 18-page report "On the Acquiescence of This Government in the Murder of the Jews."

In January of 1944, Pehle presented his report to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He also handed him a drafted executive order to create a new government agency tasked with "the immediate rescue and relief of the Jews of Europe and other victims of enemy persecution."

One week later, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9417 establishing the War Refugee Board. The order allotted \$1 million to the agency. All other funding for rescue and relief efforts came from private sources. Pehle was appointed as the agency's executive director. He was only 34.

After the war and shortly before its dissolution in 1945, the War Refugee Board estimated it had saved the lives of tens of thousands of Jews. Some historians have estimated the number at more than 200,000. — **BY MICAH MERTES**

Learn more: To hear more about Pehle and other fascinating figures in Creighton's history, subscribe to *Weird Creighton History* on your favorite podcasting platform or at alumni.creighton.edu/weird-creighton-history.

Restoring Hope

From Hong Kong to California, Creighton graduate **PATRICE WASHINGTON, MBA'22**, has unified thousands of like-hearted women committed to a life-changing, soul-changing journey.

Washington is the founder and CEO of Seek Wisdom, Find Wealth, a personal finance training and development firm that takes the approach that wealth is not limited to money. Washington's mission is to help others discover their life's purpose while on their path to financial well-being.

"I've curated the biggest friend group of my life, and I'm so grateful," says Washington. "This is not work. It just feels like, wow, this is what I get to do. No matter where you're from, we all have the same wants, needs and desires, and that's what makes us like-hearted. I think that's beautiful."

Washington is an award-winning author and host of the *Redefining Wealth Podcast*, which has more than 15 million downloads. She is also a financial expert on the PBS show, *Opportunity Knocks*. Washington was named by *SUCCESS Magazine* as one of the "Top 25 Influential Leaders in Personal Development" and in 2020, named one of the "12 Inspiring Black Voices in Personal Development." She has also been featured in, among others, *Cosmopolitan*, *Essence Magazine* and on *Forbes.com* as one of "15 Inspiring Podcasts for Professionals of Every Stripe."

In May 2022, Washington earned her Certification in Financial Psychology and Master of Business Administration from the Heider College of Business.

"I did well before Creighton and was well known, but my certificate and MBA gave me more confidence," says Washington.

In 2017, as part of a brand partnership, Washington met and interviewed Creighton Associate Professor Brad Klontz, PsyD. Klontz is a founder of the financial psychology program in the Heider College of Business.

Washington, who describes herself as

spirit-led and intuitive, calls meeting Klontz "divine." Her gift of empowerment comes from her personal experiences, as a mother, and having faced her own serious medical emergencies and major financial challenges in the past.

"In 2009, I had made a pact with God," she says. "If he would restore me, I would go everywhere that I could to restore hope to others and help teach them that this journey isn't just about dollars and cents. I became obsessed with asking, 'Why don't we do the things we know to do?'"

Washington, with her then-husband, went on a restorative journey to holistic well-being and launched her firm. Upon meeting Klontz, she was inspired to enroll in the Financial Psychology and Behavioral Finance program that examines how deep-seated financial beliefs established early in life can subconsciously drive financial decisions.

"I didn't know what to call my work. But a lot of what Dr. Klontz described to me then as 'financial psychology,' I was already doing intuitively. I credit him with so much, because I learned that there was a science behind my work. Creighton gave me information and knowledge that I could apply to my business."

To Washington, her firm is more than a business. She calls it a ministry in disguise and says

she is grateful to her community for their support and prayers as she completed her courses at Creighton.

"I don't feel like this degree is just mine. I did the work, but it took encouragement from my clients and listeners. It was important to me, as someone with a platform, to be transparent about what the middle work looked like so I could inspire others."

To document her communal achievement, Washington brought a videographer with her to campus during Creighton's 2022 spring commencement. Her daughter was also along for the celebration.

"It meant so much to me and my community that I wanted to capture it," says Washington. "As an online student, it was really important to me to walk the stage. I wouldn't trade that experience for anything, and it was important for my daughter to see. It felt so good to be there and it brought closure."

Now, Washington looks forward to hosting the inaugural Redefining Wealth Live Conference in Atlanta in October.

"What I've learned, I've seen great success because of it," she says. "Success is the ability to earn more, without feeling like it's chasing money. It's the byproduct of the value I offer to others. Every day I wake up knowing I'm leading a purposeful life." — **BY NICHOLE JELINEK, MA'15**



65 Edward V. Arnone, BS'52, MBA, Omaha, Jan. 28, 2023. **Lawrence W. Dennis, BA**, Ankeny, Iowa, Sept. 21, 2022. **Robert J. Kruml, BSBA'62, MBA**, Lincoln, Nebraska, Oct. 13, 2022. **Rita A. Lehnert, BS**, Deerwood, Minnesota, Dec. 5, 2022. **Frances Biegelmeier Lowenstein, BA'63, JD**, Washington, D.C., Jan. 7, 2023.

66 Annette Pape Kelleher, BA, Omaha, May 28, 2021. **James D. Quinn, BS'59, MS'62, MD**, Omaha, Oct. 24, 2022. **D. Greg O'Leary, MD**, Omaha, Jan. 22, 2023. **Raymond J. Votycka, MD**, Westlake, Ohio, Oct. 10, 2022. **Eileen M. Welch, BA**, Omaha, Nov. 8, 2022.

67 Thomas G. Englund, MD, Stillwater, Minnesota, Jan. 20, 2023. **Mary Wagoner Fisher, MA**, Lincoln, Nebraska, Dec. 16, 2022. **Donna Monahan Gauthier, BA**, Newport News, Virginia, Dec. 8, 2022. **Frank L. Giordano, MD**, El Paso, Texas, Sept. 10, 2022. **Laurence J. Sokol, BA**, St. Louis, Dec. 31, 2022. **Rosemary Heiser Stewart, BUSADM**, Omaha, Oct. 15, 2022. **Edward R. Tucker, BSPha**, Council Bluffs, Iowa, Oct. 9, 2020. **Dennis J. Wilwerding, BS**, Littleton, Colorado, Dec. 1, 2022.

68 Mack E. Greder, DDS, Omaha, Oct. 29, 2022. **Patricia Morris Kommer, BS**, Clive, Iowa, Oct. 22, 2022. **John L. Sullivan, BSPha**, Leon, Iowa, Oct. 17, 2022. **Grace Finnegan Tilford, BA**, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Oct. 16, 2022.

69 Mary E. Corbett, ARTS, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, Jan. 22, 2023. **Harry C. Henderson III, MD**, San Diego, Jan. 29, 2023. **Cletus S. Miller, MSEdu**, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, Feb. 11, 2023.

70 James L. Bisignano, BUSADM, Bellevue, Nebraska, Oct. 1, 2022. **John J. Bognich, BFA**, Omaha, Sept. 15, 2022. **Jody J. Koehler, BSPha**, Peru, Illinois, Oct. 8, 2022.

71 Dr. Robert J. Brown II, BS, Norton Shores, Michigan, Oct. 13, 2022. **Robert N. Brown, MD**, Omaha, Oct. 15, 2022. **JoAnn Johnson Caffery, MSEdu**, Council Bluffs, Iowa, Sept. 24, 2022.

Thomas G. Dineen, BS, Omaha, Nov. 15, 2022. **Leonard P. Gumia, BSBA**, Omaha, Feb. 7, 2023. **Robert L. Weinstein, JD**, Los Angeles, Nov. 11, 2022.

72 Dianne Wunn Cancian, BSN, Arlington, Virginia, May 2, 2021. **Carol Daufenbach Harwood, ARTS**, Sebring, Florida, June 20, 2022. **C. Dennis Lacina, JD**, Farmington Hills, Michigan, Nov. 25, 2022. **John S. Mattson, DDS'66, MS**, Waterloo, Nebraska, Feb. 17, 2023. **James R. Riha, BSBA**, Omaha, Dec. 19, 2022. **Sr. M. Suzanne Vandenheede, MSEdu**, Omaha, Feb. 14, 2023. **Larren P. Wilcox, BSBA**, Kewaskum, Wisconsin, Dec. 11, 2022.

73 Donald F. Cheloha Sr., MBA, Omaha, Nov. 21, 2022. **John J. Demakas, MD**, Greenacres, Washington, Feb. 20, 2023. **Glen B. Eich, BSRT**, Omaha, Oct. 27, 2022. **Dan T. McGrevey, JD**, Fort Dodge, Iowa, Dec. 30, 2022.

74 Gerald L. Abts, BSBA'66, MBA, Highlands Ranch, Colorado, Oct. 5, 2022. **Theodore S. Melnychuk, MA'73, JD**, Glen Mills, Pennsylvania, Feb. 6, 2023. **Joette M. Pelster, BA**, Kansas City, Missouri, Nov. 25, 2022.

75 John J. Blomstrom, JD, Casper, Wyoming, Dec. 26, 2022. **James J. Diesing Jr., BSBA**, Minneapolis, Jan. 1, 2023. **Carol Murray Gosney, MSEdu**, Omaha, Nov. 26, 2022. **John G. Lynch, MBA**, Omaha, Dec. 8, 2022. **John M. Sheran, BA'72, JD**, Bloomington, Minnesota, Dec. 20, 2022.

76 Denis H. Hare, JD, Independence, Missouri, Dec. 22, 2022. **Theresa Whitted Jacoby, MSGuid**, Council Bluffs, Iowa, Dec. 30, 2022. **Kaleen Langenfeld Johnston, BSN**, Manassas, Virginia, Oct. 24, 2022. **Daniel W. Meyer, ARTS**, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Sept. 15, 2020.

77 Jeffrey W. Beissel, JD, Mendota Heights, Minnesota, June 8, 2021. **Sr. Luella Dames, CPPS, MChrSp**, O'Fallon, Missouri, Dec. 11, 2022. **Gary L. Erlewine, JD**, Lone Tree, Colorado, Oct. 14, 2022. **Rolf E. J. Gerdau, BA**, Scottsbluff, Nebraska, Feb. 6, 2023. **Mary A. Krzemien, BA'71, MA**, Omaha, Feb. 1, 2023. **James W. McClatchey, MBA**, Pasadena, Texas, Oct. 11, 2022.

78 Rev. Richard D. Hogan, MS, Bella Vista, Arkansas, Sept. 27, 2022. **Christine M. Ortiz, BSBA**, Santa Fe, New Mexico, Dec. 25, 2022. **Stevan A. Osenbaugh, BSPha**,

Lincoln, Nebraska, Sept. 29, 2022. **Richard J. Ready, MD**, Kansas City, Missouri, Jan. 29, 2023.

79 Paul F. Beveridge, BS'71, MBA'76, JD, Prescott, Arizona, Nov. 15, 2022. **E. Robert Newman, JD**, Omaha, Feb. 3, 2023.

80 Kathryn M. Fitzgerald, MChrSp, West Chester, Pennsylvania, Oct. 19, 2022. **Malcolm S. Foster, DDS**, Santa Rosa, New Mexico, Feb. 7, 2023. **James R. Liberatore, BSPha**, Phoenix, Feb. 8, 2023.

81 Rev. J. Roger McGuinness, MChrSp, Plattsburgh, New York, Jan. 12, 2022.

82 Dr. Lee Charles Kirchner, BS, San Antonio, Feb. 22, 2023. **Lt. Col. Ingrid R. Moertl, BA**, Seven Springs, North Carolina, Jan. 14, 2023.

83 Michael J. Aman, BA'79, BSPha, Blair, Nebraska, Dec. 2, 2022.

84 Guy M. Hanson, BS'80, DDS, Middleton, Idaho, Feb. 9, 2023.

86 James E. Thorn II, JD, Phoenix, Feb. 18, 2023. **Paul J. Wurdack Jr., MCSM**, Fort Collins, Colorado, Oct. 24, 2022.

87 Molly Hogan Searl, BS, Omaha, Nov. 16, 2022.

88 Mary Collins Finke, NURS, Melbourne, Florida, Sept. 19, 2022.

89 Craig C. McVea, JD, Omaha, Nov. 26, 2022.

91 Kevin P. Green, ARTS, Omaha, Sept. 28, 2022. **Sr. Rose Palm, MA**, Watertown, South Dakota, Feb. 28, 2023.

92 Paul I. Dekeyser, ARTS, Chicago, Nov. 1, 2022. **Stephen M. Kent, MA**, Indio, California, and Middletown, Delaware, Nov. 26, 2022.

93 Anna M. Stukenholtz, MS, Council Bluffs, Iowa, Jan. 14, 2023.

94 James J. Harwood, MBA, Omaha, Feb. 26, 2023.

95 Morag Burgess Sell, MA, Blanco, Texas, Feb. 7, 2023.

98 Patrick D. Minard, PharmD, Shawnee, Kansas, Dec. 3, 2022. **John J. Septer, BS'94, DDS**, Casper, Wyoming, Jan. 11, 2023.

99 Michaela B. McKenzie, DDS, Alpharetta, Georgia, Jan. 26, 2023.

01 Nora Olson Earnest, JD, Centennial, Colorado, Jan. 23, 2023. **Melissa Batko Gaffney, BSOT**, Omaha, Nov. 16, 2022.

02 Deborah A. Shepherd, BSN, Bellevue, Nebraska, Jan. 8, 2023.

06 Rev. Paul L. Hayes, MA, Warrenville, Illinois, Dec. 29, 2022.

08 Matthew J. Butts, MD, Crescent City, California, Oct. 11, 2022.

17 Felicia Morant Fowlkes, MIMFA'15, MBA, Midlothian, Virginia, April 7, 2022.

IN REMEMBRANCE

We remember Creighton University faculty and Jesuits who have recently passed.*

Neil Norton, PhD, associate dean for admissions and professor of oral biology, School of Dentistry, Nov. 27, 2022

Lorie Vanchena, PhD, former associate professor, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, College of Arts and Sciences, Dec. 2, 2022

Joseph Solsky, PhD, former professor of chemistry, College of Arts and Sciences, Dec. 22, 2022

David Gambal, PhD, former researcher/professor of biochemistry, School of Medicine, Jan. 3, 2023

Charles Harper, PhD, professor emeritus of sociology, College of Arts and Sciences, Jan. 15, 2023

*Faculty and Jesuits who are Creighton alumni are listed in the Alumni Deaths section of the magazine.



Torres Reflects on Creighton Career

After leading the Creighton men's soccer team to the College Cup last season, **Johnny Torres, BSW'08**, is preparing for his fifth season as the team's head coach. *Creighton* magazine asked him to reflect on his time at Creighton as a player, a student, an assistant coach and now as leader of the men's soccer program.

How did you end up coming to Creighton in the first place?

Back in 1992, I was part of an Olympic development program, and the head coach of that group was Bret Simon, then the assistant men's soccer coach at Creighton. As a high school student, I was trying to figure out where I wanted to go and study and be able to compete.

Once I did take my official visit to Creighton, I realized what the atmosphere was like on campus. I sat in on a class where there was a lot of dialogue between the professor and the students, and everybody knew each other's names.

I'm delighted that I made that decision back then. And it's made an influence and an imprint on my life and how it's been shaped. I couldn't be happier.

What was your college career like? You and the team were extremely successful.

It was awesome. Being a professional soccer player was always a life-long goal, but academics were important. When I got here, Creighton had already made a name for itself (in soccer). We just had a ball. I have some great memories.

You were drafted in your senior year and played in Major League Soccer for several years. Were you thinking about coaching or returning to Creighton?

I never knew exactly what I wanted to do after I was done playing. I was a soccer junkie, and I wanted to have soccer in my life. Thankfully, I was invited and recruited a second time by Bob Warming to come back and finish my degree while helping as a student manager. I just loved it.

That's when I figured out, "Wow, I could really do this." I really enjoyed giving back to

the student-athletes in the same way that our coaches did for me back in the '90s. I decided this is what I wanted to do. I stayed on as an assistant coach and graduated with my degree in social work in 2008.

It sounds like you were focused on academics from the beginning.

I was adopted at 9 years old. Growing up in Colombia in the '80s — before I was adopted — I dreamt of being a pro soccer player. But I knew my adoptive parents were not going to let me leave Creighton without getting as close as possible to graduating. I got drafted during my senior year, but I'm extremely proud that I was able to come back and finish my degree.

What brought you so much success this past season?

When I took the helm, the most important thing was to figure out what our identity was. When COVID-19 hit, it slowed everything a little bit, but we really got to focus on each other. That built the roots and the foundation of what it meant for us to be a team. Then last season, we had our identity, we had our confidence, and we had a lot of energy.

And like anything else — in sports or any part of life — you need a little bit of fortune or luck. And I thought we got that toward the latter part of the season. And, man, that was the beginning of one of the best runs I've seen in my entire career.

The success of the past season was fantastic.

What is your vision for the program?

We are a national powerhouse. There are high standards. Every time we step on the field, the plan is to win. Not to compete or hold on. We're there to win.

In my recruiting process, we want to stay a successful program, but first and foremost, I recruit good human beings. I think what makes Creighton special is the community we have. And so for me, it's pivotal that we bring in quality human beings. Then I look for technical ability and work rate. We want to try and impose ourselves on our opponents and play attractive and exciting soccer for our fans.

How are you feeling this off-season?

I'm feeling great. We're full of energy, and we have a lot of familiar faces back. And we've got some new players coming in, too, which is always fun.



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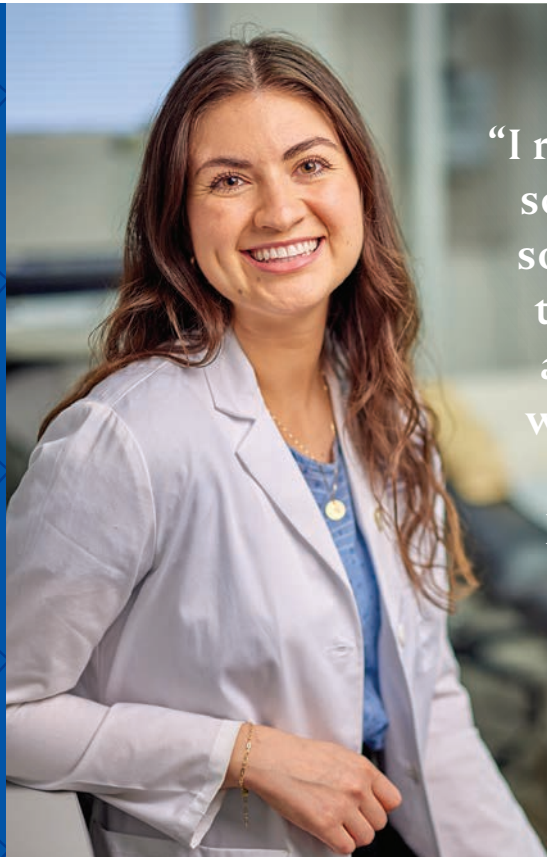


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– **AURORA RODRIGUEZ**
MEDICAL STUDENT
PHOENIX CAMPUS