

# Madison

## furious flower *Poetry center*

GWENDOLYN BROOKS

**CELEBRATE,  
EDUCATE,  
PRESERVE.**

The legacy-building mission of the nation's first academic center for black poetry **PAGE 26**

They eat beans mostly, this odd yellow pair.  
Dinner is a ritual affair.  
Plan, chop, sauté on a plian and crackling stove.  
Tim liberates.

Two who are Mouthy Good.  
Two who have lived their days  
But keep on putting on  
And pursue things we

And remembering . . .  
Remembering, with towels and napkins,  
As they lean over the beans in their rented back room, it  
is full of beads and receipts and dolls and chairs,  
tobacco stubs, signs and fringes.

MALIKO FAVORITE 2003

## Capping off their Madison careers

Class of 2019 graduates from the College of Arts and Letters celebrate May 4 on the Quad. Now JMU's newest alumni, they'll carry the Madison spirit of possibility with them on the next step of their journeys.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE MIRIELLO ('09M)



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Photographer Mike Miriello ('09M) was a finalist for a 2018-19 Platinum Award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.



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WOMEN FOR MADISON AND VALLEY SCHOLARS PHOTOGRAPHS BY ELISE TRISSEL; GABBIN AND QUILT BY DIANE ELLIOTT ('00); QUILT COURTESY OF JOANNE AND ALEXANDER GABBIN AND THE 150 FRANKLIN STREET GALLERY, HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

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— **HEATHER COLTMAN**, *provost and senior vice president for academic affairs*

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## People are central to driving change

My counterpart at Oregon State University provided some inspiration recently. I was reading his latest Letter From the Editor in the OSU alumni magazine, and it rings as true on our campus as it does all the way in Corvallis, Oregon. He wrote, "It's not about our places and our things, it's about our people and what happens to them here."

Now, I could put up a winning argument that my OSU equivalent used a comma where he should have used a semicolon instead. (The rule is to use a semicolon between two independent clauses connected without a conjunction.) Sorry (not sorry) to all the grammar nerds out there reading this, as we'll have to save that for another day.

The point behind the quote above is that people are central to JMU, and JMU is central to changing people's lives.

I've experienced this myself, and I've observed others experience it since returning to serve my alma mater. There have been no shortage of special small-town vibes—ones that didn't really arise in my last city—that I've enjoyed experiencing since relocating here from Los Angeles. Dukes look out for fellow Dukes.


As the Class of 2019 transitions to alumni status, a new wave of young people is empowered to change lives. JMU graduates embrace the idea that the world can be a better place when caring people listen, think and act. Listen. Think. Act. If you are intentional about doing all three daily, with a caring nature, change will come.

But in order to drive change, you need partnership and cooperation with others. That's the essence of our tight-knit community. Collaboration is not just a buzzword. It's how we get things done at JMU. JMU's vision is to be the national model for the engaged university: engaged with ideas and the world. Let's engage with each other and let's collaborate better.

That's where you come in.

Stories connect us as human beings. We have a great opportunity—and a great responsibility—to tell the story of JMU. And we all play a part in that. But we can't tell the stories we don't know about. You might think, "Well, duh! That sounds obvious," after reading that sentence, but it's worth reinforcing.

Whether you know it or not, you play a part in this magazine and the stories you find inside it. Please email [madisonmag@jmu.edu](mailto:madisonmag@jmu.edu) with story ideas about how JMU is changing lives. (And if you have a future Duke, email us your baby photos to be included in the next issue!)

We hope you enjoy this issue. Feedback is always welcome. Go Dukes! 

Sincerely,

  
**Khalil Garriott** ('04)

executive editor, *Madison* magazine



### Connect with us!

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-  [@JMU](https://twitter.com/@JMU)
-  [Madison magazine](http://Madisonmagazine)
-  [jmu.edu/madisonmagazine](http://jmu.edu/madisonmagazine)

# New Tour Cities This Fall!

JMU Dukes rocked the first leg of the *Unleashed* Tour, so we've added four more cities!

COMING IN **FALL 2019**



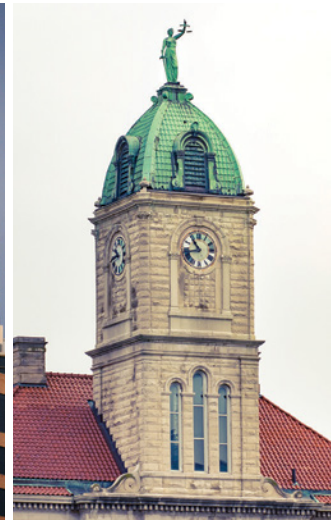
**NEW YORK CITY**  
Sept. 25



**PHILADELPHIA**  
Sept. 26



**CHARLOTTE**  
Oct. 2



**HARRISONBURG**  
Nov. 7

Each stop offers something different, and every one presents an opportunity to talk with JMU leaders such as President Jonathan R. Alger and Provost Heather Coltman, as well as our college deans, program directors, students and alumni with moving stories to share about their Madison Experience. **Get the details at [j.mu/tour](http://j.mu/tour).**

**Achieving the goals of *Unleashed: The Campaign for James Madison University* will require everyone in the JMU community to step forward and say, "I'm in!"**

The campaign tour plays a central role in including people all across the U.S., providing exciting events in unique, interesting venues for Dukes to gather, show their Purple Pride and invest in the future of Madison.

..... Join us at an event near you!

# *unleashed*

The Campaign for **JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY**

FALL 2019 Vol.42, No.3

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## Staff Snippets

**What's one way you have experienced JMU as a national leader in higher education?**

**"I traveled to Malmö, Sweden, in 2012 to share best practices with colleagues from member institutions in the International Network of Universities. JMU is the network's only U.S.-based institution."**

**JIM HEFFERNAN**  
( '96, '17M)

managing editor

**"Being a JMU student has opened many doors for me to succeed once I graduate. By JMU being a strong national leader, I am confident to graduate in December and know my university helped me build amazing connections."**

**SYDNEY ARNOLD**

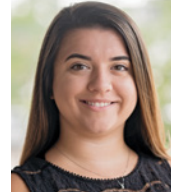
design assistant

**"JMU's intense focus on the undergraduate experience combined with hands-on learning is how I've experienced it as a national leader in higher ed."**

**MIKE MIRIELLO** ('09M)  
creative media manager

**CORRECTION:** On Page 55 of the Spring/Summer 2019 issue of *Madison*, the publisher of the book written by Donna (Pleasants) Isaac ('76) was incorrectly listed as Pileated Press. Pocahontas Press published *Footfalls*, Isaac's book of poetry. *Madison* regrets the error.

**Sydney Arnold**, a design assistant in University Communications and Marketing, is a graphic design major with an art minor. After graduating in December, she hopes to find a career with a firm that allows her to become a successful creative designer. Her experience designing this issue's By the Numbers infographics on Page 18 and producing the Community Calendar insert has reinforced her passion for magazine design.



**Sabrina Moreno ('19)** graduated with a degree in media arts and design with a concentration in journalism and a minor in creative writing. When she is not editing articles or writing about culture, people or social issues, she is consuming mass amounts of pretzel crisps with guacamole while purchasing ASAP Rocky posters on Amazon. Her stories about cartoonist John Rose ('86) and Honor Flight chapter president Dianne Klopp ('91) appear on Pages 48 and 59, respectively.



**Alicia Pettis ('14)** graduated with a degree in sociology. She spent most of her undergraduate years serving the Class of 2014 in the Student Government Association. After graduating, she worked at JMU in the Office of Annual Giving, where she started the GOLD Network to increase giving and engagement from graduates of the last decade. She lives and works in Northern Virginia. She recaps Spring Reunion Weekend on Page 54.



**Karen Risch Mott** is JMU's assistant director of campaign communications. She came to JMU to help the Furious Flower Poetry Center plan, promote and present its third major scholarly conference. A seasoned writer and researcher, she wrote a history of Furious Flower, available from JMU Libraries' Special Collections. She is researching the impact of the center on six American writers. Her story about the center is on Page 26.



**Samantha Seaton ('18)**, an assistant director of athletics communications at JMU, earned a degree in media arts and design with a journalism concentration and a minor in sports communication. She currently works with volleyball, swimming and diving, and softball. Her story about All-American softball player Megan Good's comeback appears on Page 20.





## Virginia invests in education

If you follow any sort of news media, you know that there are concerns across the country about the costs of higher education—at a time when higher education has never been more important to our economy and to our democracy. We also know that public higher education is a wise strategic investment for our states and for our nation—and that such public investment is directly tied to access, affordability and tuition moderation. Thus, we were delighted this spring when the Virginia General Assembly recognized this clear relationship by providing \$53 million in additional funds aimed at making college more affordable for Virginia students and their families. Acknowledging this important investment, governing boards at all 15 Virginia public universities voted this year to freeze tuition rates for in-state students for the coming year. Consequently, 2019 marked the first time in 18 years that JMU did not increase in-state tuition to keep up with rising costs and work to remain competitive. All Virginians should commend our lawmakers for this welcome news. Asking the question, “Why now?” reveals fascinating social, political and economic forces.


Of course, the most important reason to increase support now is to maintain access to opportunity for students. A recent study by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York finds that there is zero doubt about the economic value of earning a bachelor’s degree. The study examines average wages and adjusts for inflation and other labor market changes over time, finding that a typical college graduate earns nearly 75% more than those without a degree. This “wage premium” is not the only economic benefit: Bureau of Labor Statistics data show that during the depths of the Great Recession, when the national unemployment rate for those without a college degree peaked at nearly 16%, those with college degrees were unemployed at a rate of only 5%. JMU graduates, in particular, enjoy such benefits: JMU recently ranked No. 1 among Virginia universities for post-graduation employment based on U.S. Department of Education data. When news of this ranking was announced in June, reaction in social media among JMU alumni—and current JMU parents—was universally ecstatic. Go Dukes!

Another plausible answer to “Why now?” are the types of factors that led to Amazon’s recent decision to locate its second headquarters in Virginia. “I would estimate it at 80% of the decision came down to the availability of talent,” said Alan Berube, senior fellow of the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program. The greater Washington, D.C., area—home to nearly 40,000 JMU alumni—is the country’s most-educated region, especially in the field of computer science. Long before Amazon announced its plans, JMU had answered the commonwealth’s call to increase the number of degrees conferred in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The number of STEM degrees conferred annually by JMU increased from 1,978 in 2012 to 2,669 in 2018—a 35% increase. Of note, JMU also continues to be a major producer of K-12 teachers who will develop that talent pipeline so that they are prepared for the rigors of college work in such areas. Referring to this year’s increase in higher-education funding, Amazon’s interest and decision serves as a powerful reminder that an appropriately funded system of higher education is one of the highest-octane drivers of a state’s economic engine.

In similar news, Gov. Ralph Northam announced in May that Merck & Co. plans to invest \$1 billion over the next three years to expand its

manufacturing operation in Rockingham County, in JMU’s backyard. One of the factors leading to this decision was JMU’s ability (in partnership with Blue Ridge Community College) to fill a pipeline of biotechnology engineering and computer science talent that will allow the Shenandoah Valley to accommodate the future growth of Merck and other life-science industries and manufacturers in the region.

Funding higher education appropriately is not just about developing technical and professional talent, of course. JMU’s mission statement states that “we are a community committed to preparing students to be educated and enlightened *citizens* who lead productive and meaningful lives,” not just *workers*. JMU is known widely in higher education to be a leader in this regard because of our award-winning core curriculum. In fact, I was recently named co-chair of the Fusion of STEM & Liberal Arts Disciplines Task Force at the Council on Competitiveness because business leaders are increasingly aware that while technical skills are necessary, they are not sufficient: A strong workforce requires well-rounded team members who also can think critically.

Finally, as a faithful steward of taxpayer and tuition-payer dollars, JMU makes this issue of *Madison* available to prospective students and families in addition to its usual role as a regular bulletin for the faithful JMU Nation. If you’re on the college search and not from Virginia, please consider our General Assembly’s commitment to higher education as a superior differentiator to states that don’t put a priority on education. If you’re a Virginian—especially if you’re about to begin your education or you’re a proud JMU alumnus—please attend your district’s senator and house member’s next town hall and thank them warmly for their very wise decision to recommit to funding higher education appropriately in Virginia. 

**JMU recently ranked No. 1 among Virginia universities for post-graduation employment based on U.S. Department of Education data.**



*Jonathan R. Alger*  
Jonathan R. Alger

president, James Madison University

# News & Notes

FALL 2019

## JMU, BRCC to partner on workforce development

**J**MU and Blue Ridge Community College will receive up to \$2.5 million over five years from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership to address the workforce needs of major employers in the region.

The grant, which is part of the proposed \$1.2 billion expansion of Merck's pharmaceutical manufacturing facility in Elkton, Virginia, will provide funds for new faculty and curriculum development in the areas of manufacturing, science, technology, engineering and math.

JMU also will receive funding for two positions that will serve as liaisons to ensure that workforce development needs are being met. Additionally, each institution will get funds to hire talent acquisition specialists to implement a program to help employers identify the most qualified job applicants.



"This is an incredible opportunity that will provide a great deal of economic development to the Shenandoah Valley," JMU President Jonathan R. Alger said. "Our faculty and staff are excited to work with colleagues at Blue Ridge Community College to offer cutting-edge training and education opportunities to the community."

JMU also will allow BRCC graduates who earn an Associate of Applied Science degree in Advanced Manufacturing Technology with a specialization in biotechnology to transition seamlessly into JMU's biology major.

— BILL WYATT ('16M)

## The value of science

Madison Vision Series speaker calls for increased public support

**"I**n an era when science is often undervalued and even under attack in the public square, perhaps no area requires thoughtful debate and reflection more than the future of science education and scientific discovery," JMU President Jonathan R. Alger said to kick off the final Madison Vision Series lecture of the 2018-19 academic year. "The stakes are high."

In her talk, "Serving Society Through Science: Facts, Communication, Policy," Barbara Schaal, an evolutionary biologist and former vice president of the National Acad-

emy of Sciences, made the case for increased support of the sciences.

"Science exists to serve society," she said.

Before the Enlightenment period, humans relied on supernatural explanations of the world around them, Schaal said. The scientific discoveries of the past three centuries have led to significant advancements in medicine, agriculture, transportation, electronics, information technol-

**Barbara Schaal, an evolutionary biologist, delivered a Madison Vision Series lecture in April.**



CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 >>>

**“We need to do a better job at educating the public about the value of science.”**

— **BARBARA SCHAAL**,  
*evolutionary biologist*

>>> FROM PAGE 8


ogy and artificial intelligence, she said.

Still, she said, science is layered with ethical dilemmas, political bias, and individual and cultural differences that can undermine the public’s trust in its work. For example, there is widespread agreement in the scientific community today about global warming and its causes, but many people choose not to believe in it. And some individuals elect not to vaccinate their children against certain diseases despite evidence that the inoculations are effective.

Part of the problem in separating fact from opinion, Schaal said, is in how scientific discoveries are communicated. “These studies can be very complicated,” she said, adding that “many scientists feel that they have to go into incredible detail” when describing their findings.

The goal in communicating such discoveries is to increase our understanding of the natural world and to provide a basis for both individual decision-making and governmental policies, she said. “Science should be a statement, ‘This is what we know.’”

Schaal, the dean of the faculty of Arts and Sciences and a professor at Washington University in St. Louis, also said part of the responsibility for increasing support for the sciences falls on public education.

“We need to do a better job at educating the public about the value of science,” she said. 

— **JIM HEFFERNAN** (‘96, ‘17M)

**MADISON**  
VISION SERIES  
*Contemporary issues in an engaged society*



To view Barbara Schaal’s remarks and other Madison Vision Series presenters, go to [jmu.edu/mvs](http://jmu.edu/mvs).

## JMU’s Fulbright winners ready to take their studies global

**F**or leading universities like JMU, providing scholarships is important to attract the best and brightest students. Once they’re on campus, some qualify for prestigious scholarship programs that draw from candidates around the country.

Among 41 applicants from JMU, 17 alumni and students received recognition from the Fulbright U.S. Student Program—a fourfold increase over last year’s totals.

During the 2019-20 academic year, JMU’s Fulbright Scholars will study in far-flung countries like South Korea, Bulgaria, Malaysia, Poland, Taiwan, Uganda and many more. The prestigious, long-standing scholarship is backed by the U.S. Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. The number of JMU applicants this year, 41, shatters the previous mark. Last year, JMU had 12 applicants with three winners and one alternate.

Honors student Joanna Pottle (‘19), JMU’s first undergraduate art student to receive a Fulbright, beat out master’s and doctoral candidates for the honor. She’ll become JMU’s first Fulbright recipient to travel to Poland in September, when she begins a combination of projects and research with the Academy of Fine Arts and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Krakow.

“I’ve had so many people help me with this process, including my family, friends and community at JMU,” Pottle said. “I am truly grateful.”

All Fulbright Scholars from JMU are members of the Class of 2018 or Class of 2019. Seven of them were or are in the Honors College. They’ll join more than 2,000 other U.S. citizens to study, con-

duct advanced research and teach abroad in more than 140 countries during the 2019-20 academic year.


Of JMU’s 17 Fulbrights this year (16 winners and one alternate), 12 are from the College of Arts and Letters.

“Our high-quality undergraduate programs continue to prepare students for lives of meaningful engagement with their communities and the world,” CAL Dean Robert Aguirre said.

Fulbright Scholars are chosen based on their academic and professional achievement, record of service and leadership potential in their respective fields. Numerous JMU faculty and staff members wrote recommendation letters for JMU’s applicants and served as panelists on the JMU Fulbright Nomination Committee.

Since 1946, the Fulbright Program has provided opportunities for more than 390,000 participants to exchange ideas and contribute to finding solutions to shared international concerns.

In addition to these Fulbright winners, a pair of JMU Honors students won Goldwater Scholarships this year: David Weisenbeck and Erin Krist. Weisenbeck, whose career goal is a Ph.D. in evolutionary biology, wants to teach and conduct research on systematic herpetology. Krist wants to mentor undergraduates and earn a Ph.D. in inorganic chemistry. The Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation, established in 1986 by Congress, is a living memorial to honor the

lifetime work of Sen. Barry Goldwater, who served his country for 56 years as a soldier and statesman, including 30 years in the U.S. Senate. 

— **KHALIL GARRIOTT** (‘04)



**Honors student Joanna Pottle (‘19) beat out master’s and doctoral candidates to win a Fulbright to do research in Poland beginning in September.**

# FACULTY FOCUS

Spotlighting JMU professors through the lenses of scholarship, awards and service

## Sharon Mazzarella

COMMUNICATION STUDIES

### 2019 Provost Award for Excellence in Research and Scholarship



"Her research focuses on youth culture and mass media, specifically in the field of girls'

studies—how girls interact with popular culture and use media as a space for self-expression, community building and identity formation," Provost Heather Coltman said at the award presentation.

Mazzarella is the author of seven books, including *Girl Wide Web 2.0: Revisiting Girls, the Internet, and the Negotiation of Identity and 20 Questions About Youth and the Media*. She is editor of *Mediated Youth*, a book series dedicated to publishing cutting-edge academic books on cultural studies of youth, primarily girls.

Her forthcoming book, *Girls, Moral Panic, and the News Media: Troublesome Bodies*, takes a critical look at U.S. print media constructions of girls and girls' bodies/sexualities through a series of in-depth case studies of contemporary events.

A letter supporting Mazzarella's nomination for the Provost Award states, "Dr. Mazzarella not only helped to chart this scholarly territory in the early 2000s, she continues to shape the field through her continued scholarship,

editorial efforts and personal commitment to supporting emerging scholarship in her fields of study."

**William Grant** ECONOMICS,  
**Jesse Rathgeber** MUSIC and  
**Tracy Zinn** PSYCHOLOGY



are the **2019 recipients of the Madison Vision Teaching Awards.**



The award, sponsored by the Faculty Senate and the Student Government Association, recognizes a commitment to excellence in teaching by "developing deep, purposeful and reflective learning, while uniting campus and community in the pursuit, creation, application and dissemination of knowledge."



## Paul Raston

CHEMISTRY AND BIOCHEMISTRY



Raston received a **Cottrell Scholar Award** from the Research Corporation for Science

Advancement, which recognizes leaders in integrating science teaching and research. He was one of 24 scholars across

the country, and the only one in Virginia, to receive the award.

Raston's research offers insight into atmospheric chemistry at the molecular level, which could lead to better predictive capabilities of the chemistry that occurs in Earth's atmosphere. He will use the \$100,000 grant to develop software interfaces to control instrumentation used in undergraduate laboratory courses.

"The cool thing about this award is that it is for both research and teaching," Raston said. "It will allow for us to investigate the forces that drive atmospherically important reactions and enhance the active-learning environment in undergraduate chemistry labs."

Raston joins JMU chemistry professors Ashleigh Baber and Gina MacDonald as Cottrell Scholar Award recipients.

## Caroline Lubert

MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS



Lubert studies rocket launch acoustics, specifically ways to reduce launch

noise, which would improve safety and cut costs. Much of her research takes place at Wallops Island on Virginia's eastern shore, where Antares rockets are launched to the International Space Station.

## Justin Henriques

ENGINEERING



Henriques earned a **Rising Star Award** from the Kern Entrepreneurial Engi-

neering Network, a national affiliation of faculty who teach engineering to undergraduate

students. In announcing the award, which includes \$10,000, a KEEN committee stated it was impressed by Henriques' record of achievement in creating and promoting entrepreneurially minded learning.

## Daniel Morales

HISTORY



Morales researches the unique social and economic history of migration

between Latin America and the United States, seeking to highlight the experiences of individuals starkly underrepresented in the American curriculum. He is the author of the forthcoming book *The Making of Mexican America: The Dynamics of Transnational Migration 1900-1940*.

He teaches courses in Latino history, immigration and U.S. and Latin American history. His students are involved in the Immigrant Harrisonburg project, a community-based investigation of the lives of immigrants living in the Shenandoah Valley and beyond. Students engage in community service projects, oral histories, documentary films and advocacy.

## Elizabeth Johnson

GEOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE



Johnson was among the researchers who made a ground-breaking discovery

about how volcanoes formed in the area of Bermuda. The team discovered the first direct evidence that material from Earth's mantle transition zone can percolate to the surface to form volcanoes. Before this discovery, researchers knew volcanoes formed when tectonic plates converged or diverged, or as a result of mantle plumes that rise from the core-mantle boundary to make hotspots in the Earth's

**"It will allow for us to ... enhance the active-learning environment in undergraduate chemistry labs."**

— PAUL RASTON, *Cottrell Scholar Award recipient*

**“... we measured the amount of water stored in crystals of a mineral called pyroxene that grew within the molten rock.”**

— **ELIZABETH JOHNSON**,  
geology and environmental  
science professor

crust. “At JMU, we measured the amount of water stored in crystals of a mineral called pyroxene that grew within the molten rock, or magma,” said Johnson, who was one of eight authors of a paper on the research that was published in *Nature* in May.

#### Alan Levinovitz

RELIGION



Levinovitz challenges commonly accepted norms surrounding spirituality and natural-


ness and how that rhetoric plays in our view of wellness. His newest book, *Natural: How Faith in Nature’s Goodness Leads To Harmful Fads, Unjust Laws, and Flawed Science*, is scheduled for release in Spring 2020.

#### Cathryn Molloy

WRITING, RHETORIC AND  
TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION



Molloy studies the ways that stigmatized patients consciously and subconsciously

use rhetoric to rebuild their credibility after being unfairly doubted due to demographic factors. In her research, she harnesses the power of the personal narrative to unlock recurring themes across groups of marginalized individuals—creating space for silenced voices to be heard. 

## The sound of science

Summer research program breaks down communication barriers



**T**he Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at JMU hosts a 10-week summer program that pairs deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals with hearing individuals in a research setting.

The program, Research Experiences for Undergraduates, is funded by the National Science Foundation. Participants include students and faculty members from JMU and outside institutions that serve deaf and hard-of-hearing students, as well as colleges and universities without extensive research infrastructure. JMU faculty members provide research opportunities in all major sub-disciplines of chemistry.

In addition to conducting research, REU participants engage in a series of professional development activities aimed at enhancing effective science communication with other

**While doing research, participants learn to communicate with deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.**




chemists, scientists in other disciplines, the public and those with communication disorders.

“One of the things that I think is especially exciting about this program is how often the hearing students decide they really want to learn some sign language, and how good they get at it over a short period of time,” said Judy Bradley, an American Sign Language interpreter at JMU.

**“I really enjoy that this program has helped us break down these barriers.”**

— **BRENDEN WIMBISH** (’16),  
former research associate

“You’re actually communicating with someone that you wouldn’t have before,” said Brenden Wimbish (’16), a research associate at JMU in 2018. “And so I really enjoy that this program has helped us break down these barriers.” 



Watch a video of REU chemists at work at [j.mu/sound](http://j.mu/sound).

## Climate change: science, not gender

When chemistry and biochemistry professor Donna Amenta arrived at JMU in 1974, the department had one full-time female professor and a part-time instructor.

Today, it has 12 full-time female faculty members, including department head Linette Watkins. Overall, the College of Science and Mathematics has 78 full-time female faculty, accounting for 42% of the total.

As the numbers and percentage of women in the college has increased over the years, so has the respect for them.

“The science is judged for the science and not by the gender,” said Amenta, who was

hired as a part-time lab instructor and transitioned through a number of other part- and full-time positions before being promoted to a tenure-track position in 1990. Within five years of that promotion, she rose to full professor and served as department head for 12 years.

Amenta credits retired CSM Dean David Brakke for much of the improvement. “He didn’t force it, but he certainly facilitated it,” she said.

Brakke, who led the college from 1999 to 2016, said, “Role models and mentors are extremely important to instruction and in supporting undergraduate research. Having accomplished and productive female role

models across all departments contributes to a culture valuing inclusivity.”

The college’s female role models have gained respect not only at JMU, but also from prestigious professional organizations, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and others.

Female faculty routinely receive outside funding to support their work, said current CSM Dean Cynthia Bauerle, along with new instrumentation “that’s allowing our scientists to work at a different level.”

Amenta said there is room for more progress, “but the climate is changing for the better.”

— ERIC GORTON ('86, '09M)



**Chemistry professor Donna Amenta (left) with department head Linette Watkins.**



## Engaging the border

For one week in March, JMU students were immersed in the culture and daily lives of immigrant communities along the Texas-Mexico border.



To read more, visit [j.mu/lupe](http://j.mu/lupe).



## First beekeeping operation

JMU was named a Bee Campus USA institution by the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation earlier this year

The Bee Campus USA program is designed to raise awareness of the role pollinators play in our communities and what people can do to provide them with a healthy habitat.

### As a member, JMU commits to:

- create a campus pollinator habitat plan to offer a valuable landscape management model applicable to local landscapes by 2020
- host annual campus events to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators and to acknowledge JMU certification as a Bee Campus USA institution
- sponsor and track student service-learning projects annually to enhance pollinator habitats on and off campus
- offer a course and/or workshop at least biannually on Pollinator Ecology, Integrated Pest Management, Landscaping for Pollinators or Native Plants
- post signage regarding pollinators to educate the campus and the broader community about pollinator-friendly landscaping principles



Beekeepers install hives on east campus as part of JMU's Bee Campus USA program designation.

JMU Bee Campus committee members established a new bee colony on east campus in May.

## Join the JMU Alumni Club at Hotel Madison

Members of JMU's official hotel enjoy exclusive discounts and benefits. Plus, a portion of each stay goes to the JMU Alumni Scholarship Fund.

Visit [hotelmadison.com](http://hotelmadison.com) to join today!



*Celebrating 30 Years!*

# Year of the Trees

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## In-state tuition frozen for first time in 18 years

The JMU Board of Visitors voted in April to roll back a planned tuition increase on in-state students for the 2019-20 academic year.

The board's decision is the result of a \$52.4 million appropriation by the Virginia General Assembly and the governor to address the affordability of undergraduate public education in the commonwealth. JMU's share of the appropriation is \$6.1 million.

"This is the first time in almost two decades that JMU has been in a position to hold the line on tuition," said Charlie King, senior vice president for administration and finance. "With rising costs and a growing university, we have always done our best to find the balance between increasing tuition and maintaining affordability. The board's decision ... will go a long way to address college affordability not just this year, but for years to come."

The money, along with future allocations from Richmond, will help JMU offset rising expenses, including faculty and staff compensation, new facilities operation and maintenance costs, scholarships and financial aid, maintaining faculty-to-student ratios and strategic initiatives.

Given the university's concern with maintaining access and affordability for all students, the board of visitors voted to hold the tuition increase for out-of-state students to \$500 for 2019-20.

The comprehensive fee will increase by \$190 for all students. The fee goes to pay for student services such as the University Health Center, bus system, UREX and admission to athletic events, among other services.

— BILL WYATT ('16M)

## Amato delivers keynote lecture at Kosovo sports seminar

JMU continues to strengthen its presence in Kosovo, and one of its own recently shared his expertise at a leading sports performance conference.

Associate Vice Provost for Academic Development Herb Amato was the keynote speaker at Integrated Health and Sports Performance, a seminar hosted by the Kosovo Olympic Committee. Amato presented on how to integrate health into sports performance.

"The key to success is communication," said Amato, who frequents Kosovo as a member of the Agency for Accreditation of Universities in Kosovo.

"This has been a great service to helping strengthen Kosovo's system of education and keeps it from exporting some of its brightest minds," Vice President for University Advancement Nick Langridge ('00, '07M, '14Ph.D.) said.

As a professor of health sciences, Amato relished the chance to share his wisdom with the senior executives, sponsors, coaches, sports physicians and media members in the audience.

"Sport is a big deal in Kosovo," Amato said. "They are very eager to get better. They are very proud of their accomplishments and they

look to the future."

A former athletic trainer for many baseball players and Olympians, Amato is an expert in applying science to sport. He has worked at JMU for over 30 years and played a pivotal role in the success of the university's athletic training program.

"It built my career and helped shape me as an administrator at JMU," Amato said. "I am very proud of my athletic training accomplishments; however, I am prouder of

where the program has progressed in the past 12 years without me. What the athletic training students are learning today is night and day from what I taught them in my time."

JMU is an education partner with Kosovo. In October 2018, a JMU delegation traveled to Kosovo to help officials understand how to leverage tech in improving the higher education experience.

Langridge added, "I'm grateful to Herb for his service and believe he is part of taking Kosovo from peace to prosperity through education."

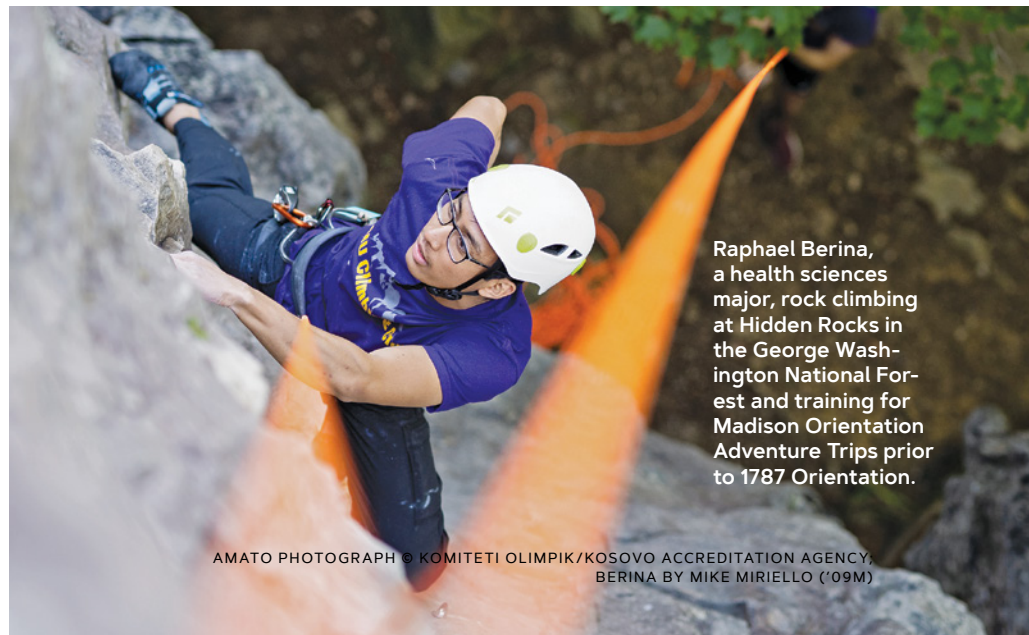
The seminar was held in June at Hotel Sirius in Kosovo's historic capital of Pristina.

— KHALIL GARRIOTT ('04)

KOSOVO



Amato is helping Kosovo achieve prosperity through education.



Raphael Berina, a health sciences major, rock climbing at Hidden Rocks in the George Washington National Forest and training for Madison Orientation Adventure Trips prior to 1787 Orientation.





## 'Inspiring beyond measure'

Top alumni headline Women Who Amaze 2019 Women for Madison Summit

**H**eadlined by top alumni speakers and signature events, the Women Who Amaze 2019 Women for Madison Summit drew 130 women to campus in May for a weekend devoted to old and new friends, inspiring stories, and personal and professional development. As one alumna said afterward, "It was inspiring beyond measure, and I really encourage anyone to go, because it truly makes you examine yourself in many ways, and how JMU has impacted others. ... I had no idea how incredibly emotional the whole weekend would be. My favorite activities were the Madison Mentoring, the Madison En Blanc Dinner and the breakout session with Mrs. Alger. Also, Jamie [Jones Miller] and Jennifer [Killi Marshall] were standout speakers. They impressed me with their stories, failures, power and grace. I am so proud to be a Duke!" **More at [j.mu/dolleydolley](http://j.mu/dolleydolley)**

### Focus on scholarships \$25 and \$200,000

The summit luncheon focused on the impact scholarships make on the lives of JMU students and the presentation of the Leslie Flanary Gilliam ('82) Spirit of Philanthropy Award.

New graduate **Katrina Shelton ('19)**, who spoke about finding a home at JMU through the Centennial Scholars Program, embraces fellow speaker **Diane Strawbridge ('80, '02M)**, head of the program and anchor to hundreds of Centennial Scholars through the years. "I made my first gift to JMU to support the Centennial Scholars Program with \$25 from my graduation gift," Shelton said, "so I'm officially a Woman for Madison." Chiquita King ('09, '11M) spoke of fulfilling her mother's dream for her at JMU and how a scholarship gave her a firm footing for a successful career. **Karen Rothenberger ('93)** told the summit crowd that Shelton's story had helped inspire the \$200,000 gift she and her husband, John ('88), made to support the Centennial Scholars Program.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 >>>



Women gathered at Oakview for the First Ladies' Brunch, hosted by Mary Ann Alger, to commence the weekend. They convened a circle, based on Dolley Madison's historic "squeezes" at the White House, where she brought political rivals together to work out the issues of the day.



**"Every detail was perfect."**

— DUTIE DUTEMPLE ('62, '67M)

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## Spirit of Philanthropy Award

An emotional moment unfolded as **Julie Thomas ('15)** helped engineer a surprise announcement by narrating a video about her mother at the luncheon: "I



am so happy and honored to be here at JMU, our second home, on Mother's Day weekend to help present the Leslie Flanary Gilliam Spirit of Philanthropy Award to my mother, **Kathleen Leilani Mueller Thomas, Class of 1978.**" Thomas, along with her husband, Mike ('76, '77M), started the Dukes Pay It Forward

Scholarship program. Today, more than 25 other like-minded donors have created these scholarships, which means 25 more students are receiving scholarship aid to attend JMU. As Kathy Thomas once said, "I can't pay anyone back, but I can pay it forward." JMU President Jonathan R. Alger and first lady Mary Ann Alger presented the award.



Based on the international dining phenomenon and a big hit at the last summit, the **Madison En Blanc Dinner** returned to the 2019 lineup by popular demand. Alumni, parents, and faculty and staff members celebrated at the picturesque **Brix & Columns Vineyard** on Friday evening prior to Saturday's focus on personal and professional development.



**Women competed, cheered, selfied and updated their knowledge of campus as they navigated landmarks and new construction during the scavenger hunt.**



Throughout the day, keynote speakers dispensed powerful advice and shared challenges and successes. Jamie Jones Miller ('99) spoke of how she sometimes must remind herself she belongs at the table with the nation's top defense officials. **Jennifer Killi Marshall ('01)**

told of her traumatic experiences with bipolar disorder and turning it into the international nonprofit This Is My Brave. Entrepreneur and former management executive Tina Fox ('94) closed the event with her keynote, "Living Your Legacy."

**Kacey Neckowitz ('10, '11M)** took the role of Dolley Madison to heart during the summit, playfully and artfully portraying a woman who both fascinated and challenged her. Having stepped away from the character, she reflects on embodying Dolley in service of her alma mater.

### Why Dolley Madison?

Dolley was dynamic. She is often lauded for her stellar conversational skills, her charm and her popularity in Washington, D.C., during both Jefferson's and Madison's presidencies. Her Wednesday evening "squeezes" allowed her to deftly use diplomacy, courtesy and authenticity to enrich political and personal relationships during the early days of our nation. She outlived every one of the Founding Fathers and was awarded a seat in Congress after President Madison died. She also experienced

great loss, struggled with a profligate son and died destitute with her former slave, Paul Jennings, as her caregiver. Her achievements are great, as are her failures, which made investigating Dolley Madison's life such an enriching experience.

### What did you learn from impersonating her?

I am a proud JMU alumna and employee—and a big fan and supporter of Women for Madison—so when I was offered the opportunity to play Dolley Madison in a series of videos to help promote the 2019

summit, I immediately said yes. I didn't know much about her, so I began reading about Mrs. Madison. The more I learned, the more I wanted to know. Being Dolley Madison made me more intentional in my interactions with people, even when I was out of costume: to think quietly and speak thoughtfully, to listen more and, maybe most important, to consider what I am doing to make my corner of the world a better place.

### Was there anything particularly difficult about the role?

As I educated myself about her life, I discovered there was much to admire about her, but I also had to face the reality that she owned and sold people as slaves.

I was ready to embrace the role of bold, charming, welcoming Dolley, but I quickly had to figure out what to do with the uncomfortable feelings I had when I learned more of her history. The result is that it wasn't a particularly accurate portrayal; it was more of an homage. I believe it is important to acknowledge and understand the harsh truths of our country's past, and their impact then and now.



## JMU professors receive support from Goodman, Roberts gifts

Political science professor Kerry Crawford and biology professor M. Rockwell Parker both received the Goodman Faculty Fellowship Endowment for Excellence in Teaching (a \$5,000 award). Supported by Clem and Robin Goodman, this endowment recognizes excellence in teaching and scholarly activity, with a focus on integrating the two to benefit student learning.

College of Arts and Letters Dean Robert Aguirre said Crawford is “firing on all cylinders and is a great credit to JMU as it builds its national reputation.”

Communication studies professor Melissa Alemán and geology and environmental science professor Kristen St. John both received the Shirley Hanson Roberts ('56) and Richard D. Roberts Endowment for Faculty



(Clockwise, from top left): Kerry Crawford, M. Rockwell Parker, Kristen St. John and Melissa Alemán.

Excellence (a \$12,500 award). This endowment honors faculty members who mentor and collaborate with undergraduate students, inspire students to take risks through high-impact learning practices, and improve the culture of scholarship in their academic units.

One of Alemán’s students shared that “she created a classroom environment that allowed me to be vulnerable—I knew that it was a place where I could grapple with tough questions, receive open and honest feedback, and find true mentorship from a professor [who] really cares about her students.”

Among the Goodmans’ wishes as donors are curriculum development, technology enhancements and professional-development initiatives. Meanwhile, the Roberts family desires to recognize professors who show strong collaboration and support for students in and out of the classroom, a deep engagement that helps transform students and helping to change the culture of learning.

— KHALIL GARRIOTT ('04)

## What’s your giving picture?



“I am proud to be part of an astounding university with such amazing alumni. My experiences as a JMU student gave me a strong educational foundation and connected me with phenomenal women who have become my **lifelong friends**. Today I volunteer for JMU and represent purple and gold wherever I go. I’m just as **proud to give back** financially year after year to help current and future students afford the opportunities JMU has to offer.”

**Rhonda Jackson Page ('94)**

**4 consecutive years of giving to JMU**

Communication Studies major, Citizens Bank manager, Women for Madison Executive Advisory Council member

Forever **LOYAL**  
Forever True. Forever **JMU**

**Join Rhonda!** [j.mu/loyal](http://j.mu/loyal)

By  
the

# Numbers

## Another record-breaking year

The public launch of *Unleashed: The Campaign for James Madison University* highlighted JMU's largest fundraising year ever. Donors contributed \$23.1 million during the fiscal year that ended on June 30, marking the fourth time in five years that private giving to JMU set dollar records. And for the fourth consecutive year, more than 20,000 donors made gifts to support the university. Gifts ranging from \$10 to \$5.2 million (including four seven-figure gifts; see [j.mu/unleashed](http://j.mu/unleashed)) helped make it a historic year, demonstrating again the importance of every gift and every donor.



**JMU**  
GIVING

2012  
\$8.6  
million

2013  
\$13.6  
million

2014  
\$11.7  
million

2015  
\$19.1  
million

2016  
\$19.4  
million

2017  
\$18.8  
million

2018  
\$21.5  
million

2019  
RECORD-BREAKING  
**\$23.1**  
MILLION



**5,329**  
GIFTS  
**24 HOURS**

**\$1.2 MILLION**



2019 FISCAL YEAR IN REVIEW

**\$6.7 MILLION**

record annual giving to the university



**20,062**

TOTAL DONORS

4th straight year of more than

**20,000**

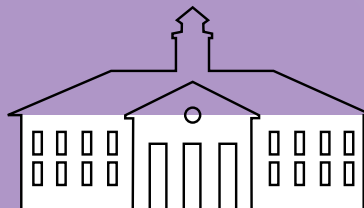
DONORS



ALUMNI DONORS

**8,456**

*How far we've come*



- Renewing Our Civil Society
- Opening Our Doors
- Advancing Our Understanding
- Building Our Success
- Realizing Our Vision

**unleashed**

The Campaign for JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

**\$143,759,837**

toward the \$200 million goal

\*Campaign total represents 71.9% of goal and was current as of Aug. 7, 2019, when the magazine went to press.

## It was a very 'Good' run

BY SAMANTHA SEATON ('18),  
athletics communications assistant director

**H**er name is etched in NCAA, James Madison and Colonial Athletic Association record books. For softball not being her go-to sport, Megan Good turned out to be pretty great.

She was a multisport athlete in high school who wanted to be recruited for volleyball, but she caught Mickey Dean's eye on the softball field. He was in awe of her natural motion and ability to effortlessly throw a fastball at nearly 60 mph—she was special.

"When she was in my office with her mom and dad, I just looked at her and said, 'You've been given a gift and I'd hate to see that get wasted,'" said Dean, former JMU softball head coach. "I told her she could come here to play softball and be an All-American every year."

Dean was right. Good was a four-year All-American and the first in program history.

Twice she was a Top 3 finalist for the USA Collegiate Softball National Player of the Year while also winning National Fastpitch Coaches Association National Player of the Year in 2017. She was also the first to win CAA Player and Pitcher of the Year in the same season.

Good was dominant from the beginning, breaking the single-season record with 29 wins her freshman year.

She was good, but she wanted to be better. "One summer day after her freshman year, Coach Dean and I drove past the field to see her throwing weighted balls by herself," current head coach Loren LaPorte recalled. "I thought, 'Wow, at a young age she really knows what it's going to take for her to compete at a high level.'"

Alongside seniors Jailyn Ford and Erica Field, Good improved as a sophomore and helped JMU earn its first NCAA Super Regional berth, where they would face LSU.

**"Her energy in tough situations made everyone calm."**

— KIERSTIN ROADCAP,  
JMU catcher

Good hit two home runs in the first game of the Harrisonburg Super Regional, propelling JMU to take the first game before losing the series.

"If I could relive the LSU series, I would," Good said.

"Being in front of our home crowd with all of our friends, family and community filling the bleachers was amazing. I think that was the best I've ever played."

When Ford and Field graduated in 2016, Good knew she'd have the ball in her hands as a junior. 2017 was her year.

Good continued to break records. She tallied 38 wins and struck out 271 batters while yielding a 0.63 ERA. In the box, she batted a career-high .383 with 69 hits, 12 home runs and 58 RBIs.

It was as if she was on top of the world. But in Fall 2017, Dean left JMU for Auburn and two months later, Good was out due to injury. "I was with some of my teammates watching a movie and I propped my legs on the coffee table and that's when it happened," Good said. "The piece of bone behind my knee broke off."

When Good visited the team physician, X-rays showed the bone had been lodged into her knee. "He told me I needed emergency surgery," Good said. "I went in for surgery the next day and was put on the list for a bone graft."

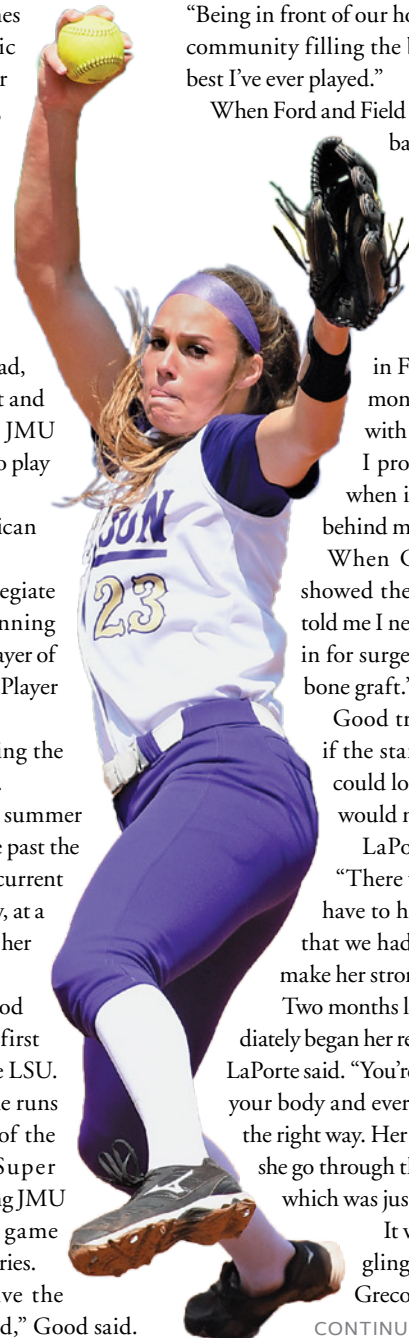
Good tried to convince LaPorte to let her play, but if the star pitcher played with a gap in her knee, she could lose all of the cartilage. It was decided that she would not play until after the graft.

LaPorte said it was her hardest year as a coach. "There were a lot of tears. She asked, 'Why did this have to happen to me now?' and all I could tell her is that we had to stay positive. I told her this was going to make her stronger in the end."

Two months later, Good received the bone graft and immediately began her rehabilitation. "Her surgery was pretty intense," LaPorte said. "You're talking about putting someone else's bone in your body and everything has to take correctly in order to work the right way. Her rehab was extremely painful and not only did she go through that, but we had to take the ball away from her, which was just as difficult."

It was the lowest point in her life. She was struggling physically and mentally. Her brother, Chris Greco, sent her this quote: *The best views come after*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 >>>



# Dukes in the pros

*JMU student-athletes take next steps in their athletic careers*

BY KEVIN WARNER ('02)

In a typical sports year, it is common for a few JMU student-athletes to earn professional opportunities following intercollegiate competition. As the university's athletics success continues to span all sports, 2018-19 featured seven student-athletes selected in professional drafts across four sports.

Dozens of other former Dukes remain active, competing professionally in football, basketball, baseball, lacrosse, softball, soccer, golf and ice hockey. Find an updated list at [jmusports.com/pros](http://jmusports.com/pros).



**Jimmy Moreland**

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE  
7TH ROUND/NO. 227 OVERALL  
(WASHINGTON REDSKINS)



**Kevin Kelly**

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL  
19TH ROUND/NO. 580 OVERALL  
(CLEVELAND INDIANS)



**Shelton Perkins**

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL  
16TH ROUND/NO. 468 OVERALL  
(BALTIMORE ORIOLES)



**Caroline Sdanowich**

WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL LACROSSE LEAGUE  
4TH ROUND/NO. 19 OVERALL (WPLL BRAVE)



**Nick Robertson**

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL  
7TH ROUND/NO. 221 OVERALL  
(LOS ANGELES DODGERS)

**Megan Good**

NATIONAL FASTPITCH  
PRO LEAGUE  
2ND ROUND/NO. 10  
OVERALL (USSSA PRIDE)

These three former Dukes are pursuing their NFL dreams:

**Marcus Marshall**

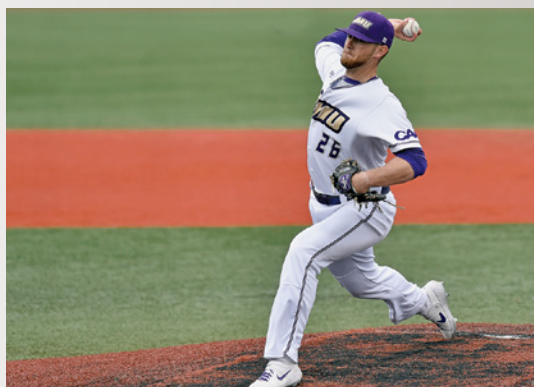
SIGNED AS UNDRAFTED FREE  
AGENT (KANSAS CITY CHIEFS)

**David Eldridge**

INVITED TO ROOKIE CAMP  
(CINCINNATI BENGALS)

**Cardon Johnson**

INVITED TO ROOKIE CAMP  
(PITTSBURGH STEELERS)



**Dan Goggin**

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL  
17TH ROUND/NO. 508 OVERALL (NEW YORK METS)

## A very 'Good' run

>>> FROM PAGE 20

*the hardest climb—be strengthened by the very blow that tore you down.*

At one point, she thought about throwing in the towel and playing just three years of college softball. “The thought of graduating crossed my mind, but my coaches reminded me that I had an opportunity to do something not a lot of people have done—being a four-year All-American,” Good said. “I still had the ability to write the end of my story and come back from a potential career-ending injury.”

There was a day when it clicked for Good, LaPorte said. “She didn’t complain about her injury anymore. Being the person that she is, she wanted to give it her all for her team, the university and her hometown (Mount Sidney, Virginia).”

Her knee was holding up, but Good’s playing time was limited in the fall. When JMU began its 2019 campaign at the inaugural St. Pete Clearwater Elite Invitational, Good was ready to go.

Pitching her first game since 2017, Good hurled six complete innings and allowed only

one run in the Dukes’ 9-1 victory over No. 19 Oregon. She performed well, but her next test was coming against No. 6 Tennessee.

JMU was out for revenge after falling to Tennessee in the NCAA Regional the year before, and this was Good’s moment.

“Watching Megan in her four-year career, you know when she has control of the game,” LaPorte said. “It’s this look on her face, the adrenaline rush pumping through her, yet she’s calm. When she gets to that point in the circle, there’s no doubt she can get it done.”

With the help of five home runs, including one of her own, Good improved to 2-0 after the 6-2 win.

Continuing her dominance in the pitcher’s circle and batter’s box, Good helped the Dukes to a CAA regular-season title, the program’s fifth CAA championship and seventh consecutive NCAA Regional appearance.

The Ann Arbor Regional was a battle with 15th-seeded Michigan. Good pitched all 25 2/3 innings in the three contests against the Wolverines, including a heartbreaking 1-0 loss in extra innings.

Her catcher, Kierstin Roadcap, knew she was the go-to person for those big moments.


“She plays with a lot of emotion and always puts what’s best for the team before herself,” Roadcap said. “Her energy in tough situations made everyone calm. We knew she was going to get the job done whether it was at the plate or in the circle. Her presence was a blessing.”

JMU defeated Michigan twice to become the only unseeded team to advance to a Super Regional since 2016. The Dukes fell to UCLA, the eventual national champions, in Los Angeles, bringing Good’s collegiate career to an end.

In her four active years, she recorded a 1.03 ERA and racked up 900 strikeouts while posting a 120-17 record. At the plate, she averaged .351 with 248 hits, 45 home runs and 188 RBIs. She holds 17 career records at JMU and has received countless accolades, but Good doesn’t pay attention to those.

“She’s extremely humble,” LaPorte said. “She’s not a ‘me’ person when it comes to press or the awards. It’s more about the team for her and has been since day one.”

Some declare Good the best athlete in JMU history. When asked about it, she was speechless.

“It was the ride of my life, and I wouldn’t trade it for anything,” Good said. 

## JMU Athletics inks deal with U.Va. Health System

BY KEVIN WARNER ('02)

**A**s construction of the Atlantic Union Bank Center continues, JMU has added a significant partner in U.Va. Health System. The \$3.5 million agreement is the largest corporate partnership in JMU Athletics history and expands a long-standing arrangement with the health care provider.


As part of the agreement, U.Va. Orthopedics will receive logo placement on the sideline of the newly designed basketball court for 10 years. The partnership also includes permanent naming of the facility’s sports medicine area.

One of the five goals of *Unleashed: The Campaign for James Madison University* is Building Our Success, focused on investment in capital projects such as the Atlantic Union Bank Center. The Building Our Success giving goal is \$32 million, and \$25.9 million had been raised when *Madison* went to press.

Independent from the University of Virginia, U.Va. Health System has long provided critical orthopedics care for JMU Athletics. Countless student-athletes credit the services provided by U.Va. Orthopedics



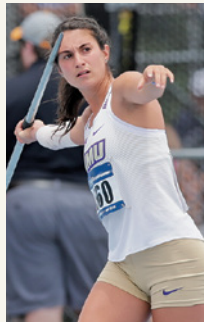
with their ability to attain success **Sports medicine area in the Atlantic Union Bank Center.** in competition while overcoming various medical setbacks. U.Va. Orthopedics doctors are regularly present on JMU’s campus and closely collaborate with JMU’s integrated health and sports performance unit to care for the health and wellness of nearly 450 student-athletes.

Director of Athletics Jeff Bourne said. “U.Va. Health System has been a steady partner, and we are thrilled that they valued their involvement with JMU to the extent of such a substantial investment.” 



# SPRING SPORTS SUCCESS BY KEVIN WARNER ('02)

JMU closed a banner 2018-19 athletics year on a strong note, as multiple spring programs won titles.



## TRACK & FIELD

Four Dukes captured individual CAA event championships and went on to advance to the NCAA Preliminary competition in Jacksonville, Florida. Olivia Viparina (3,000m steeplechase), Jantsen Wilson (triple jump), Dominique Johnson (discus) and Nicolette Serratore (heptathlon) took home conference titles.



## WOMEN'S TENNIS

With a 4-2 win over William & Mary, JMU captured its first CAA Championship in program history, earning its first NCAA women's tennis tournament appearance. The Dukes had been 1-46 all time against the Tribe before the victory in the title match.



## SOFTBALL

JMU finished 13th in the national rankings with its second appearance in the NCAA Super Regional round, falling to eventual national champion UCLA. At 51-10, the Dukes posted their third 50-win season in the last four years. Senior Megan Good became the first four-time All-American in program history and finished as a Top 3 finalist for USA Softball Player of the Year for the second time in her career.

## 2018-19 JMU ATHLETICS BY THE NUMBERS

- .668 overall winning percentage
- 84th in final Learfield Director's Cup standings
- 5 CAA championships
- 6 regular-season titles
- 8 NCAA tournament appearances
- 10 All-Americans
- 7 CAA Players of the Year
- 7 CAA Coaches of the Year
- 1 CAA Rookie of the Year
- 7 student-athletes drafted in professional drafts across four sports
- 58 President's List and 139 Dean's List student-athletes
- 74 graduates (Winter 2018 & Spring 2019)
- 5,735 hours of community service (a department record)

## LACROSSE

JMU was crowned CAA champion for the third straight year and 12th time in program history to earn a spot in the NCAA women's lacrosse tournament. The Dukes finished 15th in the national rankings.



# Bright Lights

## Caring for the creatures

Megan Reinertsen Ross ('96) is the first female director of Chicago's Lincoln Park Zoo BY JANET SMITH ('81)



Ensuring the positive welfare of the 750 animals and countless fish and invertebrates representing 200 species at the Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago requires more than a love for wildlife. It calls for science-based care.

That's where Megan Reinertsen Ross ('96), the eighth director of the 151-year-old free zoo—and the first female to fill the role—and her team come in.

"It's our duty as scientists and people who care about wildlife to understand what the individual experience is for that particular animal so we can do what we can to make its life as fulfilling as possible," said Ross, who began working at the zoo in 2000 and now oversees programmatic and strategic growth, as well as day-to-day operations.

Lincoln Park Zoo has one of the largest scientific staffs among U.S. zoos, with more than 40 full-time scientists at the 49-acre zoo, which is also a certified arboretum. Additional researchers evaluate learning programs and conduct audience research so zoo officials can understand how the facility's 3.6 million annual guests receive information to become better advocates for quality wildlife care. "We use science all across the whole institution," Ross said.

"Ambassador animals"—those that may engage with guests to help foster a connection with wildlife—are no longer "handled," Ross said. Instead, people are invited to join zoo staff members in feeding or grooming animals. "We let the animals have choice and control over whether or not they want to participate on any given day," Ross said.

The zoo is also involved in collecting data in the wild and comparing it with zoo-collected information to see parallels in animal welfare. "We want to be as impactful as possible," Ross said. "It's not just providing care for animals that are here, but it's also having that reflect back to what's happening in the wild. It's really gratifying."

Ross, who double majored in biology and psychology, credits her JMU professors and experiences with exposing her to animal care as a profession and preparing her well for her increasing responsibilities at the Lincoln Park Zoo.

"There was a 100% JMU influence on me," said Ross, who was promoted to zoo director in 2018. "I knew I loved science, but I didn't know what career opportunities there were besides those in the medical field before I got to JMU."

Drawn to JMU's pre-physical therapy program, the Atlanta native enrolled as a freshman biology major in 1992. She attended a biology department brown-bag lecture that featured psychology professor Suzanne Baker presenting her research on animal behavior in Southeast Asia. "I thought, 'Oh, animal behavior, that's a real thing.'"

That realization led to talking with, and later working in, Baker's laboratory and taking ornithology classes (the study of birds) and fieldwork with now professor emeritus of mathematics and adjunct professor of biology Charles "Zig" Ziegenfus. "I realized that I had a real passion for birds and animal behavior," Ross said. "So that's where

psychology came in and shaped what I wanted to do with my career."

Baker, now assistant head of JMU's psychology department, continues to support her former student as a member of the Lincoln Park Zoo's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

Ziegenfus and his deep commitment to ornithology resonated with Ross, who took three of his biology classes: basic ornithology and basic and advanced ornithology field techniques.

She recalls rising at 3 a.m. to set up mist nets by dawn to catch, measure, band and release birds at sites near campus and on field trips to Slate Lick Lake and Mountain Lake Biological Station in Virginia, the Dolly Sods Wilderness Area in West Virginia and the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

"Zig really took the time to talk with me about how to do things appropriately and how to handle birds," Ross said.

Ziegenfus recalls Ross' eagerness to learn how to deal with birds in the wild. "Extracting birds from mist nets or traps is not an easy task. Her progress was slow but deliberate, and I could see her confidence build

up over time." He remembers her excitement when they safely caught and banded a northern saw-whet owl, a tiny bird that weighs about 3 ounces, at Dolly Sods—and the surprise of waking up the next morning to snow, ice and winds of 20 mph.

Ross recalled a field techniques trip to Slate Lick that left her in awe of her mentor's focus and joy in spotting a bird known as an elusive species.

"Zig was recovering from a hip-replacement operation and I was to do the heavier work in the field," Ross said. "We saw a brown bird in the net, and Zig got ahead of me, so excited that he threw down his cane and started running toward the net." The bird was, as Ziegenfus suspected, a brown thrasher. "As a result, I have a very special place in my heart for brown thrashers."

Birds led Ross' migration to Lincoln Park Zoo. After graduating from JMU, she enrolled in Georgia Tech's psychology program to study animal behavior. The graduate program's laboratory was at Zoo Atlanta. When Ross was almost through her Ph.D. program of study, an official of Lincoln Park Zoo asked her to apply to be its bird curator. There she completed her dissertation research, which focused on the effects of ultraviolet light on bird behavior.

As zoo director, Ross shares a role once held by the late Marlin Perkins, who left Lincoln Park in 1962 to host *Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom*. While he was at the Chicago zoo, Perkins and zoo veterinarian Dr. Lester Fisher worked on a program called *Zoo Parade*. Fisher, who was Lincoln Park Zoo's director for 30 years, still comes by to check on the operation, Ross said.

"I'm very proud to be only the eighth director of Lincoln Park Zoo," Ross said. "I'm super proud of being the first female director because I feel like it is important to show women in all sorts of different roles. I love the idea that women and young girls now see that there are lots of women in science."

**"I knew I loved science, but I didn't know what career opportunities there were besides those in the medical field before I got to JMU."**

— MEGAN REINERTSEN ROSS ('96)



... bloom in righteous Blackness and rising sun,  
and seize the historical moment and become the noise,  
whip and whirlwind itself in the interest of a world  
unwarped and constantly unfolding for the Good.

—MAULANA KARENGA, *Firing and Flowering for Gwen Brooks*



# furious flower

*poetry center*

Gwendolyn Brooks reads at JMU in 1994 during the first Furious Flower Poetry Conference, dedicated to her and named after a line in one of her poems.

## CELEBRATE, EDUCATE, PRESERVE.

The legacy-building mission of the nation's first academic center for black poetry

BY KAREN RISCH MOTT

**B**eginning with a modest idea to honor a woman unjustly dismissed, the 1994 Furious Flower Poetry Conference at JMU turned out to be a watershed moment in American literature.

Years before, English professor Joanne V. Gabbin had been shocked to learn that she occupied a faculty position for which Gwendolyn Brooks had been passed over. Notwithstanding Brooks' 1950 Pulitzer Prize, and her status as the first black writer to be awarded such distinction, the college had deemed Brooks' credentials insufficient. After this unwelcome discovery, Gabbin vowed that, wherever she might teach in the future, she would showcase Brooks in a poetry reading.

Gabbin made good on her word at the handful of institutions where she worked over the next 14 years. Soon after she was hired at JMU in 1985, she invited Brooks to read here, too, and the poet made her first trip to the Shenandoah Valley. Less than a decade later, Gabbin wanted to bring her back, this time to celebrate her friend's body of work with a reading by Brooks' peers and literary children. She started planning for a crowd of a little over 100, including the audience, conceiving a humble but meaningful tribute taking its name from a line in one of Brooks' poems:

**The time**

**cracks into furious flower. Lifts its face  
all unashamed. And sways in wicked grace.**

— **GWENDOLYN BROOKS,**

*The Second Sermon on the Warpland*

As word spread, however, that first Furious Flower Poetry Conference grew into a major scholarly event with more than 1,000 in attendance—likely the largest gathering of black poets, critics and other literary scholars in U.S. history.

“So many poets and scholars flocked to the first conference in 1994 because, I believe, they wanted to be in the midst of those who loved and valued what they did,” Gabbin said.

Although the *The Washington Post* heralded the conference as historic, Gabbin is certain that “the most gratifying gaze was the interior one. Poets came to celebrate Brooks and left seeing how their work had more that united them in purpose than separated them.”

In 2005, following a second, equally successful conference, JMU became the nation’s first university to establish an academic center devoted to the promotion, study and preservation of black poetry: the Furious Flower Poetry Center, founded and directed by Gabbin. The center is dedicated to Brooks’ literary legacy and impact.

“I see Furious Flower’s singular contribution as providing a space where black poetry is valued, respected and celebrated without regard to the established literary arbiters who have sometimes ignored its significance,” Gabbin said.

Furious Flower operates with a core staff of two full-time and two part-time employees and, like other academic centers at JMU, it relies heavily on gifts and grants to underwrite its ambitious projects. Last year, the center began an endowment campaign to help ensure its viability and longevity, particularly as the staff and the center’s advisory board prepare for Gabbin’s inevitable retirement.



(Left): Joanne Gabbin and Gwendolyn Brooks at the 1994 conference. (Below): U.S. poet laureate Rita Dove was a participant in the inaugural poetry conference.



(Above): Gabbin (far right) with six poets laureate (L-R), Askia Touré, Amiri Baraka, Sonia Sanchez, Dolores Kendrick, Haki Madhubuti and Rita Dove. (Left): Thomas Sayers Ellis, Sharan Strange, Yusef Komunyakaa, Major Jackson, Gabbin, Opal Moore and Tony Medina.



**“I see Furious Flower’s singular contribution as providing a space where black poetry is valued, respected and celebrated without regard to the established literary arbiters who have sometimes ignored its significance.”** — JOANNE V. GABBIN, *founder and executive director*

## Digital archive

Created and curated by students in the Spring 2019 JMU X-Labs course, “Innovating the Archive,” this digital repository of previously inaccessible video, photography, poetry and commentary from the momentous 1994 Furious Flower Poetry Conference—augmented with new lesson plans—provides the general public its first look inside the valuable trove of materials now housed in Special Collections at JMU’s Carrier Library. The digitized archive and expanded resources can be accessed at [furiousflower.org](http://furiousflower.org).

For English professor Mollie Godfrey, who has extensive training and experience in the recovery and preservation of black literary archives, the biggest takeaway from guiding students through the project is recognizing “the enormous, but almost entirely invisible, nature of archival labor. Most people don’t understand what it takes to preserve, organize, catalog and synthesize an archive, much less make it useable.”

She calculates that the students created 529 video clips and transcribed more than 54 hours of video, wrote 50 biographies, tracked down 66 poems for inclusion on the site and annotated 30 of them, created nine lesson plans, constructed 95 unique web pages and designed three days’ worth of interactive conference programming. Their work was completed in a single semester, with 30 students and five faculty members assisted by colleagues and other experts.

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(L-R): “Innovating the Archive” participants Norman Jones III (public policy and administration), Lillie Jacob (English), Jessica Carter (English), Mollie Godfrey (English professor), Hannah Steinhauer (mathematics), Ardyn Tennyson (English) and Evan Nicholls (English).

## Art in words

BY LAUREN K. ALLEYNE,  
*Furious Flower assistant director*

Here at JMU, we talk a lot about engagement, particularly with regard to civic engagement. And this mandate comes, of course, from James Madison, the Father of the Constitution, but it is also relevant in our present moment because of the fraught and hostile discourse that surrounds us in the political/civic sphere. The things we have to talk about, as we work to perfect the union that is this country, are challenging. Deeply held emotions, ideas, lineages—these things can often be in conflict, but we need them to be in conversation.

This is no easy feat. If it were, we wouldn’t be here. But the poem, I believe, serves us by providing a space in which we can practice engagement, where we can safely learn how to be still and to listen, where we can exercise trust and gentleness as we walk the winding roads of someone else’s unfamiliar internal spaces, where we learn to

experience the heat of anger as both the dragon and the flame.

All art, I believe, has such power, but poetry is art in words, and we so need the words right now. We need to be able to wield them and to receive them with all their histories and complexities; we need to be both accountable and hold others accountable for the ways in which they’re used, because in this collective space, language is the vehicle of our engagement. It’s how the Founding Fathers constituted a nation, how we have codified the laws and amendments that shape the moral and social dimensions of that nation, and how we as citizens participate in it—through discourse. And I believe the poem is a space that can help us be better at doing just that.

This is putting a lot on the poem, I know, but art is an extension of our collective, and it would not exist if there wasn’t always something at stake about being human together. The poem serves us by giving us an opening, by helping us to be open, by giving us a voice and giving us the gift of learning to listen.

## Ode to the Fish-as-Weathervane

BY LAUREN K. ALLEYNE  
*Fine Arts Work Center, Provincetown, Massachusetts*

You were built for a different blue—  
for oceans, rivers, clear complexes of glass  
—but here you are, hoisted  
among the clouds, neighbor to the stars,  
your fins redefining wings.  
Say flight. Say sky is ocean by another name.  
Say biology is one order of being,  
but imagination is another.  
How you undo cliché with your unlikely  
grace, slip through the clumsy nets  
limits would knit around your bizarre  
existence. *Token*, they whisper, *freak*.  
But how you withstand the fickle  
transformations of weather, read  
the revolution wind scripts onto your body,  
learn to move in its midst. Say evolve.  
Say the first order of being is survival.  
Say these gills will become lungs  
and testify. Say thrive in any element  
and name it possible.



## Furious Flower at the Smithsonian

The 25th anniversary of the center presents an opportunity to both celebrate its accomplishments and to work toward securing its future. Two high-profile events are planned in Washington, D.C., in September.

### ■ Benefit Gala at the Grand Hyatt Washington

**Sept. 27, 7 p.m.**

Literary luminaries Elizabeth Alexander and Terrance Hayes will be joined by three U.S. poets laureate—Tracy K. Smith, Natasha Trethewey and Rita Dove—for a gala featuring dinner and poetry readings. The ticketed event will raise funds supporting the endowment of the Furious Flower Poetry Center, ensuring its ability to continue serving students, educators and poets everywhere.

### ■ 25th Anniversary Celebration at the National Museum of African American History and Culture

**Sept. 28, all day**

Reminiscent of the decade-defining conferences that have been Furious Flower's hallmark, this free event will offer diverse and rich programming all day at the museum. Attendees will enjoy poetry readings by 25 renowned poets, an afternoon panel in the museum's Oprah Winfrey Theater and interactive workshops on the practice of writing poetry.

**More information on both events is available at [furiousflower25.com](http://furiousflower25.com).**

## PROGRAMS FOR GRADE SCHOOL TO GRADUATE SCHOOL AND BEYOND

In the quarter-century since that first landmark event, Furious Flower has been committed to ensuring the visibility, inclusion and critical consideration of black poets in American letters, as well as in the whole range of educational curricula. The center's programming seeks to cultivate an appreciation for poetry among students of all levels, from grade school to graduate school and beyond. It also seeks to support and promote poets at all stages of their careers and to preserve the history of black poets. **Over the years, Furious Flower has presented more than 200 poets reading their work at JMU**, many of them more than once:

- three major conferences (in 1994, 2004 and 2014), each with a subsequent book and video anthology to share the wealth with those who didn't attend
- 15 weeklong summer creativity camps for students in Grades 3-8
- three biennial undergraduate seminars for creative writers
- three theatrical performances in tribute to Lucille Clifton (*73 Poems for 73 Years* in 2010), Toni Morrison (*Sheer Good Fortune* in 2012) and Maya Angelou (*Throw Your Head Back and Sing* in 2016)
- four biennial legacy seminars, giving educators an entire week not only to learn about—but to study with—legendary poets Clifton (2009), Sonia Sanchez (2012), Yusef Komunyakaa (2017) and Nikki Giovanni (2019)
- 26 Lifetime Achievement Awards, given to those whose bodies of work have inspired and influenced younger poets
- An online literary journal, *The Fight & The Fiddle*



(Clockwise, from top): Furious Flower Poetry Campers in 2012; poet Nikki Giovanni in 2019 and poet Lucille Clifton during a 2009 interview. (Below): Honoring Toni Morrison and Maya Angelou.





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JMU Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Heather Coltman believes the expansive impact of the center comes from its focus on connecting people and places through the spoken and written word. “Whether through outreach, education or pure performance ... its reach is global, and it has served to make our world smaller through the beauty and mystery of poetry,” Coltman said.

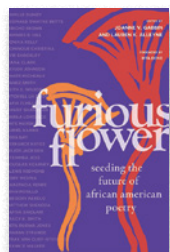
“I am excited to see how the center will expand its reach—with its mission to fearlessly embrace the deeply personal and moving stories captured in poetry—by being ever more visible and bold.”

Several important projects and programs will be unveiled this fall.

### New book out in December


Forthcoming from Northwestern University Press, *Furious Flower: Seeding the Future of African American Poetry* is both a poetry anthology and an essay collection.

More than 100 recognized writers contributed their poems, and celebrated scholars considered the art and craft of this particular genre in essays that help frame the poetry. The first collection that features black poets describing their poetic processes, it was co-edited by Gabbin and Alleyne with a foreword by Rita Dove.



### A scholar in residence

McKinley E. Melton is among 21 prestigious academics to be recognized with a \$95,000 stipend and \$7,500 research budget as part of his Frederick Burkhardt Residential Fellowship. A scholar of African American literature, he chose to establish his residency at the Furious Flower Poetry Center, where he will have an office for the 2019-20 academic year.

Melton will be working on a project titled *Claiming All the World as Our Stage: Contemporary Black Poetry, Performance, and Resistance*, which, according to Gettysburg College (where Melton is an English professor), “explores the cultural and political realities that link artists across boundaries, shaping a 21st-century poetics of resistance.” This fall at JMU, Melton will deliver a lecture from his work in progress, and he will assist in curating the center’s creative writing seminar for undergraduates in Spring 2020. 


## Fire power

The founder and executive director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center, **Joanne V. Gabbin** has been described as generous, genius, effusive, ebullient and a force to be reckoned with. “You don’t say no to Joanne,” people joke—and generally you don’t want to. Her vision and vivaciousness have powered hundreds of exciting endeavors both on and off the JMU campus.



In 2005, Gabbin founded the Furious Flower Poetry Center at the behest of former JMU President Linwood H. Rose.

Furious Flower was a breakthrough, but it was hardly her first major academic achievement. A first-generation college graduate who went on to earn advanced degrees from the University of Chicago, Gabbin has been teaching African American literature classes to college students for almost 50 years. She has published extensively on the subject and won numerous awards for her teaching and scholarship, including national recognition as one of the nation’s top scholars of black poetry.

In addition, she served as the director of JMU’s Honors Program for nearly 20 years, from 1986 to 2005. In the summer of 2016, the program was designated an Honors College, something Gabbin had laid the groundwork for during her years as its director, and shortly thereafter, the new college was gifted its first named professorship—the Dr. Joanne Gabbin Professorship—which was endowed by one of Gabbin’s former students, Sean Tobin ('92), and his family. 


## Star power

In the last year-and-a-half, **Lauren K. Alleyne’s** poetry has appeared in *The Atlantic* and *The New York Times Magazine*, as well as in *Ms. magazine’s* digital column, *Ms. Muse*. Also this year, she released her second award-winning collection of poetry, *Honeyfish*, both in the United States and the United Kingdom. She was featured in April on an NPR series for National Poetry Month.



Alleyne joined the English department faculty at JMU in 2016 and is the assistant director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center, where she is also editor of the center’s online literary journal, *The Fight & The Fiddle*.

Hailing from the twin island nation of Trinidad and Tobago, Alleyne earned her bachelor’s degree from St. Francis College, her Master of Arts from Iowa State University and her Master of Fine Arts from Cornell University. Now, she is working on her Ph.D. at the University of Virginia and looking forward to the challenges of keeping Furious Flower fresh and flourishing.

“As long as our mission continues to be a quest to discover ‘What does black poetry, and what do black poets, most need in our time?’—and we’re able to answer that question with whatever we create or celebrate—then that feeling of being seen and being heard, and being understood, and being known will continue. I hope we’re always able to provide that feeling for black poets and to provide that home for black poetry.” 

# Dare to dream

JMU WELCOMES FIRST CLASS OF

BY JIM HEFFERNAN ('96, '17M)

VALLEY  
*Scholars*





Some scholars endured personal struggles on the road to graduation. Read more at [j.mu/vscholars](http://j.mu/vscholars).

(Opposite): Members of the first class of Valley Scholars share a laugh during the Senior Celebration ceremony in Grafton-Stovall Theatre in May. (Below): President Alger welcomes the group to a preevent reception at his home.



In his inauguration speech in March 2013, President Jonathan R. Alger presented a bold, new vision for JMU to become the national model for the engaged university: engaged with ideas and the world. With the launch of the Valley Scholars program the following year, it was clear that this vision also applied to the university's own backyard.

While at Rutgers University, Alger had helped found a college-readiness program for underprivileged students in the local community who might otherwise not dare to dream of continuing their education beyond high school. Having witnessed firsthand the difference the program made in these young people's lives, he set out to launch a similar program at JMU.

"JMU has a strong commitment to access and inclusion for individuals of all backgrounds," Alger said at a kickoff event for Valley Scholars in 2014, adding that students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds are generally less likely to attend college, in large part due to a lack of academic preparation and support.



Valley Scholar Nigel Stewart converses with program donors Leon and Beverly ('68) Harris.

# Dare to dream

From the outset, JMU worked with administrators, teachers and guidance counselors in neighboring school districts to identify potential participants. The university would provide programming and support for these students and their families beginning in eighth grade and continuing throughout high school. If they completed the program and were accepted to JMU, a full-tuition scholarship would be waiting for them.

Five years later, that vision has become a reality.

Twenty-six of the 32 members of the first graduating class of Valley Scholars are set to enter JMU as freshmen in the fall. The remaining scholars will continue their education at other colleges and universities in Virginia.

Along the way, they have completed rigorous course work, maintained a minimum GPA requirement, performed community service, developed good study habits, and honed their teamwork and leadership skills. The program has opened their eyes to all that college has to offer, from academics and campus life to internships and career resources.

That spirit of possibility was evident during the senior celebration at JMU in May.

“President Alger has always emphasized that we dream big,” said student speaker Kaitlyn Good, who plans to study music education at JMU. “All of us ... are now preparing to embark on a new beginning. We are entirely prepared to turn our dreams into reality.”

“Ever since I became a Valley Scholar, I’ve been able to imagine myself taking a stroll on the Quad to the Music Building for class and anticipating game days with 535 of my closest

friends in the Marching Royal Dukes,” Good said. “More importantly, however, I’ve been able to envision myself pursuing a lifetime of teaching music to school-aged children ... and becoming the best me I can possibly be.”

When they begin their first semester at JMU, this group of scholars will have the benefit of having worked with JMU faculty in university classrooms and labs, attended family events in campus conference rooms and dining halls, practiced and performed on JMU’s stages, pitched and presented in its boardrooms, and studied and collaborated in the libraries and Student Success Center.

They also will have a support network of more than two dozen of their closest friends.

“The level of perseverance and resilience that this first group demonstrated was special,” said the program’s director, Shaun Mooney. “They had to wade through all the unknowns as we were figuring out what was working and if we needed to make adjustments. And I think they really bonded with each other. They had to if they were going to get through it.”

## Overcoming challenges

The journey was not always easy.

On top of their normal coursework, the program days at JMU, the workshops, the summer camps and the group outings, some



**Program director Shaun Mooney answers a question during one of the family workshops.**

scholars had to deal with family issues. Others had health problems. Still others made poor decisions, not unlike many teenagers. These bumps in the road could have pushed individual scholars off track—and perhaps derailed their futures.

But resources and support are integral to Valley Scholars. It’s why, in addition to academic coaches and mentors, the program staff includes a dedicated team of social workers.

“If there’s one thing this first group [of scholars] has taught me,” Mooney said, “it’s that if you really want to change people’s lives, it has to be a long-term investment.”

Part of that investment involves educating and empowering family members to help

**Xavia Gary ('15), the program’s first Engagement Fellow (center), returned to JMU in May to celebrate with some of the students he mentored in the program.**



**“All of us ... are now preparing to embark on a new beginning. We are entirely prepared to turn our dreams into reality.”**

— KAITLYN GOOD



their children succeed in school and achieve their dream of going to college. Valley Scholars offers family programming that emphasizes the importance of offering support and encouragement; keeping the lines of communication open with the scholars' teachers and guidance counselors; checking their grades regularly; making sure they are mentally and physically healthy; and scheduling.

"It's been amazing," said Toni Custer, whose son, Timothy, will enroll at JMU in the fall. "He and I have done a lot together in the program ... which is great. And it's shown the whole family what's possible. For his younger siblings, it gives them someone to look up to."

Another incoming Duke, Amy Cortés, said her parents were impressed with the amount of attention paid to each scholar as well as the program's impact. "They have seen how much it has affected me and how my mindset has changed," she said, "and how I've become interested in wanting so much more out of life."

Mooney believes some of the students in

the first cohort would have gone on to college without Valley Scholars. "But I believe all of them had better outcomes than they otherwise would have," he said. "They are better prepared."

The scholars agree.

"I think I probably would have found my way to college eventually," said Ayam Ali, a Harrisonburg High School graduate who plans to study computer science at JMU. "But it would have been a lot more difficult."

### Future growth

The Valley Scholars program continues to grow. At the start of the 2019-20 school year, the program will boast 196 students at 25 area schools, supported by four full-time and six part-time staff members, a JMU Engagement Fellow, student interns and countless volunteers in the community.

With up to 44 new students joining the ranks every year, Valley Scholars requires significant investment to cover operating costs and endow scholarships.


"Students like these, they're going to pay

**Noah Buracker and Amy Cortés are among the 26 Valley Scholars graduates who will enter JMU as freshmen in the fall.**

it forward," said donor Lois Forbes ('64). "They're going to make other kids in the [Shenandoah] Valley understand what they can be. You want to be a part of something like that. You want to help somebody else who hasn't had the same chances you've had."

At the senior celebration, speaker Noah Buracker thanked program officials and donors for their investment.

"All those years ago, in eighth grade, as we were stumbling around trying to figure out what we were going to do in life, trying to figure out if college was the right decision and in our best interest ... you looked at us and said, 'I want you. I believe you are worth it.' All these years later, I think that we are worth it."

"Let me tell you, we will pay you back," Buracker added, "maybe not right away, but in the form of a better world. ... I know for a fact that we're going to step out into the world and do great things because you allowed us to do that." 

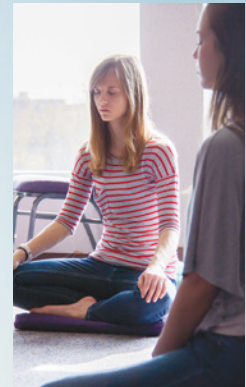
# QUIET



# ining

t H e

mind



Initiative  
cultivates  
wellness,  
connection  
and engaged  
learning

BY SARAH CHASE ('17)

The life of the American college student is defined by busyness, overscheduling, self-medicating, over-caffeinating, under-sleeping, overeating and over-stimulation with technology.

Constantly plugged in, students' minds are often in multiple places at once, but never fully present in any of them. Many students find themselves writing a paper while half binge-watching a Netflix show in the background, texting friends, scrolling through Instagram, retweeting memes, emailing professors, shopping online and chatting with people nearby.

With the increase in technology usage, counselors and health professionals have seen staggering numbers of mental health-related issues. In 2014, anxiety surpassed depression as the No. 1 mental health issue facing students. Today, 26% of college students admit to anxiety affecting their academic performance, while 17% identify with depression. Specialists have labeled the era an "anxiety epidemic."

In 2015, Marsha Mays-Bernard, associate vice president for wellness, orientation and multicultural engagement, along with 17 other JMU faculty and staff members, created what is now the Initiative for Contemplative Study and Practice.

Bernard had noticed a variety of efforts happening around campus that focused on contemplative practices. Faculty members were integrating it into their classrooms, and some had attended retreats on the topic. Madison Meditates allowed students, faculty and staff to attend daily contemplative lunch-hour offerings. And UREC offered yoga and meditation classes.

“It was clear that there were people on campus with this shared interest,” Mays-Bernard said, “but we didn’t always know each other and we didn’t always know about all of the activities that were going on. Our efforts were decentralized.”

The initiative was formed to help coordinate and organize the university’s endeavors. “We wanted to support each other, create new experiences and programs, and build

awareness on campus,” Mays-Bernard said.

In March, JMU hosted the 8th Annual Contemplative Practices in Higher Education Conference to bring awareness to contemplative practices and create a place for resiliency.

Shari Scofield, coordinator for Mad4U and a contributing member of the ICSP, said the need for contemplative practices “is an ancient need, a human need, and for me, a spiritual imperative ... It seems more and more humans are being generally medicated for disorders related to stress. Meditation instead of medication is worth exploring.”

Contemplative practices are a way to meet students where they are in their everyday lives.

Kimberly DuVall, a JMU psychology professor and ICSP member, said when stu-

**“Meditation instead of medication is worth exploring.”**

— SHARI SCOFIELD,  
coordinator for Mad4U



dents are confused or put off by the term, she explains it as “stress management skills or coping strategies to help them understand.”

Jared Featherstone, director of the University Writing Center, professor of writing, rhetoric and technical communication, and a member of the ICSP, piloted an Honors course in Fall 2018 titled Creativity, Technology and the Search for Self to teach students how to be mindful of how technology is creat-



Programs like Madison Meditates allow students, faculty and staff to participate in restorative practices.





(L-R): Ed Brantmeier and Deborah Kipps-Vaughn; Marsha Mays-Bernard; and Jared Featherstone lead sessions during the 8th Annual Contemplative Practices in Higher Education Conference in March.

ing or dismantling their notion of self.

Spencer Law said the course exceeded his expectations. “Other students shared in deep and meaningful engagement with course material. . . . We all pushed ourselves to get out of our comfort zones, wrestle with our beliefs and experience personal growth.”

Law also found Featherstone to be attentive and personal. “I’ve never had someone take so much time to work with me one-on-one and help me work through the kinds of complex issues we dealt with in class. He clearly felt for every student and prioritized our learning, growth and well-being over busy work and grades.”

Law said each class began with a few minutes of meditation to help students center themselves—something many ICSP members employ in their areas to help individuals get more out of their experiences by being present.

DuVall reminds her students to be present during daily activities such as taking a shower. If their minds start to drift to their to-do lists, she advises them to focus on the soap and steam. “It’s called ‘practice’ because it takes practice,” she said. “Our minds love to jump around and worry us, so we have to learn to control this organ—our brain—and calm it with certain disciplines.”

During classes, ICSP professors are including mental and physical exercises to help students focus better. After hours, these professors are making extra time to meet with students to help support them during periods of anxiety and altering their course work to

suit the needs of students.

But contemplative practices are broader than mindfulness and meditation practices. The Tree of Contemplative Practices is rooted in communion, connection and awareness. These can manifest in quieting the mind, reading holy scriptures, journaling, volunteering, listening to understand, dancing, attend-

ing retreats and establishing personal space.

It’s not just mental health that mindfulness remedies. It seeks to reconcile a lifestyle, one that can be hectic and stressful and lack boundaries. Mindfulness seeks to illuminate cracks so that broken pieces can be restored—something the ICSP at JMU is actively pursuing.

The group now consists of over 40 faculty and staff members who are providing resources, programs, events, research opportunities and spaces for this growth to take place.

On campus, programs like Madison Meditates, Open Mic Night, Creative Madison Craft Night, GetDown at SunDown, Tunes at Noon, TeaTime and Mindful Afternoon Retreats are provided for students, faculty and staff to come and participate in restorative practices.

“Essentially, we want to raise awareness about mindfulness and other contemplative practices and the benefits that are there for us individually and as a community,” Mays-Bernard said. “We hope to transform our culture through providing tools that help people pay more attention, connect and engage.”



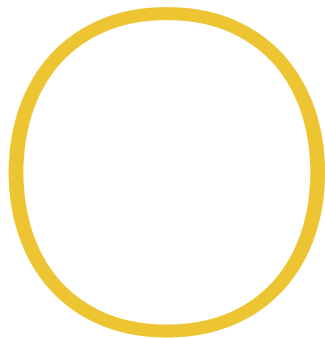
From contemplativemind.org



Alumni authors say  
centering education  
around digital devices  
is failing our children

# A wake-up call

BY KHALIL GARRIOTT ('04)



opportunistic. That’s the word to describe how Joe Clement (’91) and Matt Miles (’06, ’07M) spotted a problem, identified a solution and took action to improve lives.

It started in the halls and classrooms of Chantilly High School in Northern Virginia, where they both teach. “Over time, we both noticed that something was changing with the students we were teaching,” Clement said. “They were becoming less able to solve problems, less able to interact socially and less able to focus for long periods of time.”

Next came lunchtime conversations about their observations. Then, independent research on their own time. The end result was *Screen Schooled*, a

new book about how technology overuse causes problems for students.

“There wasn’t anything out there about the damage that’s happening to students’ learning [skills], interaction and their brains,” said Clement, a teacher for 25 years. “All we could find [were] scholarly articles in journals, but there wasn’t a book for the general reader. So we decided, there’s nothing out there. Let’s write it.”

Statistics back up the narrative that modern society is tech-driven. According to Apple, we unlock our phones 80 times a day. ABC’s “ScreenTime,” a two-hour *20/20* special that aired earlier this year, cited a recent NBC/*Wall Street Journal* poll showing that 82% of Americans think social media is a waste of time, but 69% still engage in it every day.

“Kids are overusing screens,” Miles said. “The average teenager is using a screen for over nine hours per day.”

A study in England found that if phones are not visible to high-school students in classrooms, students’ scores rise from 7% to 14% for the lowest-performing students. And here in the U.S., there is no national policy about devices in a classroom. That’s problematic, according to the authors.

“It seems like there’s a big push in education to get screens into classrooms for the purpose of having screens in classrooms,” Clement said about the educational technology industry.

Clement and Miles want to reduce device usage in classrooms because they’ve seen firsthand how damaging technology overuse and misuse have been to youth. *Screen Schooled* provides actionable steps for parents to become part of the solution to the problem—a problem some parents aren’t even plugged into.

“Students are being harmed by the overuse of technology,” Clement said.

## Madison shaped them as educators

Both Northern Virginia natives who returned to the area after graduating from JMU, Clement and Miles credit their time at Madison with preparing them for successful careers as educators. An economics major who minored in German, Clement was in sixth grade when he realized he wanted to attend JMU. When his family dropped off his older sister, who came to campus in 1980, it seemed like the perfect place to him. He applied only to JMU.

“I never even considered going any place else,” said Clement, whose Madison Experience was largely shaped by his heavy involvement with the University Program Board.


Miles, too, wanted to follow in the footsteps of an older sibling. His brother came to JMU, and Miles “fell in love with it.” A double Duke with a bachelor’s degree in interdisciplinary social science and a master’s in education, Miles changed his major a few times as he navigated his career choice.

“Ultimately, I found what I wanted to do,” he said.

“Something I’m very grateful for is how well prepared the College of Education made me for being a teacher.”

Clement said, “It seems like a lot of schools are heavy on one side: They’re either super fun or they’re super academic. JMU is just a great blend of all of it.”

Each of them said their years at JMU set them up to make an impact on young people’s lives—lives that will be more productive without being attached to their devices.

 Clement and Miles reveal their tips on how students can minimize their tech dependency. Watch at [j.mu/schooled](http://j.mu/schooled).



## 7 tips on how to get a book published:

- 1 **BE HONEST.** With yourself and with your audience. What value can you add? What can you bring to the table?
- 2 **BE UNIQUE.** Tell a story that hasn’t been told a million times. Dare to be different and go against the grain.
- 3 **TELL THE TRUTH.** The truth can be ugly.
- 4 **BE RESOURCEFUL.** Be open to where the path is going to lead you. Everybody you interview has something to offer.
- 5 **BE FLEXIBLE.** Once you find a publisher, editor or agent, they’re going to have ideas that might not be your ideas. (The title of the book, for instance, was not our first choice.) The book we would’ve written on our own would have been less interesting and not as useful without the input of the publisher. So we had to put our egos aside a little bit.
- 6 **BE PATIENT.** You’re going to submit a lot of proposals and get rejected a lot. It will take a little while, but if you stay with it, you’ll find the right publisher.
- 7 **BUILD A PLATFORM.** Leverage social media, speaking gigs, blog posts and have some way to get the word out. If you’re already a known quantity, that’s going to make the publisher’s job much easier to sell your book.

**Matt Miles (’06, ’07M) and Joe Clement (’91) are on a mission to educate and empower parents.**



## ENGAGING THE WORLD

*JMU's presence on the global stage began 40 years ago with Semester in London*

BY JANET SMITH ('81)

A student's challenge, a president's directive and a young professor's enthusiasm for teaching launched James Madison University into the world of international education 40 years ago this fall. A little earlier, in Fall 1975, English professor Ralph Cohen was teaching a class on Shakespeare, and finding himself often saying to his students, "If you could only see it on stage, you would understand."

"Why don't you take us over to London?" one student asked. Challenge accepted. Cohen drew on travel experience from the wedding trip he and his wife, Judy, took to Europe and his dissertation topic on Ben Jonson's use of London in his plays to organize hastily a two-week Shakespeare tour during winter break open to JMU students from any academic department. In an article in *The Breeze*, Cohen touted the purpose as to "give students a strong sense of familiarity with the most literary and historic city in the English-speaking world."

A May Session course in London followed in 1977, and based on student responses to both trips, JMU President Ronald E. Carrier instructed Cohen to prepare a feasibility report on establishing a semester-long program. Cohen sought advice from a colleague who designed St. Lawrence University's early study-abroad program, but he crafted a hybrid plan for JMU. Its hallmarks were housing students together in the Bloomsbury area rather than living with host families, and, to keep a strong JMU connection,

having a university faculty member in residence join British academics as a member of the teaching team.

With Carrier's blessing and Cohen serving as the first FMIR, Semester in London was born when 28 "pioneers" took the purple and gold across the Atlantic.

The students lived "right in the heartbeat of London," Cohen said, taking in 24 theater performances, the British Museum's collections and untold numbers of walking study trips as British faculty members Cohen had hired taught art, architecture, theater, music, political science and history. Weekends were made for more study in Bath and Stratford.

"It was as rigorously fun as it was rigorously academic," Ralph said of Fall 1979.

As Ralph's unpaid program assistant, Judy handled myriad details, welcomed the students to the FMIR flat for meals and social events, and cared for their three daughters while her husband taught in the heart of London.

In the next two decades, Cohen was FMIR in London for four more semesters.

In 1989, Amy Cohen wanted to enroll in "her father's" London semester to fulfill requirements for her undergraduate degree at Yale University. When Yale denied the request, Brian Allen, director of The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, who was well-acquainted with the JMU

**"It was as rigorously fun as it was rigorously academic."**

— RALPH COHEN,  
*semester leader*



**Madison House has had different addresses in London, but it is always home to JMU students. (Inset): The 1979 Semester in London "pioneers."**

program, suggested that Cohen send a copy of the JMU course syllabus to Yale officials. “Amy got the credit for every course because we had such a demanding syllabus that Yale could not say ‘no’ to our program,” Ralph said.

“The model Ralph created became the model for all of our semester-long programs,” said Lee Sternberger, executive director of JMU’s Center for Global Engagement and associate provost for academic affairs. “In many ways, I think of Ralph as the founder of international education at JMU.”

During his decade-long tenure as director of study abroad, Ralph collaborated with JMU faculty members Kathleen Arthur, Carmenza Kline and David Ley to establish semester programs in Florence, Italy; Salamanca, Spain; and Paris.

Judy officially joined JMU’s international education operation in 1989, the same year her husband resigned as director of Study Abroad. She is now director of communications and external relations for CGE. Ralph, a JMU professor emeritus of English, is co-founder of the American Shakespeare Center and the Gonder Professor of Shakespeare at Mary Baldwin University, both in Staunton, Virginia.

JMU remains a national leader in study abroad with semester programs in Antwerp, Belgium; St. Andrews and Edinburgh, Scotland; Florence; Salamanca; and London. More than 60 summer short-term programs, including Paris, and collaborations with 19 exchange partners combine with semester programs to offer a wide array of study-abroad options.

Study Abroad is now one of CGE’s three units, along with International Student and Scholar Services and International Cooperation. As a whole, the center promotes understanding by cultivating, facilitating and supporting global engagement at home and abroad.



The 1979 flight to London launched what would become an extensive array of international programs and the Center for Global Engagement at JMU.



**“In countless ways ‘being there’ knits together what you are and what you are learning. When we immerse ourselves in a great city or a different culture, all of our learning engines start working, not just the one we switch on to take notes.”**

— RALPH COHEN, from *London Bound: Celebrating Thirty Years of Semester in London, 1979-2009*



## ENGAGING THE WORLD

Sternberger's early charge as leader of CGE was to grow the numbers of JMU students and faculty going abroad and international students and faculty coming to campus. "We've matured as an office," Sternberger said. During the last five years, the aim is for strategic growth. That translates to JMU's becoming an official partner university of the Peace Corps Prep program, which prepares undergraduates for Peace Corps service and international development fieldwork, and cross-cultural programs in which international partners come to JMU.

Even the center's space in Madison Hall is part of the equation. "Space gives you opportunity," Sternberger said, and that has been leveraged in CGE's larger meeting spaces, including a kitchen where students often come together to cook foods from their respective countries. For JMU students who do not study abroad, those encounters are especially valuable.

"They still experience some internationalization by interacting with students from other countries," Sternberger said. "Our international students want to experience American traditions as well," including Thanksgiving



**Ralph and Judy Cohen with a prized memento from their years of dedication to Semester in London.**

meals, pumpkin carvings and summer picnics.

"There are so many benefits to students having international experiences, whether that's study abroad, working closely, having friendships with international students or even activities on campus," Sternberger said. "They learn about the world through their interactions with other people."

That growth and understanding pays off

in tangible ways beyond the college years. "Employers want people who have international experiences," Sternberger said. "They want people who can work on complex teams."

The same is true of JMU as an employer. "If you want to internationalize a community, a university, it's the faculty who drive internationalization," Sternberger said.

Ralph Cohen concurs. "Students who participate in international education come back and share their experiences for one or two years, but faculty members infuse the campus DNA for decades," he said. Their experiences inform their teaching and connect them with colleagues in other countries for the benefit of JMU.

"The world has shrunk tremendously, and in the face of so much misinformation and political forces that sometimes seem a bit dark ... there's this sense in many countries of shutting the doors to ideas, thought processes, systems, religious beliefs, cultural practices," Sternberger said. "More than ever, we need to combat that. There's so much to be gained by students. It's not just what they learn; it's international competence that they're gaining."

### 40 YEARS OF CENTER FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT:

# 97%

of study-abroad students found employment within 12 months of graduation.\*

(\*This information originated in studies and surveys from the University of California-Merced, University of Georgia, Harvard Business Review, University of Virginia, Forum on Education Abroad and JMU's Center for Global Engagement.)

In 2016-17,  
**1,474 students** studied abroad in 74 different programs.

# 49%

of all college graduates found employment in the same period.\*

JMU sends more students abroad on short-term programs than any of its peers.

(2016 Institute of International Education Open Doors report)

# 90%

of study-abroad alumni who applied got into their first- or second-choice graduate or professional school.\*

# \$7,000

College graduates who studied abroad earn 25% higher starting salaries than graduates who did not study abroad. This equates to \$7,000 annually.\*

# 455

 number of international students at JMU in 2018.

(2% of 22,686 total enrollment)

## LETTERS FROM ...

Semester in London "pioneers" Ann Sucher Aderton and Dwayne Yancey share memories from 1979 that prove the study trip was important to their education.

### 'Hugely influential'

Walking across Waterloo Bridge to the National Theater, studying art by wandering the museums, watching Shakespeare on the stage weekly and meeting up at a pub afterward to talk about the play: Does learning get any more authentic? We also went to Parliament when studying British political and legal institutions, to Bath, to Stonehenge—when you could still wander around the stones—to Stratford-upon-Avon. Thanks to Ralph Cohen's chutzpah, we had tea with Judi Dench! She demonstrated the difference between acting for stage and screen, and told some good stories.

My time in London was hugely influential. In my first years teaching middle-school English in Fairfax County, Virginia, I brought a group of students to the Folger Shakespeare Festival, where we won Best Supporting Actor. I got a job writing local theater reviews for *The Fairfax Journal* by submitting a play review I had written while in London. I remain a huge fan of BBC. And, I've returned to London three times with family and friends. It is a city that feels like home.

A couple things have stayed the same over the years. The full immersion in London life for months cannot be replaced with any vacation or guided trip. And the fact that JMU faculty is there as family away from home cannot be overstated. While I was away, my brother was hospitalized in a coma after a motorcycle accident. The Cohens invited me to their house to talk on the phone with my family. It was just one example of how their family, including their daughters, reached out to all of us. During my son's time in London, he had a medical crisis that pulled Cathryn Molloy, his faculty member in residence, into our family. She and her family were completely there for Stephen when we could not be.

— ANN SUCHER ADERTON ('80, '19P),

*Semester in London participant who is now a middle-school English teacher in Fairfax County, Virginia*

### A Beatle, theater, food

"In November 1979, some of us slept out on the street overnight so that we could be first in line to buy tickets to see Paul McCartney. Not everyone was a McCartney fan, but the opportunity to see an actual Beatle seemed a historic one we should take advantage of. He was playing at The Rainbow, a venue whose auditorium was probably smaller than the one in Wilson Hall. So, yeah, intimate! Keep in mind these were days when technology was in the dark ages compared to now, so to get tickets we actually had to get in a physical line—or queue, as they say there.

To make sure we didn't miss out, several of us resolved to camp out on the street—Oxford Street, to be specific. If I remember correctly, it was a Virgin Records store near the corner of Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road that was selling tickets. This was within walking distance of where we were staying at the Arran House. The afternoon before tickets went on sale, we repeatedly scouted out the location to make sure a line hadn't formed yet. Sometime early that evening, we got word that people were starting to queue up—so we joined in. I don't remember many details after that except: a) November in London is cold; b) I don't think we minded all that much because we were young and enthusiastic; and c) yeah, we got the tickets and saw the show.

Also that November, we attempted to celebrate Thanksgiving in London as best we could. One of the guys obtained a rugby ball and some of us played touch football in Regent's Park. Someone brought a radio or a boombox or something and was blasting the Talking Heads. Then there was a



Picnics and theater nights enriched the London experience.

Thanksgiving dinner out at Ralph's (Cohen) place in East Finchley. I remember my contribution was potato salad—probably the only thing I knew how to fix. I distinctly remember going shopping for mayonnaise—which was probably the biggest culture clash of the whole trip.

Some of us also discovered, and often hung out, in a small underground restaurant on Tottenham Court Road called The Casserole. By underground, I mean literally—it was down in a basement. The main waitress was a woman from Burma, who would tell us stories about Rangoon. I often wonder what happened to her. Years later I went back to London and tried to find The Casserole but it was gone. Sigh.

I really do think of those times a lot. I see a lot of theatre, especially a lot of Shakespeare, and I often think back to some of the shows I saw there and compare them in my head. Also, my whole impression of the U.K. was formed on that trip, so whenever Great Britain is in the news, that's my frame of reference. I realize that country has changed a lot since then, as has ours, but the physical things haven't. So when I see the British prime minister in front of No. 10 Downing St., I think—I've been there!"

— DWAYNE YANCEY ('79),

*Semester in London participant who is now editorial page editor of The Roanoke Times*

## LONDON UNIQUENESS OF 1979:

- Crunchy toilet paper imprinted with "wash your hands"
- Pay-to-use public toilets
- Not so many coffee shops, but lots of places for tea or a pub lunch
- During the Iranian hostage crisis, a huge Iranian demonstration in Hyde Park, with signs like "America Great Satan" and "Death to America"
- A full English breakfast every morning, if you got up early enough
- Lord Mountbatten's funeral, with his riderless horse passing a silently watching crowd
- Using special thin airmail paper to write home
- Phoning home once in a blue moon from the Cohens' rented house, since they had long-distance service



# 'The field of education is under siege'

*New CoE dean sets out to silence critics  
with collaboration as a cornerstone* BY KHALIL GARRIOTT ('04)

**M**ark L'Esperance, the newly appointed dean of the College of Education, came to JMU after more than 20 years on the faculty at East Carolina University. Formerly a professor and department chair of elementary education and middle grades education at ECU, L'Esperance's research interests are in quality teaching, school reform and middle-level education. His research agenda focuses on young adolescents through three strands: school reform and leadership, teacher candidate preparation and community engagement.

L'Esperance has worked with public school systems in coaching hundreds of administrators related to strategic planning and instructional leadership. In 2001, he co-founded Building Hope Community Life Center, a thriving multicomponent center dedicated to serving the children and families of Greenville and Pitt County, North Carolina. His graduate studies included doctoral work at Indiana University and earning a Ph.D. in 1998 from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro. He is a native of Lynn, Massachusetts.

*Madison* recently caught up with L'Esperance as he embarks on a new career adventure during a pivotal time, with JMU striving to become the national model for the engaged university.

## **Madison: How will you help JMU become a national leader in higher education?**

**Mark L'Esperance:** Based on the solid historical foundation and contemporary impact that James Madison University has in educator preparation and military science, I am very excited about the potential for developing interdisciplinary projects within the College of Education, at the university level, across the commonwealth of Virginia, nationally and internationally. I would like to expand the international education opportunities currently taking place within the college.

## **Madison: What prompted your move into administrative roles?**

**L'Esperance:** Throughout my career, I have always balanced my teaching with my assigned role as a coordinator, director or department chair. I believe that an administrative role allows you to have a bird's-eye view of the bigger mission and vision of the organization. I've always been passionate

about working with stakeholders in accomplishing that mission and vision.

The main reason I wanted to be considered for this position involves the outstanding reputation James Madison University has in preparing educators along with the focused vision related to community engagement, civic engagement and the engagement of learning. The opportunity to be part of something significant that allows me to utilize my education, experiences and passion made James Madison University's College of Education a perfect fit.

## **Madison: How would you describe your teaching style?**

**L'Esperance:** My teaching style is a combination of instructive, collaborative and facilitative. It depends on the topic and audience. I rely heavily on understanding the contextual considerations and work toward moving individuals to a specific outcome or objective. Every time I'm with someone, it is also an opportunity for me to learn and grow as an educator and person.

## **Madison: Talk about how you have specialized in helping at-risk students with low socio-economic status.**

**L'Esperance:** As a low-wealth, first-generation college graduate, I fully understand the impact of having the appropriate support system that allowed me to accomplish my goals and dreams. I have worked directly in dozens of low-wealth schools while supporting hundreds of administrators, teachers and students into creating programs, processes and policies that enhance the educational experience of all. However, the one service activity closest to my heart is Building Hope Community Life Center, located in Greenville, North Carolina. I co-founded this organization 18 years ago to work with the at-risk children and families located in Pitt County. This partnership, involving East Carolina University, the school system, businesses and government organizations, has supported and advocated for hundreds of families and children.





**“Every time I’m with someone, it is also an opportunity for me to learn and grow as an educator and person.”**

**Madison: What is your vision for the College of Education?**

**L’Esperance:** Building on a strong foundation currently in place, I believe that the College of Education will become a “Culture of Significance” empowered by a collective sense of purpose based on a clearly defined mission, vision and goals. This vision aligns directly with James Madison University’s commitment to engagement. It is my belief that the College of Education will be recognized nationally for the impact it has on both innovation and best practices in educator preparation and military science, and through civic and community engagement.

**Madison: How do you envision the college evolving in the coming years?**

**L’Esperance: Impact:** The field of education is under siege. The critics are focused on creating a narrative that the education system is failing and there are better ways of doing it than what universities provide. As the dean of education, I believe that we must be *intentional* about identifying and communicating the impact that the College of Education has on the communities we serve. This includes articulating the

economic and cultural impact of the graduates as well as the certificate and license earners of the college’s respective programs. An example of this is the economic impact of the countless practicum and internships hours delivered by our students at schools and other agencies. Another example is analyzing the specific impact of the initiatives of departments, programs and centers. How do we tell *our story* in a way that silences the critics and at the same time promotes the significant accomplishments of our alumni, faculty, staff and students?

**Preparing quality educators:**


How can we ensure all our traditional and distance-education programs are preparing the highest quality teachers, administrators, school counselors and psychologists, along with other educators? I believe that my role as dean will be to support faculty in creating an environment in which innovation, along with pedagogical best practice, is celebrated and rewarded. This requires supporting faculty, staff, centers and programs in seeking external funding along with developing networks of short-term and long-term partnerships.

**Collaborating with public schools:**

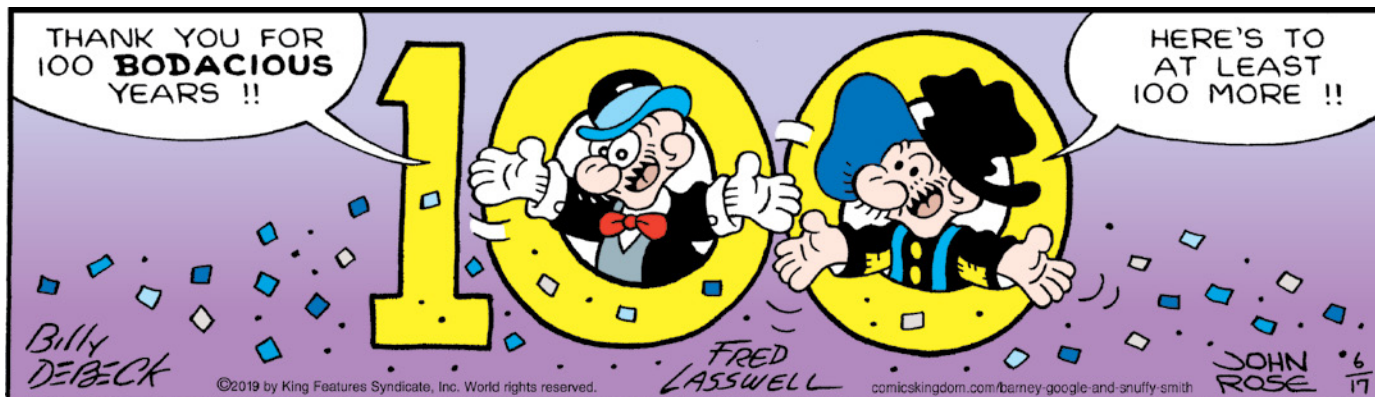
Over the course of my career, I have worked with hundreds of schools in the area of

school renewal and leadership along with educator preparation. I have been fortunate to lead the efforts of establishing a university-based laboratory school that centers on partnering with the local school district along with university and community partners. The initial or long-term success is that the public-school partner always feels that it has a mutual commitment and relationship with its university partner. I believe that at JMU, the key to this is working with districts to create comprehensive interdisciplinary frameworks based on shared needs and clearly articulating the intended outcomes, roles and responsibilities of each partner.

**Madison: Is it possible for a college to be “agile” given how fast the world changes?**

**L’Esperance:** Yes. There has to be a culture in place that is rich with indicators of broad and deep renewal and progress with data to support the efforts of the many departments, programs, centers and services. The culture has to be in a constant mode of reflection. The culture is *data-directed, not data-driven*. The outcome of this intentional and thoughtful community is to impact and promote the role of education at the regional, state, national and global level. 

# Alumni for Life



## Celebrated cartoonist looks back on career

BY SABRINA MORENO ('19), alumni relations intern

The road to establishing John Rose's ('86) career as a cartoonist was paved with a lunchtime meal of Cocoa Puffs—which he'd one day choke on following a phone call from Fred Lasswell, the cartoonist behind the renowned *Barney Google and Snuffy Smith* comics.

He'd sent Lasswell a packet of work samples, expecting to receive rejection. It was common in the industry to face multiple "thanks, but no thanks" responses.

This one would be different.

"John, this is Fred Lasswell," the caller said. "I really like the way you draw big noses." Rose became his inking assistant in 1998 and remained under his tutelage until Lasswell's death in 2001, when Rose was chosen to take over the *Snuffy Smith* comic strip. He became just the third person to ever draw it, which Rose says is "the greatest joy of his professional career."

June 2019 marked the comic strip's 100th anniversary, an accomplishment Rose attributes to its character development of the Smith family. This includes Snuffy, the title character known for being an endearing hillbilly with quirky antics.

"After a while, the characters become like family," Rose said.

As a result, Rose finds himself speaking in their Southern accent after being in the "Snuffy mindset," especially with the comic's weekly schedule of six daily cartoons and the Sunday cartoon. But his work producing three to four editorial cartoons per week for the (Harrisonburg) *Daily News-Record* helps keep it fresh.

"Being a cartoonist is just being a good listener," Rose said. "I can hear something in the booth behind me at a restaurant and think, 'Oh, that's something I could use in a comic strip.'"

Three days out of the week are spent in the studio tucked in the corner of his L-shaped family room. His two-legged

(Above): As part of a special centennial birthday series, John Rose's ('86) *Barney Google and Snuffy Smith* comic strip ran on June 17, 2019, which was the 100th birthday of the strip. (Below): Rose's bodacious *Snuffy Smith* shows his JMU purple-and-gold pride.

drawing table with unfinished *Snuffy Smith* comic strips is surrounded by decades worth of cartoon memorabilia, such as a Donald Duck hat from his first trip to Walt Disney World in 1971, framed comic strips of *Garfield* and *Snuffy Smith* salt shakers from the 1930s.

*The Flintstones* plays on TV in the background, only a few feet from shelves filled with nearly every Disney movie ever made.





On the right is a photo illustration by his daughter, Sarah Rose ('17), of a cartoon Snuffy looking back at John as he sketches. Daughter Meredith Rose Carter ('13, '14M) is also a JMU alumna.

"It's a little bit messy, but it's a lot of fun," Rose said of his workspace. "I think that helps fuel the creative process."

Rose has come a long way from drawing on his parents' living room walls. Awards line every studio corner, including one from Walt Disney for his contributions to cartooning through the *Snuffy Smith* comics.

Whether it be drawing sports cartoons in Manassas, Virginia, or working for *The Warren Sentinel* until finally landing at the *DN-R* in 1988, Rose says his family's support has been the most important aspect of his career.

He met his wife, Karen ('84), on the second weekend of his freshman year. He'd later surprise her with pizza in the stacks of Carrier Library while dressed as a pizza delivery man.

"She enjoyed that. She's a really, really smart woman," Rose said. "She just had that one day where she had that lapse in judgment and said, 'I do.'"

Karen still laughs at the gesture, recalling the time he also made a heart-shaped pizza for Valentine's Day for her and their

daughters. "There's a theme of pizza," she said. "He loves pizza."

Karen says that after 31 years of marriage, Rose hasn't changed from being the thoughtful, creative man he was back in college.

"He cares so deeply for all of us, and with that ability to bring that sense of humor and help to lighten when the times might not be the best times ... that helps," Karen said.

The family—all JMU graduates—supports the university as sports fans. They've had season football tickets since 1993 and have traveled to all three national championship games.

Although editorial cartoons and comic strips keep him busy, Karen said the jokes don't stop there. His "thinking cap" is always on.

"I think I've got a pretty good sense of humor, but my daughters and wife would probably say I've got a pretty dad-type sense of humor," Rose said.

He thinks back to the last joke he read and continues.

"Where do apples go hiking?" He pauses.

"The Apple-achian Mountains," he said, laughing. "See, that's a dad joke right there."

Sarah, who works at The Walt Disney Co. in Orlando, Florida, said her dad is just a fun-loving guy. With her love of

(Left): Rose shares his experiences as a comic strip artist at a JMU Libraries' Special Collections speaker series event on March 14. (Above): One of Rose's *Barney Google and Snuffy Smith* comic strips from a Sunday newspaper.

graphic design, she was able to partner with him on an upcoming Popeye comic strip and other work for the comics.

Her father directly influenced her decision to apply to the Disney College program. Sarah said he's the first person she told of her acceptance into the program because of their mutual love of Disney.

"He became an annual passholder and comes down any time he can," Sarah said. "Sometimes he'll just come and watch me work. He loves it."

Along the way, Rose published a variety of books and caught the attention of the Robertsons from *Duck Dynasty* and Dolly Parton after featuring them in the *Snuffy Smith* cartoons.

It's moments like those when he realizes he can't imagine doing anything else. He's living out his lifelong dream of being a cartoonist.

"That's really all you can hope for," he said. "To make somebody, just for a second, take their mind off the worries and pressures of the day and just get a chuckle ... I'm bodaciously blessed I get to do this." ❧



## Get to know new JMU Alumni Association Board of Directors members

The JMU Alumni Association Board of Directors is an executive board committed to representing alumni, creating spaces for opportunity and engaging philanthropically with the JMU community. In the fall, the JMUA welcomed four new members:

### Charles May ('83)

**Major:** Communications  
**Home:** Chesapeake, Virginia  
**Job:** President and CEO of Cooke and May LLC

### What is your favorite JMU memory?

**May:** As the first group of scholarship football players at JMU, my favorite memory was helping take a Division III football program to a successful Division I football program—culminating with a signature win versus U.Va. in 1982. Additionally, as the lead recruiter of both Charles Haley and Gary Clark, another favorite pastime is selling JMU to them to attend. Lastly, and most importantly, meeting my Ole School group teammates. They still remain key people in my life today.



(Above, L-R): Frank Smith ('03), Ellen Hineman ('89), Stephanie Cardace ('09), Amy Barnett ('06, '08M), Chiquita King ('09, '11M), Carol Benassi ('82), Robin Goodman ('83), Stephanie Mendolia ('08), Heather Hedrick ('00), Kaitlin Holbrook ('13), Zac Hittie ('06, '10M), Eric Bowlin ('02) and Chris Ellis ('08). (L-R, back row): Dave Urso ('03), Carrie Combs ('07, '09M), Dirron Allen ('00), Pratt Templeton ('14), Jeremy Brown ('94, '96M) and Tripp Hughes ('09).

### Chris Ellis ('08)

**Major:** Business Management  
**Home:** Richmond, Virginia  
**Job:** Financial planner

### What do you think makes JMU so special?

**Ellis:** The feeling of culture, of being a part of the "family." This goes beyond students and alumni. Staff and family members who have been a part of the community add so much to it. There's this appreciation for a welcoming atmosphere. If I see someone wearing JMU colors or the logo, there's this automatic connection. You see that welcoming environment wherever you go. From a business aspect and where I currently work, we love to see when people are from JMU because we know they have the hard skills to put in the work, and they have the emotional intelligence and "soft skills" to engage thoughtfully. There was no limitation to who you could become, and that



was something the environment always nurtured in me.

### Amy Barnett ('06, '08M)

**Major:** Communication Sciences and Disorders  
**Home:** Glen Allen, Virginia  
**Job:** Medicaid support specialist

### What have you done since graduating from JMU?

**Barnett:** I moved to Blacksburg for four years and was a speech pathologist there. Then I moved to Richmond, and got plugged into community outreach. I eventually transitioned into my role now of being a Medicaid support specialist. When I got to Richmond, I got plugged into the RVA Dukes Chapter and eventually became co-president with Chris Ellis. It often feels like a mini-JMU in Richmond. Everyone involved wants to give back, and our community here



## ALUMNI FOR LIFE

knows that we can always count on each other.

### Stephanie Cardace ('09)

**Major:** Health Sciences and Biology

**Home:** Arlington, Virginia

**Job:** Physician assistant


### Why did you decide to serve on the board?

#### Cardace:

I'm a big advocate of the JMU party never ending. So many people had a great time at JMU and then life happens and you can sort of forget how to have fun. Just because you don't go



to JMU anymore doesn't mean that you can't be plugged into events and the community that JMU provides. That's why I hope I can engage alumni on the board and get them connected again if they've forgotten what it's like. There's always a place for them at JMU.

As the board welcomes new members each year, it is also bittersweet to say farewell to members leaving the board. This year the board says farewell to **Dirron Allen ('00)**, **Carol Benassi ('82)**, **Stephanie Mendolia ('08)** and **Joe Showker ('79)**. Thank you for your energy, dedication and commitment to serving the JMU community. 



family weekends

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

OCT. 11-13, 2019 JMU.EDU/PARENTS

COMBS PHOTOGRAPH BY ELISE TRISSEL; FAMILY WEEKEND BY KENDALL HERLICA

## The Madison Family connection

BY CARRIE COMBS ('07, '09M), Alumni Association executive director



What an honor and privilege it is to be here with you!

That's a phrase I've used many times over the past year, and it never gets old. I've been privileged to meet our remarkable alumni from California, Georgia, New York, North Carolina, Maryland and across our beloved Virginia.

Last spring, I had the opportunity to witness an exceptional panel presented by our Black Alumni Chapter. When speaking about her Madison Experience and building community as a minority student and alumna, a panelist said, "We must transform, not conform." And it struck me not only as wise and worthy words to live by, but a fitting descriptor of who we are as JMU alumni.

For this reason and so many more, I am humbled to serve as executive director of the Alumni Association. We are a unique and powerful community—a community that I have witnessed and experienced in extraordinary ways since stepping foot on campus in 2003.


Being a part of the Madison Family as a student, alumna and employee, I have experienced some of the strongest and most meaningful connections in unexpected ways, and I know many of you can relate.

It is the investment in relationships and outpouring of support from our alumni family that enables our university to flourish and rise to new challenges. This place, our students, our faculty and staff, our alumni, we're more than a community—we are a family. It's personal. We're connected. And that's why I stay; it's what inspired me to step into this role—not because I can wear fancy dresses or travel the country, but because I believe in the power of what we can do together.

As we welcome the Class of 2019 into the alumni family, we will surpass 140,000 living alumni. Wow! That's an impressive number!

My challenge to all of you is to not conform to being one out of 140K, but to seek opportunities to meet the Duke sitting next to you at a fall football game or to invite a new alum to join you at a networking event, chapter social or *Unleashed* event. When you're connected to Madison, you're connected to a family.

It can be easy to glance over the biweekly *Madison Update* or scroll past the numerous event invites on Facebook, but you never know when you might pass up an opportunity to make a connection that will last a lifetime.

If JMU has had a positive influence on your life, please tell us about it at [alumni.jmu.edu/yourstory](http://alumni.jmu.edu/yourstory). I can't wait to hear from you. 

## Building outside the box

BY SARAH CHASE ('17), alumni relations coordinator

**M**olly McElwee-Malloy ('00, '02M) is a registered nurse and certified diabetes educator working with the behavioral science team on post-market clinical outcomes at Tandem Diabetes Care, a medical device manufacturer. In 2000, she graduated from JMU with a bachelor's degree in music, and again in 2002 with a master's in music. While not seemingly scientific, McElwee-Malloy says she uses her major every day.

During her sophomore year at JMU, McElwee-Malloy decided to see a doctor after experiencing unexplained weight loss and feelings of sickness and exhaustion. She was misdiagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. McElwee-Malloy finished the semester but, over break, continued to decline and was admitted to the hospital, where she was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes. "There, I received insulin for the first time and felt like a completely new person. I realized this was the answer for my body."

After sustaining an injury from overplaying the flute, she ceased competitive music performance after graduation, as the injury required surgery to continue. Instead, McElwee-Malloy pursued work within diverse industries, learning administrative and management skills. Over the years, she sought out many different doctors and therapies, but she found there were too many overwhelming variables with diabetes.

"It's like walking around all day with a portable stove and a pot of water. You need to keep the water at simmer all the time, constantly adjusting the temperature up or down—but you also need to be a person, an employee, a functional human being." While controllable, diabetes ran McElwee-Malloy's life because she constantly had to manage her condition.

In 2005, she heard about an artificial pancreas trial going on at the University of Virginia and decided to participate.



Molly McElwee-Malloy with the Tandem Diabetes Care insulin pump.

**"The polish that JMU put on me ... is something that I do in my job all the time."**

— MOLLY McELWEE-MALLOY

"It was a continuous glucose monitor that would communicate my blood sugar level, and this insulin pump would act on a smart algorithm to help regulate itself rather than me have to worry about it." It was revolutionary, and McElwee-Malloy wanted to be a part of the research. So, she asked doctors running the trials what it would take to be on their team.

The doctors chuckled but answered honestly that they could use a nurse.

Two years later, after returning to school and becoming a registered nurse, McElwee-Malloy joined the team at U.Va. working on the very trials she had been participating in. The team would become the Center for Diabetes Technology at U.Va. under the direction of Dr. Boris Kovatchev, sometimes known as the father of the artificial pancreas.

Kovatchev's team helped to create and refine an accurate algorithm prediction. "Essentially, it's weather forecasting for

the insulin and glucose in your body," McElwee-Malloy said. After successful trials and a startup acquisition, the algorithms were licensed to be commercialized and integrated into an insulin pump made by Tandem Diabetes Care. McElwee-Malloy stayed with the product throughout the entire process.

She officially joined the Tandem team in January 2018 after the algorithms were licensed and is approaching her 10th year of working on smart diabetes technology. As of today, Control-IQ Technology has been submitted to the Food and Drug Administration for approval of treatment for insulin-dependent diabetes.

McElwee-Malloy was drawn to Tandem because of its tenacity and how it addresses accessibility to those who need it. That's why she now focuses on post-market outcomes, working with advocacy groups, health care professionals and insurance providers to ensure that those with diabetes are eligible for the device. It is here that McElwee-Malloy says she uses her JMU degrees every day.

"The polish that JMU put on me, particularly my flute professor, Carol Kniebusch Noe, to be able to perform, to translate a difficult piece of music to an audience, is something that I do in my job all the time." She likens complex music to the complicated technicality of the science field. "Working in diabetes, particularly medical device technology, is very technical—and every day I'm taking that complicated 'music,' if you will, to health care professionals, advocacy groups and insurance companies for them to hear, understand and be affected by."

In the future, she hopes to continue her work in improving the product and creating updated versions. "For a long time, I didn't know what I was supposed to be doing, but this is it," she said. "If I could tell students anything, it would be to build your skill set and not to be afraid of building outside of your box with something that might not make sense right now." 🎵

## Shaping the next generation

BY SARAH CHASE ('17), alumni relations coordinator

**G**rowing up, Cory Weathers ('04) had no idea that fixing his grandmother's stereo would lead to a career in engineering, let alone an award for managerial leadership at the STEM Global Competitiveness Conference.

But it was on this stage, as he accepted the Linda Gooden Legacy Black Engineer of the Year Award, that Weathers found himself recalling his grandmother's words, "You'd make a great engineer." Thirty years later, he's shaping the next generation.

Weathers came to JMU in 2000 on a full athletic scholarship, with the intent to pursue a major in integrated science and technology and continue engineering studies after graduation. He attributes much of his growth as a young engineer to professors who mentored him.

"Dr. Okechi Egekwu was one of the most influential mentors and professors I've had the pleasure of working with," Weathers said. "I always admired the way he used examples from his work experiences at companies like General Motors and Alcoa to illustrate engineering concepts in class. My style of teaching and mentoring is heavily influenced by his."

Weathers loved working with real problems and issues. "I tend to think of problems from a multidisciplinary mindset because that way of thinking is at the core of JMU's ISAT curriculum."

After graduation, Weathers attended graduate school at North Carolina A&T State University, focusing in industrial and systems engineering. Lockheed Martin funded a project he worked on during his time there, leading him to pursue a job at the company's Orlando, Florida, site in 2007.

Now in his 12th year at Lockheed Martin, Weathers has held challenging roles in production operations, engineering and information technology. Weathers recently served as deputy chief engineer for Lockheed Martin's UK Military Flying Training Sys-



(Left): Cory Weathers celebrates receiving the Linda Gooden Legacy Black Engineer of the Year Award. (Above): Lee Reynolds ('13) with Weathers ('04).

tems program. MFTS is a comprehensive cross-service training program, providing a modern and streamlined flight training solution for the British Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and Army Air Corps. In this role, Weathers has demonstrated a passion for solving complex challenges, delivering innovative solutions and collaborating effectively.

But Weathers' passion goes beyond his title as chief engineer. He participated and graduated from Lockheed Martin's three-year leadership engineering development program, has served as the site lead for the company's diversity and inclusion council, and consistently volunteers with middle- and elementary-school students in Orlando doing STEM activities—qualities for which the Linda Gooden Legacy Award was created.

Weathers acknowledges that much has changed since his childhood memory of fixing his grandmother's stereo. "Systems I help build are more complex and our customers' missions are much more critical, but one thing hasn't changed. To me, true accomplishment comes from service to others."

Growing up in Baltimore, Weathers didn't have role models in STEM. "I'm most passionate about being able to serve as an example to people who look up to

me, who've grown up in communities like mine, with family experiences like mine."

That's one of the driving forces for Weathers being a mentor and speaking with young students at underrepresented schools in Orlando and other cities in which he has lived. "Diversity and inclusion are key to the results we accomplish as a company. We work on very large systems that are used around the world and we need perspective and input from everyone. Diversity is critical in our ability to solve such tough problems."

But Weathers isn't just a source of guidance in Orlando. He has also been a mentor to Lee Reynolds ('13), a fellow Duke, football player and STEM professional with whom he's shared a close friendship since graduation. "I took advantage of the opportunities I had while at JMU and they've stayed with me ever since. JMU has that special sauce," Weathers said.

Award aside, Weathers' greatest accomplishments are marrying his wife and having two beautiful children. "They're 10 and 4, excited about learning and already asking good questions about how the world works. That's all we could ask for," he said.

Even at home, Cory Weathers is shaping the next generation. 

## My Madison Experience, five years later

Catching up with classmates, marveling at JMU's growth during Spring Reunion Weekend

BY ALICIA PETTIS ('14), 2014 senior class president

Five years ago, I graduated from JMU. I loved every minute of my Madison Experience, from the challenging classes, to the meaningful student activities, to the friendly campus. Saying goodbye to a community I had deeply invested in for four years was tough. Luckily, as I prepared to leave, the JMU Alumni Association was forming a concentrated effort to engage students in what life was like as alumni. Through this effort, I began to understand the evolving role JMU might have in my life after receiving my diploma.

One of my most memorable alumni experiences actually happened before I graduated. Every year a special induction ceremony is held, where current seniors and graduates celebrating their 50-year reunion gather together to welcome the soon-to-be alumni to the JMU Alumni Association and renew the connection that defines the alumni community. Spending time with the Bluestone Reunion alumni at this event illustrated to me how the Madison Experience could extend beyond this campus, and only deepen in its meaning over my lifetime. I remember briefly imagining how much might change in 50 years, and hoped I would make it back for my 50th reunion.

After graduation, priorities quickly changed. All of a sudden, I wasn't at JMU worried about my grades, getting to organization meetings or hedging bets on available parking spaces. Instead, I was in a new city looking for an entry-level job to start my career. Because of my student involvement in the JMUA, I was tuned into the opportunities the community presented in helping me to build my new life. (I read all the emails!)

As a recent graduate, building a career is of the utmost importance to me. In looking for jobs, I have turned time and time again to the Madison Network. Whether it's been an informal email to an alum-

nus I connected with on LinkedIn or a formal networking event in Tysons Corner, I have received an abundance of professional opportunities from tapping into the network. I'm grateful to JMU for all that it has done and continues to do in helping me build my career.

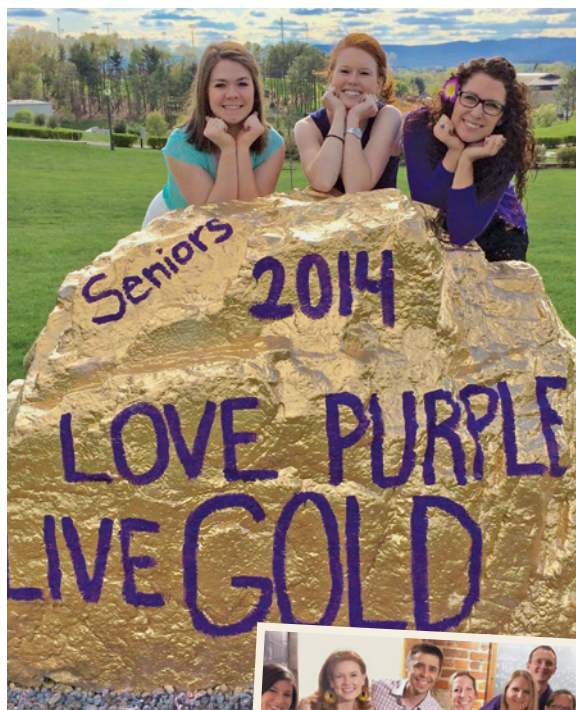
So, when the JMUA emailed my class to let us know they were looking for volunteers to help plan the first Spring Reunion Weekend for graduating classes of five-year increments, I immediately jumped on board. I had already seen the power of classmates returning to campus to reconnect and renew their commitment to the Madison Experience. During the weekend, I got the chance to catch up with "old" classmates and get caught up on all the ways that JMU is being the national model for the engaged university.

In those five years, a lot had changed, both in our lives and at JMU. Walking around campus, it was amazing to see JMU's growth over such a short time. New buildings, new programs, new colleges; the list goes on. But we as alumni had also undergone changes, though not as physically outstanding as the JMU campus. And yet, underneath all the change, alumni and JMU have stayed the same in our tried-and-true love for community and dedication to growth.

To say that the last five years flew by fast would be an understatement. I'm proud to have found ways to keep connected and invested in the university. It'll be no time before my classmates and I will be back

on campus celebrating our 50th reunion.

I am so very thankful for JMU's new and evolving role in my life. I hope you'll be a part of extending and evolving the Madison Experience so that all alumni, no matter their stage in life, find a way to stay engaged with our alma mater.



(Above): Senior Class Council members pose with painted spirit rock at Senior Dinner in April 2014. (L-R): Megan Gibbons ('14), Alicia Pettis ('14) and Amberlee Carlson ('14, '15M). (Right): 2000s grads gather at the Union Station bar during the first Spring Reunion Weekend in April. (L-R): Shawni Mas ('15), Pettis, Khalil Garriott ('04), Krista Garriott ('04), Kristina Mohler ('09, '14M), Zac Hittie ('06, '10M), Karin Anderson ('09), Chiquita King ('09, '11M) and Laura Hittie ('07, '08M) (kneeling).





# MixedMedia

BOOKS, MUSIC & FILM

## If I'm Being Honest

BY ANNIE LAWRENCE ('12)

Annie Lawrence Music  
ASIN: B07MBW532J

In her second album—a mix of pop, folk and country—Lawrence opens up about her personal life, her vulnerabilities and victories, including romantic heartbreak and surviving cancer.



## A Passion for Kindness: Making the World a Better Place to Lead, Love, and Learn

BY TAMARA LETTER ('06)

Dave Burgess Consulting Inc.  
ISBN-10: 1949595188

Letter shares her own kindness journey and showcases experiences from other kindness cultivators around the world.

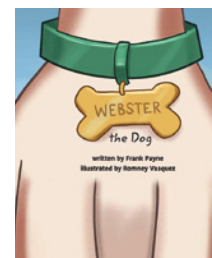


## Webster the Beagle

BY FRANK PAYNE ('89)

Mascot Books  
ISBN-10: 1684018307

In his first children's book, Payne tells the story of a born-to-be hunting dog named Webster who finds his true calling when he gets lost in the woods.

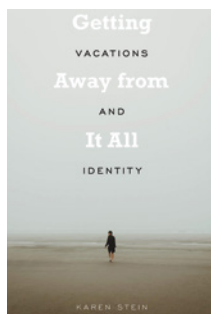


## Getting Away from It All: Vacations and Identity

BY KAREN STEIN ('01)

Temple University Press  
ISBN-10: 1439918759

In this study of individuality, flexibility and the intersection of self-definition and social constraint, Stein interviews vacationers about their travels and downtime, focusing on "identity transitions."

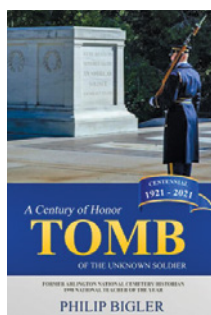


## Tomb of the Unknown Soldier: A Century of Honor

BY PHILIP BIGLER ('74)

Apple Ridge  
ISBN-10: 1513642774

Historian Philip Bigler skillfully tells the story of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, America's most cherished and revered military shrine.



## The Now Dark Sky, Setting Us All on Fire

BY ROBERT KRUT ('95)

Codhill Press  
ISBN-10: 1949933032

Winner of the 2018 Codhill Poetry Award, *The Now Dark Sky, Setting Us All on Fire* is Krut's third collection of poetry that beautifully portrays our struggle between idealistic dreams of imagination and the sobering reality of our here-and-now lives.



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# HOME COMING

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

**SAVE THE DATE: OCT. 25-27**

Homecoming 2019 will be here before you know it! Make plans to join us back on campus to reconnect with your JMU friends and show your Purple Pride!

## WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS

### JMU DAY OF SERVICE

Join fellow alumni, students and faculty in giving back to the Harrisonburg community.

### HOMECOMING GOLF TOURNAMENT

Enjoy a captain's-choice format, awards banquet and raffle with the Harrisonburg Alumni Chapter.



### QUADFEST

Enjoy an evening of live music, giveaways, lawn games, food and activities for people of all ages.

View a full list of events and register at: [alumni.jmu.edu/homecomingevents](http://alumni.jmu.edu/homecomingevents)



### HOMECOMING HEADQUARTERS

Join the JMU Alumni Association at the largest tailgate of JMU Homecoming!

### HOMECOMING FOOTBALL GAME

Cheer on the Dukes as they take on the Towson Tigers.



## Madison EVENTS

**OCT. 5**

### MetroDukes Crabfest

Support the MetroDukes' largest chapter scholarship fundraiser of the year and enjoy all-you-can-eat crabs, shrimp and corn on the cob.

**OCT. 25-27**

### Homecoming 2019

Come home for a weekend of football, friends and plenty of purple-and-gold spirit.

**NOV. 2**

### RVA Gala

Support the Richmond, Virginia, Chapter scholarship fund at their annual Gala event.

**DEC. 14**

### Winter Commencement

Celebrate the winter Class of 2019!

**MARCH 20, 2020**

### Alumni Awards

Honor distinguished alumni who have made exemplary contributions to JMU and their communities.

**APRIL 24-25, 2020**

### Spring Reunion Weekend

If your class year ends in a zero or five, you are celebrating a milestone reunion this year! Join us back on campus for a weekend of fun and reminiscing.

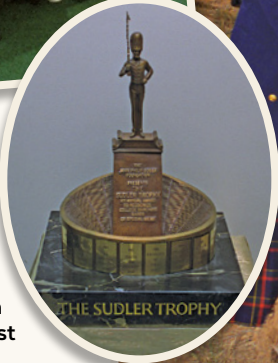
**JUNE 18-19, 2020**

### Legacy Family Days

JMU alumni and their high-school-age children are invited to attend Legacy Family Days, a two-day event designed for alumni families to help navigate the college admissions process.

For more information and to register for all alumni events, please visit [alumni.jmu.edu/events](http://alumni.jmu.edu/events)

# Class Notes



**1994** was a stellar year at JMU. (Inset, clockwise): The field hockey team won the NCAA national championship, ground was broken on the east side of Interstate 81 for the University Recreation Center and the Marching Royal Dukes won the Sudler Trophy, given to the nation's best marching band.

## CLASS NOTES

**78** Frances Jeffries, a career educator in Frederick County (Virginia) Public Schools, was awarded a Medalion of Recognition from Lord Fairfax Community College.

**81** Amy McAvoy ('84M) was named Teacher of the Year for her work in career and technical education at Turner Ashby High School in Bridgewater, Virginia. ■ Mitchell Townley won the 2018 Inspirational Country Song of the Year award for *This Side of Sunday*, co-written with Scott Parker and performed by Brent Harrison.

**82** Frederick County Bancorp Inc. welcomed Kimberly Chaney as chairman of its board of directors. ■ Mary



Strickler was named Balfour's National Adviser of the Year at the National High School Journalism Conference in Anaheim, California.

**84** Celanese Corp., a global specialty materials company, appointed Anne

Mitchell Townley ('81) holds his 2018 Inspirational Country Song of the Year award.

Puckett to the company's executive leadership team as senior vice president and general counsel.

**87** Jeffrey Harper is chief revenue officer at

Allied Payment Network, the industry's most progressive provider of online and mobile bill payment services to banks and credit unions.

**88** Scott Sherwood is CEO of Novi Labs, a leading developer of artificial intelligence-driven petroleum well planning software in Austin, Texas. ■ Leila Rice is director of communications for the Hampton Roads Sanitation District in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

**91** Tamara Gibson ('94M) founded Village Artisans of Port Republic in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

**92** Timothy Schools is president and chief executive officer of CapStar

## Mission accomplished for Staff Emeriti Association BY TINA UPDIKE ('73)

The Staff Emeriti Association is a volunteer organization of retired staff emeriti members who have joined together to maintain ties to James Madison University and to promote their current interests. Throughout the year, the SEA's activities and events support their mission of being actively engaged. During Spring semester, SEA members volunteered at two JMU events: CHOICES and the community fair during Employee Appreciation Day.

The SEA's monthly luncheon series offers educational opportunities as well as a chance for members to get to know one another and network with former colleagues. One luncheon featured a presentation by Rodney Wolfenbarger, the new director of JMU's Lifelong Learning Institute, on upcoming classes, trips and lectures.

The highlight of the year was President Jonathan R. Alger's annual address to the SEA, in which he provided an overview of all the new developments and achievements

**After President Alger's annual address to the Staff Emeriti Association, SEA members enjoy a delicious lunch in the Montpelier Room of JMU's E-Hall. (Inset): A raffle of door prizes provided a delightful end to the day's events.**

around campus. Following his talk, members enjoyed a lively question-and-answer period with the president. The networking social time prior to the delicious lunch served in the Montpelier Room of JMU's E-Hall allowed all attendees to connect with former colleagues and to greet new members. The event ended

with a raffle of door prizes donated by various JMU departments. The SEA thanks the JMU Office of Human Resources for sponsoring this event.

For more information about the SEA and upcoming events, visit [jmu.edu/staffemeriti](http://jmu.edu/staffemeriti) or email [staffemeriti@jmu.edu](mailto:staffemeriti@jmu.edu).



Financial Holdings Inc. in Nashville, Tennessee.

**93** Eric Davis was appointed vice chancellor of human resources for the state of Minnesota. ■ Toni Sheets, executive director of technology for Harrisonburg City Public Schools, received the People's Choice Award and was nominated for the Leadership Award at the Shenandoah Valley Technology Council's Tech-Nite.

**95** Matthew Gallagher is managing director of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials' Chi-



**Jeffrey Harper ('87)**



**Leila Rice ('88)**

cago team. ■ Candy Phillips was honored as a 2019 Bright Star for her efforts as executive director of First Step: A Response to Domestic Violence, at U\*Nite, an evening to celebrate community leaders put on by United Way of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County.

**96** Louis Paglia is president of Sterling, the world's leading background and identity services provider.

**97** Kathleen Johnston was named Teacher of the Year at Spotswood Elementary School in Harrisonburg, Virginia.



**Dukes take on Turks and Caicos Islands. (Back row, clockwise): Cathy ('89) and Jim ('89) Dotter of Virginia Business Systems in Richmond, Virginia; VBS employee Ryan ('12) and Nora ('12, '13M) Schoepke; Ray Cilimberg ('85), spouse of VBS employee Robin Cilimberg; and Molly Lingon ('90, '91M), spouse of Rick Lingon, vice president of sales and marketing for VBS.**



## Honoring the sacrifice

Alumna helps veterans visit D.C. memorials  
BY SABRINA MORENO ('19)

On weekday mornings, Dianne Klopp ('91) rises early to go online to teach English as a second language to children in China. Then, after homeschooling her own children, she ventures into her checklist for Honor Flight—a nonprofit organization whose mission is to transport American war veterans to the Washington, D.C., memorials, free of charge.

As the founder and president of the Top of Virginia chapter she operates out of her home near Winchester, Virginia, and serves veterans in the Shenandoah Valley. Klopp says it's "all really grassroots" and volunteer-based, making the group effort one of the most important aspects to planning each trip.

"It's like our Super Bowl," she said. "It takes so many months and hours and hours of planning."

On every mission, Klopp attaches her father's service picture to her badge as a way to take him with her. He died before getting to see the memorials. "I think that's why it's urgent for me to help other veterans to get there," Klopp said. "So they can see it before it's too late."

More than 250 area veterans, some of whom served in World War II, have made the trip since the chapter's first mission in October 2016.

Klopp works hard to ensure it's the ultimate day of honor for veterans. She says letting them know how thankful people are for their service and sacrifice is what makes it so special.

The trip begins by 7:30 a.m. with breakfast. Each veteran is paired with a guardian—often a JMU student. Then it's on to the Air Force Memorial. After lunch, veterans receive a police escort to the Arlington National Cemetery for the changing of the guard.

"That's my favorite stop of the day," Klopp said. "We are the only group that's allowed to drive the tour buses directly up to the Tomb of the Unknown [Soldier] so that the vets don't have to walk."

Then, the bus takes them to the WWII and Korean War memorials and the Vietnam Wall. Later, each veteran receives letters from family members and the local community thanking them for their service. Afterward, they enjoy a catered dinner with "Welcome Home" banners. Donations to support the day come from community service organizations and local businesses.

"Dianne does a fantastic a job," said Dave Matthes, a veteran and a Top of Virginia board member. "She's like the Energizer Bunny. She just has her fingers on top of everything, and she goes and goes and goes."

For the full feature, go to [j.mu/honorflight](http://j.mu/honorflight).



CLASS NOTES

**98** April Rodgers, a teacher at Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School, is the 2019 Alexandria City (Virginia) Public Schools Teacher of the Year.



**Todd Davis ('99)**

**99** Anthony Casano is partner in the tech and telecom practice Ridgemont Equity Partners in Charlotte, North Carolina. ■ **Todd Davis** is associate general counsel at Strategic Education Inc. in Herndon, Virginia, where he focuses on federal regulatory and legislative matters in higher education. ■ **Matthew Perrone** founded EpiPalooza, an annual fundraising event to raise awareness for those with epilepsy.



**Daniel Beckley ('02)**



**Brent Jackson ('03)**

**00** Kimberly Alexander is town manager of

Elkton, Virginia. ■ **Grant Bughman** joined Vontobel Asset Management as client portfolio manager to support global client relations in New York City, New York. ■ **Heather Harris ('05M)** was named Teacher of the Year at Riverbend Elementary School in Elkton, Virginia, for her work as a library media specialist.

**01** In November 2018, **Candice Roman-Santos** and **Deborah Lewis** had an epic getaway in Napa, California, to celebrate Lewis' milestone birthday. The two first met during their Summer Orientation at JMU and have remained close ever since, despite living on opposite sides of the country.



**Deborah Lewis ('01) and Candice Roman-Santos ('01)** in Napa, California.

**02** Daniel Beckley is executive director of the Kansas City Symphony.

**03** Brent Jackson is president of Jackson Hotel Management in Harrisonburg, Virginia. ■ **Evan Vass ('08M)** is county administrator in Shenandoah County, Virginia.

**04** Carolene Schulte ('05M) was named

Teacher of the Year for her work in family and consumer sciences at Elkton Middle School in Elkton, Virginia. ■ **Leslie Holloway Kapuchuck ('13M)**, principal of Mountain View Elementary School in Harrisonburg, Virginia, established a movement room where children can take mind breaks to help refocus energy by playing games.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 62 >>>



The JMU Capitol Alumni Coed Soccer Team, captained by John Byrd ('97), competed in the Spring 2019 season of District Sports Soccer. The JMU squad competed in 10 games against the likes of Yale, Michigan, William & Mary, Virginia Tech and U.Va. Rated as the second-ranked defensive team, the season highlight for JMU was providing the only blemish on the record of the first-place overall team.



**Beth Carlin Graveline ('05) and Stephanie Weber ('09)** completed an epic trek through Nepal in April. In just six days, they hiked an estimated 23,000 steps up and down the mountainside of the Annapurna region.



# Celebrations

WEDDINGS, HONORS  
& FUTURE DUKES



(Top): Frank Ashby ('13) and Alyssa Beam ('14) were married on April 6 in South Boston, Virginia. (Above): Lauren Hartnett ('11) and Conor Twiss were married on May 4 in Raleigh, North Carolina.



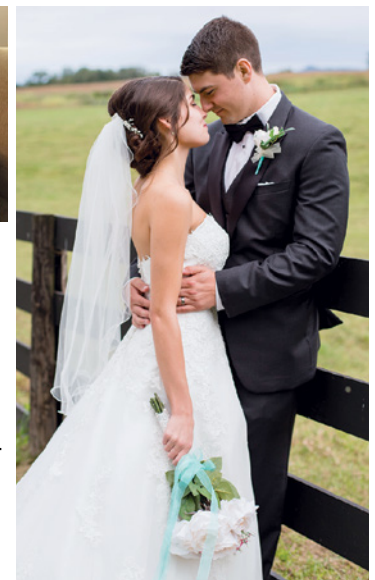
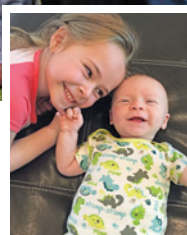
(Above): Gwendolyn Brantley ('07) and Nick Fitzpatrick were married on Nov. 10, 2018, in Williamsburg, Virginia. Pictured (L-R): Tom ('05) and Elizabeth Ridley, Britt Cohen ('00), Gwendolyn and Nick, Caroline Kelley ('07), and Jordyn ('07) and Tim ('01) Miller. (Left): Alyssa Tower ('16, '17M) and Levi May ('12) were engaged on May 18 at the Kissing Rock on campus.



(Above): Betsy Hang ('07) and Javier Medina were married on Feb. 2 at Hacienda Siesta Alegre in Rio Grande, Puerto Rico. (Right): Emma ('07, '16M) and Alan Maynard ('06, '12M), had a son, Miles Alan, on March 21. Heather ('14, '19M) and Ben Davis, had a daughter, Makena Rose, on April 12 (not pictured).



(Above): Carrie ('04) and Barry Hawes, had a daughter, Lillian Margaret, on Feb. 3. (Right): Katie Ellen ('18) and Michael Foster were married on Sept. 22, 2018, at Rivercrest Farm and Event Center in Elkton, Virginia.



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**05** Police officer Kyle Dolph was awarded the Meritorious Action Ribbon, presented to an officer who prevents injury or death to others. ■ **Ryan Tibbens ('06M)** was named Best Teacher by the *Loudoun-Times Mirror*. He was also named to the Loudoun 100, which celebrates influential members in the community.



**Ryan Tibbens ('05, '06M)**

**07** Claire Leeper founded the Valley Wind Ensemble, a group in which local band directors and professional musicians can play when they're not teaching students. ■

**Adam Ruhland ('08M)**

opened Wild State Cider in Duluth, Minnesota.

**08** Kevin Flint is planning commissioner at the Rockingham County (Virginia) Planning Commission.

**09** John Duni is a senior associate at Matrix Capital Markets Group in Richmond, Virginia. ■ **Sgt. Phillip Read** was given the Leadership Award by the Harrisonburg Police Department for leading the major crimes unit in the Criminal Investigations Division. ■ **Allison Ramser Teixeira** won \$108,000 and mentorship by Ben Van Leeuwen to start an ice cream business on CNBC's *Deal or No Deal*.



**Allison Ramser Teixeira ('09)** on the set of *Deal or No Deal*.

**(L-R): Wild State Cider owners Andrew Price and Adam Ruhland ('07, '08M).**



SCHOLARSHIP THANK-YOU LETTERS

**Madison Business Scholarship Endowment**

The endowment was established in 2007 by the Madison Business Scholarship Group, including seven COB alumni with the shared belief that their full JMU experience, in and out of the classroom, was instrumental in their personal and professional successes.

**Dear Madison Business Scholarship Group,**

I want to thank you for selecting me among the fortunate recipients to receive the Madison Business Scholarship Endowment. I came to James Madison University as the only student from my graduating 500-member high-school class with the goal to make an impact on the community.

Within these past three years, I have strived to give back to JMU and specifically the College of Business. I have been able to do so most notably as a student ambassador for *The Morning Brew*. *The Morning Brew* is a daily newsletter outlining market updates and changes in current events. This newsletter will keep students updated on important news and prepared for internships. In addition to my position as a student ambassador, I am also a student assistant under the finance, accounting and business law department chairs. These organizations allow me to stay active on campus and expand the presence of the College of Business.

This scholarship is very important to me because it directly allowed me to travel to Belgium to study abroad. I am sending you this letter while immersed in the European culture. This has been an eye-opening experience thus far and I can't wait to see what else this program has in store for me. Thank you again for this donation as I will ensure it is put into great use.

Best,

**Daniel Brill**, Class of 2020  
Westport, Connecticut

**Lucille Y. Marshall Music Scholarship**

Originally administered by the Harrisonburg City Public Schools Board of Trustees in 1965, this scholarship was transferred to the JMU Foundation in 1974. Marshall was a teacher and supervisor of instrumental music in the city public schools for 17 years. She was a well-known, respected and loved figure in the community. When she died in 1962, members of the community established the fund that today is the Marshall Scholarship.

**Dear Mrs. Irvine,**

I hope you've been well and enjoying this lovely fall weather! I am writing to you to thank you, once again, for your generous donation! Being a Lucille Y. Marshall Scholar has been such a joy, as it allows me to stretch my own funds further and accomplish more academically. Just last semester, I was awarded the Hillcrest Scholarship through the Honors College to study opera in Berlin this coming summer! I'm also a Writing Center tutor this semester. It's a job that I love and the extra income allows me to take extra voice lessons.

Thank you again for supporting the arts. It's made such a special difference in my life!

Sincerely,

**Monica Slater**, Class of 2020  
Stafford, Virginia

**Charles Lisanby Center Internship**

The internship was established in 2011 to receive charitable contributions in support of the Charles Lisanby Center in the Madison Art Collection at JMU.

**Dear Mrs. Lisanby,**

I would like to take the time to thank you for giving me the opportunity to explore, through my internship, different paths my passion for art history could take. The Lisanby Museum has already given me much insight on different aspects to museum work and researching works of art for exhibitions. I would not have been able to achieve this experience anywhere else as a freshman. You are propelling me forward in my art history career through the internship given to me, and I want to thank you with all of my heart for it. I cannot wait to see where the next three years of being a student at JMU takes me.

Thank you,

**Katie Long**, Class of 2022  
Moseley, Virginia





**10** Police officer **Rachel Jackman** of the Harrisonburg Police Department was awarded the Meritorious Action Ribbon.

**12** **Lauren Bunch** was named Teacher of the Year at Montevideo Middle School in Penn Laird, Virginia, for her work in health and physical education. ■ **Allison Chupp** opened North Mountain Clinic, a nurse/nurse practitioner-owned clinic in Broadway, Virginia.

**13** **Linda Hirw** was named Teacher of the Year for her work in social studies at Broadway High School in Broadway, Virginia. ■ **Elizabeth Rhodes**

**Katie Ellen Foster ('18) and her husband, Michael, enjoyed a day of snorkeling at Black Rock in Kaanapali Beach during their honeymoon on the Hawaiian Islands of Oahu and Maui.**

(**'14M**) was named Teacher of the Year at Plains Elementary School in Timberville, Virginia.

**15** **Angela Strite** was named Teacher of the Year at Lacey Spring Elementary School in Rockingham County, Virginia.

**17** **Ishmael Hyman** signed with the Cleveland Browns. ■ **Andrew Ankrah** signed with the Washington Redskins.

## Faculty Emeriti Association news

**John Edson McKee, 77**, professor emeritus of graduate psychology, passed away Feb. 28. He was hired at JMU as a counselor educator and co-led the creation of the university's counseling program. He retired in 2018.

**James Harbour Crable, 79**, professor emeritus of art and art history, passed away May 23. A prolific artist, he taught at JMU for 33 years before retiring in 2006.

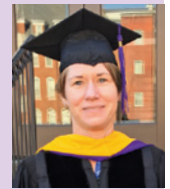
For more information about the faculty emeriti organization, contact **Sherry King**, director of parent and faculty emeriti relations, at [kingsf@jmu.edu](mailto:kingsf@jmu.edu) or by phone at **540-568-8064**.



**James Crable with his Census Series in 2005.**

## Alumni represent JMU at university presidential inaugurations in 2019

College of Health and Behavioral Studies alumna **Jenny McCaffery ('94)** represented President Jonathan R. Alger and JMU at the inauguration of Nora Roberts Miller as the 15th president of the Mississippi University for Women in Columbus on Feb. 1. "I enjoyed meeting fellow delegates from near and far," McCaffery said. "I am excited for MUW. I think that Nora Miller will be a talented and enthusiastic president. She seemed to have a realistic vision for the future as well as an appreciation for the intangibles that make a university truly special. I can see her dropping into the dining hall and sitting with a group of students on any given day—a trait that was common in JMU's former president, Ronald Carrier."



**Jenny McCaffery ('94)**




**Joseph ('77) and Jo Ann ('78) Converse**

**Dr. Joseph Converse ('77)**, an alumnus of the College of Science and Mathematics, and his wife, **Jo Ann Converse ('78)**, an alumna of the College of Education, represented JMU at the inauguration of Katherine A. Rowe as the 28th president of the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, on Feb. 8. Events included the re-investiture of the Chancellor, Robert M. Gates, and a celebration of the 326th anniversary of the college's royal charter.

**Linda Weiss Cross ('77)**, an alumna of the College of Business and chairperson of the JMU Foundation, and her husband, **Greg Cross ('75, '78M)**, a College of Business alumnus, represented JMU at the inauguration of David A. Armstrong as the 10th president of Saint Thomas University in Miami Gardens, Florida, on March 20. "Not only were we proud to represent JMU at the inauguration, but we met many delegates and faculty from many other universities who had heard of JMU's outstanding reputation, which made us extremely proud to be alums," the Crosses said.

College of Arts and Letters alumnus **David Vardeman ('91)**, of Washington, D.C., represented JMU at the inauguration of Irma Becerra as the seventh president of Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia, on March 28.

**Jim Dotter ('89)**, a College of Arts and Letters alumnus, represented JMU at the inauguration of Paula P. Pando as the fourth president of J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in Richmond, Virginia, on March 29. His wife, **Cathy Dotter ('89)**, a College of Business alumna, was also in attendance. "We had a wonderful time and I am so glad that we got to experience Dr. Pando's investiture," Cathy Dotter said. "She is a remarkable woman and J. Sargeant Reynolds CC is lucky to have her. We ran into [Richmond] Mayor **Levar Stoney ('04)** as well. Thank you for the opportunity to serve JMU."

**Dr. Richard Taliaferro ('75)**, a College of Science and Mathematics alumnus, represented JMU at the inauguration of Kimberly Blosser as the fifth president of Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown, Virginia, on April 26. "Thank you for inviting and assisting me with being a delegate at Dr. Blosser's inauguration," Taliaferro said. "It was such a great experience and I had a great time." 

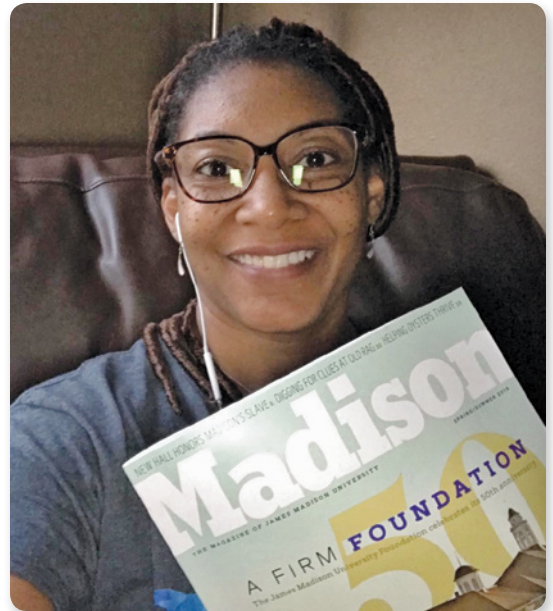


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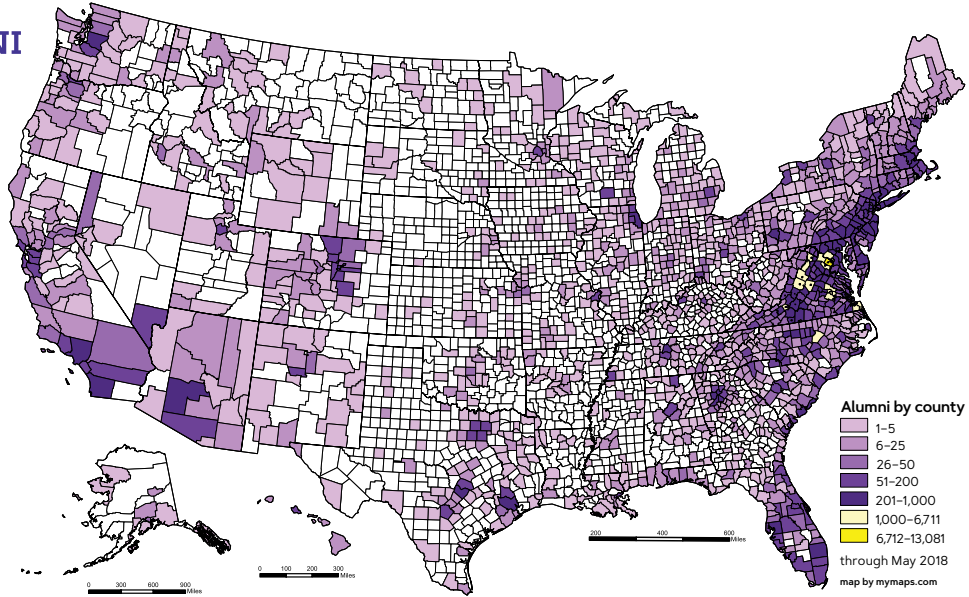


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# SEEKING THE TRUTH

**Sarah Delia ('09)** is an award-winning podcast host/reporter who chases stories wherever they lead. An Edward R. Murrow Award-winning journalist, Delia spent more than a year unwrapping the case of "Linda," a North Carolina woman who was sexually assaulted by a stranger in 2015. Covering the story for WFAE, Charlotte's National Public Radio station, Delia brings her audience along on the winding road to justice. Delia earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and art history from JMU and got her start in broadcasting as the programming director of JMU's student-run radio station, WXJM.

— KHALIL GARRIOTT ('04)



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