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**“...we will act with kindness  
and respect in all we do.”**

**– Todd Diacon, PhD**  
President, Kent State University

SPRING/SUMMER 2020

# KENT STATE

## MAGAZINE



**50 Years On**

From the roots of tragedy  
have grown tolerance and  
respect for opposing views.  
**SEE PAGES 12-27**



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COVER ART: JOHN-NOALL REID, BA '98

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Take Note

“In these uncertain times”—we’ve lost count of how often we’ve seen that phrase in recent weeks. The coronavirus crisis grew into a global pandemic as we were putting together this issue, and suddenly we were washing our hands repeatedly and working remotely.

As announcements of cancellations and postponements came in, we had to adapt, adding and cutting content when necessary. Although there wasn’t room for everything and everyone we had hoped to cover in the print version, please check out the online version of the magazine for more stories and links.


And to reflect on the meaning of May 4 for today, may we refer you to the final page of *This We Know: A Chronology of the Shootings at Kent State, May 1970*, by Carole A. Barbato, Laura L. Davis, and Mark F. Seeman (2012, The Kent State University Press), adapted below:

“The shootings at Kent State on May 4, 1970 spurred the largest student strike in US history; changed American’s consciousness about the Vietnam War; encouraged Congress to lower the voting age to 18 and begin to withdraw funding for the war; changed Ohio National Guard regulations so that nonlethal weapons were carried for campus disturbances; set a precedent in the US Supreme Court, allowing public officials acting in the capacity of their office to be brought to trial for their actions; remind us of the importance of protecting the rights of the First Amendment; show us the need to communicate effectively and respect differences; and demonstrate that young people can make a difference.”

Young people can make a difference.

We know that only too well at Kent State, and we continue to work every day to ensure that more young people have access to higher education and opportunities to explore the world and themselves. *Stay safe and be well.*

Squirrel Search

In each issue, we hide an image of a black squirrel on three pages (not counting the Table of Contents). If you find all three, you qualify for a drawing to win a squirrel-themed prize. Each squirrel will appear like this:  (shown actual size and will not be distorted or rotated).

When you find them, send us an email at [magazine@kent.edu](mailto:magazine@kent.edu), listing the three page numbers and places they appear, plus your name and mailing address. For rules and eligibility requirements see [www.kent.edu/magazine/rules](http://www.kent.edu/magazine/rules). Good luck!



And the **WINNER** is...

Congratulations to co-winners **Stacy (Fisher) MacGregor, BBA ’90**, Dublin, Ohio, and her son, Lachland, who is 9 years old and in the fourth grade. The two teamed up for the squirrel search and were “totally stoked” when their names were selected in the random drawing of correct submissions.

“We loved reading the book and all of the other black squirrel goodies,” says Stacy MacGregor, pictured at right with Lachland and squirrel-themed swag from McKay Bricker Framing & Black Squirrel Gifts in downtown Kent.

The book pictured, *And Now You Know Too! The story of how the black squirrel came to Kent*, is by **Kathy Frazier, BA ’70, MA ’75, EdS ’81**, and **Deborah Walker, MA ’78**.

The three black squirrels hidden in the fall/winter 2019-20 issue are found on page 7 (on the stand in the glass blowing photo), page 25 (in the dark curly hair near the headset band on Oden Oraelosi’s head) and page 34 (in the top right photo, between the curb and the 1969 Oldsmobile).

*Thanks to all who entered!*



via **EMAIL**

Reflecting on May 4, 1970

President Diacon’s comments on the 50th anniversary of May 4, 1970 are reflective and somber [fall/winter 2019-20, “A Dialogue with President Diacon,” page 12]. As a 1969 graduate of the Kent State School of Business [now the College of Business Administration], I remember well hearing for the first time of the May 4th shootings. As a young US Naval Ensign, I was aboard my ship undergoing training at the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, naval station, preparing to deploy overseas. The news came via newspapers and magazines; there were no computers, no cell phones, thus no social media.

There had been a few sit-ins, by nonstudents, and a few demonstrations by the Kent Committee to End the War in Vietnam, but nothing of great magnitude, as very few of the [almost] 22,000 students participated. Kent State had a fairly conservative student population by today’s standards, with many of the students coming from the suburbs of Ohio; they simply wanted a solid education to prepare themselves for their life ahead.

My heart was saddened; such a quiet and wonderful institution deserved better, much better.

**JOHN MENSCH, BBA ’69**  
President, 1st Security Insurance  
Bloomfield, Ind.

Dink Date Debate

Over the weekend, I was with a group of KSU alumni, and we used the KSU trivia quiz [fall/winter 2019-20, “So You Think You Know Kent State?” page 15] as a group game. Question 6, about the dinks, is why I’m writing. The answer says the last incoming freshman class to receive dinks was in 1968. I was in the 1969 cohort, and we most definitely received dinks. In fact, I still have mine!

I was not able to attend a summer orientation session, so my orientation took place in the days just before students moved in for fall term. We must have been told the “rules,” i.e., if an upperclassman caught you without your dink on, that upperclassman could make you do something, most likely humiliating, like scrub the metal seal [of the university] in the pavers at the front campus gate, on your knees, with a toothbrush.

The dink “threat” caused me to take several hours to walk all over campus, map in hand, to learn my way around. I remember the sandals I was wearing, and I remember the blisters I had! My thinking was that if I knew my way around, I would be less likely to be identified as a freshman. Which means, of course, that I refused to actually wear the dink! (I’ve always been a bit of a rebel.)

**Jude Rule, BA ’73, MEd ’01, EdS ’03**  
Kent, Ohio

I enjoy reading *Kent State Magazine* and, as a graphic design major, I think it has great design and content. But, your current fall/winter issue included

a quiz answer that said the last year the freshman dink beanie was issued was 1968. I was “lucky” to still get mine in 1969 and still have it! [See photo below.] Go Flashes!

**MIKE COTHREN, BFA ’73**  
Westerville, Ohio



We believe the correct answer is not 1968. My freshman roommate and I were housed in Manchester Hall, which was a men’s freshman dorm in 1970. On a Friday in September, freshmen were encouraged to attend a rally between Clark and Allyn. At that rally, we were all presented with our freshman dinks and told of the traditions. That is not to say we honored the tradition of wearing them around campus, but my freshman roommate from 1970 still has his and mine is still in my memory. So, we are either two years older than we think or your records are in error.

**CHRIS EWALD, BArch ’75**  
Phoenix, Ariz.

**Editor’s Note:** According to the quiz, the “correct” answer to question 6 (“What year marked the first time a freshman class was *not* issued dinks?”) was D) 1969, and the answer stated, “The dinks tradition ended in 1968.” At least, that’s what we thought! That year appears in the caption of a photo on Kent State’s Digital Archives, titled “Freshmen in Dinks” (<https://omeka.library.kent.edu/special-collections/items/show/489>), which includes this description: “According to *A Book of Memories*, ‘Small blue-and-gold skullcaps called “dinks” were part of Kent State’s tradition of freshman hazing until 1968.’”

We reached out to Special Collections and Archives staff, who did more digging. Page 20 of *A History of Kent State University: Nearing a Century of Kent Pride* by William H. Hildebrand, Professor Emeritus of English, states, “Another tradition ended, in 1967, when freshman wore dinks for the last time.”

An article, “Many Old Kent State Traditions Now Defunct,” in *The Daily Kent Stater*, May 9, 1969, states, “Included with Freshman Week is the wearing of the Freshman Dink. Wearers of these ‘caps’ must dink for all upperclassmen. But this idea seems to be falling by the wayside. It was originally intended to last until the Golden Flashes won their first game, but Freshmen only wear the dinks for one week now.”

“It does seem that many traditions slowly peter out and thus the end is up for debate,” says Katie Clements, adjunct public services librarian at Special Collections and Archives.

Thanks to alumni firsthand accounts, though, a clarification has been added to the digital archives photo description, as follows: “However, alumni report of the tradition continuing in 1969 and in 1970 (without enforcement of dink ‘protocols’).”

Don’t Forget Trumbull!

I was enjoying the “Check It Off” list in the recent issue of *Kent State Magazine* [fall/winter 2019-20, page 28], but I was sad to see that the Trumbull Campus was not included in the Regional Campus section. I used to attend Trumbull when I first started my undergraduate degree here at Kent State, and I was looking forward to seeing what fun items you had listed for my old campus. I couldn’t help but notice the question at the end stating, “What did

we forget?” and I figured I’d let you know that you forgot the Trumbull Campus!

**B. NICOLE PERRY, AAS ’13, BS ’14, MEd ’18**  
Kent, Ohio

**Editor’s Note:** So sorry about that! Last year we had students reach out to all the Kent State campuses, but we never received an answer from Kent State Trumbull. Since the story didn’t run until many months later, in the rush of deadlines I forgot that we hadn’t heard back from Trumbull, and no one noticed the omission on the proofs.

When I asked B. Nicole Perry to share what fun items she would list, she responded: “It’s been a little while since I’ve been to the Trumbull Campus, so I apologize if any of these things are outdated: Read a copy of Trumbull’s art and poetry magazine, *ICON*. Play a game of pool in the Student Union lounge. Visit the Link Art Gallery. Attend a free theatre workshop at the Trumbull Theatre.”

We added her items to the online bucket list, ([www.kent.edu/magazine/news/check-it](http://www.kent.edu/magazine/news/check-it)), and if other Kent State Trumbull students or alumni would like to submit suggestions, we’d be happy to add them to the list.

Long-time Reader

Terrific issue!!! As a long-time alumnus, and with a similarly long history of leafing through each and every issue of *Kent State Magazine*, I just wish to say that I think the fall/winter issue featuring President Diacon to be especially well balanced and engaging. Way to go.

**JIM WALKER, BS ’73, MEd ’79**  
Massillon, Ohio

Making Travel Plans

Thank you for your repeatedly excellent magazine. I look forward to every issue and enjoy reading about the diverse activities and areas of research. I am a 1970 graduate and would like to travel to Kent State’s 2020 homecoming. Since it will probably draw a large number of graduates, I’d like to make my hotel reservation soon. However, I am having a problem finding the date for homecoming. Would you be able to tell me which weekend it will be? Thanks for your help!

**DEBORAH FOX LEVERETT, BS ’70**  
Montclair, NJ

**Editor’s Note:** Turns out, settling on a date for Homecoming is a little complicated. First, the final home schedule has to be confirmed with the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the Mid-American Conference.

Once dates are solidified, multiple parties at the university—including institutional advancement, athletics, student affairs and government and community relations—meet together to determine a date for Homecoming that works best for the university, in coordination with the city of Kent.

As of press time, because of the pandemic, the date of Homecoming is now on hold.

via **INSTAGRAM**

Categorical Acclaim

I found myself recognized in the *Kent State Magazine*, which is pretty cool [fall/winter 2019-20, “Class Notes,” page 40]. Those who know me well know that my years going to school at Kent State University and living in the city of Kent were the best times of my life.

There aren’t many places or things that I’m attached to, but walking on that campus is something that I’ll always cherish. The friendships I made, the things I learned—more so life lessons than classroom education—are everlasting.

Sometimes I wish I lived back there, but I wanted to expand my horizons and grow, and I guess cat rescue is the latest extension of my growth. As an @ksualumni, I will give back whenever I can.

**PAUL SANTELL, BBA ’97**  
Astoria, NY  
[@paulthecatguy](https://www.instagram.com/paulthecatguy)

We want to hear from you!

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# PERSPECTIVE ON A PANDEMIC

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**Kent State epidemiologist and science communicator Tara C. Smith gives us her take on what to expect—and what we can do to help—as the coronavirus crisis continues.\***

Tara C. Smith, PhD—a professor of epidemiology and head of the Smith Emerging Infections Laboratory at Kent State’s College of Public Health—has devoted her career to studying how infections are transferred between animals and humans. She was the first to identify US livestock associated strains of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* and has pioneered the investigation of this organism in the United States.

For years, Smith has studied plagues and pandemics throughout history. We asked her to share her perspective on the latest global pandemic, COVID-19, with the Kent State community.

It seems like years have passed since the world first heard of an “atypical pneumonia” circulating in the Hubei province of China in December 2019. When we’ve seen similar reports in the past, the illnesses have had a variety of causes, but all were eventually containable.

In the late 1990s, it was “bird flu”: an influenza virus that spread from birds to humans, strain H5N1. After 18 individuals were infected and 6 of them died, Hong Kong culled millions of chickens in an effort to contain the virus, but it popped up again in 2003 and has spread slowly around

the globe since then, sickening 861 and killing 455 of them—a 53 percent case fatality rate.

In 2002, it was the novel virus that eventually came to be known as SARS coronavirus, for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. It was circulating in China’s Guangdong province for months before it came to worldwide attention in February 2003, and eventually sickened over 8,000 people in 26 countries before being brought under control by strict quarantine and isolation procedures.

Since 2003, we have seen multiple types of novel avian influenza “spill over” from birds into humans in China, circulating alongside H5N1. We’ve seen the emergence of H7N9, H10N8 and H5N6: a numerical and alphabet soup of viruses. Virologists and epidemiologists know them well, but the general public was understandably oblivious to their identification.

So when reports of the latest odd pneumonia cases surfaced in December, one of two candidates seemed likely: a novel influenza virus or a coronavirus. The initial reports suggested it wasn’t easily spread between people: a new avian influenza seemed more likely.

But just a few days later, person-to-person spread was confirmed, and cases seemed to be increasing rapidly. By January 8, a new coronavirus was announced, and we knew its entire genetic sequence by January 10.

What we didn’t know is that we likely already had the first trickle of cases in the United States by that time, or that the memory of another pandemic would soon be evoked: the influenza pandemic of 1918.

In 1918, the St. Louis Red Cross Motor Corps personnel wear masks as they hold stretchers next to ambulances in preparation for victims of the influenza epidemic.

The story of the 1918 influenza pandemic is that it was quickly forgotten in the collective memory of the general public. The most famous book about the outbreak is called *America’s Forgotten Pandemic*, written by historian Alfred Crosby. Though it is estimated that a third of the US population was infected and 675,000 died from fall 1918 through spring 1919, the collective amnesia around the epidemic seems almost deliberate: a decision no one personally made, but everyone followed to cleanse their memory of a disease that claimed friends and family members, and shut down cities for weeks or months at a time.

Around the world, the effects of the epidemic led to the development of systems to understand, track and improve the health of the population. A forerunner to the World Health Organization was formed in 1919. Many countries, including the United States, created or updated their health ministries.

A number of countries adopted socialized medicine, realizing it was both unfair and scientifically incorrect to blame individuals for their illnesses, and that it was in the interest of the entire country to keep their citizens healthy.

We have the specter of 1918 over us now, as we use the lessons learned that year to drive our interventions today. Though influenza and SARS-CoV-2 are very different viruses, we can use the same key methods to prevent the spread of both: hand hygiene and social distancing.

You’ve probably heard others implore you to “flatten the curve” and slow the spread of the virus. These are based on many sources of data, but one that has been shared over and over is the graph of deaths from 1918 influenza in Philadelphia, where they continued to have parades and social gatherings even as the virus spread through the city, versus St. Louis, where they shut down public events much like we are today and had a significantly lower rate of death.

We don’t know right now how long we’ll have to have these measures in place. Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), has suggested at least 8 weeks of extensive social distancing will be necessary. A recent report from the UK suggested that 8 weeks might not even be long enough; that the virus may surge when social distancing is relaxed.

And there are uncertainties beyond the spread of the virus. We don’t have great answers about what will happen with unemployment and rent payments over the long term, or how the mental health of all of us will be affected after months of physical separation from the rest of society. We don’t know if we’ll quickly find drugs to help treat the infection, or if we’ll be able to develop a vaccine soon enough to make a difference.

There are more unknowns than knowns, which is an understandable cause of anxiety for all of us—scientists included, though we’re doing what we can.

But the upside is that we all can play a role in determining our collective future. We can adapt to our new, temporary

“Everybody knows that pestilences have a way of recurring in the world; yet somehow we find it hard to believe in ones that crash down on our heads from a blue sky.”

— Albert Camus, *The Plague*

normal by keeping in contact over social media and video apps; checking in on our elderly neighbors who may be too scared to go out to grab groceries; by donating to food banks and other charities if you’re able; and by reaching out to others when you’re struggling and letting us know how we can provide aid.

We have been a divided country, but a pandemic transcends politics. We are all in this together, learning and sacrificing day by day. We don’t know how this will change our country over the long term when we come out on the other side.

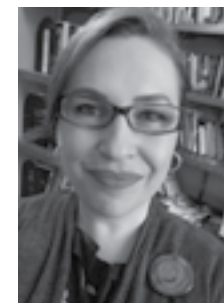
This pandemic has already exposed the limitations of our safety net, as questions linger about payment for testing and treatment, providing meals when students are out of school, and how to keep the bills paid when a large chunk of our workforce is no longer working.

Will we be able to collaborate to forge solutions now, and make them more permanent when the immediate viral threat is behind us?

I hope we do. There’s never been a more important time to live the motto, “Flashes take care of Flashes,” and to extend that ideal beyond the campus and into our extended communities.

Camus knew this, as well, as he composed *The Plague*. “I have no idea what’s awaiting me, or what will happen when this all ends. For the moment I know this: there are sick people and they need curing.” ⚡

\*As you might expect, this essay was written weeks before it landed in your mailbox. Everything was in a state of flux—and likely still is—however, this information reflects the situation when the magazine was sent to press on April 17, 2020.



Tara C. Smith, PhD, who came to Kent State in 2013, has published over 80 peer-reviewed papers and book chapters on topics in infectious disease epidemiology and has received more than \$3 million in funding from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the US Department of Agriculture and the National

Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to carry out these studies.

Active in science communication and outreach, she has maintained a science blog, [www.aetiologyblog.com](http://www.aetiologyblog.com), since 2005, and has written books on *Streptococcus* and *Ebola*, including *Ebola’s Message* (MIT Press, 2016). She also writes about infectious disease for several national sites, pens a column for *SELF.com*, serves as a member of the advisory board of the *Zombie Research Society* and is chair of the communications committee for the *American Society for Microbiology*.



## Making College Count

John McDermott, BBA '20, an accounting major and scholarship recipient from Cleveland's west side, is the first in his family to continue his education beyond middle school.

Though his family did not emphasize schooling, he realized the value of an education because of positive childhood role models and high school teachers. With their help, close friends and his own self-direction, he completed high school while working two jobs, running on the cross country team and participating in Key Club, Rotary and more.

Just before he graduated from high school, mentors through College Now, an organization that helps students in Greater Cleveland succeed in postsecondary education, assisted him as he applied to and began college.

"Students from backgrounds like mine are not supposed to make it to college," McDermott says. "Some say we are forever bound to the environment we grew up in."

With no financial support from his family, he decided to attend Kent State and received 16 different scholarships from community organizations and the university. He was driven not only

to earn his degree but to maximize his collegiate career by taking advantage of the opportunities available to him.

McDermott completed eight internships while staying involved on campus, serving as president of Delta Sigma Pi, a professional business fraternity that operates the Deltasig concession stand in the business building. He also studied abroad in Prague and volunteered in the community at Habitat for Humanity, the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank and other local nonprofit organizations.

**"You have to be willing to apply yourself, ask for help and accept assistance."**

"A college degree is certainly within reach for students who have the drive to make something great out of their lives," he says. "You have to be willing to apply yourself, ask for help and accept assistance. It

takes a tremendous amount of hard work, determination and grit to rewrite your educational trajectory."

His academic studies and extracurricular activities have earned him awards, including Kent State's Alumni Association Senior Leadership Award for Spring 2020 for "breadth and depth of leadership beyond the classroom" and the Arden L. Allyn Cup for the academic year 2019-20, presented to "an outstanding senior in the College of Business Administration who has demonstrated superior leadership and scholastic performance."

McDermott, who fulfilled his childhood dream of completing a college degree in May, is working at a summer accounting internship at a "Big Four" accounting firm in Cleveland before entering graduate school in the fall.

"If I hadn't received scholarships, I would have had to take out more loans and bear the mental stress of having a substantial amount of debt hanging over my head," he says. "Scholarships provided essential funding when I had nowhere else to turn and allowed me to devote more time to school and extracurriculars. Scholarships truly change the lives of students like me." —Julie Miller, BS '87



COURTESY OF FASHION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Kent State University School of Fashion student Tyshaia Earnest wins the top award at the 2020 Fashion Scholarship Gala in New York City.

she pulled products from her pocket to support her case. Her unique approach and impassioned pitch made her a clear standout in the competition.

But this scholarship has a value far beyond the dollar amount for Earnest. She hopes her success will encourage others in her community to pursue their dreams, as well.

"Winning this award is confirmation that my purpose and passion for this industry is legitimate and valued," she says. "Overall, I'm so grateful for this award, and it has completely changed the trajectory of my career. Every goal I have set for postgraduate life has been intentional, with hopes that they will mold me into the person I dreamed of being when I was young."

**"Every goal I have set for postgraduate life has been intentional."**

Earnest has crafted her skill set and leveraged opportunities to enhance her education throughout her Kent State experience. In fall 2019, she and Kyla Carter, a fellow fashion merchandising major, won first place in the 2nd annual FlashLab Innovation Pitch Contest for their proposal to train non-JMC majors about how to get involved with student media. She also worked as a marketing and promotions assistant at Kent State Student Media.

In addition to the FSF program, she engaged in a study abroad experience in Florence and a study away opportunity in New York City. She graduated this spring and recently accepted an offer to work for Nordstrom Corporate in Seattle, Washington. —Bethany Sava, BS '12

## Turning Dreams into Reality

Just before her final semester at Kent State, Tyshaia Earnest, BS '20 stood on a stage in New York City alongside seven other finalists at the Fashion Scholarship Fund Gala. That evening, she emerged as the top scholar out of nearly 650 applicants, taking home the \$35,000 first-place scholarship prize.

The Fashion Scholarship Foundation (FSF) awards more than \$1.2 million each year to foster the success of students in design, merchandising, analytics, marketing and supply chain management. The organization also provides access to networking, mentorships, internships and career opportunities among influential industry leaders.

Earnest pursued a fashion merchandising degree with dual minors in marketing and visual journalism. Though she achieved remarkable success, her college experience came with challenges. As a first-generation student, she says "it's hard to be what you can't see." Without a family member to provide guidance, she found it difficult to navigate college and tap into available resources.

However, in the spring of her freshman year she was looking for a challenge, and she found a valuable mentor in Catherine Leslie, PhD, assistant professor in Kent State's School of Fashion. "She guided me to seek involvement with this amazing organization (FSF) and created other opportunities for me."

Peter Arnold, executive director for the FSF, refers to Earnest as a "Kent State rock star" when describing her dynamic and compelling presentation, which left a strong impression on the judges. Earnest arrived for the presentation of her case study—a collaboration between Nordstrom and Period.org—in a blazer and branded T-shirt. As she spoke,



From left to right: John McDermott, BBA '20, stands on the Charles Bridge in Prague, Czech Republic, while studying abroad through the Kent State Prague program in spring semester 2019; attends the KSU Homecoming football game in 2016 with some friends he made freshman year; and hangs out at the Deltasig concession stand in Kent State's business administration building.



COURTESY OF FASHION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Representing Kent State University at the 2020 Fashion Scholarship Fund Gala are (from left to right) Tyshaia Earnest, Amelia Johnson, Catherine Leslie, PhD, professor at the School of Fashion Design and Merchandising, and Jahnaye Chapman. Johnson and Chapman were each awarded \$5,000 scholarships for their merchandising and marketing presentations.



Accessible for All

Kent State University wants to create a welcoming environment for all—even at its athletic events. Cheering crowds, flashing scoreboards and loud buzzers can overwhelm people with sensory issues, so select men’s basketball games at the MAC Center this season recognized and catered to those on the autism spectrum, with support from local autism organizations.

Men’s basketball highlights include:

**1 NOV. 6, 2019**

**Celebrating Kalin Bennett**

Freshman center Bennett, believed to be the first freshman diagnosed with autism to sign a national letter of intent to play Division 1 men’s basketball, scores his first basket in a game against Hiram College (which Kent State wins 97–58).

**2 DEC. 21, 2019**

**First Sensory-Friendly Basketball Game**

Kent State partners with KultureCity®—which provides accessibility and inclusion for those with all abilities—to host a sensory-friendly game that brings in fans like April Stevens’ son (pictured), who has autism and loves basketball.

Kent State staffers receive training to help those who may feel anxious, and the MAC Center is now a certified sensory-inclusive venue.

The game against Hampton University (which Kent State wins 103–64) provides a sensory-friendly viewing area, pet therapy dogs and “sensory bags” to borrow that contain noise-canceling headphones, fidget activity toys and communication cards for nonverbal individuals.

**3 FEB. 15, 2020**

**Autism Awareness Basketball Game**

In a game between Kent State and Ohio University, Flashes wear the winning uniform design from a contest held by Kent State Athletics and the School of Fashion, which partnered with Under Armor®, Kent State’s Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Student Accessibility Services.

The back of the jerseys include the Autism Society’s autism awareness ribbon and the phrase “1 in 59”—referring to a 2014 Centers for Disease Control study, which estimates that one in 59 US children is diagnosed on the autism spectrum.

Ohio University’s team wears light blue shoelaces, a designated color for autism awareness. During the game (which Kent State wins 87–72), the university promotes autism awareness messages and distributes stress toys and autism awareness T-shirts.



KENT STATE ATHLETICS

KABIR BHATTIA, WKSU-FM

KENT STATE ATHLETICS

PHOTOS BY RAMI DAUD

Bowled Over!

Fourth time is the charm for the Kent State Golden Flashes football team, which made history with a 51-41 win over Utah State in the Tropical Smoothie Café Frisco Bowl on December 20, 2019 in Frisco, Texas.

The Golden Flashes’ first three bowl appearances—the 1954 Refrigerator Bowl, the 1972 Tangerine Bowl and the 2013 GoDaddy.com Bowl—ended in defeat. This time, however, Kent State emerged with its first bowl win in the program’s history, capping a 7-6 season for the Golden Flashes.

Highlights from the game include:

**1 Eligibility**

Kent State is the only Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) to win their last three games of the regular season to become bowl eligible. Previous wins over Buffalo, Ball State and Eastern Michigan improved the team to 6-6 entering the Frisco Bowl competition.

**2 Second Season Success**

In his second year as head coach, Sean Lewis leads the Golden Flashes from 2-10 in 2018 to 6-6 in 2019. “The resiliency of these guys and this team is a testament to the hard work they’ve put in,” says Coach Lewis.

**3 Exceptional Players**

Down 27-26 in the fourth quarter, Golden Flashes quarterback Dustin Crum (#14) leads four consecutive scoring drives to seal the win. Crum throws for two touchdowns and runs for a third on his way to being named game MVP.

Defensive back Qwuantrezz Knight is named defensive MVP after notching nine tackles (three solo) and 1.5 sacks. Kicker Matthew Trickett adds a team record of five field goals.

Interviewed about the final touchdown, Crum says, “I couldn’t be happier right now, changing the culture with this group of guys.”

**4 Newsworthy Victory**

The results of the game land the Golden Flashes coverage on local news channels, along with *USA Today* and *Sports Illustrated*. —Morgan Anglin, BS ’20





Pictured left to right: Joshua Talbott, ATC '04, BS '07, MTec '12, team leader from Kent State University's Division of Information Technology, and Antonio D'Angona, BS '15, assoc. systems administrator at the College of Arts and Sciences, inspect the 3D-printed replica of the Liberty of Poetry statue that Kent State created for the Sisters in Liberty: From Florence, Italy, to New York, New York exhibition.

RAMI DAUD

## Sisters in Liberty

It took a large, multidisciplinary team from Kent State University to help unite two “sisters,” located on separate continents and more than 4,300 miles apart.

The story begins in June 2018, when James Blank, PhD, dean of Kent State's College of Arts and Sciences, J.R. Campbell, executive director of the Design Innovation Initiative, and Fabrizio Ricciardelli, PhD, director of the Kent State Florence Program, met in the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence, Italy, with the curatorial leadership of the Opera di Santa Croce—a nonprofit organization responsible for managing, preserving and increasing the value of the church and complex of Santa Croce.

The basilica is the burial site of some of Italy's most prominent figures, including Michelangelo, Galileo and Machiavelli. Among its many works of art is sculptor Pio Fedi's The Liberty of Poetry, which was created for the tomb of Giovanni Battista Niccolini, a poet and playwright of the Italian unification movement or Risorgimento.

Some believe the statue, inaugurated in 1877, may have been the inspiration for the design of Frédéric Bartholdi's The Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World, which was dedicated in New York Harbor in 1886 and has welcomed immigrants and visitors to America ever since.

Through this meeting in Florence, an idea was born for a collaborative exhibition featuring the two “sister” statues, each an embodiment of liberty, to explore the cultural ties between Italy and the United States and reflect on the quest for liberty and personal freedoms. *Sisters in Liberty: From Florence, Italy, to New York, New York* opened Oct. 17, 2019 at the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration, the first time the Opera di Santa Croce created an exhibition outside of Italy.

To bring the Florence statue “to” New York, Kent State's Design Innovation Initiative sent two experts in 3D imaging—Robert Clements, PhD, associate professor of biological sciences, and Joshua Talbott, ATC '04, BS'07, MTec '12, team leader in information technology—to Florence to 3D scan the statue using technology from Exact Metrology. They returned to Kent

State to process 30 to 40 gigabytes of data and create a blueprint for a 3D printer.

Freshmade 3D, in Youngstown, Ohio, 3D printed an 80-percent scale, nine-foot tall replica in three sections so it could be transported easily to New York. The rays on the top of the head were cast in a sand mold 3D printed by Humtown Products in Leetonia, Ohio.

Tamara Honesty, assistant professor of scenic design, and students from Kent State's School of Theatre and Dance, painted the statue to make it look like the original.

The New York exhibition also includes a dual-language “Listening to Liberty” Listening Wall, an interactive digital tool developed by a team led by David Hassler, director of the Wick Poetry Center, and designed by Each + Every, a multidisciplinary design studio in Kent, Ohio.

It allows visitors to listen to oral histories and view historical documents and multimedia stories centered on the themes of the exhibition—and to create and share their own poetic reflections.

The replica will remain in New York through the exhibitions' close on September 10, 2020, and will find a permanent home at Kent State's Design Innovation Hub.

—Stephanie Langguth, BS '03, MPA '19

For the exhibition, Kent State's Design Innovation Initiative leveraged skills and expertise from the College of Arts and Sciences, Wick Poetry Center, College of the Arts, College of Aeronautics and Engineering and College of Architecture and Environmental Design. Kent State project supporters included The Burbick Foundation, the Wick family and The Woodward Foundation.



## Fake Versus Factual News

“Fake news” is now part of our popular lexicon—but how can we tell the difference between fake and factual?

News can appear credible as likes, comments, shares and views increase. But, with the rise of bots programmed by software experts and click farms with low-wage workers hired to increase likes and followers, it's easy to purchase the appearance of engagement and fake credibility.

To help the public navigate a media landscape littered with fake news, staff from Kent State University's public radio station, WKSU, developed *Media Literacy Workshop: Navigating the News*.

The discussion-based workshop provides five questions to ask when consuming content:

- 1. Who created this message?** Someone with a motive made this message. What is the motive? Is the message trying to get me to buy something? Have an opinion? Take action?
- 2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?** How do the words, design, music—all the components—in the message make me feel?
- 3. How might people different from me understand this message?** How would this message make people feel who hold viewpoints and beliefs opposite of mine?
- 4. What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message?** All media carry subtle messages about who or what is important. Are there ideas or perspectives left out from this message?
- 5. Why is this message being sent?** Who's in charge of this message and who profits from it? What is being sold or told in this message?

With these five questions, individuals can start to think critically about the content they consume on a daily basis.

The workshop is part of WKSU's 70th anniversary community outreach. It was presented on March 5 at the Wayne County Public Library's main library in Wooster, Ohio, just before public events were canceled due to COVID-19. —Lindsay Kuntzman Hilewick, BA '06, MA '09

WKSU turns 70 on Oct. 2, 2020; for updates on events planned for the celebration see [WKSU.org](http://WKSU.org).

## flash **FORWARD**



## Pay It Flash Forward Student Emergency Fund

With COVID-19 disrupting everyone's lives, some of Kent State's students and families are dealing with unexpected costs including travel, food and housing, technology needs and, in some cases, lost wages.

Kent State's most vulnerable students are finding themselves in critical financial need during this unprecedented situation. The Pay it Flash Forward Student Emergency Fund was recently created to help students overcome difficult setbacks so they can stay on track to obtaining their degrees.

“Please help us show how Flashes Take Care of Flashes,” says President Todd Diacon. “That is not just something we say; it is the only way we will all be able to make it through this—together.”

“When you give back, you give forward.”

Help your fellow Flashes at [www.kent.edu/flashesgiveback](http://www.kent.edu/flashesgiveback).



## Giving Tuesday By the Numbers

**\$1,740,846**  
raised

More than **4,000**  
gifts made

**45+** funds

NEARLY **\$500,000** IN  
PLANNED GIFTS BOOKED

**820**  
NEW  
DONORS  
IN  
NOV.

**1**  
AMAZING  
UNIVERSITY

**33**  
DAYS



The replica Liberty of Poetry statue on display at the Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration.





### The Lessons of KENT STATE

# 50 YEARS LATER

Great waves of change had rolled across college campuses by the fall of 1969. Enrollment at Kent State that year exceeded 21,000 students, up from just 9,600 in 1960 and 5,800 in 1950. Two university presidents, Bowman and White, oversaw the entirety of this growth and change, serving 27 years in total, back when lengthy presidential terms were the norm.

And northeast Ohio was booming. Cleveland was booming. Ohio was booming—as the region, city and state filled the nation's appetite for steel, automobiles, consumer goods and food. Students, the children of the area's immigrants and African-American migrants, flooded into Kent State, many of them the first in their families to attend college.

The population of Kent, Ohio, was also growing, its economy driven more by local industry than by the university. One could still shop downtown at hardware stores, grocery stores and men's and women's clothing stores. Nixon's silent majority walked Kent's tree-lined streets, and politics leaned conservative. In the 1968 election, 65 percent of voters in Portage County voted either for Nixon (41 percent) or Wallace (14 percent).

Into this mix of young and old, liberal and conservative, working class and college educated, the currents of greater America entered Kent and Kent State. In 1968, Kent State women stepped outside of their dorms at midnight to protest antiquated curfew regulations that applied to coeds (a term from the day) of all ages, but not to men. It didn't seem fair, one senior told the *Daily Kent Stater*, that freshmen boys didn't have a dorm curfew, but she did.

Meanwhile, musical tastes were changing as well, and a young musician, Joe Walsh, who attended Kent State from 1965 to 1967, played on campus and in the town's bars, first with his group The Measles, and then with the James Gang.

The generation gap widened. Political currents swelled. Impassioned students, inspired first by the Civil Rights Movement, challenged assumptions and protested the war in Vietnam. Things heated up. Student groups occupied part of a building to protest the Oakland police

department recruiting on campus due to their suppression of minorities.

It got rough as students were threatened with arrest at this and subsequent events.

Meanwhile, townspeople and many students defended the status quo, and the *Daily Kent Stater* reported ball bearings being thrown at campus protestors by counter protestors and pushing and shoving at antiwar events on campus. As throngs of Kent State students marched through downtown to protest the Vietnam war in the fall of 1969, Kent residents stood on the sidewalks holding signs supporting the war effort. One grandmotherly woman's sign read, "What a Glorious Day for Our Communist Enemies!"

By spring 1970, the war caused polarization to reign. Yippie leader Jerry Rubin had recently spoken on campus, as had SDS organizer Bernardine Dohrn a year earlier. Dohrn urged revolution during her speech on campus. So, too, had Mark Rudd when he spoke at Kent State, fresh from leading the occupation of Columbia University. Only violence could stop a violent war machine was their message. Police were called "pigs."

Townspeople were leery of students, and their discourse was equally polarized. The students were lazy, they walked barefooted, they didn't bathe or cut their hair. They were hippie freaks. People were angry and increasingly afraid. You were on one side or the other. Oppositional battle lines were being drawn, to paraphrase one popular song from the era.

And then, on May 4, 1970, what many feared happened. Four dead in Ohio. How did it occur? Why Kent State? How could we reach a point where students could be shot by the National Guard on their campus? How to understand this explosion of violence and death? How to understand why the guardsmen shot protestors at a peaceful rally, where just a few rocks were thrown, nothing more?

Few thought they were in danger that day, so much so that many Kent State students were walking to and from

their classes during the rally. Such was the case of Sandy Scheuer, struck and killed by a guard bullet while on her way to class, books in her arms.

How to make sense of the many who, after the shootings, wrote to their local newspapers expressing their anger at the students, wishing the guardsmen had killed more of them? Indeed, how to make sense of the hateful letters written to the parents of the slain students by citizens blaming their children for their own deaths?

Many people, much more experienced and knowledgeable than I am, have tried to answer these questions. My reading of events, both as the current president of Kent State University and as a historian, points to the dangers of polarization and poisoned discourse as important lessons to be drawn from our tragedy.

The demonizing language of the day, *you weren't just wrong, there was something wrong with you if you disagreed with me*, can be seen in the rhetoric on all sides. When people made outlandish claims about threats to public safety, there were audiences ready to believe that snipers were on the prowl and that Kent and its good citizens were under attack.

“**Sadly, polarization and poisoned discourse have returned to America, making Kent State and May 4, 1970 more relevant than ever.**”

Sadly, polarization and poisoned discourse have returned to America, making Kent State and May 4, 1970 more relevant than ever. People once again believe outlandish claims and conspiracy theories—this time fueled further by the power and speed of social media. People today threaten their opponents with lightning-fast speed and global impact.

To this day it isn't clear why the Ohio National Guard opened fire. What is clear is that the students did not expect an attack, and in the first seconds of the shooting many students assumed the guard was shooting blanks. What also is becoming clear is that violence often explodes in a clash of supposed enemies. At Kent State we know

what happens when reasoned discussions and respectful dialogue break down. People die. That's what happens.

So what to do? At Kent State we try to live by our core values, a primary one being that we will act with kindness and respect in all we do. We celebrate free speech, for our students were gunned down exercising that right. We encourage our students to expand their skills of empathy and compassion. We ask each other to listen, really listen, to others whose views are different from their own. We allow students to paint our famous rock on the front campus with political slogans from the left and right. We aim for tolerance. It is tough to do in the current environment.

Only a few weeks ago, Kent State students and professors were walking by Taylor Hall. Cars were parked in the Prentice Hall parking lot, but not on the sites where the four students were killed. Members of the campus community mingled and talked. They noticed—we all notice, we *always* notice—the memorials marking where four of our students were shot and killed on May 4, 1970.

Events, projects and programs to culminate our yearlong commemoration of the 50th anniversary of May 4, 1970 were proceeding. We looked forward to welcoming you to the Kent Campus again—to join us in a silent, candlelight march and vigil to honor the dead and wounded, to hear about the four slain students and recall the war that many had come to oppose, and to remember the lessons of the shootings on our campus.

And then came the coronavirus crisis—causing us to close our campuses, cancel commemoration weekend events and postpone commencement ceremonies. We began a new chapter in the history of remote instruction at Kent State that harkens back to the roots of Kent State Normal College as a correspondence and summer school in the first years of our existence, and to the heroic efforts of faculty and staff to conclude the academic term after the shootings closed campus in 1970.

We will get through this crisis, as we have done in the past. And as our 50th commemoration year comes to an unforeseen close, I trust we will turn the lessons of the Kent State shootings into a legacy of reflection and remembrance.

Todd Diacon, President

Email: [president@kent.edu](mailto:president@kent.edu), Instagram: @ksupresdiacon

*In keeping with the commitment to honor and remember the events of May 4, 1970, Kent State University will have an online "virtual" program to mark the 50th Commemoration with a variety of online videos, exhibits and learning resources, starting on May 1, 2020 at [www.kent.edu/may4kentstate50](http://www.kent.edu/may4kentstate50). A special video tribute will be posted at noon on Monday, May 4, 2020.*



# Memorials of MAY 4

## CANDLELIGHT WALK AND VIGIL

Each year since 1971, students, faculty and others gather at 11 pm on May 3 to take part in a candlelight procession around the perimeter of the Kent Campus. Following the walk, a vigil begins with people positioned on the spots where the four students were killed. The vigil continues until 12:23 pm on May 4, the time of the confrontation between the students and the Ohio National Guard. **(1)**

The candlelight walk and vigil were established by Jerry Lewis, PhD, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, with the help of students. In 1975, the Kent State University administration stopped sponsoring and supporting the annual commemoration program.

In October 1975, the May 4th Task Force (M4TF) was founded by Kent State students and victims of the May 4 shootings to raise awareness, continue the search for truth and ensure the lessons to be learned from the tragedy would be part of a continuous and living history. In the years since, the M4TF student organization planned events for commemorations and conducted the annual candlelight walk and vigil.

On March 6, 2019, Kent State's Board of Trustees passed a resolution that committed the university to assume responsibility for the annual May 4 commemoration and ongoing educational events through the Office of the President, beginning with the 50th commemoration in 2019-2020 and continuing from that time forward.

Today, the M4TF student organization continues to be dedicated to the memory of the events of May 4, 1970 and the values of peace, justice and truth.

## CENTER FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE

The Center for Peaceful Change was established in 1971 as a living memorial to the students killed on May 4, 1970. Initially, the center, directed by Raghbir Basi, PhD, was an independent unit in North Hall that housed the university's peace studies program (or integrative change, as it was known then) with a focus on interdisciplinary study, research and public service to promote peaceful mechanisms of change.

In fall 1973, the center instituted a Living/Learning Community located on the basement floor of Stopher Hall. **(2)** Focused on learning from experience, the center's May 4 committee sponsored the annual candlelight vigil, as well as other May 4 activities, for the first few years. In 1994, the name of the center was changed to the Center for Applied Conflict Management, under the direction of Patrick Coy, PhD, with a continued emphasis on interdisciplinary learning and applied skills. In 2017, it was transformed into the School of Peace and Conflict Studies, and housed in McGilvrey Hall.

Today, under the leadership of inaugural director Neil Cooper, PhD, the school builds upon the legacy of its predecessors, regularly enrolling more than 1,000 students each year in courses that teach applied skills in conflict management and nonviolent change.

This year, through private donor support, four endowed scholarships were created through the KSU Foundation—named for each of the four slain students—that will be awarded to students in the new School of Peace and Conflict Studies.

## B'NAI B'RITH HILLEL MARKER

On the first anniversary of May 4, a small group stood in prayer and dedicated a cast aluminum plaque to the memory of Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, Sandra Scheuer and William Schroeder, three of whom were Jewish. This marker, which had been financed by and cast under the direction of B'nai B'rith Hillel, lay unanchored at the foot of a tree in the parking lot adjacent to Prentice Hall until it disappeared on the evening of May 3, 1974.

In 1975, a faculty committee collected contributions for a new granite marker, which was dedicated on May 3, 1975. This was damaged and replaced by a third marker, again of pink granite. The two-foot-high stone serves as one focal point of May 4 memorial observances on the Kent Campus. **(3)** Every year on the evening of May 3, it marks the end of the candlelight procession that starts at the Victory Bell and ends at this marker, where participants leave the remains of their candles in remembrance.



**SOLAR TOTEM #1** Pierced by a bullet during the shootings on May 4, 1970, this 15-foot sculpture across from Taylor Hall, created by Akron-based artist Don Drumm, BFA '56, MA '65, has become an enduring memorial to the tragic event.

The university had asked Drumm to create the abstract sculpture in 1967, as part of a project funded through a grant from the National Defense Education Act. When he designed the piece, Drumm's plan was for the artwork to change with the movement of the sun—its many CorTen steel plates throwing shadows as the sun traveled across the sky.

It has become an ever-changing work of art, but not as Drumm intended. Every spring, the bullet-scarred sculpture is adorned with daffodils from Blanket Hill, occasionally embellished with candle wax from prayer vigils and often marked in chalk with notes calling for remembrance and peace. **(4)** Drumm approves of these additions to his artwork and has requested that the bullet hole, which he refers to as "a fingerprint of time," always remains.

## VICTORY BELL

The Victory Bell, located on the Commons near Taylor Hall, was donated by The Erie Railroad. Originally rung for athletic triumphs, it was later used to call together political protests. After the events of May 4, 1970, it was removed from the Commons, but returned after strong student opposition. **(5)** The bell is now rung during May 4 Memorial remembrances—and also for athletic triumphs.

## On Memorializing

When you look around the Kent Campus, you see numerous physical and living memorials to the May 4, 1970 shootings that encourage public mourning, memory and reckoning.

However, the process of memorializing this pivotal event in Kent State's history—and our nation's—has not been easy, says Tammy Clewell, PhD, professor of English at the Kent Campus. "We are on the verge of forgetting just how much resistance there was to the act of memorialization."

Clewell, who came to Kent State in 2000, was already engaged in research about mourning and memorializing practices as reflected in early 20th century British and American literary works. She became interested in the long history of the university's efforts to memorialize the events of May 4, 1970, especially around the May 4 Memorial, which was dedicated in 1990.

"When I discovered there was a lot of controversy surrounding the process of building the memorial, I decided to begin my research on it," says Clewell, who presented her research at Commemorating Violent Conflicts and Building Sustainable Peace, an international conference cohosted by Kent State's School of Peace and Conflict Studies at the Kent State University Hotel and Conference Center on October 26, 2019.

In her presentation she concluded, "If memorial making comforted some but not everyone and if it did not resolve all disputes within a diverse community, it still had the value of creating a process where opposing voices were heard and differing viewpoints scrutinized."

Invited to put together a panel on the topic for the now-cancelled commemoration weekend, she is creating an exhibit, in collaboration with Mindy Farmer, PhD, director, and Lori Boes, assistant director, of the May 4 Visitors Center, planned for fall 2020.

"You have to fight for contentious memory," Clewell says. "And we have a lot of people to thank for doing that."



**PAGODA**

This umbrella-like structure made of concrete and steel was a project by Kent State architecture students and was completed shortly before the events of May 4, 1970. It has since become an icon of that day because it is featured in many historical photos of the event **(6)** and was frequently mentioned in the subsequent investigation.

**THE KENT FOUR**

Alastair Granville-Jackson, an artist and former Kent State faculty member, created this sculpture in 1971 as a response and tribute to the four students who died on the Kent Campus on May 4, 1970. The red-orange sculpture is made of hollow metal tubes, referring back to rifle barrels and forward to trumpets of deliverance. **(7)** In the artist’s original vision, the tubes were meant to shoot flames. The sculpture was recently restored and relocated from in front of Stopher Hall to its current location near the former Art Building.

**MAY 4 RESOURCE ROOM**

The May 4 Resource Room—which contains books and articles about May 4, 1970, campus unrest during the Vietnam era and the US involvement in Southeast Asia—was dedicated in 1974 on the first floor of the library, adjacent to what is now the University Library Starbucks location.

Victor Buehrle Jr., BS ’50, provided funding for the resource room, which is open to the public and serves as a reading room. Portraits of the four slain students and selected artwork related to May 4 are displayed in the room. **(8)**

The May 4th Task Force has used it as a regular meeting space, and students seek it out for a quiet space to read, study and reflect.

**MAY 4 MEMORIAL WINDOWS**

Four memorial windows to May 4, 1970 were created by Theodore Abel, BFA ’78, and presented to the university by the artist. **(9)** They are a permanent feature of the May 4 Resource Room in the University Library.

**MAY 4 MEMORIAL**

Officially dedicated on May 4, 1990, as part of the 20th commemoration, the memorial’s environmental design was developed from a concept submitted by Chicago architect Bruno Ast to the university’s National Design Competition in 1986.

The memorial, which overlooks the Commons on the Kent Campus, is constructed of carnelian granite, a stone associated with strength and time. As conceptualized by Brinsley Tyrrell, Emeritus Professor of Art, 58,175 daffodil bulbs planted on the hillside site symbolize the number of US losses in Vietnam. **(10)**

A wall, representative of both shelter and conflict, is built along the memorial entry and defines the plaza as a significant gathering area. The plaza ends in a jagged, abstract border symbolic of disruptions and the conflict of ideas. The words *Inquire, Learn, Reflect* engraved in the plaza’s stone threshold affirm the intent to provide visitors an opportunity to inquire into the many reasons and purposes of the events, to encourage a learning process, and to reflect on how differences may be resolved peacefully.

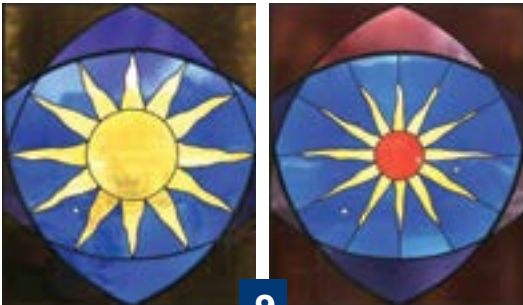
A progression of four polished black granite disks embedded in the earth leads from the plaza to four free-standing pylons aligned on the hill. The disks reflect our own image as we stand on them. The pylons stand as mute sentinels to the force of violence and the memory of the four slain students. A fifth disk placed to the south acknowledges the many victims of the event and its wide impact. A plaque with the names of the four students killed on May 4, 1970 was added on the ground close to the memorial.

**MAY 4 MEMORIAL HONORS SCHOLARSHIPS**

May 4 Memorial Honors Scholarships were established in 1990 to honor the four slain students, Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, Sandra Scheuer and William Schroeder. In 1998, the university scholarship awards were increased to include full in-state tuition, room and board. These scholarships are among the most prestigious awarded through the Honors College.

**PRENTICE HALL PARKING LOT MARKERS**

As a result of a request from the May 4th Task Force student organization, the university authorized the installation of markers locating the sites in the Prentice Hall parking lot where the four students were killed on May 4, 1970. **(11)** The markers were dedicated on September 8, 1999, and participants stand vigil near them at each annual commemoration.



**OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY MARKER**

In 2006, Kent State received an Ohio Historical Society marker, one of 1,600 OHS markers in the state. **(12)** The marker was installed on the May 4, 1970 Kent State Shootings Site.

**MAY 4 WALKING TOUR TRAIL MARKERS**

A guided walking tour of the May 4, 1970 site was installed in 2010, in honor of the 40th anniversary. The walking tour includes interpretive panels installed at seven stops along the walk. **(13)** The panels feature pictures, maps and written descriptions. Each trail marker focuses on different key aspects and events of May 4, 1970.

A video documentary and audio complement the tour trail markers. A May 4 team wrote a script that was reviewed by 200 Kent State students, faculty and staff, as well as community members, scholars and consultants across the United States. Civil rights activist and NAACP Chairman emeritus Julian Bond narrates the tour for the documentary and audio.

**MAY 4 VISITORS CENTER**

Dedicated in 2012, the Kent State University May 4 Visitors Center, under the direction of Mindy Farmer, PhD, is a 1900-square-foot permanent museum exhibition located in Taylor Hall that relates the history of the shooting of 13 Kent State students by members of the Ohio National Guard on May 4, 1970.

Kent State scholars worked with humanities scholars, consultants, community leaders, veterans and students to determine the content, and national firms were hired to design the displays and create the multimedia components. **(14)** The exhibition, comprised of three galleries, educates visitors by setting its account of the shootings in the context of the social and political climate of the 1960s. The displays show the breadth of the impact of the May 4 shootings and offer visitors opportunities to reflect on its meaning for today.

As visitors exit the center onto the historical site and memorial for reflection, they are issued a call to action through the words of Mahatma Gandhi: “Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

Average attendance at the center is just over 15,000 per year, and about 200 classes per year use the center for instruction and lessons relating to the May 4 legacy.

**NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATION**

Over the years, teams from Kent State worked tirelessly to submit nominations that would enable the May 4, 1970 Shootings Site to receive national recognition. In 2010, the US Department of the Interior listed a roughly 17-acre portion of the May 4, 1970 Kent State Shootings Site on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2016, US Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell designated the May 4, 1970 Kent State Shootings Site as a National Historic Landmark, and it joined more than 2,500 historic places that bear the national distinction. In 2018, Kent State unveiled the National Historic Landmark plaque. **(15)** The plaques were installed inside the Visitors Center and outside on two corners of Taylor Hall.

**MARKERS FOR THE NINE WOUNDED STUDENTS**

Permanent bronze markers will be installed at each location in the ground and Prentice Hall parking lot where the nine students were wounded on May 4, 1970. The markers will bear the name of each student wounded, along with their distance from the Ohio National Guard when the shots were fired. Due to the cancellation of the 50th commemoration weekend, the dedication ceremony will be held at a date to be determined. ⚡



Eight of the wounded attend the May 4 ceremony in 1985. Clockwise from back: Jim Russell, Joe Lewis, Scott Mackenzie, Doug Wrentmore, Tom Grace, Robert Stamps, Alan Canfora, Dean Kahler, and Elaine Holstein, mother of Jeffrey Miller. (John Cleary did not attend this event.)

# MAY 4

## Where the Nine Wounded are Now

By Lisa Abraham

**They call themselves “Blood Brothers”—the nine students injured on May 4, 1970—because they all shed their blood on Kent State’s campus. Yet, most of the wounded caught in the bullet spray of the Ohio National Guard didn’t even know each other beforehand.**

**Through their physical recovery, multiple court cases and 50 years of publicity, they formed lifelong friendships, bonded by their desire to never forget what happened that day and to honor the memory of the four students killed.**



**Alan Canfora, BA '72, MLS '80**

For the past 50 years, Alan Canfora has remained the primary voice of May 4, never allowing the shootings and the four killed to be forgotten. “I knew Jeffrey Miller,” he says. “He was my friend.”

Canfora is director of the Akron Law Library; he has been active in politics in his hometown of Barberton, Ohio, serving for 27 years as chairman of the Democratic Party. He also worked for the Summit County Board of Elections and Barberton Municipal Court.

But his largest role has always been as May 4 activist. When he was shot in the wrist that day, Canfora was an active participant in the anti-war protest. As a 21-year-old junior, he can be seen in photos waving a black flag at the rally. He chose black because just a week earlier, he had attended the funeral of a childhood friend killed in Vietnam.

When the university stopped sponsoring the May 4 commemorations in 1975, he helped form the May 4th Task Force with Robert Stamps, Dean Kahler and current students. Their goal was to raise awareness about the May 4 shootings and its aftermath, specifically the lack of accountability and justice. **“It’s been a long, arduous struggle, fighting for truth and justice,” says Canfora. “We have been very effective.”**

Keeping May 4 alive has been a duty and a privilege, he says. In 2007, he uncovered digital audio in the May 4 archives at Yale University, which revealed a guardsman had shouted the verbal command to “fire” on the students.

Canfora says no one today can defend the actions of the Ohio National Guard, shooting unarmed students in broad daylight.

“The National Guard intentionally perpetrated a massacre at Kent State.”

He met his wife, Anastasia, at a May 4th Task Force meeting in 2009. They married a year later and welcomed a daughter in 2015 and a son in 2020.

Canfora’s love for Kent State still runs deep. “It’s the finest university in Ohio,” he says. “Kent State had one bad day in 1970 and it has remained a specter, unfortunately.”

He says he has one regret: “I wish our protests were stronger and more effective sooner. By 1970 there already were 30,000 US soldiers killed in Vietnam, as well as over a million Asian victims.”



**John Cleary, BArch '74**

John Cleary, a 19-year-old freshman from Scotia, New York, came to Kent State to study architecture in the fall of 1969. He was shot in the chest by a guardsman’s bullet, while making his way to class during the student protest rally. A photo of Cleary lying injured on the ground

made the cover of the May 15, 1970, edition of *Life* magazine, and became one of the iconic images of the day. (See page 48.)

Cleary spent the following summer recuperating at home and working to complete his classes. “There was no internet or email or texting, everything was sent by snail mail,” he says. Along with his assignments, professors sent many encouraging letters and honest critiques of his work, which helped him stay on track.

“I graduated on time,” Cleary says. **“My goal was always to get back and complete my work on time and not let what happened to me change my goals or aspirations.”**

Now retired, Cleary had a successful career as an architect in Pittsburgh. He avoided going back to the Kent Campus on May 4 for many years, but eventually began returning for May 4 anniversaries, particularly after his son attended Kent State.

Cleary says the commemorations are important. “Every year they talk about the four students who were slain, and it keeps their memory alive. It’s important to not let people forget what happened and to understand the significance.”



**Thomas Grace, BA '72**

Thomas Grace, a 20-year-old sophomore history major from Syracuse, New York, hadn’t planned to attend the May 4, 1970 protest rally, even though he had been a vocal opponent of the war. But that morning Grace reconsidered and felt he could not shirk his responsibilities.

A guardsman’s bullet hit his heel, taking off the right side of his left foot. He remembers sharing an ambulance with Sandra Scheuer, who was killed in the shootings.

His ankle was fused, but his foot still has a cavity that makes it difficult to stand for long periods of time. He credits his mother, Colette, who was a nurse, for pleading with the surgeon to not amputate Grace’s foot after a gangrenous infection set in.

“I have lived a fairly normal life, all things considered,” he says. “If not for my mother, I likely would have been strapping on a prosthesis every morning.”

After graduation from Kent State, he began to rethink his goal of teaching history. Instead, he earned a master’s degree in social work from the University of Buffalo in 1975, and he worked with the developmentally disabled for the state of New York for 30 years.

Later in his career, Grace still felt a call to history, and he returned to the University of Buffalo, earning his doctorate in history in 2003. He is an assistant professor of history at the State University of New York’s Erie Community College in Buffalo.

Grace resides outside of Buffalo with his wife, Peggy. He has a grown son and daughter from his first marriage and a grandson.

He returns to Kent State often for May 4 commemorations and is considered a May 4 historian and scholar, as well as a Civil War expert. His book, *Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties*, was published by the University of Massachusetts Press in 2016.

“The fundamentals of that day have never changed,” he says. “The guard shot into a crowd of unarmed protesters and bystanders, killed four and wounded nine. It’s kind of unfathomable and certainly appalling.”

Grace has always had some misgivings about his place in history as one of the Kent State wounded. **“I’ve often said my intention in going to Kent State was to study history, not become part of it.”**

He praised Kent State’s administration over the past 25 years for owning up to its past. “Kent State, better than any other institution, has come to terms with its past, and I’ve been a direct witness to that,” Grace says. “It has contributed significantly to my coming to terms with the lethal actions committed by the Ohio National Guard in May 1970, and I salute [the university] for that.”



**Dean Kahler, BS '77**

Dean Kahler, a first-quarter freshman on May 4, 1970, decided to attend that day’s student demonstration, not because he had strong feelings about the war in Vietnam, but because, as a farm boy from Stark County, he had never seen a protest rally and was curious.

The 20-year-old was standing near a tree, observing, when he felt a bullet pierce his spine. From his training as a Boy Scout, he knew almost instantly that he would

never walk again. The injury left him paralyzed from the waist down and wheelchair-bound, which has made him the most recognizable of the May 4 wounded.

Kahler regularly takes part in May 4 commemorations and often conducts media interviews about the shootings and their legacy. He has been a steady presence representing the Kent State shooting victims.

His recovery was not without its challenges. The first get-well card Kahler opened in the hospital turned out to be hate mail from someone telling him he wished he were dead. Despite such treatment, Kahler says he chose to maintain an upbeat attitude. A lifetime member of the Church of the Brethren, he is a pacifist and against all war; he believes in promoting peace.

Kahler returned to the Kent Campus in fall 1970, earning a bachelor’s degree in education in 1977. **“I consider Kent State my second home,” he says. “I like visiting as often as I can.”**

He spent his life in public service, teaching school for 15 years, and working for the Ohio Industrial Commission, the Ohio Attorney General and the Ohio Secretary of State, as well as serving two terms as an elected Athens County Commissioner. He taught history and social studies and never shied from talking about the May 4 shootings in his classes.

Despite numerous physical setbacks, including having both feet amputated in 2009 due to vascular problems caused by years of living in a wheelchair, Kahler has maintained his positive attitude and says he is grateful to have survived and thrived. Years ago, he started running races in his wheelchair and took part in 60 races the year he turned 65.

He gives credit to his faith, his family and his circle of friends for lifelong support after the shootings, and says he was grateful for a long career of fulfilling employment.

After spending many years living in Southeast Ohio, Kahler returned to his hometown in Stark County in 2009. Now retired, Kahler remains an active community volunteer.

He was selected to serve as the speaker for Kent State’s spring commencement, but the ceremony was cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. “I had hoped to talk about the importance of good citizenship, giving back to the community and sharing the benefits of a Kent State education.”



**Joseph Lewis**

Joseph Lewis was an 18-year-old freshman from Massillon, Ohio, studying pre-professional social work, when he was shot while attending the student protest rally on May 4, 1970. Repeated images of the wounded soldiers on the evening news were

enough to turn Lewis against the war in Vietnam.

He was standing near Taylor Hall when the guardsmen raised their rifles. He gestured toward them with his middle finger, and the shots soon followed.

Lewis remembers most of the aftermath: the high school girl who held his hand as he waited for help, the ride in the ambulance, the chaotic scene at the hospital. He was shot in the abdomen and a second time above the ankle, by a guardsman who later admitted in court that he purposely shot Lewis, even though he was already down.



"I was afraid I was going to die, but I wasn't afraid of dying. I said the Act of Contrition and told God I was sorry for my sins," he recalls. "And they hauled me away to an ambulance."

Lewis returned home after three weeks in the hospital, and soon began to realize that much of the public faulted the students for the shootings. **"The most important thing people need to realize is there was absolutely no need for those weapons to be loaded with live rounds, and absolutely no need for the guardsmen to fire them," he says. "We didn't do anything wrong."**

He returned to Kent State for two more years, but he quit school in 1972. That summer, he hitchhiked to Oregon, where he has resided ever since.

"I was dealing with what we now call PTSD, but then there was no care or counseling for that," he says. Lewis also had survivor's guilt, knowing that he was standing much closer to the guard than those who were killed.

In 1980, he was hired by the Scappoose, Oregon Public Works Department, and retired from there in 2013 as supervisor of the water treatment plant. He also served 16 years on the Scappoose Board of Education. Oregon, he says, was a good place to heal.

Lewis met his first wife, Galen Keller Lewis, when she was a Kent State professor working as a researcher for the ACLU during the victims' civil lawsuit against the university. When they married, Keller brought three children into the marriage, and she and Lewis had one son together.

Keller Lewis died from cancer in 1991, and Lewis married his current wife, Lisa, in 1998. She brought three children into the marriage, giving Lewis a total of seven children, and, now, 14 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"I don't deny my experience at Kent State. But I'm a husband and father and grandfather, and that's the most important part of my life. It's the best part of life."



**Donald Scott Mackenzie, BBA '71**

Donald Scott Mackenzie transferred to Kent State in the fall of 1968 after attending a small college in Iowa for two years. He thought Kent State would be less isolated, offer a more active campus and be closer to his home in Richboro, Pennsylvania.

On May 4, 1970, he had finished a class in Franklin Hall and was walking toward his apartment next to Harbourt Hall when the shooting began.

"I was at the far end of the parking lot, observing what was going on. I turned and ran the opposite way. I remember someone saying, 'Don't run, they're only shooting blanks,'" Mackenzie recalls. A second later, a steel-jacketed bullet hit the back of his neck, missing his spine by about half an inch, and exiting out the middle of his left cheek.

The 22-year-old's jaw was shattered and wired shut for several months while he recuperated over the summer. He returned to Kent that fall and completed courses in business with an emphasis on economics and minor in political science.

After a year spent skiing in Colorado and traveling in Europe after graduation, Mackenzie decided to pursue furniture

making, design and fine woodworking. He went back to school in Pennsylvania, earned a degree in industrial arts, and taught high school shop classes for a few years, before moving to Colorado in 1977. He earned master's and doctorate degrees in industrial design at Colorado State University.

For a time, he had a custom furniture business before giving it up to teach fulltime at Montana State University-Northern and later Dakota State University, where he taught design and digital arts and design. He retired two years ago, and he and his wife Cheryl moved back to Colorado. Married since 1983, the couple have two grown children.

Mackenzie has kept his involvement in May 4 mostly private, although he has returned for May 4 anniversaries. The injury caused permanent nerve damage to his face—a constant and sometimes painful reminder of the shooting.

"I didn't think the war made any sense, but I wouldn't classify myself as an activist," he says. **"I've always liked the idea of trying to find as much common ground as possible and not getting too extreme, too fixated on one side. All reasonable opinions need to be listened to and debated."**



**James Russell, BFA '70**, died June 23, 2007, from a heart attack at his home in Deer Island, Oregon, where he had moved after graduating. Russell was born in New Jersey, and grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was 23 and a senior advertising major when he was shot in the

thigh and forehead on May 4, 1970. He worked for the city of Beaverton, Oregon, and as a freelance photographer. Fellow wounded student Joseph Lewis, who also lives in Oregon, maintained a long and close friendship with Russell. The two gave talks about May 4 to local high school and college students, which, Lewis says, helped them heal. "Jim had a very positive attitude," says Lewis. **"He always said he had five good years at Kent State and one bad day."** Russell was survived by his wife, Nelda Pelosi, and their daughter, Becka.



**Robert Stamps, BA '72, MA '76, MA '99**, died June 11, 2008, in Florida. He had neurologic Lyme disease and was suffering from pneumonia. Stamps was 19 and a sophomore studying Spanish and sociology when

he was shot in the lower back on May 4, 1970. A Cleveland native, he was a parole officer and addictions counselor. A published author, Stamps also had been an adjunct professor, spoke fluent Castilian Spanish and was an extensive traveler. He was survived by his wife, Teresa Sumrall.

**Douglas Wrentmore** was a 20-year-old sophomore from Northfield, Ohio, studying psychology, when he was wounded in the right knee. He has rarely given interviews about May 4, and he declined to be interviewed for this story. He resides with his wife in southern Ohio.

# REMEMBERING THE LIVES OF THE FOUR Slain Students



The May 4 Visitors Center is only a few steps from the hill and parking lot where the tragic events of May 4, 1970 took place. Located within Taylor Hall, the center has won numerous awards for its work to preserve the memory of May 4, 1970, including a 2018 Public Education and Awareness Award from the Ohio History Connection. The center also provides services to those who have been affected by the events of May 4, including a confidential support group, yoga and meditation.

As part of the 50th commemoration, the May 4 Visitors Center presented a series of four temporary exhibitions honoring each of the students killed on May 4, 1970—Allison Krause, Jeffrey Miller, Sandra Scheuer and William Schroeder. The idea for the exhibitions came about after a student taking the May 4, 1970 and Its Aftermath course conducted a survey of fellow students on the Kent Campus. Fewer than one-fourth of those surveyed knew the names of the four students killed on May 4.

The May 4 Visitors Center staff took that as a call to action. Mindy Farmer, PhD, director, and Lori Boes, assistant director, decided to curate a series of exhibitions, one for each of the four slain students, that would make them more relatable to students today. They each curated two exhibitions, collaborating with Glyphix Studio, a student-staffed program within the School of Visual Communication Design. Glyphix designed each exhibition under the direction of Larrie King, MFA '14, creative director and assistant professor of visual communication design.

The first exhibition in the series opened in 2018 and the final exhibition opened in 2020. Each one documented the many facets of the students' lives, featuring photos, letters, personal mementos and other memorabilia loaned by family members and friends. To tell their stories, the center used text written by the students themselves or their loved ones. And each exhibition had at least one piece that created connections between the slain students and current students.

For *Sandy's Scrapbook* it was the phone messages from the late 1960s that visitors likened to today's text messages. For *Allison the Activist* it was a letter she had written in high school to a Kent State student asking if she could still have a social life when enrolled in the Honors College. For *Bill, An All-American Boy*, it was the letters and poems he wrote to his mother. And for *Our Brother Jeff* it was his record collection as a DJ and his relationship with his older brother.

"Too often, Sandy, Bill, Allison and Jeff are only known for their tragic deaths," Farmer says. "We wanted to show that they lived interesting and full lives. And in many ways, their stories represent the divides of the era. Allison and Jeff were activists. Bill was a member of the ROTC struggling with the meaning of the Vietnam War. Sandy was an honors student trying to get to class."

Although the exhibitions dedicated to the slain students will rotate out this year, the May 4 Visitors Center will continue themed temporary exhibitions in order to give visitors a new experience every time they come. The next theme will examine memorialization, including the initial lack of memorializing that followed the shootings because of contentious views surrounding the event.

Learn more at [www.kent.edu/may4visitorscenter](http://www.kent.edu/may4visitorscenter).



*Sandy's Scrapbook*



*Bill, An All-American Boy*



*Allison the Activist*



*Our Brother Jeff*





## ALLISON BETH KRAUSE

April 23, 1951 - May 4, 1970

Participating in the protest | Shot in the chest | Age 19



### Allison the Activist

From the time she volunteered at a mental hospital in high school to the time she helped organize a campus-wide march against

the Vietnam War as a freshman, it was clear that Allison Krause was an activist.

Even though her family moved every few years for her father's job, Allison found a home in Kent. She remembered fondly the times she traveled with her mom, dad and younger sister to eat at the Robin Hood, the only "white cloth" restaurant in the area.

While she was a good student and wanted to attend Kent State, she was worried about how she would be perceived if she joined the Honors College (see letter excerpt on panel at right).

Allison the Activist included photos and samples of homework, as well as images and films of her marching in protests.

At her funeral, one of her high school teachers ended his eulogy by stating, "In her own quiet way, she symbolized the best in young people."

*Alienation is common among all people. Many problems develop when communication between people is difficult or non-existent. It is the root of all violent outbreaks, war and all general disharmony. We live in a world with many fellow human beings and to realize that each person is not entirely alone will make alienation an obsolete human characteristic.*

—Allison Krause



## WILLIAM KNOX SCHROEDER

July 20, 1950 - May 4, 1970

Walking to class | Shot in the chest | Age 19



### Bill: An All-American Boy

Bill Schroeder was athletic, loyal and extremely patriotic. He was the captain of his high school basketball team, a

member of the marching band and Lorain's youngest Eagle Scout. In 1968 he left for the Colorado School of Mines on a full Reserved Officer Training Corp (ROTC) scholarship.

In the fall of 1969, he transferred to Kent State and changed his major to psychology. As his mother wrote, "he decided that the presence of a trained psychologist on the military front could be as important as a soldier's rifle or a chaplain."

A member of the Army ROTC, he received awards for academic achievement and excellence in history, and he joined the Geology Club. His future

plans had included combining military service with graduate school.

Bill: An All-American Boy gave visitors an intimate look into his life, including loving letters to his mother, photos with friends, his Boy Scout sash and Eagle Scout badge.

*Learning from the past is of prime consideration.*

*Your many influences shall linger and last, To be passed on through me to the next generation.*

—Bill Schroeder



See all the exhibition panels at [www.kent.edu/magazine/4slain](http://www.kent.edu/magazine/4slain)



## JEFFREY GLENN MILLER

March 28, 1950 - May 4, 1970

Participating in the protest | Shot in the mouth | Age 20



### Our Brother Jeff

Jeff Miller was a psychology major, but his passions also led him to study the environment, criminal justice and African American history. He

was also passionately against the war, as his mom wrote, "I expected my son to be against the war." According to her, he had a great sense of humor and liked the Mets, music, math and motorcycles.

Jeff and his older brother Russ were close, especially after their parents divorced. Jeff followed Russ to Michigan State and left for Kent State after Russ graduated. Even when they disagreed, they shared a love for music. Jeff, who was not tall, briefly ran his own radio show, "Short Mort," at Michigan State University.

While he only spent one semester at Kent State before he was killed, he had made many friends, including Allison Krause and Sandy Scheuer, who were also killed during the shootings.

Our Brother Jeff included personal items loaned by his brother, Russ, along with vinyl records, photographs, Jeff's letters, and excerpts from his mother's recollections.

*The War Without a Purpose marches on relentlessly, not stopping to mourn for its dead, content to wait for its end.*

*But all the frightened parents who still have their son fear that the end is not in sight.*

—Jeff Miller



## SANDRA LEE SCHEUER

August 11, 1949 - May 4, 1970

Walking to class | Shot in the neck | Age 20



### Sandy's Scrapbook

In an era before social media, Sandy Scheuer chronicled her life in the pages of her scrapbooks. Her candid photographs, personal letters and

lovingly selected mementos paint a story full of friendship, family and adventure.

At Kent State, she was a speech therapy major and honors student, a member of Alpha Xi Delta sorority and active in the Jewish community. She was a beloved daughter, sister and friend.

Bruce Burkland, her high school boyfriend, wrote, "To begin to describe what a beautiful person Sandy was would take forever, but there is one thing that I want people to know about her, which is that she was not a reactionary student and was not involved in the demonstrations at Kent State."

"Sandy was not the type to cause or incite such events, but rather she always spread joy, happiness and laughter in people's hearts wherever she went. She was the ultimate in life, especially of my life."

In the last photo of her, taken on May 2—later published in *Time* magazine—she was looking at the burned-out ROTC building and holding onto a stray dog, using a ribbon as a leash. As a friend noted, "Sandy felt sorry for any stray animal or lonesome person and had compassion for everyone."

Sandy's Scrapbook included photos of family trips, friends and proms, concert programs, a paddle from her sorority and while-you-were-out messages. ⚡





# MAKING USE OF THE MAY 4 Collection



A student receives assistance in handling archival materials and using finding aids, which help users search for information in a specific record group, collection or series.

**K**ent State University Libraries has been curating materials related to the May 4, 1970 shootings and their aftermath for 50 years. The May 4 Collection spans more than 300 cubic feet of primary and secondary source materials—including thousands of documents, photographs, memorabilia, artifacts, artwork and audio and video recordings—all of which are open to the public. Kent State's archivists and librarians have in-depth expertise in assisting researchers, filmmakers, students and others to access archival resources associated with May 4.

Much of the collection also is available through free, online access. More than 50,000 items in the collection have been converted to digital format, including hundreds of photographs, recordings and more than 125 oral history interviews.

"Our online May 4 Collection is used by researchers the world over," says Cara Gilgenbach, associate professor and head of Special Collections and Archives at Kent State University Libraries. "Because it is such a valuable resource, we are always working to increase our digital offerings in this collection."

An Ohio Archives Grant allowed for more than 100 reel-to-reel audio recordings pertaining to May 4, 1970 to be digitized beginning in spring 2015. A grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission launched a project to digitize some of the most used portions of the extensive May 4 Collection between 2016 and 2018.

The two-year grant project resulted in the digitization of 39 collections that reflect student, faculty, administrative, local, national and international reactions to the Kent State Shootings. Items in the collections marked with an "online" icon allow for easy access to digital content.

Another grant in 2019 from the Council on Libraries and Information Resources provided more than \$30,000 for the digitizing work to continue through its "Recordings at Risk" program. The program, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, supports the preservation of rare and unique audio and audiovisual content of scholarly value.

Although Special Collections and Archives houses thousands of collections, the May 4 Collection is one of its most heavily used archives. It's been accessed by an international community of users not affiliated with Kent State, such as filmmakers, media professionals and others. This past year it was used extensively by university faculty, staff and students who developed dozens of programs and presentations as part of the 50th anniversary commemoration year. —Lisa Abraham

For links to the May 4 Collection, including the Kent State Shootings: May 4 Digital Archive and the Kent State Shootings: Oral History Project, see the May 4 Collection homepage, <https://www.library.kent.edu/special-collections-and-archives/kent-state-shootings-may-4-collection>.

## Mapping MAY 4



**“W**hen we heard the gunshots, we did not believe that they were real bullets. We thought they were shooting up in the air, and we just didn't believe that the bullets could be real.”

These are the final words in a recorded clip from Naomi Goleman Etzkin, who was a student on May 4, 1970 and near the Pagoda when the shooting occurred. She recorded her experience for the Oral History Project, which is part of the Kent State Shootings: May 4 Collection in Kent State University Libraries' Special Collections and Archives.

Though the tragic events of that day have been documented in myriad ways, a new project, Mapping May 4, is attempting to tell the stories of those who experienced it in a new, more immersive way.

Jennifer Mapes, PhD, associate professor of geography, and Sara Koopman, PhD, assistant professor in the School of Peace and Conflict Studies, spearheaded the project for Mapping May 4.

They analyzed 139 oral histories collected in the Oral History Project to find specific locations. These stories became the framework for the "geonarratives" that tell individuals' stories in the context of the space and time in which they occurred.

The Mapping May 4 web app has an interactive aerial map of the Kent Campus as it was in May 1970. Small black circles appear throughout the map with stories told by people who experienced the events of that weekend. The circles are plotted by location to capture the memories associated with a place, such as residence halls, local businesses, bars and restaurants.

Koopman and Mapes received a \$20,000 grant from Ohio Humanities to continue collaborating with Kent State Special Collections and Archives on the second phase of the project.

The grant supports the creation of a location-aware mobile app, designed by Each + Every, a Kent design studio, with a curated tour of sites on campus and downtown, as well as wall-sized, map-based exhibits for the May 4 Visitors Center and Kent State Historical Society.

So far, the site features 216 audio clips from 116 different locations, including recollections of students, faculty, Ohio National Guardsmen, local business owners and residents of Kent.

These clips are searchable by date, name, role or location. Visitors to the site may upload their own stories (text or

audio) and photos, and those visiting Kent in person can use their mobile device to take one of four short walking tours in the city or campus.

A tragedy such as May 4 leaves deep wounds. Even 50 years later, groups remain staunchly divided over the event. At times, the oral histories may seem to contradict each other. But often, say Koopman and Mapes, the stories show more similarities than differences in the shared trauma of those who lived in Kent in May, 1970.

**“Our hope is that, connecting through place, people might be able to connect across difference.”**

—Sara Koopman, PhD

"Our hope is that, connecting through place, people might be able to connect across difference," Koopman says. "It's also an attempt to open another way for dialogue to help build reconciliation and broader understanding."

—Bethany Sava, BS '12

Learn more about the project at [www.mappingmay4.kent.edu](http://www.mappingmay4.kent.edu).



Jennifer Mapes, PhD, and Sara Koopman, PhD, stand in front of a map of the Kent area, showing locations covered on their Mapping May 4 app.



# Listening to the Voices of MAY 4



## ARMED WITH OUR VOICES EXHIBITION

Kent State University's Wick Poetry Center launched its interactive exhibition *Armed with Our Voices* at the National Council for the Social Studies conference in Austin, Texas, in November 2019, as part of the university's yearlong 50th commemoration of the May 4, 1970 shootings.

Plans were in place to install it in March at the Kent Student Center, with pop-up versions at Regional Campuses. Then it was to travel to various venues across the country, including the Ohio Supreme Court and New York City's St. John the Divine Cathedral.

That was before the outbreak of COVID-19 and state social distancing requirements made it necessary for the center to suspend in-person exhibitions. "We had to pivot and convert the exhibition to an online experience," says David Hassler, director of the Wick Poetry Center. "The upside is that now the presentation can be shared more widely with those who may not have been able to see the exhibition in person."

*Armed with Our Voices* is now a digital Listening Wall, created in collaboration with Each + Every design studio in Kent,

## MAY 4TH VOICES RADIO PLAY

Wick Poetry Center has a variety of May 4th programming online, including a one-hour radio special available for free on PRX. The *May 4th Voices Radio Play* features the performances of actors and comedians with a connection to Kent State, including Jeff Richmond, BA '85, Tina Fey, Ron West, BA '82, Steve Byrne, BA '96, and many others.

David Hassler wrote the play *May 4th Voices: Kent State, 1970* (The Kent State University Press, 2013), based on the Kent State Shootings: Oral History Project, which is part of the May 4 Collection digital archives. He collaborated with Joe Gunderman, production coordinator at WKSU, who produced and directed it as a radio play.

Listen to the full radio play at <https://May4voices.org>.

*Left: Visitors to the Armed with Our Voices exhibit in Austin, Texas, react to the content on display and respond by creating a poem on the large touch-screen display. "In the early days of COVID-19, when I saw that Chinese people were no longer able to order using touch screens at Arby's, I knew we could be in trouble," says David Hassler, director of the Wick Poetry Center.*

Ohio. The digital exhibition commemorates the 50th anniversary of the tragic shooting and connects it to the contemporary moment—encouraging visitors to explore the history of student protest and the timely themes of peace and conflict transformation.

The exhibition was created in

partnership with the May 4 Visitors Center, Stephanie Smith, assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, and other colleagues.

More than just static text and photos, the digital Listening Wall contains archival videos, articles, oral histories and photographs that create a deeply immersive experience. Visitors are challenged to reflect on the content and given an opportunity to respond. Responses are curated to display in an online gallery on the *Armed with Our Voices* website.

Wick Poetry Center invites the public to visit the digital exhibit, to pause and listen deeply to these voices, download lesson plans, and view the gallery of poems on peace and conflict transformation selected by poet Naomi Shihab Nye. Then, most of all, the center hopes the public will share their own voices. —April McClellan-Copeland

View the digital exhibit and share your voice at <https://armedwithourvoices.org>.



## VISITING MAY 4 SITES Through Augmented Reality

Fifty years after May 4, 1970, an interdisciplinary team from Kent State University is working to develop technology that will allow users to look back in time through a computer or mobile device. Users will be able to physically visit locations related to the shootings on the Kent Campus, or view them on a web browser, and see what they looked like 50 years ago.

"The experience we are creating allows users at any location to view the past in the frame of the present through the lens of augmented reality," says Robert Clements, PhD, associate professor of biological sciences. "Coupling historical imagery with descriptive audio immerses the viewer in the events of May 4th, prompting reflection to promote healing."

Clements is part of a team that includes principal investigator Rick Ferdig, PhD, Summit Professor of Learning Technologies and professor of educational technology, along with Enrico Gandolfi, PhD, assistant professor of educational technology, Annette Kratoski, PhD, director of the Research Center for Educational Technology, and Cheng-Chang Lu, PhD, professor of computer science, as co-investigators.

## PROJECT BEGINNING AND EVOLUTION

Coinciding with the 50th commemoration of May 4, 1970, these faculty members received a grant for \$175,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to launch an on-site and online augmented reality (AR) experience.

With the AR experience, a viewer can enjoy 360-degree views of the Kent Campus, along with the AR components using their mobile phone, a tablet or a laptop—from anywhere in the world.

This project evolution became even more valuable when COVID-19 concerns necessitated the cancellation of May 4 50th Commemoration events. "Little did we know how important this would become for the 50th commemoration," says Rick Ferdig. "It allows people to 'come to campus' when we can't physically be together."

## MAY 4 AUGMENTED REALITY EXPERIENCE

Users navigate to the website to visit the designated AR hotspots or take a tour that suggests visiting hotspots in a specific order. When users click on a hotspot, they will see a 360-degree view of a place on the Kent Campus.

Using their touchscreen or mouse they can "look" around the scene until they land on the spot with the historic photo overlay. A short audio clip plays, relaying the history of that location in context, and links to other audio and video resources will appear.

In the mobile version, users will visit physical locations on the Kent Campus and, in the application, turn their phone for 360-degree views of the scene.

## IMMERSIVE AND ENGAGING FOR USERS

There are currently seven AR hotspots; as the project continues, the team hopes to create 15 to 22 total AR hotspots.

Ferdig and his team worked closely with University Libraries to enrich the AR experience with relevant, engaging content.

James Raber, BS '02, MET '09, PhD '20, executive director of educational technology and service management, worked with the team. For his recent doctorate in educational psychology, he based his dissertation around this project and tested it with users.

"The research showed that regardless of user's prior level of AR experience or their affinity towards learning history," says Ferdig, "their knowledge of the May 4 event and their interest in the topic significantly grew." ⚡

—Phil Soencksen, BS '89

View the May 4th Augmented Reality Experience at <http://may4thxr.kent.edu>.





# BECOMING A SCHOLAR AND STORYTELLER

**Research into black student activism at Kent State helped a digital media production major find his voice and further his dream to film African American narratives.**

By April McClellan-Copeland

Photo by Bob Christy, BS '95

Until recently, Aidan Taylor, a junior at the Kent Campus, was unsure about his career aspirations. So how did he transform himself into a scholar whose undergraduate research presentation garnered a first-place finish?

Taylor says the transformation took focus, a passion for Pan-African studies, and mentors and professors who inspired him to apply for Kent State's Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE).

During SURE's 2019 summer session, Taylor, a digital media production major, connected with

Amoaba Gooden, PhD, chair of Kent State's Department of Pan-African Studies, to assist in her research for a documentary project. Taylor researched the role black students at Kent State played in the anti-war, black power and civil rights movements prior to and after May 4, 1970.

He was among more than 50 SURE student fellows who each had three minutes to present their findings before faculty, staff and peers last October.

"I had never presented research, so I was nervous and ready to get it over with," says Taylor, who showed slides and talked about his research project. "I was taken by surprise when I won

first place. The experience showed me that what I'm doing matters, that people care about research in the humanities and that my voice has power."

Taylor's SURE project is part of a documentary, *Advocacy, Resiliency and Black Liberation, an Oral History*, being produced by Dr. Gooden, who says he came to the project equipped with a profound curiosity, which pushed him to ask detailed questions that advanced the research.

"This curiosity, coupled with his passion for learning and understanding the complexity and nuance of black life, makes him an ideal candidate for graduate school," she says. "I have no

doubt that he will fulfill his dream of capturing various narratives of the African American experience through film."

Initially, Taylor began his SURE project by looking at the role of Kent State's black students during the May 4 protests and shootings. However, as he examined photographs from that day, one thing became apparent—very few, if any, black students took part in the protests.

"I found out that Kent State's Black United Students [BUS] told black students to stay away from the May 4 protest," says Taylor, who interviewed a couple of BUS members who had been on campus at the time. The black students were aware of the Orangeburg Massacre of 1968, one of the most violent events of the civil rights movement.

On the evening of Feb. 8, 1968, four years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, highway patrolmen in Orangeburg, SC, opened fire on about 200 unarmed black students at South Carolina State University who were protesting racial segregation. Three young men were shot and killed and 28 people were wounded.

BUS members knew that the Ohio National Guard soldiers called to the Kent Campus during the May protests were likely carrying guns loaded with bullets not blanks.

As Taylor expanded his research into the decades leading up to May 4, he noted Oscar Ritchie's appointment as a full-time faculty member at Kent State in 1947, making him the first African American to serve on the faculty of any predominantly white university in Ohio.

He also examined events that preceded the founding of BUS in April 1968, and the student organization's mass walkout to protest the presence of recruiters from the Oakland, Calif., police force on campus in November 1968.

Their activism resulted in the creation of the Institute for African American Affairs (IAAA) in 1969, the Center of Pan-African Culture (CPAC) in 1970 and the Department of Pan-African Studies in 1976. And it galvanized student activism nationwide.

"I wanted to emphasize how black students democratized Kent State and campuses around the world," says Taylor. "We were one of the first places in Ohio to get a Black Studies program. I also wanted to highlight what our black

students did with the anti-war and black power equity movements that spread to other campuses. Campuses such as Columbia and UC Berkley looked to Kent State to see what we did and how we affected change."

Taylor, a native of Cincinnati, attended the city's School for Creative and Performing Arts, and developed an interest in fashion. While in high school, he read a book by political activist and author Angela Davis, which piqued his interest in African American history. But when he enrolled at Kent State, his initial goal was to break into the fashion industry.

**"I wanted to emphasize how black students democratized Kent State and campuses around the world."**

Then he was accepted into the Student Multicultural Center's Academic STARS (Students Achieving and Reaching for Success)—a six-week cultural and retention program that helps prepare newly admitted African American, Latinx American, Hispanic, Native American and multiracial students to achieve academic success, enrich their college experience and explore their cultural heritage.

Living at the Kent Campus the summer before his freshman year, Taylor took two college-credit courses, participated in STARS activities and met African American professors and mentors. And he began to think about black history in a way he hadn't before.

"Growing up, I didn't know that people studied African history," says Taylor. His mother, who is white, had prepared him for what he might encounter as a young biracial man, and his father, who is black, had instilled in him a work ethic—but Taylor hadn't thought deeply about his cultural heritage.

"When I started learning more about black history, it changed my view on life and my place in the world and academia," he says. After completing

the SURE program, he added Pan-African studies as a second major.

Taylor serves as a LEAD (Leading by Example as an Advocate for Diversity) Ambassador, a program created by Kent State's Academic Diversity Outreach in University College to help minority students navigate their college experience.

He is also president and founder of Collective, a student organization he created to connect artists across the Kent Campus and help them collaborate to bring their visions to life.

Now he is working on an independent documentary, *Black Images*,

*Black Voices*, which examines how African Americans are represented in the media and how they see themselves in the world.

Recently, his presentation on the documentary project earned him second place in the 2nd annual Student Media FlashLab Innovation Pitch Contest. The \$300 prize money will help him fund his plans for producing a two-hour documentary. Each winning idea will also share up to \$10,000 from the Student Media Innovation Fund in order to launch, test and maintain their ideas in coming months.

Taylor hopes to travel the East Coast to explore how different populations of black people feel about where they're at in life.

Through his participation in Academic STARS, SURE, LEAD, and Student Media programs, Taylor acknowledges that Kent State has opened doors for him to do meaningful work and impact society.

"It feels good to have my university back me up," says Taylor, who plans to attend graduate school and teach film someday. "Kent State has brought me a lot of good things in terms of preparing me for my career." ⚡





# THE FUNKY WINKERBEAT

**When two Kent State grads connect,  
a classic comic strip gets a current update.**

*By Macy Kittelberger, BS '20*

*Photos by Ramì Daud*

About five years ago, cartoonist Tom Batiuk, BFA '69—perhaps best known for his long-running newspaper comic strip, *Funky Winkerbean*—was contacted by a local high school student who wanted to interview him for a story to run on the school's cable TV channel.

It was the first time that Batiuk [rhymes with attic], who is based in Medina, Ohio, had heard about The BEAT, an award-winning, student-driven program that offers young professionals, from 6th to 12th grade, the opportunity to

experience journalism in a hands-on way. (The BEAT stands for Brunswick Educational Access Television and serves the Brunswick City School District.) Once Batiuk saw the television studio in Medina and everything the students were doing, he wanted to learn more—as research for his comic strip.

"*Funky* is a reflection of my life," says Batiuk, who retired from teaching art in 1972 to focus on the nationally syndicated strip, which ran in 78 newspapers at that time and now appears in more than 400 newspapers worldwide.

*Left: Cartoonist Tom Batiuk is interviewed by one of the student members of The BEAT, as John Wasylo, BEAT advisor and Channel 22 manager, looks on.*

*Below: This Funky Winkerbean comic strip featuring The BEAT ran on Sunday, March 3, 2019. Used with permission.*

"My characters started in high school, grew to young adults, and are in their late middle age. Along the way they've reflected my own experiences and, by extension, the experiences of my readers as we've traveled the same road through life."

When Batiuk was on set at The BEAT studio for his interview, he observed how the school news program operates. "I was surprised at how far advanced everything was," he says. "I asked [the program's advisor] if I could hang around and get some reference materials so that I could update things for the Westview High School that's in *Funky*."

Turns out The BEAT's advisor is a Kent State grad, too. John Wasylo, BA '80, who received a degree in communications, says, "Our students are being groomed to be 'backpack journalists.' They're not only taught how to work equipment, but more importantly, they're taught how to write and how to construct a good news story."

Wasylo discovered early in his career that he liked working for corporations, producing videos and working with communications of any sort. Hired as the community relations representative for Brunswick City Schools in 1997, he was encouraged to use his video skills in supporting the school cable channel, as well as managing communications for the district.

"The first year I was shooting videos throughout the district," Wasylo says, "and I had students coming up to me all the time saying, 'Wow, that looks like a lot of fun,' or 'That looks neat, how can I get involved?'"

He wanted to find a way to meet the students' interests, and after speaking with the school superintendent about starting a video program, The BEAT was born.

Since the program's beginning in 2000, the 11- to 18-year-old student members of The BEAT are given opportunities to experience real-world journalism—writing news stories, conducting on-camera interviews and even editing, shooting and directing their own content.

It's a collaborative effort, and one that Wasylo says was inspired by his own experience at Kent State in the late '70s. He was one of a group of students with a passion for all kinds of music who were hired to work as board operators and occasional hosts during the day on WKSU.

They also produced an entirely student-driven show at night called "Fresh Air" [unrelated to the current NPR program hosted by Terry Gross], which played music interspersed with interviews of artists from around the world talking about their music.

**"Funky is a  
reflection of  
my life."**

— Tom Batiuk

"While we were programming the music, we would ask if the artist who created it would talk with us," recalls Wasylo. "It was as simple as asking." Most of the musicians they contacted said "yes"—including prominent artists such as Peter Gabriel and Andrew Lloyd Weber.

"That's when I got my first taste that young people can do anything—and if they work together, the sky is the limit," Wasylo says. "I tried to bring that spirit of collaboration into what we're doing with The BEAT. I want young people to feel that anything is possible." ▶







Members of The BEAT pose with Tom Batiuk and John Wasylo on the set in the TV studio at Brunswick High School. The news set was donated by FOX 8 Cleveland around 2012.

Wasylo is impressed with how far The BEAT has come since its start. Batiuk is, too—and he was inspired to update his daily comic strip to be “a little more current.” He wrote a storyline incorporating the real school news program into a similar one for students at his strip’s fictional Westview High School.

“I just stole their studio, wunk it into *Funky* and wrote off that,” Batiuk says. “I took my character, Les, who had been the advisor for the school newspaper and put him in John’s role of being the advisor for this television station.”

He also took inspiration from the Westview High School’s mascot, a scapegoat, and the sound it makes to create a name for his comic strip’s television station. “Instead of calling it The BEAT, I call it The BLEAT, just adding a little ‘L’ in there.”

Batiuk says it helps him to ground his work in a real setting. So now he comes around The BEAT studio about once a year to observe and research for his work. Recently, he included a story in the strip based off the Brunswick BEAT students’ yearly efforts in covering the Medina County Fair.

“It’s funny how sometimes life imitates art,” Wasylo says. “We are so honored that he sees us as adding value and contributing something to the strip.” ⚡

Macy Kittelberger, BS ’20, majored in public relations at Kent State’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication. Now that she has graduated, she hopes to take everything she has learned at Kent State and pursue a career in corporate communications.



Left: Tom Batiuk at the drawing board in his studio in Medina, Ohio. Photo credit: Erin Baka



Right: John Wasylo shows one of The BEAT students how to adjust the height of a tripod.

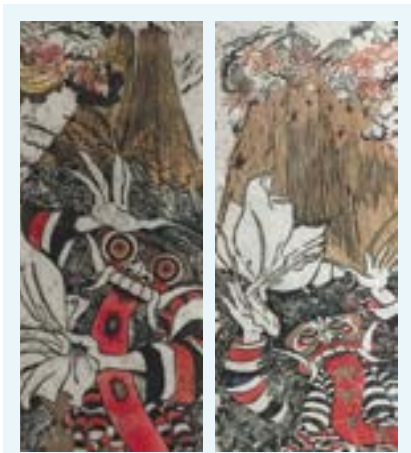


class NOTES

1960s



**Raymond Borom, BA '63, MED '66**, Akron, Ohio, former director of affirmative action at Kent State from 1983 to 1997, and his son, **R. Todd Borom, BA '83**, Glen Cove, NY, collaborated in writing *Don't Die Broke: Easy Steps on How to Save, Invest and Build Your Wealth*, was released on Amazon and in bookstores early February 2020. The 100-page book is designed to help anyone—teen, millennial or baby boomer—quickly learn how the stock market works and why it's essential to begin investing.



**Charles "Chuck" Miley, BS '65**, Maplewood, NJ, wrote, "The 9/11 Memorial Museum located at ground zero in the footprint of the World Trade Towers in New York City, has acquired my woodblock print diptych for their permanent collection. The woodblock print has pochoir, relief and collage elements and is titled "T was Rangda Set the Birds Afire I & II." The image of Rangda is of Balinese Hinduism and is one manifestation of Durga the killer witch."

**Gary Feateringham, BS '66**, North Potomac, Md., wrote, "My memoir, *Three Months of Socialism: Living in USSR During the 1970s*, was published through Amazon (August 2019). It captures the first three months of our daily life while I was working at the Joint Institute of Nuclear Research in Dubna, Russia, from 1972 to 1977, assigned to the East European Operations of Control Data Corporation, a supercomputer



**George Palovich, MFA '64**, and Janet Trisler, (who attended KSU from 1960-62 and received a BFA from The University of Akron in 1972), Sun City, Ariz., were given a 50-year retrospective of their artwork at West Valley Art Museum and Peoria City Hall Art Gallery in Peoria, Ariz., from Nov. 25, 2019 to Jan. 17, 2020. The exhibition, *An Artistic Life Together*, included works in ceramics, drawing, painting, sculpture, fine printmaking and dolls produced over their 58-year art career and marriage. To view more of their work see <https://sites.google.com/site/artbytrisal/welcome>.

"I Believe in Little Richard" ceramic by George Palovich and Janet Trisler

manufacturer. It is not political, but rather documents our struggles living under the Soviet system and trying to raise an infant daughter."



**Richard Margolis, BS '69**, Rochester, NY, exhibited *Upheaval: Photographs of Anti-War Events at Kent State & Ohio Ku Klux Klan Rallies* during the Cleveland Photo Fest at Images Photographic Arts Gallery in Lakewood, Ohio, from Sept. 15 to Oct. 12, 2019. The images were printed in 2018 and 2019 from existing negatives of photos taken between 1965 and 1970 at and around Kent State—many never printed until recently. Margolis was a photojournalism major, edited the 1968 *Chestnut Burr* and lived in Kent until 1972. He photographed Sunday night, May 3, 1970, and was processing film on Monday when the sirens began going by. He photographed on campus later that afternoon and at several memorial events following the shootings. He is now printing that and other film from back then, exhibiting prints in his studio/gallery in Rochester. For more information see [www.richardmargolis.com](http://www.richardmargolis.com). Pictured: Viewing "Gretchen and I on a Date—1965," included in *Upheaval*.



**Patricia Arredondo, BSE '67**, Phoenix, was elected chair of The American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, Inc. for the 2019-2020 academic year. Dr. Arredondo, a first-generation college student, is a scholar-practitioner, organizational consultant, licensed psychologist and the author of seven books and other scholarly publications. Her latest book is *Latinx Immigrants: Transcending Acculturation*

and *Xenophobia* (2018). She is president of the Arredondo Advisory Group and faculty fellow with Fielding Graduate University. For her leadership and scholarship in psychology she was recognized as a Changemaker: Top 25 Psychologists of Color by the American Psychological Association in 2018.

50TH REUNION—1970

1970s

**Paula Stone Tucker, BA '70, MA '74, EdS '81**, Tallmadge, Ohio, is author of *Surviving: A Kent State Memoir*, available on Amazon, about her years at Kent State, when she was a witness to the May 4, 1970 shootings. She won the Silver Award for Memoir and Autobiography from the Florida Writers Association. Tucker splits her time between Northeast Ohio and The Villages, Fla.

**Greg Long, BBA '71**, Wooster, Ohio, a retired lieutenant colonel, participated in a panel with other former members of the Kent State ROTC, "Honoring Those Who Served in ROTC in 1970," in November 2019 at the Kent State Student Center, as part of the university's 50th Commemoration of May 4, 1970, events. President and managing partner of Long, Cook & Samsa, Inc., an accounting firm in Wooster, Ohio, he serves as treasurer and chair for the Committee on Finance of the Kent State University Foundation, is a member of the College of Business Administration's National Advisory Board and chair of the college's Accounting Advisory Council.



**Todd Raskin, BS '72**, Chagrin Falls, Ohio, founding partner of Mazanec, Raskin & Ryder Co., LPA, which has offices in Cleveland and Columbus, Ohio, has been named Cleveland's 2020 "Lawyer of the Year" in civil rights law by *Best Lawyers*. It's his third time receiving the designation, which he also received in 2013 and 2017. Raskin has a diverse legal practice with an emphasis on civil rights and government liability defense, as well as the defense of employers, both public and private.



**Margaret (Shoaf) Tracey, BS '70**, Warren, Ohio; **Cheryl (Youngmann) Russo, BS '71**, Medina, Ohio; and **Margaret (Hoyer) Akbar, BS '72**, Chippewa Lake, Ohio, met fall quarter 1967 and became friends and roommates in Terrace Hall, Koontz Hall and Tonkin Court (off-campus apartments). All became teachers. Tracey is a member of the American Association of University Women, Warren-Trumbull branch. Russo earned a MEd in reading and literacy from the University of Akron. Akbar earned a MEd '80 in administration and a MEd '82 in psychology from the University of Akron; she went on to become a school psychologist in the Medina, Ohio, school district. The former "roomies" frequently visit the Kent Campus for their get-togethers. Pictured, (left to right): Margaret Akbar, Cheryl Russo, Margaret Tracey.



**Dixie Benschhoff Ludick, MEd '73, PhD '77**, Aurora, Ohio, was awarded the Hiram College Lifetime Achievement Award by President Lori Varlotta in a ceremony at Hiram College on June 15, 2019. Dr. Ludick is a nationally recognized psychologist who has provided consultation and training for professionals in industry, education, medicine and nonprofit agencies, and clinical services to college students, couples, groups, seniors and families. She is currently adjunct assistant professor of community and family medicine at Northeast Ohio Medical University. Her book, *Increasing Your Personal and Professional Effectiveness: A Manual for Women Who Want to Accomplish More without Changing Who They Are*, was published in 2016.

**Carter Strang, BS '73, MEd '79**, Shaker Heights, Ohio, wrote, "I organized and spoke at 'The Kent State Shootings, May 4, 1970—The Day the War Came Home and Its Legal Aftermath,' a CLE [Continuing Legal Education] seminar at a Cleveland-Marshall Law Alumni event in October 2019. Other speakers included attorneys for the Ohio National Guard and students involved in the criminal and civil litigation. The CLE was the subject of a *Record-Courier* article on Oct. 27, 2019."

**Daryl Hall, BS '74**, Scottsdale, Ariz., wrote, "My book, *Flashback: A Young Man's Search for Truth About the Kent State Shootings*, was released on Amazon in October 2019. Written in memory of the four slain students who died on May 4, 1970, the book begins when I learn about the shootings as a senior in high school only a forty-five-minute drive from Kent State; I'd signed a letter of intent to play football for the Flashes in the fall. "While the shooting aftermath is the main theme of the book, I also share stories during my four years at Kent State, which include the Vietnam War, the impeachment of President Nixon, college life, music of the time and KSU football. During my time on campus, the football team won the first conference championship in school history (1972); teammates on the squad included Gary Pinkel, Gerald Tinker, Jack Lambert, Nick Saban and Larry Poole."

**John Matsis, BFA '74**, Las Vegas, was one of ten former Farrell High School (Farrell, Pa.) graduates inducted into the Farrell Alumni Hall of Fame at its 15th annual banquet on Oct. 12 at the Park Inn by Radisson. He was honored for carving out a multi-faceted career through varied professional endeavors, which included acting, teaching at bartender school, city government, culinary school, school accreditation and evaluation, real estate and the teaching of social media strategies from Kent, Ohio, to Atlanta, to the Shenango Valley and, for the last 20 years, Las Vegas.

**Michael Cajero, MFA '76**, Tucson, Ariz., wrote, "I graduated from the KSU Art Department with a MFA in studio art; emphasis on sculpture, painting and art history. My advisor was Leroy Flint. From 1971 to 1975, the main influence at the time came from process art [which emphasizes the "process" of making art and the concepts of change and transience]. Artists like Lynda Benglis, Joseph Beuys, Arte Povera, Robert Smithson, Vito Acconci, Robert Morris, etc. provided a strong direction for our work. "Another strong influence was the industrial sensibility provided by Akron and Cleveland, which encouraged artists to use common building materials such as tar, paper, plastic, paint, rubber, etc. I built an environment out of common masking tape. Ephemerality was a key element in the creation of my figured sculpture. "I've continued along the same line of thinking up to the present day, and I'm still producing work. All my sculpture, drawings and ceramics are in the collection of the Process Museum in Tucson, Ariz." *The museum is open by appointment for tours. Reservations can be made on the website, [www.processmuseum.org](http://www.processmuseum.org), or [processmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:processmuseum@gmail.com).*

**Tom Sudow, BA '76**, Shaker Heights, Ohio, was elected International President of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs (FJMC) in July 2019. He will serve a two-year term as the 44th president of the global organization, which is celebrating

its 90th year, and he says destigmatizing addiction and mental illness will be among top agenda items in Conservative synagogues across the globe in the coming years. As a KSU student, Sudow was active at the university's Hillel, where he met his wife, Michele. Currently, he is director of the Burton D. Morgan Center for Entrepreneurship at Ashland University and the director of business development for Cleveland Clinic Innovations in Cleveland.

**Robert Trifiletti, MA '76**, Boston, was a graduate student working in Tri-Towers in 1970. The events surrounding May 4 were traumatic for him, and he only returned to campus in 1976 to finish his master's degree. During his career, he worked for the US Department of Education and *The Washington Post*.

As a program officer in the Office of English Language Acquisition, for many years he volunteered to teach Italian and Spanish to government employees and donated the tuition to My Sister's Place, a shelter for survivors of domestic violence. He and the employees of the Office of Language Acquisition received a President's Award from President George W. Bush in 2005 for extraordinary support of voluntarism through the Combined Federal Campaign National Capital Area.

Since 2008, he has been the director of the Italian Center of New York City, Boston Office, where he initiates conferences on Italian culture and the Holocaust. Trifiletti appeared briefly in and wrote his part of the documentary "God is the Bigger Elvis," which was nominated for an Academy Award: Documentary Short Subject in 2012.

As part of the Prisoner Visitation Service, he volunteers at the Federal Medical Center, Devens, Mass., and he helps feed the homeless at the Pine Street Inn: Shattuk Men's Shelter, Boston. He also teaches Italian and donates the tuition to women's shelters in Boston.

**Gary Zwick, BBA '76**, Bainbridge Twp., Ohio, wrote, "I am a partner in the Cleveland law firm of Walter Haverfield, LLP, where I practice in the areas of tax, estates and trusts and ERISA [Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974] law.

"Recently, the legal treatise I coauthored with James John Jurinski of the University of Portland, *Tax and Financial Planning for the Loosely Held Family Business*—originally published by ALI-ABA in 1999 and updated thereafter, but out of print for almost 10 years—was picked up by Edward Elgar Publishers in the UK.

"We updated it, and it is now back in print. The book is generally found in law libraries around the country and used as a textbook. I am married to **Linda Hollander Zwick, BA '77.**"

**Michele (Makros) Weitzel, BFA '77**, Copley, Ohio, is a local beekeeper and first-time author. She was dedicated to her career as a graphic designer before choosing early retirement





Kent State men's soccer alumni surround Rudy Bachna, head coach of the program, spanning the years 1963-80.

Kent State Men's Soccer Alumni Reunion Recap

Kent State men's soccer alumni (1963 to 1980) held a reunion on Saturday, Sept. 21, 2019, at the Courtyard by Marriott in Stow, Ohio, attended by 39 former Kent State men's soccer players and coaches, 20 spouses and significant others, who all came from across the United States, and were joined by five Kent State Athletics staff.

Organized by former player **Fred Jermyn, BS '74**, San Diego, it was the first full-scale reunion of Kent State men's soccer alumni since the program began 70 years ago. It originated in 1949 as a Club team by Fred Davidson, PhD, a psychology professor who had played the game in high school and amateur ranks and wanted to introduce the sport to KSU. The soccer program came to a halt after the 1950 season when Dr. Davidson was called into the US military for the Korean War. It was relaunched in 1963 by Rudy Bachna (who also founded the Kent State gymnastics program in 1959, serving as head coach of gymnastics until



his retirement in 1991). Varsity status was achieved for Kent State men's soccer in 1965 and continued through the program's final season in 1980.

Bachna was honored by the Kent State men's soccer alumni with a trophy for Most Head Coach Wins and a plaque recognizing his legacy, which will be installed in the Kent State Field House.

Awards also were presented to **Zoltan Balogh, BArch '69**, Richfield, Ohio; **Nick DiGrino, BS '71**, Macomb, Ill.; **Bob Clouse, BSE '76**, Columbus, Ohio; and **Jeff Johnson, BS '77**, Houston—as goalkeepers who are now listed in the *NCAA Men's Soccer Division I Record Book*, 40-plus years after their feats occurred.

**Gary Gough, BS '92**, Hudson, Ohio, a player from 1972-75, says, "It took one fantastic banquet organizer, a lot of traveling for most and 39-70 years to attend the greatest Kent State banquet in history." (See [www.kent.edu/magazine/MensSoccerReunion](http://www.kent.edu/magazine/MensSoccerReunion) for a list of the reunion attendees.)

Rudy Bachna, who relaunched the Kent State men's soccer program in 1963, is presented with a trophy for Most Head Coach Wins by Fred Jermyn, BS '74, San Diego, one of his former players in 1970. Jermyn wrote the Kent State University Men's Club & Varsity Soccer Media Guide & Record Book of 1949-1980 to preserve the historical data of the program. The 541-page book is available for free download via request by email to [fred.jermyn@hotmail.com](mailto:fred.jermyn@hotmail.com).

to take care of her aging mother. While liquidating her mother's estate, she came across WWII memorabilia and a large collection of love letters between her mother and father, inspiring her to write *Love Letters from the Marine Wolf: A US Hospital and Transport Ship, an Army Medic Afloat, and a War Bride in World War II*, available on Amazon. The book qualified as an art exhibit at the grand opening reception of the 50 Years of VCD at the Kent State University Alumni Show in August 2019.



**Michael Batchelor, BS '78, MA '82**, Fairview, Pa., was appointed to the board of directors of Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania, a philanthropy network now comprising 100 grant-making organizations of all types. Batchelor was selected as the first executive director of The Erie Community Foundation (ECF) in 1990, and was named its president in 1996. Under his leadership, assets grew from \$20 million to \$448 million, placing ECF within the top 10 percent of community foundations nationwide.

1980s

**Kevin Schwartzhoff, BS '80**, Kent, Ohio, has been named Kent's new Parks and Recreation Department director. He most recently served as public services director for Colerain Township near Cincinnati.



**Kenneth Durgans, MA '81**, Kansas City, Mo., was named associate provost for diversity and inclusion at Kansas City University. Previously, he was with the University of Colorado, School of Dental Medicine,

in Aurora, Colo., where he served as a key member of the dean's senior administrative team with oversight for all diversity and inclusion activities that support students, faculty and staff. He has held similar positions at several institutions.



**Richard Kibler, BS '81**, Hartville, Ohio, a Hugh A. Glauser School of Music alumnus, has been named Stark County's 2020 Music Educator of the Year, and he was presented with the award during a recent

Canton Symphony Orchestra concert. Kibler currently teaches band in the Lake Local Schools.

Another Kent State alumnus, **Brian Kieffer, MM '14**, Canton, Ohio, who has taught vocal music in the Plain Local Schools for more than 30 years, received the annual award in 2018. Several other Kent State alumni have also been finalists for the distinction since its inception in 2017.



**Margaret Giller, BS '83**, Petersburg, Va., worked as a GS-07 to 13 safety and occupational health professional for the DoD/Army at major training areas in Germany; at a five-state Army Reserve Region headquartered in Pittsburgh; and at Fort Lee, Va. (25 years). She is currently with the Area Support Group, Kuwait (a major US Army base/deployment camp), functioning as area radiation safety officer. She was awarded Army Safety & Health/Explosive Safety professional certification in December 2019.

**Anna Halberstam Rubin, PhD '82**, Palo Alto, Calif., was the only member of her immediate family to survive the Holocaust. She gave a talk about her experiences at Temple Beth-El in Eureka, Calif., in September 2019, with readings from her recently published memoir, *Just a Little Girl: Despair and Deliverance* (April 2019). She is also the author of *Sholom Aleichem: The Writer as Social Historian* (1989).



**Robin Alford, BS '84**, Crestview, Fla., wrote, "I have retired from the Department of Defense as a civil servant in the acquisitions career field, with 34 years of service to our country. I am also a

licensed nail technician and certified medical nail technician, and am now operating my own nail services business, TALONted, with an emphasis on providing safe services to persons who are classified as "at risk" because of chronic illnesses, such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease."

**Benjamin Holbert, III, BA '84**, Beachwood, Ohio, has been accepted into the Cleveland Leadership Center's Class of 2020, a premiere senior leadership think tank. The ten-month program—which aims to give members a better understanding of the role of diversity within the community and to cultivate relationships with leaders across a wide range of sectors, industries and backgrounds—began in September 2019.

Holbert is a business owner and has served as mayor of Woodmere Village, Ohio, since January 2018, after serving as councilman for six years. He also has many years of experience as a local TV news anchor.

**Michael Armstrong, BBA '86, MBA '90**, Cleveland, has published his debut children's book, *Best Day Ever* (Sterling Publishing, spring 2020). It's the last day of summer vacation and William has one thing left to accomplish: have the best day ever. Unfortunately, his meticulous efforts keep getting sidetracked by Anna's outlandish interruptions. After dismissing each one, William is finally ready to have the best day ever—if only he could figure out how. Described as "hilarious" and "infused with fun," the book is available on Amazon, BN.com, BAM.com and bookstores everywhere. Learn more at [www.michaeljarmstrongbooks.com](http://www.michaeljarmstrongbooks.com).



**Stephanie Donofe Meeks, BS '87, MEd '97, K-12 School Library Media Licensure 2003**, Columbus, Ohio, library media specialist at Columbus Public Schools and former director for

integrated technology at the Ohio Department of Education, was recognized as the 2019 Presidential Award recipient in October 2019, at the OELMA [Ohio Educational Library Media Association] conference in Dublin, Ohio. The award is presented to an individual or group who has provided notable service and significant contributions to OELMA and school librarians.

**Beth (Snode) Zbasnik, BA '87, MA '96**, Minerva, Ohio, wrote: "I recently self-published a children's book titled, *Cooper: a fish, a flower shop, a funeral home and a happy ending*. The concept was swirling around in my mind for about 15 years, then pen finally met paper. Based on a true story, it is available at the major booksellers. I am the assistant clinical coordinator in the Physician Assistant Studies Program at the University of Mount Union in Alliance, Ohio."

**Tony Trigilio, BA '88**, Chicago, wrote: "I was selected for *Newcity* magazine's "Lit 50: Who Really Rocks Books in Chicago, 2019," honoring the year's top 50 literary figures in Chicago. Also, my latest book, *Ghosts of the Upper Floor: The Complete Dark Shadows (of My Childhood)*, Book 3, was published this year by BlazeVOX Books."



**Todd Washburn, BS '88**, Dripping Springs, Texas, in November 2019 became the superintendent of schools in Dripping Springs Independent School District (ISD), a district with more than 7,200 students west of

Austin, Texas. Previously, he had been the associate superintendent of curriculum and instruction at Eanes ISD since 2016. He received a master's degree in educational administration and superintendent certificate from Southwest

Texas State University in 2003. Over his 29 years in education, he also served as a teacher/coach, assistant principal and principal at both the middle school and high school levels, and the executive director of secondary curriculum in Leander ISD.

**Jennifer (Loudiana) Hollinger, BGS '89, MEd '94**, Massillon, Ohio, is the director of user support and classroom technology in Information Technology Services at Walsh University in North Canton, Ohio. She is also an adjunct instructor at Walsh in the DeVille School of Business, and she is on the planning team for and teaches the freshman orientation required course. Previously, she was the education and training specialist in Information Technology Services at Case Western Reserve University and a senior web coordinator in Information Technology at The University of Utah. She is married to **Brian Hollinger, BA '90**.

1990s



**Lisa (Hicks) Dael, BA '90, MLS '91**, Athens, Ohio, wrote, "In October 2019 I was promoted to assistant director of online and outreach programs for the Patton College of Education at Ohio University."



**Erica Maxwell, BSE '93, MEd '96**, Chandler, Ariz., was hired as the Arizona Department of Education's first-ever associate superintendent of equity, diversity and inclusion. In addition to her more than 25

years as a certified educator, she has supported at-risk youth and diverse student populations by cofounding the Arizona Multicultural Education Conference in 2011 and founding Club READ (Reading Experiences Appreciating Diversity), a free summer reading club for Chandler students in 2013. She received the East Valley NAACP Education Advocacy Award in 2015.



**Don Decker, BS '94**, Weston, Fla., was recently appointed city manager, chief executive officer of the City of Weston, Fla. He was previously the director of parks and recreation for the city and has worked for

Weston since 2001.

**Ryan Keating, BBA '97**, Westlake, Ohio, was named chief financial officer of Sea-Land Chemical Company.





**Brandi Hephner LaBanc, MEd '97**, Hadley, Mass., was named the vice chancellor for student affairs and campus life at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She began her new duties in January 2020. Hephner LaBanc, who has more than two decades of experience in higher education, previously served as vice chancellor for student affairs at the University of Mississippi, since 2012—the first woman to hold that position in the university's history. She has also been a professor of higher education since July 2019 and was associate professor of higher education from 2012-19. Among her honors and special recognitions, Hephner LaBanc was inducted into the 2013 Hall of Fame by the College of Education, Health and Human Services at Kent State and has been recognized by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators as a Pillar of the Profession for 2020. At Ole Miss, she received the Lift Every Voice award, a highly regarded diversity and inclusion honor bestowed by colleague and student nominations.

**Kellea Tibbs, BA '97**, Frankfort, Ky., in February 2019 accepted a new position as the director for alumni relations at Kentucky State University in Frankfort, Ky. Previously, she was an assistant director for the OHIO Alumni Association at Ohio University for seven years.

**Joseph Connell, MA '98**, Brooklyn, NY, has been promoted to deputy director of neighborhood contracts for the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

**Mark Fink, AA '97, BGS '98**, Ithaca, NY, director of teaching and learning with technology for Ithaca College, has joined ShapingEDU: Dreamers, Doers, and Drivers Shaping the Future of Learning in the Digital Age, hosted by Arizona State University's Skysong Innovation Campus. The vision is for change-making individuals from a wide variety of learning-focused organizations across the world to collaborate on big ideas for

transforming education. By deliberate design, ShapingEDU is action-oriented and believes the future is what we invent it to be.

Dr. Fink leads one of the 10 actions and was appointed "mayor" to the neighborhood that is working to bolster intergenerational leadership for learning futures. While at Kent State, he was a counselor with the Academic Success Center, where cognitive and metacognitive strategies enabled student success.

**Rebecca Lewis, BA '98**, Bryn Mawr, Penn., in summer 2019 studied lowland rain forest and montane cloud forests while investigating the biotic, physical and cultural forces that affect tropical biodiversity in Costa Rica. A lower school science teacher at Baldwin School, she is a graduate student in Miami University's Global Field Program.



**Micah Kraus, BA '99, MA '01**, Akron, Ohio, gave an artist talk on Oct. 12, 2019, about the creative process and subject matter of the artwork in his exhibition *A Reasonable Decline* hosted by Akron Soul Train, an artist residency program fostering a more vibrant downtown Akron. The exhibition ran from Sept. 16 to Oct. 17, 2019. In his laser etchings on display, Kraus used local Akron imagery of decaying buildings, flaking signs and other general urban crustiness, burned through layers of ink and into paper, reducing beloved memories into abstracted representations.

**Kelly Groomes-O'Donnell, BS '99**, Medina, Ohio, in summer 2019 studied lowland rain forest and montane cloud forests while investigating the biotic, physical and cultural forces that affect tropical biodiversity in Costa Rica. An 8th grade science teacher at Midview Local School District, she is a graduate student in Miami University's Earth Expeditions.

**2000s**



**Robert Baldwin, BA '00**, DeLand, Fla., recently joined ShuffieldLowman law firm, working in the DeLand office as senior counsel in the area of estate planning. He has more than 15 years of experience at large, national



**Lisa Roberts, BS '99**, Mount Juliet, Tenn., is a comedy talent buyer at National Shows 2 (a concert promotion company, www.nationalshows2.com) based in Nashville, Tenn. She programs comedy for a few exclusively booked NS2 venues and also books nationally touring comedians in theaters nationwide. She has been featured in *Pollstar* magazine with various comedians she has presented.

law firms and received his JD from Ohio Northern University, where he completed a legal sabbatical at Oxford University. He is a licensed member of the Bar in Florida, Michigan and Washington, DC. Active in his community, Baldwin is a member of two local bands, and he and his wife regularly perform at the Athens Theatre in DeLand.



**Jonathan Katz, BS '00**, Shaker Heights, Ohio, was named managing editor of *Cannabis Business Times* and *Cannabis Dispensary* magazines by GIE Media, Valley View, Ohio, a marketing and

communications business-to-business media company serving 17 industries.

Most recently, Katz worked as a freelance writer and editor through his own firm, JSK Communications, LLC, providing business-to-business writing, editing and project management services for publishing and content marketing firms, as well as individual businesses.

**Benjamin Lybarger, BA '00**, Brooklyn, Ohio, in summer 2019 studied avian and tropical ecology in the Amazon. A general manager at K9 Cleveland, he is a graduate student in Miami University's Advanced Inquiry Program.

**Matt Windt, BBA '01**, Front Royal, Va., was recently hired as the program manager of membership by the National Defense Information Sharing and Analysis Center, located in Washington, DC, where he will be working on national defense cyber security issues. While at Kent State, he participated in the Washington Program in National Issues (WPNI) from January to April 2000. He cofounded the Kent State

**First Place on the Food Network**

**Leslie Srodek-Johnson, BS '01**, Sagamore Hills, Ohio, journalism graduate, mother of two and lead decorator and baker at Stan's Northfield Bakery, considers herself a "small town girl" who never thought she would be on national television.

Then she received a call in December 2018 from a scout for the Food Network, who had seen her work on social media and wanted to find out more. After being vetted over several weeks, she was invited to be part of the third season of "Christmas Cookie Challenge," which aired in December 2019. She competed in the episode, "Bright Lights, Big Cookies," won the judges over in the first round with her cute Santa-beard-on-a-stick cookies—and ended up bringing home the big win and \$10,000.

"It was an overwhelming experience. When they announced that I won, I was in shock," says Srodek-Johnson, who has worked in her family's Northeast Ohio bakery (started by her paternal grandparents, Stan and Helen Srodek, in 1961 and taken over by her father, Dave, in 1969) since she was in the fifth grade. She still works there with her mom, Kathie, every day.

Srodek-Johnson worked at the bakery while attending Kent State. Between the baking and decorating, she spent time with TV2 and says, "One of my favorite memories is co-hosting TV2's "Desperate for a Date," a dating

Backpacking Club through KSU's Department of Recreational Services in 1998.

**Scott Maidman, BBA '02**, Mt. Lebanon, Pa., has been recognized on the 2019 Forbes "Top 250 Next-Generation Wealth Advisors" list. This is the second year that Maidman, senior vice president, wealth management advisor for Merrill Lynch, has made the list.

He's worked for Merrill Lynch since 2007, but his fascination with investing began as a teenager, when he became an avid reader of financially focused websites and created "mock" portfolios. He majored in finance at Kent State, where he also played hockey, and earned an MBA in corporate finance from Robert Morris University. Today he is a member of the Parents Athletic Council in Mt. Lebanon, Pa., where he lives with his wife and two children.



**D'Andrea Mull, BA '02**, Gainesville, Fla., was appointed vice president for student affairs at the University of Florida, starting in January 2020. Previously, she was associate vice president for student life

and dean of students at The Ohio State University since 2017, and before that was assistant vice president for student life from 2012 to 2017.



Leslie Srodek-Johnson, of Stan's Northfield Bakery, won a 2019 episode of the Food Network's "Christmas Cookie Challenge." Photo courtesy of Nate Migal, @nateincle on Instagram.

show that aired from 1999-2001, with **Jason Herron, BGS '00**, and **Mike Polk, BA '01**."

Appearing on a national television network was a lot more nerve-wracking. She was flown out to Los Angeles in February 2019, and for her episode, she competed with four other bakers from across the country. "It's a lot of pressure to be on a national stage representing 58 years of your family's legacy," she says. "I didn't want to let my family down. I was so nervous, I think I lost ten pounds—I couldn't eat."

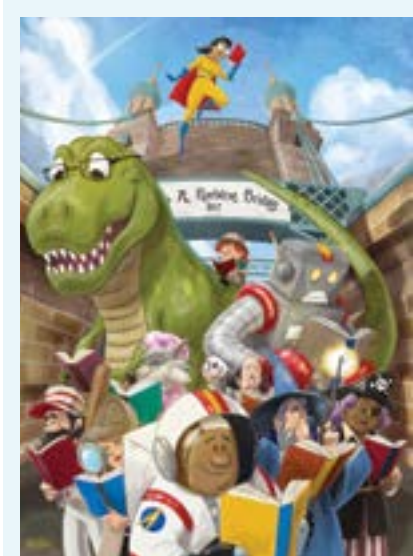
She had to keep the news of her win secret until the episode aired on Dec. 16, 2019, but two weeks before it aired, she made a dozen of the Santa-beard-on-a-stick cookies and put them in the bakery. "Nobody seemed to care about them," she laughs. "The night before the show aired, I decided to make about 200 of them just in case they were popular. Those were sold out by 8 am."

Srodek-Johnson knows her grandparents would be proud of her, and she was amazed at the congratulatory messages she received from fans after the episode ran. "I cannot believe how many people that I have met through the years and that have moved all over the country . . . came together tonight to watch the show about the little blonde girl from the hometown bakery," she wrote on Facebook.

She also received a handwritten letter of congratulations from Kent State President Todd Diacon—and a Certificate of Congressional Recognition and Achievement from congressman David Joyce in celebration of her win.

"I am super excited to have won," she says. "It was validation for me that my dedication to my family and our family business paid off." —Ashley Whaley, BS '06, MEd '12

*The episode is available on-demand on streaming services, including Food Network's website, Hulu Live and Sling.*



**Kevin Necessary**, (who attended KSU from 1997 to 2002), Cincinnati, illustrated the poster (left) for the 2019 Books by the Banks Cincinnati Regional Book Festival, an annual event that features national, regional and local authors and illustrators, held in downtown Cincinnati on Oct. 26, 2019. In August 2019, he was part of a team from WCPO-TV in Cincinnati that won an Ohio Valley Emmy for best Human Interest Program: "Living in the Shadows," a comic-journalism immigration piece. He also is a syndicated editorial cartoonist through GoComics.com and the illustrator of a children's book, *My Best Friend Fiona* (WCPO, 2017), written by Lucy May, about the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden's spunky baby hippo, Fiona. Necessary resigned his full-time cartoonist position with WCPO in October 2019, in order to freelance. For more information, see www.kevinnecessary.com.



**N. Scott Robinson, MA '02, PhD '13**, El Cajon, Calif., received his doctorate in musicology-ethnomusicology in 2013 and is now associate professor of music and chair of the music department at San Diego Mesa College in Calif.





**Adam Kern, BFA '03**, Seattle, in summer 2019 co-created and directed *Shadow of the Run, Chapter 1: Wanderlust*, an immersive theatre production, based on the Cleveland Torso Murders, believed to have been committed by an unidentified serial killer active in Cleveland between 1935 and 1938.

The audience followed the characters in and around historic buildings of downtown Bedford, Ohio, interacting with them and watching the action unfold up close and personal.

Kern has been doing theatre professionally for the past 15 years, after earning an MFA from the then American Repertory Theatre/Moscow Art Theatre School Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard University. For more information see <https://shadowoftherun.com>.



**Paul Marnecheck, BA '03**, North Royalton, Ohio, wrote, "In November 2019 I was elected to serve as council president for the City of North Royalton. I previously served for 10 years as the Ward 4 member of council."



**Liz Opsitnik, BS '03**, Arlington, Va., has been promoted to executive editor, consumer advice, at *US News and World Report*, where she oversees consumer-focused money, real estate, health and education content. With the company since 2011, she previously was managing editor, advice products, and deputy managing editor, autos.



**Jennifer Ling Datchuk, BFA '04**, San Antonio, was one of 50 visionary artists awarded a prestigious 2020 United States Artist Fellowship of \$50,000 of unrestricted funds. The annual awards recognize the most compelling artists working and living in the United States, in all disciplines, at every stage of their career. Datchuk, an assistant professor of



HEATHER KLINGER, KLINGER PRODUCTIONS



DAVE PERKIEWICZ, CLEVELAND.COM

**John Pippin Jr., BBA '04**, Cleveland, and his wife, Shelley, are co-winners of the HomeGrown Heroes award in the Food and Beverage category, and were recognized with 11 additional winners at the second annual [cleveland.com/The Plain Dealer](http://cleveland.com/ThePlainDealer) HomeGrown Heroes Award Reception on Nov. 13, 2019, at SmARTspace at 78th in Cleveland. The couple started Breenuts with a unique concept: donuts made with craft beers from local breweries.

Their Gordon Square shop—which is part donut shop, part bar with 16 beers on tap—opened in 2017 and has become wildly popular. HomeGrown Heroes celebrates the unsung heroes of the community who are working tirelessly on their start-ups, businesses, innovations and social organizations to fuel the economic development of the region.

ceramics at Texas State University, received the Emerging Voices award from the American Craft Council in 2017. She lives and maintains a studio practice in San Antonio, Texas. Learn more at [www.jenniferlingdatchuk.com](http://www.jenniferlingdatchuk.com).

**Joseph Di Lullo, BA '04**, Shelby, Ohio, was inducted into InfoCision Management Corporation's Hall of Fame, class of 2019.

**Dalia Colón, MAT '05**, Riverview, Fla., returned to WUSF [National Public Radio member station in the Tampa Bay area, owned by the University of South Florida] as producer of the Zest podcast. From 2010 to 2014, she covered health and features for WUSF. Before that, she was a staff reporter for the *Tampa Bay Times* and *Cleveland*

**Kristy (O'Hara) Glaspie, BS '04**, Kent, Wash., married Reggie Glaspie on April 14, 2018, in Sumner, Wash., and in true Pacific Northwest fashion, it rained the entire day. She is an editor and writer for World Vision's magazine and digital stories site. Her husband works in recruiting for Weyerhaeuser. She once again lives in a city named Kent, although this time it's in the state of Washington.



BOB CHRISTY '95

**Danielle Wiggins, BS '04, MA '09**, Bedford, Ohio, multimedia journalist and speaker, served as chief of ceremonies at the inauguration of President Todd Diacon at KSU's MAC Center on Nov. 1, 2019. In addition to her daily TV responsibilities as 3News morning traffic reporter at WKYC Studios in Cleveland, Wiggins also previously anchored the 4 am half hour of the Go! morning show and was the co-creator, host and producer of the station's "Rising" initiative, which told the stories of people in Northeast Ohio who have overcome obstacles to achieve success and are inspiring others to do the same.

In 2018, she won a regional Emmy Award and a Salute to Excellence Award from the National Association of Black Journalists for a "Rising" episode. Before joining 3News in 2013, she managed the production of "The Regina Brett Show" on 89.7 WKSU, an award-winning weekly, hour-long interview radio talk show. She also is executive producer of Vision Ideal Media, a company she started in 2006 to assist small business owners and/or nonprofit organizations in developing multimedia materials to connect with their target audience.

*Magazine*. Her work has been recognized by the Suncoast Regional Emmys, Telly Awards, Florida Associated Press Broadcasters, Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists and others. When she isn't sipping mojitos in the name of podcast research, you can find her in one of her other roles—producer/cohost of WEDU Arts Plus and mom to Norah and Benji, who always have an appetite for fun.



**Brian Michael Smith, BS '05**, New York, in June 2019 joined the cast of Showtime's *The L Word: Generation Q*, a sequel to the acclaimed series that aired from 2004-2009. He will portray Pierce Williams,

"a buttoned-up, fastidious, expert political strategist and a veteran of LA politics." In September 2019 he joined the cast of Fox's *9-1-1: Lone Star* alongside Rob Lowe and Liv Tyler. As a series regular in *9-1-1*'s Texas-set spinoff, Smith will portray a "transgender male firefighter with a gift for observation worthy of Sherlock Holmes"—making him the first black,



**Amanda (Holzen) Horgan, BA '05**, Hawthorne, Calif., was crowned the 2019 Ms. Woman United States in Las Vegas on Aug. 2, 2019. She will be spending 2020 promoting her platform, "Fit With a Purpose," which aims to create a dynamic community that encourages and inspires others to set their own health, fitness and service goals.

transgender man to be featured as a series regular on a broadcast network television series. In February 2019, Smith appeared in Portland Center Stage at the Armory's production of Cheryl Strayed's *Tiny Beautiful Things*. In 2017 he debuted as Antoine "Toine" Wilkins in Ava DuVernay's series *Queen Sugar* on OWN [Oprah Winfrey Network]. In addition to performance, Smith works in youth media literacy and community organizing at the LGBT Community Center in Manhattan, The Tribeca Film Institute and Wingspan Arts Program.

**Jennifer McGlincy, BA '06**, Centennial, Colo., wrote, "I've published my first children's picture book, *Bubbles Can't Hold Rain*. Winner of the 2018 University of Denver Daniels College of Business Social Capital Award, the book is a transformative tale that explores isolation and the necessity that Wheezie Stevens feels to seek support beyond her comfort zone. Inspired by children diagnosed with cystic fibrosis, the story encourages all children to reach out for help when their bubbles feel too full.

"It was fully funded through a GoFundMe campaign that raised over \$7,000 to produce 700 books for newly admitted patients at Children's Hospital Colorado and Children's Hospital Pittsburgh. We will continue to donate one copy of the book for every copy purchased. I am grateful for my education at Kent State where communication, creativity and business savvy were fostered and prepared me to produce something of which I am truly proud." For more information see <https://wheeziestevens.com/>.



N.J. Akbar, PhD, assistant dean of University College, stands with Vilma Seeberg, PhD, faculty emerita, after being acknowledged by Kent State President Todd Diacon during his inaugural address on Nov. 1, 2019. Photo credit: Bob Christy, BS '95

Turning Trials into Triumph

**N.J. Akbar, PhD '19**, Akron, Ohio, was elected vice president of the Akron Board of Education a few months after finishing his doctorate in cultural foundations of education from KSU, where he also serves as an assistant dean in Kent State's University College. It was his second time running for a position on the board.

Akbar grew up in poverty in a Detroit neighborhood that the website NeighborhoodScout once considered one of the most dangerous in the United States. "I saw drugs all around me," he says. "I saw alcoholism, I saw poverty. I didn't see a lot of success."

As a child, he stuttered, spoke with a lisp and entered the third grade barely able to read. But his third-grade teacher at Harry B. Keidan Elementary School, Michele Deacon, took extra time with him and put him on a path to loving school. He earned a bachelor's and master's degree from Eastern Michigan University, served in the military, and was pursuing a doctorate in cultural foundations of education at Kent State when his mother passed away in 2017.

"I almost quit the program because I just went into a deep depression," Akbar says. "I sent an email to my adviser and told her I

was quitting." But his dissertation supervisor, Vilma Seeberg, PhD, wouldn't allow him to stop. "He said, 'Okay, I can't do it anymore,'" Seeberg recalls. "And I said, 'Oh, yes, you can! You are not quitting. We'll work this out. . . . Together we will work through this.' And we did."

Akbar says he ran for a position on the school board because "I want to make sure that there's someone on our school board who understands what it's like to succeed in education, but also knows what it's like to struggle." His goals for his tenure on the board are centered on community and on the children of Akron. He wants to engage and involve more community members, be as transparent with them as possible, and encourage the community to support Akron Public Schools, which, in part, means passing a levy. His long-term career goal is to become a chief diversity officer at a local university and maybe someday become the US Secretary of Education.

"I believe that failure is often medicinal," Akbar says. "I've always learned through my failures. I always analyze what is it that I could do better. How do I come out stronger so that they never are able to beat me again?" —*Danielle Wiggins, BS '04, MA '09, Bedford, Ohio. Adapted from an article first posted on wkyc.com on Aug. 17, 2019. Used with permission.*



**Erin Maroon, BS '06**, North Canton, Ohio, founded a nonprofit organization with her husband after the sudden, full-term stillbirth of their daughter, Ashlie, in October 2015. Ashlie's Embrace provides comfort to grieving parents after stillbirth or early infant loss by increasing awareness of CuddleCots and making them available to parents through medical facilities. The cooling devices allow grieving parents the gift of time to hold, bathe or take photos with their baby. As of August 2019, the organization has placed 49 CuddleCots at hospitals in nine states with placements pending in five additional states. For more information see [www.ashliesembrace.org](http://www.ashliesembrace.org).



**Katie Miller, BSE '06, MED '08**, London, Ohio, in July 2019 assumed high school counselor duties at London City Schools after a seven-year stint in the same position at Urbana City Schools.



**Bradley Proudfoot, BA '06**, Wadsworth, Ohio, has been named the Reader's Choice "Best of the Best" attorney in Medina County by the Medina Gazette. Based in the Medina office of Critchfield, Critchfield & Johnston, Ltd., Proudfoot is an associate in the Litigation Department, as well as a member of the labor and employment and construction law practice groups. He serves on a number of community boards, including the Wadsworth Public Library Foundation and the Wadsworth Lions Club, and also sits on the City of Wadsworth's Board of Nuisance Abatement and is a member of the Wadsworth Area Chamber of Commerce. As a member of the Medina County Bar Association, he currently holds the positions of president-elect, chair of the Law Day Scholarship committee, and is also a member of the character and fitness review committee.



**Russell Toomey, MA '06**, Tucson, Ariz., received a "40 under 40" award from the Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in recognition for his leadership and commitment to southern Arizona. He is an associate professor at the University of Arizona, and his research focuses on positive youth development and identity development of Latinx and LGBTQ youth. Toomey's research has been cited nearly 3,500 times, and is widely mentioned in the media, in policy decisions and in legal cases. He also volunteers for several LGBTQ youth-focused organizations both locally and nationally. He is the chair of the Society for Research on Adolescence's inclusion, equity and social justice committee. According to his nominator, Toomey is "an exceptional mentor to his students," and "creates a learning environment and a research environment where students feel supported, challenged, and capable of accomplishing their goals."

**Amber Walden, BS '06, BS '11**, Mentor, Ohio, in summer 2019 studied the forces of evolutionary, geologic and social change and contributed to sustainable solutions for an archipelago in Galápagos. An interpretive naturalist at Lake Metroparks-Penitentiary Glen Nature Center, she is a graduate student in Miami University's Advanced Inquiry Program.



**Kimberly Miller, BA '09**, Akron, Ohio, joined Richardson Design as senior interior designer. Previously, she worked as a senior interior designer at Louis & Partners. Richardson Design, based in Cleveland, serves a global client base in the hospitality, retail, entertainment and leisure markets. Miller also is an advocacy coordinator for the IIDA (International Interior Design Association), Cleveland/Akron chapter.

**April Bleakney, BFA '08**, Cleveland, a printmaker, was one of 16 artists (out of a pool of 78 applicants) who received a 2020 Artist-in-Residence award from Akron Soul Train (AST). AST is an artist-in-residence program connecting and empowering the community and artists by granting fellowships that provide resources for all creative disciplines and include a community engagement component.

**Andrew Rihn, BA '09**, Canton, Ohio, released his first full-length collection of poetry, *Revelation: An Apocalypse in Fifty-Eight Fights* (Press 53, 2019). The book responds to the professional fights of Mike Tyson in 100-word prose poems. The voice of an Old Testament prophet shines through the fight commentary and relates Tyson to a modern-day Elijah—climbing the mountain to do battle, and climbing back down to a world of depression, anxiety and alienating silence.

2010s

**Zachery Fry, BA '10**, Huntsville, Ala., published *A Republic in the Ranks: Loyalty and Dissent in the Army of the Potomac* (University of North Carolina Press, April 2020). The book—a comprehensive reassessment of the army's politics during the Civil War, showing how enlisted men developed political awareness that went beyond personal loyalties and laid the groundwork for Lincoln's victory in 1864—was awarded the 2018 Edward M. Coffman First Manuscript Prize by the Society for Military History. He also received the 2019 John T. Hubbell Prize for the best article published during 2018 in *Civil War History*, a quarterly publication of The Kent State University Press. Fry is an assistant professor of military history at US Army Command and General Staff College, Huntsville, Ala.

**Ashleigh Nugent, PhD '10**, Steinhausen, Canton of Zug, Switzerland, has been appointed the director of global medical communications for PTC Therapeutics, Inc. in Zug, Switzerland.



**Edward Nakhle, Marc '11**, Detroit, has joined the Detroit office of Quinn Evans as a senior designer. Nakhle holds a master of architecture and urban design from Kent State (2011), a master of architecture and a bachelor of science in architecture from Lawrence Technological University (2011, 2009), and a bachelor of applied science with a concentration in civil and structural engineering from the University of Windsor (2005).



**Nathan Yaussy, MA '13**, Burton, Ohio, [pictured above, right] won a \$25,000 national Milken Educator Award from the Milken Family Foundation on Nov. 8, 2019. The nation's preeminent teacher recognition program, the Milken Educator Awards are hailed as the "Oscars of Teaching" by *Teacher* magazine. Yaussy is a ninth and tenth grade biology and life science teacher at Fairport Harding Early College High School in Fairport Harbor, Ohio. One of 40 educators across the country selected to receive the award, he is the sole Ohio recipient this season and the first from the district. "Nathan makes learning tangible and exciting, both in and out of the classroom," said National Institute for Excellence in Teaching CEO Candice McQueen, who presented the award. "With every lesson, students develop critical skills to think deeply and make the world a better place. As part of the National Milken Educator Network of excellence, [he] will have a platform to broaden his impact and influence."

**Rob Young, BA '12, BA '14**, and **Ana Young, BS '14**, Fairview Park, Ohio, own and manage Big Bear Remodeling in Rocky River, Ohio, which was recognized as one of the top 50 remodeling companies in the United States by *Remodeling Magazine* in September 2019 at the Remodelers Summit and Awards Gala in Orlando, Fla.



When **Troy Aleman, BBA '12**, married **Tracy Arenson, BA '07**, Lakewood, Ohio, on Nov. 16, 2019, in Cleveland at Windows on the River, their wedding party was very "blue & gold." "Out of 23 people total in our wedding party (including Troy and me), 11 of us were KSU grads. Pretty neat!," notes Tracy. The couple met at WRL, a Canton advertising/marketing agency where Tracy is senior art director; Troy interned

there during his senior year at Kent State and was hired as an account executive after graduation. Pictured (left to right): **Oliver Harper, BS '12, MS '13; Lisa (Vavrik) Rowan, BS '07; Holly Mueller, BS '07; Gabe Bregon, BBA '12**; Troy Aleman; Tracy Arenson; **Jake Gregory, BBA '12; Michelle (Lallo) Elrod, BS '07; Pat Tanski, BS '13; Barb (Ditzel) Ginley, BSN '07; Hunter Aleman, BBA '12**

The small design/build firm specializes in kitchens, bathrooms and additions in Northeast Ohio, and has doubled in size twice in the last four years, with an employee-based business model. In addition to remodeling, Big Bear is state licensed in electric and plumbing, and it has an inhouse architect and designer. The remodeling company also has won multiple awards from Houzz and Home Advisor for service.

**Matt Lilley, BA '13**, Kent, Ohio, has been hired as regional sales manager by Lippert Components Inc. in Elkhart, Ind. In his new role, he will work within the West Coast region to establish aftermarket partnerships and to support the company's aftermarket growth efforts for RV products.

**Michael Daugherty, BS '14**, Frederick, Md., has spent the last six years sharpening his skills as a logistics and supply chain expert. After working as an operations manager and robotics SME [Small and Medium-sized Enterprises] for Amazon.com, he has since moved to Washington, DC, to serve as a naval operations management analyst, consulting for the US Navy, specializing in unmanned submarine technology development and implementation. He is currently employed at Booz Allen Hamilton, one of the nation's top defense consulting firms, and has offices in Washington, DC, and the Washington Navy Yard.



**Hannah Summerville-Miller, BA '15**, married **Max Miller, BSE '15**, Avon Lake, Ohio, on Aug. 17, 2019, in Vermilion, Ohio. They met their senior year at Kent State, and many other Golden Flashes were in attendance, as well.

**Scott Goss, MFA '14**, Shaker Heights, Ohio, an interactive installation artist, was one of 16 artists (out of a pool of 78 applicants) who received a 2020 Artist-in-Residence award from Akron Soul Train (AST). AST is an artist-in-residence program connecting and empowering the community and artists by granting fellowships that provide resources for all creative disciplines and include a community engagement component.



Kent State University College of Podiatric Medicine (formerly Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine) graduates reunited at FASMA (Foot & Ankle Specialists of the Mid-Atlantic) physicians weekend in Wintergreen, Va. **Andrew Liss, DPM '76**, serves Columbia and Kensington, Md.; **Maryellen Waltz, DPM '11**, provides podiatric care to Culpeper, Fishersville and Orange, Va.; **Jennifer Bell, DPM '07**, serves the community of Frederick and Mt. Airy, Md.; **Casey Friske, DPM '10**, provides complete podiatric care in Clarksville, Md.; **Mitchell Waskin, DPM '83**, serves the Richmond, Va. area; **Eric Masternick, DPM '02**, works in Reston, Va., providing the community with podiatric services. FASMA, one of the largest groups of podiatrists in the United States, has recently partnered with NMS Capital of New York to fund growth. Pictured left to right: Dr. Andrew Liss, Dr. Maryellen Waltz, Dr. Jennifer Bell, Dr. Casey Friske, Dr. Mitchell Waskin; Dr. Eric Masternick. Not pictured: **Devlin Grant, DPM '12**.





SARAH RENEE STUDIOS

**Chelsea Kennedy, BS '16, MPH '18**, and **Andrew Grega, BS '15**, Norton, Ohio, were married in Cleveland on Sept. 1, 2019, with 11 KSU alumni in the wedding party, in addition to the couple. "We made lifelong friends at KSU," notes Chelsea. "We participated in fraternity and sorority life; Andrew is a Kappa Sigma and I am a Chi Omega. We met when Andrew was the "House Boy" (dishwasher) in my sorority house. Andrew used his training from the College of Aeronautics and Engineering to become a commercial airline pilot. I work as a project coordinator at Kent State University in the College of Public Health. We took our parents to New York City in November 2018 to see the Christmas festivities. While ice skating around the Rockefeller Christmas Tree, Andrew cleared the ice and proposed in front of

not only our parents but thousands of strangers. It was like a scene out of a movie! We will never forget that moment." Pictured (left to right): **Kata Bjelopera, BS '16**, Wickliffe, Ohio; **Chelsea (Natcher) Reaser, BBA '16**, Ravenna, Ohio; **Molly Phelps, BS '16**, Stow, Ohio; **Amanda Bevington, BA '16**, Logan, Utah; Melissa Boswell, University of Akron, '15; **Lindsey Mace, BA '15**, North Canton, Ohio; Chelsea Kennedy; Andrew Grega; **DJ Ehrmantrout, BS '16**, Wooster, Ohio; **Joe Spinhirny, BS '15**, Aurora, Ohio; **Domenic Cicchinelli, BA '16**, Glenshaw, Pa.; **Weston Sisson, BBA '17**, Warren, Ohio; **TJ Ewing, BS '16**, Chagrin Falls, Ohio; and **Collin Czehut, BA '16, MED '18**, Chesterland, Ohio

**Jenelle ("Jen") Alverson, BFA '15**, Cincinnati, joined the Taft Museum of Art in Cincinnati as assistant preparator and collections technician on Sept. 12, 2019. Previously, she was a senior exhibition technician at the Akron Museum of Art and, earlier, exhibition technician at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Cleveland.

**Adam Hazy, BA '15**, Ashtabula, Ohio, is the new marketing coordinator of the Ashtabula County District Library, as of Sept. 4, 2019. Previously, he was marketing coordinator at Andover Bank in Andover.



**Eric Snitil, BS '16**, Rochester, NY, was named new chief meteorologist at WROC-TV Channel 8 in Rochester, NY, in August 2019. Previously, he was a meteorologist at NBS affiliate WSFA 12 News, Montgomery, Ala., for 8 years. (He completed his degree at Kent State by taking the one class he had left online.) At KSU, he served as weather director for TV2 and was recognized as "Best Student Weathercaster" by the Broadcast Education Association.



**Betsy Brannen, MLIS '17**, Walkersville, Md., was recently promoted to children's services supervisor of the Urbana Regional Library with the Frederick County Public Library System located in Frederick, Md. Previously, she was a children's services supervisor at the Walkersville Branch (2018-2010) and a library specialist at the Middletown Branch (2016-2018).



**Damien McClendon, BA '16**, Cleveland, was one of 16 artists (out of a pool of 78 applicants) who received a 2020 Artist-in-Residence award from Akron Soul Train (AST). AST is an artist-in-residence program connecting and empowering the community and artists by granting fellowships that provide resources for all creative disciplines and include a community engagement component. McClendon was featured at an Open Mic event at the Akron Soul Train gallery in Akron, Ohio, on Feb. 22, 2020.

In 2020 he is writing and revising poems that examine racism, poverty, masculinity and fatherhood and is teaming up with Vibe Collective to offer a professional development writing workshop with prompts such as: childhood, parenthood, family or chosen family. McClendon, who majored in Pan-African studies at Kent State, was a semi-finalist in three consecutive National Poetry Slams and placed 7th in the World Slam. He was Cleveland Heights Poet Laureate from 2018 to 2020.



BOB CHRISTY, BS '95

Mary Celeste Starzyk and family pose with President Diacon after her graduation in December 2019.

Pictured (left to right): **Topher Starzyk, MEd '99, EdS '00**; Madeline Lauber (student at Northwestern); **Kathleen (Starzyk) Lauber, BA '91, BSN '95**; Ana Starzyk; **Ernie Lauber, MBA '00**; **Mary Celeste Starzyk, MA '19**; President Todd Diacon; Jayden Gill; Jordan Gill; Lawrence Starzyk, PhD, Professor Emeritus of English; Jacob Lauber (student at Kent State); **Tammy (Hagan) Starzyk, BA '98, MA '03**; Jack Starzyk. Not pictured: Julia (Starzyk) Gill, who had recently given birth to twin sons, Leo and Lennox; Larry Gill; **Jaimie (Starzyk) Stitzel, BBA '05, MBA '11**; **Jess Stitzel, BBA '06, MBA '13**; Aubrey Stitzel

Lifelong Learner

**Mary Celeste Starzyk, MA '19**, Kent, Ohio, graduated on Dec. 13, 2019, with her second master's degree, this time in art history, at the age of 76. She and her husband, Lawrence J. Starzyk, PhD, Professor Emeritus of English at Kent State, met when they were both studying English literature at the University of Chicago. She earned a master's degree and he earned a doctorate.

Married for 52 years, they have five children. **Kathleen (Starzyk) Lauber, BA '91, BSN '95**, Solon, Ohio; **Topher Starzyk, MEd '99, EdS '00**, Kent, Ohio; **Jaimie (Starzyk) Stitzel, BBA '05, MBA '11**, Houston (adopted from Korea) are alumni. Julia (Starzyk) Gill, Ravenna, Ohio (adopted from Nepal), is currently working on a degree in education at Kent State (as is grandson Jacob Lauber). And Anastacia ("Ana") Starzyk (adopted from DR Congo) is working on graduating from Roosevelt High School in 2023 and hopes to attend Kent State.

Thanks to Kent State's exchange program, two Fulbright scholarships and connections with colleagues, Starzyk and her husband have lived and taught in a variety of countries: Japan, Thailand, Nepal and Italy.

In 1991, she established the American Nepalese Congolese Children's Foundation to help people interested in adopting from Nepal (and later DR Congo), which she describes as "the most important work of my life." While working as a full-time teacher, she placed approximately 60 children for adoption—50 from Nepal and 10 from DR Congo—before US laws changed, and she is no longer able to place children for adoption.

She is now working to establish one-month rotation programs for medical students at Tribuvan Hospital in Nepal and a briefer program for Kent State nursing students to visit and shadow in the leprosy hospital and other medical institutions in Nepal.

According to Starzyk, "The purpose of these programs is 1) to help students learn about medicine as it is practiced in poverty-stricken countries, 2) to help medical students develop an understanding for the medical problems of the poor, and 3) to help students develop firsthand information about tropical diseases and related problems."

After teaching for about 48 years at Cuyahoga Falls Board of Education, where she had worked as a reading specialist and French teacher, she retired in 2011. Missing a school atmosphere, she signed up to audit classes at Kent State. After one of her classes, Gus Medicus, PhD, associate professor of art

history, suggested she work for a second master's degree in art history.

With the deadline for acceptance into the master's program only a week away, Starzyk says it took the diligence of many people—including a KSU administrative assistant who crawled over boxes in a storeroom to find some documents Starzyk had submitted years earlier for a different program—to enable her to file all the necessary documents within the deadline.

"I have loved my studies!" she says. "Our time in Rome allowed me to do research on Bernini. Dr. Medicus became my advisor for my thesis. Now, I can't understand why I didn't study art history the first time around."

"One of my goals, when I decided to officially return to school to study for a second master's, was to be the oldest person crossing the stage. I think I've succeeded."



Mary Celeste Starzyk, MA '19, receives her diploma from President Todd Diacon during the December 2019 commencement ceremony.



in **MEMORY**

**1940s**

**Rachel Horton, BS '40**, October 3, 2019  
**Doris Irmiter, BS '43**, January 14, 2019  
**Madeline Foust, BS '44**, February 7, 2019  
**Emily Rieder, BSE '45**, March 16, 2019  
**John Reyer, DPM '47**, August 1, 2019  
**Charles Lehman, BS '48**, July 19, 2019  
**Alan Benson, BS '49**, August 23, 2017

**1950s**

**Frank McClimon, BBA '50**, September 19, 2019  
**Richard McGill, BBA '50**, February 9, 2018  
**Mae-Jeanne McGill, BBA '50**, July 23, 2019  
**Lee Miller, BBA '50**, August 15, 2019  
**Richard Hirt, BS '51**, October 1, 2017  
**Gweneth Bliss, BS '52**, June 10, 2018  
**Salvatore Crano, BS '52**, November 22, 2018  
**Stanley Pockar, BS '52**, November 6, 2018  
**William Warnock, BS '53**, May 15, 2018  
**Donald Wright, BS '53, MED '58**, May 3, 2019  
**John Vanko, DPM '54**, December 8, 2017  
**Ruby Kerr, BS '55**, June 19, 2019  
**William Cox, BS '56**, August 10, 2019  
**James Menough, BS '56**, October 5, 2019  
**Patricia Witek, BS '57**, April 25, 2019  
**Robert Hewitt, BS '59**, September 2, 2019

**1960s**

**Burton Bartram, BA '60**, August 11, 2019  
**Gene Feucht, BS '60**, October 14, 2019  
**Dan Mihuta, MED '60**, August 10, 2019  
**Robert Franklin Nisbett, BS '60, MA '63**, November 25, 2019  
**Terrence Caldwell, BS '61**, September 14, 2019  
**Ida Carroll, BS '61**, March 19, 2019  
**James Martin, BS '61**, October 22, 2018  
**Noel Chamberlain, BA '62, MED '72**, January 31, 2018  
**Raymond Fenn, BS '62, MA '64**, June 28, 2019  
**Donald Fought, BA '62**, July 9, 2019  
**Judith Welk, BS '62**, July 7, 2019  
**John George, BArc '63**, August 16, 2019  
**Charles Frank Smith, MS '63**, August 1, 2019  
**James Vargo, BS '63**, August 25, 2019  
**Albert Vinci, BS '63, MED '68, PhD '84**, February 26, 2019  
**Thomas Romanin, BS '64, MA '68**, August 13, 2019  
**Joseph D'Aurora, BS '65, BA '67**, November 18, 2019  
**Shirley Haueter, BS '65**, March 28, 2019  
**Robert Marx, BS '65, MA '67**, August 7, 2019  
**Robert Feldman, BS '67**, January 14, 2018  
**James Kallmyer, BA '67**, January 18, 2018  
**Beatrice Yuhaniak, BS '67**, September 23, 2019  
**Donald Fraraccio, BS '68**, October 21, 2018  
**Lois Freedman, BS '68**, August 26, 2019  
**Magdalean Geletka, BS '68**, April 1, 2019  
**Judith Kreuter, BBA '68**, July 30, 2019  
**John Augenstein, MED '69, PhD '87**, August 19, 2019  
**Paul Jordan, BA '69**, January 2, 2019  
**Ronald McQueen, BBA '69**, June 18, 2019

**1970s**

**Howell Chambers, MED '70**, October 23, 2018  
**Paul Guggenheim, BS '70**, May 21, 2019  
**William Huber, BS '70**, August 29, 2019  
**Paul Melvin Standley, BS '70**, August 2, 2019  
**Betsy (Scheider) Donehoo, BA '71**, July 12, 2018  
**Stephen Gates, BFA '71**, November 23, 2019

**Walt Hodgson, BS '71**, September 25, 2019  
**Mary Neuzil, BA '71**, September 9, 2019  
**Gary Robinson, BS '71, MED '80, PhD '84**, July 26, 2019  
**Edward Kainec, BS '72**, August 25, 2018  
**Stephen Niksa, BBA '72**, August 20, 2019  
**Donald Zureich, BS '72**, April 11, 2019  
**Glad Bahr, BS '73**, December 28, 2017  
**John Murphy, PhD '73**, September 9, 2019  
**Richard Jenei, BS '74**, October 21, 2019  
**Patricia Baird, MLS '76**, July 20, 2017  
**Robert “Bob” Breznai, BBA '76**, January 13, 2020  
**George Donaldson, BS '76**, May 15, 2019  
**Alice Keiser, BA '76**, October 24, 2019  
**Thelma Williams, MED '76**, January 1, 2019  
**Kathleen Hensley, BA '77**, December 26, 2018  
**Paul Rousse, BS '77**, October 2, 2018  
**Mary Krekus, AAS '78**, July 7, 2019  
**Lynne McClure, BS '78**, October 10, 2019  
**Timothy Mulle, BArc '79**, September 18, 2018

**1980s**

**Bradford Cordell, BA '80**, August 19, 2019  
**Karen Kilbane, BS '82**, November 1, 2018  
**Richard Purgert, BGS '82**, April 1, 2018  
**Joseph Begany, BArc '83**, June 30, 2017  
**Thomas Bartos, BSN '84**, October 13, 2018  
**Joseph Incorvia, AAB '84**, November 3, 2018  
**Sherman Jacobs, BA '84**, September 26, 2019  
**Susan Crew, BBA '85**, October 30, 2019  
**Britt Cope, MBA '88**, April 28, 2019  
**Robert Lambert, BS '88, MED '95, PhD '09**, July 29, 2019  
**Marc Slomovitz, DPM '88**, September 11, 2018

**1990s**

**Paula Bird, BSE '90**, September 6, 2019  
**James Cusano, AAS '90**, March 1, 2018  
**Tara Jackson, BSE '92**, August 16, 2019  
**Norman McKinnon, BGS '92**, July 14, 2018  
**Ann Grasn timer, MED '93**, April 19, 2019  
**Donna Crayton, BSN '97**, August 22, 2018  
**Christopher Diestel, BA '98**, October 15, 2018  
**Delbert Shafer, AAS '99**, January 14, 2018

**2000s**

**Anthony Calanni, BS '00, MBA '02**, September 25, 2018  
**Juanita Weaver, BS '02, MS '04**, August 19, 2018  
**Kenneth McCarthy, BBA '03**, July 1, 2017  
**Barbara Meister, MLIS '05**, February 26, 2018  
**George McCollum, BS '06**, August 29, 2019  
**Kenya Prade, BSN '07**, July 22, 2019  
**Michael Rice, BSN '07**, August 25, 2019  
**Jack Grady, DPM '09**, November 9, 2017

**2010s**

**Jaime Movens, BSPH '16**, September 29, 2019  
**Christopher Brazie, XAS '18**, June 5, 2019  
**Qasem Adawi, MAT '19**, July 6, 2019

**FACULTY/STAFF**

**Anna (Chmil) Martyniuk**, secretary for the Department of Mathematics, June 4, 2019  
**Osyp Martyniuk**, professor in the School of Architecture, July 26, 2019  
**Thomas Pynadath**, Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry (1966-2004), recipient of the Distinguished Teaching Award (1989), January 16, 2020.

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Kent State University Alumni  
Center for Philanthropy & Engagement  
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Limit your notes to 150 words or less, and include your degree(s), class year(s), and city/state of residence. Notes may be edited for length or clarity and published as space allows.

**Deadline for submissions:**  
**Spring/Summer** December 31  
**Fall/Winter** June 30



**TRIBUTE**

**Love Story and Legacy:**  
*A tribute to John and Helen Williamson*

Kent State is a place where many great love stories begin. John and Helen Williamson began their journey together at the university and remained devoted to one another—and their alma mater—throughout their lives.

**John Williamson, BBA '45**, who lost his parents at an early age and worked his way through college, said in a 2011 interview that his favorite Kent State memory was meeting his wife, **Helen (Morgan) Williamson, BS '45**, who was a member of Tri Sigma Educational Sorority. In addition to delivering blocks of ice for food refrigeration, he worked in the campus print shop and sometimes taught students how to run the printers. When Helen's sister came in for a lesson, he asked her on a date.

"She told me I was too young and that she had a sister who sat in front of me in psychology," he said. "So I met Helen in class, tapped her on her shoulder and asked her on our first date. We got

**Feeding Essential Healthcare Workers**

**Jason Zygodlo, BBA '02**, Brunswick, Ohio, a medical sales representative who serves on the Kent State Alumni Association National Board of Directors, is teaming up with local restaurants and other alumni and friends to help raise money to provide meals for frontline workers battling the COVID-19 pandemic in Northeast Ohio.

He and his girlfriend, Chelsea Mikula, came up with the idea to feed essential workers and help area restaurants survive. They contacted Lago East Bank, a restaurant in Cleveland near Mikula's work, and learned that the chef, Fabio Salerno, had already started an effort, "Essential Meals for Essential Employees," to send food to frontline workers.

The chef was looking for donors to pay the \$15 per meal cost, so Zygodlo and Mikula agreed to sponsor the first 100 meals. They also put the word out through social media for other donors and quickly met their goal of sending 500 Lago meals to essential workers.



Now Zygodlo has teamed up with **David Segen, BA '04**, owner of Bellacino's Pizza and Grinders in Stow, to help boost Segen's business, which is struggling due to the pandemic. The new goal is to send at least 300 meals to frontline workers in the Akron area through Bellacino's, in an effort called "Feed the Frontlines."

"We've already been getting donations from Golden Flashes," Zygodlo says, noting that **Chris Lee, BA '04**, is also helping with the effort.

To donate a meal visit: [www.lageeastbank.com](http://www.lageeastbank.com) [www.bellacinosofstow.com](http://www.bellacinosofstow.com). A donation window will pop up immediately on either site.

engaged in college and were married on Aug. 3, 1945."

After graduating, the couple spent their first six years in Cleveland and then moved to Toledo in 1951 for what would become John Williamson's longtime career with The Toledo Edison Company. He was promoted to president and CEO in 1972, and he received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Kent State in 1974. He was at the utility's helm in 1986 when it merged with Cleveland Electric Illuminating Co., and he retired in 1987 as chairman emeritus of Toledo Edison and Centerior Energy Corp.

Helen Williamson, who majored in home economics, stayed home to care for their three sons. She also applied her skills and optimism to volunteer activities, which included organizing a private kindergarten before it was offered in a public school system, volunteering for the Toledo Meals on Wheels program, and serving as officer and president of a local PTA, president of Epworth United Methodist Church Women's Guild and president of the Corey Woods Garden Club. Among her many honors, she received the Gold Medallion Award for service to Kent State University.

The Williamsons recognized the importance of having a home away from home for Kent State alumni. When they were students, what was then known as the Curtiss House became the president's residence in 1942 and remained so until 1988, when the house was offered to the office of alumni relations.

"We had the idea to use the president's home to attract graduates from all over," John Williamson said. "In my mind [the alumni center] created good will."

Private gifts totaling \$1.6 million were raised for renovations and to build an addition. John

and Helen gave the lead gift and the building, completed in the summer of 1992, was named the Williamson Alumni Center to honor them.

John Williamson passed away on Oct. 26, 2014, and Helen Williamson passed away on Aug. 5, 2019, but they will always be remembered for their dedication to Kent State and for creating a home for Golden Flash alumni.

Although Kent State Alumni moved to the new Center of Philanthropy & Alumni Engagement in December 2015, the Williamson House continues to be used to support the Kent State community.

According to Helen Williamson's obituary, her philosophy was, "Life is made up of many stages. When leaving a stage, look forward to new challenges and opportunities. Don't live in the past."—*Ashley Whaley, BS '06, MED '12*



Above: Curtiss House, circa 1940s  
Below: Williamson House, 2019







Howard Ruffner, at left, meets John Cleary for the first time since the photograph he took of Cleary lying wounded on May 4, 1970 made the cover of the May 15, 1970 issue of Life magazine.

BOB CHRISTY, BS '95

## They Meet at Last

The photo on the cover of *Life* magazine, showing Kent State freshman John Cleary lying wounded on the ground, became one of the iconic images of the May 4, 1970 Kent State shootings.

It was taken by Howard Ruffner, a Kent State sophomore who had picked up a freelance assignment for *Life* magazine to photograph that day's student protests.

No one could have foreseen that the student rally would turn into an attack by the Ohio National Guard that left four students dead and nine, including Cleary, injured.

And Ruffner, who shipped his undeveloped film on a plane to *Life* magazine's Chicago office later that day, could not have anticipated that his image would become symbolic of the era.

Despite the photo's significance and historical impact, it took nearly 50 years for the photographer and subject to meet.

The reunion took place on Sept. 19, 2019, at the Kent State University Library, where Howard Ruffner, BS '71, was about to debut his new book, *Moments of Truth: A Photographer's Experience of Kent State 1970*. Published by Kent State University Press, the book's nearly 150 images include dozens of photos that he took that day, most of them previously unpublished.

John Cleary, BArch '74, a retired architect who resides outside of Pittsburgh, says the meeting was an unexpected opportunity after so many years. "Howard had some photographs from that day that I had not seen before, so it was good to sit down with him and talk," he says.

Cleary was a 19-year-old from Scotia, New York—and about to take a photo with a camera he had borrowed from his roommate—when a guardsman's bullet hit his chest, knocking him down.

One of Ruffner's photos that particularly touched Cleary was a photo of him lying on the ground surrounded by a circle of students. "They were holding hands, kind of protecting me," he says. "In the center was myself and the people working on me." He was moved by how fellow students came to his aid (see photo below).

A native of Lakewood, Ohio, Ruffner was 24 at the time of the shootings, having started college after serving time in the US Air Force. He resides in Pasadena, Calif., after retiring from a long career in corporate communications and as a high school media studies teacher.

For Ruffner, the day's events and having his photos published in *Life* solidified his career choice in photography. "I was fortunate not to be shot and to document what was there."

Over the years, the *Life* cover has followed Cleary, with friends sending him copies to mark anniversaries of May 4. "On the 25th anniversary, I got four or five magazines," he says. "I have many copies, mostly from friends and relatives who felt it was time to pass it along."

Ruffner and Cleary's reunion was captured by NBC Nightly News, which expected to air the segment sometime near the 50th anniversary of May 4.

The pair had anticipated seeing each other again at the May 4 50th anniversary commemoration, until the university cancelled those events due to the coronavirus pandemic.



Ruffner says it seems oddly appropriate for the campus to be closed on May 4, because it harkens back to the days after May 4, 1970, when the campus was closed and the students were sent home following the shooting.

"It seems a strange parallel to that aftermath at this time." ⚡  
—Lisa Abraham



Kent State students form a protective barrier around wounded student John Cleary on May 4, 1970.

HOWARD RUFFNER, BS '71

# Legacy

You know the photo: the one of the young woman with a scarf & dark hair, crouching over what used to be a student

screaming *why*

hands plunging into the low atmosphere as if she can grab her god's shoulders & shake him for letting this happen. But you don't know the man in plaid

over her left shoulder. You don't know his class had been dismissed early to participate in democracy. He is too far away & indistinct for you to see the

thick glasses, the mustache he still wears fifty years later. You don't know that a decade after the National Guard almost shot him, too, he would become

my father. Daffodils remain silent, but not complicit: they're still suffering shock. Flowers planted in gun barrels, tear gas tossed back at uniforms. Shoots

of yellow flowers from my baptism poke through early May soil.

— Megan Neville, BS '04, MEd '07, Cleveland  
Design by Abigail Archer, junior in VCD program



Created by the Wick Poetry Center  
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College of Arts and Sciences

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Ohio Arts Council, The Burbick Foundation, The Woodward Foundation, Carol W. Gould

#### Poem by Megan Neville, Cleveland, OH

Design by Abigail Archer

Winner (adult non-student) of the national call for poems about peace, selected by Naomi Shihab Nye, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the May 4 shootings at Kent State University.