Graduating with a C.E.O.

Meet 14 young entrepreneurs — students and alums like Ashley Kalinauskas '12 (CAHNR), whose Vetivax vaccine is making it easier and cheaper to treat cancer in pets. pg 18
The dawning of a late summer day lent shimmer to the new Innovation Partnership Building (IPB) on Discovery Drive in Storrs. One of UConn’s most specialized R&D facilities, the IPB brings together world-class academic researchers with industry partners from the private sector to accelerate the development of groundbreaking technologies in materials science, additive manufacturing, cybersecurity, flexible electronics, energy, and other fields. Anchor partners include United Technologies Corp., General Electric, Comcast, Pratt & Whitney, and Eversource. And the IPB is home to one of the most advanced microscopy centers in the country thanks to a partnership with Thermo Fisher Scientific. Students in fine arts and engineering worked together to install “Wall Drawing 867,” a colorful mural conceptualized by late Hartford artist Sol LeWitt, onto the walls of the glass lobby. Their collaboration was one of many initiatives planned between students of arts and sciences.
Fireflies light up our world for three to six weeks each summer. But UConn professor of physiology and neurobiology Andrew Moiseff is researching the larval stage of these burrowing (yes, they burrow!) insects — that may glow in the dark even then. Firefly larvae spend about a year in the soil and are equipped with specific adaptations for life in a subterranean environment, in stark contrast to their familiar above-ground adult form. Since not a lot of research has been done with firefly larvae, Moiseff's team is delving into new territory, learning about how the same animal has adapted to two distinct lifestyles. —ELAINA HANCOCK '09 ME

To watch a video of fireflies in both forms, hear more about the research, and to learn how this photo of lightning bugs in a field in Storrs was created, go to s.uconn.edu/fireflies.
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WEB EXTRAS
magazine.uconn.edu

MORE YOUNG TALENT
Meet more alums, so young and successful their stories will make your teeth hurt. uconn.edu/CEOs

FIREFLIES
Capture the glow of fireflies above — and below — ground uconn.edu/fireflies

UCONN 360
Catch up with the only podcast devoted to all things Husky. uconn.edu/podcast

CLASS OF 2022
Who are they and how did they celebrate their first days at UConn? uconn.edu/2022

ROBOT MILKER
Cows push each other out of the way to get into the robotic milking machine. uconn.edu/happycow

TOM’S TRIVIA
Find the answers at uconn.edu/sethtrivia

FROM THE EDITOR

JULIE’S UNCLE
She’s an extremely polite person, but at the end of their second podcast together, Julie Bartucca ’10 (BUS, CLAS) straight-up intercepted Tom Breen ’00 (CLAS) with an exclamation: “Wait! Barry Ber-man is my uncle!”

They go on to say it’s possible he’s not the same Barry Berman that Breen has just mentioned while teasing a story for podcast #3, but the timing would be right. And Uncle Barry Berman ’73 (CLAS), along with many others in Bartucca’s extended family, is indeed a UConn alum. And, as it turns out, he is indeed UConn alum.

Uncle Barry himself turns up in episode #3 of the UConn 360 podcast to regale listeners and hosts Breen, Bartucca, and Kenneth Best with the story of how he and a fellow student made national news in 1972 by getting one Bill X. Carlson elected both president and vice president of UConn’s Associated Student Government. Why was the landslide election of Bill X. Carlson national news? As Breen puts it, “In a very narrow technical sense, he does not exist.”

You’ll have to listen to the podcast to find out what that means. It’s a fantastic story told well — the specialty of the biweekly UConn 360 podcast, which now has some 16 episodes and counting.

Breen, Bartucca, and Best are all colleagues here at University Communications, where they write for the University in all kinds of ways, including for this magazine. But the podcast is different, says Bartucca, in that it allows quick, easy, slice-of-life storytelling. Huskies share a sensibility, she says. They can remember that sense of connection they felt when they were on campus. For the podcast, she says, whether it’s a former accounting professor now selling gorgeous screenprint artwork, a student WUSB DJ sharing her favorite playlist, or an uncle who once had a hand in toppling a disliked Student Government, it’s all about what Bartucca’s mother and Berman’s sister-in-law, Mary (McCarthy) Stagis ’85 (SFS), fondly refers to as “that UConn feeling.”

“I try to find stories that evoke that,” says Bartucca.

Top from left, Breen, Bartucca, and Berman recorded episode #15 of their UConn 360 podcast above, Bartucca with her uncle, the legendary Barry Berman.
Cryptocurrencies have value only in the minds of believers who see other people making a bunch of money. But they actually have nothing behind them. Gold and silver have value commodities. Paper money, although likely over-printed, is backed by the gross national product of the country printing that fiat money. Real estate has value, as do most items considered assets. Of the future, when the technology involved is used with something of value behind it, there may be an opportunity for real success. Meanwhile, the suckers appear to be buying into a nickel, dime poker game with hundred-dollar bills. Phil Becker ’86 (CLAS)
Glendale, California, via email

By a Thread

really enjoyed reading this issue, so proud of the help for Cambodians. There should be info in case people would like to donate to that project in particular. Also proud of [department head Michael] Bradford and what he’s doing for the theater department.

Good job!

Bassy Reyna ’72 MA, ’82 JD
Connecticut, via email

Note: Donate to this project by sending a check to: Kimberly Health Advocates, attn: Mary Scully, 1125 New Britain Ave., #202, West Hartford, Connecticut, 06110.

Serenade

I have been away from UConn for many years. Having played basketball at UConn and having coached both on the university and professional ranks, I must say I was so very impressed and taken by the UConn Choir and its European tour. Besides the excellence of the choir’s singing ability, the passion I observed in the video was so very special. Bravo — a great representation of the university. Great to see UConn in the light of joy, happiness, and wholesome fellowship.

Alan Keith Srebnick ’71 (BUS)
Weston, Florida, via our website

Note: These voices are so beautiful that words cannot capture their power.
Frederick Charles Shakir Jr. ’84 (CLAS)
Guam Hill, Connecticut, via our website

It was my privilege to help these two get engaged and my honor to be at their wedding. Wishing you many many years of happiness. #studentdayhuskiesforever #fridayphotography #uconn #huskies.

UCONN TO HOUSE MAURICE SENDAK ARCHIVE

The finished artwork for his published books, and certain manuscripts, sketches, and other related materials created by Maurice Sendak, considered the leading artist of children’s books in the 20th century, will be hosted and maintained at the University of Connecticut. Under an agreement with, and supported by a grant from, The Maurice Sendak Foundation, the artwork and source materials for books, such as Where the Wild Things Are, In the Night Kitchen, and Outside Over There, will serve as a resource for researchers by students, faculty, staff, and the public. They will be part of Archives & Special Collections at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center.

Sendak lived in Connecticut and supported UConn for many years, speaking to the children’s literature classes of Francelia Butler, professor of English, in the 1970s and 1980s and receiving an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree.

“You would only have to spend an afternoon with Maurice to know that he was the ultimate mentor and nurturer of talent,” says Lynn Caponera, president of The Maurice Sendak Foundation. “He profoundly admired UConn’s dedication to the art of the book, both in its collections and in its teachings. We, the friends who entrusted to carry on his legacy through the Foundation, couldn’t be more pleased with this exciting collaboration.”

“Maurice Sendak created books that will live forever. His work changed the course of children’s literature in the 20th century,” says Katharine Capshaw, professor of English and president of the Children’s Literature Association. “Sendak’s books connect profoundly to children’s inner fears and vast resourcefulness. He treated young people with respect, valuing their creativity and sense of ethics, and his work illuminated the joy and mystery of the imagination.”

“Imagine now opening up students to the world of one of the most celebrated creators of visual literature for children’s picture books... and walking across campus to take part in what amounts to a private master class with Maurice Sendak,” says Cora Lynn Deibler, head of the Department of Art and Art History and a professor of illustration. “As you pore through the work, you will be receiving a one-on-one tutorial in excellence in the form — from creativity and concept, through design and execution.”
CHECKING IN WITH...

DAN ROUSSEAU LIGHTS IT UP

Dan Rousseau ’08 (SFA) has never been in front of a TV camera and it’s been years since he had an acting role in the theater. Yet you can enjoy his workmanship every day of the week on CNN, and if you tuned in to hockey at this past Winter Olympic Games in South Korea, you saw his work there as well.

Rousseau works in the world of television lighting as both a designer and director. Since 2008, he has worked for the Lighting Design Group Inc. at CNN, where he has permanent spots on three shows: “Cuomo Prime Time,” “Anderson Cooper Full Circle” (a Facebook Live show), and “Quest Means Business” on CNN International. He floats on other shows, includ- ing “The Van Jones Show.”

Rousseau has won two Emmys — in 2012 for NBC News coverage of presidential election night and in 2016 for the special event “CNN Heroes.” We caught up with him this summer on the set of “The Van Jones Show” at the CNN studios near New York City’s Columbus Circle.

What is it about lighting that interests you?

You can do almost anything with lighting. You take essentially a blank canvas and end up crafting a story through texture, through color, through movement. Plus, there’s just so many cool toys to use. There are no two lights that are the same, and then there’s the whole infrastruc- ture of how it’s controlled. There is a computer nerd-ing-out aspect to the whole thing.

Is the audience even aware of lighting?

If it’s done right, you never notice it. As part of attending or watching a show, your goal is to get lost within the show. If the lighting is bad, you are going to be noticing that, and it’s going to distract from the actual event. If the lighting is good, you’re going to feel like you are actually there and you are part of that scene. You feel the same emotion that the characters are feeling. The same thing goes if you are at a concert. I’ve lit a number of concerts in my career, and the big thing for me is how to take a song, lyrics, a melody and translate that visually.

What’s it like to light a new show like “Cuomo Prime Time”?

The challenge was making a distinctive look that sepa- rated our show from all the other shows done in the same studio while keeping it under budget. We were able to completely change the color palette of the set. There are a lot of little tricks I have tucked away in that set to get that look!

What’s the difference be- tween working in the studio at CNN and out in the field like at the Olympics?

With the Olympics, we are taking the biggest show that could possibly be put on the air and creating a studio in somebody else’s arena. I was working the hockey venue and they didn’t have a television studio, so we had to build one on our own. It’s incredibly challenging. You are under the clock and you have to make what you have on your equipment list work.

What did you learn at UConn that you use the most today?

The biggest thing that helped me at UConn was the net- working. I learned how to work with others and how to advertise myself. I learned how to communicate with a lot of different disciplines. That’s something I do a lot with now.

Does working at CNN make you take a strong political stance one way or the other?

It’s made me a news junkie just by the culture I work in. I feel connected to every story that’s going on. When it comes to the politics, I’m immune to it all, because I am exposed to so much of it. That’s not to say there aren’t certain stories that stop me in my tracks because I realize I am a part of that moment. One that I espe- cially remember is when the Chilean miners were trapped [in 2010]. We were here until 3 a.m. watching them all come out of that little rescue pod, and we were glued to it.

With an Emmy for “CNN Heroes,” that show must be very special for you.

We do it at the Museum of Natural History and only have 72 hours to load the whole show and then we go live. All the stress and hard work really pays off because it’s about people doing good in the world. Hundreds of people are nominated and 10 finalists are brought to the event and then we announce the CNN Hero of the Year. You see these people that are putting smiles on other people’s faces and making positive change. I feel hum- bled by it because I realize that I am helping give them this special night.

What do you do for fun in New York?

When I need to get out of the studio, I just go and explore the city: I walk around, look at all the buildings — it’s an architectural buffet. I love the parks. I am inside so much — the more I can be outside, the better it’s going to be for me when I have to go back inside.

Is there anything you miss about Storrs?

I always miss Dairy Bar ice cream, but I will say I also miss the quiet setting.

—MICHAEL ENNFIT ’88 (CLAS)
"We have team goals, and I have individual goals for myself. And being MVP was a goal that I had."

Sameh Dardona, associate director of research and manufacturing. We can now integrate corrosion, and report that information to the end user."

On working with scientists at UConn to create “smart” sensors that can detect any kind of wear, even corrosion, and report that information to the end user.

Sameh Dardona, associate director of research and Innovation at United Technologies Research Center, Science News, July 30, 2018

On the ruling against Roundup-maker Monsanto for $289 million to a plaintiff who alleges his terminal cancer is from using the herbicide:

"This verdict is just the first in what could be a long legal battle over Roundup, and proving causality in such cases is not easy."

Richard Stevens, professor of medicine, Business Insider, Aug. 16, 2018

On her study showing that in just one week an average American household’s diet generates as much greenhouse gas emissions as a drive from D.C. to Trenton, New Jersey:

"If people reduced their spending on protein foods by 18 percent, they’d see almost a 10-fold reduction in household greenhouse gas emissions."

Rebecca Boehm, postdoctoral fellow at UConn’s Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, The Washington Post, June 11, 2018

On preventing findings from the first long-term study of the deep ocean’s “twilight zone” from being put to commercial use without thoughtful regulations:

"New knowledge can lead to unforeseen consequences."

Peter Auster, professor of marine sciences, Boston Globe, Aug. 4, 2018

On the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that online retailers must collect sales taxes even in states where they have no physical presence:

"I think what we will see is that Amazon will start collecting the sales tax on behalf of third-party vendors and impose a commission for doing so. So this is really going to create another profit center for Amazon."

Richard Pomp, professor of law, SiriusXM Business Radio, July 9, 2018

On commercial gyms that provide tanning beds:

“We would be astounded if gyms provided tobacco to patrons.”

Sherry Pagoto, professor of allied health sciences, Salon, July 21, 2018

On the first universities in the United States to adopt the most technologically advanced way of managing and studying a dairy herd:

"This verdict is just the first in what could be a long legal battle over Roundup, and proving causality in such cases is not easy."

Two new robots have been introduced to the herd that enable the cows to choose when to be milked.

The new voluntary milking system will change the day-to-day life of the herd. Previously, each cow was milked three times a day, at the same time every day. When the cows were ready to be milked, they got noisy, says Steve Zinn, department head and professor of animal science in the College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources.

There’s a different atmosphere in facilities with voluntary milking systems. Since the cows are milked on demand around the clock, they are generally quiet and calm and spend a lot of the time lying down relaxing.

When ready for milking, the cow walks to the robot, which starts each visit by washing the cow’s udders before attaching a separate milking unit to each teat or “quarter.” If one quarter finishes milking before the others, that quarter’s machine will stop and be removed, which is likely more comfortable for the cow.

The voluntary milking system also provides new research opportunities for UConn. Each of the more than 80 cows is equipped with a smart device gathering data 24 hours a day on the cows’ behaviors, health, and milk production. A flood of data begins flowing as soon as the milk dew, and all of this data needs management, analysis, and interpretation, which is where UConn Engineering comes in.

"We are working to figure out how we are going to use the data, how we analyze it and start making predictions with it,” says Matthew Stuber, assistant professor in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering.

For instance, data on the cow’s movement — or lack of movement — can be an indicator of health, and data on milk quality can indicate what kind of grain is best for a particular cow. By analyzing that information, the engineers hope to develop ways to predict exactly how to tailor conditions for each cow and analyzing that information, the engineers hope to develop ways to predict exactly how to tailor conditions for each cow and achieve better outcomes for the facility as a whole.

Since the robots are taking care of the milking, says Zinn, this leaves caretakers more time for managing the whole cow, and researchers more time for new and innovative research.

—ELAINA HANCOCK ’09 MS

See the robotic milker in action — and watch cows lining up to go in — at uconn.edu/happycows.
AKSHAYAA CHITTIBABU ’19 (CLAS)

Chittibabu is among other things, a STEM Scholar in UConn’s Honors Program, a 2016 Holabird Scholar, a 2017 Newman Fellow, a UN Foundation Global Fellow, and a 2018 Truman Scholar. After she received the Truman, a highly selective national award that honors our next generation of public service leaders, President Craig Kennedy said, “She represents everything we are looking for at the University of Connecticut challenge our students to be.”

With a dual major in biological sciences and sociology, Chittibabu is planning to pursue both MD and public policy graduate degrees. But if things don’t work out for her on the science end of the scale, she could always take her bona fide artistic skills and become a poet or a painter. Better still, she could try being a stand-up comic because this high achieving scholar has a quick wit and a keen sense of timing when it comes to delivering a punchline. Yes – she is funny, too.

You grew up in Westford, Massachusetts, and graduated from the Massachusetts Academy of Math and Science. Why UConn?

I initially wanted to study physiology and neurobiology, and UConn is one of the few colleges with that undergraduate major. Once I came for a visit, I fell in love with the campus. Everyone I met was warm and enthusiastic, and it just felt right to be here. Plus, I look great in navy blue!

You are interested in many things. What drew you to the sciences?

My mom is a computer science engineer and my dad specializes in materials science and nanotechnology. I was full of questions when I was a kid. Why are leaves green? Why is the sky blue? They always explained things in a way that made science non-intimidating.

Have you a favorite class or teacher? I have so many. But a class that literally changed my life was Sociology of Health with [assistant professor] Kathryn Ratcliff. In that class, I realized that if I wanted to create change in health care, I would have to look upstream, not just at the clinical level.

How did you put that realization into action?

With Professor Ratcliff’s encouragement, I helped organize the first Global Health Symposium in Connecticut. It was held here on campus on March 24, 2018, with the theme “Think Global, Act Local.” We had speakers presenting global health research, and others who explained local engagement opportunities for students.

Chittibabu has traveled the world studying languages and advocating for global malaria and polio prevention. Top, South Korea; bottom, rural Panama.

Our goal was to bring the global health conversation to UConn and to expose our peers to ways they can get involved and become leaders in the field. I think we did that.

How many languages do you speak, and what’s the story behind them?

I speak five. Because of my parents, I was exposed to languages and cultures from around the world — both joyful and challenging — that you are having or have faced.

Currently reading:

A Dog’s Purpose by W. Bruce Cameron

Actually, I am rereading this book, as I first read it when it was published in 2010. Given the feature film that came out last summer, I can’t resist picking it up again for summer reading. It is such a great story, even if you are not a devoted dog lover like me. The story is about a dog who is reborn again and again into new situations and experiences with different human interactions. In each life, the dog is trying to figure out the reason for its being — which I find very moving. It makes you pause and reflect on your own life and the lessons you are intended to be learning throughout different situations — both joyful and challenging — that you are having or have faced.

On Deck:

Blind Spot by Maizlin R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald

I have had this book for a while but have not had a chance to start it yet — it’s on my summer reading list. It is about implicit bias, which means our attitudes or stereotypes that can affect what we do in an unconscious way. We all have implicit bias, so it is part of the way our brain organizes information. It is also has been shown to lead to discriminatory behavior (with race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation) — even in school settings. So it is important to learn about it, recognize it, and adjust our behavior to avoid acting on our unconscious biases.

SANDRA CHAFOULEAS

We talked with the Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor of Educational Psychology in the Neag School of Education this spring. She was seeking summer reads that would “stretch her in new ways” but also relate to the field of study she’s so passionate about. Her preference is print: “There’s nothing better than a tabbed, dog-eared, hard copy book with writing in the margins.”

SANDRA CHAFOULEAS

Letting Go: A Parent’s Guide to Understanding the College Years by Karen Levin Coburn and Madge Lawrence Treger

I picked up this book as our oldest child was heading off to college and really wish I had read it a year earlier, as it covers the full roller coaster — from the admissions process through the undergraduate years. There are useful tidbits of advice and many resources for parents to help navigate it all, but the most interesting pieces are the interviews sharing perspectives from students, parents, and college personnel. You finish the book understanding that there is no simple path or right decision for anyone, and that it is truly normal to experience peaks, valleys, and twists. As a professor, reading the book left me with greater appreciation of the issues that students could be facing. As a parent, it helped me take a deep breath of acceptance in reflecting not only on our past year but what might be next.

Just Finished:

A Dog’s Purpose by W. Bruce Cameron

Illustration by Kyle Hilton
I wasn’t financially comfortable. It was just the two of us. So after my parents divorced and we moved into an apartment, I was the one often dealing with the landlord, and I was pretty vocal.” Bergendahl says with a chuckle. “Even though I was basically a shy person, if there was something I thought was right, I would stand up for it.”

**Class Description:**

By sharing her personal experiences and doing classroom simulations, Bergendahl shows students how the law she teaches in class works in real life. The class begins with a general overview of the purpose and philosophy behind the criminal justice system and different types of crimes and punishment. Bergendahl then focuses on individual parts of the justice system.

“I hope students leave the course with a more realistic understanding of the system from all perspectives,” says Bergendahl. “I would like them to realize that it is not a one-size-fits-all point of view of law enforcement, prosecutors, or judges — that is why we call it ‘The Politics of Crime and Justice,’ because there are different political decisions and political actions that each one of these actors undertakes.

“Just because the law and the Constitution say what kinds of rights exist, we see that those rights have been interpreted in different ways throughout history. I also hope the students learn how each actor influences the others. If law enforcement doesn’t do its job, it makes the prosecutor’s job harder and so on. I don’t expect them to remember everything, but they should at least know how all of the interdependent parts work together and what that means for the rights of individuals who move through the system.”

**Bergendahl’s Teaching Style:**

The highlights of the class are the class-room simulations. When discussing law enforcement, for example, Bergendahl shows a video that puts students in the role of a police officer responding to a call. The situation escalates and ends with the officer (and the class) having to decide whether the officer should fire his weapon. The officer is white and the other person black. Discussion for the use of deadly force is far from clear.

“It generates a lot of discussion,” says Bergendahl. “It puts students in a position where they have to make a potentially life-and-death decision very quickly. It helps them understand the importance of appreciating things from both the law enforcement perspective and from the perspective of those who encounter the police.”

As a follow-up to the simulation, UConn Police Lt. Jason Hyland speaks to the class about laws surrounding the use of force and gives students a firsthand perspective of one of the most difficult decisions officers must make in the field.

In the section in which the class discusses the role of prosecutors and defense attorneys, Bergendahl has her students manage a simulated caseload. With limited resources, the student prosecutors must decide which cases are best suited for plea bargains, which ones should go to trial, who would recommend he be kept in jail, and who should be released on bail.

“I’ll walk around the room and they’ll ask me, ‘What should we recommend for this person’s bail?’ and I tell them I don’t know,” says Bergendahl. “Do prosecutors know in the real world? There’s not a book somewhere that says bail should be this or that for this particular crime. They have to learn on the job. They need to quickly assess who that defendant is, what is the likelihood they might flee, and whether they might re-offend.”

When looking at the role of judges and judicial selection, Bergendahl splits the class into prosecutors and defense attorneys and has them pick a jury from a list of 30 potential jurors.

The last phase of the class looks at sentencing, punishment, corrections, probation, parole, and parole. “We talk about three strikes, the sex offender registry, the history of corrections and how it has changed, and what probation and parole are. One of my favorite things in this section is having the students watch parole board hearings for three different inmates. They have to decide whether an inmate should be released on parole based on their respective hearing. The students then get to see if their decisions matched up to what really happened. It’s fascinating.”

**Why We Want to Take It Ourselves:**

Several years ago, Bergendahl secured a fellowship that allowed her to add a service learning component to the course. It turned out to be one of the best decisions she ever made. That first year, students had an opportunity to work with a variety of community-based service organizations, such as the UConn Police Department, the Connecticut Office of the Victims Advocate, and Perception Programs, a nonprofit dedicated to helping people with concurrent substance abuse and mental health problems.

Some students tutored inmates at the Brooklyn Correctional Institution. Others organized a talent show for women in the Next Step Cottage at Perception Programs in Willimantic to help build their self-esteem. Both projects helped students connect with people who have been through the system, Bergendahl says. It allowed them to see those individuals not as inmates, but as real people who are working toward rehabilitation and eager to get their lives back on track.

“I want them to leave here thinking, ‘Okay, how can I become a more engaged citizen?’” says Bergendahl. “I think that is something we, as a political science department, should be doing more. We should be encouraging others to be more active citizens. Yes, we are teaching them knowledge, but it shouldn’t end there. I don’t want to just teach, I want to empower!”

---COLUM POLITRAS ’85 (CLAS)
NEW ENGINEERING & SCIENCE BUILDING

In June, UConn celebrated the opening of its new Engineering & Science Building, a state-of-the-art facility whose carefully planned design and modern labs will help the University and its researchers drive new innovations in a range of scientific disciplines.

The School of Engineering uses three floors, housing programs such as robotics, advanced manufacturing, cyber physics, virtual and augmented reality, mechatronics, and other subjects. The Institute for Systems Genomics is on two floors, including its Center for Genome Innovation, microbial analysis and resource service, and other programs.

“This building is the culmination of significant investment by the state of Connecticut in STEM fields, and in the future of engineering,” says Kazem Kazerounian, dean of the UConn School of Engineering.

“Nearly 40 percent of our state’s economy is generated by engineering-related industries, and with our 70 percent increase in engineering enrollment, and significant investment in resources, UConn is providing research, talent, and technology that will pay dividends for decades to come.”

SMARTPHONE SOUP

In the bottom drawer of your desk at home lie all the “must-haves” of yesteryear — a bundle of knot- ted earphones, a broken computer mouse, some overplayed CDs, a flip phone, an iPod. A study in The Global E-waste Monitor 2017 reported that in 2016 humans generated 44.7 million metric tons of electronic waste (e-waste). And in that graveyard of a desk drawer, the basement, or a landfill, all these devices will rot for hundreds, even thousands, of years before degrading. The glass used in just one cell phone takes some 500 years to decompose.

But what if the future smartphones and tablets were made of edible materials? To chemistry professor Challa Kumar, a future where you can pop your cell phone in a pot of water, swirl it around, bring it to a boil, and have yourself a yummy iPhone stew is not science fiction but a future reality of his research in bionanotechnology, or what he calls “edible chemistry.”

Kumar and his team of graduate students created a white LED light from bovine serum albumin (BSA), a waste product of the meat industry. White LEDs are used in electronics like phones and TVs that emit white light from their screens. Kumar’s “hamburger protein” LEDs emit white light at a higher resolution than current LEDs and, says Kumar, “When you are done with the device, you could eat it.”

“We are the only group in the world doing this where both products and reactants are edible — to humans, plants, or bacteria,” he adds.

The team’s research has clinical significance, too. The edible LED also has inexpensive pH and glucose sensing capabilities. Combined with the team’s food-based batteries, these LEDs could replace current electronic glucose meters for diabetics.

Kumar also is exploring the possibility of using lipids from coconut oil to replace the toxic elements in current cancer cell-targeting treatments. He and his students believe the uses for edible chemistry are limitless, that it is the future of technology as well as environmental awareness.

“In the not-too-distant future, they say, we could be watching our favorite Netflix series on screens made from the same materials as last night’s burgers. — CARA WILLIAMS ’18 (CLAS)
Frustrated with the limited perspective offered by traditional newscasts, digital media and design students Ginzberg, Kelleher, and Polen teamed up as undergrads with Santi, an electrical engineering student, to create a revolutionary new live-streaming platform called Loki. The company’s proprietary technology gathers the myriad points of view an audience of smartphone users can capture at live events — concerts, breaking news, Husky basketball games — and lets viewers knit the streams together into unique, personal video feeds. Winner of the School of Business’ 2017 Innovation Quest, Loki makes viewers the editors, directors, and producers of their own content, right down to which camera angles they choose. How we receive our news may never be the same. — KEVIN MARKEY; PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS
When Dashride rolled out its automated dispatching software five years ago, some 200,000 taxi and limo companies operated in the United States — and every last one of them was under pressure from new ride-sharing apps. “Many had been using the same practices for 20 or 30 years,” says Ullman. “They didn’t have the technology to meet customer needs.” Dashride hooks them up with cutting-edge tools like advance booking capabilities; full back-office support of billing, customer management, and accounting; and detailed mapping and routing services. It is now the leading provider of software for taxi, medical, corporate, and driverless fleets across the United States and in Europe and Asia. For an enterprise that Ullman and Bachant started at UConn to provide safe rides to classmates after nights out on the town, it’s one heck of a ride.—CLAIRE HALL; PHOTO BY NATHAN OLDHAM

This year in the United States some 8 million pets will be diagnosed with cancer. Half of all dogs over the age of 10 will die from the disease. Kalinauskas hopes to change all that. Founder and CEO of biotech startup Torigen Pharmaceuticals, which is supported by the UConn Technology Incubation Program, she and her colleagues have developed a highly customizable vaccine that uses an animal’s own cancer cells to induce an aggressive immune response. Called VetIVax, the experimental treatment has produced eye-opening results and shows great potential as the company continues nationwide clinical trials. “Few adverse events,” reports Kalinauskas, who majored in pathobiology and veterinary sciences with a minor in business. “We are extending lives.” Millions of pet owners rejoice. —KEVIN MARKEY; PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS
Fun is serious business for these friends and four-year UConn roommates. Through TNB, Rasheed and Ellis bring young professionals together at venues around the state to share ideas, make social and professional connections, and add excitement to the life side of the work-life balance. The company’s popular “Network and Chill” and “Connecticut Daybreak” events have featured virtual reality sets, vintage video game consoles, and photo booths along with dance music and drinks. But all a party really needs to be successful, says Rasheed, is a critical mass of people ready to have a good time. The outgoing impresarios have been engineering fun since undergrad days, when their “Late Night at the Student Union” sober events (karaoke, bounce houses) and “Get on the Bus” outings for the Black Student Alliance drew loyal followings. Both earned MBAs, and Ellis went to work in the financial industry, while Rasheed turned to a career in sales. TNB grew out of the frustration they and friends felt at limited nightlife options available to urban professionals in and around Hartford. “If there isn’t a space there for us, let’s create it,” says Rasheed, who believes everyone should make it a practice to talk to five strangers at any social gathering. “What have you got to lose?” —KEVIN MARKEY; PHOTO BY CONNECTICUT DAYBREAK

While still in high school, Ben Grosse launched MXERS Audio, a maker of bespoke earbuds. He and friend and business partner Bharat Pulgram built the prototype by hand in a suburban Minneapolis basement. Today, their growing company produces a full line of devices that are customizable by color, style, and fit, and are specifically tuned for different genres of music. “What’s undervalued by prospective entrepreneurs is the why factor,” says Grosse, who serves as a student advisor to UConn’s Peter J. Werth Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. “Why should you buy our earbuds — or any other product?” For MXERS fans the answer is crystal clear: cool design and quality audio that cuts through the noise of a crowded market. —CLAIRE HALL; PHOTO BY NATHAN OLDHAM

“We couldn’t find the jeans we wanted,” says Karlyn, “so we made them ourselves.” What the Tppers wanted were jeans to fit their athletic curves (Karlyn and Kiersten played lacrosse at UConn; older sister and business partner Kendall played at Cornell). Standard-issue cuts were always too big in the waist and too tight everywhere else. After a pitch for athletically engineered real jeans (no jeggings or leggings, please) earned positive feedback at UConn’s CCEE Business Plan Competition during Karlyn’s sophomore year, the sisters took time to refine patterns, test prototypes, and source materials. This past March, they officially launched Tenacity. Grown and sewn completely in the United States, the flattering garments are made in Texas from cotton harvested and milled in Georgia and Alabama. Active women everywhere can easily breathe a big sigh of relief. —KEVIN MARKEY; PHOTO BY SKERPON PHOTOGRAPHY

Fareed Rasheed ’08 (CLAS) Co-founder (left), Jason Ellis ’08 (CLAS) Co-founder
TNB (There’s Nothing Better), New Britain, Connecticut

Ben Grosse ’21 (BUS), Co-founder and CMO
MXERS Audio, Minneapolis, Minnesota; mxersaudio.com

Kiersten Tupper ’12 (CLAS), ’15 MA, Co-founder (right); Karlyn Tupper ’14 (CLAS), Co-founder and CEO
Tenacity, Syracuse, New York; tenacityjeans.com
Inspiration for the device that Molkenthin has already secured a provisional patent for came to the recent nursing grad during her junior year, while she was spending a day at a hospital shadowing a lactation consultant.

“I saw a lot of new mothers struggling, upset, even tearful,” she says. “They were frustrated and asking, ‘How do I even know if my baby is getting enough breast milk? She seems like she’s fed, but then she’s crying as though she’s still hungry.’

Later, in a Healthcare Innovations Program class, professors Christine Meehan and Anna Bourgault asked students what they would design if they could improve something in the medical field. Molkenthin began collaborating with several UConn biomedical engineering students and before the end of her senior year had a working model for her device. A sensor on the infant’s stomach calculates breast milk consumption based on reflection and absorption and transmits that data via Bluetooth to an app that a mother can track to figure out what works best for her baby. “It takes something that’s so subjective right now and makes it objective,” says Molkenthin.

—JESSE RIFKIN; PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

Winner of the 2013 Innovation Quest competition, Smith designs, manufactures, and markets the Macropod, a microscope imaging system that produces astonishingly detailed pictures of the hidden natural world. NASA uses a Macropod to study microbes present in the closed environments of spacecraft. Other customers include the United States Geological Survey, Harvard University, the Department of Agriculture, and natural history museums the world over. “The Smithsonian is one of our top clients,” says Smith, who runs the business with his wife, Annette Evans, a Ph.D. student in evolutionary biology at UConn. One key to the company’s success? Its drive to constantly upgrade both technology and customer service. “What can we do better?” Smith asks. “What features would clients like to see? That’s what we’ve been able to do pretty well, and that’s what we’ll continue to do.” —KEVIN MARKEY; PHOTO BY PETER MORENUS

Mark Smith ’13 MS, CEO
Macroscopic Solutions, Tolland, Connecticut; macroscopicsolutions.com

Brittany Molkenthin ’17 (NUR), CEO
Lactation Innovations, Hartford, Connecticut

For more entrepreneurial alums go to s.uconn.edu/CEOs
David Bergman grew up in White Plains, New York. His mother had immigrated from Morocco, his father from Israel. “They had no idea about American football,” says Bergman, who nonetheless became a huge football fan. It wasn’t the Giants or Jets who piqued his passion, though. Bergman’s chosen team was, and is, the Minnesota Vikings. Now what are the odds of that?

Well, if anyone can tell you the odds of that, it would be Bergman himself. An assistant professor in the Operations and Information Management Department of UConn’s School of Business, Bergman teaches and researches in the field of optimization, which falls under the umbrella of analytics. And he’s found a way to work American football into the mix.

Bergman’s specific area of academic study is computational optimization, which involves developing computer algorithms for automated decision-making—a field called prescriptive analytics. It differs from the other branches of analytics in that it doesn’t just interpret data, as in descriptive analytics, or predict future events based on that data interpretation, as in predictive analytics. Prescriptive analytics uses the ongoing collection of data to automate decision-making in an ever-changing landscape.

“The problems are super complex and they can have a really large impact,” says Bergman. But basically, “it’s a way to drive efficiency or effectiveness in your organization.”

Hence, Bergman is called upon to tackle the streamlining of quandaries in fields ranging from cybersecurity risk assessment and military equipment procurement to parcel delivery timelines and airline crew scheduling. His expertise also happens to work well in football gambling, particularly for NFL fantasy survivor pools.

If you’re unfamiliar with that type of football pool, it’s really simple. And not simple at all. You enter a survival pool at the start of the NFL season, and your first task is to choose one of the winning teams from among the 16 games in Week 1 (in order to survive to do the same in Week 2, and so on). So let’s say the New England Patriots, who have played in three of the

How to Win Your NFL Pool, Thwart a Terrorist, Maximize Delivery Routes — and Find the Perfect Kidney Match

All you need is the everything algorithm, says professor Bergman

By Jeff Wagenheim
Illustrations by Rob Dobi
Bergman believes his algorithm also could enhance airport security screening. Airport security staff has a finite number of agents available at each checkpoint and a constant flow of passengers to be screened or allowed to pass. Every time an agent is with someone, that’s one fewer agent available to deal with the approaching horde. So the ongoing decisions on who to screen must be spot-on. “You want to maximize the agents’ availability without compromising security,” he says. “There are sequential decisions that can be automated.”

The same is true of military or airline crew scheduling, both of which are complex tasks that cry out for efficiency and automation. As does parcel delivery — 300,000 packages to handle in a day, picked up within specific time windows, delivered within specific time windows, going here, there, and everywhere via various modes of transportation. “The decision-making that the parcel services face every day is so large-scale and so complicated,” says Bergman, “that they employ fleets of people with my background.”

The possibilities for applying his calculations are “literally endless,” says Bergman. “There are a lot of ways we can make an impact in optimizing decisions using our algorithm. With automated decision-making using predictive models, you can maximize almost anything, as long as you know what you want to maximize.”

To take a bite out of this type of problem, you must make a sequence of choices in which each one places limits on the choices available to you in future decision-making. Bergman worked with University of North Alabama economics professor Jason Imbrogno to create an algorithm to automate these decisions, which can address matters far more critical than football.

The same algorithm can be applied, for instance, to such high-stakes concerns as the allocation of donor kidneys to patients. One patient in need might be a perfect match for the first kidney that becomes available, but that patient also might have a compatibility broad enough to match later kidneys. So the greater good might be served by matching the first kidney with a patient with less universal compatibility.

“You can maximize almost anything, as long as you know what you want to maximize.”

Base your Week 1 pick on probabilities for the first eight weeks. For Week 2, refine the probabilities through Week 9. And so on. “A rolling horizon is the way to go,” says Bergman. “This strategy has proved better than millions of other strategies people employ. You’re planning ahead, but with the flexibility to recalculate.”

Those calculations — sorting through 15 or 16 games a week for eight weeks — might sound complicated, but they can happen in milliseconds these days. Computers gain speed every year, and algorithms have never been more efficient. In the last 20 years, Bergman estimates, optimization technology has sped up by a million times. “That is not an exaggeration,” he says. “Problems that took three months to solve 10 years ago now take a second or two on my laptop.”

But while Bergman can calculate for you the optimal picks for the next eight weeks of the NFL season, he would be selling your chances short if he did so and left it at that. The optimal strategy calls for one more step: “Even football experts are able to predict the outcomes of NFL games with only around 65 to 70 percent accuracy,” he points out, “so the probability of you lasting the whole season is an opportunity time,” he says. “I didn’t pick this career path with any expectation that this was going to be a super exciting time to do it. But timing is everything.”

Of course, Bergman recognizes that timing has its own complications. He and his wife recently became parents, and they’ve already been inundated by information and warnings about children’s screen time and access to technology. He is equipped more than most dads to recognize the benefits, and he’s in the process of gaining firsthand experience with the challenges. “As a society, we are going to have to work on being more conscious,” he says. “But that’s not my research area. I just work on making things more efficient.”

Including his own survival pools. “Football is such a complex game, with so many factors having an impact on every play. There’s so much going on that it’s a very hard game to predict. But I love trying.”

And if things get too topsy-turvy for any algorithm, Bergman can always return to the childhood technique that made him choose the Vikings and started his NFL fandom: “I think it was because I liked the team colors.”
The Fight for

Physical Literacy

Elementary schools are associate professor Lindsay DiStefano’s battleground. “Move!” is her rallying cry.

By Elaina Hancock ’09 M3
Photos by Peter Morenus
kids in order to succeed throughout their education. Physical literacy is important for children to develop in order for them to be physically active for a lifetime.”

“Gaining reading literacy is important for kids in order to succeed throughout their education. Physical literacy is important for children to develop in order for them to be physically active for a lifetime.”

A: The longer the better, how-ever there have been studies done that show even a five-minute break can give kids an edge and will be less likely to participate in physical activi-ties in the future. Q: You studied sports med-icine in undergrad and grad school at Boston University and then UNC-Chapel Hill. How did you get from there to researching physical literacy in young children? A: My research background in sports medicine started specifically with identifying and correcting risk factors for common injuries. I saw that a lot of what we consider today as risk factors for injury are actually related to children not learning normal motor control. If a child isn’t given adequate physical opportuni-ties and experience, there seems to be a risk that they will not know how to properly control their body correctly when they try to play a sport as an adult, which may be setting them up for the risk of injury. And they will be less likely to participate in physical activity across their lifetime.

Q: So how do we fix that? A: The best way you can fix a lot of these issues is by physically every child is through school. A big component is getting up teachers to incorporate physical activities into the classroom experience. This gives teachers the opportuni-ty to help children learn how to control their body and be exposed to different types of movement. And class-room based physical activity breaks have been shown to improve student attention, behavior, and academic performance. This is really a win-win for teachers and students.

Q: How much of an activity break is enough to yield positive results? A: The longer the better, how-ever there have been studies done that show even a five-minute break can give kids an edge and will be less likely to participate in physical activities in the future. Q: How do you counsel parents on sports special-ization, something we are hearing so much about these days? A: Sports specialization is the opposite of sports sampling. Basically it is when a child starts to only play one sport for the majority of the year at the expense of playing other sports. Frequently it happens when athletes demonstrate some talent and their coaches or parents start to think they are likely to get a scholarship or play professionally so they end up playing that sport year-round.

Now I just play sports for fun with my kids, and I coach youth hockey. I’ve got three little kids, so I have that motivation to keep them and their peers growing up and knowing how critical moving throughout their lives can be. All of my kids’ teams do preventive training and we’ve started evaluating kids for physical literacy. It definitely helps communicating with the parents of athletes that I coach now.

Q: You’re an advocate of sports sampling. What is that? A: It’s much easier to learn movement control if children are exposed to a lot of different types of movement control. Therefore it’s important to sample a lot of different types of movement control. Q: You studied sports medicine in undergrad and grad school at Boston University and then UNC-Chapel Hill. How did you get from there to researching physical literacy in young children? A: My research background in sports medicine started specifically with identifying and correcting risk factors for common injuries. I saw that a lot of what we consider today as risk factors for injury are actually related to children not learning normal motor control. If a child isn’t given adequate physical opportunities and experience, there seems to be a risk that they will not know how to properly control their body correctly when they try to play a sport as an adult, which may be setting them up for the risk of injury. And they will be less likely to participate in physical activity across their lifetime.

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Manisha Sinha’s History Lessons Tell the Truth About Slavery in the United States.

When Draper Chair of American History Manisha Sinha was a child, growing up in India between Patna, one of the oldest inhabited places in the world, and Delhi, one of today’s most populous cities, dinnertime was a lot like it is for most families. Or so she insists.

“Every family has its disagreements, and we were no different,” she says. “We would argue about history over the table.”

Sinha’s father, Lt.-Gen. Srinivas Kumar Sinha of the Indian army, and her mother, a Gandhian nationalist, often recalled stories from India’s declaration of independence in 1947. She and her two sisters, one of whom also is an endowed professor of history and the other a high school history teacher, and her brother, India’s current ambassador to the United Kingdom, were thoughtful children.

Drilled into them at an early age was a passion for debate, grounded in the idea that no successful future is possible without understanding the past. Perhaps it’s no surprise, then, that this summer, when Kanye West called the 400-year legacy of slavery in the U.S. “a choice,” Sinha wasn’t having it.

Drawing on her decorated 2016 book, The Slave’s Cause: A History of Abolition, she told Time magazine that West would do well to read the history, including the slave spirituals, that his own music stems from. “He ought to know that even when blacks were enslaved, their minds were not enslaved,” she said. “When they did not have the right to vote, they voted with their feet.”

The Slave’s Cause, which was long-listed for the National Book Award for nonfiction among a half-dozen other awards, illustrates the many and often overlooked ways that slaves fought for their own freedom. Sinha’s work teaches students, politicians — and yes, the odd celebrity — that history matters.

“These are historical legacies — we still live with them today — and we must learn from them,” she says.

A ‘TYPICAL’ IMMIGRANT

Sinha’s light laugh lilts down the corridor outside her Wood Hall office. She has worked here since fall 2017, arriving from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where she spent the first 20 years of her career and received that university’s highest honor, the Chancellor’s Medal. Before that, she attended Columbia for her Ph.D., before that, college at Delhi University. Now, with the Connecticut breeze blowing her hair through the opened window, she notes that she’s lived longer in the U.S. than in the country of her birth.

“It’s a pretty typical immigrant experience,” she muses. “I got my first job, my first car, everything — here in the U.S.”

Her father, who would later be called “the thinking man’s soldier” and a “sensitive, sympathetic, and enlightened general” by the press, spent his career wedged between a deep patriotism for his native country and a struggle for respect from Britain and its leaders.

As one of the first Indian officers in the British army, Srinivas argued in his writing — and at his dinner table — that it was of utmost importance for Indians to be represented in British institutions. Yet Sinha’s mother, Premini, who wore only hand-woven Indian khadi robes and espoused the Gandhian principles of Indian patriotism and nonviolence, often challenged Srinivas’ positive view of the British.

“My father said that Indians being in British institutions allowed for access to resources Indians might not have,” says Sinha. “Yet then there was my mother, the Gandhian.”

In part because of these discussions, Sinha held from early childhood a deep fascination with colonial India and its independence. She studied the writings of Mohandas Gandhi, and from there turned to the similar writings of Martin Luther King Jr.

“I became very interested in race in American democracy because of India’s history of colonialism with the British,”
Sinha says, “During the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King, Jr. invoked Gandhi’s idea of nonviolence and got it right. But in fact there were American abolitionists and thinkers who had used it even before Gandhi, like Thoreau in his Civil Disobedience.”

At Columbia, her dissertation on slaveholders was nominated for the competitive Bancroft Prize and eventually became her first book. The Counterrevolution of Slavery: Political Ideology in Antebellum South Carolina (The University of North Carolina Press, 1994). “After all, that I wanted to write a book about people I actually liked,” she says with a laugh.

“THESE GROUPS WERE ALREADY IMAGINING THE INTERRACIAL DEMOCRACY WE LIVE IN TODAY.”

In 2004, Sinha spent a year at the American Antiquarian Society on a coveted fellowship. There she uncovered original pamphlets signed by prominent black abolitionist Martin Delany.

The culmination of this research, 10 years in the making, was The Slave’s Cause. The book counterpoints the position, held by many historians, that white abolitionists by and large delivered slaves from bondage through their own newspapers, speeches, and petitions. After all, how could slaves work on their own behalf when they were enslaved? In fact, some of the earliest anti-slavery organizations were started in Connecticut, says Sinha. Slaves and black freemen were petitioning for emancipation here and in Massachusetts and New Hampshire as early as the Revolutionary era. Those early black abolitionists, anti-slavery, de-segregation, and racial equality ideals in turn influenced white abolitionist speakers and publishers.

“These groups were already imagining the interracial democracy we live in today,” says Sinha, her students had read enough newspapers, speeches, and essays from the Reconstruction era when many of the statues were erected to understand the context of their construction. “Because they knew the context, they did a job arguing with each other,” she says. “They learned the history through direct engagement with sources, and that demands more of them.”

Sinha flew to Delhi and spent a week with Sinivas in the hospital while he recovered from a successful surgery to remove a malignant tumor. After surgery, she flew to San Francisco on Sept. 14, 2016, for a week of book promotion in the U.S. and Canada. “I thought, that cannot be,” said the doctor. “He kept telling everyone my book was going to win the U.S. National Book Award, and I would say, ‘No, Dad, it’s on the long list, it didn’t win,’” Sinha laughs.

Great Debates

On a crisp September day in 2017, in a classroom in Wood Hall, Sinha asks students in her History 3510: Civil War in America class to take sides on the question: Chaos had erupted in Charlottesville, Virginia, two months earlier, when a neo-Nazi march to protest Confederate monuments was met by anti-racist counter-protesters, one of whom, Heather Heyer, was killed. The flames of the national debate about Confederate monuments were fanned, and Sinha wanted her class to participate. “I divided the room in half, and I said okay, this side must defend keeping the monuments and this side must advocate for taking them down,” she says. “It was a big challenge.”

During that week, Srinivas touched up his recently finished autobiography and penned the last of a long line of op-eds, according to Sinha. With his prognosis for recovery good, Sinha said goodbye and returned to a country that had just lost Donald Trump. “I thought, that cannot be,” said the self-described Clinton supporter. “And then I got the call that my father was back in ICU with sepsis.”

He died a few days later, just short of his 92nd birthday.

“So while her fellow National Book Award honoree and her corer in New York for the annual awards celebration, Sinha found herself back in Delhi for the funeral.”

Sinha teaching this fall. To see photos of her with her father, go to s.uconn.edu/sinha.

“IT’S THROUGH THESE KINDS OF INTERACTIONS THAT MY STUDENTS LEARN TO UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT MOMENT, WITH CONTEXT.”

As the endowed James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair in American History, Sinha is charged with enhancing the academic experience in early American studies at UConn. She inaugurated biannual symposiums in American history, with themes like Confederate monuments and history and the law. In spring 2019, she’ll delve into the Reconstruction era, the topic of her upcoming book. The symposium draws historians and public intellectuals from around the country, an exceptional experience for her students.

“I really get to know my students,” she says. “It’s a wonderful thing about UConn, that classes can be small and you can have real discussions. It helps me, too, by influencing my writing, because I can figure out where my audience is coming from.”

Sinha has written extensively in the popular press about historical parallels. She’s likened the progressive politics of the Obama administration to equal rights gained during the Reconstruction era, and cautioned that those gains could slip away, just as Reconstruction gave way to Jim Crow era.

A HISTORY PRESCRIPTION

Kanye West isn’t the only public figure who could learn from her students’ example, says Sinha. Precious few politicians seem to know their history, she says, including members of Congress and presidents. If she had her way, all presidents would read the complete writings of Abraham Lincoln.

“I would prescribe it,” she says. “He confronted the worst crisis in this country’s history. Presidents should learn from his humility and from what he understood as patriotism. It was not to triumph. It was not to rejoice. He knew that the highest form of patriotism can be dissent.”

Sinha set off on a monthlong book tour in the fall, to India and the U.S., and returned to a country that had just lost Srinivas to cancer. “During that week, Srinivas touched up his recently finished autobiography and penned the last of a long line of op-eds, according to Sinha. With his prognosis for recovery good, Sinha said goodbye and returned to a country that had just lost Donald Trump president. “I thought, that cannot be,” said the self-described Clinton supporter. “And then I got the call that my father was back in ICU with sepsis.”

He died a few days later, just short of his 92nd birthday.

“So while her fellow National Book Award honoree and her corer in New York for the annual awards celebration, Sinha found herself back in Delhi for the funeral.”

Sinha teaching this fall. To see photos of her with her father, go to s.uconn.edu/sinha.

“IT’S THROUGH THESE KINDS OF INTERACTIONS THAT MY STUDENTS LEARN TO UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT MOMENT, WITH CONTEXT.”

“As the endowed James L. and Shirley A. Draper Chair in American History, Sinha is charged with enhancing the academic experience in early American studies at UConn. She inaugurated biannual symposiums in American history, with themes like Confederate monuments and history and the law. In spring 2019, it will delve into the Reconstruction era, the topic of her upcoming book. The symposium draws historians and public intellectuals from around the country, an exceptional experience for her students.”

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Sinha has written extensively in the popular press about historical parallels. She’s likened the progressive politics of the Obama administration to equal rights gained during the Reconstruction era, and cautioned that those gains could slip away, just as Reconstruction gave way to Jim Crow era.

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Just watching a Dan Hurley workout is exhausting. He’s constantly on the move, gesticulating, goading, galvanizing his players. He doesn’t wear a whistle. He wants the players to keep moving, switching seamlessly from one drill to another, heeding instructions on the fly, making the most of every NCAA-allowed minute. These hourlong summer workouts are intense and highly competitive. There are winners and losers. Scores are kept and posted in the gym, the locker room, and the weight room for all to see. Hurley seems to notice every detail of every individual, and not just their basketball skills. He’s observing pace, effort, and demeanor as well, and has even called out a couple of guys for being poker-faced. If you’re on Coach Hurley’s team, you need to show your passion.

While he’s intent on preparing his current players for the upcoming season, Hurley also has an eye to the recruits who come to Storrs and watch a workout, knowing it will appeal only to those who are ready for that level of intensity. “If you’re a competitive player,” he says, “you’ll love this kind of environment.”

Embracing the Hurley way is the one condition he laid out when, little more than 24 hours after he decided to accept the position of head coach at UConn, Hurley met — alone — with his new team in the locker room at the Werth Family UConn Basketball Champions Center. The players were demoralized from a second losing season and uncertain about their future. Addressing the 10 eligible to return, he told them things were going to be different, but they would have to allow him to coach and that would mean being hard on them.

Minutes later, beneath the championship banners on the practice court, Hurley was formally introduced to UConn Nation as the Huskies’ new coach. The future of UConn Men’s Basketball had begun.

The Power of the UConn Brand

Hurley inherited a UConn program that had lost its way coming off the era of Hall of Fame Coach Jim Calhoun and struggling to adapt to new conference realities, despite winning its fourth National Championship under Kevin Ollie just four years ago.

But, he says, he likes to fix things, and it would be hard to find a coach with a résumé better suited to the task. The son of Hall of Fame high school coach Bob Hurley (“I learned 95 percent of what I know from my dad”), he scored more than 1,000 points as a point guard at Seton Hall, coached four years at Rutgers as an assistant, nine years as head coach at St. Benedict’s prep school, and is entering his ninth year as a Division I head coach after stints at Wagner and the University of Rhode Island.

He has a track record of building or rebuilding programs. He transformed St. Benedict’s into a national high school basketball powerhouse; turned Wagner
around in just two years; and in six years led the struggling Rhode Island Rams from just seven wins the previous season to an Atlantic 10 conference championship, regular season championship, and two consecutive trips to the NCAA Tournament.

Hurley, long familiar with the UConn brand — both as a player on a rival Big East team and as a high school coach whose players were sometimes recruited by Coach Calhoun — says being the Huskies’ coach is his dream job. Though the brand was forged during the glory days of the Big East, he is determined to both carry it forward and reshape it, blending UConn tradition with Hurley family reputation. “We’re going to build a program so strong that conference affiliation isn’t what the fans or the media are talking about,” he says. While others will doubtless measure his success based on Final Four appearances, championships won, and the number of first-round NBA picks he produces, that won’t be enough for Hurley: “I measure myself that way too — I’m as aggressive, or played selfishly, where they were out-rebounded, or allowed the other team to dictate the game. That’s never going to happen again, he told them.

He filled the three open scholarships with two graduate transfers and a freshman he had previously recruited to URI, chosen not only for their talent but for character and work ethic as well. One of the graduate students, Tariq Smith, played for Bob Hurley Sr. in high school. and reaching out to their families, the program — getting to know his players and student managers. The players believe in his ability to lead them forward. “He came from a winning background,” says junior guard Christian Vital. “Every place he went, it was struggling to begin with and ended up in a better place because of him.”

After watching video of more than 20 of last season’s games, Hurley picked out clips where he felt the players weren’t aggressive, or played selfishly, where they were out-rebounded, or allowed the other team to dictate the game. That’s never going to happen again, he told them.

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Creating New Habits

As the summer days and weeks lengthen into months, the Huskies are practicing hard, eating better, sleeping more, and growing closer as a team. The new conditioning regime has some beefing up, others slimming down, and all looking toned and fit. Thanks to a sleep tracker on their phones, they are monitoring their own sleep, aiming to get the eight hours a day recommended by “Coach Cal.” And they are all doing better at eating three meals a day.

“Paying attention to the small things now is going to amount to achieving our bigger goals as a team,” says senior guard Jalen Adams. “The workouts are intense,” says Vital, “but we know it’s going to pay off.”

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“BETTER, SMARTER PEOPLE MAKE BETTER PLAYERS.”

individually, to get him up to speed and build his confidence without prematurely exposing him to contact.

Gilbert says Hurley is a very hands-on coach. “He’s such a great leader. He knows exactly what to do and when to do it. He pushes you in a way you still feel motivated.” The players agree that Hurley is tough but say he takes the time to explain what he’s doing and why. “He’s gonna tell you the truth, whether that’s good or bad,” says Gilbert.

Hurley also holds his players accountable. “If you mess up, he’s not going to let you get away with it,” says Adams. “He lets the whole team know, and the whole team has to come up with a way to resolve it.”

When Coach rips into two players for slacking on sprints — the sprints are among teammates in community service

The Climb Up

It was Hurley’s father, a probation officer as well as a coach, who taught him how to use sport as a vehicle to achieve a better life. “The things you learn about yourself in sports, the habits you develop, the work ethic, competitiveness, how to interact with people from all backgrounds, the skill set, can all help you become a successful person,” says Hurley, who knows firsthand the ups and downs of a successful person,” says Hurley, who knows firsthand the ups and downs of a college basketball player’s career. Like many of his players, he and his older brother Bobby were raised in the inner city — specifically the schoolyards, streets, and parks of Jersey City, and on the basketball court of St. Anthony under the watchful eye of their father, Bob Hurley Sr., Naismith Hall of Fame coach. Hurley and his younger brother, Bobby, were raised in the inner city — specifically the schoolyards, streets, and parks of Jersey City, and on the basketball court of St. Anthony under the watchful eye of their father, Bob Hurley Sr., Naismith Hall of Fame coach.

But after a highly structured childhood and high school career, he says he lost focus during his early years as an undergraduate at Seton Hall. On the court, he struggled to live up to the Hurley name and was stung by the fans’ belittling comparisons to his brother Bobby, a four-year starter and two-time national champion at Duke who was then a rookie with the NBA’s Sacramento Kings. Early in his junior year, he says, he hit rock bottom and took a leave from the team, heading home for winter break unsure whether he would even go back to school.

Then Bobby was almost killed in a car accident. “He should have died,” says Hurley. “That was perspective right there. I had been losing my mind over not playing, but life is a lot bigger than that.” So he returned to school, rejoined the Pirates as a redshirt, and began the climb back up. The following season he began playing for a new head coach, Jersey City native George Blaney, who would later move to UConn as associate head coach under Jim Calhoun. “Coach Blaney cared about me as a person,” he says. “He believed in my talent as a player. He worked so hard with me to get me right. He taught me there could be love there.”

In his senior year, Hurley found love outside of basketball as well. He met his future spouse, Andrea (now his wife of 21 years and the mother of their two sons).

With his confidence and passion for the game restored, Hurley finished his college career with 1,070 points, and could have had a promising career as a professional basketball player. But he had found his calling elsewhere in the sport: “I knew, after all the things I had been through and learned as a player, that I could best use my skills as a coach.”

Can We Shock the World Again?

So where will Hurley’s coaching skills take UConn? “The Huskies are hungry and so are the fans.”

“Definitely want to be a tournament team. And want one of those,” says Gilbert, with a nod to the signed 2014 championship basketball on display in Coach’s office.

But no one has higher expectations than Hurley himself. “My expectations are higher than those of the most delusional fan,” he says. “I came here to challenge myself. I want to be an elite coach, and bring UConn back to the elite level.”

As the weeks count down to the 2018-19 season, he vows there won’t be a team in the country that will play harder. “They’ll be a strong team, communicating with each other, having each other back, motivating each other. Those are things we can control,” he says.

No one knows how far they will go. But, says Hurley, “my goal is to be the surprise team of college basketball this year.”
entertainment agency in Europe. The Connecticut Society of Certified Public Accountants recently honored Daniel S. Firestone ’63 (BUS) of West Hartford, Connecticut, with a 50-Year Award recognizing his years in the association. Daniel owns the public accounting firm of Daniel S. Firestone, CPA, in West Hartford. He is active in the community as a member of the West Hartford Pedestrian and Bicycle Commission, a founder of the Cycling Without Age Program, and current chair of the Democratic Town Committee. He also collects and restores antique automobiles, primarily Hudsons. Dean F. Paul ’66 (CLAS) has retired from the private practice of law and is living in Fort Worth, Texas. His recent book, Second Thessalonians 2.1-12 Unlocked: The Key to the Timing of the Rapture, is an expository study of one of the most important prophetic passages in the New Testament. Judy Strom ’67 (CLAS) and her husband Bob are grandparents to Emory Joseph Strom, who was born to Tammy Strom, of Bellingham, Connecticut, in August at Danbury Hospital. The baby also has an aunt, Jessica Strom, in Ridgefield, Connecticut, and an uncle, David Strom, and cousin, Juliet Strom, both in Centerville, Virginia.

Class Notes

Welcome Back, Jamelle Elliott

“It feels good to be home,” said Jamelle Elliott ’96 (BUS), ’97 MA, after being named UConn’s associate athletic director for the National C Club. The mission of the just-formed C Club is to unite and engage current and former student-athletes with opportunities, such as networking and mentorship. After playing for the Huskies (she remains the sixth all-time leading rebounder with 1,054), Elliott was on the Women’s Basketball coaching staff here for 12 years before heading to Cincinnati, where she was head coach from 2009 to 2018.

Kudos

1. Jeff Piascik (14 BUS) and Zoe (Basso) Piascik (14 CLAS) in Waterford, Connecticut, surrounded by 2014, 2015, and 2017 grads. 2. Marissa Seagrave (14 MFA) and John Seagrave (12 MS) with their UConn peeps in Saratoga Springs, New York. 3. Assistant band director Jessica VonVillas ’12 (SFA), ’16 MM with new husband Josh Dickerson and band alums in Newport, Rhode Island. 4. Alicia Affinito ’17 (ENG) and Tom LaFemina ’17 (ENG) with fellow proud alums — and dog.

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UCONN MAGAZINE | MAGAZINE.UCONN.EDU FALL 2018
HAIL TO THE CHIEF: RICHARD ROBINSON ’79 (CLAS) IS THE CONNECTICUT SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE

“I was having dinner at home in the family room, watching television. My phone rings — a Stamford number that I didn’t recognize. I didn’t want to answer it, because I thought it was one of those robo calls,” says Richard Robinson ’79 (CLAS). “But my wife said to answer it.”

On the other end of the line was Gov. Dannel Malloy, saying that he would nominate Robinson to become Chief Justice of the Connecticut Supreme Court.

“I kissed my wife and asked, ‘Did you find that different...?’” She said, “Why?”

I said, ‘I thought you might find it different — kissing a Supreme Court Chief Justice!’”

Her reaction, he says with a laugh, “was loud.”

Liberal Arts

Robinson continues, “because I don’t feel that’s the important part of it. It’s how it impacts the law, the jurisprudence, how it impacts the people who were involved in it. I don’t look at whether it’s popular or not.”

Aisle Crossings

Robinson says he even practices with the Connecticut Supreme Court and later appointed Chief Justice by a Democratic governor. The politically divided Senate and House both confirmed his nomination unanimously.

Which ruling does he consider his most important during his court tenure?

“It’s always the last case that went out,” he says. “My view is this: No one case is more important than the other. For every litigant, that’s the most important case to them. That’s how a justice should think about it.”

“Before the case, we did a fundraiser for a charitable cause. We had this one bike...”

Robinson remembers, “I seem to remember being assigned the 2 to 3 a.m. shift a lot.”

Sliding Doors

Graduating with a major in English and minor in ecology, Robinson told his mentor Ben Magubane, an anthropology professor who had been exiled from his own home country of South Africa, that he was considering law school. “That’s a waste of time. Go into medicine,” Magubane replied.

After much thought, Robinson decided on law school and graduated from the University of West Virginia in 1984. He roots for UConn sports to this day, though admits to feeling conflicted during the seasons when the two teams competed in the same Big East conference.

“After those games,” Robinson explains, “I would say I had rooted for whichever team won.”

Environmental artist Ned Kahn ’82 (CLAS) creates massive kinetic sculptures that mix natural elements, such as wind, water, and even fog, with the structural. He has more than 100 such installations around the world including this, the “Cloud Arbor,” in Buhl Community Park in Pittsburgh. Kahn describes the 2012 collaboration with landscape architect Andrea Cochran and the Pittsburgh Children’s Museum as a sphere of fog that forms inside a forest of stainless steel pipes. High-pressure fog nozzles embedded in the 30-foot-tall poles convert water into a cloud that appears and vanishes every few minutes.

To read more about Kahn and to see his sculptures in motion, go to s.uconn.edu/kahn.
Washington. He will also oversee development of the college’s planned medical residency programs. Most recently, he was founding dean of the School of Dental Medicine at East Carolina University.

- Attorney James P. Ray ’84 (ENG), ’92 MBA, ’92 JD and Robert S. Mello, ’87, ’91 JD are among 68 lawyers elected a 2018 Fellow of the Connecticut Bar Foundation’s James W. Cooper Fellows Program, which recognizes distinguished service to the legal system. Both men are partners at the Robinson+Cole law firm in Hartford. Robert was previously an environmental engineer and inspector with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. He lives with his wife and two sons in Simsbury, James, who serves on many Connecticut Bar Association committees, also served as a Connecticut and Western Massachusetts board member for the National Conference for Community and Justice and as a member of the Connecticut State Bar’s Continuing Legal Education Programming Committee.

- The Connecticut Society of Certified Public Accountants recently elected quality of life. - Grant W. Wexner ’92 (BGS), chairman of Old Saybrook, Connecticut, reports that he has worked as a professional in the recreational marine industry in Connecticut since 1963. He is a marine surveyor by trade and captains a cruise ship for the Valley Railroad. He has served on many state, local, and national committees, and was recently appointed a director of the Connecticut Port Authority in Pennsylvania, but was drawn to UConn’s science program and so switched in 2007. Here, she took a heavy course load and worked in Professor Michael Lynes’ immunology lab. That didn’t leave her much free time, but she kept writing, finishing short sto- ries and a novel.

For the past year, Joukhadar has called nowhere home as she went from writer’s residency to writer’s residency, including a two-month stint in Morocco, her first visit to Northern Africa and a chance to hone her Arabic. She’s been working on her second novel, which has to do with Syrian immigration to the U.S. historically. “People don’t know they have been immi- grated [to the U.S.] since 1860.”

Ironically, as she has worked on that book, the Trump administration essen- tially banned Syrians from even visiting the U.S. While she’s been on the road to promote her debut novel, Joukhadar says people at her readings often ask her what they can do to help Syrians. If nothing else, they urge her to read what Syrians themselves have to say about the war.

She hopes her novel is “a gateway for people to seek out the voices of people raised in Syria, to hear them in their own words.” — AMY SUTHERLAND

David Rosado ’93 (CLAS), ’07 JD is Hartford’s First Latino Police Chief

David Rosado has been making use of his sociology degree since taking over the job of Hartford’s top cop early this year. The FBI Academy grad is a Hartford native who’s been with the depart- ment for more than two decades.

At his swearing-in ceremony, Rosado, a father of three, said of Hartford, “If you can make it here you can make it anywhere. So I want all those young kids growing up in the city today to remember, that translates to ‘Yes, you can.’”

ALUMNI PROFILE

JENNIFER ZEYNA JOUKHADAR ‘08 CLAS

In 2015, after years of intense study, a bachelor’s in particular and calligraphy followed by a Ph.D. in pathology as well as two postdoctoral fellowships, Jennifer Zeynab Joukhadar ‘08 (CLAS) walked away from science to pursue her childhood dream—to be a novelist.

“I wanted to give myself a chance to write full-time for six months to a year and see where it led,” she says.

Where it led to Joukhadar’s first novel, The Map of Salt and Stars, which was recently published by Simon & Schus- ter. The book’s dual narrative follows two fatherless girls as they each embark on long and dangerous journeys across the Middle East and North Africa.

As 12-year-old Nour flees the Syrian civil war with her family, she comforts herself by recounting a story her father used to tell her about Rawiya, a teenage girl who apprentices herself to a medieval mapmaker charting trade routes. Jouka- dar switches back and forth between the two tales as they are as similar as they are different. Rawiya’s story is a fairy Tale; Nour’s is a nightmare.

Says Kirkus Review, “Joukhadar plunges the Western reader full force into the refugee world with sensual imagery that is immediate, intense, and at times overwhelming.”

When Joukhadar began work on her novel, the Syrian civil war had raged for three years. As a Syrian American (her fa- ther emigrated from Syria to Manhattan), Joukhadar could not tune out the news of the fighting and the refugees. “I was thinking of the ways my community was grieving for people who were lost, places that were lost. I wondered if we could redefine home as something other than a place, so we can’t lose it. I started to think of the power of stories, not just how to be vehicles of what we can take with us.”

Though the war felt personal for her, the author knew of it was mostly through first-hand accounts of refugees, reading as much as she could. She also researched her own passions, geology and mapmaking, which she weaves into the book as symbols and plot devices. Now, for example, car- ries a piece of lapis lazuli riven by bands of salt, a metaphor for the unavoidable trauma in life. Though Rawiya’s story is fantastical, complete with a kind of mon- strous bird, she apprentices to al-Idrisi, a medieval geographer, to hear their stories in third grade, she set her sights on- chime. “It brings a little bit of color into the refugee world even when she goes through difficult times.”

Though Joukhadar began writing stories in third grade, she set her sights on science in college. Her family encouraged her to have a backup plan to writing, and a career as a research scientist became that. She then pursued a Ph.D. in neurophysiology in Pennsyl- vania, but was drawn to UConn’s science program and so switched in 2007. Here, she took a heavy course load and worked in Professor Michael Lynes’ immunology lab. That didn’t leave her much free time, but she kept writing, finishing short sto- ries and a novel.

For the past year, Joukhadar has called nowhere home as she went from writer’s residency to writer’s residency, including a two-month stint in Morocco, her first visit to Northern Africa and a chance to hone her Arabic. She’s been working on her second novel, which has to do with Syrian immigration to the U.S. historically. “People don’t know they have been immi- grated [to the U.S.] since 1860.”

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Jennifer Zeynab Joukhadar has received high praise for her first novel from critics who have compared it to The Kite Runner.
The calls come at all hours. Hard calls, wrenching calls. Like the one that had Susan Brillhart driving from her Hoboken, New Jersey, home to the neonatal intensive care unit at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia so she could advocate for a tiny baby in foster care.

Born 13 weeks premature, the baby tested positive for drugs, was taken from her mother, and released from a New Jersey hospital at 34 weeks to relatives who were named foster parents.

“But they took her out to soccer games and all over and she was still so vulnerable and she got really sick,” says Brillhart. The baby went into cardiac arrest four times by the time she arrived by helicopter at Children’s Hospital. When Brillhart got there, the radiologist told her the baby’s brain scans “were devastating” and she was on full life support.

“I don’t work for the courts, I’m there to represent the best interest of the child,” she says. Like that baby — who recovered.

“It made no medical sense, but then babies don’t read medical books. That’s why I love little kids; they grow and don’t know how to give up, and they survive things that they shouldn’t. People toss the word ‘miracle’ around loosely, but there are times when it really applies.”

The baby’s mother, who also had a son with cardiac problems, worked closely with a child services caseworker and Brillhart to learn how to care for her chronically ill children. Over time, the mom and her children were reunited. “They are all doing really well,” says Brillhart.

A Calling

It’s advocacy work Brillhart has been training for her whole life. While a senior at UConn’s School of Nursing, Mount Sinai Medical Center recruited her to work on its Infant/Toddler Unit, starting a 30-year career as a pediatric nurse, manager, professor (she has a Ph.D. in nursing science), and nurse practitioner. In 2000, she landed her “dream job,” coordinating the care of 150 chronically ill children in New York’s foster care system. On call 24/7/365 “with my pager clipped to my paj’s,” she became exhausted, developed cardiac arrhythmias, and reluctantly left to return to teaching nursing full-time.

An assistant professor of nursing at the College of Staten Island, City University of New York, she was happy to be teaching the next generation of nurses but missed caring for young patients. So, when she spotted a newspaper ad asking Would you like to advocate for children?, her answer was a resounding yes.

Fifteen years later, she is “our longest-standing volunteer, and she’s had more cases than anyone,” says Beverly Savage, CASA’s executive director. “No one is more qualified or more dedicated.” While CASA asks volunteers to commit to one year advocating for a child, case supervisor Georgia Lavey says Brillhart has stayed with cases for years until a child is adopted or reunified with a parent. She has been part of 14 reunifications and seven adoptions and her phone brims with texts and birthday party photos of “her kids.”

Her commitment, she says, has its roots in two places: first, her parents, who were foster parents “and had that house where all the kids were — not a lot of money but a loving and happy place — that was our house.”

The second is UConn’s School of Nursing: “UConn connected me to professors who modeled excellence,” says Brillhart. “It was implied — you work hard and advocate well because your patient’s outcome depends on you. This is your opportunity to positively change their lives. That’s always stayed with me.” —JACKIE HENNESSEY ’83 (CLAS)
children to work as a product manager of natural skin care polymers for the cosmetic industry. ➤ Celine Petrie, ’00 (CAHNR)

Mark Roberts ’05 (CLAS) graduated with a master of public administration from the University of New Haven in May. Roberts, a 12-year trooper with the Connecticut State Police, was also inducted into Pi Alpha Alpha — the global honor fraternity for public administration students — as a result of his academic performance. ➤ Stephen Napier ’06 (CLAS), ’09 JD was recently elected to partnership at Ivey, Barnum & O’Mara LLC, which has offices in Greenwich and New Canaan, Connecticut, and New York, New York. ➤ Chuck Buder ’06 (BUS) and his wife, Emma (Emily Buder) Roberts ’05 ED, ’07 MA, welcomed a daughter, Iona Sophia Buder, into the world in March. The couple, married in 2016, lives in West Hartford, Connecticut. ➤ Construction attorney Ryan Scardato ’07 (CLAS) recently joined the Orlando, Florida, law firm of Lowndes, Driskell, Doster, Kanter & Reed.

Jason Jakubowski ’99 (CLAS), MPA ’01 was recently named president and CEO of Foodshare, the regional food bank serving Hartford and Tolland counties, including UConn and the town of Mansfield, Connecticut. Jason was a former two-term editor-in-chief of The Daily Campus, where he met his wife, Sarah (Treat) Jakubowski ’98 (CLAS). They live in West Hartford, Connecticut, with their five children.

On the Hill

When you ask Erin Perrine ’10 (CLAS) how she speaks in such perfect, coherent sentences, she says, “Whenever I can’t think of the words to say, I just pause.” She pauses them and you can almost hear a smile through the phone. “It’s better to pause than to say the wrong thing.”

Perrine is the spokeswoman for House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-California, and her job is all about saying the right thing. Whether chatting with reporters in the press room during a floor vote, writing a news release, or answering urgent queries on her phone, Perrine always has one thing on her mind: What would House Majority Leader McCarthy say, and how can she best represent him?

Perrine’s path from UConn political science major to the office of the House Majority Leader zigzagged but never wavered. She worked for now Speaker of the House Paul Ryan’s, R-Wisconsin, campaign for office in Wisconsin, for a voter contact firm in Washington, D.C., as a deputy press secretary for Sen. John Thune, R-South Dakota, and as the press secretary of the Republican National Committee. She says she never said no to a job just because she wasn’t sure what she wanted, or because she’d have to move. Every job was an opportunity to become a better writer, to be a better communicator, to work more effectively with the press.

Surprisingly perhaps, this Republican spokeswoman says that working with the press has become her favorite thing. “The Capitol Hill press corps is full of the most passionate, funny, smart people I’ve ever met. It’s great that every day I get to go there and talk with them,” she says. ➤ KIM KRIEGER
CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO TOM’S TRIVIA!

Go to s.uconn.edu/oct18trivia to see if you know as much as King of UConn Trivia Tom Breen ’00 (CLAS).

1. A popular campus social occasion, through the 1960s, was a day in the fall semester when residence halls competed in events ranging from sack races to costume contests. What was the name of this day?
   A: Dad’s Day
   B: Derby Day
   C: The Community Chest Carnival
   D: Fall Carnival

2. Agriculture has been an essential part of UConn since the institution was founded in 1881 as the Storrs Agricultural School. Who was the last president of the school to also have been a farmer?
   A. Charles Beach
   B. Glenn Ferguson
   C. Albert Jorgensen
   D. Benjamin Koons

3. When Week of Welcome was Freshmen Week, a panel of three seniors would enforce traditions like a candlelight oath ceremony and beanie-wearing. Their slogan was the forbidding, “Read, Hear, and Obey.” What was this group called?
   A: The Committee of Three
   B: The Archons
   C: The Order of the Night Moose
   D: The Black Triumvirate

4. The first Husky to have a significant NBA career was the country’s top rebounder, led the team to three consecutive NCAA tournament appearances, and memorably scored 30 points in a victory over American International College, when the player guarding him was none other than Jim Calhoun. What was his name?
   A: Tom Penders
   B: Dee Rowe
   C: Toby Kimball
   D: Bobby Osborne

One of the Vocational-Agriculture groups on campus as photographed in 1946 by entomology professor and longtime unofficial University photographer Jerauld A. Manter.