The Scientist Behind Those Sunrise Photos
Everyone deserved an especially warm reception to UConn this year, so it wasn’t only first years who got the traditional Week of Welcome, aka WOW. Glimmering glo swings and fire pits graced Founders Green at the top of Great Lawn at a party for returning students. And yes, of course, there was plenty of Dairy Bar ice cream.
FEATURES

22  A Picture is Worth a Thousand Lectures

Behind those Horsebarn Hill sunrise photos on Instagram is a longtime UConn professor and wildlife biologist whose photography passion started on research treks.

30  And Now I Spill the UConn Secrets

The graphic memoir that’s getting so much attention for Margaret Kimball ’06 (SFA) had its beginnings in her UConn English course “Coming of Age in American Autobiography.”

34  The Long Game

Doug Glanville has no right to be this good at this many things. After a successful Major League Baseball career, the Nog professor has found a meaningful voice in multimedia.

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From the Editor

Peter Morenus

THE BEST

In his role as co-host and co-founder of the UConn 160 podcast, Ken Best (left) spoke with UConn Baseball coach Jim Penders ’94 (CLAS), ’98 MA (right) for a live Homecoming event done in conjunction with a story Best had just written for this magazine. It’s relatively easy for Best to come up with a list of the stories he wrote for this current incarnation of UConn Magazine that are likely to resonate most with readers. “The Quiet Genius of Coach Penders” feature for our Summer 2017 issue is on that list, as is “Keys to the Kingdom,” Spring 2018, for which Best toured the Steinway & Sons piano factory in Queens, New York. “It’s a bit more challenging for Best to recall which of his bylined stories might be most memorable to readers of this magazine during 2002–2012, when he was the magazine’s editor. The Spring 2012 cover story, “Geno Goes for Gold in London,” springs to mind. “I think fans of women’s basketball would remember when Geno became the National Coach. That was a big deal,” he says. And there’s Summer 2004’s “Tracking the Red and Blue States: Politics in the 21st Century,” for which Best spent two days with Stuart Rothenberg ’78 Ph.D., one of Washington D.C.’s most influential political analysts. “We have this national figure who’s an alum, and he always refers back to his professors and has Husky championship posters in his office. I watched him give a speech — he’s like a stand-up comedian but he’s the smartest guy in the room,” says Best, who interviewed the likes of Judy Woodruff and Andy Cook for the piece. Remembering the stories he wrote while editor of the magazine is more challenging for Best because writing was the side gig while he focused on the big picture. “I was putting the thing together and making sure the trains ran on time,” he recalls, “doing that incredibly complex job of trying to put together a magazine that will have something for everyone and is well written and illustrated, with minimal resources, that will make readers think. ‘It’s neat that my university is doing that.’ If you can get that three times a year you’ve done your job.”

Best retired from University Communications this summer. It’s hard to say which Ken Best you and I will miss most, the one who wrote features like those mentioned above or the former magazine editor and ally who daily shared tips and trade secrets. I wish them both sunshine and below par in retired life.

FROM THE EDITOR
A GOOD BOY

Jonathan XIII, the snowy white Siberian Husky who represented UConn as its official mascot for almost six years before going into retirement as mentor and best friend to his successor, died in August at age 14.

Jonathan XIII made his Husky debut during the March 9, 2008, men’s basketball game against Cincinnati. From that beginning, he was a friendly presence during his walks on campus and a source of spirit and pride at athletics events. He continued as the official mascot until 2014, when his growing sensitivity to loud noise and crowds made such events uncomfortable for him to attend.

He then became an unofficial mascot emeritus when the black-and-white Jonathan XIV was introduced in 2014, and the two dogs lived together as de facto brothers throughout the younger Jonathan’s life with a host family off campus.

Huskies named Jonathan have represented UConn dating back to 1935, in honor of Jonathan Trumbull, the last colonial governor and first state governor of Connecticut. The co-ed service fraternity Alpha Phi Omega has helped to care for the Jonathans since the 1970s.

Although he had continued to take regular walks on campus in recent years with Jonathan XIV, the older Jonathan — known colloquially at home as “J.J.” — had been slowing down in recent years and had attended fewer official events. —STEPHANIE REITZ

“MY FAVORITE PAIGE BUECKER’S PASS THIS YEAR WAS WHEN CHRISTYN WAS TRYING TO GET THE BALL TO OLIVIA BUT THE LANE WAS BLOCKED. PAIGE CALLED FOR THE BALL AND ON THE RUN, AS SOON AS THE BALL GOT TO HER, SHE CAUGHT IT AND FIRED THE PASS TO OLIVIA FOR A LAYUP.” Bond Riley via Facebook

SUMMER ISSUE

I've been living in the Bay Area, California, for the last 25 years. I receive UConn Magazine and usually take the time to look through it and read some of the articles. But I have to tell you, you all knocked this issue out of the park. Every story was inspiring and interesting and timely. What amazing careers and accomplishments by our UConn students. The story I loved best was Jamaican-born Rohan Freeman. What an amazing and generous man.

I’m proud to be a UConn grad. I had a very successful career as a personal trainer, post-rehab specialist, and holistic nutritionist and am now semi-retired. Keep on bringing those great stories!

Patty Torza ’82 MA
Santa Rosa, California, via e-mail

SOCIAL MEDIA

The newest addition to Fairfield Way 😍

Juliana Mazza
A beautiful piece. You explained the job perfectly and are the epitome of a fantastic reporter, anchor and human.
Polikseni Manxhari via Twitter

YOUR TURN

We want to hear from you — good, bad, just not ugly. Please share thoughts, insights, discrepancies, recollections — and how’s your Tom’s Trivia win-loss percentage coming? Post to our website at magazine.uconn.edu, email me at lisa.stiepock@uconn.edu, or send by regular mail to UConn Magazine Letters, 34 N. Eagleville Rd., Storrs, CT 06269-3144.

Here’s a sampling of feedback from our last issue. Find more at magazine.uconn.edu.

Peter Morenus
Jonathan XIII at the 2008 Blue & White scrimmage at The Rent.
“YOU CHANGE THE WAY YOU LIVE WHEN YOU’RE HUNGRY”

For the first time the shelves were bare, and Jason Jakubowski ’99 (CLAS), ’01 MPA was scared. If he didn’t think of something, tens of thousands of people would go hungry. “It was two weeks into the pandemic,” says Jakubowski. “We had never pumped out that much food in such a short period of time. We don’t do food drives. We don’t collect cans of food, like a lot of organizations do. Our donations come in bulk from the food industry. But the grocery stores and food wholesalers had bare shelves, too.” Jakubowski is the president and CEO of Connecticut Foodshare and is an adjunct professor in the Department of Public Policy. He says he gained a deep sense of empathy and an obligation to serve his community from his dad, a teacher, and his mom, a social worker.

How did you respond to that bare-shelf emergency, when the whole country got a glimpse of what it’s like to be food-insecure? We had to completely change our distribution model, overnight. We had no choice but to purchase food, and food banks are not in the business of purchasing food. I told my team, I don’t care how much it costs. We need to get it here, to make sure we don’t get down to zero, because hunger affects everything. You change the way you live when you’re hungry.

How is it possible in a state with as much wealth as Connecticut for hunger to be an issue? When I go to national conferences, people say, “There’s no hunger in Connecticut. There’s no poverty in Connecticut.” That’s completely untrue. There is a tremendous amount of wealth here in the state of Connecticut, but there is also a tremendous amount of poverty, even in towns like Greenwich, which are among the wealthiest municipali- ties in the entire country. There are 169 towns in Connecticut, and we distrib- ute food to people in all 169.

How has food banking changed over the years? The old way of doing things was, you’d amass edible products, and you’d distribute those edible products, which could have been Snickers bars, or Skittles, or Twinkies. If it’s edible, you wanted to distribute it. The new paradigm in the food banking industry is collecting and distributing nutritious food, paying attention to the nutrition levels of the food we’re giving out. Poorer areas have greater issues with obesity — a box of Twinkies costs much less than a bushel of apples. Nutritious food is expensive.

Has educating people about nutrition become part of your mission now? Yes. We started something called the Foodshare Institute for Hunger Research and Solutions. The executive director, Katie Martin, has developed a program called SWAP, which stands for Supporting Wellness at Pantries. It’s a stipend program that ranks food based on nutritional value, so a food gets ranked either red, yellow, or green. Individuals are encouraged to take as many green foods as they want, and to be cautious with red foods.

What was the most important thing you learned at UConn? How to run a business. I was the editor-in-chief of The Daily Campus for my junior and senior years. It was a half million-dollar business at the time. We published 10,000 papers — every single day. There was a staff of about 50 students, and I answered to a board of directors. So many of those skills are things that I utilize on a daily basis today, running a $100 million food bank.

I learned, too, to treat people the right way. We all do jobs. We all have responsibilities. We all have personal lives. We all have health con- cerns. Everybody is a human being, first and foremost.

I also met my wife at UConn. I was the editor-in-chief, and she was the news editor. And that was the last time I was ever her boss.

Was UConn part of the emergency effort during the pandemic? Yes. We created an emergency drive-through distribution center at Rentschler Field, UConn’s football stadium. We served a couple thousand cars a day. Cars would line up and drivers would pop their trunks, and we’d put boxes of food in their trunks, and they’d drive on. We distributed more than 9 million pounds of food that way. The support we received from the University was terrific. Genu was out there, distributing food. Coach Pend- ers. Coach Dailey. Members of the women’s basketball team. The entire men’s basketball team. It was a real UConn effort.

What is your personal relationship to food? I love food. Sometimes I love food too much. I love good food. But I also look at it through the lens of the work that I do, and realize that food should not be something that is a lux-ury. It should be a right. It should be something that everybody is entitled to. We have a moral and societal ob- ligation to ensure that people in our community don’t go hungry.

You grew up in New Britain, Con- necticut. Red Sox or Yankees? I am obsessed with the New York Yankees, the New York Jets, and the UConn Huskies. Two of those have brought me a tremendous amount of joy over the years. —PETER NELSON

Peter Morenus

Foodshare Warehouse.

Jakubowski in July at the Connecticut Foodshare Warehouse.
COLLECTIONS

3,081 MILES

After Hannah Bacon ’15 (CLAS) lost her job at an environmental nonprofit due to the pandemic, she decided to use her time off to walk across the country to raise money and awareness for climate action. The New Milford, Connecticut, native who majored in Spanish and human rights ended her 3,081-mile trek this summer, after 206 days and countless social media posts. Here are just a few of our favorites.

See more from Hannah at magazine.uconn.edu.

Stuart Brown, the recently retired director of student services at UConn Waterbury, moonlights as a theater critic, podcaster, and creator/host of the online radio broadcast “Sounds of Broadway,” which boasts 40,000 listeners a month. It’s a global audience that includes a Storrs contingent—the program airs on UConn’s WHUS on Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

The show reflects Brown’s encyclopedic knowledge of the Broadway music catalog, along with his creativity in developing themed set lists that might focus on a composer, a production, a subject, or an individual performer. He also takes requests via email and writes back to his listeners, which he believes is especially important.

“How many times do you email someone, or you go to a website and you fill out a web form? You never hear from them,” Brown says. “You hear from me usually within 24 hours. That engagement to me is so key.”

Listeners rely on this engagement with the craft. Brown plays tracks from long-established, popular productions, but he’s known for seeking out the unexpected, too, such as music from the obscure genre of “industrial musicals,” productions developed and performed by Broadway talent for corporate sales meetings, a staple of the mid- to late 20th century, and short-run productions. “There are some cast albums that just totally bombed,” he says. “A lot of times this is really good music and for whatever reason the show didn’t do well, or it closed quickly or might have done just okay. I like to introduce a lot of that, and I’m always on the lookout for it.”

Tell Me What’s a Happenin’

Brown’s podcast “Broadway Buzz” is a collaboration with UConn Waterbury’s neighboring Palace Theater. When the pandemic shut down stage performances across the nation, it also halted the Palace’s regular radio program. Host Sherre Marcucci, the theater’s marketing and public relations officer, had to consider how to keep the Palace Theater’s audience engaged until performances could resume.

“We decided podcasting was the way to pivot,” Marcucci says. “I suggested Stu as a host because he is a fount of knowledge of the Broadway catalog. He is passionate about his topic and offers listeners lots of backstory information you wouldn’t necessarily know, or be privy to, which gives it a sense of exclusivity.”

Brown’s podcast features music, trivia, anecdotes about theater, and interviews with stage notables. He anticipates it will help the post-pandemic world come back to the theater.

“I’m hoping by people listening to the podcast, listening to the radio station, they’re going to say, ‘Wow, I miss that. I can’t wait to go back so I can be enveloped in that music live,’” Brown says. —KENNETH BEST
**UCONN NOW**

**3 BOOKS**

**ARMCHAIR TRAVEL TO INDIA, ISRAEL, AND SPAIN**

Communications major Edina Oestreicher ’90 (CLAS) returned to campus last June as the executive director of UConn Hillel, the Center for Jewish Student Life. Starting a new job in the midst of a pandemic was challenging, she admits, but telecommuting has not kept her from collaborating with students, staff, and faculty on innovative programming that’s been keeping the Jewish community on campus engaged. And, she says, she’s had more time to read without the hour-plus commute from her home in Orange, Connecticut. Oestreicher usually has one fiction and one nonfiction book going simultaneously.

Just Finished:

“I love Jhumpa Lahiri’s work and so enjoyed this story of the Indian immigrant experience in the U.S. Lahiri paints a vivid picture of the challenges and aspirations faced by immigrants and the accompanying, often burdensome, familial expectations. Her story of identity and family made me yearn for their native culture. I highly recommend her short story collection “Interpreter of Maladies” too.”

Reading Now:

“Israel: A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth” by Noa Tishby

I am finding this book incredibly informative, entertaining, and even-handed in helping me understand Israel’s history and present. There are so many conflicting opinions about Israel and this writer presents the facts in a very balanced way. I am excited to share it with students on UConn Hillel’s upcoming birthright trip to Israel (a free 10-day trip to Israel for all Jews between the ages of 18 and 32).

On Deck:

“One of my passions is hiking, and high on my bucket list is to trek the 500-plus-mile Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route across Spain. I am planning on making the trek next summer and am excited to read Hitt’s travel memoir about the route’s history and the colorful pilgrims from around the globe that he meets along the way — including a one-legged hiker and a man who, according to the publisher’s blurb, “speaks no languages.”

**LOVE, LIFE, AND THE MIRACLE MOVIES OF OSCAR GUERRA**

Emmy Award–winning filmmaker Oscar Guerra wants to have a conversation about immigration. Not a policy debate or a campaign rally or, god forbid, a made-for-cable screaming match. But an honest and open talk about what they think they know about the struggles, sacrifices, and dreams of marginalized humans whose voices often can’t be heard above the shouting.

“I think that once you invite people to have this conversation, you can start connecting,” says Guerra. “Hey, we both have kids. What would you do for your kids? Everything. Everything. I would do the same.”

Guerra’s “Frontline” documentary “Love, Life, and the Virus” just won the 2021 national Emmy Award for Best Story in a Newsmagazine. The film is about a Guatemalan family in Stamford, Connecticut, whose already precarious world is turned upside down when the expectant mom, Zully, is rushed to the hospital with Covid. With her husband, Marvin, a restaurant worker, and 7-year-old son, Junior, also infected, Zully knows her baby can’t be heard above the shouting. “I thought it was a prank,” recalls Luiana Lira, the teacher. “A raspy voice screaming, ‘I’m dying. Please take care of my kids. What would you do for your kids? Everything. Everything. I would do the same.”

Guerrero Production

**NEW SWING TREE GARDEN**

Lena Hiranthom ’24 (CLAS), left, and Jackson Kermode ’24 (CLAS) at Swan Lake’s new Swing Tree Garden, a tribute to the beloved Mirror Lake Swing Tree which, in failing health at age 70, was felled in 2019. The new garden has two saplings from that tree, two buddy benches that face each other to encourage conversation, and a box for journals so visitors can share reflections and encouragements.
my baby.” Incredibly, she does. Lira nurtures the newborn for five weeks as medical professionals and community organizations rally around the family, nursing Zully to health and an emotional reunion with Marvin, Junior, and healthy infant Neyseyl.

“It’s almost a case study of what can happen when we work together as a community,” says Guerra. “The story is a miracle. This is not the reality for most low-income Latinos. But it shows that when we’re here for each other, things can work out even in the most dire circumstances, like the peak of a pandemic.”

Broadcast last August in English to a national audience on “Frontline,” the long-running PBS investigative series, and in Spanish to an international one on Univision’s acclaimed “Aquí y Ahora” program, “Love, Life, and the Virus” had also been nominated for an Emmy in the Outstanding Feature Story in a Newsmagazine category. And it was a finalist in the 2021 Dart Awards competition, administered annually by the Dart Center for Journalism and Trauma at Columbia University.

The American Dream
An immigrant himself, Guerra came to the United States from Mexico to study at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he earned a doctorate in mass communication in 2014. He holds a bachelor’s in communication and a master’s in marketing from Tecnologico de Monterrey University in Mexico City, one of Latin America’s most prestigious private universities.

“I wanted to savor the academic environment that is so rich and beautiful in the States,” says Guerra, of his decision to live and study here. “I grew up in Latin America, I’ve lived in Europe, but for the college experience, this is paradise.”

Despite his credentials, Guerra at a certain point found himself struggling to adjust to life in his new country. He remembers thinking, “If it’s so hard for me, I’m 28 years old, I have my bachelor’s, my master’s, what must it be like for an 8-year-old who has nothing?”

At that moment, Guerra says, it was like a switch went on. It became his mission, “almost a moral responsibility,” to document the immigrant experience. “I believe in the American dream. It has maybe shifted from what it once was, but I believe in the American dream. I love this country and I think that we immigrants who helped build the country are still building the country — the stories need to be told, because that is the only way we can get to know people.”

Guerra is teaching video editing this fall and has a grant from UConn Research Excellence to work on “Covid-19 Vaccine Rollout in Stamford, CT: A Multimedia Archiving Project,” with Glenn Mitoma and Kathy Libal of UConn’s Human Rights Institute. He also is at work on a new as-yet-untitled documentary for “Frontline.” It traces families who were separated at the border during the U.S. government’s zero-tolerance immigration policy. The film will be supported by a companion website that Guerra and UConn students are developing as an academic resource with colleagues from Syracuse University. The site will include background information on zero tolerance as well as complete interviews and other source material not seen in the film’s tightly edited final cut. Assuming the production clears an as-yet-untitled documentary for “Frontline.” It traces families who were separated at the border during the U.S. government’s zero-tolerance immigration policy. The film will be supported by a companion website that Guerra and UConn students are developing as an academic resource with colleagues from Syracuse University. The site will include background information on zero tolerance as well as complete interviews and other source material not seen in the film’s tightly edited final cut. Assuming the production clears an unprecedented backdrop of an unprecedented pandemic is particularly gratifying.”

Guerra says he is continuously humbled by the people who entrust him with their stories. “As a filmmaker, the journeys are a project. For the people you’re working with, it’s their life.”

On the latest installment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change:

“On the latest installment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change:

“The report reads like a disaster novel.”

Geography professor Anji Seth, biology professor Mark Urban, and political science professor Prakash Kashwan, Science, Aug. 28, 2021

On being back for his 25th season:

“I don’t really fish. I don’t read a lot. I don’t swim. This is what I do.”

Ray Reid, UConn Soccer head coach, Stamford Advocate, Aug. 19, 2021

On whether tackle football is something parents should think twice about:

“Absolutely,”

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On Team USA basketball:

“We’re going to have to put it together quick, and it’s not comfortable. And yet you’re never going to know by the way we play. We’re going to make it look easy. And it’s not easy.”

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“It’s not a question of if, but when.”

Preston Green, education and law professor, The New Republic, Sept. 10, 2021

BOOKSHELF

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Former UConn President and current political science professor Susan Herbst’s latest book, “A Troubled Birth: The 1930s and American Public Opinion” (University of Chicago Press), asks why public opinion pollsters seem to get so much wrong these days. Herbst answers by peeling the historical layers of who the public is in these hypermediated times and what mix of culture, politics, and economics shapes that public’s thinking.

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Speaking the Language

Trapped at home during quarantine in the spring of 2020, Adrienne Bruce ’22 (CLAS) decided the time was ripe to pick up another language. As soon as her remote classes ended, the linguistics and philosophy major turned to online Korean lessons. “It was something fun to do while I adjusted to quarantine,” she says.

Bruce is putting her pastime to the test this semester at Sogang University in Seoul, South Korea. She was awarded a Gilman Scholarship for undergraduate studies abroad from the U.S. State Department. Then at UConn I studied Mandarin and Japanese. Scholarship for undergraduate studies in Seoul, South Korea, on a Gilman Scholarship for undergraduate studies abroad from the U.S. State Department.

How did you pick UConn?
I went to the Fall Preview on a cloudy day with a forecast for rain, but everyone on the tour had a good time despite the weather. After that I really wanted to attend UConn to experience such a big campus with so many majors and clubs.

Why did you pick linguistics and philosophy as your major?
I wanted to learn about more languages, instead of focusing on only one. I wanted to learn about the core languages and how those expand into other languages. I have an interest in sociolinguistics, which is how language and society are connected. Why do people from different regions speak the way they do, and how does the way people speak affect socioeconomic class? I also have a minor in literary translation. I have fun translating because it’s like peering into the mind of the author.

How have you balanced your coursework with your jobs at Starbucks?
I worked six to eight hours and did that from home. I worked 15 to 20 hours at Starbucks. My manager was understanding. She wanted me to put my schoolwork first, but there were times it was a little stressful.

What extracurricular activities have you had time for?
I go to language club meetings. I’ve met a lot of my friends that way. I’m most active in the Korean Student Association. I also volunteered as a Husky Ambassador and let students interested in attending UConn shadow me.

What’s left on your to-do list to get ready for South Korea?
I’m waiting to hear about my visa and my flight. South Korea has a similar climate to Connecticut so I’m trying to pack as if I’m going to UConn for the semester — but with more because I’ll be in a different country as opposed to being 30 minutes from home. My brother won’t be able to drop off anything for me.

What’s your favorite drink?
I don’t like coffee. My go-to is iced matcha latte with caramel and vanilla. I use one less scoop of matcha so it’s milky.

Why do you think Black students might be reluctant about going to South Korea?
Yes, because studying abroad is something I’ve wanted to do for a long time. Winning the scholarship makes me feel more nervous because that requires I do a project during the semester. I am thinking about finding other Black people who live in South Korea and interviewing them about their experiences there as a way to help encourage Black students to study there. I know some Black people who are scared to go to South Korea.

What do you think is true about the weather in South Korea?
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Raina Jain ’24 (ENG) was still in high school when she learned at a science fair lecture who the culprit behind much of the honeybee die-off she had been hearing about for years was. The varroa destructor is a tiny mite that attaches itself to, and feeds off, a honeybee.

“The varroa destructor is a tiny mite that attaches itself to, and feeds off, a honeybee. It works by depositing small amounts of thymol onto the bees as they pass through the entryway of the hive hundreds of times a day, slowly building up a concentration of thymol that kills the varroa mites but does not hurt the bees. Jain has 4,000 devices already reserved for when her company begins full-scale production.

A true entrepreneur, Jain started working on the next big thing while perfecting the first one. While studying bees, she learned about their nutritionally byproducts and started eating honey and propolis, sometimes called “bee glue,” straight out of the hive mixed with ginger and turmeric.

“I felt instant energy, and became so much more focused,” she says. Finding no similar products on the market, she created one. Queen Bee immune support supplement recently won UConn School of Business’s Innovation Quest (iQ) competition, and Jain plans to use the $15,000 grand prize for full-scale production.

Her successful device, HiveGuard, is in its final testing stage, having recently deployed 100 thymol-depositing hive entryways to beekeepers in California, Florida, and North Carolina. It works by depositing small amounts of thymol onto the bees as they pass through the entryway of the hive hundreds of times a day, slowly building up a concentration of thymol that kills the varroa mites but does not hurt the bees. Jain has 4,000 devices already reserved for when her company begins full-scale production.

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“I felt instant energy, and became so much more focused,” she says. Finding no similar products on the market, she created one. Queen Bee immune support supplement recently won UConn School of Business’s Innovation Quest (iQ) competition, and Jain plans to use the $15,000 grand prize winnings to sign with a distributor and launch retail sales. She vows to plant a pollinator tree for every bottle sold.

Jain is an inaugural member of Freshman Female Founders. Through UConn’s Peter J. Werth Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the pilot program supports entrepreneurial endeavors of first-year undergraduates.

“I am so incredibly passionate about women in STEM making their voices heard,” she says, “especially because I remember when I was going around the country giving presentations on HiveGuard, attending these panel discussions and presentations. I would sit on a three-hour conference call, I’d be the only woman of color, who is 17 years old, and I wouldn’t say a word. I started forcing myself to speak up and say things that were on my mind, and so, slowly, I was able to come out of that and become the person I am today, but that did take a lot of courage and stamina. And I just felt like, just to have a woman standing next to me in that conference call, in that presentation, you just felt different, like you were in it together, almost.”

Werth Institute director David Noble calls Jain one in a million. “Most students have entrepreneurial potential, and it is our job to shine a light on that or open up that aspect of their life,” Noble says. “We spend a lot of time teaching students how to capture value from their potential. Raina is different. She has the eye of the tiger, she has the thing you cannot teach, so you just try to support it — find ways on the margin to help, to make her day a little easier.” —CLAIRE HALL AND JACLYN SEVERANCE
A NEW STUDENT-INSPIRED CAFÉ AT WILBUR CROSS

You don’t have to be a full-on vegan or vegetarian to enjoy the newest Storrs campus eatery, CrossRoads Café. “The name is a play on words, because it’s located in the Wilbur Cross Building,” explains Maddie Pickett ’23 (ENG), who coined the name.

“But hopefully it’s also crossroads between people with all types of diets, because everyone should be willing to try at least cutting back on meat, even if you don’t give it up completely.”

What item on the menu would most tempt the vast majority of students who do eat meat? Assistant director of culinary development Robert Landolph answers with the cilantro, rice, and bean burrito, which features cilantro lime dressing, black beans, guacamole, vegan cheese, and salsa verde. “Every-one just raved about that one during taste testing,” he says.

Focus groups tested each item on the menu to ensure it would appeal to even the most carnivorous of Husky linebacks. “We left the focus groups so full,” says Pickett with a laugh.

The Pitch

Pickett pitched UConn Dining Services on a plant-based café last October, and Dennis Pierce, who served as director of Dining Services until his retirement this spring, was intrigued. Students could get vegan or vegetarian food options at any dining hall or café on campus, but there was no venue dedicated to plant-based eating.

So Dining Services sent students a survey in January to gauge potential interest. The survey revealed that about 1.5 percent of students on campus are vegan, and 4 to 5 percent are vegetarians, which lines up with overall U.S. percentages according to Gallup surveys. Responses to the café idea, even from the vast majority of meat eaters on campus, proved positive enough that the idea was greenlit.

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There were challenges to overcome. “We have all these purchasing restrictions that make things difficult,” acknowledges Ethan Haggerty ’04 (CLAS), an area manager for UConn Dining Services. “Kombucha was not easy to source, for example.”

Much of the food comes from UConn’s Spring Valley Farm, a year-round project started in 2010 that is run by about a dozen students living several miles off campus. They routinely grow about 11,000 pounds of organic vegetables each year, so were happy to have a new primary outlet for their produce.

The Play

So what’s on the menu? There’s a spinach, apple, and tangy cheese wrap called Wilbur’s Crossup. A vegan sausage, pepper, and onion grinder called the Chaugie (recipe at right) is an homage to the now-shuttered student union restaurant called Chuck & Augie’s, which had a burger called the Chaugie. Haggerty says he wanted to name the eggplant with pesto and broccoli rabe sandwich “the broccoli Rob Landolph” after his boss, but realized too few would get the joke.

Taking over the space of the former Wilbur’s Café, CrossRoads was renovated with bright paint, wood paneling, and new signs, including one advertising the mission: healthy, wholesome cuisine that nourishes the body, feeds the soul, and helps the planet.

Student employees were hired with a focus on their ability to answer customers’ questions and perhaps bring them into a more plant-based lifestyle for personal health and more macro ecological and environmental reasons. For example, the entire process of creating a single meat burger requires about 660 gallons of water; a mushroom burger requires a fraction of that. Pickett drew her inspiration for the pitch from a vegetarian restaurant she found at UMass Amherst, which turned out to be a student co-op run by its dining services. UConn decided to go all in with CrossRoads Café, and Pickett is grateful for the opportunity to spread the message more broadly and create some converts.

“In our society, meat is the center of the dish. Everything else is a side,” she says. CrossRoads is one step to change that narrative. “Not just through words, but through action. “I don’t have many friends who are vegetarian or vegan, but everyone who’s heard about the café has expressed interest in trying it right away.” — JESSE RIPEK ’14 (CLAS)

THE CHAUGIE

Makes 4 vegan grinders

1 small or ¾ large onion, thinly sliced
1 red pepper, juliened
1 green pepper, julienned
2 tablespoons olive oil
½ teaspoon kosher salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 pound sliced, plant-based sausage, such as Gardein
¼ cup store-bought marinara sauce, warmed
4 6-inch grinder rolls, sliced open
4 slices vegan cheese, such as Chao
Gardein-based sausage, such as Gardein

Nutritional yeast, for garnish

Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Toss together the onions and red and green peppers with the olive oil, salt, and pepper. Place them on half a sheet pan and place the plant-based sausage on the other half. Cook until the veggies and the edges of the sausage are caramelized, about 20–25 minutes. Place the grinder rolls on a flat surface. Tuck a half slice of vegan cheese into each roll. Divide plant-based sausage evenly among rolls, followed by the peppers and onions.

Top each grinder with 2 tablespoons of marinara sauce, warmed

Serve and enjoy!
He loved inspecting bits of what he found on the ocean in Southern California. Nyholm grew up with a notion, and it was in a marine biology lab class that he found his true calling.

Both Rossi’s parents were middle school teachers, and she’d always wanted to follow in their footsteps. Then in college, as a biology/English major who also thought she was on her way to medical school, a microbiology class caught her up in the mystique of the tiny. “There’s so much stuff you can’t see with the naked eye, yet they impact us so much,” she says. Rossi has a favorite picture she likes to show students of *B. burgdorferi*, a harmless bacteria that is closely related to the not-so-harmless one that causes anthrax, and more distantly to other disease-causing microorganisms. If the student’s test strain of bacteria can clear itself some distance away from growing near it — it might be producing an antibiotic, potentially one worthy of becoming a medicine. Rossi sends such promising strains to the Tiny Earth project, a collaboration of universities and institutions dedicated to finding new antibiotics from microorganisms.

**Their Teaching Style:**
A key part of the course is the Pokémon-style cards students make of their chosen genus of disease-causing bacteria from the ESKAPE list (it stands for Enterococcus, Staphylococcus, Klebsiella, Acinetobacter, Pseudomonas and Enterobacter). Each student creates an image of the bacteria and lists its attributes and powers. They then use the card to teach their fellow students about it. Nyholm likes to ask questions that force the students to think in a broad way. This is his first time teaching a lab course to undergrads at UConn, and he’s finding it invigorating.

“They get really excited about their discoveries. They have ownership,” he says. He’s also thinking about ways to work some marine microbiology into the course. Although UConn Storrs is landlocked, Connecticut has a lot of coastline, including at UConn Avery Point. Several years ago, a student brought a sample from Farm Creek in Rowayton that grew a vibrant red species with definite antibiotic properties, something they’d never seen before. Cultivating marine bacteria can be trickier than soil bacteria, but might yield even more interesting surprises.

Rossi has taught the class since 2014 and her enthusiasm for the subject, and the possibilities, keeps growing. She says she’s considering having the students map out all the samples taken through the years and create a time series, showing how the microbial life at each location has changed. That could in turn tell them something about environmental changes. She sees every opportunity to show students how what they’re doing relates to real life.

**Why We Want to Take It Ourselves:**
Discovering new life-forms never gets old. As Rossi says, “We find new stuff every year!” Most of the bacteria they sequence isn’t new to science, but sometimes it’s very unusual, and it’s always possible a discovery will lead to a new drug to replenish the world’s diminishing supply of effective antibiotics. In this class, even the most pedestrian of soil bacteria samples are windows into the hidden worlds beneath our feet. —KIM KRIEGER

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**ENGINEERING TO OFFER ROBOTICS MAJOR**

Next fall, prospective and existing UConn students will be able to declare majors in robotics engineering and UConn will become only the second research-intensive university in the U.S. to offer the specific major. Students will design, build, and operate robots — defined as not just the walking, talking trons of popular fiction and film, but as any machine capable of autonomously carrying out complex actions.

Yes, the TikTok possibilities are endless. So are the applications in many commercial areas, such as health care, logistics, manufacturing, maintenance, and surveillance. UConn Engineering has been a leader in the field, with research in autonomous drones, path planning, human-robot collaboration, cyber insects, and more.—ELI FREUND ’14 (CLAS)
Milton Levin '04 Ph.D says he’s often surprised at how Husky Nation responds to the photos he takes. A recent drone shot of Mirror Lake garnered more than 8,000 likes within hours of being shared on Instagram and became one of UConn’s top posts of the year. “I wish I knew the magic formula so I could be more selective, but I just try to take unique shots,” he says. Levin walks his photogenic chocolate lab, Acadia, around campus at different times of day and snaps photos when the circumstances seem right. “I always have a camera with me. I’m always thinking about how to document what I see.”

Levin first came to Storrs in 1999 as a graduate student. Working as a necropsy technician and making bagels at his twin brother’s shop in Virginia are just two of the detours his academic career took before he realized that research was his passion. That brought him to UConn to work with Sylvain De Guise,
professor of pathobiology and veterinary sciences and director of Connecticut Sea Grant, studying the impact of environmental contaminants, particularly polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), on the immune systems of marine species, such as seals, dolphins, and polar bears. The research took him far off the beaten path, to places few humans get to see.

In Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, Levin studied the association between the presence of the PCBs and the immune response of harbor seal pups. He and De Guise were part of a research team that showed the long-lasting environmental impacts of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon catastrophe, considered to be the largest marine oil spill in history, on Barataria Bay dolphins. And the two traveled to Arviat, Canada, a remote Inuit area, to study PCBs in beluga whales.

“My interest in photography started because I got to go to these amazing places,” says Levin.

Initially, he just wanted to capture these memories for personal reasons. But he soon discovered his pictures could be more than fodder for a personal photo album. Lectures or invited talks featuring videos of the charismatic megafauna from his field research trips stir something that data and graphs never will, he explains. “I always have at least one student come up to talk or email me about opportunities to work in the lab, especially undergrads. That makes your day. You’ve at least reached one person. Once I started seeing that reaction, I knew I needed to start documenting a lot more.”
Preparing for his voyages started to include packing different cameras and lenses, and setting aside time for photography. He even began mulling over photo plans in the same way he mentally maps out his experiments and sample collection, before falling asleep. But, he insists, “The science always comes first; I won’t sacrifice anything there. If it’s my job to hold a net one day, I’ll hold the net and put my camera down. Or maybe I’ll strap on a GoPro so I can do both.”

On a trip to Scoresby Sund, East Greenland, in 2012, Levin was working with Danish colleagues from the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources. The team trekked with their “mini labs” on their backs to a remote research site, where they worked with indigenous subsistence hunters to collect samples from polar bears. Levin was standing near the water’s edge when a colleague tapped him on the shoulder. He turned around to see three polar bears — a mother and her two cubs — approaching. Levin quickly got his camera out to capture their image. It’s one of his most treasured photos.

“When I see [the photo], it still has an impact on me. I can still smell it and hear the dogs barking in the background as these bears came closer. It may not be the best photo I’ve ever taken, but it reminds me of one of my best days as a wildlife biologist.”

Photos like this one are captivating, yes, but they also bring the effects of climate change and species decline into focus. Although parts of the world like Scoresby Sund remain largely untouched by humans,
they aren’t safe from the effects of human activities — quite the opposite, says Levin, citing a recent study he worked on. “People think these are pristine environments, but the science shows that polar bears and killer whales have some of the highest levels of wildlife contamination. Even though PCBs haven’t been produced in 40 years, they find their way into the ecosystem and affect the immune systems of Arctic animals.”

Long-term, sublethal effects. That’s how Levin describes the toll that pollutants take on the majestic and endangered species he studies. There’s no immediate die off, and the problem seems so distant — both geographically and for the species’ survival. But a recent study warned that the current concentrations of PCBs can lead to the disappearance of half of the world’s populations of killer whales from the most heavily contaminated areas within a period of just 30 to 50 years. Levin hopes that coupling his research and his photography will better communicate the urgency of the situation.

Unlike his scientific endeavors, photography allows him to freely incorporate variability and subjectivity. “When you’re in the lab, you have to be very objective. You have to do an experiment the exact same way every time,” he says. Looking through the lens it’s all about new perspectives, even on old things.

“When I walk around campus, I always see things in a new way, because the light is different or it’s a different season. Sometimes it’s worth taking a picture.”

Levin, left, flying his drone above Horsebarn Hill and, above, in his makeshift home office with his chocolate Lab, Acadia, a frequent companion on campus photo missions.
er family never talked about it. But when Margaret Kimball ’06 (SFA) was four, her mother attempted suicide on Mother’s Day while the rest of the family was at church. They were still not talking when, during Kimball’s senior year of high school, her mother’s bipolar disorder kept her in the hospital for a couple weeks.

Kimball is talking — and drawing — now in “And Now I Spill the Family Secrets: An Illustrated Memoir,” which has the literary world talking, too. Publishers Weekly calls the book “riveting,” Library Journal says “thoroughly brilliant,” and Kirkus is “eager for a successor.”

To create the graphic memoir, Kimball had to investigate her own childhood as if it belonged to someone else. She interviewed her family and combed through photos, albums, and old diaries to understand and relay the nuances of living in a home where the specter of mental illness hovers over everything.

It was more than a decade ago that the writing process for the book actually began, however.

NASCENCY

“At UConn, I was writing essays about my mother and bipolar disorder, so this book has been on my mind for years,” says Kimball. “I remember writing one essay in particular about the manic episode my mom had when I was around 16, the one where she threw water at me. I tend to think of this essay as the very beginning of my book, the first thing I wrote after my older brother told me about my mom’s 1988 suicide attempt.”

Kimball submitted that essay to the “Coming of Age in American Autobiography” course she took with now-retired UConn English professor Lynn Bloom.

“She was the most influential professor I ever had,” Kimball says of Bloom. “She introduced me to the world of memoir, works by Joan Didion, Anne Fadiman, Mary Morris, and she helped me write with clarity and passion for a subject matter.”

Kimball remembers Bloom being “smart, independent, creative, and always thinking outside the box.” After reading Kimball’s book, Bloom says she thought the work expertly blended images and text to tackle a very difficult subject matter.

“I don’t always remember every student I’ve had but I sure remember Margaret, and I’m glad we’ve kept in touch all these years,” she says.

A popular commercial artist, Kimball credits her time at UConn with instilling in her the work discipline she applies today. “When I was learning illustration in the art department, I got a good handle on the fundamentals of creating strong commercial art, from the initial sketch to handing in the final image.”

LEGACY

Heading to UConn in the first place was an easy choice for Kimball. Her parents met in Belden Hall during the Blizzard of 1978 and tales of their time there had often enthralled young Margaret.

“I remember my dad driving me to UConn freshman year, to the Jungle, where I was assigned to live. He shared a few stories from his time there, like how his roommate once drove his motorcycle through the halls.” Her father often visited her at UConn, and “we’d do things together like ice skate, eat at Kathy John’s, or stop by the Dairy Bar.”

After graduation, Kimball headed to the University of Arizona to earn two MFAs, in creative writing and visual communications, and she soon realized how she could blend both passions into a personal project.

“One of the greatest things I get from art is the mental theater I can create with my illustrations,” she says. “I’ve always loved graphic memoirs and how they can create an immersive environment for their characters.”

Her graphics, and in particular her hand lettering, have earned her an impressive client list that includes Smithsonian magazine, Simon & Schuster, McDonald’s, and Macy’s. She recently collaborated with other artists on a 30-foot mural for the City of Cleveland. Near the West Side Market, its theme is celebrating literature. Her contribution illustrates the word “yes” with flowers blooming from it.

CARTOGRAPHY

Kimball is also known for her illustrated mind maps, such as the one on the following pages, which we asked her to create for this magazine about her time at UConn.

“I’ve always loved maps and how they can be living documents of reality,” Kimball says. —DAVID SILVERBERG
hen Neag School of Education professor Doug Glanville cleaned out his garage during a recent family move, he unearthed some unusual stuff. Interspersed among the old grill equipment and lawn chairs were a dozen baseball bats, signed by Derek Jeter and other MLB stars, and beneath them a pair of Nike spikes that once belonged to Michael Jordan, during his year of professional baseball.

These items were not the treasure trove of a fan or collector, but rather the personal scrapbook of a man with the unlikeliest of backgrounds for a professor: Major League Baseball. As an outfielder with the Cubs, Phillies, and Rangers, Glanville spent a successful nine years on the field where it happens — in 1999 he batted .325 while stealing 34 bases. He showed me a panoramic photo of jam-packed Enron Field in Houston, on its inaugural night back in 2000, pointing to a tiny figure at the plate. “That’s me, leadoff guy. I got the first hit and first stolen base in the history of Enron Field.”

Glanville’s post-baseball career has brought him to teach at the Neag School as a professor from practice. Where many retired baseball players at his age — he turned 50 last year — would be pitching batting practice, this fall the former pro is pitching questions and essay assignments at students in his popular class, “Sport in Society.” The course, required for sports management majors, takes on the intractable nature of social and racial injustice: What are the underpinnings of justice? What are the obstacles in the U.S. to achieving it? How might sports provide both model and means?

The origins of “Sport in Society” trace to the years after Glanville’s 2005 retirement, when he worked for ESPN and found himself pondering issues beyond the scope of a play-by-play announcer. “It was a convergence of my passions with what I was learning in media work,” he recalls. “At some point I just started jotting
Over nine years with the Rangers, Cubs, and Phillies, Glanville amassed memorabilia including Michael Jordan’s cleats and bats signed by Derek Jeter and Sammy Sosa.

He added, “Keep in mind, this was the height of MLB’s performance-enhancing drug era. (“Looks like a drug dealer’s car”).

Soon after, he was approached and asked, “So, you’re trying to make a few extra bucks, shoveling people’s driveways?” When Glanville explained he was shoveling his own walk, in front of his own house, the officer abruptly left.

Glanville subsequently was told by police that a Black man had broken a West Hartford ordinance protecting door-to-door solicitation, and the officer pursued the complaint across the town line to Glanville’s spacious home in Hartford’s West End.

Decades later, Glanville recalls the incident as a defining moment in his life. “Basically we almost got assaulted by a mob of white guys in suits. But we weren’t just a group of Black players who were being attacked. We were a diverse group of people. We knew that what had happened was wrong. We knew we were going to have to fight this together, and we knew we were stronger together. It’s like Heather McGhee says in “The Sum of Us,” “it’s not Black versus white or white versus Black, it’s all of us against racism, right? Racism hurts all of us.”

His own life has served up the frequent slights that a Black person in America experiences. For most Americans of color, these incidents pass without garnering attention, but Glanville has the personal and professional “bandwidth” — a favorite word of his — to draw a light of publicity to them. Two racial incidents in the mid-2010s revealed his way of doing this.

In a 2014 article in The Atlantic, “I Was Racially Profiled in My Own Driveway,” the former major-leaguer describes shoveling snow one morning outside his spacious home in Hartford’s West End, one street over from the West Hartford line, when a West Hartford police officer approached and asked.

A universal rule of thumb for the distribution of talents holds that no human shall possess two different champion skillsets. A Michelin-started chef should not do research in quantum physics. A marquee movie star should not win a Pulitzer Prize for journalism.

And Doug Glanville should not be Doug Glanville, a distinguished Major League Baseball player who also possesses the writing chops to perform at the highest literary level. Over the past 15 years, the former Phillie has written a series of op-eds in The New York Times, essays graced with candor, wisdom, and wit. In 2010 he published “The Game From Where I Stand,” an absorbing chronicle of his life as a professional athlete. The memoir won rave reviews; acclaimed journalist and “Friday Night Lights” author Buzz Bissinger called it “a book of uncommon grace and elegance … filled with insight and a certain kind of poetry.”

Soft spoken and thoughtful, Glanville carries his excellence lightly. “You’d never know that Doug was a Major League Base-
“Yes, you need people marching in the streets, calling out injustice, going on CNN. But you also need people in the courtroom, in the policy room — people doing the slow work, the non-tweetable work. Playing the long game.”

Glanville answered with typical thoughtfulness. “I was very upset. But I didn’t see what I would gain by getting in his face. I got mad and take a selfie, make a lot of noise. Maybe I blow up this guy’s career. That probably works for my own gratification, for revenge. But for me there has always been a moment when I realized that there’s an opportunity to benefit a lot more people than just me.”

The LAX lecture highlighted two key facets of Glaville’s M.O. as a teacher, fundamentals that guide his mission at UConn and beyond. One is his gift for presenting personal issues in dispassionately, even as he makes political ideas highly personal. “Doug has a terrific ability to take complex experiences, profound experiences, and discuss them in a way that is both academically rigorous and yet totally accessible,” says Riaiyya. “Students respond to that in a big way.”

The second is his emphasis on constructive action — and on the patience it requires. “That can be challenging for this generation,” Glaville tells me. “Their temptation is to quickly tweet out outrage. Boom boom boom, 280 characters, and it’s out there, right?” He pauses. “But then it’s over. All of a sudden, the message is gone.” Raising the temperature in a confrontational way can be gratifying emotionally, but the effort to create change requires a deeper dive. “Yes, you need people marching in the streets, calling out injustice, going on CNN. But you also need people in the courtroom, in the policy room — people doing the slow work, the non-tweetable work. Playing the long game.”

Take the effort to reform policing. Glaville supports it wholeheartedly, but views cooperation, rather than confrontation, as the key. “I believe law enforcement’s important, so if I’m trying to create change, I need their buy-in. In Connecticut, for instance, it’s the State Police — Police Officer Standards and Training — that trains police officers and sets curricula and standards. A lot of people haven’t even heard of it, right?”

Glanville joined the council four years ago, after the Shoveling While Black incident. As he readily points out, the group is hardly a populist arrangement. “But we do a lot of work. We’ve passed legislation governing use of force. We have hot-pursuit laws. We’ve got stuff done.” And getting stuff done, he teaches his students, requires persistence. “When you feel racism, you want it to change, and you want that to happen now. I get that. But for me there has always been a moment when I realized that there’s an opportunity to benefit a lot more people than just me.”

The activism of the engineer includes understanding that racism is a complicated system, from which there is no easy way out. But systems, as Glaville teaches his UConn students, can be improved. “In engineering you begin with a system as it is. That’s how you problem-solve whatever: you study the system, its nuances and intricacies, and you measure how it performs. Then you try to change it, then you re-measure. That’s what I do in engineering. That’s what I do with the system as it is.”

The activism of the engineer includes understanding that racism is a complicated system, from which there is no easy way out. But systems, as Glaville teaches his UConn students, can be improved. “In engineering you begin with a system as it is. That’s how you problem-solve whatever: you study the system, its nuances and intricacies, and you measure how it performs. Then you try to change it, then you re-measure. That’s what I do in engineering. That’s what I do with the system as it is.”
A sociology graduate, Larkin-Wells honed her abilities as a breadmaker through UConn’s Sustainable Community Food Systems minor — a unique and intensive interdisciplinary program that combines theory and practice through service learning and hands-on experience with community partners. Larkin-Wells, interim manager of Spring Valley Student Farm, bakes her breads and pastries while the bread is fresh and soft and warm. “When I can make a really big loaf of bread for a group of people and know that it’s all going to get eaten that day, it’s all going to get eaten fresh — that’s my favorite kind of bread to make,” she says. Like Larkin-Wells, many of the UConn graduates in this issue have found unexpected opportunities to pursue their passions and make the most of each day.

“On Saturday night, we rack the coals in the oven to spread them evenly across the oven floor, and then close the door,” says Jessica Larkin-Wells ’19 (CLAS) of her side hustle baking bread at a pizzeria after it closes. “Because it’s wood fired, and because it’s a very well insulated oven, it maintains its heat the next day, so we don’t have to add any energy; it’s already hot.”

Larkin-Wells has published a two books of poetry: “Burger King of the Dead” and “Poems from Titusville by Wallace Stevens.” While at UConn, Surowiecki won the Wallace Stevens contest as both a graduate and under-graduate. 

UCONN MAGAZINE | MAGAZINE.UCONN.EDU
of RNA in healthy cells and in those with disease-causing dysfunction.

Retired UConn Professor Emeritus Cynthia Adams ’76 MA, ’81 Ph.D. made the most of the pandemic by pursuing her lifelong dream of becoming a novelist. In fact, she wrote two: “The Farmhouse on Cemetery Hill Rd” and “The Portal.” Both are historical fiction novels about how they are changing the world.

She works for Born This Way Foundation, the nonprofit founded by Lady Gaga and her mother, Cynthia Germanotta, to promote kindness. The organization makes grants to help young people from around the globe pursue their passions.

“Unfortunately, the topic of gun violence continues to be as relevant as when I began writing my book soon after I retired as a school principal in Farmington, Connecticut,” she says. “Kudos to Small Spaces.” They welcome submissions for the book.

**UCONN MAGAZINE | MAGAZINE.UCONN.EDU FALL 2021**
Matt Smith ’92 (CLAS) was in trouble. He had a full house, it was approaching 9 p.m., and he still hadn’t heard from his headliner.

“This was before everyone had cell phones,” recalls Smith, “and it was a Friday night, so I couldn’t reach the guy’s manager.”

Smith told the opening act, a local guitar singer named Mark Erelli, to stretch for as long as he could. But after an hour, Smith finally had to tell the packed room the feature performer was a no-show, and anybody who wanted would get a full refund. Only three did. The rest stayed for Erelli’s unamplified, standing on a chair by the kitchen. Erelli has sold out shows at Cambridge’s Club Passim ever since.

People walked out of here beam ing,” says Smith, managing director of Passim in engineering a pre- eminent listening room — admittedly some might advocate for the iconic Boston music room’s...
Huskies Take Tokyo

Six former Huskies helped Team USA to its seventh straight gold medal. Former Husky teammates Sue Bird and Diana Taurasi celebrated after winning a record fifth Olympic gold medal with Team USA veterans Tina Charles and Breanna Stewart, along with Olympic rookie Napheesa Collier. Jennifer Rizzotti ’96 (CLAS) served as an assistant coach. All told, 14 former Huskies represented six nations in these 2020 Olympics and Paralympics, including nine from women’s basketball, two from men’s basketball, two from field hockey, and one from women’s soccer.

Find more information and highlights at magazine.uconn.edu.

Nothing Stops Paratriathlete Amy Dixon

Amy Dixon has always been a competitor. She started to ride in equestrian events at age five and was swimming in meets at six. She’s played soccer and was an “all-around sports geek” in high school. The former UConn student began to lose vision due to a rare autoimmune disease while in college and is now 98% blind.

Despite a significant health setback during her training period, she took on the ultimate competition this summer as a member of Team USA in Tokyo. At age 45, she made her Paralympic debut and finished 12th with guide Kirsten Sass.

The paratriathlon combines a 750-meter open water swim, a 20-kilometer bicycle race, and a 5-kilometer road race. Dixon has competed at six World Championships since 2014, placing as high as fifth, and has medaled at nine World Paratriathlon Events, including earning a silver in February 2020.

“It feels amazing,” Dixon says of her Paralympic journey. “I was fighting for my life in the ICU eight months ago, and here I am on the start line of the biggest race in the world. I’m just so honored to represent my country and to be able to start this race and finish it well with a smile on my face. I’m proud of our effort and, really, we had fun out there. There were so many USA cheers! We felt like celebrities the whole time. There were more cheers for us than I’ve ever heard. It was so uplifting and so wonderful to be a part of.”

Find more on Dixon’s journey at magazine.uconn.edu.
Laura Sheehan in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and Geoff Sheehan in "Hamlet."

Speculative Fiction," which examines how race and family are represented in this genre of film. Shauna Monts ‘07 (CLAS) was named chief human resource officer for Wheeler. She has more than 20 years of experience in community-based organizations and health care and lives with her family in East Hartford, Connecticut. Christine D. Gagnon ’02 (BUS), ’03 M.S., ’08 MBA is getting noticed. Gagnon, chief financial officer for the African Asset Finance Company, was named one of the Top 50 Women in the Equipment Finance industry for 2021 by Monitor Daily. Adam Bokon ’03 (BUS) joined Rockland Trust as vice president and commercial loan officer for its commercial banking division in the Waltham, Massachusetts, office. Bokon, who earned an MBA from the Australian Graduate School of Management at the University of New South Wales, enjoys following Boston sports teams and volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. He lives in Natick, Massachu- setts, with his wife and young family. Kudos to Uyi Osunde ‘03 (CLAS), ’08 J.D. Ed., who was recently named principal of Stratford Public Schools in Connecticut. He most recently served as principal of Windsor High School in Connecticut. Jack Sheedy ’03 (BSG) published his fourth book, "The Wanting Place," a poetry chapbook. In addition, his one-act play, "Morbidity," was chosen for a virtual staged reading by the Pittsburgh New Works Festival. He says he studied the craft of playwriting under the guidance of John Long ’73 (CLAS) at UConn Theater in 2000. Oliver Hays ’04 (CLAS) has joined Zen Media as the director of media relations. Previously, he had been account manager at MSR Communications and communications and proposal manager at Phillips Lyttle LLP. Nicole Snyder ’05 Ph.D., professor of chemistry and assistant dean for research and creative works at Davidson College in North Carolina, was elected to the executive board of the Council on Undergraduate Research. In addition to his legal practice, he also serves as a Major, Judge Advocate General Officer for the National Guard, where his duties include serving as special victim’s counsel for service members who report sexual assault and harassment as well as providing counsel on cyber law and ethics issues. Gideon Young ’07 (CLAS) recently published his first book of haiku, “my hands full of light,” and plans to publish an additional one too, he is also a consultant for A+ Schools of North Carolina, which provides arts-integrated professional development for teachers. Franchesca Willoy (Neumann) Walpes ’08 (CLAS) and Taryn Hargreaves ’09 (SFA) discuss some- thing of a following when they are two kids, both of whom are big-time Huskies fans. "Alena Dillon is one of my favorite authors and to read her journey through pregnancy is a great joy and heartbreak," writes comedian and actress Amy Schumer of the latest book from Alena Dillon ’07 (CLAS). Dillon’s " mettre la vie sur Tab Tat: An Ordinary Story of Pregnancy and Early Motherhood" comes out this October from Woodhall Press.

in the Hartford area. Geoff Sheehan ’94 JD, who has built a 30-year career in disability work, will serve as leader of New Haven’s Disability Services. Sheehan officially served as executive director of Disability Rights Connecticut. Congrats to Michael C. Jurmu ’95 MA, who was elected chair of the Department of Geography at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Jim Parker ’95 MBA recently celebrated his 30th anniversary with IBM, where he is a senior IT manager supporting sales and contract applications for IBM Global Financing in Armonk, New York. He lives in Sandy Hook, Connecticut, with his wife, Maria, and two sons. Robert Delargrane ’98 (BUS) is moving up. He was promoted to senior business development manager at Hoffmann Architects, an architecture and engineering firm specializing in the rehabilitation of building exteriors. Delargrane, of Oxford, Connecticut, also serves as chairman of the board for the Howard Whitmore Memorial Library. Salvatore Menzo ’96 MA, ’99 Ed.D. was named executive vice president/general manager of TidelSmart Global, leading the company’s experimental offerings division. TidelSmart is based in Falmouth, Maine, and Fortmann opened the company’s first Connecticut office in Dorset. "I currently reside in New Canaan and have been cheering on UConn since I left campus," he says. Steven T. Rogers ’99 MBA, ’98 J.D. was hired as partner at Wiggins and Dunn LLP in the firm’s life sciences practice group. Previously, he worked as an intellectual property lawyer for nearly 20 years. Jeff Fortmann ’99 (CLAS) was named executive vice president of Goodwin University Magnet Schools, having served as superintendent of Wallingford Public Schools for 12 years. Jonathan Harris ’98 MBA, ’98 J.D. was hired as partner at Wiggin and Dana LLP in the firm’s life sciences practice group. In addition, he is serving as an attorney for the Board of Directors of the New York University Cancer Center. He lives with his wife and two sons in Sandy Springs, Georgia. Jessica and Chris Machado ’12 (CLAS) welcomed a baby boy in February, before meeting at UConn in 2008, Chris and I have shared memories, he writes. "We can’t wait to see what the future holds for our little Husky.”

Kudos to Gretchen Knaut ’94 JD, who has built a 30-year career in disability work, will serve as leader of New Haven’s Disability Services. Sheehan officially served as executive director of Disability Rights Connecticut. Congrats to Michael C. Jurmu ’95 MA, who was elected chair of the Department of Geography at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Jim Parker ’95 MBA recently celebrated his 30th anniversary with IBM, where he is a senior IT manager supporting sales and contract applications for IBM Global Financing in Armonk, New York. He lives in Sandy Hook, Connecticut, with his wife, Maria, and two sons. Robert Delargrane ’98 (BUS) is moving up. He was promoted to senior business development manager at Hoffmann Architects, an architecture and engineering firm specializing in the rehabilitation of building exteriors. Delargrane, of Oxford, Connecticut, also serves as chairman of the board for the Howard Whitmore Memorial Library. Salvatore Menzo ’96 MA, ’99 Ed.D. was named executive vice president/general manager of TidelSmart Global, leading the company’s experimental offerings division. TidelSmart is based in Falmouth, Maine, and Fortmann opened the company’s first Connecticut office in Dorset. “I currently reside in New Canaan and have been cheering on UConn since I left campus,” he says. Steven T. Rogers ’99 MBA, ’98 J.D. was hired as partner at Wiggins and Dunn LLP in the firm’s life sciences practice group. Previously, he worked as an intellectual property lawyer for nearly 20 years. Jeff Fortmann ’99 (CLAS) was named executive vice president of Goodwin University Magnet Schools, having served as superintendent of Wallingford Public Schools for 12 years. Jonathan Harris ’98 MBA, ’98 J.D. was hired as partner at Wiggins and Dana LLP in the firm’s life sciences practice group. In addition, he is serving as an attorney for the Board of Directors of the New York University Cancer Center. He lives with his wife and two sons in Sandy Springs, Georgia. Jessica and Chris Machado ’12 (CLAS) welcomed a baby boy in February, before meeting at UConn in 2008, Chris and I have shared memories, he writes. “We can’t wait to see what the future holds for our little Husky.”

Laura Sheehan in “The Merry Wives of Windsor” and Geoff Sheehan in “Hamlet.”
Cue the why-hasn’t-anyone-thought-of-this-before head slap. Ellen Quintana ’21 (NUR) just got a non-patentable patent for technology that reduces the disposables gloves that come out each time you try to pull one from the box. She noticed the problem during a chemistry lab her first year at UConn. “No one could get just one glove out of the box, and there were gloves everywhere,” says Quintana. “We were told that once they fell out, we couldn’t put them back. It was really wasteful.” Her ReduSeal system cuts down not only on glove waste and cost, but it also saves time for busy nurses and other health care professionals. —MIGLIA KANE

Member Award from the National Cancer Registrars Association (NCRA). She is a senior manager and education coordinator of oncology for Cigna Health. Congratulations to Travis Triano ’09 (BUS) on making partner at the Davis Polk law firm, where he is a member of the executive compensation practice in New York.

Ashley E. Pereira ’10 (CAHNR), a teaching assistant in Marquis Who’s Who for her exemplary work in STEM education and career readiness as a teacher-turned-entrepreneur. She has worked to engage students both as a teacher and as an educational research associate, a STEM curriculum developer, and an adjunct professor of science education at Eastern Connecticut State University. Erika Sahler ’10 (CAHNR), ’12 MA was a host for UConn Alumni’s Husky Plant Night, held virtually in March. The workshop provided information on when and how to plant seeds along with soil types, blooming times, and related topics. She is the plant science department head at Agricultural Science and Technology — Vernon Regional at Rockville High School and co-owns Meadow Brook Farm in Ellington, Connecticut.

Kudos to Colleen Teevan ’10 Pharm.D. for being recognized as an American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) Preceptor of the Year, one of four preceptors honored nationally. She has been closely involved with Covid vaccination efforts and, in fact, was the second person to administer a Covid vaccine in Connecticut.

Lesa Vanotti ’10 MBA, president & CEO of Darlington Savings Bank, was named one of Hartford Business Journal’s 2021 Women in Business. Stuart Zirnuk ’10 (CLAS) published a fiction chapbook, “The Vultures,” which won the ZeJuliet Review’s 2020 Chapbook Prize and was a finalist for The Hunger Journal’s 2020 Chapbook Prize. Congratulations to DeVaughn Ward ’11 JD, who was named 2021 Connecticut Attorney of the Year at the virtual Connecticut Legal Awards. Ward, who runs his own Hartford-based practice in criminal and civil law, was recognized for his work on behalf of individuals with hepatitis C.

Matthew P. Remo ’11 (BUS) was promoted to senior vice president, director of strategy and development, at Peapack-Gladstone Bank.

Matthew Talmadge ’12 6th Year was appointed principal of Westbrook Middle School in Westbrook, Connecticut. Silvia Schaffer ’12 JD was promoted to senior counsel at the law firm of Wood Smith Henning & Berman LLP in the firm’s Orange County, California office. The Philadelphia Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers named Lindsay Chataveu ’13 (ENG) its 2021 Young Government Engineer of the Year. Chateauver, who lives in the Fishtown neighborhood of Philadelphia, is the engineer of structures for Amtrak at its offices in University City. She assists in the management of the railroad’s bridge maintenance and inspection programs and directs the annual inspection of more than 4,000 structures, including bridges, culverts, overhead structures, and signal supports.

Sophia N. Ondony-Onyia ’13 Ph.D., ’15 MBA was appointed to the board of directors of Daré Bioscience Inc. She founded and CEO of The Sophia Consulting Firm, which provides marketing and communications services to pharmaceutical, biotech, and health tech companies. Congratulations to Alyssa Lee ’14 (BUS) and Nicolas Quadri ’14 (CLAS), who tied the knot in June. The two met through mutual friends at UConn, but didn’t start dating until after graduation.

Kate Copeland ’15 MBA, assistant professor of science education at Eastern Connecticut State University. Rhonda Bahler ‘10 (CAHNR), ’12 MA was a host for UConn Alumni’s Husky Plant Night, held virtually in March. The workshop provided information on when and how to plant seeds along with soil types, blooming times, and related topics. She is the plant science department head at Agricultural Science and Technology — Vernon Regional at Rockville High School and co-owns Meadow Brook Farm in Ellington, Connecticut.

Rita K. Netto ’11 (BUS) was appointed to the Dramatic PAWS Club and started an unofficial Twitter account as Connecticut celebrity Buddy the Beefalo. Buddy, you may remember, was the lin on the lam in the woods for months after a daring escape from a slaughterhouse. The friends met in the Dramatic PAWS Club and did UConn Improv together. They have a penchant for performing, writing, and comedy and launched the account on a whim. Buddy’s Twitter “voice,” like that of his creators, is a disaffected thirtysomething millennial with liberal inclinations. Last we heard, the elusive Buddy was captured and brought to an animal sanctuary in Florida, where he has already attempted several escapes. Check out Buddy’s latest adventures at @BuddytheBeefalo.

Kudos to Theresa Vallecillos ’09 (BGS) for winning the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Connecticut Alumni Association (UCNAA). A recent graduate of the University of Connecticut, she is a disaffected thirtysomething millennial with liberal inclinations. Last we heard, the elusive Buddy was captured and brought to an animal sanctuary in Florida, where he has already attempted several escapes. Check out Buddy’s latest adventures at @BuddytheBeefalo.

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**KEEP THAT NEWS COMING! WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.**

➢ To submit a Class Note, email alumni-news@uconnalumni.com or write Alumni News & Notes, UConn Foundation, 2384 Alumni Drive, Unit 3053, Storrs, CT 06269
➢ Alumni obituaries can be found at foundation.uconn.edu/obituaries
➢ To submit an obituary, please use the email and postal addresses above.

Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.

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**TOM’S TRIVIA ANSWERS:**


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**Olympic Flag Bearer**

On the way to winning a historic fifth Olympic gold medal, Sue Bird ’02 (CLAS) was voted by fellow Team USA athletes to be the delegation’s flag bearer for the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. She shared the privilege with baseball player Eddy Alvarez.

“It’s an incredible honor to be selected the flag bearer for Team USA,” said Bird. “It’s an honor that is bigger than the moment in that you’ve been selected by your fellow Team USA athletes to represent the entire delegation, and it will last forever … Also, I know this isn’t about me. This is about all the players who either came before me and set the tone for what the USA Basketball women’s program is now, and also the players that I’ve been fortunate enough to play with. So, it’s not just about me. It’s representing all of them.”

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**TO THE JOURNEY.**

Want to support alumni-owned businesses where you live? Or let fellow alumni know about your own business? Now it’s as simple as visiting the global site: foundation.uconn.edu/alumni-owned-businesses.
1. The first international student at UConn arrived in 1907. Which nation did this student call home?
   A: Ecuador  B: Canada  C: Bulgaria  D: Japan

2. What is the oldest building on campus that was originally constructed as student housing?
   A: Whitney Hall  B: Gulley Hall  C: Storrs Hall  D: Sprague Hall

3. First-years arriving at UConn in the fall experience multiple Convocation and Husky WOW events. In the early years, though, the welcome that new students received could be a bit more unruly. Which of these was not something UConn freshmen had to experience in the first half of the 20th century?
   A: Rope pull with the sophomore class  B: “The Trip to Eagleville”  C: “The Cannon Rush”  D: Midnight food fight with the sophomore class

4. Convocation was an annual event at UConn from 1935 to 1962, when President Homer Babbidge decided to forgo the custom. When it was reestablished in 1988, President John Casteen invited what prominent speaker to ensure robust attendance at the “new” event?
   A: Isaac Asimov  B: Elie Wiesel  C: Mr. Rogers  D: Gary Hart

Go to magazine.uconn.edu or p. 52 to see if you know as much as King of UConn Trivia Tom Breen ’00 (CLAS).

In this 1924 photo, sophomores parade across campus to meet freshmen for one of the annual welcome traditions mentioned in question #3.