

UConn

MAGAZINE

SPRING 2019

LEGACY OF
PRESIDENT HERBST
—
WELCOME PRESIDENT
KATSOULEAS

THE KNOCKOUT DOCTOR

Courtside, cageside, and ringside, UConn neurologist Dr. Anthony Alessi is there to stop the fight when a human brain is in danger. pg 16.



SNAP!

Rotary Club

Electrical engineering senior Davis Meissner was just one of a number of lucky students and staff invited to go up in one of the two Sikorsky helicopters that landed on the Student Union Mall last fall as part of a celebration of the partnership between UConn and Lockheed Martin — the parent company of Sikorsky.

“When we first took off, it was like being on an elevator that didn’t stop,” says Meissner. Then the pilot made a few hard cuts. “We got sucked into our seats with the G-force.” —MICHAEL ENRIGHT '88 (CLAS)

See more photos and learn how Meissner, who hails from Wisconsin, became a Husky (yup, it involves a girl) at s.uconn.edu/copters.



SNAP!

Pucked

For University photographer Peter Morenus, getting this shot entailed some research, several trips to the hardware store, and using a handheld heat gun to construct a hard plastic box and a sheath of bubble wrap to protect the camera he mounted inside the net.

While testing the remote control before a game against New Hampshire on January 11, a few of the student-athletes heard the clicking and discovered Morenus' camera concoction. Natalie Snodgrass (#9, on left) and her teammates really hammed it up — and why not? UConn won this game 2-0, their fifth-straight victory. Head coach Chris MacKenzie had earned his 100th career win earlier in the season. His squad will look to make a run through the Hockey East playoffs in early March in hopes of postseason glory. —MICHAEL ENRIGHT '88 (CLAS)

Meet the rest of the team at s.uconn.edu/hockey.



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Small, urban, and ambitious, UConn Stamford keeps its head in the liberal arts but both feet in the job market. Meet six Stamford students doing the same. *By Kim Krieger*

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Bragging rights get a boost; the first females in The Jungle reunite; alums with top jobs in the state-house, the salon, and the cemetery. Plus class notes, trivia, and more.

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UConn Magazine is produced three times a year (Spring, Summer, and Fall) by University Communications, University of Connecticut. Email: uconnmagazine@uconn.edu. Letters to the editor and other comments are welcome. Send address changes to The University of Connecticut Foundation, Records Department, Unit 3206, 2390 Alumni Drive, Storrs, CT 06269.

WEB EXTRAS

magazine.uconn.edu

CLUBBING

Meet more clubbers and see them in action — be prepared to sing and dance along. s.uconn.edu/clubs

GOAL!

A different perspective on the UConn Women's Hockey Team. s.uconn.edu/hockey

SAY CHEESE

Find the recipes for grilled ham and cheese and onion soup — à la française. s.uconn.edu/bistro

HERE, KITTY KITTY KITTY

More pictures of bobcats and other things that go *grrrrrr* — and squeak — in the night. s.uconn.edu/bobcats

NOTABLE

The Foundation's new notable alumni site will give you serious bragging fodder. s.uconn.edu/notable

Cover photo by: Peter Morenus

Snap! photography by: Sean Flynn (copters) and Peter Morenus (hockey)

Table of contents: All photos by Peter Morenus; illustration by Kailey Whitman

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FROM THE EDITOR



Dr. Anthony Alessi in Storrs

THE DOCTOR IS IN — AND OUT

I'm lucky to have my parents living right around the corner from me, especially considering that my mom is a terrific cook and generous with dinner invites. At one such recent meal, I recounted a tale from my workday about arranging logistics for the story that begins on page 16. It concerns a neurologist here who works with a lot of athletes, including UConn students but also bull riders on the national circuit, boxers, and MMA or mixed martial arts fighters.

I had spoken with him briefly to make sure all the places, times, and credentials were in order for our art director, photographer, and writer to meet him at Mohegan Sun Arena later that afternoon where he and his team would be examining the MMA fighters scheduled to compete the following night. I told my parents that what I had found fascinating was his easygoing manner (“just have them text me, I’ll find them”) paired with the high stakes of his job. That afternoon, he and his team from UConn Health would be doing exams to make sure the men and women were fit to get in the ring the following night. But perhaps more critically, he in particular would take the fighters’ measure in terms of general manner and comport. Because the following day he would be the fight doctor, the one who determines when to pull any fighter who is in danger of doing permanent damage to his or her brain.

And how was my parents’ day? Pretty uneventful, they said. My mom, too, had dealt with a UConn Health neurologist, she said, when she went to the offices at Storrs Center for a follow-up on her carpal tunnel syndrome.

And that, of course, is the punchline. We soon realized that her local carpal tunnel physician and the subject of our feature “The Knockout Doctor” are one and the same. The remarkable Dr. Anthony Alessi and many UConn Health physicians juggle seeing patients at our hospital in Farmington and clinics throughout the state with teaching, research, and consulting. For Alessi that last piece means climbing into rings and paddocks to protect human brains. The reason I know he’s not alone in this juggling act is that the UConn Health team heading to Mohegan Sun that afternoon included orthopedic surgeon Dr. Cory Edgar.

I know Edgar because he spent months overseeing the care of my husband when he broke both his shoulder blades in a construction accident.

All in a day’s work.



LETTERS

Lots of “love” for lots of stories on social media. And, speaking of love, it’s always nice when those who are supposed to be our biggest fans really *are* our biggest fans: Thanks Alan Rousseau, aka Dan’s younger brother, for posting on our story about your big brother’s Hollywood lighting career. It is indeed “awesome and interesting.”

Get in touch! Email me at lisa.stiepock@uconn.edu or post something on our website at magazine.uconn.edu.

Graduating with a C.E.O.

➔ LOVE @tenacityjeans! I have both the blue jeans and black jeans. They are my go-to favorite jeans.

Samantha Eisenberg '12 (CLAS), '15 (ED); Fairfield, Conn., via Instagram

➔ I love this [Lactation Innovation]! I had no clue how much my daughter was consuming when I was nursing and I felt so lost. Excellent idea.

Rachel Lyke '07 (CLAS), Hillsborough, N.J., via Instagram

➔ Awesome [Lactation Innovation]! In the old days, we would weigh a baby on a sensitive breastfeeding scale, then nurse them, then re-weigh them, old school. Pam Jenkins Parish Pace, Bridgewater, Mass., via Instagram

➔ I love these CEO stories! Would love to see them come to life with a networking event with current students.

Anny D, mom of UConn sophomore Saunderstown, R.I., via Instagram

The Fight for Physical Literacy

➔ I agree wholeheartedly — children need more movement. I squeeze in movement whenever I can, but time is tight. When pressure to perform well on high-stakes testing (as well as multiple district benchmark assessments) is alleviated, I think you’ll see more teachers jumping on the physical literacy bandwagon — it’s fun for us, too! DiStefano is on the right track encouraging families to take more responsibility for physical literacy — home is where it all begins!

Carrie Strayer '13 (ED), Bainbridge Island, Wash., via our website

Coach Hurley

➔ Love the article on Coach Hurley! It was inspiring and motivating to die hard UConn bball fans. Thank you.

Beth Kelly, Old Lyme, Conn., via e-mail

➔ Looking forward to his making it

happen! John Gluchowski Jr., via Facebook

Kimberly Bergendahl

➔ Love Professor Bergendahl! She’s a treasure to the UConn political science department. Mark Sargent, '15 (CLAS), North Greenbush, N.Y., via Instagram

➔ An icon and a legend. The best professor and mentor anyone could ask for! Diana Bibb '18 (CLAS), Harrington Park, N.J., via Instagram

Job Envy: Erin Perrine

➔ UConn putting a conservative in the spotlight — cherish it while you can. Matt Holmes, '18 (BUS), Granby, Conn., via Instagram

Tom’s Trivia

➔ I was a Blue Legionnaire, the “arresting” force for the Black Triumvirate, scouring campus during orientation for “culprits” who were tried onstage by the BT. The major crime was not wearing the freshman beanie. Sentences may have involved whipped cream during trial on a raised platform. Ray E. Burrington '73 (CLAS), Manchester, Conn., via our website

Welcome Back Jamelle Elliot

➔ Class act — back where she belongs. Lucky us! Marie Wuerch, via Facebook



Peter Morenus

ON CAMPUS

WELCOME PRESIDENT KATSOULEAS

After a six-month search with more than 200 applicants, Thomas C. Katsouleas, a leading plasma scientist and engineer with deep academic roots in teaching and research, has been appointed the 16th president of the University of Connecticut by UConn’s Board of Trustees. His term begins Aug. 1, 2019.

“I’m honored and humbled to be appointed president of the University of Connecticut, one of the most outstanding public research universities in the nation and one of Connecticut’s greatest assets,” Katsouleas told the Board upon his appointment. “I want to thank you for placing your confidence in me. I will spend each and every day working to justify that confidence and meet your expectations in the years ahead.”

Katsouleas, who is currently executive vice president and provost of the University of Virginia, comes to Connecticut with the endorsement of Gov. Ned Lamont.

“UConn is a vital piece of Connecticut’s economic engine, and I look forward to working with Tom in ensuring that the University and our state’s economic development team, large corporations, small businesses, and start-ups alike are working together to help develop a pipeline of talent and an environment that supports business development and economic growth,” said Lamont. “Tom’s reputation is one of advocacy and relationship-building, a key attribute for the president of our flagship university. I look forward to connecting him with business leaders, our agency commissioners, members of the nonprofit and advocacy community, and others as we work toward a Connecticut that is forward-thinking, strategic, and welcoming to new graduates, businesses, and entrepreneurs alike.”

Katsouleas’ wide portfolio of responsibilities at Virginia complement the work he will take on at UConn, with both schools featuring a rich array of academic degree programs, large academic medical centers, competitive NCAA Division I athletics teams, and esteemed professional schools.

Katsouleas plans to bring his UVA tradition of regular coffeehouse “office” hours with students to UConn beginning this August.

“Tom is clearly the right candidate at the right time to lead UConn forward, and we are delighted he has decided to come to Connecticut,” said Board of Trustees Chairman Thomas Kruger. “He has a deep and comprehensive understanding of what makes a major research university work and what success looks like. We were drawn to Tom’s vision of what the future of UConn can be and how we as a University can work with the Governor and his administration to help support the Governor’s economic vision for the State.”

Among his many goals at UConn, Katsouleas expects to focus strongly on supporting innovation, enhancing the University’s connections with alumni and philanthropic supporters, and capitalizing on the state’s investments to aggressively expand UConn’s impact on the economy and innovation.

“One of my highest priorities is to grow research at UConn. That means making strategic investments in faculty and facilities with the goal of doubling research here over the next seven to 10 years,” he said. “Good public universities are pillars supporting their state — serving its needs and supporting its economy. Great flagship universities with their satellite campuses and partners, including state and community colleges, are the crown jewels of the state — uplifting the mind and spirit not just of their own students, but of the surrounding communities and the entire state. That is what we are here to do, and I’m incredibly proud to contribute to that mission.”

Katsouleas has been known at past universities to scoot across campus on his personalized skateboard and explore the surroundings by motorcycle.

“I look forward to bringing to the UConn presidency an ambitious agenda, a lot of energy, and my skateboard,” he said. —STEPHANIE REITZ

Find videos and more about Katsouleas and his plans at s.uconn.edu/katsouleas.

INSTAGRAM



Winter is here. Stop by the @uconnbookstore to gear up for that cold walk to class! @miltonlevin



It’s cold, but it’s a sight #UConnViews #FlynnFrame @uconn



Guests descended on the Pratt & Whitney Hangar Museum to try super-cool virtual reality demos and talk tech at last night’s #UConnScienceSalon. @uconn

CHECKING IN WITH...

HALEY DRAGOO IS ON THE FAST TRAIN

The opening line of the LinkedIn profile for **Haley Dragoo '13 (CLAS)** reads, "From unemployed to a feature in the NYT and a 60 Minutes appearance in less than a year... wildly lucky."

Dragoo is a social media manager for New York City's public transportation system MTA, the Metropolitan Transit Authority. She was indeed the subject of a July profile in *The New York Times*, titled "Don't Hate Her. She's Just the (Subway) Messenger." She also was featured in an October "60 Minutes" segment about the inner workings of NYC's subway system.

"People can get really frustrated when they're having difficulties with their commute, and we just try and be as empathetic and accurate with our answers as possible," says Dragoo, explaining her job helping run all manner of social media for the subway system.

Dragoo grew up in Montville in the southeastern part of Connecticut and says she chose UConn for financial reasons, having originally wanted to attend Emerson to study public relations. "Ooooh, I'll be in Boston," she says in a mimic of her high school self.

"But that was just a 17-year-old kid not understanding the concept of how much \$160,000 actually is. My mom said, 'You're going to UConn.'"

Fortunately, she says, she took that advice and started her UConn studies as a communication sciences major. Dragoo switched to an individualized major

in consumer behavior during her sophomore year, finishing up with a senior capstone thesis that analyzed the consumer impact of Google.

"I don't know that I would have graduated on time if I hadn't found the individualized major program. It was a life raft," she says. "It was a diamond, a secret gem. All the advisors were amazing; they paid so much attention to me. Every time I go into an interview, people ask about that. It makes you stand out."

She also was featured in a "60 Minutes" segment about the inner workings of NYC's subway system.

Off Track

Still, before earning a glowing profile in the *Times*, Dragoo's career path had been a bit rocky.

Her first job after graduation was at a Connecticut casino, as a cage cashier exchanging gamblers' chips for money.

"I worked there for six days!" she says laughing. "I just couldn't deal with it. They made me take my nose ring out every day, you couldn't paint your nails, they made me put makeup on my arm tattoos."

Does MTA require anything similar? "I could have a tattoo," she replies, "on my face."

After stints doing social

media for two companies in California, Dragoo returned to the Northeast to be closer to loved ones. She's the only child of a single mother whom she was only seeing annually and was in a long-distance relationship with her boyfriend, Michel, whom she's still with today.

But moving back without a job in hand was financially dire. "I would have to borrow money from my mom just to pay the tolls to drive to see Michel in New York City," she remembers.

After submitting 133 job applications — yes, she still recalls the exact number — the MTA hired her in November 2017.

Dragoo wasn't confident she would land the job, having applied from a position of unemployment.

"They have all these people whose lifelong goal had been to work for the MTA," she says, "but that wasn't me."

On Course

With the official title Assistant Transit Customer Service Specialist, Dragoo posts more than 100 times per day through Twitter account @NYCTSubway, which has 962,000 followers as of this writing, as well as the MTA's official website, Facebook page, and MYmta app. She posts status updates about delayed or stalled trains as well as in-the-moment replies to questions or complaints from individual passengers who message or tweet at the MTA.

That part of the job

comes with a downside, admits Dragoo. Seeing thousands of mean tweets every time you come to work for years can take a big toll on your mental health.

"Your job for your entire shift is to absorb people's unbridled blind anger," she says. "You're seeing the most personally hurtful things people can say, literally responding to people at their worst."

Part of her job is simply understanding that. "They're having the worst time of their day because their train isn't coming," says Dragoo. "They hate the MTA in that moment." She's giving them not just logistic information, she says. "We just hope that our answers give them some peace of mind."

Another piece of the job is translating things into plain English. This, for instance, just came over the internal subway radio system known as the six wire: "Incident: BK-bound 4 train at Bowling Green discharging due to a door problem. BK-bound 4/5 trains holding in stations b/w Wall Street and 125 Street."

"I posted: 'Southbound 4 and 5 trains are holding in stations between 125 St and Wall St while we remove a train with mechanical problems from service at Bowling Green.'"

As cool as her position is right now, Dragoo says it still doesn't beat the job she had working as an event manager at UConn's Student Union. "That was the greatest job I've ever had."

—JESSE RIFKIN '14 (CLAS)

Dragoo at the 34th Street-Hudson Yards subway station in New York City. Getting her job with the MTA took her, she says, from her "last ten dollars to a profile in *The New York Times*."

UConn Talks

On TV ads for junk food:

“These companies are not just targeting black and Hispanic kids with their advertising, but they’re targeting them with the worst products.”

Jennifer Harris, UConn’s Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, CNN, Jan. 15, 2019

On the election of the first mixed-race governor of Japan:

“It broadens the reality of being Japanese, at a time when some voices would have a very old-fashioned notion of Japanese ethnicity.”

Alexis Dudden, history professor, *The New York Times*, Sept. 30, 2018

On the danger of fake news to democracies around the world:

“When people start to believe that all information is biased, they tend to either double down on preexisting beliefs or opt out.”

Michael Lynch, philosophy professor, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, Nov. 2, 2018

On his study showing that black students who have a black teacher before third grade are 13 percent more likely to enroll in college:

“Interacting with these teachers every day for a year tells them, look, there’s this person that looks like you, and they’ve gone off and got a college degree, and you can do this too.”

Joshua Hyman, public policy professor, National Public Radio, Nov. 28, 2018

On his study showing that by the time we feel thirsty it’s too late:

“Our thirst sensation doesn’t really appear until we are one or two percent dehydrated.”

Lawrence E. Armstrong, kinesiology professor, *Reader’s Digest*, Nov. 26, 2018

On work/life balance:

“Women are operating under two sets of expectations – one for work and one for parenthood – that cannot possibly both be met and are a setup for chronic stress and guilt.”

Sherry Pagoto, health and social media professor, *Self* magazine, Nov. 9, 2018

On the newest climate change update proving that birds are facing possible extinction on tropical mountaintops:

“It’s terrifying, like a nightmare come true... If this is how climate change will play out across tropical mountains, then we’re in deep trouble.”

Morgan Tingley, biology professor, *The Atlantic*, Oct. 29, 2018

On the violent death of an American missionary on a remote island in the Indian Ocean:

“That initial approach was rebuffed when an arrow pierced a waterproof copy of the Bible Chau held aloft in his quest to evangelize the tribe.”

Scott Wallace, journalism professor, *National Geographic*, Nov. 28, 2018

This Just In

“YOUR NAME IS ON THE BUSINESS AND YOUR REPUTATION IS TIED TO IT”

Recognizing that family businesses are a vital part of Connecticut’s economy and that the leaders of multi-generation businesses experience unique issues, the UConn School of Business revamped and re-introduced its Family Business program last year.

Although several universities offer family business consulting, UConn takes a different approach, says Lucy Gilson, head of the management department. The UConn program offers executive education to family business owners while simultaneously preparing undergraduates for internships and potential jobs within family businesses.

“The UConn family business collaboration allows experts in fields as diverse as family studies and finance to all work together,” says Gilson.

The revamped program boasts an undergraduate course in family business, a student summer internship program, and executive education “basecamp” classes.

“There is something unique about working in your family’s business,” says Julie Paine-Miller, vice president of Paine’s Inc. Recycling and Rubbish Removal. “You have the motivation and inner drive to be better than just good. Your name is on the business and your reputation is tied to it.”

When asked what it is like to be employed in a family-owned business, Paine-Miller shares that some of her fondest childhood memories involve riding in her family’s garbage trucks.

“I have a deep-seated love for trash,” she says with a laugh.

“I have memories of being around the trucks from the time I was a little girl.”

Paine-Miller started working at the bottom rung of the East Granby company, as all family members do, answering customer complaints. Founded in 1929, today Paine’s has its fourth generation of family leaders, employs more than 70 people, and serves 45,000 customers in Greater Hartford and the Northwest Corner.

Almost one quarter of all Connecticut businesses are family owned, according to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development.

Family businesses are abundant in Connecticut and a significant contributor both to the economy and employment, according to John A. Elliot, dean of the School of Business.

Whether they are household names, such as the 350-employee Bigelow Tea Company, or smaller mom-and-pops that serve giants like United Technologies, Electric Boat, and Stanley Black & Decker, family businesses touch all industries, says Elliot.

“While it’s easy for the corporate giants of the world to pack up and move elsewhere, family businesses just don’t do that,” says program director Robin Bienemann. “They are much more likely to stay in Connecticut because their business has been here for generations. It is our goal to keep them here, keep them strong, and help them over the obstacles that they encounter.”—CLAIRE HALL



Taste of Storrs

A test kitchen on the third floor of the Student Union (who knew?) is where the magic happened in creating the new menu for the restaurant downstairs, **The Bistro on Union Street** — previously known as Chuck & Augie’s. The new menu offers a taste of modern French comfort food, such as the French onion soup and croque monsieur pictured at left, while still keeping some fan-favorite dishes from the previous restaurant.

—CAMILA VALLEJO '19 (CLAS)

For the croque monsieur and French onion soup recipes, go to s.uconn.edu/bistro.



Sciadopitys verticillata,
Japanese umbrella pine

Dwarf *Pinus strobus*, eastern white pine

Sciadopitys verticillata, Japanese umbrella pine

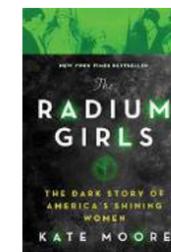
3 BOOKS



DANIEL BURKEY

Engineering professor-in-residence Daniel Burkey commutes to Storrs from Middletown and listens to audiobooks on the way. Additionally, he's reading at least one, but usually two or three, print books at any given time. It's a good thing Burkey, who's also the associate dean for undergraduate education and diversity, is married to a librarian. The couple keeps reading logs — see more titles at s.uconn.edu/books.

Just Finished:



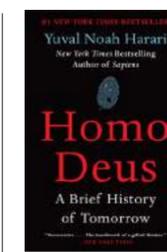
"Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America's Shining Women" by Kate Moore

This is a fantastic book about the workers who painted with radium to make glow-in-the-dark clocks and such in the early 1900s in Waterbury.

It's a heartbreaking story. Some of these were girls as young as 13, 14, and ended up dying of horrific cancers later. They'd walk home at night and they'd be glowing. They thought it was cool. I was initially drawn to it because it's a science book, but it becomes a book about chemical safety, which is a lot of what I do as a chemical engineer. There's a lot of that here because it is about the first workers-comp lawsuit.

And Just Listened To: "The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable" by Nassim Nicholas Taleb. It looks at why humanity is so bad at predictions.

Currently Reading:



"Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow" by Yuval Noah Harari

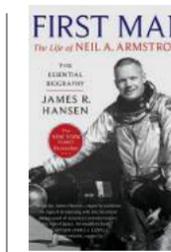
This is by the guy who wrote the bestseller *Sapiens*. It looks at how, for

most of human history, we have been dealing with war, famine, and plague. In the early 20th century, war and disease became largely contained. So humankind went from a time of constant catastrophe to a time of dealing with manageable events — not famine, for instance, but rather obesity.

The question he poses is, given all that, what will be the challenges for humans in the next millennium?

And Currently Listening To: "Abaddon's Gate" by James S. A. Corey, the third in the book series that the really gritty Syfy show "The Expanse" is based on. Humanity has colonized the solar system and, scientifically, it's a really good look at what that would be like.

On Deck:



"First Man: The Life of Neil A. Armstrong" by James R. Hansen

I've wanted to read this since I heard the author interviewed on NPR.

Apparently he did more than 50 hours of interviews for the book. And Armstrong was so reclusive.

It covers everything from his family life to his career starting with his time as a Navy pilot in North Korea.

There are so many "next up" reads, though, that's just one of many. *Bad Blood*, about the Silicon Valley company Theranos and how it defrauded people for a decade, that is another one.

And About To Listen To: "Leadership in Turbulent Times," the latest presidential biography by Doris Kearns Goodwin. It compares the ways that Lincoln, Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, and Lyndon B. Johnson handled crisis and chaos.

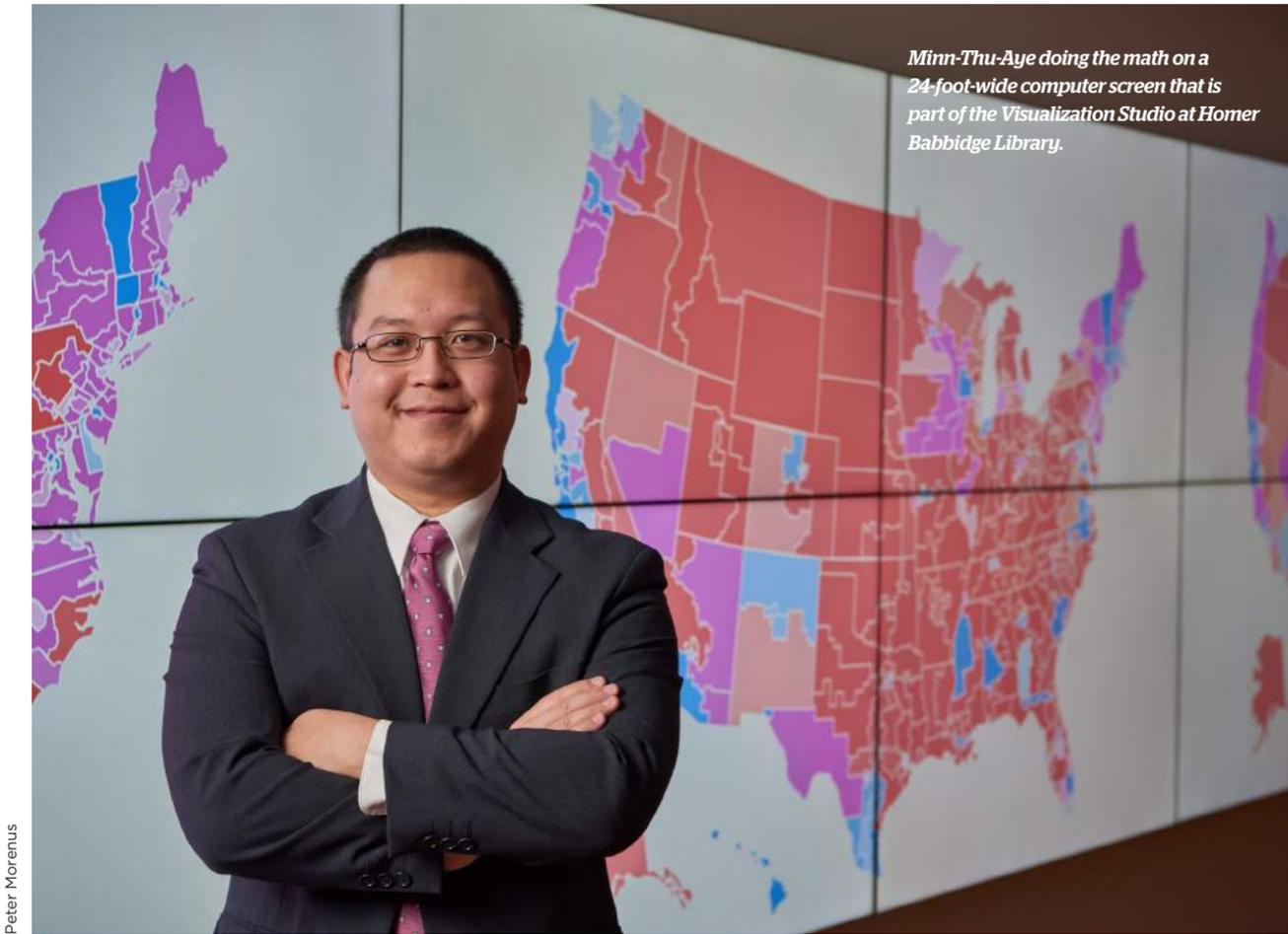
COLLECTIONS

CONIFERS



Tucked just off of Route 195 south of campus, UConn's Conifer Collection hosts hundreds of trees, the fruits of Sidney Waxman's hunts. Waxman, a plant science professor, was a pioneer of propagating dwarf varieties of pine — with the help of his .22-caliber rifle. He and his friends would scour the countryside for witches' brooms, atypical clumps of branches on pine trees. Waxman would use his .22 to shoot high up into the clumps to dislodge pinecones and collect seeds, which he would then plant, all in the name of developing new varieties of dwarf pines. Since eastern white pines, *Pinus strobus*, are so common in Connecticut, the UConn Conifer Collection boasts an almost startling array of dwarf white pine varieties, as demonstrated at left. The inset photo shows the collection in the 1990s.

Minn-Thu-Aye doing the math on a 24-foot-wide computer screen that is part of the Visualization Studio at Homer Babbidge Library.



Peter Morenus

COVETED CLASS

UNIV 1784: MATHEMATICS, POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, AND GERRYMANDERING

The Instructor:

Wearing jeans and a polo shirt, Myron Minn-Thu-Aye easily could be mistaken for an undergrad as he leads a post-mortem on the 2018 midterms. In truth, the boyish 33-year-old, an assistant professor-in-residence, has been following elections for as long as his students have been alive. His fascination can be traced to the American presidential campaign of 2000, when he was a student at a British high school in his native Hong Kong. “Florida was suddenly in the news,” he says. “The Supreme Court was in the news. From far away it was something we talked about.”

A few years after “hanging chad” briefly became a household term, Minn-Thu-Aye arrived in the U.S. as a freshman at Williams College. American elections were no longer distant events, and he remembers gathering with classmates to watch the returns as George Bush secured his second term in 2004. Meanwhile, his academic path was taking an unexpected turn.

“I had been good at math in school but had no intention of taking it any further,” he says. “But all my dormmates seemed to be taking math classes, so I thought, sure,

why not?” He enrolled in multivariable calculus his freshman year and was smitten. “Wow! This is something I need to explore more!” He ended up going straight from Williams to Louisiana State University, where he completed his Ph.D. in algebra in 2013.

Class Description:

A hot-button issue in recent years, the practice of gerrymandering — drawing electoral districts to manipulate the outcomes of elections — has been around almost as long as the Republic itself. It takes its name from Elbridge Gerry, signer of the Declaration of Independence and fifth vice-president of the United States, who as Massachusetts governor in 1812 oversaw the creation of a Congressional district so sinuous it was said to resemble a salamander.

In “Mathematics, Representation, and Gerrymandering,” Minn-Thu-Aye and his students apply the clear-eyed logic of data science to a bare-knuckle

political practice, exploring the geometry of electoral districts and breaking down the relationship between redistricting and demographics.

“We’re really looking for any kind of light that mathematics can shed on the electoral process and notions of fairness therein,” says Minn-Thu-Aye. “We look at different types of data and learn about geometric and statistical ways to measure whether an election is meeting various criteria we might find desirable. A big goal is to add complexity to our views and understanding of elections.”

Minn-Thu-Aye’s Teaching Style:

On a morning not long after last fall’s blue wave, the class is crunching numbers on ranked-choice voting (RCV), a type of balloting that allows voters to list multiple candidates by order of preference. Some experts believe that RCV can provide a more accurate measure of voters’ wishes than the all-or-nothing system we commonly use.

The State of Maine implemented RCV for the midterms, and one result was that incumbent U.S. congressman Bruce Poliquin unexpectedly lost his seat. It was the first time in history that ranked choice had been used to decide a race for the U.S. Congress. Poliquin responded in the most American way possible: he filed a lawsuit.

After briefly noting that U.S. courts repeatedly have upheld the legitimacy of RCV (indeed, Poliquin’s challenge would be summarily dismissed), Minn-Thu-Aye guides the class through an assessment of the various techniques used to slice and dice ranked-choice ballots. An instant runoff system, for example, takes the two candidates who garner the most first-place votes and eliminates everyone else. The top two are then tallied head to head, and the winner of that comparison wins the election. This is the system Maine used, but there are many others.

A time-tested method known as a Borda Count assigns point values to ballot positions — three points for every first-place vote, for instance, two points for second place, one point for third. Whoever racks up the most points wins. Outcomes can swing wildly depending on which method is used. Candidate A could win a Borda Count race without

being anyone’s first choice, while Candidate B might prevail over a crowded field in an instant runoff despite being dead last on a majority of ballots.

“How easily can techniques be manipulated?” Minn-Thu-Aye asks the class. “What conditions of fairness do we want our vote to satisfy?”

Why We Want to Take It Ourselves:

One year from now our country will embark on a Constitutionally mandated national census. Based on the data collected, electoral districts will be redrawn, Congressional representation will be reapportioned, and public funds will be redistributed to reflect population shifts. Meanwhile, the 2020 federal elections will put both the Senate and the White House in play. A proper understanding of these generation-

defining events (the census and the presidential election coincide only once every 20 years) will require a sharp set of analytical tools.

“Math can surprise you,” says Minn-Thu-Aye. “It doesn’t describe everything, it doesn’t solve all your problems. But it captures some things very well. It can be a lens to look at these issues that I imagine are going to matter a lot to us, potentially on a personal level, in the quite near future.” —KEVIN MARKEY

UNIV 1784 courses are freshman Honors courses that meet twice a week, once with faculty like Minn-Thu-Aye for academic forums and once with upperclass Honors students who prepare freshmen for the four-year Honors experience.



University Archives

REMEMBER THIS?

BLIZZARD OF '78

Named one of the worst winter storms in Connecticut history, the famous Blizzard of 1978 left many areas in a state of emergency, yet students at UConn seemed far from worried. Students dove into two feet of snow, had epic snowball battles, spent hours sledding down Horsebarn Hill, and were reported to have done a good amount of “skin diving,” a reportedly common Nor’easter sport that entailed jumping off ledges or from windows into piles of snow while wearing little or no clothing. (Do not try this at home.)

Throughout the Blizzard of '78, University health services treated 20 students due to snow-related injuries, including a window jumper who broke his foot leaping from his dorm room into a not-so-fluffy pile of snow.

—CAMILA VALLEJO '19 (CLAS)

THE KNOCK- OUT DOCTOR

Ringside, cageside, in the bullpen, and on the field, neurologist Dr. Anthony Alessi is on a mission to save as many human brains as possible.

By Peter Nelson
Photos by Peter Morenus

What happens to Carrington Banks, 29, from Peoria, Illinois, just before 9:30 p.m. on the 12th of October in the Mohegan Sun Casino, with just under a minute to go in the second round of a mixed martial arts (MMA) fight, is either something he will never forget or something he won't remember — specifically a hard right knee to the chin, delivered by an opponent named Mandel Nallo, just as Banks is ducking his head to move in closer. The knee is the last thing Banks sees before it all goes dark.

The next thing he sees is the face of Dr. Anthony Alessi, UConn Health clinical professor of neurology and orthopedics and director of the UConn NeuroSport Program.

Alessi, an energetic man in a light gray suit and athletic shoes, shines a light in Banks's eyes to see if they dilate. The two are backstage beneath the arena, where Banks is seated on a chair sequestered by black partitions. Banks is confused and angry and wants to know why they stopped



Between rounds in this welterweight battle, Dr. Alessi checks out Greenwich, Connecticut, native and southpaw Kastriot "Slaughterhouse" Xhema who is taking on Pat "The Gorilla Ninja" Casey from Springfield, Massachusetts.



the fight, because he says he's fine and he wants to continue.

"You took a nap. You were out for a couple of minutes. Come on. You gotta go," Alessi tells him, gesturing to a ramp where the lights of a waiting ambulance flash. Banks walks to the ambulance under his own power with Alessi steadying his elbow to make sure he gets to the hospital for further examination.

"In pro football," Alessi says, "you get hit hard in the head, they take you out and put you into a concussion protocol. In boxing or MMA, if you took a guy out every time they got hit in the head, the sports wouldn't exist. My job is to make sure all these guys go home alive. That's why I'm here."

Warmup

After medical school, Alessi began his practice working as an athletic trainer

at Mount St. Michael Academy in the Bronx, eventually opening a neurology practice in Norwich, Connecticut. He started working with the Yankees' Double-A team there and noticed during his hospital shifts that he was looking at many baseline, prefight brainwave EEGs for boxers scheduled to fight at Mohegan Sun Casino.

"The Connecticut boxing commissioner invited me to come down to watch a fight," says Alessi.

"After the fight, he asked, 'How would you like to work with us?'"

"I said, 'Do I get to end the fight?'"

"He said, 'We want you to.'"

So I've been ending fights since 1996."

Indeed, for the past 23 years, Dr. Alessi has served as the consulting neurologist during boxing matches at Mohegan Sun. He has gone on to study head trauma in other sports, how to

measure recovery, how to gauge when an athlete is ready to return to play, and how to prevent head injuries.

But he got his start as a "fight doctor."

Alessi admits it's odd for a neurologist to work in a sport where a primary goal is to induce maximum cognitive impairment in your opponent — but that's exactly what makes his presence imperative. People who say anybody who fights in mixed martial arts needs to have their head examined can rest assured that it is — before, during, and after the fight.

"Some people are born with one pupil larger than the other, for example," Alessi says. "I need to know that *before* a fight because that's also a sign of concussion."

Sometimes fighters reveal things in the prefight interview that disqualifies them. "I once had a fighter who said, 'Yeah, I had surgery — I got a burr hole in the side of my skull.' I said, 'What are you talking about?' He showed it to me and I felt the hole. He said, 'Yeah, I had a brain hemorrhage, but that was years ago.' I said, 'You can't fight with that.' But he said, 'Well, they let me fight in [a different state].' I said, 'Are you kidding me?' Another guy I

examined had a prosthetic eye. He said, 'Why can't I fight?' But with a glass eye, you obviously can't see a hand coming from that side."

Showdown

Despite the appearance of greater brutality, Alessi says mixed martial arts fights are less dangerous than boxing matches, with MMA fighters generating about half the average punching force boxers do, particularly when they're grappling on the mat and swinging from only a few inches apart, though as Carrington Banks could testify, a flying knee to the chin is a different story.

"In mixed martial arts, you also have the ability to tap out," says Alessi. "You can quit. There are various techniques, in mixed martial arts, where someone might get his opponent in an arm bar or a choke hold, and the other guy knows there's nothing he can do about it, so he taps out. In boxing, they can't quit, and the head is the primary target. But you'd be surprised how many times you go into the corner and the fighter doesn't want to come back out. That's the first question I ask them, and if they say no, I end the fight. He'll still get paid, and I've saved his life."

"My job is to make sure all these guys go home alive. That's why I'm here."

The American Academy of Neurology has backed off from its edict in the 1980s that boxing should be banned, instead calling for measures including more regulations and formal neurologic examinations for fighters. Alessi says more and more neurologists have gotten involved in the sport, screening individuals to determine whether they should fight.

Besides protecting individual athletes, Alessi has used boxing and MMA events as a lens through which to view the larger picture surrounding head trauma. "As the public awareness about long-term brain damage from concussions developed, I realized it was like I had my own lab," he says.

The world has known for a long time about the dangers of head trauma, the syndrome codified in 1928 when New Jersey forensic pathologist Dr. Harrison Stanford Martland published

a paper in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* on fighters and coined the term "punch drunk."

Today, it seems that new findings on head injury are in the news daily. Since 2001, more than 60,000 scientific papers on chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) and brain trauma have been published, raising awareness at both the public and professional levels, leading to protocols where athletes are pulled from games at the first sign of concussion. Trainers are taught to perform a SCAT5 (Sport Concussion Assessment Tool, 5th edition), elaborating on the questions the old cigar-chomping cornermen used to ask fighters between rounds: "What's your name? What day is it? Do you know where you are?"

The SCAT5 is used because the greatest and most immediate danger to concussion sufferers is second-impact

Above left: In one of the night's main fights, Russian heavyweight Sergei Kharitonov deals Las Vegas native "Big Country" Roy Nelson an illegal knee to the face, which brings ringside physician Alessi into the cage; he and the ref have five minutes to decide whether the fight should go on. In this case, it does. Above right: A packed house before the main event.

syndrome, a fatal edema caused by a second head trauma sustained before the brain has had time to repair torn tissues, ruptured blood vessels, or damage at the cellular level from an earlier injury. Other organs have room to expand if they swell. The brain, encased in a hard shell, does not.

Time Out

“There’s no such thing as a minor concussion,” says Alessi, who teaches at the UConn School of Medicine. Of his three daughters, two are neurologists. “And as I tell students, if you’ve seen one concussion, you’ve seen one concussion. They’re all different. In most cases, a single concussion should not cause permanent damage, but a second concussion, soon after the first, does not have to be very strong for its effects to be permanently disabling or deadly.”

The problem with studying concussions is that you can’t line up a variety of test subjects of various ages and sizes, take baseline measurements, and then hit them in the head with a 13-pound bowling ball moving 20 mph — the equivalent, experts estimate, to taking a punch from a pro boxer. You can’t then compare those results to the results from hitting them with 6-pound bowling balls moving 40 mph, or to what the results would be if you hit them once an hour, or once a day for a month, or in the side of the head instead of the front.

“Ninety percent of the time, after a concussion, you wait 10 days and the athlete is going to be okay. But we still don’t know what the long-term effects might be. We know how the cells repair themselves, but we don’t know what kind of debris might be left behind once the cells heal,” Alessi says. “A big part of my job is educating the athletes. That’s really the best way to prevent these things.”

Much of the current discussion of CTE, in relation to professional sports, concerns professional football. While not discounting that discussion, Alessi advocates for a broader approach.

“There are only 1,800 professional football players. In college football, there are 54,000. In high school football, about a million. In youth



“I tell students, if you’ve seen one concussion, you’ve seen one concussion. They’re all different.”

football, you have over 3 million children. Another 3 million children play youth soccer, and a half million play youth hockey. So you have 7.5 million young athletes playing high-velocity collision sports, all with brains that are still developing.”

Children lack both the myelin sheathing that protects older brains and the developed neck musculature that helps older athletes avoid injury. Alessi works with UConn student-athletes and teams and advises youth sports programs, because he is

concerned for these younger athletes.

“They’re smaller and they don’t move as fast, so the force of impact is less, but they’re more vulnerable,” says Alessi. “We used to think if you let kids play full-contact sports, it will toughen them up — not true. The more contact you have, the greater the risk.”

Requiring the presence of certified athletic trainers at every secondary school athletic event and training coaches on concussion symptoms are among the bare-minimum guidelines, which are endorsed by leading sports

After seeing patients at UConn Health Storrs most of the day, Alessi and a team of UConn Health doctors perform pre-fight interviews and health assessments at Mohegan Sun. Fighters are Carrington Banks (top) and Mandel Nallo, who will face each other the next day. These checkups are essential. “Some people are born with one pupil larger than the other,” says Alessi. “I need to know that before a fight because that’s also a sign of concussion.”

medicine organizations in the United States. Banning checking and headers in youth hockey and soccer and reducing full-contact practices to once a week for professional and college football have been linked to reduced injuries, Alessi says.

“You have to ask, what’s to be gained from high-velocity impact at a young age? The fastest-growing youth sport in America today is flag football. Archie Manning [former pro-football quarterback and father of Peyton and Eli Manning] didn’t let his sons play youth football. Tom Brady never played youth football. A lot of really good professional athletes in the NFL knew that they could build skill without getting hit,” Alessi says.

Main Event

Alessi has also been hired by the Western Sports Foundation to advise professional bull riders, traveling to their events six times a year. If a knee to the chin is enough to knock out a 155-pound martial arts fighter from Peoria, a head-butt from an enraged 2,000-pound bull is exponentially worse, as Hall of Fame bull rider Tuff Hedeman learned in October of 1995 when he rode a bull named Bodacious, regarded as the toughest bull that ever lived. Bodacious had perfected a trick where he would raise his hind quarters to throw a rider forward, then bring his head up and back. Bodacious butted Hedeman twice and broke every bone in his face, resulting in two surgeries and six titanium plates installed to repair the damage. The next time Hedeman drew Bodacious, he wisely allowed the bull to exit the chute without him.

“Bull riders are a different breed,” Alessi says. “They’re generally smaller, and they have greater core strength than any athletes I’ve ever seen,

because you need that to stay on a bull. They get kicked or thrown or butted, but most of the time the damage comes from the violent whiplash they experience. In the old days, they just wore cowboy hats. Now about two-thirds of them wear helmets. We learned from the unfortunate circumstance where a young Canadian rider by the name of Ty Pozzobon passed away by suicide at age 25. The pathology found he had CTE.”

Pozzobon was thrown and stomped by a bull in 2014, kicked so hard his helmet popped off. He was unconscious for 34 minutes and spent 10 days in the hospital. Pozzobon’s tragic story forced professional bull riding, called the world’s most dangerous sport, counting 18 fatalities from 1989 to 2009, to take a harder look at itself.

“The riders are very interesting guys,” Alessi says. “I try to get to know them because the guys you see riding bulls this weekend may not be the same guys you saw last weekend, because there are so many tours. You may tell a guy, ‘I don’t think you should ride,’ so instead of riding PBR [Professional Bull Riders], they’ll go to some other lesser tour and ride. Like boxing. You tell some guy he can’t fight, he’ll think ‘That’s okay’ and show up on a card in the Dominican Republic. When you talk to the riders, they all have interesting stories. You ask, ‘Why did you become a bull rider?’ ‘That’s what my father did. My uncles. My brothers. It’s what we do.’”

Getting to know them is not the same thing as sympathizing with them, in contact sports where metaphorical hardheadedness can be an athlete’s best and worst characteristic. Carrington Banks’ desire to keep fighting is exactly what Alessi must guard against, where the heart of a champion, the sheer will to keep

going and fight on, the very dimension of character that makes them a champion, is what destroys them in the end, fighting on into the later rounds of fights when they should quit, or fighting on into the later years of their careers when the body is too old to take it anymore.

Knockout

The next fight after Carrington Banks also ends with a knockout when a lightweight named Kevin “Baby Slice” Ferguson Jr. takes a beating from a fighter named Corey Browning. In a sport where participants are assigned cartoonish nom de guerres like “Big Country” or “The Monsoon” or “The Romanian Bomber,” Browning is built like a guy whose nickname might be “Tech Support.”

He nevertheless prevails over the ripped and chiseled Ferguson, whose nickname “Baby Slice” comes from his father, a legendary street brawler nicknamed Kimbo Slice, the man who put mixed martial arts on the map for both his ferocity and his theatrics. Like the sons of bull riders who seek to follow in their fathers’ footsteps, there’s something heartbreaking about an athlete who does something dangerous because it’s the family business.

Personal narratives are not Alessi’s concern. “Baby Slice” is carried out on a stretcher and still unconscious when Alessi loads him into the ambulance, and the subsequent fights have to pause briefly because there are no more ambulances. “I can’t let myself feel sorry for a guy because it’s his last fight, or because he really needs the money. Sometimes they expect a fighter to sell tickets to everybody from his gym, the way Girl Scouts sell cookies to their family members. So someone might tell me, ‘You gotta let this guy fight — he sold 500 tickets.’ Or sometimes, the more rounds a guy fights, the more he gets paid, so it’s in the corner’s interest to keep the fight going.

“I say no. That’s not why I’m here. That’s why I have the final say, and if I need to stop the fight, I stop it. I’m here to make sure nobody gets hurt. I’ve got one job, and that’s to make sure every fighter here goes home alive.” ☺



It takes two to tango . . . and to waltz, cha-cha, rumba, or swing! UConn Ballroom dancers compete in all these and more.

Clubbing

Fungus foragers, ballroom dancers, business consultants, gender activists, and students with some 650 more passions have a home in the UConn club community. We share photos of all 650. Just kidding. Find a tiny sampling here.

By Julie (Stagis) Bartucca '10 (BUS, CLAS)
Photos by Peter Morenus, Christa Yung, and
Lucas Voghell '20 (CLAS)



With its campus circuit and slate of speakers, the annual March to End Victim Blaming is one of Revolution Against Rape's signature events.



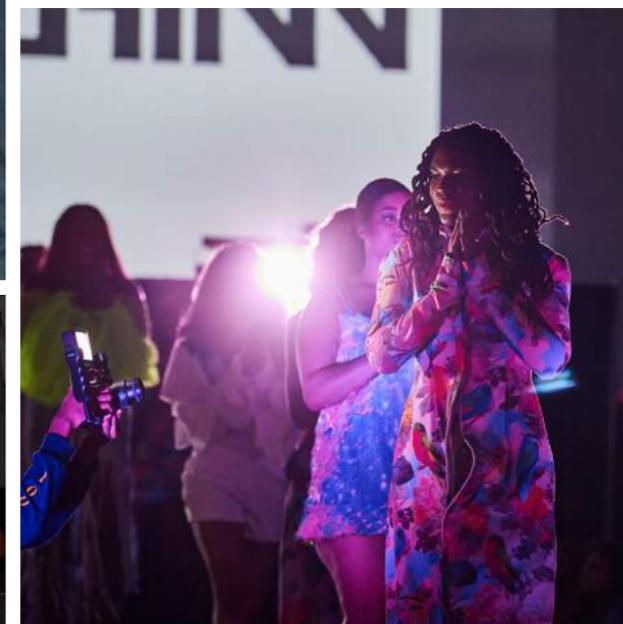
◀ Ballroom Blitz

UConn Ballroom dancers who achieve a certain level of proficiency compete on behalf of the University at major regional collegiate competitions held at schools like MIT, Brown, and Yale, plus an annual contest hosted here every fall (shown). Although UConn duos place at every competition, President Joseph Irizarry '20 (ENG) stresses that ability isn't required to join. The "club" portion of the organization is all about meeting new people, learning a new skill, and having fun. "You can definitely catch us grocery shopping, dancing down the aisles," he says.



Mind Your Business ▶

Case studies are well and good. But founder Justin Lee '15 (BUS) knew UConn's high-caliber students could provide valuable strategy consulting to real businesses. Since 2014 **UConn Consulting Group** has done just that for 15 companies and organizations, from startups to the UConn Foundation and UConn Athletics to the Massachusetts Department of Education. And they're doing it well – one client said they forgot they weren't working with seasoned professionals.



▶ Model Citizens

Never had a chance to go to an authentic Caribbean carnival? No need: The **West Indian Student Organization** hosts one right on campus every April. Bacchanal Bashment and other events like a yearly fashion show (shown above) bring the colorful costumes (think rhinestone-bedazzled bikini tops and feathered headdresses), upbeat music, and joyful dancing of the West Indies to Storrs. President Cynthia Bissereth '20 (ENG), a first-generation American whose family is from Haiti, says her favorite part has been learning about her own ancestry and about the diversity within the community.



◀ #UsToo

Plastering campus with sticky notes about consent during Sexual Assault Awareness Month is one way to get noticed. **UConn Revolution Against Rape** strives to empower survivors, educate the community, and remind the administration – at UConn and in Washington – that they will fight for victims' rights. Shown here and on pages 28-29 at its annual March to End Victim Blaming, the group also runs workshops for local high schools, UConn Greek organizations, and at UConn-hosted True Colors, the largest youth LGBT conference in the U.S.



◀ A Real Fun Guy

There is fungus among us, and the **Mycology Club** wants to find it. And identify it. Through hikes with professors and forays into the forest to forage for food (say that three times fast), the group aims to learn everything they can about mushrooms and their ilk. "It's a combination of academics and outdoor activity that gets you noticing what's beneath the top layers of the forest," says President and Co-Founder Zoe Demitrack '20 (ENG).

Guiding Right ▶

Through a partnership between the **Office of Community Outreach** and **Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters**, thousands of UConn students – "bigs" – who have mentored students in Windham, Connecticut's elementary and middle schools over the decade-plus have grown from their experience just as much as the "littles" do, says Nutmeg BBBS Director of School Programs Allison Holst-Grubbe. One young woman was a Little Sister as a girl in Windham, then came to UConn and gave back as a Big Sister, then as a site manager. She is now a teacher. Talk about giving us all the feels.



Pitch Perfect ▶

It's been 27 years since Rockapella sang the theme song for "Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?" Luckily for the 10 a cappella groups at UConn, the instrument-free-band craze is still going strong. Pictured at Convocation 2018 are the **Conn-Men**, the 17-year-old, all-male group that has performed at the White House and opened for Yale's Whiffenpoofs, Pentatonix, and – yes – Rockapella.

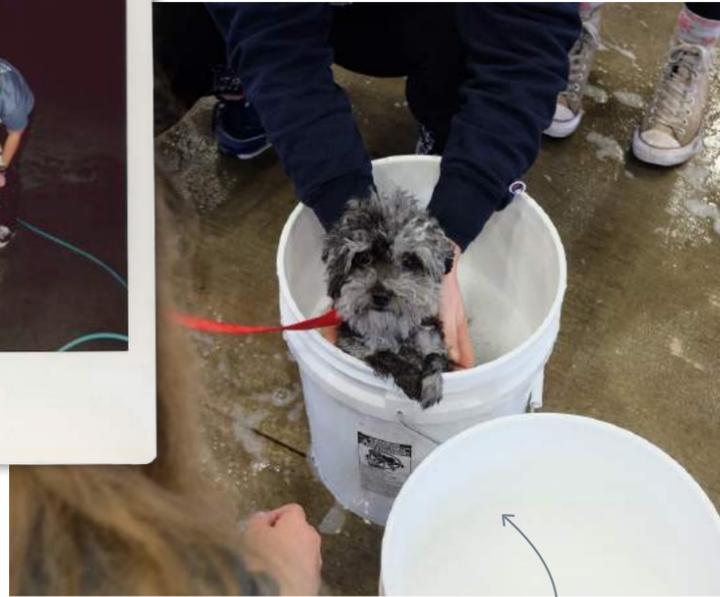


▲ High Horse

The "sport of kings" is not that glamorous at the college level, **UConn Polo Club** President Anders Carlton '19 (ENG) insists. Team members spend eight hours a week, bare minimum, practicing and working the horses. "It's not something you can just pick up and put down," she says. "Once you get hooked, you really get hooked for life." It pays off – the UConn men's and women's teams have a combined 10 national championships and eight Final Four appearances.

Pet Projects

Friendship and camaraderie with fellow aspiring veterinarians, connections with professionals working in the field, and opportunities to pamper sweet pooches at a biannual dog wash event? Check, check, and check. **UConn's Pre-Vet Club** members build their resumes and cooperative spirit through an annual alumni banquet, visits to the yearly American Pre-Veterinary Medical Association symposium, and service/research trips to places like South Africa and Honduras.



You First

Sport has been defined as "tumultuous merriment," and jumping out of a plane certainly fits that definition. It's also serious business for members of **UConn Skydiving**. The club sport allows boundless opportunity to train and compete in this expensive hobby — one member has racked up 2,000 solo jumps. Above right is Meghan Ryan '22 (Pharm.D.), whose team, Space Force ROTC, earned a silver medal in the four-way advanced formation contest at the 2018 National Collegiate Parachuting Championships in Arizona. CT True Blue, another UConn team, snagged gold.



Good Chemistry

You were onto something with that science fair volcano. **UConn Chemistry Club** celebrates its members' love for this science of substances — and gets the next generation excited about it — primarily through demonstrations at their weekly meetings and through outreach to local schools, volunteering at 4-H STEM Day and the Middle School Science Bowl. Demos range from making batteries out of fruit to burning magnesium in dry ice to a fiery thermite reaction — all to spark kids' (whether middle school or college students) enthusiasm for STEM.



Candy Crush

All are welcome to fold traditional origami or compete in modern Japanese variety show games with the **Japanese Student Association**. JSA celebrates Japanese culture through full-day events including the annual Cherry Blossom Festival (or Sakura Matsuri), part of Spring Weekend, with live performances, art for purchase, and traditional street fare like *yakisoba* (stir-fried noodles). Every November, JSA teams up with the Korean Student Association for Peperocky Day (pictured), where students make their own chocolate-dipped cookie sticks similar to Japanese Pocky and Korean Pepero. In each country, November 11 is Pocky Day/Pepero Day, a Valentine's-type holiday focused on the exchange of the popular snacks as a token of affection.



Find videos, more photos, and more clubs at s.uconn.edu/clubs.



THE SUSAN HERBST

Eight years ago, newly inaugurated President Susan Herbst stepped to the lectern in the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts, introducing herself to the community with a clear vision for UConn as an institution with a storied history and a limitless future.

As Herbst prepares to complete her presidency later this year, her legacy is already evident across all our campuses — not only in UConn’s stellar academic ascent but also in the development of its cutting-edge research, modern campus amenities, and economic contributions to the state of Connecticut.

“The immense power of UConn is in our astounding breadth,” Herbst said at her inauguration as UConn’s 15th president. “We learn from brilliant researchers and instructors, from our outstanding scientists, writers, historians, engineers, physicians, dentists, artists, attorneys, and musicians.

“We learn from the leaders of our student organizations and the excellence of our student-athletes, as well as from the coaches who inspire that incredible discipline. . . . By appreciating the love of learning, the life of the mind, and the natural history of this beautiful countryside, our students will value their university, their state, their nation, and their world,” she said.

Herbst has set a strong foundation on which UConn’s 16th president and coming generations of its students, faculty and staff, alumni, and others can build.

“Being able to lead this outstanding institution has been one of the great honors and privileges of my life,” said Herbst in a message to the UConn community. “These have been exciting and rewarding years. UConn has risen in the rankings and grown academically as we embarked on transformational new initiatives, formed vital partnerships, addressed long-standing needs, planned carefully for the future, and made difficult but necessary decisions.

“Despite financial struggles because of the state budget, together we have become a stronger, better university,” she said. “UConn is among the finest research universities in the United States and the pride of the state of Connecticut — as it should be.”

Herbst was named UConn’s 15th president on December 20, 2010, and is the first female to hold the position since the school was founded in 1881. As president, Herbst hired hundreds of highly accomplished faculty — above and beyond filling vacancies — to significantly enhance course offerings and the University’s research capability. She led the implementation of Bioscience Connecticut and Next Generation Connecticut, major investments that continue to transform UConn.

Bioscience Connecticut, an \$864 million initiative at UConn Health, allowed for expanded enrollment in the medical and dental schools, building new space for business incubators, creating centers of excellence with neighboring institutions, and more. The initiative included building a new world-class hospital tower, an outpatient ambulatory care

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center, and parking garages. Existing facilities underwent major renovations, making room for updated infrastructure, state-of-the-art research laboratories, business incubators, and modern educational spaces. Bioscience Connecticut was critical to attracting The Jackson Laboratory to create a billion-dollar personalized medicine laboratory on the UConn Health campus as part of a University partnership approved in 2012.

Next Generation Connecticut, valued at more than \$1.5 billion in investments, has expanded educational opportunities, research, and innovation in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) disciplines, as well as added new faculty in the humanities. NextGen funded the Peter J. Werth Residence Tower, the Engineering and Science Building, massive infrastructure improvements, Gant Science Complex renovations, and other projects.

Herbst worked to stabilize UConn Health’s fiscal condition and championed the opening of the Innovation Partnership Building to foster cutting-edge research and industry collaboration. She also shepherded the move from UConn’s suburban West Hartford campus to downtown Hartford and the establishment of student housing at UConn Stamford.

From 2010 to 2018, freshman applications

skyrocketed from 23,278 to more than 38,000, and average SAT scores for Storrs freshmen climbed from 1221 to 1306. In 2018 the number of Storrs freshmen from minority backgrounds hit 40 percent.

Herbst’s time at UConn also has included a strong focus on affordability and providing an exceptional student experience on its campuses. With strong support from the undergraduate student body, for instance, Herbst initiated the construction of a \$100 million student recreation facility that will open next year. And she recommended elimination of several student fees at UConn, reducing costs for about 10,000 UConn students.

She led the successful effort to combine the old UConn Alumni Association with the UConn Foundation, creating a single nonprofit entity to oversee both philanthropy and alumni relations. In 2018, the Foundation raised the most in its history, and the endowment, which was \$272 million in 2010, had climbed to \$448 million.

Lawrence D. McHugh, Board of Trustees chairman from 2009 through 2017, worked closely with Herbst throughout her tenure and said that hiring her was one of the Board’s most important and far-reaching decisions.

“Her contributions have been powerful

Illustrations by:
Kailey Whitman



UConn
STAMFORD

PA



and lasting,” he said. “She led the place with a fierce determination to drive UConn higher and higher academically, to expand the faculty, focus on student success, build outstanding facilities, and to do all she could to ensure UConn grew and thrived. She remade the administration and set the university on a new path to success.

“The University of Connecticut is a much better institution today than it was the day she arrived, and the bonds with our alumni have never been stronger. She will be missed — and a tough act to follow.”

Herbst began her career as a professor at Northwestern University and was on the faculty from 1989 until 2003, when she became Dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Temple University. She went on to become

BEST COLLEGES
NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES
PUBLIC TOP 25
U.S. News & WORLD REPORT

Annual impact of UConn on Connecticut economy: \$3.4 billion.



Hundreds of new tenured or tenure-track faculty were hired, enhancing course offerings & research opportunities.

UConn is graduating **28% more students now** than when Herbst arrived. Most of those graduates go on to **live & work in Connecticut.**



The School of Engineering increased its enrollment 57% during Herbst's tenure; the number of enrolled female students more than doubled.



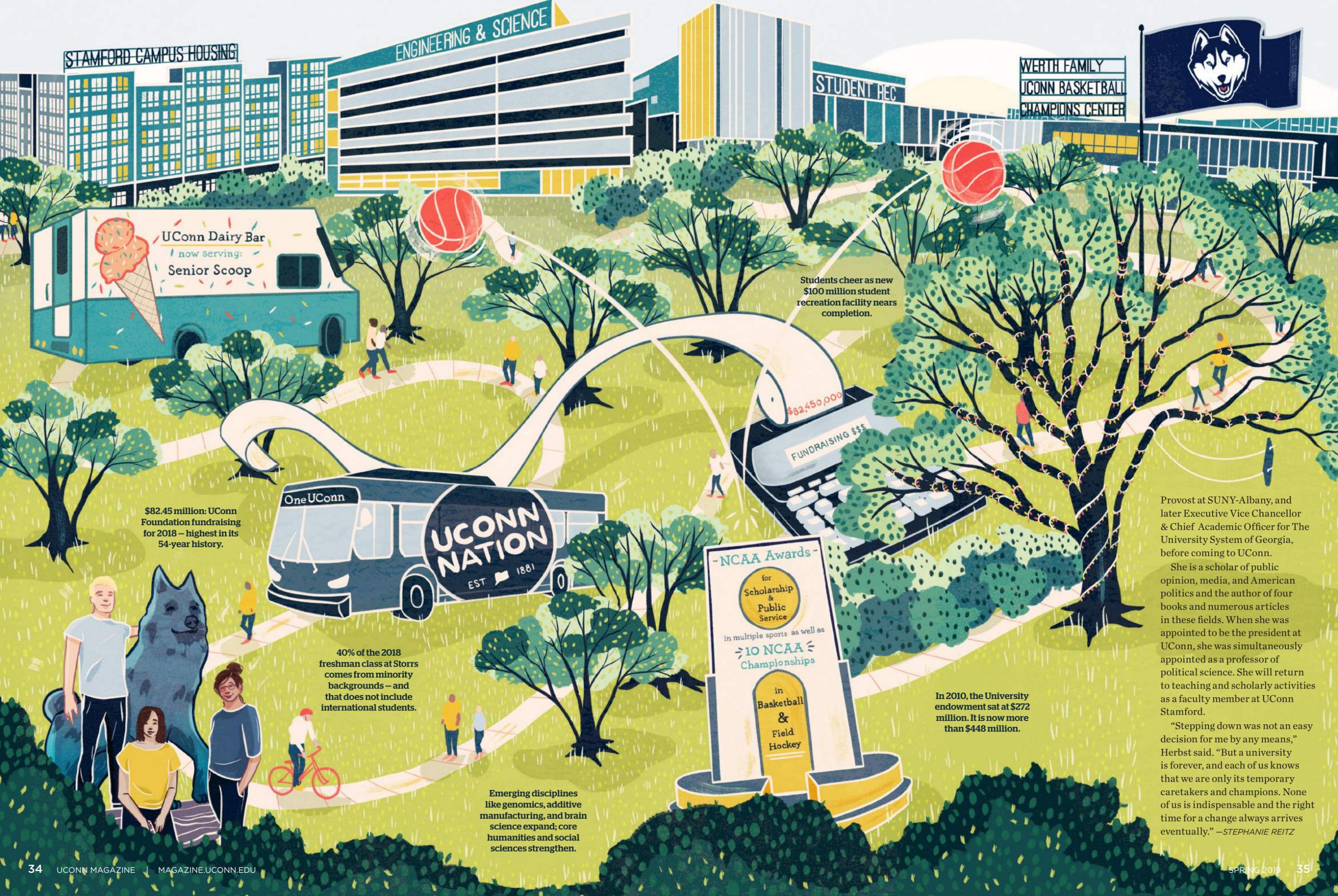
Freshman applications to attend UConn in 2010: 23,278

Freshman applications to attend UConn in 2018: 38,000+

Number of undergraduates enrolled in 2010: 21,881

Number of undergraduates enrolled in 2018: 23,978





STAMFORD CAMPUS HOUSING

ENGINEERING & SCIENCE

STUDENT REC

WERTH FAMILY
UConn BASKETBALL
CHAMPIONS CENTER



UConn Dairy Bar
now serving:
Senior Scoop

Students cheer as new \$100 million student recreation facility nears completion.

\$82.45 million: UConn Foundation fundraising for 2018 – highest in its 54-year history.

One UConn
UConn NATION
EST. 1881

\$82,450,000
FUNDRAISING \$\$\$

NCAA Awards
for Scholarship & Public Service
in multiple sports as well as
10 NCAA Championships
in Basketball & Field Hockey

40% of the 2018 freshman class at Storrs comes from minority backgrounds – and that does not include international students.

In 2010, the University endowment sat at \$272 million. It is now more than \$448 million.

Emerging disciplines like genomics, additive manufacturing, and brain science expand; core humanities and social sciences strengthen.

Provost at SUNY-Albany, and later Executive Vice Chancellor & Chief Academic Officer for The University System of Georgia, before coming to UConn.

She is a scholar of public opinion, media, and American politics and the author of four books and numerous articles in these fields. When she was appointed to be the president at UConn, she was simultaneously appointed as a professor of political science. She will return to teaching and scholarly activities as a faculty member at UConn Stamford.

“Stepping down was not an easy decision for me by any means,” Herbst said. “But a university is forever, and each of us knows that we are only its temporary caretakers and champions. None of us is indispensable and the right time for a change always arrives eventually.” —STEPHANIE REITZ

TRACY RITTENHOUSE

KNOWS WHERE

THE WILD THINGS

ARE



Rittenhouse, showing students how to measure the tail of a mouse, teaches wildlife techniques and researches wild populations. She knows, for instance, just how many bears and bobcats could be lurking in your Connecticut backyard.



By Lisa Stiepock | Photos by Peter Morenus



“They’re just so quiet. People don’t see them even though they’re right there,” says Tracy Rittenhouse of the Connecticut bobcats she is studying. “I think they’re living in places more urban than we ever imagined.”

Her students have shown her pictures of a bobcat they spied in the parking lot of the Young Building on campus. “Bobcats are very good at avoiding people even though they’re active at all times of the day and night.”

Rittenhouse, associate professor of natural resources and the environment, was asked to help analyze data for The Bobcat Project that Connecticut’s Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) began last year.

Despite having studied the state’s populations of everything from salamanders and bats to deer and bear, she finds this survey “super exciting.” Few in-depth studies have been done on bobcats anywhere in the country. So there’s a lot to learn.

Q. What are you hoping the bobcat data you’re collecting will tell us?

A. It’s going to be really interesting to see how urban these cats go, what their movements are like, do their home ranges get bigger or smaller when they move into cities? And we’re doing

some pilot radio isotope work on diet. We know they eat squirrels and rabbits and can eat deer. But do they also eat house cats or possibly turkey?

Q. DEEP tracked 50 cats last year and 30 so far this winter. What have you already learned?

A. They are more common than I thought. That’s my biggest take-home thus far. And I thought that we might be able to quantify when it gets too urban for them, and I think the answer is we don’t hit that here in Connecticut. I think the answer is they can be everywhere.

Q. People always say the deer aren’t in our roads; our roads are in their forests. I guess that’s true for bobcats, too?

A. That’s true in many places, but here in Connecticut we’re living in the exact opposite of that. In the 1800s, before we had laws to regulate it, people completely deforested Connecticut and much of the wildlife was extirpated. Turkey and bear were gone; deer and bobcat nearly gone. Then the landscape was developed. So we have this forest that’s grown up around houses and because this forest has regrown, the wildlife community has regrown with it. Bear and deer are examples of

species that have increased.

I grew up in the suburbs in Minnesota and the neighborhood that I grew up in looks pretty similar to how it did when I was 5 years old, because it’s just the lawn and the trees that my dad planted. What we have here in Connecticut are parcels an acre or two in size, where we let trees grow up in parts of it and don’t mow the whole thing, so it’s really interesting to see what wildlife species benefit from that.

Q. What other Connecticut species have made a comeback?

A. I’m trying to figure that out. I’m really interested in looking at different taxa. I like working with amphibians; they make a nice contrast to mammals because what they need from their habitat is quite different.

Q. If it’s not breaking into my garage, why should I care about this wildlife, where it is, and in what numbers?

A. Wildlife serve as an indicator of habitat quality: If it can support a salamander population, it’s a healthy stream. We’re in this exurban landscape here in Connecticut, this intermix of urban and forest. Having these healthy ecosystems gives us better air quality and better water quality and improves the spaces that we live in. And I think

“THEY ARE MORE COMMON THAN I THOUGHT. THAT’S MY BIGGEST TAKE-HOME THUS FAR.”

people like to look out their window and see trees and see flowing water. Your day is a little better when you get a bit of that, right?

Q. Growing up, did you bring forest creatures and strays home?

A. I was not that child. I think most people in wildlife are, but I was more of a suburbanite. I grew up in a two-kid-one-dog-two-car-garage house outside Minneapolis. Most of my day-to-day experiences were going to the playground across the street. I remember mallard ducks on the pond.

Q. So what *did* foster this career interest?

A. I watched the Discovery Channel — a lot. And my family took road trips every year to national parks. I got to see the big charismatic places and to appreciate how fortunate we are to live here because of the awe-inspiring places that our national parks really are.

Q. What stands out from those trips?

A. I loved going to Glacier National Park and seeing the glaciers and the grizzly bears. My mom read “Night of the Grizzlies” out loud to us. Very scary book. [It recounts the true story of two separate fatal grizzly attacks at Glacier on one night in 1967.] We were camping

in a tent trailer and my dad did not sleep at *all*.

I remember going to Yellowstone and being so excited and then being disappointed when I realized that there were human footprints everywhere. Before they had rules about staying on the path, people had had what I perceived as a negative influence on this beautiful place. And so I learned about how important it is to have managers, to have people who are making decisions about how to use the land.

Q. You attended undergrad at University of Wisconsin-Madison. How are your students here different than you and your peers were then?

A. We still thought we could protect *all* the species. These students are asking, How do we have forest that still has *any* wildlife populations in it? They think they are inheriting a planet that’s going to see a lot of change, and they’re going to be responsible for living in that change and managing that change, and they’re kind of bracing themselves for difficult decisions.

Q. That is so depressing.

A. [Laughs.] So one of the good things about studying population dynamics is seeing how resilient many wildlife populations are. Deer drop to very low



Rittenhouse (above, left) works with DEEP biologists who are trapping bobcats, like this 35-pound male caught in the northeast corner in mid-November. Blood and hair samples are taken from the tranquilized cats who are fit with magnetic GPS collars that fall off after 300 days. Far left: Students in Rittenhouse’s wildlife techniques class learn to trap, measure, sample, and release mice and voles in the fields and forest near Horsebarn Hill.

numbers and become abundant again. And turkey. Raptors. So we know it’s possible for populations to rebound. There’s a natural capacity to survive. And that’s a good take-home from population dynamics. You don’t have to save every individual to save the population.

Q. Your children are 7 and 10. How are you passing an appreciation for nature on to them?

A. We try to go on a hike every weekend, even if it’s 20 minutes. We’ve gone to the Grand Canyon, Zion, and Bryce. No pop-up trailers, though. We cheat and hotel it. ☺

Find out more about Rittenhouse, including two alternate career paths that will surprise you, as well as more bobcat photos, at s.uconn.edu/bobcats.



Naika Denerville, Communications
NBC SPORTS

Stamford, Connecticut, calls itself The City That Works. And as the home of one of the largest concentrations of corporations in the U.S., including four Fortune 500 companies and nine Fortune 1000, you better believe it.

In this kind of neighborhood, it's no surprise that the students at UConn Stamford tend to have a strong pre-professional impulse, often landing jobs in their chosen fields years before they graduate. There are plenty of opportunities in finance, IT, design, and entertainment right in this city and the surrounding towns. And if the right position isn't available locally, it surely is in New York City, just a 50-minute ride on the express train from Stamford station, itself just a few blocks from campus.

But don't think UConn Stamford students are only in it for the jobs. Most of them attend UConn Stamford because they want a liberal arts education and they want it in the fast-paced milieu of lower Fairfield County. Students can get a four-year degree here in political science, history, digital media and design, business, or computer science. They can live here, too: more than 400 students currently enjoy apartment-style living in three buildings. This expansion of Husky habitat has led to a boom in the number

Location, Location, Location

Small, urban, and ambitious, UConn Stamford keeps its head in the liberal arts but both feet in the job market. Meet six Stamford students doing the same.

By Kim Krieger
Photos by Peter Morenus

of Huskies: applications for study in Stamford have tripled since 2016. With its unusual combination of preprofessional opportunities and the liberal arts, UConn Stamford has become a destination school for a certain kind of student. We followed six such students, four seniors, a junior, and a graduate student, on a typical Tuesday in November.

7 AM

Senior Naika Denerville sips a grande vanilla chai tea latte, no water, no foam, in the Darien, Connecticut, Starbucks. "My office," she calls it.

Denerville, a communications and gender studies student by day and an NBC Sports production assistant by night, lives at home to save money. She doesn't have a car for the same reason. So her dad drops her off at the coffee shop at 6:30 a.m. on his way to work. It's a comfortable place to study and it's just around the corner from the train station, which gets her everywhere — to school, to her internship at the Greenwich Film Festival, and to her jobs as a sales specialist at the Greenwich Apple store and, of course, at NBC Sports. The ride is fast and free with a student ID and U-Pass. And before the train, she can study. Which is what she's doing right now.

While Denerville hits the books at Starbucks, Eloisa Melendez wrangles two kids to school as part of her daily babysitting gig. Meanwhile, in downtown Stamford, Anshul Manglani is reading the *Wall Street Journal* over breakfast.

• UConn Stamford applications tripled from 2016 to 2018

• Undergrads who hail from outside the U.S.: 6.5%

• Number of possible internship placements: 750-plus



THE GREENWICH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Isabella Ferrante, History

Charlie Ira wakes up, already thinking about computer science. And Isabella Ferrante gets in her car.

9:30 AM

By 9:30 in the morning, while Denerville's in Psychology, her first class of the day, senior history major Ferrante has arrived at the UConn Stamford Writing Center.

Tutoring other students in writing is Ferrante's on-campus job. She also works off campus at the Greenwich Historical Society. The jobs are apt; together, writing and history make stories, her favorite things. This particular morning in late November, Ferrante's thinking about the stories told by the poems of Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, who met as young men when they were injured during World War I and both ended up in Scotland's Craiglockhart War Hospital. It's her thesis topic.

"It's the bane of my existence!" she says, laughing, and



Anshul Manglani, Risk Management
STUDENT UNION

then explains that there are very few sources about the hospital, so she's probably going to have to go to the U.K. to do some original research. Both her honors thesis advisor and her general advisor are urging her to go, even though she's never left the northeastern U.S. before.

11 AM

Anshul Manglani, a risk management graduate student, knows the feeling. He had spent his life in Indore, India, and was working in the risk department of a large financial company when he decided he needed a change.

"Everybody should have some global experience to see how the world works," says Manglani. He wanted a business master's degree that would be practical and give him some programming skills. The business schools in India are very into theory, he says. UConn Stamford, on the other hand, is all about practice. And its location, close to the world

- Four-year bachelor's degree programs: 14

- Time to New York City by train: 50 minutes

- # of students living in the new residences: 425

- Percentage of first-generation undergrads: 45



financial hub of New York City, would be ideal. Indeed, now Manglani takes classes taught by executives from firms like Goldman Sachs, co-leads the UConn Student Managed Fund, and has learned the programming language R well enough to assistant teach a graduate class in it.

Which is what he does every Tuesday, starting at 11 a.m. And he always stays an extra half hour afterward, for what he calls “the student doubt session.”

“I resolve their doubts,” he says, and grins.

Right about the time Manglani starts teaching, Eloisa Melendez, a senior in political science and women’s studies, starts her first class of the day. She takes four classes in a row on Tuesdays, from 11 a.m to 4:45 p.m. It’s stressful, she admits, but stacking all her classes midday means she can babysit in the mornings and attend to city business every evening. That is, City of Norwalk business. The unassuming poli sci major turns into Councilwoman Melendez at night. She ran for council at age 19 and never looked back. She’s



president and founder of the campus Young Democrats, vice president and co-founder of UConn Latinx Organization. Statewide she’s a member of the Connecticut Hispanic Democratic Caucus. She chairs the Ordinance Committee of the Common Council, and listening to her talk about next moves after the November election, you can tell she’s already versed in the fine arts of rounding up votes and compromise.

“Sometimes I feel like Nancy Pelosi,” she says. But most of the time she feels like every other UConn Stamford student, working hard on her liberal arts education and her career.

12:30PM

Ferrante goes to her first class of that day. Denerville and Melendez go to their second. Manglani’s still resolving undergraduate doubts.

Nina Drozdenko is just getting to her first class, too, Critical Perspectives on Digital Media, in which she and her classmates critique television shows and movies.



Drozdenko, a senior digital media and design (DMD) student, started college at UConn Torrington and transferred to Stamford when Torrington closed. It had always been her plan to go to Stamford — she’d made one of her first films in high school as part of a program founded by UConn Stamford DMD director Matt Worwood, and she wanted to be close to New York City and all the internships and job opportunities in Fairfield County. She also wanted to stay in a smaller campus environment — although Stamford feels a lot bigger now than when she started a few years ago, she says.

A lot of her time on campus is spent working in the student ad agency Beachball in the student lab they call The Splash Pad. DMD professors recruit the projects from local businesses, and the students get to build their portfolios with those real-life projects. All the experience helped Nina get her next job at Logicbroker in Shelton, Connecticut, which she says she scored by geeking out about design tools with a marketing director she met at a UConn job fair.

2PM

Junior Charlie Ira gets out of his last class of the day. He started computer science at UConn Stamford the first year it was available and has taken every comp sci class they offer.

“CS is awesome here. I don’t know why anyone would want to study anywhere else,” he says. There are a lot of jobs nearby, he says, and a great startup culture. Just today Amazon announced a new headquarters in New York City,

Residence halls like this one create a fuller college experience. “You can move away from home,” says UConn Stamford director Terrence Cheng. “There’s a demand for a UConn experience that’s not in Storrs.”

amplifying an already juiced tech community in the area.

Now he’s going to grab some lunch with some other CS majors, then he has a meeting on making internet-of-things devices that use private blockchain technology for security. Ira is a proponent of blockchain technology. With a few other students that he met in an independent study class, he formed a startup that uses blockchain in the health care space. Ira never misses an opportunity to improve his skills. “There are no days off,” he says. A couple years ago he resolved to always take his schoolwork seriously. “And my opportunities have expanded in step.”

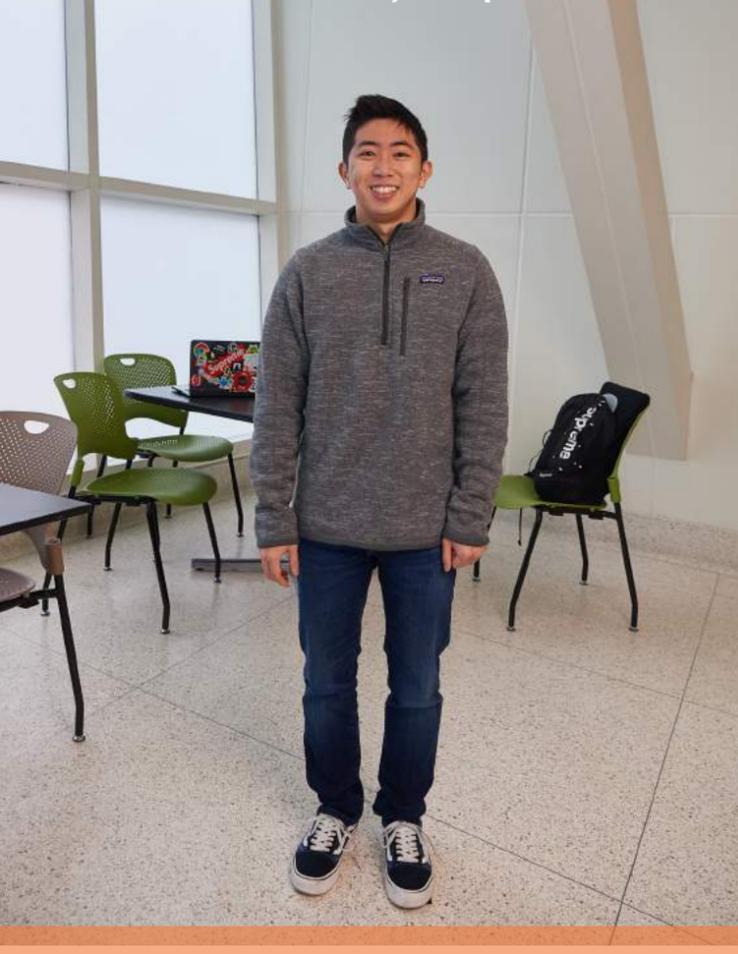
3:30PM

Both Denerville and Drozdenko attend the class Women, Gender and Violence on Tuesday afternoons. Denerville says it drove home to her that gender is in everything. She wants to take that sensibility with her into the TV industry and create entertainment that recognizes women as people with diverse motivations, that doesn’t mindlessly play to stereotypes.

Drozdenko agrees.

“There’s a conflict between my gender studies and my marketing. Long term, I want to be a truly ethical marketer.”

STUDENT UNION
Charles Ira, Computer Science



During the afternoons he studies or attends meetings of the Risk Management Student Committee.

Though it might sound like a stodgy group of business students discussing credit-and-loss statistics, the Risk Management Student Committee functions a lot like a support system for the graduate students, especially those who come to the U.S. from other countries. They showed Manglani the basics of living in Stamford, such as where to buy food, and they also organize graduation parties and events, such as the recent Diwali dance party celebrating the Hindu festival of lights. Manglani practiced a special Michael Jackson-style moonwalk for that one.

“I KNEW I WAS A HUSKY, BUT I WASN'T A STORRS HUSKY.”

“The college has been generous. They gave us a budget, they let us plan. UConn never makes you feel like you are far from home,” he says. Now that he’s a second-year student, he says he takes special pride in using his experience to help others adjust and succeed.

“I dearly love to help people. Many times you don’t get anything in return. But I have received so much help in my life, I cannot tell you. Whenever I have needed help, people have been there.”

7 PM

Manglani’s in the gym. Ferrante and Ira are back at their respective homes, eating dinner and studying. Denerville and Drozdenko are still on campus. Drozdenko likes to stay late, working on her own or with other students in The Splash Pad. Denerville’s also still on campus, using the relative quiet to focus. Both of them are likely to stay until the campus police shut the place down at 10 p.m.

Melendez is back in Norwalk at City Hall. She always has a committee meeting on Tuesday nights, either Public Works; Health, Welfare, and Public Safety; Ordinance; or Planning. She particularly likes the Planning committee — she’s only 24, so when she makes policy, she’s thinking about the next 50 to 60 years. Because she plans on sticking around. When she chose to study at UConn Stamford, she wanted a place where she could complete her entire political science degree while continuing to live and serve in Norwalk.

“I knew I was a Husky, but I wasn’t a Storrs Husky,” says Melendez. Ferrante, Drozdenko, Manglani, Ira, and Denerville would agree — for them, Stamford is the right place to be. ☺

• UConn Stamford offers 3 Masters Degree programs

• Undergrads can choose from 110 majors

Ferrante usually hits the gym around 3:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. In previous semesters she would spend afternoons working on the winter showcase for The Outlets, the improv group she founded her first year at UConn along with another student. Over the past four

years the group has evolved from four people doing short improv skits to nearly 30 students dancing, singing, cracking jokes, and performing skits. Ferrante directed the annual showcase the past three years, but now she’s looking to pass the baton.

Manglani is still in the undergraduate R class, taking notes as the professor teaches. After class he’ll TA another study and “doubt session” until 7 p.m., when he’ll finally have some free time. But Tuesdays aren’t typical — most of his classes start at 6 or 7 p.m., to accommodate the many business graduate students who work during the day.



For information on alumni events, visit uconnalumni.com/events.

Who’s Who – Bleed Blue Edition

We’ve all been there. You are sitting around with a group of friends and all they can do is brag about *their* school. This famous person went there, this great athlete went there, this TV star went there. And on and on . . . and on.

UConn alumni and friends now have a great resource as they issue a retort to those friends, “Oh yeah! Well, guess who went to *my* school!”

There’s a new website at UConn Foundation that brags a little — well maybe more than a little — about some of the outstanding and famous people that have passed through our portals.

Take this quiz for a taste of who you will meet on the site.

1. You are in New York City and a UConn grad is delivering the news on powerhouse station WNBC. Then you watch another alum moderate ESPN’s “First Take,” filmed at South Street Seaport. Who have you seen?
2. Like to curl up with a good read? What UConn graduate wrote such best-sellers as “She’s Come Undone” and “I Know This Much Is True,” and which one recently won the Rea Award for the Short Story?
3. Which two Husky basketball greats are inductees in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame?
4. Fascinated by outer space? What two UConn alumni have been NASA astronauts?

Find the answers to these questions, IDs for the pictures above, and a link where you can submit your own news about achievements, promotions, life events, and anything else you want to share with Husky Nation, at s.uconn.edu/notable (or see p. 52). —MICHAEL ENRIGHT '88 (CLAS)

CLASS NOTES



➔ **Lois Greene Stone '55 (ED)** celebrated 62 years of marriage to Dr. Gerald E. Stone and has 15 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. A writer and poet, her poetry and personal essays are included in book anthologies, while collections of her personal items, photos, and memorabilia are in major museums, including the Smithsonian.



➔ **Jim Rodechko '62 MA, '67 Ph.D.** has published two mysteries, "The Old Boys' Club" in 2014 and "The Ladies in Their Lives" in 2017. He retired in 2002 from Wilkes University, where he served as professor of history, dean of arts and sciences, and, finally, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty. He and his wife, Virginia, have been married for 53 years, have two daughters and five grandchildren, and live in Drums, Penn. ➔ **Arno B. Zimmer '68 (CLAS)** of Bridgeport, Conn., recently published his first paperback novel, "Death Comes to the Torpedo Factory," a mystery involving a secret file, a former German intelligence agent and an old gumshoe.



➔ Three-time *New York Times* best-selling author **Howard Weinstein '75 (CLAS)** has won a 2018 Western Fictioneers Peacemaker Award for Best First Western Novel for his new historical novel "Galloway's Gamble."

➔ **Bruce Lubin '75 (CLAS), '77 MBA** has been named chairman of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, which represents 1,000 organizations that employ 400,000 people and create more than \$24 billion in annual revenue in the Chicago region. He works at CIBC, where he is executive managing director and president of Illinois Commercial and Specialty Banking. ➔ **Tom Morganti '76 (CAHNR)** has published his second novel, "D.O. Sykes," about dealing with bipolar disorder. He is a veterinarian living and working in Avon, Conn. ➔ **Colleen Murphy Davis '79 (CLAS)** recently retired as an assistant United States attorney after serving the U.S. Department of Justice for nearly 24 years. Davis began her career in 1987 as

a criminal prosecutor with the Travis County Attorney's Office in Austin, Texas, and later accepted a position as an assistant district attorney with the Dallas County District Attorney's Office in Dallas, Texas. In 1995, she became assistant United States attorney in Fort Worth, Texas. In 2000, she transferred to Tampa, Fla., where she worked until she retired in June 2018. During her career, Colleen prosecuted violent crimes, child exploitation offenses, drug offenses, and white-collar crimes. ➔ **Lisa C. Taylor '79 (CLAS), '81 MA** had her sixth book, "Impossibly Small Spaces," a collection of short stories, published in October 2018. Lisa teaches private writing workshops in the U.S. and Ireland. She also holds an MFA in creative writing from

the University of Southern Maine. She is married to **Russ Taylor '80 (CLAS)** and they collaborate on many creative projects. His photography has been used on four of her book covers.



➔ **Susie Bisulca Beam '80 (CLAS)**, who majored in fashion design and retail management, writes that she has grown exponentially since college. She married Timothy Beam, wrote and produced a play, and became an Ameriprise financial adviser assistant. She has also worked as an office manager and a swim instructor, became a Goodwill Ambassador, wrote a book titled "He's Not My

Husband," and now works as an event specialist. She has also stayed true to her passion for sewing and made countless costumes for her two children and the local high school's theater troupe. ➔ **Paul A. Larson '82 MD** began a one-year term as president of the board of trustees of the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists in August 2018. In April 2018, he received the Wisconsin Radiological Society Flaherty Award for lifetime achievement. ➔ **Theresa Mayer-Benfer '83 (BUS)** reports that she and her three sons recently opened a craft brewery called Raritan Bay Brewing in Keansburg, N.J. "We're bringing fresh new craft brews to the Bayshore. We have 13 different beers on tap now and our selection keeps growing. It's been quite an experience. We renovated a historic building, furnished it with a seven-barrel brewing system, and created an awesome gathering space for tastings and parties," she says. ➔ **Jay Gillotti '86 (BUS)** reports that, after decades of research and collecting, he has published a book on motor sport history. "Gulf 917" is a chassis-by-chassis history of the legendary Porsche 917s raced by the John Wyer/Gulf racing team in 1970 and 1971. The book includes many rare or never-before-seen photos and documents. ➔ **Timothy Barnett '86 (CLAS)** was recently promoted to full professor of English at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. His most recent publication is "Intersectional Pedagogies of Queer Literature" in approaches to teaching LGBT literature. He also has helped form a BA program at Illinois' Stateville Prison through his work with Northeastern Illinois University and Chicago's Prison+Neighborhood Arts Project. ➔ **Matt Greene '89 (BUS)** was recently honored as one of 16 of the top New York City-based

financial advisors in the country by Northwestern Mutual.



➔ **Anne Halloran Tortora '90 (SFA)** was named director of music and liturgy for Fairfield University's Campus Ministry and is completing a doctorate at Creighton University. ➔ **Tony Susi '90 MM** recently released his sixth album of original music entitled "Cathartic Keys," a collection of nine songs composed by the singer/songwriter that he says are intended to help people cope with whatever life throws at them in a positive way through music. ➔ **William Guerrero '93 (CLAS)** became vice president of finance and administration at Ithaca College this summer. Previously, he spent most of his career at the State University of New York (SUNY) College at Purchase, serving as executive director of the Purchase College Association and prior to that was vice president for finance and treasurer at Albertus Magnus College in New Haven, Conn. While at UConn, his last name was Polvay. After graduating from college, he decided to change his last name to Guerrero to honor his mother. ➔ **Elvin D. Turner '93 MBA**, president and CEO of Turner Consulting, LLC, in Bloomfield, Conn., made history recently by becoming the first African-American president of the Society of Financial Service Providers. He has more than 30 years of financial service industry experience working with companies such as MassMutual, Bank of America, and Hartford Life. Turner was instrumental in developing an outreach program that brings financial education to underserved communities, and has taken a leadership role in creating

a national "pipeline project" to bring greater numbers of underrepresented minorities into the financial services industry. ➔ **Kerryann Tomlinson '94 MSW** became executive director for Playworks, overseeing the Arizona region, in February. Her role includes leading the region's strategic goals, managing a team of 20 staff members, staffing the region's advisory board, and

overseeing program quality and delivery of service, which impacts more than 50,000 students across Arizona. ➔ **Mara Reisman '99 MA '06 Ph.D.** recently published her book, "Fay Weldon, Feminism, and British Culture: Challenging Cultural and Literary Conventions." She is an associate professor in the English department at Northern Arizona University.



Bri Diaz

KUDOS

Melissa McCaw Is New State Budget Chief

Melissa McCaw '14 MPA, who received UConn's 2017 Department of Public Policy Distinguished Alumni Award, is one of the many alums that Governor Ned Lamont is tapping for top jobs in his administration. McCaw becomes Connecticut's first African-American budget director at the Office of Policy and Management. For the past three years McCaw has served the City of Hartford as chief financial officer and budget director. Watch this space for news on more alums headed to the statehouse.



Rhona Dash Fiore '72 (CLAS) writes that she and 11 other women who were the first freshmen to live in "The Jungle" celebrated their 50th reunion this September by setting sail on a five-day Caribbean cruise together.

The dorms, officially known as North Campus, had housed only men until 1968, the year the women moved in as freshmen. "There were no coed dorms on campus. Women had curfews with no keys to the dorm doors. The doors were locked at curfew, and if you missed the deadline, it involved a lot of banging on the front door and begging forgiveness from a very stern House Mother," Fiore says.

Fiore says she and the other women wore freshman beanies together, pulled their first all-nighters together, attended their first all-night parties together, and cried on one another's shoulders. Their friendship and support enabled them to grow, learn, and progress through their time on campus and as graduates.

There have been many annual reunions since then where they eagerly share memories of younger days and family photos of milestones, vacations, retirements, and grandchildren. "UConn is the glue that binds our friendship," Fiore says. "This place, our place, our University of Connecticut, is part of what shaped us."

Classmates from "The Jungle" on their 50th reunion Caribbean cruise. From left, bottom row: **Tricia Ahern Goodman '72 (CLAS), '78 MSW; Kathy Keegan Starcher '73 (CLAS); Ginny Dahlgard '72 (CLAS); Sue Laubner Adiletta '72 (CAHNR); Rhona Dash Fiore '72 (CLAS); Marie Benoit Anderson '72 (CAHNR); Cathy Hearne Knight '72 (CLAS); Mary Stramski '72 (CLAS); and Michele Corsino Somers '72 (CLAS).** From left, top row: **Diane Jaskilka '72 (CLAS); Bonnie Boyer Scalzo '73 (CLAS); and Barbara Uchneat Pico '72 (CLAS), '75 MA.**

ALUMNI PROFILE



Photos Courtesy of Mount Auburn Cemetery

THE REAPERS AND THE FLOWERS

Mount Auburn Cemetery is not only the final resting place of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, it is a beautiful public park overseen by a UConn horticulture alum

When you ask Dave Barnett '78 (CAHNR) to show you his favorite spot at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, one of the country's premier historic graveyards, he won't drive you to see one of the many notables buried here, such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Instead the cemetery director steers his van deep into the vast landscape and then pulls over to point out a shallow pond. Despite the rain he announces, "Let's get out and have a look!"

The vernal pool, which is fed by rain, sits at the bottom of a natural amphitheater and is rimmed by evergreens and headstones. The list of reasons that draw Barnett here is long but at the top of it is an amphibian, the spotted salamander, a good-size creature with electric yellow spots that lays baseball-size egg masses in the pool each spring. It is an endangered species, which is why Barnett and his crew planted many native New England shrubs, such as winterberry and summersweet, around the pond's edge so the egg masses can attach to their branches. And that is why, here, among the 19th-century graves, the salamanders thrive.

The salamanders explain, in part, why Barnett has worked at Mount Auburn for 25 years, the last 10 as director. He still can seem surprised by his job and catches himself as he describes Mount Auburn's new energy-efficient crematory.

"What's a UConn horticulture major doing talking about cremation?" he asks.

But Mount Auburn is no ordinary cemetery. It is as much a park, with 5,000 trees, all of which Barnett can identify

without the help of a marker or, for that matter, leaves.

Opened in 1831, it was the first of its kind in the country, a nonsectarian cemetery designed for the dead and the living. Unlike church graveyards with their hard rows of tombstones cutting across grassy lawns, Mount Auburn was lushly planted to comfort grievers but also to draw walkers to the many paths that meander over the rumpled landscape of hills and dells. In an era with few public parks, Mount Auburn became one of the top tourist destinations in the country, along with Niagara Falls. Its popularity made it a model for other cemeteries and sparked the public parks movement in the U.S. that led to the creation of New York City's Central Park.

A Pause in the Day's Occupations

Some 200,000 visitors a year still make their way to the National Historic Landmark to roam over the 175 acres and past its 100,000 graves. Come spring, birders descend en masse to spot the migrating warblers hopping among tree branches. Botany professors bring their classes here. Citizen scientists study the cemetery's biodiversity. Yet, as Barnett points out, Mount Auburn is still very much an active burial ground, with 500 new burials per year — which is why dog-walking, skateboarding, and picnicking are not allowed. It's tricky, he says, to balance those two demands, but that is what has kept him here all this time. "I would have never lasted in a regular cemetery," he says.

Barnett, 62, hails from "the Red Sox side of Connecticut." He grew up in Ledyard, working in his grandparents' nursery and roaming the surrounding woods. Barnett knew early on that he wanted to follow in his grandparents' footsteps, even

though his father tried to talk him into a more lucrative career. While at UConn, where he was president of the horticulture club, he had a career-foreshadowing summer internship at a public garden in Philadelphia. "I liked that the park was driven by things other than making money," he says. "It was about uniting people with nature."

After graduating he married his high school sweetheart, headed to Chicago to work at an arboretum, and then earned a Ph.D. in ecology at the University of California at Davis. While still finishing his dissertation, he went to work at Long Island's Planting Fields Arboretum. When Mount Auburn's then president asked him to apply to become director of horticulture, Barnett figured he'd take a look even though he didn't want to work in a cemetery. "He had me come in May, when everything was blooming."

By September he was the director of horticulture, charged with making the cemetery more of a botanical garden. He restored woodlands, removed invasive Norway maple trees, and planted bulrushes and other aquatic plants to draw blue herons and turtles. He turned a steep

"What's a UConn horticulture major doing talking about cremation?"

grassy slope into a wildflower meadow. Barnett admits that at the start he was so focused on the plants, especially the trees, that he saw the memorials as being in the way. "They made pruning so much more difficult."

Forever and a Day

After the vernal pool, he drives to one of his favorite trees, a graceful *Japanese stewartia*, which has a striking bark of mottled grays and bronzes. Barnett points out a small memorial on the trunk, which is one way people can be remembered here. Years ago in this same spot he was approached by a woman who told him it was her mother memorialized on the tree. "She said she came here to think about her," he says. "It was one of those moments that hit me with the value of this place for people who have lost someone."

In 1993 Barnett lost a younger brother to cancer. In his memory, he's run the Boston Marathon every year since. He drives in from his home in Boxborough to Cambridge by 6:30 each morning so he can run along the nearby Charles River. When his brother died, he wasn't comfortable talking about death, but now after so many years at Mount Auburn, it is second nature, he says. When his father was diagnosed with cancer, the two of them walked the grounds of a cemetery in Mystic, Connecticut, looking for a spot for his burial. "That's a gift," Barnett says. "Who gets to do that with their family? For most people it's too difficult to bring up."

Barnett always wanted to have his ashes buried near his father but now thinks he'd like some to go here, in this beautiful landscape that has been his life's work. The man who never wanted a job in a cemetery, who never planned to stay at Mount Auburn for 25 years, thinks he might stay for good. —AMY SUTHERLAND



➔ Adam Raimondi '04 (CLAS) and Lauren (Gemske) Raimondi '08 MA welcomed a son, Benjamin Christopher, in February. ➔ Rebecca Acorn '04 (BUS), of Bedford, N.H., was promoted to manager at Baker Newman Noyes, an accounting and consulting firm. In her spare time, she is a volunteer for the Bedford Historical Society and the Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire. ➔ Tom Cragin '06 (CLAS) and his wife, Stacy (Gomez) Cragin '02 (CLAS), celebrated their first wedding anniversary recently after getting married at the Blithewold Mansion in Bristol, R.I., in September 2017. They live in Manhattan but regularly get back to their home states of Rhode Island and Connecticut. Tom recently joined NBCUniversal and works at 30 Rockefeller Center in a digital/media advertising sales role. ➔ Former "Daily Campus" news editor Diego Cupolo '06 (CLAS) was awarded honorable mention in The World Justice Project's 2018 Anthony Lewis Prize for Exceptional Rule of Law Journalism for his reporting on Turkish politics since a failed coup attempt in 2016. Today, he is a freelance multimedia journalist based in Ankara, Turkey. ➔ Justin Gomez '07 (CLAS), the oldest brother of Stacy (Gomez) Cragin (whose anniversary is described above), and his wife, Leah (Portale) Gomez, also are celebrating their first anniversary after getting married at The Sullivan House on Block Island, R.I. in July 2017. They just bought their first home on the shoreline in Milford, Conn. Another brother, Steve Gomez '08 (CLAS) and his wife, Heather (Mobley) Gomez, celebrated their

marriage at the Woodwinds in Branford, Conn. and currently live in Hamden, Conn. ➔ Matt Pavia '09 (ED) and his father, Tony, have written a book about the experiences and sacrifices of the residents of Stamford, Conn., during the Vietnam War. "An American Town and the Vietnam War," published by McFarland & Company, is set to be released in Fall 2018. Matt teaches American Studies and English at Darien High School in Darien, Conn. Tony is a retired history teacher and high school principal.

➔ Zachary Binkowski '09 (PHR), '11 Pharm.D. was recently named 2018 Employee of the Year at St. Vincent's Medical Center in Bridgeport, Conn. Binkowski is the critical care clinical pharmacy specialist at the medical center and an adjunct associate professor of pharmacy practice at the UConn School of Pharmacy. Through his affiliation with the medical center, he is also an assistant professor at Quinnipiac University's Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine, where his teaching focuses on various aspects of pharmacotherapy. ➔ Stephanie (Hedberg) Kane '09 (NURS) and her husband, Nicholas, welcomed their first child, Colin, in August. They live in Guilford, Conn.



➔ Eric King '10 JD and his wife Amber (Doucette) King '07 (CLAS), '10 JD welcomed their son, Noah Everest King, into the world in May. They married in 2016, live in West Hartford, Conn., and are both attorneys in the greater Hartford area.

➔ Sara Okscin '10 (BUS) married Sean Matthews on Sept. 1, 2018. The couple moved to Marlborough, Mass., where Sara is now a senior accountant at Questex, LLC. Sean graduated in 2009



Christopher Michel

ALUMNI PROFILE

AMY ERRETT '79 (CLAS)

The founder of Madison Reed was named one of the Top 100 Female Business Founders of 2018 by *Inc.* magazine

Amy Errett, a self-described disrupter, made her mark by trying to blow up what seemed like the most stable of industries: hair coloring.

Women either get their hair colored at the salon or they buy a kit in the store and do it themselves at home, right? It turns out there was potential for more.

“Hair color is a category that’s highly overlooked,” says Errett. “It seems like, who cares, right? But the size of the prize is massive, and it’s got these elements to it that are very attractive because, built into the usage pattern, is repetition. So I think what I saw was an opportunity to disrupt a category that no one was paying attention to that was huge.”

Neither in the store nor at the salon, Errett realized, did the makers of hair coloring products establish a direct relationship with women. So in 2013 she launched Madison Reed, a San Francisco Bay Area-based online hair color company named for her now 15-year-old daughter.

“I think that I’m very resilient and I’m very persistent. I’m somebody that, I get an idea and then I’m not going to stop executing it no matter what gets in my way,” she says.

Errett started Madison Reed with a home-coloring product but now has retail stores and a company that has attracted \$121 million in funding.

“I get an idea and then I’m not going to stop executing it no matter what gets in my way.”

“A Little Off”

“You have to be able to see something that no one else saw. I think this is why sometimes founders are categorized as a little off, because they just tend to have this ability to kind of see around the corner before everybody else gets around the corner. It’s a mix of what I call highly data-analytically driven and high intuition and passion.”

She says she saw technology, with an online-based company, as the way to challenge hair-coloring titans such as L’Oreal and Clairol. Using a color-choosing algorithm, a mobile app, and a subscription option eliminated the need for a four-walls retailer.

“I have this deep belief that most women are living their lives on their

phones, and I think the nature of mobile and convenience in her hand is where she’s going to drive her life,” says Errett. “She’s busy. She needs convenience. I also think more and more women care about ingredients. She’s not cheap, but she’s value-driven, and I think more and more women are not afraid of ordering things on the internet. That trend is our friend.”

The online quiz asks new customers 16 questions about their hair, which allows that direct relationship Errett was after. “We’ve disrupted the retail shelf and we’ve disrupted the salon. So, we just went directly down the middle to the consumer.”

“My Life Got Catapulted at UConn”

Errett had a diverse business career before Madison Reed. She was chief executive officer of an investment advisory firm, Spectrum Group, for a decade before selling the company in 2000. She then went to ETrade, as the firm’s chief asset gathering officer. And she was CEO of Olivia, a lesbian-focused travel company. It wasn’t all success. For instance, when she got fired from a position running a company.

“It probably made me a better founder because I had deep empathy for everybody that had to deal with me. I learned a lot about resilience and self-awareness, and I learned a lot about how to pick myself up after publicly falling on my ass.”

She also learned she needed to put herself first more often. Errett says she is now more attuned to what makes her happy and, in turn, more successful. But she also credits much of her success to her days at UConn. “I had a great experience, great friends, just a fantastic sense of community,” she says. “I came from a working-class family, got out of UConn, became a banker, and then had the good fortune to go to Wharton. So, my life really got catapulted at UConn.”

Errett was inducted into the UConn School of Business’ Hall of Fame in 2014, and in 2015 was elected to the Board of Directors of the UConn Foundation, a position she still holds.

“Hashtag I bleed blue,” says Errett.
—TOM KERTSCHER

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Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.

from Syracuse University. The couple met after college through competitive cheerleading, and a former UConn coach and cheerleaders attended the wedding in Holyoke, Mass. ➔ Here's some more Husky love to pass along. **Laura Vargo '11 (CLAS)** married **Jeff Petrower '11 (BUS), '11 MS** on Oct. 20. The bridal party had a large UConn contingent as well, including matron of honor **Elyssa (Shildneck) Kelly '11 (CLAS)**, maid of honor **Allison Gale '11 (CLAS)**, bridesmaid **Abbey (Williams) Farrell '11 (NURS)**, and groomsmen **Ben Hochron '11 (BUS)** and **Dorian Bramarov '12 (CLAS)**. "Both Elyssa and Abbey married UConn gents themselves, and Dorian recently married a UConn gal, so it was about time that Jeff and I tied the knot! UConn couples are the best couples," Laura said. ➔ **Stephanie Page '11 (CLAS)** was married on August 12, 2018, to James

Cormier at Misselwood in Beverly, Mass. **Sarah Greenburg (Bannon) '11** and **Katherine Harlow '11 (BUS)**, who were roommates of Stephanie's at UConn, were part of the bridal party. Stephanie and James have known each other since middle school and dated through high school. After each went to off to college, they went their separate ways before reconnecting in 2015. Stephanie is a senior fund accountant at Alterna Capital Partners in Wilton, Conn. James is head coach of boys basketball and assistant director of admissions at Cushing Academy in Ashburnham, Mass. ➔ **Stefan Walczak '11 (CLAS)**, a young poet, screenwriter, and author living in Middlebury, Conn., is releasing his first novel, "Crimson Sky." At the same time, he will release an original musical soundtrack by the same name he composed to accompany the reading of the horror novel. ➔ **Cassandra Fiorenza '12 (SFA)** recently launched an online art gallery called Collective 131 that features emerging female artists, allowing new and seasoned art collectors to discover and purchase artwork directly through the website at collective131.com. Cassandra says she is also busy planning her wedding at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston for June 2019. ➔ **Suzanne Ondrus '14 Ph.D.** is on a Fulbright Scholarship in West Africa, where she is teaching creative writing, American poetry and drama, literary theory, and American civilization to graduate and undergraduate students at the University of Ouagadougou. She reports that some of her

undergraduate classes have as many as 1,000 students in them. She would love to connect with UConn alumni located in West Africa at suzanne.ondrus@gmail.com. She says there is a great need for academic books at the university, particularly American, Irish, and British literature and books on American history, racism, and African Americans. Anyone interested in donating books can mail them to: Suzanne Ondrus, S/C Abbé André Kaboré, 01 BP 1195 Ouagadougou 01, Burkina Faso, West Africa.

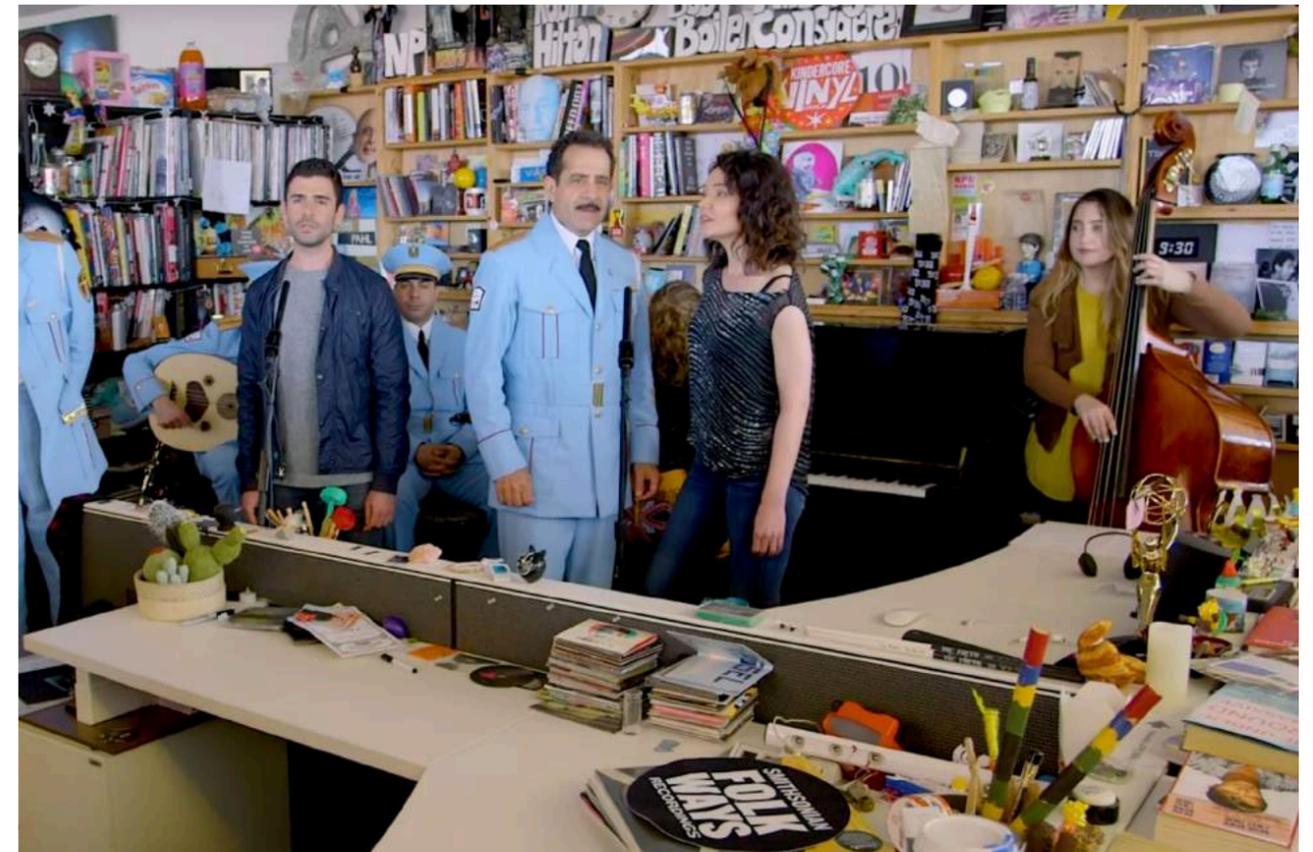


➔ **Simon Perlsweig '16 (CLAS)** recently published his first book, "Front Porches to Front Lines, One Small Town's Mobilization of Men, Women, Manufacturing and Money during World War One." The book is a historical memoir that tells the story of his maternal great-grandparents, who lived in Springfield, Vt. during the Great War and subsequent influenza epidemic of 1918. ➔ This fall, Dayton native **Darren Brown '17 MFA** performed as Kurt in the world premiere production of "Edge of Life," written by AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center physician

Joel Cornfield. Performed at the Athenaeum Theatre in Chicago, the production focuses on the right to dignity in health, sickness, and death and the choices we are left with at the end of our lives. ➔ **Bridget Oei '18 (CLAS)** made news when she finished as first runner-up in the 91st Miss America Pageant on Sept. 10. Oei, who graduated from UConn and its Honors Program with a degree in environmental chemistry, competed as Miss Connecticut. She used her platform to inspire young girls to pursue STEM careers and showed off her skill as an Irish step dancer during the talent portion of the pageant. At UConn, she was both a Stamps Scholar and a Holster Scholar. Hear more about her and about her experience by tuning in to the UConn 360 podcast at uconn.edu/uconn360-podcast. ➔ MahoneySabol, a regional certified public accounting firm with locations in Glastonbury, Middletown, and Essex, Conn., recently hired **Genevieve Stimpson '18 (BUS)**, of Simsbury, Conn., as a staff accountant. She had been an intern at the company.

Answers to quiz on page 45: 1. David Ushery '89 (CLAS) and Molly Qerim '06 (CLAS) 2. Wally Lamb '72 (ED), '77 MA and Ann Beattie '70 (CLAS) 3. Ray Allen and Rebecca Lobo '95 (CLAS) 4. Richard Mastracchio '82 (ENG) and Franklin Chang-Diaz '73 (ENG), '90 H. **Pictured clockwise from top:** Jackie Burns '02 (SFA); Kartik Chandran '99 Ph.D; Bobby Moynihan '99 (SFA); Diana Taurasi '05 (CLAS); Chang-Diaz

Eckhardt accompanies "The Band's Visit" cast on an NPR Tiny Desk Concert last year.



JOB ENVY

She Is Not Throwing Away Her Shot

Alexandra Eckhardt '11 (ED, SFA) dreamed of being a professional musician since elementary school, when her dad taught her to pluck "Earth, Wind & Fire" tunes on a four-string, junior-size electric bass. Her life revolved around music in high school and at UConn, where she studied jazz and music education. But once she had her diploma, Eckhardt wasn't sure how to launch her career. Then the bassist learned about an audition for a show she had not heard of at the time, "In the Heights."

Eckhardt spent nine months driving from one out-of-the-way city to another with that production and then hit some major cities on the tour of "The Book of Mormon." Along the way she learned to play salsa music and fretless bass. She also picked up a key mentor, Alex Lacamoire, the music director for "In the Heights" and then "Hamilton." But life on the road — eight shows a week, little vacation — is grueling, even for a 20-something. She headed to New York City to rent her first apartment and try her luck.

Since then, Eckhardt, 30, has lugged her five-string bass back and forth across the city as her list of playing credits grow. She subbed in the bands for a dozen-plus Broadway productions, including "Wicked" and "Hamilton." Now Eckhardt plays the electric and acoustic bass in "The Band's Visit," one of the most Tony-winning musicals in history (including best musical and best actor awards for Katrina Lenk and Tony Shalhoub, pictured above center). Though she has a regular gig, what most musicians dream of, she works as if she doesn't, playing with jazz, pop, and rock bands, too, including a recent appearance with singer Sara Bareilles on Stephen Colbert's "The Late Show."

"Even if a show is doing well, you are trying to think of the next thing," she says. "Being a freelancer in New York City, you have to have a lot of stamina and hustle." —AMY SUTHERLAND

➔ For more of our interview with Eckhardt, go to s.uconn.edu/eckhardt.

IN MEMORIAM

Please visit s.uconn.edu/febobits2019 to find obituaries for alumni and faculty. And please share news of alumni deaths and obituaries with *UConn Magazine* by sending an email to alumni-news@uconnalumni.com or writing to Alumni News & Notes, UConn Foundation, 2384 Alumni Drive Unit 3053, Storrs, CT 06269.

CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO TOM'S TRIVIA!

Go to s.uconn.edu/feb19trivia to see if you know as much as King of UConn Trivia Tom Breen '00 (CLAS).

TOM'S TRIVIA

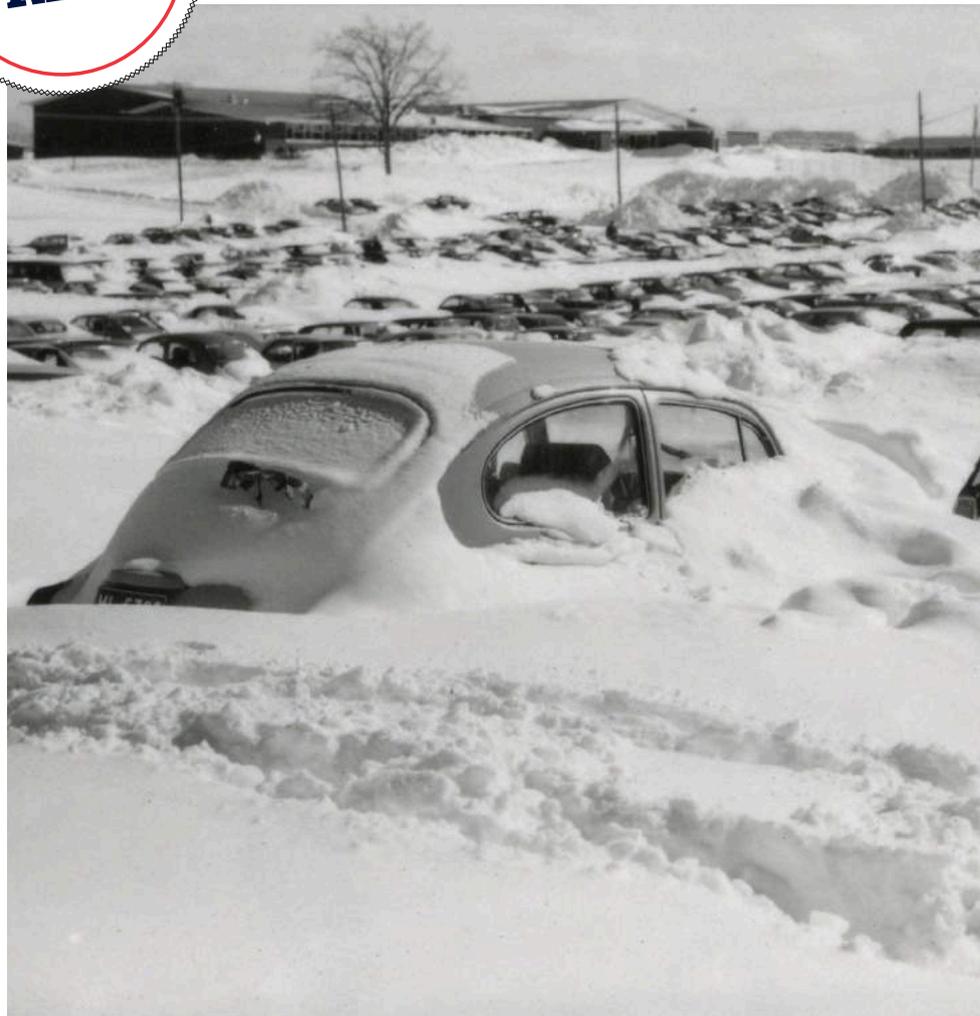
- 1.** In 1970, members of the marching band were told they would soon have a new mascot, abandoning the husky. The change never officially happened. But what would the new UConn mascot have been?

A: The Colonials
B: The Yankees
C: The Patriots
D: The Provisionals
- 2.** What fictional office was contested every fall by students in the 1940s and 1950s who went by monikers like the Barefoot Natural Boy, Lena the Hyena, the Gin Dipper, and Waldo the Whistling Yak?

A. The Mayor of Storrs
B. King of the Jungle
C. Grand Troglodyte of South Campus
D. President of the UConn Football Rooters Club
- 3.** After World War II, a student-run "night club" opened in the old dining hall known as the Beanery (now the Benton Museum) with everything from dances to sketch comedy to beauty pageants. What was the name of this late-night institution?

A: Connecticlub
B: Storrs After Dark
C: Club Husky
D: The Oak Grove
- 4.** The Blizzard of 1978 was the first time classes were canceled due to weather since the hurricane of 1938. Which of these activities was *not* among the ways students passed the time?

A: Jumping naked from dorm windows into snow drifts
B: Shoveling out sidewalks and doorways at the Mansfield Training School
C: Cross-country skiing around campus
D: Trekking to a beer truck at Mansfield Four Corners that was selling six-packs



This February doesn't seem so bad compared to 1978 and its historic blizzard (see page 15 for another extreme-snow photo).