

SHE SPILLS HER UCONN SECRETS // WANT REAL CHANGE? YOU NEED TO PLAY THE LONG GAME

# UConn

MAGAZINE

FALL 2021

## The Scientist Behind Those Sunrise Photos





SNAP!

### Sophs to a Flame

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







## FEATURES

### 22 A Picture is Worth a Thousand Lectures

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

### 30 And Now I Spill the UConn Secrets

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

### 34 The Long Game

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

## SECTIONS

### 1 UCONN NOW

Improving the world with documentary films, food pantries, cross-country treks, smarter bee hives, and more. Plus, celebrating our Big East homecoming season highlights.



### 40 UCONN NATION

Alums taking the Tokyo Olympics by storm, getting injured NFL players back on the field, managing music clubs, keeping Shakespeare in the park, gaming the Food Network, making kindness cool, and more.

## UConn Magazine VOL. 22 NO. 3

UConn Magazine is produced three times a year (Spring, Summer, and Fall) by University Communications, University of Connecticut.

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**Table of Contents** Milton Levin '04 Ph.D; Margaret Kimball; courtesy of ESPN  
 Milton Levin seal photographs pages 2, 24, 25; Research, photographs and videos conducted/collected under NMFS Permit #17670-04 and USFWS Permits #53514-17-01 and #53514-18-01

**From the Editor** Peter Morenus

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## FROM THE EDITOR



## THE BEST

In his role as co-host and co-founder of the UConn 360 podcast, Ken Best (left) spoke with UConn Baseball coach Jim Penders '94 (CLAS), '98 MA (right) for a live Homecoming event done in conjunction with a story Best had just written for this magazine. It's relatively easy for Best to come up with a list of the stories he wrote for this current incarnation of UConn Magazine that are likely to resonate most with readers. "The Quiet Genius of Coach Penders" feature for our Summer 2017 issue is on that list, as is "Keys to the Kingdom," Spring 2018, for which Best toured the Steinway & Sons piano factory in Queens, New York.

It's a bit more challenging for Best to recall which of his bylined stories might be most memorable to readers of this magazine during 2002–2012, when he was the magazine's editor. The Spring 2012 cover story, "Geno Goes for Gold in London," springs to mind. "I think fans of women's basketball would remember when Geno became the National Coach. That was a big deal," he says. And there's Summer 2004's "Tracking the Red and Blue States: Politics in the 21st Century," for which Best spent two days with Stuart Rothenberg '78 Ph.D., one of Washington D.C.'s most influential political analysts. "We have this national figure who's an alum, and he always refers back to his professors and has Husky championship posters in his office. I watched him give a speech — he's like a stand-up comedian but he's the smartest guy in the room," says Best, who interviewed the likes of Judy Woodruff and Andy Cook for the piece. Remembering the stories he wrote while editor of the magazine is more challenging for Best because writing was the side gig while he focused on the big picture. "I was putting the thing together and making sure the trains ran on time," he recalls, "doing that incredibly complex job of trying to put together a magazine that will have something for everyone and is well written and illustrated, with minimal resources, that will make readers think, 'It's neat that my university is doing that.' If you can get that three times a year you've done your job."

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

*Lisa Stiepok*





Jonathan XIII at the 2008 Blue & White scrimmage at The Rent.

REMEMBRANCE

## A GOOD BOY

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

Jonathan XIII made his Husky debut during the March 9, 2008, men's basketball game against Cincinnati. From that beginning, he was a friendly presence during his walks on campus and a source of spirit and pride at athletics events. He continued as the official

mascot until 2014, when his growing sensitivity to loud noise and crowds made such events uncomfortable for him to attend.

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

Huskies named Jonathan have represented UConn dating back to 1935,

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

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



## YOUR TURN

We want to hear from you — good, bad, just not ugly. Please share thoughts, insights, discrepancies, recollections — and how's your Tom's Trivia win-loss percentage coming? Post to our website at [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu), email me at [lisa.stiepock@uconn.edu](mailto:lisa.stiepock@uconn.edu), or send by regular mail to *UConn Magazine Letters*, 34 N. Eagleville Rd., Storrs, CT 06268-3144.

Here's a sampling of feedback from our last issue. Find more at [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu).

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» I purchased a sheet of these stamps but had no idea about the UConn connection. *Leslie Smith McCormick*

» Same here! I purchased them for the amazing artwork, but now I need to go back and get another sheet. *Dorothy Mattesen Drobney*

» Featuring my favorite cow: Devon! Lol. *Devon Ann Conover*

**“My favorite Paige Buecker’s pass this year was when Christyn was trying to get the ball to Olivia but the lane was blocked. Paige called for the ball and on the run, as soon as the ball got to her, she caught it and fired the pass to Olivia for a layup.”** *Bond Riley via Facebook*

### Summer Issue

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

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

*Patty Torza '82 MA*  
Santa Rosa, California, via e mail



### Sage Phillips

» I love Sage's father's advice "why don't you take this as an opportunity to build a program" — wise words. We should all be encouraged to forge our own path if there isn't one laid out for us. Impressive work, Sage!

*Sara Tarca via Instagram*

### SOCIAL MEDIA



The newest addition to Fairfield Way 🐾



### Juliana Mazza

» A beautiful piece. You explained the job perfectly and are the epitome of a fantastic reporter, anchor and human.

*Polikseni Manxhari via Twitter*



CHECKING IN WITH

# “YOU CHANGE THE WAY YOU LIVE WHEN YOU’RE HUNGRY”

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

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

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

**How has food banking changed over the years?** The old way of doing things was, you'd amass edible products, and you'd distribute those edible products, which could have been Snickers bars, or Skittles, or Twinkies. If it's edible, you wanted to distribute it. The new

paradigm in the food banking industry is collecting and distributing nutritious food, paying attention to the nutrition levels of the food we're giving out. Poorer areas have greater issues with obesity — a box of Twinkies costs much less than a bushel of apples. Nutritious food is expensive.

**Has educating people about nutrition become part of your mission now?**

Yes. We started something called the Foodshare Institute for Hunger Research and Solutions. The executive director, Katie Martin, has developed a program called SWAP, which stands for Supporting Wellness at Pantries. It's a spotlight program that ranks food based on nutritional value, so a food gets ranked either red, yellow, or green. Individuals are encouraged to take as many green foods as they want, and to be cautious with red foods.

**What was the most important thing you learned at UConn?**

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

I learned, too, to treat people the

right way. We all have jobs. We all have responsibilities. We all have personal lives. We all have health concerns. Everybody is a human being, first and foremost.

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

**Was UConn part of the emergency effort during the pandemic?**

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

**What is your personal relationship to food?**

I love food. Sometimes I love food too much. I love good food. But I also look at it through the lens of the work that I do, and realize that food should not be something that is a luxury. It should be a right. It should be something that everybody is entitled to. We have a moral and societal obligation to ensure that people in our community don't go hungry.

**You grew up in New Britain, Connecticut. Red Sox or Yankees?**

I am obsessed with the New York Yankees, the New York Jets, and the UConn Huskies. Two of those have brought me a tremendous amount of joy over the years. —PETER NELSON

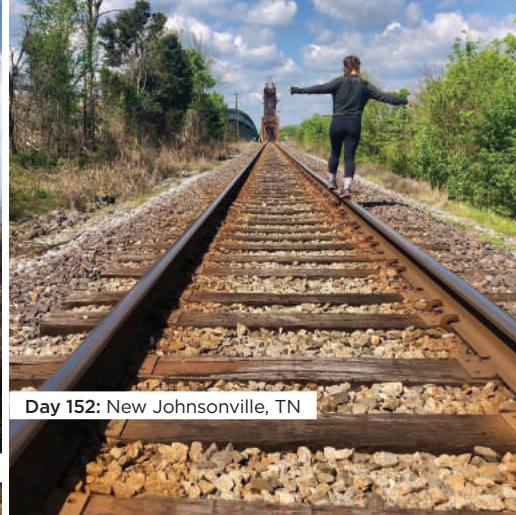


Jakubowski in July at the Connecticut Foodshare Warehouse.

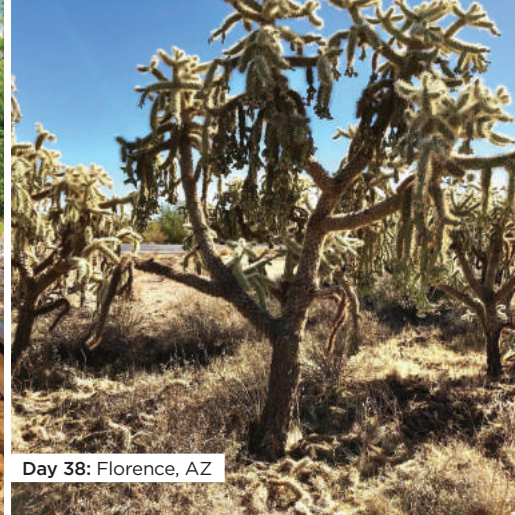




Day 2: Lake Elsinore, CA



Day 152: New Johnsonville, TN



Day 38: Florence, AZ



Day 11: Twentynine Palms, CA

COLLECTIONS

# 3,081 MILES

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

See more from Hannah at [magazine.uconn.edu](https://magazine.uconn.edu).



Day 179: near Damascus, VA



Day 94: Amarillo, TX



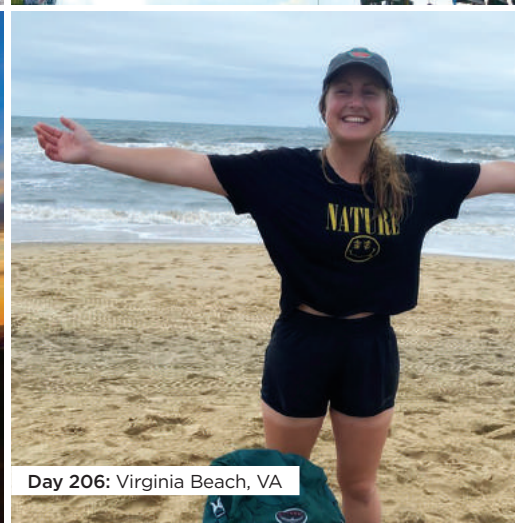
Day 18: Rice, CA



Day 63: Las Cruces, NM



Day 9: Whitewater, CA



Day 206: Virginia Beach, VA

MOONLIGHTING

# OFF BROADWAY

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

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

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

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

### Tell Me What’s a Happenin’

Brown’s podcast “Broadway Buzz” is a collaboration with UConn Waterbury’s neighboring Palace Theater. When the pandemic shut down stage performances across the nation, it also halted



Stuart Brown at the Palace Theater across the street from the UConn Waterbury campus. The 1920s Renaissance Revival-style theater closed in 1984 and, after a stunning restoration, reopened in 2004. Brown has collaborated on many Palace programs.

the Palace’s regular radio program. Host Sheree Marcucci, the theater’s marketing and public relations officer, had to consider how to keep the Palace Theater’s audience engaged until performances could resume.

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

be privy to, which gives it a sense of exclusivity.”

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

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



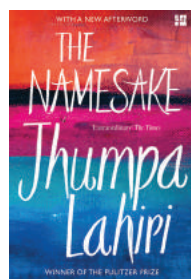


3 BOOKS

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

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

**Just Finished:**



**"The Namesake"**  
by Jhumpa Lahiri

I love Jhumpa Lahiri's work and so enjoyed this story of the Indian immigrant experience in the

U.S. Lahiri paints a vivid picture of the challenges and aspirations faced by immigrants and the accompanying, often burdensome, familial expectations. Her story of identity and family made me think what it must be like for people to live so far from home and continually yearn for their native culture. I highly recommend her short story collection "Interpreter of Maladies" too.

**Reading Now:**

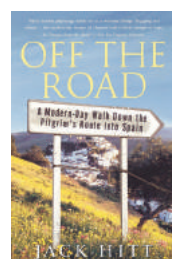


**"Israel: A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth"** by Noa Tishby

I am finding this book incredibly informative, en-

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

**On Deck:**



**"Off the Road: A Modern-Day Walk Down the Pilgrim's Route into Spain"** by Jack Hitt

One of my passions is hiking, and high on my bucket list

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



ON CAMPUS

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

Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Oscar Guerra wants to have a conversation about immigration. Not a policy debate or a campaign rally or, god forbid, a made-for-cable screaming match. But an honest and open talk about what it means to be a working-class Latinx immigrant in America in the 21st century.

An assistant professor of film and video production at UConn Stamford, Guerra makes intimate, human-scale documentaries. His vulnerable subjects — a mother who gives birth while gravely sick with Covid, a family trapped at the U.S. border after fleeing

death threats from a drug cartel in Honduras — invite viewers to reassess what they think they know about the struggles, sacrifices, and dreams of marginalized humans whose voices often can't be heard above the shouting.

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

Guerra's "Frontline" documentary "Love, Life, and the Virus" just won the 2021 national Emmy Award for Best Story in a Newsmagazine. The

film is about a Guatemalan family in Stamford, Connecticut, whose already precarious world is turned upside down when the expectant mom, Zully, is rushed to the hospital with Covid.

With her husband, Marvin, a restaurant worker, and 7-year-old son, Junior, also infected, Zully knows her baby won't be able to go home. Just before being put in a coma for an emergency delivery, she calls the only person she can think of who might help — Junior's elementary school teacher.

"I thought it was a prank," recalls Luciana Lira, the teacher. "A raspy voice saying, 'I'm dying. Please take care of



THIS JUST IN

### NEW SWING TREE GARDEN

**Lena Hiranthom '24 (CLAS)**, left, and **Jackson Kermode '24 (CLAS)** at Swan Lake's new Swing Tree Garden, a tribute to the beloved Mirror Lake Swing Tree which, in failing health at age 70, was felled in 2019. The new garden has two saplings from that tree, two buddy benches that face each other to encourage conversation, and a box for journals so visitors can share reflections and encouragements.



my baby.” Incredibly, she does. Lira nurtures the newborn for five weeks as medical professionals and community organizations rally around the family, nursing Zully to health and an emotional reunion with Marvin, Junior, and healthy infant Neysel.

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

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

**The American Dream**

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

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

Despite his credentials, Guerra at a certain point found himself struggling to adjust to life in his new country. He remembers thinking, “If it’s so hard for



Digital Media & Design professor Oscar Guerra, in personal protective gear while filming “Love, Life, and the Virus,” calls his 2021 Emmy Award-winning documentary “almost a case study of what can happen when we work together as a community.”

me, I’m 28 years old, I have my bachelor’s, my master’s, what must it be like for an 8-year-old who has nothing?”

At that moment, Guerra says, it was like a switch went on. It became his mission, “almost a moral responsibility,” to document the immigrant experience.

**“I thought it was a prank. A raspy voice saying, ‘I’m dying. Please take care of my baby.’”**

“I believe in the American dream. It has maybe shifted from what it once was, but I believe in the American dream. I love this country and I think that we immigrants who helped build the country — the stories

need to be told, because that is the only way we can get to know people.”

Guerra is teaching video editing this fall and has a grant from UConn Research Excellence to work on “Covid-19 Vaccine Rollout in Stamford, CT: A Multimedia Archiving Project,” with Glenn

Mitoma and Kathy Libal of UConn’s Human Rights Institute.

He also is at work on a new as-yet-untitled documentary for “Frontline.” It traces families who were separated at the border during the U.S. government’s zero-tolerance immigration policy. The film will be supported by a companion website that Guerra and UConn students are developing as an academic resource with colleagues from Syracuse University. The site will include background information on zero tolerance as well as complete interviews and other source material not seen in the film’s tightly edited final cut. Assuming the production clears various intricate legal and social hurdles, it will air on PBS this fall.

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

—KEVIN MARKEY

**UConn Talks**

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

**“The report reads like a disaster novel.”**

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

On being back for his 25th season:

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

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

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

**“Absolutely.”**

Dr. Anthony Alessi, director of UConn NeuroSport Program, *NBC Connecticut*, Aug. 17, 2021

On Team USA basketball:

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

Sue Bird ’02 (CLAS), *Time* magazine, July 8, 2021

On UConn’s 11th straight ranking among *U.S. News and World Report’s* top 25 national public universities:

**“Maintaining our strong position against the challenging backdrop of an unprecedented pandemic is particularly gratifying.”**

Interim President Andrew Agwunobi, *Hartford Courant*, Sept. 13, 2021

On religious charter schools:

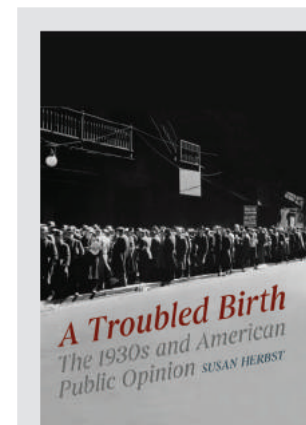
**“It’s not a question of if, but when.”**

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

**BOOKSHELF**

**WHO IS THE PUBLIC IN “PUBLIC OPINION”?**

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







Bruce at her Starbucks job in Wethersfield, Connecticut, in June.

OUR STUDENTS

## SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE

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

Bruce is putting her pastime to the test this semester at Sogang University in Seoul, South Korea, on a Gilman Scholarship for undergraduate studies abroad from the U.S. State Department. She spoke with us in July.

### Are you at all nervous about going to South Korea?

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

### Why do you think that is?

I think Black students might be reluctant because it may be their first time in an ethnically homogeneous country. I, among other Black people, may be afraid to feel isolated and not find others (in this situation, Black students) that have gone through the same situation of studying abroad.

### When did you get interested in foreign languages?

It started as a kid. I'm from East Hartford and in sixth grade I went to a school that focused on music and

languages. Each semester we studied a different language. We had Spanish and Mandarin in sixth grade. In middle school, I spoke French for two years, and in high school I studied Mandarin again and did Japanese on my own. Then at UConn I studied Mandarin and Japanese.

### How did you pick UConn?

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

### Why did you choose linguistics and philosophy as your major?

I wanted to learn about more languages, instead of focusing on only one. I wanted to learn about the core languages and how those expand into

other languages. I have an interest in sociolinguistics, which is how language and society are connected. Why do people from different regions speak the way they do, and how does the way people speak affect socioeconomic class? I also have a minor in literary translation. I have fun translating because it's like peering into the mind of the author.

### How have you balanced your schoolwork with your jobs in the undergraduate admissions office and at Starbucks?

In the admissions office, I got to package up acceptance letters, which gave me insight into how many talented students apply. I worked six to eight hours and did that from home. I worked 15 to 20 hours at Starbucks. My manager was understanding. She wanted me to put my schoolwork first, but there were times it was a little stressful.

### What's your favorite drink?

I don't like coffee. My go-to is iced matcha latte with caramel and vanilla. I use one less scoop of matcha so it's milky.

### What extracurricular activities have you had time for?

I go to language club meetings. I've met a lot of my friends that way. I'm most active in the Korean Student Association. I also volunteered as a Husky Ambassador and let students interested in attending UConn shadow me.

### What's left on your to-do list to get ready for South Korea?

I'm waiting to hear about my visa and I'm packing. South Korea has a similar climate to Connecticut so I'm trying to pack as if I'm going to UConn for the semester — but with more because I'll be in a different country as opposed to being 30 minutes from home. My brother won't be able to drop off anything for me. —AMY SUTHERLAND

ALL STAR



## HUSKIES BACK IN THE BIG EAST 2021 BONANZA

UConn became a charter member of the Big East in 1979. The Huskies left the league in 2013. But the 2020–21 season saw UConn return to its roots. Here are some of the back-home season highlights, which included seven championships. —MIKE ENRIGHT '88 (CLAS)



Women's Basketball capped an undefeated league season with its 19th Big East tournament win.



#13 Christyn Williams



TRAJECTORY

# BEE GOOD

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

"That's when I decided to take it into my own hands and try to think of a tangible solution to that problem," she says.

Jain reached out to the lecturer, the University of Maryland's Samuel Ramsay, and read every research paper on honeybees she could find. She built a prototype of a device that used a gel-like solution relying on a substance called thymol, a naturally occurring

pesticide that, at low concentrations, doesn't hurt the bees, but destroys varroa mites. Her prototype failed — but she was undeterred.

"I still have that gel with me today, because I sometimes just look at that and think, 'Raina, this whole experiment, this whole company, everything started from that first step,'" she says. Her successful device, HiveGuard, is in its final testing stage, having recently deployed 100 thymol-depositing hive entryways to beekeepers in California, Florida, and North Carolina. It works by depositing small amounts of thymol onto the bees as they pass through the entryway of the hive hundreds of times a day, slowly building up a concentration of thymol that kills

the varroa mites but does not hurt the bees. Jain has 4,000 devices already reserved for when her company begins full-scale production.

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

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

Jain is an inaugural member of

Freshman Female Founders. Through UConn's Peter J. Werth Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, the pilot program supports entrepreneurial endeavors of first-year undergraduate women.

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



© Peter Morenus

you just felt different, like you were in it together, almost."

Werth Institute director David Noble calls Jain one in a million. "Most students have entrepreneurial potential, and it is our job to shine a light on that or open up that aspect of their life," Noble says. "We spend a lot

of time teaching students how to capture value from their potential. Raina is different. She has the eye of the tiger, she has the thing you cannot teach, so you just try to support it — find ways on the margin to help, to make her day a little easier." —CLAIRE HALL AND JACLYN SEVERANCE

11 MARCH

Men's Basketball made it to the Big East tournament semifinals.



#2 James Bouknight

20 APRIL

Golf won the Big East championship.



Caleb Manuel and Jimmy Paradise

7 MAY

Women's Lacrosse advanced to the Big East tournament championship.



Kyra Place (left) and Kate Shaffer

30 MAY

Baseball added the Big East tournament crown to its season championship.



#45 Kenneth Haus

10 APRIL

Women's Swimming and Diving finished second at the Big East championship.



#26 Aiyi Young

24 APRIL

Field Hockey never left the Big East — and won their ninth straight league tournament.



#5 Donovan Wright

15 MAY

Outdoor Track and Field Men won the Big East championship; Women took second.

15 JULY

Women's Cross Country won the league's Academic Excellence Award after finishing second at the March championship.



© From left: Porter Binks, Stephen Slade, Julio Aguilar

© From left: Stephen Slade, courtesy of Big East, Stephen Slade



# CROSSROADS

## PLANT-BASED CAFÉ

TASTE OF STORRS

### A NEW STUDENT-INSPIRED CAFÉ AT WILBUR CROSS

You don't have to be a full-on vegan or vegetarian to enjoy the newest Storrs campus eatery, CrossRoads Café.

"The name is a play on words, because it's located in the Wilbur Cross Building," explains Maddie Pickett '23 (ENG), who coined the name.



For an extra (tasty) orange salad recipe, go to [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu).

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

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

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

#### The Pitch

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

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

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

Much of the food comes from UConn's Spring Valley Farm, a year-round project started in 2010 that is run by about a dozen students living several miles off campus. They routine-

ly grow about 11,000 pounds of organic vegetables each year, so were happy to have a new primary outlet for their produce.

#### The Play

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

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

Student employees were hired with a focus on their ability to answer customers' questions and perhaps bring them into a more plant-based lifestyle for personal health and more macro ecological and environmental reasons. For example, the entire process of creating a single meat burger requires about 660 gallons of water; a mushroom burger requires a fraction of that.

Pickett drew her inspiration for the pitch from a vegetarian restaurant she found at UMass Amherst, which turned out to be a student co-op not run by its dining services. UConn decided to go all in with CrossRoads Café, and Pickett is grateful for the opportunity to spread the message more broadly and create some converts.

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



### THE CHAUGIE

#### Makes 4 vegan grinders

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

Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Toss together the onions and red and green peppers with the olive oil, salt, and pepper. Place them on half a sheet pan and place the plant-based sausage on the other half. Cook until the veggies and the edges of the sausage are caramelized, about 20–25 minutes.

Place the grinder rolls on a flat surface. Tuck a half slice of vegan cheese into each roll. Divide plant-based sausage evenly among rolls, followed by the peppers and onions.

Top each grinder with 2 tablespoons of marinara and a sprinkle of nutritional yeast.

Serve and enjoy!





Professors Patricia Rossi and Spencer Nyholm.

COVETED CLASS

## MCB-2612: MICROBE HUNTERS

Life teems unseen in both the soil and the sea, waging an endless, hidden biochemical war. Students who take Patricia Rossi and Spencer Nyholm's "Microbe Hunters" class, however, can witness it firsthand.

### The Instructors:

Discovering the microbiological world can transform a person. Nyholm grew up on the ocean in Southern California, fishing for sand dabs and rockfish. He loved inspecting bits of what he

caught under his dad's microscope, and thought he wanted to be a doctor. But some volunteer work cured him of that notion, and it was in a marine biology class that he found his true calling.

Both Rossi's parents were middle school teachers, and she'd always wanted to follow in their footsteps. Then in college, as a biology/English major who also thought she was on her way to medical school, a microbiology class caught her up in the mystique of the tiny.

"There's so much stuff you can't see with the naked eye, yet they impact us so much," she says. Rossi has a favorite picture she likes to show students of *Borrelia burgdorferi*, a bacteria with an elegantly spiral form. It causes Lyme disease. Some of the tiny stuff is beautiful. Some is deadly. All of it can amaze.

### Class Description:

Microbe Hunters is a gateway class for anyone interested in microbiology or scientific field research. And thanks to Rossi's collaborations with other institutions, students have the potential of finding the next life-saving antibiotic, too.

Early on in the class, the students are sent out into the world with instruc-

tions to collect a soil sample. Most collect samples from the Storrs campus, though some roam farther afield: samples have come from the banks of the Farmington River, from salt marshes in Fairfield County, and from central Connecticut deer poop. Back in the lab, they culture the samples to see what kinds of bacteria they can grow from them. Students use dishes exposed to the air to make sure they don't accidentally grow some of the known bad boys of the soil, like the *Clostridium* bacteria that cause botulism and tetanus. Those types of bacteria prefer environments without oxygen.

Instead, the bacteria they find tend to be friendlier types. They characterize the bacteria biochemically, sequence a gene to identify them, test how they behave when grown with chia seeds, yeast, and flies, and add them to colonies of *Bacillus subtilis*.

That last test is one of the most exciting. *B. subtilis* is a harmless bacteria that is closely related to the not-so-harmless one that causes anthrax, and more distantly to other disease-causing microorganisms. If the student's test strain of bacteria can clear itself some space — that is, kill off or prevent *B. subtilis* from growing near it — it might be producing an antibiotic, potentially one

worthy of becoming a medicine.

Rossi sends such promising strains to the Tiny Earth project, a collaboration of universities and institutions dedicated to finding new antibiotics from microorganisms.

### Their Teaching Style:

A key part of the course is the Pokémon-style cards students make of their chosen genus of disease-causing bacteria from the ESKAPE list (it stands for *Enterococcus*, *Staphylococcus*, *Klebsiella*, *Acinetobacter*, *Pseudomonas* and *Enterobacter*). Each student creates an image of the bacteria and lists its attributes and powers. They then use the card to teach their fellow students about it.

Nyholm likes to ask questions that force the students to think in a broad way. This is his first time teaching a lab course to undergrads at UConn, and he's finding it invigorating.

"They get really excited about their discoveries. They have ownership," he says. He's also thinking about ways to work some marine microbiology into the course. Although UConn Storrs is landlocked, Connecticut has a lot of coastline, including at UConn Avery Point. Several years ago, a student brought a sample from Farm Creek

in Rowayton that grew a vibrant red *Vibrio* species with definite antibiotic properties, something they'd never seen before. Culturing marine bacteria can be trickier than soil bacteria, but might yield even more interesting surprises.

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

### Why We Want to Take It Ourselves:

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

### THIS JUST IN

## ENGINEERING TO OFFER ROBOTICS MAJOR

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

Yes, the TikTok possibilities are endless. So are the applications in many commercial areas, such as health care, logistics, manufacturing, maintenance, and surveillance. UConn Engineering has been a leader in the field, with research in autonomous drones, path planning, human-robot collaboration, cyborg insects, and more. —ELI FREUND '14 (CLAS)





# A Picture Is Worth a Thousand Lectures

The man behind those Horsebarn Hill sunrise photos on Instagram is a longtime UConn professor and wildlife biologist.

By Jessica McBride '07 MA, '17 Ph.D  
Photography by Milton Levin '04 Ph.D

**M**ilton Levin '04 Ph.D says he's often surprised at how Husky Nation responds to the photos he takes. A recent drone shot of Mirror Lake garnered more than 8,000 likes within hours of being shared on Instagram and became one of UConn's top posts of the year. "I wish I knew the magic formula so I could be more selective, but I just try to take unique shots," he says. Levin walks his photogenic chocolate lab, Acadia, around campus at different times of day and snaps photos when the circumstances seem right. "I always have a camera with me. I'm always thinking about how to document what I see."

Levin first came to Storrs in 1999 as a graduate student. Working as a necropsy technician and making bagels at his twin brother's shop in Virginia are just two of the detours his academic career took before he realized that research was his passion. That brought him to UConn to work with Sylvain De Guise,







Levin's research on marine species has taken him to the remotest spots on the planet, but also to places like Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge on Cape Cod, where this grey seal was having a siesta.



Levin carefully restrains a grey seal pup during blood collection as part of a health assessment study at Great Point on Nantucket, Massachusetts.

professor of pathobiology and veterinary sciences and director of Connecticut Sea Grant, studying the impact of environmental contaminants, particularly polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), on the immune systems of marine species, such as seals, dolphins, and polar bears. The research took him far off the beaten path, to places few humans get to see.

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

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

Initially, he just wanted to capture these memories for personal reasons. But he soon discovered his pictures could be more than fodder for a personal photo album. Lectures or invited talks featuring videos of the charismatic megafauna from his field research trips stir something that data and graphs never will, he explains. "I always have at least one student come up to talk or email me about opportunities to work in the lab, especially undergrads. That makes your day. You've at least reached one person. Once I started seeing that reaction, I knew I needed to start documenting a lot more."





Levin in his Mustang Survival suit, before heading out on Chesapeake Bay in Virginia to collect samples from harbor seals.

Preparing for his voyages started to include packing different cameras and lenses, and setting aside time for photography. He even began mulling over photo plans in the same way he mentally maps out his experiments and sample collection, before falling asleep. But, he insists, “The science always comes first; I won’t sacrifice anything there. If it’s my job to hold a net one day, I’ll hold the net and put my camera down. Or maybe I’ll strap on a GoPro so I can do both.”

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

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

Photos like this one are captivating, yes, but they also bring the effects of climate change and species decline into focus. Although parts of the world like Scoresby Sund remain largely untouched by humans,



A polar bear and her two cubs walking along a partially frozen fjord in Scoresby Sund, East Greenland.





Levin, left, flying his drone above Horsebarn Hill and, above, in his makeshift home office with his chocolate Lab, Acadia, a frequent companion on campus photo missions.

they aren't safe from the effects of human activities — quite the opposite, says Levin, citing a recent study he worked on. "People think these are pristine environments, but the science shows that polar bears and killer whales have some of the highest levels of wildlife contamination. Even though PCBs haven't been produced in 40 years, they find their way into the ecosystem and affect the immune systems of Arctic animals."

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

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

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





EXCLUSIVE ILLUSTRATIONS BY MARGARET KIMBALL

**H**er family never talked about it. But when Margaret Kimball '06 (SFA) was four, her mother attempted suicide on Mother's Day while the rest of the family was at church. They were still not talking when, during Kimball's senior year of high school, her mother's bipolar disorder kept her in the hospital for a couple weeks.

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

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

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

#### NASCENCY

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

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

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

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

"I don't always remember every student

I've had but I sure remember Margaret, and I'm glad we've kept in touch all these years," she says.

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

#### LEGACY

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

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

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

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

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

#### CARTOGRAPHY

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

"I've always loved maps and how they can be living documents of reality," Kimball says. —DAVID SILVERBERG



# UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT - STORRS -

CIRCA 2002 - 2006



MARK E. FREITAS ICE FORUM  
WHERE I WENT ICE SKATING WITH MY DAD



HILLTOP APARTMENTS (CRAWFORD)  
WHERE I LIVED SENIOR YEAR ALSO FOR MY EXTRA "SUPER SENIOR" SEMESTER



TED'S BAR



HUSKIES TAVERN



GAMPEL PAVILION



NATHAN HALE INN (WHERE MY PARENTS MET MY MENTOR, LYNN Z. BLOOM)

FULL DISCLOSURE: I NEVER ATTENDED A BASKETBALL GAME

WHERE I HEARD EAVAN BOLAND READ

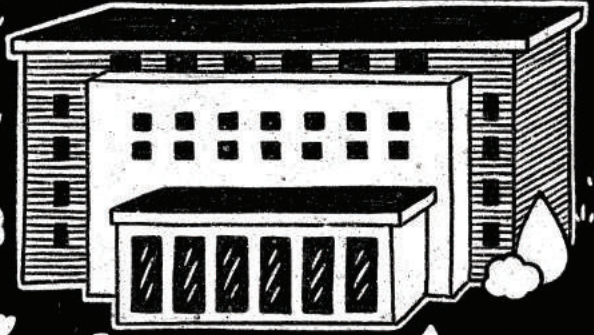
BELDEN HALL (ALUMNI)

WHERE MY PARENTS MET IN THE BLIZZARD OF 1978 AND WHERE MY SISTER LIVED FROM 2014-2016

WHERE I SAW JAMES MAPES WITH MY DAD & SIBLINGS



JORGENSEN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

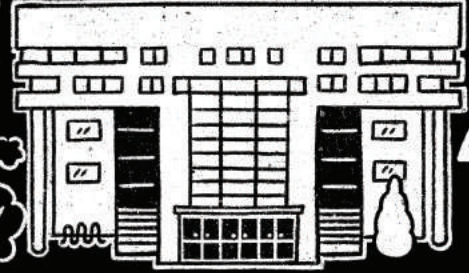


NORTH CAMPUS ("THE JUNGLE")

WHERE I LIVED FRESHMAN YEAR

FINE ARTS BUILDING (WHICH WAS RENOVATED AFTER I GRADUATED)

WHERE I HAD A STUDY CARREL SENIOR YEAR AND SPENT HOURS DRAWING



HOMER D. BABBIGE LIBRARY



BENTON MUSEUM

WHERE I WORKED

AND ONCE HAD TEA WITH TIBETAN MONKS



CEMETERY

& WROTE MY FIRST ESSAY ABOUT MY MOM

WHERE I SPENT MOST OF MY TIME

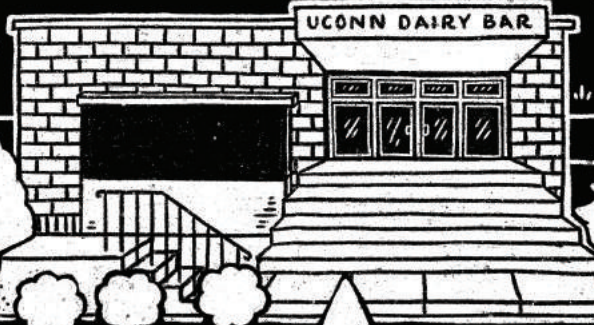
MANSFIELD ROAD

(A PRETTY WALK)



MIRROR LAKE

PHILIP E. AUSTIN BUILDING (WHERE I STUDIED ENGLISH & CREATIVE WRITING)



UCONN DAIRY BAR

MY PARENTS TOOK ME HERE AS A KID

HORSEBARN HILL

KATHY JOHN'S (NOW-CLOSED EATERY)

CONDO WHERE MY AUNT AND UNCLE MOVED (BRIEFLY)

ALMOST NOTHING WAS HERE WHEN I WAS IN COLLEGE

(A BUNCH OF BUILDINGS I NEVER VISITED)

DOG LANE

WILLOWBROOK

STORRS ROAD

ROUTE 195

KING HILL ROAD

GLENBROOK

N. EAGLEVILLE ROAD



# THE LONG GAME

**Doug Glanville has no right to be this good at this many things.**

Batting .325 while stealing 34 bases; teaching a popular education course



Commenting for ESPN — on games and on justice

By Rand Richards Cooper

Illustrations By Yesenia Carrero

When Neag School of Education professor Doug Glanville cleaned out his garage during a recent family move, he unearthed some unusual stuff. Interspersed among the old grill equipment and lawn chairs were a dozen baseball bats, signed by Derek Jeter and other MLB stars, and beneath them a pair of Nike spikes that once belonged to Michael Jordan, during his year of professional baseball.

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

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

The origins of “Sport in Society” trace to the years after Glanville’s 2005 retirement, when he worked for ESPN and found himself pondering issues beyond the scope of a play-by-play announcer. “It was a convergence of my passions with what I was learning in media work,” he recalls. “At some point I just started jotting

Creating legislation that spurs real change





Over nine years with the Rangers, Cubs, and Phillies, Glanville amassed memorabilia including Michael Jordan's cleats and bats signed by Derek Jeter and Sammy Sosa.

down ideas about sports and social justice." He approached Major League Baseball and offered himself as a resource for players looking to engage with social issues. The league showed interest but made no commitment. Eventually Glanville decided to turn his notes into a course.

The class, he explains, situates students at the intersection of sport, society, and activism. "We look at how athletes and sports engage on social justice subjects via all sorts of pathways — legislative, political, legal, media. We go through these elements and try to come out in a forward-thinking way."

Texts range from Eric Liu's "You're More Powerful Than You Think" to Floyd Abrams' "The Soul of the First Amendment" and Heather McGhee's "The Sum of Us." Glanville incorporates

articles by such activist athletes and former Huskies as Sue Bird '02 (CLAS), Maya Moore '11 (CLAS), and Breanna Stewart '16 (CLAS). He added Renee Montgomery '09 (CLAS) to that list this semester. Guest speakers have included baseball player Adam Jones and former players' union chief Donald Fehr.

The course takes up hot-button issues that have only become hotter since the killing of George Floyd. But Glanville is no Johnny-come-lately to activism and the struggle for change. Indeed he has been working toward it since he left baseball, fashioning a way to draw the personal and the political together, examining his own life experiences within the larger American context.

Like the canny base runner he once was, Glanville got the jump

on the zeitgeist, his eyes fixed on a sense of where we are headed, and what we need.



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

And Doug Glanville should not be Doug Glanville, a distinguished Major League Baseball player who also possesses the writing chops to perform at the

highest literary level. Over the past 15 years, the former Phillie has written a series of op-eds in *The New York Times*, essays graced with candor, wisdom, and wit. In 2010 he published "The Game From Where I Stand," an absorbing chronicle of his life as a professional athlete. The memoir won rave reviews; acclaimed journalist and "Friday Night Lights" author Buzz Bissinger called it "a book of uncommon grace and elegance ... filled with insight and a certain kind of poetry."

Soft spoken and thoughtful, Glanville carries his excellence lightly. "You'd never know that Doug was a Major League Base-

of yourself was authentic," Glanville says. "Her attitude was, Are you going to sell your soul? For what? Money? Fame?"

He traces his optimism about diversity to his hometown of Teaneck, New Jersey, which in the 1960s voluntarily desegregated its schools. Glanville's middle school lunchroom resembled the United Nations, he says. "It was a beautiful tapestry of people. That's how I grew up." In Teaneck he experienced daily interactions across race, class, and ethnic lines. What are now called "uncomfortable conversations" were routine. So was interracial solidarity. He told me about an incident during high school, when Teaneck's baseball team played in a neighboring town and a close game turned on a contested call.

"Keep in mind, Teaneck was the diversity, and the surrounding towns didn't like us a lot."

Heckling led to sharp words and after the game, a white fan hurled racial slurs, then tried to knock down a Black Teaneck player as the team exited the field.

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



His own life has served up the frequent slights that a Black person in America experiences. For most Americans of color, these incidents pass without garnering attention, but Glanville has the personal and professional "bandwidth" — a favorite word of his — to draw a light of publicity to them. Two racial incidents in the mid-2010s reveal his way of doing this. In a 2014 article in *The Atlantic*, "I Was Racially Profiled in My Own Driveway," the former major-leaguer describes shoveling snow one morning outside his spacious home in Hartford's West End, one street over from the West Hartford line, when a West Hartford police officer approached and asked, "So, you're trying to make a few extra bucks, shoveling people's driveways?" When Glanville explained he was shoveling his own walk, in front of his own house, the officer abruptly left.

Glanville subsequently was told by police that a Black man had broken a West Hartford ordinance prohibiting door-to-door solicitation, and the officer pursued the complaint across the town line to Glanville's street. The ensuing encounter spawned the phrase "Shoveling While Black," coined by Glanville's wife, Tiffany, in an email to their neighbor, state representative Matt Ritter, it reflected the guilty-until-proven-innocent stigma that all too often afflicts Black Americans in their dealings with law enforcement.

"The shoveling incident," Glanville wrote, "was a painful reminder of something I've always known: My biggest challenge as a father will be to help my kids navigate a world where

## "It's not Black versus white or white versus Black, it's all of us against racism, right? Racism hurts all of us."

ball player," says Jason Irizarry, Neag School dean. "He does not wear his resume on his sleeve."

Glanville credits his late father, a Trinidadian educator who emigrated to the U.S. and became a psychiatrist, and his mother, a math teacher, with giving him lessons in perspective. He enjoys recalling his father's skeptical comment upon seeing the tinted-window Lexus his son had bought with his baseball wealth ("Looks like a drug dealer's car"). And late in his career, when Glanville was tempted to boost declining physical prowess with performance-enhancing drugs — this was the height of MLB's steroid era — it was his mother who warned him of the cost in hollowed-out self-respect. "My mom reminded me of the beauty of knowing that what you gave



**“Yes, you need people marching in the streets, calling out injustice, going on CNN. But you also need people in the courtroom, in the policy room — people doing the slow work, the non-tweetable work. Playing the long game.”**

being Black is both a source of pride and a reason for caution.”

The second incident, a year later, spawned another *Atlantic* article, “Why I Still Get Shunned by Taxi Drivers,” in which Glanville related his experience one night at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), where he arrived with a white ESPN colleague and hailed a cab. The cab driver at first saw only the white colleague. When he noticed Glanville, he declined to take the two, shouting at Glanville repeatedly to take a bus instead.

In 2017, I heard Glanville lecture about this incident at the University of St. Joseph, an hour-long talk titled “Responding to Injustice in Ways that Work.” He introduced “a case study” of “a business traveler” arriving at LAX — withholding the fact that he was that traveler. Projecting LAX statistics on a screen — 81 million passengers and 6 million taxi trips a year — he told the story of the interaction that night at the airport, right through to the cabbie’s refusal of service. Hailing a cab, Glanville reminded his audience, is a simple transaction, or at least should be. Then, via a slide, he revealed the identity of the traveling duo. He smiled, ruefully acknowledging the racial aspect of the situation. “So now we have a problem, right?”

His approach was low-key and reassuring, like a doctor calmly relating a diagnosis and formulating a treatment plan. The

treatment plan for LAX required action that Glanville confessed he’d been reluctant to undertake. “It’s 1 a.m., you just want to say ‘Forget it’ and get to sleep,” he recalled. But when a woman working near the taxi stand approached and told him he was the third Black man to be refused service that night, he knew he had to act. His privileged status as a media professional entailed responsibility, he told his audience. “I’m with ESPN, I have visibility and access, I can do something about this.”

The rest of the lecture detailed the methodical steps Glanville took over the ensuing weeks and months. Digging into relevant civil rights law and taxi management agreements. Investigating procedures for handling complaints. Coordinating with LAX in the formation of a sting operation, with Black undercover officers in plainclothes hailing taxis (an “astronomical and shocking” 6 out of 25 were refused service, Glanville related). And ultimately working with the LA City Council to create training for all airport cab drivers, set “zero tolerance” for racial discrimination, and devise a new complaint system.

In the Q&A, a Black professor marveled at his forbearance. “I don’t think anyone would blame you if you got very upset with that cab driver. What enables you to be so resilient in the face of such an offensive act?”

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



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

The second is his emphasis on constructive action — and on the patience it requires. “That can be challenging for this generation,” Glanville tells me. “Their temptation is to quickly tweet out outrage. Boom boom boom, 280 characters, and it’s out there, right?” He pauses. “But then it’s over. All of a sudden, the message is gone.” Raising the temperature in a confrontational way can be gratifying emotionally, but the effort to create change requires a deeper dive. “Yes, you need people marching in the streets,



calling out injustice, going on CNN. But you also need people in the courtroom, in the policy room — people doing the slow work, the non-tweetable work. Playing the long game.”

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

Glanville joined the council four years ago, after the Shovel-ing While Black incident. As he readily points out, the group is hardly a populist arrangement. “But we do a lot of work. We’ve passed legislation governing use of force. We have hot-pursuit laws. We get stuff done.” And getting stuff done, he teaches his students, requires persistence. “When you feel racism, you want it to change, and you want that to happen now. I get that. But

you have to embrace the slow work. It’s not sexy, but it’s what actually lets you make change that sustains itself. The long game is what sticks.”

Glanville practices what he preaches. Not satisfied with merely writing about Shovel-ing While Black, he took action, collaborating with Rep. Ritter to craft a bill, signed into law by Gov. Malloy in 2015, placing limits on law enforcement’s pursuit across town lines for minor infractions. Years later, Ritter is still talking about it. “It amazed me that a former major league player was willing to do the hard

work of meeting with legislators and staff. It showed both humility and a terrific commitment. This bill never would have become law without Doug.”

If Glanville ever runs for office, Ritter says with a laugh, he’ll volunteer to run his campaign. And indeed, if you spend an evening with the former major leaguer, you’re likely to leave thinking that he’d be an excellent mayor.



In the aftermath of the George Floyd killing, Glanville recorded an impassioned commentary on ESPN, “Enough,” making a stirring plea for social change. Noting that the 8 minutes and 20 seconds it takes for sunlight to reach the Earth approximates the time it took for Floyd to die under an officer’s knee.

He drew a metaphor in which, following the darkness

of despair, “the sun rose again, giving us another opportunity to be enlightened — to help us see George Floyd as all of us, and not just ‘one of them’... [and to] respond, and make his death be our light.”

In Glanville’s brand of social activism, this poetry is channeled through pragmatism; he offers inspiration, then counsels perspiration. It’s not surprising that his “number one text” for “Sport in Society” is called “Systems Thinking for Social Change.” The first Black Ivy League grad to play Major League Baseball, Glanville majored in engineering at the University of Pennsylvania, and there’s a strong element of engineering in the way he views social problems — and how he goes about solving them. “I studied engineering because I loved science, but I always wanted to apply it,” he says. “I wanted to understand not just how to build something, but how it will impact the world.”

The activism of the engineer includes understanding that racism is a complicated system, from which there is no easy way out. But systems, as Glanville teaches his UConn students, can be improved. “In engineering you begin with a system as it is,” he says. “Policing, housing, whatever: you study the system, its nuances and intricacies, and you measure how it performs. Then you project out for what the system will be in the future — whether it declines or deteriorates or just amplifies the current reality. Where the beauty and design and humanity come in is in trying to imagine the system as it should be. That is the destination, that aspirational space. Your whole work as an engineer is to bend that curve and that arc — from as it will be, to as it should be.” ☺





Find more on Larkin-Wells and the Sustainable Community Food Systems minor at [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu).

## Rise Up

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

A sociology graduate, Larkin-Wells honed her abilities as a breadmaker through UConn’s Sustainable Community Food Systems minor — a unique and intensive interdisciplinary program that combines theory and practice through service learning and hands-on experience with community partners. Larkin-Wells, interim manager of Spring Valley Student Farm, bakes her bread at a pizza shop in Guilford after it closes for the weekend, largely using freshly milled, organic, and heritage grain flours from a producer in Maine. On Sundays, a gathering of people in the know come to the shop to purchase the 40 or so just-baked loaves while the bread is fresh and soft and warm. “When I can make a really big loaf of bread for a group of people and know that it’s all going to get eaten that day, it’s all going to get eaten fresh — that’s my favorite kind of bread to make,” she says. Like farming, breadmaking has brought her skills that go far beyond forming loaves, she says — teaching her to be “infinitely attentive” to what she’s doing and the world around her. —JACLYN SEVERANCE

### CLASS NOTES



➔ **Roger Shatanof '56 (CLAS)** of Coral Gables, Florida, says he is “doing whatever I can to spread UConn’s greatness throughout the Sunshine State!”



➔ Congratulations to **Bruce H. Cagenello '60 (CLAS)**, who is retiring after 50 years as a real estate agent. He won several awards during his long career, including the National Commercial Award from the National Association of Realtors and the Individual Partner of the Year Award from the UConn Center for Real Estate. He also served as chairman of the Connecticut Real Estate Commission and as president of the Greater Hartford Association of Realtors. He has been married since 1959 to his high school sweetheart, Dody, and they have three children, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

➔ Speaking of longevity, **Ronald R. Smith '61 (CLAS)** and **Janice A. Green '61 (CLAS)** are celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary in November with a cruise to the Caribbean. They were married at St. Thomas Aquinas church on campus shortly after graduating with degrees in mathematics/statistics. ➔ **Fred K. Epstein '61 (PHAR)** has a life update. He started out as a sales representative for Abbott Laboratories before partnering in a Hartford pharmacy. When the partnership dissolved, he opened

two successful Connecticut apothecaries in Enfield and Southbury. Later, he became a pharmacist in Florida. He and his wife, Lois, were married one week after his UConn graduation. They live in Boca Raton and have three children and six grandchildren.

➔ **Jim Bell '63 MSW** and **Nancy Sculli '63 MSW** also caught us up with their lives since graduating. They met while earning their master’s degrees in the School of Social Work in 1963 and married a year later. They both went on to have successful careers, Bell as a child welfare administrator and Sculli as a clinical social worker. They are the proud parents of three children, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren and celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary in September.

➔ **Wilma Davidson '65 (ED)**, together with Diana de Avila, published “Soldier, Sister, Savant,” which tells the story of de Avila, who became an artistic genius after a traumatic brain injury. ➔ **John Surowiecki '66 (CLAS), '78 MA** has published two more books of poetry: “Burger King of the Dead” and “Poems from Titles by Wallace Stevens.” While at UConn, Surowiecki won the Wallace Stevens contest as both a graduate and undergraduate. ➔ UConn roots run deep for **Jack Donohue '68 MS** and **Mary O’Connor Donohue '68 MA**, who first met on East Campus while pursuing their master’s degrees. They married the following April and put down roots in Shelton, Connecticut, where they raised four children, three of whom are UConn grads: **Ellen Donohue Tulman '92 (ED), '93 MS**, **Kevin Donohue '97 (BUS)**, and **Megan Donohue Beardsworth '98 (BUS)**. In addition, two sons-in-law, **Edan Tulman '92 (CLAS), '96 MS** and **Adam Beardsworth '98 (CLAS)**, are proud Huskies. While at UConn, they developed friendships that



➔ Huskies on the front line: **John Powell '87 (ENG)**, a hospitalist physician, and **Molly Gaffney '18 (NUR)**, a registered nurse in postpartum and labor and delivery, have worked together at St. Peter’s Hospital in Albany, New York, for three years. Powell and his wife, Laura, who is also a physician, have four children: David, 21; Jennifer, 20; and twins Alison and Elizabeth, 17. Their husky friend is Luna.

have lasted a lifetime. Their friends, including **Marylynn Massolo Darling '68 MA**, **Barbara Brown Maguire '69 MBA**, **Peter Maguire '69 MA**, **William Sherman '68 MA**, and the late **Charles Darling '77 Ph.D.**, are dubbed “The Freebies,” and have continued to meet regularly for the past 53 years, supporting each other through life’s ups and downs and getting together to watch UConn basketball games.



➔ **Robert J. Krueger '71 (PHARM)** and **Beth Lindbergh Krueger '71 (CLAS)** marked their 50th anniversary in June. They met in 1966 at one of the famous UConn “Shoots” held on campus on Friday afternoons that fall. They have both retired from jobs at Ferris State University and live in Big Rapids, Michigan. “We loved our time at UConn!” they wrote. ➔ **Tobe Berkovitz '72 SFA, '73 MFA** is ready to kick back. He is now associate professor of advertising emeritus at Boston University. During his BU career, he also served as interim dean and asso-

ciate dean of the College of Communication and acting department chair of the Department of Mass Communication, Advertising, and Public Relations. He says he fondly remembers his UConn mentors, professors Jerry Rojo and Frank Ballard. ➔ Kudos to **Stephen M. Mulready '73 (BUS)**, interim dean of the Barney School of Business at the University of Hartford, who was named the school’s new permanent dean. ➔ Congrats to **Frank L. Kane '74 (CLAS)**, who won the Golden Apple Award as Outstanding Community Preceptor by the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society of Rutgers Medical School. Kane, a clinical professor at Rutgers/UMDNJ Medical School for more than 20 years, recently retired after 35 years of private practice. ➔ **Lynne Maquat '74 (CLAS)**, the J. Lowell Orbison Endowed Chair and a professor of biochemistry and biophysics at the University of Rochester, won the 2021 Warren Alpert Prize for RNA discoveries. Maquat, who was awarded the prize along with colleague Joan Steitz, was honored for making seminal discoveries in the biology and function (continued on p. 42)





➔ **Julie (Stagis) Bartucca '10 (BUS, CLAS), '19 MBA** and husband Jordan welcomed Jack Thomas on July 7. Their third generation Husky-to-be already is the UConn 360 podcast's biggest fan — must be the sound of Mom's voice.

of RNA in healthy cells and in disease-causing dysfunction. ➔ Retired UConn Professor Emerita **Cynthia Adams '76 MA, '81 Ph.D.** made the most of the pandemic by pursuing her lifelong dream of becoming a novelist. In fact, she wrote two: "The Farmhouse on Cemetery Hill Rd" and "The Portal." Both are historical in nature and use the supernatural to develop suspense. After teaching at UConn for 31 years, Adams worked in mental health and addiction services for another nine years. ➔ After 25 years at BP Lubricants USA (Castrol), where he held several positions, **Art Valletta '77 (BUS)** is retiring. Having raised five children, he and his wife, Beverly, look forward to golfing, skiing, and traveling the world. ➔ The National Football League hired **Christopher F. Droney '79 JD, '16 HON** as league arbitrator. In this role, he is responsible for resolving all contractual employment and salary conflicts between players and the league. Previously, he was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit and sat on the court for eight years before joining Day Pitney LLP as a partner in 2020.

➔ Congrats to **Thomas P. Cella '79 (CLAS)**, a lawyer at Howard, Kohn, Sprague & FitzGerald in Hartford, who was recognized by Best Lawyers in America in the fields of personal injury, medical malpractice, and product liability. ➔ **Lisa C. Taylor '79 (CLAS), '81 MA** and **Russell W. Taylor '80 (CLAS)** have moved to a small mountain town in Colorado, where Russ is the art editor of an online magazine and Lisa is the fiction editor. Lisa, who also offers a writing workshop, is the author of four poetry collections and two short story collections, most recently "Impossibly Small Spaces." They welcomed their first grandchild, Ames Rafael, in April.



➔ Kudos to **Shari G. Cantor '81 (BUS)**, mayor

of West Hartford, Connecticut, who was named one of the *Hartford Business Journal's* 2021 Women in Business. Cantor is a UConn trustee. ➔ Speaking of awards, **Paul A. Larson '82 MD** received the gold medal of the American College of Radiology (ACR), an award that recognizes lifetime contributions to the ACR and the profession of radiology. He is president of the board of trustees of the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists and a former member of the ACR Board of Chancellors. He also serves as a member of the board of directors and executive committee of the Wisconsin Medical Society and is former president of the Wisconsin Radiological Society. ➔ **Lisa (Deorio) Wolak '82 (CLAS), '01 6th Year** is climbing the career ladder. She was appointed superintendent of Weston Public Schools in Connecticut. Previously, she

was principal of Weston High School. ➔ The Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering elected **Jane K. Stahl '85 JD**, an environmental consultant and former deputy commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Protection, as an honorary member for advising on statewide science and technology issues. She and her husband, Kent, have raised two children and frequently get away to the Cape. ➔ **Lynn Katz '87 JD** just published a debut novel, "The Surrogate," a domestic thriller about a troubled teenager obsessed with guns and the teacher who tries to help him. "Unfortunately, the topic of gun violence continues to be as relevant as when I began writing my book soon after I retired as a school principal in Farmington, Connecticut," she says. ➔ Kudos to **Mark Boxer '87 MBA**, who received an honorary degree from (continued on p. 45)

MAKING GOOD

Cool to Be Kind

Aysha Mahmood's job is, in short, to make kindness cool, a goal as ambitious as it is straightforward. The idea alone can make people roll their eyes, she says, "especially if you consider yourself too cool to be kind."

**Mahmood '14 (CLAS)** obviously does not. She works for Born This Way Foundation, the nonprofit co-founded by Lady Gaga and her mother, Cynthia Germanotta, to promote mental health and activism in young people. Mahmood does that essentially with good news. From her home office in Windsor, Connecticut, she edits the foundation's Channel Kindness, a digital platform that features stories by young people from around the globe about how they are changing the world.

"The stuff they are doing is mind-boggling," Mahmood says.

A recent story recounts how a 10-year-old Texan started a nonprofit to help homeless people. Another describes how young Asian-Americans around the country are

fighting racism. The hope, Mahmood says, is that these stories inspire more young people to do good in big or small ways.

Mahmood, 28, studied political science and journalism at UConn. The Connecticut native still recalls the thrill and anxiety of one assignment, to find and write a news story during a single 90-minute class. "Thankfully, we only had to do that once."

After graduation she worked at the *Manchester Journal Inquirer* and then as a press aide for the Connecticut State House Democrats. When talking about politics 24/7 began to feel a bit toxic for her, Mahmood decided it was time for a change.

"This job combines my love for journalism and my love for social good," Mahmood says. "I feel like I'm living my dream."

—AMY SUTHERLAND



ALL STAR



Former Baltimore Ravens center Skura with team orthopedic surgeon and alum Curl.

CURLING

Marshal Yanda was an all-pro guard for the Baltimore Ravens of the National Football League, a massive 300-plus pound kid from Marion, Iowa, who was about as big and strong as human beings get. But when one giant powerful athlete collides with another giant powerful athlete, something's gotta give. In 2008, what gave was Yanda's knee, an ACL tear that 30 years ago would have been a career ender.

Thanks to orthopedic surgeon **Leigh Ann Curl '85 (CLAS)**, a former Husky basketball power forward and UConn University Scholar, Yanda went on to win a Super Bowl and play in eight Pro Bowls before retiring in 2019.

Curl, chief of orthopedics at MedStar Harbor Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, has been the head orthopedic surgeon for the Ravens since 1998. She also is assistant team physician for the

Baltimore Orioles and has worked with the University of Maryland Terrapins, the New York Mets, USA Women's Basketball, and St. John's University in New York, among others. And she recently finished a term as president of the NFL Physicians Society.

There is no collision sport as impactful on the human body, head to toe, as football. Even a smaller defensive back, moving at high velocity, can apply as much as 1,600 pounds of force when making a tackle — and when one player is going east and the other is going west, you can magnify that force to as much as 150 Gs.

"I've covered football at every level, from high school to college, on the sidelines, and there is absolutely no question that every step up, they're bigger, stronger, faster, more speed, more collisions, and more intense

injuries," says Curl. "Every sport has its own injury profile. The goal is to drive a reduction of injury risks and a reduction of injury burden. There are players who have significant injuries, like maybe some spine things, and you say to them that the risk of playing is so significant you would basically flat out disqualify them. But for almost everything else, it's a shared decision making on what the options are."

On Nov. 25, 2019, at the L.A. Coliseum, it was Raven center Matt Skura whose knee took the hit, and who left the game in the injury cart with Curl (pictured above). Both Yanda and Curl helped Skura rehab emotionally and physically from what turned out to be an ACL, MCL, and PCL tear and to make a remarkable recovery. This season, Skura is back at center, playing for the New York Giants. —PETER NELSON





JOB ENVY

## NIGHTCLUB CONFIDENTIAL

Matt Smith '92 (CLAS) was in trouble. He had a full house, it was approaching 9 p.m., and he still hadn't heard from his headliner.

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

Smith told the opening act, a local guitar slinger named Mark Erelli, to stretch for as long as he could. But

after an hour, Smith finally had to tell the packed room the feature performer was a no-show, and anybody who wanted would get a full refund. Only three did. The rest stayed for Erelli's improvised second set, bought out all the merchandise he had ("He had to run to his car for more," Smith says), and gave the lesser-known singer-songwriter a standing ovation and three encores — the last one performed

unamplified, standing on a chair by the kitchen. Erelli has sold out shows at Cambridge's Club Passim ever since.

"People walked out of here beaming," says Smith, managing director of Passim, arguably America's pre-eminent listening room — admittedly some might advocate for the iconic Bluebird Café in Nashville.

"To me, the most exciting thing about the job is finding really good stuff and grabbing people by the arm and saying, 'Listen to this — this is amazing.' It's not just a financially driven decision. It's part of our mission to find and develop new talent."

Contemporary folk music is foreground music. It is literate, rewards close attention, tells stories that make you laugh or cry — sometimes in the same song — and Smith says he was hooked on it when he was first heard it in the late '80s at UConn.

"A friend of mine in the dorm made me a mix tape of some of the top people on the scene, Bill Morrissey and John Gorka and Cliff Eberhardt and Patty Larkin," says Smith. "I started driving all over New England to see several shows a week. A lot of them were right here at Passim."

The club in Harvard Square began in 1958, at a different location, as Club 47, moving to a basement room on Palmer Street in the '60s run by the legendary Bob Donlin, who booked such acts as Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell, Tom Rush, and Muddy Waters. After Donlin died, the club reorganized in 1994 as a nonprofit and solicited volunteers. Matt Smith volunteered; now he's been running it longer than Donlin did, with no plans to go anywhere else.

### The Dreaded Pivot

Not surprisingly, Smith's most recent challenge has been adjusting to the pandemic, when all the clubs suddenly shut down and the musicians he depends on lost their livelihoods. With the ability to livestream on Facebook, StreamYard, and other platforms, Club Passim quickly adapted and turned itself into a kind of miniature television studio.

"Our last show in the room was March 11th [2020], and our first remote

livestream, from someone's home, was on the 12th. We turned on a dime," says Smith.

"We've been able to keep some of the programs we started when we became a nonprofit going by streaming. Our music school, with classes and workshops, has actually expanded because of online programming. In June of 2020, we started doing a virtual open mic, essentially a Zoom meeting where musicians join and take turns playing songs. We've had people from as far away as Australia perform at it. We've done livestreams from here, with a few masked socially distanced staff members for a live audience. We also give grants to artists, so during the pandemic, we started something called the Passim Emergency Artist Relief Fund, as a way to get money into the hands of musicians who were out of work. In a year's time, we raised and distributed over \$160,000."

His open, generous approach explains why, in an industry where club owners are frequently vilified for taking advantage of musicians in a variety of ways, Smith is universally respected, even beloved.

"I've never understood the idea of venues and artists being on opposing sides," Smith says. "We're both trying to make money on the same thing. We're supposed to work together, because the full house is everyone's goal. The good show is everyone's goal. It's my job to create the best environment where that can happen."

When it all comes together, in a small intimate room, where the audience is sitting right on top of the performers, witnessing something remarkable, there's nothing like it. People familiar with the phenomenal musical "Hadestown," which won eight Tony awards in 2019 before Covid shut Broadway down, might not know it was the work of a folksinger, Anais Mitchell.

Mitchell got her start at Club Passim and, in fact, gave the show, which was originally a kind of concept album, one of its earliest staged readings there.

"This was April of 2010, before the record came out," Smith says.

"I've known Anais since she was 18. She grew up in Vermont, but then moved down here for a little bit. She took songwriting classes here and came to play the open mic. She was telling me about the record, so we were thinking how cool it would be to do a local version. We mapped out all these performers. She had the full band with her, and we pushed the risers together in front of the stage to form a thrust, so the band was up on stage, and the five singers were around a table on the risers, with a condenser mic in the middle, and Anais on guitar, but the others were just singing. And we ended up selling out three nights with it. It was fantastic. I remember Anais was worried, asking, 'What am I going to do if they want an encore? I don't have anything else.'

"I said, 'You bow. That's what people do in theater. They bow their heads, and that's it. You've done the show.'" —PETER NELSON

Eastern Connecticut State University and was the 2021 commencement speaker.

➔ **Eileen Komanecky '89 (BUS)** is enjoying her second career as a realtor in Naples, Florida. After graduating from UConn with an accounting degree and working as a CPA for most of her life, she found that her education and skill set were a good fit for the real estate field. She is an active tennis and pickle ball player and lives in Olde Naples with her husband, Mark, and their Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Tucker.



➔ **Carri Preble '90 (CLAS)**, a business-oriented attorney with significant experience in the telecommunications and commercial real estate industries, has joined the Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein law firm in their Raleigh, North Carolina, office. ➔ **Steve McLoughlin '90 (CLAS)** has been named

director of marketing for Connecticut Wealth Management LLC of Farmington, Connecticut. McLoughlin, who most recently served as vice president at Rebel Interactive Group, lives in Milford with his wife and three children. ➔ Congrats to **Jacinth C. Smiley '91 (BUS)**, who was appointed group vice president of corporate strategy by Hormel Foods, where she will lead the development and execution of the company's growth and investment strategies.

➔ Also moving up is **Dori (Nemeczky) Ross '91 (ENG)**, a professional engineer with more than 25 years of experience managing programs and projects, who is now director of operations for BSC Group, an engineering consulting firm headquartered in Boston. ➔ **Gianine Abbattista Esposito '92 (CLAS)**, senior vice president of human resources at



➔ Cheers to **Jayhon Ghassem-Zadeh '13 (CLAS), '15 MPA**, a senior consultant at Booz Allen Hamilton, and Molly Morrissey, former press secretary for U.S. Sen. Tina Smith (D-Minn.). They were married in July, surrounded by their families at Hartford City Hall. The two first met in Washington, D.C. and got engaged in New York City in 2019.

Shionogi Inc., will join the pharmaceutical company's executive committee. She has worked in human resources for more than 20 years, holding various leadership roles at Ferring Pharmaceuticals, GlaxoSmithKline, Liz Claiborne Inc. and Gap Inc. ➔ Kudos to **S. Dave Vatti '92 JD**, a former assistant U.S. attorney who was sworn in as a magistrate judge for the District of Connecticut and serves the Bridgeport federal courthouse. ➔ Celebrating two decades of togetherness, **Erin (Capozzi) Macaluso '94 (BUS), '02 MBA** and **Matthew Macaluso '95 (CLAS)** marked their 20th wedding anniversary in July. Erin is director of finance at Paradigm Precision in Manchester, Connecticut, and Matthew is a history and social studies teacher at Somers High School and a commercial pilot and flight instructor (continued on p. 48)



ALL STAR

Huskies Take Tokyo

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

Find more information and highlights at [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu).



Left, center: Current Husky Aaliyah Edwards '24 joined former UConn star Kia Nurse '18 (CLAS) playing for Team Canada; right, Stefanie Dolson '14 (CLAS) led Team USA to gold in the Olympic debut of 3X3 basketball



© Clockwise from top: Tim Clayton/Getty Images; Gregory Shamus/Getty Images; Christian Petersen/Getty Images; Jason Sheldon; Courtesy of Dan Rousseau (3)



Team Canada's Stephanie Labbé '09 (CLAS) saving Brazil's fifth penalty shot for the quarterfinal win. She went on to make more key saves to help her team win Olympic gold.



Lighting designers Dan Rousseau '08 (SFA), Billy Albertelli '13 (SFA), and Anna Jones '06 MFA worked lighting magic during NBC's nearly 7,000 hours of Olympic coverage from Japan.



At UConn's Corey Stringer Institute, NBC sports medicine analyst Mike Ryan went through the same heat acclimation protocol as the US Women's National Team to prepare for Tokyo.

© Clockwise from top: Koki Nagahama/Getty Images; Adam Pretty/Getty Images; Adam Pretty/Getty Images; Jason Sheldon; Courtesy of Dan Rousseau (3)



Dixon, left, with her guide Kirsten Sass after crossing the finish line.

ALL STAR

Nothing Stops Paratriathlete Amy Dixon

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

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

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

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

Find more on Dixon's journey at [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu).



KUDOS

**We Are but Players**

A lot has happened since **Geoffrey Sheehan '84 (SFA)** and **Laura Sheehan '85 (SFA)** put on "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" with a \$300 budget in Hartford's Bushnell Park. They have raised three sons and a daughter, staged 26 Shakespeare festivals, and moved their Capital Classics Theatre Company to a permanent home at the University of St. Joseph in West Hartford. Along the way the Sheehans, who met as undergrads in a UConn drama class, have entertained scores of audiences and cultivated and befriended many professional actors in the area. They have even officiated at their weddings and served as godparents to some of their children.

As the theater celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, the Sheehans continue to refine their performances by using music, colorful costumes, and skillful acting to make sure the Bard is accessible to modern audiences. "For me, the hardest part about performing Shakespeare is making sure you understand and speak the language as a deeply authentic human expression so you can perform as the people in the stories rather than as Shakespeare characters," Geoff says. Over the years they also have expanded their repertoire to now include a Shakespeare book club, a Halloween radio play at The Mark Twain House & Museum, and a series of short contemporary performances followed by audience discussion. —GRACE MERRITT



Laura Sheehan in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and Geoffrey Sheehan in "Hamlet."

in the Hartford area. ➔ **Gretchen Knauff '94 JD**, who has built a 30-year career in disability work, will serve as leader of New Haven's Disability Services. She most recently served as executive director of Disability Rights Connecticut. ➔ Congrats to **Michael C. Jormu '95 MA**, who was elected chair of the Department of Geography at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. ➔ **Jim Parker '95 MBA** recently celebrated his 40th anniversary with IBM, where he is a senior IT manager supporting sales and contract applications for IBM

Global Financing in Armonk, New York. He lives in Sandy Hook, Connecticut, with his wife, Marie, and two sons. ➔ **Robert Delagrangé '96 (BUS)** is moving up. He was promoted to senior business development manager at Hoffmann Architects, an architecture and engineering firm specializing in the rehabilitation of building exteriors. Delagrangé, of Oxford, Connecticut, also serves as chairman of the board for the Howard Whittemore Memorial Library. ➔ **Salvatore Menzo '96 MA, '99 6th Year, '08 Ed.D** was hired as superintendent of Goodwin

University Magnet Schools, having served as superintendent of Wallingford Public Schools for 12 years. ➔ **Jonathan Harris '98 MBA, '98 JD** was hired as a partner at Wiggin and Dana LLP in the firm's life sciences practice group. Previously, he worked as an intellectual property lawyer for nearly 20 years. ➔ **Jeff Fortmann '99 (CLAS)** was named executive vice president/general manager of TideSmart Global, leading the company's experiential offerings division. TideSmart is based in Falmouth, Maine, and Fortmann opened the

company's first Connecticut office in Darien. "I currently reside in New Canaan and have been cheering on UConn ever since I left campus," he says. ➔ **Steven T. Rogers '99 MBA** was appointed vice president of business development at Gamma Aerospace in Mansfield, Texas.



➔ Congrats to **Miranda A. Green-Barteet '00 MA**, who has written a new book with Meghan Gilbert-Hickey called "Race in Young Adult

Speculative Fiction," which examines how race and racism are represented in this genre of fiction. ➔ **Shaunna Monts '01 (CLAS)** was named chief human resources officer for Wheeler. She has more than 20 years of experience in community-based organizations and health care and lives with her family in East Hartford, Connecticut. ➔ **Christine D. Gagnon '02 (BUS), '03 MS, '08 MBA** is getting noticed. Gagnon, chief financial officer for the African Asset Finance Company, was named one of the Top 50 Women in the Equipment Finance industry for 2021 by *Monitor Daily*. ➔ **Adam Bokon '03 (BUS)** joined Rockland Trust as vice president and commercial loan officer for its commercial banking division in the Waltham, Massachusetts, office. Bokon, who earned an MBA from the Australian Graduate School of Management at the University of New South Wales, enjoys following Boston sports teams and volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. He



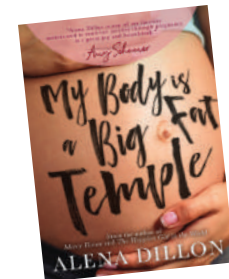
➔ **Jessica and Chris Machado '12 (CLAS)** welcomed a baby boy in February. "Since meeting at UConn in 2008, Chris and I have shared wonderful memories. We can't wait to see what the future holds for our little Husky."

lives in Natick, Massachusetts, with his wife and young family. ➔ Kudos to **Uyi Osunde '03 (CLAS), '08 MA, '20 Ed.D.**, who was appointed superintendent of Stratford Public Schools in Connecticut. He most recently served as principal of Windsor High School in Connecticut. ➔ **Jack Sheedy '03 (BGS)** published his fourth book, "The Wanting Place," a poetry chapbook. In addition, his one-act play, "Moratorium," was chosen for a virtual staged reading by the Pittsburgh New Works Festival. He says he studied the craft of playwriting under the guidance of **John Long '73 (CLAS)** at UConn Torrington in 2000. ➔ **Oliver Hays '04 (CLAS)** has joined Zen Media as the director of media relations. Previously, he had been account manager at MSR Communications and proposal manager at Phillips Lytle LLP. ➔ **Nicole Snyder '05 Ph.D.**, professor of chemistry and assistant dean for research and creative works at Davidson College in North Carolina, was elected to the executive board of the Council on Undergraduate Research. ➔ **Erin R. Hatzikostas '05 MBA**, founder & CEO of b Authentic inc, was recognized as one of the *Hartford Business Journal's* 2021 Women in Business. ➔ Congrats to **Paul Brenton '06 6th Year**, who was hired as superintendent of Plainfield Public Schools in Connecticut, having previously served as assistant superintendent for Killingly Public Schools in the state. ➔ **Stephen P. Barry '07 (CLAS)** shared the good news that he was promoted in January to partner at his law firm, Latham & Watkins LLP, where he practices primarily in securities litigation and government investigations in the firm's Washington, D.C. office. He says he and his wife, **Kelly Barry '07 (NUR)**, live in Oakton, Virginia with



➔ After a year's postponement due to the pandemic, **Marie Hoyt '10 (BUS), '11 MS** and **Lucas Valentine '04 (CLAS)** were married in May in a small wedding in White House, Jamaica, where several other alums helped them celebrate including, from left, **Aaron Smith '09 (BUS), Cara Wallace '11 (CLAS); Hoyt; Valentine; Ashley (Wing) Vitale '11 (CLAS); Neema Vaheb '07 (BUS), '07 MS; Kathryn (Valentine) Vaheb '07 (CLAS);** and **Glenn Valentine '76 (CAHNR)**.

their two kids, both of whom are big-time Huskies fans. ➔ "Alena Dillon is one of my favorite authors and to read her journey through pregnancy is a great joy and heartbreak," writes comedian and actress Amy Schumer of the latest book from **Ale-na Dillon '07 (CLAS)**. Dillon's "My Body is a Big Fat Temple: An Ordinary Story of Pregnancy and Early Motherhood" comes out this October from Woodhall Press.



➔ Former National Labor Relations Board attorney **Alan Merriman '07 (BUS), '10 JD** has joined Littler's labor management relations practice group in the New Haven office. He

was a field attorney with the NLRB for nearly a decade, handling hundreds of unfair labor practice charges and representation case investigations. In addition to his legal practice, he also serves as a Major, Judge Advocate General Officer for the National Guard, where his duties include serving as special victim's counsel for service members who report sexual assault and harassment as well as providing counsel on cyber law and ethics issues. ➔ **Gideon Young '07 (CLAS)** recently published his first book of haiku, "my hands full of light," and has plans to publish an elementary reader, "Prince Rivers: A Leader for Justice." A stay-at-home dad of two, he is also a consultant for A+ Schools of North Carolina, which provides arts-integrated professional development for teachers. ➔ Friends **Emily (Neumann) Wasley '08 (CLAS)** and **Brittany Hart '09 (SFA)** attracted something of a following when they (continued on p. 50)





**KUDOS**

**Recent Nursing Alum Secures Patent**

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

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



➔ Kudos to **Theresa Valerand '09 (BGS)** for winning the 2020 Distinguished

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



➔ **Ashley E. Pereira '10 (CAHNR)** is making the grade. Pereira, of Windham, Connecticut, was included in *Marquis Who's Who* for her exemplary work in STEM education and career readiness as a teacher turned entrepreneur. She has worked to engage students both as a high school science teacher at Connecticut River Academy in East Hartford and as an educational research associate, a STEM curriculum developer, and an adjunct professor of science education at Eastern Connecticut State University. ➔ **Erika Bahler '10 (CAHNR), '12 MA** was a host for UConn Alumni's Husky Plant Night, held virtually in March. The workshop provided information on when and how

to plant seeds along with soil types, bloom times, and related topics. She is the plant science department head at Agricultural Science and Technology —Vernon Regional at Rockville High School and co-owns Meadow Brook Farm in Ellington, Connecticut. ➔ Kudos to **Colleen Teevan '10 Pharm.D.** for being recognized as an American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) Preceptor of the Year, one of four preceptors honored nationally. She has been closely involved with Covid vaccination efforts and, in fact, was the second person to administer a Covid vaccine in Connecticut.

➔ **Lesa Vanotti '10 MBA**, president & CEO of Torrington Savings Bank, was named one of *Hartford Business Journal's* 2021 Women in Business. ➔ **Stuart Ziarnik '10 (CLAS)** published a fiction chapbook, "The Vulture," which won the *Headlight Review's* 2020 Chapbook Prize and was a finalist for *The Hunger Journal's* 2020 Chapbook Prize. ➔ Congrats to **DeVaughn Ward '11 JD**, who was named 2021 Connecticut Attorney of the Year at the virtual Connecticut Legal Awards. Ward, who runs his own Hartford-based practice in criminal and civil law, was recognized for his work on behalf of individuals with hepatitis C. ➔ **Matthew P. Remo '11 (BUS)** was promoted to senior vice president, director of strategy and development, at Peapack-Gladstone Bank. ➔ **Matthew Talmadge '12 6th Year** was appointed principal of Westbrook Middle School in Westbrook, Connecticut. ➔ **Silvia Schaffer '12 JD** was promoted to senior counsel at the law firm of Wood Smith Henning & Berman LLP in the firm's Orange County, California office. ➔ The Philadelphia Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers named **Lindsay Chateaufort '13 (ENG)**



➔ **Courtney Chandler '21 MBA**, a UConn communications manager, and her husband Ed Dimio welcomed Theodore Michael Dimio on June 8 — which means Theo's already walked the commencement stage. Maybe he'll do it again in 22 years!

its 2021 Young Government Engineer of the Year. Chateaufort, who lives in the Fishtown neighborhood of Philadelphia, is the engineer of structures for Amtrak at its offices in University City. She assists in the management of the railroad's bridge maintenance and inspection programs and directs the annual inspection of more than 4,000 structures, including bridges, culverts, overhead structures, and signal supports. ➔ **Sophia N. Ononye-Onyia '13 Ph.D., '15 MBA** was appointed to the board of directors of Daré Bioscience Inc. She is founder and CEO of The Sophia Consulting Firm, which provides marketing and communications services to pharmaceutical, biotech, and health tech companies. ➔ Congrats to **Alyssa Lee '14 (BUS)** and **Nicolas Quadrini '14 (CLAS)**, who tied the knot in June. The two met through mutual friends at UConn, but didn't start dating until after graduation. ➔ **Kate Copeland '15 MBA**, assistant (continued on p. 52)

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➔ Alumni obituaries can be found at [foundation.uconn.edu/obituaries](http://foundation.uconn.edu/obituaries). To submit an obituary, please use the email and postal addresses above.

*Submissions may be edited for clarity or length.*

**TOM'S TRIVIA ANSWERS**

1. A, 2. C, 3. D, 4. B

director of University events and conference services at UConn, was named 2021 Member of the Year, which is the highest honor awarded by Meeting Professionals International. ➔ Kudos to **Curtis Darragh IV '15 MA** for being named School Counselor of the Year by the Connecticut School Counselor Association. ➔ Also crushing it is **Jennifer Birchwale '16 (CLAS)**, who earned her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from

Yeshiva University's Ferkauf Graduate School of Psychology. She is a practitioner and lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. ➔ **Raquel Herrera-Soto '16 JD** was hired by Murtha Cullina LLP as an associate in the firm's Energy, Environmental, and Utilities Practice Group. Previously, she had worked for the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for nearly 10 years. ➔ Congrats to West Hartford Public Schools Director of Equity Advancement **Roszena Haskins '17 Ed.D.** for being honored with the 2021 George Coleman Excellence in Equity award during Connecticut's State Education Resource Center conference on dismantling systemic racism. ➔ **Francesco C. Mioli '17 JD** joined the Robinson+Cole LLP law firm as an associate in the firm's Real Estate+Development Group in Stamford, Connecticut. ➔ In other legal career news, the Connecticut law firm of Cramer & Anderson LLP hired **Matthew J. Sponeheimer '17 JD** as a trust and estates associate. ➔ In addition, **Emily Towill '18 (BUS)** graduated from Boston University School of Law and will work in Boston for Dechert LLP. ➔ And **Michael DiTommaso '18 JD** was hired as an associate at Fox Rothschild LLP in the firm's Greenville, South Carolina, office. He was previously a clerk for Judge Alfred V. Covello of the U.S. District Court for the District of Connecticut. ➔ **Erin Mason '18 MA** was hired as university registrar for Ball State University. Previously, she was UConn's associate registrar. ➔ Congrats



➔ **Grace Vallo '17 (BUS)** sent an exciting update: Because of my recipe blog Tastefully Grace, I was asked to be a contestant on Food Network's new show "Money Hungry." I put my taste buds to the test with a series of increasingly difficult tasting challenges. Using just my taste and food knowledge to define ingredients and dishes — sometimes blindfolded! — stretched my food brain, forcing me to search through a repository of culinary memories, including when I was very young and in the kitchen as my dad's little sous chef. Richard Dino, my most influential UConn business professor, told us at the close of class to, "Enjoy the journey." It's in these moments where his words still resonate.

to **Brenna Menchin '18 (CLAS)**, who graduated from Sacred Heart University in May with a master's degree in speech-language pathology and is a pediatric speech therapist at S&L Therapy in Brookline, Massachusetts. ➔ And kudos to **Madhavi Gorusu '19 MBA**, a hematologist and oncologist with Starling Physicians, who was named one of *Hartford Business Journal's* 2021 Women in Business.



➔ **Andre Waldeck '20 (SFA)** is making career moves. He joined the Asset

Wealth Management technology division of J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. in Dallas, Texas. Waldeck, who majored in Digital Media & Design at UConn, previously worked as an IT Help Desk analyst at Revolution Retail System. ➔ Congrats to former assistant principal **Tricia Lee '20 6th Year**, who was promoted to principal of The Friendship School in Waterford, Connecticut. ➔ **Allison Butkus '21 (CAHNR)** of Waterbury, Connecticut, was hired as a mortgage advisor at Province Mortgage Associates Inc. While attending UConn, she worked as an emergency department technician at the Hospital of Central Connecticut in New Britain.

**JOB ENVY**

**Olympic Flag Bearer**

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

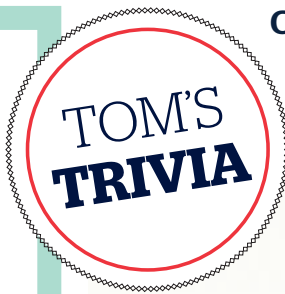
"It's an incredible honor to be selected the flag bearer for Team USA," said Bird. "It's an honor that is bigger than the moment in that you've been selected by your fellow Team USA athletes to represent the entire delegation, and it will last forever ... Also, I know this isn't about me. This is about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



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## CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO TOM'S TRIVIA!

Go to [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu) or p. 52 to see if you know as much as King of UConn Trivia Tom Breen '00 (CLAS).

**1. The first international student at UConn arrived in 1907. Which nation did this student call home?**

- A: Ecuador B: Canada  
C: Bulgaria D: Japan

**2. What is the oldest building on campus that was originally constructed as student housing?**

- A: Whitney Hall  
B: Gulley Hall  
C: Storrs Hall  
D: Sprague Hall

**3. First-years arriving at UConn in the fall experience multiple Convocation and Husky WOW events. In the early years, though, the welcome that new students received could be a bit more unruly. Which of these was *not* something UConn freshmen had to experience in the first half of the 20th century?**

- A: Rope pull with the sophomore class  
B: "The Trip to Eagleville"  
C: "The Cannon Rush"  
D: Midnight food fight with the sophomore class

**4. Convocation was an annual event at UConn from 1935 to 1962, when President Homer Babbidge decided to forgo the custom. When it was reestablished in 1988, President John Casteen invited what prominent speaker to ensure robust attendance at the "new" event?**

- A: Isaac Asimov  
B: Elie Wiesel  
C: Mr. Rogers  
D: Gary Hart



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