

IN THIS ISSUE: A SHOCKING BETRAYAL, A STUNNING FIND, AND A REPUTATION RECLAMATION

# UConn

MAGAZINE

FALL 2022



## Surviving "Survivor"

**Alum Chanelle Howell  
wanted her very presence  
on Season 42 of "Survivor" to  
make a difference. It did.**





SNAP!

### Destination: Dairy Bar

Full-time research professor and part-time photographer **Milton Levin '04 Ph.D.** captured a father and sons paramotoring onto Horsebarn Hill from Bolton, Connecticut. **John Dean '89 (BUS)**, right, **Kevin '21 (BUS)**, left, and **Jason '26 (SFA)** were seeking a half gallon of chocolate peanut butter ice cream and three spoons. For more photos, visit [s.uconn.edu/fliers](http://s.uconn.edu/fliers).





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Show superfan Margot Leitman spends a day in the urban jungle — mining for secrets and foraging for smoothies — with recent “Survivor” contestant Chanelle Howell ’14 (CLAS). *By Margot Leitman*
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Alums who climb glaciers, get inside the minds of babies, train members of the Coast Guard in Japan, make money, make the best chili, make the cover of massive video games — plus Class Notes, Tom’s Trivia, and more.



**On the Cover:**  
“Survivor” contestant Chanelle Howell ’14 (CLAS) the wilds of Fiji on the set of Season 42 and, on page 18 and above, in the wilds of Manhattan’s Central Park.

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**Tom’s Trivia** Photo courtesy UConn Fire Department

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FROM THE EDITOR

HUSKIES IN THE WILD

This summer, my colleague Jen Cote and her family were at Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming hiking a fairly remote trail around Jenny Lake when they heard someone call out, “Hey did you go to UConn?”

The park ranger approaching on the other side of the trail, who had spied Cote’s UConn T-shirt, turned out to be none other than Hannah Bacon ’15 (CLAS), who made headlines in our magazine (“3,081 Miles,” Fall 2021) and across social last year when a job loss prompted her to not find a new job; but instead walk across the country solo to raise money for climate action. Cote remembered Bacon’s story well and admits, “We were a little starstruck.”

And they had a lot of questions for Bacon. “She told us about her trek cross country, which was great for my kids. It’s one thing to be told you can do or be anything. But it’s another thing to see it.” It was particularly inspirational, Cote says, because Bacon felt like one of them. “She’s local, a UConn grad, she decided to go on this amazing adventure, and then did it — and now she’s a park ranger on the other side of the country.”

Cote says they talked about Bacon throughout the rest of their trip. “I didn’t expect to connect with someone from UConn — especially in the middle of the woods in Wyoming!” And all because of a UConn shirt.

We love stories of encounters like these and random photos of UConn gear in the wild. Please share them with us so we can include them in our upcoming “In the Wild” feature in the UConn Nation section of the magazine.

*Lisa Stiepock*



Hannah Bacon ’15 (CLAS), top, on the Grand Teton National Park trail where Jen Cote and her family ran into her. Below, Cote and daughter Kaida at Jenny Lake on that same trip.





## FEEDBACK

We want to hear from you! Please share thoughts, insights, discrepancies, recollections, photos — 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 comments on our last issue, edited for clarity and length. Find more at [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu).

### "There Was Suddenly a Fatwa on My Head"

➔ I read with some interest that one of your UConn programs helps scholars leave persecution due to voicing opinions overseas. I was particularly happy to see that Marvi Sirmed, who fought fatwa in her home country, was helped. I appreciate her service to Asian women and wish her well in her future work. I handle victim's rights cases in immigration and feel strongly about the subject.

Roshani M. Gunewardene '88 JD, Fort Myers, Florida, via email



### "I Wouldn't Have Listened to Me"

➔ Montville's article in the *Globe* (in the '80s I believe) comparing the heartache of being a Red Sox fan to sticking your hand in a drill press ("at least you knew when the pain would start") was a classic!

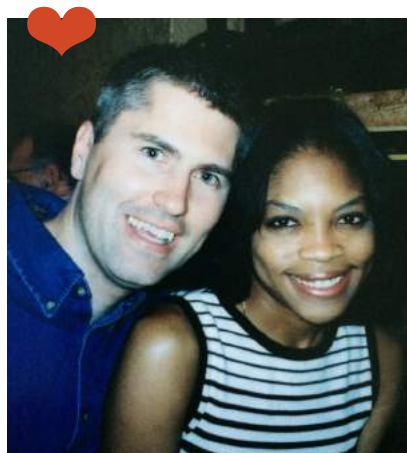
Carol Gigi Stanley

### Play Ball

➔ I remember both Dan and Jim from UConn. Great umpires and even better people. Happy for their success. Pat Sully

### Polo Championship

➔ This alum remembers crossing the hay-covered dressage ring in the barn to get to her psychology class on the second level. Congratulations! Sandi Bradley



➔ The UConn love stories keep coming — find the latest on our website, including this issue's spotlighted tale from Chuck Tennyson '88 (CLAS), '96 MBA and Donna-Marie Tennyson '95 MBA, whose kids (all Huskies, too) insisted they share their Storrs-centric love story, along with then (above) and now photos.



Chris Marciniak '10 (CLAS), Brooklyn, New York, via Facebook

### Giants Among Us

➔ What a lovely tribute to my @UConnHistory colleague and friend Frank Costigliola. So many @SHAFRhistorians have shared his hospitality and walked his [farm and woods] in addition to benefiting from his scholarship and mentorship. One of the truly best people I have met in academia. Or anywhere. He lives a life of balance like few people I know.

UConn history associate professor Bradley Simpson, via Twitter

### "I Wouldn't Have Listened to Me"

➔ I enjoyed the most recent edition of *UConn Magazine*, especially Leigh Montville's piece. Montville still has much to teach us ... and not just about journalism from a bygone era. He shows us how to give back, to share his time and talent with UConn students — as he did with me in 1975 when I was editor-in-chief of *The Daily Campus*. Montville's mentoring ways are reminiscent of those of Wallace Moreland 1926 (CLAS), a former editor-in-chief of the *Connecticut Campus* and my own visitor from a bygone era. Thankfully, this kid listened.

Arthur M. Horwitz '76 (CLAS), West Bloomfield, Michigan, via email

## THIS JUST IN

### OUR 17TH PRESIDENT

Radenka Maric, an acclaimed innovator in clean energy technology whose leadership as a vice president helped propel UConn to new heights in research funding, has been selected as the University's 17th president.

Maric has served as UConn's interim president since Feb. 1, 2022, a period in which she raised its national profile by hosting leaders of several top federal agencies for on-campus visits to demonstrate UConn's successes in various areas of research and academia. She brought a highly student-centric focus to her interim presidency and says she will continue and expand those efforts in concert with others at UConn to prioritize student success and inclusion, access to mentoring and life-transformative educational experiences, and their personal and professional fulfillment.

"Being named president of the University of Connecticut is the honor of a lifetime. I am proud and humbled to have your confidence and your trust," Maric told the Board of Trustees. "I will work every day to continue to earn it, as well as that of our students, faculty, staff, alumni, patients, and many supporters."

This news arrived as presses were warming up to print this magazine. Find more at [s.uconn.edu/rmaric](http://s.uconn.edu/rmaric).



## ON CAMPUS

### THE CLASS OF 2026

Undergraduate Student Government president Mason Holland '23 (CLAS) ignites the flame at Gampel Pavilion's Torch Lighting Convocation Ceremony for the Class of 2026 on Aug. 26. Among this year's record 4,075 new Storrs-based Huskies (statewide the class is 5,800 strong), more than one-quarter are starting a new tradition as the first generation in their families to attend college, a record high 47% are students of color, and 175 members are high school valedictorians or salutatorians.



CHECKING IN WITH

## FATHER-DAUGHTER DANCE

Marc D’Amelio ’91 (CLAS) describes himself as a man without a lot of hobbies. But he helped his daughters, Dixie, 21, and Charli, 18, rise to TikTok stardom, moved cross-country, partnered with Abercrombie & Fitch on a new line of branded apparel, became a reality TV star, and won Best New Unscripted TV Series at the MTV Movie Awards for “The D’Amelio Show,” all in just three years during a pandemic.

And while he may have moved to Hollywood, D’Amelio still has hometown and Husky pride. The native Norwalker’s next project, branded D’Amelio Huskies Collective, was created to help UConn student-athletes develop and control their own name, image, and likeness. We checked in with him while he was back home in Norwalk in July.

**You are known as a true-blue Husky.** When I went there, UConn was an underdog — it was a school that was affordable. I transferred from community college and it’s almost as if I grew with the school. I remember telling my grandmother I was going to UConn, and she thought I was going to Canada! And now when you say UConn, there’s not a person who follows colleges who doesn’t know where it is.

And my love of the City of Norwalk is so important to me, for similar reasons. We’re surrounded by all these affluent towns, and sometimes the schools get a bad rap. When we had the opportunity to move to Westport or Darien, we came back here to Norwalk. I’m loyal in that way. And that’s the same way I feel about UConn. If I can create a buzz about the University of Connecticut, if I can use my platform to do that, I’ll do it. I do think sometimes people who follow me for Dixie and Charli information go, “Aw, he’s talking about the University of Connecticut again!”

**You were a DJ at Huskies. What kind of music did you play?** R&B and hip-hop. It happened as kind of a fluke. It was one of those long weekends where everyone came back on Sunday. The manager said, “We have such a crowd, I wish we had some music,” and I said, “This kid has all these records, I can go grab ’em,” and then we performed, and the place went wild. The manager said, “Do you want to work here?” And I ended up becoming the Thursday night DJ.

**Tell us a little about the D’Amelio Huskies Collective.** What I’m trying to do is create a personal brand development collective, where we bring not just the best basketball players, the best football players, but have a diverse collective — I want to have at least one student from every sport and help them develop deals with companies.

**Your daughter Charli is one of TikTok’s biggest stars. How did you feel when she first became internet famous?** I was comfortable with social media. I grew up in a single-parent household, and I had an abundance of freedom. I never abused that freedom. With that said, I know that a lot of parents rightfully worry about the influence of social media. I started off with the girls on Mac computers with cameras on them, then iPhones, and then we gradually got into social media with the understanding that you have a personal brand, and what you put out there could potentially be out there forever. I do think it’s really important now, for whatever you’re doing, to be involved in social media. People say “I graduated from Harvard or Yale,” and I think, “Wow, they must be really smart.” And if someone has two million followers on Instagram, I think, “What do they do?”

**Do you have any concerns about privacy?** I can tell you a hundred stories about how we’ve had to navigate through the notoriety. People knocking on our door at all hours of the day, caravans of kids rolling up, getting swatted — someone delivering a hundred pizzas to our house. All those things happen.

But most of the interactions we have with the public are incredible — little girls crying when they see Charli. I try to remind my kids what they were like when they had their first interaction with someone they idolized. They’re really good. They have a clothing brand called Social Tourist, and we opened a store with Abercrombie & Fitch. There were like 300 people out front, and they sat and had a personal interaction, sometimes a minute or longer, with every single person there.

**What is most fun about your family’s life now?** It’s so surreal, it’s just nonstop cool stuff and I’m constantly pinching myself. Seeing my daughter Dixie perform at Madison Square Garden was pretty cool. And winning the MTV Unscripted award as a family — I grew up with MTV, and to get that popcorn award was pretty cool.

**MTV! Since you brought it up: Beavis or Butthead?** Oh man. Probably Beavis. They’re both amazing.

**MTV is such a cultural icon.** Growing up in the 80s, when MTV first started, from Michael Jackson to Aerosmith — and Run-DMC put hip-hop on the map — that represented culture in general. It was such a big part of my life. Now for my kids, there are hundreds of places. YouTube, social media. A show on Netflix. A show on Hulu. They have to go everywhere. I don’t know how they navigate through all the streaming services, all the social media platforms. It’s pretty wild how they get their culture. —KIM KRIEGER



D’Amelio at his family’s new Norwalk, Connecticut, home in July, proudly sporting some Husky kicks. Find more of our interview at [s.uconn.edu/damelio](https://s.uconn.edu/damelio).





GOOD TASTE

## THE KITCHEN QB

Jordan Mazur '12 (CAHNR) dreamed of making the National Football League when he graduated from UConn, and he has accomplished that goal with the San Francisco 49ers.

No, you won't see him on TV with a jersey and helmet as a player — Mazur works behind the scenes, helping the players on the field stay in top shape as the director of nutrition for the NFC West team.

"I oversee every player's nutrition and have an individualized meal plan for each of them," says Mazur, a native of Suffield, Connecticut. "I monitor body weight and composition and,

along with our sports medicine team, look at a player's blood work for micro-nutrient, vitamin, and mineral levels."

Then he uses the data to customize what each player eats, working with the team chefs and cafeteria staff on what is served during training camp, on practice, recovery, and game days, at the team hotel, and even on the plane for road games.

The meals blend lean protein, whole grains, and plenty of fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats. Mazur's players, for example, might have a choice between grass-fed flank steak with brown rice, broccoli, organic berries, avocado, and

Mazur shows off his "performance and recovery" spin on the charcuterie board.

almonds or grilled free-range chicken breast with quinoa, Brussels sprouts, kiwi, avocado, and pistachios.

Mazur says a sports nutrition class he took at UConn piqued his interest in the field. "The class opened my eyes to how nutrition can help enhance performance in athletes," he says. Nancy Rodriguez "really was the first professor to inspire me and let me know that this field was even something I could ... make a career in."

He added a master's degree from Florida State and had stints with the Philadelphia Eagles and the University of California before landing his current gig six years ago.

Mazur, who was a member of the men's rowing club team as a UConn student, says he tries to develop trust with each player, much like a coach would. "Professional athletes understand how important nutrition is and what they need to do to stay on track. At this level, money and contracts are a motivation. This is their career and livelihood."

Even those of us who don't rely on nutrition to fuel our livelihoods could benefit from some of Mazur's professional advice. For starters, the 49ers try to use locally sourced food for the team as much as possible — easy to do in California "where so much fresh product is available within 100 miles," says Mazur.

"The bottom line is that food is meant to be enjoyed, and there are many aspects to it — social, emotional, community, religious, and cultural. It's about balance and moderation. I preach an 80:20 approach — 80 percent of the time you should be eating what you need to fuel your body and 20 percent of the time, eat the food you enjoy."

He admits to the occasional hamburger and ice cream (UConn Dairy Bar banana chocolate chip is his favorite flavor: "Don't knock it 'til you try it").

He knows that people who see him with those foods tend to question whether a dietitian should be eating such things. "But if those are foods you

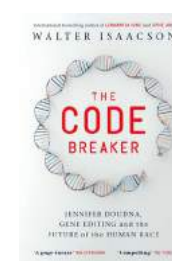


3 BOOKS

## THE BOOK JUGGLER

Management professor Nora Madjar was a speedy reader in her native Bulgarian and says she delighted in learning to read in English because it let her slow down and better absorb the material. Now, she toggles between the two languages when listening to autobiographies in her car and fiction while exercising or turning pages for pleasure before bed. Madjar, whose recent research confirmed assumptions that women pay a higher career price for remote-work interruptions than their male counterparts, is trying to find a balance like the rest of us — she finds associating different genres with contexts helps her keep them straight and saving fiction for workouts motivates her to move more to find out what happens next.

Just Finished:

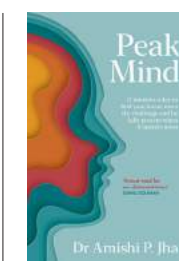


**"The Code Breaker: Jennifer Doudna, Gene Editing, and the Future of the Human Race" by Walter Isaacson**

I enjoyed the story of this Nobel Prize-

winning American biochemist on multiple levels and learned a lot about CRISPR gene-editing and the creation of mRNA vaccines. Isaacson explores the scientific process; the competition vs. collaboration approaches among male and female scientists; the rush to publish in journals; the importance of funding, collaborations, and value systems; and the lag between findings and practical applications. But more than that, the fascinating story of Doudna's path and how work affected her life allowed me to reflect on my own experience as an academic and scientist.

Reading Now:



**"Peak Mind: Find Your Focus, Own Your Attention, Invest 12 Minutes a Day" by Amishi P. Jha**

There is abundant evidence in my own research that

multitasking is ineffective and that we need to focus more on the present. But I was looking for new motivation to refresh my lapsed mindfulness practice when I found this book. Not only is the 12-minutes-a-day promise appealing, but so far I've loved the evidence-based narrative and the neuroscientific perspective on why we get distracted, how we pay attention (and to what), and the emotional and cognitive benefits of mindfulness training. I've already been motivated by "Peak Mind" to try some of its training practices to strengthen my focus.

On Deck:



**"Alone Time: Four Seasons, Four Cities, and the Pleasures of Solitude" by Stephanie Rosenbloom**

I have a pile of books on my night-

stand, but I'm particularly looking forward to this one about traveling alone to Paris, Istanbul, Florence, and New York during four different seasons. The book initially appealed to me because I love traveling with my family and am looking forward to a trip to Europe and my home country of Bulgaria with a stopover in Istanbul. Coincidentally, I managed to squeeze in a short, solo day trip to Florence during a recent work trip to Italy. I thoroughly enjoyed it and expect the book will help me revisit the experience — and maybe I will be convinced to find more alone time on my travels.

enjoy, it's OK to have them in moderation," he says.

"Maybe have a couple slices of pizza instead of a whole pie. Don't finish the whole pint of ice cream. It all depends on what your goals are. You have to listen to your body and know when you are full and when you are hungry, and have an intuitive eating approach."

—MIKE ENRIGHT



**Mazur's Cauliflower Curry**

Find the recipe for this and more Mazur meals at [s.uconn.edu/mazur](http://s.uconn.edu/mazur).





MOONLIGHTING

## LEO CAN HANDLE IT

From behind the wheel of a limo, Leo Lachut '89 (CLAS) has seen a lot of things. Couples on the first day of marriage. Couples celebrating 50 years of marriage. Rock stars, movie stars, sports stars. Prom kids, awards season revelers, concertgoers, concert headliners, and many jet-lagged executives. But only once has he met the same bride twice.

"I pulled up to the house and the mother of the bride comes out and says, 'Leo?' I'm like, 'How do you know me?' She says, 'You drove my daughter the first time she got married!'"

On the way to the church, the bride jokingly asked if they should share her secret with the groom. Lachut told her he'd have to keep mum.

"There's a privacy issue that is comparable across fields," he says with a chuckle. "In higher education, we have FERPA. And in driving, we have the limo code."

Education is Lachut's day job. As director of Academic Support and

assistant director of First Year Programs and Learning Communities, he oversees UConn's extensive network of academic support services.

"We work with high-performing students and students who are struggling. We create programs and do one-on-ones and workshops and presentations to help students with whatever is getting in the way of their success. It could be personal, financial, academic." In an average year, the programs he runs see more than 15,000 sign-ins.

The limo gig started when he was in grad school in counseling psychology. He saw a help-wanted ad for a livery company and thought off-hour airport runs might fit into his routine of classes and practicums. At the interview, the owner handed him a map and asked him how to get to JFK. Lachut plotted a route and was hired on the spot. This was almost 30 years ago, before GPS. Training consisted of driving around town and backing into different spots in progressively larger vehicles, culminat-

ing in a 30-foot-long stretch.

He liked the work so much, he stayed with it after getting his master's. These days he's selective about his assignments. After three decades, he's earned the right to turn down predawn trips to the airport. "It's mostly joyous occasions," he says of the job's appeal. "Bachelorette parties, birthdays, anniversaries. You meet wonderful people."

Including some high-profile ones. When U2 played Hartford, Lachut was part of the nine-vehicle motorcade that ferried the band from the private runway at Bradley to the concert and back. On another occasion, he took Will Ferrell to ESPN to promote a movie. "He was with me for a day. Just a wonderfully nice man."

Brushes with fame are an interesting perk, but what Lachut really enjoys are the milestone events of everyday people. "I love weddings," he says. "They're great occasions, but they can be nerve-racking." Someone forgets the rings, the parents of the bride get lost on the way to the venue. When things like that happen, which they routinely do, Leo the driver becomes Leo the counselor,

reassuring his passengers that everything will be OK. He'll swing back for the rings. The parents will be found.

"There's huge overlap in people skills," he says of his two careers. More than once he's arrived at a wedding venue only to have the bride tell him to keep going, she can't do it. He'll talk quietly with her, urging deep breaths and giving her time to settle her emotions. When she's ready, he opens the door. "In my thousands of weddings," he says, "I've never lost a bride."

Recognizing his unique skills, the company has made a habit of putting

Lachut on sensitive jobs, such as Make-A-Wish events for sick children and their families. "Give it to Leo," they say at the office. "Leo can handle it."

Clients, too, appreciate his steady demeanor. Anxious parents have requested him by name for prom duty, knowing that if he's in the front seat their kids will be looked after. For years he had an elderly client he would take shopping and to the salon every week. When she adopted a dog, she asked Lachut to drive her to New Hampshire and help her bring the pup home.

Such long-term relationships are

not unlike the ones he develops with students. Recently he heard from a woman who graduated in the early 2000s and is now a social worker. She'd been thinking of him and the time she'd spent crying in his office, she said, and thought he might like to know she was in her career because of all the work he did with her.

"I'm still connected with students from my very first year. I hear about what they're doing and about their kids and I go to their weddings."

But only as a guest. Someone else handles the driving. —KEVIN MARKEY

UConn Talks

On keeping some small purchases secret from your spouse:

**"We find that when people engage or imagine engaging in this secret consumption activity, they feel a little guilty. And so then they're driven to want to invest back in the relationship. People are actually benefiting in the long run."**

Marketing professor Danielle Brick, *medium.com*, Aug. 28, 2022

On why it's so hard to change people's minds:

**"People form opinions based on emotions, such as fear, contempt, and anger, rather than relying on facts."**

Human development and family sciences professor Keith M. Bellizzi, *The Conversation*, Aug. 11, 2022

On being asked to share a fun fact for the *Hartford Business Journal* 2022 "40 under 40" interview:

**"I can solve a Rubik's Cube blindfolded."**

Operations and information management professor David Bergman, *Hartford Business Journal*, Aug. 15, 2022

On the much larger Andromeda galaxy colliding with and devouring the Milky Way — in about 5 billion years:

**"It's going to be like, *bloop*, done."**

Astrophysics professor Chiara Mingarelli, *The Atlantic*, Aug. 17, 2022

On Shinzo Abe, Japan's longest-serving prime minister, who was assassinated in July:

**"His personal vision for rewriting Japanese history, of a glorious past, created a real problem in East Asia, which will linger. It also divided Japanese society even further over how to approach its own responsibility for wartime actions carried out in the name of the emperor."**

History professor Alexis Dudden, *The New Yorker*, July 9, 2022

On forcing future lawyers to disclose information about sealed convictions, juvenile cases, or arrests:

**"It's very unlikely that the information that is produced is going to predict who will later engage in misconduct."**

Law professor Leslie Levin, *The New York Times*, Sept. 6, 2022



COVETED CLASS

# EDCI 2100: POWER, PRIVILEGE, AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

Who is the “public” in “public education”? Future teachers in this class tease apart that question, using history and current events to examine the inequities in our educational systems and to posit real-world fixes.

**The Instructor:**

At just 4 years old, Violet Jiménez Sims '02 (SFA), '05 MA, '11 6th Year told her mother she wanted to “be one of the little people that lived inside the television.” Today, she laughs and says she’s learned that no one lives inside a TV, and instead of being an actress, she spends most of her time in front of a different audience: college students.

“Good teachers have to be good actors,” Sims says. “You have to be entertaining enough to capture students’ attention and use improv skills sometimes when things don’t go right.”

Her path took a turn from fine arts to education during her senior year at UConn, when she was homecoming royalty representing the Puerto Rican/Latin American Cultural Center. “As part of that process I met a lot of people on campus,” she says. “One thing led to another, and there was an opportunity in the Dean of Students’ office.” Sims took the role and quickly knew she was on to something: She liked working with students. After earning her master’s, she taught Spanish and ESL (English as a Second Language) at Connecticut public high schools in New Britain and Manchester before becoming an administrator at a Montessori magnet school in Hartford.

“There was nothing else I had done before that seemed so impactful to individuals,” she says of teaching.

Now an assistant clinical profes-

sor in the Neag School of Education, Sims teaches “Power, Privilege, and Public Education” as a way to remedy an issue she saw frequently in public schools. “Equity work, diversity and inclusion — there were a lot of people in the field who just did not have any training connected to that,” Sims says.

Filling that gap when teachers are already leading a classroom is “almost a little too late,” she says, and that’s why she wants to help train students from the beginning.

**Class Description:**

“We talk about educational equity and justice — the historical, social, cultural, philosophical, and legal frameworks of education — and connect it to current events,” Sims says.

Categorized as both a general education and service learning course, it gives students an introduction into schooling in America while encouraging them to go out and experience it firsthand. By the end of the course, students pick an education topic to center an advocacy project around.

But first, students must understand the development and structure of education. As with most courses, there’s plenty of assigned readings, podcasts, and guest speakers. But many points are driven home through reflection exercises. One early assignment asks students to evaluate their own K-12 education in a five-page narrative. Students are often left surprised, Sims says. They’ll pinpoint things like dress codes, school demographics, and teachers, evaluating how those may have positively or negatively impacted their own education and how they see the world today. “This work is a



journey, not a destination. If you’re into social justice work and you want to make sure that you’re having an impact, you are constantly learning about it,” she says. “And in order to actually be good at it, you have to be extremely reflective at all times.”

**Teaching Style:**

Collaborative. Sims says she likes to shape the class with the students taking it each semester. And she’s intentional about it, from the projects she picks to how she addresses the class. Whether she’s listening to groups discussing a reading or reaching out via email, she often refers to students as friends.

Sims in an elementary classroom in Willimantic, Connecticut, in June. When her UConn students land in classrooms like this, she wants them to have had honest training in equity and inclusion.

“I want students to feel comfortable. I don’t see a hierarchy to their knowledge. I happen to have a longer amount of time on this earth than them, but my knowledge isn’t in any way superior to theirs.”

She’ll provide materials and facilitate a discussion but really lets the students decide how they let the information sink in. “I try to co-construct instruction with students,” Sims says.

She hopes to promote one of the most important values in her class: honesty. Sims knows it can be hard to

dive deep and understand situations from other perspectives. But it all starts with open dialogue.

“I’ll have people share all sides of the spectrum, from students who have experienced discrimination in different ways to ones who grew up in very rural, conservative places. I want my students to speak up if perspectives are clashing for them or they just want to know more.”

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

Being prepared to get on the teaching

**“Good teachers have to be good actors. You have to be entertaining enough to capture students’ attention and use improv skills on the spot sometimes when things don’t go right.”**

stage means knowing your potential audience of students — and yourself. That’s one of the main reasons, two years after taking it, Emily Gunzburg ’22 (ED) says it’s still her favorite class.

“Students who take this course learn who they are and how their identity impacts the way that school systems exist either inside the classroom as educators or outside of the classroom as taxpayers and potential future parents,” she says.

Gunzburg plans to become a teacher and sees how understanding her own privilege has already helped her engage students during her senior year teaching experience in Manchester, Connecticut, public schools. “Explaining privilege to fourth graders can be very difficult at times. But I think because I went through a semester of understanding it myself I was able to aid in some sort of recognition that I hope will help them down the line.”

And that’s one of Sims’ main goals through this class. “If we have reflective practitioners who understand how they enter a space and how to be responsive to everyone else in that space, I think they will be prepared for whatever changes.” —CAMILA VALLEJO ’19 (CLAS)



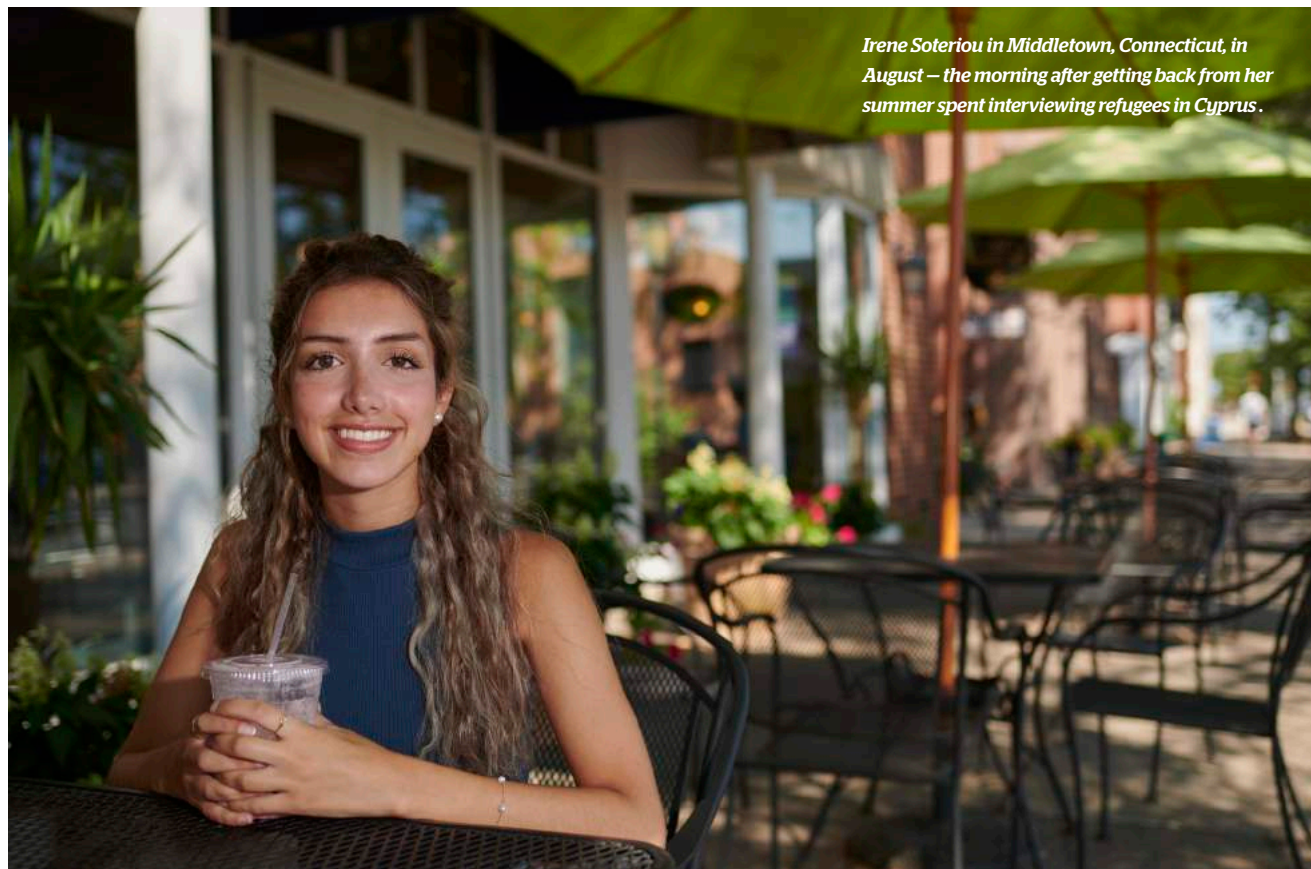
OFF CAMPUS

Summer School

UConn Marine Sciences Ph.D. student Tyler Griffin records the salinity and temperature of a tidal creek with University of Albany undergraduate Mya Darsan as part of a Research Experiences for Undergraduates program collaboration between Mystic Aquarium and UConn Avery Point that is funded by the National Science Foundation.







*Irene Soteriou in Middletown, Connecticut, in August — the morning after getting back from her summer spent interviewing refugees in Cyprus.*

OUR STUDENTS

UConn's Tenth Truman Scholar Is a Husky and a Cypriot

Irene Soteriou '23 (CLAS) has an easy presence, a quick laugh, and a fondness for whipped cream on her pancakes — which makes her seem pretty much like your average 21-year-old college student. In many respects she is, but in others, not so much.

Soteriou was born shortly after her parents, Julia and Marios, came to this country from the Eastern Mediterranean island nation of Cyprus. Growing up in Middletown, Connecticut, Soteriou says, "I was all girl. I loved wearing dresses with sparkles, and my favorite toy was an American Girl doll named Lydia." And then she laughs, adding, "I remember in preschool I wanted to grow up to be a princess."

In the intervening years, the sparkles in her wardrobe have pretty much gone by the wayside, and Lydia has been

put away for safekeeping. Soteriou's new career goals center on justice and human rights — decidedly more impressive than any run-of-the-mill fairytale princess. One thing that has remained a constant for the graduate of East Catholic High in Manchester, Connecticut, is her commitment to family, both here and abroad. She and younger brother Constantinos traveled to Cyprus every summer with their parents to visit grandparents and other relatives. "I love it there," she says, "but I can't imagine how different my life would be if that's where I'd grown up."

Soteriou spent much of this past summer in Cyprus, traveling from village to village interviewing Cypriot refugees. "I was speaking with folks who lost their homes in the 1974 Turkish invasion. It's tragic because many of these refugees will likely

pass away without ever having the opportunity to regain their homes."

She wants to stop human rights violations, particularly in the Middle East. "I don't see a lot of [human rights] decisions that I holistically agree with, and I think there's a need to find a different way of doing things; there's a need for a shift in how we engage with the rest of the world. It's up to my generation to do that. We craft the future for ourselves, so it's up to us to do better."

She hopes her unusually styled pre-law double major of statistics and cognitive science will come into play here. "I believe that there is still so much untapped potential for fields like cognitive science to revolutionize the ways in which we craft more carefully informed and targeted approaches to conflict prevention, crisis resolution,

and survivor rehabilitation," she says.

"My hope is that entering the foreign policy realm with the robust understanding of brain and behavior that I am gaining through my studies at UConn, along with the analytical tools that I am developing in my statistics classes, will enable me to lend certain unique strengths and perspectives to the table."

Soteriou's impressive combination of scholarship and activism has earned her extraordinary accolades. In 2021, she was named a Newman Civic Fellow, and in the spring of 2022 she added the designation of Truman Scholar, marking only the 10th time since 1986 that a UConn student has won the prestigious honor, which recognizes future leaders in public service.

Among her many student commitments, she serves as speaker of the Undergraduate Student Government, and is founder and president of the UConn Human Rights Symposium. She also founded and serves as executive director of the Student Coalition for Refugees and contributes as a student representative on the President's Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility. This past year she joined UConn's fourth cohort of Bold Scholars — a program that fosters leadership skills in young women.

"Bold is the best thing I've done at UConn," she says of the two-year program students enter in their junior year. "It's about building strong relationships with ambitious women from a number of different fields."

The program's director, Liza Boritz '01 (SFS), '22 Ph.D., calls Soteriou "amazing" and notes how at a weeklong spring retreat, "her energy, passion, and sense of humor were infectious for her peers and me. It's hard not to be inspired by her words and her work."

Amid all the accolades, Soteriou says she continues to ground herself in family advice. Cheering her on from Cyprus as she prepared for her Truman Scholar interview, her paternal grandfather, Kostas, told her she was "stubborn, but in a good way." —SHEILA FORAN '83 (BGS), '96 Ph.D.



UConn Wiki

OUR LIBRARIAN

Edwina Whitney (1868–1970) was the second and longest-serving head librarian at UConn, then Connecticut Agricultural College. Upon retiring in 1934, she earned the rank of emeritus librarian and an honorary Master of Letters — the only honorary degree UConn awarded an employee during its first century of existence. The Edwina Whitney Residence Hall, still an active residence hall, was built in 1938.

Whitney's connection to the University ran deep. She was born in a small white house next to Mirror Lake. Old Whitney Hall, named after her father, became the first major campus building in 1881. Hired by UConn in 1900, she worked solo in a cramped two-room library, its 8,000 books illuminated only by kerosene lamps. By the time she retired, the library was electrified and its collection had quadrupled in size. These improvements reflected what Whitney saw firsthand: UConn's rise from country farmstead to premier state university.

For her 100th birthday, UConn President Homer D. Babbidge presented her with a plaque (above) and a cake with 100 candles. She even received birthday greetings from President Lyndon B. Johnson and Connecticut Gov. John Dempsey. —MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ





# SURVIVOR: MANHATTAN

**Superfan Margot Leitman spends a day in the urban jungle with recent "Survivor" contestant Chanelle Howell.**

**A**s torrents of rain pour down over the thin outdoor shack covering us at an uptown smoothie bar, my notebook is drenched, my phone is getting wet, and so are we. "It's A-OK," says Chanelle Howell '14 (CLAS). "I've seen much worse."

Of course she has. She was on season 42 of "Survivor."

First airing in 2000, "Survivor" is the granddaddy of reality shows. Originally intended to be a challenge of survival in the wild, the game has evolved into "100% a social experiment, unequivocally," says Howell. But there are still plenty of physical challenges.

I should know. I, too, have been immersed in "Survivor" of late. From my couch.

I recently discovered the show and have been consuming as much as I can to make up for 22 years of lost time. I flew across the country for this opportunity to talk with Howell and I am wondering about so many things. But first and foremost, I wonder why our smoothies are taking so long. Howell is unfazed. One of her big gains from "Survivor," she says, is understanding the principle of patience. Back in New York now, she's decked out in stylish running gear, with long hair, manicured nails, and her purple "Survivor" buff wrapped around her wrist, because she thought I would appreciate it. I did. Howell is even more beautiful in person than she was on my TV screen.

I work through my hunger-stoked lightheadedness and pull my frizzed-out hair away from my face to get started on our interview, smoothie or no smoothie. I am curious if she views the show differently, as a fan who has now seen the sausage getting made. Howell says she still loves "Survivor," she just sees it through a new lens.

"I view it now as more of a production versus a natural organic experience — which is completely fine, because it's not. We are not in a plane crash that goes down in the middle of the ocean and forces us to survive. I will never forget when I first started the show and we pulled up in the boat onto the

Peter Morenus





**"I used to be someone who played very small ... now I'm going to take up space."**

beach and there is a sea of hundreds of cameras and I was like, 'OK, this is massive.'

Our smoothies arrive and with them the blazing sun comes back, causing black eye makeup to sweat down my face. Howell's makeup and hair stay put. She's made for TV, and I have a feeling she will be a part of many more "massive" experiences. She doesn't complain at all in these extreme city temperatures (95 degrees in the shade) and never once glances down at her phone. She seems to be truly in the moment, something people spend a lifetime searching for. And that will last longer than any prize money — which she humbly reminds me many times she did not win.

Howell was the seventh person voted out of season 42 and the first juror so, yes, she lost the game. As a jury member, though, she stayed on the island and on the show after being voted out, in order to monitor tribal councils and then help choose the winner.

A year later, she seems settled back into her New York City routine. And while the island of Manhattan may not be quite as cutthroat as the show's Mamanuca Island, both are challeng-

ing in their own ways. In fact, a lot of what we talked about over our highly anticipated smoothies (seriously, what took so long?) was similar to a "Survivor" episode — with plenty of challenges, occasional rewards, scarce advantages — and many, many blindsides.

**CHALLENGE:** A pandemic hits and Howell gets furloughed from her job at a consulting firm.

**REWARD:** She has extra time on her hands to make a killer "Survivor" audition tape.

**BLINDSIDE:** She makes the show right after landing a fantastic new job at one of the top investment banks in the world.

► Getting cast was a big deal for Howell, who hails from Hamden, Connecticut, just north of New Haven. "This doesn't happen to people like me, people from my neighborhood, people from my community, it just doesn't." Trouble was she got the call right after getting hired at her new job, and doing the show would mean immediately asking "for two months off to run around in the jungle barefoot." Luckily, her new boss is a "Survivor" fan and

kindly allowed Howell to do just that. That serendipity put her in a mindset that she must be destined to win.

**CHALLENGE:** Howell needs to prepare for living in the jungle while residing in Manhattan.

**REWARD:** Central Park turns out to be a good spot for running hills and practicing fire-starting skills.

**BLINDSIDE:** Once on the show, she realizes you can train all you want for the physical strength and survival skills, but what really matters is your mental game.

► Howell trained hard for all aspects of "Survivor." After hours of demanding physical workouts, she says, "I would practice making fire in Central Park, I would go find a rock and get my little flint." She made sure the fires were small: "I'm not trying to get arrested before going on 'Survivor.'"

And while Howell, a communications major and human rights minor, read books like "Can't Hurt Me: Master Your Mind and Defy the Odds" by former Army Ranger/Navy SEAL David Goggins to ready herself, she found she was unprepared for how much she



**Howell's "tribe" did not eat until Day 5, when she and Hai Giang [seated] managed to catch a few minnows and coconut crabs.**

would evolve mentally.

"Significant parts of my personality have changed coming out of the show. Confidence. I used to be someone who played very small whenever I walked into a space ... versus now I'm going to show up as I am, I'm going to take up space, I'm going to be my full self."

It's the moments like this I want to shout, "I'm telling you, you did not lose!" I mean, here is a woman who can now make fire from flint, made lifelong friends, kept her dream job, got a free trip to Fiji, and gained mega confidence.

**CHALLENGE:** Get noticed in a group of people who are all trying to get noticed.

**ADVANTAGE:** Howell learned to stand out from the crowd after transferring from Eastern to UConn.

**BLINDSIDE:** It turns out everyone on "Survivor" is an uber-extrovert.

► "I think that I'm a pretty personable person, but once they put you in a room with other extroverts, you're like, 'Damn.'"

Very early in her season Howell dis-

covered some contestants had almost magical social skills. So she channeled some magical Husky thinking. After transferring to UConn from a smaller university, she says she learned the importance of significance, of wanting to be a part of something bigger than herself. "It showed me you can do more."

Talking to me for *UConn Magazine* is exciting and feels "full circle," she says.

"When I was back at UConn would I in a thousand years have thought I would be where I am right now? No! Not nearly!"

**CHALLENGE:** This season "Survivor" made everyone work for food and supplies, no freebies on rice or gear.

**ADVANTAGE:** Howell had experience roughing it and had even killed a chicken when volunteering in Africa.

**BLINDSIDE:** Unlike in previous seasons, there were no chickens to kill in season 42.

► During her time at UConn, Howell volunteered to work at an orphanage in Cameroon, Africa, with a group called UConn Empower. "It was one of those formative experiences that I put on the same level as 'Survivor.' It significantly shifts integral pieces of your personality and how you view the world."

Little did she know how good a "Survivor" proving ground it would be. In Cameroon she subsisted on mostly rice and tomato paste and walked to a river for fresh water. When she and her fellow volunteers wanted to celebrate their last day with a special chicken dinner for the children, she found — blindsided — she had to kill it herself. "You can't go and buy chicken breast in the store there, you bought the live chickens."

On "Survivor," she barely ate for 12 days.

"We won fishing equipment on day 5 ... we were like, 'OK, who wants to take out the fishing equipment?' And everyone was looking around, no one





wanted to do it. So I was like, ‘I will do it.’”

She and tribemate Hai Giang, with whom she is still very close, caught some minnows and coconut crabs and boiled them all together. That was the only time her tribe ever caught fish. They then survived on a few coconuts until earning rice on day 12. “The hungriest I was was day one ... but after a certain amount of time you’re like, it’s not coming, it’s never coming, you just get used to it.” *That’s why she was so chill about those smoothies.*

**CHALLENGE:** Represent as a Black woman in a reality TV world that isn’t always an accurate reflection of the world we live in.

**ADVANTAGE:** CBS institutes a diversity initiative that includes a target that 50% of reality show casts be people of color.

**BLINDSIDE:** Her season of “Survivor” brings the issue of implicit bias to the forefront — *after* Howell is voted off.

► In the episode following Howell’s elimination, as she sat on the “jury,” an important dialogue about race

began. She was unable to participate in the conversation because game rules dictate that members of the jury are unable to speak during the tribal council discussions. The next person voted off after Howell turned out to be Rocksroy Bailey, a Black man. Seeing Howell and Bailey seated on the jury shifted the game when Black contestants Maryanne Oketch and Drea Wheeler began a tribal council dialogue about implicit bias. It was an emotionally charged episode and, as contestant Lindsay Dolashewich stated, “a moment bigger than the game.”

“It was hard to sit in the tribal council and not say anything,” says Howell, “because it’s a shared experience that we all have and a fear that I think I personally had and a lot of Black people, Black women have when

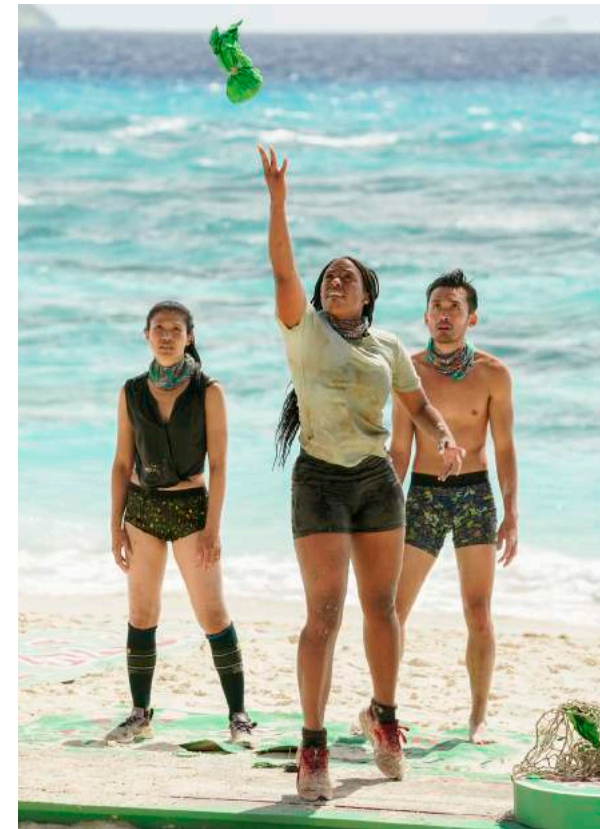
they go into the game of ‘Survivor,’ which is: Is there going to be a pattern continued?”

Oketch and Wheeler spoke eloquently about what it meant to play the game as a Black woman knowing that, no matter who you are as an individual, you are representing for all Black and Brown girls watching. In this moment, Oketch may well have cemented her eventual game win.

Though she wishes she could have taken part in the conversation, Howell is glad that her very presence as the first of two Black people voted off in a row set off what she considers a necessary dialogue. “It was a very important conversation to have ... I’m happy that America or the world got to see that conversation.”

It was Howell, in the finale, who cast

**Howell trained madly for the strength, endurance, and wilderness challenges of the show (even making fire with flint in Central Park), only to discover it’s all about your social game. The first member of the jury, she was soon joined by other voted-off castmates who would vote to determine the winner of the season’s million-dollar prize.**



the first vote for Oketch to win the \$1 million, the first black woman to win the title in 20 years.

“The demographic that is watching the show is diversifying, which means we want to see people on the show that we relate to ... and not just from a race perspective. For example, I’m a Black woman, there are so many different types of Black women. We don’t exist in monoliths, some of us are awkward, some of us are funny, some of us are serious, some of us are professionals, and so there are different archetypes within the sub-demographics, which I think ‘Survivor’ is doing a great job of capturing so well. I remember a world where I would be like, ‘Oh, man, if they cast this person they may not cast me.’ But no, we’re in a world where they might cast both of us. And someone else.”

On the extreme red-eye to New York (scheduled to leave at 11:30 p.m., took off at 2 a.m.), I had thought ahead to my transition from “Survivor” fan to “Survivor” writer (is that a job? Probst, call me). I worried I would no longer be as enthralled with the show after our interview. But I am. Because it’s casting people like Howell, having

## “... nothing exists besides the game.”

dialogues about implicit bias, pushing people’s bodies and minds to their limits, that makes the show in many ways mirror the everyday struggles of humanity. It’s been a rough few years for us humans — and watching people live in a place with no cellphones, or jobs, or money, or computers, or social media, is a welcome all-consuming escape.

“You get so entranced in the game that nothing exists besides the game,” says Howell. “And it wasn’t until months later when I was like, whoa, I definitely lost a million dollars, that’s crazy.”

I have a feeling Howell will find another way to earn that million dollars. She’s done so much already — probably due in part to an Excel spreadsheet she made of things that would make her happy and things that would make

her money. “Survivor” was near the top of that list. So were day trading, food blogging, and DJing, all things she has tried. She still has more to check off the list — Howell is just getting started. At age 30, she’s already been to 5 out of 7 continents. “I want to see them all,” she says.

But first, she walks me to my subway stop so I can go back, take off my wet clothes, wring the sweat from my bra, eat a giant Tex-Mex bowl, and sit in the air conditioning. Not Howell. She turns around to go for a run in the park.

Back in my room, washing the sweat-filled eye makeup off my cheeks, I think of something Howell said about “Survivor” that sums up how I feel about our day together:

“Even the seconds that I hated, I still loved it as a whole.” ☺



# Caribou and Coffee



How a chance discovery at a quirky coffee shop turned up one of Connecticut's most significant archaeological sites

By Elaina Hancock | Illustrations by Kailey Whitman



**“I looked down and thought, ‘That shouldn’t be here.’”**

One day in May 2020, while settling on the porch of the Two Wrasslin’ Cats coffee shop in East Haddam, Connecticut, archaeologist Mark Clymer glanced down and noticed something left behind by someone who had been at the same spot before him — around 12,000 years ago.

Clymer knew right away the small tool he spied was made of a type of sedimentary rock called Normanskill Chert, which could not have come from anywhere near where he sat but would have originated instead in the Hudson Valley region over 100 miles away.

Clymer, who’s studied the past and had an eye out for artifacts since his childhood in New York State, told the shop’s owner, Mark Thiede ’86 Ph.D., that there was something interesting underfoot in the patio area and asked if he could dig a few exploratory test pits.

Thiede gave the green light, and Clymer started digging a 50-by-50-centimeter (roughly 20-by-20-inch) test

pit. “I started finding more material, chips, and possible tools made of this Normanskill Chert. I knew there was something going on here.”

Clymer got in touch with archaeologists Sarah Sportman ’11 Ph.D. and David Leslie ’16 Ph.D. to tell them about the exciting find. “They came out to take a closer look at it, and the rest is history,” Clymer says.

In the two-plus years since then, the team has returned a handful of times, each visit yielding new and exciting finds pointing back to the Pleistocene epoch, which ended roughly 11,700 years ago. What started with pure — if well-informed — luck is now another site that is part of a growing list positioning Connecticut as a center of research about the region’s earliest human inhabitants.

**“We’re more confident than ever that this is the real deal.”**

At a dig on an overcast, late September day, the group works and chats while digging and sifting the soil and cataloging the finds.

Curious customers stop by while sipping their coffee. Some ask questions, while others insist they don’t want to slow the work, and just watch the dig proceed.

With hand shovels, a few team members carefully loosen the dirt, working around some large stones. The site is laid out in a grid pattern so the locations where artifacts are found can be recorded and cataloged. Loosened soil is loaded into buckets and brought up to sifting trays fitted with hardware cloth to separate out potentially exciting finds.

“We have an interesting and very early site here, and the location is perfect,” says Clymer, pointing past the patio toward a brook behind the coffee shop. “It gets marshy back there, and you can just imagine the migratory caribou herds coming through here, and these people were likely following and hunting. This spot is just ideal.”

Leslie mentions the site’s closeness to the creek is also likely a reason why the team does not need to dig down too



far: some pits are only about 11 inches deep, some 20. Even after thousands of years, the way soil has been deposited and removed in flooding events means the amount covering the artifacts is not as deep as one might expect.

Excavating what is left behind, layer by layer, gives glimpses into life across millennia.

And each dig has uncovered more supporting evidence to indicate that the oldest artifacts were left by the first people of Connecticut, referred to by archaeologists as “Paleoindians.” These people were hunter-gatherers, moving seasonally across the landscape at the end of the last Ice Age, between 10,000 and 13,000 years ago. “Sites dating from this time period are

rare,” says Sportman, the Connecticut State Archaeologist and a UConn Extension professor.

“A lot of activity occurred here over the last couple centuries,” she says. “We’re finding ceramics, we found a half penny from the 19th century last year. We have found old glass, coal; there is all sorts of evidence from other time periods. It really showcases how the landscape has been used by people over the past 10,000 years, layers upon one another.”

Leslie says that near the cafe’s fountain, the team found tools that would have been used to scrape animal hides to remove fat or sinew so they could be turned into clothing or shelter, not unlike the canopies that now shield



the dig from the rain. They also found projectile points that are considered very indicative of the Paleoindian period. “They are big spear points that have a groove through the middle, called a flute, that’s worked into the point,” Sportman explains. “What we found was the flake of stone that’s taken out to make the groove. We’re more confident than ever that this is the real deal.”

A case in point: the September 2021 dig turned up another fluted projectile-point fragment.

The creators of the artifacts — the Paleoindians — likely followed herds of caribou over long distances, possibly throughout the year. They were purveyors of fine-quality stone, choosing only the best raw materials possible for making their tools as they traveled.

The stone they preferred, though, is not found in Connecticut, which is why it stood out to Clymer. And it didn’t take long to unearth the site’s broader significance.

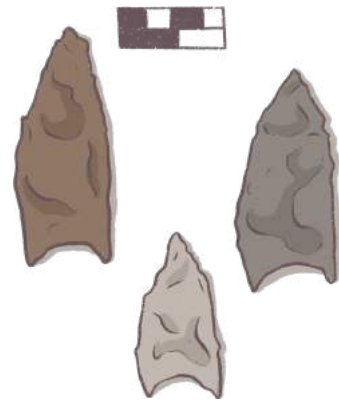
“We found the chip, the first real channel flakes ... within the first half an hour of digging,” Leslie says. “It was exciting because it doesn’t always work like that.”

### “I really think about how random it is that something like this occurs.”

The coffee shop on the site, Two Wrasslin’ Cats, is eclectic and cozy, the kind of place that’s full of stories, so it’s hardly a surprise to find something as unusual as an active archeological site in the backyard.

“This place here was built in 1784, and I bought it with the plan to turn it into a coffee shop in 2012, sort of an ‘in-between retirement,’” says Thiede, the owner, who earned his Ph.D. in molecular biology at UConn in 1986 and went on to a 26-year career in pharmaceutical research. He says he was inspired by the hip coffeehouse scene in Seattle in the late 1990s to try opening his own shop in Connecticut.

“I was a scientist and I thought I’d try to run a business. I had no idea what I was doing when I started, but I bought this beautiful property and



named it after my cats.”

The two wrasslin’ cats were Bruno and Larry, named for professional wrestlers Bruno Sammartino and Larry Zbyszko because they loved to tussle. The shop is adorned with all manner of cat-themed memorabilia, which Thiede says were almost entirely contributed by members of the community. The oddities are everywhere you turn; among the more typical cat figurines and classic art deco Kit-Cat Clock are such oddities as framed hairballs, Bruno and Larry’s ashes on the fireplace mantel, bread art, and needle-felted replicas of Bruno and Larry made for Thiede by a student from Maine.

Community connection is vital to the excavation project, too. From the volunteer involvement in the dig to children sifting soil as a hands-on archaeology lesson, the atmosphere is supportive and productive. The work would be too much for one person, and Sportman notes that without the help of the nonprofit Friends of the Office of the State Archaeologist (FOSA) and the community, Connecticut would be missing out on this important glimpse of the past.

During the September dig, one regular customer brought artifacts she had found over the years to ask the archaeologists about. Leslie and Sportman, taking their break for

lunch, were happy to describe the significance of the finds.

In her roles as State Archaeologist and an Extension educator, Sportman fulfills part of UConn’s mission as a land-grant university, serving as a resource on her discipline, engaging and sharing knowledge with the public. The Wrasslin’ Cats site is the perfect opportunity for laypeople to interact with the experts, ask questions, and experience the research process as it happens.

Thiede hopes to host an event at the shop for the team to present its findings. “I really think about how random it is that something like this occurs,” he says.

Random, too, that someone like Thiede owns this property. The team is grateful for the opportunity to conduct research they realize can be disruptive, especially at the height of the pandemic when outdoor seating for coffee shops was at a premium.

“Lots of times you have property owners like Mark who are just excited to be part of the process and learning about the site,” says Sportman. “Then other times there are people who don’t want anybody to know that they’re there, because they just don’t want the attention on their property. On private land or state or federal land, it’s different. This is a purely research-driven



project. There’s no reason to do it, other than the fact that everybody’s really interested.”

“Though I didn’t uncover the artifact, I’m a facilitator,” says Thiede, who is as fascinated by the artifacts as the archaeologists are. “They got more and more excited as they moved along. I found out that they designated the archaeological site as the Two Wrasslin’ Cats Site, and that was really cool. I’m just very humbled by their enthusiasm and what they’ve done over the past couple of years, getting the science done.”

### “There could be sites like this all over, you just have to know what to look for.”

The Wrasslin’ Cats Site story is a great example of why it’s important for budding and professional archaeologists to look out for artifacts in the ground.

“Yeah, you get a lot of sunburns on the back of your neck,” Leslie quips.

The most recent major Paleoindian discovery in Connecticut was in 2019 in Avon. Though most sites, like Wrasslin’ Cats, are found by chance, the site in Avon was a compliance dig, meaning the site had to be carefully excavated prior to construction, since it used federal funding.

The site provides the oldest evidence to date of human occupation in the state and, along with the work of Zachary Singer ’17 Ph.D. at the Templeton Paleoindian Site in the Litchfield County town of Washington, provides important new information about Paleoindian ways of life. The newly discovered sites have called into question old models for locating Paleoindian sites, says Sportman, and provided opportunities to apply new technologies to uncover more about what the Pleistocene landscape was like.

The people who left the tools at the Wrasslin’ Cats Site were likely not there for long, says Sportman, noting the lack of more permanent



structures like hearths or post holes. What the team has found so far shows a group of hunters and skilled artisans stopping for a time to make and repair tools, and perhaps process hides. Further digs and research, the archaeologists hope, will reveal more about the Paleoindians.

“We’re just getting started,” Sportman says. “There’s a lot of potential here for adding to the database of information about this period because we really just don’t know that much about it yet.”

Sites like Two Wrasslin’ Cats are important because they will help fill the knowledge gap about our earliest predecessors, and hopefully change the way history is taught.

“I remember learning history starting when the Pilgrims arrived,” FOSA member Scott Brady says. “We were taught that there were Native people here, but nothing about the 10,000 years before that. I think these sites can teach all of us a lot about what really was happening here for a long, long time. The signs of that are everywhere. It’s just not as obvious. There could be sites like this all over, you just have to know what to look for.”

Thiede marvels at how close the project came to never getting started.

“If Mark hadn’t shown up, this research wouldn’t be happening,” he says. “Somebody would likely have picked that stone up and just thrown it in the brook.” ☺



By Julia M. Klein  
Illustration by Christa Yung

# Betrayal

**“I love the hunt,” says alum Rosemary Sullivan, a queen of compelling biography, whose latest tome tackles one of World War II’s most persistent and villainous mysteries.**

Rosemary Sullivan '69 MA was a 12-year-old schoolgirl in Quebec, Canada, when she first read “The Diary of Anne Frank.”

“It seemed just otherworldly that somebody would be trapped in a house for two years without being able to look out the window or make any noise,” she recalls. Rereading the diary as an adult, familiar with the wartime context, “changed my relationship with Anne Frank,” she says. “I was deeply impressed by the intelligence and candor and the moments of satire. It was an astonishing performance for a child from the age of 13 to 15.”

Her re-encounter was a prerequisite to a project that has captured headlines — and stimulated controversy — around the world this year. “The Betrayal of Anne Frank” (HarperCollins) is Sullivan’s meticulous account of a 5-year-long cold case investigation into a longstanding mystery: how Anne Frank, her family, and four other Jews hiding in Nazi-occupied Amsterdam came to be arrested and deported. (Of the eight, only Anne’s father, Otto Frank, would survive the war.)

The investigation, featured on CBS’s

“60 Minutes,” identified a surprising culprit: Arnold van den Bergh, a prominent Jewish notary desperate to save his own family. *New York Times* reviewer Alexandra Jacobs found the argument for his culpability “convincing, if not conclusive.” The reaction abroad — at least from those countries with the greatest stake in the story — was less favorable. In response to a critical report by five Dutch historians, the Dutch publisher, Ambo Anthos, announced in March that it would cease publication and remove the title from bookstores. HarperCollins Germany delayed the book but plans to publish a revised version later this year.

“I never doubted, and I still don’t doubt, the integrity of the investigation,” Sullivan says, noting that her larger goal was to describe the context of the tragedy. While tracing the investigation’s labyrinthine twists, she paints a portrait of World War II Amsterdam as a site of scarcity, peril, and shifting political allegiances. Death shadowed the entire Dutch civilian population, but especially the country’s Jews, most of whom died in Nazi concentration camps. “It should be possible to under-

stand that van den Bergh was as much a victim as anybody else,” Sullivan says.

## The Biographer as Detective and Adventurer

This Anne Frank project was a departure for the 74-year-old poet turned biographer. An emerita English professor at the University of Toronto, Sullivan had authored 14 previous books, including 2015’s acclaimed “Stalin’s Daughter: The Extraordinary and Tumultuous Life of Svetlana Alliluyeva” and “Villa Air-Bel: World War II, Escape, and a House in Marseille.” She revels in tracking down archival documents and finding interview subjects in far-flung places. “I love the hunt,” she says. “The subtext of biography is as exciting as the text. The adventure, the search for the subject, involves encounters with people, geographies, political contexts. It’s a very enlarging experience.”

For this recent book, the parameters were more defined. An interdisciplinary team, relying on techniques such as artificial intelligence, crowdsourcing, and criminal profiling, conducted the research. Sullivan’s contribution was “an act of synthesis, pulling it all together,” she says, something at which she has long experience. Still, little in her early life predicted that she would become the narrator of such an iconic Holocaust story. “I didn’t expect this to be my trajectory,” she admits.

Born into an Irish Catholic family outside Montreal, she was the second





# “an embedded journalist”

of five children. Her mother's forebears immigrated after losing a child to the Irish potato famine of the 1840s; according to family lore, her father's father was a revolutionary who fled after the 1916 Easter Uprising. Rosemary's mother, Leanore, whose father was a Canadian cycling champion, met Rosemary's father, Michael Patrick Sullivan, Quebec's 1935 Junior Middleweight Boxing Champion, on a blind date.

“Growing up in Quebec, you have to have a sense of politics — or be aware of how power functions,” Sullivan says. She “fell in love with books in high school,” but her father wanted her to help support the family. At his urging, her high school principal counseled her that “university would be wasted on a woman.” She ignored them both and attended McGill University with the help of a Rotary Club scholarship.

Sullivan followed the advice of one of her McGill professors, who suggested she get degrees from three different countries. Her master's in English literature came from UConn, her doctorate from the University of Sussex in England. During her time at UConn, the poet Stephen Spender was a writer-in-residence, and Sullivan met Spender's longtime friend W.H. Auden, who was visiting. In 1986, she would win an award for best first book of poetry in Canada for her own collection, “The Space a Name Makes.”

Sullivan's first book, adapted from her doctoral thesis, was “The Garden Master: The Poetry of Theodore Roethke.” But she would specialize in chronicling the lives of literary women.

## Of Poets, Oligarchs, Revolutionaries — and Margaret Atwood

In 1979 Sullivan traveled to Czechoslovakia and the

Soviet Union, where she met dissident writers. Her glimpses of those closed societies eventually became valuable background for “Stalin's Daughter,” and the trip inspired her to join Amnesty International and found the Toronto Arts Group for Human Rights. In 1981, she organized an international congress in Toronto to generate support for politically endangered writers, which attracted such literary stars as Susan Sontag, Allen Ginsberg, South Africa's Nadine Gordimer, Argentina's Jacobo Timerman, and the Soviet dissident poet Joseph Brodsky.

A conference volunteer who became an editor later invited her to write a biography of Elizabeth Smart, a Canadian poet and novelist who had been a friend of Sullivan's. After “By Heart: Elizabeth Smart/A Life” (1991), Sullivan published “Shadow Maker: The Life of Gwendolyn MacEwen” (1995), on another Canadian writer, and “The Red Shoes: Margaret Atwood Starting Out” (1998). Atwood, arguably Canada's best-known novelist, was not initially keen on cooperating on a biography — “I'm not dead,” she said — but Sullivan proved persuasive.

Then the 2001 film “Varian's War” sparked Sullivan's interest in American Holocaust rescuer Varian Fry. Fry had been the subject of a recent biography, so Sullivan took a different tack. She focused on a chateau outside Marseille that became a refuge for intellectuals and artists assisted by Fry. Published in 2006, “Villa Air-Bel” won the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem Award in Holocaust History and marked her first immersion in what Sullivan calls “the most important narrative of the 20th century.” She and her husband, the Chilean musician and sound engineer Juan Opitz, also collaborated on a

short film about the villa.

A casual conversation with her then-editor at HarperCollins, Claire Wachtel, in 2011, inspired “Stalin's Daughter.” An obituary of Svetlana Alliluyeva had just run in *The New York Times*, and Wachtel told Sullivan, “You should write that biography.” Sullivan protested that she didn't speak Russian, but Wachtel insisted that might be an advantage: “It won't be one of those scholarly things.”

Russian-speaking research assistants helped Sullivan sort through archival treasures, including Alliluyeva's poignant childhood letters to her tyrannical father. And the cooperation of many friends and relatives, especially Alliluyeva's daughter Olga, allowed Sullivan to invest her story of a tragic, peripatetic, intermittently literary life with a rare intimacy. She recalls Olga telling her, “There were moments when my mother would be totally broken, and you would see her in the night terrors of a child, and there was nothing you could do to console her.”

The research took Sullivan to Moscow, St. Petersburg, Georgia's capital of Tbilisi, London, England's Lake District, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West in Arizona. “It was thrilling,” she says. Published in 23 countries, “Stalin's Daughter” won critical plaudits and a passel of prizes, including the Biographers International Organization Plutarch Award. But Sullivan derives special satisfaction from Olga's reaction: “You were on my mother's side.”

## A Divided Citizenry, a Complicated Villain

When Sullivan got a call from her agent in November 2018, telling her that HarperCollins wanted her for the Anne Frank project, she didn't sign on right away. She wanted to be sure. She reread the diary and dove into biographies of Anne Frank and her father, Otto, before deciding, “This is a really remarkable subject.”

Two Dutch investigations of the betrayal, in 1947–48 and 1963–64, focused on Willem van Maaren, who worked in the warehouse beneath the Franks' hiding place and stole from the

business. Both were inconclusive. The new investigation was the brainchild of Dutch filmmaker Thijs Bayens, whose grandparents had hidden Jews during World War II, and Dutch journalist Pieter van Twisk. They, in turn, hired Vincent Pankoke, a retired FBI special agent who had previously targeted Colombian drug lords and Wall Street corruption, to oversee the ambitious project. The HarperCollins advance helped fund the undertaking.

Sullivan flew to Amsterdam in May 2019 to spend a month with the cold-case team and visit key sites, including the Anne Frank House. Pankoke says she “acted like an embedded journalist witnessing and experiencing our every move and emotion” and was especially “fascinated by the emotional details of the time.” Sullivan's planned return to Amsterdam in early 2020 was short-circuited by the pandemic, but the internet and video conferencing kept her abreast of the investigation.

“The Betrayal of Anne Frank” begins with a background section on the Frank family. It then thumbnails several suspects, including van Maaren; Nelly Voskuil, the Nazi-infatuated sister of a Dutch woman who helped hide the Frank family; and Anna “Ans” van Dijk, a Dutch Jew executed after the war for informing on other Jews. The point “wasn't just to find who betrayed Anne Frank,” Sullivan says. “It was to give an impression of what it was like to live under occupation, in constant fear. And to ask for moral clarity in such a context is absolutely arrogant.”

Van den Bergh's name first surfaced in an anonymous note sent after the war to Otto Frank. Frank later copied the note and gave it to the second Dutch investigation. The cold-case team surmised that Frank came to believe in van den Bergh's guilt, but kept mum for fear of stirring up European anti-Semitism. “That put us, as author and cold-case investigative team, in a difficult position,” says Sullivan. “Do we say something that Otto Frank didn't?”

The notary's story is “really complex and interesting,” she says. Once prosperous and respected, he lost almost everything — his profession, his home, his security. His children were in

Sullivan at a book fair in Denmark promoting her acclaimed “Stalin's Daughter: The Extraordinary and Tumultuous Life of Svetlana Alliluyeva.”



hiding, and he and his wife were on the run. A member of Amsterdam's Jewish Council, with connections to both high-ranking Nazis and the resistance, he may have viewed his best option as trading information.

“Like Otto Frank's, his goal was simple: to save his family,” Sullivan writes. “That he succeeded while Otto failed is a terrible fact of history.”

After the book's publication and an initial burst of favorable publicity, a story in *The New York Times* showcased the skepticism of Dutch scholars, some of whom questioned whether the notary could have possessed the addresses of Jews in hiding. The Dutch publisher beat an immediate retreat.

“I was shocked,” Sullivan says. “The response — ‘We apologize to anyone who feels offended by this book’ — is such a capitulation to the ideological divisiveness of our time.” Sullivan's recent books chronicle just such “peri-

ods of enormous ideological division, which often lead to violence,” she says. “We're in a very risky period. We're living in these separate towers where we can't talk to each other. We're really going to have to be very careful, because something rather nasty is surfacing.”

At the moment, Sullivan is working on a collection of her travelogues, dating back to 1977 and including solo trips to the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, India, Egypt, Cuba, Peru, Mexico, Chile, and the Great Bear Rainforest in British Columbia, among other places.

“I returned to reading them, provoked by the lockdowns during the pandemic,” she says. She plans to thread the pieces with autobiographical meditations: “What in my childhood made me a lonely traveler? What did I learn from my travels? What will traveling be in the future?”

As usual, she says, “I'm enjoying the writing.” ☺





# G-MAN

## Frank Figliuzzi's FBI Story

By Peter Nelson

ing, was met with all manner of skepticism along the way. An uncle told him at a family gathering, "I don't think it's gonna work, because we're Italian, and I don't think they like us." Undaunted, he gained a bachelor of arts in English from Fairfield University in 1984, the first in his family to earn a college degree, and went on to get his law degree, with honors, from UConn in 1987. He knew a law degree would be attractive to FBI recruiters but

**T**he first time Frank Figliuzzi '87 JD applied to be an FBI agent, he was turned down. He was disappointed — but then again, he was only 11 years old.

"I loved the old Sunday night TV show 'The FBI' with Efram Zimbalist Jr.," says Figliuzzi. "These guys would solve every problem in the world in less than an hour — and they wore suits."

When Figliuzzi was two, his father moved the family from Port Chester, New York, where he'd owned a small Italian foods shop, to New Fairfield, Connecticut, to become a regional manager for ShopWell foods. Young Frank loved the idyllic suburbs, but found the city more exciting.

"As a kid growing up in southern Connecticut, our news came from the New York media market, stories of the FBI breaking up the mafia. These guys using their brains for justice and equality." Inspired, he wrote a letter to the New Haven field office, asking the head of the FBI in Connecticut for a job. "The guy wrote me back and said, 'Here's what you need to do — get back to us in about 15 years.'"

Figliuzzi's career plan, never waver-

says his classmates scoffed.

"They looked at me like I was crazy. 'You're gonna live on a government salary?' They were all trying to become a partner in some law firm. Within a couple of years, those same classmates were calling me, saying they couldn't stand the lack of integrity at their law firm, or they were bored out of their minds, and how could they get an application to the FBI?"

Integrity has always mattered to Figliuzzi, who became an agent almost exactly 15 years after writing that letter and the same year he got that law degree. He worked in Atlanta, San Francisco, Silicon Valley, and at FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C., where he was a unit chief in the Office of Professional Responsibility, the FBI's Internal Affairs component. In 2001, after the 9/11 attacks, he headed the Joint Terrorism Task Force in Miami, where many of the attackers had trained, and where the government feared more were hiding.

A week after 9/11, anthrax powder was discovered in the Boca Raton mail-room of American Media, publisher of the *National Enquirer*. Al Qaeda was suspected at first, though the search

ultimately led to a home-grown government scientist. Figliuzzi directed the FBI investigation from a trailer in the parking lot outside the American Media offices.

"It's a 60,000-square-foot, three-story building, filled with microscopic, deadly anthrax spores that killed somebody, and we're doing hazmat entries into the building. Meanwhile, I see kids getting on school buses. I see people out for their morning run, oblivious to the fact that down the street, an incredibly deadly attack has occurred. But that's why we have the FBI, to take that kind of burden on, so that everybody else doesn't have to worry about it."

That sense of mission and honorable purpose has animated Figliuzzi's life from the first day he set foot in the FBI Training Academy in Quantico, Virginia. After Miami, he became Chief Inspector and led the Cleveland Division in 2004. In 2011, he was named Assistant Director of the Counterintelligence Division, the nation's top spy-catching agency. Over his 25 years of service, he watched the FBI change from an organization that primarily investigated crimes after the fact to one that tried to predict and prevent them.

"Leading up to 9/11, the entire U.S. intelligence community was aware, because of the chatter being picked up by agencies across the globe, that people were being moved," says Figliuzzi. "There was talk of assets being in place, waiting for the signal. We knew it was going to be big, but not where or how."

After the 9/11 intelligence failure, the FBI hired thousands of young analysts to sift through all the data being collected and received.

"That was a huge strategic shift," says Figliuzzi. "You can imagine seasoned, grizzled FBI agents with guns and badges, and now we have young analysts embedded on every squad, in every office, who are suddenly driving cases, connecting the dots. I'm not sure I would get into the FBI today. Advanced degrees are now the norm for FBI agents. Today's recruiting needs are hard sciences. Biochem for work in theft of trade secret formulas. Foreign languages, people who are fluent in Urdu and Farsi. People with national





security intelligence experience. People with military experience. Wall Street finance experience for white collar crime. And, of course, cybersecurity is huge.”

Cyber has driven what Figliuzzi sees as another fundamental shift in what threatens us. It comes both in the way social media can radicalize and organize domestic terrorists like those who attacked the Capitol on Jan. 6 and in the way foreign actors can shut down, or hold ransom, American infrastructure like the Colonial Pipeline or the JBS meat-packing plant.

“This is the future. That’s how the next war starts,” he says. “We might already be in it.”

Figliuzzi perceives another shift in the bureau, one that is potentially even more critical. The FBI has a long tradition of policing itself and keeping its house in order, from vetting new recruits to polygraphing agents to debriefing missions in order to understand what mistakes were made. Outsider attacks undermine the agency’s reputation, even if they prove to be untrue.

The FBI, traditionally seen as a straitlaced apolitical law enforcement agency, has in recent years found itself at the center of multiple high-profile political controversies. From the investigations into former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s email use and into potential ties between Russia and Donald Trump’s 2016 presidential campaign to the recent search of Trump’s home in Florida to retrieve top secret government documents, the agency has received a mixture of withering criticism and high praise from both ends of the political spectrum in an increasingly polarized America. In one of the most explosive events in the agency’s history, FBI Director James Comey was publicly fired in 2017. The reason cited at the time — which was highly disputed — was his handling of the Clinton email investigation.

To avoid the appearance of partiality and to be transparent, said Comey, he famously closed, reopened, then again closed an investigation into then presidential candidate Hillary Clinton’s emails, prior to the 2016 election.



FOR FIGLIUZZI RETIREMENT MEANS LIVING IN TUCSON, ARIZONA, WORKING AS AN ANALYST FOR MSNBC, PUBLISHING A BOOK, AND HOSTING A PODCAST — “THE BUREAU WITH FRANK FIGLIUZZI.”

“Comey is a man of incredible integrity and ethics and yet, in his very attempt to do the right thing, he ended up having the exact opposite impact,” Figliuzzi says. You don’t have to be atop the organization for the burden to be immense, consequential.

“When young people talk to me about a career in the FBI, I say look, this is not a career or another job. It’s a calling. You’re never off duty. At a backyard barbecue or a kid’s PTA meeting, you’re that FBI person. You blow off vacations, birthdays, anniversaries, kids’ games. You look at your watch at five p.m., but the bad guys don’t stop at five. There’s a constant sense of urgency and of gravity. You make what could be literally life and death decisions, seven days a week, weeks on end.”

The FBI recognizes the stress that comes with the job, and the burnout that sometimes accompanies it, and allows federal agents to retire with 25 years of service — for Figliuzzi that came in 2012. “The good news is, you get to retire young,” he says. “The bad news is, you usually *do* need to retire when that time comes.”

For Figliuzzi, retirement has not been laid back. Last year he published “The FBI Way: Inside the Bureau’s Code of Excellence,” which is, among other things, a call for empathy, a path to recovery. In an era where every certainty is called into doubt, every bit

of news you disagree with is “fake,” and every investigation is “a witch hunt” or a “hoax,” Figliuzzi believes a return to the FBI way is both timely and crucial. The FBI was once considered one of the most trustworthy government agencies in the country, if not the world. Figliuzzi hopes it can be that again.

“When you bash the FBI so much that you demoralize the men and women who work there, you degrade their mission, and then, when an FBI agent knocks on a citizen’s door and shows credentials, that citizen has to pause for a minute and wonder whether they can trust that FBI brand. Then we’ve got a big problem. That’s really what compelled me to write this book.”

Figliuzzi also has become a frequent contributor on MSNBC and he hosts a podcast, “The Bureau with Frank Figliuzzi,” in which he interviews current active-duty FBI agents. He attributes his gift for eloquent speaking in part to his schooling at UConn Law.

“Success is about effective communication. If you can’t communicate your ideas effectively, you’re not going to get anywhere. One of the strong things about UConn was, they stopped you from talking or writing like traditional lawyers. Lawyers have had a reputation for really laborious, circuitous language. UConn really didn’t stand for that. I credit a great deal of my success in my career to them.” ©





**Ice Ice Baby**

Turn to page 41 to find out why recent communications grad **Luke Adams '20 (CLAS)** is standing barefoot atop this glacier in Greenland — and where he went from there.

**CLASS NOTES**



➔ **Lois Greene Stone '55 (ED)** reports that she and Dr. Gerald E. Stone celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary in June. They have 15 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren “so far.”

➔ **Hannah Riesenfeld Korobkin '56 (CAHNR)** writes from Phoenix, Arizona, with a life update. Korobkin has retired from her job as a physical therapist. She says that when she was at UConn, her professors, including Frances Tappan and James Bauer, were early pioneers in the physical therapy profession. She is hoping to hear from her classmates.



➔ Reporting in from another warm climate, **Jason Traiger '67 MA** says he is enjoying retirement in Sarasota, Florida, where he spends his time following local cultural events, bicycling, taking photos, and playing in the Manatee Concert Band.

➔ Also enjoying retirement is **Albert D. Surowiecki '68 (CLAS)**, who was a revenue officer for the IRS in the New York City area. He is a Vietnam veteran and lives in Woodmere, New York.



➔ **Anne Greiner '70 (CLAS)** shares that three generations of her family have graduated from UConn. Her son, **Neil Greiner '93 MS**, and her grandson, **Zachary Greiner '22 (BUS)**, just graduated in May. Congratulations to a true-blue Husky

family! ➔ **Kenneth Anchor '70 MA, '72 Ph.D.** was honored with the Presidential Award from the American Board of Vocational Experts at its 2022 convention. He founded the multidisciplinary credentialing organization 40 years ago. A clinical psychologist based in Nashville, Tennessee, he also has served as psychology professor and internship training director at Vanderbilt University. He has published more than 95 book chapters and journal articles, along with five books, including “The Disability Analysis Handbook.”



➔ **Virginia H. Fallon '71 (PHAR)** sent us proof that she still has the freshman beanie she got in 1966 before finishing the five-year pharmacy program. Thank you Virginia! ➔ **William R. Kinloch '73 (CLAS)** has retired after a long career in law. His educational website, [draftriotwalkingtour.com](http://draftriotwalkingtour.com), is based on his lifelong study of the American Civil War and includes a virtual walking tour of four important sites of the 1863 New York City Draft Riots, including photos of the sites as they appear today. He and his wife, Barbara, make their home in Cheshire, Connecticut. ➔ Bestselling author **Robert D. Kaplan '73 (CLAS)** gave a nice shout out to his English professors at UConn. He dedicated his latest book, “Adriatic: A Concert of Civilizations at the End of the Modern Age,” to two professors emeriti. “I dedicated the book to David Leeming and the late Charles Boer because their classes on myth and modern literature led me to a lifelong infatuation with learning and the intellectual

life. It is an example of how the liberal arts, as taught half a century ago, opened the mind of a working-class student,” he says. The book, his 20th, uses the travel genre to explore poetry, art, architecture, history, geography, and geopolitics. Besides being a novelist, Kaplan reported on foreign affairs for *The Atlantic* magazine for 30 years.

➔ Fore! **Andy Bessette '75 (CLAS)**, a member of the UConn Board of Trustees, was inducted into the Connecticut Golf Hall of Fame in June. Bessette, who is executive vice president and chief administrative officer for The Travelers Companies Inc., is no stranger to athletic feats. He was a member of the 1980 U.S. Olympic Track and Field team in the hammer throw, setting an Olympic Trials record. ➔ **Barbara Tryon '75 (CLAS)** has published “The Broken Flower Girl,”

under the name BJ Tryon. ➔ Speaking of novelists, UConn professor emerita and retired psychologist **Cynthia Herbert Adams '76 MA, '81 Ph.D.** just completed “The Red Toque: Love and Loss in the Time of Tito.” Based on a true story, the historical novel centers on a farm family in the hills of Slovenia, and the six children who must survive both World War I and World War II. Adams has also written a trilogy of horror novels and a memoir. ➔ **Nick Checker '77 (SFA)** won a grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development’s Office of the Arts to develop a solo-performer adaptation of his stage play, “Elegy for an Icon.” He also just published a new book, “The Legend of Kwi Coast,” a young-adult novel about a daring young dolphin. ➔ **Elaine W. Viens '78**



➔ Add another accolade to the **Sue Bird '02 (CLAS)** and **Diana Taurasi '05 (CLAS)** résumé. Theirs became only the second cover in NBA 2K game franchise history to celebrate WNBA athletes (Candace Parker graced 2K22).



**(CLAS)** shares a life update. She says after graduating from UConn, where she played JV basketball, she went on to earn a master's degree at Southern Connecticut State University. She is now retired from a career as a speech language therapist and lives in Signal Mountain, Tennessee.



➔ **Andy Young '80 (CLAS)** published "Work(s) in Progress," his second book of essays, many of which have appeared in newspapers in his home state of Maine. He jokes that given his financial acumen — he notes that he was asked to leave the School of Business in 1979 for failing to finish the lower division requirements in four years — he should be able to retire from his position as an English teacher at Kennebunk High School by the end of the 2046–47 school year. ➔ **John M. Barry '82 (CLAS), '84 MA** is settling into retirement after a long career in college communications. He retired in July as vice president for communications and chief marketing officer for the University of Richmond. Prior to Richmond, he spent 10 years at Baylor University, where he was vice president for communications and marketing and chief marketing officer. He also served as associate director/director of the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at UConn and then as UConn's director of communications and marketing. His family of Huskies, wife **Patty Barry '00 (CAHNR)**, son **Stephen Barry '07 (CLAS)**, and daughter-in-law **Kelly (Messer) Barry '07 (NUR)** helped him celebrate his retirement. ➔ **Leigh M. Skipper '83 (BUS)**, the chief federal defender for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, joined Duane Morris as a partner in (continued on p. 41)

➔ **Greg Farm '06 (BUS)** is a "chili head" with beginner's luck. On a whim, he and his brother, Dan, decided to enter the Meadowlands Race-track Chili Cook-Off in East Rutherford, New Jersey, the last week of January 2020, shortly before the pandemic shut everything down. The brothers entered in the verde category, a green chili typically made with pork, green peppers, various spices, and no beans.



"It was the very first time we entered an International Chili Society competition and the first time we tried to make chili verde. We won!" he says. "I guess we're pretty lucky, because I've heard from a number of people who have had success cooking chili that this kind of win is rare." Their victory qualified them for the annual ICS World Championship Chili Cook-off in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, in the summer of 2021. Though they didn't win there, Farm says he had a great time and even made an appearance on "Inside Chili Nation," which aired on the Cooking Channel last February. "Food has always been a real important part of our family," he says. "We were one of those families who, no matter what we had going on, had to eat dinner together at the family table. After our mom passed from breast cancer in 2016, it's something all of us surviving family members do to stay connected to her and one another." Farm, who lives in Abington, Pennsylvania, and is an IT director at Lennar Homes, plans to bring the heat again when he and his brother compete at the Meadowlands chili cookoff this November. In the meantime, he agreed to share his award-winning chili recipe, which will be featured in the upcoming "Seriously Good Chili Cookbook" by Brian Baumgartner, aka Kevin from "The Office." —GRACE MERRITT

### Northeast Connection Chili

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 pork butt, cut into ¼-inch chunks             | 1 quart chicken stock              |
| 2 Spanish onions, diced small                   | 2 tablespoons cumin                |
| ¼ cup garlic, minced                            | 1 tablespoon onion powder          |
| 2 Anaheim chilies, seeded, charred, and peeled  | 1 tablespoon garlic powder         |
| 2 poblano chilies, seeded, charred, and peeled  | Hatch green chile powder, to taste |
| 1 ½ pounds tomatillos, peeled and rinsed        | Salt and pepper, to taste          |
| 1 bunch cilantro, rinsed, big stems chopped off |                                    |

#### Directions:

In a large pot, sear the pork chunks a few at a time and set aside. Add the onions and garlic and saute until soft. Puree the roasted chiles, tomatillos, and cilantro together with a little bit of the chicken stock. Add everything back into the pot along with the rest of the chicken stock and all the spices. Bring to a boil, then simmer until the meat is nice and tender and the chili has thickened up slightly, about 2 hours. Adjust the salt to your liking. This chili is great served over rice!



### REMEMBRANCE

## MICHAEL ZACCHEA

I met Michael Zacchea '12 MBA when he came to my faculty office in UConn's School of Business and introduced himself as the director of a new program to help veterans start and run small businesses. That program, Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans (EBV), was created in 2009 by Zacchea and Mike Wisniewski, who were UConn MBA classmates and fellow discharged Marines. I learned during our meeting that Zacchea had been injured by a rocket-propelled grenade explosion in 2004 in the Second Battle of Fallujah in Iraq. My respect instantaneously went to the "in awe" level. Zacchea also said that he suffered a traumatic brain injury as a result of the blast. I learned later that, as he lay unconscious and exposed to enemy fire, three Marines broke cover under fire and pulled him to safety. He never learned their names and could thus never thank them. Later, I found a video interview online in which Zacchea told about overcoming huge bureaucratic hur-

dles in Washington to get an Iraqi interpreter into the states. The person, who otherwise would have been killed for working with Americans, stayed in Zacchea's home for some time. My awe was elevated. After its publication in 2017, I read Zacchea's memoir, "The Ragged Edge: A US Marine's Account of Leading the Iraqi Army Fifth Battalion." He tells how, as a major in the Marines, he overcame huge challenges to successfully train and lead into combat a battalion of Iraqi soldiers. To do so, he learned Iraqi culture. Shiites and Sunnis put aside differences under his leadership. He and his soldiers became devoted to one another. My awe grew substantially each of the three times I read the remarkable story. A few years into the EBV's operations, I attended an annual graduation dinner. I saw that evening that Zacchea's EBV program was about much more than providing skills to start and run a business. I observed powerful love for Zacchea from each and every graduating veteran. Moreover, there

was obvious love among all the graduates. Subsequent graduation dinners were the same. The event has always been profoundly emotional and made a deep impression on me. Mike gave unlimited time to each EBV veteran, during the program and after. It seemed like, in return for being saved in Fallujah, Mike was determined to save each of them — from post-traumatic stress disorder and suicide. And his love and leadership inspired them to help save one another. In this way, UConn's EBV program became a huge success. And Mike's efforts went way beyond the EBV program. He was very involved at the state and national levels in other veteran programs, humanitarian efforts in Ukraine, and helping to shape state and local politics.

Mike unexpectedly passed away in April 2022. It was a shock. The beloved EBV director was 53. Like many veterans of 21st century American conflicts, a "quiet wound" resulted in him making the ultimate sacrifice for serving his country. His was renal cancer, a common veteran ailment that likely is the result of proximity to burn pits. Mike will, fittingly, be buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. Mike always signed his correspondence with the Marine motto, Semper Fi (always faithful), and he lived by that motto 24/7. On Memorial Day this year, a few weeks after he died, I thought about Mike a lot. I wondered — have I known anyone greater? Given the EBV leadership I witnessed and what I read in his book, I realized that I indeed now regard Mike Zacchea as the greatest person I have ever known. —TOM O'BRIEN (CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MIKE WISNIEWSKI AND DAVID MURPHY)

UConn's EBV program has over 220 graduates, who have launched more than 180 businesses, produced more than \$150 million in gross revenues, and created more than 430 jobs. To date, 34 graduates have found career-track, full-time employment, and 21 have accessed career-track educational opportunities. Find more, including how to join those inspired by Mike to keep the program going, at [s.uconn.edu/bootcamp](http://s.uconn.edu/bootcamp).





MAKING GOOD

## RESCUE MISSION

Kinesiology alum Yuri Hosokawa uses methods she learned at UConn to train the Japan Coast Guard.

“In a game, the winning team gets a trophy or bragging rights. In a rescue situation, the winning team completes the mission and comes home alive,” says Yuri Hosokawa ’16 (CAHNR).

Hosokawa has dedicated her relatively short career to preventing heat-related deaths in athletics, notably as a key liaison between the International Olympic Committee and local athletic trainers at the Tokyo 2020 games. Now she’s set her sights on bringing the same knowledge to the Japan Coast Guard.

Hosokawa was pleasantly surprised when an officer from the Japan Coast Guard approached her at a 2018 lecture intended for other academics and exercise scientists. He wanted to find a way to help his staff at the 5th Regional Base tap into her cutting-edge research on exertional heat illness.

“Treating members of the military like elite athletes is more common in the U.S., but that standard of care isn’t happening on a global scale,” she says.

“It should be, but it’s not. This was a big opportunity to make change.”

Hosokawa had some experience working with other tactical athletes during her time at UConn’s Korey Stringer Institute (KSI), but she knew the partnership she was about to embark on would be forging new ground in her home country of Japan, where athletic training isn’t considered a medical qualification. She learned to take the leap and try something new from her academic advisor and mentor, kinesiology professor and KSI CEO Douglas Casa ’97 Ph.D. “He’s always looking for that new spark, a way to connect A and B even when that seems impossible. I took that philosophy with me.”

So Hosokawa started work with her new team. Accepting the harsh realities of marine emergencies was the first step. “It’s that old saying — expect the best, plan for the worst,” she explains. “For athletes, there are fewer unexpected variables when it comes to how we



Hosokawa sharing her exertional heat stroke expertise with students at Japan’s Waseda University, members of the Japan Coast Guard, and athletes at the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics.

optimize performance so they can be their best.” Natural elements, extreme conditions, and other hazards play a major role for rescue organizations, and the Japan Coast Guard was no different. “They have no idea what they’ll face or for how long. They may be out on the ocean for days and they’re always fighting nature. They don’t have a set of rules to play their ‘game.’”

Just like she has done with soccer players and track stars, Hosokawa used evidence-based training methods to make sure everyone was safe and knew their limits. For the first two years of the partnership, she educated the unit on physiology. She helped them learn to recognize red flags their bodies would raise to indicate they were entering the danger zone. “We established safety

measures first and taught life-saving protocols. You can’t enhance performance without first making sure you know how to keep people alive.”

Then it was all about the data, an aspect of the work that Hosokawa loves. “We took temperatures, tracked how different clothing affected them, all of that. With that baseline, we can know their intensity zones and adjust accordingly.”

Hosokawa’s work isn’t just helping ensure medical safety. By teaching rescuers

to listen to their bodies, she is helping shift the culture by connecting safety with performance.

“Before they understood how heat illness works, cadets would want to keep pushing themselves past their breaking point. They wouldn’t want to admit they were struggling. Now upperclassmen make sure the new guys tell the truth about fatigue instead of hiding it. Now it’s ‘tougher’ to speak up than to stay quiet, because they know it’s a

better way to do their jobs.”

While she’s only working with one base now, Hosokawa may be a lot busier in the near future. Japan’s Coast Guard protects 18,486 miles of coastline and other bases have learned how she’s helping the 5th Regional. They’re eager to up their game too.

“My goal is that someday every base has a dedicated athletic trainer on staff.” —JESSICA MCBRIDE ’07 MA, ’17 PH.D.

the firm’s trial practice group, working on its white-collar criminal defense team. During his tenure as chief federal defender, he oversaw one of the largest federal defender offices in the country and was responsible for the training, strategy, and supervision of more than 65 attorneys. He is also an adjunct professor at Drexel University School of Law, teaching classes on sentencing and federal criminal law. ▶ Kudos to **David Samuels ’83 (BUS)**, who received the H. Goldman Humanitarian Award at the annual meeting of the Charles E. Smith Life Communities, a provider of eldercare services. He has served on its board of governors and as a trustee for nearly 20 years.

▶ **Nancy Dupont ’85 (NUR), ’10 MPH**, who is UConn Health’s epidemiology director, received the 2021 Dr. Peter J. Deckers Employee Appreciation Award.

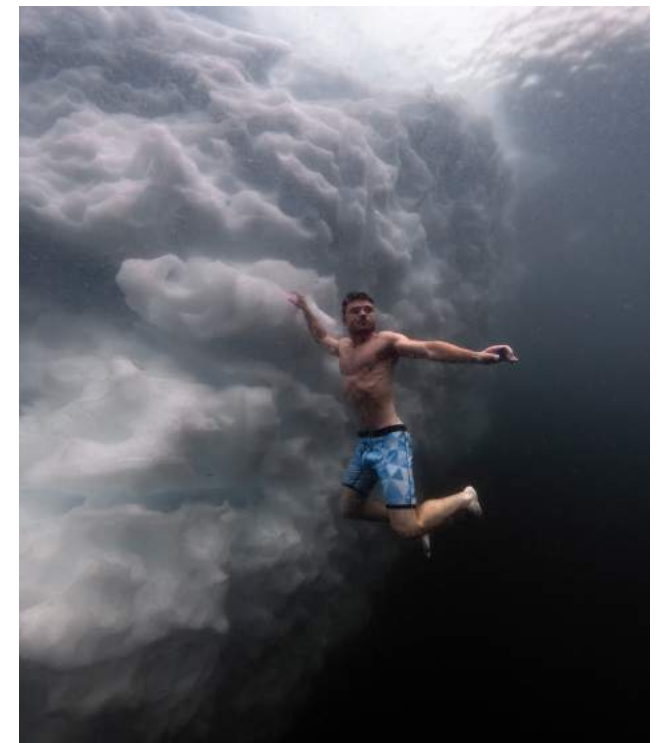
▶ **Cosmo DeStefano ’85 (BUS)** writes in with a life update and some exciting publishing news. “In some ways, it seems like yesterday that it all started with my accounting classes with Professor Larry Gramling on the Storrs campus,” he says. He goes on to say that he spent his entire 34-year professional career at PricewaterhouseCoopers and was a partner in the tax practice when he retired in 2019. He just published his first book, “Wealth Your Way: A Simple

Path to Financial Freedom.” The Covid-19 pandemic, he says, “provided much down time to collect my thoughts and write the book: 35 years of experience distilled into 200 pages.”



▶ **Dana Sosensky ’87 (BUS)** wrote in to say that she loved “An Epic UConn Love Story — In Eight Acts,” in the February 2022 *UConn Magazine* about the many couples who met in The Jungle at UConn. “My husband and I met there in Alumni, as did our three daughters and their significant others,” she says. “Moving to the next generation, we now have our little granddaughter, who is sporting her UConn spirit!”

▶ **Steven J. Burns ’88 (BUS)** was appointed president and CEO of the Idaho Community Foundation, a public nonprofit that aims to help build and strengthen communities across Idaho’s 44 counties.



Yup, he jumped! Adams is a video storyteller whose latest endeavor saw him freediving under a glacier with no oxygen tank, wetsuit, or mask — in 28-degree Fahrenheit water. The feat is meant to raise awareness for men’s mental health. Find more on Adams and this project at [s.uconn.edu/glacial](http://s.uconn.edu/glacial).



▶ Playwright **Julie Linden ’90 (CLAS), ’95 MA** got some good news recently. Her one-act play, “Symptoms and Their Interpretations,” was selected for the 2022 William

Inge Theatre Festival’s New Play Lab. ▶ Kudos to **Philip Dukes ’91 (CLAS), ’99 MBA** on being appointed chief counsel and senior policy advisor to the New York City Mayor’s Office of Pensions and Investments. ▶ Congratulations to **Marcia Imbeau** (continued on p. 44)



TRAJECTORY

**The Right Man for the Job**

When Greg Lewis '91 (BUS) teaches executive leadership seminars at Honeywell, where he is the Senior Vice President and CFO, there is one story he inevitably shares.

If you want to be a leader, you need to think like one, he says. And there was a pivotal moment when he learned that lesson.

Early in his career, Lewis worked as a business analyst at The Stanley Works in New Britain, Connecticut, now Stanley Black & Decker. The company was considering investing \$1 billion to purchase another manufacturer.

"I was super excited. I had prepared all the numbers, the spreadsheets, and the calculations," says Lewis, who majored in finance at UConn. "I couldn't wait to present all the financials, and the returns were quite compelling."

Minutes into the presentation the CEO asked Lewis' boss: "Who is going to run this new company?" The room was silent. There was no good answer for that critical question.

"Meeting adjourned!" the CEO bellowed. The acquisition was off the table, and Lewis hadn't even had a chance to speak.

"Many times you learn the most from observing people around you, from the opportunity to be exposed to senior executives and how they think through problems," he says. "I realized that day that business is much more than numbers. It comes down to risk, execution, and people. Picking the right people for the job is one of the most important things we do."

**A Future Ignites at UConn**

Lewis grew up in Shelton, Connecticut, the youngest of six boys, with a younger sister who was born much later. "Growing up in my family there was a lot to live up to and a constant competitive spirit," he says. His



father owned a small wiring cable company and had a strong work ethic that Lewis has tried to emulate.

At St. Joseph High in Trumbull, Connecticut, he was a strong student and a football player. Longtime friend Dan Iassogna '91 (CLAS) recalls his mom talking about Lewis. "That Greg Lewis is going to be somebody," she would tell Dan.

"Greg was polite, smart, and he conducted himself almost like a CFO even back then," Iassogna says. "He was incredibly driven, a great athlete,

but also just a nice person. He was always someone who was very easy to root for!"

Lewis chose engineering at UConn because one of his brothers had excelled in the field. But his first semester was an academic disaster, and he transferred to business.

"I think there's a lot of pressure on kids today to decide their future in high school. When you're young, life will take many twists and turns. You'll get many things wrong," he says. "You've got to risk something

and not be afraid to fail. After all, my opening salvo at UConn was almost crash and burn. UConn is the place where I learned about myself and where I was going."

At a Belden Hall dance in 1987, Lewis met Barbara Reynolds '89 (BUS), from Wethersfield, Connecticut. Now his wife of 28 years, Barbara has been the rock of the family, says Lewis. They have moved eight times, living everywhere from New England to Texas and from Minnesota to their current home in North Carolina. And Barbara has been the North Star for their daughters, now 21 and 18, teaching them to be brave, confident, and forward-looking.

Family time is precious, says Lewis on the eve of his family's Cape Cod summer vacation. "I work a great deal, and I travel a lot, but when I'm with them, I'm present," he says. "The time I spend with them is quality time."

Is it hard to disconnect? "Yes, especially in the pandemic, it has been. Technology is great but it doesn't let go of you," he says.

"Creating separation is one of the hardest things to do — not only by disconnecting from the phone, but also boxing work out of your mind. It's one of the biggest challenges, and the bigger the job, the more the weight."

**A Risk Pays Off**

"Becoming a CFO wasn't my goal when I graduated from UConn. I just wanted a job! I started at Kraft Foods, working hard and building my career," says Lewis, who earned an MBA from Fordham in 1995.

"I tell others that if you want to be successful, say yes when someone gives you more. Those can be scary decisions. But being uncomfortable is how you learn and grow and discover that you're more capable than you think."

Lewis has worked at Honeywell for 16 years, the last four in his current role. To keep the Fortune 100 technology company at its competitive peak requires constant vigilance.

He worries about volatility in busi-

ness, cyber risk, geopolitical risk, and discovering new talent. Currently the organization devotes more than 60% of its R&D efforts to sustainable projects, such as producing environmentally friendly asthma inhalers, turning plastic waste into oil, and developing products that prevent communication failures among emergency personnel battling structural fires.

"As CFO you get involved in everything," he says. "You can't be a bystander. You have to know what's going on in commercial and R&D,

and takes long walks. He escapes to Cape Cod, where he can listen to the ocean, enjoy the peace, and reconnect with family and friends.

"You have to be purposeful, take care of yourself, and make time to unplug. I'm certainly not a textbook case for work-life balance. But if I don't have a well to draw from, I'm not going to be helpful to anyone," he says.

"As a leader, you're giving energy to your people. If they see that you're down, they'll take their cue from you," he says.



The Lewises in Trafalgar Square visiting Sam during her freshman year at NYU London in 2019. From left: Ava, Sam, Greg, and Barbara.

how the factories are performing, what the crisis management team is worried about, and how we're safeguarding the health and safety of our employees in a pandemic."

**Everything Is a Trade-Off**

With a demanding job and frequent international travel, Lewis recognizes the importance of taking care of himself both physically and psychologically.

He meets with a personal trainer twice a week, plays golf when he can,

Although he has no plans to retire, Lewis likes the idea of teaching in some form when he's ready to leave the corporate world.

"I tell my daughters, you can't have it all. Everything is a trade-off. If you want a big job, it comes with a lot of stress. It's not for everybody. You have to be willing to give a lot of yourself to do it. It can be incredibly rewarding, especially when you impact someone's life and help them succeed. Those are some of the best days." —CLAIRE LAFLEUR HALL



'91 Ph.D., who was awarded the Arkansans for Gifted and Talented Education's Presidential Award. She teaches graduate courses in gifted education and elementary education at the University of Arkansas. ➔ **Klarn DePalma '92 (BUS)** was named senior vice president of group sales and sponsorships at Nexstar Media Inc., where he will be responsible for the strategy, development, and execution of sales and sponsorship efforts for the company's broadcast stations and digital properties. ➔ **Wendy Winters '93 MA** was hired by Midland Public Schools in Midland, Michigan, as a consultant in gifted education. Winters says she helped the district create a new program for children in grades one through five called Advanced Learning Program for Students for the 2022–23 school year. ➔ **Laurie S. Haas '94 (BUS)** was named one of the Top 100 Women Leaders in Connecticut for 2022 by Women We Admire. An attorney with the Murthy Law Firm, she represents companies and individuals before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services,

the Department of State, and other government agencies. ➔ Congrats to **Paul Throne '94 MSW, '96 MPH** on being elected chair of the board of directors for the National WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Association. Throne directs the Office of Nutrition Services in the Washington State Department of Health and is Washington State's WIC director. He lives in Tacoma, Washington, with his husband, **David P. Carney '91 MSW.** ➔ **June (Sauter) Prakash '94 (CLAS)** was elected president of the Arlington Education Association in Arlington, Virginia. ➔ **Eric Schmidt '94 (CLAS)** left behind a 20-year career in the car industry to start his own business in the life insurance field, partnering with Integrity Marketing Group. ➔ Congrats to **Kerry A. Kelley '95 (CLAS), '01 MPA** on being named vice president of finance and administration and chief financial officer for Connecticut State Community College. Previously, she served as a section director in the governor's budget office. ➔ **Ed Chiamonte '98 (CLAS)**



➔ When you go to UConn, meet your wife at UConn, get married on campus, and your daughter commits to the Class of '26, a little yard artwork is in order, write **Jim O'Meara '92 (BUS), '00 MBA and Georgia O'Meara '93 (CLAS).** Jim created this on their front lawn in South Windsor, Connecticut, for daughter Rhianna's high school graduation party. It took about 20 cans of spray paint, he says, and the inspiration for the image came from the boards at the hockey arena (he has season tickets). "My two older sons attended Maryland, but I put a little more emphasis on this one since both Rhianna's mom and I are UConn alumni through and through. We finally got our Husky!"

published his first book, "Back To Win: How Johnny Moss Returned Humanity to Poker and Life," which resurrects a historic poker player to examine the construct of man vs. machine, as well as what it takes to be the GOAT (Greatest Of All Time) in any field. ➔ **Chris Casavant '98 (CLAS),** a sixth-grade teacher in Marshfield, Massachusetts, recently published "The Greatest Cause of Mia Dubois," a novel for middle schoolers about climate change and climate justice. "The environment is an issue I'm very passionate about and have been for years," he says. "I decided to try to make a difference this way." ➔ And speaking of books, **Jeremy Visone '98 (CAHNR)** has published "Empowering Teacher Leadership: Strategies and Systems to Realize Your School's Potential" about transforming

schools into collaborative team environments where teacher leadership is an intentional part of the culture. ➔ And **David Pohorence '98 MA** has written "Why Not Me?" about the struggles, experiences, stories, and strategies that led to his success as a personal trainer, business coach, and fitness franchise owner. ➔ Meanwhile, **Peter Jones '98 MBA** has published "Treasure!" about the histories of coins from shipwrecks. ➔ **Frank W. Petise '98 (ENG)** is on the move. He was named bureau chief of Transportation, Traffic & Parking for the city of Stamford, Connecticut. Frank, his wife, Cortney, and their three children live in Southport, Connecticut. ➔ **Deborah C. Beebe '99 (BUS)** has joined Harper & Whitfield PC. Beebe is now a manager in the accounting firm's Farmington office. (continued on p. 46)



➔ **Chad Cook '09 (BUS)** and his wife, Lianna, report that there was a big contingent of UConn grads at their wedding reception, held at the Glastonbury Country Club in Glastonbury, Connecticut, in November 2021. The couple actually got married in 2020 but delayed the wedding reception due to the pandemic.

LIFE LESSONS

MAKING MONEY



**Brian Feroldi '04 (BUS)** remembers sitting down with the HR department at his first job after graduation looking at the 401(k) forms they'd handed him. "I opened this glossy brochure and it said, 'Do you want to put it into the high growth, the medium growth, or the low growth?' I looked at the lady and I said, 'What do I do?' She said, 'I can't help you with that. We're not allowed to.' Somehow, I was supposed to magically be able to fill out these forms and figure out my financial future, with essentially zero education about what to do." It's a scenario millions in this country can relate to. Some 100 million Americans have money invested in the stock market through 401(k)s, IRAs, brokerage accounts, and employee stock purchase plans.

"They are in a very real way betting their financial future," says Feroldi, "but I know, from talking with hundreds of people and interacting with thousands more online, that the vast majority of people have no clue how the stock market works — why it goes up, why it goes down on a given day or over long periods of time."

Feroldi dispenses financial advice as a writer for The Motley Fool, a virtual investment services website that was a startup when Feroldi signed on and now has more than 600 employees worldwide. He recently published "Why Does The Stock Market Go Up? Everything You Should Have Been Taught About Investing In School, But Weren't" (Choose Fi Media, 2022).

Feroldi says he knows what mistakes new investors should avoid, because he's made most of them himself.

"I am drawn to the idea of taking money and turning it

into more money, but I am also a firm believer that growing your income, keeping your expenses in check, and creating extra savings for yourself is an order of magnitude more important, and more impactful, than anything you can ever do with your investments. If I could go back in time 20 years and give advice to my younger self, it would be to focus on income, expenses, and savings, and don't focus on the returns."

In other words, don't look at investing as a get-rich-quick strategy. Feroldi's biggest regrets come from forgetting that. He doesn't think of stocks he should have bought.

"You can play that game all day with yourself. I should have bought this. I should have bought that. The biggest mistakes that I've made aren't about what I should have bought. It was selling early. I actually owned Microsoft at 20 and then I sold it at 24, and now it's just under 300. I missed out on a 10- to 15-times larger return because I was in a rush to take a profit. I sold another company called DexCom for \$7 per share. Last I looked, it was over \$400 per share. Again, I bought something because I knew enough, and then I was in a rush to take a profit."

Another common mistake newbies make is trying to time the market.

"My short-term hunches are rarely correct. If you had asked me in March of 2020, when Covid was brand new, the world economy was falling apart, and businesses were shutting down — cruise ships, airline companies — if you had said, 'Brian, what's gonna

happen to the stock market over the next year?' I would have

told you, 'It's going down. Business is terrible. Unemployment is skyrocketing. It's an awful time, economically.' And that would have been exactly wrong. Because as soon as March 2020 happened and the bottom hit, the stock market pretty much went straight up over the next year."

There's another investing mistake that's all too common, says Feroldi: "People wait too long. They delay the idea of having to think about investing for their retirement. Especially when you're right out of school, and your income is limited, and you have all these expenses. You want to buy a house. You want to go on vacation. You want to do all these things, and you don't have a lot of income to go around."

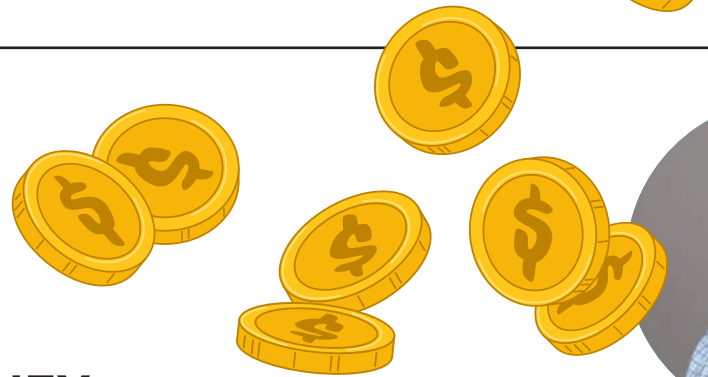
The irony, of course, is that when you're young is the best time to put money into the markets — because then you have decades for that money to grow and compound.

"The dollars you put in when you're 20 and 30 are so much more powerful than when you're 60 or 70. You can buy individual stocks with a portion of your capital, but you've got to have a long-term mindset.

You've got to buy the companies and just say to yourself, 'I believe that this company is going to substantially grow revenue, and earn profits, over the next 10 years.'"

Buying and holding great companies is a time-tested way to build wealth.

"If you can do that, the odds of you having a huge smile on your face 10 years from now, 20 years from now, 30 years from now, are extremely high." —PETER NELSON





TOM'S TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. C; 2. A; 3. B; 4. C



➔ Congratulations to children's book author **Angela Burke Kunkel '02 MA**, whose debut picture book, "Digging for Words: José Alberto Gutiérrez and the Library He Built," was selected as a Nutmeg Book Award nominee for grades two to three. She has two more books forthcoming with Random House Studio, "Make Way," a picture book biography of Robert McCloskey, and "World More Beautiful," a picture book biography of author-illustrator Barbara Cooney, whose work is kept in UConn Library's Archives & Special Collections.

➔ **Brian Feroldi '04 (BUS)**, a writer for The Motley Fool who has 265,000-plus Twitter followers, has written his first book, "Why Does the Stock Market Go Up?" The book is designed to demystify the stock market for the average investor. Want some Feroldi investing tips? See our story on page 45.

➔ **Cara Marie Brown '04 (CLAS)** reports that she earned a master's degree in special education in 2019 and is now teaching in the Waterbury, Connecticut, school system.

➔ Congratulations to **Lindsey (Welsford) Martínez '05 (CLAS)**, who was appointed to serve as a judge in Orange County Superior Court in California. Martínez, of Brea, California, previously served as a senior attorney in the Fourth District Court of Appeal, Division Three. She earned her law degree at George Washington University. ➔ **Ismat Mikky '06 Ph.D.** was appointed chairperson of the Division of Nursing at Bloomfield College in Bloomfield, New Jersey. ➔ **Brett Eagleson '08 (BUS)** joined the New Haven, Connecticut-based Washington Trust as vice president of commercial real estate. Previously, he served as vice president and commercial loan officer at Guilford Savings Bank. He is active

in community service and currently serves as treasurer on the board of directors for Guilford Youth Mentoring. ➔ **Lynn Malerba '08 MPA** was named Treasurer of the United States by President Joe Biden. She will be the first Native American to hold this position. Malerba became the first female chief of the Mohegan Tribe in modern history in 2010. ➔ **Brittany Hunter '08 (ED), '11 MS** was promoted to business manager for Azure Core at Microsoft, where she previously worked in talent management and as an HR program manager. ➔ Congrats to **Alyssa Lynch '09 (CLAS)** on being promoted to partner at the law firm of Halloran Sage in New Haven, Connecticut. She's a member of the firm's Workers' Compensation Practice group.



➔ **Daria Zagorska Luczkowski '10 (BUS), '13**



➔ Decades after she first started working on messenger RNA as an undergraduate in a UConn lab, **Lynne Maquat '74 (CLAS)** has received two major international awards for her groundbreaking discoveries in the field.

Maquat, a mechanistic biochemist, recently won the 2021 Warren Alpert Foundation Prize from Harvard Medical School and the 2021 Wolf Prize in Medicine from Israel. She is best known for discovering a mechanism that destroys faulty messenger RNAs (mRNAs) in human cells. Her discoveries have led to a better understanding of human diseases and the development of RNA-based therapies to fight disease.

Maquat, who is the J. Lowell Orbison Endowed Chair and a professor of biochemistry and biophysics at the University of Rochester, grew up in Easton, Connecticut, and was the first in her family to go to college.

"Back then, I was painfully quiet, very studious, probably too serious, and wanted to do well," she says. "I grew a lot as a person at UConn since I was on my own and had to make my own decisions. I really liked to learn and took all sorts of classes. However, the best and, at the same time, most challenging experience for me was working in Stu Heywood's lab. I spent two summers and four semesters working in his lab. I was well prepared for graduate school by the time I graduated UConn."

In addition to making seminal discoveries, Maquat has been a mentor to women at work. She started the University of Rochester Graduate Women in Science, which provides mentoring for the professional and personal development of graduate students.

"When I was a graduate student, working toward a Ph.D. in biochemistry, there were no female biochemistry faculty members," she recalls. "Moreover, a number of the male biochemistry faculty members sent the vibe that training women was not a good use of time and energy. I found my career to be full of difficulties because I am a woman. Fortunately, I believed in what I was doing."

When she's not in the lab, Maquat and her husband, Mark, love to spend time outside with Jacky, their "12-pound, non-shedding Schnoodle." An avid traveler, her work has taken her to "amazing places" around the world, including Patagonia, Ladakh, Tibet, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka. —GRACE MERRITT

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Obituaries can be found at [foundation.uconn.edu/obituaries](http://foundation.uconn.edu/obituaries)

Submissions may be edited for clarity and/or length.

**MBA**, who emigrated to the U.S. from Poland in 1999, has always shared a passion for creativity with her mother, Ewa. The mother-daughter duo recently founded Mia Bella Box, an online gifting solution for individuals and companies, named for Luczkowski's 7-year-old daughter, Mia. ➔ **Marty Summa Jr. '12 (ED)** was promoted to director of digital media and social strategy for Sage Growth Partners. Previously he was senior director of social/digital media and branding for the University of Maryland's athletic department. ➔ **David Robitaille '12 (ENG)** was named global marketing manager of oligomers and coatings at Dymax Corp. After graduating from UConn, Robitaille served in various positions at DuPont before joining Dymax in 2015. ➔ **Jessica J. Hitt '13 MBA** was honored with a 40 Under 40 award by the

*Denver Business Journal*. She is VP of human resources at TIAA, a financial services organization. She began her career at the Royal Palm Beach Target as a member of the leadership team. ➔ **Brett St. John '13 (CLAS)**, who earned a master's degree at Creighton University, joined Coastal Bridge Advisors as an investment strategy associate. ➔ **Joey Kopriva '14 MA** was promoted to director of residential life at Columbia University. Kopriva has been in residential life at Columbia for seven years, most recently serving as the associate director. ➔ **Abbye E. Meyer '14 Ph.D.** has published "From Wallflowers to Bulletproof Families: The Power of Disability in Young Adult Narratives," which examines the different ways authors use and portray disability in literature.



➔ And the winner is ... **Ryan Glista '16 (CLAS), '18 MFA**, who snagged a New England Emmy for Outstanding Editing in the Boston/New England Region for the dance film, "While You Were Gone." ➔ **Jessica Stargardter '16 (ED), '17 MA** and **Bryan Kirby '18 (ED), '19 MA** have published two books, both titled "Empowered Leaders: A Social Justice Curriculum for Gifted Learners." One is for fourth and fifth graders, the other for sixth through eighth graders. ➔ **Jake Krul '17 (ED)** was promoted to assistant director of development in athletics for the UConn Foundation. He previously served as an assistant director of athletic external relations

there. ➔ **Olivia Piper '17 (CLAS)**, a poet and fiction writer who has been published in *Funicular Magazine*, *Her Heart Poetry*, and the *Connecticut River Review*, has been admitted to Hollins University's creative writing MFA program. At UConn, Piper directed and adapted several stage productions, including "Little Women" and "Brownstone," and was a staff writer for HerCampus at UConn. ➔ **Constantine J. Alleyne '17 MBA** was named one of the Top 100 Women Leaders of Connecticut for 2022 by Women We Admire. She is founder and president of the Civilian Corrections Academy, which offers consultancy, training, mentoring, and career planning services. ➔ **Kailey Townsend**, who attended UConn from 2015 to 2019, has taken on a new role as social media manager for the president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Federation of America.



➔ **Leah Lum '18 (ED)**, competed for Team China women's ice hockey in the Olympic Winter Games in Beijing. ➔ **Jeff Garnelis '18 (ENG)** was hired as safety/risk manager at Environmental Systems Corp. in West Hartford. He had been a risk control consultant at Travelers Insurance and a loss prevention associate at AIG Insurance. He grew up in Stafford, Connecticut, where he worked for his father's res-

idential homebuilding business. ➔ **Alfredo Ramirez '19 MA** began a new role as a corporate training specialist with City Experiences. He previously worked as the assistant director for programs and marketing at Temple University. ➔ Swapping baseballs for basketballs, **Sydney Gibbs '19 (ED)** started a new position as an account executive for membership sales with the Brooklyn Nets, having previously worked in a similar position for the Boston Red Sox. ➔ **Ronobir "Ron" Deb '19 (CLAS)** of Glastonbury, Connecticut, was among the first Peace Corps volunteers to return to overseas service since the agency's unprecedented global evacuation in March 2020 in response to the pandemic. Deb, an economics major, landed with his group in April in Colombia, where he will serve as a community economic development volunteer. "I'm interested in international relations, and this seems like a great opportunity to gain some quality experience for a State Department-type job, if I choose to go that route," Deb says. "I'm also looking forward to the food and meeting new people. I hope to finally become fluent in Spanish and develop some hands-on economic experience in the real world."



➔ **Ryan Haynes '20 MA** is a residence life coordinator at Pomona College in Claremont, California. ➔ **Hunter Frayne '21 (CLAS)** is an investment research associate with Fenimore Asset Management. While at UConn, Frayne double majored in economics and philosophy and interned at Pitch Gauge, IBM, Gutenberg Research, and The Hanover Insurance Group.



Peter Morenus

**JOB ENVY**

**Out of the Minds of Babes**

While running through an assessment with a young subject recently, **Amanda Yagan '21 (CLAS)** asked, "What do we use to tell the time?" Without skipping a beat, the boy confidently answered, "Alexa!"

The fact that he had no clue why his answer invoking the smart speaker made his mom and Yagan laugh underscores exactly what Yagan studies: how environmental factors, such as exposure to electronics, shape young brains and bodies.

As a clinical research assistant in the Advanced Baby Imaging Lab at Rhode Island Hospital, Yagan interviews children, leading them through the Mullen assessment scales cognitive test and iPad games. She also administers MRI and other scans, all in an effort to better understand how brains grow and develop through infancy and childhood, and how factors such as genes, nutrition, exposure to electronics, and sleep shape this development.

"I love getting to work with kids," says the speech, language, and hearing sciences major, who radiates such warmth and enthusiasm that it's easy to imagine just how comfortable she makes these little ones. "Often the children get really shy at the beginning ... and at the end they independently give me hugs, or sometimes they'll want me to carry them around the lab, and we just hang out and bond as we pick out books for them to take home. I love that we are able to pick up on each other's energy and know that we are in a safe space."

Other perks that make her gig so cool? Yagan enjoys regularly having her mind blown by the work of her brilliant colleagues, as well as Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation-funded trips to India, Zambia, South Africa, Uganda, and Ghana to train doctors there to use portable MRI scanners, like the one she's pictured with here.

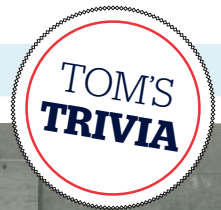
"I'm so excited to go to work" each day, she says. "I come home and I'm so happy." —**JULIE (STAGIS) BARTUCCA '10 (BUS, CLAS), '19 MBA**

It was Yagan's job that first got our attention, but Amanda Yagan the person is impossible to resist. Read more of her story at [magazine.uconn.edu](http://magazine.uconn.edu).



## CHALLENGE YOURSELF TO TOM'S TRIVIA!

Go to [s.uconn.edu/fall22trivia](http://s.uconn.edu/fall22trivia) or p. 46 to see if you know as much as King of UConn Trivia Tom Breen '00 (CLAS).



**1. If you're looking for owls at UConn Storrs, what's the place you're most likely to find them?**

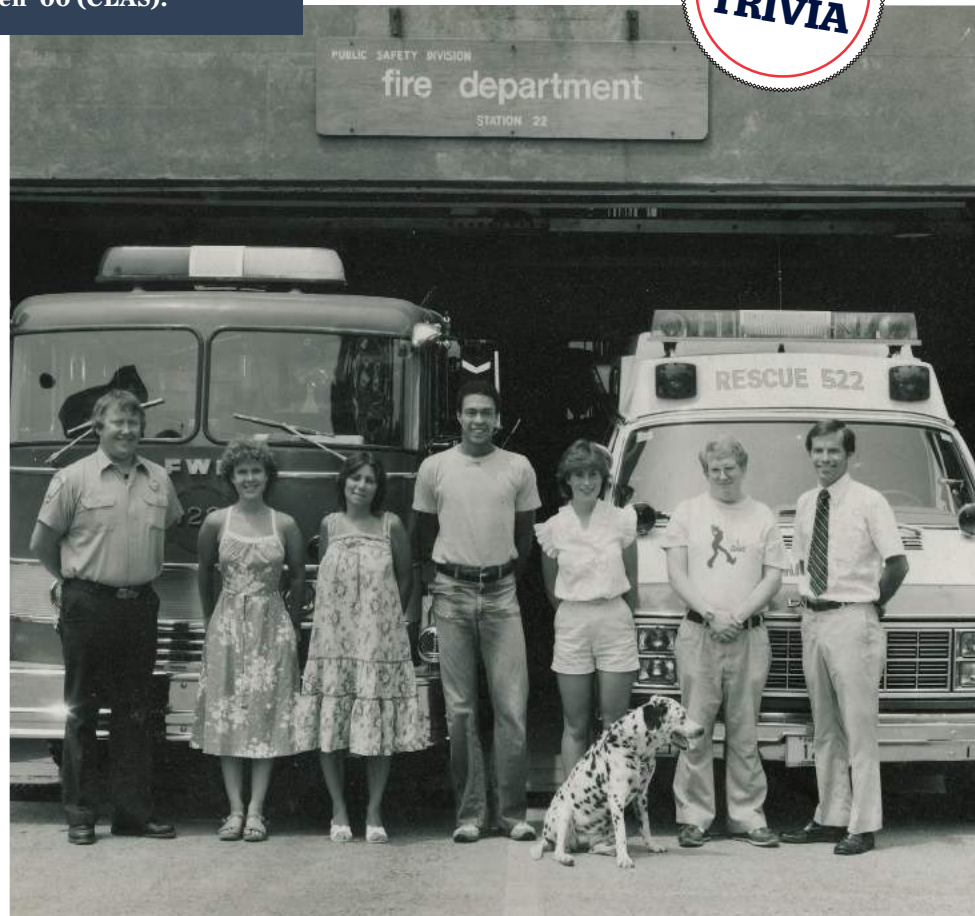
- A: The Avian Enclosure on the edge of Horsebarn Hill
- B: Wilbur Cross
- C: Whitney Hall
- D: The Raptory, a bird-themed café in the basement of Gulley Hall

**2. The commencement ceremony in May 2000 marked the debut of a new feature that would eventually become a standard part of the experience. What was it?**

- A: Livestreamed video
- B: Separate commencement speakers for separate schools and colleges
- C: Golden cords given to Honors students
- D: A website devoted to commencement

**3. What is Babbidge Bog?**

- A: The nickname given to the North Campus residence halls in the 1960s
- B: A layer of pre-glacial wetland that lies beneath Homer Babbidge Library
- C: The first site of the Spring Week-end staple of Oozeball
- D: The name antiwar protesters gave to Mirror Lake during a "swim-in" demonstration in 1969



**4. From 1973 to 1983, the UConn Fire Department had a Dalmatian mascot who accompanied the deputy chief on routine calls and rode in a fire engine during Homecoming parades. What was her name?**

- A: Blaze
- B: Smoky
- C: Freckles
- D: Jonathanette