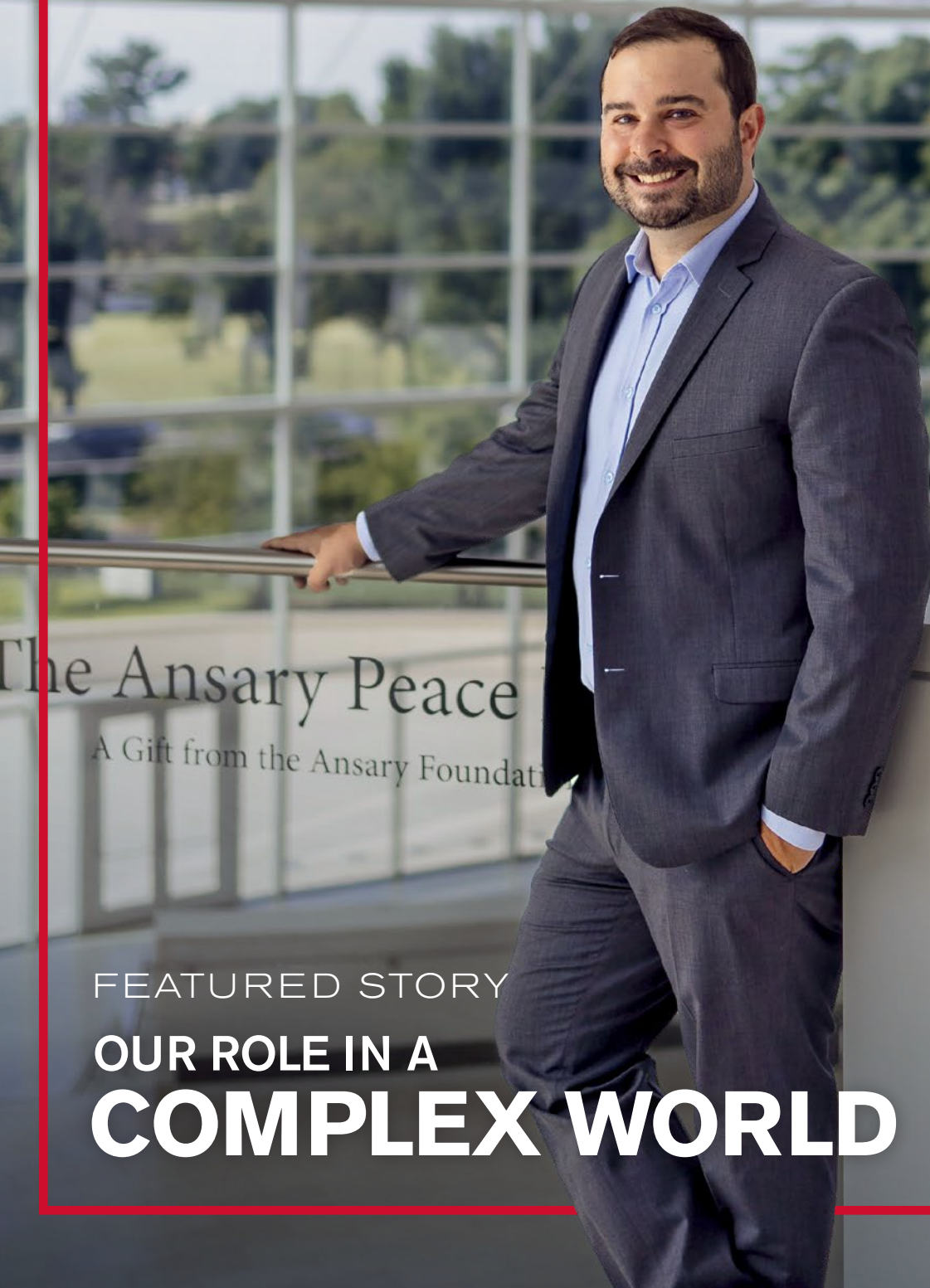


THE MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS | SUMMER 2024

KEENE STATE TODAY



FEATURED STORY

OUR ROLE IN A
COMPLEX WORLD

FEATURE

10 Our Role in a Complex World

In this issue: At Keene State, when we say explore...we mean explore. Inside, find stories that illustrate how our students benefit from expanded global opportunities that are an important part of their liberal arts education at Keene State.

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DESIGN

Boston Impressions
bostonimpressions.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Jessica Bigaj
Robin Cook '24
Paul Miller
Mark Reynolds
Hilary Shepard
Robyn Stello
Caroline Tremblay, Owl &
Pen Writing
Andrea Vickers-Sivret '01

PHOTOGRAPHERS

William Wrobel '11
wwrobel@keene.edu
Ethan Davis '25
ethan.davis@keene.edu

BRAND CONSULTANT

Katie Arsenault
katie.arsenault@keene.edu

PRESIDENT

Dr. Melinda Treadwell '90
president@keene.edu

On the cover and inside cover:

Colleagues at The U.S. Institute of Peace, Matthew Parkes '13 and Galen Gammino '17 find hope amid challenge as part of that nonprofit's large-scale effort to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict in regions worldwide. Learn more about their work on page 10.

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6.5.24

Dear Keene State Family and Friends,

We are all still rejoicing from a vibrant finish to the academic year and a lively Commencement. Looking out at everyone gathered on Fiske Quad – graduates, family, and friends – I was honored to celebrate our students and all their achievements.

We are also fresh from a fun-filled Reunion Weekend and the wonderful opportunity it brings to reconnect with friends, family, and faculty. I look forward to welcoming the Class of 2024 in future years.

I am also reflecting on a time of much growth and exploration. When we launched the Keene State College 2023-2026 Strategic Plan in January 2023, we knew we were reaching for change, and challenging ourselves to strengthen our foundation of excellence. Our plan is a remarkable document, embraced by the whole community, but how we have implemented that plan is what makes me most proud.

We have charted our progress on campus through an internal Strategic Portfolio, which holds all of our monthly updates, recordings of regular Zoom sessions, and much more. We have held ourselves accountable with high-spirited sessions with our Strategic Peer Review Committee, and have tracked our gains and made every effort to be transparent.

I can also report the launch of our public-facing Success Metrics dashboard. Any visitor to our website can type “Strategic Plan” into the search box and find a link to this dashboard.

Why is this important? Because our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan charts our progress through 2026 and is a reflection of our full community. The dashboard allows everyone to dig in and learn more about what we are doing to move Keene State into the future.

The scale and context of the Strategic Plan, and my appreciation for the dedicated and visionary work required to fashion it, empower me to look



forward intently and purposefully—an ability even more important during these challenging times for higher education and tense times for our world.

I will always be concerned about how these external realities test us emotionally and touch our Keene State community. The educational work we value on campus matters in helping our students, faculty, and staff come together and think critically about what is happening nationally and globally. And we continue to cultivate a campus culture that invites all voices to share, expanding our understanding and empathy so this community remains strong.

As you flip through the pages of this edition of Keene State Today, you will have a chance to read a handful of stories illustrating how Keene State alumni, students, and faculty are engaged, aware, and making a difference in our complex world even as conflicts roil in global hotspots; political differences heighten; and human-rights challenges persist.

We will introduce you to two alumni, Matthew Parkes '13 and Galen Gammino '17, who are colleagues at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) in Washington, D.C. Both graduated with degrees in Holocaust and genocide studies, and both earned graduate degrees at separate institutions. At USIP, they are part of heroic work centered on international peacebuilding and atrocity crime awareness and prevention.

You will also learn how our Study Away program, internships, field study experiences, and professional development opportunities are enriching the experiences of Keene State students and helping to prepare global citizens. And you will meet alums

who are veterans and learn about their deployments, student journeys, lessons of the past, and how their work here on campus is sparking greater impacts.

The Cohen Center serves as a research and resource center for the teaching of the Holocaust and genocide through our academic programs. It marked its 40th anniversary with a full and successful event series that reached more than 6,000 students, educators, and community members.

It has turned its attention to global perspectives and interconnected realities. In an exciting development, alumni, educators, and community members traveled to Germany and Poland this July. The Center's goal is to make study trips like these available annually.

Improving the quality of life locally and globally is a part of the culture and values Keene State holds dear. As New Hampshire's public liberal arts college, Keene State holds itself to high standards and proudly shows our progress and shares successes.

And as our Strategic Plan progresses and the stories in this issue make clear, we have much to celebrate. Your input is valued and needed, especially at this complicated moment in our collective history. We are honored to share this journey with you.

Enter to learn, go forth to serve.

Dr. Melinda Treadwell '90
PRESIDENT, KEENE STATE COLLEGE

KEA UPDATES

The Keene Endowment Association (KEA) welcomed two new trustees to its Board of Directors at the June meeting.



BRIAN B. BETHEL, CIH, CSP

Brian B. Bethel, CIH, CSP was an assistant clinical professor in the Safety & Occupational Health Applied Sciences Department for the College and is now manager of Global People Safety & Health for industry leader, SC Johnson & Son. He has an established track record of driving safety, industrial hygiene, and environmental improvements in a variety of manufacturing industries in the global workplace.

He also has a unique ability to select, lead, and grow professionals in disciplines across all aspects of the Environmental, Health & Safety spectrum. Brian is known for promoting engagement and diversity of thought. He brings a wealth of leadership and engagement experience to the Board.

During his introduction to the KEA Board Development & Governance Committee, he shared that as a student at Quinnipiac University, he received a scholarship at a point when he didn't know how he was going to fund the remainder of his education. He understands how important scholarships can be to a student. We are excited that Brian will help represent the interests of our Safety & Occupational Health Applied Sciences and Construction Safety Sciences students.

Another excellent addition to the Board is Stephanie Giang. Stephanie Giang '17 earned her bachelor's in psychology from Keene State and in 2019 she earned her MEd in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Boston University. But her altruistic dedication to education doesn't end with her academia. Stephanie works at Massachusetts General Hospital, overseeing residency programs/fellowships that involve coordinating recruitment and credentialing for students. She continues to serve these students even when they have completed their programs and are working in their fields.

As an alumna, Stephanie has served on the KSCAA Board of Directors since 2021 and continues to support alumni events and engagement opportunities. Additionally, she is the lead advisor for Keene's Phi Psi Chapter of Delta Phi Epsilon International Sorority, where she supports and gives counsel to the Leadership Team and all collegiate members. During her initial meeting with the KEA Board Development & Governance Committee, she shared her energy and enthusiasm for highlighting the importance of the KEA endowment and increasing awareness about it. As a KEA scholarship recipient herself, Stephanie is passionate about giving back to continue supporting current students.



STEPHANIE GIANG '17



THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK LIFE

SAVE THE DATE!

JUNE 6, 2025 | REUNION WEEKEND





KSCAA UPDATES

The Keene State College Alumni Association (KSCAA) is thrilled to introduce your newly elected board of directors. On April 15, voting concluded for the 2024 election, bringing in more than 400 votes from our alumni.

The freshman group of directors that was selected range in graduation years from 1964 to 2010, providing a broad representation of our alumni base. In addition, April Pongitory '96 was re-elected for a second term. She brings a wealth of experience that she will put to good use as she moves into the role of president of the KSCAA. Elected alumni, Jason Beckta '08, Phil Clay '64, Roberto Ferragina '96, and Elizabeth Mullen '10 join our eleven returning board members.

This past year, the KSCAA developed four working groups to strengthen the mission of the board. The groups include philanthropy, communications, volunteering, and events. Through these efforts, the KSCAA has increased regional events, welcomed new volunteers, and supported increased growth in donors to the College. This work would not be possible without the drive and dedication shown by our talented directors, who strongly believe the growth of the alumni association directly supports the health of the College.

About KSCAA

Founded by the graduates in 1910, the KSCAA is a dependent affiliate of Keene State College. Its policies and programs are determined by the Board of Directors.

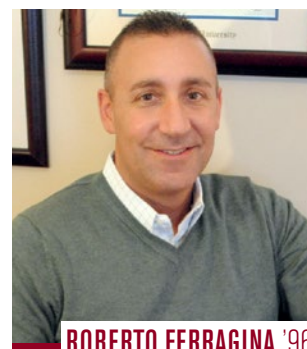
The mission of the Keene State College Alumni Association is to promote the welfare of the alumni and Keene State College.

The KSCAA is comprised of more than 40,000 alumni living throughout the United States and internationally. Through on-campus and regional events and activities, volunteer opportunities, programs, Keene State College activities, specific benefits and services for alumni, and more, the Alumni Association promotes the welfare of alumni and the College.

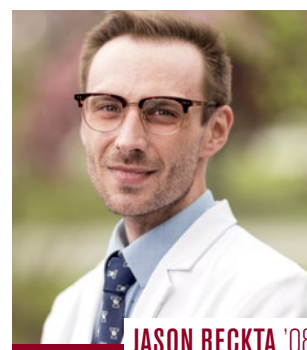
Save the date! We're excited to introduce the first annual Hootie's Hustle 5K, presented by the KSCAA on September 14 as part of Homecoming Weekend.



APRIL PONGITORY '96



ROBERTO FERRAGINA '96



JASON BECKTA '08



PHIL CLAY '64



ELIZABETH MULLEN '10

A photograph of Norma V. Walker, an elderly woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a red vest over a white shirt. She is standing on a carpeted staircase with a wooden railing, waving her right hand. The background features a large mural on the wall.

Remembering NORMA V. WALKER

KEENE STATE'S ALUMNA EXTRAORDINAIRE '51 M '59 By Mark Reynolds

The passing of this incredible soul leaves a deep hole in the history and connection of the Keene State community.

The Keene State College community lost one of its most dedicated and engaged alumna on April 27, 2024, when Norma V. (Wright) Walker '51 M '59 went forth to serve a higher calling. Knowing Norma and her selfless love for the College's older alums, I'm sure that's exactly what she's doing.

Norma learned her lessons in generous service on her family's hard-scrabble farm in Hancock, NH. "We didn't have much, but Grampa [Ephraim Weston] always shared a big Thanksgiving dinner with neighbors, friends, and family," Norma explained. "Easter also found many at his table, which, on those occasions, were several tables pushed together and covered with sheets for tablecloths. We'd lay planks across chairs so there was room for everyone. Those were special times in my life."

Her Aunt Ellen [Agnes Ellen Weston], who graduated from Keene Normal School in 1918, was also a big influence in her philosophy of living and her alignment with Keene State. "My grandfather and my Aunt Ellen believed in doing for people while they were alive, and this has made me go and visit alums who we might never know about and who are the history and foundation of the College."

Visit, honor, and connect she did in various roles, including her tenure as a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. At one point, Norma noticed that the classes from the early '20s didn't have class secretaries. So she asked the director at the time, Mike Maher '72, if she could contact one of the classes. "Once I got started, it just sort of snowballed. In 1996, I noticed there were

several alums over in Havenwood (a retirement community in Concord, NH), so I made arrangements to go have punch and cookies with them," she recalled.

That effort snowballed, too, and Norma became the driving force behind the Golden Circle Society (alumna who graduated 50 or more years ago). She organized each of the Society's luncheons, beginning with the first one in June 1997. The group has hosted nearly 150 luncheons since.

Former KSC staff member Amy Proctor '13, who attended several Golden Circle luncheons with Norma, noted, "Norma always gives something to everyone who comes – it may be a hug, a flower, or something she made, but she always gives something. She never asks them for anything."

"I really enjoy being involved with the Keene alumni," Norma said. "I just wanted to reconnect people, so they'd know that Keene was here for them, that Keene needed them, and they needed Keene. Keene was here because of them, and to me, this is important. Once you see the close interaction between people, it's worth it. You watch people who meet at a Golden Circle luncheon, for example, and haven't seen each other for a long time, and the conversations and reunion that happen are wonderful."



Besides stewarding the Golden Circle Society, she maintained a voluminous correspondence with classmates, alums, faculty, and staff. She called and visited College friends. Up until the very end, she was in Alumni Center office several times a week, sending out birthday and special-occasion cards and nearly 300 Christmas cards. She kept in touch with staff and alumni, worked on projects for such events as Reunion or Homecoming, and collected alumni news for Keene State Today.

Back in the early 2000s, Norma started collecting “memories,” mostly from Golden Circle alumni. She sent out a form that requested basic contact information and asked each recipient to describe a special memory of their time at the College (in those days, Keene Normal School or Keene Teachers College). She said, “I realized that we were losing so many of our older alums, and I thought it would be nice to get some of these tidbits recorded. A lot of them are personal, but they show some of the history of the College....It’s really special.” A significant number of the responses were from people who attended during the ’20s. And many of the letters offered up interesting anecdotes that illustrated how different people experienced Keene State.

Norma’s contacts with older alums proved invaluable when Professor Emeritus Lawrence Benaquist was filming *Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Serve: The First Hundred Years of Keene State College*, the documentary honoring Keene State’s centennial in 2009. “Some of the most poignant parts of the film are captured in the charming stories and reminiscences that alums from the ’30s told of the early College years, and it was Norma Walker who gave us the access to those people,” said Dr. Benaquist.

Anyone who had the honor of knowing Norma Walker knows just how special she was – always ready to enhance someone else, never for personal accolade. As her daughter Jan Johnson said, “Mom did not

like attention, and EVERYTHING she did was from her heart and because she believed in it or the person – she was remarkably selfless.” Her granddaughter Jessi described her as a ‘national treasure,’ and that couldn’t be more true.”

“Norma was a graceful and ever-present spirit at Keene State. Anyone who spent an hour with her was richer for it,” described KSC President Melinda Treadwell ’90. “She embodied the teaching and learning that is the heart of our mission, vision, and values as a College. We will miss her dearly.”

“Her dedication to the College and its alumni community is unparalleled,” said Sean Gillery ’89. “Norma’s care and concern for people was limitless – personally visiting with homebound alumni or writing hundreds of birthday cards and holiday letters each year, reinforcing the personal bond she felt with the College and its graduates. She was always willing to lend a helping hand, and her generosity of spirit knew no bounds. I join countless others who are deeply saddened by Norma’s sudden passing – such a tremendous loss for her family and friends and for Keene State College.”

This anecdote from Andrea Vickers-Sivret ’01, KSC’s Director of Alumni Relations, deftly captures Norma’s importance to the College. “A few years ago, I brought my daughter into the office with me when I was working on the weekend. She loves to wander around looking at the pictures and artifacts that are spread throughout the Alumni Center. As we were leaving, she mentioned what an important person Norma is to the College. I agreed with her and then asked how she knew that.

She replied, ‘Well, the College used to be called Keene Norma College.’ I burst



out laughing and knew she had seen the banner in the lobby for Keene NORMAL School. (She dropped the “L”). In that moment I thought, ‘That is so appropriate because Norma is the College, and the College is Norma.’

She embodied everything that makes Keene State special: dedication, selflessness, serving others. The year before Norma passed, she was setting the stage, making sure everything continued on as she had been dutifully serving her treasured Golden Circle alumni. She appointed an apprentice to take over the birthday cards and Golden Circle Guides to plan the luncheons.

It takes a team of people to assume the responsibilities that Norma did on her own. She was writing and sending out birthday cards up to her last day with us. There has never been and will never be another alumna as devoted to the Alumni Association as Norma was. She will be deeply missed.”

Norma Walker’s passing leaves a deep, deep hole in the life and culture of Keene State. The shoes she wore here are far too big and will take several people to fill. But I bet she’s filling new shoes now, moving on to embrace and delight in all those older alums and family who have passed on before her and who meant so much to her.



College archivist and Assistant Professor of KSC’s Special Collections, Rodney Obien, who had been working with Norma n a research project for the past year, noted that “Norma was the embodiment of the history and traditions of Keene State, and she really connected me to our past—to its life and spirit beyond just the facts and figures.”



FEATURE:

OUR ROLE in a COMPLEX WORLD

AT KEENE STATE, WHEN WE SAY EXPLORE ... WE MEAN EXPLORE.

On campus, in the community, across the country participating in internships, research, and community work, and taking classes in foreign destinations, exploration is an integral part of a liberal arts education. We feel strongly that it gives Keene State students and graduates a deeper perspective, meaningful connections, and competitive advantages.

All of that is critically important, especially in today's world, which is fraught with tenseness and polarization: war and conflict; human rights abuses; political division and factionalism at home and abroad; racism and discrimination; charged rhetoric and intimidation; and even protests on the campuses of our nation's colleges and universities that have crossed boundaries and turned violent.

That is just some of our current picture.

At Keene State, we believe that all institutions of higher education have a responsibility to expose students to what is happening nationally and globally and to educate them so that they can be responsive contributors to a more peaceful and equitable world.

We are proud of our open social and academic community, engaged student body, leadership, and staff. Open and civil dialogue across differences, after all, should be one of the great yields of a college experience.

This high priority is spelled out in Keene State's mission, vision, and values statement, which includes these phrases:

- Pursue meaningful work in a global society
- Be known for distinctive academic programs that anticipate the needs of our regional and global communities
- Work toward a sustainable and equitable world
- Take action to benefit others

President Melinda Treadwell '90 wrote in a recent letter to the editor published in *The Equinox*, our student newspaper: "The difficult realities around us afford a unique opportunity to discuss and debate real and important issues, to gain

strength during anxious times by drawing our community closer. ... We have a remarkable capacity to turn conflict into greater understanding toward constructive outcomes."

The theme of this issue of *Keene State Today* is the College's place in our complex world. Stories illustrate how our graduates and current students are aware, engaged, and invested in being difference-makers and meaningful global citizens. This happens in the classroom, in the field, in advocacy, and in action. It happens through access to clubs and organizations, global exchanges, speaker series, academic programs, scholarships, leadership summits, study abroad, and international research to mention some examples.

It happens also because of Keene State's commitment to making our campus and programs accessible to international students and because of our genuine commitment to attracting a diverse student body.

The stories you will read in no way serve to capture it all; rather, the purpose is to present a sense of what makes Keene State unique in this respect and why we should be grateful for our remarkable community and all that it does.

COLLEAGUES AT THE U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE, PARKES '13, GAMMINO '17 FIND HOPE AMID CHALLENGE

The list of Keene State alumni driving change at home and afar to make the world safer, more humane, and just is long.

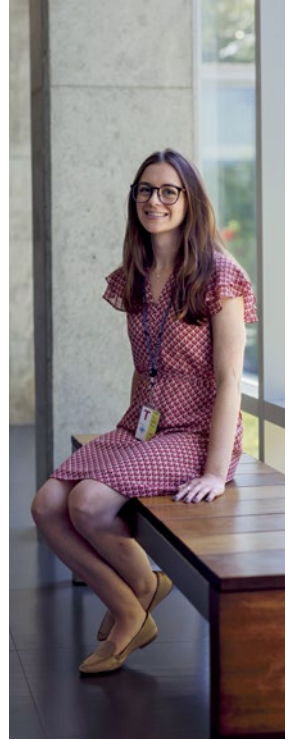
Two graduates – Matthew Parkes '13 and Galen Gammino '17 – are colleagues at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) in Washington, D.C. They share not only degrees in Holocaust and genocide studies from Keene State but also a passion for being change agents in a complex global setting.

For high-level work, no role is too small when the potential for peace is on the line.

The Institute works with local partners to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict in regions worldwide. Created in 1984, USIP is nonpartisan and congressionally mandated with global security in mind. It moved to its permanent home on the northwest corner of the National Mall in 2011.

Matthew is a program officer for the Afghanistan and Central Asia program and Galen works in USIP's Public Education Department, which offers resources and delivers educational programs.

Matthew and Galen share more about their important work, visions, belief in conflict resolution, and reasons they can harbor great hope amid so much challenge.



MATTHEW PARKES '13

Degrees from Keene State: Bachelor's in Holocaust & Genocide Studies, minor in Political Science

Other Degrees: Master's in Conflict Resolution, Georgetown University

Originally from North Andover, MA, and now resides in Washington, DC

Matthew joined the staff of USIP after grad school and serves as a program officer for the Afghanistan and Central Asia program working to support coordination of key activities in Washington and the region. This

includes designing and managing field projects with implementing partners, planning public events and private discussions, drafting progress reports for donors, and regular visits to Central Asia to meet with partners and government counterparts.

Matthew analyzes the key drivers of conflict for policymakers and the general public through publications and events. His team works with the State Department in Central Asia to design projects, conferences, and dialogues to enhance regional coordination between the five Central Asian republics and the U.S. focused on the universal threat of violent extremism.

The Afghanistan program shifted dramatically following the Taliban's takeover of the country in August 2021. The organization closed its field office in Kabul and evacuated staff. Still, Matthew said, despite the "many heartbreaking setbacks," USIP works closely with U.S. policymakers, activists, and Afghan civil society leaders to address significant and ongoing humanitarian issues.

Additionally, Matthew helps to manage a smaller project on Uyghur cultural heritage preservation. The Uyghurs are an ethnic Turkic group that have lived in modern-day China and Central Asia for centuries. Over the past decade, the Uyghur population in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region has faced severe persecution by the Chinese government, which the U.S. and other countries have said meets the criteria of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Matthew answered a few questions:

Q: What is most rewarding about your profession?

MP: "I am fortunate to work with dedicated activists, scholars, and policymakers in DC and the region. Interaction with leading experts and practitioners keeps me informed and energized, and their dedication and persistence continually inspire me. This especially applies to Afghan women and Uyghur activists, who despite great hardship continue to work tirelessly to raise awareness and push for true accountability."

Q: How did your KSC education help prepare you for the "real world," personally and professionally?

MP: "The peacebuilding and international relations fields are an extension of the Holocaust and genocide studies (HGS), so in that sense, I'm using my education every day. The HGS program inspired me to continue my studies at Georgetown, which led to an entry-level position at USIP six years ago. The lessons and skills from Keene helped me rise within the organization to my current role. What prepared me most for the academic components of this job and the broader challenges of working in conflict areas was the excellent faculty in the HGS program. I'm forever indebted to Paul Vincent, my favorite professor throughout all my years at Keene and Georgetown, for constantly challenging me and sparking my love for this field. And then there was James Waller, Hank Knight, and the fantastic Michele Kuiawa and Tom White in the HGS office."

(Continued on pg. 12)

Q: These are charged times for our world – divisions, conflicts, anxieties, and fears. What gives you hope that peaceful outcomes and a more just society can prevail?



MP: *"The peacebuilders and activist groups I engage with are the biggest source of hope. Their passion, dedication, and intelligence continually amaze and inspire me. Also, how the vast majority of people have reacted to the major global shocks of the past two years is a source of hope amidst such tragedy. People are speaking out, and I feel we're slowly heading toward a more peaceful and just future."*

Q: What advice would you share today with a high school junior or senior considering college?

MP: *"Do everything you can to find a field you're passionate about and run with it, but don't worry if you don't know what you want to study right away. Take some risks and try out different things. Most of all, have fun!"*

PS: Matthew has a 5-year-old lab named Molly, a rescue he described as the "sweetest pup in the world." He includes biking, hiking, concerts, and serving as coach of the office softball team among his hobbies. Matthew talks to his core group of Keene State friends almost daily and sees them a couple of times a year.

FEATURE:

GALEN GAMMINO '17

Degrees from Keene State: Bachelor's in Holocaust and Genocide Studies and Sociology, minor in Criminal Justice Studies

Other Degrees: Master's in International Peace and Conflict Resolution, American University
Originally from East Greenwich, RI, and now resides in Washington, DC

In her third year as a research analyst, Galen heads up the design, development, and launch of USIP's online courses. Her work is situated within the Institute's Gandhi-King Global Academy, which works to directly assist peacebuilders in civil society and government within conflict-affected countries by training, educating, advising, and convening actors to resolve conflict without violence.

Galen explained that practical, self-paced, instructor-led courses support frontline peacebuilders' educational and training needs in these nations and regions. Courses cover negotiation, mediation, conflict analysis, nonviolent action, and other peacebuilding topics. Courses are free and come with a certificate of completion.

She divides her time between two high-priority courses she's developing. One is Atrocity Prevention, which is offered in partnership with the Holocaust Memorial Museum. The second is Transnational Crime in Southeast Asia. It delves into Southeast Asia's emergence as a hub for transnational criminal activities, and the peace and security threats it poses regionally and globally.

"I had no idea about the gravity of these scam operations," Galen said. "If you ever receive a 'Hi, looking forward to dinner tonight!' text from a stranger, it is likely not an innocent case of having the wrong number. It is more likely from someone who has been trafficked and forced to work in a scam compound somewhere in Southeast Asia." The second course is Atrocity Prevention. It is offered in partnership with the Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Galen answered a few questions:

Q: What is most rewarding about your profession?

GG: *"Seeing real people join our platform and participate in the discussion forums of the courses I have worked on over the years. The best is hearing how they have used our courses in their communities. Just this week I heard from someone about how they know of civil society groups in Myanmar taking our courses, translating materials, and delivering them to communities synchronously where technology gaps exist."*

Q: How did your KSC education help to prepare you for the "real world," personally and professionally?

GG: *"Keene State was such a supportive environment for my growth. My coursework was largely based on practical skills, like conducting conflict analysis or community-based learning and research. Even when my coursework was more traditional reading, research paper writing, and discussion, it was always focused on developing my critical thinking skills. ... I can't express how dedicated, approachable, and ready to advise the faculty and staff are at Keene State. Having experienced other academic institutions, I know it is not the norm."*



STUDENTS FIND FUN IN THEIR FIELDS AND SERVE IN CREATIVE WAYS (by Paul Miller)

Through our Global Education Office, Keene State students are able to pursue semesters abroad while international students have the opportunity to join us for study on campus here in New Hampshire. During the experience, they conduct research and perform service learning to benefit communities they are visiting.

Rewarding discoveries, after all, are made both in the classroom and beyond its walls. Forging a diverse and well-rounded educational path is all part of the college's emphasis on academic freedom in the liberal arts tradition. It is a big part of why Keene State students and graduates enjoy a deeper perspective, meaningful connections, and competitive advantages.

Here are a few examples of how these adventures change lives:



ADVENTURES ABROAD: GRAPHIC DESIGN, JAPAN-STYLE

Sawyer Culberson '26, a graphic design and criminal justice major, spent the fall 2023 semester at Kansai Gaidai University in Hirakata, Japan. He was 6,790 miles from home and even further removed from his comfort zone or so it seemed initially.

Today, he embraces a bring-on-the-world spirit.

In Japan, Sawyer took a criminal justice class, a Japanese design studies class, a Japanese language class, and a manga drawing class, the latter his favorite. He lived in a large dormitory with other international students, a handful of whom that have remained close friends. He's also close with Noa Kodama, a Japanese exchange student who attended Keene State during both semesters in 2023 and 2024. They met in Keene in the spring.

"Our little (dorm) group clicked," Sawyer said. "We went to Universal Studios Japan together, hung out, got tattoos. One student flew to New Hampshire to attend a concert with me. I learned so much about Japan ... and the world."

Two are Americans from Ohio, one is from the Philippines, and the other is from France. They connect via Discord, a messaging app, Sawyer said, adding that he also has about 15 to 20 friends he met abroad that he corresponds with on Instagram.

The experience "exceeded my expectations tenfold," he wrote in a blog for the student newspaper, the Equinox.

"I'm more comfortable about a lot of things," Sawyer said, grateful for the opportunity and proud for stepping out of his comfort zone so thoroughly. "I brought to Keene State nervousness; I will leave confident and prepared."

(Continued on pg. 14)

Q: These are charged times for our world – divisions, conflicts, anxieties, and fears. What gives you hope that peaceful outcomes and a more just society can prevail?

GG: "It is a hard climate to be hopeful in. I think of a quote from a Taylor Swift song, 'I am still a believer, and I don't know why.' The song is not at all about the state of the world, but when I hear it I always think about my optimism that the world can be a better place, even though time and time again it shows us its worst. It can feel like there is no reason to believe. When we stop imagining that a better world is possible we have lost. It gives me hope that people are still trying."

Q: What advice would you share today with a high school junior or senior considering college?

GG: "Make the most of your post-high school years, however you spend them. You don't need to have your future perfectly mapped out. Follow your interests and join clubs and organizations. It's okay, and if anything advantageous, to have a lot of experiences that don't necessarily relate to one another. Looking back years from now, you'll likely find that those dots start to connect and make you uniquely qualified for different opportunities."

PS: Galen is in a long-term relationship with a fellow Keene State alum, has a 4-year-old German Shepherd mix named Mellie, and enjoys knitting, crocheting, reading, and walking Mellie in D.C.'s "amazing parks." She is part of a GHS alum hub in the D.C. area that has stayed connected. Since her 8th-grade class trip there, she has always wanted to live in D.C.



ADVENTURES ABROAD: WIGWAMS, NATIVE PEOPLE'S HOMES

During the last academic year, students Abigail Carlson '24, Anthony DiVito '26, and Zachary Lizotte '25 presented research on wigwams as emergency shelters at the Energy and Sustainability Conference in Lisbon, Portugal. This research used digital modeling to test for temperature comfort and air quality associated with open fires and wood stoves used inside wigwam structures.

The students worked as a team under the direction of professors Fernando del Ama Gonzalo and Paul Fowler. Ongoing research led by these professors examines traditional Native American wigwams and continues to explore their possible uses as temporary and emergency shelters in today's world.

ADVENTURES ABROAD: MAKING INROADS AWAY FROM HOME

Keene State students are known for stepping up, advocating for social good, and volunteering to make a difference in the world. Through the College, they're able to get connected with mutually beneficial community service initiatives, like one that recently led a group of Keene State Owls on a memorable coastal adventure.

For one week, six students and two staff members traveled to Kiptopeke State Park in Cape Charles, Virginia to demolish an existing boardwalk and replace it with a less maintenance-intensive stone walkway. A network of boardwalks connects trails and beaches at this destination on the state's Eastern Shore.

Among other things, park-goers can explore a unique coastal habitat featuring a major flyway for migratory birds. As part of their trip, students and staff explored locations along the coast, learned about the region's ecology, and spent time gleaning insight from the park's rangers.



ADVENTURES ABROAD: WHEN THE WORLD IS YOUR CLASSROOM

Graduate students Peter Graney, Courtney Barnes, and Marcos Silveira (pictured left) joined a delegate roster of more than 400 students representing 46 nations at an international leadership summit in Bangkok, Thailand. All three returned with new friends, insight from their newly found window into the world's rich cultural diversity, and a sobering – but career-inspiring – understanding of some of the most consequential human rights challenges.

It was a memorable week and a veritable scrapbook of memories. Peter aspires to document conflict in world hot spots. And Marcos described the summit experience "as continuing my lifelong journey of learning and discovering more of what it means to be human." Each of them has an undergraduate degree in Holocaust and genocide studies from Keene State, and all three are currently pursuing graduate degrees at the College.

FEATURE:

SCHOLARSHIPS, FINANCIAL AID ARE PART AND PARCEL OF COLLEGE'S AIM TO CREATE DIVERSE PATHS FOR ALL

(by Paul Miller)

The Koenig-Siddall First Generation Scholarship was established in 2022 by Rich and Sandra Neil Wallace to honor two of their first-generation ancestors. It acknowledges and addresses unique challenges faced by students who have immigrated to the U.S. or who are the first in their families born in the United States.

The Wallaces are the 2024 recipients of the Granite State Award.

Read more about them on page 25.

This past academic year, four Keene State students benefited from a one-time award of \$3,000 to offset their college costs. Three are immigrants and all are the first generation in their families to attend a college or university.

Four other students were recipients of a \$1,550 Rene C. Lachapelle Scholarship, which provides financial assistance to a Keene State junior or above whose academic path helps bring theory to practice through study abroad, undergraduate research, internships, and other out-of-the-classroom activities.

More than 40 percent of Keene State students are first-generation, 70 percent receive a merit scholarship, and 95 percent receive at least some financial aid.

These awards are about more than helping to pay the bills. They are about helping to lift burdens large and small, instilling confidence, and leveling the playing field so that all students have an educational journey in which they feel visible and heard.

They go a long way toward assuring that Keene State students and graduates experience the deeper perspectives, meaningful connections, and competitive advantages that the college's liberal arts traditions promise.

Meet two of the scholarship recipients:

GABRIELA CARDONA '24



MBAMBI MBUNGU '26



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FEATURE:

MBAMBI MBUNGU '26

Mbambi is among the first Koenig-Siddall recipients and is a native of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and one of 10 in a family living in a refugee camp in that Central African nation before finding his way to New Hampshire.

He is a studio art and human resources management double major. His passion for art dates back to his youth, when he drew in the sand near huts that served as the family's living quarters. Villagers who passed and admired his drawings were careful not to disturb them by walking around them.

Mbambi has come a long way, literally and figuratively. Recently, while at Keene State, two of his paintings were displayed at the Currier Art Museum in Manchester, NH. He paints in oil and acrylic on canvas and draws with colored pencils on paper.

Inspired by an internship with world-renowned artist Richard Whitney, who lives with his artist wife, Sandy, in Stoddard, Mbambi spends many of his idle hours in the studio on campus painting and drawing.

"His portfolio is something else," says Rick Scott, who recruited Mbambi to play soccer for the Owls. "He's passionate about his art."



As the team's main center-forward striker this past season, Mbambi possessed speed and power on the pitch. He was counted on to score goals, and he did, leading the Owls in points, goals, assists, and game-winning goals. "But more than that," Matthew Schmidt, his coach said, "he is a wonderful person, a quiet leader, and his story, actions, and success carry significant influence."

As a transfer student, Mbambi is no longer eligible to play soccer for Keene, but has two academic years to complete his degree since declaring his majors later in his educational journey.

Mbambi was a standout on the Owl soccer team, and he is an accomplished artist. Here are two selections from his portfolio: RnB singers in colored pencils and Congo Camps in watercolor acrylic paint.

FEATURE:

GABRIELA CARDONA '24

Gabby is a Rene C. Lachapelle Scholarship recipient, who graduated in the spring with a degree in women and gender studies and minors in sociology and criminal justice. The academic enrichment opportunity she took outside the classroom to further her scholarly pursuits was studying both semesters of her senior year abroad, in Italy and England.

A first-generation student, Gabby came to America because her mother, born and raised in El Salvador, wanted more opportunities for her daughter. Gabby seized every moment she could, on campus, including as Orientation leader, Office of Admissions volunteer, cross country runner, and president of the Yoga Club.

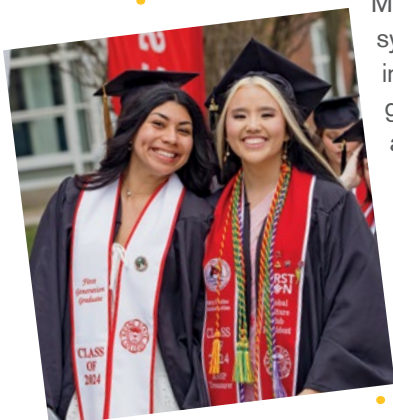
Her desire to spend a year abroad was largely to “see how law and justice is practiced and upheld in different countries, and to gain perspective on how women’s rights and advocacy are supported” outside the US.

This past academic year, she spent the fall semester in Florence, Italy, and the spring in York, United Kingdom.

“I was always told growing up that knowledge is gained from books, wiser and older people individuals, and travel...

Minoring in Criminal Justice, I took a criminal justice system course on the Italian mafia and its history in virtually every region of Italy and the country’s government. ... In the UK, I met so many people and visited so many places.”

Her duration abroad allowed Gabby to travel to other destinations, such as Morocco, Spain, and the Netherlands, and still make it back just in time to walk across the graduation stage with her friends and classmates.



Mbambi and Gabby are just two of the many Keene State students for whom more is made possible by scholarship and financial assistance. They each arrived at Keene State humbled yet driven by their past. They were excited by the prospect of something more and they never looked back. Their stories are of the ilk that we love to tell.



By: Caroline Tremblay, Owl & Pen

FROM SERVICE TO SCHOLARS:

Veterans Find Home at Keene State College

“
KEENE STATE
COLLEGE
DOESN'T CARE
WHERE YOU
ARE **FROM**; IT
CARES WHERE
YOU ARE
GOING.
—
RODGER MARTIN '79
”

Rodger Martin '79, a Keene State graduate who's now an adjunct professor at the College, boils it down to this: “Keene State College doesn't care where you are from; it cares where you are going.”

He shared more about his story and how it led him to this unique college community. In 1966, Rodger enlisted in the US Army directly out of high school. He was trained as a combat engineer and then spent 22 days on the Pacific sailing to Vietnam, where he became part of the 588th Combat Engineer Battalion at Cu Chi, later moving toward Tay Ninh near the Cambodian border.

As a combat engineer, he helped build infrastructure, clean up explosives, and clear roadways after mines detonated.

During an attack on a Special Forces camp, Rodger was wounded and returned to the US with time left to serve. “I finished out my enlistment in Massachusetts and loved being around Mt. Monadnock so much, I stayed,” Rodger recalls.

He had taken classes whenever possible and earned an undergraduate degree in English Education. As he prepared for graduate studies, he looked at Keene State, meeting with the College's veteran coordinator before becoming a student in educational administration. “In retrospect, that trained me in skills I didn't know I had and created what I call the business background for all work,” he describes. He attributes his professional successes to what he learned during that time.

For veterans whose journey has led them to Keene State, there's something about campus that just feels like home. They describe the buzz and hum of students always engaging with one another and their work. It's reminiscent of life on base where an ever-active thrum offers reassuring rhythm.

Whether a student is arriving after years serving overseas or as a first-generation college student who's lived locally all their life, the focus is creating opportunities for everyone. Recently, among a number of noteworthy rankings, **Keene State was named #5 in Best Colleges for Veterans by US News & World Report.**

The College qualified for this recognition as a public institution that is certified for the GI Bill and ranked as one of the top Regional Colleges North. In addition, **Keene State enrolls a minimum of 20 full-time and part-time undergraduate veterans and active-duty service members on an annual basis.**

Being part of a diverse student body is key to what a true liberal arts education means – the opportunity to deepen your perspective, grow meaningful connections, and embrace all the competitive advantages that come as result of your time on campus.

These many years later, he continues to teach journalism and English at Keene State and says when it comes to engaging with students: “There's no work like it. It never gets old.” He mentors aspiring journalists, writers, and poets, emphasizing the authenticity of the work they perform. For instance, The Equinox, Keene State's newspaper, is produced weekly by more than 60 learners. “These students can taste their work, they can feel it, the smell of it, and it matters far beyond our campus,” Rodger says.

He continues to believe deeply in the transformative power of the arts and humanities, explaining that they offer students “a moral base from which to use new technology and the fiber to counteract it when it's used immorally.” A person need only look at the challenges facing our world to see both the reprieve and guidance these vital areas of scholarship offer.

Of course, history falls within those bounds, and that's been the deep love of Peter J. Dangelantonio's (Class of '24) life. In fact, he distinctly remembers it began while watching the Disney film, Bedknobs and Broomsticks. “From that moment I became enveloped and obsessed with Medieval warfare, as well as Germany's vast history,” he recalls.

“IT’S HARD TO EXPLAIN THE FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS GOING THROUGH YOU DURING AN ENGAGEMENT. . . . EVERYONE HAS TO BE ABLE TO WORK IN SYNC, NOT ONLY FOR THEIR SURVIVAL, BUT FOR THE ENTIRE INTEGRITY OF THE SHIP.”

PETER J. DANGELANTONIO '24

Originally from nearby Jaffrey, Peter grew up at the base of Mt. Monadnock until he shipped out for the Navy in 2012. He says his time in the service was “the best job I ever had.” As a Boatswain’s Mate, his expansive role included everything from driving ships and launching helicopters to search and rescue and heavy machinery operation. In 2014, he was deployed to Syria and the Middle East, traveling to 13 countries, meeting four ambassadors, and serving in a ceremonial role for

numerous celebrations with foreign countries and diplomats.

Peter knew he wanted to become a history teacher when he returned home. He found Keene State’s program to be excellent and has already enrolled as a graduate student in history and archives, with the goal of becoming a certified archivist. He’s hungry to not only teach but also “dig through that deep, forgotten history that all history majors know exists.” Otherwise, if left unchecked, the same stories repeat themselves.

Peter will also be working with head archivist Rodney Obien to interview Vietnam and possibly Korean War veterans to record their experiences. Having been immersed in the Keene State community and connected with other veterans through two years as part of the orientation team, he feels the College helps veterans feel like they have a voice.



HE ENCOURAGES EVERYONE TO TAKE FIVE MINUTES AND TALK WITH A VETERAN WHO MIGHT CROSS THEIR PATH ON CAMPUS (AND BEYOND).

“HAVING PEOPLE BE OPEN AND ABLE TO TALK TO US IS SOMETHING WE LONG FOR,” PETER SAYS



ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS

The Keene State College Alumni Association is pleased to announce its 2024 Alumni Award recipients. This year the Alumni Association is recognizing five graduates who embody the Keene State motto of “Go forth and serve.” With graduation years ranging from 1964 to 2018, all five alumni have shown dedication and service to better their communities, often in conjunction with supporting the College.

SUE HOLBROOK '64

Sue Holbrook '64, who Norma Walker nominated, is being recognized for her faithful commitment to members of the Golden Circle and beyond. Sue is the woman behind the pen when signing birthday cards to Golden Circle members. Additionally, Sue serves on the Golden Circle Committee, as well as the Reunion Committee. She helped organize a meet-up for the class of 1964 and is instrumental in planning successful luncheons.



HAILEE CENTRELLA '18

Hailee Centrella '18 works as a College Relationship Specialist at ALKU on the Talent Acquisition Team, where she was promoted to a group manager role within just a few years. ALKU offers specialty consulting services for employers in the areas of Technologies, Healthcare IT, Life Sciences, and Government. Hailee is a first-generation college student, whose experience at Keene State enabled her to launch a career that keeps her connected with the College in meaningful ways. She gives back by participating in on-campus workshops, guest lecturing in various classes, and participating as a frequent mock interviewer. We are fortunate that Hailee continuously makes time in her very active schedule for the College and our students.

MINDY CAMBIAR '83

Mindy Cambiar '83 has been an active and steadfast supporter of the Keene community that started at the time she was a student and carries through even today. After graduating, Mindy was eager to make an impact. With a group of other committed individuals, she saw a need and helped to establish The Community Kitchen. From there, she became director of Hundred Nights Shelter, continuing her leadership there until recently retiring. Her commitment to the underserved in our community is awe-inspiring.

PEG RICHMOND M'93

Peg Richmond M'93 is best known as the smiling face driving the Keene State Admissions Office over the last 38 years. She has been through many times of transition on campus, continuously keeping our students and future students at the heart of everything the College does. Peg has impacted Keene State, the city of Keene, and well beyond with her dedication and commitment to bringing quality students to campus who make an impact and move on to be successful adults.

ALISON LACASSE '90

Alison LaCasse '90 is the first recipient of the newly named Norma V. Walker '51 M '59 Outstanding Alumni Teacher Award. Alison has many traits Norma upheld as a teacher, an advocate, and a voice for the underrepresented or those in need. Alison has worked as a music teacher in a Title 1 district for the past 23 years. She continues to dedicate her life to the students and staff at Lamprey River Elementary School, where she spends countless hours before and after class fervently supporting her community. In a place with high turnover and many challenges, Alison is the steadfast light that the school has come to rely on.



This year's recipients were honored at the Alumni Awards Luncheon during Reunion Weekend. We are grateful for each of their remarkable contributions to this campus, their communities, and the greater good.

THE 2024 ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENTS ARE:

Sprague W. Drenan: *Sue Holbrook '64*

Alumni Achievement: *Mindy Cambiar '83*

Outstanding Service: *Peg Richmond M'93*

Alumni Inspiration: *Hailee Centrella '18*

The Norma V. Walker '51 M'59 Outstanding

Alumni Teacher: *Alison (Welch) LaCasse '90*

PEG RICHMOND M'93 AN APPRECIATION

Some people are intrinsically upbeat, happy by nature, seemingly in a perpetual good mood. Few people are all of that stitched together in one cocoon of joyfulness.

Count Peg Richmond among the few.

Keene State's Director of Admissions retired this August, concluding 38 years of service in that important and demanding sector not just of Keene State, but higher education.

A tireless worker, passionate leader, shrewd strategist, and champion of young students and parents attempting to navigate the sometimes cumbersome path to college, Peg was the full package.

She performed all facets of the job, traveling tens of thousands of miles and overseeing admissions teams with forward-looking vision and can-do spirit. She even rolled deftly with all the punches the endless technological evolution threw her.

One can attempt to quantify her impact in numbers – we assert for the record the numbers are downright gaudy – but her effect in human terms is a greater measure. Peg's a people person. Her diligent efforts and ubiquitous smile beamed belief and possibility, opened doors, changed lives, and launched careers.

It is the Admissions team, after all, that holds the key to unlocking the start of a higher education experience.

Peg's vocabulary was not our vocabulary: transcript, need-blind, FERPA and FAFSA, early action, decision day, common app, yield, profile-building, and test-optional, to name just a few.

In the company of potential enrollees, Peg was most at home in her role. She saw sharing the virtue and value of Keene State as the easy part of her job. She didn't

bank on miracles; she preferred roll-up-your-sleeves hard work. Admissions was a business without bluffs as she saw it, and it played perfectly to her realness. Loyalty to her job, future students, and Keene State was unflinching.

Peg looks forward to not having to set her alarm clock. With her husband, Rod, she also looks forward to more of what they enjoy doing most together – hiking in the White Mountains and adding to that pleasure visits to US National Parks, as many as time and obligations allow.

Unsurprisingly, Peg also plans to volunteer to help students prepare for college.

If you are reading this, you likely have met, known, or heard about Peg Richmond, given that Peg oversaw student recruitment teams that enrolled more than 50,000 first-year and transfer students – rough count – during her tenure.

She trusted her gut, reveled in student success stories, and rooted for underdogs. Keene State is forever indebted to Peg for her expertise, eternal optimism, and love of craft. There will not be another quite like her. We stand assured that the dominant colors in her wardrobe – red and white – will not change and that on-campus sightings of her and Rod will remain par for the course.

**KEENE STATE IS FOREVER INDEBTED
TO PEG FOR HER EXPERTISE, ETERNAL
OPTIMISM, AND LOVE OF CRAFT.**



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

A SPRING BREAK TRIP TO THE SUNNY SOUTH BRINGS BIG SMILES

The alumni staff had a great time reconnecting with our Floridian alumni this past March. It is a long-standing tradition to visit our Owls in the sunny south during Keene State's spring break. The warmth felt from our smiling alumni and the bright Florida sunshine will not easily be forgotten. Thank you to those who joined us, whether it was at our sunset cruise, Red Sox game, or a meet-up. We felt the Owl love and can't wait to return next year!



Save the date for this year's upcoming trip, March 13 – 22, 2025.

KEENE STATE COLLEGE CELEBRATES THE POWER OF GIVING



Donor Travis Hodgdon '94 & KEA President Dan Kurowski '07

At the 12th Annual Celebrate Momentum event on April 15, donors, scholarship recipients, parents, and College staff gathered to celebrate the impact of giving on the Keene State College community. Each year, the Keene Endowment Association (KEA) collaborates with KSC Advancement staff to host this program

where students can meet donors who expand and enrich their opportunities to access classroom learning, extracurricular activities, internships, study away, and more.

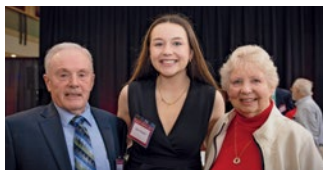
This year, the KEA recognized two groups of donors for their significant contributions to support Keene State students: Travis '94 and Gretchen Hodgdon for their creation of five generous scholarships, and the Class of 1961 for their long-time dedication to growing a class scholarship fund which now awards three scholarships per year.

Two senior recipients of the scholarships from the honorees provided remarks about their inspiration to pursue college degrees, their Keene State experiences, and the impact of their scholarships. Gage Perry '24, Education and Political Science double major, and Ellie Kopicko '24, Education and History double major, are both completing student teaching experiences.

Congratulations to the honorees and the two Keene State College graduates!



Dr. John Sturtz, Professor, Education
Gage Perry '24 and Emma Dunn



Bob Saulnier '61, Ellie Kopicko '24,
Dot Simpson '61

KEENE STATE RETIRED FACULTY AND STAFF REUNITE

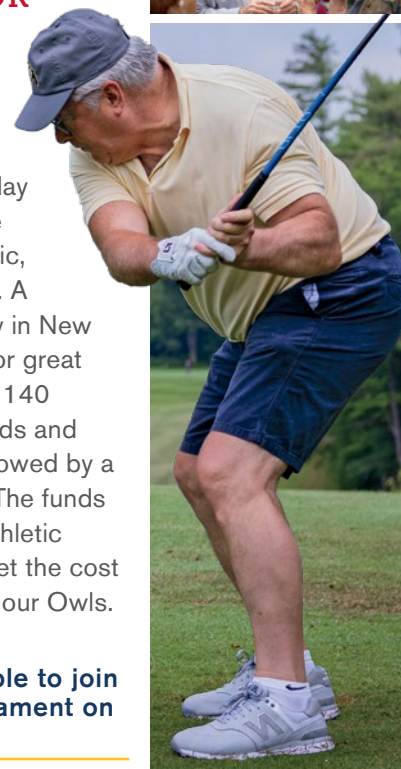
On June 18, 2024, close to 60 retired Keene State College faculty and staff gathered at the Student Center to renew friendships with former colleagues, and to welcome newer retirees. Participants enjoyed a luncheon and the opportunity to reconnect with one another. Thank you, retirees, for all that you have contributed to the history and value of the College!



ANNUAL KEENE STATE GOLF CLASSIC RAISED OVER \$43,000 FOR OWL ATHLETICS

On June 14, 2024, the Keene State community came together at Keene Country Club to play in the 33rd Annual Keene State College Golf Classic, sponsored by Chartwells. A gorgeous, late-spring day in New England paved the way for great golfing, with a full field of 140 alumni, faculty, staff, friends and sponsors on the links followed by a lively outdoor barbecue. The funds raised for Keene State Athletic Department will help offset the cost of new team uniforms for our Owls. Thank you!

We hope you will be able to join us at next year's tournament on June 13, 2025.





THIS YEAR'S MEMORABLE REUNION CELEBRATES TRADITIONS OLD AND NEW

The 2024 Keene State College Reunion Weekend was once again a special time to celebrate alumni and remember friends from the past. For the second year, the event returned to June, bringing more than 250 alumni and friends back to reconnect with other Owls.

Alumni traveled to the campus ready to reunite with classmates and celebrate the achievements of faculty and alumni. The weekend was marked by the ever presence of our beloved alumna, Norma Walker '51 M'59, who passed away this April. Golden Circle members gathered in the Flag Room to view pictures of Norma through the years and remember her contributions to the College.

She continued to be acknowledged as her family led the parade of classes down Appian Way, holding Norma's class of 1951 sign. The Alumni Association sealed her legacy by presenting the first Norma V. Walker Outstanding Alumni Teacher Award to Alison LaCasse '90 at the Alumni Awards Luncheon. It was a special time to remember a dear friend.

Alumni spanned over 74 years of graduates, with Ellie Muldoon '49 proudly serving as the oldest alumna in attendance, followed by Julianna Benducci '24 who concluded the parade of classes down Appian Way. Activities included class reunion meet-ups, the Alumni Awards Luncheon, Owl Artist's Exhibit, ice cream social, and a cornhole tournament on the Fiske Quad to benefit the College's athletic programs.

Save the date for Homecoming Weekend - September 13 - 14, 2024.



BRETT VANCE '94 IS TIME-TESTED:

'The Longer You Teach, The More Rewarding It Becomes'

Real-world learning opportunities at Keene State are neither new nor fleeting. Brett Vance '94 is a reminder of that. Twenty-seven years into his teaching career, the Owl grad says a Keene State student exchange at the Belgorod Pedagogical Institute in Belgorod, Russia, cemented his career ambition. "There I visited local schools with cooperating teachers and officials," Brett recalled. "Being the first American that these individuals had met built an awareness for me about the responsibility to present myself well for my country."


He returned knowing that he wanted to be a teacher. "It was a different place and time; however, I've never forgotten the learning and the level of student engagement. It was truly inspiring."

During his Keene State years, a team of caring faculty skillfully guided Brett through his education. He didn't declare his major right away; rather selected a range of courses based on his interest. "My life experience and sociology study have taught me to keep an open mind toward learning, and view almost any issue from multiple perspectives."

Brett majored in history at Keene State and earned a minor in sociology. "I have leaned on my Keene State education in my teaching over the years. Some of my best lessons include historical anecdotes learned

from Professor Carl Granquist. The amazing thing is that I can still recall every detail, including Carl's voice intonation from his lectures, some 30 years later." Among other influential faculty, he also singled out Dr. Charles Hildebrandt and Dr. Valentin Doborovich, for whom Brett worked as a language assistant.

Currently, Brett is helping lead a statewide project that seven teachers were chosen to coach seven students to read *The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens* and to interview Dr. Bill Haas, former US diplomat and N.Y. Times best-selling author. Haas will lead a panel discussion with the students as part of this New Hampshire civics collaboration. Opportunities like these, Brett said, make his profession fulfilling.

A portrait of Brett Vance, a middle-aged man with a mustache and goatee, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue shirt. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a gentle smile.

I HAVE HAD THE MOST AMAZING CAREER THAT HAS ALLOWED ME TO APPLY MY PASSIONS TO HELP KIDS TO APPRECIATE HISTORY. TEACHING IS THE MOST **CHALLENGING** PROFESSION AND THE MOST **REWARDING** AT THE SAME TIME. THE LONGER YOU TEACH THE MORE REWARDING IT BECOMES.

GRANITE STATE AWARD AND HONORARY DOCTOR OF HUMANE LETTERS DEGREE PRESENTED AT KEENE STATE COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT

Sandra Neil Wallace and Rich Wallace were honored with the Granite State Award at Keene State College Commencement on May 4, 2024. Each year, this award is presented by Keene State and the University System of New Hampshire to recognize outstanding achievements by community members.

Sandra and Rich are co-founders of The Daily Good, a nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing food security, health and well-being, diversity and inclusion, and literacy. The Daily Good provides free food from various cultures through pantries at Keene State, Antioch University New England, and River Valley Community College. The Wallaces are also award-winning authors of novels and non-fiction works addressing a range of social and political topics. Many of their books are for young readers and highlight people who help shape history by breaking barriers.

Sandra is the daughter of a refugee and concentration camp survivor, and Rich's great-grandmother arrived in the US at Ellis Island from Scotland. Sandra attributes learning about the power of food to bring people together from her grandmother, Anna Koenig, who moved to Canada as a World War II refugee from Yugoslavia.

In honor of their ancestors, the Wallaces established the Koenig-Siddall First Generation Scholarship to acknowledge and address the unique challenges faced by students who immigrated to the U.S. or who are the first in their families to be born in the US.

Their passion for the well-being of their broader community was clear in the words they shared with the Class of 2024: "In our hearts, many of us hope to make the communities we call home a better place – to make a difference. But sometimes we get stuck on knowing what to do or how to do it. We invite you to focus on what we all have in common: the need to belong, to be loved, to be with family, and to have a purpose. We invite you to ask the question: What would make your daily life better?"

In addition to the Granite State Award, the Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters Degree of 2024 was awarded to Marcus Soutra '06, co-founder of Eye to Eye, a national organization supporting neurodiverse children.

WHEN ADDRESSING KEENE STATE'S CLASS OF 2024, MARCUS SHARED THE LESSONS OF HIS JOURNEY WITH THIS MESSAGE:

"This is your time – your time to be brave, your time to be vulnerable, your time to embrace the discomfort. Growth rarely happens within your comfort zone. Being brave means stepping into the unknown and facing uncertainty while being true to yourself."



Marcus is recognized by Keene State for his work in education and social entrepreneurship, bridging gaps for neurodiverse children. Following several years of teaching in public schools, Marcus co-founded the organization Eye to Eye with David Flink. Inspired by their own experiences as neurodivergent students, they began a grassroots nonprofit organization that Marcus said aims "to find ways for young people to embrace their uniqueness, celebrate their gifts, and challenge society's notion of normalcy."

Now a national organization, Marcus has contributed to the growing cause for 17 years during which he began as the first official staff member and subsequently became president. Operating first as an outside source of service, Eye to Eye is now integrated within public and charter schools across the US, with headquarters in New York City. In addition, Marcus has lectured internationally, reaching audiences as far as Japan and Malaysia.



NEWS FROM THE NEST

A WARM WELCOME FROM OUR ALUMNI DIRECTOR

Congratulations to the Class of 2024! Welcome to the Keene State College Alumni Association, a proud group of over 48,000 members. As an alumni-Owl, you have joined a network of Owls who are here to support and “hoot” you on.

KEENE STATE OWL ATHLETES TAKE THE SEASON BY STORM

The 2024 spring athletic season recently concluded with four out of five sports qualifying for the LEC tournament/championship. Baseball qualified and won a postseason game for the first time since 2017. Sophomores Evan Cali '26 and Otis Follet '26 were each named Second Team All-Conference, and Tommy Ahlers '26 Third Team All-Conference. From softball, first-years Elyse Picard '27 and Grace Wallace '27 were named to the All-LEC Rookie Team.



Women's lacrosse finished 12-6 overall and made their eighth appearance in the LEC championship game. Haile Ratajack '24 became the program's all-time leading scorer, finishing with 235 career goals.

For KSC outdoor track and field, senior Kyle Maruca '24 set multiple discus records, most recently tossing 50.87 meters at the NEICAAA championships. Men's lacrosse had five



student athletes recognized in the LEC's postseason awards, highlighted by Colby Cala '28 being named to the first team.

Men's Basketball ranked as high as number four in the country at one point and became the first team to three-peat in the Little East Conference since the mid-1990s. They reached the Sweet 16 for the second season in a row and sixth time overall. Jeff Hunter '24 and Octavio Brito '26 were once again named All-Americans, with Hunter becoming the all-time leader in rebounds and blocks in program history. Congratulations to the many dedicated student athletes who make Owl Nation proud!

The inaugural esports season was a success, including all three teams qualifying for the postseason including Rocket League's first-ever postseason win against Mary Washington on April 1. They played 25 matches overall in their initial campaign, and had 18 student-athletes rostered. They plan to add a fourth title for their program for their first full season next year.

COMMITMENT TO CULTURE IS MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND THE CORNERSTONE OF A KEENE STATE EXPERIENCE

The Global Cultural Club is one of 54 active student-run clubs or organizations on campus that engage more than 900 students combined. The club is one of several unique elements that make Keene State a more inclusive place.

Participation of this kind is helping Keene State sharpen its identity as a small college that regards increasing interactions and positive opportunities as a way to broaden viewpoints and expand thinking ... in human, cultural, and social ways.

The more than 20 Global Cultural Club members come from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Bangladesh, China, Nepal, Peru, Zimbabwe, and Massachusetts are home destinations for the club's officers.

Culture-sharing might include making dumplings for Chinese New Year, traditional Bangladeshi food for Ramadan, or having cross-culture potlucks with the Black Student Union. Or events to teach languages, like Japanese and Nepali.

The club also hosts international crafting events, and for exchange students plans events to introduce exchange students to American pastimes and sports, like bowling or skiing.

A club co-advisor, Rodney Obien said the group is remarkable, too, for offering a space for Keene State's domestic students who study abroad and want to continue connecting globally.





RAISING ALL STUDENTS AND BUILDING INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS, CONTENT DRIVES DISTINGUISHED TEACHER

For Dr. Sarah McGregor, associate professor of physics, education is a relentless pursuit for students and teachers. And it is nothing if not inclusive in the same never-ending way.

Her philosophy was born from her experiences as a student, of being told she couldn't do something, and that science was an out-of-reach field of study. There were too many doubters and not enough believers in her orbit.

"It killed me," McGregor recalls. "It hurts my soul still, especially when my students relay those same things. I believe in all my students. I want to tell them and show them that they can do it."

"That's what I try to do, break barriers, whether it's gender identity, being a minority, or being a first-generation student like I was. There's this internal idea that not 'getting it' in class or as a subject means I can't do it, and then it becomes something people believe. Then students are left to doubt their skills and talents. That's not acceptable."

McGregor arrived at Keene State in 2014 as a contract lecturer in physics. She has a doctorate in astronomy from Boston University. This year, the tireless and inspirational educator is the recipient of the 2024 Keene State College Alumni Association Distinguished Teacher Award. McGregor was honored at the Faculty Excellence and Appreciation reception in May.

As part of the recognition, McGregor will address students at the College's 2025 Commencement.

The Distinguished Teacher Award recognizes excellence in teaching; encouragement of independent thinking; rapport with students in and out of the classroom; and student advising.

Nominations for McGregor poured in from across academic departments, students, and alumni who praised her hands-on teaching methods; community-building skills; and ability not only to temper anxiety for students who, as one said, aren't "science kids" but redirect it in positive ways. Also, for her natural adeptness at making the classroom an all-around "joyful place."

Megan Blanchette '24 said McGregor "makes Keene State feel more like a home and our little physics and astronomy department like a family."

Without hesitation, Kieren Seavy '22 described McGregor as one of the best professors she's ever had. "She's like a real-life Ms. Frizzle for the show Magic School Bus. She is very passionate, which sparks the same passion in her students."

Remarked Alumni Cory Boule '14: "The coolest thing" he'll ever do was made possible because of Dr. McGregor's mentorship. Boule completed a research assistantship at the Laboratory for Atmospheric and Space Physics at the University of Colorado Boulder, engaging in novel research for professional space scientists.

“DR. MCGREGOR CONTRIBUTES TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHING AND PEDAGOGY BY COLLABORATING WITH COLLEAGUES WHO ARE CONCERNED, AS SHE IS, WITH CONTINUALLY IMPROVING THEIR TEACHING”

DR. BRIAN ANDERSON,
PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY.

Colleague Dr. Mel Adams summed up McGregor this way: "She's a master educator with a sky's-the-limit positivity about student work. On an individual level, she has reassured students facing gender bias and imposter syndrome that they are plenty smart. We are fortunate to have her expertise, skill, and grace in the classroom."

"Getting this award certainly leaves me optimistic that I am making some of the differences I try to make," McGregor said. "What I realize is that I need to be louder. I study education and teaching, and I hope to write about pedagogical and cultural changes in the classroom and maybe cause a ripple effect in thinking across wider audiences. The idea that I can do more to propagate STEM education excites me."



See our website for the full story:

<https://www.keene.edu/news/stories/detail/raising-all-students-building-inclusive-classrooms-and-content-drives-teacher-of-the-year/>

In Memoriam

Carolyn L. Goodwill 1945
3/16/24

Geneva A. French 1946
3/20/23

Barbara Bassett 1948
10/16/23

Rita Evans 1951
5/2/23

Norma V. Walker 1951 M'1959
4/27/24

Grace E. Chandler 1952
4/16/24

Irene A. DilMeco 1952
2/24/24

Bruce E. Parent 1952
4/9/24

Betsy J. Wiggins 1953
2/21/23

Marlene DeFreest 1954
10/26/23

Sally Locus 1954
10/23/23

Maryellen Tremblay 1955
9/30/23

Dr. Bernard J. Ellis 1956
12/28/23

Mary Ann Pellerin 1956
Unknown

Bette L. Stockwell 1956
12/17/23

Arthur Constine Jr 1957
10/1/23

John D. Field 1957
10/31/23

Sarah W. Hutchins 1957
12/24/23

Marion S. Ball 1959
1/1/20

Barbara Nevel 1960
1/17/24

Irene Plourde 1960
1/4/24

Elizabeth G. Bainton 1961
11/16/23

Mary A. Foshier 1961
4/9/24

Barbara W. Barwood (Ward) 1962
10/19/23

Nancy J. Tate 1964
5/24/20

Joyce A. Cate 1966
3/28/24

Joseph Cunningham, Jr 1966
2/1/24

Margaret Hetherman 1966
1/29/24

Anne B. McCooey 1966
11/25/23

Curtis Darling 1968
9/14/23

Donald Boyer 1969
4/14/24

Martha Mortenson 1971
3/3/24

David R. Irwin 1972
4/26/24



John Sullivan 1972

2/11/24

Elmer Dunbar 1973

5/22/23

Jeffrey B. Clairmont M'1974

8/25/23

Dexter R. Durant, Jr. 1974

12/23/23

Wayne A. Woodbury 1974

2/24/24

Thomas F. Hogan 1975

10/19/22

Joan Messier 1976

11/24/23

Mark Kimball Murphy 1976

10/6/23

Blanche Truesdell 1976

1/18/24

Robert Anderson 1977

10/27/23

Ruth M. Lapan 1977

2/16/24

Pamela Clark 1978

10/11/23

James J. Powers 1978

4/1/24

Patricia Leinster 1981

11/9/23

Philip M. Prouty 1982

2/29/24

Allan Saari 1984

2/21/24

James Schumann II 1984

3/23/24

Michael P Carroll 1985

3/14/24

Nancy Drake Woodring Hansen M'1986

12/5/23

James M. Myers 1986

10/14/23

Jon Henry Perkins 1986

7/16/05

Katherine Traquair 1986

3/5/24

Mary Rubega 1989

12/6/23

Robert S. Clarke M'1993

7/4/21

John P. Ramsay 1993

10/9/23

Valerie Cole 1995

1/9/24

Paul S. Poirier 1998

12/2/23

Kenneth Swymer Sr. 1999

11/21/23

Gerald Mazza 2004

12/31/23

Danieal Farina 2011

1/19/24

CLASS NOTES



1947 In early May, **Steve Fortier '86** and Jessica Bigaj visited with **Ruth Washburn '47**. **Steve** and **Norma** used to visit with **Ruth** on years when she could not make it to reunion. **Steve** says, "**Norma** and I called it 'bringing reunion to **Ruth**!' It was always special for me to experience the unique bond between **Norma** and **Ruth** and even more special to become part of that bond."

1949 Eleanor (Hughgill) Muldoon shared about the June Reunion Weekend: "There are only five members left in our class - **Sherm and Marge (Hunter) Lovering, Ollie (McMorram) Dorr, Helen (Corey) Dwire**, and me. I went to Keene for Alumni Reunion hoping to see another '49er there...I was fortunate to see five or six people I knew! My daughter and I were able to have a great visit with **Sherm and Marge**. How many of you saw the article about them on the front page of The Keene Sentinel? **Marge** was my roommate in Huntress for three years and we've stayed in contact. After 79 years, KTC still holds a large piece of my heart!"

1960 Gail (Spevack) Sheldon is pleased to inform her classmates that the Class of 1960 Endowment Fund has provided assistance to 4 KSC students (3 seniors & 1 sophomore) this past year. The fund will continue to aid others in coming years.

Donald Nevel, husband of **Barbara Fisher Nevel**, shared the sad news that **Barbara** passed away in Florida on January 17. He included several pages and photos of their life and funeral services that were held on April 26. If you would like copies please email sheldon-sheldon@comcast.net.

Last fall, **Gail** mentioned visiting **Irene Plourde** in her beautiful surroundings at Whittaker Place; we are sad to report that **Irene** passed away January 4. Before moving to Florida, Irene had made end-of-life plans to be held here in NH with her former teachers, students, and friends. **Sr. Claire Coll** and **Gail** attended her services in Concord, NH on April 27.

Gail has also stayed in touch with **JoAnn (Dailey) Demars, Kathy (Bergeron) MacDonald, Norma (Turcotte) McShane, Ron Bailey**, Rich Joy's wife Joyce, **Bob "Lefty" Joy's** sons (Ronald & David), **Sr. Claire Coll**, and **Sr. Kathryn LaCasse**.

Ron Bailey retired recently from his part-time job as Conservation Ranger for the city of Lebanon, NH. Now he is doing volunteer trail maintenance work in Lebanon & Hanover, NH. **Ron** says he "Hopes to make our 65th reunion next year." Will YOU be there, too??

To '60 classmates reading this, you are NOW a member of our Class committee planning our 65th next June! Reach out - hope to hear from YOU!!!

1963 Nancy (Drew) Mercier '63 wrote in to share, "This past summer, I had the privilege of meeting up with my roommate, **Susan McLain**, from my freshman year at Keene State. We roomed together in Fiske Hall and became fast friends. I had not seen her for about 55 years and it was so special. We both happened to be in NH at the same time and connected through Facebook. It seems we just took up where we left off and it was so special."

1959 Larry Cole '59 corresponded with our recently departed **Norma Walker '51 M'59** - he wrote, "I may not look a year older, but I sometimes feel it. Old age has partially caught up with me this past year; creaky bones. Going back to Newick's after 45 years - sure found a very different place, but still good seafood. I look forward to another Golden Circle lunch south of Keene someday."

1961 Congratulations to **Marilyn (Woodward) Twombly** on her new great grandchild. **June (Merrill) O'Neil** recently undertook a Viking cruise down the Danube to Germany and had a great time. **Elizabeth (Gardner) Bainton** passed away in November 2023. She will be missed by her family and friends. Our condolences to all. We miss our dear **Norma Walker** who passed away in April.

Bob Saulnier and **Dot Simpson** attended the beautiful "Celebrate Momentum" ceremony at KSC in April. Hopefully you all received a letter congratulating our Class for its continued scholarship endowment funding. To date, the fund have given out 32 @ \$1,000 scholarships to students majoring in Education. One of Momentum's student speakers, **Ellie Kopieko '24**, spoke about how her scholarship helped her to obtain her college degree. It was a big honor to be the first class to receive the KEA's Recognition Award.

Please remember to earmark your donation to Class of 1961 Scholarship Fund. Small or large YOU are making this happen. A big thank you to **Bob Saulnier** for being so diligent in overseeing our funds."

1964 Carol (Mosher) Kobelski shares that she enjoys traveling - she went to Alaska, and took the train from Vancouver to Banff last year. She's looking forward to visiting three national parks, and the Snake and Columbia Rivers this summer.



1966 Bobbie Barry wrote in for the Class of '66 - "We are sad to learn of the passing of **Anne (Cubby) McCooley** last November and **Joyce (Devine) Cate** in March. Thank you, **Marsha (Hinman) Cizmadia** for sending her the information. **Marsha** has kept in contact with several classmates, including **Sandy Baranski, Shirley Jackson**, and **Mary Ellen (Winslow) Yorkel**.

We would love to hear news from 1966 classmates. All of us are approaching or already into our 8th decade of life when memories of Keene, college, and connecting with friends could bring us a smile of pleasant remembrance. Alumni can connect with **Bobbie** at Barry_roberta@yahoo.com."

1973 Kathy Stacy recently reconnected with fellow '73 alumni, **Roseanne (Cook) Norwood** and husband, **Irv Norwood**. **Kathy** shares, "My husband and I had a nice visit with her on our way to Orlando."

WINTER RECEPTION & JAZZ Concert

Wednesday | December 4, 2024

6:00 p.m.
Thorne-Sagendorph Art Gallery



KSC Jazz Ensemble
Concert to follow
7:30 p.m.





Notes from the Class of 1974 50th Reunion

Class of '74 Secretary, **Jane (Cappuccio) Stauffer** wrote in about the class celebrating it's 50th reunion and shared highlights from the surveys returned...

We had a good turnout for the 50th reunion on a perfect June day on campus. We were all inducted into the Golden Circle, and received a medallion with the seal of the College on it at the luncheon. None of us could believe how the time flew by, it was an quite an experience.

I live with my husband Rich in my hometown of Salem, MA. Since retiring after 34 years of teaching, I keep busy with volunteer work. I have served on boards of local and state professional associations, and neighborhood groups. I am currently the Secretary on my city neighborhood board. I am also on the board here at our condo. I also help gather community partners for the Salem Film Fest, an annual documentary film festival here in Salem. My husband and I enjoy traveling, we came home one day before the Reunion from a 3-week trip including a cruise to England, Scotland, Norway and Iceland. We were a bit jet lagged, but thoroughly enjoyed seeing the campus touring Huntress Hall and talking to everyone - and we enjoyed the gathering at Fireworks Restaurant downtown at the end of the day.

Cynthia Godin reminisced about her active student life while at KSC - a member of the ski team, racing both alpine & Nordic events - they were the FIRST women's Nordic team at Keene. She was also on the Women's Council and abolished parietal hours that limited visits between members of opposite sexes to each other's rooms or dormitories. She and her husband Ed have traveled to Switzerland and across Europe. **Cynthia** stays busy yearlong playing tennis, golfing, and skiing - and watercolor painting.

Janet (Chamberlain) Ernest shared memories of living in Huntress when no guys were allowed past the lobby. She remembers ghost-hunting for the ghost of Harriet Huntress in the attic (and expected her to be in the rocking chair up there!). She has many memories and is "...so happy to still be connected to [her] KSC close friends through all these years..."

Nancy (Frost) Conant is staying active volunteering for the YMCA and other community events. She recently traveled to Europe, to a hot air balloon festival in New Mexico, and to Washington for family gathering. She remembers being part of student senate during her time at KSC, creating lots of friendships, crazy antics, and the professors.

David Wallace retired several years ago but "As a lifelong learner, is still taking classes, both physical and online."

David and his wife Lesley recently celebrated his son's marriage in April. **David** remembers being a busy student as Senior Class President and being active on the Student Council and College Senate.

Karen Sielke, having retired in 2012, says she stays active hiking, walking, and biking - being OUTSIDE! She has even hiked the Canadian Rockies and at Glacier National Park.

Kathleen (Graham) Lombardi is an active volunteer for her church and its many events like the Pumpkin Patch & Snowman Fair. She also volunteers with several community organizations that help women and children. She has recently traveled on a Bermuda cruise and to Florida.

Marie (Driscoll) Frash, retired in 2022, now enjoys travelling the world including India (seeing the Taj Mahal), Malaysia, and Thailand. She also attended a 2-day safari in Yala National Park in Sri Lanka.

Richard Hamilton is an active volunteer for his local fire department and helps volunteer at numerous community events. He enjoys golfing and traveling (mostly to Europe at least twice per year) and has been to Europe, Croatia, and Czech Republic in the last 18 months. He's looking forward to a European River Cruise this spring. **Rich** remembers his student life in the Newman Center and getting to know Father Barrett (who married him and his wife, Marie), and his many years in the TKE house.

Rich still stays connected with his TKE brothers via email.

Suzanne (Lindsay) Jarvis is still active helping her husband, Michael, with their sewing machine repair, service, and sales business. She shares how she and her KSC roommate (**Kathleen Smart**) are still good friends, even after 50 years!

Bruce Stronach lived in Japan for 36 years, while there he was President of Yokohama City University and Dean of Temple University Campus in Japan. He now lives in Boston with his wife, Michiko, and is currently the President of Showa Boston Institute. He is also Fellow in Research at Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies at Harvard. He still travels back to Japan a couple times a year, visiting Tokyo, and he recently visited Taipei Taiwan. His memorable experience from his KSC days was the real foundation he received for his career. He is planning to meet with other members of the rugby team in the fall.

Tina (Cahill) Sweet lives in Hookset with her husband Jeffrey and retired from Eversource in 2015. She currently volunteers for a non-profit Caregivers and gives weekly rides to medical appointments. Her real passion is downhill skiing. "I went 61 times last year, and will surpass it this year. I also enjoy hiking, power walking, travel and I am an avid reader." In February, she went helicopter skiing in Selva di Val Gardena Italy in the Dolomites. **Tina** is part of a group of 10 members of the Class of '74 that come to Keene most every year and often attend the reunion weekend. This time she was joined by **Karin (Stenberg) Layton, Laurie (Meyer) Daily, Jean Stone, Cindy Godin, Sherry (Briscoe) Strickland, Ann Robitaille, Wendy (Lehmann) Paterson, Nancy (Frost) Conant, and Janet Ernest.**

Wendy (Lehmann) Paterson lives in Castleton, Vermont. She worked for 34 years in Special Education in an elementary school. "I taught in a two-room school house for 9 of those 34 years, and am still in touch with many of my 'kids' and parents." She also volunteers with VT Adaptive Ski as a ski instructor. She is part of the Vermont Giant Pumpkin Growers Association and grew a 1,315-lb. giant pumpkin in 2017. "It was my personal best, and placed 2nd in the State of Vermont that year." She has wonderful memories of the KSC Woman's Ski Team, they won the championship, though she wasn't sure if it was 1973 or '74. "There will be ten of us College girls attending [Reunion] together; we are actually old ladies, but we feel like kids still."

Notes from the Class of 1974 50th Reunion (continued)

Suzanne (Daley) Quigley lives in her hometown of Marblehead with her husband Stephen. She started her career in teaching the fourth grade in 1974, then switched to Special Ed. as a resource room teacher until 1981. In 1996 she became a certified Wilson Reading teacher and taught and also tutored grades K-8 finally retiring in 2016.

Suzanne plays both tennis and platform tennis during the fall, winter, and early spring season and is the organizer of a platform tennis group. She also enjoys walking and yoga. She and her husband have three sons, two daughters-in-law, and four grandsons. They thoroughly enjoy attending their sports and visiting with them as often as possible. They have recently traveled to Scottsdale, San Francisco, Naples, and St Martin. **Suzanne** has very fond memories of Fiske and Randall Hall and all the friends, professors and courses. Especially the micro-teaching course during Sophomore year.

Karin (Stenberg) Layton lives in Ashlar Village in Wallingford, CT with her husband Stephen. She retired after a varied 20 year teaching career. She enjoys doing house portraits, and her most recent volunteer work is tutoring reading. She created a traveling tree show as an education outreach member of the Fairfield Forestry Committee and is also active in Delta Kappa Gamma Society International for Women Educators.

Kathleen Smart, who was unable to attend the Reunion, wrote in from San Antonio, TX. She retired in 2008 from the US Postal Service, and spent 13 years being a caregiver for her Mom. She is now "just relaxing." Her most memorable experience from her days at KSC was making unbelievable friendships that have lasted for 50 years.



1977, 1978, 1980 Several members of the '77 Basketball Team had a mini-reunion in Leesburg, FL - this was the team that went to the NAIA tournament in Kansas City. Left to right are **Warren Marshall '77**, **Mark Yeaton '77**, **Kevin Savage '78**, and **Paul Trocki '80**.

1981 Audrey Reynard '81 has recently published her 3rd CD of recorded poetry (audreyreynardspokenwordcd.net). "The Nature of Love" cover features a landscape painting by Helen Boland.



1988, M'89 Tim Black presented a paper entitled "Two Airmen, a Military Academy, and a Very Large Bomb" at the 25th Annual Conference on Illinois History in Springfield, IL. The paper covered the history of the Western Military Academy and two of its most famous graduates -- Edward "Butch" O'Hare and Paul Tibbets, Jr. This is the third time **Black** has presented papers to the conference having done so in 2013 and 2015. He graduated from KSC in 1988 with a Master of Arts for Teachers degree in English.

1988, M'99 Jeff LaValley was appointed as the Director of Alumni and Parent Engagement for the Meadowbrook School of Weston (Weston, MA) in June 2023.

1989 James Hogg '89 shared, "In August 2023 I accepted a position as a Senior Aviation Safety Trainer with Vinnell Arabia, a subsidiary of the Northrop Grumman Corporation, supporting the Saudi Arabian Ministry of the National Guard (MNG Saudi) Aviation Training Institute in Riyadh Saudi Arabia. The institute conducts initial rotary wing flight training for MNG officers with follow-on training in the AH-64E Apache, UH-60 Blackhawk or the Mi6 light attack helicopter...It's been a great experience and an excellent transition since retiring from the Army in 2022 as a Senior Aviation Safety Specialist and Apache Helicopter Pilot with 31 years of service."

1975 Being "of a certain age" certainly hasn't stopped **Donna Kuethe** and college roommate and biking buddy, **Jean Harris**, who recently completed a coast-to-coast bicycle trip, fulfilling a life-long dream for **Donna**. Symbolically dipping their back tires into the Pacific Ocean in San Diego, CA on March 7, they pedaled the southern route through NM, TX, LA, AL, MS to FL. Through the breath-taking scenery, the hill country (we're talking serious hills here), the headwinds, the detours, and of course, the weather, they persevered, reaching St. Augustine, FL to dip the front tires in the Atlantic on March 7. As a breast cancer survivor wanting to pay it forward, **Donna** dedicated her ride to the Payson Center for Cancer Care in Concord, NH, specifically to the Hope Resource Center which supports patients and their families in their journey through cancer care, raising over \$20,000 for this cause.

1990 & 1991 Last fall, several alumni gathered for their 5th annual girls weekend. They were in the Lake Sunapee region where they did some hiking, visited some breweries and enjoyed sitting around a fire and chatting. Pictured from left to right – **Kelly (Salter) Braverman '91**, **Diana (Keane) Marc-Aurele '90**, **Jennifer (Book) Clement '91**, **Alison (Welch) Lacasse '90**, **Denise (Dudley) Sandler '90**, and **Jen (McLane) Perlee '91**.



1999 Paul Silverfarb was recently named the new Communications and Marketing Director at ALS United Connecticut whose mission is to discover treatments and a cure for ALS, and to serve, advocate for, and empower people affected by ALS to live their lives to the fullest.

2000 & 2002 Patrick Cate was recently appointed as President of Lakes Region Community College in Laconia, NH. At his first commencement ceremony as President, he was joined by fellow alum **Chuck Llyod '02**. They were both were RA's together at KSC.



2007 Justin Miller '08 has been promoted to Director of Construction Safety Services for Hettrick, Cyr & Associates, a Connecticut-based company providing services for general industry clients and construction trades, specializing in roofing safety. **Justin** joined the firm 13 years ago as a safety and risk-control consultant, and for the past six years has been a senior safety and risk-control consultant. Before joining Hettrick, Cyr & Associates he was safety director for Orndorff & Spaid Inc. a commercial and residential roofing contractor in Maryland. At Keene State, **Justin** earned a bachelor's degree in safety studies, graduating cum laude. He lives in Swanzey with his wife, Amanda, and their daughter, Saylor.

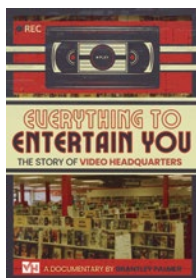


2003, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2021, 2022, 2024 KSC Math Major Alumni returned to campus in April to support the current KSC math majors who were presenting at the 30th Annual Hudson River Undergraduate Mathematics Conference. These alumni presented at the very same conference during their time at KSC at other host colleges/universities. Alumni, current students, and KSC professors ended the day at the college camp to reconnect with one another. So many memories and laughs were shared. Pictured here from left to right:

Front row: **Ingrid Ayer '03, Craig Sheil '03, Andrea Drake '05, Kim Simpson '07, Lisha Hunter '04, Professor Caitlyn Parmelee**

Second row: **Lisa (Hultgren) Mulhearn '04, Lydia Ahlstrom '21, Professor Ockle Johnson, Professor Karen Stanish**

Back row: **Megan Blanchette '24, Samantha Blair '24, Professor Vincent Ferlini, Jeffery Garand '15, Professor Mike Cullinane, Gavin Koehler '22, Jackson Turni '22, Colleen (Nielsen) Finn '11, Robert Tiebout '04"**



2008 The documentary, Everything to Entertain You: The Story of Video Head Quarters, directed by **Brantley Palmer '08**, was featured at the VT Film Festival and the Monadnock International Film Festival last fall.

2008 Keith O'Neil '08, Josh Martell '08, and Evan LaBarre '07 held a mini-reunion and attended a live WWE event together last December. Pictured right is **Keith**.



2010 Alessandra Curcio shared, "I was born and raised in New Jersey, and I graduated from KSC in 2010 - wooo gooooo owls! I was just on The Price Is Right on June 3! Back in 2019, I was hit with some bad luck on Wheel of Fortune. I left with \$1,000. However, I met up with some past Wheel of Fortune contestants back at the beginning of April to attend Pat Sajak's 8,000th episode - I was on his 7,000th ironically, and I decided to attend a taping of The Price Is Right. I got called to come on down, and won BIG! Such a lucky day for me! I took home over \$65,000 in cash and prizes! Big win for a person who didn't even intend to get on TV! I thought I was just going to spend the day watching the show and attend a Wheel of Fortune show the next day! Oh, and the funny thing is, you'll see in the video link below, I had no idea I even won the showcase! I was walking off stage after I spun LOL!" https://www.instagram.com/p/C7x3fp1NhpJ/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

2014 Alex Davis curated a gallery exhibition at Childs Gallery in Boston entitled Interlaced: The Fabric of Art. The gallery also displays some of **Alex's** work (<https://childsgallery.com/>).

2015 In March 2023, **Julia Janson** was offered a full-time permanent position with the award-winning Omaha Zoological Society at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium as the Conservation Education Coordinator. Her time is split between the zoo and the also award-winning Lee G. Simmons Wildlife Safari Park in Ashland, NE. **Julia** shares that, "My role is to promote conservation behavior change at the zoo, safari park, and in the community through our Conservation Heroes program. Conservation Heroes encourages and celebrates conservation behavior through the implementation of simple pragmatic sustainable solutions and utilizing the power of citizen science." **Julia** also served two years (four consecutive terms) in AmeriCorps as a naturalist and education coordinator with The Great Basin Institute and US Forest Service in Nevada and California. She writes that, "After 8 years of drifting across state and country lines, though, I look forward to putting down roots the heartland of the US. I would not have gotten where I am today without the support of all of my professors at Keene State College! Thank You!"

2018 Jessyca Derby earned a Ph.D. in Human Factors from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Her dissertation was titled "Designing Tomorrow's Reality: The Development and Validation of an Augmented and Mixed Reality Heuristic Checklist." **Jessyca** is the daughter of KSC graduate **Jacqueline Hoffman Cournoyer '89, Ph.D.**



2019 Sarah Otterbeck received the Graduate Student Government Award for Excellence in Leadership at Clemson University this April. **Sarah** writes, "I couldn't have done this without the support of my husband, my family, and my amazing mentors, Shannon Stefl and Matt Voigt."



2015, 2016, 2017
Erik Armbricht '15 married fellow alum **Emily Fennes '16 M'17** last October.

2019, 2020, 2021
Maria Aiello '19 shared pictures of a get-together last December with ten former Owl Nation members. She wrote, "We went to Local Burger for lunch, watched the epic KSC basketball game, and walked around our beautiful campus!" Attending were: **Maria (Aiello) Johnston '19, Josh Johnston '19, Ben Lemay '19, Sarah Willson '20, Tommy O'Rourke '20, Hunter Davis '20, Dan Thomasino '20, James Emery '21, and Lexi (Smith) Emery '21.**



UPCOMING EVENTS

ALUMNI ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

9/13/2024

HOMECOMING

9/13 - 9/14

WINTER RECEPTION

12/4/2024

HOOTIE'S ALUMNI NIGHT

KSC Basketball vs. Rhode
Island College

1/18/2025

KSC GOES TO FLORIDA

3/13 - 3/22/25



From the

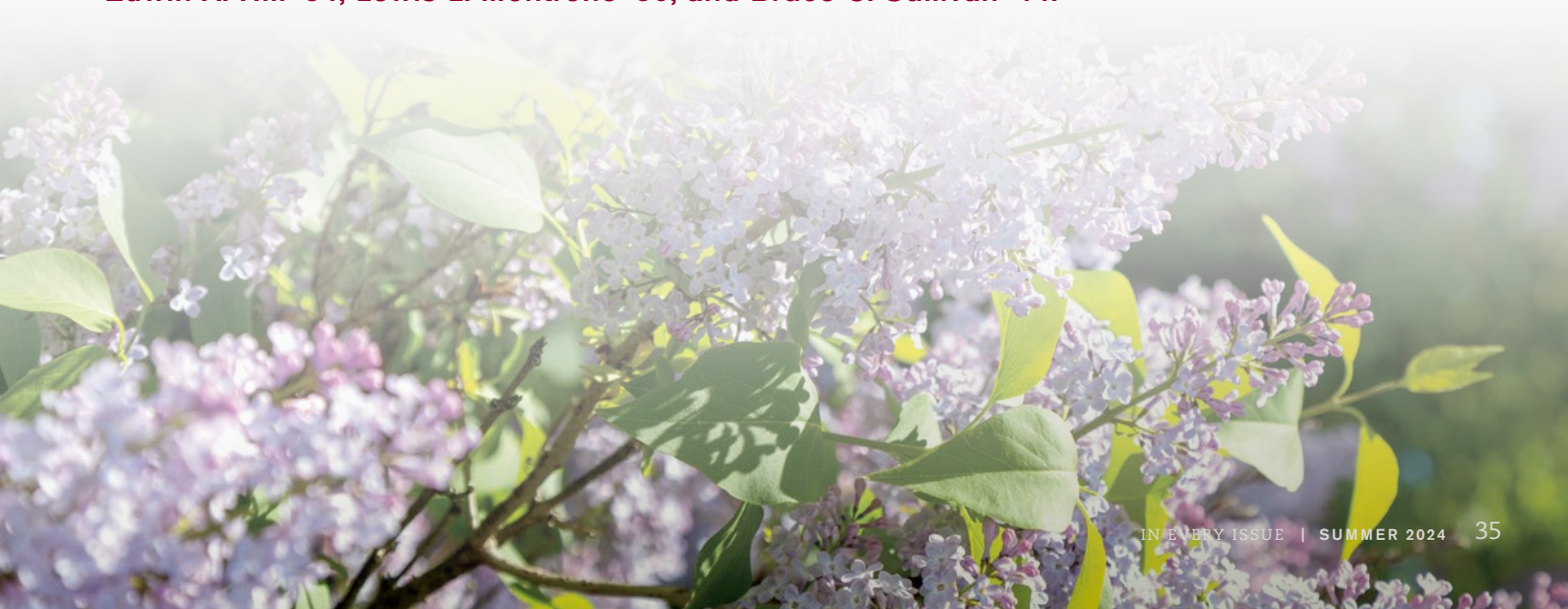
ARCHIVES...

May brings many special things to campus—Commencement, warmer weather, and the smell of lilacs on Fiske Quad.

The nine lilac bushes in front of Fiske Hall were planted in memory of the nine Keene State students who lost their lives during World War II.

In 1996, the Keene State College Alumni Association dedicated the lilac bushes, each bearing a plaque with their names at its base:

Lloyd Marin '43, Frederick W. Clayton '42, Thomas D. Dillant '41, J. Francis Driscoll '33, Thomas J. Essie '46, Hollis C. Furbush '43, Edwin A. Hill '34, Lewis L. Montrone '36, and Bruce C. Sullivan '44.



Keene

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SAVE THE DATE!

HOMECOMING 2024

SEPTEMBER 13-14



Reconnect with Owls — old
and new — at your favorite
athletic events around campus.

www.keene.edu/alumni/events/homecoming/

THE HOOT

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