

KEENE STATE TODAY

THE MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS | WINTER 2024



KSC EARNS NO. 1 RANKING FOR UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING FROM U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

OUR PAST, OUR FUTURE:

A Commitment to Education

Also featuring:

GARRETT
BELTIS '13

ALLIE
BEDELL '14

VITHEAVY
BARTON '24

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In this issue, we celebrate Keene State's origins as an institution dedicated to educator preparation. You will meet aspiring teachers and KSC alumni working in New Hampshire classrooms and learn more about their journeys and successes in an increasingly challenging environment. Their stories are the first in a continuing series and illustrate the driving purpose of our \$20 million comprehensive campaign, **Opportunity Starts Here.**

Keene
STATE COLLEGE



ON THE COVER: Ritu Budakoti M'07, is seen with a student at the Keene Middle School, where she teaches 8th-grade science. Teachers are unique because they touch the future, and their work is a true service to humanity, Ritu says.

ON THIS PAGE: Nica Morris '23 works with students on a Spanish lesson at the Wells Memorial School in Harrisville, N.H. Nica was the recipient of two scholarships while a student at KSC, the Lucille Plante Davis '38 Scholarship and the Frank H. Blackington, Jr. Memorial Scholarship.



When Keene State learned this fall that it had earned a No. 1 designation by U.S. News & World Report, we felt humbled, no doubt, but validated, too.

The ranking among regional colleges of the North was for Undergraduate Teaching, and the award was based on recognition and recommendations of our peer institutions, which adds to its distinction. Faculty, provosts, and academic leaders at other institutions make nominations for this award, which recognizes quality of teaching across an entire campus, across all undergraduate disciplines and programs.

We've long understood that our accomplished and difference-making faculty are exceptional; that others in higher education recognize that quality truly speaks volumes.

Keene State begins with those individuals who teach, guide, and mentor our students, who prepare them – with care, regard, and powerful educational experiences in and away from the classroom, outdoors and in labs, in real-world settings and sometimes far abroad – for bright futures and to be the world's next leaders.

These faculty members also shape our academic programs to meet what our students say they want, and what our local and state workforce experts tell us they need. These three areas – faculty support, academic programs, and workforce readiness – are key components of our five-year, community-built strategic plan, and of our current fundraising initiative, Opportunity Starts Here: A Campaign for Keene State, which has raised more than \$15M from more than 3,600 donors.

Our success in the rankings is an indicator that our community's investments are having an impact, and that the College is on the right track. Every single person in the Keene State community should feel proud of this achievement and I thank you for your commitment to our mission, vision, and values.

Our success in the rankings is also a nice tie-in to the cover story for this issue of Keene State Today, about our Educator Preparation Program, and about how we are putting teachers-to-be through rigorous and multi-layered paces to lead classrooms of their own.

Interestingly, many of our graduates from this program teach in the state or in the region. They benefit from remarkable mentoring, methods courses and field experiences, student teaching, and cooperating professionals.

It's a powerful thing.

Education, a time-tested Keene State academic discipline with roots dating back to the college's inception in 1909, remains as vital today as ever, not only in New Hampshire but also across the nation and overseas.

Our graduates are school leaders, principals, early education center directors, and teachers in public schools, private academies and charter schools, and so much more.

Our cover story is the first in a series which aims to shine a light on the impact that the Educator Preparation Program has on area and state schools in particular. The series will show that our grads are hired quickly, enjoy rewarding careers, and have a unique ability to change lives.

I know you will enjoy meeting so many of Keene State's amazing education graduates who are making so much possible to achieve. After all, they are carrying on a 114-year-old tradition, and they are emblematic of what makes Keene State distinctive.

In gratitude, always.

Dr. Melinda Treadwell '90, President, Keene State College



U.S. News and World Report Confirms Keene State Excellence among 52 Colleges in the North



#1

Undergraduate Teaching



#12

Overall Regional College



#8

Top Public School



#8

Best Value College



#5

Best College for Veterans

Keene State's success in the rankings is something the entire Keene community is part of. Thank you in particular to our many donors who have invested in Keene State and its students as part of our comprehensive campaign.

Every gift to every area of Keene State counts!

Keene
STATE COLLEGE

A Campaign for Keene State College
OPPORTUNITY STARTS HERE

Counting Period: July 1, 2021 to December 31, 2023

CAMPAIGN

3,708

DONORS

5,987

GIFTS UP TO \$100

8,207

TOTAL GIFTS

Campaign Progress

\$15.49M

Campaign Goal

\$20M

STUDENT ACCESS

\$6.93M

Goal: \$7.5M

PROGRAM, FACULTY, & STAFF DEVELOPMENT

\$8.48M

Goal: \$10M

HIGH-IMPACT LEARNING

\$75K

Goal: \$2.5M

Learn more at campaignforkeene.org



KEA BOARD OF TRUSTEES UPDATES

On September 7, 2023 the Keene Endowment Association (KEA) held its annual meeting. Trustees elected two new officers, Dan Kurowski '07 as President and Bobby Rodrigue '00 as Vice President, and four new trustees.

Dan was previously vice president of the board and brings four years of experience with the KEA. He lives in Wilbraham, Massachusetts with his wife, Karen, a 2008 graduate of Keene State College, and their two young children. Dan is manager for program development for the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority.

Dan shares this message: "I am honored to be a part of this future-focused association that oversees a growing investment portfolio of close to \$20 million in scholarships and program support. The KEA Board of Trustees are stewards of contributions made by gracious alumni and friends of the College, who wish to make a lasting impact on the accessibility and the quality of a liberal arts education provided by Keene State. The KEA supports Keene State

students and faculty as they pursue learning in the classroom, internships, research, community service, study away, and more. I invite you to join us in celebrating generosity and the immense potential of Keene State students and future alumni! Please contact the Advancement Division at 603-358-2620 to learn about contributing to one of our many existing endowments which align with your wishes or creating your own."



MARTY SHEIL '90

is a retired military veteran and elementary school teacher. He served in the U.S. Army for 21 years. After leaving the Army and receiving a teaching degree at KSC, Marty taught third grade at the East Derry Elementary School in Derry, New Hampshire for 20 years. He is married to Carol (Briand) Sheil '78, whom he met at KSC, and they have two adult sons, Craig '03 and

Ryan. Craig is also a KSC graduate. The family regularly attends KSC sporting events and other campus and community activities. The KEA is grateful to welcome Marty to the board.



CAROL JUE

is a retired licensed social worker and long-time active member of the Monadnock Region community. For close to 40 years, she and her husband, Ken, were extensively involved throughout the region both professionally and as volunteers. In the summer of 2022, Ken passed away, and today Carol actively continues to support the community in a range of capacities. Community service is a core value

of the College that dates to its founding in 1909 and thrives today through community service work, service-based trips, service-learning courses, and internships. Ken and Carol demonstrated their commitment to this valuable work by providing scholarship support to students with financial need who are highly engaged with their community. Now Carol will expand her support for the College and Keene State students by serving as a trustee for the KEA.



MADISON (MADDY) OLSEN '20 M'22

earned her bachelor's degree in education and English literature in 2020 and her master's of education in 2022. While at KSC, Maddy was an active student and was a participant in the honors program, vice president of the Delta Phi Psi sorority, class president for three

years, and many more activities. She is the recipient of numerous accolades such as the KSC Echo Award and 2020 Campus Compact President's Award, among others. In 2020, Maddy received the Stay Work Play New Hampshire Rising Star Award for Intern of the Year for her internship at Hinsdale Middle High School. She is currently a sixth-grade language arts teacher at Woodbury Middle School in Salem, New Hampshire where she also coordinates an after-school program for students experiencing homelessness. We are honored to have Maddy as a KEA trustee.



SCOTT MCPHERSON '92

is the chief financial and operations officer at The Derryfield School and is responsible for the business and campus operations of the School, including human resources, finance, buildings and grounds, information technology, and auxiliary services. Prior to coming to Derryfield, he worked at *New Hampshire Public Radio* for 22 years fulfilling a variety of roles including producer, news editor, and finally the vice president for operations and finance. Early in his career Scott worked as a newspaper reporter in New

Hampshire and Massachusetts, contributing stories to the *Boston Globe*, *Business NH Magazine*, and National Public Radio. Scott earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from KSC, and a master of business administration degree from Southern New Hampshire University. He lives in Concord with his wife, Kelly, and three sons, Will, Alex and Jay. In the community, Scott has served on a variety of boards, including the Public Media Business Association, the New Hampshire Association of Broadcasters, South Congregational Church, Merrimack Valley Youth Baseball and Softball, and is the past president of the KEA while serving two previous terms. The KEA is eager to welcome Scott back to the board!

USNH TRUSTEES REPORT

Trustee David Westover '72 attended the fall USNH Board of Trustees meeting hosted at Plymouth State University. David's report is below.



As we all know, Keene Normal School was chartered in 1909 as a teacher preparation school. To this day, education is still the most popular major at Keene State. To that end, Paul Miller, the College's

Director of Strategic Communications, and Tanya Sturtz, Director of Educator Preparation and Associate Dean of Accreditation, Compliance, and Assessment, that spoke about an

enterprise storytelling series in the months ahead will shine a light on our education graduates - where they are now and how they are teaching and making a difference in their classrooms. More generally, it was nice to hear just how widely valued undergraduate teaching excellence among our campus faculty is, as shown by the No. 1 ranking.

Later in the session, President Treadwell and Cabinet Members Dr. James Beeby, Nathalie Houder, and MB Lufkin made an in-depth presentation on Keene State's Strategic Plan. They laid out in detail how the plan is being implemented and most importantly, detailed checks and balances to ensure that each component of the plan is monitored for success. The report was very well received by the trustees.

It was also shared that Governor Sununu has established a commission on

higher education to study the potential consolidation and/or strategic alignment of the Community College System and the University System of New Hampshire. An initial report will be made as early as March 2024. We are sure we will be hearing more about the work of this commission in the months ahead.

Dave has had the opportunity to spend a lot of time on the KSC campus over the first semester. The new outdoor gathering space is now completed. He shares, "I am sure it will be well utilized when the weather warms in the spring." Admissions has had two very successful open houses for high school students and their parents. It is always rewarding to talk with many of them as they enjoy lunch in the DC. Dave also reports that our fall athletic teams have all enjoyed successful seasons.

nickelodeon



FOR GARRETT BELTIS '13, IMAGINATION AND ORIGINALITY UNLEASHED

Garrett Beltis '13 is a senior producer at Nickelodeon Digital Franchise Studios in New York City. He describes himself as restless and imaginative, and not always within reason, and he calls his Keene State student experience "life-changing."

His degree in visual media was an independent major, a combination of graphic design and film production course work and applied field experiences. He was a part of the student newspaper staff, an Orientation Leader, and for two years served as building manager for the College's bustling Student Center.

Not bad when one considers that Keene State fell onto Garrett's radar only because a patron at a coffee shop he was working at in his hometown of Putnam, Connecticut, came in one day wearing a KSC hat.

It was enough to capture Garrett's attention. The rest is what one might call history, of which there is a lot for this enterprising and creative 32-year-old who

lives in Stamford, Connecticut, with his husband, Kayle.

After seeing the hat, Garrett added Keene State to his list of colleges he chose to visit.

It was raining on the day that he and his mother, Jan, first came to Keene State, a small but nationally recognized public liberal arts college in the southwest corner of New Hampshire. So, they made the 85-mile jaunt north again, later, and that time it was snowing so hard that Jan accidentally drove the vehicle they were in partly down Appian Way, the main pedestrian corridor in the center of campus.

Weather aside, the attraction for Garrett was immediate, saying that "Keene felt



"Keene felt like what I might describe as existentially accessible... a place where finding a community was possible, and it was!"

like what I might describe as existentially accessible. It wasn't so big that I'd get lost or so small that I'd feel stuck. It felt like an upgrade from my hometown. It felt like a place where finding a community was possible, and it was!"

Garrett answers some of our questions.

Question: Before college, did you know what you wanted to study?

Answer: "Yes, journalism, but having to remove yourself from a story, that wasn't me. I never would have imagined a career in the entertainment industry; that seemed like a pipe dream. I had an impression that every film production major moved to LA after graduation like some big bird migration, all vying for the same entry-level jobs. And I know many who did just that with great success! But that vision made me terrified about getting lost in the crowd. I learned at Keene State that the only person that could stop me from getting lost in the crowd was myself. Keene taught me that hard work is the key to any ambition. Keene State taught me to bet on myself."

Question: In an ideal world, where do you want to be in 10 years?

Answer: "I'd love to be producing my own original series. I've been able to translate my passions into many aspects of production – from on-set skills to creative development and even organizational management. I've even studied improv and sketch comedy with the Upright Citizens Brigade. I see having my own series as an opportunity to utilize everything I've learned at once. ... I recognize how fortunate I've been. If producing a SpongeBob puppet show and seeing it air on TV is my peak, then I'll still be super proud of how far I've come."

Question: What made Keene State such a good fit for you?

Answer: "The people. In my first week, I met two of my best friends – two people who made me feel like I could be my weirdest, goofiest self. They also convinced me to pursue this type of career. I found a home working at the Student Center, and another working off-campus at Brubaker's Café. Being an Orientation Leader challenged me in ways I couldn't imagine, but in the most supportive environment I've ever seen. Over time, I would have conversations with department heads that made me feel like I was talking to an equal."

"Before Keene, I never had conversations with adults where I felt so genuinely respected."

Question: What to you most enjoy about your role at Nickelodeon and your profession?

Answer: "To be honest, being a producer suits my specific brand of ADHD. During my time in Oregon, a KSC Alumni and former roommate, Kristin Greco '13, had gotten a job at WWE. It was Kristin who originally convinced me to become a film major, along with another friend and alum Katie Bolvin '13. Kristin eventually helped me get an interview with WWE, and I began working there for the next five years. WWE was cutthroat. They didn't sugarcoat video feedback or anything for that matter. I owe the quality of my production skills to WWE. I met my husband there, got my MBA and even pitched my own puppet show! But when the puppet show didn't work out, and I felt like I had conquered all of the challenges I wanted to, I began looking for work elsewhere."

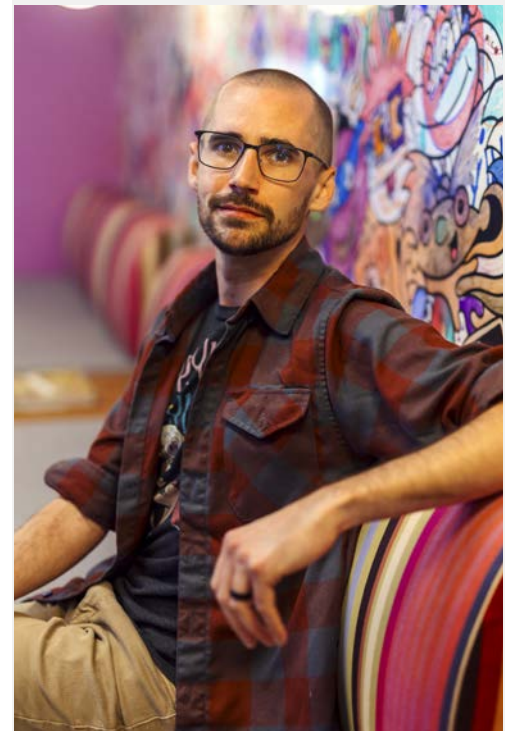
"Kristin, Katie and I all ended up at WWE at one point or another. When their former coworker Stefan left WWE and got a job at Nickelodeon, Kristin and Katie introduced me to Stefan. Stefan and my future Nick team loved the puppet show I had pitched at WWE. It served as proof that I could take a creative idea and see it from pre-production to delivery."

"The hundreds of hours of weekly recap shows that I wrote, produced, and distributed internationally at WWE also helped ... even if all that felt much less creative. After taking bets on myself for so long, Nickelodeon took a bet on me. I started work at Nick in October of 2019, about six months before the pandemic."

"My biggest accomplishment since then is certainly the SpongeBob puppet series Pineapple Playhouse that I began with Kristin. Pineapple Playhouse is a reenactment of abbreviated SpongeBob episodes. It originated from the need to create a premium original video, at home, with less than three crew members and in two days or less. Those were the Covid restrictions we had to adhere to. Kristin and I knew we could pull it off in my apartment in Queens, New York, because we knew how complementary our production skills could be. We could only hire one additional set of hands who ended up being our main puppeteer and prop builder. I built props and puppets (like Mr. Krabs!) when the budget ran out, and with guidance from the professionals."

"Kristin and I played multiple roles during those two days, and again when we repeated the apartment-based production for several episodes. Eventually, as Covid restrictions eased, we were able to expand our production onto an actual Paramount stage. Now the series has over 38 million collective views on YouTube."

Question: What advice would you share with a high-schooler considering college?



Answer:

"Find something you care about and let it fuel you."

"I think there's such mindset in high school that caring isn't cool. But apathy doesn't get you anywhere in life. I almost flunked out of high school because nobody ever expected more of me. Even teachers would make me the butt of their joke. It was the people I met outside of high school that opened my eyes to the possibilities in life. When you graduate high school, life gets so different so fast. Don't nail yourself down to who you are before college."

By Paul Miller



FIRST HIRE TO VICE PRESIDENT

ALLIE BEDELL '14 HAS HELPED TO PUT CANVASS AMERICA ON POLITICAL MAP

Combination of different knowledge bases serving grad well

With a presidential election cycle about to kick into a higher gear, graduate Allison Bedell's role as vice president for Canvass America, a voter canvassing organization based in Washington, D.C., is sure to intensify.

Allie, a 2014 Keene State graduate, wouldn't want it any other way.

Ambitious and politically curious by nature, Allie is where she wants to be, in the nation's capital and in the political mix, directing efforts focused on helping election campaigns with voter-contact or in-person-based voter-canvassing support.

Her story, as it is for so many of our alums, is remarkable in that Allie was able to blend her college education by integrating high-interest classes, finding service-learning opportunities, and studying abroad.

An Honors Program student, Allie parlayed all of that into bachelor's degrees in journalism and political science. She also left Keene State with two minors, in Spanish and Holocaust & Genocide Studies.

Allie is from Londonderry, New Hampshire, the first-in-the-nation presidential primary state where she began her career in politics.

Now 31, Allie has the distinction of being the very first hire for Canvass America, a still-growing organization that employs more than 1,000 workers across the country. She has extensive experience building successful grassroots voter contact operations.

Prior to Canvass America, Allie worked for then Florida Gov. Jeb Bush's 2016 presidential campaign, and successful reelection bids for Pennsylvania Sen. Pat Toomey and Nebraska Sen. Deb Fischer. For Bush, Allie developed an aggressive paid door-knocking plan and oversaw more than 300 volunteer deployments.

She stitched a lot together in four years at Keene State, noting that the college delivered on its liberal arts tradition of allowing students to roam and explore, and stretch the way they think.

"I was taught to ask difficult questions and to critically examine things to be better informed," Allie says. "This requires a lot of empathy, nuance, and dialogue to be able to tackle tough questions in a way that is lacking in this age of divided politics and 280-character takes online."

"Keene State provided opportunities to try different things. We were encouraged to travel, to learn and be curious, to volunteer, and to wade into discussions that made us uncomfortable. It's an environment that taught me to be a curious and compassionate leader and to always work toward finding points of consensus." — Allie Bedell '14

“Keene State provided opportunities to try different things. We were encouraged to travel, to learn and be curious, to volunteer, and to wade into discussions that made us uncomfortable. It’s an environment that taught me to be a curious and compassionate leader and to always work toward finding points of consensus.”

At Keene State, Allie worked for the Keene State student newspaper, was part of the College’s yearbook staff, and was a member of KSC Republicans, one of dozens of student-run groups on campus.

She studied in Bosnia and immediately knew, she says, that she wanted to study in Keene State’s Holocaust & genocide studies (HGS) program when she returned. More than just another add-on, it became another degree.

“The HGS program brought important context and meaning to what I was already studying.”

Her Keene State memories – and connections – are never far away.

“I still talk to some of my closest friends from Keene every week. For much of the last 10 years we’ve lived in different places, but when we see each other at weddings or when passing through each other’s cities, we pick up exactly where we left off. We all have pretty different lives and careers but we have stayed close because we’ve been there to cheer each other on through every milestone of our adult lives.”

Success doesn’t just happen, Allie says, but the right college fit and a little ambition can help to get you to where the world is headed in your chosen field. For her, Keene State checked all the boxes.

“I was a precocious high school student who stressed about grades and extracurriculars and I had dreams of going to big, fancy schools. I was going to be able to get through Keene State with no debt and my other options required astronomical student loans. As an adult, I can’t believe that I made such a smart choice at 17, but I am so glad that I did; both financially in the long-term and for what I gained from Keene State.”

Growing Canvass America and mentoring young professionals are her top priorities.

“I’ve had the opportunity to learn so much in a startup environment. It has taught me to be much more dynamic and creative to ensure we get things done and that we can roll with the punches. ... I’m proud of what we’ve built and excited to see where we take it.”

And, to high school students who find themselves in that important decision-making space about college, which Allie wrestled with and remembers so well, she says:

“You’re going to get as much or as little out of your education as you want to, wherever you land. Soak up as many opportunities as you can by saying yes to everything you’re able to. At no other time of your life are you able to have such a variety of experiences that you can try and leave behind just as easily. Dive in; you’ll discover a lot about yourself and your interests in a low-stakes way. People change careers or make big life changes as adults; that’s different. When you’re in college, you have more flexibility to change your mind and maybe discover that “Aha!” moment when you really figure out what you want your life to look like.”

By Paul Miller



FOR VITHEAVY BARTON '24, EXHIBIT CATALOG SURE TO BE A PORTFOLIO-TOPPER

For Vitheavy Barton '24, going to college was less a leap of faith than a well-timed decision.

Vitheavy took two gap years before enrolling at Keene State. It was the right path for her.



It has been a foundation-building and growth-filled experience, the Littleton, New Hampshire native says of her education, and with graduation and real-world realities looming, it has been “wonderful” for her ever-expanding portfolio.

In the Summer of 2023, Vitheavy produced a scholarship-funded 52-page catalog for an exhibit titled Yosooi: Fashion and Vernacular Photography in 20th Century Japan that opened in September at the College's Thorne-Sagendorph Art Gallery.

Vitheavy used the \$4,000 grant to spend part of her summer visiting other museums and galleries, including one at Harvard, to examine photo catalogs; collating and editing photos from the Japan exhibit; and designing the catalog.

Donor- and alumni-funded SURF (Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship) scholarships offer Keene State student recipients an opportunity to engage in start-to-finish research in their academic discipline. Vitheavy's grant was endowed by Julian and Julie Landau and was one of four awarded to Keene State students in 2022-23.

The exhibit depicts fashion and everyday life in Japan through family snapshots and ordinary photographs.

Vitheavy is a graphic design major. Her finished product incorporates some of the more than 100 photographs, from disarranged images to fully intact albums. Also included are narratives by the exhibit curators, Lucille Druet and Ayaka Lida, and Vitheavy's faculty advisers to the project, Jon Gitelson and Rodney Obien.

The exhibit photos are but a small part of a larger private collection of images – more than 3,000 – taken primarily in Japan during the Taisho (1912-1926) and Showa (1926-1989) eras. Vernacular photographs are images not meant to be fine art. That distinction, and the compelling history behind the photos, was not lost on Vitheavy.

“I got a sense of nostalgia, similar to what one feels when looking at an old family album. I wanted to replicate some of those nostalgic feelings, so I included textures and colors pulled straight from the photos and album pages featured in the exhibit. Namely, brown and sepia. Black and grey are also very prominent, as most of the photos from the collection are silver gelatin prints.”

A larger exhibit catalog is in development for the exhibit symposium in early November and will feature many of the same design elements.

Gap years are not for everyone, “but



“...we have this talented student, with a modest and humble background, from New Hampshire’s north country, and I can see her being a big-time designer in New York City. She has the chops.”



for me they were everything,” Vitheavy, an Honors Program enrollee, said. Bottom line, she never looked back.

“Had I gone right out of high school when I was nervous and personally just not ready for college, I don’t think I would have made it.”

A gentle nudge from her grandparents 3,000 miles away in California, and a Keene State academic program that aligned with her academic interests came at “just the right time, and I ended up really, really loving college.”

“I changed so much those two (off) years. I was told that by family and friends. College isn’t for everyone, but it was just where I needed to be. I met my best friend here, I have had small classes that allow me to really connect with my professors, and I’ve had experiences like this catalog project that help to set me up for success.”

Vitheavy has lived on campus all four years, works in the Design Center tutoring other students, and this semester is taking Illustrator 2, Packaging Design, and Sound Design for Video as part of her required Integrative Studies Program credits.

“I’ve always loved art in general. Design is the more logical side of it and more viable for finding work. I’ve had so many opportunities, working with real clients, assisting other

students, getting to know all about branding, business, marketing, and client management.”

The catalogs are instrumental to the exhibit and the project was designed to be workplace-like, said Obien, associate professor and head of special collections and archives.

“What is so unique about this project is that it involves a real exhibit, real guest curators, and an opportunity for Vitheavy to be in a real-world situation with real deadlines. We wanted it to be educational. Yes, this is a student, but she is a project designer. We didn’t hold back. I think she felt the burden of the production planning, of completing the catalog. When she wasn’t sure of the next step, that’s when we stepped in to help.”

“Having worked with Vitheavy we know that she is very creative, thoughtful and thorough. And she is quick to ask questions.”

Jonathan Gitelson, chair of the Department of Art & Design, nominated Vitheavy, who was in the Found Japan class that he and Obien taught. He had worked with Vitheavy before in Digital Imaging and was impressed with her work ethic and her work, he said.

“Vitheavy was amazing throughout the

process,” Gitelson said. “She participated in every meeting with the curators and worked one-on-one with them. These connections will no doubt have positive professional results in the future. Vitheavy also met with professional catalog designers in New York City to discuss the process and again, build connections.”

Obien said Vitheavy went all out and designed a great catalog. Jon saw something in Vitheavy, Obien said. “He gets all the credit for selecting Vitheavy for this project.”

The sky really is the limit for Vitheavy, Obien said.

“The fruits of her labor, her vision, the experience that Vitheavy has had ... it’s the kind of learning that you hope all students can have access to. In this case, we have this talented student, with a modest and humble background, from New Hampshire’s north country, and I can see her being a big-time designer in New York City. She has the chops.”

By Paul Miller

Vitheavy reflects on her vision of the catalog:

“When talking with the curators, we decided to stay away from more detailed illustrative elements in my design so as to not distract from the photos themselves. Instead, the main graphic elements are simply patterned diamonds that feature close-ups of the textiles in the exhibit images. The diamond pattern was inspired by the neckline and patterns found on kimono; a traditional Japanese garment often seen in the photos, in other historic Japanese documentation, and in contemporary Japanese media.”

“As for the font, Indivisible, the clean sans serif type was chosen to support and reference characters from the Japanese writing system. A large and bold version of the title, YOSOOI, featuring more close-ups of textiles, was also developed as a graphic element.”

SURF RECIPIENTS CONDUCT A BROAD RANGE OF WORK EVERY YEAR. MEET OTHER 2022-2023 RECIPIENTS BELOW.

SURF fellowships allow talented students to spend a portion of their summer conducting research or carrying out a creative project that makes an original contribution to their chosen discipline, extending learning beyond the academic year.

Projects emanating from all disciplines are eligible, as well as interdisciplinary projects. Each fellowship offers \$4,000 to the successful student applicant. In addition, each faculty mentor of the successful student applicant receives \$800.

Summer research fellowships are intense educational experiences in that they expose the student to the entire research or creative process from start to finish.

Annabelle Koutroubas '23

Major: Studio Art | Minor: Sustainability

Project: Textiles - History of Oppression, Role as Material Culture and Sustainable Practices – a mixed-media art installation

About the art & design program at Keene State College: "The art & design faculty and tools available at Keene State have been invaluable resources to me as an art and design major. Before Keene State, I had never used a printing press, never used a potter's wheel, and never used Adobe Photoshop, all of which have contributed to my art practice."

Paige Pribilla '24

Major: Film Studies | Microcredential: Animation

Project: Stop-motion animated film, Fallen Flower – about a small dragon attempting to carry a fragile flower to a mountaintop

About the process: "I really enjoy creating animated films because you have complete control over everything in the film. With animation, you are physically manipulating each frame on your own, creating a personal touch to animated films that live action films couldn't fully achieve."

Thomas "TJ" Lonergan '24

**Major: Spanish | Second Major: Secondary Education
Minor: Holocaust and Genocide Studies**

Project: Gender, Language and Power: Going Forward – including summer study at University of Alicante in Spain

About his faculty advisor, Dr. Lisa DiGiovanni: "I would never have had this opportunity presented to me if it weren't for her, and I definitely would not be here without her constant support throughout my time in the Spanish department."

TJ's SURF was made possible through the generosity of Travis '94 and Gretchen Hodgdon.

For more information on how you can fund a SURF grant and other high-impact learning experiences at Keene State call 603-358-2371.

THE "WHY" SERIES CREATES SAFE & CONSTRUCTIVE PLATFORM FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION TOPICS



This fall, the Office of Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion introduced the "Why" series. The "Why" Series emerged as a response to the growing need for a safe and constructive platform where individuals could explore complex DEI questions and concerns.

At its core, the series aims to encourage the Keene State community to delve into uncomfortable topics,

fostering a culture of understanding, empathy, and growth. Each installment of the "Why" Series tackles an emerging topic within the realms of DEI, inviting

students, faculty, and staff to engage in open, respectful, and insightful dialogues. The series supports the College's strategic goal of creating a more inclusive community as outlined in the current strategic plan.

These dialogues are aimed at addressing the fundamental "Why?" underlying various DEI concerns. By dissecting these concerns at their root, participants can develop a better understanding of the intricacies and implications surrounding them—an understanding that is more relevant than ever in today's complex world.

For more information about diversity initiatives, policy and practice development at Keene State, visit www.keene.edu/campus/diversity/office

COHEN CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST AND GENOCIDE STUDIES MARKS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies (Cohen Center) at Keene State College is marking a major milestone: its 40th anniversary. In 1983, the Holocaust Resource Center began as a collection of books and resources brought together by founder Dr. Charles Hildebrandt, who coined the mission “to remember...and to teach.” It was one of the first Holocaust resource centers to be established in the United States.

The Cohen Center has greatly evolved since that time, expanding both its offerings and mission. In 2001, it was renamed the Cohen Center for Holocaust Studies after a transformative gift from Rick and Jan Cohen to honor Rick's parents, Lester and Norma. The Cohen Center later expanded its name and mission to include genocide studies in 2009. The dedication of a new building in 2019 to house the Cohen Center as well as the Department of Holocaust and Genocide Studies (the academic program) further strengthened the relationship between the two. Today, the Cohen Center continues to counter ongoing realities of antisemitism, hatred, dehumanization, and violence.

The anniversary is being marked by three special events that feature speakers from across the globe. Two of those offerings took place during the fall semester: the 2023 Holocaust Memorial Lecture featuring Dara Horn and the 2023 Kristallnacht Lecture featuring Suzanne Hampel OAM. Horn is an award-winning author of both fiction and nonfiction, and her October 3 lecture was entitled “In the Haunted Present: Jews in a Non-Jewish World.” Hampel is the Co-President of the Melbourne Holocaust Museum in Australia. Her November 14 lecture analyzed the Australian response to the Holocaust, including key turning points such as Kristallnacht.

This spring, the Cohen Center will host Loung Ung, a survivor of the Cambodian genocide and human rights activist, for the third major event: the Genocide Awareness Lecture to be held on April 3. Ung is the author of *First They Killed My Father*, an autobiographical account of the genocide that was later made into a Netflix film produced by Angelina Jolie. The event will be available both in-person and via livestream, a format that the Cohen Center has offered all year long in order to make events accessible to wider audiences.

Reflecting on the Cohen Center's work today, Dr. Kate DeConinck, KSC Director of Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, emphasizes the importance of partnerships. According to DeConinck, who became the Cohen Center's director in 2022, “Democratic partnerships and collaboration are key in our work to educate people about the past and promote human dignity and civic leadership.” At this year's Kristallnacht Remembrance event, for example, city officials spoke at or otherwise participated in the program.

Looking ahead to the future, the Cohen Center is fundraising to support new initiatives such as internship opportunities for undergraduate students and graduate fellows, a study tour program to bring community members to domestic and international locations alongside experts for experiential learning, a new cohort model to empower local educators in designing Holocaust and genocide curriculum, and more.

To learn more visit www.keene.edu/cchgs or call 603-358-2371



Above, from left, President Melinda Treadwell, Dr. Kate DeConinck, Suzanne Hampel, and Dr. James Beeby at the 2023 Kristallnacht Lecture in November. Hampel was the event's keynote speaker. Below, author Dara Horn delivers the 2023 Holocaust Memorial Lecture in October. Both in-person, on-campus events were part of the Cohen Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies' 40th-anniversary event series.





OPENING MINDS, DOORS AND FUTURES:

Keene State's Legacy Educator Preparation Program

EDITOR'S NOTE: Keene State's legacy Educator Preparation Program has a 114-year history of reading skilled, passionate students to educate future generations in the classroom. Meet some of the graduates, many of whom have gone on to lead their classrooms locally and throughout New Hampshire creating a homegrown workforce pipeline. Also, meet current students who are pre-service teachers and hear more about their journeys, and learn how our education grads are uniquely connected, hired quickly and enjoy rewarding careers. Explore additional content at Keene.edu and on the College's social media accounts. Pictured L to R: Hannah Trombley '11, Ian Kaplan '19, Amanda (Starkey) Miller '11, Susanna Gagnon '11, Hannah Bennett '25, Ritu Budakoti M'07.

The classroom of Ritu Budakoti M'07 at Keene Middle School buzzes with energy. The space is welcoming and dotted with vestiges of earlier projects, like model rockets and solar vehicles. Whiteboards are covered with schedules, charts, photos and homework assignments, while a poster inspired by the periodic table of elements displays "The Elements of a Successful Student."

When we visited, students were working in small, enthusiastic teams, immersed in that day's unit focus – Is Energy a System? – and the related learning objective: Observe energy transfer between three bouncing balls; explain why it is that energy cannot be created or destroyed; collect data on rebound heights; and evaluate the physical energy and kinetic energy of the bouncing balls.

The essential question is, "Can we create and/or destroy energy?"

On the middle panel of the main whiteboard at the head of the classroom was this side

note, in large chalk print:

"Hola, Cardinals! Now that we have bounced into this awesome week, let's not forget we all have great potential! - Mrs. Budakoti."

In the days ahead, students in Mrs. Budakoti's inviting classroom will fabricate a solar oven to test, extract DNA from strawberries, and enjoy an Inquiry Lab on roller coasters.

Welcome to 8th-grade science — Cluster E.

Not surprisingly, Mrs. Budakoti, 43, who earned a Master of Education degree at Keene State, was a finalist for the New Hampshire Department of Education's 2023 Teacher of the Year honor. She holds a bachelor and master of science degrees in botany from a university in India, where she is from originally.

In a career that spans 15 years, this mother



“I see my life’s purpose as helping to develop a community of lifelong learners because they have the potential to change the world for the better,” Mrs. Budakoti says. “As an educator, I live my purpose every day.”

Ian Kaplan '19 teaches 6th-grade reading in the same building as Mrs. Budakoti. His classroom is equally as riveting, though not with rockets and microscopes. Instead, and not inconspicuously, his classroom is dressed in extra layers of books.

An energetic and engaging teacher who earned a bachelor's in English literature and education, Kaplan also has extensive training in educational equity and inclusion, as well as certification in Safe Space (LGBTQ+ allyship and inclusion).

Keene State allowed him to be who he is, he said, and ultimately that allowed him to do what he now knows he was born to do, teach.

“Keene is the first place I've ever lived that has felt like home,” he said. “Chris Parsons, the professor in charge of English secondary education graduates, helped me to see myself as an educator. ... I initially intended to work at Keene Middle School for a few years before leaving to explore the world; however, I quickly realized that Keene was my world — the place I wanted to help build and grow.”

In 2019, Kaplan and two other KSC alums, Tom Garceau '19 and Devon Coffey '19, were teaching English at Keene Middle School at the same time, one in 6th grade, one in 7th, and one in 8th. By the end of that year, the first for all three, they had

started a Dungeons & Dragons after-school club that included more than 80 students.

Parsons remembers that the students had talked a lot about the fantasy role-playing game's application to literacy skills in the English Methods classes he taught.

Garceau and Kaplan have gone on to win exceptional educator awards, from the supervisory unit for Keene Schools and the KSC Alumni Association, respectively. They are also now cooperating teachers for their alma mater and have hosted student teachers from Keene State who graduated in 2023 and who are also now teaching within 30 minutes of Keene. They are Lauren Simmons, at Monadnock Regional Middle High School in Swanzey Center, and Alyssa Hamilton, at ConVal Regional High School in Peterborough.

“All three very quickly became leaders in the school,

not administrators, but the sorts of teachers who build other teachers up, start clubs, coach sports, run in-house professional developments, design new curriculum, and become the go-to adult for so many students,” Parsons said. “No matter the training, being an early-career teacher is hard, but our graduates do that hard work — and lead while doing it. Investing in teacher education programs means investing in folks who will become teacher leaders.”

of two children has taught on two continents and in public and private schools. And her education continues; Mrs. Budakoti is enrolled in Keene State's Education Leadership Graduate Program.

Keene State has a long history of preparing and inspiring difference-making teachers and educational leaders.

Many, like Mrs. Budakoti, put their stamp on their classroom and their teaching style. In the eyes of their students, they see potential and imagine possibility. And almost universally, it is clear they have a passion for their chosen profession.

A Long History In The Making

Keene State's history of preparing future educators is well chronicled and dates back to 1909 when Keene Normal School opened with the mission of educating young women in the region. Those graduates were able to practice teaching in and around Keene. Having unpaid student-

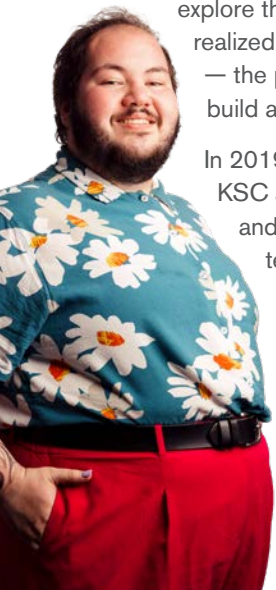


educators teach their children was a boon for taxpayers, whose financial ante toward public education diminished as a result.

The earliest Keene Normal School students studied education, pedagogy, and the liberal arts and sciences. A confluence of historical events, including a devastating hurricane, a world war, and the Great Depression, brought considerable and unforeseen pressures to bear on the institution.

But the school persevered by leveraging an evolving and growing liberal arts

continued on pg. 18



program and reputation, and emerged for the better, as Keene Teachers College, in 1939.

Twenty-four years later, the school transitioned again, this time to Keene State College, which enrolled roughly 1,000 students at the time. Among the students who were part of the first class to attend and graduate from the college under its new – and current – name was Betsy Coll '67, who used her degree to become a physical education teacher. Her extraordinary teaching career spanned 34 years.

“It’s been an awesome thing,” Associate Dean Tanya Sturtz, Director of Educator Preparation said, “all the successful outcomes, but also to see how our Educator Prep program has grown, pivoted with the times, and maintained the same high standards and pedagogical values it has always demanded.”

In all its iterations, from 1909 until today, Keene State has launched thousands of education careers, here, in New Hampshire, across the country, and around the world. School leaders, principals, early education center directors, and in especially large numbers, teachers in public schools, private academies, charter schools and corporate childcare centers.

Keene State and its Educator Preparation program claim many

points of distinction, not the least of which is the national accreditation it has maintained since 1954, and that 14 of its undergraduate programs offer paths to recommendation for endorsement for New Hampshire Licensure to the New Hampshire Department of Education. Only one-third of all teacher preparation programs in the country are nationally accredited.

While many Educator Preparation programs in New Hampshire are state-approved, only Keene State

and the University of New Hampshire are approved by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

The College’s deep and enduring partnerships with schools in the region, depth and tenure of caring and available faculty, graduate program options, and strong job placement rates are other distinguishing qualities of the program.

Passion- And Purpose-Driven Teachers

Hannah Trombly '11 teaches 4th grade at Wheelock Elementary School in Keene.

The classroom, she insists, is not a place for mediocrity, for teachers or students’ experience. Passion and purpose should lead, she said, and then the rest will follow.

“There are so many challenges so you have to love it; the classroom has to be your happy place. Teaching styles are varied. I take pride in getting to know my students, in being creative, and in making it comfortable for the students. I try to put on a show every day that lets them know just how cool our world is.” said Trombly.

Julie Henry '08 teaches social studies at Nashua North High School.

Like Trombly, Henry said getting to know students – their interests and learning abilities, for example – matters most and makes teaching easier.

Fifteen years in, she said, relationship-building remains a job priority.

“Learning objectives and curriculum writing are things you learn in college, and necessary, but being flexible and adaptive you learn as you go. ... I’ve also learned not to be afraid to be silly and to dress up for Spirit Week, or to laugh at your own mistakes even if you are in front of students. Teaching is a learning experience for students and adults every step of the way.” said Henry.

All of the teachers we spoke with for this series credit their Keene State experience for raising expectations and providing mentorship and field placement opportunities that make them highly employable.

Sturtz said the College faculty’s collective desire to excite and empower the next generation of educators — like Coll, Budakoti, Kaplan, Trombly, and Henry, and so many other teaching graduates — is the backbone of “the many positive outcomes for our students.”

“Getting to know the students, and creating a positive learning environment is everything.”

- Hannah Trombly '11



Facts and Information to Consider:

- In the academic year 2022-23, the college graduated 72 undergraduate and graduate students who were recommended for New Hampshire Licensure, which means they met decision points, testing requirements, and state requirements. Of those, **52 are working in schools in New England, and 37 are teaching in New Hampshire.** Six of the graduates are in graduate programs.
- In the **past four years**, looking at cohorts who entered the teacher workforce mid- or post-pandemic in Secondary English Education, **74 percent now teach English in New Hampshire and 96 percent do so in New England.** Parsons said he suspects this kind of percentage applies to all Keene State education programs, not just Secondary English Education.
- On a national scale, according to Educators Rising, **60 percent of teachers are in classrooms within 20 miles of where they went to college.** Educators Rising supports students interested in education-related careers.
- Keene State has constituent alumni in all 50 states, and some 150 living and/or working abroad, but **more than 16,700 of its alums live in and/or work in New Hampshire.**
- Graduates who participate in an internship, which includes student teaching, are **two and a half times more likely** to stay in New Hampshire to work.
- From 2013 through 2022, the percentage of alumni whose work or graduate education is related to their studies at Keene State has ranged from **76 to 86.**



Ritu Budakoti

That At-Home Feeling

While there may be an absence of consistent, sustained data to illustrate just how many education grads go on to teach locally or in New Hampshire, the data that does exist, coupled with anecdotal evidence, is considerable.

Bottom line, Parsons said, “Many of our alums end up teaching close to Keene State, which is remarkable.”

Keene State classroom-ready teaching graduates are always on our radar, said Rob Malay, Superintendent of Schools for School Administrative Unit 29, which includes Keene schools.

“The value of the symbiotic relationship between the college and our schools is huge on many levels, from collaborating on how public education has and continues to evolve, to providing real experiences for future educators, to identifying and designing programs that meet current needs, to providing support for one another, and to be a pipeline for graduates who we know will be well prepared. It’s an incredible benefit.”

Sturtz said preparing students, inspiring them, and connecting them with schools is central to the program’s mission and a formula for producing in-demand graduates.

“Our faculty engage in advocacy, research, and collaboration with schools and community partners. ... We are proud of the successful careers we see and hear about, and we think our job placement rate speaks for itself.”



“We know,” Parsons says, “that our alums are incredible teachers and humans. I wish everyone could see them work with our children and in our communities. It is breathtaking. And, despite pandemics, teacher shortages, and attacks on teachers, these English teachers find meaning and purpose in their work; they support our children through anything and everything, making sure students have the social-emotional and academic content they need. I am in awe of them. There ought to be a parade.”

By Paul Miller

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

HOMECOMING WEEKEND

The weekend of September 29 was filled with happy faces and warm greetings for alumni during the annual Keene State College Homecoming! With more than 600 attendees and many athletic competitions, it was a successful event that included inducting the 2023 Athletics Hall of Fame class.



FOR MORE HOMECOMING PHOTOS
visit the [Keene State College Alumni Facebook page](#).



[keenestatealumni](#)

Winter Reception & Jazz Concert

Alumni, friends, staff, and jazz aficionados gathered December 6, 2023 for a Winter Reception followed by a concert with performance by the KSC Jazz Ensemble. An annual event hosted by the Alumni Department, this gathering kicked off a warm welcome to the winter festivities at KSC.



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME

On September 29 the College inducted six alumni and two contributors to the College into the 2023 Alumni Athletic Hall of Fame. The celebration recognized the following individuals for their achievements in their respective sport: Bob Merrow, Athletic Training; Bobby Doyon '11, Baseball; Rick Scott '77, Men's Soccer; Dr. Stanley Yarosewick, KSC President 1994-2005; and the 2006 Keene State Distance Medley Relay Team: Breanne Lucey '08, Krystin Gavin '10, Sarah Miller '07, and Jennifer Adams '08. Rick Scott is the first inductee chosen for induction in three categories: player, coach, and contributor.

The ceremony also included Crystal Blamy '08 and Amy Zombeck '99 who were inducted into the Little East Conference Hall of Fame, a NCAA Division III organization. Their induction brings the number of KSC alumni to 13 in the LEC Hall of Fame.

The achievements of these individuals during their time as students, contributors, or supporters were remarkable. They will have a permanent place in the history of Keene State College. Congratulations to the inductees. Go Owls!



REUNION 2024

Save the Date

May 31 - June 1, 2024

For classes ending in 4 and 9 contact us at alumni@keene.edu if you'd like to organize a class reunion.

Evening of Dance Celebrates 50 years

The Theatre & Dance Department is celebrating its 50th Evening of Dance. Dressed in Blue, featuring Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, will take place April 11-13.

Dressed in Blue is a multi-day celebration of dance, with events for alumni, students, parents, and the community. The event is also a key annual fundraiser for the Theatre and Dance program. In addition to four performances, the landmark celebration features an opening night reception, open classes and studio hours for alumni, and a Gershwin panel discussion for the entire community.

For the past 50 years Evening of Dance has showcased original choreographed works by students, faculty, and guest artists and

designers across disciplines, and reinvents dance through an inspiring breadth of contemporary perspectives.

The Theatre and Dance program is once again collaborating with the Music Department for the celebration. This year's performance will feature pianist and Coordinator of the Piano Program Christina Wright-Ivanova, the Keene State College Concert Band conducted by Assistant Professor John Hart, as well as an original score by Composition Coordinator Heather Gilligan.

For information on the schedule of events or how to support the Theatre & Dance Department visit: www.keene.edu/alumni/events/50th-evening-of-dance/

BIG BELIEFS: A RESEARCH LAB AT KEENE STATE

The Big Beliefs Lab is one example of how Keene State bridges real-world experience with the classroom, and makes an impact on the larger community.



Associate Psychology Professor Shailee Woodard, Ph.D. and her students are investigating the worldviews of children, teens, and adults in the Big Beliefs Lab. Worldviews are linked to mental health, prejudice, responses to pandemics, and more, yet little is known about how worldviews form. At what age do worldviews begin to take shape? What beliefs make up these

early worldviews? How do worldviews change throughout childhood and adolescence? What experiences influence worldviews?

The Big Beliefs Lab aims to answer these questions.

In the Big Beliefs Lab – or B.B. Lab – students not only experience psychology research, they own it. Students are involved in all aspects of B.B. Lab research, which is housed in the Department of Psychology, including designing studies, collecting data, and analyzing and presenting results. Students have presented their findings at conferences both on and off campus.

Previous research resulted in the creation of the Unified Worldview Measure, a standard set of questions to evaluate adult and child worldviews, that was then used to identify the main components that comprise a person's worldview.

If you'd like to support the lab's research, it is recruiting in-person and online participants from 7 years old through adulthood! Learn more about this study and participate at sites.keene.edu/bigbeliefs/current-research.

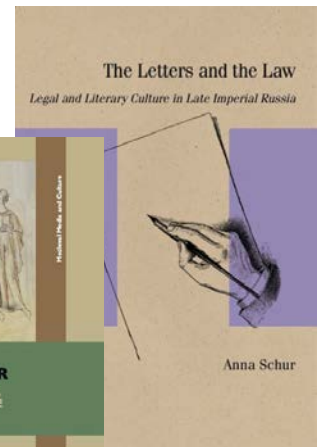
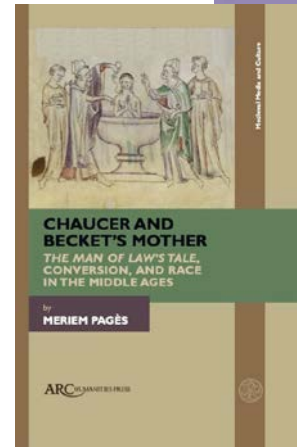


NEWS FROM THE NEST

CHESHIRE ACADEMY FOR LIFELONG LEARNING (CALL) – ON CAMPUS AND ONLINE!

Keene State College's institute for learning in retirement program, the Cheshire Academy for Lifelong Learning (CALL), provides affordable, fun, and educational classes for community members on a variety of topics. CALL's spring session features online classes Monday-Friday and in-person classes on Fridays. Nearly 40 classes are led by members, community experts, and Keene State faculty. Past course highlights include British Operas led by a professional opera singer, the Senior Sneakers exercise program, Architectural Design, True Tales of the Monadnock Region, The Geography of Geopolitics, and Menacing Microbes. Registration for the eight-week spring session is open until February 27. Classes run once per week between March 4 and April 26.

CALL has learning opportunities for everyone with no tests and no grading! Learn more and register online at Keene.edu/CALL or by phone at 603-358-2290.



FACULTY NEWS

KSC Professors Anna Schur and Meriem Pagès are celebrating the recent publication of their books of literary criticism: *The Letters and the Law*, published by Northwestern University Press and *Chaucer and Becket's Mother*, published by Arc Humanities Press.



ATHLETICS NEWS

The Keene State Athletic Department is reflecting on a very successful fall season. Women's cross country repeated as Little East Conference champions, while the men's cross country team made a three-place improvement to finish fourth. Field hockey and men's soccer both finished second in the LEC, while women's soccer was third and volleyball was fifth. The field hockey squad reached the LEC

Championship game for the 21st time, falling in a hard-fought decision to the University of Southern Maine. Men's golf, in just its second season, finished second at the conference championship, led by LEC Rookie of the Year Sean Bonneau.

The department also has hired new coaches for the men's and women's ice hockey programs, as well as esports, set to debut in 2024. Rob Morgan (*bottom right*) will be the new leader of the Owls' women's hockey program, while Bobby Rodrigue '00 (*top left*), a name familiar to many hockey fans in Cheshire County, will lead the men's. Noah Drouin '20 (*top right*) will be the Owls' esports coach.



Noah Drouin



Rob Morgan

WOMEN'S SOCCER TEAM TRAVELS TO ITALY



In August, the women's soccer team traveled to Italy for ten days, visiting seven different cities, playing in three soccer games, and making memories to last a lifetime.

Said Senior Women's Soccer Captain Alexa Skinner '24: "It was an incredible experience!! We were able to explore numerous cities. We ate authentic Italian food, learned all about the history and culture, and competed in three games against very talented Italian teams. Overall, it was an amazing experience! Traveling to Italy with my best friends is something I can confidently say I will remember forever."



CAMPUS ENHANCEMENTS

As part of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan the former Bushnell Apartments site has been redesigned as a beautiful outdoor space for students, faculty, and staff to gather for performances, outdoor classroom learning, or to simply enjoy time together. Other completed campus improvements include updated furniture for 62 classrooms, safety enhancements at the Redfern Arts Center, demolition and abatement of Monadnock and Randall Halls, and updates to restrooms in Holloway Hall. Ongoing projects include continuing improvements at the Redfern, updating the remaining restrooms in Holloway Hall, and finishing classroom flooring and painting updates. On the horizon, the College will be reviewing the USNH Master Plan for KSC, planning updates to Carle Hall to create a more open and inviting first floor and lobby, planning for the preliminary stages of Elliot Hall renovations, and updating an existing classroom into an esports gaming facility.



WHERE IS MELINDA?

In addition to her role as President of Keene State College Dr. Melinda Treadwell serves at the executive level on State, regional, and national organizations. She is engaged in important conversations and advocacy in the areas of higher education policy, innovation, inclusivity, collegiate athletics, student mental health and well-being, and leadership and mentoring.

SELECTED 2023 SERVICE, PANELS, AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS:

- Leadership and Its Privileges
NCAA DII Senior Women Administrators
- A View from the Top
NCAA DIII Pathways Panel
- Innovation in Higher Education
NECHE Annual Meeting, Moderator
- Gender Inclusivity, Institutional Research, and Institutional Assessment
NECHE Annual Meeting, Moderator
- NECHE Standards Revision on Innovation
Requested contributor and writer
- NCAA Pathway Leadership Development Program
Annual service as mentor to emerging leaders
- State of the College
Invited media conversations and presentations to Lions Club, Elm City Rotary, and Keene Rotary
- Implementation of DEI Initiatives
Presidents' Panel, NHCUC Higher Education Summit

STATE AND LOCAL

New Hampshire Higher Education Commission

Commissioner

New Hampshire College & University Council

Chair, Executive Council

REGIONAL

New England Commission on Higher Education

Commissioner

Little East Conference

Immediate Past Chair, Presidents Council

NATIONAL

National Collegiate Athletics Association DIII:

- *Management Council*
- *President's Advisory Group*
- *Legislative Steering Committee*
- *Financial & Risk Management Working Group*

Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges

Executive Committee & Board of Directors

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

Rural Presidents / Chancellors Committee

CLASS NOTES

1947, 1951/1959, & 1986

Steve Fortier '86, Norma Walker '51 M '59, and KSC's Jessica Bigaj visited with **Ruth Washburn '47** last January and shared pictures of this "VERY special day!"



1954

June Haymon and her son Kris plan to attend the next reunion. She writes how they enjoy Keene and look forward to meeting everyone - especially Norma Walker and the President. June shared, "I don't hear from anyone in my class, but I still want to attend [reunion] - I'm 91 and still get around. Best wishes to all."

1960

Gail (Spevack) Sheldon, class secretary, told us: "I had another pleasant visit with **Irene Plourde** at Whitaker Place in Penacook, New Hampshire. If you are in the area, stop and see her. She will enjoy showing you her beautiful surroundings. I have contacted **Norma (Turcotte) McShane, Kathy (Bergeron) Macdonald**, and have heard from **Maxine (Weld) Andrews, Shirley (Tolman) Shugart, and Claire Coll**. I have also received communication from Walt Czarneck's brother (**Rich Czarneck '61**) and Ruth (Knox) Baker's sister,

Paula Knox '67. Lang Plumer has been present at the Golden Circle luncheons and participates on the Alumni Board. I received a video of services held for **Rich Joy** from his wife Joy in North Beach, MD. If anyone would like a copy, I can forward the ceremony to you."

Gail is now updating the class list in anticipation of the 65th class reunion in June 2025 - please let her know if you need to be added to the list (**sheldon-sheldon@comcast.net**).

1961

Dot Simpson, class secretary, sent in the following updates. "Congratulations to **Betty (Bennett) Schofield** on her many great grandchildren. She and **Marilyn (Woodward) Twombly** continue to use their talents quilting and keeping Joanne Fabrics in business. Roger and Dot visited with **Ray** and **Pat Clark** at their beautiful setting in Maryland. They remain active and are doing well. We managed to play a few games of bridge! **Nance (Kidder) Howe** visited us in Ocala, Florida. She is very active babysitting and playing great grandmother. Nance is active in her many church activities. Fun times!

A large crowd of KSC 1961 grads gathered in August at Hart's Turkey Farm Restaurant for the Golden Circle meeting. In attendance were: **Ruth (Doan) MacDougall, Ronnie & Diana ('80) Wyman, Betty Schofield, Grace and Bob Saulnier, Chet and Nancy Fessenden, Barbie (Petelle) Moore, Pricilla (Canney) & Joe ('60) Dutile**, and **Roger** and myself. Captain Roger gave us a little "Lake Winnepesaukee tour" when some classmates came back to the house after the luncheon. Come join us next summer at the Golden Circle lunch!

Our beautiful **Barbara (Greenough) Mackey** passed away. She will be greatly missed. Especially from her friends and lovely family. Our condolences to all!

Bob Saulnier wrote to Dot saying, "I am quite pleased with the performance of our

Class Scholarship. This year for the first time, we were able to give four student scholarships. This means we have given 27 \$1,000-scholarships to different KSC students from New Hampshire!"

A BIG THANK YOU to **Bob Saulnier** for his diligent and accurate supervision of our fund...Our funds keep growing with more recipients. Bob's time and talents should be appreciated by all KSC Class of 1961 members. Many scholarship recipients have expressed their gratitude in person or by notes. THANK YOU CLASSMATES for making a difference for many KSC students.

Please send news! Our next big reunion will be 2026. We are a very close class. Keep in touch!

1964

Dick Cate retired this summer after 44 years in education, most recently as the principal of Symonds Elementary School in Keene.



1966

Roberta "Bobbie" (Luce) Barry, class secretary, shares that **Shirley Jackson**, retired from Information technology work, lives in Scarborough, Maine. She stays in touch with classmates **Sandra Baranski, Anne McCooey, Mary (Winslow) Yorkell, Marsha Cizmadia, and Joyce (Devine) Cate. Tess (Leslie Wolcott) Buswell** travels between Maine and Florida and stays busy with family and friends year round. Same can be said

for **Tim** and **Carol (Holbrook) Brown**. They travel between Saratoga Springs and Florida. **Richard Swasey, John Bennett, Bill Haggerty, and Henry Douton** often meet up during their winters in Florida. **Ellen (Sullivan) and Gerald ('62) Moynihan** have a granddaughter at Skidmore, and they enjoy an annual family vacation at the Maine coast. Ellen has a new knee (most of us now have some new body part). She enjoys swimming at the Y and reading. **Jack Barry '65** and I stay busy enjoying activities at our retirement community, Tara Estates.

To any and all from class of '66, send note(s) to: Bobbie Barry, 43 Blair Drive, Rochester, NH 03868 or email Barry_roberta@yahoo.com.

1976

Marilyn Gugliucci, M.A., Ph.D., professor and director of geriatrics education and research in the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine's Division of Geriatrics, shared that she was recently elected president of The Gerontological Society of America. "KSC was incredibly instrumental in launching my professional/academic career," she wrote.



1990, 1993, 1995

Claire (Bourgault) Guillemette '93 wrote in and shared several photos from a recent KSC roommate reunion. Claire and **Deanna (Stanavage) Varljen '91** ordered KSC schwag and rented a house in Marlborough for the weekend so they could visit campus and their favorite stomping grounds. Not pictured, but ever present in spirit, was **Nancy Jo (Wiggin) Hauck '90**. She was unable to attend the reunion but they made sure to include her in all of the shenanigans as she was instrumental in the goings-on at 34 Bruder Street back in the day....when there was a

house! Claire jokes, "We self-proclaimed ourselves as the 'Bruder Street Babes.' Many a good time was had at that house!"



From left to right: Suzanne LaRocque Margarit '95, Wendy Hays Yale '90, Kara Barbieri Clarkin, Celia Leicht Adone, Deanna Stanavage Varljen, Claire Bourgault Guillemette '93, Kelly Conboy Ragan, Carla Jo Larson O'Donoghue '90



1997

KSC just welcomed a legacy owl this summer when **Adam and Jennifer Jensen** moved in their son, **Seth Jensen '27**, a business major.

1999

Heather Allen Burkett was recently in the running for NH teacher of the year.

1999

Brittany LaFleur '18 and **Rachel Nagler Schpero** ended up being on the same grade 1 team in Manchester, Connecticut. Even though they are 19 years apart, they often talk about their favorite memories at KSC and what has changed since they were there!

2000

Jaime Burton shares with us she is a recent published author of a children's book titled, "The Christmas Witch" (by Jaime Katusha). She tell us "The Christmas Witch takes readers on a magical adventure that celebrates our differences, encourages self-determination, and highlights the importance of being true to oneself in order to find genuine joy in life. It's a perfect book to read in the fall from October - December!"



2001

Patricia Stello reunited with grandson & future Owl, Jake Amadon.



2002

Congratulations to **Chuck Lloyd** on his new position as the Vice Chancellor for the Community College System of New Hampshire (CCSNH). Chuck has served for six years as the President of White Mountains Community College.





2004

Charlie Ziniti and **Julie Henry '08** are KSC US History majors and are social studies teachers at Nashua North.

2008

When alums **Beth Wood '13** and husband, **Matthew**, closed their downtown Keene establishment, 21 Bar & Grill, for one month for renovations they paid their entire staff to work at one of two area nonprofits, The Community Kitchen and the Keene Swamp Bats, a summer collegiate baseball team. Thinking of others first is a seed of goodness ... and a source of Owl pride!



2011

Alumni that teach together, stay together... **Susanna Gagnon**, **Chardonnay Auger**, **Christina Longchamp '12**, **Caitlin**

Lomando '08, and **Kristen Robert '94**, are all teachers at Mount Pleasant Elementary in Nashua, New Hampshire where Hannah Bennett '24 has also substitute taught.

2012

Teaching duo **Katherine DeLuca** and **Katie Nunes Robidoux '13** work together at Trumbull High School in Connecticut.



2015

Emily Fennes '16 M '17 married **Erik Armbricht** in October 2023. They met at KSC when she was a sophomore and Erik a junior. A large group of alumni joined them for the happy occasion!

2016 & 2017

Heather Norton married **Brandon Charney '17** in the fall of 2023.

2017

Emma Cote was named Chair of the World Language Department at the Founder's Academy Public Charter School!

2017

Kelsey Perrault and **Garrett Wensberg** were wed at the end of September 2023.

2018

Alyssa Precourt and **Brian Fitter** married this fall. Alyssa's brother and sister-in-law, also alumna, were in attendance.

2018

Alums **Mickayla Johnston** and **Ty Croteau** married this past August with close to 30 class members in attendance!

2018

Olivia Belanger, **James Rinker '22**, and **Hunter Oberst '22**, along with other Sentinel staff, received top prizes for investigative reporting & editorial writing with the NH Press Association awards this summer.



Have a class note to share?

Submit your update to classnotes@keene.edu

or by mail to:

Alumni Office,
229 Main Street,
Keene, NH 03435-2701

Academic Excellence Celebration:

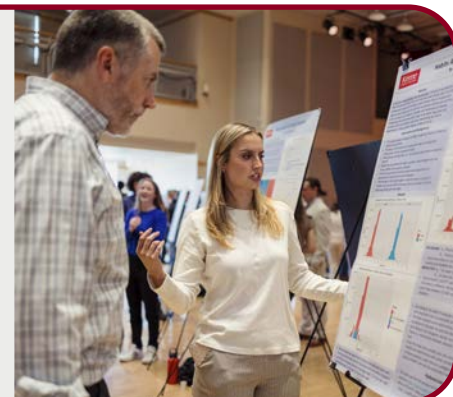
"Celebrating student creativity, scholarship, and co-curricular activity"

FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2024

Join the Keene State College community for a day of celebration! Attend individual and group student presentations in the afternoon followed by an interactive poster session from 5-7pm in the Student Center.

Explore additional events scheduled for that day, such as the senior portfolio art and graphic design exhibits at the Thorne Sagendorph Art Gallery and cap the day's events with the 50th Evening of Dance performance at Redfern Arts Center.

Visit www.keene.edu/aec for more information.



CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MARGARET RAMSAY '56 M'64

An active and always enthusiastic Keene State College alumna, Margaret Ramsay engaged with the College in multiple ways:

the first woman alumni representative to the USNH Board of Trustees, long-time member of both the KEA Board of Trustees and the KSC Alumni Association, and an employee of Keene State for 10 years in Continuing Education and the Advancement/ Alumni Affairs Office. Chuck Redfern, son of former KSC President Leo Redfern, remembers Margaret this way:

"It is most likely those who were Keene State College classmates of Margaret will remember her as an active student about campus."

However, it was after her graduation from KSC that Margaret went on to 'Go Forth and Serve'. In 1966, Margaret was elected to the KSC Alumni Association Board of Directors. In



the 70's, she held a key role in the realization of the Redfern Art Center, and later in the renovation of the KSC College Camp. Soon after that, the porch viewing Wilson Pond was named 'Margaret's Porch'. However, many citizens beyond her hometown of Swanzey, New Hampshire will remember her as a

veteran of the New Hampshire House of Representatives. It was in this role Margaret made significant strides for the funding of the state's higher education system, which was amplified with her membership of the House Ways and Means Committee. Margaret was married to Murray, her lifelong partner, who was also a KSC classmate. Together, they had two wonderful children, Heather and Jonathan."

Margaret's obituary reads, "In every way imaginable, Margaret attributed KSC as one of the most positive influential events of her life. Her ongoing commitment was based on her genuine gratitude for all the important friendships, experiences and opportunities that filled her life once landing in Keene."

UPCOMING KEENE STATE COLLEGE & ALUMNI EVENTS

For News & Events visit keene.edu/news

MARCH 14-17

Keene State
goes to Florida

APRIL 3

Genocide Awareness
Lecture with Luong Ong

APRIL 11-13

50th Evening of Dance -
Dressed in Blue

APRIL 12

Academic Excellence
Celebration

MAY 4

Commencement

MAY 31-JUNE 1

Reunion Weekend

JUNE 14

33rd Annual Chartwells
Golf Classic and Raffle



In Memoriam

Alumni whose passing was reported between June 15, 2023 and October 31, 2023.

Mr. Andrew J. Lavoie '44
unknown

Ms. Barbara J. Gingras '63
unknown

Mr. Raymond L. Lapointe '68
4/30/19

Mr. Paul W. McManus '75
6/6/19

Mr. George Story '75
8/22/21

Ms. Carolyn (Keyser) Fellows M'72
11/2/21

Ms. Jan M. Duplissie '76
6/6/22

Mr. Scott A. Chase '71
12/9/22

Ms. Brenda (Foote) Makin '64
12/11/22

Mrs. Virginia (May) Parker-Ferrell '65 M'79
12/20/22

Mr. Chester W. Perkins Jr '58
1/25/23

Mrs. Joyce (De Gelan) Tuden '71
2/17/23

Mr. Craig W. Doggart M'71
3/27/23

Mr. Willis F. Ingram '72
3/28/23

Mrs. Gloria (Pike) Hammond '57
4/2/23

Ms. Jessica A. Bulfaro '18
4/20/23

Dr. Elmer E. Dunbar '73 H'93
5/22/23

Mr. William R. Liggett '85
6/2/23

Mrs. Linda J. Cloutier '73
6/8/23

Ms. Anita C. Stokes '56
6/12/23

Ms. Patricia (Perkins) Durling '51
6/13/23

Mrs. Eleanor (Bowhay) Zahner '46
6/25/23

Mr. Christopher S. Yurgeles '85
6/26/23

Mr. William E. Bristol '79
7/7/23

Ms. Elizabeth A. Richardson M'91
7/8/23

Ms. Paul A. Laughner Jr '74
7/9/23

Mrs. Shirley L. (Rolston) Martell '47
7/22/23

Mr. Charles D. Loughran '87
7/24/23

Mr. Terry C. Paul M'74
7/26/23

Mr. Lawrence J. Blandini '72
7/28/23

Mrs. Mary (Perry) Gill '57
8/7/23

Ms. Diana (Tobias) Quimby '72
8/9/23

Mr. Patrick T. Crowley '99
8/9/23

Ms. Helen C. Marison '39
8/11/23

Ms. Cynthia (Park) Glover '57
8/16/23

Ms. Marilyn (Howe) Houghton '57
8/18/23

Ms. Janice A. Dingee '66
9/1/23

Mr. Michael A. Craft '72
9/1/23

Mr. Carl G. Perkins '52
9/5/23

Mr. Peter N. Johnson '82
9/17/23

Ms. Deborah A. Dugan '94
10/1/23

Mrs. Midge C. (Corsi) Corsi '62
10/1/23

Mr. Steven F. Houle '68
10/13/23

Mrs. Margaret (Russell) Ramsay '56 M'64
10/13/23

Mrs. Louise W. (Whitten) Perkins '43
10/17/23



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ALUMNI CENTER

From the archives...

232 Main Street—part of Keene State's current Alumni Center—has been a site of historic heritage since the 1800s. Though the exact date of the first foundation's construction is unknown, a photo from 1853 shows the entire street was once lined with historic houses, including the building that is now part of the Alumni Center. **Every other historic house on the street was demolished except for 232 Main Street, which survived through a chain of owners and even a bankruptcy.**

In 1875, the house acquired its current form shortly after being bought by John W. Starkey, a farmer and peddler. It then passed through a multitude of owners, from pottery merchants to Victorian furniture carvers.

In 1965, the building was purchased by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Manchester, who rechristened it as the Newman Center. It remained as such until 2004 when it was acquired by the state for Keene State College to use as a space for alumni. The College formally acquired the property and its adjacent buildings in 2007, and **in 2009-2010 was renovated into the Alumni Center you stand in today.**

By Jeremy Koutroubas '24



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course with friends,
alumni, and community
members, all to benefit
the best student-athletes
in the game, by par.

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Contact KSC.Athletics@keene.edu

Support Keene State Owls during the Athletics Giving Challenge!

Throughout February, Keene State's varsity teams are competing in the eighth annual Athletics Giving Challenge to raise donations and secure the highest number of donors for their respective teams. Thanks to Fenton Family Dealerships, the stakes include not only bragging rights but also additional funds for the team with the highest total dollars and the most donors. Your contribution to Owl Athletics directly supports your chosen team. **Make your gift today at KeeneOwls.com/2024AGC. Thank you!**


**ATHLETICS
GIVING
CHALLENGE**

February 2024

THE HOOT

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