

NONPROFIT ORG
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ONWARD



TO PARAPHRASE SIR AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, WE CERTAINLY LIVE IN INTERESTING TIMES.

Shortly after concluding our board of trustees meeting last March, thinking we had finalized our budget and plans for the new fiscal year, we suddenly found ourselves in the throes of a global pandemic. In the interest of safety, we sent everyone home and pivoted quickly to remote teaching and learning. The Nor'easter community rallied, and the transition went quite well. With the support of professional staff, faculty converted their courses to the new online format, and students adapted with admirable resilience.

With our deep footprint in the health sciences, it's no surprise that so many UNE alumni found themselves on the front lines of the crisis, caring for those directly impacted by COVID-19. But those alumni who have made an impact include far more than health care professionals; they include educators, scientists, business leaders, and others, who have stepped up to assist their communities in this time of crisis. It has been gratifying to hear so many stories of how the Nor'easter ethic of caring for our fellow citizens has manifested itself.

As soon as we sent students home early last spring, we immediately began planning for the safe re-opening of our campuses. While the health and safety of our community was priority number one, we also recognized that our mission required us to be together for face-to-face learning. Drawing from emerging best practices, and in concert with federal and state guidelines, we re-worked every aspect of campus life to ensure that we could meet these dual prerogatives. Through the dedication and hard work of the entire UNE community, we are successfully adapting to this strange new reality. It's a work in progress, to be sure. But students are back in the classrooms and labs, researchers are making new discoveries, and our campuses are once again abuzz with activity.

As large as the pandemic has loomed, it's not the only thing that has shaped our collective experience this year. The killing of George Floyd in late May galvanized our entire society to confront racism in all of its manifestations. Since my arrival at UNE three and a half years ago, we have built on our past work by committing ourselves to creating an even more diverse and inclusive community, and this commitment became

a major focus of our strategic plan. Among other things, we accelerated the creation of a new position of associate provost for Community, Equity, and Diversity, and we hired Dr. Chris Hunt to lead our efforts in this area. We rolled out the results of a comprehensive campus climate survey conducted earlier this year, and Dr. Hunt is now working with others across the University to develop action steps we will take to further this important work.

We have also continued to make progress in the other five areas of our strategic plan, and I'm incredibly proud of the faculty and professional staff for continuing this work even in the midst of the pandemic.

Just a few highlights include the reorganization of the College of Arts and Sciences; the reimagining of our undergraduate curriculum; the development of new academic programs and new research partnerships; the establishment of new centers of excellence in digital health, public health, and collaborative education; the consolidation of our academic advising, internship, and career services functions; the moving of many of our business operations online; and last, but emphatically not least, the past month saw the announcement of a \$30 million gift to UNE from the Harold Alfond Foundation. There will be a lot more to say about this exciting development in the coming months, but for now, suffice it to say that the Harold Alfond Foundation trustees have been our visionary partners for over 25 years, and this investment, the largest gift in UNE's history, reaffirms their commitment, not only to UNE's mission, but also to the health of the state.

Although we all long for times that are a little less "interesting," 2020 has brought out the best of the Nor'easter community. It has illustrated — in ways both small and large — our adaptability, our resilience, and our commitment to our shared humanity. Working together, I know that the Nor'easter Nation will continue to serve as a force of good in our rapidly changing world.

Sincerely,

JAMES D. HERBERT, PH.D. | PRESIDENT



COVER STORY UNE ONWARD ▶

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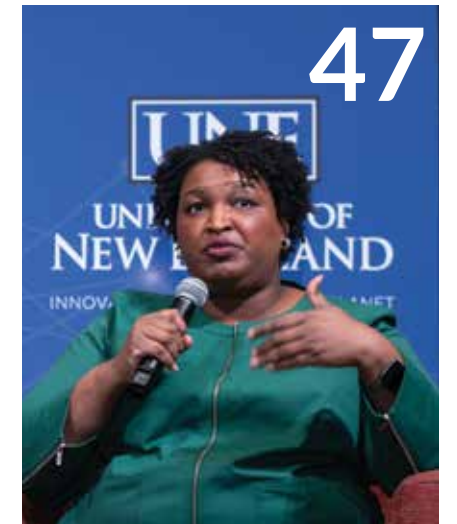
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Special thanks to the many students, alums, and other community members who stepped up in this strange time to provide wonderful selfie photos for stories in situations where photo shoots could not be safely arranged.



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UNE RECEIVES ALFOND FOUNDATION GIFT

On October 6, the Harold Alfond Foundation announced that the University of New England is one of eight Maine institutions that will benefit from an unprecedented and transformational \$500 million investment made by the foundation in an effort to confront the state's long-term economic challenges.

This \$30 million gift, the largest in UNE's history, will support the construction of a new state-of-the-art home for the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) on the Portland Campus, the establishment of a new Institute for Interprofessional Education and Practice, and the acceleration of high-growth undergraduate and graduate programs on the Biddeford Campus to meet student demand and critical workforce needs.

The move will further integrate all of UNE's professional health care education programs with its health-related Centers for Excellence, including those in Collaborative Education, Aging and Health, Digital

Health, and Public Health, amplifying and providing a new cohesiveness around their work.

UNE is a national leader in team-based health care education, known as Interprofessional Education (IPE), which prepares future health care providers to collaborate in team-based health care. It provides opportunities for students to learn from and with each other, to understand the roles and responsibilities of health care team members, and to gain communication and problem-solving skills.

By relocating the UNE COM to the same campus as its other health professions programs and launching the Institute for Interprofessional Education and Practice, UNE will have a depth of health care programs on a single campus that is nearly unique in American higher education.

"At no time in the past century has the critical role that health care workers play in our lives been more clear," said UNE President James

Herbert. "In this time of COVID-19, we are reminded every day of the importance of training the next generation of health care professionals to UNE's mission. The Harold Alfond Foundation's generous gift will allow UNE to increase the number of doctors and other health care professionals we educate and to better serve the state and region by training students to work across health disciplines in integrated teams, providing improved outcomes for their patients. By allowing us to grow undergraduate and graduate programs on our Biddeford Campus that are linked to workforce needs, this grant will also enable us to expand our positive influence on Maine's economy and help shepherd in a new wave of economic prosperity for our state."

UNE President James Herbert (left) with Greg Powell, chairman of the Harold Alfond Foundation, at an October 13 press conference announcing the gift.

Right: An artist's conceptual rendering of the new home of the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine, to be built on UNE's Portland Campus.

For additional content and bonus features, be sure to visit us online: une.edu/magazine.



JILLIAN ROBILLARD '20 WINS \$25,000 GRAND PRIZE ON "GREENLIGHT MAINE"

Class of 2020 graduate Jillian Robillard (Marine Entrepreneurship) has won the "Greenlight Maine" Collegiate Challenge, scoring \$25,000 in prize money to bolster her innovative lobster bait business, Green Bait, which aims to preserve Maine's lobster fishing economy.

Her win of the televised pitch competition — which pits college students' business ideas against each other for the chance to win the kickstart money — was aired on NEWS CENTER Maine on Sunday, June 7. She bested two other student businesses: Easy Eats, a technology-based platform that provides dorm-door food delivery service to college students, and Ferda Farms, a sustainability focused oyster farm in Brunswick, Maine.

Green Bait is an extension of Robillard's existing business Southern Maine Crabs, which buys crabs from fishermen along the Maine coast and sells them to wholesalers for profit. The new product is a lobster



Jillian Robillard (left) receives the \$25,000 prize from "Greenlight Maine" host Julene Gervais.

bait formula made from invasive green crabs, an insidious species that feeds on clam beds and oysters and has been linked to the decline of the soft-shell clam industry.

The crabs appear in lobster traps as bycatch and, due in part to climate change, their numbers continue to rise in Maine and New England. Fishermen cannot legally return the species to the water, so they are often killed and discarded.

Robillard saw the problem as an opportunity to grow her existing business while protecting the environment. To create the bait, she buys unwanted green crabs from fishermen and processes them into a proprietary bait blend. She then sells the bait back to those lobster fishermen at a reduced price.

The bait is cheaper for fishermen to purchase, and it attracts the same number of lobsters as conventional bait, Robillard told the "Greenlight Maine" judges back in January. In Sunday's Collegiate Challenge finale, she said that developing the product is one of the ways she is doing her part to make a difference at the local and global level.

"Everyone has a social responsibility, and I think these fishermen are willing to try something new, especially if it's in their benefit and if there's an incentive," she said.

Judging the episode were Andy Nichols, CEO of Elmet Technologies; Briana Warner, CEO of Atlantic Sea Farms; and Isla Dickerson, senior vice president and director of marketing for Bangor Savings Bank.

The three were particularly taken with Robillard's product, with Nichols calling her an "impressive, driven, young entrepreneur."

Dickerson was also especially impressed by the product. "I love the fact that she has taken something that has really been a blight on our oceans and turned it into something that can have a positive impact," she said.

Of her win, Robillard said she is excited to see how the \$25,000 prize will shape her business and the lobster industry.

"This feels absolutely awesome," she said. "I'm really looking forward to the future and how to utilize this money to better our state and our planet."



UNE HOSTS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY CONFERENCE AT MOROCCAN CAMPUS

The University of New England, in its continuing efforts to support global education and interprofessional development, hosted the 2nd Annual Conference of the Occupational Therapy Association of Morocco (OTAM) at its campus in Tangier, Morocco, on Jan. 4, 2020.

The conference drew academic leaders and occupational therapy (OT) professionals from around the world to the University's Tangier Campus for a day of learning and collaboration in support of OTAM, the Moroccan national professional association of occupational therapy practitioners and students.

The conference originated in 2019 with a partnership between Said Nafai, O.T.D., M.S., OTR/L, CLT, a professor of occupational therapy at American International College and founder of occupational therapy in Morocco, and UNE Clinical Professor of Occupational Therapy Kathryn Loukas, O.T.D., M.S., OTR/L, FAOTA.

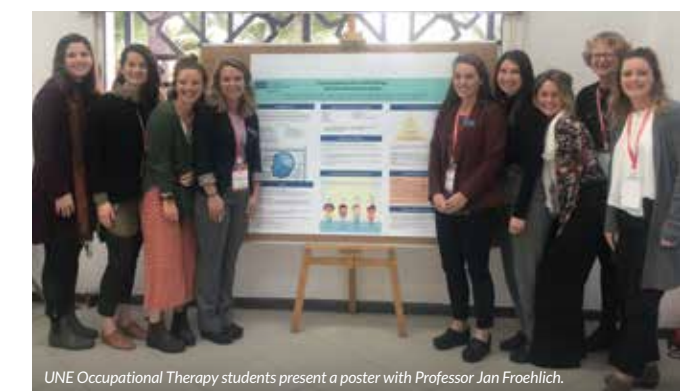
This year, 27 occupational therapy students and four physical therapy students went to Tangier, along with five faculty:

- Kristin Winston, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, program director and associate professor of occupational therapy
- Elizabeth Crampsey, Ed.D., M.S., OTR/L, BCPR, assistant clinical professor and coordinator of the Community Therapy Center
- Jan Froehlich, M.S., OTR/L, associate professor
- Sally McCormack-Tutt, Ed.D., M.P.H., PT, D.P.T., associate dean for Academic Affairs, Westbrook College of Health Professions, and clinical professor of physical therapy
- Susan Wehry, M.D., chief of geriatrics, Department of Primary Care

Winston said the trip allowed UNE students to gain a deeper understanding of occupational therapy practice by learning from clinicians around the world at the conference as well as by performing occupational therapy work at service sites in Tangier, including a local orphanage, a school for children with developmental disabilities, and a site for women to learn work skills.

A global understanding of occupational therapy not only exposes students to the differences between international practices, but it also teaches students to become culturally effective occupational therapists, Loukas said.

Kathryn Froning (M.S.O.T. '21) said the opportunity gave her a new, global viewpoint. "The service-learning experience presented me with a cultural lens other than my own through which to view the core values and tenets of occupational therapy and broadened my horizons as a future occupational therapy practitioner," she shared.



UNE Occupational Therapy students present a poster with Professor Jan Froehlich.



GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

UNE launches interdisciplinary center dedicated to digital health

This past summer, the University of New England established a center to study the rapidly growing field of digital health and to explore how to best integrate it into teaching and learning. The Center for Excellence in Digital Health (CEDH) aims to engage existing and future clinicians in utilizing digital health assets to improve outcomes for patients, providers, and institutions in Maine and beyond.

Establishment of the center positions UNE as a leader in the burgeoning field of digital health, which incorporates computer science, health science, and technology to improve health care quality and personalized care. In addition to wearable devices, examples of digital health include telehealth and telemedicine, artificial intelligence, electronic health records and patient portals, and other hardware and software services to enhance health care delivery.

The Center for Excellence aims to support the incorporation of technology into the University's health professions curricula and emerged from work completed over the previous year to develop common student learning outcomes in digital health. Through partnerships with faculty, staff, industry, and external academic institutions, the center also serves as a hub for collaborative research and community outreach activities.

Founding Director Nan M. Solomons, Ph.D., assistant director of the UNE Online Health Informatics program, said that digital health technologies have proven to be critical in the ongoing coronavirus pandemic as visits to health care providers are more routinely held via video conferencing.

OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

UNE COM focus of osteopathic medicine journal's August issue

The University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine (UNE COM) is the focus of the August issue of the *Journal of the American Osteopathic Association (JAOA)*.

The issue features four research articles written by UNE COM faculty and students plus an editorial by Carol Brenner, Ph.D., associate dean for Research and Scholarship for the college, and a special communication by Jane Carreiro, D.O., UNE COM dean and vice president for Health Affairs. The issue builds off of UNE COM's existing reputation as an innovator in medical education by highlighting the college's role as an increasingly productive environment for diversified research and scholarship.

Carreiro's closing piece highlights UNE COM's achievements over the course of its 40-year history, specifically noting that the college has graduated more than 3,300 physicians who practice throughout the nation and world, that 62% of graduates practice as primary care physicians, and that more than 26% of graduates practice in rural and underserved areas.

Additionally, Carreiro points out, UNE COM graduates practicing primary care in Maine have an annual economic impact of more than \$100 million.

"Community and environment were important to our founders, and they remain the underpinnings of UNE COM today," Carreiro said. "UNE COM is emblematic of New England values and resources, and our commitment to supporting the mind, body, and spirit of our students, faculty, staff, and community is heartfelt."

"This sense of community, belonging, and support is one of our proudest achievements, and it is what makes UNE COM, UNE COM," she added.

DENTAL MEDICINE

Delta Dental grant helping to keep College of Dental Medicine graduates in Maine

This fall, Northeast Delta Dental renewed its commitment of \$300,000 to the Delta Dental Plan of Maine Loan Repayment program, which it established at UNE in 2016. To date, the program has funded twelve graduates of UNE's College of Dental Medicine who are now practicing in rural areas of the state.

The gift covers three students for loan repayment up to \$90,000 each. Recipients sign an initial two-year contract to practice in an underserved area and can elect to sign a second two-year contract at the conclusion of the first. Thirty-thousand dollars is reserved for scholarships for three other students completing their fourth-year rotation in a rural location.

Class of 2020 graduate Daniel Duarte, D.M.D., said that receiving loan repayments from the grant helped shape his decision to locate in an underserved area after he graduated.

"The salary is much lower here in a public health setting compared to private practice or even corporate dentistry," he stated. "So, this facilitated my path to want to serve a community that really needed it."

Tom Raffio, president and CEO of Northeast Delta Dental, notes that the company's loan repayment funding is achieving exactly what was intended when the program was launched.

"Our commitment to building a pipeline of dentists to underserved areas is bearing fruit. It is exciting and hopeful news that we are pleased to share," he stated.



Daniel Duarte, D.M.D.



MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

School of Marine and Environmental Programs eyes opportunities in Maine's growing aquaculture industry

In an op-ed published in the *Bangor Daily News* on Aug. 3, 2020, UNE President James Herbert championed Norway-based Nordic Aquafarms' intentions to construct a \$500 million, state-of-the-art, sustainable land-based salmon farm in Belfast, Maine, and discussed ways in which the project would benefit the University's students and researchers.

A proponent of the farm, Herbert encouraged UNE's marine scientists to testify as intervenors on behalf of Nordic Aquafarms during the company's permitting process.

"We were asked about the scientific validity of what they plan to do," explained Charles Tilburg, Ph.D., academic director of the School of Marine and Environmental Programs. "They needed expertise in water quality and recirculating agriculture systems. That is something that the University of New England could provide."

"Being a scientific advocate for aquaculture development is completely different than being an advocate for Nordic Aquafarms," stated Barry Costa-Pierce, Ph.D., Henry L. & Grace Doherty Professor of Ocean Food Systems and program coordinator of UNE's professional science master's program in Ocean Food Systems. "When we began as intervenors, we were obviously in support of the project overall, but there was scientific testimony we provided on the different value of recirculating aquaculture systems and land-based aquaculture in general, here and globally, that was neutral."

There's no question the project could be beneficial to the University, though, as students in the Marine Science program are learning about recirculating systems, water quality, and water chemistry.

"As academic director of the school of Marine and Environmental Programs, I am excited that this could provide internships and job opportunities for our students," Tilburg said. He added that collaboration with Nordic Aquafarms would support faculty and student research interests as well.



ARTS AND SCIENCES ⤴

Jeanne Hey discusses Supreme Court vacancy on WMTW

The death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg amplified the issue of how the high court could play a major role in Maine's closely watched U.S. Senate race between Susan Collins and Sara Gideon.

Maine voters have already indicated the Supreme Court is one of the top four issues determining how they would vote in the Senate race, according to a Quinnipiac University poll released in September.

Jeanne Hey, dean emerita of the College of Arts and Sciences and professor of political science, told WMTW that is largely due to Collins' vote to confirm Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh.

"The really challenging position is for Susan Collins," Hey said. "Much of her loss in popularity has actually been focused on the fact that she voted for Justice Kavanaugh, whom many of his critics say is going to undermine Roe v. Wade. This puts her in the spotlight."

"I don't expect, frankly, for this to change many people's minds," Hey told WMTW. "If it changes anything, it will be to motivate turnout, especially for Gideon voters who feel so strongly that Roe v. Wade not be overturned."

RESEARCH ⤴

UNE donates fit testing solution for N95 masks to Maine counties and Maine CDC

As more and more frontline workers across the world are being fitted with N95 masks, the saccharine solution used to test if the mask has been properly fitted to its wearer has been in short supply everywhere, and the state of Maine has been no exception.

In April, York County emergency management professionals contacted UNE President James Herbert to inquire if the University had any saccharine solution to spare. Eager to help, President Herbert reached out to Karen Houseknecht, Ph.D., associate provost for Research and Scholarship and professor of pharmacology, who then, in turn, called UNE Director of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Ron Souza.

With a new awareness of the shortage in the state of the fit testing solution, Houseknecht and Souza put their heads together to figure out a way to help. "That's when I said, 'We do chemistry. We can just make this stuff,'" said Houseknecht. She was eventually successful in placing an order of the reagent used to make the solution — an ultra-pure version of saccharin. Souza picked up the saccharin in Portland and brought it to the Biddeford Campus, where lab technician Deborah Barlow, a talented bioanalytical chemist, mixed, bottled, and labeled the solution. Houseknecht then distributed the final product.

News of UNE's donation to York County spread, and soon other Maine counties as well as the Maine CDC were asking UNE for help. Houseknecht and her team produced batch after batch of the solution — a task for which they were publicly thanked by Maine CDC Director Dr. Nirav Shah at a daily press briefing.

Houseknecht said she was happy to be able to provide assistance. "These are extraordinary times, and the need is huge apparently," she said. "We're just doing what we can ... We've got such a great community here, and everyone wants to help."

As of mid-September, Houseknecht's team had provided fit test solution to support approximately 35,000 fit tests. The trio remains prepared to supply more through fall and winter if needed.



HEALTH PROFESSIONS ⤴

Pharmacy student and faculty member make hand sanitizer

Sandra Schipelliti (Pharm.D., '22) and George Allen, Pharm.D., associate professor and chair of the Department of Pharmacy Practice, have been busy making hand sanitizer in the Hannaford Lab.

The hand sanitizer was distributed to students and families during campus tours this summer.

UNE's Office of Undergraduate Admissions reached out to the pharmacy program to see if compounding hand sanitizer would be possible.

"I did a lot of research on the rules for making it, and it turns out that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) released emergency guidance allowing people like us to compound hand sanitizer," Allen explained. "They provided a very simple recipe. For example, it doesn't have the moisturizing qualities that your typical product that you buy in the stores has. It is much simpler."

Allen and Schipelliti planned to supply the Admissions Office with 50, two-ounce bottles of sanitizer per week.

"Since my background is in infectious diseases, it made sense on a personal level to help," Allen commented. "I'm passionate about infectious diseases and trying to control them. Sandra is a member of a student organization called the Infectious Diseases Association. She's been a leader in that group, so it made sense to ask her to help me."

HEALTH PROFESSIONS ⤴

UNE panel of national experts addresses health care disparities for Black, LGBTQ+ individuals

People's race, sexual orientation, income, and social standing are all factors in their access to medical care and the quality of the care they receive. For Black individuals and members of the LGBT community, these social determinants of health are often the source of inequities that can lead to substandard care.

These disparities and underlying structural inequalities were recently explored in an Aug. 6 panel discussion facilitated by Jennifer Audette, PT, Ph.D., program director and professor of Physical Therapy.

The virtual panel discussion, "Social Determinants of Health and the Intersections of BLM/LGBTQA," aimed to address the disparities faced by Black and LGBT individuals in light of both the COVID-19 pandemic and rising Black Lives Matter movement. The event was streamed to more than 75 students, faculty, and staff, and audience members were invited to participate in the discussion.

The panel was offered by UNE's Center for Excellence in Collaborative Education in partnership with UNE's Planetary Health Council. Participating in the discussion were panelists from Regis University, University of Texas at El Paso, University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM), and UNE alum Negeri Clarke, Pharm.D. '20.

Audette said the intention of the panel was to educate students, as future health providers, on ways to dispel stereotypes about minority groups with the goal of improving health outcomes. The event also served to educate attendees about the differences in health care access between privileged and underserved groups of people.

"We hope people left the session with a better sense of how structures that are in place in our society make matters worse for some people and how, on a personal level, we can break down those systemic walls that exist for minority groups," Audette said.



THROWN INTO THE FLAMES OF COVID-19, UNE COM CLASS OF 2020 ADVANCES ONWARD. VIRTUALLY.

by Alan Bennett

"We are the class minted by the greatest pandemic the world has seen in a century. I cannot think of a more fitting time to graduate into the medical profession," Lauren Ferguson, D.O. '20, said confidently at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine's Commencement ceremony in May.

The ceremony was different than in years past. For one thing, the student Commencement address is usually presented to a packed concert hall at Merrill Auditorium in Portland. But this year, few people heard Ferguson's words in person.

Instead, Ferguson, president of the UNE COM Class of 2020, spoke into a camera lens, her speech recorded in advance of the ceremony's airing. The crowd of friends and family members normally in attendance was



David Shbeeb, D.O. '20, remotely celebrates his graduation from UNE COM with his family.

replaced by a select few University administrators, COM faculty and staff, and videographers from the Office of Communications. The champagne was poured at home, rather than in busy downtown restaurants.

It was the first virtual graduation ceremony in the college's 40-year history, held in wake of the novel coronavirus pandemic, which, in March, resulted in the suspension of UNE's on-campus activities. When, in May, cases of COVID-19 soared in southern Maine, it became evident that there was no other choice: Commencement had to be held online.

But how?

"Keeping the spirit of a conventional Commencement ceremony was pretty paramount because we still wanted to make sure these folks had a special experience," said Vin Buonocore, M.Ed., assistant dean of Recruitment, Student, and Alumni Services for UNE COM. "We already live in a digital world, and we were entering a new version of that. We were willing to experiment to create a program that would be as close to what our graduates would experience, in person, at Merrill Auditorium."

The decision was made to host Commencement using a combination of pre-recorded video and live streaming through the video conferencing service Zoom, which became an incredibly familiar tool for all members of the University community since UNE's transition to online learning.

"We already live in a digital world, and we were entering a new version of that. We were willing to experiment to create a program that would be as close to what our graduates would experience, in person, at Merrill Auditorium."

— Vin Buonocore

Following additional addresses — during which the graduates were reminded of their roles as medical professionals amidst the backdrop of a global virus outbreak — the graduates' names were read off as they appeared one-by-one on the screen. Donning their regalia as if nothing

were out of the ordinary, most of the physicians-to-be were surrounded by their families. Some were hooded by their parents, some by their children, and some by their siblings. Others held their babies; their partners stood at their sides. Pets even took starring roles, with some dressed for the occasion.

Many graduates toasted with the aforementioned champagne, served in a custom UNE COM flute, celebrating a long four years of dedicated work to answer the call of medicine. People hugged, they laughed, and they shed tears of joy. All smiled as they recited the Osteopathic Oath, certifying their path onward to residency.

"This was the first time that family could really be a part of a ceremony ... You could just feel the smiles and excitement and how proud the parents were."

— Marly Solebello

"I think we were all kind of pleasantly surprised with just how personal this was," said Buonocore. "It was as special, or maybe even more special, than what has typically happened in the past. It was really worth the extra stress of planning to make this happen."

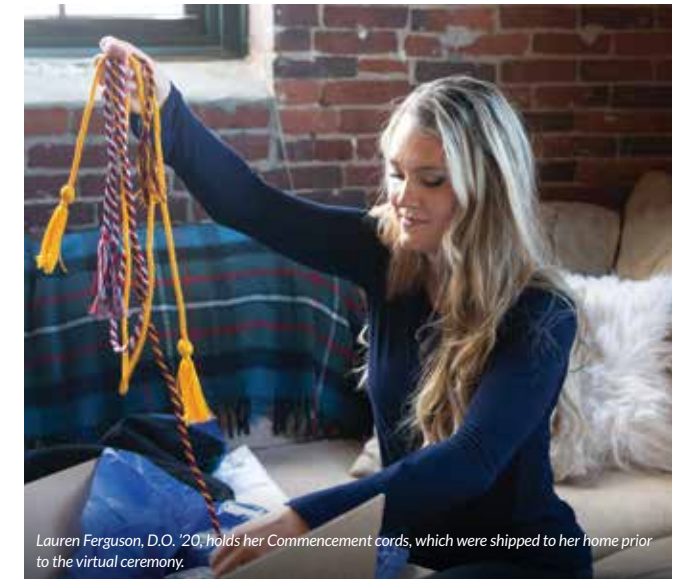
The participation of family made this year's ceremony all the more special, said Marly Solebello, M.Ed., coordinator of Alumni Services and Event Planning for UNE COM.

"This was the first time that family could really be a part of a ceremony. Typically, they take a passive role in just viewing Commencement in the audience. But this year, they took a more active role," said Solebello. "You could just feel the smiles and excitement and how proud the parents were."

Commencement was not UNE COM's first foray into digital contingency planning, but it was their first to combine pre-recorded material with live components.



David Shbeeb watches the 2020 COM Commencement ceremony from home.



Lauren Ferguson, D.O. '20, holds her Commencement cords, which were shipped to her home prior to the virtual ceremony.

In March, the college held its first virtual Match Day ceremony, an annual event that marks the date when students learn where they will be completing their medical residencies. It is a highly competitive process as students vie for a limited number of resident programs — against students at other schools — across the country.

Rather than collectively celebrating their matches at the Danielle N. Ripich Commons in Biddeford, the soon-to-be graduates viewed a pre-recorded series of speeches on Facebook Live and were encouraged to share their joy in the comments. Eliza Foster, D.O. '20, said at the time that the ceremony spoke to the resiliency of medical professionals and the college's ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances.

"I believe we have been prepared to play our role in the bigger picture, whatever that may be," said Foster, who matched to a residency at Central Maine Medical Center in Lewiston. "Our medical experiences, ability to adapt to change, and determination to come out on the other side more prepared and knowledgeable will serve us well as we start our medical careers in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic."

Supporting Foster's claim are the UNE COM 2020 match rates for residencies — this year, more than 95% of UNE students were chosen for hospital stints, a rate higher than the national averages for allopathic and other osteopathic medical schools. In total, 164 UNE COM students matched to residencies in 16 specialties across 27 states, including programs in family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics.

The Match Day ceremony was a success, but it lacked the camaraderie of years past. Buonocore said he wanted to change that for Commencement. For him, it was also a sentimental ceremony — the Class of 2020 was the first he came to know upon his arrival at UNE in 2017.

"It was important to me that we do something special and that the students knew we were working hard to provide the best possible experience. They worked the majority of their lives to become doctors; we had to do something to recognize that," Buonocore said. "We knew Zoom could work, and it was worth a possible malfunction to give each student the chance to be in the limelight for one single moment."

The first of seven total virtual Commencement ceremonies, UNE COM's graduation served as a model for the University's other colleges, which held their graduations about a month later in mid-June.

“Our medical experiences, ability to adapt to change, and determination to come out on the other side more prepared and knowledgeable will serve us well as we start our medical careers in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic.” — Eliza Foster

“It was nice to serve as a resource for others. We at UNE COM are definitely a group who likes to try new things and experiment with technology. This was an opportunity to try something new with one of those events we typically don't get to play around with,” Solebello said. “I think that really speaks to the way we try to collaborate and develop ways to support our students and make things really special for them while they're here.”

“Our primary focus was how to make this ceremony memorable, something our students could be proud of,” she added. “I think we did that.”

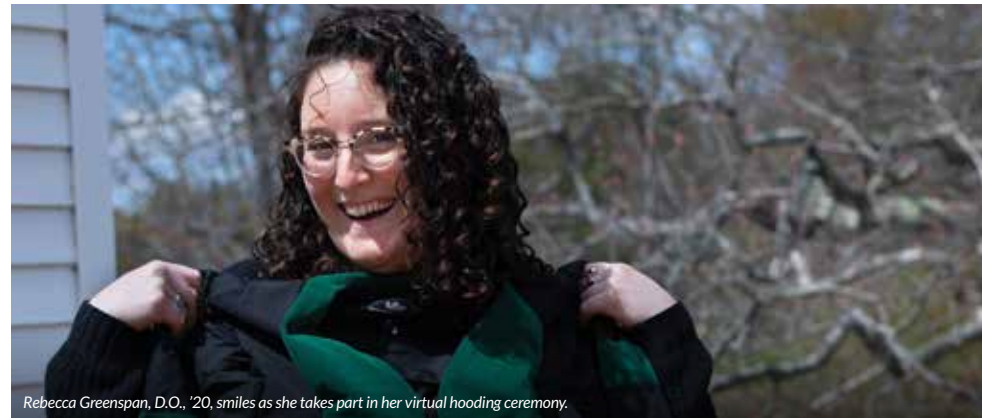
Reached by phone after the event, Ferguson, originally of Huntington Beach, California, said she was at first disappointed to learn that Commencement would be held virtually but was also relieved to know the necessary precautions were being put in place to keep students safe.

“It was disappointing mainly just because I wasn't able to reunite with my classmates, and we haven't seen each other in a while since we left campus for clinical rotations,” she said. “But it was really heartwarming to see them all on Zoom. Do I still wish we could have all been there in person? Of course. But it still felt like I was sharing something with them, and I thought that was pretty special.”

Ferguson, a captain in the U.S. Air Force, was matched to a family medicine residency at the National Capitol Consortium, a military residency program, and started in June. She credited UNE COM for providing her and her classmates an education that could train them to meet the needs of today — which are significant.

“We graduated a great group of people with wonderful personalities and incredible motivation,” she said. “As we walk into the fire of this pandemic and face challenges our predecessors never could have envisioned, I hope we never lose sight of our osteopathic roots.” ■

For additional content and bonus features, be sure to visit us online: une.edu/magazine.



Rebecca Greenspan, D.O., '20, smiles as she takes part in her virtual hooding ceremony.



David Shbeeb poses with son.



Pat Kelley, associate dean of Recruitment, Student, and Alumni Affairs



Jane Carreiro, D.O., vice president for Health Affairs and dean of UNE COM, listens to Commencement remarks as they are recorded.



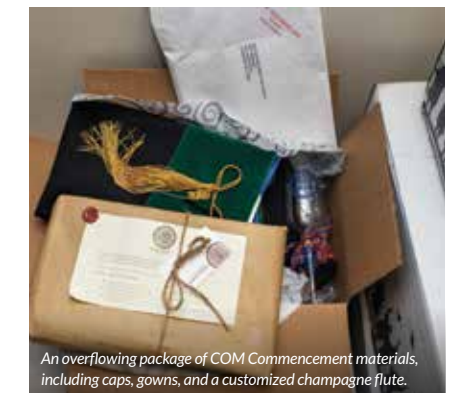
Lauren Ferguson reads through the 2020 UNE COM Commencement program.



UNE President James D. Herbert, Ph.D., addresses graduates in taped remarks ahead of the COM Commencement.



A team of telecommunications professionals works to record virtual remarks from Dean Carreiro and others.



An overflowing package of COM Commencement materials, including caps, gowns, and a customized champagne flute.



Photo courtesy of Bradford Trone

A NEXUS FOR INTERACTION

by Will Wood

Will Wood is a senior at UNE graduating May 2021 with a medical biology/premedical major and a minor in health, law and policy. He serves as the student representative from the College of Arts and Sciences on the University Committee for Community, Equity, and Diversity.

It began with George Floyd's murder; or, more aptly, it resurfaced, in that moment. As a Black male I am keenly aware that the duration of my life is inexorably linked, ebbing and flowing, in relation to my proximity to and interaction with law enforcement.

Sad, yet true.

I and all Black folk are reminded once again that our lives have substantially less value than our White counterparts. My reaction to these moments is to turn inward, assess how I feel, find support in loved ones and dear friends who look like me, who understand the gravity of these moments and their sustained impact. This instinct was inhibited with the COVID-19 pandemic in full swing. I was in quarantine at the home of dear friends, filling my days oscillating between quality time with my nine-year-old son, studying for the upcoming MCAT [Medical College Admission Test] exam, and putting the finishing touches on applications for medical school.

“As a Black male I am keenly aware that the duration of my life is inexorably linked, ebbing and flowing, in relation to my proximity to and interaction with law enforcement.”

At this moment, perhaps for the first time, I consciously realized that the majority of the people who currently compose my inner circle are White folks. The Black folk whose presence, understanding, and reassurance I was craving were tucked away in their respective pandemic environments, depriving me in this moment of fulfilling my craving. After many days of unease at this realization, coupled with conversation with White folk that I was no longer interested in having, I began to cultivate and carve out more space for the Black relationships in my life.

In an effort to give this action further context, I'll share that my parents were unable to overcome the circumstances of distance that often accompany military families, resulting in my mother, a 21-year-old

white female with a Black infant son, moving from Kentucky back to her hometown in Minnesota. This move solidified my coming of age in a largely homogenous environment, so much so that to this day seeing other Black folk fills me with childlike excitement. It also gave me the opportunity to hone my ability of navigating White spaces with the ease and precision of a professionally trained cellist playing Chopin's Nocturne.

Until recently I hadn't given much thought to how I modulate my behavior, tone of voice, and body language based on the visible cues when inhabiting largely White spaces. I have since become hyper-aware of all the micro-adjustments I am having to continuously make. These unconscious (and now conscious) insights, coupled with the murder of George Floyd and my response to the University's statement on the racial tension, led me into a conversation with UNE's Director of Intercultural Student Engagement that resulted in the inception of Brothers of Color and my nomination and selection to the University Committee for Community, Equity, and Diversity as student representative from the College of Arts and Sciences.

Brothers of Color is a new UNE student organization that aims to provide a safe space for males of color to gather, build a community, and establish a sense of solidarity with one another. As of this writing [early September], we have had the opportunity to meet a few times over Zoom to discuss the current events of the summer, our individual takes on what it means to be a person of color in this time of prolonged racial tension, and our personal aims for what we hope Brothers of Color can achieve.

We have been able to share our collective frustration at the continual inequities and inequalities that we experience on and off campus. Listening to my fellow students share their learned experiences of maneuvering through White spaces, having racially charged conversations with close White friends while explaining why what's happening is not okay — these conversations are a confirmation of sorts that UNE needs a place for young males of color to coalesce.

“Until recently I hadn't given much thought to how I modulate my behavior, tone of voice, and body language based on the visible cues when inhabiting largely White spaces.”

Students of color are an underrepresented population at UNE, and male students are an even smaller fraction of that population. The Black Student Union and United have been able to garner more interest from the female students of color, leaving males of color to socialize with teammates or classmates but with no nexus of interaction.

On a personal note, my hope is that in Brothers of Color we are creating a space for melanated males in which we all share a common

“Brothers of Color is a new UNE student organization that aims to provide a safe space for males of color to gather, build a community, and establish a sense of solidarity with one another.”

understanding and acknowledge what it means to traverse a White landscape daily. This shared understanding will enable us to set aside the modulation of behavior, tone, and body language and revel in one another's company. To cut up and get down. To laugh, to be ridiculous in an environment where that behavior won't be misinterpreted as aggression. To have a sense of fraternity and freedom. ■



Wood, a certified roller, is shown here in the office he uses to see clients. Photo courtesy of Zippy Guerin.

THEN & NOW



This black and white photograph taken at Westbrook Seminary in the 1930s shows two students on the steps of Hersey Hall and two automobiles parked in the curve of the campus green. Also visible is the single-story dining room that connected Hersey to Goddard Hall from 1869 to the 1960s. During the junior college years, formal dinners were held for the students and faculty from Monday through Thursday. A faculty member at the head of each table would introduce a pre-selected topic for discussion during the meal.

"Goddard Hall and Hersey Hall, Westbrook Seminary. ca.1930s" (ca.1930s). University of New England, Westbrook College History Collection. https://dune.une.edu/wchc_photos_goddard/4/



UNE ONWARD ▶

A Community Responds to the COVID Crisis.

▶ IT'S NO SECRET THAT HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE U.S. RECEIVED A MASSIVE WALLOP AS THE CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK CRASHED DOWN ON THE COUNTRY LIKE A TIDAL WAVE, TOSSING THOUSANDS OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES INTO CHAOS AND LEAVING AN ESTIMATED 25+ MILLION AMERICAN STUDENTS FEELING LOST AT SEA.

TO COLLEGE STUDENTS, THEIR PARENTS, AND THOSE WHO WORK IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER ED, IT SOON BECAME CLEAR THAT COVID-19 HAS RADICALLY AFFECTED EVERY FACET OF COLLEGE LIFE: FROM ACADEMICS TO ATHLETICS, FROM FACILITIES TO ENROLLMENT, FROM STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMMING TO RESIDENTIAL STUDENT LIFE.



EXACERBATING THE SITUATION IS THE FACT THAT RAPIDLY CLOSING CAMPUSES AND SWIFTLY TRANSITIONING TO ONLINE INSTRUCTION — THE ONLY VIABLE COURSE OF ACTION LAST SPRING FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES FACING THE PANDEMIC — LED TO HEIGHTENED UNCERTAINTIES ABOUT PEDAGOGICAL EFFECTIVENESS AND UNAVOIDABLE QUESTIONS ABOUT COST VERSUS VALUE. PUNDITS BEGAN PONDERING IF THE MOVE TO REMOTE LEARNING WOULD HAVE LASTING EFFECTS ON THE HIGHER-ED LANDSCAPE, RAISING QUESTIONS IN THE PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS: WILL TRADITIONAL CLASSROOMS, AS WE'VE KNOWN THEM FOR CENTURIES, GO THE WAY OF INK POTS AND CIPHERING SLATES? WILL THE COLLEGE EXPERIENCE BE FOREVER CHANGED?

THE JURY IS STILL OUT. HOWEVER, IF UNE SERVES AS ANY KIND OF INDICATOR, THERE ARE, INDEED, WAYS FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER ED TO SURVIVE THE PANDEMIC, REAFFIRM THE VALUE OF FACE-TO-FACE EDUCATION, AND PERHAPS EVEN EMERGE FROM THE TURMOIL STRONGER THAN BEFORE.

IT IS A HARSH TRUTH THAT SOME INSTITUTIONS ARE BETTER POSITIONED TO PULL THROUGH CRISES THAN OTHERS. FORTUNATELY FOR UNE, THE UNIVERSITY POSSESSES A NUMBER OF ATTRIBUTES THAT HAVE HELPED OUR COMMUNITY WEATHER THE COVID STORM.

UNE is lucky to be located in a state with a relatively low population density and fortunate that Maine leadership demonstrated responsibility and took decisive action early on in the outbreak. But UNE's ability to ride through the rough waters of the pandemic has as much to do with its nimble and innovative spirit as its locale in northern New England. (Or perhaps it is in part *because* of its New England roots that it possesses the "Yankee ingenuity" needed to keep it afloat.) No matter the relationship, though, UNE and its predecessor institutions have a history of adaptability that has carried the University through tough times in the past. As President James Herbert wrote in an April 14 address to the UNE Community at the height of fear and uncertainty, "Our institution is known for being innovative, scrappy, agile, and nimble, and these qualities will continue to serve us well during whatever transition period lies between now and our return to something more closely resembling our normal way of life."

Where we are now is not our "normal" way of life by any stretch, but it is "more closely resembling" normal if compared to mid-April when we were a month into barren campuses and three weeks deep into online instruction. So how did we get from there to here? In what ways did we put our scrappiness and agility to use?

“Our institution is known for being innovative, scrappy, agile, and nimble, and these qualities will continue to serve us well during whatever transition period lies between now and our return to something more closely resembling our normal way of life.”

— James Herbert

As early as late January, UNE representatives were in contact with the Maine CDC, County Emergency Management Agency directors, and regional Emergency Medical Services directors about the outbreak. By February, the University had convened a Coronavirus Response Team, which was meeting regularly to keep abreast of the situation and its potential impact on the University community, including our students abroad.

The meetings soon became a daily event, often lasting for hours and resulting in work that was carried on well into the night. Every decision that was made by the administration, every piece of correspondence that the UNE community received, reflected hours of tough deliberation, examination of data, and consultation with experts.

"It was a very, very intense time. We were monitoring everything from the national news to various networks that members of the team had," explains Herbert. "I was talking with other university presidents and monitoring what they were doing; our medical folks were following emerging news on that end and consulting with our own infectious disease experts. It was this sort of brain trust, and everyone would come together in these meetings to share information and try to make the most informed decisions based on the limited information that we had at the time."

And no decision conjured more robust discussion — or was more difficult to make — than the one ultimately delivered on March 13 — the decision to move nearly all undergraduate and the majority of graduate programming online, to close the residence halls, and to recall our students abroad in Europe.

"It was excruciating," recalls Herbert, "because I knew that when we made the decision, it was going to have a ripple effect, and it was going to affect so many people in so many ways. It weighed heavily on me. I didn't make it without deep consultation with the team nor without thinking through the consequences. But when push came to shove, the health and safety of our community had to be the top priority."

UNE Medical Director of Student Health Services Paul Berkner, D.O., recalls the intensity of the COVID Response Team meeting that day. "The situation with this virus was changing at lightning speed, and President Herbert had to make a decision about sending residential students home. And kudos to him for having the ability to listen and to really lead and being able to change course when it was necessary."

And thus the test of adaptability began.

▶ SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT

Each unit within the University immediately sprung into its own set of actions, doing whatever was needed to batten down the hatches. "It wasn't as though we made the decision, and then it was just a one and done deal," says Herbert. "There were countless other decisions that had to be made as a result and countless procedures, protocols, and



policies that we had to think through and implement.” The most immediate concerns fell on the laps of Student Affairs, Information Technology Services (ITS), the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), and the UNE faculty.

Jen Deburro, M.Ed., dean of students and assistant provost for Student Affairs, and her team took command of the monumental task of overseeing the unexpected move-out of 1,300+ residential students within a two-week period. The logistics alone were overwhelming: appeals to stay on campus for extenuating circumstances needed vetting, last-minute storage issues needed solving, housing and dining refund policies needed drafting. But there was the emotional state of the students to be concerned with as well. Some were confused, some sorrowful, and some anxious.

“As sad as the process of moving out was, it was probably the time when Student Affairs staff had the greatest impact as we were talking to and consoling students and, in some cases, their families when they came to campus to retrieve their items,” Deburro says. “We assured them that we’d all still be here for them, that we’d stay connected and offer programs and support.”

Meanwhile, ITS and CETL professional staff members were consumed with their charge: to provide the resources required by faculty members to move almost all courses to online platforms within a nine-day period. With Marc Ebenfeld, director of CETL, and Craig Loftus, chief information officer in ITS, at the helm, existing resources and programming were reviewed with faculty, additional resources were acquired, drop-in training sessions were offered, and faculty workshops on the structure and pedagogical aspects of distance learning were created, scheduled, and administered. “We knew that we had a very short time to get

resources into the hands of faculty members in order to help them move quickly to remote instruction,” says Ebenfeld. “Key members of ITS and CETL started collaborating immediately, and, by working from early morning to late at night, we created a soup-to-nuts 52-page online resource guide, mostly constructed in the first three days.”

Ebenfeld remarks that the teams’ efforts were “well received,” but such a comment is undoubtedly an understatement. With over 500 unique visitors in the first month alone, the resource was a lifeline to faculty members, who accessed the site more than 10,000 times. Moreover, faculty and professional staff attended the workshops and online drop-in sessions for a total of more than 100 hours.

“The faculty and professional staff in the academic units really picked up the ball and ran with it,” Herbert states proudly. “They spent the week of spring break preparing for the transition from traditional face-to-face instruction to remote teaching and learning, and they did an amazing job, and they did it without complaining or questioning the necessity of it. They had to be very creative and worked very hard to make that transition quickly, and I’m incredibly thankful for them.”

The Office of Admissions had some quick thinking to do as well, enhancing its virtual offerings, including its Accepted Students Day events, and Human Resources went full speed ahead to develop telework/flexwork policies to enable as many employees as possible to work from home and to create safety protocols for those who couldn’t.

Global Education raced against deadlines of border-closings to arrange stateside travel for our study-abroad students, eventually recalling all travelling students out of abundance of caution. Vice President for Global Affairs Anouar Majid, Ph.D., recounts the urgency of the situation.

“While we reacted instantly to President Trump’s unexpected ban on travel from Europe and brought our students in Spain and Iceland safely home, we thought we could carry on in Morocco because we have our own campus there, and the situation was different,” he explains. “But when Morocco closed its airspace, we had to operate like a commando team, strategizing about ways to extricate our students while thousands of people were left stranded for weeks and months.”

Student Affairs, after its all-hands-on-deck effort to assist in the swift move-out of residential students, immediately pivoted to its new roles of helping students deal with the unexpected circumstances in which they found themselves, assisting in the navigation of online learning, aiding students in coping with the loss of on-campus experiences, and finding new ways to foster a sense of togetherness and community despite separation by physical distance. (Virtual BINGO, anyone?).

It wasn’t just the employees who jumped into the deep end of UNE’s “new normal” to learn how to swim. “Our students really handled this with incredible grace and resilience,” notes Herbert. “They themselves transitioned to this new format largely without complaint and understood why they needed to do this. And they were resilient, surprisingly resilient, in making that transition.”

▶ COMING UP FOR AIR

It was a lot to handle in the space of one month, but handle it UNE did. On April 14, President Herbert announced that it was time for the University to step back and take stock of where we were. He convened an ad hoc Committee on Contingency Planning for academic year 2020-21, tasking members with determining how the University could best fulfill its educational mission under various scenarios — namely, if resumption of on-campus operations in fall would or would not be possible, depending on the containment of the virus.

While he gave committee members a May 31 deadline to make recommendations, it did not take them that long to reach their conclusion: for students enrolled in on-campus programs, the UNE mission could not be fully enacted without critical face-to-face interaction. UNE would resume on-campus operations in the fall.

In a May 4 email to the UNE community, Herbert announced the decision. Looking back, he explains his reasoning. Firstly, he says, hands-on learning, a critical feature of the University’s on-campus programs, simply cannot be duplicated electronically. “When we’re talking about the traditional college experience, there’s so much of it that cannot be replicated online,” he states. “In terms of our academic programs, we’ve worked really hard at UNE to build the bridge between the classroom and experiential components. If you subtract that from the equation, you’re missing a huge piece of the academic experience.”

Secondly, he says, there is no equivalent replacement for the co-curricular activities and the sense of community from which on-campus students benefit. “The UNE experience involves much more than just pure academics per se,” he clarifies. “This is a community where we work really hard to help students grow into responsible and informed citizens,

and much of that work requires interaction among students and between the students and our faculty and staff.”

Herbert also cites UNE’s responsibility as the largest provider of health care professionals in the state and the region as a reason for making the bold move in early May to declare the University open for fall — and to go one step further by opening the University’s doors to health professions students reporting for summer sessions. Particularly in the midst of a pandemic, it was, in his mind, imperative that UNE keep its health professions students on track to graduate and to enter the workforce as scheduled. “Maine has the nation’s oldest doctors, meaning many of them are getting ready to retire. We also have large swaths of the state in rural areas that have insufficient health care providers to meet the needs of

“This is a community where we work really hard to help students grow into responsible and informed citizens, and much of that work requires interaction among students and between the students and our faculty and staff.”

— James Herbert

those communities,” he notes. “With the pandemic only intensifying and making clearer the health care discrepancies among various vulnerable populations, it felt to me to be irresponsible to not do everything we could to continue providing health care professionals to the state.”

And finally, Herbert says, making the decision relatively early on to resume normal operations in the fall was an important step in turning that decision into a reality by giving the University community a concrete goal to work toward and sufficient time in which to achieve it. “I knew that if we wanted to be as absolutely safe as possible in the summer for the return of the graduate health professions students and in the fall for the return of the undergraduates, we had to give ourselves as much time as possible; we had to declare, ‘We’re going to do this,’” Herbert states.

“We weren’t sure of exactly how this was all going to work out, but we were sufficiently confident that we were going to be able to do it and do it safely, so I said, ‘Let’s plant a flag and rally everyone to work as hard as possible toward this goal.’”

Herbert believes the bold step was exactly what was needed. “Had we waited — and many institutions did wait — every day that we waited to make that announcement would be a day that would be lost in terms of planning and would mean that we would be just a little less



prepared, a little less safe when we eventually did resume operations," he speculates, "and so I'm actually really proud that we made the decision early and that we committed ourselves fully and unambiguously toward making it happen, as safely as possible."

▶ TESTING NEW WATERS

With the decision made, and the arrival of health professions students only seven weeks away, a large responsibility fell to the individual health professions programs that were offering summer sessions. Deans drafted and adopted strict procedures regarding social distancing and the use, reuse, and disposal of personal protective equipment (PPE), including masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves in various clinical and laboratory settings. Moreover, they created class schedules that kept as low as possible the number of students on campus and in any one building at any given time. They also grouped students into small and consistent cohorts in order to help reduce the chance of cross contamination and to allow for easier contact tracing should a student contract the virus.

"So much of what we teach these [health professions] students has to do with hands-on skill development. It was just critical to get them back in the lab where they can practice with authentic equipment and work with the simulators," explains Dean of the Westbrook College of Health Professions Karen Pardue. "If they don't have these opportunities to develop their clinical skills, we can't keep them moving on safely and successfully to degree completion. And of course, that's our goal."

With a handful of health professions programs up and running, a Phase I Return to Work Plan launched by Human Resources, and the start of a three-step phased re-opening plan for resuming research operations underway, UNE began the summer-long process of experience gathering. A dry-run of sorts, the summer session gave University administrators, faculty, and professional staff a look at what was working and what work was left to be done to prepare for an *en masse* return to campus and resumption of residential life in the fall.

One thing that quickly became apparent during the summer months was the students' relief to be back and the extent to which they missed the



hands-on component of their education. As Luke Shaner, member of the College of Dental Medicine's Class of '23 put it, "Online learning doesn't compare to going into class and interacting with people and the professors." He describes the hands-on learning aspect of his program as "extremely vital," noting that the amount of experiential learning "is something that's really special about UNE." Classmate William Sorokolit applauds the faculty for a surprisingly smooth transition to online learning but agrees that something major was lacking during the second half of the 2020 spring semester. "Hands-on learning was one thing that, coming in, the school promised and really pushed for. So, I'm happy they got us back in as quickly as they did," he shares.

And it wasn't just faculty interaction and the in-class instruction to which the students were grateful to return. Many summer session

"Online learning doesn't compare to going into class and interacting with people and the professors."

— Luke Shaner

students mention that learning without their fellow classmates had been a challenge during the remote instruction period. "While back home doing online, I missed getting to study with my peers," says Elizabeth Fuller, a Class of '22 student in the Master of Science in Athletic Training program. "I'm someone who needs to bounce ideas off of other people, so getting to talk to them in person and work things out together again is huge."

"We are a huge support system for one another," explains second-year physical therapy student Kaline Mulvihill. "Having the opportunity to be back with them and to have that support is extremely necessary."

▶ DIVING BACK IN

Throughout the summer, UNE worked diligently to expand on a state-wide framework for opening Maine's higher education institutions — a framework informed by resources including the federal and state CDC, the WHO, the Office of the Governor, OSHA, developing science on COVID-19, and emerging best practices in higher education. Thus, was born the UNE Onward plan, issued on July 10.

A living document, UNE Onward serves as a blueprint for University operations and can be modified as needed in response to changing circumstances surrounding the coronavirus. "I made it very clear from the beginning that this is a malleable document," says Herbert of the plan. "It is not etched in stone, and it will continue to evolve."

When released, UNE Onward called for a modified academic calendar, a hybrid instruction model for fall 2020's undergraduate courses that blends face-to-face and asynchronous online learning experiences, a



four-tiered testing program, modified residential housing policies, and a robust on-campus public health awareness campaign. It also made necessary a variety of adaptations to campus that required what Herbert calls "heroic efforts" from the entire Facilities Department: the relocation and expansion of the student health centers, the designation of East Hall on the Biddeford Campus as quarantine space for infected students, and a myriad of risk mitigation measures, including increasing air flow in buildings, installing special filters in air circulation systems, and moving furniture to allow for social distancing in dorm rooms, classrooms, common spaces, and dining halls. Based on the UNE Onward plan, all members of and entities within the UNE community — from faculty to Facilities, from Health Services to Housekeeping — trimmed their sails for the next leg of the University's journey.

▶ EMERGING FROM THE DEPTHS

On August 26, as the result of the can-do attitude of highly dedicated administrators, faculty, and professional staff, UNE successfully opened its doors to the full student population, welcoming undergraduate and graduate students, commuters and residential students, health professions and non-health professions students alike with the spirit of resiliency that UNE has demonstrated through the ages.

With students required to have taken a COVID-19 test within 72 hours of their arrival on campus and a second test required of them immediately upon entering campus, the first days of the fall semester saw a lot of breath holding as results came in. They also saw a lot of relief, as students reunited, albeit at a distance, with fellow students, faculty, and staff.

And with that relief has come a renewed sense of appreciation for being part of a genuinely caring community. "I feel very lucky as a college student to be here because most college students around the country are facing the issue of not being allowed to come back, or they've already been sent home," remarks Emily Williams, a junior psychology major and education minor.

"It makes me appreciate how UNE is such a tight-knit community," comments, Michaela Super '21, a psychology major with a double minor in mental health rehabilitation and education, "and I think it really shows

Nicole Trufant
Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration

When the rainy day came, UNE was better prepared to weather the storm than many comparable schools. Nicole Trufant talks about the behind-the-scenes financial stewardship that allowed UNE to pivot relatively painlessly into the new "normal."

As we entered into the pandemic, we were well positioned financially because the University has done financial strategic planning since 2016 so that we would be prepared for unforeseen circumstances as they come down the road. We've always had a conservative approach to budgeting and to financial planning. As a tuition-driven institution, it's important that we have reserves on hand so that we can adjust and pivot as needed.

If there isn't full transparency between the president and the chief financial, if there isn't trust, it won't work — the University won't move forward. When President Herbert came on board, he understood the financial strategic plan right away. He embraced it. So, we partnered on that from day one, and without his commitment to it and without our partnership, it wouldn't work.

What was important to me and to the finance staff was that, given the reserves that we had built because of our conservative budgeting approach, we wanted to take on the burden and the responsibility of absorbing the additional costs and revenue losses and doing that modeling behind the scenes, while allowing faculty and administration to do the quick pivoting that they needed to do. And then, to start the planning process to reopen campus, without them carrying the burden of doing deep cuts, with layoffs and significant reductions to their budgets, that a lot of other schools have experienced.

I remain highly optimistic. UNE's always been the little school that could in the woods of Maine. It's an opportunity for us to look at things in a different way, and I think we can come out stronger.





Josh Hamilton
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

For fall 2020, virtually all of our academic programs were reconceived to meet new safety standards, and a hybrid online/in-person teaching model was adopted for all undergraduate courses. It took a Herculean team effort to transform UNE's pedagogical practice without sacrificing academic rigor or student experience. Josh Hamilton tells us how it was done.

A lot of universities and colleges talk about being student-centric, but we really take that very seriously. And all of our planning was through the lens of "how will this affect our students?" We're fundamentally a face-to-face university with a strong emphasis on experiential learning.

We decided to take a single model and have all of the faculty follow that model. And that's the hybrid model, where students split both classroom time and remote self-directed learning in the same class. Data has already shown us across the U.S. that at the undergraduate level, the hybrid platform is not only the most popular format for undergrads — it's arguably the most successful.

We also had to reduce our classroom size by 40%, so in the hybrid model, when students take a class, there'll be cohort A and cohort B, where we split them in half. This allows us to use all of our faculty and all of our classrooms efficiently, but have everybody following essentially the same format.

So, the scheduling group, for example, was the registrar, student life, my office, faculty representatives, deans office representatives, all working together to build the fall schedule in a way we had never done before. And there's no best practices because the whole world is going through this for the first time.

It's early days, but the faculty and the students have adjusted remarkably well to this new format. I think UNE is going to emerge as a real leader in this. I think we made wise decisions. We moved quickly. Everybody was pulling in the same direction. And because of that, we have a really clear unified model for our students that I think will be a hallmark of how to have gotten this done, in this time of COVID.

in how all the students are taking everything so seriously." Noting that campus is not as boisterous as usual this fall, she adds, "That's one reason why campus is quiet — because we don't want to go home. We want to stay, so I think it's really nice that with being back on campus, you can see how seriously everything is being taken. I really appreciate that from my peers."

Mitchell Becker, a senior majoring in medical biology and minoring in nutrition, agrees. "I realized this semester that I really took for granted

"You can't replace seeing your professor in person and having that face-to-face communication. Nothing beats in-person."

— Emily Williams

the community that I had, because when I went back home, it was really tough," he shares. "The sense of community and of always being in contact with your friends and being able to talk to classmates about homework between classes is really nice, and I just felt such a disconnect from the social part of college when I went home. I definitely don't take that for granted anymore."

Super, who works as a student tour guide at UNE and who sits on the Academic Affairs Committee of Undergraduate Student Government,



▶ **"I definitely don't take [community] for granted anymore."**
— Mitchell Becker



is grateful to be back, in part, because she believes the social and cultural components of campus life have profound effects on students' personal growth during their college years — growth that would likely not result from a purely online learning experience. "If, in my senior year of high school, I had picked an online program to get a degree, I really don't think I would have gained so much independence and confidence and have a whole new personality with being a tour guide and sitting on USC," she explains. "I feel like it would cut short a lot of the growth people experience in college if everybody went 100% online."

"I would rather be back in person than be in my bedroom in Connecticut any day of the week," she adds with a chuckle.

For Williams, there are clear academic advantages to being back on-campus too. While she, like the overwhelming majority of students, gives enormous credit to faculty members for quickly pivoting to remote teaching in the spring, she is happy to have "real world" instruction again. "You can't replace seeing your professor in person and having that face-to-face communication. Nothing beats in-person," she declares.

Becker agrees, and while he says that the teleconferencing tool Zoom made online learning more tolerable, he benefits more from his classes now that contact with others has been extended beyond the virtual. "Zoom helps a little bit in that you can see the other person's face, but for me, it really helps that I can be in the same room as them, even if I can't completely see their face because we have masks on," he states. "Just being in the same room helps to get rid of that barrier."

Morgan Quimby, a senior animal behavior major, feels the same way. "You can see your classmates from the Zoom camera, but it's just not the same. It doesn't feel as *connected*," she clarifies.



▶ "It makes me appreciate how UNE is such a tight-knit community." — *Michaela Super*

Quimby is quick to point out the very real benefit of experiential learning that is afforded by on-campus classes. For her major, like many majors at UNE, she says, the hands-on component is essential. With lab classes and field classes this semester, she is thankful that UNE took the steps necessary to make a fall return to campus possible. "I think going online just wouldn't give the same experience," she says. "It's definitely worth the time and effort to get students back on campus. I'm just learning so much in my hands-on classes. You don't really get an appreciation for birds and how diverse the species are and their migration patterns, for example, until you're out in the woods at 6:30 in the morning."

Beyond academic, social, and personal rewards, UNE's return to on-campus operations has given students one additional advantage: the lesson of resiliency — the lesson that there is power in dealing valiantly with negative circumstances and that in working hard to make the best of a bad situation, you can actually help propel yourself to a better place.

"To a degree, the COVID situation has allowed us to realize that we can still be resilient in the face of a global catastrophe," reflects Williams. "I think that when it's safe enough, we will bring back some of the best social aspects of college. But it's good to know that when you can't have face-to-face interaction, it's not like the world as we know it is over ... We can still persist. We can still get an education and enjoy, as much as possible in a safe way, social situations and staying connected. It's not perfect. It's not always going to work. But I think, overall, the situation that we're in has taught us to be resilient and to be flexible, if anything — to kind of roll with the punches. Whatever happens, happens. But we will make the best of it."



▶ "It's definitely worth the time and effort to get students back on campus." — *Morgan Quimby*

So what about the doomsday predictions for higher ed? Did the pundits prematurely leap to conclusions about the COVID-induced demise of the traditional college experience? While it remains to be seen what scars will be left on the face of higher ed as a whole, in the case of UNE, the coronavirus seems to have had the opposite effect from that which was predicted. The students' time off campus has made them acutely aware of just how much they value their hands-on education, and it has solidified in their minds the importance of community. As it turns out, there is no virtual replacement for the qualities of a college education that matter most to UNE students.

As Herbert predicted early on, it was UNE's culture of nimbleness that gave it a leg up in dealing with the pandemic. "We have important traditions at UNE, and we're mindful of them. We're aware of our roots. No question," he states flatly. "But we are not bound by tradition. We don't let tradition get in the way of making changes, even big changes, that happen quickly."

"Universities and colleges tend to be like slow moving supertankers that take quite a long time to change direction," he adds. "And while we don't want to make changes thoughtlessly, we need to be agile and responsive to the way the world changes. And the pandemic is just a case in point."

There are, of course, no guarantees when it comes to this virus. It has been baffling public health experts from the beginning, and the lack of certainty weighs heavily on Herbert. "There's still a level of uncertainty

"While we don't want to make changes thoughtlessly, we need to be agile and responsive to the way the world changes." — *James Herbert*

here. And so we're not at all complacent," he insists. "I know that I'm losing sleep at night, just worrying about all the things that could possibly go wrong, and I'll feel much, much better once there's a safe and effective vaccine and the pandemic is behind us."

But Herbert also feels confident that the University has taken every precaution available in preparing the campus to be safe. And if UNE stays the course and maintains the level of vigilance it has achieved thus far, it will have proven that it can navigate the roughest patches of COVID's stormy seas as nimbly and deftly as a university possibly can. UNE may not know the precise coordinates of the destination to which it is headed, but it is sailing — not drifting — in the right direction: Onward. ■

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BECCA KRYCESKI

**Health, Wellness, and Occupational Studies (HWOS) '20
Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing, August '21
President, Class of 2020**

I think that burnout is a real thing, especially with nurses right now during the pandemic. With that in my mind, I think a lot about what can keep me sane throughout nursing school and my career. I have a planner that I make my to-do list with every week. It helps to cross things out, even if it's just little things like taking the trash out because then it's off the list. I have classes online mostly, but I also go to the Portland Campus for some. Each morning, I like to go to the gym for about an hour to start out my day. Consistency and routine keep me motivated.

Since I'm such a social person, it's really important to me to fit in seeing friends too, even if it's something silly like going to Target together. I have been trying to still see my close friends in person, just in a socially distanced way: for instance, we will go to the Eastern Promenade and sit near each other to watch the sunset. I'm basically the same as before. I tell myself I should be more scared, but I'm not.



FOSTERING COMMUNITY AND BUILDING BRIDGES: INTRODUCING CHRIS HUNT

By Philip Shelley

Priority Four of UNE's five-year strategic plan (adopted in 2018) exhorts the University to create a "welcoming, inclusive, and vibrant community," with a specific focus on increasing diversity in all areas of campus life.

In the summer of 2019, the Priority Four (P4) Committee, responsible for putting that part of the UNE's Strategic Plan into action, determined that a new cabinet-level position should be created on the UNE leadership team, something akin to what is often called a "chief diversity officer."

While financial exigencies slowed the hiring process, the P4 Committee and the University leadership team were attentive to feedback from the UNE Community, which was overwhelmingly in favor of filling the position. With the murder of George Floyd and the increasing urgency of the national conversation around systemic racism, UNE leadership accelerated the hiring, already in progress, despite the additional financial constraints imposed by the coronavirus pandemic.

"As University leadership evaluated our strategic priorities, we concluded that this role was critical in carrying forward anti-racism work at UNE and ensuring we are a welcoming community for all," said UNE President James Herbert at the time.

UNE Provost Josh Hamilton echoed the president's words in describing the missing piece he felt was needed to ensure the success of ongoing initiatives. "President Herbert and I have been

heartened to see the many efforts across UNE to promote diversity and inclusion," said Hamilton, "from top-down initiatives by the administration in accordance with our strategic plan to grass-roots initiatives at every level of the University. What we lack is a centralized person who can help us coordinate all that work and make sure we were not duplicating efforts or working at cross-purposes."

After a somewhat surreal, mostly virtual series of interviews, on August 1, 2020, G. Christopher Hunt, Ed.D., officially stepped into that role, becoming UNE's first associate provost for Community, Equity, and Diversity, moving with his six-year-old beagle-Chihuahua mix, Geno, from his home in Easton, Pennsylvania, to his new place in Cape Elizabeth. For now, Hunt's wife of 17 years, Nichelle (an M.P.H. who has worked in student support and advising), and his three children (Cydney, 16, an honors society high-achiever and aspiring dermatologist; Christopher Jordan, or "CJ," 14, a basketball prodigy and electronic beat-meister; and "bright light" Cayla, 12, heavily into Tik Tok and an avid cook who has become the family's lead chef) remain in Pennsylvania, to finish up school and minimize upheaval in their lives.

"We have vacationed here in the past," says Hunt, "and we are somewhat familiar with the area. But Geno doesn't have school, and he doesn't have a job — so that's why he gets to come."

Hunt, who earned his Doctor of Education at East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania, comes to UNE most recently from Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, where, since June 2017, he was the dean of Equity and Inclusion, the interim chief diversity officer, and most recently the dean of students and assistant vice president. Prior to his time at Lafayette, he spent eight years at Moravian College, in Bethlehem, where he was the associate dean of students and director of Intercultural Advancement and Global Inclusion, building that office at Moravian from the ground up.

And at UNE? "My job," says Hunt, "is to be involved in all manner of high-level conversations and to work collaboratively at all levels across the University to help make sure that we are being mindful of equity, inclusion, diversity, and people's sense of belonging in everything we do: from building design and décor to student recruitment and curriculum to hiring professional staff and faculty."

The need to improve in these areas is not unique to UNE, among predominantly White institutions (PWIs), particularly when it comes to faculty recruitment. "I can't think of a college

"My job is to be involved in all manner of high-level conversations and to work collaboratively at all levels across the University to help make sure that we are being mindful of equity, inclusion, diversity, and people's sense of belonging in everything we do."

— G. Christopher Hunt



Hunt with (from left) his wife Nichelle, James Herbert, and Lynn Brandsma

INTRODUCING...

right now that's not having conversations about hiring a more diverse faculty," says Hunt. "And I do know this: colleges and universities will continue to fall short if they're not intentional about strategies and methods to make their faculty more diverse. UNE has already articulated a desire to do better. I think, certainly, it starts there."

For Hunt, it's important to take a long, holistic view rather than focus on short-term quick fixes. "Sure," he says, "we want to make gains this year, next year, the year after... but we also have to keep our eyes on what the faculty will look like a decade down the road. One way to do that is, when we have students in our classrooms, and we see something in them that suggests they can actually be a faculty member, we should speak that into them, and we should give them the idea that, 'Hey, you know, you, you might be good at this.'"

This kind of person-to-person recognition is crucial to diversifying admissions as well. As Hunt points out, "It's one thing to recruit students from diverse backgrounds, but it's another thing to retain them and make sure they have a sense of belonging on campus. At a high level, that involves many different institutional offices, but I also think that the work has to be done at a very micro level, fostering community and building bridges, in a very grass-roots kind of way."

Cultivating relationships and community is key to ensuring that no student graduates feeling like they had a bad experience based on their race, identity, or background.

"My research talks about Black men who went to college during the baby boomer generation and the millennial era," says Hunt. "Many of the participants who graduated in the '70s and '80s, as well as those from the millennial era in the 2000s, left those institutions feeling alienated and isolated. So, part of my role will be to make sure we're working with Student Affairs and faculty and everyone else to do as much as we can to make sure everyone's having a rich experience. And then, also, to cultivate those relationships, post-graduation, so that all our alums stay connected to the institution and feel that UNE is a lifelong home base for them."



Hunt at the September 2020 board of trustees meeting on the Portland Campus.

Affinity groups for students are a good way of laying a foundation for those lifelong relationships. "When I do my research on retention," explains Hunt, "one of the best practices is to make sure that students have those kinds of groups, like a BSU [Black student union] or a Latinx student union or an LGBTQ affinity group... We think about them sometimes as 'just' clubs and organizations, but these are actually retention strategies and have a direct impact on students' sense of belonging and academic success. Sometimes they are the difference that helps marginalized students feel like they have a voice and a real connection with the institution."

"I really feel strongly that the more people get to know who you are in your heart, that will enable you to build bridges with other people, other departments."

— G. Christopher Hunt

"I'm looking forward to working with [Dean of Students] Jen DeBurro and [Director of Intercultural Student Engagement] Erica Rousseau in Student Affairs," continues Hunt. "I think we're going to complement each other really well. I really feel strongly that the more people get to know who you are in your heart — that you are engaged, that you are advocating for them and showing up — that will enable you to build bridges with other people, other departments."

Hunt served as an advisor to student groups at both Lafayette and Moravian, and he plans to continue that kind of work at UNE. "What helps me feel renewed about my work every day," says Hunt, "is having an opportunity to work on the ground with students: getting to know them on a personal level, forming mentoring relationships — that is really meaningful to me."

One of the reasons those mentoring relations are so important to Hunt is because of his own experience as a Black male college student at a PWI. "When I was an undergraduate student at West Chester University of Pennsylvania," Hunt remembers, "one of the things that really stuck out to me was the unofficial mentoring relationship that I formed with the assistant director of multicultural affairs. His name was Dr. Kendrick Mickens. And honestly, just seeing him in a position of authority, seeing a Black man in that role, was something to aspire to — one of the reasons why I imagined myself being able to do something like that."

But Hunt is quick to point out that his presence serves as a model for White students as well as Black students. "I talk about showing up, being present, and that's what I mean: being a model for students who look like me. But also, quite frankly, for majority students as well. It's not lost on me that I might be one of the first, if not the only, Black educator that many White students are going to interact with."

While our conversation has focused on students, what about Hunt's own experience as a Black man in one of the whitest states in the U.S., stepping in as the only Black cabinet-level administrator in a predominantly White school? Hunt is philosophical. "It's not my first time being the first Black administrator or the only Black person in a room," he says. "So, I understand the significance. I have been built for it. So, I don't come into the room apologizing or being bashful. I come in to do my job and to advocate the way I need to for students, faculty, and professional staff. What I hope moving forward is that if I am the first, that there will be a second, and a third, and a fifth and so on..."

While no higher-ed administrative position can exist in a social vacuum, positions like Hunt's are explicitly embedded within larger societal contexts, such as the one created by the horrific public murder of George Floyd. "For me and my work," says Hunt, "it's a primer for more in-depth conversations. It feels like society — more so now than perhaps at other times in the past — is willing to be introspective and ask ourselves, collectively, some harder questions. The Pew Center has done some public opinion polls, and there's data out there that suggest opinions about systemic racism are evolving very quickly, almost in real time."

Of course, the price paid to even start the conversation has been unfathomably high. "What's really...sick," says Hunt, reaching for the appropriate word, "is that it took his torture for folks to say, 'Oh! That's what you mean!' Because there are other George Floyds. There are a lot more George Floyds. So in the wake of his death and countless others, we must honor them by doing the hard, introspective work of making more just and equitable college campuses and society."

Hunt's hiring itself can be seen as a direct result of doing that hard and introspective work, which sent colleges across America scrambling to integrate their leadership teams. I ask Hunt how he would answer people who might say his hiring is simply putting a Band-Aid on a set of deeply intractable, systemic problems.

Hunt shakes his head and responds very slowly, like he doesn't think much of the question. "I actually think not everything deserves a response," he says. "I don't think that's necessarily a substantive talking



Hunt (and Geno) talking to students on the Biddeford Campus



Hunt and pup Geno attend the Campus March for Social and Racial Justice.

point. What I'm very big on is, if someone or some organization does something that puts points on the board, then those points should be honored and reflected. And if an organization does things that cost us points, then we should deduct them. I think we have to be fair and honest and call balls and strikes."

"Look," says Hunt, elaborating, "I realize that just hiring someone doesn't necessarily advance every issue. But I think it is progress. First there was the implementation of UNE's Strategic Plan and the incorporation of Priority Four. That was a start, launched by President Herbert and the leadership team. Then there was all the work that the Priority Four committee did, as it relates to the Rankin climate survey, as it relates to the hiring of my position and doing that search, and any number of other things that they've been working on. So now I'm hired, and part of my charge will be to analyze that data from the Rankin study and work with the community to talk about implementing the next steps. The University Faculty Assembly is already working on some policy revisions and motions..." He stops mid-sentence and shrugs: there's a lot of positive work going on.

"I like to think of things in terms of sports analogies," says Hunt. "So, I might say 'singles and doubles.' I also think about old-school football, you know: three yards, four yards at a clip, running up the middle. Eventually you advance the ball down the field. And you know, you might get sacked, you might have some losses, but you're constantly moving forward."

He continues, "You know: you have one conversation here, or one conversation over there, and that will lead you to where you want to get to — eventually." ■

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USING INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN STRATEGIES TO CREATE GREAT ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

By Monique Gaudet

In recent months, nearly every college and university in the U.S. has scrambled to bring their instruction online. UNE's fully online College of Graduate and Professional Studies (CGPS) has the advantage of having a team of instructional designers on staff who, in collaboration with CGPS's academic programs, have, since 2012, created and maintained all of CGPS's online courses. This in-house knowhow was a tremendous asset for UNE, as the coronavirus pandemic forced the entire University to transition quickly to online instruction this past spring summer.

"We worked with UNE's Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and ITS to provide planning and resources to help support faculty transitioning to online delivery across the University," says Dan Blickensderfer, director of learning experience and manager of the CGPS Instructional Design Services (IDS) team. "Along with offering instructional design expertise, we designed a flexible Blackboard course template that all faculty would have access to use and could adapt individually."

HELPING EDUCATORS IMPROVE THEIR REMOTE INSTRUCTION

To transition effectively from traditional, in-person classroom teaching to asynchronous online instruction is significantly more complicated than just pointing a camera at the professor. "Remote instruction that relies too heavily on synchronous class meetings often misses out on some of the best affordances of online learning," says Blickensderfer, laying out some of the best-practice tenets of his discipline. "Replacing traditional in-class lecture time with video conferencing-based lecture time should be done sparingly. Lecture videos should be short and address key challenges in the course material that instructors know students have difficulty with."

Instead, options for engagement (student-to-student, student-to-instructor, and student-to-content) should be built into the learning experience. One way to do this is through the regular use of asynchronous online discussions within the course, facilitated by the instructor. With well-crafted prompts and clear expectations for discussion, students can participate in all three engagement options through their posts and replies.

HOW INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN CAN HELP

Since the early days of online learning two decades ago, instructional designers, as well as other pioneering educators who experimented with technology-mediated instruction, have known that intentionally designed online learning can provide real benefits compared to a traditional lecture or "sage on the stage" model of classroom instruction. They have also known that taking all of the content from an existing in-person class and putting it in a learning management system (LMS) does not by itself automatically make a good learning experience for students. In an emergency though, that's what many educators have had to do.

"Replacing traditional in-class lecture time with video conferencing-based lecture time should be done sparingly. Lecture videos should be short and address key challenges in the course material that instructors know students have difficulty with."

— Dan Blickensderfer



Intentional instructional design depends on first asking (and then answering) questions like, "What skills and knowledge do we really want students to be able to demonstrate by the end of this module or course?" and "How will students demonstrate these skills and knowledge in ways that we can assess?"

Instructional designers work collaboratively with academic programs and subject matter experts, guided by well-established instructional design best-practice frameworks, to create a curriculum that is focused on students and takes full advantage of the online medium to enhance their experience of learning.

MOVING BEYOND THE IMPROVISATION PHASE

This pandemic has highlighted the importance of intentional instructional design for UNE and all universities moving some or all classes online. "Many educators in the early days of the pandemic had to abruptly switch their in-person courses to an emergency remote-instruction delivery mode, using unfamiliar technology," says Blickensderfer. "Educators did this quickly and sometimes with little support — and with varying results for their students."

As we collectively move out of an emergency mode into a "Phase 2" of pandemic-necessitated remote learning, it will be increasingly

important for educators to create intentional online learning experiences that are centered in good pedagogy, take advantage of appropriate technologies, and leverage good instructional design principles.

To help answer the increasing need for skills in online learning design and development, CGPS has developed a new stackable graduate certificate in Online Learning Design. The skills offered by this certificate benefit aspiring instructional designers, educational technologists, and technology integrators, among other positions. This certificate is designed for educators across K-12, higher education, and corporate learning and development and is a way for us to contribute to meeting the wider need for foundational online learning skills beyond UNE.

The IDS team, in partnership with CETL, provided online learning design expertise to the University during the initial transition of moving classes online. "IDS is very much at home working collaboratively with academic stakeholders and other teams to provide students with meaningful online learning experiences," says Blickensderfer. "And we look forward to finding ways to provide resources and support for other educators across UNE, helping them leverage online teaching innovations and pedagogy best-practices in their courses, with the success of our students as a top priority." ■

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

By Amber Windler and Monique Gaudet

We talked to UNE alumni about the impact of a global pandemic on their careers and passions — and asked them to share their stories.

EMILY J. GREENE, B.A., B.S. '16

(POLITICAL SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES, COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES)

OUTREACH COORDINATOR — SACO WATERSHED COLLABORATIVE; COASTAL TRAINING PROGRAM ASSOCIATE — WELLS NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE; VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR — SOUTHERN MAINE BEACH PROFILE MONITORING PROGRAM OF THE MAINE SEA GRANT

"The most incredible denominator of my three jobs is that they were all remote to begin with, except when I have to work on our coastal beaches with my volunteers. It was a relatively seamless transition for me and my colleagues from in-person to online, to follow CDC guidelines in managing COVID. What I find most rewarding working in the water/environmental sector is the networking opportunities (despite COVID)! There's nothing that I appreciate and live for more than weaving a web that connects us all together in environmental conservation. During COVID, I've made the decision to adapt as much as possible to meet the needs of colleagues, my current job requirements, and more. We sink or swim together, and it's a motto that I've stuck by since the beginning of my career.

I wouldn't change my experience at UNE for anything. The relationships I fostered with other students and my professors was an invaluable experience that helped transform me into a stronger, more intelligent, more intuitive, more considerate and kind human being."



ADAM LAITE, B.S. '13

(BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES)

VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES — RESTAURANT GROUP AND SEAFOOD COMPANY, LUKE'S LOBSTER

"I joined the Luke's Lobster team in 2016, starting as the sales director, after quickly progressing through positions in hardware, software, and medical sales. Today I'm the vice president of sales and an equity partner in the business, with experience operating a \$90M business. COVID-19 has thrown a wrench into our business. I clearly recall the turning point when four

plane-loads of live lobster from Canada got turned around in Beijing; that was really the start of the pandemic impact on lobster. We had 26 domestic restaurants and 11 in Asia operating in March. Today we have just over 10 open in the U.S. and a handful in Japan. We will open up several more units as things improve, but it has been a challenging time for sure. We have had a strong start to our wholesale side of business with grocery business up. Our largest customer, Whole Foods Market, has already sold more of our retail products to date in 2020 than in all of 2019. Our business processes about 5 million pounds of lobster and 2 million of Jonah Crab in our Saco, Maine, facility. Although these are tough times, we see a bright future and believe we will come out stronger through the adversity of COVID-19."

SARAH KILGORE, M.P.H. '20

(MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH, COLLEGE OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES)

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, ARMY

"In my role as a nurse for the Department of the Army in New York at the epicenter of the outbreak, I have had to make many adjustments because of the pandemic. I work with a population of active duty soldiers and Army cadets; but when the cadets were sent home on March 6th, my workload actually increased dramatically. I was fielding dozens of telehealth calls and requests every clinic day and coordinating health needs across 50 states for 4,400 displaced cadets. Those first few months went by in a blur. Being a nurse, I didn't have the option of working from home, and I was exhausted. My schoolwork continued on without interruption though — that is, until it came to my practicum experience. My study population had still not returned and my preceptor was pulled to duty elsewhere (and her proprietary research with her); but to delay graduation was not an option while I was facing a permanent change in station: going to CENTCOM (in Tampa, Florida) this fall.

Fortunately, CGPS faculty were very quick to respond and come up with new project ideas that were rigorous enough for our accreditors. While working in New York, I collaborated with students from Maine and Texas to explore the effects of the coronavirus through a socioeconomic

lens by documenting the impact through photography. It was fascinating to look at the pandemic from a broader view, at multiple economic levels, and from the perspective of multiple states. I could really see how COVID affected the entire community, even for those who never contracted the disease. I graduated this August, but one of my partners and I are continuing on with the work, focusing on risk communication and public trust during a pandemic. We adapted our presentation, and we have been selected to present our poster at the Maine Public Health Association Annual Conference this fall!

I am grateful to the faculty at UNE for their creative problem-solving and accommodations for their students. I am proud to be a fresh graduate and will strive to make the UNE community proud as well."



NEGERI CLARKE, PHARM.D. '20

(DOCTORATE OF PHARMACY, COLLEGE OF PHARMACY)

CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION PRESENTER ON SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH AND THE INTERSECTIONS OF BLM/LGBTQA

"The concept of being a leader, especially as a new graduate out of school, is challenging. As new practitioners, we will find ourselves in settings that have an old, academic way of practicing. We are taught at UNE in an interprofessional, integrated model that is what will really move the future. We must be an advocate for our practice: if you are somewhere where interprofessionalism is a major part of what you do, you participate; if you are where it is trickling, you advocate; if you are where it is nonexistent, you initiate and ask those tough questions. We cannot be afraid to ask the question. If you do not ask the question, the process toward interprofessional practice will never begin. It is going to take courage, especially if you are in a new setting or feel marginalized.



Students can use the time at UNE to practice and learn with classmates and faculty how to speak up and ask difficult questions.

Ask yourself, how can I be the person to make a positive impact on the things I don't agree with and the things I feel are going well? If you can vote, vote. If you want to shape your environment, you have to be an active participant. Don't let your youth stop you. We do not have time. The time is now. Pick an area that you are invested in, and advocate for it. Make sure you are purpose-driven."



CAMPUS MARCH FOR SOCIAL AND RACIAL JUSTICE

This all started as an immediate thought between me and two Nor'easter football teammates, Jeremy Diaz and Cobey Johnson — a plan to skip practice one Thursday in light of the recent shootings and killings of African American men and women by police. After Coach Lichten got word about our intention to skip practice, we texted about it, and with the coach's full support, we concluded that instead of just skipping practice, we should do something bigger and much more organized.

That led to the entire team not practicing. In lieu of practice, I organized an open conversation about the situation in society today with the murders of Eric Garner, Trayvon Martin, George Floyd, etc. and the negative societal views that African Americans are defined by. There are disgusting stigmas and stereotypes that African Americans live with every day, and they have been so effective that people get killed over them. We then agreed to have everyone who wanted to help organize an on-campus march to stay after and help with flyers, posters, and getting the word out.

While organizing, I felt it was important to focus this march on the individual. Social media, news outlets, and the BLM organization itself spread its message very effectively. The movement is good and all, but I wanted this march to be different than that and to have a slightly different meaning. I asked of all the participants to think about why they were personally there. Why are you here? Why are you attending? What do you want to get out of this? The event was much more successful than I thought it would be, and I don't think I would be able to speak in front of 500+ people if it was about any other topic. I am glad it happened the way it did, and I am not going to stop taking steps.

Julian Connerton '22
Sports and Recreation Management
Egg Harbor City, N.J.

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FIGHTING THE UNIMAGINABLE: UNE HEALTH CARE ALUMNI STAND AT THE PANDEMIC'S FRONT LINE

By Alan Bennett

It was the year that no one saw coming — 2020: an onslaught of unprecedented challenges brought forth by an insidious global pandemic that continues to rage on today. The outbreak of the novel coronavirus shook the world and, for many University of New England alumni, the outbreak hit close to home.

As Maine's largest educator of health professionals, UNE has graduated scores of UNE health care professionals stationed at medical centers across the country who have spent the better portion of the year tending to patients critically ill with COVID-19. The daunting task has introduced new precautions — including an unstable supply of personal protective equipment, or PPE — ever-changing protocols, and, for many, a roller coaster of emotions.

"Being a new graduate in the emergency department is challenging to begin with, but I never thought I'd be working on the front line of a pandemic in my first year of nursing," said Reed Norton '19 (Nursing), who started working in Maine Medical Center's most urgent division immediately after graduating from UNE.

The emergency department (ED) was rocked when the first case of COVID-19 arrived at the hospital in March, adding insult to injury in a department of its nature.

"There are so many techniques and tasks that need to be learned, like new procedures, and extra setup for protection," Norton said. "To be honest, I don't think anyone was completely prepared for something of this level."

The pandemic became personal for Norton, who, because of his direct contact with COVID-19 patients, was forced to isolate from his mother. She suffers from autoimmune diseases, he said, that put her at greater risk of complications from the virus.

"The separation from her is probably one of the hardest parts about this pandemic," he said. "I'm sure people around the world are feeling the same way about their loved ones, but protecting her health and safety will pay off in the long run — which is something I have to remind myself of every day."

Maine Med ED nurse Suki Bischoff '14 (Nursing) was in the same boat, having to indefinitely distance herself from her family in Massachusetts.

"I remember at one point talking to them and saying, 'I most likely won't see you or be able to hug you or see you in person until two weeks after I take care of my last COVID patient because I need to ensure that I am safe,' and who knows when that will be," she said.



"There are so many techniques and tasks that need to be learned, like new procedures, and extra setup for protection. To be honest, I don't think anyone was completely prepared for something of this level." — Reed Norton



Like Norton, Bischoff knew her job would be difficult when she started at Maine's largest hospital in 2016. But she never saw a pandemic approaching.

"I expected maybe a mass casualty incident, a bomb, a massive car accident, a plane crash or something like that," she said. "I never expected a global pandemic in my career. The first week was very surreal, realizing the impact that this would have on our community, our country, our staff, and our families."

Tanner McLaughlin '19 (Nursing) started working as a nurse at Maine Med just weeks after earning his bachelor's degree from UNE. Housed in the medical telemetry unit, which treats a variety of

patients who need constant care, including stroke patients, McLaughlin had adjusted to the ever-shifting nature of his day-to-day tasks.

But the loud arrival of COVID-19 only intensified the chaos that is front line medicine.

"You could feel the stress in the hospital," McLaughlin stated. "We were all anxious and scared, but we took it day by day and did the best we could."

McLaughlin's first experience with COVID-19-positive patients came in late spring, when Maine saw its highest number of cases. He was asked to "float" from the telemetry floor to be a runner for the coronavirus unit, which meant supplying equipment and medications to other frontline staff.

It was a shift of firsts for McLaughlin, a Millinocket, Maine, native: he had never before donned a PAPR hood, a respiration device that filters out contaminants in the air, and he had never been asked to work in such a high-stress situation.

"It wasn't horrible, personally," he admitted, "but it was difficult having to take the PPE on and off and clean everything multiple times just to do it all again hours later. I can't imagine doing it each and every day."

As cases in Maine declined, McLaughlin said the non-coronavirus units began operating somewhat normally, but, much like the virus itself, anxiety and uncertainty still lingered in the air.

"We're at least testing every patient who comes into the hospital," he said. "It's nice to know that your patients are negative instead of always thinking it's possible they could spread the virus to us."





Jason Barschdorf

In Augusta, Maine's capital city, Jason Barschdorf, M.S.P.A. '16, found himself thinking in terms of extremes.

"At one extreme, I can recognize the importance my work has in impacting people's health and wellness — at the other end, I feel helpless," Barschdorf, a physician assistant at MaineGeneral Health's acute walk-in clinic, said earlier this spring. "It has never been clearer to me that the importance of a person, a title, a career, or a job goes far beyond the numbers on a paycheck or number of years of education someone has."

Barschdorf said the first days of the COVID-19 crisis were tense, and he spent hours reading and watching everything he could find to learn about the virus that has killed scores across the globe.

"It is very unsettling to spend your whole day saying, 'I don't know.' It became instantly clear we were all learning and developing an understanding and a plan on the fly," he said.

UNE's health professions alumni have grappled with the pandemic from Kittery to Fort Kent, from the sidewalks of Camden to the northern highlands, and from the rocky Midcoast to babbling mountain streams. But the work of these former students represents only a portion of UNE's reach. Pandemics do not care about borders, and many of UNE's alumni have confronted the virus outside of the 207.

In a non-medical setting, Matt Scheuer '16 (Marine Affairs) has done his part to assist medical professionals in the Boston area by laser-cutting face shields at the makerspace Artisan's Asylum, based in Somerville, Massachusetts.

Scheuer had been spending his days experimenting with 3D printers and prototyping robotics when the novel coronavirus crisis struck the eastern United States. For many makers, who have no medical training, the pandemic was both a thorn and a rose: many of their creative endeavors were stymied by the outbreak, but the virus also gave them the chance to support the medical community.

"A lot of people, myself included, felt lost at the beginning of the pandemic. I'm not a doctor or an ambulance driver, so what was there



Matt Scheuer

that I could do?" he said. "But, in knowing how to use these technologies and running the laser cutter, I feel like I'm doing something and contributing something real."

Duncan Grossman, D.O. '18, showed those at home what it is like to live life on the front lines through an essay of photos — images he captured during the few spare moments he could find at his hospital residency in Brooklyn, New York.

The chilling photo essay, which was featured in the Wall Street Journal, depicts the severity of the crisis in New York at the height of the city's outbreak: doctors intubating patients infected with COVID-19, screens of patients with low blood oxygen saturation, and exhausted staff swabbing patients to test for the virus.

"I was inspired by these people who came to work every day to battle a new disease that no one knows how to treat and could kill any of them," he said to the paper.



Duncan Grossman

In New York City's northernmost borough, the Bronx, Alex Hsu '19 (Nursing) was in a similar situation to Grossman.

A December alum, Hsu had no idea that he would be graduating straight into the wake of the worst pandemic in more than 100 years. The Taiwanese native had always dreamed of becoming a medical professional, but, now, he was living a very real and sometimes unnerving version of his dream.

The experience brought moments of joy — "I feel lucky that I'm in a position to help people get better," Hsu relayed — but it also came with moments of heartbreak.

"The working environment was so difficult that it really is like fighting a battle," he said in May, when the Big Apple emerged as the virus's new global epicenter. "We have no time to grieve or adjust to the emotion after witnessing a patient pass away because more patients are there waiting for you. You're working, working, and working until your time is over, and it's like that every day."

At the apex of the outbreak in New York City, Hsu told of how nurses would care for COVID-19 patients for hours at a time while wearing heavy protective equipment. It was hot and slowed down their work, and sometimes medical personnel were forced to treat patients without any PPE at all.

"That's like asking a soldier to go to the front lines with a machete when the other side has machine guns," he remarked.

At summer's end, cases of the coronavirus had drastically declined in the city, and Hsu's hospital had actually treated its last COVID-19 patients. For the first time since the year's commencement, Hsu could breathe sighs of relief instead of solemnity.

"There is a happiness that comes with having COVID out of the hospital," he said. "This is why I chose this profession: to see patients get better. It is something I need to do, and I'm really happy to do it."

Still, it is unclear when the pandemic will end — and the disease that has become known simply as "the coronavirus" will likely never entirely go away, especially if people don't take it seriously. When, in a short few months, snow blankets the ground and lights twinkle on rooftops, will the lockdowns, mask mandates, and painful nasal swabs all have been worth it?

Hsu isn't yet sure, but it is clear that his work — and that of so many other UNE alumni — is far from over.

"I'm happy to see the number of COVID-19 cases going down, but I'm hesitant. My shift ends at midnight, and there is a pub across the street from where I wait for the bus with some other nurses. Outside the pub, I see dozens of people gathered with drinks and loud music, and hardly any of them are wearing masks," he said. "The other nurses and I just shake our heads." ■



Alex Hsu

"We have no time to grieve or adjust to the emotion after witnessing a patient pass away because more patients are there waiting for you. You're working, working, and working until your time is over, and it's like that every day." — Alex Hsu

STACEY ABRAMS: RUNNING AGAINST VOTER SUPPRESSION

by Philip Shelley

"Here's what voter suppression does," Stacey Abrams explained to a standing-room-only crowd of over 900 people at Innovation Hall on UNE's Portland Campus on January 22, 2020. "It's three things: it's can you register and stay on the rolls?; can you access your ballot?; and does your ballot count?"

Abrams, the former Georgia House Democratic leader and former Democratic nominee for governor of Georgia, was the guest speaker for UNE's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration, addressing a mesmerized audience of students, faculty, professional staff, members of the public, and distinguished guests — including Maine Governor Janet Mills and former state legislator Gerald Talbot, also a former UNE trustee.

UNE President James Herbert offered the event's opening remarks before introducing the event's organizer Erica Rousseau, UNE's director of intercultural student engagement. Rousseau, in turn, had the honor of introducing Abrams and Dr. Theodore R. Johnson — a senior fellow at the Brennan Center for Justice and author of the forthcoming book *When the Stars Begin to Fall* — who served as the event's moderator.

The logistics involved in bringing hot-ticket speakers to campus are always dauntingly complex, and the Abrams camp was especially strict in its requirements because of Abrams' status as an active political candidate (and, through most of the summer, as a contender on the short list of legitimate Democratic vice-presidential candidates).

But Rousseau took all those daunting logistical demands in stride. Her concern was focused elsewhere. "All I was thinking about was the learning outcome," she recalls. "I needed someone to walk us through: What is voter suppression?"

"The issue of voter suppression is something that a lot of people here in Maine and New England aren't aware of because voting in Maine is relatively easy," continues Rousseau. "They don't know the tactics that are used, particularly in the South, to keep poor and Black people from exercising their Constitutional right to vote."

In the run-up to the 2020 presidential election, the issue of voter suppression has stepped out of the shadows and onto the front pages, with polling places shutting down, questions raised about the safety of in-person voting during a pandemic, and doubts cast from certain quarters about the legitimacy of mail-in ballots. The selection of Abrams as UNE's MLK speaker could not have been timelier.

Abrams' talk drew on her experience as the first Black woman to earn a gubernatorial nomination for a major party, when, in 2018, she came within just 50,000 votes of beating Brian Kemp, Georgia's Secretary of State, amidst allegations of rampant racially motivated voter suppression. As Georgia's Secretary of State, Kemp was the very person responsible for overseeing the state's election process. Abrams dryly observed: "It's like the New England Patriots letting Tom Brady be the referee."

"Can you register and stay on the rolls?; can you access your ballot?; and does your ballot count?"

— Stacey Abrams



Abrams flanked by (from left): Maine Governor Janet Mills, Dr. Theodore R. Johnson, Director of Intercultural Student Engagement Erica Rousseau, and UNE President James Herbert



Abrams and Johnson address the standing-room-only crowd in Innovation Hall.

Abrams discussed the frustrations she faced when, in the final three weeks leading up to Election Day, 30,000 phone calls poured into her campaign — the first campaign to have a fulltime voter protection team — to report incidents of voter suppression. When all was said and done, a total of 80,000 calls about voter suppression activities had been fielded by her campaign.

Abrams acknowledged a brief period of mourning over the loss of the race but said that she soon channeled her disappointment in a positive direction. “I didn’t have the luxury of just walking away or curling into the fetal position. My job was to think about what else I could do. So Fair Fight became the mission.” Fair Fight 2020 is a multi-state voter protection initiative, which combats voter suppression through litigation, legislation, and advocacy measures.

“Voting is one of the most powerful tools we have as Americans,” says Rousseau, who grew up in North Carolina and has worked to combat voter suppression since she was teenager. “We have a responsibility to research, elect, and hold our representatives accountable. I’ve registered over 2,000 voters since the age of 18. I run ‘voter vans’ during every presidential election. I’ve knocked on doors in disenfranchised neighborhoods to encourage registration.”

The idea that our right to vote is something we can never take for granted may carry more weight in Black communities and among other historically disenfranchised groups than it does in middle- or upper-class White communities where voting is seemingly routine.

“Voting is something that my elders and ancestors struggled and died for,” says Rousseau. “We deserve sound leadership. It’s not about party lines for me. Politics is not a sporting event. It’s not about if your team won. It’s about access, income, health care, and being free. That’s why bringing Stacey Abrams to UNE was deeply personal to me: to inspire others to be counted, for their voices to be heard, and for the racist tactics to suppress their votes to be exposed and made just.” ■

“That’s why bringing Stacey Abrams to UNE was deeply personal to me: to inspire others to be counted, for their voices to be heard, and for the racist tactics to suppress their votes to be exposed and made just.”

— Erica Rousseau

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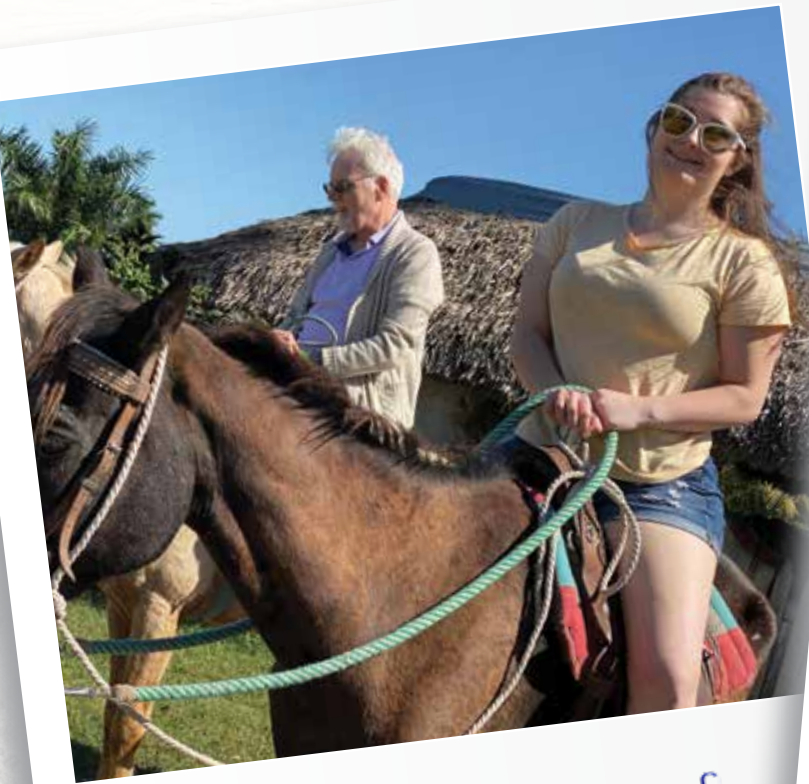
Abrams and Johnson prepare to take the stage.



Many in the crowd raise their phones as Abrams makes her exit from Innovation Hall.

A VIBRANT CULTURE

By Mariah Berchulski with Melissa DeStefano



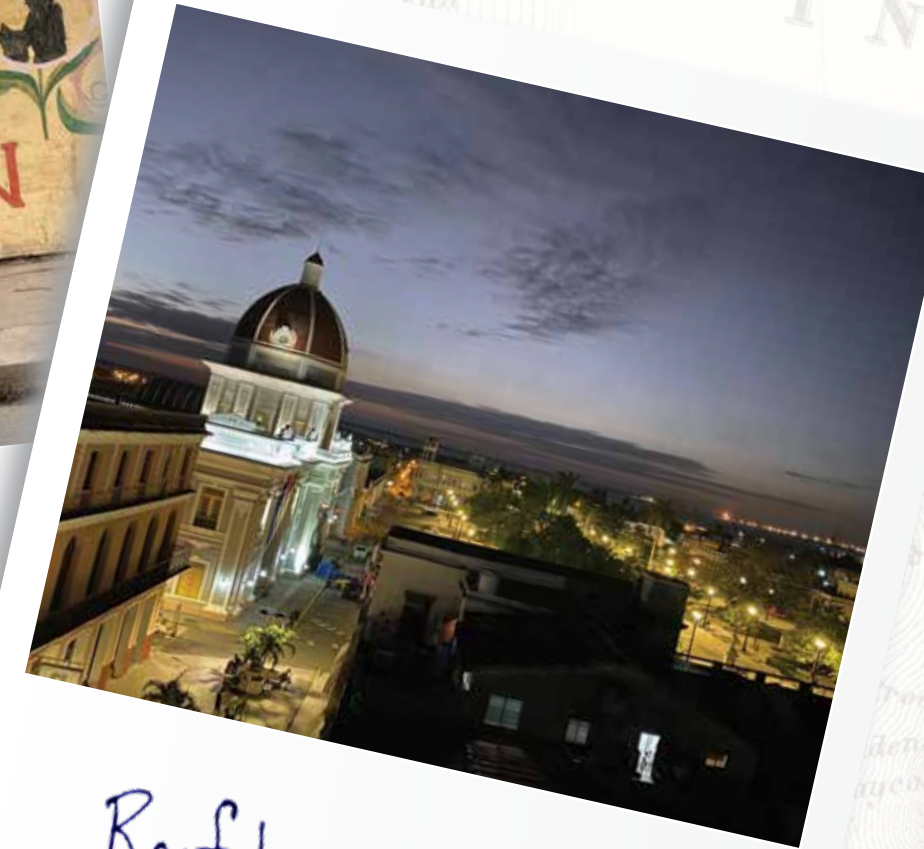
Horseback Tour of
an Organic Farm



Old Havana
Art for Sale



Revolution
Street art



Rooftop Bar View
in Cienfuegos

I'm Mariah Berchulski, a senior neuroscience major with a minor in applied mathematics. I had the amazing opportunity of traveling to Cuba for UNE's Citizenship travel course. During the fall semester, our class met once a month. During that time, we learned about Cuba, prepared for our trip, and got to know each other, but we became a tight-knit group over our week-long journey through the amazing country of Cuba. From horseback riding on an organic farm to exploring the cities of Havana, Cienfuegos, and Viñales, the trip was an amazing experience.

We were able to take a walking tour through Old Havana and see the numerous plazas while also exploring the many side streets. Everywhere we looked, there was something to admire — from the historic architecture spanning decades of styles to the classic cars driving around on the streets. To top it all off, there were countless little shops selling local artwork, much of which was strewn along the sidewalks and hung in shop entryways. The sight of all of the vibrant colors enhances the beauty of an already gorgeous city and gave us plenty of opportunities for buying fun gifts and souvenirs.

It seemed like there was an abundance of public art or murals everywhere we went in Cuba. Every mural had a purpose or a message. "Por Siempre Revolución" means "revolution forever," although the focal point of the artwork is the numerous flowers made out of gears. Each of these flowers/gears displays careers that were important to the revolution. The center flower/gear shows the logo for the committees for the defense of the revolution, which is a series of local organizations said to be the eyes and ears of the revolution as they worked to promote its success and protect against sabotage.

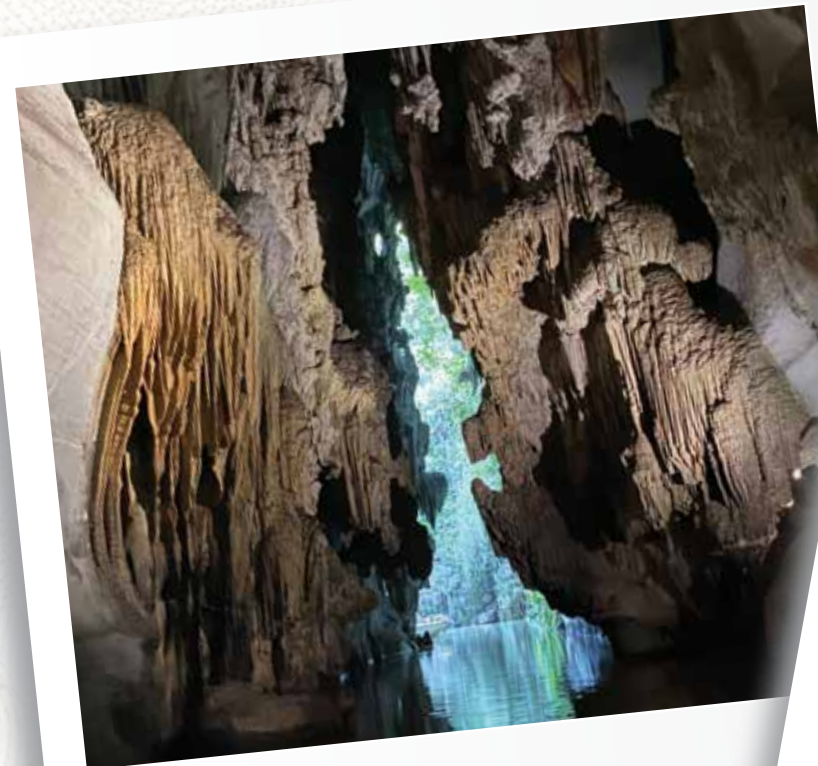
Our second night in Cuba was spent in Cienfuegos, a port city on the southern coast. We spent time exploring the city on our own — meeting locals, visiting the docks, and perusing the local markets. We even had the opportunity to meet a local guild of artists and discuss what it's like to be an artist in Cuba today. Later in the afternoon, we saw a local band perform and danced the night away until returning to the rooftop bar of our hotel, which overlooks the city's central square, Parque José Martí.



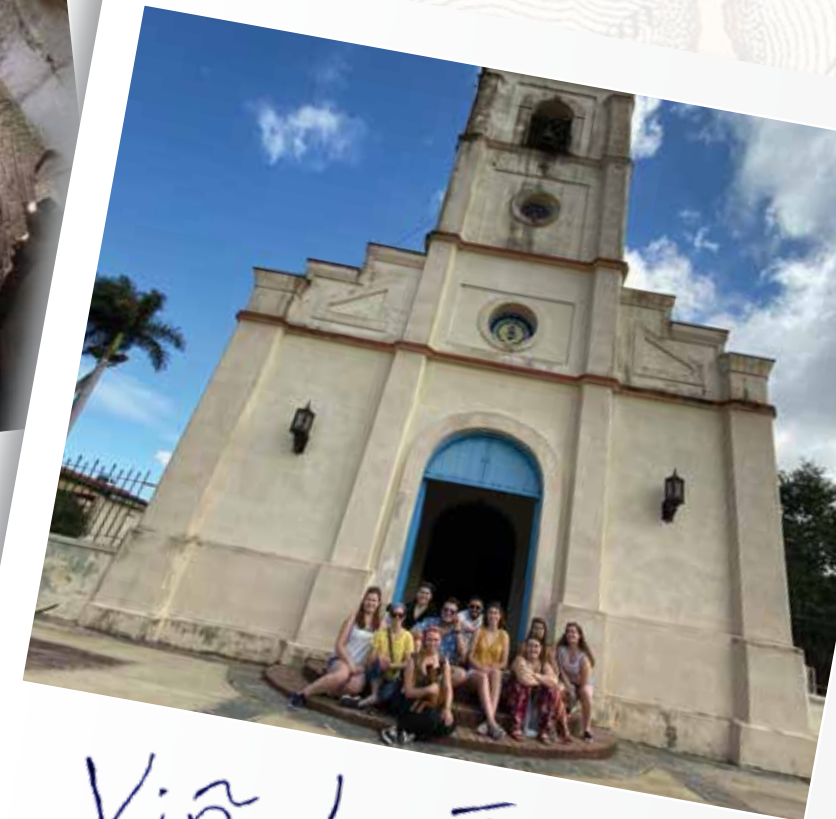
Pick Your Taxi!



Overlooking Viñales Valley



Indian Cave



Viñales Town Square Church

When we ventured into the center of town in Viñales, we were surrounded by colorful, colonial-era buildings, friendly dogs, classic cars, and numerous horse-drawn carriages. Seeing the juxtaposition of a horse-drawn carriage next to a classic car (which are both used as taxis in the area) was a perfect representation of the local culture. Some might say it's a view of a country stuck in the past, but, in reality, Cuba is a country that utilizes all of its resources in the best way it can. This pattern was one that we noted throughout the country as we explored.

Throughout our trip, the natural beauty of Cuba never ceased to impress. The third city we spent time in was Viñales, a primarily farm-oriented city in the center of the country. Here is the gorgeous view of Viñales Valley from the balconies of our hotel. A tobacco-drying building can be seen in the distance along with a farmhouse. While in Viñales, we visited a tobacco farm where we learned how tobacco is dried and how to roll cigars. We also enjoyed a delicious dinner of numerous traditional dishes from the local area.

Also while in Viñales, we visited Indian Cave, a series of caverns and caves with a river running through it. To enter the caves, we walked up a path made of many stairs that is built into the rock. Once inside, we admired the numerous stalactites, stalagmites, and other rock formations while we walked through to the river. Once there, we got on a small boat that took us back out of the cave. Coming to the end of the cave, we saw natural light streaming in through the vines that covered the opening in the mountain. It was a picturesque, otherworldly view.

While in Viñales, we explored the town square and surrounding area. The main square has a beautiful church, a dance studio, and numerous shops and restaurants. We spent some time exploring the city and made friends with the local stray dogs that then followed us around for the day.

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A CAMPUS DESERTED

Photos and artist statement by Holly Haywood



I tiptoed through UNE's Biddeford Campus for the first time in late March, right after everyone was sent home. It was desolate, dark, and disturbing. Empty lots, locked doors, and an unrecognizable hush. President Herbert himself remarked that the campus in March and April seemed "eerily quiet," and it's true: There are few settings as odd and unsettling as a deserted university campus.

As the UNE Communications team went about its work in the early days of the pandemic, we recognized that in addition to our usual marketing and communications work, we now had an archival obligation to capture this unprecedented rupture in our institutional history as it unfolded before our eyes.

As a photographer, I asked myself: How do I to record this landscape with a measure of hope — while also acknowledging the reality of our altered lives? I returned to our campuses time and time again, almost unconsciously choosing dark, rainy days. I did not feel sunny; I felt a profound sense of loss. Over time, I embraced the darkness, the beauty and symbolism of rain-soaked surfaces, the vastness of abandoned space.

Photography has always been a way for me to make sense of the world, of the things I cannot understand. Through the act of taking photographs — and then, later, editing and selecting images — I was able to find beauty and solace in these places, and I see now in these images a story of resilience and hope. ■





The Nor'easter field hockey squad is all thumbs-up during a team meeting on Zoom.

COACHING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

by Tristan Durgin

It was a shock to the system when the world of collegiate athletics came to a halt on March 13, 2020, amidst the early stages of the pandemic. While other elements of academic life at the University of New England were immediately reformatted to carry on, the physical nature of sports competition left seasons unfinished and teams separated without any warning. The Nor'easter coaches, many of whom are years into practicing their craft and developing trusted routines, were faced with tossing their playbooks aside and scouting against this new opponent.

In the short term, the coaches' primary focus was on remaining connected to their student-athletes. Technology like Zoom quickly became a popular method of communicating, as it provided the teams with face-to-face interaction that was lacking during the separation.

"I have been literally and figuratively 'Zooming' through my life as a coach in these times," shared men's basketball coach Ed Silva. "All of our student-athlete development activities, recruiting 'visits,' and meetings have occurred this way, so every day and night is jam-packed." Field hockey coach Danielle Collins has felt more connected to her student-athletes and prospective students during this remote period. "We have more face time with one another, specifically for that purpose," she said. "It has been nice to be able to talk so often versus always texting or sending an email."

The ease of video conferencing has provided opportunities to support the student-athletes in their adjustment to the new way of life and the absence of physical contact. Several coaches have held weekly virtual dinners or game nights to bring their team families together. Others

"Our team has been focused on personal connections and mindset during this time."

— Ashley Potvin-Fulford

have used this time to build up relationships with the alumni of their programs. This has taken the form of establishing a mentorship program to connect former student-athletes with the current group or bringing recent graduates into meetings to share their college experiences and how they prepared them for life after school. And some have had the chance to assist their student-athletes' mental development and growth.

"Our team has been focused on personal connections and mindset during this time, and we have been digging into the Premier Mindset program offered through the department," commented women's rugby coach Ashley Potvin-Fulford. The Premier Mindset online coursework features mental health strategies and training exercises from leading sports psychologists designed to enhance performance.

As things transition to a fall 2020 semester without outside competition, UNE's coaching staff is preparing a variety of plans within the University's safety parameters to engage and support their student-athletes as soon as they return to campus. On top of ensuring a successful resumption of in-person classes along with positive study routines, these plans should still provide many unique athletics opportunities and time to tap into areas that don't get enough attention during typical seasons.

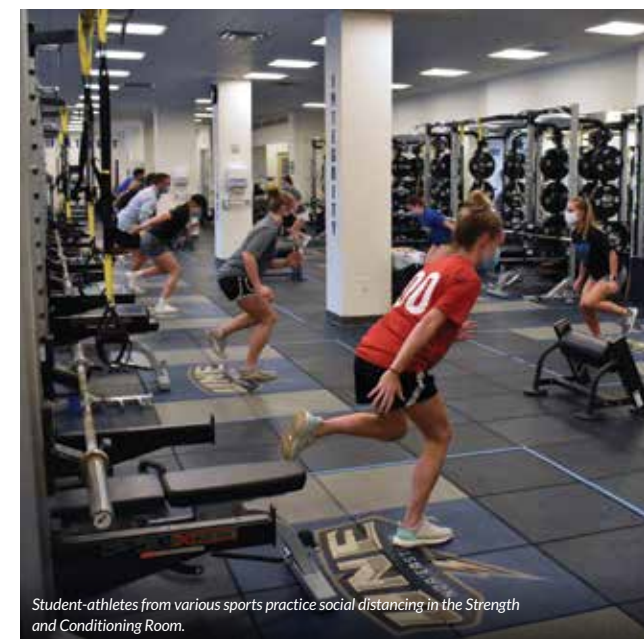
"This gives us a terrific opportunity to set specific skill assessment and spend more time on positional skill development," said women's ice hockey coach David Venditti. With activities better fit for individuals and small groups, it is going to be a great time to embrace a type of fundamental training that will likely resemble the days of summer camps. Some coaches intend to increase focus on nutrition education and injury prevention, while others will utilize video more as a means to evaluate practice habits. Newer coaches see it as a perfect chance to build a strong team culture and give those fresh relationships ample time to grow.

It will be a long process building towards the next chance to compete. Things will be completely different from before, but the idea is to embrace all the changes as positive.

"Since the start of this, I've tried to send the message that successful people don't have the best of everything; they make the best of everything," Silva added. The UNE coaches and their student-athletes have a renewed emphasis as a result of the pandemic — to appreciate the sense of community that sports can provide, to never take for granted any moment together, and to treat every practice and competition as if it is the last. These are more important than ever. ■

"This gives us a terrific opportunity to set specific skill assessment and spend more time on positional skill development."

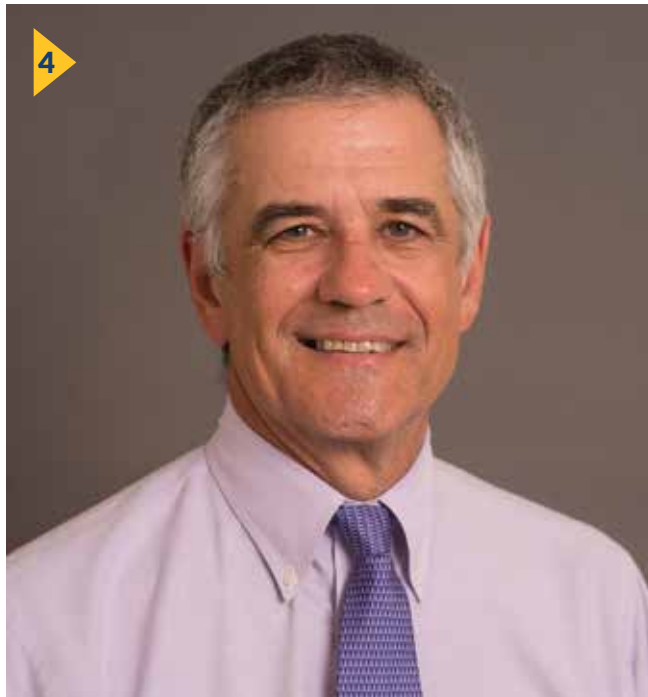
— David Venditti



Student-athletes from various sports practice social distancing in the Strength and Conditioning Room.



The Nor'easter football team spreads out on the Blue Field.



2020 HALL OF FAME SUMMARY

by Tristan Durgin

The 16th class of inductees into the University of New England Varsity Club Athletics Hall of Fame will include former student-athletes Kelly Coleman '15, D.P.T. '18, Ashley (Gott) Haase '12, and Aidan McParland '15, as well as long-time UNE administrator and professor Dennis Leighton.

Established in 2005, the Athletics Hall of Fame honors the very best in the combined history of St. Francis College, Westbrook College, and UNE. Through 2019, 52 individuals and seven teams have been inducted.

1 Kelly Coleman '15, D.P.T. '18

Kelly Coleman played in all 118 games for the women's basketball squad during her time at UNE (2011-15), including three as a starting forward. She amassed 1,508 points (12.8/game), 762 rebounds, and made 364 free throws (76.2%), which puts her fifth, eighth, and fifth, respectively, in the program's all-time totals. Coleman's decorated career concluded in 2014-15 with a fourth team All-America selection and the Commonwealth Coast Conference (CCC) Player of the Year distinction, along with her second all-region recognition and a third all-conference pick (all to the first team). She was also voted as the Maine Player of the Year as a junior, when she averaged a personal-best 17.7 points/game. The Nor'easters made national tournament appearances in those four years.

2 Ashley (Gott) Haase '12

Ashley Haase (formerly Ashley Gott) was UNE's starting catcher on the softball team from 2009 to 2012 and remains the known career leader in hits, with 201 over 158 games (.393 batting average). She also has the program's top spot in total bases (263), shares it in doubles (41), ranks sixth for runs batted in (77), and stands 10th in runs scored (93). Defensively, Haase had a .974 fielding percentage in 781 plays. She was the 2012 CCC Player of the Year and a four-time all-league selection (twice first team), while registering numerous personal highs as a junior (.450 average, 68 hits, 39 runs, 29 RBI). The Nor'easters also won the program's second conference championship in 2012.

3 Aidan McParland '15

Aidan McParland was the starting goalkeeper for the men's soccer team from 2011 to 2014, appearing in 62 of the squad's 68 contests. His career totals top the known program records: an .849 save percentage, a 1.23 goals against average, 24 victories, and 15 shutouts. McParland saved his best for the senior campaign, as he backstopped the Nor'easters to a 9-7-2 mark with an .878 save percentage, 0.91 goals against, and six shutouts. He was named the 2014 CCC Defensive Player of the Year that season, landed his third all-conference first team nod, and received second team All-New England status for a second time. Also in 2014, McParland was UNE's first student-athlete honored as a CoSIDA Academic All-America® First Team selection.

4 R. Dennis Leighton P.T., D.P.T.

Dennis Leighton has been the faculty athletics representative (FAR) at UNE since the fall of 1996, supporting and promoting the student-athlete experience. He is widely respected within the Faculty Athletics Representatives Association (FARA), which governs NCAA FAR activity on national, conference, and institutional levels. Leighton was on the association's Executive Committee from 2003 to 2016, which included serving as the president in 2007 and ten years in the role of secretary-treasurer. He was chosen as the recipient of FARA's prestigious David Knight Award in 2017. Additionally, he served on the NCAA Division III Management Council and is the UNE chapter president of the Chi Alpha Sigma National College Athlete Honor Society. ■

UNE HIRES FIRST P.D. MERRILL ENDOWED CHAIR OF BUSINESS AND A NEW DIRECTOR OF THE P.D. MERRILL MAKERSPACE

By Angela Coulombe



John Austin



Justine Bassett

In July 2020, UNE selected John Austin as the first P.D. Merrill Endowed Chair of Business, concluding a national search for a leader in business education and innovation to head its Business programs. The position, as well as the expansion of UNE's Makerspace, was made possible by a \$1.3 million gift from the P.D. Merrill Charitable Trust to enhance the University's programs in business, entrepreneurship, and innovation.

"UNE is a very vibrant school; that really stands out for me. The ability to manage uncertainty, along with the ability to be a deep critical thinker, will be essential to thrive in tomorrow's business world," says Austin. "UNE is committed to helping develop leaders who can create transformational change. As we all work towards figuring out how we're going to do things differently over the next couple of years, what a great time to be a student studying different techniques to help businesses thrive in these environments."

Austin is no stranger to transformational change within the business world. He holds a doctorate in organization studies from Boston College and a Bachelor of Arts in economics from Johns Hopkins University. Since 2013, Austin has owned Austin Executive Development, where he designs and delivers custom executive development programs, long-term strategy projects, and change leadership consulting for corporate, government, and nonprofit organizations.

"I see a commitment to innovation as a way to improve the world," says Austin. "As I've worked with undergraduate and graduate students, as well as executives, to become long-term change agents, it's very exciting to step into an institution where that is already part of the culture. I'm absolutely thrilled with the idea of engaging undergraduates in the same questions that are being asked in the business world. I would like UNE to become known as the university that not only creates long-term thinkers with deep technical and creative capabilities but takes those capabilities and turns them into action. UNE's business programs have the opportunity to become the connecting tissue to help the people who are developing these competencies translate them into long-term, sustainable enterprises."

"I see a commitment to innovation as a way to improve the world."
— John Austin

He continues, "I'm also excited about the integration of the P.D. Merrill Makerspace into the business programs as a means of fostering interdisciplinary teamwork along with the exploration of design-thinking and rapid prototyping. Having conversations between the discipline of business and other disciplines is where true innovation happens."

Justine Bassett, the new director of the P.D. Merrill Makerspace, couldn't agree more. "In a rapidly changing world, the P.D. Merrill Makerspace helps prepare students for jobs that don't even exist yet. The Makerspace allows students to learn new skills, develop creative confidence, and can be a great complement to their primary areas of study, as it crosses disciplines."

"The Makerspace allows students to learn new skills, develop creative confidence, and can be a great complement to their primary areas of study, as it crosses disciplines."

— Justine Bassett

Since its inception in 2016, the Makerspace has been a sought-after campus resource that supports UNE's mission of offering distinctive and integrated approaches to professional, experiential, and liberal education.

As an entrepreneur and business leader with extensive experience as a maker and artist, Bassett holds a bachelor's degree from Wellesley College and a master's degree from Georgetown University focused on international business. She began her career in international technology transfer for Bath Iron Works, Motorola, and Verizon and went on to a career in design — running her own business and later helping organizations like the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History incorporate innovation and design thinking into their visitor experience. Most recently, she was the chief program officer at a D.C.-area makerspace that worked with the 14th-largest school district in the country to develop innovative programs around making and skills for the future.

"The present circumstance with COVID-19 illustrates why the P.D. Merrill Makerspace is so important. While creating new-to-world products, students in the Makerspace develop a mindset that enables adapting to challenges, being open to possibilities, and feeling empowered to make a difference — no matter their background or field. I'm very excited to help ensure that students across UNE's diverse colleges benefit from this valuable (and fun!) resource." ■



John Achatz, trustee, P.D. Merrill Charitable Trust

CELEBRATING A LEGACY

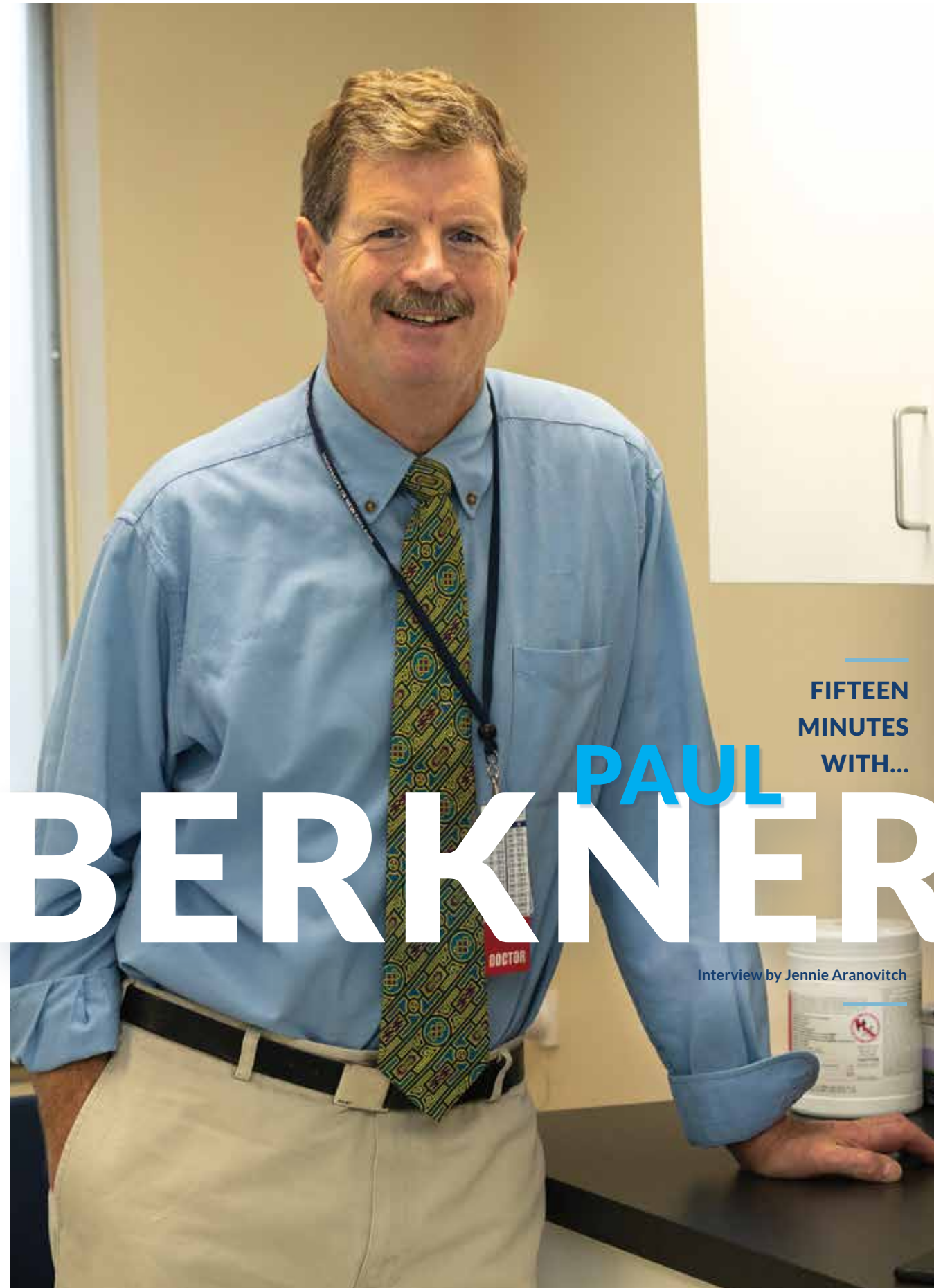
Members of the UNE community and the P.D. Merrill Charitable Trust, along with family and friends of P.D. Merrill, came together to honor him at the P.D. Merrill Legacy Celebration on October 15, 2020. Chair of Merrill Industries and a prominent business leader in the Portland community, Merrill was a longtime UNE board member who believed strongly in the University and its entrepreneurial approach to education.

Those present at the gathering recognized the lengthy history of support afforded to UNE by the P.D. Merrill Charitable Trust and specifically acknowledged the trust's most recent generous gift of \$1.3 million. The gift was made to create a new P.D. Merrill Endowed Chair of Business (filled by John Austin, Ph.D.) and to expand the P.D. Merrill Makerspace on the Biddeford Campus — a modification needed to accommodate increasing student and faculty usage of the space. The P.D. Merrill Charitable Trust has also supported UNE's Student Innovation Challenge, an annual competition organized out of the Makerspace.

John Achatz, a trustee of the P.D. Merrill Charitable Trust, stated, "P.D. cared a lot about UNE and a lot about business leadership in Maine. He did not like putting his name on things, but he would be quietly pleased that the University has chosen to honor him in this way. We are glad to support UNE in enhancing educational resources for future business leaders."



President James D. Herbert; John Austin, Ph.D., P.D. Merrill Endowed Chair of Business; Sandra L. Goolden, widow of P.D. Merrill and former trustee, University of New England



FIFTEEN
MINUTES
WITH...

PAUL

BERKNER

Interview by Jennie Aranovitch

Paul Berkner, B.S. '81 (Marine Biology), D.O. '86, a double UNE alum, is a former pediatrician and longtime associate clinical professor of pediatrics at UNE COM, who joined UNE's Student Health Services as the medical director on February 1, 2020. The former medical director at Colby College and a leader in the field of concussion prevention and management, Berkner assumed his new position at UNE just two days before the World Health Organization declared a public health emergency as the result of the coronavirus outbreak.

You started at UNE as medical director in February of 2020, but your ties to the University go back a long way. What is it like coming back to your alma mater in this position?

It's really exciting to come back in this new capacity. It's wonderful to see the University grow and expand to become the powerhouse that it has become over the years. The [Westbrook] College of Health Professions has just been eye-opening to me as I work my way through and understand more about what's going on. And it's been truly astonishing to see the amount of growth that has happened at the University since 1977 when I first walked on the campus.

You earned your undergraduate degree from UNE in marine biology. What were you planning on doing with that degree, and what ultimately made you decide to go to medical school?

I was in an oceanographic program called the Sea Education Association, out of Woods Hole, Massachusetts, when I was a junior. I always had the thought that I was going to either go to grad school or medical school, but when I got off the boat, I said, "There's no way I'm going into research." Researchers spend an awful lot of time by themselves

My other favorite thing is the health care staff. They are truly dedicated individuals. They're very smart. They're very well trained. And they really care about providing care. They work incredibly hard, and they're an amazing group of individuals.

You stepped into the position of medical director at UNE just as indicators were pointing to a possible pandemic status for the COVID-19 outbreak. I'm sure your first months on the job were quite different from what you expected. What has been the most challenging part for you in your role?

I think the most challenging part for all of us is that we've had to learn how to manage a brand new disease at a scale that we're not used to, and every single health care provider, epidemiologist, public health official in the world has had to scramble. We have tried to fit the virus into boxes — or categories — of things that we understand, things that we recognize and have dealt with before. But the problem is that we didn't know enough about this disease, and we can't put it into any of the boxes that we're used to. We can't put it in the influenza box. We can't put it in the SARS box. We can't put it into the MERS box. We can't put it in the Ebola box. That's been the challenging thing.

"We've been very intentional, and we've listened a lot. And if everyone does the things that we now know we need to do then not only can we survive — we can succeed."

doing things that really matter, but it wasn't for me. I liked dealing with people too much. I liked taking care of people. I wouldn't call myself an extrovert, but I enjoy interactions and I enjoy helping people.

What is your favorite thing about your job?

I really enjoy working with students. College health care is a transitory service. We provide care to students for four years or six years, or however many years they're on campus. But we're really not their long-term primary care doctors. Being part of a student's formative health care experience is very interesting and rewarding. We educate students about transitioning to adulthood in terms of medical care and about being fierce advocates for their health. When students are in their first year, it's not uncommon for their parents to be calling in, but by the time they're seniors, the students are reaching out themselves. And the way we get them to that point is by making them comfortable in the care that they're receiving and confident that they can explore how to manage their own health care in a safe environment.

And because we've been trying to put it into a box that doesn't fit, the public health and medical communities got some really important things wrong in the beginning. And because so many things have been wrong, the ground never feels stable.

And we still don't know what the next changes are. I think that that's the thing that most keeps me up at night. The not knowing what is coming next.

What are your feelings about how the fall semester will go?

I think we're on the right track. I think a lot of schools felt like they needed to make decisions right away, but we've put a lot of thought into this. We've been very intentional, and we've listened a lot. And if everyone does the things that we now know we need to do: wash our hands, keep socially distant; if you're sick, get seen and potentially tested ... If we all do that — faculty, staff, and students, then not only can we survive — we can succeed. ■

MY PERSPECTIVES ARE THE PRODUCT OF ...

by Carol Ewan Whyte

Carol Ewan Whyte, Ph.D., M.Sc., is the assistant director for research and service and a Public Health faculty for the College of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Born in Jamaica during the lesser known Hong Kong Flu pandemic, I started life as a survivor.

Jamaica is known for its food, natural beauty, athletes like Usain Bolt, and, of course, reggae. But, long before Bob Marley and his influential music, came one of Jamaica's most famous sons, one of the first Black civil rights leaders in the world, Marcus Mosiah Garvey.

Garvey was born in 1887 and died in 1940. He sought to unify people of African descent living worldwide and advocated for Black people to be proud of themselves, to work hard, and he begged for us to be seen as equals. He was even deported from the U.S. for his outspoken nature and radical views. Black pride started with Marcus Garvey and is a foundation on which Jamaicans build their identity. Nelson Mandela, Malcom X, and Martin Luther King Jr. are some of the world-renowned civil rights leaders who learned from the teachings of Marcus Garvey.

Jamaica's motto is "Out of Many, One People," and that is because our heritage is filled with a fascinating mash-up of cultures: from the native Arawak Indians, to the Spanish and English who fought over our land and enslaved us, to the Africans brought to the island as slaves, the Asians who came as indentured laborers, and our ancestors from the Middle East.

My personal history is also deeply rooted in religion and spirituality, as Jamaica is in the Guinness Book of World Records for having the most churches per square mile in the world. Here, the word "churches" really means "places of worship" as we have almost all religions and beliefs represented on the island. We even gave the world a new religion — Rastafarianism. Having so many different religious views results in many heated arguments, but they all end up being lessons of tolerance and learning to live with friends, neighbors, co-workers, and relatives who have different views from your own.

At 10 years old, I went to an all-girl (boarding) high school which was once White-only. As a young Black girl, my friends and I were sometimes reminded by politicians seeking re-election of the privilege we now had; not that we had worked our tails off to receive the highest scores in the national placement exam in order to be placed in this school. My alma mater, St. Hilda's Diocesan High School, is even mentioned in Malcolm Gladwell's book, *Outliers*.



While completing my first master's degree, I started working at a research institute on the Mona campus of The University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica — a university that has produced Nobel Prize and Nobel Peace Prize winners and numerous world leaders. My job lasted for 13 years! It was the most eye-opening job I could have had, allowing me almost daily trips to the inner city. I saw abject poverty; I saw unfathomable resilience among community members as they struggled to survive; and I watched many children rise above it all to succeed. I also saw unexpected affluence that came from hard work. I saw a lot, experienced many emotions, and through it all, I learned to advocate for my research "subjects" who became like family.

On a personal level, I am married to a 6-foot-tall, 200-pound Black man who has been stopped so many times on the highways between Maine and Boston that the troopers know him by name; yet they continue to pull him over. I also have a Black 16-year-old daughter who is often the only Black child in her class and who has spent weeks educating her peers, administrators, and teachers at her school about racism, about being Black and female in America, about being Black in Maine, and about being Black in her school.

I have watched her cry when the burden on her 16-year-old shoulders became too much for her. But, she keeps on with her education because

she sees it as her mission to create change, and change starts with correct information. Last November, on one trip to the Capitol building to meet senators and elected representatives from across the U.S. as part of her work on climate change, she was called "a special breed of Black" by an elected United States official who was so impressed by her. He meant well, and he ended up having some great conversations with my daughter on the subway. But his words came out so wrong, and that made them unforgettable. Needless to say, my daughter will always remember that encounter!

"In Jamaica, I grew up in a culture where we were taught that we are all one, and my Jamaican history is rooted in advocating for equal rights for all: one love and respect!"

I moved to Maine in 2007, and in 2016, I landed at UNE. I work with the graduate public health program where we know that racism is a public health problem. It should not be a surprise to anyone that non-White people in this country have shorter lifespans, and there is a term for it that I think is so appropriate: "weathering." Imagine what happens to the wood on your deck or your picket fence over time happening internally — in bodies that are forced to constantly produce abnormally high levels of cortisol and other inflammatory agents as they respond to the stresses caused by living in a society that sees them as less equal, less capable, less worthy of the liberty, justice, and freedom promised to all.

In Jamaica, I grew up in a culture where we were taught that we are all one, and my Jamaican history is rooted in advocating for equal rights for all: one love and respect! I will be the first to admit that I have a lot to learn about race and other inequities present in this society, and I have started by listening — listening to Black Americans and people of color who share their experiences with me and provide me with historical context for current issues. I am here to listen to all voices, to learn, and to use my knowledge, my voice, and advocacy skills to make change.

UNE has been making strides to address diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) matters. This work has understandably been accelerated and amplified by the recent racial tensions across the country. Since 2019, I have been involved with UNE's efforts to create a more welcoming community and to identify and address DEI issues as part of Priority IV of the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan. I currently serve as co-chair of the University Committee for Community, Equity, and Diversity, the new name for the Priority IV Taskforce. This committee oversees DEI work across UNE campuses and comprises UNE community members from all levels who are dedicated to this work.

As part of this group, I worked closely with our consultants [Rankin & Associates] to develop and deploy the Campus Climate Survey completed this March. The survey was available to all members of the UNE community, and we were all able to have our voices heard regarding DEI topics. The results of the Climate Survey are currently being reviewed and will be made public to UNE community members this fall. [The survey results were presented to the UNE community in September 2020.] I was also a part of the search committee to bring our first associate provost for Community, Equity and Diversity to campus.

The creation of this senior-level position last year and the commitment to move the process along during unprecedented times is another assurance that UNE leadership is dedicated to identifying the DEI issues and gaps that exist in our current approaches and, through the leadership to be provided by this new leadership position, addressing them. As an institution of higher learning, we know the importance of having accurate information available, so I am also involved with the development of a central repository of resources for members of our community. Accurate information is needed to drive knowledge, which, in turn, drives true and lasting change.

I am pleased to see the efforts being made by UNE to go beyond pious platitudes and to start to implement more tangible change at all levels. I know that with the commitment of our administration, available resources, and systems, and the dedicated teams across our campuses, we will make UNE an even more welcoming place to study, live, play, and work.

"I am pleased to see the efforts being made by UNE to go beyond pious platitudes and to start to implement more tangible change at all levels."

As a child growing up on the tiny island of Jamaica, I never knew exactly how my learning to accept others despite our differences would come into play in my professional life. As I work on the Priority IV committee, I am thankful for my beginnings and my early life experiences, and the connection between my formative lessons and my current professional life have become clearer. Every encounter, every experience, has shaped my perspective; they help me to be tolerant of others and the differences we each bring to the table and, importantly, to not be afraid of having difficult conversations. I bring this approach to my work as I continue to learn, grow, and advocate for change and a better experience for all on our campuses.

At the end of the day, we are all humans in search of a better life, and our phenotypic expressions should not be used by others to determine where we live, how we live, how long we live, or how we die. ■

class NOTES

Notes submitted from Westbrook Junior College, Westbrook College, St. Francis College and UNE alumni were published in the summer editions of The Tower and Knights and Nor'easters publications.

1984

Jeffrey Glassheim writes: I'm enjoying retirement in the New Year and decade here in my 8th year already in the Land of Enchantment — sun bathed NM! My eldest daughter, Elyssa, is an MS-3 at the University of New Mexico School of Medicine and completed a 1-year Post-Sophomore Fellowship sponsored by the Department of Pathology back in June '19. Thus she is now a member of the Class of '21. My youngest daughter, Brenna, remains in my college town of Philadelphia following her graduation last May '19 cum laude with her Business Accounting degree from Temple University's Fox School of Business and now works in the solar power industry in sales and finance just over the Betsy Ross and Ben Franklin Bridges in suburban NJ. Happy New Year/Decade to all my Class of '84 UNECOM alumni!

1992

Garey Raymond writes: I had a very successful practice in Los Angeles for 16 years and was voted top provider by Open Care out of 782 clinics in greater Los Angeles. I have also been car racing and won the Pacific road racing championship in 2016 and The E production championship in 2019. I have moved the practice to Vista, CA to focus on racing and bringing PT to the race track. I won the Jeff Nadler Spirit of Cal Club for starting this new and valuable venture to racing.

2000

Chong So writes: I am living in Manchester, NH and working as a family physician in Dracut, MA.

2001

Glenn Leavitt writes: My patient was featured in an article in the East Idaho News on April 15, 2020 entitled "Pregnant woman with COVID-19 on Road to Recovery" and includes this: "Jeremy calls the recovery a miracle and attributes it to the prayers of the community, and the efforts of health care workers, particularly Kim's obstetrician, Dr. Glenn Leavitt. Kim is eight months pregnant and was seeing him for prenatal care.

But the couple says Leavitt, who is a doctor of osteopathic medicine, ended up doing a lot more than simple prenatal care. They say his osteopathic treatments have been instrumental in Kim's recovery." A win for osteopathic medicine! <https://www.eastidahonews.com/?p=430283>



Jeffrey Glassheim

2002

John Kasel writes: I am serving as Director of Advanced Practice Providers and a Board of Governors member with Baylor Scott & White Health in Texas. I received a Doctor of Health Administration degree from Medical University of South Carolina.

Eric Hibma writes: Since graduation in 2002 with a Master's in Physician Assistant Studies, my wife and I settled in Plainwell, MI where I have been a PA-C for the past 17.5 years with the same office. I started in Family Practice, but we subsequently became a multi-specialty practice and I have been a Pediatric PA-C for the past 7 years. I am married with 8 children and we celebrated our 20th wedding anniversary this May.

Carrie Golden Klonel writes: This year I made a big change and left hospital-owned, FFS medicine and joined a Direct Primary Care office. I now have a small patient panel, plenty of time for office visits, zero staff and I'm SO happy! www.hearthsidefamilyhealth.com



Garey Raymond



Eric Hibma and family

Please email your news and photos to alumni@une.edu, post on UNE Connect at www.alumni.une.edu, or mail to the UNE Office of Alumni Advancement, 716 Stevens Avenue, Portland, ME 04103.

College of Osteopathic Medicine news should be emailed to RSAS@une.edu.

PLEASE LIMIT SUBMISSIONS TO 75 WORDS OR LESS. SUBMISSIONS MAY BE EDITED FOR LENGTH AND CLARITY.

2003

Mark Montgomery writes: I have recently accepted the position of Chief Diversity Officer at SUNY Polytechnic Institute in Utica, NY where I will deploy strategic and sustained approaches to further advance a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion for the institution's students, faculty, and staff.

2008

Daniel Frey writes: **Matthew Somma '06, D.P.T. '09** and I partnered to open Finish Strong Physical Therapy and Performance in Falmouth, ME in January of 2020. Finish Strong PT provides compassionate, evidence-informed, and cost-effective physical therapy that restores independence for you to move well, feel well and live well.

2009

Terri Williams La Russo writes: In 2018, I was named Associate Division Chief for Hospital Medicine, and have also had a faculty appointment to the University of South Carolina School of Medicine-Greenville since 2016. In December 2019, I completed a physician executive MBA at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Hope everyone is well!

2013

Kathryn Hamel writes: Adjunct Professor at Missouri Baptist University in the Social Science Department since 2015. Promoted to Child Abuse and Neglect Supervisor in the investigation and assessment unit for the State of Missouri in 2016, and supervising MSW students' field practicums for University of Missouri

2014

Lisa Carpenter writes: Moved back to Biddeford, working as an ambulatory internist and bariatric management specialist. Recently bought my first house and I'm participating in the MaineHealth Provider Leadership Development Fellowship. Really loving my role and work here!

Justa Smith writes: After graduation, I began attending Walden University to pursue my Doctor of Social Work degree. I got married to my best friend, Clayton on 08/11/18. My Doctor of Social Work degree was conferred on 8/12/18. I am now working at a community action agency and work with seniors.

2016

Crystal Meeks Evans writes: Since graduating from UNE with my Master's in Social Work, I have gotten married and started my career. Shortly after graduating, I received the job of Alcohol and Drug Prevention Coordinator at Region Mental Health Center in Clarksdale, MS. Three years into the job, I was asked to accept the position as Co-Occurring Disorder Specialist at the same local mental health agency. During all of this time, I have attended numerous amounts of training across the state of Mississippi. I have also had the opportunity to attend drug and alcohol prevention conferences across the U.S. (Chicago and Boston). I am a Certified Crisis Prevention Instructor at my agency as well. One goal that I have accomplished during this time is becoming a Certified Mental Health Therapist in the state of Mississippi.

Krystal Hamlin writes: I have worked in the field of Social Work since I have graduated from UNE. I work as an Outreach Coordinator at a local domestic violence shelter. I have gained a new member to my family since leaving UNE. I am the mother of an active 2-year-old boy. Every day with him is truly a blessing. Thanks to UNE for the education. It has truly enhanced my skills and mindset.

Kristi Muzzy writes: I graduated with a master's in social work. I became a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW) in the state of Vermont in 2019. I have been

working as a medical social worker within a federally qualified health center in association with the designated mental health agency of that county. Since receiving my social work license, I have decided to open my own private practice, Sunrise Supportive Counseling, LLC, in Burlington, Vermont.

2017

Rowen Martinez writes: After obtaining my D.P.T. in December 2017, I visited the Portland and Biddeford campuses during my commencement exercises in May 2018. I was also fortunate enough to visit Seville and Tangier campus on a trip to Southern Spain and Morocco in March 2019.

2018

Ayaz Mahmood Khan writes: I am glad to announce that I continue to actively engage in my addiction medicine and pain management medical practice. The MPH degree that I received in 2018 from UNE has helped me understand better the public health ramifications of drug addictions. I am also happy to announce that since leaving UNE, I have received the prestigious FACHE (Fellow of American College of Hospital Executives) credential. This very prestigious certification distinguishes me as a leader among leaders in the healthcare field.

2019

Alden Bush writes: I just completed my Master of Science with a concentration in Registered Nursing and am continuing on to the Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Doctor of Nursing Practice Program at Columbia University School of Nursing. I was also just elected as a University Senator serving for the 2020-2022 period as the representative of Columbia Nursing to the Columbia University Senate. My MPH from UNE has been an invaluable resource in my clinical education and while working during this global viral pandemic.





“I always saw Georgette as the ‘mother’ of UNE. The impact of her intelligence, steadfastness, and caring for everyone — students, faculty, and staff — in both formal and informal ways was evident over the decades.” — *Danielle Ripich*

Georgette Sutton drinking tea in the kitchen of her home on Hills Beach Road

REMEMBERING

by Amy Haile

GEORGETTE R. SUTTON's relationship with the UNE community began 1954 when her husband, Bill, returned to St. Francis High School to teach math, French, and chemistry. When St. Francis transformed into a college and Bill became the dean of students, the Sutton family, and particularly Georgette, became a family away from home for many St. Francis students.

As the years went on, the Sutton family became further entwined in the St. Francis and UNE legacy: Theresa Sutton MacKenzie '93, Bill Sutton Jr. '87, Louise Ann Sutton SFC '76, and Claire Sutton WC '88 are all alumni, and when Bill passed away in 1983, Georgette joined the staff of UNE on the switchboard followed by her daughter, Kathy, who currently works in Financial Aid.

“I always saw Georgette as the ‘mother’ of UNE,” said former UNE President Danielle Ripich HA '16, president emerita. “The impact of her intelligence, steadfastness, and caring for everyone — students, faculty, and staff — in both formal and informal ways was evident over the decades. I came to love her, and I treasure the quilt and the handmade gifts she gave me over the years. We are all fortunate to have known her and her giving spirit.”

Awarded the Kenneally Cup in 1994 and named an honorary alumna in 2002, Georgette's longest lasting legacy to UNE may well be her holiday pork pies, which inspired the annual UNE pork pie luncheon.

President James Herbert recalled, “When I was doing online research in preparation for my interview at UNE, the first video I happened upon was an interview with Georgette describing the pork pie (tourtière) tradition she started at SFC. I remember being struck by how her story embodied UNE's strong sense of community. With her warm smile, long-time family connection to the Biddeford Campus, and way of speaking that comes from a lifetime on the coast of Maine, Georgette was a living testament of UNE's heritage.”

The Sutton Lounge in Decary Hall will be rededicated to honor both Bill and Georgette Sutton and their longtime dedication to both St. Francis College and UNE.

JEAN WILKINSON was a longtime trustee, leader, donor, and friend to the University of New England. Jean started her 19-year tenure as a UNE trustee in 1987, at a time when the relatively new University was still defining itself. Her expertise in finance as well as her strong commitment to the community made her the best choice for vice chair (1988-1989), and then chair (1990-1995) of the board of trustees. Jean's wise council guided UNE through one of its most transformational times, including the merger with Westbrook College, and set it on the path to become the nationally recognized institution we know today.



Jean Wilkinson, standing with Sumner "Milt" Field, husband of Trustee Diane Collins Field '81, '85



Harold "Ed" Woodsum

After Jean left the board of trustees in 2006, she remained a strong supporter of the University. She made an impact across our campuses with her generosity, including many gifts to capital campaigns, multiple scholarship funds, the Art Gallery, and the Annual Fund. In 2010, Jean was inducted into the Deborah Morton Society in recognition of her leadership not only at UNE but also during her career and within the environmental, social, religious, and educational organizations that were important to her.

UNE Trustee Emeritus **HAROLD "ED" WOODSUM** served as a trustee of Westbrook College from 1979 to 1986 and as a trustee of the University of New England from 1999 to 2010, serving as vice chair and then chair of the board during that tenure. Ed was awarded honorary doctorates from Westbrook College in 1991 and the University of New England in 2004.

An original co-founder of Drummond Woodsum law firm in Portland, Maine, Ed practiced law at the firm for 33 years, with a six-year leave of absence to serve as director of athletics at his alma mater, Yale University. In addition to his volunteer work at UNE, Ed led and volunteered with several national, local, and civic organizations that focused on stewardship of the environment, the arts, and children. Ed's wife, Joan, passed away in 2014, and, since then, the Joan and Ed Woodsum Endowed Scholarship has made an impact on the lives of UNE students from coastal Maine. ■



Gene Coffin



Valerie Hubbard

NOT ALL HEROES WEAR SCRUBS

by Alan Bennett

Gene Coffin and Valerie Hubbard work on a different kind of front line.

As housekeeping supervisors at the University of New England — Coffin in Biddeford and Hubbard in Portland — they lead teams of professionals dedicated to ensuring both the cleanliness of the campuses' facilities and the safety of its students, faculty, and professional staff.

A New York native and decades-long Mainer, Hubbard is celebrating her 15th year at UNE and her third being charged with overseeing housekeeping operations at UNE's historic grounds along Stevens Avenue. Coffin, of Portland, has been with the University for two years and comes to its sprawling seaside campus in Biddeford after 15 years of working in health care and environmental safety, most recently at Southern Maine Health Care.

Prior to 2020, their work involved detailed cleaning and monitoring of all University buildings based on daily, detailed checklists. Those lists included the deep cleaning of bathrooms, classrooms, and windows and the dusting of surfaces.

But the job evolved as the coronavirus pandemic began to take root.

In March, the University ceased on-campus operations to protect against community spread of COVID-19. Since then, as UNE prepared to resume in-person instruction, Coffin's and Hubbard's custodial teams have employed a number of strategies to shield the UNE community from the virus — and it has been no small task.

UNE's classrooms have been transformed to allow for social distancing. Chairs have been arranged for students to sit six feet apart, per U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. Faculty podiums have been placed seven feet from the front row of student seats, and sanitizing stations have been installed throughout classrooms for students to use as they enter, sit down, and leave.

Learning at UNE now also involves a detailed sanitation process. Protocol requires that students first clean their hands, use disinfectant wipes on their learning spaces, and then discard the wipes. Once classes conclude, students stand in line, six feet apart, and leave one at a time.

"We have been planning for this every day since March."
— Valerie Hubbard

And changes to the setup do not stop at the classroom. New wayfinding signs direct students to enter and exit buildings through separate doorways, to allow maximum distance between people.

"We have been planning for this every day since March," Hubbard said. Professional cleaning practices have also become more advanced.

Over the summer, housekeeping staff became trained in using an electrostatic sanitation system, commonly referred to as a portable misting or fogging system, to sanitize hard-to-reach surfaces. The machine, created by GenEon Technologies, sprays a fine mist of chemical sanitizer solution that can kill coronaviruses like COVID-19, among others, in less than a minute.

The method takes the crew's existing protocols of cleaning surfaces a step further. Custodians are also taking precautions to protect themselves by wearing face masks, gloves, and safety glasses to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

Virus-proofing campus may seem like a lot of work — and it is — but for Hubbard, the increased precautions are just part of adapting to these most unprecedented times. "It's just a different method of cleaning than we had before," she said. "It's more detailed because we are very conscious of avoiding students and staff becoming sick."

One roadblock staff have encountered is a diminished stock of chemical cleaners from manufacturers. As consumers have seen during the coronavirus crisis, hand sanitizers and other disinfecting agents have been in short supply. "It's been a moving target," said Coffin. "We're constantly trying to meet the challenge of what we can get for cleaning supplies."

Despite the hurdles, Coffin stays motivated by one simple principle: doing what is right. "I initially wanted to work in health care because I wanted to know, at the end of the day, that the efforts I made actually benefitted the health and wellbeing of people," he said. "Here, my motivation is to keep people safe."

Hubbard has worn many hats in her 39 years in housekeeping and said she takes pride in knowing she and her staff are able to provide a healthy campus environment. "I find it enjoyable to stand back and look at something clean and know that people don't need to worry about getting sick," she said. "Because that has to be done."

Coffin said part of the job in ensuring a healthy UNE community is educating people about proper hygiene to reduce spread of COVID-19. "The key is to wash your hands and to be mindful. It's about consistency," he insisted. "We want everybody to be conditioned to the thought process and do what they need to do to make it effective."

"We want everybody to be conditioned to the thought process and do what they need to do to make it effective."
— Gene Coffin

Hubbard also stressed that the task of ensuring a safe campus community extends beyond the cleaning staff.

"Facilities and Housekeeping worked together all summer, and we continue that work. But it's not just up to us. It is also up to faculty, staff, and students when they're here," she said. "We all have to pitch in and work together." ■

ANGLES OF APPROACH

by Hillary Mishcon

Hillary Mishcon is a Doctor of Pharmacy candidate in UNE's School of Pharmacy, Class of 2021. But before she made the decision to pursue a career as a community pharmacist, the Andover, New Hampshire, native received a fine arts degree from the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design, and she still paints in what little spare time her graduate studies allow. We asked Hillary if there were parallels between these two seemingly divergent life paths: art and pharmacy.

I actually think it's really interesting that people view them as so separate because, for me, it was kind of such a natural flow from one to the other. Especially because when you're painting, you can choose to look at the world through a lot of different lenses. One of the lenses you can use to look at the world is through chemistry, and everything — I mean *everything* — relates back to chemistry, painting especially. And then that ties in very easily with pharmacy.

With art, especially when you're doing a lot of drawing of humans, you have to have a good sense of anatomy and how the body works in order to reproduce an image of a person and to depict them effectively. And that knowledge, again, ties into pharmacy — having a sense of anatomy — and in pharmacy, obviously, you go into the internal organs a little bit more than you do in art. I think the two tie together more than people feel that they do.

On a really basic level, there are critical thinking and creative thinking skills that are widely applicable to both. And in both cases, you sort of learn to approach a problem from a lot of different angles. You have to do that in art, and you have to do that with patients in practice. It's really using the same kind of skills, but in totally different environments.



Mishcon in her studio at work on "Cook House," currently in progress



"Nora's Dining Room," 20"x24", a painting by Hillary Mishcon from 2016

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