

WINTER 2018-19

THE LINK FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

WAGNER



100 YEARS UPON THE HILL

The Staten Island Campus, Rephotographed

Page 22

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VOL. 16, NO. 1

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City of Dreams

For President-Elect Joel W. Martin, Wagner's location is one of its outstanding strengths. "I mean, my God, what a view!" he said during his introductory talk. "It's a portal of opportunity to all who dream big." Read more on pages 5–6.

PHOTOGRAPH: JONATHAN HARKEL



From the President

Introducing Joel and Jan Martin



IT WAS WONDERFUL to see the historic moment that happened on campus in December with the introduction of Dr. Joel W. Martin as the 19th president of Wagner College. I could not be more thrilled with his

selection. (You can read more about him on pages 5–6.)

Joel is a gifted educator, an accomplished scholar, and a strong advocate for liberal education and the practical liberal arts. That's exactly what we were looking for as a president going forward. He is the provost of Franklin and Marshall College, one of the esteemed liberal arts colleges in the country. He has been a department chair, held an endowed chair, and been a top administrator at well-regarded universities. He's well prepared in his experience, academically as well as administratively, to lead an institution like Wagner. In addition, he's a true scholar.

His wife, Jan Martin, is a special person in her own right. She's a K-12 science teacher, currently working in York, Pennsylvania. In this economically depressed

city, she coordinates a STEAM academy — science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math — working to provide a powerful education to underprivileged kids.

They are the most gracious, loving couple that you could imagine. It's just a home run in every way. They are a wonderful fit on every level.

I want to thank the search committee and the trustees personally for successfully completing such a challenging task, especially Andy Cortese '72, who chaired the search committee. He did a phenomenal job and gave an inordinate amount of time. Board chair Warren Procci '68 H'17 also gave much time and effort to the selection.

For Carin and me, Wagner is a precious place, and it will be very deep in our hearts and minds every day for the rest of our lives. You will never be far away from us in our thoughts.

As Carin and I move on to the next stage of our lives, we've been comparing leaving Wagner to parents letting go of a child — they love the child dearly, of course, but it's time for the child to move out of the home. This situation is always a little threatening to parents — until they see that the child has met her or his soul mate, and they see how wonderful the next stage of their child's life journey is going to be with a partner like that. I'm convinced that Joel and Jan Martin are those soul mates for Wagner.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Guarasci".

Richard Guarasci
PRESIDENT

A WONDERFUL FIT President-Elect Joel W. Martin and his wife, Jan, with Carin and Richard Guarasci in the Wagner president's office.



From the Editor

The Master Teachers of the Wagner Plan

At the beginning of the fall 2018 semester, I spent some time reading the descriptions of all 21 First-Year Learning Communities offered to Wagner’s 425 first-year students.

What an interesting slate of topics the Wagner faculty created! I wished I could take all of them. I’m curious about “the nature of science and its relationship to modern life”; I’d like to know more about “how language, culture, social and political events are interrelated,” whether there is “a place for consciousness within an evolutionary account of human beings,” and “the triangular interaction of humans, microbes, and the environment,” just to name a few examples.

As we celebrate the Wagner Plan’s 20th anniversary in this magazine issue, I want to recognize that the Wagner Plan works because of the commitment of the faculty. Their enthusiasm for giving students a rich and meaningful education from their first to their last semester has made it successful.

First-Year Learning Communities, in particular, require extra time, coordination, and care. The two professors who collaborate on each Learning Community create a theme, teach basic courses in their disciplines around this theme, organize learning opportunities outside of the classroom, offer in-depth writing workshops in the Reflective Tutorial course, and provide academic advising to each student.

Two of the many master teachers in this program are Alison Smith, professor of history, and Anne Schotter, professor of English. Smith has taught in the First-Year Program every

year since it began except one. For 15 of those years, she and Schotter have offered a Learning Community together — making them the most experienced pair in the program.

Their Learning Community’s title has evolved from “City and Civilization” to “Encountering Others in the Old World and New” to this year’s “Exploring the Global Roots of New York City.” It has always incorporated basic courses in literature and history, but with varying emphasis as interests and needs have evolved. The Reflective Tutorial focuses on exploring the history and culture of New York City.

“We’ve always tried to connect the past to the present for our students,” said Schotter. “And the present provides frequent opportunities for it.”

Smith has also worked with economics professor Mary Rose Leacy to teach “Urbanization, Civilization, and Collapse” and with psychology professor Larry Nolan to offer “Citizen Appetites,” which combined historical and psychological perspectives on food. Schotter has also collaborated with Patricia Moynagh (government and politics) to offer “Human Rights and Human Wrongs,” which looked at issues of justice in politics and literature.

It takes an unusual degree of dedication to offer a First-Year Learning Community, as well as all other components of the Wagner Plan. Wagner is indeed fortunate in its faculty and their joy in teaching.

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EDITOR, WAGNER MAGAZINE

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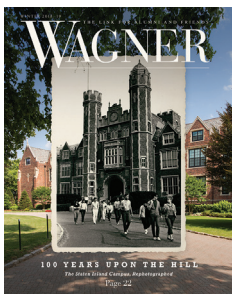
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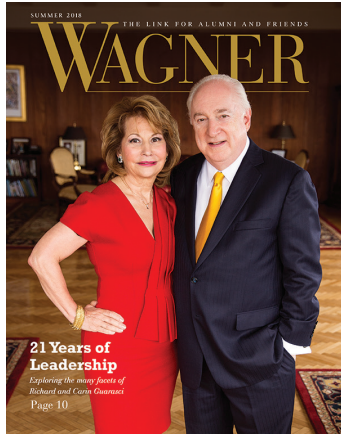
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On the Cover

The inset black and white photo is from March 1985 by Morris Warman. The color photo is from July 2018 by Jonathan Harkel. The photo composite was created by Natalie Nguyen. See more then-and-now photos celebrating Wagner’s Staten Island centennial on pages 22–29.

From Our Readers



A Strong Role Model

Thank you for the touching remembrance of Jeanne P. Corbo, former director of placement at Wagner, which appeared in the summer 2018 issue of *Wagner Magazine*. I served as one of Mrs. Corbo's student assistants in 1970. I know firsthand that she was a dynamo on campus as she assisted current students in finding jobs and planned recruitment events for seniors. She was also a subtle, but effective, role model for strong family values and work ethic, the importance of celebrating special events, and just being available for hurting folks. She is missed. Mrs. Corbo was the topic of my recent icebreaker



at New Day Toastmasters on September 6, 2018, in Staten Island.

Rose Stella Proscia '72
RETIRED SSA BILINGUAL CLAIMS REP
AND COMPETENT COMMUNICATOR,
TOASTMASTERS

A New Era for Field Hockey

I just read in the summer edition of *Wagner* that the College has added two new athletic teams, including women's field hockey. What happened to the women's field hockey team of old? I played four seasons of varsity field hockey during my years at Wagner. There was no such thing as Title IX back in the day. We practiced on the Oval — when the IFC [Inter-

Fraternity Council] wasn't playing scrimmage football. Wonderful Rita Rauba, professor of physical education, was our coach. We had no trainer or equipment room. We laundered our own uniforms and played games against other New York area colleges and universities at Staten Island Academy. Most members of the team were on the Dean's List, too. Field hockey is a wonderful game; I'm happy to hear that it is returning to the Hill.

Molly LeVan '72

Editor's Note: In October 1978, the Wagnerian announced the cancellation of the field hockey team. That program had existed for at least 10 years. Coach Rita Rauba cited lack of interest in the sport in the region, which made it difficult to create a competitive season. Now, field hockey is on the upswing; the Northeast Conference announced in September 2018 that it will reinstate field hockey as a championship sport in 2019–20. Wagner will be a member of the NEC's six-team league. One other note of interest: Title IX of the Education Amendments, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program, was signed into law on June 23, 1972.



WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU We welcome letters from readers. Letters should refer to material published in the magazine and include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number. The editor reserves the right to determine the suitability of letters for publication and to edit them for accuracy and length.

Laura Barlament, Editor
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Upon the Hill

Learning, teaching, giving and achieving on Grymes Hill and beyond

‘We Have Found Our Family’

A warm welcome for the 19th president of Wagner College, Joel W. Martin

JOEL W. MARTIN, PH.D., was introduced to the Wagner community on December 5, 2018, as the next president of Wagner College. He will begin his term on July 1, 2019. He succeeds President Richard Guarasci, who is retiring.

DISTINGUISHED ACADEMIC RECORD

MARTIN COMES TO THE WAGNER PRESIDENCY with a long record of teaching, service, and leadership at colleges and universities large and small.

Martin earned his bachelor’s degree at a small liberal arts college, Birmingham-Southern, in Alabama, his home state. He holds a master’s in theological studies from Harvard University and a Ph.D. in the history of religions from Duke University. He began his academic career at Franklin and Marshall, a liberal arts college located in Lancaster, Penn., in 1988 as a professor and, later, chair of the religious studies department.

A noted expert on Native American religions, he is the author and editor of several books in this field, including *Native Americans, Christianity, and the Reshaping of the American Religious Landscape* (2010) and *The Land Looks After Us: A History of Native American Religion* (2001). In 2000, he was named the Costo Endowed Chairholder in American Indian Affairs at the University of California Riverside, where he also served as interim dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

From 2006 to 2014, he held academic leadership positions at the University of Massachusetts Amherst: He served as dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, then as the university’s vice provost for academic personnel and dean of the faculty.

He then returned to Franklin and Marshall to serve as provost and dean of the faculty. He has led key efforts there, such as engaging the faculty in the design of a new visual arts center; spearheading initiatives on creativity and innovation, the humanities, and science education; and securing a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support faculty diversification and inclusive pedagogy.



THE SEARCH PROCESS

“OVER THE COURSE OF SEVEN MONTHS, a very diverse search committee evaluated a large and talented pool of candidates and unanimously endorsed Joel Martin to be the next president of Wagner College,” said Andrew F. Cortese ’72, a Wagner trustee and chair of the presidential search committee. “The Board of Trustees then unanimously and enthusiastically voted to select Dr. Martin. We are thrilled to welcome him as our next president.”

The 16-member search committee represented the trustees, faculty, administration, and the student body. They reviewed dossiers submitted by more than 140 candidates for the position. Confidentiality was guaranteed to ensure that candidates who held key positions at other institutions would apply.

The committee interviewed 12 semi-finalists, from whom they selected three finalists for in-depth interviews and campus visits.

“Joel blew us away,” said search committee member Patricia Tooker ’79 M’04 D’16, dean of the Evelyn L. Spiro School of Nursing. “I told him, ‘You are our next president.’ We were impressed with his resume, but even more so in person. He’s

{ CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE }



First the Facts . . .

6,450

ALUMNI WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE WAGNER PLAN FOR THE PRACTICAL LIBERAL ARTS

148

PROFESSORS WHO HAVE TAUGHT AT LEAST ONE FIRST-YEAR LC SINCE 1998

{CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE}

so genuine, appreciative, and interested in who we are. He wants to keep what we do intact and build on it for the next generation. He’s also fun; he has a sense of humor.

“What resonated was his love for Wagner, his respect for Wagner, and his vision for who we can be in the future.”

FIRST VISIT

ON DECEMBER 5, the day of the presidential selection announcement, Joel Martin and his wife, Jan, made their first visit to meet all constituents on campus. An introductory program with President Guarasci was live streamed, followed by a reception in the Union.

The couple’s warmth was warmly returned.

“The first thing I noticed about him was you could tell he cared and came from a genuine place,” said Dan Hughes ’19, the student representative on the search committee. “I feel that genuine spirit propelled him through the process. And his wife is phenomenal. She did a fantastic job of stamping that approval for us.”

Jan Martin is a longtime K–12 science teacher. Most recently, she has worked for Pennsylvania State University in York to organize a conference inspiring young women to study science; she also coordinates enrichment activities for a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) academy within a public school.

Joel Martin highlighted three key strengths of Wagner in his introductory remarks. He began with the Wagner Plan, describing it as an “extraordinary vision of the curriculum that does more than focus on academic development for its students: It focuses on social development, and asks students how their learning can make a difference in the world.”

The second strength he mentioned was Wagner’s location overlooking New York City and its “Arcadian” campus. “It’s a gateway, a portal to opportunity for anyone who dreams big. . . . That’s powerful symbolism of what this college means to students and to the future of our society.”

Finally, he emphasized the personal culture at Wagner. “The people of Wagner are incredible,” he said. “The culture you have here, the friendliness, the warmth, is authentic. . . . We have found our family.”



Watch a video of Joel Martin’s introduction at Wagner at wagner.edu/newsroom/new-president-intro.



THE SEAL OF THE COLLEGE

Wagner introduces a new rendition of a familiar icon

IN HONOR OF WAGNER’S 100th anniversary on its Staten Island campus, the Office of Communications and Marketing is introducing a renewed version of the College’s official seal in 2018–19.

The new drawing contains the original elements from the seal, which dates back to 1916: A circle that incorporates the name and location of the College, surrounding the overlapping shapes of an open book, a sword, a trumpet, and a palm branch.

The new rendition adds two new elements to the design: 1883, the year of the College’s founding in Rochester, New York; and the monogram “NYC,” acknowledging the importance of New York City as Wagner’s location for the past century.

In keeping with traditional and modern practice, the seal is used only on official documents, presidential events and documents, and high-end products. The diplomas of the class of 2019 will feature the new seal.

...Then
the Quiz!



Which professors hold the record
for teaching the most First-Year
Learning Communities?

ANSWER ON PAGE 11

‘Small Windows, Wide Views’

An art historian on the ancient history of seals and their modern relevance

SARAH JARMER SCOTT, associate professor of art history and dean of integrated learning, has been studying the seals of ancient Mesopotamia ever since her graduate school days at the University of Pennsylvania.

That university’s large museum collection was acquired in the 1930s, when a team of scholars from Penn helped to excavate the ancient city of Ur. While some were focused on the precious metals and gems of an elite burial site, others collected “sealings” — that is, clay pieces on which seals were impressed — that had been discarded on the same spot.

A new book that Scott co-edited, *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient World: New Approaches to Glyptic Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 2018), showcases the vast amounts of information about ancient religious views, social status, and communication that scholars glean from these tiny objects.

In Scott’s chapter of the book, she focuses on a type of seal that is shaped like a hollow tube — the cylinder seal. Like stamp seals, which have an even longer history, cylinder seals were carved with imagery and impressed on objects for various purposes.

Seals originated around 7,000 BCE to express their owners’ religious rank and shamanic powers. Inscribed with anthropomorphic animals and geometrical shapes, the seals may have evoked their owners’ ability to cross boundaries between people and animals, or between the material and the spiritual world.

Scott writes about that moment in history when the use of seals intersected with the advent of cuneiform writing. Both were used to convey information, while increasing urbanism and commodity exchange changed the cultures of ancient Mesopotamia — an early “revolution in communication,” Scott says. During this time period — around 3,500 to 500 BCE — seals increasingly became

a part of trade, carrying information about ownership, content, and even measurements or quantities.

SEALS TODAY

“THE USE OF SEALS for identity and transfer of authority is the same now as it was in ancient Mesopotamia,” Scott notes.

Scott points out the connection between the clay used in seals and sealing, clay’s religious significance as the material from which the gods made humans, and the seals’ ability to act as authority-bearing agents for people.

That notion still has modern relevance, she says. Having a document notarized, for instance, is a modern way of using a seal to represent a person’s physical presence, identity, and authority.

In another modern parallel, giant statuary or other imagery of gods in ancient temples were miniaturized on seals. In the same way, images associated with institutions are miniaturized on modern seals to convey the power or authority of that institution.

“Wearing the seal, on a pin for example, is remarkably similar to antiquity. What we wear is carefully curated. It’s a sign of allegiance or support of the idea that image represents,” she says. “It’s a way to show your kinship.”

In ancient times, the seal was also a sign of authority. If you imprinted your seal on something or someone, it showed your ownership or authority over that thing or person.

That’s why Scott is fascinated by objects like Main Hall’s old brass doorknobs embossed with the College’s name. “It’s a visceral, physical embodiment of the institution when you touch it and open the door,” she says.

“I think people today are visually literate in a way that’s similar to the ancients, but we can process images faster now. The ancients were better at processing details. They saw a lot fewer images than we do today.”



IMAGES OF AUTHORITY

A cylinder seal from Ur, in today’s Iraq, dates to approximately 2600 BCE, a time when seals were used in trade to indicate ownership and contents of a shipment.



**Quote
Unquote**

“We need a more integrative approach to seeing the body not just as a machine, but as an integrative organism.”



Martin Picard
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
RESEARCHER,
KAUFMAN REPAGE
LECTURE, OCT. 3

Where She Found Her Stride

One of the first female *Wagnerian* editors gives back to the College

WHEN JOAN BANSEMER EHREN '53 was elected editor in chief of the *Wagnerian* in February 1952, she was the second woman ever to serve solo in that role since the student newspaper was founded in 1934.

She didn't give her unusual position much thought at the time. She just knew that she had found a home at Wagner and on the newspaper staff.

“When I arrived on the Wagner campus, a very confused 17-year-old commuter student, my safety net became the newspaper office,” she wrote in a 1993 reminiscence on her Wagner years.

She was a first-generation college student, from Staten Island. It was her pastor, Rev. Frederic Sutter, who guided her toward enrollment at Wagner. An 1894 Wagner graduate, Sutter was the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Staten Island. He led the College's relocation from Rochester to Staten Island and served on the Board of Trustees for decades.

Ehren's “safety net” at the newspaper office, however, was not a quiet place. She remembers students arguing about the controversies and politics of the day. They needed the administration about what they considered to be uninspiring, male-dominated chapel services. She and her fellow *Wagnerian* staffers were intrigued by Norman Thomas, who was running for the U.S. presidency as a socialist. They even invited him to speak on campus — a plan that was crushed by the Wagner president.

A history major, Ehren went on to earn a master's in educational psychology from Columbia in 1955. In the 1960s, she worked for several years on a curriculum project of the Institute for Developmental Studies, focused on the “social and academic problems of environmentally disadvantaged children,” as she wrote at the time. That effort laid the groundwork for the federal government's Head Start program, which

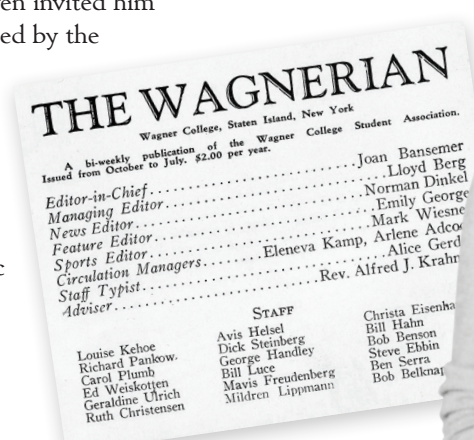
provides support for the developmental needs of young children from low-income families.

Later, she changed her career focus, earning a Ph.D. in higher education administration from the University of Denver. Her husband, Charles Ehren, was a professor of law at that university. He later served as dean of the law schools of Pace University and Valparaiso University, and Joan also went into higher education administration. She worked at Saint Xavier University in Chicago for 10 years as the director of the career center and associate dean for student life services.

The Ehrens retired to East Hampton, New York, and began a life of volunteer service. Joan has been president of several nonprofits and volunteer organizations, and Charles has served on committees for the East Hampton Town Board and other local causes.

Joan always stayed connected to Wagner as well, making annual gifts and becoming a member of the Inner Circle donor group. Most recently, the Ehrens designated a significant portion of their estate plan to Wagner College.

“Wagner gave me so much,” she explains. “They gave me the first steps to becoming a professional woman. I so appreciate Frederick Sutter's belief in me and the support I received from the College. They helped me, and many others, pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, when we didn't even have boots. I want to give back to them, and hopefully that will help students now and in the future.”



WHAT'S INSIDE

The Triathlon Team

WAGNER'S WOMEN'S TRIATHLON TEAM began competing in fall 2018. The six-member team concluded its inaugural season as one of the nation's top four in NCAA Division I.

1 Fabia Maramotti '18 M'20 was the top Seahawk finisher at the 2018 USA Triathlon Collegiate National Championship. Her time of 1:08:44 earned her 12th place. A native of Reggio Emilia, Italy, she came to Wagner in 2014 for her undergraduate education and is now working on her MBA.

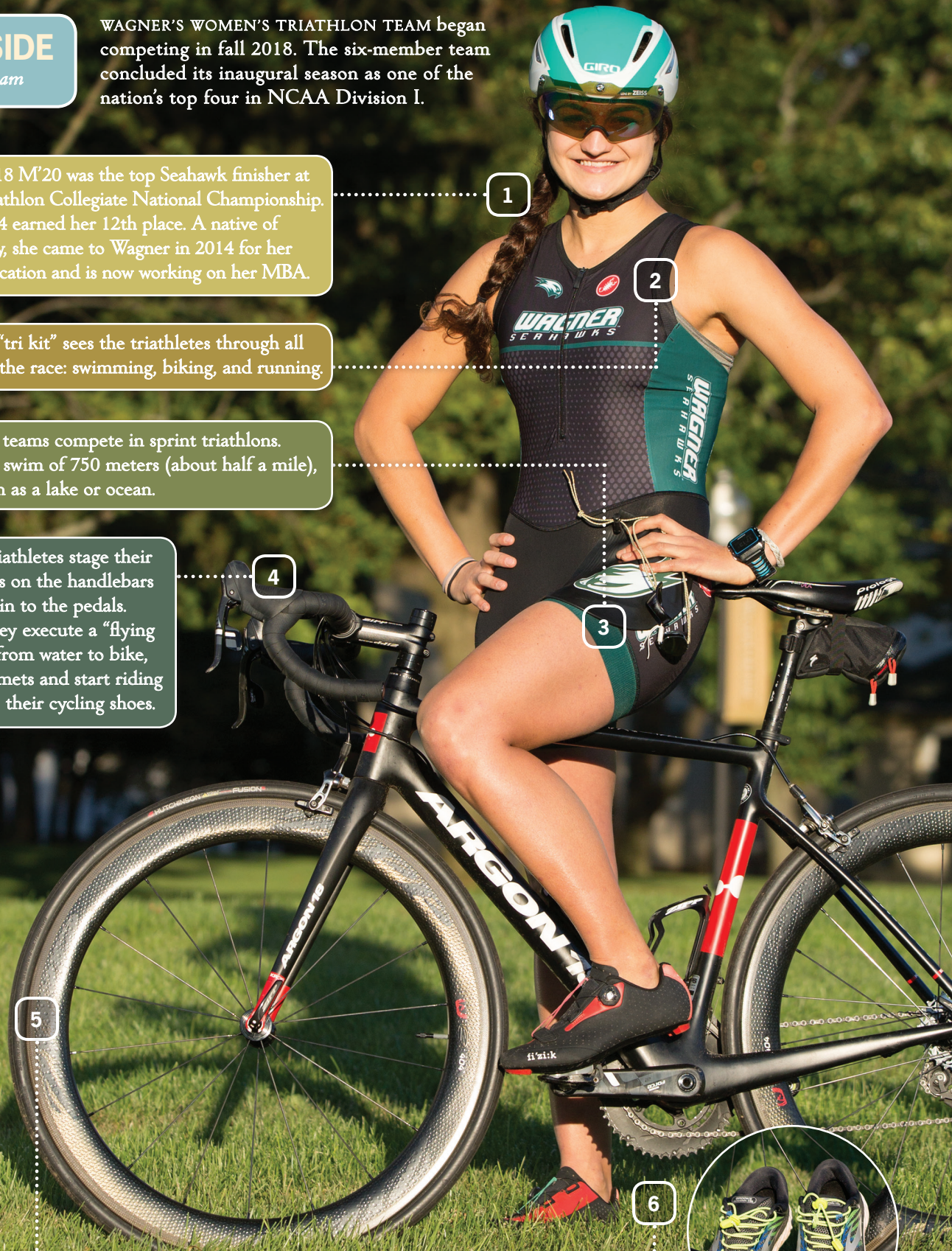
2 A triathlon kit or "tri kit" sees the triathletes through all three segments of the race: swimming, biking, and running.

3 NCAA Division I teams compete in sprint triathlons. They begin with a swim of 750 meters (about half a mile), in open water, such as a lake or ocean.

4 Before the race, triathletes stage their bikes, with helmets on the handlebars and shoes clipped in to the pedals. After the swim, they execute a "flying mount": Running from water to bike, they don their helmets and start riding while slipping into their cycling shoes.

5 Following the swim, athletes pedal a route of 20 kilometers (12.4 miles). They use lightweight road bikes; Maramotti rides her own Argon 18, a Canadian brand.

6 While approaching the cycling finish line, athletes slip out of their shoes. They replace bikes and helmets in the staging area, and pull on running shoes with bungee laces for a quicker transition. The run is 5 kilometers (3.1 miles).



Quote Unquote

“A leader ... is someone who shows initiative for growth, drive to succeed, and passion for what they are doing.”



Nick Bouzas '19
LEADER ON THE HORIZON
AWARD RECIPIENT,
OPENING CONVOCATION,
SEPT. 27

Teaching As They Were Taught

Two Wagner Plan alumni have returned as faculty members

TWO WAGNER PROFESSORS have a special relationship to the Wagner Plan curriculum: They not only teach it — they also were taught it.



Chris Corbo '06 M'08, associate professor of biological science, earned his bachelor's in biology and master's in microbiology at Wagner. Racquel Campo DeCicco '07, assistant professor of chemistry, earned her bachelor's in chemistry at Wagner.

For both professors, Wagner was a place that broadened their perspectives during their undergraduate years, and they were excited to return to the College as faculty members to nurture the next generation.

“We know what it's like to be a student here, and it helps,” DeCicco says.

Corbo says that, as a college freshman, his ambition was to work in a zoo. That focus started to shift when he met biology professor Zoltan Fulop and became involved in his

laboratory research, which looks at life from the molecular level. Corbo started to see that he could do research, that he enjoyed its intellectual challenge and its camaraderie — and that it offered him more opportunities in life.

Corbo completed his Ph.D. in molecular neuroscience at the CUNY Graduate Center. Besides biology and microbiology courses, he teaches the First-Year Learning Community “The Love-Hate Relationship Between Humans, Microbes, and Chemicals,” which combines his microbiology class with a chemistry class.

Corbo emphasizes breadth as the advantage of a Wagner Plan education. “Many students come to the sciences because they think they want to go into medical professions. But, science is not just about human health, but also the planet's health, and this all interacts with each other.

“I'm always telling students not to take so much science, but to spend time getting breadth in their education,”

Corbo says. “The Wagner Plan helps to show the importance of a liberal arts education and all you can get out of it.”

DeCicco came to Wagner as a freshman thinking she wanted a pre-health major; but, like Corbo, she started down a different path when she found a role model. Hers was Wendy DeProphetis, who was then an assistant professor of chemistry at Wagner. “She was young and starting out,”

DeCicco says. “I wanted to be her, and now I have her job.”

“The Wagner Plan helps to show the importance of a liberal arts education and all you can get out of it.”

DeProphetis's lab focused on both chemical synthesis and chemistry education research, and DeCicco found that she enjoyed both. She earned a Ph.D. in organic chemistry at Stony Brook University. “As soon as I saw the position open up at Wagner, I jumped on it,” she says.

Now, she offers chemistry courses, mentors students in her lab, and also team teaches an Intermediate Learning Community, “Cuisine: Chemistry and Culture,” with anthropology professor Celeste Gagnon, showing students an integrated approach to food chemistry and culture.

Hands-On and Knee-Deep

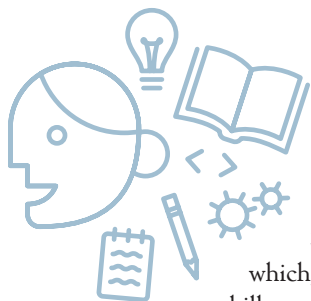
Students in the First-Year Learning Community “Exploring the Anthropocene Through Film and Science,” a new course in fall 2018, work in Wagner's composting area. This Learning Community focused on the science behind concepts such as global warming and pollution, as well as the uses of film in documenting these phenomena. The course included site visits around Staten Island, which served as a microcosm and a laboratory for observing environmental change. The professors and creators of the LC, Elizabeth Suter (biology) and Philip Cartelli (film), both started teaching at Wagner in 2017. Suter is an environmental scientist who studies the microbial ecology of aquatic environments. Cartelli is a documentary filmmaker and researcher whose work centers around themes of geography and the environment.

The Answer
 QUIZ QUESTION
 ON PAGE 7

Professors Linda Rath (biology) and John Esser (sociology) have each taught 21 First-Year Learning Communities, every year since 1998.

Skills and Knowledge

A new approach to the core curriculum



FOR MANY YEARS, students at liberal arts colleges (including Wagner) have been required to take a broad-based core curriculum in addition to their major.

At Wagner, these requirements have been known as General Education. It includes a distribution of courses across the humanities, social sciences, sciences, and the arts, plus foundational skills in writing, math, speech, and computers.

“The limitation in Wagner’s curriculum has been its ability to demonstrate that it develops within its students the intellectual and practical skills employers demand and citizenship requires,” said sociology professor John Esser.

This year, the Wagner faculty introduced a new approach to this broad-based element of the Wagner Plan. First-year students in 2018–19 will instead follow the Key Skills and Knowledge curriculum —

which, as the name indicates, emphasizes skills as well as disciplinary knowledge.

The skills that the faculty identified in the curriculum are intercultural understanding, creativity, critical reading and analysis, information literacy, quantitative thinking, technological competency, oral communication, and written communication.

“Students work with their academic advisor to select courses that develop six skill areas,” Esser explains. “Students must take at least one course that provides intensive skill development plus additional courses that provide skill practice or exposure. Students are encouraged to see the value of general education through focusing on the skills they develop.”



How to Write a Great Play

“What is water?” asked the professor. “Life-giving,” answered one student. “Refreshing,” added another. “And purifying. But you can also drown in it.”

And so, the playwriting class’s discussion of the Pulitzer Prize-winning drama *Water by the Spoonful* was off and running.

At issue for Professor Ben Marshall and his students: What makes the script work? And why?

Marshall should know. His play, *Incident at Willow Creek*, won the 2018 Stanley Drama Award. Given by Wagner College since 1957 to up-and-coming playwrights, the award has recognized the likes of Terrence McNally, Lonnie Elder III, and Jonathan Larson (for *Rent*).

“We thought, ‘Wouldn’t it be great, having a Stanley winner teaching our playwriting course?’” recalled theater department chair Felicia Ruff. “Ben, who’s an English professor at Middlesex County College, is on sabbatical this semester, and he said yes.”

The nine student playwrights enrolled in Marshall’s class will produce 10-minute scripts for submission to a new project, *The Originals*, which will be produced in April in Wagner’s Stage One theater.



Visit wagner.edu/theatre for more information.



over the past 20 years,
the wagner plan for the
practical liberal arts
has shaped a
generation of alumni

by **laura barlament**
illustrations by **anja reponen**

launched in 1998, the Wagner Plan for the Practical Liberal Arts has now guided a generation of Wagner students.

What sets the Wagner Plan apart from a traditional liberal arts education? A series of special courses, called “Learning Communities,” show students how different disciplines work together to address large questions or issues. The Wagner Plan also incorporates experiential learning, so that students apply what they are learning in the community or in the workplace.

Wagner students take three Learning Communities — First-Year, Intermediate, and Senior — along with other general education courses and their major and/or minor courses.

Over the past few months, I have interviewed alumni who have graduated under the Wagner Plan, asking them how this educational model affected them and what continuing influence it has in their lives.

What I heard again and again is that the Wagner Plan enables students, in the words of Quincy Rasin '18, to “create your own story.”

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an internal auditor who knows how to connect the dots

IN 2018, Olatunde Ogunlana '10 M'11 joined the legal and audit group of Goldman Sachs, with a focus on the investment management division.

Ogunlana is a Staten Island native; his mother, Olaide Ogunlana '08, is a Wagner-educated nurse. He chose Wagner for its small classes and Learning Communities that would expose him to many fields of knowledge in an integrated way.

"Having a broad enough view to understand how to connect the dots is the greatest experience of my Wagner education," he says. "It's a testament to the Learning Communities. You start to understand how things work in correlation with each other."

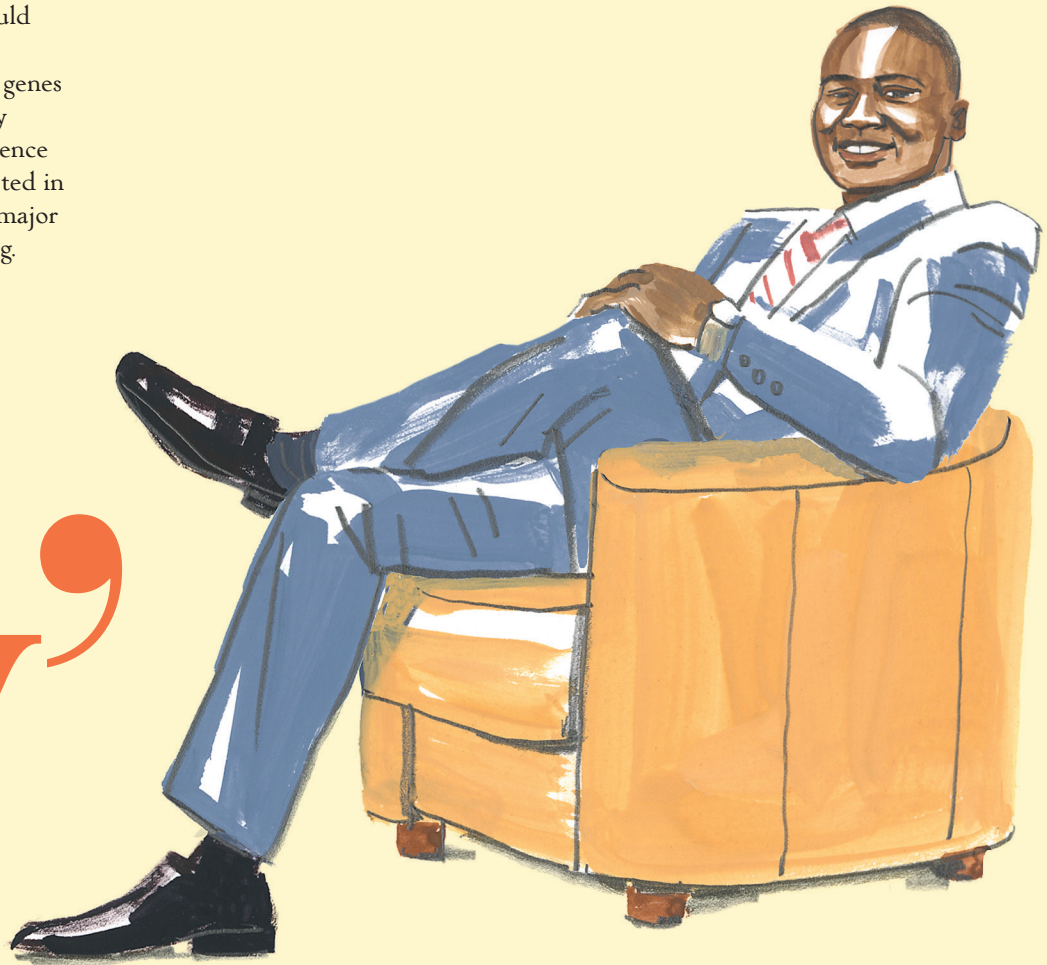
He started off thinking he would major in science. His First-Year Learning Community was about genes and genomics, combining biology and sociology. His affinity for science continued as he also grew interested in business, ultimately choosing to major in business focused on accounting.

As a senior, he interned with PricewaterhouseCoopers for a full year, leading to his first job in auditing at that company. His challenging accounting courses — he especially remembers those with Professor John Carrescia and the late Professor Janice Buddensick — prepared him well. The professors' accessibility after class helped him understand the real-world applications of their courses.

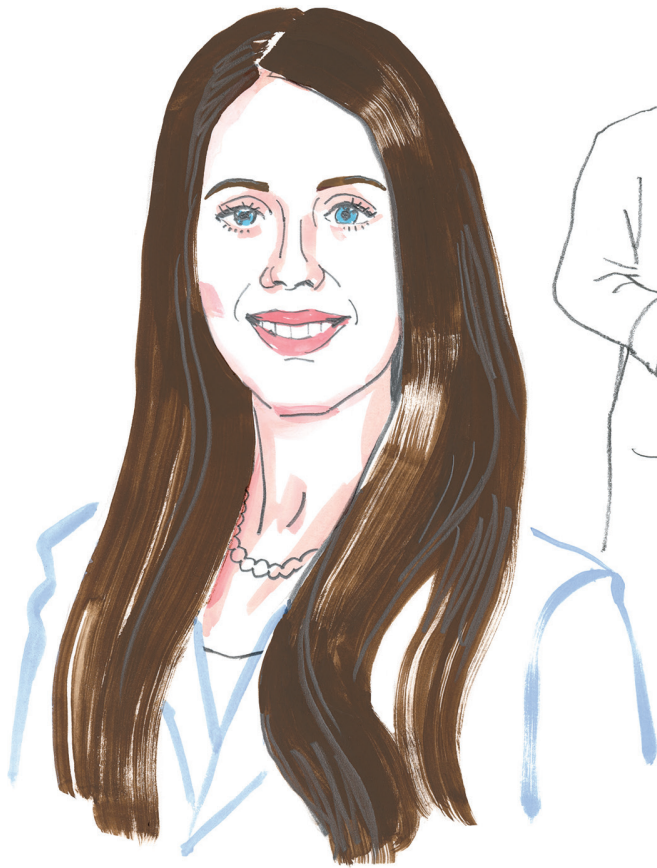
Ogunlana says that interacting with Wagner students prepared him for today's diverse workforce. As a football player, he also learned discipline, attention to detail, and performance under pressure.

An integrated liberal arts education was a great base for going into the world of finance, he says. "Finance is really just social science with numbers," he says, laughing.

"It's a testament to the Learning Communities. You start to understand how things work in correlation with each other."



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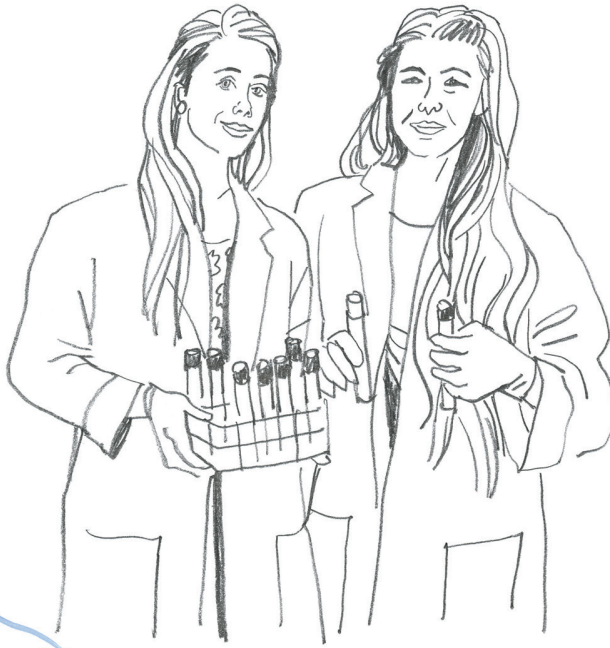
an urban physician devoted to diversity

LAST SUMMER, Dr. Violeta Capric '12 started the first year of her residency at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn.

Practicing medicine among the rich diversity of peoples and cultures at a large, urban hospital is a challenge she sought out, influenced and prepared by her experiences in the Wagner Plan curriculum.

Her First-Year Learning Community combined studies of English and political science. The students learned to advocate for political and social issues and served in local soup kitchens.

"It was a great experience, an eye-opening experience," she recalls. "The best part about it is you get to do something that you never thought would be your strength, or that you wouldn't have chosen for yourself."



**"I think I
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Capric embraced as many diverse experiences as she could fit into her schedule. She was a biology major and a chemistry minor, and she also took extensive coursework in anthropology, math, and art. "The more I took those other courses, the more I fell in love with them. I couldn't stop."

After her sophomore year, she did a summer internship in medical research at Johns Hopkins, thanks to the Spiro-Hopkins Scholarship program; the summer after her junior year, she did research in medical archaeology in Peru with Professor Celeste Gagnon.

Many of her First-Year Learning Community friends were interested in politics, and they influenced her to become involved with student government. Ultimately, she served as the Student Government Association president during her senior year — while also doing her senior internship in public health outreach at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Her internship helped her get her first post-college job in genetic and genomic research at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. After a couple of years in laboratory research, she realized that she wanted to work with patients, and she applied to medical school. In May 2018, she completed her M.D. at the Ross University School of Medicine.

"I think very highly of a liberal arts education," she concludes. "It helps shape you. ... In the Learning Communities, you learn to branch out, whether you're comfortable with it or not. You do it with friends. And in your Senior Learning Community, you do an internship. And for me and many of my friends, that internship turns into your first job. It might have been difficult to get without having the opportunity to put your foot in the door. So, it really does open a lot of doors to you as a student. You may not know what you want to do just yet, as an incoming freshman, but Wagner helps you find it."

really felt a challenge to serve the people. I left with a sense that I could make a difference in people's lives."

a prison social worker and reformer

A LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER, Stephanie Gangemi '06 has provided mental health programs and therapy for jail inmates in El Paso County, Colorado, for the past nine years. In 2018, she won a major prize from the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute for her work to help law enforcement better respond to mental health issues in jails.

Gangemi is a born-and-raised Staten Islander who came to Wagner to stay close to family and attend a small school. A violinist, she received a music scholarship and planned to major in music.

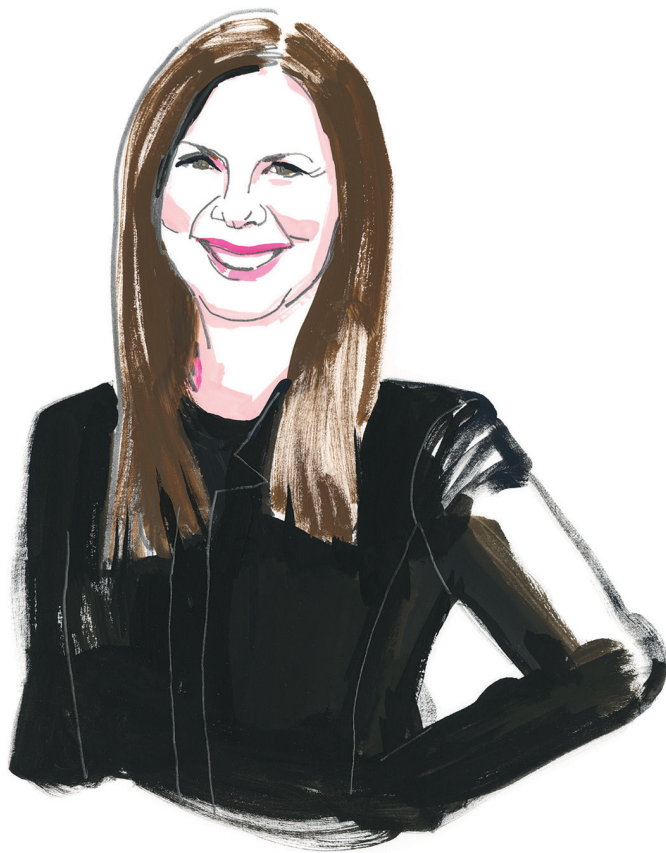
Her First-Year Learning Community started her down a new track. It combined sociology and philosophy and focused on contemporary social issues. By learning to debate and take positions on issues, and interacting with students of different beliefs, she started to develop her own thoughts, her own voice, and her own sense of purpose. She also experienced working with at-risk youth.

"I think I really felt a challenge to serve the people," she says. "I left with a sense that I could make a difference in people's lives."

Other courses that influenced her outlook included her Intermediate Learning Community on the history and literature of New York City; a biology class that looked at plagues and biological warfare; courses on criminal justice and gender studies; and an economics course on poverty and discrimination. "Everything combined and made sense," she says. "That's when it all came together for me."

She learned about prison issues from a former visiting professor at Wagner, Steven Lybrand. Sociology professors John Esser and Jean Halley were also major influences and mentors. Two internships helped shape her path: one with a law firm, and the other with domestic violence survivors. She preferred the latter.

After college, Gangemi earned her master's in social work at Columbia, interning at Rikers Island jail. She then went to work as a social worker for the El Paso County (Colorado) Sheriff's Office. At the end of her tenure there, she served as the director of mental health for the El Paso County Jail. She oversaw a team of social workers and therapists, provided therapy for



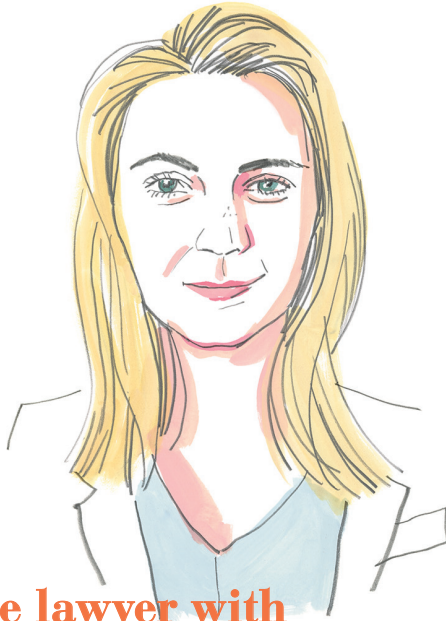
serious-need inmates, and led programs for suicide prevention and other issues. She developed a training program for law enforcement officers, and she built a co-responder program where social workers go out with deputies on calls.

Her paper on those programs won the \$15,000 Seidenberg Prize from the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute. The prize money was funded by a law firm that led a successful pro bono federal class-action lawsuit on behalf of inmates dealing with mental illness in the Illinois Department of Corrections system.

Gangemi resigned from the sheriff's office last year, and is now working to complete her doctorate in social work at Smith College, teaching as an adjunct professor, and consulting with law enforcement and jail administrations nationally.

"Wagner has a way of supporting you in thinking, in a big way and in an abstract way, but then also bringing your thinking down to reality so you can apply it," she says. "It's not thinking for thinking's sake. It's, 'How do I act now, because I'm able to think.' To me, that's the most important thing I took away from the Wagner Plan experience.

"I think there's a lot of rhetoric these days about higher education and criticism of the liberal arts being not practical, but I found Wagner to be super practical. They taught me that no, not only can you act, but you better act now that you have this information."



a corporate lawyer with a heart for social justice

JULIA ZENKER '14 graduated from Vanderbilt Law School and started her first job as a law clerk with the international law firm Hogan Lovells' New York office in 2018.

Zenker came to college from rural New York state with an interest in the law. She wanted to major in philosophy to hone her skills in critical reading and effective writing. Her First-Year Learning Community combined philosophy and Spanish, and it influenced her in many key ways: She became a double major in Spanish and philosophy. She found her best friends and faculty mentors. She worked with the immigrant community in Port Richmond and advocated for social issues.

Outside of class, she became a leader in Generation Citizen, a national program that offers civics education in schools. As the founder and executive director of a Generation Citizen chapter at Wagner, she organized and trained other students to expand the program to local schools.

Experiential learning was a key element of the Wagner Plan for her. "I have a hard time conceptualizing things without some kind of context, and that came through the experiential portion," she says. In law school, she sought out experiential learning opportunities, such as legal clinics and externships in Nashville and New York.

"I think employers want to see that you can do work and are not just book smart," she says. "You can be brilliant, but it might not translate into someone who's personable and can communicate. With the work I'm going into, you need to have all those things. Wagner makes you communicate with people and test your skills that way. And you have a demonstrable record of what you can do when you go out into the work force, and that's what will be appealing to an employer."



"There's no better learning experience than physically being in the industry you want to work in four to five days a week."

a music promoter and change manager

BRIDGET HERRMANN '05 is the Midwest and Northeast manager of radio and streaming for Warner Music Nashville. Ever since her student days, she has been promoting musical artists and bands — a career that she says was launched and is continuously enhanced by her Wagner education.

"I loved how well-rounded the curriculum was," Herrmann says, citing favorite courses such as Military Law and Astronomy. Wagner professors challenged her to think differently, to speak her mind, and to keep reading and learning more, she says, practices that are helpful now that she works in a business undergoing so much change.

She learned to juggle multiple tasks and to contribute to a community through her sorority, Alpha Sigma Alpha. An arts administration major, she says that the internship integrated into her Senior Learning Community was the key to her career path. She interned at the record label A&M/Octone (now owned by Interscope). "There's no better learning experience than physically being in the industry you want to work in four to five days a week," she says.



a language teacher and global citizen

CRESCENDO SMALLS '07 M'08 teaches Spanish at Fort Hamilton High School in Brooklyn.

Teaching Spanish is more than just a job for him. “For me, Spanish is not just a language, it’s a part of my life,” he says. “Speaking Spanish and being immersed in the culture, and being able to use what I know to impact others and to bless others has been tremendous.”

Like Stephanie Gangemi, Smalls wanted to be a music major when he came to Wagner; but his First-Year Learning Community, which combined literary and linguistic studies in Spanish, led him in a new direction. While the Wagner choir gave him an outlet for his musical interests, he found himself more drawn to Spanish than to music theory. In education courses, he observed classrooms in New York City public schools, and began to envision himself as a teacher.

During his senior year, he spent a semester studying abroad in Madrid, Spain. It was his first time traveling abroad, and the experience capped off his studies and fueled a new sense of mission for him. “It opened the door for me to being global, being aware of what’s going on outside the U.S., and connecting with people, cultural connections,” he says.

Just as he learned at Wagner to use Spanish to connect culturally with others, he now teaches his students from that same mindset, integrating experiential learning outside of the classroom so that they can apply their Spanish skills to real-life situations.

“I tell my students, ‘I don’t care how much vocabulary you know, what you can do from a textbook, if you cannot connect with someone culturally, if you cannot converse with someone in the Spanish language, if you cannot use this language to make connections with people, then I failed you,’” he says.



“I’m giving you the tools to connect with other people across the globe.”

Smalls is still active in music as well, especially in his church. He regularly volunteers with Christian student groups at Wagner, such as Intervarsity Christian Fellowship and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. In 2015, he combined his gifts in Spanish and music by teaching workshops on music and worship at a Christian music camp in Spain — just one of several trips abroad he has taken since he was bitten by the traveling bug as a Wagner senior.

“Being [at Wagner] as a language major was a launching pad,” Smalls says. “It really opened me up to the world and to being a global citizen, and taking all that I’ve learned and sharing it with my students.”

these class of 2011 alumni were part of the same First-Year Learning Community, “Perception, Illusion, and the Social Construction of the Self.” I followed them throughout their four years in a series of *Wagner Magazine* stories that ran from 2007 to 2011.

“I think the creative, innovative thinking and the ability to look for connections in places that you wouldn’t normally look is a skill that comes out of the First-Year Program.”

a teacher outside of the school system

SAMANTHA SIEGEL ’11 M’13 lives in Philadelphia, where she has started a business that brings yoga-inspired practices, which she calls mindful movement and meditation, to children and teens.

“My Wagner experience, both as a student and professionally, has given me the ability to be both a risk-taker but also extremely intentional as I move forward in creating a business in a new community,” Siegel says.

Siegel spent the first several years of her post-collegiate life at Wagner, taking on roles of increasing responsibility. First, she earned her master’s degree in education, based on her study of Wagner’s work in schools through the Port Richmond Partnership. Her analysis led to her appointment as the director

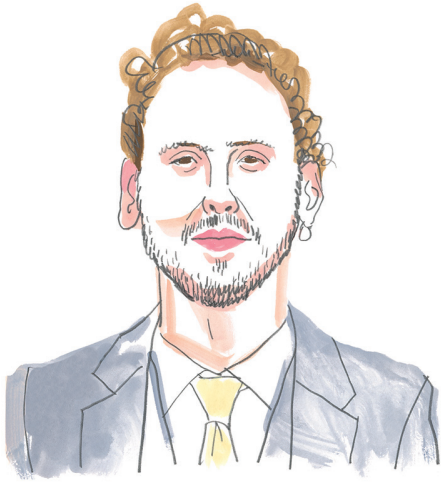
of Wagner’s Center for Leadership and Community Engagement. Under her leadership, the center launched new programs that promote academic, leadership, and civic skills among Wagner students and Port Richmond High School students.

When Siegel decided to leave her job at Wagner, she sought out a close-knit community like Port Richmond where she could live and pursue some long-held dreams and ambitions. She found it in the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia. In 2015, she had taken a group of Port Richmond High School students to Philadelphia to work in Germantown’s community garden. “I looked around at this garden that was filled with people from all different walks of life, color, and it just blew me away,” she recalls. “And I said, ‘Something is really calling me here. I want to live here.’”

Siegel has worked in childcare, educational consulting, and writing. She is a member of a cooperative farm at Awbury Arboretum. She has also written a series of children’s books, and she incorporates storytelling into her teaching.

“I think the creative, innovative thinking and the ability to look for connections in places that you wouldn’t normally look is a skill that comes out of the First-Year Program,” she notes.





a psychologist focused on underserved populations

KYLE GLOVER '11 moved to San Diego in 2018 and started a doctoral program in psychology. Since graduation, he has worked at a mental health outpatient facility and an organization that helps people with disabilities to integrate with their communities.

"When I was at Wagner, and I was an impetuous young man, I always thought I was going to be the greatest psychologist since Sigmund Freud, right?" He laughs and continues, "I've since tempered my expectations. I'd like to have my own practice, and I'd like to make my own unique contribution to therapy and psychology and to humans' understanding of themselves."

For Glover, his Wagner experience was profound in shaping his view of himself, his interests, and his sense of mission. "Things I learned there, especially with Professor Miles Groth and Professor Walter Kaelber, still stick with me, whether it's psychology, religion, philosophy. ... I'm going to try to apply them in order to assist people if I can."



a grassroots political change-maker

KYLA KNIGHT '11 moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, in 2018, where she works as an engineer for Microsoft and as a user experience researcher for get-out-the-vote projects.

She has worked for a couple of different tech companies; she earned her MBA, focused on information systems and organizational behavior, from Baruch College. But a lot of her post-collegiate life has been devoted to grassroots political activism, especially for LGBTQ rights and marriage equality. Wagner, she says, set her up for this work by developing her confidence, knowledge, and maturity.

One important moment came during Knight's senior year, when she was part of the Wagner Moot Court team. At the American Collegiate Moot Court Association's Mid-Atlantic Regional Tournament, she was assigned to argue on the topic of same-sex marriage. Her team made it to the semi-finals — a first for Wagner.

"It's really important to me that the foundation of Wagner is holistic," Knight says. "Since we live in such a turbulent environment, it's so important to look at how you can give back. Wagner does such a good job of instilling that sense of value of giving back to the community."

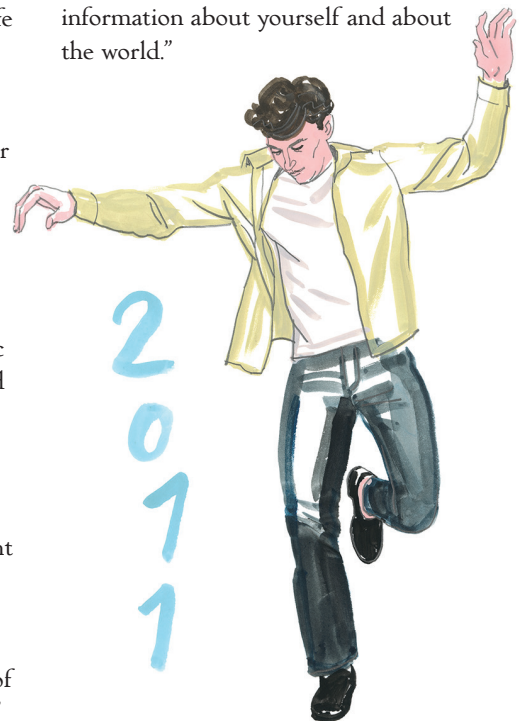
a working actor empowered to create solutions

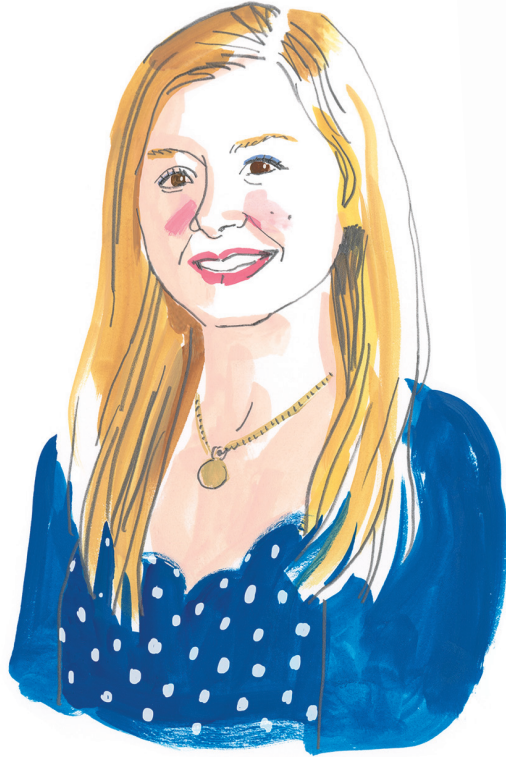
PATRICK HEFFERNAN '11 has been working as a musical theater actor ever since he left Wagner. He has been in three national theatrical tours and many regional theater productions, and he has taught at Wagner and choreographed Wagner College Theatre shows.

It's a life of constant learning (he went to Germany last summer for vocal training, for example), juggling schedules, and occasionally waiting tables and teaching yoga on the side if necessary.

As a Wagner student, he learned to be resourceful, to integrate ideas, and to collaborate with diverse people.

"It's so empowering [as a Wagner student] to see that you can be a part of the solution instead of having the solution given to you," he says. "Wagner's a place where the student is asked to step up and contribute and make the most of what's being offered. Every class you take and every co-curricular experience feeds you and gives you information about yourself and about the world."





a public relations specialist and civic leader

ALEX JACOBS WILKE '07 is the director of public relations for the State University of New York, Potsdam, and a civic leader in that upstate college town.

"My career is very important, but equally as important to me is being engaged as a citizen and being well-rounded as an individual," she says. "I found that at Wagner."

An English major and journalism minor, she was the editor of the *Wagnerian* for three years, as well as a Wagner College Choir member. She still sings in a choir, and she started her career as a reporter for her hometown newspaper, the *Watertown Daily Times*.

She serves on local commissions and boards and is considering running for the village board. "I'm the person who wants to know what's going on. I want to delve in there. ... I don't just want to complain about the dilapidated house, I want to figure out what you can do about it under the law."



a community-based researcher with eclectic taste

I MET QUINCY RASIN '18 last fall on the Wagner ferry shuttle. He was on his way to his internship at the New York City Housing Authority. Today, he is a research assistant for Neighborhood Fundamentals, in the Washington, D.C., area. This company provides research and technical assistance to municipalities, state agencies, developers, and others on issues related to housing affordability and community development.

Rasin calls himself a person of "eclectic taste," which is what drew him to the Wagner Plan and to a major in the interdisciplinary field of public policy and administration.

A coastal North Carolina native, he was a track athlete at Wagner, setting Seahawk records for the 500-meter indoor run and as part of multiple relay teams. He also participated in Greek life, served as a resident assistant, and mentored teenage boys at a nearby school that specializes in college preparatory education in low-income neighborhoods.

Rasin says that interdisciplinary learning, the diversity of courses and students, and the strong community made the Wagner experience great. "It's kind of like a fishbowl that's overflowing at this point, and you can reach in a grab something, and you say, 'Wow, I'm glad I learned this.'"

Eventually, he wants to be involved in policy work related to the issues of black men, and "be a professor with practical and theoretical experience," like Professors Abe Unger and Cyril Ghosh, his mentors and role models.

At Wagner, Rasin served one year as the orientation coordinator, and the theme of his programming was "create your own story." "Wagner helps you do that," he says. "You have complete creative control over your college experience."

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an administrator serving first-generation college students

MICHELE SAMPSON-NELSON '03 is the assistant vice provost for student services at Iona College, overseeing residential life and providing commuter student services.

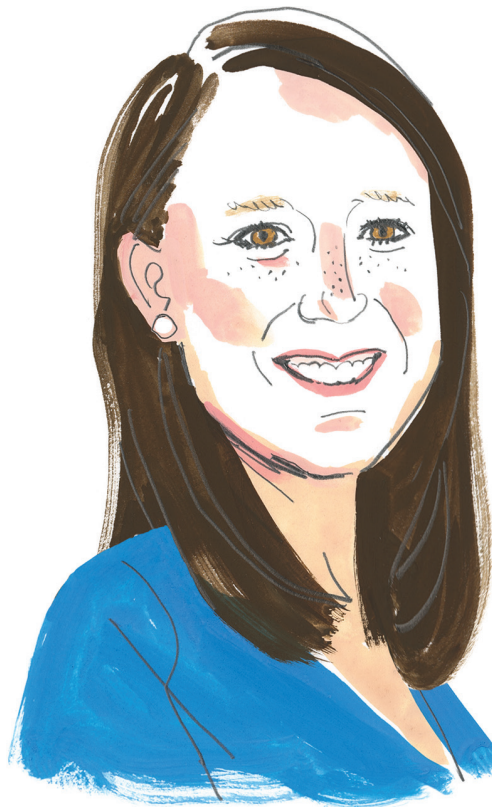
The first person in her family to attend college, Sampson-Nelson was also among the first students to complete the Wagner Plan, which had been launched the year before she started.

“When I say that Wagner changed my life, I really do mean it,” she says. “It’s why I have such a passion for serving at a school that meets first-generation college student needs.”

In her Wagner Plan education, she found challenge, encouragement, and insight that profoundly shaped her interests. Her Learning Communities focused on understanding diverse perspectives and backgrounds, particularly those of marginalized groups.

“It taught me how to think; it showed me my interests; it helped me with my writing,” she says. “Now, I work with commuter students, and they are far more physically diverse and economically diverse than my residential students. I sincerely think that the experiences, exercises, assignments [I had as a Wagner student] gave me a true appreciation for differences, and sameness, that I don’t know that I would have had.”

Richard Guarasci, who was then provost, was one of her First-Year Learning Community professors, and his mentorship was particularly important. She had never thought about graduate school until he “planted the seed” in her mind during her first semester at Wagner. She went on to earn a Ph.D. in faith-based educational leadership from Fordham.



“Dr. Guarasci was a visionary. I think what he brought to fruition is profound. Only a small percentage of the population is privileged to get an education, and the question is, what are you going to do with it to make the world a better place? That’s a really important message for young people to hear,” she says.

“If you’re looking for an education that doesn’t just shape your brain, but shapes your heart and shapes your soul, I think that’s what Wagner did.” ■

100 years UPON THE

THE STATEN ISLAND CAMPUS, REPHOTOGRAPHED photographs by JONATHAN HARK



WAGNER COLLEGE'S HISTORY stretches back 135 years. In 1883, two German Lutheran pastors opened the Lutheran Proseminary of Rochester, New York — the direct ancestor of today's Wagner.

During the next 35 years, two major moves brought the fledgling school closer to the College we know

today. First, in 1886, it was renamed Wagner Memorial Lutheran College, in memory of J. George Wagner Jr., son of a College benefactor, Rochester businessman John G. Wagner.

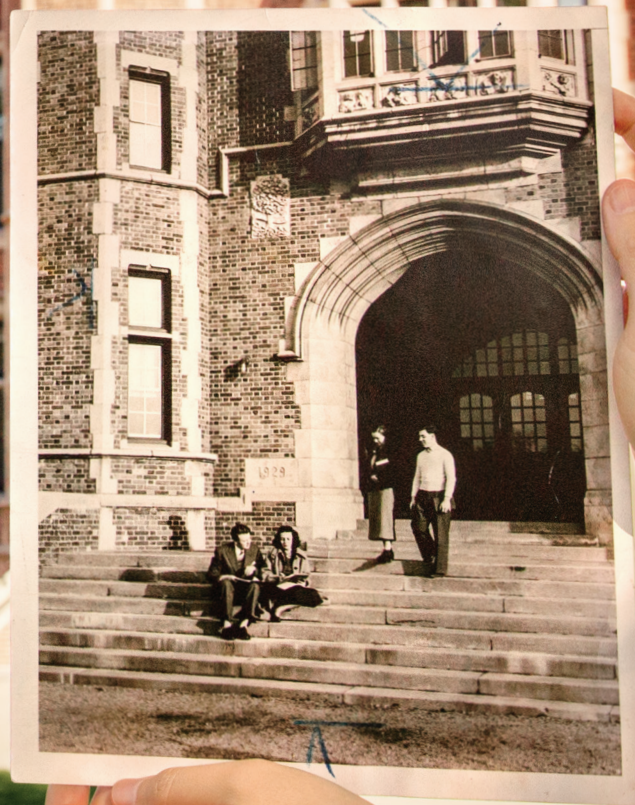
The second major move came 100 years ago, in 1918: the relocation of the campus from Rochester to Grymes Hill in Staten Island.

In celebration of a century “upon the hill” — this beautiful hill “looking out to sea,” as the alma mater says — we present this “rephotography” feature.

To produce this feature, we selected archival images of the campus from the years 1918 to 1958. We then analyzed the original locations and angles of those scenes so that we could

E HILL

EL text by LAURA BARLAMENT



“rephotograph” them as closely as possible.

As you compare the scenes of then and now side by side, we hope you enjoy discovering new insights into how things have changed — and, even more remarkably, how they have stayed the same.



the enrollment was 833 in fall 1946. TODAY, WAG





THEN, FROM ABOVE The archival aerial photograph (*opposite page*) is dated December 1946. Enrollment was booming with the end of World War II and advent of the G.I. Bill. The small buildings to the right of Main Hall were part of the “Veterans Village,” student housing built with war-surplus construction materials. Those buildings were not the sturdiest structures, and they were removed after a storm severely damaged them in November 1950. North Hall and South Hall (today’s Parker and Reynolds) were the other dormitories; Main Hall was the classroom building, library, and gym. The enrollment was 833 in fall 1946.

THE BIG PICTURE TODAY Today, Wagner’s enrollment is about 2,300. The campus has four residence halls that, together, can house more than 1,400 students: Guild (1951), Parker Towers (1964), Harborview (1968), and Foundation (2010). With Campus Hall (1957), Horrmann Library (1961), Spiro Hall and Megerle Hall (1968), and the Union (1970), the campus has vastly more square feet of academic, administrative, and dining space, not to mention the 93,000-square-foot Spiro Sports Center (1999, not shown in this picture).

Photographer Jonathan Harkel skillfully imitated the height and angle of the archival photo as closely as possible using a DJI Phantom 4 Pro unmanned aerial vehicle (a.k.a., a drone). Beyond the expanded campus facilities, note the addition of the Staten Island Expressway (opened in 1964).

LOOKING OUT TO THE SEA Guild Hall, opened in 1951, was Wagner’s first residence hall built for women. Wagner was an all-male institution until 1933; by 1950, women accounted for more than a third of total enrollment. In the 1950s photo, you can see Brooklyn across the Verrazzano Narrows waterway; in the new photo, two prominent additional structures are visible, which both opened in 1964: Wagner’s Parker Towers Hall and the Verrazzano-Narrows Bridge.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNATURE Main Hall (*previous page*) was built in 1928–1930. Designed by George Conable, it was then known as the Administration Building. Whatever it was called, it became the College’s architectural signature and the subject of endless photo shoots. The archival inset photo is dated March 28, 1938.

NER’S ENROLLMENT IS ABOUT 2,300.



THE ORIGINAL BUILDINGS

This panoramic photo of the Wagner campus in 1918 shows all of the original campus buildings – all of which are still in use today.

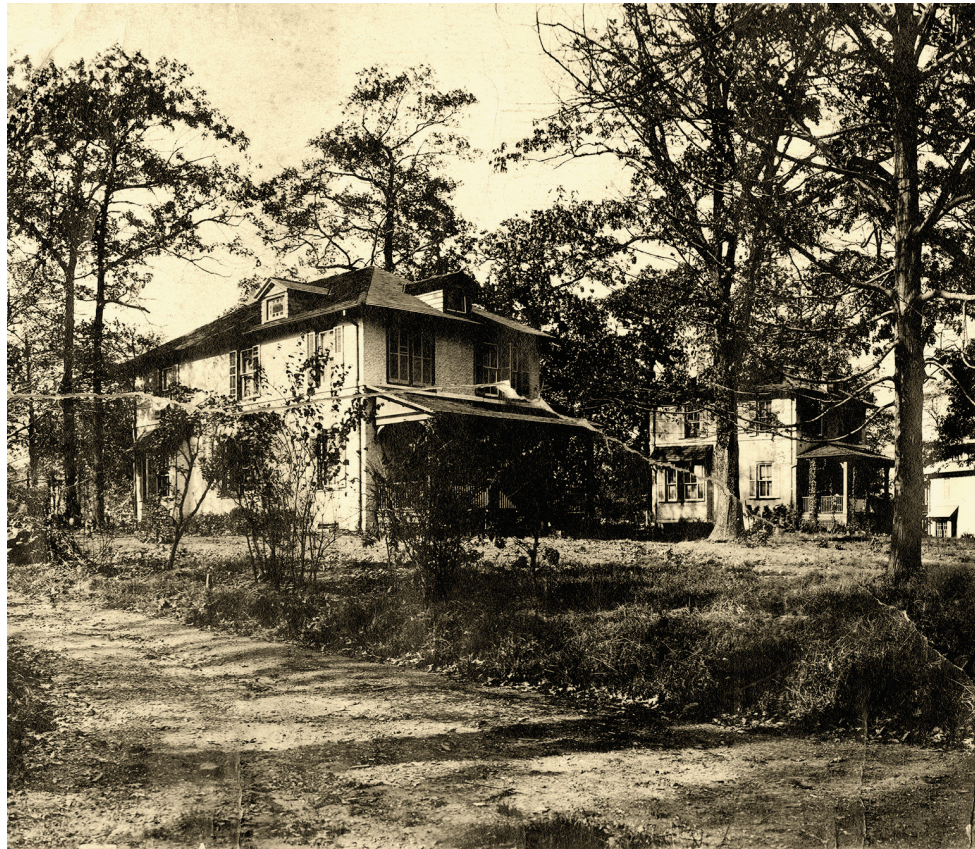
Before Wagner acquired the property, it served as a summer resort colony known as the Bellevue Club or the Hotel Bellevue. The resort built the two Prairie Style cottages on the left around 1905. Wagner used them as housing for professors and their families for many years. Later, the cottages served as housing for female students. By the early 1980s, the old cottages were being used for the admissions and security offices.

In 2001–02, they underwent a metamorphosis. Henry V. Pape '36 dedicated about \$300,000 to refurbishing buildings from his days on campus. This gift allowed the College to add a connecting structure between the two cottages and build a new porch and exterior. Today, it is known as the Pape Admissions House.

Past the two cottages stands the house built in 1918 for President Adolf Holthusen and his family. In the very early days, when the College had little money, much of the students' food was donated by the women of nearby Trinity Lutheran Church and cooked in this house by Clara Holthusen, Adolf's wife. Today, the Holthusens' former home is known as Kairos House, which hosts the campus ministry program, Knubel Chapel, and offices for the student newspaper, the *Wagnerian*.

In the middle of the 1918 picture, mostly hidden by a large tree, is the Bellevue resort annex (today's Reynolds House); more is said about that building on the next page.

Finally, on the right, stands the oldest building on the Wagner campus: an Italianate villa built circa 1852 by Edward and Mary Cunard. Edward Cunard's father, Samuel Cunard, was the founder of the famous Cunard shipping line. Mary died in 1866 and Edward in 1869; several of their children continued to live at the house with their maternal grandmother until 1873. A man named Amzi Lorenzo Barber bought the house and its property in 1889. He used it as his summer residence for four seasons. After that, it was leased to various parties, who operated a summer resort at the old villa and its grounds. It has served the College in many ways over the years; from the 1920s until the 1950s, the dining hall was located there. Today, Cunard Hall houses the administrative offices for business and finance, the registrar, and financial aid, as well as classrooms and offices for the physician assistant program.







THE JAPANESE CHERRY TREES FRAMING THE VIEW STILL B



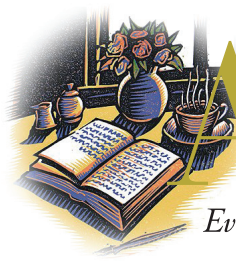


GYM AND PARKING LOT The archival photo on this page was identified as “New parking lot, fall 1956.” In the new photo, you see the typical cars of 2018 and a relatively new emergency call box, sitting in the approximately same old parking lot. The old photo also shows the side of the Sutter Gym, built in 1951. The gym underwent a major expansion in 1999, tripling the building’s original size. It was named the Spiro Sports Center in honor of benefactors Dr. Donald W. ’49 H’88 and Dr. Evelyn L. ’49 H’92 Spiro.

LOOM EVERY SPRING. they were planted around 1940.



A LEGACY OF BEAUTY Reynolds House has always been a part of Wagner College’s Grymes Hill campus. It was built around 1905 as part of the Bellevue resort. It featured a two-tiered entry porch with two-story columns, giving it an elegant look in the old color photo from a 1958 postcard. At that time, the building was North Hall, a women’s dormitory. In the 1970s, it became the Music Building, and the College removed the grand front porch. The Japanese cherry trees framing the view, however, still bloom every spring. They were planted around 1940. Today, Reynolds House is home to the College’s alumni, communications, and development offices. It was dedicated in 2001 in memory of William Reynolds (1918–1998), a former Wagner trustee. He and his wife, Margaret “Peggy” Bambach Buck Reynolds ’40 H’98, have been instrumental in strengthening the financial foundations of the College and enhancing its beauty. ■



AlumniLink

Events, opportunities, and celebrations for the Wagner family, both near and far

Object Lessons

The Wagner Antiques Roadshow recalled many aspects of College history and culture

“THE CREATION OF OBJECTS, in many ways, is essential in understanding ourselves and what and who we are,” said art history professor Sarah Scott, as she introduced the Wagner Antiques Roadshow. This special event was held as part of the Homecoming 2018 festivities to honor Wagner’s 100th anniversary on Grymes Hill.

Inspired by the long-running PBS television show in which experts evaluate antique objects brought in by everyday people, the Wagner Antiques Roadshow featured a panel of Wagner staff and faculty who commented on Wagner-related objects in the College’s collections and contributed by alumni.

Although the Wagner antiques have no great dollar value, they are extremely valuable as a means of remembering and passing along the history and culture of the Wagner College community.

Diverse objects sparked conversations about varied aspects of the campus culture throughout the past 100 years. They included “regulation green freshman caps,” as they were called in the 1949 student handbook (they were also known as “dinks”); a belt buckle, an ashtray, and a beer stein featuring Wagner images; fraternity and sorority paddles; Main Hall’s interior door handles engraved with the Luther rose; an LP record album with a photo of Reynolds House; and an 1899 edition of



Clockwise from top: Kevin Farrell '22, a student in the First-Year Learning Community “Creating a Human Material World,” checks out the display of Wagner antiques. Diane Wehri Mathisen '79 holds a metal Wagner belt buckle owned by her father, the late Bill Wehri '53; Aletta Kipp Diamond '65 H'15 contributed her Alpha Delta Pi sorority paddle. A Main Hall door handle engraved with the Luther rose and a Wagner beer stein owned by Betty Henriksen '65 were also part of the show.

Uncle Tom’s Cabin owned by George J. V. Schorling, Wagner class of 1911.

During the fall 2018 semester, students in the First-Year Learning Community “Creating a Human Material World: Objects, History, and

Memory,” (taught by Scott along with history professor Brett Palfreyman) are writing catalogue entries for the objects discussed at Homecoming. Plans are in the works to create an exhibit of these objects for Reunion 2019.

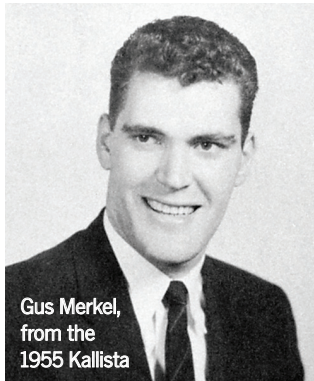
Passing on Wagner Values

Delta Nu brothers reunite and raise scholarship funds in honor of Gus Merkel '55

DELTA NU celebrated the 75th anniversary of the founding of the fraternity with a dinner that welcomed 80 people back to Wagner on October 13.

The gathering not only reunited Delta Nu alumni, but it also raised money for the Gus Merkel '55 Scholarship.

"[Gus Merkel] was a lifelong friend and the epitome of what a Wagner student is on campus and after being graduated," said Fred Jacobsen '54, who has pledged \$70,000 to the fund. More than \$11,000 in additional funds were raised through the Delta Nu reunion event.



Gus Merkel, from the 1955 Kallista

English major Gus Merkel was a leader in Delta Nu and on the basketball team, serving as its co-captain during his senior year. After graduation, he had a successful career in public relations with companies including AlliedSignal and AT&T. He was also celebrated for his work on behalf of the elderly through Project CARE (Community Action to Reach the Elderly) in Morris County, New Jersey. He pitched in with direct aid to senior citizens, fundraising for the organization, and participation in statewide and national commissions on aging. Merkel died in 1999, of a heart attack, at age 66.

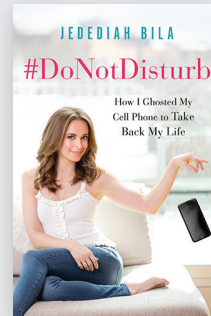
"As a family, we are honored that Fred Jacobsen, Delta Nu, and Wagner College will remember Gus in such a wonderful way — a way to pass on the values he learned at Wagner," said his widow, Janet Junge Merkel '57.

SAVE THE DATE!

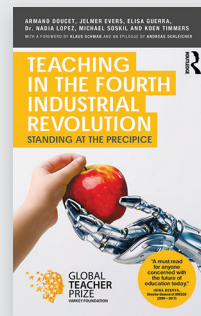
Reunion

WEEKEND

MAY 31-JUNE 2, 2019



Jedediah "A. J." Bila '00
#DoNotDisturb: How I Ghosted My Cell Phone to Take Back My Life (Harper Collins, 2018) A former host for Fox News and *The View*, Bila "shares stories of her phone and social media addiction and how this insatiable need to respond affected her deeply, many times negatively, as she missed out on sunsets and countless other real-world experiences," says *Kirkus Reviews*. "Since nearly all of us use our phones constantly, Bila's tale will appeal to a wide variety of readers."



Nadia Lopez '98 H'16
Teaching in the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Standing at the Precipice (Routledge, 2018) Working with five fellow Global Teacher Prize finalists, Lopez has co-authored a book that presents a positive and hope-filled template for the future of education, with authentic examples from teachers. This work was supported by the Varkey Foundation, which focuses on teacher training and access to education worldwide.

New & Noteworthy



HOMECOMING 2018

MORE THAN 1,000 ALUMNI, students, family, and friends turned out to celebrate Wagner Homecoming on September 22, 2018. The festivities paid homage to Wagner's 100 years of history on Grymes Hill by featuring eight favorite Staten Island food vendors: Alfonso's Pastry Shop, Joe & Pat's Pizza (where Pat Pappalardo '70 and his son, Angelo Pappalardo '03, are among the family of co-owners), the Burrito Spot, La Rosa Chicken, Jac Mao Chinese Cuisine, Montalbano's, Egger's Ice Cream, and Mark's Bake Shoppe (owned and operated by Mark '05 and Amanda Concilio '08 Intoccia). Souvenir T-shirts featured a vintage design, printed by Staten Island's Short Stop Custom Screenprinting, operated by Jennifer Albrizio '85, Hall of Fame softball alumna.



Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY

Choir Tribute to Black Music
February 20, 9 p.m.,
Performance Center,
Campus Hall

**Wagner College Theatre:
My One and Only**
February 21–March 3,
Main Stage

This zany romantic comedy set in the glamorous Roaring '20s is a tap dance spectacular with an incomparable Gershwin score.

**Choir at Black History Month
Town Hall**
February 23, 12 p.m.,
First Central Baptist Church,
Staten Island

**Choir, Chamber Singers, and
Stretto: Concert**
February 24, 4 p.m.,
Trinity Lutheran Church,
Staten Island

MARCH

**Wagner College Theatre:
The Dance Project 2019**
February 28–March 3,
Stage One

Choir at Carnegie Hall
March 23, 8 p.m.,
Carnegie Hall, New York
Wagner joins this MidAmerica
Productions choral concert
featuring Morten Lauridsen's
Lux Aeterna.

Career Conversations
March 27, 6–9 p.m.,
The University Club, New York
Alumni, parents, and students
network and share information
about post-graduate life.

APRIL

**Wagner College Theatre:
The Pirates of Penzance**
April 11–14, 25–28,
Main Stage

Gilbert and Sullivan's musical farce is filled with sentimental pirates, bumbling policemen, young lovers, and an eccentric Major-General.

**Treble Choir and Hildegard
Ensemble: Spring Concert**
April 28, 4 p.m.,
Trinity Lutheran Church,
Staten Island

MAY

**College Choir, Chamber
Singers, and Stretto:
Spring Concert**
May 5, 4 p.m.,
Trinity Lutheran Church,
Staten Island

Nursing Night Out
May 6

Baccalaureate
May 9, the Oval

Commencement
May 10, the Oval

**SEAHAWKS
COAST TO COAST**
*Regional alumni gatherings
in 2019*

February 1 Phoenix
February 2 San Diego
February 10 Tampa
February 11 Naples, Florida
February 13 Palm Beach,
Florida

QUESTIONS? Contact the Office of Alumni Relations
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wagner.edu/calendar

History Makers: Dr. Humphrey Germaniuk '75, the quintessential medical examiner, brought professional standards to communities large and small

In 2007, the blockbuster crime novelist James Patterson released *The Sixth Target*, his latest book in the Women's Murder Club series. Early on in the story, the lead character, a female detective, walks into the lab of San Francisco's deputy chief forensic pathologist.

"A fortysomething white man, five eight or so with salt-and-pepper hair and black horn-rimmed glasses," the pathologist is presented as the consummate professional: no-nonsense, precise, and dedicated to finding out the truth.

The character's name is Dr. Humphrey Germaniuk. His appearance, profession, and personality were, indeed, based on the real Dr. Humphrey Germaniuk '75.

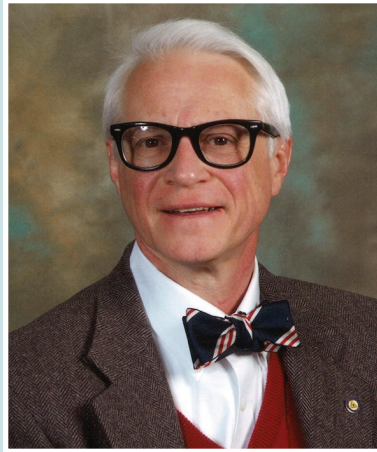
At that time, the real Dr. Germaniuk was the assistant coroner in a rural county in northeast Ohio. He was a highly skilled certified forensic pathologist – the first professional with those qualifications to serve that county. But how did he make his way into a James Patterson novel?

Germaniuk (pronounced "German-ick") was born and raised in Staten Island, the son of Ukrainian immigrants. He had an early interest in medicine and majored in biology at Wagner. After reading about the New York Medical Examiner's office, he visited and volunteered there. New York City's famed chief medical examiner, Dr. Milton Helpert, became a mentor. These experiences "inspired his pursuit of forensics, and it became a lifelong quest," says his widow, Genevieve Smith Germaniuk '75.

After his Wagner graduation, Germaniuk went to Italy to continue his education. Over the next nine years, he became fluent in Italian, studied at the universities of Turin and Rome, and earned his Ph.D. and his M.D. In 1978, *Wagner Magazine* featured him for moonlighting as a radio DJ and television interviewer for Radio/Tele Torino International.

He married Genevieve Smith, a Wagner nursing graduate who was serving in the Army, in 1981. They lived in Rome during his final three years of medical training.

He then completed a residency in pathology at The Ohio State University and a fellowship in forensic medicine at the Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner's Office. After a few years as a medical examiner in Syracuse, New York, he went to Washington, D.C., where he was deputy chief and then chief medical examiner. In Washington, he



testified at hundreds of capital trials and built a national reputation as an authority in forensic medicine.

In 1998, he decided to leave that high-stress environment and took a job as a forensic pathologist for the coroner's office in Trumbull County, Ohio. He built trust in the community through his dedication, knowledge, and ability to communicate with all kinds of people. As a local newspaper, *The Vindicator*, noted, "Especially evident is his ability to give complicated medical information to lay people in a way that produces confidence that the doctor

has determined all there is to know about the cause of someone's death."

In 2008, he ran for the office of coroner and won. Over the next 10 years, he ensured that the entire coroner's office staff received training and certification in death investigation, and he helped to lead statewide efforts to improve the quality of death investigations.

Maxine Paetro became acquainted with Germaniuk when she started working as a co-author with James Patterson in 2005. She learned about Germaniuk through a contact in the FBI, and he became the medical examiner that she consulted with while working on about a dozen novels in the Women's Murder Club series.

"I needed expert advisors to help me make it feel real," she says. "He was tremendous. He was very into it. He was detail-oriented."

Germaniuk became ill early in 2018, but he never stopped working. According to Genevieve, his philosophy was that death was inevitable, and he believed in allowing the disease process to take its course.

He died on April 20, 2018, of complications from liver disease. Trumbull County Prosecutor Dennis Watkins told *The Vindicator*, "This man has been a workaholic for the people of Trumbull County. We have been blessed with his work product."

"If you put your mind to something, you can do it," Humphrey Germaniuk told *Wagner Magazine* in 1978. "A human being has vast resources of potential and our institutions, like Wagner, are there to test potentials for exploring and realizing capabilities. ... Wagner to me was a training ground for the real world – a dress rehearsal for developing things like leadership or patience."



ClassNotes

Updates from old friends across the generations

1952 and '53

Fred Brockmann '52 M'54 and **Lee Schriever Brockmann '53** write, "Our daughter, *New York Times* best-selling author Suzanne Brockmann, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for more than 25 years of writing (more than 60 romantic suspense books) in Denver on July 19, 2018, at the Romance Writers of America's annual convention. This is like an Oscar for authors — we are proud!"

1961

Walter "Wally" Pagan reported on the 43rd annual meeting of a group of Wagner friends, which took place in September 2018 at Mickey's Bar and Grill in Lyndhurst, N.J. It includes many

brothers of Alpha Sigma Phi, as well as Delta Nu members and other classmates and football teammates. The members mostly live in New York and New Jersey, but they also traveled in from Pennsylvania, Texas, Georgia, and Florida. "What keeps us together," says Wally, "is Wagner. That's the bottom line, it always has been. Not a fraternity, but Wagner. Many of us were fortunate to get scholarships and play ball, many joined fraternities, many [like Wally himself] joined the Board of Trustees." Joining in the gathering were fellow 1961 classmates **Fred Ufferfilge**, **Paul Bertholet**, **Bob Harvey**, and **Al Palladino** (former trustee); as well as **John Mangiante '56**, **Marie Attonito Alberti '57**, **Lou DeLuca '59**, **Paul Nuzzo** '60, **John Campi '62** (former trustee), **Frank Spero '63**, **Jack Smiechoski '63**, **Matthew**

Tricorico '63, **Richard Schlenker '63**, **Fred Williamson '64 H'11** (former trustee), **Paul Feeney '64**, **Ronald Bibbo '64** (former trustee), **Walter Frueh '64**, and **Arthur Attonito '67**.

1963

Hank Murphy '63 M'69 was inducted into the Curtis High School (Staten Island) Alumni Hall of Fame in November 2018.

1966

Nancy Zick Smith and her husband, Frederick B. Smith, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in June 2018. "Fred is District Three Commander of Long Island Power Squadrons, now known as 'America's Boating Club,'" Nancy said. The organization is a part of the United States Power Squadrons, a non-profit

educational organization that teaches safe boating, boat handling, and navigation, offering courses to members and to the public.

1967

Russ Johnson '67 M'72 released two more novels in 2018, *King of the Vultures* (under the pen name Alastair Flythe) and *The Charleston Assassin* (in the Detective Pete Nazareth series). In June, *King of the Vultures* was featured on Goodreads, earning a five-star rating.

1968

Al Lambert '68 M'77 was featured in the *Staten Island Advance* in June 2018 in an interview that highlighted his success as a musician and businessman. He has been performing since 1963, and he continues to perform

Keep in Touch!

Email: alumni@wagner.edu

Web: wagner.edu/alumni

Mail: Alumni Office, Reynolds House, Wagner College, One Campus Road, Staten Island, NY 10301

Deadlines: This issue reflects news received by October 29, 2018.

Content: Wagner welcomes your news and updates, and we will happily share them with the Wagner family. We ask

that you send us announcements of weddings, births, and graduations after the fact.

Photos: We accept photos of Wagner groups at weddings and other special events. With the photo, send the names and class years of all alumni pictured; birth date, parents' names, and class years with photos of children; and dates and locations of all events.

Photo Quality: Digital and print photos must be clear and of good quality. Prints should be on glossy paper with no surface texture; they will be returned at your request (please attach your address to the photo). Digital photos must be jpegs of at least 250 pixels per inch; low-resolution photos converted to a higher resolution are not acceptable.

Crib Notes

with both the Al Lambert Orchestra and the Al Lambert Trio. Al has worked with Rodney Dangerfield, The Shirelles, Pat Cooper, and many other well-known performers. He recalled that his most exciting gig ever was playing the I Love NY Festival for more than 30,000 people. In total, Al has performed for more than 5,000 shows, events, banquets, weddings, and more. "Singing warms the soul," he said. He is also the owner of Lambert Leasing in Tottenville, Staten Island. Al lived in Staten Island for more than 70 years, but now he and his wife, Lenore, live in Parlin, N.J.

1969

Paul Fein '69 M'72 has released a book, *The Chemistry of Leadership: A Self-Discovery Formula to Finding the Leader in You*. Paul says the book will help readers in "knowing their self-discovery formula to finding the leader in you" and "finding the 'elements' within yourself and blending them to create an inspiring reaction, resulting in meaningful and impactful outcomes." It outlines three "discovery areas": "being an authentic inspirer," "being an action driver," and "being an application deliverer." A Wagner chemistry major, Paul was previously the vice president for global learning and development for Maquet Medical Systems; now, he is a consultant and serves as managing leader and director of the



Michele Sampson-Nelson '03 and her husband, Donald Nelson, welcomed Donald Clifford "DC" Nelson into the world on August 22, 2018.

IDD Leadership Group. **Aino K. Lautsio-Riccitello** is a committee member, professional consultant, sponsor, participant, and friend to Piper's Angels Foundation, which is dedicated to improving the lives of people with cystic fibrosis. In June, the organization hosted its third annual Crossing for a Cure, a long-distance paddling championship. Aino spent 15 hours on the escort boat during the 70-mile paddle from Bimini (a district in the Bahamas) to Lake Worth, Fla. They raised \$280,000 to provide treatment, research, and support for those afflicted with cystic fibrosis. Look up "Crossing for a Cure 2017" on YouTube

to watch a documentary about this work.

1970

Mark Nemiroff and his wife, Holly, decided to downsize and have moved to a new, smaller home in the town where they have lived for many years — Yardley, Pa. He continues to practice medicine as a consultant anesthesiologist at the Deborah Heart and Lung Institute in Brown's Mill, N.J. **Agustin "Augie" Torres** has retired after 45 years in journalism. At the *Jersey Journal*, Augie worked his way up to opinions editor and political editor. He left full-time work at the newspaper in 2015, but

continued as a columnist for three more years. "Having covered events from the humble to the historic over five decades, 'Augie' Torres is best known for the behind-the-scenes column he's written for 15 years that has helped Hudson County and New Jersey residents make sense of the labyrinthine machinations and rough-and-tumble world of Hudson politics," wrote Margaret Schmidt in a June 16, 2018, piece about Augie's retirement.

1972

In June 2018, **Jean Volk** was inducted into the Hall of Distinguished Alumni at New Brunswick (N.J.) High School, where she graduated in 1968. After graduating from Wagner with a music education degree, she was an elementary school music teacher in Edison, N.J. She developed an interest in the law as it affects teachers, and earned a law degree from Seton Hall. She worked for several law firms and organizations. She has also worked for more than 45 years as a church organist and choir director; a member of the American Guild of Organists, she has served as dean of the Middlesex chapter. Jean is currently a full-time professor teaching business and marketing courses at Middlesex County College in Edison, where she has also served as assistant chair of the department, curriculum coordinator of the paralegal program,

and faculty advisor to the Student Law Association.

1974

Steven Ciceron won the Best Male Supporting Actor award at the 2018 CV Indie Film Awards program for his performance in the film *Rose England*. Acting is Steven's second career and "true passion." After Wagner, he pursued graduate degrees in psychology at the University of Virginia and began his career as a psychologist. After raising two sons, he started acting professionally, and he has been "cast in diverse roles such as a doctor, judge, attorney, policeman, dad, historic figure, and even a psychopathic villain and demon." Visit his website at stevenciceron.com.

Ruth Mitchell had a fulfilling career in home health nursing, and now she uses her nursing knowledge in a new setting. "I have a dairy goat farm in Jamaica, West Indies. I often recall the nursing professors noting how transferable nursing skills are," Ruth wrote.

1979

Joyce K. Anastasi, director of the Division of Special Studies in Symptom Management at New York University's Rory Meyers College of Nursing, won a \$3.5 million research grant from the National Institutes of Health to study the efficacy of a non-pharmacologic therapy to manage HIV-related

neuropathic pain. "Many people living with HIV and chronic illnesses turn to complementary and alternative therapies to treat health-related conditions, including alleviating pain and reducing the side effects of medication, but few therapies have been sufficiently evaluated," Joyce says. "Results from this randomized controlled clinical trial will provide patients and clinicians with an evidenced-based, non-pharmacologic therapeutic option to manage this painful condition, which is sorely needed."

1980

In August 2018, **Frank Morogiello** was hired by the executive search firm Caldwell in Dallas, Tex., as a partner in the firm's industrial practice. Frank has more than 30 years of experience as a search professional and airline

executive. He was with American Airlines for 20 years, ending his tenure as the head of global sales. He also serves on the board of the Texas Travel Industry Association, and serves as an advisor to Rocksolid, which makes soft-shell head protection designed for football.

1984

We received a tribute to the late **Nancy Bracco Coraggio** '86 (who identified herself with the class of 1984) from her longtime friends and Zeta Tau Alpha sisters **Belinda Bardes Kielczewski**, **Faith Miller Duval** '82, **Gail Miller-Shapiro** '83, **JoAnn Moore** '83, and **Rosemary Gordon Meagher** '83. Another close friend from ZTA was the late **Madelyn Gritz De Stefano** '83. Nancy passed away on June 11, 2017. "Nancy's infectious smile would light up any room she walked into," her ZTA sisters

wrote. "She was helpful and kind to everyone she met, always offering a smile or words of encouragement. ... After graduating from Wagner, Nancy was active in community theater in North Babylon, Long Island. Nancy married her best friend, Richard Coraggio, and had three beautiful children, Richie, Jennifer, and Kristen, whom she loved deeply. As her children grew, Nancy passed on her love of the theater to her children, who became active members of their high school theater. Nancy attended every show and musical production they were involved in. For many years, Nancy worked for the North Babylon School district as a paraprofessional, helping students with special needs. Nancy was loved by all who knew her, but her greatest loves of all were her loving husband and her three children, who will carry on their mother's beautiful spirit. We love Nancy Bracco Coraggio and will miss her always."

1985

Richie Byrne was presented the Distinguished Alumni Award at the sixth annual Minty Awards Dinner Gala in January 2019. The Minty Awards are given by the Minty Organization for the Performing Arts, founded by **Mike Pinto** '10, to honor excellence in high school dramatic arts programs in Staten Island. Richie performed in many shows at Monsignor Farrell {Continued on page 40}



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GOING ABSTRACT “It was an eye-opener for me and showed me that art could take you anywhere in the world,” she recalls of her time at Wagner. “I was a realistic painter when I went into college, and was an abstract expressionist when

Joan Giordano '60 *Color, Form, and Texture*

CLAIM TO FAME Joan Baldassano Giordano '60 is a visual artist who combines painting and sculpting, using media ranging from bamboo to wax. Since she finished her fine arts degree at Wagner in 1960, her work has been seen everywhere from the city of Atlanta to the country of Zambia.

ENCOUNTERING THE AVANT GARDE A Staten Island native, Giordano always loved to make art, but her Wagner experience gave her a new view of what art could be. During the 1950s and 1960s, faculty at the College had significant connections to New York's cutting-edge artists. Giordano was especially influenced by Tom Young, an abstract expressionist who taught art at Wagner from 1953 to 1970. Because of Young's connections, Giordano got to meet New York School artists like Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock.



Photo: Joan in her studio with two pieces she created in 2016, *Free Press* and *Epoch*.

I went out.” She enjoyed the challenges of “zeroing in on color and form and texture, and emphasizing text and stories. You were challenged to push your art forward, become more exciting, and encompass things that are more current.”

A MOTHER AND AN ARTIST In September 1959, at the beginning of her senior year, Joan married fellow Wagner student Ben Giordano '59, a business major and executive sales trainee with New York Life Insurance

Co. He became a marketing executive, while she pursued her art education and her family life. Just a week after graduating, in June 1960, she gave birth to their first child, Jeffrey. She went on to study Asian art on a fellowship at Hunter College; have her second son, Glenn; and earn an MFA from the Pratt Institute.

MEDIA AND SCALE “My work is always large, because I like getting physically into it,” she says. She has created techniques to fuse many elements into sculptural objects. She commonly incorporates handmade papers, having learned the kozo papermaking art in Japan; encaustic, or hot wax painting; newspapers; metals; and materials from nature, such as branches and bark, which she finds near her home in the Catskills.

ART AMBASSADOR Giordano is perhaps most proud of being a part of the Art in Embassies program, which has brought her art around the world. Former First Lady Laura Bush invited her to a breakfast at the White House in 2004 celebrating artists who contributed to the Art in Embassies program.

IMPRESSIONS “Handsome works that hang on the wall like a Samurai’s divested armor” is how Peter Plagens (*Wall Street Journal*) described Giordano’s exhibit “Spin Out: Constructions” in 2012. Writing for *Sculpture* magazine in 2017, Thalia Vrachopolous praised Giordano’s “Woven in Time” exhibit for its dedication to “human dignity, honesty, and fair play.” Another critic writing for *Sculpture* magazine, Jonathan Goodman, saw spiritual themes in Giordano’s 2007 “Presences” exhibit. Her “sentinel-like flat panels of charred paper ... read almost like abstract scrolls,” he wrote. “These flags of the spirit communicate what we know but cannot say in response to our slow, but inevitable, decay.”



{Continued from page 37}

High School, was a theater major at Wagner, and has developed a successful career as a comedian. **Keith Giglio** and his wife, Juliet, sold their holiday movie script, *A Very Nutty Christmas*, to Lifetime. The film aired on November 30 as part of Lifetime's 2018 Holiday Movie Schedule. The couple sold more than a dozen screenplays while living in Los Angeles for 20 years. Now living in Syracuse, Keith and Juliet are professors at SUNY Oswego and the Newhouse School at Syracuse University. **Andy Williams** purchased a new Harley-Davidson Motorcycle and a new home in Key West, Fla. "Wagner College students, alumni, and administration are welcome to visit," Andy wrote.

1995

Tracy Vicere, a special-education teacher at Woodward Parkway Elementary School in Farmingdale, N.Y., was featured in Long Island's *Newsday* newspaper in October 2018 for her work to benefit Cohen Children's Medical Center. Tracy is an adolescent cancer survivor who was treated at that hospital after she was diagnosed with two types of cancer in June 1989. In 2011, she launched Friends and Angels: The Tracy Vicere Foundation. In October, Tracy hosted her eighth annual fundraiser to benefit the hospital's Division of Hematology-Oncology and Stem Cell Transplantation. The

foundation has "donated more than \$125,000 to programs that keep patients' spirits up and help ease sometimes lengthy stays," the story said. **Rosie Gioia Van Nostrand '96** is a foundation board member and its communications director. Wagner College Theatre alumnus **Scott Wichmann**, a mass communication specialist in the U.S. Navy Reserve, wrote a column for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* in October 2018 explaining his devotion to both military service and show business. After graduation, he "found an artistic home in Richmond, and became a mainstay in the theater community." His career expanded in interesting ways, and he even played Frank Sinatra. Meeting a former U.S. Navy SEAL and going to his training bootcamp to improve his marathon time, however, inspired Scott to renew his previous fascination with the Navy. In 2009 at the age of 34, he became a U.S. Navy reservist. Since then, Scott has traveled to bases in Afghanistan, documented flight operations on the deck of the USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower*, and helped resupply a nuclear submarine off the North African coast.

1996

Jennifer Marano-Gregorio ran her fourth NYC Marathon in November. Jennifer is considered to be one of the best female road racers on Staten Island. "It all comes down to camaraderie in

the running community, the people I train with, the common sacrifice of running at 5 a.m. with my friends, the common goal, and seeing it all coming together. When I'm on the roads, it's my peaceful place," she told the *Staten Island Advance*. **Kyle Poyer** has been selected for induction into the Indiana High School Wrestling Coaches Association Hall of Fame in February 2019. During his coaching career, Kyle has coached two state champion wrestlers, two sectional and two regional team champions, and received seven Coach of the Year honors.

1997

Jason Sirois, who has worked for the Anti-Defamation League in New York since 2010, became ADL's national director of education programs in 2017. In January 2018, when he was heading up ADL's "No Place for Hate" initiative, he spoke at a United Nations event marking Holocaust Remembrance Day.

2002

Joel Richardson '02 M'08 is contributing to the website The Page Community as an expert thought leader for comedy. He wrote about the challenges he faced in launching his career in comedy and comedy show production, and praised **Donald Crooks '69 M'72**, professor of business administration, for inspiring him in his MBA classes.

2003

Michele Sampson-Nelson and her husband, Donald Nelson, welcomed Donald Clifford "DC" Nelson into the world on August 22, 2018. See a photo in Crib Notes, page 36.

2006

Elisabeth Cardiello '06 M'07 is in a documentary, *Coffee for All*, streaming on Netflix. The film's website describes it as "a curious journey from Naples to Buenos Aires to New York that detours into a reflection on the cultural tradition involved in having coffee in different places around the world." Elisabeth owns the coffee company Caffè Unimatic.

2007

In June 2017, **Christine Wendt** was appointed the manager of social work at Hackensack University Medical Center in Hackensack, N.J. "I am enjoying it and doing great," Christine said. Unfortunately, she lost her mother, Judith Wendt, in September 2017.

2009

In June 2018, **Llew Radford** was named the head coach for boys varsity basketball at his high school alma mater, Heritage High School, in Newport News, Virginia. The previous two years, he served as assistant coach and math teacher. Llew played basketball during his time at Wagner, averaging 11.0

Knot Notes

points and 7.4 rebounds as a forward in his senior season.

2012

Chelsea Beck was inducted into the athletic hall of fame at Wilson High School in West Lawn, Pa., in September 2018. Chelsea was captain of Wilson's swimming and water polo teams for all four years of high school, helping the swim team win four state titles and the water polo team earn county, state, and national honors. She had a standout career as a member of the Seahawk women's water polo team and graduated *summa cum laude* from Wagner. She played professional water polo in Australia before earning a graduate degree in education in 2017 from Johns Hopkins University. She is lead teacher for Mastery Charter Schools in Philadelphia.

2015

Leo Schuchert '15 M'18 left Wagner in August 2018 after more than five years as a College employee in the Center of Leadership and Community Engagement. He served as a Bonner Intern during his undergraduate years, Port Richmond Partnership Leadership Academy coordinator for three years, and CLCE associate director and Bonner Leaders coordinator.

2016

Jonathan Quigley made his off-Broadway debut in the



2010

Erin Fitzpatrick '10 married Cory Cousart in Simsbury, Conn., on August 18, 2018. Pictured on top of the swing set are Erin and Cory. Pictured below them are 2010 classmates **Emma Acciani, Emily Visnovsky, Don Rahl, Ali Magistrali, Tavis Doucette,** and **Kristie Scherrer.**

National Yiddish Theatre Folksbiene's Yiddish-language production of *Fiddler on the Roof*, directed by Joel Grey, which opened July 15, 2018. Originally meant to run just six weeks, ticket demand was so strong that the show was extended four times; as of press time, it was scheduled to run until December 30. Another WCT alum, **Jason Daniel Rath**, played Slim in a unique, all-African-American production of *Oklahoma!* at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts during the fall of 2018.

2017

Caroline J. Gelling '16 M'17, a certified physician assistant in pain management, is practicing at Pain Management of Long Island. **Connor Gibbs** attended a workshop for contemporary music composition at the European University of Cyprus in November 2018. He was one of 12 composers

selected to write a new piece for the workshop. Connor also traveled to Houston for the Space City New Music Festival, and one of his pieces made its world premiere at the 2018 Dartington International Summer School and Festival in southwest England. When he isn't traveling for music, Connor is a teacher at a city high school in Springfield, Mass.

2018

Danielle Allen played Sphintze in the national tour of *Fiddler on the Roof*, directed by Tony Award winner Bartlett Sher, which launched in Syracuse on October 17. **Britte Steele '09** also performed in the production. **Tyler Loftus** was hired as the quarterbacks coach for SUNY Morrisville, a Division III program in upstate New York. He was featured in his hometown newspaper, the *Star Beacon* of Ashtabula, Ohio, in July 2018. Tyler was a backup quarterback for

most of his years at Wagner, but he told the newspaper that his time on the sidelines prepared him to be a coach. "It was humbling," he said. "It was kind of disappointing at first, but it did definitely help me with coaching. Kind of seeing it from another perspective." Tyler was considering going into the law, the story says, but after gaining coaching experience as a graduate assistant at Wagner, he decided to stick with that profession. "It will be my way to minister to kids, help build young men, as well as stay involved with football and be able to compete," he said. **Charles Poveromo** is traveling the United States singing jazz music under his stage name, Charlie Romo. After performing in Florida and California, he returned to Staten Island in October 2018 for his "homecoming" show. He also made his professional acting debut, co-starring on a new streaming network series.

In Memoriam

Celebrating lives that enriched the Wagner family

Mrs. Frances Murray Grimes '43
Rev. Paul C. Reisch '44
Mr. Monroe Beim '45
Mrs. Naomi Stover Monge '46
Mrs. Elaine Strongman Kesner '48
Mrs. Adele True Stoughton '48
Dr. Guy V. Molinari '49 H'90
Mr. William A. Volpe '49
Mr. Thomas H. Darson '50
Dr. Martin G. Andersen '51
Mrs. Betty Mezzacappa Darcy '51
Mr. Donald C. Schuster '52
Mrs. Eleanor J. Corliss Kaufmann '53
Cmdr. Martin D. Kiefer '53, USN
Mr. Kenneth L. Schlamp '53
Dr. Karl G. Fossum '54
Mr. Herbert T. Behrens '55
Mr. Paul J. Prester '56 M'60
Dr. Mario Buatta '57 H'86
Rev. Dr. Frederick G. Wedemeyer '57
Mrs. Dorothy Becker Marcelo '59
Mr. William P. Sloane '62 M'66
Mr. Richard M. Cardenas '65
Mr. Barry I. Faden '65
Mr. Henry M. Adams '66 M'69
Mrs. Linda P. Pecsok Auzenne '66
Mr. Peter J. Frederick '66
Ms. Susan E. Golick '68
Mr. Richard A. LaRosa '69
Mrs. June Maxwell Vigar '70 M'73
Dr. Sharon Ivey Richie '71
Mrs. Dorothy A. Woitasek Bush '72
Mr. Norman J. Sokolow M'72
Mr. Richard Baldwin '73 M'75
Dr. Edwin M. Cortez '73
Mr. Thomas A. Belkowski '76
Mr. James D. Heyden '81
Ms. Laura S. Jacobs '84
Mrs. Nancy Bracco Coraggio '86
Ms. Rose Marie Pedro M'04

WAGNER LEGACIES

Dr. Guy V. Molinari '49 H'90

Dr. Guy V. Molinari '49 H'90 died on July 25, 2018, at age 89. He represented Staten Island in the New York State Assembly and U.S. Congress; served as Staten Island Borough President; and became known as the "Republican kingpin of Staten Island," in the words of his *New York Times* obituary.



Both Guy and his brother, Robert (also class of 1949), attended Wagner. "I was extremely proud to attend Wagner College," Molinari wrote in his memoir. He majored in social science and joined the fraternity Kappa Sigma Alpha.

He earned his law degree from New York Law School, and he served in the Marines during the Korean War. He practiced law on Staten Island before entering politics in the 1980s, winning 10 straight elections.

Wagner recognized Molinari with an Alumni Achievement Award in 1981 and an honorary doctorate in 1990, the same year he was sworn in as borough president at a ceremony in Main Hall. "Throughout [his] decades of public service, President Molinari has been committed to the welfare of Staten Island and its residents," the College citation for his honorary degree said.

Survivors include his daughter, former Wagner Trustee Susan Molinari H'95.

Dr. Sharon Ivey Richie '71

Dr. Sharon Ivey Richie died on September 2, 2018, in Clearwater, Florida. She was 68.

In 1969, when Richie was a junior nursing student, she was elected Wagner's homecoming queen — the first black woman to receive that honor. She represented the student organization Black Concern, and her election was an important step in promoting the rights and needs of African-American students at Wagner.



Richie went on to a stellar career in the Army Nurse Corps. She spent a year as a White House Fellow, served as chief nurse for the Army Recruiting Command, and was promoted to full colonel at age 36, the youngest officer of that rank in the entire Army at the time.

After retiring from the Army, Richie earned a Ph.D. in organizational behavior from George Washington University. She was a board member of the Military Officers Association of America and a trustee for Excelsior College, whose distance learning program in nursing has trained military nurses around the world. She also became the director of the School of Nursing at Norwich University, a private military college in Vermont.

Wagner College honored Sharon Richie in 1983 as Alumna of the Year, and again in 2010 as a Distinguished Graduate.

Professor Lewis J. Hardee Jr.

Lewis J. Hardee Jr., emeritus professor of theater, former music director, and chair of the Wagner College Theatre department, died on July 7, 2018, after a brief illness, at the Manhattan apartment home he shared with his dear friend and companion, Peter Monteleone. He was 81.

Born in the coastal fishing village of Southport, North Carolina, in 1937, Hardee was deeply attached to his hometown. “My career was in New York,” he often said, “but my heart is in Southport, where it always has been and will remain.”

Hardee earned a master’s degree in musicology at UNC Chapel Hill and pursued post-graduate studies in composition at Columbia.

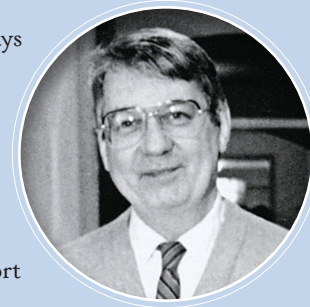
As a composer and author of musicals, Hardee was especially proud of his musical drama *Revolution!*, written for Southport’s bicentennial celebration. Two of his musicals, *The Little Prince* and *The Prince and the Pauper*, toured the United States before Hardee joined the Wagner College Theatre faculty as music director in 1984.

“Whenever I think of Lewis,” said retired theater professor John Jamiel, “I think of a Southern gentleman: charming, funny, and a great cook who made a wonderful coq au vin welcoming me to the department. Lewis was instrumental in hiring me at Wagner; he mentored me, and he changed my life and the direction of my career.”

“This talented man always had compassion for the students,” recalled Martha D’Arbanville, former WCT administrative assistant. “He would make a complete turkey dinner at the holidays and transport it to school in his beloved Lincoln Town Car. He wanted those students who couldn’t go home to have some of the holiday tradition.”

A longtime member of the Lambs, the first professional theatrical club in the United States, Hardee wrote its definitive history, *The Lambs Theatre Club*, in 2006. For a number of years, through his graces, the Lambs hosted the Stanley Drama Awards ceremonies, a Wagner College Theatre program that has recognized up-and-coming playwrights since 1957.

He wrote several other books in the nearly two decades that followed his retirement from Wagner College in 1999. His personal favorites were two collections of material he compiled about his hometown, *Classic Southport Cooking*, published in 2005, and *Of Home and the River*, a combination autobiography and local history, published in 2008.



Robert Browne

Robert Browne died at his home on Staten Island, on August 14, 2018, at the age of 92. Browne worked in the Business Office of Wagner College for 21 years, starting in June 1965. He served as Wagner’s business manager and controller from September 1981 until he retired in May 1986.

Co-workers remember “Bob” for the hard work he dedicated to Wagner — and for his tall stature. For bookstore employee Pat Coffey, who has worked at Wagner for over 30 years, Browne was unforgettable. “He was such a nice, kind, and intelligent man. He worked very hard for the College,” Coffey said. “Bob always had a hello to give, with a big smile on his face.

Plus, he was a very conscientious worker. He loved his job, and this school. He was very dedicated to Wagner.”

Before coming to work at Wagner, Browne served his country during World War II as a Navy cryptographer at Pearl Harbor. He was a lifelong member of St. John’s Lutheran Church, serving as treasurer, choir member, Sunday school teacher, and member of the church council and school board.



Openness to Experience

My Hope for Wagner Students By Steve Jenkins

I am now in my 14th year as a psychology professor at Wagner, but my educational path was very different than that of most Wagner students.

When I was 18 years old, I enrolled in three courses at my local community college in Northern California. I had no interest in any of them. I dropped two of those courses and failed the third — which was, of all things, Psychology 101. The classes I dropped were English literature and philosophy. Who had time for such nonsense? I gave college a try really just to get my parents off my back. I already knew what I was going to do with the rest of my life. I was going to be a rock star.

I got my first guitar when I was 13 years old, and spent every waking moment trying to emulate my favorite guitar players. For me, there was only one kind of music: good old '80s hard rock. Now, unfortunately, people refer to it by a term I have always hated: "hair metal." I wasn't interested in blues, rap, funk, or reggae. For me, it was all about hair metal, and I fit the image. I had hair down to my waist, rock 'n' roll boots, and a leather jacket.

When I was 19, I started playing the local clubs around San Francisco. My band opened for some big names, and we started headlining our own shows. We even had some record label interest. I moved to Los Angeles and started playing in bands in Southern California. It went well for a while.

“There was only one thing I wanted to do with my life, and now it was gone.”

Unfortunately, in a few years, the 1990s came around, with a new type of rock music. The dreaded grunge rock. Nirvana. Soundgarden. Awful! Who could listen to that garbage? Despite my indignation, public interest in what I considered to be the only type of music worth playing began to fade. At age 24, I was rendered obsolete, and I stopped playing music.

Of course, for me, this was a massive personal crisis. There was only one thing I wanted to do with my life, and now it was gone.

One night, in a panic, I decided to call my dad, who wasn't someone I usually went to for career advice. He always supported me, but he never really understood why his son had longer hair than his daughter. But, he listened to me patiently as I went on and on about not knowing what I was going to do with the rest of my life. Rather than giving me advice, he simply said, "Steve. Why do you need to figure this all out tonight?" That simple question made me realize that

it wasn't a matter of life or death, and that I could take some time to look around and consider the possibilities. Suddenly, I was more willing to be more open. But still, what to do?

I decided to take a college course again. Maybe this time I would actually open the textbook, turn in assignments, and even show up for the exams. So I once again signed up for Psychology 101.

One psychology class in particular had a major impact on my life. My professor was discussing theories of personality, and said that people who score high on measures of a trait called "openness to experience" (which means having intellectual curiosity, and a preference for novelty and variety) tend to be more psychologically healthy. Those who score low on this trait tend to be more neurotic, or experience more negative mood states. In other words, when you are closed off to learning new things, you are more likely to experience depression and anxiety. And when you are open to new possibilities, you tend to be happier and healthier.

I began to reflect on how closed off to possibilities I had been in life so far. There was only one thing I ever wanted to do with my life, only one type of music I liked, only one path to stardom. No wonder I felt anxious and depressed when life didn't follow along the perfect path that I had designed for myself. In my very narrow world, there was nothing else.



I share the story of my educational path with students in the hope that they will learn from my mistake — my mistake of being closed off to possibility, and of being rigid in my way of thinking. Students at Wagner are exposed to people of different religions, different sexual orientations and identities, different racial and cultural backgrounds, different abilities and disabilities, and different interests and ideologies. They have tremendous potential for growth if they are open to learning to communicate and understand more about people who differ from themselves.

When I say “openness,” however, I want to be clear that am not referring to “tolerance.” To me, tolerance suggests, “I know that I am in some way fundamentally superior to you, but I am willing to tolerate your existence, while I look down upon you, exclude you, and possibly even ridicule you when you are not around.” If we can move past tolerance and bring ourselves to be open to others, we open ourselves to new possibilities.

As part of a liberal arts education at Wagner, students are required to take courses in a variety of disciplines. In their First-Year Learning Communities, they may be required to go out into the community to better understand

the practical applications of what they are learning in the classroom. Some may be asked to be of service to others who are less fortunate.

In the years I have taught in the First-Year Program, I have seen firsthand those who simply tolerate the experience, and those who are truly open to it. Those who engage themselves in the program often find it so rewarding and inspiring that they continue their work in the community years after they have completed their course requirements.

Being open to experience, however, does not come without consequence. When we become more knowledgeable about others, about different disciplines, and about the world, it forces us to critically evaluate our own ideologies. This can be scary. If we learn a new way of understanding, the foundation for which we have lived our lives so far can become unstable. Things that we always accepted as truth get called into question. The very essence of who we are is no longer quite as clear.

There is a reason for the saying “Ignorance is bliss.” It takes great courage to question your way of being, but I believe that with it comes great reward. My own life is much richer, much more fulfilling, than it was when it consisted of only one dream, one way to get there, and one type of music.

I still enjoy some good old-fashioned '80s hair metal from time to time, but I'd like to end with a quote from a very different type of artist whom I have grown to appreciate over the years — the blues and folk singer Bill Withers. He said, “I feel that it is healthier to look out at the world through a window than through a mirror. Otherwise, all you see is yourself and whatever is behind you.” I hope my students will choose to look through the window and be open to experience.

Steve Jenkins, associate professor of psychology, originally delivered a version of this reflection as a speech to the class of 2020, at their freshman convocation, in 2016.

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WAGNER COLLEGE



Wagner's 19th President

On December 5, 2018, President Richard Guarasci introduced Joel W. Martin, provost and dean of the faculty at Franklin and Marshall College. The Wagner Board of Trustees has named Martin as Guarasci's successor as president. "It's just a home run in every way," Guarasci said of the appointment. Read more on pages 5–6.

PHOTOGRAPH: JONATHAN HARKEL